Ian:
Dogs, well you try and make friends with them if they actually got savage you would kick them or belt them depending on the situation they were probably a deterrent four out of ten times. Sometimes you keep going. The size of dog doesn’t matter.

Alex:
Dogs are bad, like even little terriers, you still have to check it could be a happy sort of dog, you put your hand near the fence and it doesn’t bite or doesn’t bark. Usually though little dogs they just do not shut up, they just go on and on. You have gone down the road and they are still goin on even when you haven’t broken in to the place. I have broken in to a few places with dogs. When I have broken in and there has been a big dog inside, I am straight back out the window.

The third category of responses (n=6) were the smallest group. They expressed little concern for the presence of a dog if they believed the possible return from the B&E could be exceptional.

Steven:
Dogs can be a put off, but it depends how much was in the house. If it was a dead set affluent house we would do it. Give the dog a Mogadon or a Cerapax in a piece of meat and keep feeding them that till they fall asleep. They would go to sleep and quite often they would never wake up. You had to be careful cause I didn’t like killing dogs, I love dogs I think they are beautiful and I have had dogs myself. Like a crap house with two dobermans I wouldn’t bother, but a great looking house and maybe some inside information and I would go to the bother.

CUL-DE-SACS AND DEAD-END STREETS

Cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets prompted three main categories of answers from respondents. There was a group of respondents who did not really consider if a street was a through road or a cul-de-sac. This type of laissez-faire answer and approach was given for many answers. These were burglars who admitted to being very minimalist in their planning. They also related that they were not very good burglars and they were often caught. The second group of answers indicated a clear dislike for cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets because they found them to be too risky and they
would go elsewhere. The third group had a dislike for cul-de-sacs, but with one proviso. If the cul-de-sac backed on to a reserve or back lane the houses were possible targets, especially if an almost totally hidden entry and exit could be achieved.

The first group of respondents (n=5) gave vague and uncomplicated answers when asked for an opinion on cul-de-sacs. Their responses to many possible deterrents were also greeted with similar answers indicating minimalist reconnaissance and planning. Indicative answers of this group were:

Claire:
I don’t care what street from a cul-de-sac to a busy main street that has never bothered me.

Jill:
The street layout, I never thought about those things.

Barry:
Dead-end streets, busy streets, quiet streets I don’t care, I have no preference.

The second group (n=31) of answers discounted cul-de-sacs and dead end streets. They expressed no exception to their assessment and they avoided quiet cul-de-sacs. Answers that typified this group were:

Mick:
I like a more busier street rather than a dead-end street, because you can make a little bit of noise. A road with a little bit of traffic is better.

Jill:
I don’t like courts where one neighbour is looking at another.

Vikki:
Type of street? Well something busier with a little bit of noise, because the quiet streets like cul-de-sacs you get busy bodies looking at every car that is going by, I like a street that is fairly busy.
Derrick:
Not a dead-end, a straight through street is better, cause you can get out easy, either way.

Shelley:
I don’t like cul-de-sacs, no. Most times like on a busier road no-one takes any notice because there are always cars going along. You even may get trucks coming along they brake really noisy, they cover any noise you would make getting into a house. I prefer a busier road with some noise.

Steven:
Cul-de-sacs are the worst, busy roads are better but not too busy, see people notice you in dead-ends and cul-de-sacs. You just want an ordinary common street, a through road no-one notices you. Traffic level doesn’t really matter. A dead-end is bad news because the people are generally more neighbourly.

The third group (n=14) had a dislike of cul-de-sacs and dead-ends. However they did have a proviso. A house in a cul-de-sac was a possibility if there was a back lane or a reserve at the back of the cul-de-sac. Typical answers were:

Kevin:
Cul-de-sacs are only all right if there is like, a reserve or a park at the back, you can just go over the back fence and into the park.

Craig:
You have to have an exit, street layout is important, you have to have an exit. Cul-de-sacs I am not keen on if you don’t have an exit. If the cul-de-sac has waste ground at the back then it isn’t a problem.

Gary:
If it was a quiet dead-end street I wouldn’t do it, but if it had a back lane it was okay. Like if something goes wrong you just jump the back fence you are gone in like four different ways and they don’t know all they saw was the back of a black dressed person.
HIGH FENCES

The influence of very high fence or wall was similar to a cul-de-sac, in that there is a proviso that determined whether it was a deterrent or an attractor. Generally, a high fence is seen as an attractor to a B&E target, because once the burglar is on the house-side of the fence they are hidden from the view of passers-by. However, the attractor influence of a very high fence or wall is eradicated and becomes a deterrent if the gate is locked. Some respondents reasoned that once you had to scale the fence or wall to get in and out the task became prohibitive for two main reasons. The first reason was basically the logistical problem of climbing over the fence with goods such as a stereo or a VCR. It increased the effort quite markedly. The second reason was that if one was spotted going through the fence or wall via the gate by a neighbour or passer-by this would arouse little attention. But if one was spotted climbing over the fence or wall by a neighbour or passer-by this would arouse great attention if the fence or wall had a gate. A few respondents were willing to tackle a high fence or wall, but this was when they worked with others. Once they were over the fence their partner could keep watch. Then goods could be passed over the fence at the completion of the B&E when it was safe. Following are some typical answers. First are the interviewees who worked in a team and they saw little inconvenience with a high fence or wall. The second group expressed the unlocked-attractive and locked-deterrent interpretation on high fences and walls.

Those who had worked with others (n=18) made comments such as:

Ian:
A high fence would not bother us, if you work good as a team it would present no great difficulty.

Nick:
A high fence presented a bit of a problem but not that big a problem. I am very athletic, I used to jump off third floor verandas, so most high fences were no problem. My partner would stay and be the cocky.
Those (n=38) that had a duel interpretation of high fences or walls made comments such as:

Kevin:
A high fence with the gate unlocked, fine. A high fence locked, forget it.

Steven:
I definitely like high fences, I like em, but if the gate is locked it would have to be worth it.

Bronwyn:
Most of the time if they have a big fence it is good because no-one can see you when you’re in anyway, so high fences help you in a way. Not to climb over though, if you can walk through it.

Tom:
High fences can be a problem if they are locked. If they are unlocked, in you go. If they are locked you have to climb them, and barbed wire you have to have a blanket to chuck over them. I have done it, but only a couple of times.

Darlene:
A low fence is better. A big fence is all right if you can open the gate. Sometimes you climb over and see if you can open the gate from the inside, usually you can, but if you can't that is a problem. It is quite amazing how many places have a huge wall, but then you try the gate and it opens up. Then you don’t have to worry about getting over it.

Bill:
A high fence is only a problem if the gate was locked so you would have to climb over it. That would deter me.

Wendy:
High fences or walls bother me if I thought I would have trouble getting over them. Sometimes you can't get a good look if someone is home or not. All this doesn’t count if the gate is open.
ALARMS

Alarms seemed to draw two types of response. The first group, which was the largest (n=37), stated that alarms were of some deterrent value, but that there was quite a variety in the quality of alarms, from very poor to sophisticated. The poor alarms could be tricked or the siren could be smashed and silenced. Sophisticated alarms with silent detection sensors that notified a security company when activated drew the greatest respect from respondents. The answer to a sophisticated alarm system was to move on or do a smash and grab. The latter decision was based on whether the respondent could see expensive goods within the house by peering through windows. Many respondents knew of two alarms, silent and alarm only. They stated that if they suspected a silent alarm that notified a security company was fitted, to check if it was activated they would break in, then go and hide out of sight. They would wait for about 30 minutes to see if a security van or the police arrived. Many respondents had the belief that a person would only have a sophisticated or expensive alarm system if they had possessions of extreme value. A little extra effort could be very rewarding. The second group (n=13) were totally deterred by alarms.

Typical answers of the first group follow:

Jill:
An alarm is not that great a deterrent, because I never worry about them when I hear them going off so why would others?

Vikki:
I used to be able to fix alarms, but it is getting too hard to do them any more. With screamers you just smash them so they don’t scream out. The silent alarms you have to be careful of those.

Barry:
Most alarms are still shit. You just get the cover off and work quick on the wires. Most houses have a ladder, grab it, go up, lever open the alarm and pull the wires. See most people have ladders, it is their own fault.
Steven:
I am very experienced with alarms. I have broken into places with alarms. If they look really good, I may go in through the roof, stick my head down through the roof and have a look, if there was great looking stuff, just be really quick.

Craig:
I don’t like really sophisticated alarm systems, cameras and that, but you check they’re not in and you do a quick smash and grab, a ram raid, in and out in one or two minutes, with a balaclava on. A top security system doesn’t mean you don’t do a place it just means you take different precautions or do it differently.

Robert:
Alarms, I have done them with them. People don’t pay attention like alarms on cars. I have been shown how to turn them off. You need a good screwdriver to lever the cover off. See, you carry a bum bag full of house breaking tools, a little jemmy. The bum bag is hidden under your clothes. I think twice, but if the alarm looks shitty I would go ahead.

The second group had a little more respect for alarms:

Jane:
If I get close to a house and I see it has an alarm I try somewhere else. Alarms do scare me off

Kerry:
An alarm, I avoid those, I mean I have broken into places with alarms, but you would be quick and run like hell. The alarm would be going like crazy, it is deafening you would get disorientated, my mate would go one way I would go the other, we would never get as much as places with no alarm.

Lachlan:
Alarms, well I would give it a miss, unless I could see something really valuable through a window or something like that. See, a lot of alarms aren’t really alarms, just fake boxes. I have broken into places with alarms. It is a good deterrent though, it definitely is, but not totally, well virtually total. Unless I could see something of stand out value, more than normal value.
LIGHTS ON INSIDE A HOUSE OR RADIO OR TELEVISION NOISE INSIDE A HOUSE

After high fences came two possible deterrents that drew a similar response from respondents. Lights on inside a house and a radio or television on inside a house provided little deterrence if a house still looked empty. Most respondents seemed wise to both of these attempts by home owners to feign occupancy. Some respondents did give slight support for both factors as deterrents but support was often qualified or weak. Typical responses for the two possible deterrents follow. The answers range from strongest to weakest, on strength of deterrence:

Shelley:
Lights on do deter, but not if it has that silent or empty feel about it. See a lot of this doesn’t count, as I would always pick the most obvious place in the street. A porch light is a give away. Like, also some places have a light on as you walk up, then as you walk away it goes off. Then you realise it is just one of those light things. Walking up to an empty looking place and when I get close I can hear a radio or TV, well, that has never happened to me.

Richard:
See lights left on is no real deterrent, but in a street after dark at least half would have no lights on, so you just go for them, even though some of the ones with their lights on may be out as well. Why take the chance?

Glen:
If a radio or TV was on and I still thought the place was empty I might just knock on the door. If someone asks, I say “Is George home?”. If no-one answers I would break in.

Dan:
Lights on inside are not a deterrent it is even better if they are on, the more you can see and the neighbours can’t tell you are in there. If there are no lights on, and you go in there and turn the lights on what’s going to happen? The neighbour sees it. If they go out and leave the light on, it is better because you can sneak in and out with without disturbing the neighbours. If you knock and they answer the door you just say “Is so and so here?” The TV and radio on it is the same thing.
CAR IN DRIVEWAY

This factor elicited two main types of responses. The first group stated that a car sitting in a driveway did have an influence in the early stages of selecting a house. When they were scanning down an entire street their eyes were drawn to houses without a car. However, the deterrence value of a car sitting in a driveway was weakened if there were no other clear signs of occupation. The second group stated that a car in a driveway had little impact. This reasoning was based on the assumption that many families now have more than one car so houses could be unoccupied even though a car was in a driveway. Typical responses from the first group are:

Alex:
A car in the driveway is a good deterrent when you first scan a street, if some do and some don't have cars, if some do have cars you think someone maybe home. If it looks empty though you may still check out the place.

Carol:
I usually don't go near a place with a car in the driveway, there are others to get in the street.

Becky:
If there is a car in the driveway and you go closer and the lights are on and you can hear people don't worry about it. If there is a car and it is quiet you go up listen then knock on the door. If someone answers you just say "Is Lucy here? I am lost, I must have the wrong address."

Typical responses from the second group were:

Gerry:
A car in the drive doesn't matter, it could be a two car house, you may know that only one car is there, but no-one is home. You have to take care though, someone could be home, unless you saw everyone leave.
Christopher:
A car in the driveway is not that important, it would not stop me, I would check it out, lots of places have two cars.

Louise:
A car in the driveway could mean either home or not, but it wouldn’t deter me if the place looked empty.

Edward:
A car in the driveway makes no difference, most double income families have two cars. You sit there and watch for a short while. Like you park the car and have a walk up and down and walk back. I get my own dog and walk up and back, simple. You can get a quick indication if someone is home or not.

Nick:
Yes and no, you just have to sus it out, they could be home, they could be asleep, if they are asleep, try and get into the garage for some power tools, or even steal the car, I have done that.

Amanda:
It doesn’t really matter, through the day there are lots of places where you have both parents working. Even on the week-ends there can be one car there, yet they are out, away for the week-end, the family doesn’t take two cars to go to the beach, it takes one, but through the week they may use two cars. It doesn’t really matter.

Joe:
A car sitting in the driveway doesn’t mean anything. You make sure.

LOCKS

Locks drew three broad types of responses. The first type of response was given by eight respondents. These respondents seemed dissuaded by hard effort. If it was proving hard to get in they would sometimes move on. However, it must be stressed that good locks did not deter these respondents when selecting a house. They were only dissuaded once the house required extreme effort to break in. The second group, the least of the three (n=4), stated that good locks did not deter them getting in, but once inside if the doors had locked deadlocks they would only take small
items because they would exit through a window. The third and largest group (n=38) did not care about good locks and found them to be of no deterrent value. Many stated that this was because they entered houses through the side or a back window. Although there were varying answers to the deterrent value of good locks, all 50 respondents rated good locks as a ‘1’ on a scale of ‘1’ to ‘10’. With ‘1’ being no deterrent and ‘10’ being an excellent deterrent.

A typical answer for group one was:

Vikki:
Locks that are part of the door, with a really good frame, like steel doors and frames are quite a deterrent. Like you need a crow bar, sometimes you still can’t budge them. You then check the windows, if you have to smash one to get in, I am not into smashing windows because that makes too much noise.

The following answers represented the second group:

Barry:
Deadlocks don’t stop you getting in, but they mean you can only take small things, cause you have to get in the way you came, you haven’t got time to piss fart about.

Kevin:
Deadlocks are pretty good, but I would still break in, see it is hard to tell the type of lock till you are close and I would never break in through the front door anyway, I get in through windows, so often I was in before I saw they had a deadlock. If it was a deadlock I would take smaller stuff.

The following answers are typical of the third group:

Craig:
No lock is a deterrent, no, never, like I said if you can’t get in an easy way you just do a bash job.

Mathew:
My mate used to deal with locks, he used to get us in, he used to take care of anything, he could open a deadlock, sliding doors, nothing stopped him.
Shelley:
Locks don’t bother me because I have never gone through a door, I always entered through a window. I have never come across anything on a window that would stop me getting in.

Hennessey:
Locks are no deterrent, not to a sledge hammer.

Ross:
Even really good locks are no good, I would just go to the windows anyway, and even if they had deadlocks on the windows you try and take the glass out, if you can’t do that a quick look around then if it is fine smash the glass.

Claire:
Locks on doors don’t bother me because I go in through the window. The doors don’t matter anyway. I always try the windows first.

Derrick:
No lock would stop me, you just need a crack, just a gap to get a jemmy in. No lock can stop that.

Ian:
Locks are no problem. Would not matter what they were.

SECURITY SCREENS

There were two types of answers given in response to the deterrent value of security screens. The minority (n=8) gave a modicum of deterrent value to security screens, while the majority (n=42) saw security screens as having no deterrent value. Although there were two broad types of answers to the deterrent value of security screens, all 50 respondents rated security screens as a ‘1’, on a scale of ‘1’ to ‘10’, ‘1’ being no deterrent and ‘10’ being an excellent deterrent. Typical answers of the minority group were:
Darlene:
Security screens, well I would still try and get in. If I couldn’t I would maybe try another window.

Peter:
Security screens, well if a place is that ‘jeed up’, like they really don’t want you in there, well either there was something good in there or they were just security conscious, but you wouldn’t know what till you break in. I would have a go, if it was taking too long someone might say, “Lets give this a miss.”

Typical answers of the majority were:

Brenda:
Security screens are no deterrent, if you can move them, you have a go.

Tom:
Security screens don’t work. I remember once my sister’s husband was angry with her and she locked him out. He just pulled the screen straight off.

Shelley:
I have got through all security screens I have come across so far.

Kevin:
Security screens, ah, just use a jemmy bar.

The previously discussed cues were all ones that may deter a burglar. The following cues are ones that had an attractive influence on the respondents when they were selecting a house. Three cues were dominant attracting factors for respondents. These were louvre windows, a house that is surrounded by a dense covering of trees and bushes and a house with a lane at the back.

**TREES AND BUSHES**

Seven respondents stated that they did not factor in if a yard was full of bushes and trees or if it was bare when they were deciding whether to break into a house. Forty-
three respondents gave very strong indications that they were attracted to a house that had a yard full of trees and bushes. Typical answers of the majority were:

Tim:
Trees and bushes are good because there is somewhere to hide no-one can see what you are doing, you climb out with the video, put it under the tree, go back in, bring out the television put it under the tree, then take it all away.

Steven:
The places that are better are ones with hedges or higher fences and trees around where neighbours can’t see ya gettin in, they can’t see what ya are up to.

Dan:
A house full of trees you definitely take that into account a house full of trees is a better proposition than an open yard, because you have cover from like people driving past. You are out of sight.

George:
The most worstest house to have is one covered with trees and bushes. Like one, the front is covered with big trees and whatever because no-one can see. The most in the front of your yard the better. People going past can’t see nothing. It is stupid to have stuff and trees in your front yard.

Becky:
I always like a good bushy garden that’s better than a bare one.

Marlene:
Lots of trees and bushes are good, because, like if the neighbour was to stick his head out of the window he wouldn’t see anything.

LOUVRE WINDOWS

Louvre windows were a preferred method of entry of many (n=23) of the respondents, so when they were deciding which house to burgle in a street they were often drawn to houses with louvre windows. The following answers were typical:
Jane:
I like those louvre windows on bathrooms, they are always good and easy too, the louvre ones.

Barry:
The places I liked the best were places with louvres, especially louvres. They are an attraction, glass louvres, they are so easy, just a screwdriver or a pair of pliers just twitch the metal and pull the louvres out. Pull two or three out and you are in. It takes seconds to do that.

Bill:
I just love those louvre windows.

BACK LANCES

Back lanes were mentioned by 18 respondents as being a strong attractor when selecting a house to burgle. Following are some typical responses:

Joe:
A lane out the back is good thing especially if you have a vehicle then you can take your time and you can clean the house out. A back lane is a real attraction.

Peter:
A back lane to the house is always good.

Wendy:
I like a back lane.

Louise:
A back lane is good, the neighbours don’t see you, no-one keeps an eye out over a back lane, just the front of places, no-one can see you.
THE ACT OF BREAK AND ENTER

Once a target is chosen and then checked for non-occupancy, the burglar goes through a pillaging routine that is shaped over many B&Es. Derrick stated that this freedom to steal at your pleasure and leisure was the good thing about B&Es. “Once you have broken in, everything is yours”. What follows are the accounts of some of the respondents that are representative of the entire sample. The routine utilised by the respondents is very similar with very few differences.

Ross:
I go in, knock on the front door to make sure no-one is home, and I may knock two or three times, if I wasn’t sure then if there is no answer, like when I am knocking on the door I would be casually looking around checking the neighbour’s houses out, checking out the area, like if there is a way out, a quick escape route. After a couple of knocks I have decided to go in I would wander around the side of the house I would find a window or louvres. I would climb in the window, look on the fridge and the kitchen have a look on top of shelves and cupboards because people throw their wallets or rent money, some people leave it in one spot, or in a cupboard in a jar. I would then head into the bedrooms, I would have a quick look in the lounge room just to spot a video, I would just remember, “Yeah I will grab that”, but I wouldn’t pick it up and carry it around with me, I get it on the way out. I would preferably be going for cash or jewellery. In the bedroom I would look inside the bedside tables, in the jewellery boxes, the big ones usually have rubbish, the little jewellery boxes are what I am after, it seems to me that women put their expensive jewellery or good pieces they don’t throw that in a big jewellery box. They have that in a little box under their underwear or something. After the bedrooms I would be just about done, I would never want to be in for long, a quick look through then out, get the video or whatever on the way out.

Arch:
Go up knock, knock really loud, go round the gate and yell out. Normally I would have my own dog with me so if they have a dog they do the old sniff and that. While they are fighting and carrying on. I would crack the window if I can’t open it. Grab a bag or get the pillow case from the bedroom, run around the house put stuff in it. Come back and go. If there is something really good like a big stereo, put a blanket around it, but everything is so small now, back years ago you couldn’t
do that. Ring a taxi if there was heaps or just get back out. Straight to the bedroom, see I would never touch kids rooms, just the main room and lounge room.

Jeff:
I would generally get in through a window. I would turn on the lights in the lounge to see what I can see. Pull out the tellie, pull out the video, pull out the stereo, sometimes I would have a car, sometimes I would ring up a taxi. Jump in the taxi and say “That bitch she is not getting my TV.” Other times I grab the doona off the bed and fill it up with everything. I would have a quick look around and see what is for the taking. I would have a look in the bedroom for jewellery, but that is about it, I would be gone.

Craig:
I would tap on the door, if they answered you just say “Oh I am a bit lost I have a street map here can you help me?” Some people are silly enough to leave keys under flower pots, under mats in letter box, on top of the door frame on the front door, or around the back in the same positions. You have a quick look for them. Open a window is the easy way, you can if desperate go in through the roof. You have to be able to get up on the roof first. Once in straight to the lounge room and bang go the video and stereo unit and just have a quick look through the master bedroom and the drawers next to the beds and sometimes you find 50 bucks in a tin in the kitchen, they throw coins in there. Some people keep money in their fridge. I would take video, stereo, TV, money and if you came across a cheque book take that, jewellery no it is too easily traceable, if it is engraved.

METHODS USED TO DISPOSE OF STOLEN GOODS

There was one factor that determined how stolen goods were processed and that was whether the respondent had been given pre-break and enter orders. These orders would vary from an organised list of goods given to the respondent by their fence, to a casual request from a friend to keep a eye-out for a particular item. There were particular items that respondents stated they could never get enough of. As soon as they stole these items they could instantly exchange them for money or drugs.
Becky:
I normally had buyers, people waiting for them, or I could normally be told well before I get them. Some of them are drug dealers so they say they want a 68 centimetre TV. He normally will take them or the new portable stereos. Another guy we know when ever we get all the computers we take them to him.

Brenda:
The main ways I get rid of stolen goods was what ever way I could sell them, offer them to second hand shops if I could, I have false ID. When you burgle a place you get credit cards and Medicare cards so you can use these for ID. You never use your own. Sell to friends. If you can’t get rid of something you just chuck it away you don’t hold on to anything. I would usually give to Lifeline, I know that sounds silly but I really am, I am funny like this, but I really hate waste and wasting things. I am a recyler, believe it or not.

Kevin:
I had a fence you would call it I would swap stuff for drugs. One bloke I used to use he had a whole big room, full of videos and televisions, you could take virtually anything to him, like especially gold. All electrical stuff even computers. If it was a top good VCR he would give me a weight like $300. It all depends on like my mood, his mood, how much I was hanging out. Like also if he particularly wanted something like say a car or something I would say give me a weight and I will be back in an hour you know?

Richard:
I have taken everything sometimes pens pencils even the vacuum cleaner, and even the cleaning stuff, anything you could get money for, even food for personal use as well, you know? See whenever I worked with a mate Tony, not that often, he knew fences that would take everything, so when I was with him we would ransack the place. All the time I have done crime I never worried that much about keeping or having my own fence because lots of mates had them.

Derrick:
I was never allowed to meet the fences, the gang wouldn’t trust me that much. Although I did not know for sure I got the feeling sometimes we were stealing to contract.