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Surrey burglary figures spark row

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Helen Maguire MP has accused the Government of leaving Surrey families and businesses to “fend for themselves” after Liberal Democrat analysis suggested that fewer than one in 15 burglaries recorded by Surrey Police in 2025 resulted in somebody being charged or summoned.

However, Surrey Police and the county’s Police and Crime Commissioner have responded that burglary has been falling, detection rates are improving and officers attended almost 97% of reported residential burglaries during the latest financial year.

The Liberal Democrat MP for Epsom and Ewell said 3,045 burglaries were recorded across Surrey in 2025. According to figures supplied by her office, 6.4% resulted in a charge or summons, while 2,272 cases – 74.61% of the total – were closed without a suspect being identified.

Nationally, the party said 223,194 burglaries were recorded in England and Wales during the same calendar year. Of these, 13,936 – 6.24% – resulted in a charge or summons, while no suspect was identified in 160,396 cases, or 71.86%.

The figures were described as having been drawn from Home Office crime outcome statistics and analysed by the Liberal Democrats.

Mrs Maguire said: “It is unacceptable that families and businesses across Surrey are being left terrified as the vast majority of burglaries go unsolved. The Government has been asleep at the wheel; a persistent lack of support for community policing has left our streets vulnerable.

“In 93.6% of burglary cases in Surrey, the victims never see someone charged – this has to change. Surrey Police work tirelessly, but they require the proper resources and mandate from central government to ensure every single case is rigorously investigated.

“That’s why I’m demanding urgent action from the Prime Minister to restore neighbourhood policing and to back our calls for an investigation guarantee for all burglaries in Surrey.”

The Liberal Democrats are calling for what they describe as a “Burglary Response Guarantee”, backed by legislation requiring the police to attend and properly investigate every domestic burglary.

Police points to higher ‘solved’ rates

Surrey Police said the figures needed to be placed in context, particularly because the classification of burglary offences changed in April 2023. Burglaries are now divided into residential and business offences.

Detective Chief Inspector Jo Horner, the force lead for burglary, acknowledged that further improvement was required.

She said: “We know there is more to do to improve burglary detection rates, but it is also important to provide context to the data which has been used.”

Between April 2025 and March 2026, Surrey Police attended 96.9% of reported residential burglaries, according to the force.

Over the same period, it recorded a “solved rate” of 10.44% for residential burglary and 12.18% for business burglary.

A solved outcome is not necessarily the same as a charge or summons. It can include other recognised outcomes, so the police percentages cannot be compared directly with the 6.4% charge-or-summons figure quoted by the Liberal Democrats. The figures also cover different periods: calendar year 2025 in the MP’s release and the 2025/26 financial year in the police response.

DCI Horner said burglary remained “an area of continued focus and priority” for the force.

She highlighted an investigation that led to five offenders admitting a series of car-key burglaries, attempted burglaries and vehicle thefts across Surrey, Sussex and Kent. Investigators linked the group to more than 20 stolen vehicles with a combined value of £337,100.

A separate East Surrey operation resulted in six men being charged with nearly 80 offences, including burglary, motor vehicle theft and vehicle interference. Five of the men are now serving prison sentences.

Surrey Police said each of its two divisions has a proactive team monitoring burglary patterns, identifying hotspots and

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targeting prolific offenders and organised criminal networks.

PCC says burglary is falling

Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner Lisa Townsend said domestic burglary was “deeply invasive” and could have a profound effect on its victims, while acknowledging that improving detection remained a challenge for police forces nationally.

She said: “The good news is that Surrey Police is one of the fastest improving forces in the country and burglary rates across the county have been consistently falling.

“According to figures available on my Data Hub, the number of domestic burglaries fell by over 15% between 2023 and 2025. And more recent provisional data shows that in April and June this year, we saw the lowest monthly rates of domestic burglary in the latest three years.”

Mrs Townsend said the force’s burglary solved rate between April 2025 and March 2026 was more than 10%, which she described as considerably higher than the national average.

She added: “Surrey Police is already committed to deploying to every residential burglary reported in the county and each policing division has its own proactive team which identifies trends and ‘hotspot’ areas and targets offenders.

“The force has made great strides in tackling burglary over the last two years and this will be an area I will continue to scrutinise performance on to ensure they maintain that trajectory going forward.”

What the figures do – and do not – show

The competing statements measure several different things.

A 6.4% charge-or-summons rate does not necessarily mean that the offender “got away scot-free” in every other case. Cases may remain under investigation, be resolved through another recorded outcome or fail to proceed for evidential or other reasons. Nevertheless, the figures supplied by Mrs Maguire’s office indicate that no suspect was identified in almost three-quarters of Surrey’s recorded burglaries in 2025.

Conversely, attending a burglary does not mean that it will be solved. Surrey Police’s 96.9% attendance figure relates only to residential burglary and not to the business burglaries included in the MP’s overall total.

Neither side supplied Epsom and Ewell-specific figures, so the statistics in the exchange relate to the Surrey Police area as a whole.

Residents can report suspicious activity through Surrey Police’s website, by calling 101 or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. A crime in progress or an immediate danger should be reported by calling 999.

Sam Jones – Reporter



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