

## Schelle

### Mandatory building plan advice for new constructions

#### I. Project description

##### A. Context

From 2005 on, the number of domestic burglaries started increasing everywhere, also in the municipality of Schelle. There was especially indignation related to domestic burglaries in new homes: the homes are just built, and yet they are not safe; how is this possible? The thought that we were being overtaken by events was very much present. There was little or no reaction on a simple brochure with a building permit application. Scientific research has also shown that later installation of burglary prevention is barely followed up by the home's residents. Securing the home later also leads to aesthetical problems, and most of the time it is more expensive.

"Domestic burglary in new constructions is like buying a car without wheels"

##### B. Functioning

With each new construction, a domestic burglary prevention consultant will evaluate the building plan. A proposal is done to secure the facade elements that can be reached, if these facade elements comply with the European standard 1627-1630, and reach at least resistance class 2. In this case, a remark is made regarding the number of windows that can be opened, or other engineering errors in the context of burglary prevention (e.g. alcoves). In rare cases, a building plan is rejected, and this will then be reviewed in consultation with the architect.

Organisational and physical measures are recommended, rarely electronic ones.

Because of this project, it is an urban planning obligation in the municipality of Schelle to follow this building plan advice, on condition that the advice is given within thirty days. Those who do not follow the advice will, in principle, be committing a building violation. This person will also not be able to call upon the municipal premium for techno preventive measures against domestic burglary.

In the municipality of Rumst, the building plan advice is not mandatory, but applicants need to indicate on the building permit application form if they wish a building plan advice or not. In Boom and Schelle, a premium is foreseen. The other municipalities within our police zone do not have this. The premium is only awarded if the complete home is burglary-proof, and, for example, not only the front door.

Originally, the goal was that the personnel of the urban planning department would carry out these advices, after following extra training for this purpose. As it now only concerns the municipality of Schelle, the domestic burglary prevention consultant (DPA) keeps doing them.

### C. Objectives

Making newly constructed homes in the municipality burglary-proof to reduce the number of domestic burglaries. Schelle wishes to be proactive.

### D. Target audience

Residents of Schelle who construct a new home (or have one constructed): owners, developers.

## II. Means

### Partners:

Municipality of Schelle (Urban Planning department)

- Delivery of the building plans to the domestic burglary prevention consultant, and afterwards delivery of the report to the builder.

Local police zone Rupel (department of burglary prevention)

- Execution and follow-up of timely delivery of the advice.

### Costs:

Costs are limited: an extra plan needs to be delivered by the applicant of the advice. Each advice contains a number of copies of the building plan with an indication of the facade openings that need to be secured. A brochure 'Safe Housing' is also delivered. Finally, there is the personnel cost: drafting of the advice for a normal family house takes about fifteen minutes.

## III. Evaluation

### Positive points/benefits:

- The extra cost for a new building plan advice on the regular cost was calculated: in The Netherlands, this is about 400 euros. This cannot be transposed exactly to Belgium, but it is a good indication. This is a small cost in relation to the construction of a home.
- The table below contains data of 2009 to 2013 regarding domestic burglaries and attempts in the municipality of Schelle.

Year	Attempts in Schelle	Completed burglaries in Schelle	Number of advices for new constructions	Number of burglaries in advised homes
2009	8	23	18	0
2010	12	33	10	0
2011	19	13	18	0
2012	10	20	13	0
2013	14	19	7	0

- Since 11 years, it is an obligation at the national level in The Netherlands for every home to be of resistance class 2. This led to about 10.000 fewer domestic burglaries. In The Netherlands, 80% of front doors are burglary-proof.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The project would best become mandatory at the regional or national level. Only this way it will function optimally, and that way, advice should not always be given per individual case, but this advice will be registered in the regional/national building decree.
- The advice is binding, and if it is not followed, this is a building violation. However, it is not monitored if the advice is actually followed. This monitoring should be implemented when the project is expanded.

## **IV. Transferability**

### **Points of attention:**

There has to be goodwill of the whole municipality/town where this is to be applied. After all, the municipality should make the council decision. The department for urban planning should also support the project, and it has been shown that this is not always obvious, as they fear that this will lead to extra work.

## **V. More info?**

### **A. Contact person**

Ivo Schoeters  
Fabiolalaan 55 Schelle  
Phone: 03 443 09 00  
Email address: [technopreventie@politiezonerupel.be](mailto:technopreventie@politiezonerupel.be)

### **B. Support material**

- Development of a template for the advice



With financial support from the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme of the  
European Union

European Commission – Directorate-General Home Affairs

#### Legal notice

The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the official opinions of any EU Member State or any agency or institution of the European Union or European Communities.