

Crime scene attendant Esme Blair looks for fingerprints at a burglary in Mt Roskill.

PHOTO / FILE

Drugs, desperation and "the thrill" - this is what police say drives Kiwi burglars.

Every single household burglary will be attended by New Zealand Police from this week, after a [new policy announcement made by Police Minister Judith Collins yesterday](#).

The move comes after spikes in household burglary rates and falling resolution rates across New Zealand. Burglaries increased [13 percent in the year to June 30](#), with more than [90 per cent going unsolved in the year to December 31](#). Now, intelligence reports produced by police have revealed some insights into how New Zealand crooks work.

There are "several contributing factors" which led to the increase, and which make the crooks tick. "Some of these can be explained by understanding the current environment in which burglars are operating in.

"Burglars are motivated, either as a result of a drug habit, the desire and need for cash and in some cases simply for the thrill it provides.

"Burglars are positively reinforced due to the ease with which stolen goods can be offloaded encouraging offenders to continue offending. This exacerbates the problem."

Ellis withheld the recommendations of the report on the grounds the information could impact the "maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences and the right to a fair trial".

She said the recommendations could also prevent, "the effective expression of opinions by or between officers and employees of any department or organisation in the course of their duty."

THE REPORT'S FINDINGS

- Burglaries happen in the [poorest areas](#) and it is the people living there who are committing the crimes.

"Neighbourhoods in New Zealand with the highest volume of dwelling burglaries tend to be areas with higher deprivation levels," said Ellis.

- Most burglars target the same types of property - electronics, jewellery, cash, tools and machinery, documents and bicycles.

- Ellis said these items are known as "Craved" items, an acronym for Concealable, Removable, Available, Valuable, Enjoyable and Disposable.

- A "large proportion" of offenders are youth, she said. "They are likely to be travelling on foot. This helps explain why small items such as cash, jewellery and smart phones are targeted as they can be easily carried and removed."

- Areas where there is lots of new houses being built are often hot spots, like in Canterbury and North Shore. "Both Districts have seen increases in dwelling burglaries from residential construction sites. It is likely the growth in housing development in these districts is a contributing factor to the increase in dwelling burglaries.

- Thieves follow the money. The easier it is to offload stolen goods, the more they will steal. "The success or failure to convert stolen goods into money (or drugs) play an important role into whether burglars continue to offend."

- Drugs play a big part. "Information suggests many burglars in New Zealand steal property to feed their drug habit. It is likely that the motivation to trade stolen property for drugs or cash is likely increasing dwelling burglary numbers."

- It's everything combined. "It is likely not one of these contributing factors alone that is resulting in the recent increase in dwelling burglaries, but a combination of these factors."

- Weak security. Burglars will go for houses that are not secure as they are easier to steal from, said Ellis. "Effortless entry also perpetuates further offending."