

Burglary in Brent – Trends in the data and actions taken to reduce offences

July 2012

Executive summary:

This short report provides information on the increases in burglary reported across Brent and actions being taken to arrest this increase. Key points include:

- Since 2010/12 Brent has seen an increase in burglary offences both in 2011/12 and again so far in 2012/13. Burglary increased 10.0% in 2011/12 and is up 8.9% so far in 2012/13.
- This has been driven by an increase in residential burglary, which increased 17.0% in 2011/12 and 12.7% so far in 2012/13 (up to May). Non-residential burglary has remained static over the same period.
- While this is clearly a cause for concern, more recent intelligence suggests that the increase has reduced somewhat.
- In addition, while overall London figures point to a reduction in burglary, comparing Brent with other London boroughs places it 23rd out of 32 in terms of burglary performance.
- The period between October and March was when a large part of the increase over 2011/12 occurred.
- In 2011/12, Harlesden, Brondesbury Park and Stonebridge saw the highest number of burglary offences, accounting for about a fifth of the total.
- Thirteen wards saw increases in burglaries between 2010/11 and 2011/2012, while eight saw decreases. The largest increases were in Alperton, Brondesbury Park and Sudbury – all with increases of more than 25%
- Much work is being undertaken by Brent to reduce burglary and a number of priority actions have been implemented. This includes:
 - Targeting of the most active burglars in Brent (including beginning eviction proceedings where an individual lives in social housing)
 - Strengthening of communal doors in blocks of flats owned by registered social landlords
 - Events to promote prevention to the public and registered social landlords
 - Forensic retrieval in known hotspots
 - Targeted work in housing estates particularly affected by burglary
- So far in 2012/13, the sanction detection rate for burglary (i.e. burglary offences which result in an individual being charged for the offence) in Brent is 15.0% and 17.5% for residential burglary.
- The sanction detection rate for burglary in Brent is similar to that for London as a whole and has been better than the London average since 2011/12.
- Initial information suggests suspects are increasingly either; young people from the local area associating with gangs and highly organised and mobile suspects who are operating across a number of boroughs. More detailed information is currently being compiled to allow further analysis.
- Initial information suggests that the majority of offences occur during the day with the main point of entry being the front of the property. A number of blocks of flats where a communal door can be breached and a number of flats burgled have been increasingly targeted. Again more detailed data is currently being compiled.

- Live data will be closely monitored over the next few weeks. Additionally, more detailed data is being compiled by the Metropolitan Police Service which will be incorporated into Brent's strategic crime needs assessment. This will be completed in September 2012 and longer term plans and strategies to address burglary will be developed based on findings from this needs assessment.

1 Introduction

Brent Council is committed to addressing increases in burglary. This short report establishes:

- **The context:** Data is presented looking at trends in burglary offences being committed in Brent, both overall and at a ward level. There is also initial information presented on perpetrators and the types of properties targeted.
- **Current and future actions to reduce burglary:** This section looks at what actions are being taken to reduce burglary in Brent led by the Integrated Community Safety Team and the Metropolitan Police Service. It also discusses a set of future actions that were agreed at a meeting between these stakeholders on 28th June 2012. These actions are being implemented across the next month with the intention of immediately impacting burglary.

This is an interim report. Brent's strategic crime needs assessment which is currently being developed by the Integrated Community Safety Team will provide more comprehensive information about the profile of suspects and the characteristics of offences. The needs assessment will be completed for September 2012 with an action plan for development on the basis of its findings.

2 The context

2.1 Burglary offences in Brent compared to London

Scorecard data from the Metropolitan Police indicates that as of 27th June, across London as a whole¹, residential burglary was down by 3.6% for the financial year to date (compared with the previous year) and non-residential burglary was down by 0.4%. However, in Brent residential burglary had increased 6.7% compared to the previous year while non-residential burglary had fallen by 0.4% (i.e. exactly in line with the overall London figures).

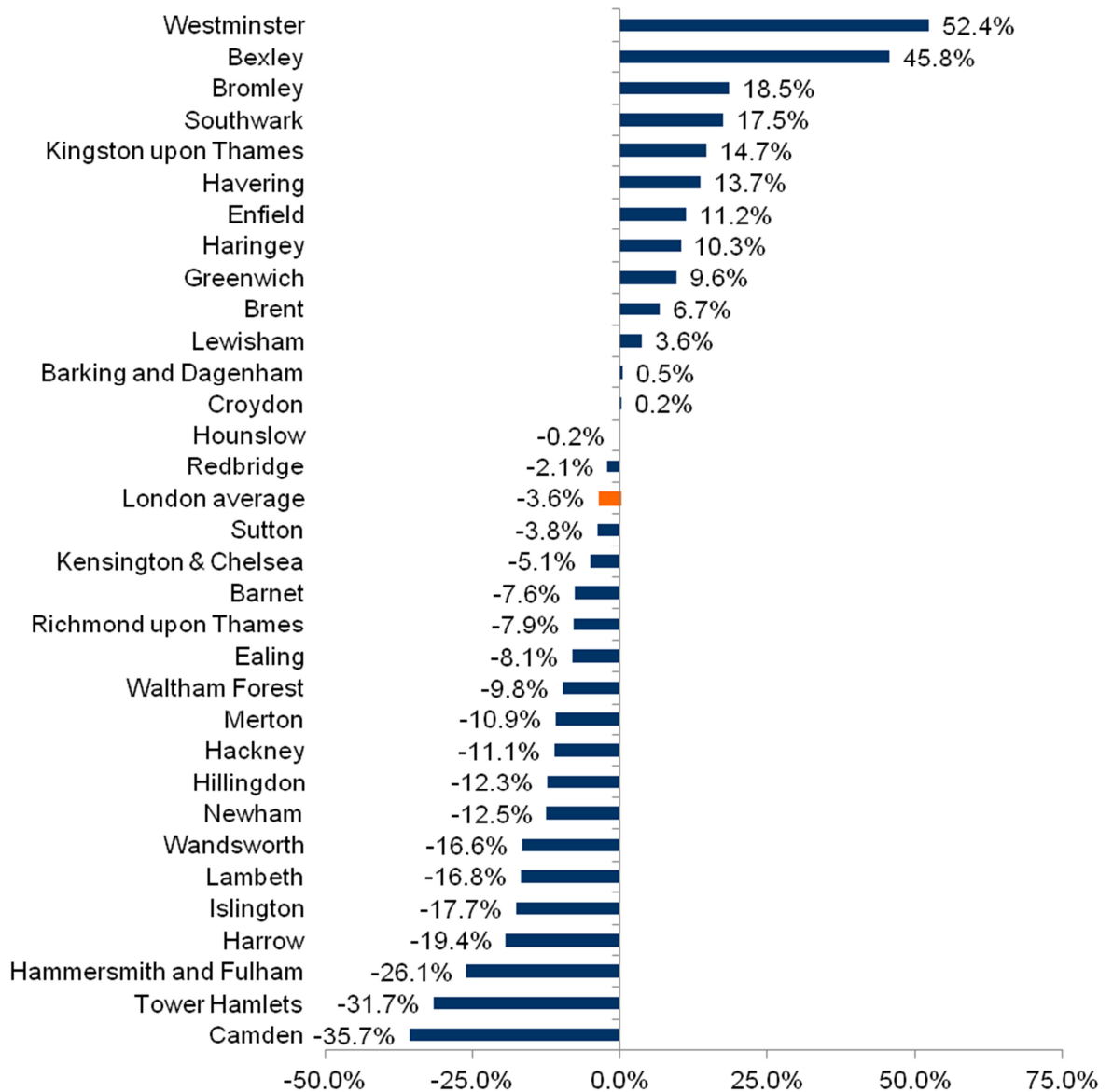
However, as Figure 1 makes clear, London-wide figures mask significant variation between boroughs. Specifically, this shows that so far this year, residential burglary increased by as much as 52.4% in Westminster and decreased by as much as 35.7% in Camden. Nine other boroughs have seen increases in residential burglary larger than Brent. This locates Brent at 23rd out of 32 in terms of performance in reducing burglary in London.

¹ Excluding City of London.

With the exception of Westminster, Figure 1 also makes clear that all other boroughs neighbouring Brent (Barnet, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow and Kensington & Chelsea) have all reported decreases in residential burglary so far this year.

It is important to note, that these figures should be taken in the context that this financial year is still less than three months old. Any increases may reflect random fluctuation in the figures which may even out over the remainder of the year.

Figure 1: Changes in residential burglary for financial year to date compared with previous financial year by borough



Source: MPS TP Scorecard up to 27th June 2012

2.2 Trends in Burglary Offences in Brent

Figure 2² looks at trends in burglary offences using CRIS³ data and shows that the previous financial year (2011/12) saw a 10.0% increase in burglary in Brent compared to 2010/11. This was caused by a 17.0% increase in residential burglary with non-residential burglary recording a slight decrease of 0.1%.

Focusing on the first two months of the financial year, Figure 2 shows that burglary overall is up 8.9% in 2012/13 (compared to 2011/12) and was up 12.0% in 2011/12 (compared to 2010/11). This was driven by the increases seen in residential burglary (12.7% for 2012/13 compared to 2011/12 and 15.4% for 2011/12 compared to 2010/11). Non-residential burglary remains static.

In summary, a clear pattern emerges of a rising trend in burglary across Brent, driven by increases in residential burglary.

Figure 2: Trends in burglary offences in Brent 2010 to 2012 (Figures in brackets indicate percentage change on previous year)

Figure	2010 to 2011	2011 to 2012	2012 to 2013
Whole financial year			
Total number of burglary offences	3,613	3,975 (10.0%)	-
Total number of residential burglary offences	2,618	3,064 (17.0%)	-
Total number of non-residential burglary offences	995	911 (-0.1%)	-
April to May			
Total number of burglary offences	540	605 (12.0%)	659 (8.9%)
Total number of residential burglary offences	376	434 (15.4%)	489 (12.7%)
Total number of non-residential burglary offences	164	171 (0.0%)	170 (-0.1%)

Source: Metropolitan Police Service CRIS data

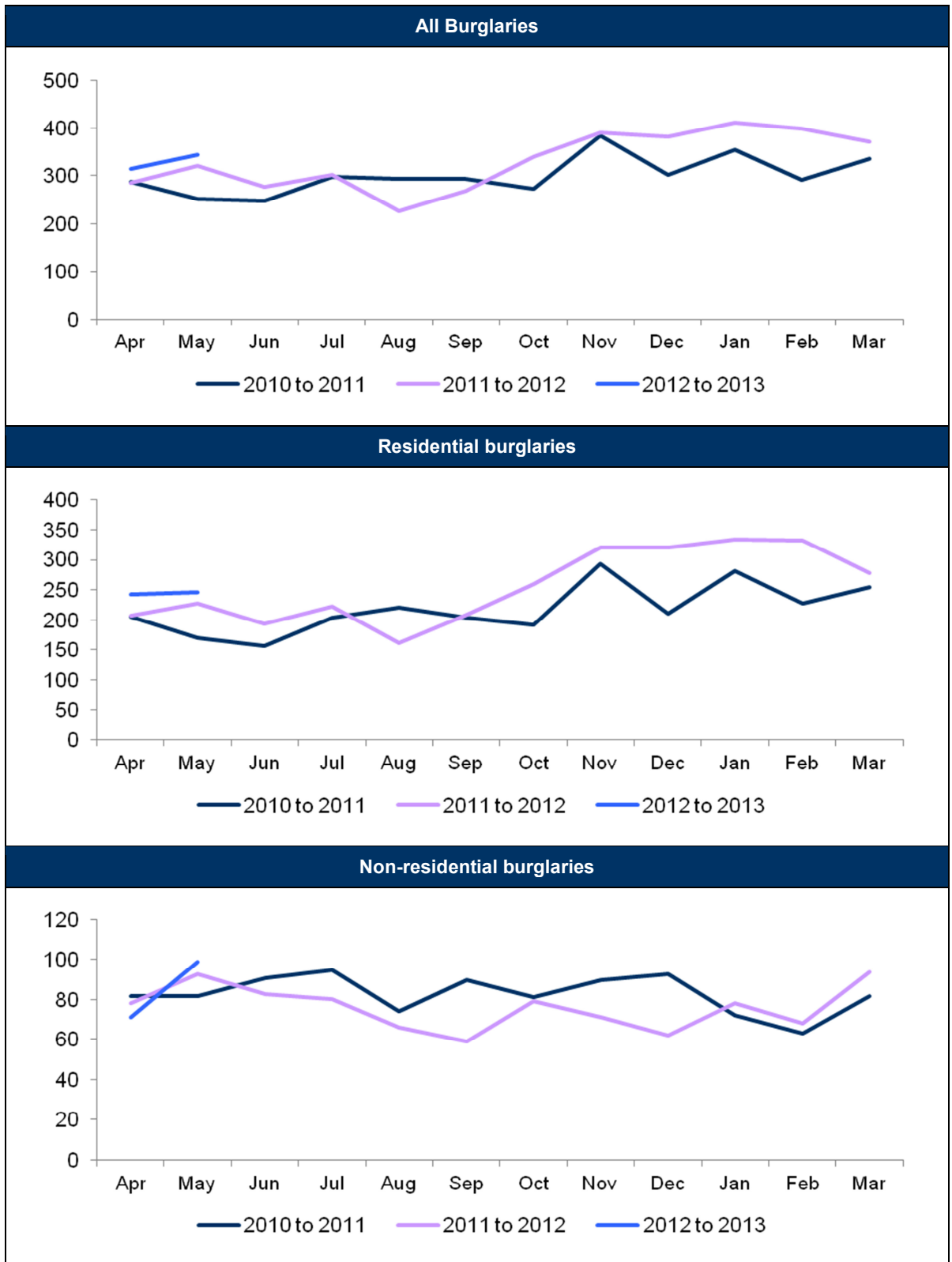
Figure 3 presents monthly trend data for Brent over the period 2010 to 2012. This shows that October to March is characterised by significant growth in residential burglary (i.e. the second half of the financial year), particularly in 2011/12.

Figure 3 also makes clear that both total and residential burglary has been higher in the first two months of 2012/13 than in either of the previous two years.

² Please note, this data comes from the CRIS database and only covers up to May 2012. Figures from the TP Scorecard cover most of June and will therefore differ.

³ Crime Reporting Information System – a database belonging to the Metropolitan Police Service.

Figure 3: Monthly trends in burglary offences in Brent 2010 to 2012 (Figures in brackets indicate percentage change on previous year)

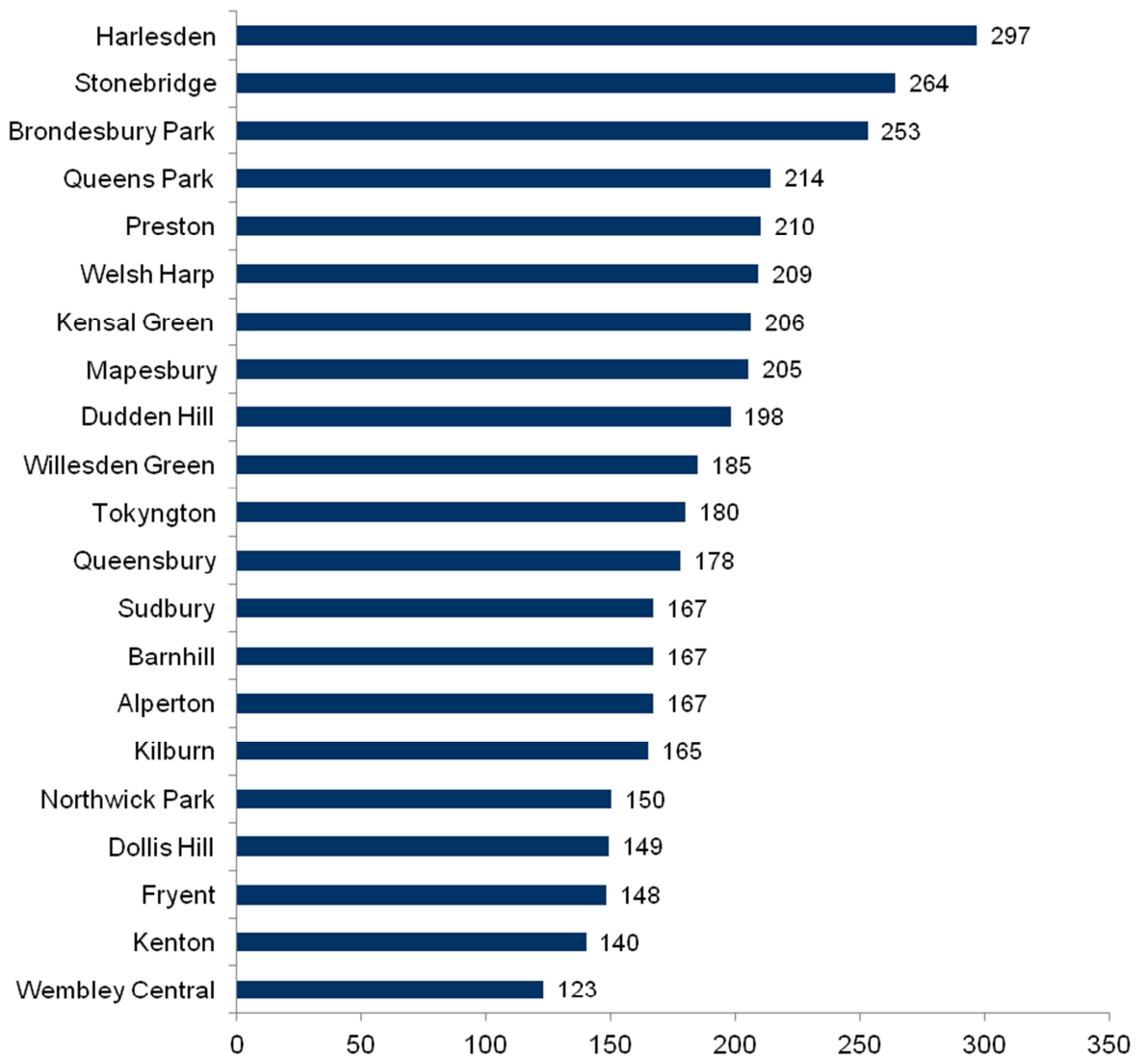


Source: Metropolitan Police Service CRIS data

2.3 Geographical variation in burglary offences

Figure 4 shows that Harlesden, Stonebridge and Brondesbury Park wards observed the highest number of reported burglaries (or about 20.5% of all offences in 2011/12, while Fryent, Kenton and Wembley Central have lower numbers of reported burglaries.

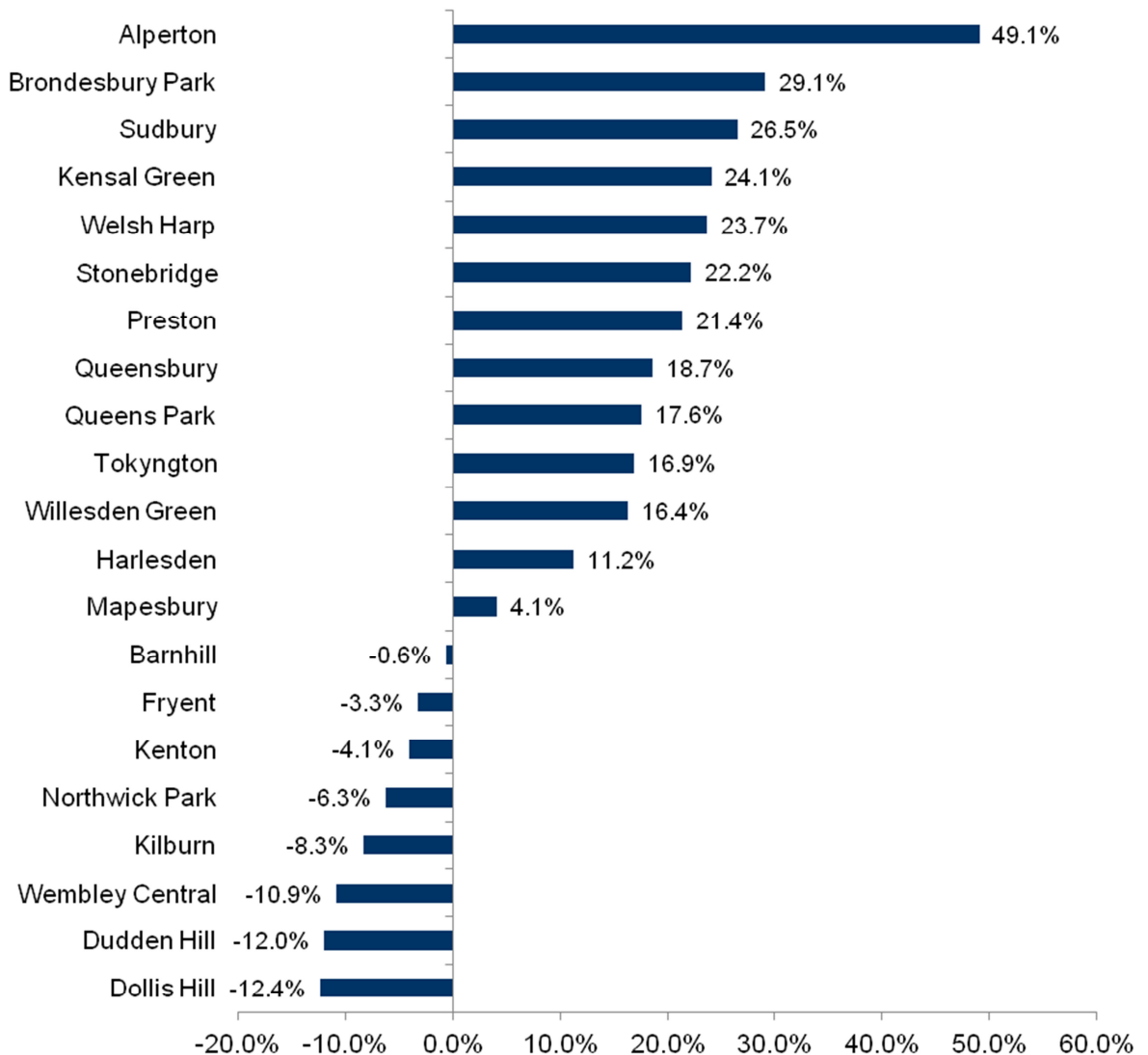
Figure 4: Total number of burglaries by ward in Brent in 2011/12



Source: Metropolitan Police Service CRIS data

Figure 5 shows that between 2010/11 and 2011/12, the total number of burglaries increased in thirteen wards and decreased in eight wards. The wards that observed the largest increases in burglary were Alperton, Brondesbury Park and Sudbury – all of which had reported increases over 25%. Wembley Central, Dudden Hill and Dollis Hill all had reported decreases exceeding 10%.

Figure 5: Percentage change in total number of burglaries between 2010/11 and 2011/12



Source: Metropolitan Police Service CRIS data

2.4 Sanction and detection rates

Figure 6 shows that the sanction detection rate for burglary (i.e. burglary offences which result in an individual being charged for the offence) in Brent is similar to that for London as a whole. Indeed, sanction detection rates in Brent have been marginally better in Brent than the London average since 2011/12. For example, the sanction detection rate for residential burglary in Brent so far is 17.5% compared to a London average of 14.7%.

Figure 6: Sanction detection rates for burglary in Brent and across London - 2010/11 to 2012/13

Year	Residential burglary	Non-residential burglary	All burglary
Brent only			
2010/11	11.1%	7.9%	10.2%
2011/12	13.3%	13.3%	13.3%
2012/13 (up to May)	17.5%	7.7%	15.0%
London wide			
2010/11	12.5%	8.7%	11.2%
2011/12	9.5%	11.4%	10.2%
2012/13 (up to May)	14.7%	8.7%	12.5%

2.5 Characteristics of perpetrators

Initial intelligence from the Metropolitan Police suggests that there has been an increase in burglary suspects who are:

- Young people living in the local area and are associated with gangs, this is particularly true in the Harlesden/Stonebridge hotspot. In particular, there was a problem with a group of young people who were committing offences, being caught by the police, bailed, and then reoffending.
- Perpetrators that live outside Brent committing crime in Brent. Intelligence suggests that typically these offenders are highly organised and mobile and frequently commit crime over a wide geographical area, making them harder to target and locate.

This is a change from the more traditional profile of suspect, who is typically older, has a history of substance misuse and previous offences (although this group are still present in Brent).

More comprehensive information on the profile of suspects is currently being compiled and will be analysed as part of the Strategic Crime Needs Assessment.

2.6 How the burglary takes place

Initial intelligence from the Metropolitan Police indicates that the majority of offences were committed during day time hours with the main point of entry being the front of the property

(43%) where a door or window is forced. This is particularly true in the Harlesden/Stonebridge wards where there have been a number of repeat offences in blocks of flats in estates with a communal door being breached and a front flat door or window being kicked or forced. Point of entry via the rear accounted for 39% of offences.

3 Current and future actions

There is much effort being undertaken by partners in Brent to reduce burglary led by Brent's Integrated Community Safety Team and the Metropolitan Police Service. These include:

- **Operation Topple:** This is an intelligence-led operation by the Metropolitan Police to target the most active known burglars in Brent with increased surveillance and searches.
- **Data sharing:** The Metropolitan Police has shared with Brent Council intelligence of the most active burglars who are currently active in Brent. This information is being cross-referenced with information held by the Council. This information will be used through the next month to begin eviction proceedings against suspects that live in social housing and also whether it will be appropriate to use other available sanctions, such as Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.
- **Forensic retrieval:** This Metropolitan Police pro-actively collects and gathers forensic evidence in known burglary hotspots. Any information gathered can be cross-referenced with police data, such as the Police National Computer (PNC) to identify suspects and activity in these areas.
- **Targeted work on housing estates:** The Metropolitan Police undertake targeted work on housing estates which have known issues with burglary. This includes increased patrols, intelligence-led house searches and other preventative work.
- **Strengthening of communal doors in social housing:** Brent Council is liaising with Registered Social Landlords to strengthen communal doors in social housing properties. If a burglar can get past a communal door in a block of flats or house with multiple occupants, they can very quickly burgle a number of properties. Strengthening a communal door can prevent perpetrators getting into the property in the first place. Brent Council will offer to pay for 50% of the costs of replacing communal doors and will target roughly 40 properties. These doors will have Secure By Design status, be fitted by a security expert and meet standards agreed by Brent Council and the Metropolitan Police.
- **Crime prevention day and breakfasts with registered social landlords:** Brent Integrated Community Safety Team is arranging crime prevention days in each locality to publicise information on how the public can protect their properties from burglary. As part of this prevention work, the Integrated Community Safety team will also be arranging breakfast events with Registered Social Landlords to discuss improving security at their properties and discuss other prevention strategies.

There are also ward-specific actions being taken to reduce burglary by partners in Brent. Actions that the Integrated Community Safety Team is aware of are set out at Figure 7.

Figure 7: Actions being taken to reduce burglary within wards in Brent

Ward	Actions
Alperton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary follow-up visits to all victims and offering crime prevention visits to residents in the ward to help prevent more burglaries from occurring. • Targeted stop and searches. • Increased uniform and plain clothed patrols in hotspots. • Conducting street briefings in hotspot areas to help make residents of the ward more aware of crime. • Weekly visits to key local people, advising the Integrated Community Safety Team of issues.
Barnhill	Actions being taken to reduce burglary include deploying more plain clothes patrols in hotspot areas.
Brondesbury Park	<p>Actions being taken to reduce burglary are targeted on the Chatsworth Road, Cavendish Road and Willesden Lane areas and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTV vans placed in the hotspot area • Covert patrolling • Increased stop and searches • Visits to victims and cocooning of areas • Operation Bumblebee crime prevention packs delivered • Crime prevention plans for victims • Street briefing
Dollis Hill	Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.
Dudden Hill	<p>Actions being taken in this ward include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 1,000 leaflets delivered to households in hotspot areas • Crime prevention seminar held at the college of North West London for all concerned residents. • Regular high visibility patrols in the area • Crime prevention follow-ups at any homes burgled
Fryent	Actions are focused on the Springfield Estate and Springfield Gardens and include high visibility patrols as well as plain clothes and crack house closure.
Harlesden	Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.
Kensal Green	<p>Actions being taken are focused on the Wrottesley Road and Holland Road areas. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visibility patrols in the area • Street briefings in affected areas • Follow-up visits to burglary victims, giving crime prevention advice • Liaising with Borough Intelligence Unit at Metropolitan Police to target known burglary suspects living in the ward and executing search warrants at these addresses where intelligence indicates. • Use of Safer Neighbourhood Team Task Force Officers • CCTV van during relevant times.
Kenton	Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.

Ward	Actions
Kilburn	<p>Actions are focused on the area north of Glengall Road, south of Willesden Lane, east of Tennyson Road and Willesden Lane and West of Kilburn High Road. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniform and plain clothes patrols in identified hotspot areas. • Targeted strengthening of security at premises identified as vulnerable to burglary (i.e. windows left open or property on display), then crime prevention advice given to occupier or a card left. • Street briefing and crime prevention surgeries in identified hotspot areas. • Regular messages on crime updates and any issues of note to persons on Neighbourhood link distribution list
Mapesbury	<p>Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.</p>
Northwick Park	<p>Actions being taken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northwick Park SNT will be identifying the most problematic areas across the ward and speaking to all residents, offering crime prevention advice and targeting these areas for increased patrols, to gather intelligence and reduce the affects of crime across the community. • Obtaining mobile alarms, timers and personal attack alarms to increase safety across the whole of the ward.
Preston	<p>Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.</p>
Queensbury	<p>Actions being taken to reduce offences include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visibility patrols • Burglary hotspots to be identified on a fortnightly basis to concentrate patrols • Ward based operations to stop vans/lorries/other vehicles that are likely linked to burglaries and scrap metal haulage so as to ascertain correct ownership of goods.
Queens Park	<p>Actions being taken to reduce burglary include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain clothes and uniform officers patrol identified hotspot areas • Conducted surgeries and offered crime prevention advice and property marking • Regular messages on crime updates and any issues of note to persons on Neighbourhood link distribution list.
Stonebridge	<p>Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.</p>
Sudbury	<p>Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.</p>
Tokyngton	<p>Actions being taken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tokyngton Safer Neighbourhood Team have increased patrols around the worst affected areas targeting the specific vulnerable times. • Crime prevention surveys have been undertaken of premises with key crime prevention needs. • Valuable items of property have been property marked and a large amount of property registered on the Hermes system. • Brent Council also provided funding for crime prevention equipment to be distributed in the area.
Welsh Harp	<p>Actions being taken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime prevention stalls

Ward	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Over 200+ window alarms distributed
Wembley Central	Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.
Willesden Green	Burglary is tackled as part of the general policing, crime prevention and anti-gang work taken place in this ward.

4 Next steps

Over the next month, the Metropolitan Police is collating more detailed information on burglary which will be incorporated into Brent's strategic crime needs assessment. This will include more detailed information on the profile of suspects, details on the types of offences and properties targeted. The needs assessment will be completed in September and more detailed, longer term plans and strategies will be developed based on the findings from this report.