

# Maghull (SEP) Neighbourhood Smart Water Property Marking Initiative - 2013

## **Identifying the need for the project.**

In support of the Local Burglary Reduction Policing Plan, emphasis has been placed on property marking and in particular the use of Smart Water Property Marking system.

The Area policing Commander, Neighbourhood Inspectors and policing teams have driven this aspect of crime reduction. However due to the price of kits (£15 each) vulnerable residents, although interested, have been unable to meet the cost themselves.

SEP area committee was extremely generous last year in funding 150 smart water kits across its three parishes to a value of £1500 (plus £10 p+p) and these were all distributed in the relevant wards at either hotspot locations or to those who were more vulnerable such as elderly victims of crime or repeat victims of this type of crime. The areas that have been allocated smart water have seen reductions in this type of crime and to further this across SEP we are submitting a similar bid to further develop this form of crime prevention

## **Project overview and aims.**

- To supply Smart Water household property marking kits to vulnerable residents who live in the Molyneux, Park and Sudell ward areas of Sefton East Parishes.
- The purchase and allocation of 150 kits on a pro-rata basis, 50 kits per ward at a cost of £500 per ward. (Smart Water is currently offering three kits for the price of two and this is reflected in the above figure.).

Allocation of kits will be based on an individual need basis drawn from Police crime pattern analysis data and information supplied by partners. (Home Watch, local authority, local community referrals etc.

## **Smart Water Product Description.**

Smart Water is a colourless liquid that is used to invisibly mark personal property ranging from electrical items to vehicles. It can be used to code all sorts of items such as jewellery, ornaments, electrical items and mobile phones and iPods that are often stolen during a house burglary.

Each bottle contains a unique chemical 'code' which is registered to the householder that conclusively provides ownership. It cannot be easily seen by the naked eye and is almost impossible to remove. The liquid glows under ultraviolet light making it easy for the Police to detect.

Each pack of Smart Water contains a unique code that is registered to an individual address enabling Police to trace stolen items back to the owner using the code. Criminals know about Smart Water and fear its power to forensically link them with the scene of a crime.

A key element of this Smart Water project is it enables patrolling police officers to quickly check and identify suspected stolen property and arrest those found in possession.

### **Use of Smart Water in Sefton.**

This high-end forensic property marking system has been used extensively in the Sefton area since November 2007. To-date over 4500 households have benefited.

Management is via a secure database to track allocation and distribution of the kits. The database contains details of recipients, PCSO's supplying the kits and to ensure correct completion of necessary documentation required by Smart Water. (Data Protection and ECHR compliant) Also a list of Serial numbers of each kit is recorded and date documentation forwarded to Smart Water is recorded.

### **Partners required to be involved in project delivery.**

<b>Name of Partner</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>Stake holders and Co-ordinators in the Molyneux, Sudell and Park ward areas of SEP</b>	To obtain names of vulnerable householders who would benefit from the SmartWater property marking system. To supply the Police on request, with the torches to check suspected stolen property.
<b>Local Neighbourhood Policing Teams (PCSO and N'hood officers)</b>	In partnership with Maghull/ Lydiate/Aintree Home Watch officers a coordinated response will ensure that vulnerable residents will be identified and benefit from the project. i.e. the elderly, single parents, people in hot spot areas & repeat victims of burglary.
<b>Merseyside Police Marketing Department.</b>	To promote the project into the public domain with the aim of raising awareness, reducing the fear of burglary in vulnerable residents and to transfer that fear onto the criminal. To improve public confidence "That they don't have to be a victim of burglary".

### **This project supports other relevant Sefton policing initiatives.**

- Supporting people and their communities
- Reducing the fear of crime
- Improving public confidence & satisfaction
- Supporting the local crime and disorder partnership objectives
- Assist with the aim of reducing domestic burglary.

### **Identified needs and demands.**

- Vulnerable residents unable to fund the kits
- A need for reduction in burglary
- Increased prosecutions for offences of burglary and handling stolen goods
- Improved sanction detection rates
- Transfer the fear of crime on to the offender

### **Evidence of how does this project will address these needs and demands.**

Residents who used SmartWater in the Littleworth and Berry Hill areas of Buckinghamshire saw a massive 84% reduction in burglary since the beginning of February this year.

A recently published report stated, of 101 offenders interviewed, 91% were aware of Smart Water and its abilities to forensically link criminals to a crime scene and property with its owner. 74% of interviewees said they would abandon their plans to break into a building if a Smart Water warning label was on display.

39% of criminals interviewed (post arrest) felt that it would be “Very Difficult” or “Fairly Difficult” to sell Smart Water marked property.

In June 2010 a £21,500.00 Home Office grant enabled Sefton Home Watch and Merseyside Police to purchase of 2000 property marking kits. Analysis has indicated that only one property has been subjected to burglary.

### **Conclusion.**

In these economically challenging times and in line with the ARC principle of crime reduction, (initiative's should be Achievable, Realistic and Cost effective), investment in Smart water is an effective tool that is proven to prevent and detect crime.

I ask that £1500 – plus £10 for p+p (£500 per ward area) be made available to support the above project. Total amount would be £1510.

If area committee decided upon granting this amount of funding then we could order and receive the kits within days and immediately start to commence their roll out.

## Evidence in support of application.

### An Evaluation of Smart Water: Offenders' Perspectives

*A report for Smart Water Technology Limited produced by*

***Professor Martin Gill, Professor of criminology, University Leicester.***

**Key Findings from structured interviews with 101 offenders with varying levels of involvement in dishonesty offences. All interviews took place face to face.**

In the study **SmartWater came top**, with a mean average of **8.3 out of 10**, scoring considerably higher than security guards (4.9), burglar alarms (6.0), CCTV (6.2), and access control systems (6.9). The impact of SmartWater as a criminal deterrent even topped **high-visibility police patrols**, which received 7.4 out of 10.

The report found that of the 101 offenders interviewed, **91% were aware** of SmartWater and its abilities to forensically link criminals to a crime scene and property with its owner. Furthermore, **74% of interviewees said they would abandon their plans to break into a building if a SmartWater warning label was on display.**

Security measure	Mean	N
<b>SmartWater</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>High visibility police patrols</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>94</b>
Ink-dye tags	7.2	94
Access control systems	6.9	94
Window grills	6.7	94
CCTV	6.2	94
Burglar/intruder alarms	6.0	94
Cased merchandise	5.9	94
Electronic tagging	5.0	94
Security guards/Store detectives	4.9	94
Property marking	4.8	94
Mirrors	3.9	94
Perimeter fencing	3.8	94

“The results displayed in the table illustrate that SmartWater compares well. It received the highest average score, and more importantly when compared

individually to all other security measures SmartWater's mean was significantly higher.

A finding of considerable interest is that SmartWater's average score of 8.3, as compared with the average score of "property marking" (4.8), suggests that while property marking in isolation is a reasonable or average deterrent, SmartWater's more holistic approach clearly increases the deterrent value".

**Other key findings:**

- **Overall, the findings indicate that crime reduction strategies using SmartWater products have a strong deterrent effect.**
- **The combination of forensic products which SmartWater uses in its holistic approach increases the deterrent factor substantially.**
- **82%** of the respondents could recall at least one distinct feature of the SmartWater product range.
- **70%** of the offenders interviewed stated that if stained by SmartWater index spray they perceive it would be "very difficult" to remove.
- **42%** interviewees thought that the value of the stolen item would be affected.
- **39%** of respondents felt that it would be "Very Difficult" or "Fairly Difficult" to sell SmartWater marked property.

Jenny Muldoon – Sergeant at Maghull Neighbourhood