Improving Performance around Burglary Investigation

A Crime Scene Investigator’s learning from New Zealand and Australia

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Winston Churchill Fellow 2014
Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Burglary investigation forms part of every Crime Scene Investigator’s (CSI) daily workload in the UK. It is a crime that affects only a few and these are often people who would not normally require the services of law enforcement. In recent years burglary has become a national priority and forms part of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioners primary objective, helping the members of our communities to feel safe in their home. It sits under the umbrella of Volume Crime which also includes vehicle crime or any crime that by its sheer volume has a significant impact on the community and the ability of the local police to deal with it¹.

It is routine for CSI’s to contact victims of burglaries in Avon and Somerset, discuss with the victim the circumstances of the offence, and make decisions around whether to attend and if there is any forensic potential. The Scientific Investigations department within Avon and Somerset is a dynamic unit that has been pushing the boundaries of Crime Scene Investigation for a number of years. This started with Operation Quest in 2009 which looked at low solvability crime and supported CSI’s to better understand how they could strengthen an investigation, and empowered them to make decisions around which crime scenes to attend. This was based on data that had been gathered to look at decisions over charging offenders and was purely outcome based.

Since 2012 there has been a drive to support the primary objective around burglary investigation and so Avon and Somerset Police adopted a 100% attendance policy to provide a high level service to the public. Whilst I believe this was put in place to try to improve public satisfaction and overall performance, the latter was not achieved. It is clear that a balance between serving our public and utilising the time of our valuable CSI resources is essential and a balance between the plans needs to be found.

¹ College of Policing Investigations -https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/investigations/introduction/
Over the past ten years volume crime levels have reduced significantly allowing CSI’s the ability to spend more time at the scene\(^2\). This has seen improvements in standards of evidence recovery and recording. It is my wish to push the boundaries of the CSI ‘examination’ to ‘investigation’ of the crime scene. This would entail using skills and knowledge gained from training and experience as well as making a professional judgement as to whether there is forensic opportunity at the crime scene. Each CSI in central Bristol attends on average 130 burglary dwelling crime scenes per year (based on 2013 – 2014 figures). As a result they are experienced in the field of volume crime investigation, enabling them to quickly identify the methods used by offenders to gain access to premises, the reason the property was targeted, identify trends or crime series’ and to provide an opinion as to what has happened based on their findings. This is a mind-set that is key to Avon and Somerset’s CSI department, led by Forensic Operations Manager Mike Webb, and a vision I have adopted during my seven years under his command. I have established this operationally by creating a Burglary model with my team in Bristol, this pulls together their experiences in burglary investigation and saw the implementation of a tri-department investigation model, working closely with the Intelligence Department and burglary investigators. By the end of the crime year (April 1\(^{st}\) 2013 to March 31\(^{st}\) 2014) performance had increased by 50%.

As a result of these successes, I was keen to develop the model further and began researching other burglary models, conducting general research around burglary investigation, and looking for other successes in other Police forces in the UK.

I continued to research the available material around burglary investigation, national documents, burglary and performance improvement plans and specifically those in relation to CSI’s. I was unable to find any published burglary models relating to CSI or papers specific to CSI and burglary investigation, or indeed CSI’s being recognised as an untapped intelligence resource and investigative arm of law enforcement.

This led me to the Australian Institute of Criminology who had conducted various research projects and had publicised work available for me to study. I started to research burglary levels across the globe and learned that the UK and Ireland have one of the highest rates of burglary in the world. New Zealand and Australia are also in the upper sections depending on which model is applied. See Figure 1

Statistical bulletin, 23\(^{rd}\) January 2014
I was conscious to take into account population levels so that my research could be put into context. Bristol has an approximate population of 380,000, which is very similar to Christchurch in New Zealand, which sits at approximately 350,000. Perth has a population of approximately 1,800,000 and this is comparable to the Avon and Somerset area population combined. In addition, the number of burglaries in Christchurch is at a very similar level to that of Bristol at approximately 2,500 per year. Perth on the other hand sees incredibly large numbers close to 30,000 burglaries per year.

I wanted to see how much emphasis both countries place on burglary as an offence and the service they provide. Also whether there are any innovative burglary investigation methods and how CSI’s are used to detect burglary. In addition New Zealand Police operate as a national body and I hoped that by visiting them I may gain an insight into streamlined procedures and a single operating model that I may be able to bring back working practices that support the new South West Forensics structure and regionalisation process.

I have expanded the project to include research and strategic aims in Tasmania, Sydney, Wellington and Dunedin. By visiting six different policing areas I hoped to gain six different perspectives on burglary investigation.

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Figure 1 - Prevalence of burglary, Australia and other countries, 2003–04 (percentage)\(^3\)

South West Forensics

South West Forensics is a regional model which will merge the Scientific Investigation Departments of Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Devon and Cornwall Police, Dorset Police and Wiltshire Police. The process of regionalisation commenced in 2014, which saw the appointment of the Director of Forensics, who will lead the process through to completion by the end of 2015.

This model has evolved largely due to the austerity measures now in place for the next five years, and in order to streamline processes with a view to raising regional standards in forensic investigation.
My Fellowship

Aims

To visit New Zealand and Australia and learn new, innovative ways of investigating burglary and bring the learning back to the UK, and in particular to Avon and Somerset Police and South West (SW) Forensics.

Broad objectives:

- Bringing ideas and success stories back to the UK
- Sharing with colleagues
- Practitioner development
- Sharing working practices
- Making links/beneficial partnerships
- Identifying new working methods
Itinerary

I completed attachments with the following organisations: -

**New Zealand Police**
- Wellington Police Headquarters, departmental overview and structure
- Wellington Central Police Station Fingerprint Bureau
- ESR, Forensic Science Laboratory
- Dunedin Police, CSI Research and Development
- Christchurch Central Police Station, operational burglary investigation

**Australia**
- New South Wales Police, West Sydney Volume Crime Investigation
- The Institute of Criminology, Canberra, current burglary research
- CrimTrac, Canberra, computer systems in policing
- The University of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement, current research into end to end burglary investigation process
- Western Australia Police, operational burglary investigation
New Zealand and Policing

New Zealand Police operate as a single policing body across the whole country, divided into twelve district command units. As New Zealand Police are a national force their entire model is based on one plan ‘Prevention first’, which has been in place since 2011. All departments work to the same goals and strategic plan across the entire nation. All of New Zealand Police work stems from this, and they base their operating model on their five drivers for crime, alcohol, families, youth, road policing and organised crime and gangs.

New Zealand Police believe that this changes the way they police the country by working with their communities and their victims. They focus on providing a better service and reducing the chance of someone becoming a victim again by utilising their three stage crime prevention plan. This forms a structured and staged response. All victims of burglary receive a ‘bronze’ response which includes basic crime prevention advice; this includes a leaflet and verbal information from the attending Scenes of Crime Officer (SOCO), if attending. This can then be scaled up and developed for repeat or vulnerable victims.

Their intentions are to intelligently deploy their workforce, allowing for a more flexible and better response for victims and not simply reacting to problems. Ultimately they are working to reduce offending and victimisation. They are aiming to achieve a balanced approach using intelligence, enforcement and alternative ways of resolving cases, enabling a better understanding of the reasons people commit crime and to be able to deal with them.

At the heart of their policing ethos stands a treaty inherited from the Maori community. Despite working closely with these communities, including the Pacific Islanders, this community commits a disproportionate amount of New Zealand’s crime and so they have produced a document called “Turning the tides”. From their research they realised that a disproportionate amount of Maori and Pacific Islanders were being charged, rather than using other options available to them, like caution or Restorative Justice that they were using for other ethnic groups. Together with the community leaders, this agreement hopes to reduce offending and be more respectful of the minority groups in New Zealand.

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In 2011 New Zealand Police commenced a program that focussed on improving the quality of life for young people. This was a joint venture with the Ministries for Education, Health and Justice and Social Development, called the Social Sector Trials\(^6\). The aims of this project were to increase participation in education, training and employment; reduce truancy and reduce levels of alcohol and drugs. This was aimed at 12-18 year olds in six trials across the country. It focussed on risk areas and individuals at risk of offending. The pilot was so successful that this is now being rolled out countrywide and is based on helping people change early on. They have also introduced a leadership program which encourages leaders to be accountable and understand what is expected of them under the principles ‘know the way, go the way, show the way’.

**Wellington**

I began my Fellowship at New Zealand Police Headquarters in the capital city, Wellington, where I met Forensic Coordinator Penny Costello. There I was able to gain an insight into the overview, structure and goals of the department. I learned that the operational Crime Scene Units are managed by each District Command Unit and all work to different local policing plans. Police Headquarters is also the site of the National Police Training College where new recruits, CSI and ongoing training and development takes place. I was also able to visit the National Fingerprint Unit where I was able to gain knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the Fingerprint Officers who unlike in the UK system attend all major and serious crime scenes to conduct fingerprint examinations and recovery.

**ESR Forensic Services**

I was also able to visit the forensic science provider based in Wellington where I learned about their DNA facilities, their structure across the country, the turnaround times for DNA submissions and their new technology and advancements. I also learned about their agreement with New Zealand Police and how they attend all their major crime scenes and complete the scene examination.

Within the UK system the forensic service provider is employed by the police to assist our investigations at major crime scenes and works in conjunction with the Crime Scene Manager and alongside the CSI’s who are responsible for the evidence recovery.

My next stop was to visit Christchurch Police Station in the Canterbury region of New Zealand. As someone living in the UK I had not realised the devastation and long term effects that the 2011 earthquake has had on the people living there. Whilst working and staying there I was privileged to hear people’s personal stories about that day in February 2011 where Christchurch was changed forever. The devastation is still evident with much of the repair work still to be done. There is a temporary memorial in the city centre to represent the lives lost, called ‘the 185 empty chairs’, each unique to represent each individual that perished that day.

From an operational perspective the earthquake forced all of Christchurch Police to find new accommodation as the Central Police Station was condemned. As a result all units are collocated in the south of the city and have built new working relationships.

I met the Temporary District Commander Virginia Le Bas who explained how the Prevention First model was working in Christchurch. She told me that she understood that by focussing on crime reduction New Zealand Police would inevitably see a decline in performance initially but that the long-term benefits would outweigh the short term decline. This varies greatly from UK policing where crime prevention is given as information and advice to our victims rather than it being the forefront of Policing but it was interesting to see a totally different way of thinking and working but ultimately with the same aim of reducing crime.

I had the opportunity to visit Phillipstown with the Neighbourhood Policing Team Sergeant, there he has set up a close-knit team who are working together to improve life in the neighbourhood. They have successfully driven the gangs and drug dealers from the streets, formed a youth group run by local people and have won awards for their work. They focus on their prolific offenders and finding the best opportunities or ‘gold products’ (like fingerprints or good quality CCTV) to identify those responsible for committing the crime.

I also spent time with the Volume Crime Investigation Department where I spoke with Sector Sergeant Don Fisher about their work. Their main goal is to reduce overall crime levels. He explained that front line officers do not attend routine burglary calls and only respond if an intruder is still on the premises. They do however attend 100% of ‘creep burglarly’ (this is a burglary where the occupier is asleep on the premises, when the offender enters their home) as they identify this offence as being more serious than those committed when occupiers are absent. At present in Avon and Somerset Constabulary a Police Officer attends all dwelling burglaries and conducts an initial assessment of the scene.
I was able to spend time within the Intelligence Unit where they use a daily briefing model to determine where crime hotspots or series are. Each day operational police are directed by this integral unit. They have combined the communications and intelligence units under a pilot scheme that runs locally and resources are dispatched according to the daily picture. This provides additional information that is available to a CSI and they are involved in this daily briefing process and aware of the current priorities set by the district. At present within Avon and Somerset resourcing and dispatching of police units is not conducted based on the intelligence picture but is demand led according to crime type and the threat, risk or harm to the public.

The majority of my time was spent within the Scenes of Crime Department with Detective Sergeant Lee Wright. His department have been given the autonomy to decide what volume crime scenes will yield useable results. The Scenes of Crime Officers within New Zealand Police are all sworn Police Officers. I attended several crime scenes during my week in Christchurch including a dwelling burglary where the offenders had entered a property in the ‘red zone’ (areas of the city where the majority of homes were being demolished). This makes the remaining properties isolated and an easy target for offenders without the prying eyes of neighbours. SOCO’s focus on DNA and fingerprints as their main evidence types and have no system for recording and using footwear evidence as intelligence. SOCO’s spend less time at volume crime scenes and this gives staff the ability to attend a larger number of scenes. This is vastly different from CSI’s within Avon and Somerset who collect all available evidence at a crime scene and spend as much time as needed to complete their investigation.

During my visit I became aware of how well New Zealand Police utilise the media for prevention campaigns to support their policing model. The ‘12 days of Christmas’ campaign is launched in line with the seasonal increase in dwelling burglaries, and on the Saturdays leading up to Christmas an increase in vehicle offending from town car parks and shopping malls. This campaign is a large scale media operation with a series of broadcasts encouraging people to destroy packaging intelligently, and includes drinking awareness for office parties. This is all combined with crime prevention messages, increased patrols in the relevant and high risk areas and leaflet drops to residents.

**Dunedin**

I visited South Dunedin Police Station where I spent time with operational officers and the Forensic Quality Manager. This is one of the most densely populated boroughs in the Southern Hemisphere, it is a local socio-economic area with high levels of unemployment and burglary offences are a problem. There is a large student population in North Dunedin they have a blasé attitude to crime, leaving large houses insecure allowing thieves to walk in and help themselves to whatever they desire, a problem that is also seen in Bristol.
In South Dunedin the offender management program relies on local officers making a ‘cold-call’ visit to the homes of offenders and taking a questionnaire. This covers who they offend with, who taught them, if they teach anyone and people they will not target. Community Officers find that this works well and that the offenders will talk to them in their own environment. The aim of this is to steer offenders away from crime by finding out the root causes of their offending and submit this as intelligence into the system.
Australia and Policing

Australia is made of eight states and territories and each state has its own law and enforcement regulations. Courts and correction systems are also bound by state; this can make inter-state investigations complicated as to ‘deport’ a Queensland citizen from New South Wales requires an ‘extradition’ order. The structure is based on the old colonial boundaries.

There is a Federal Policing body, the Australian Federal Police (AFP). They are concerned with matters of national security, including terrorism, drug and human trafficking.

Each state has its own computer recording and reporting systems and up until recently have not all fed into the National Criminal DNA identification system. This gave a complete contrast to my experiences in New Zealand but does reflect some of the challenges in British Policing (43 separate police forces) even though we do operate in England and Wales under the same legal system.

New South Wales Police, West Sydney

I visited New South Wales Police in West Sydney, where I worked alongside Volume Crime SOCO’s. There I learned that they experience high volumes of crime across the city of Sydney and prioritise according to outcomes from volume crime. They spend less time at crime scenes and recover DNA and FP as routine, footwear and other evidence types are not routinely collected. This is largely due to restrictions of budget and as a result they will only seize one sample of DNA evidence from a crime scene as only one submission is allowed regardless of failures. Due to large backlogs at the laboratory this would extend turnaround times, which are already around two weeks for simple crime stains (three days in the UK). The courts are reluctant to accept DNA evidence without fingerprint evidence and this is also problematic for a CSI trying to make decisions at the crime scene. The regional forensic service provider ideally want an Eppendorf tube (an already prepared crime stain sample) and so SOCO’s are preparing an area within a crime scene with a medical drape and cutting swabs and cigarette butts ready to be submitted to the laboratory. This saves time at the laboratory having taken away the first stage of their process.

DNA evidence has long been accepted as an excellent tool for solving crime within the modern day policing system, no such issues exist around courtrooms and the necessity for it to sit hand in hand with other evidence. CSI’s within Avon and Somerset recover all available DNA material at a crime scene that is believed left behind by the perpetrator. We triage the samples according to success rates of the DNA and on crime type and complete a staged submission in order to try and achieve a successful outcome as quickly and cost effectively as possible.
The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) – Canberra

I was fortunate enough to visit the AIC in Canberra where I met Deputy Research Director Rick Brown. The AIC is an agency under the commonwealth and Attorney Generals Department and part of the National Government, it was established in 1973. The Mission of the AIC is to improve and inform crime and justice policy in Australia by disseminating relevant research of national significance.

The Institute is made up of 27 researchers who research all crime and justice issues. These are split into four research teams: -

(i) Transnational Organised and Cyber crime
(ii) Violence and Exploitation
(iii) Criminal Justice monitoring and analysis
(iv) Crime Prevention and evaluation

There I worked alongside the team of researchers and learned about their work with DNA evidence, in particular the development of familial DNA (the theory of criminality running in families and shared DNA components being present) for use in the Australian court room. This as yet is untested in the courtroom with the first case due to come to trial in 2015. They have a large catalogue of past research published on their website and share their work internally through a series of short published articles called ‘Trends and Issues’ which means that all projects are documented and published for staff members to access.

CrimTrac

I also visited CrimTrac whilst in Canberra where I met lead scientist Carmen Eckhoff, a DNA expert. They support a national sharing platform for information where they pull together state and territory computer systems. This also enables the evaluation of police work across the country. The AIC was commissioned to make a business case for better IT systems within Australia for Policing. They assess the impact of multiple systems rather than one national system, and how current systems are used by police. The AIC have worked closely with CrimTrac to develop this.

CrimTrac have completed a national DNA database evaluation and have also evaluated the use of DNA evidence in Australia. They are developing new systems to understand how other types of DNA evidence, like familial DNA and Y-str (male only DNA) could be utilised, as well as a better system for comparing ante and post mortem data for large scale incidents with mass-fatalities.

Both Y-str and Familial DNA are being utilised in the investigation of serious and major crime in the UK as routine DNA tools and have been tested in the UK courtroom successfully for many years. This provides the most serious of crimes the highest level of investigative technology to help identify a perpetrator, bringing our most dangerous offenders to justice.
Tasmania

I visited the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement (TILES) and attended the annual conference where there were a variety of speakers from across Australia and I was the key-note speaker. The main purpose for the visit was to meet with two researchers who had completed an end-to-end process review of burglary investigation in Australia. The aim was to look at the time taken between each stage of the investigation to identify performance opportunities around time-lags in the process and to identify if this model could be used to assess the same parameters in the South West region and improve the current time lines.

I also visited Hobart Central Police Station Scenes of Crime Unit and discussed volume crime investigation with the unit head. I looked at their exhibit tracking system and their equipment as a comparison to the systems in place within Avon and Somerset. I also delivered a presentation at the Tasmania Police Academy to a mixed audience of new recruits as well as senior leaders.

Western Australia Police

I started my visit with Western Australia Police (WA) in the south of Perth where they experience the highest level of burglary in Western Australia. As part of my attachment I attended dwelling burglary scenes with a Police SOCO. SOCO’s in WA Police are able to task themselves from computers within their vehicle which maximises their time out in the community. They task themselves based on geography and on the opportunities for forensic recovery at the crime scene. They also spend on average less time at volume crime scenes than staff in Bristol and focus on DNA and fingerprint evidence.

All fingerprint evidence is recovered photographically and included within the general scene photos. They are only recovered for the item if the SOCO is concerned about the texture or curve of the surface and as a secondary exhibit to the photograph. This allows the rapid transfer of fingerprint evidence into the criminal database for the fastest possible results. It also saves time at crime scenes where SOCO’s are not require to routinely recover marks. This has been in place for a significant period of time and has reduced the amount of lifting material used by SOCO’s and has had a significant cost saving. This is vastly different to processes in the UK where finger-marks would always be recovered from items and either scanned electronically (for priority scenes or serious crime) or forwarded the next day within the internal post system. The training for both SOCO’s and fingerprint experts therefore concentrates on dealing with photographed marks rather than recovered marks. There is no requirement for the photographs to be taken precisely as they use the fingerprint computer system technology to adjust the size of the mark in order for it to be searchable on the national database.

I also visited the new forensics division headquarters where I was able to visit the fingerprint bureau and the DNA and blood screening unit. This is a hi-tech facility where they are pushing the boundaries with blood screening and have a new infra-red search facility used to search for blood on dark coloured or patterned clothing.
I was able to follow the fingerprints from the crime scenes I had attended the previous day through to completion and in one case to identification of a possible offender. For the fingerprint expert this was a simple system where the fingerprints were already uploaded into an accessible file and then transferred directly onto the national database.

This is also the location for the major crime SOCO’s who deal with all major incidents in a small team, travelling all over Western Australia.
Conclusions

On the whole I found that burglary is not set as a high priority in any of the areas I visited, nor is police attendance a regular occurrence. A police officer would only normally attend if an intruder is found on the premises and the responsibility passes to the attending CSI, if in fact they are attending. As a result of this lower level response the priority burglaries are not seen as a priority for CSI attendance and there is little pressure or expectation on outcomes. This also seems to be the case with regards to the public expectations, from the addresses I visited and on discussion with police personnel the public do not seem to have the levels of expectation that I have experienced first-hand in the UK. It is clear from my visits that Avon and Somerset Constabulary provide an outstanding service to the communities we serve but as an organisation we need to be more positive in acknowledging this publicly.

The time spent at a burglary scene by CSI is significantly reduced and the examination at the scene does not extend to the same levels conducted within Avon and Somerset, nor does the extent of the evidence collection. Opportunities for detecting these crimes through forensic science are not as readily available to the investigation team but nor is the budget for the submission of items. This is a difficult challenge faced by many of the policing units I visited.

In some areas CSI’s are not used as part of the investigation process, and do not see themselves as investigators and there was very limited interaction with other teams. In some areas they were very much a standalone unit when it comes to volume crime investigation. They are however given autonomy and make professional decisions based on the perceived outcome from the offence i.e. whether or not to attend based on this perceived outcome.

In order to bring back the learning to the UK and to improve performance in the South West region around volume crime scene investigation as a starting point the mind-set around examiner vs investigator needs to be challenged both within the CSI environment and within investigations, and implemented and encouraged by leaders.

CSI’s bring huge value to an investigation and working closely with the investigation team and the intelligence analysts means that CSI’s have the local and up to date knowledge on offenders and trends and feel empowered to make professional decisions based on outcomes from their investigation and based on their experience. They need to be encouraged to share their opinions both verbally and in writing, and ultimately feel empowered to do this in the courtroom.

CSI’s need to fundamentally understand the strategic perspective of crime scene investigation and the part in which they play in stopping the crime cycle and offending, and the impact this has on the community they serve.
Within Avon and Somerset we have been attending a large proportion of burglary crimes, recovering all available evidence and submitting items as routine. We need to carefully review our processes in order to ensure we are identifying the key evidence and address the balance on what is attended, what is recovered, and an evaluation conducted on what evidence is being used for successful prosecutions.

Best practice is not always about doing more; it can be about doing what is practical, proportionate and ensuring a positive outcome can be achieved. It is also about identifying when there is an opportunity to recover evidence that can be utilised in bringing the correct person to justice as efficiently as possible. CSI’s need to decide when investigating a crime scene what the key items are that need to be seized. Not simply offer a ‘cover-all’ service attending and seizing everything available without first applying thought as to whether there is scope to recover useable evidence and recording a rationale about the decisions taken so that we are seen to be open in our investigation processes.

For further work suggestions please see recommendation section.
Dissemination

Since my return to the UK most of my dissemination has been done via presentations and meetings to a variety of policing audiences. This has included developing a new working model with the lead investigator for burglary within the force, which is still very much ongoing.

I am also working closely with my Head of Department to bring about these developments into the Scientific Investigation department. I have formed a working group with Volume Crime Scene Investigators (VCSI’s) and police investigators who are going to develop key streams of work based on my learning from my Fellowship, combined with the burglary charter and my knowledge and experience as a CSI Supervisor to try to improve burglary performance:

1. **Burglary is everyone’s responsibility**
   
   *This will aim to re-energise staff across the Constabulary around burglary, ensuring staff understand that it is a force priority and how they each contribute to the investigation of burglary.*

2. **Defining ‘gold products’ and developing a model of how this can be implemented**
   
   *This will create a simple way of highlighting a crime to an investigator that has a piece of evidence that can result in the early identification of the offender and break the cycle of offending.*

3. **Redefining ‘creeper burglaries’**
   
   *Increasing the response time to this offence and highlighting the different and prolific nature of this offender and understanding the need to recover evidence quickly (often insecure entry and limited CSI scope)*

4. **The ‘CSI package’ and CSI briefing**
   
   *What can investigators expect to obtain from a scene attended by a CSI? What information does a CSI have access to and how is this disseminated?*

5. **Reflecting ‘Threat’, ‘Harm’ and ‘Risk’**
   
   *Avon and Somerset Constabulary are in the process of moving away from specific crime types as performance measures, and are now focussing on the threat, harm and risk elements of crime. The organisations ability to fight threats, reduce the harm crime causes and manage risks is important to combat all levels of crime. This is a principle which CSI’s need to embed into its code of ethics.*

This work will be presented to both department heads in July 2015 for a pilot and eventual wider dissemination if proved successful across Avon and Somerset with the aim of it being utilised across the South West region where we are seeking to standardise volume crime investigation attendance criteria.
I have helped to create a formal link between The University of the West of England’s criminology department to both the Australian Institute of Criminology in Canberra and the Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement as a result of my Fellowship. I hope that this will create an information sharing platform for research.

I hope to engage with the College of Policing to discuss the development of a national CSI model for burglary investigation. I hope that by working closely with them we can benchmark volume crime investigation from a CSI perspective. The current structure places forces into most similar groups and effectively in competition with each other rather than encouraging the sharing of good working practices.

I am working closely with the University of the West of England (UWE) and am hoping to continue on to a PhD study program, further developing the CSI model and framework for volume crime investigation for CSI’s.
**Recommendations**

**Redefining ‘creeper burglary’ offences**

Taken from the New Zealand Policing model all ‘creeper burglaries’ should be identified as higher risk and given priority above more straightforward ‘victim absent’ burglaries. They should have 100% attendance from CSI and we should look to attend promptly to secure evidence as they are often ‘walk-in’ offences and committed by our most prolific offenders.

**Gold products model**

Taken from the New Zealand Policing model develop a ‘Gold products’ model – identifying the key evidence types that give quick time results to identify and apprehend an offender.

**CSI continued professional development**

Taken from the Australian Institute of Criminology produce a South West region “trends and issues” document within Scientific Investigations as learning and staff development (both reader and author) to encourage the sharing of information and knowledge across the region of ongoing project work as well as lessons learned from scene attendance.

**Practitioner development for implementation of the ‘CSI package’**

Devise a series of training workshops for all CSI’s across the south west based on the CSI ‘Investigation’ principle to include: -

- CSI’s to be encouraged to use professional judgement for volume crime attendance, this should be outcome based and not offence defined, whilst engaging with the threat, harm, risk principles and documenting rationale
- Detailed note writing, encouraging CSI’s to write down the rationale behind their decision making within their crime scene notes
- Providing interpretation from the crime scene and the CSI’s opinion to investigators
- In-depth scene investigation allowing CSI’s to reconstruct the series of events and being able to provide this detail to the investigation
- Working closely with investigators to encourage information sharing
- Promoting Streamline Forensic Reporting (SFR) where CSI’s provide professional opinion with regard to Modus Operandi (The method of operation used by the offender in the commission of the offence) and the interpretation of the key forensic evidence.
- Using and supporting the National Intelligence Model

**Burglary investigation process review**

This will be based on the TILES model to review the current burglary investigation process, identifying the key stages of the investigation to identify system lags from attendance, submission, identification and arrest. This can be done in partnership with UWE through the student placement programme.
Local volume crime profile knowledge

From the Christchurch model it is clear that CSI’s should be up to date on intelligence information through briefings and attend either a local investigations briefing or hold their own CSI briefing encouraging the sharing and dissemination of information. CSI’s should complete local intelligence training to be able to correctly record intelligence onto force systems and be issued with a Pocket book as a sourced document.

Streamlining volume crime investigation for CSI

From the operating model used by New Zealand Police, WA Police and NSW Police it is clear that CSI’s don’t attend all volume crime scenes or recover all available evidence and spend less time at burglary scenes. A review is needed of the current model within the South West of the evidence types collected, particularly trace evidence, to assess how much of this is successfully used to detect volume crime. Consideration should be given to this type of evidence being collected and based on previous research the likelihood of a result being obtained that can be used as an actionable outcome. This can be done in partnership with UWE through the student placement programme.

Develop a working group for CSI in the South West for the development and streamlining of volume crime investigation for the next five years, capturing good working practices and disseminating across the region. Create a structure and attendance criteria that is outcome based, not crime type restricted that can be implemented across the four forces easily and uploaded to the ISO 9001 database as a reference guide (quality management standard in place in Avon and Somerset Constabulary).

South West forensic leadership development

Based on the New Zealand Police Leadership model develop a framework and structure so that cultural barriers are challenged and broken down, and the fundamental principles are clear in the minds of our leaders, so that staff feel supported and are encouraged.

To refresh the in house ‘Aspiring Leaders’ program to include the Scientific Investigations code of ethics framework, and hold a South West region leadership day after implementation of the regional South West Forensic model.

Improving public satisfaction through the work of South West Forensics

Develop a SW Forensics leaflet for the public, informing them about what our findings mean and what the next steps are, as this will impact on victim satisfaction. This could be developed from the Avon and Somerset CSI leaflet (see appendix 2).

Devising a sharing platform for CSI-investigators-intelligence

Based on the principles of the Christchurch Intelligence model, develop a formal system of communication and sharing between investigators, intelligence officers and CSI’s.
Improving details on initial call and initial attendance at volume crime offences

Using the ideas from the Christchurch Intelligence model to aim to produce a detailed input from call handler and first attending officer on the scene log for CSI’s and Investigators to use when assessing and dealing with burglaries.

Develop communication between call handlers, uniformed officers and CSI’s to encourage rapid attendance when relevant for the right crimes and preventing false impressions being given to our victims.