

# Dublin Cycling Campaign *Tackling Bike Theft*

www.dublincycling.ie  
Mon 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015

**DUBLIN  
CYCLING  
CAMPAIGN**

## Avoid The Thief

Anti-Bike Theft Campaign  
[dublincycling.ie/AvoidTheThief](http://dublincycling.ie/AvoidTheThief)



- Background to the campaign
- Data
- The campaign
- Survey results
- What's happening
- Ideas for the short & longer term



# Background

# Why we started looking at bike theft?

- Bike theft victims contacting campaign
- Stories that bike theft was on the rise
- Value of bikes stolen increasing

# It's an old problem ..

Irish Independent 1905-current\*, 08.10.1943, page 3

## Thefts Of Bicycles

### GARDAI ON DUTY OUTSIDE CHURCHES

The authorities had taken such a serious view of the stealing of bicycles from outside churches that they had placed Gardai on duty at churches all over Dublin, said Detective-Officer Murphy at Dun Laoghaire.

Before the court was Patrick Roe, Montpellier Parade, Monkstown Road, Blackrock, who was convicted of the larceny of a bicycle, value £3, the property of Rose Flynn, Yankee Ter., Newtownpark, Blackrock, at Blackrock, on September 19, and illegal possession of various bicycle parts.

He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour on the larceny charge, and one month for the illegal possession, the sentences to run consecutively.

It was stated that the accused had been seen loitering around the vicinity of the churches, and since his arrest no bicycles had been stolen from the churches.

Irish Press 1931-1995, 11.10.1935, page 8

## HARD LABOUR FOR CYCLE THEFTS

### JUDGE ISSUES WARNING TO RECEIVERS

When a youth named John Connor, Harold's Cross, was charged with stealing bicycles in the city, Judge Shannon said:

"I take a serious view of bicycle stealing, which, I understand, is very prevalent in the city. It seems very easy to steal bicycles and just as easy to sell stolen bicycles, and it is a most difficult crime to detect.

"I would be very happy to have any person convicted of receiving stolen bicycles before me, and I consider that the only remedy is imprisonment."

The Judge imposed a sentence of six months' hard labour on Connor.

# Gardai advice to cyclists (1940)

Irish Independent 1905-current\*, 06.09.1940, page 7

## Advice to Cyclists

### COMBATING THE CYCLE THIEF

Don't leave your machine unlocked.

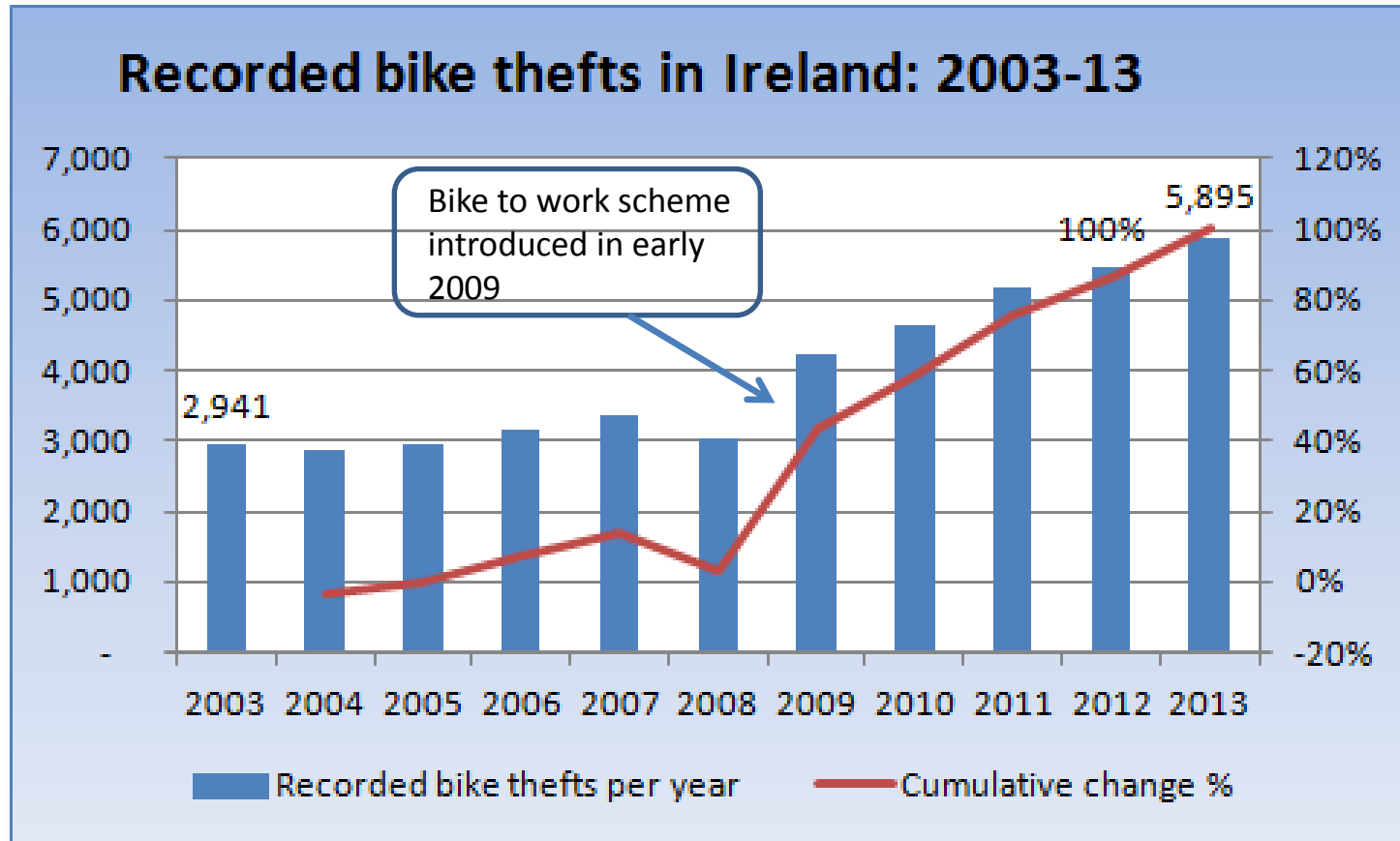
It's always worthwhile to turn the key in the lock, even if you'll only be absent a few seconds.

If you have forgotten your lock or key, deflate one of your tires and remove the valve.

Remember, a lock & key won't safeguard detachable objects such as a basket, a pump or a lamp.

Data

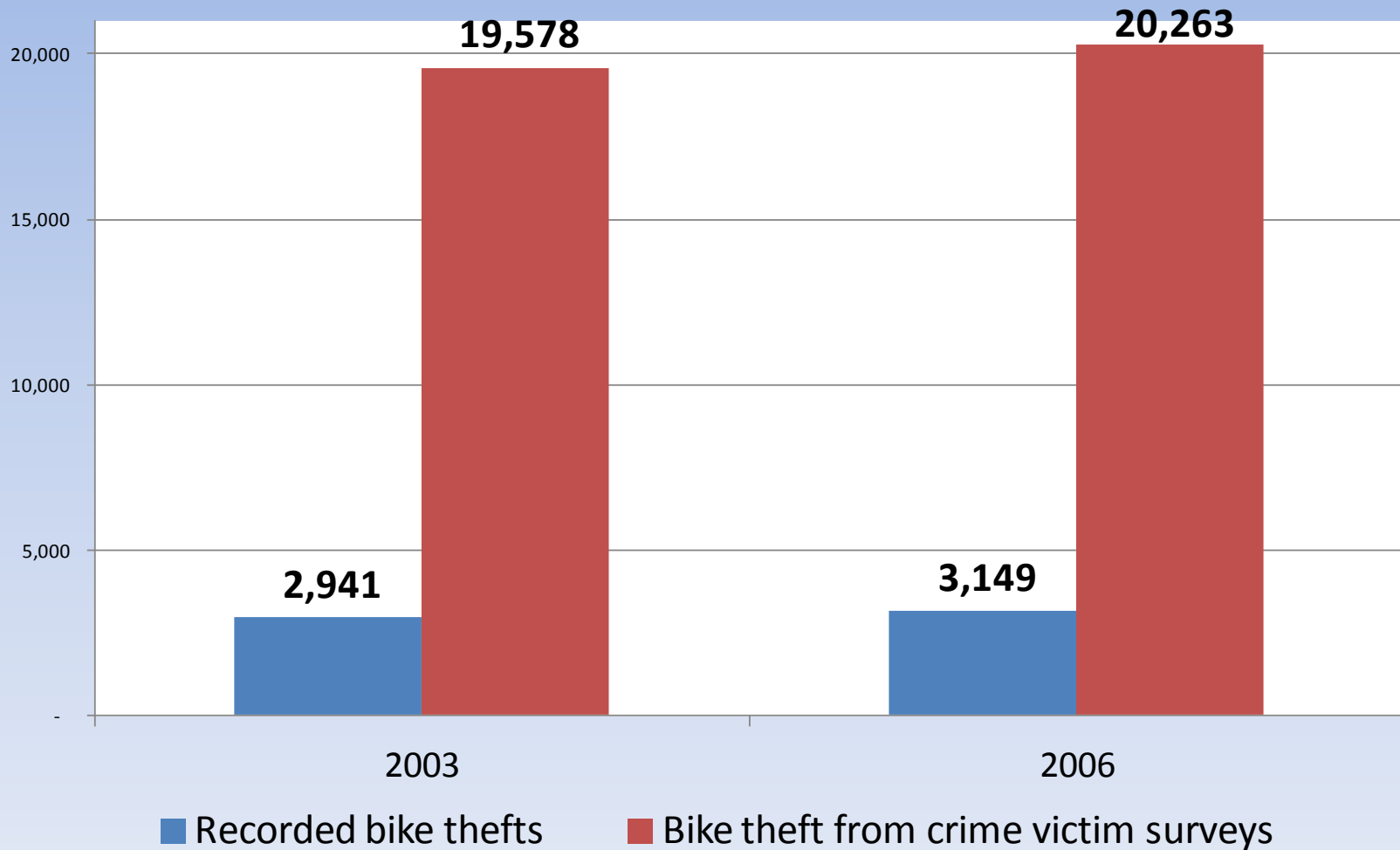
Between 2003 & 2013 recorded bike theft increased by 100%, with a sharp increase from 2009





# Only 1 in 6 reports a bike theft

1. Recorded bike thefts & 2. Bike theft figures from crime victim surveys 2003 & 2006 (CSO)



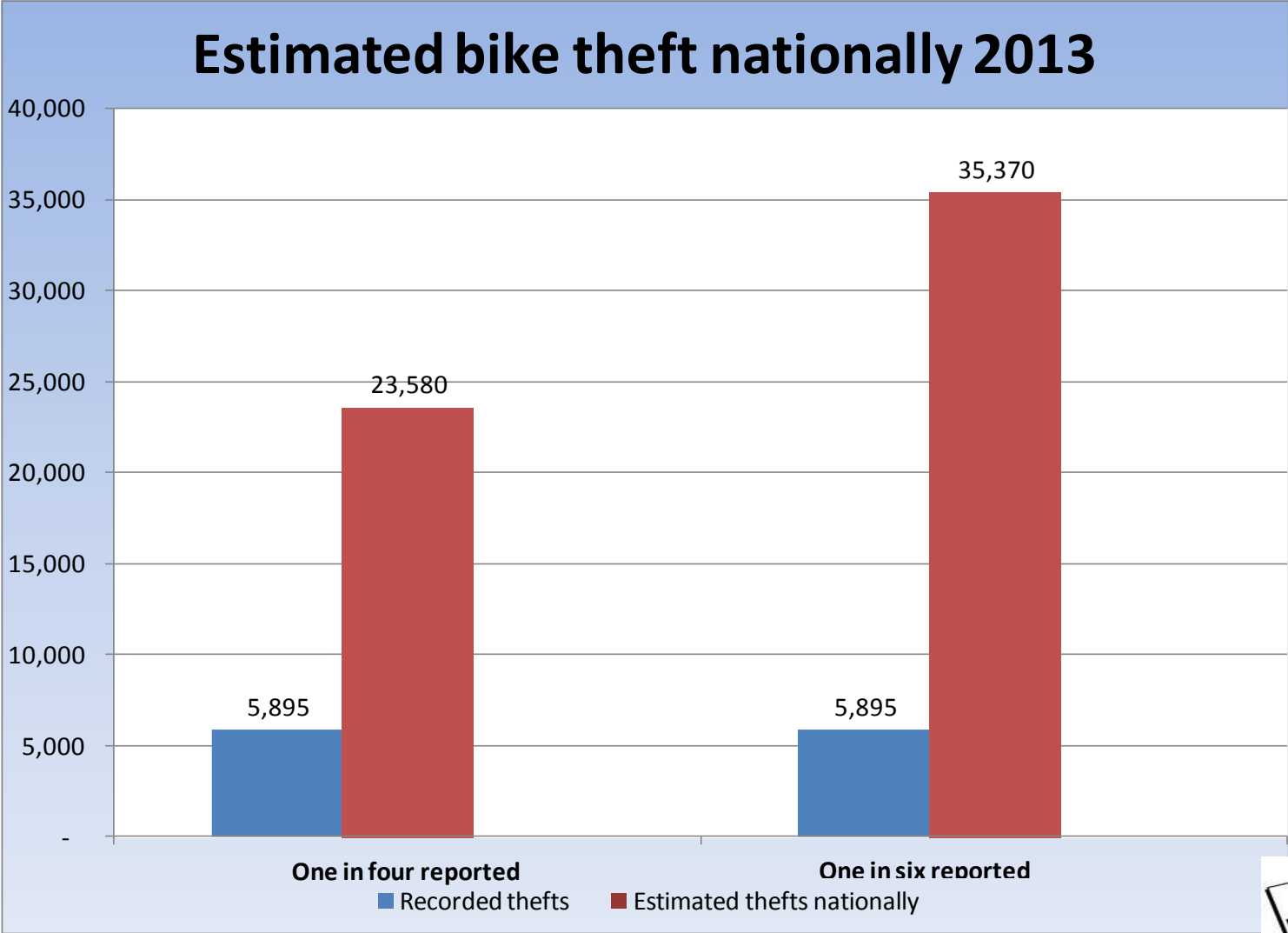
# Under-recording in other European countries is between 4:1 and 6:1.

Reported and estimated bike thefts from 2006: Ireland, Netherlands, Denmark & UK

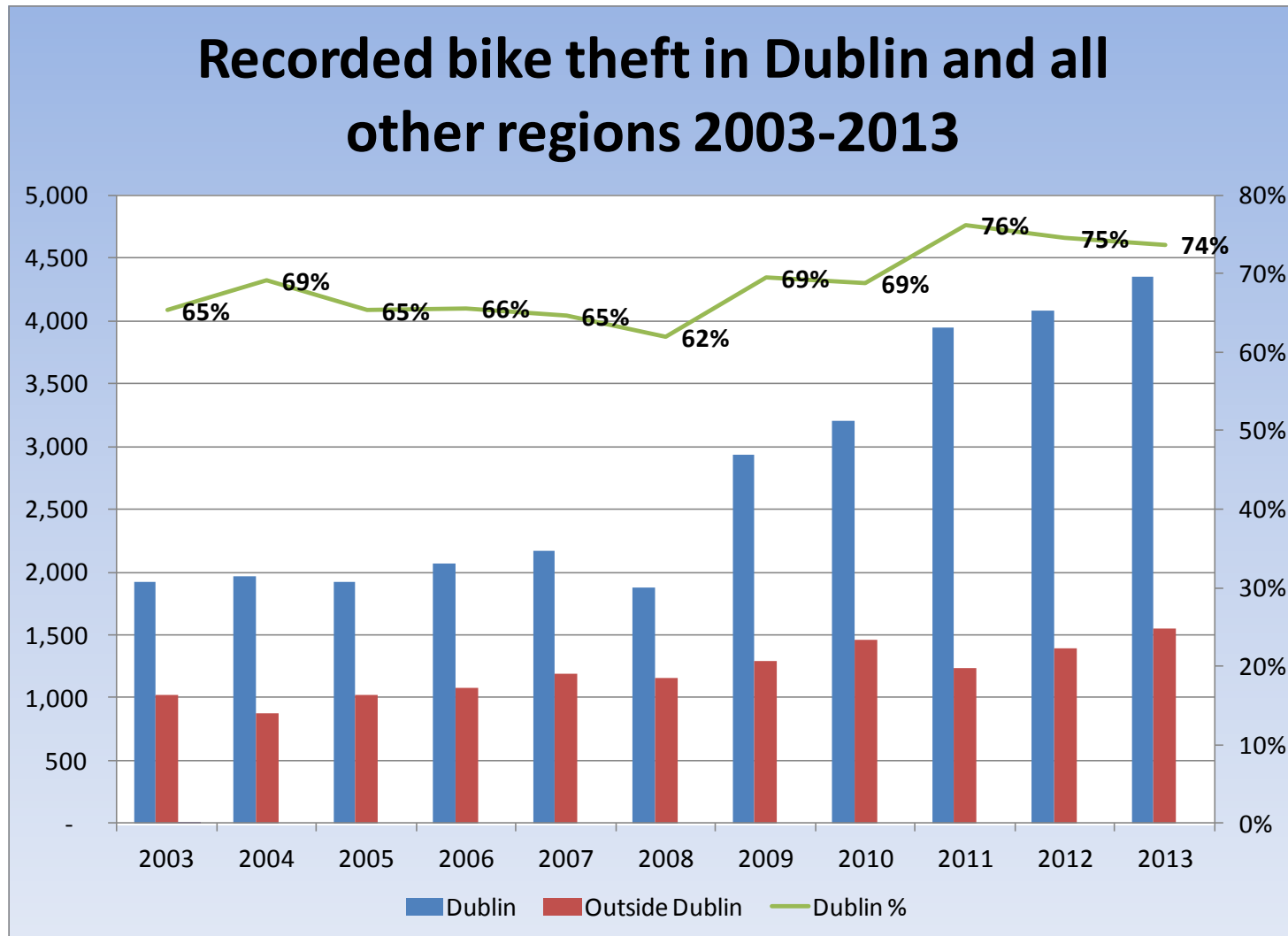
|                                    | Ireland | Netherlands | Denmark | UK      |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| Bike thefts reported               | 3,149   | 120,000     | 70,000  | 100,000 |
| Bike thefts crime victim surveys   | 20,263  | 763,000     | 280,000 | 500,000 |
| Bike thefts reported %             | 16%     | 16%         | 25%     | 20%     |
| Ratio of stolen to reported stolen | 6.4     | 6.4         | 4.0     | 5.0     |



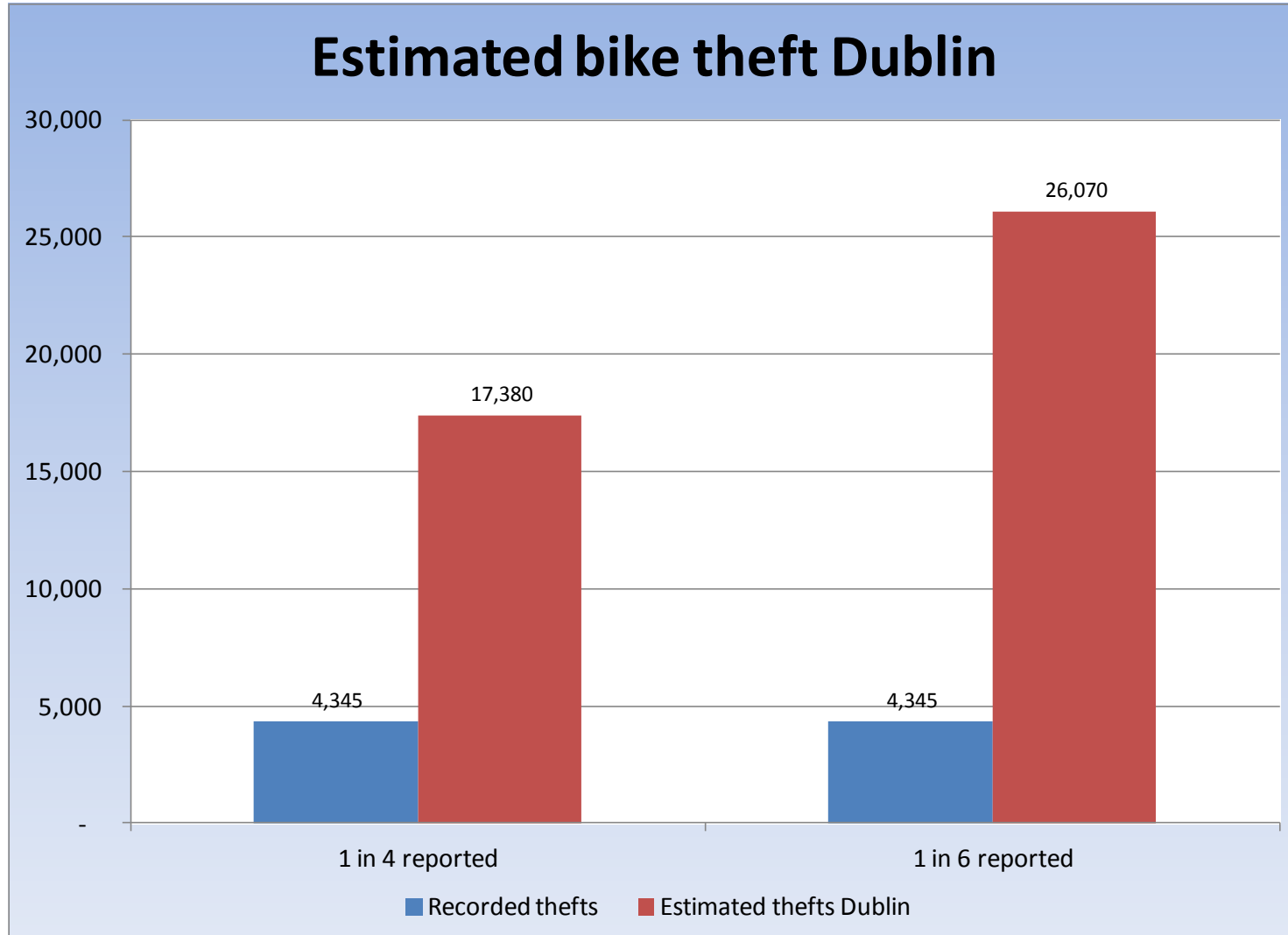
We estimate that somewhere between 23,000 and 35,000 bikes were stolen nationwide last year



# 75% of total bike theft in Ireland occurs in Dublin

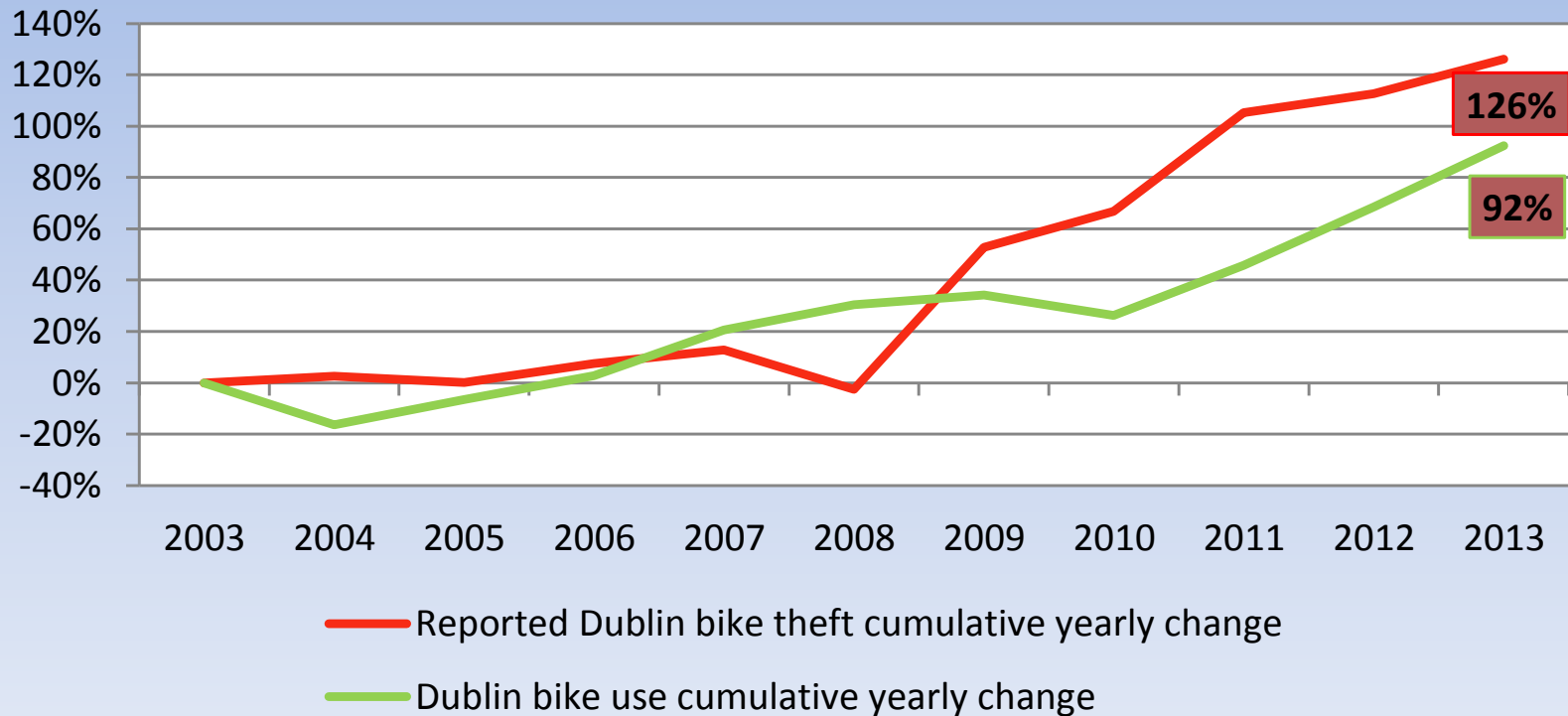


# ...so between 17,000 and 26,000 stolen in Dublin in 2013



Between 2003 & 2013 reported bike theft increased at a faster rate than bike usage

### Bike theft & bike usage Dublin: 2003-2013 (% change)



Conviction rate: If we estimate that 30,000 bikes are stolen annually, the conviction rate is less than 1%

Convictions for bike theft vs recorded and estimated thefts 2012

| Recorded bike theft | Detected | With relevant proceedings | Court proceedings commenced | Conviction & pending | Conviction & pending (%) |
|---------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 5,477               | 571      | 214                       | 205                         | 135                  | 2%                       |

| Estimated bike theft | Detected | With relevant proceedings | Court proceedings commenced | Conviction & pending | Conviction & pending (%) |
|----------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 30,000               | 571      | 214                       | 205                         | 135                  | 0.5%                     |



# What the Gardai say

- Difficult to reunite recovered bikes with bike owners
- Non-reporting means difficult to prove suspected stolen bikes were stolen.
- When theft is reported, often no frame number.



# Netherlands & London experience

# Bike theft in the Netherlands



# Case study Netherlands

Motivation for change:

- Public anger led to govt action.

Goal:

- Reduce thefts by 100k from base line of 763k.

Administrative approach:

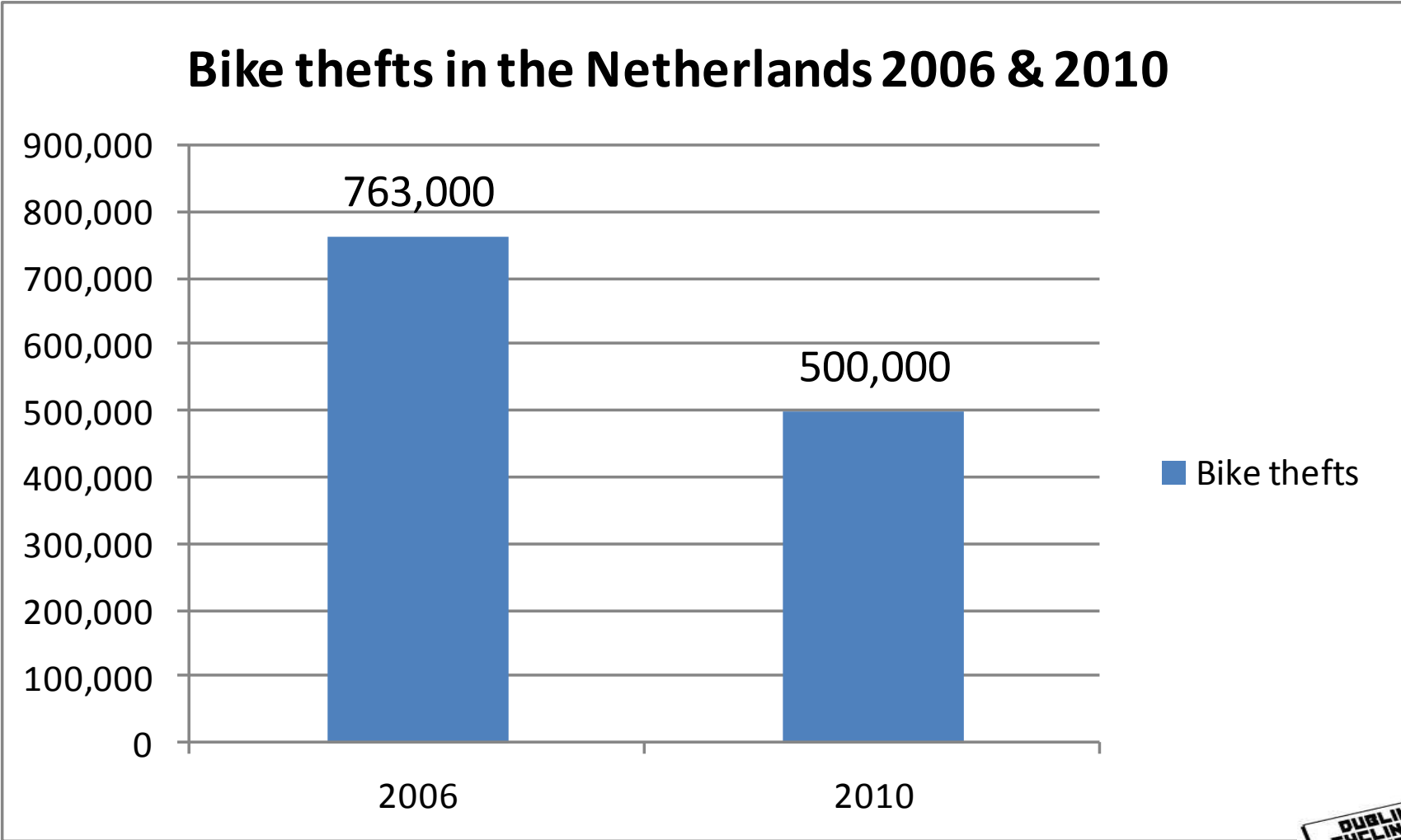
- Dept of Transport chair group
- All stakeholders represented
- Centre for expertise established

Starting Point was a review of:

- Locations, times & profile of thieves
- Distribution channels for stolen bikes
- Attitude of public and police to bike theft



# Bike theft fell by 33% between 2006 & 2010



# Lessons from the Dutch

- Political will needed.
- State group (dept of transport) to co-ordinate work
- All stakeholders involved.
- Start with detailed analysis.
- Actions with greatest return.
- No single simple solution or `silver bullet`.



# Bike theft London

© FightMe



# `Project Cycle Ops` London

## Background

- Rising population
- Mayor – `make London a cyclised city`
- Research showed bike theft a barrier to increased cycling

## Research/Analysis

- No frame numbers for reported stolen bikes
- High re-sale value (bikes are CRAVED).
- Low detection rates and sentences

## Size of the problem

- 100k thefts (25% reported – 25k)
- 25% who had a bike stolen stop cycling (25k).

## Specifics of London problem

- Avg re-sale value stg 275. Avg court fine: stg 150

# ` Project Cycle Ops` Plan

## Organisation

- Transport for London (TFL) co-ordinate
- Police, advocacy groups etc involved.
- 30 full time officers funded by TFL (2010-2013).

## Actions

### Identified and targeted high risk areas:

- Leaflets, stands with locking advice, stickers on bike stands (“lock it or lose it”.)
- Bike registration events
- Web sites buyers and sellers guides

## Bike Parking

- Stands that have natural & formal surveillance etc.



# Dublin Cycling Campaign`s Bike Theft Campaign



# Bike Theft Campaign aims (1)

## Highlight the extent of the issue

- Bike theft doubled in past 5 years
- Theft figure in Dublin approx 20k and not 5k reported
- Low conviction rates.

## Provide advice for cyclists

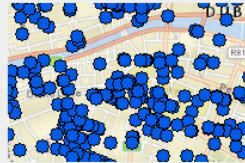
- Use better locks – no cable locks
- Know frame and model number & always report
- Don't buy a stolen bike



# Bike Theft Campaign aims (2)

- **Recommendations:**
  - Code of practice for websites & bike shops
  - Gardaí to give bike theft a higher priority
  - More secure cycle parking
- **But most importantly..**
  - State run committee needed to oversee work

# Survey



## Dublin Bike Theft and Bike Parking Survey - Dublin Cycling Campaign



**Many thanks to Esri Ireland for providing the software and support free of charge.**

Esri Ireland is the supplier of the ArcGIS Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Platform

[www.esri-ireland.ie](http://www.esri-ireland.ie).

# Results

- 1,539 responses
  - 1,081 had a bike stolen
  - 458 submitted comments

## Impact on cycling

- 1 in 6 victims (16%) don't replace bike (3k).
- A further 26% reduced amount cycled (5.2k).
- 42% therefore stop or reduce cycling  
(London comparable figure is 67%).

## Locations

- Top 3 theft locations are:
  1. Car parks
  2. Home (house/appt/garden/shed)
  3. Streets



# Results cont

## Reporting

- 27% of people who reported thefts had frame number.
- 4% recovered stolen bike

## Locking

- 11% didn't have bike locked.
- 44% had bike locked with a cable lock

## Insurance etc

- 15% (c 1 in 7) had bike insured. (London figure is over 30%)
- 87% of those with insurance had home insurance
- 42% who replaced stolen bike got a used bike



# Results Bike parking

## Parking

- 32% said they`d pay for bike parking
- A further 42% said they might pay.
- Of that 74 %, 3/4`s said they`d pay Eur 2/day max.

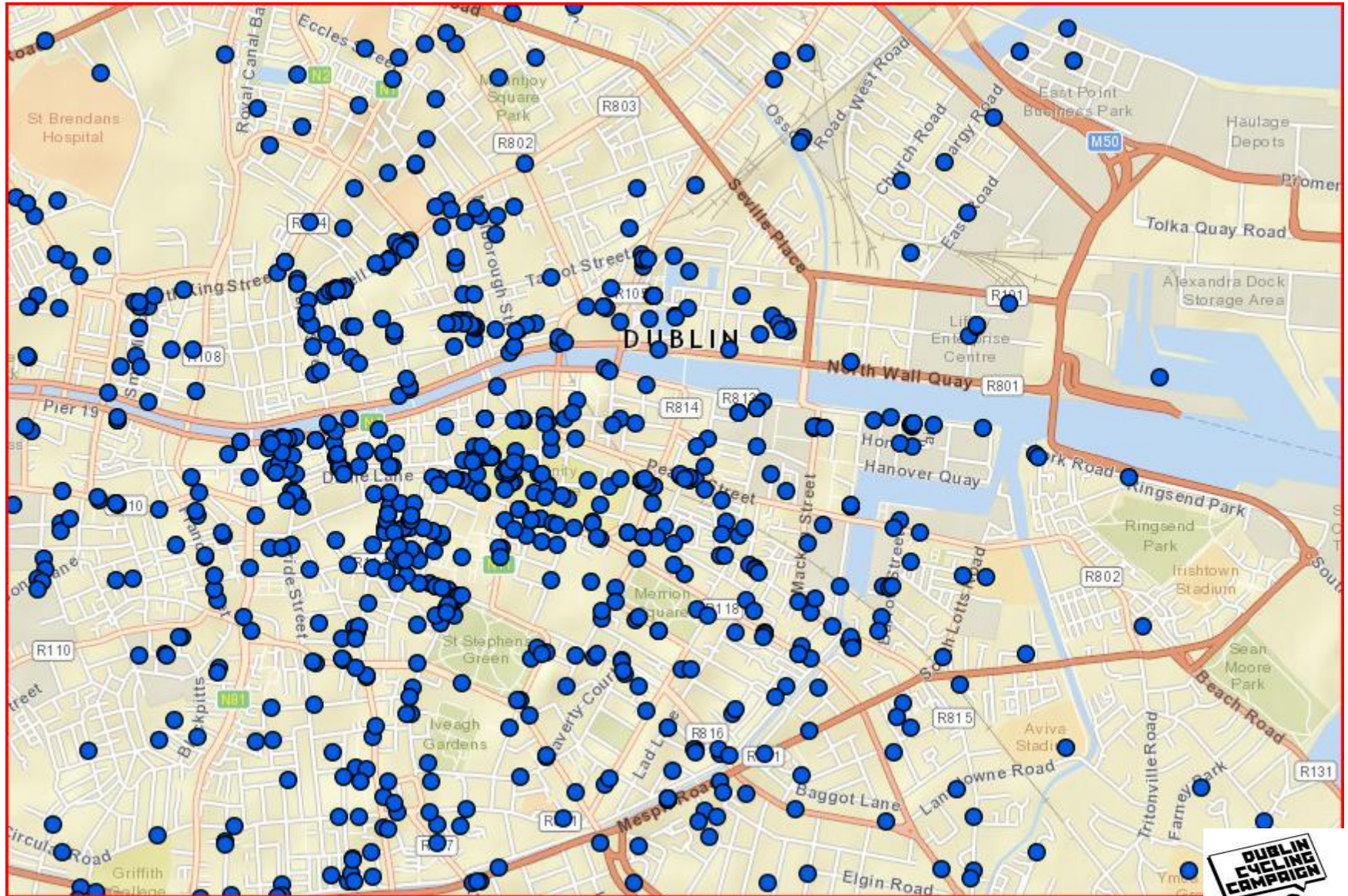
## The draw

- 14% said they wouldn`t like to be included in the draw...
- 39% said they`d like to get involved in the campaign (609...)



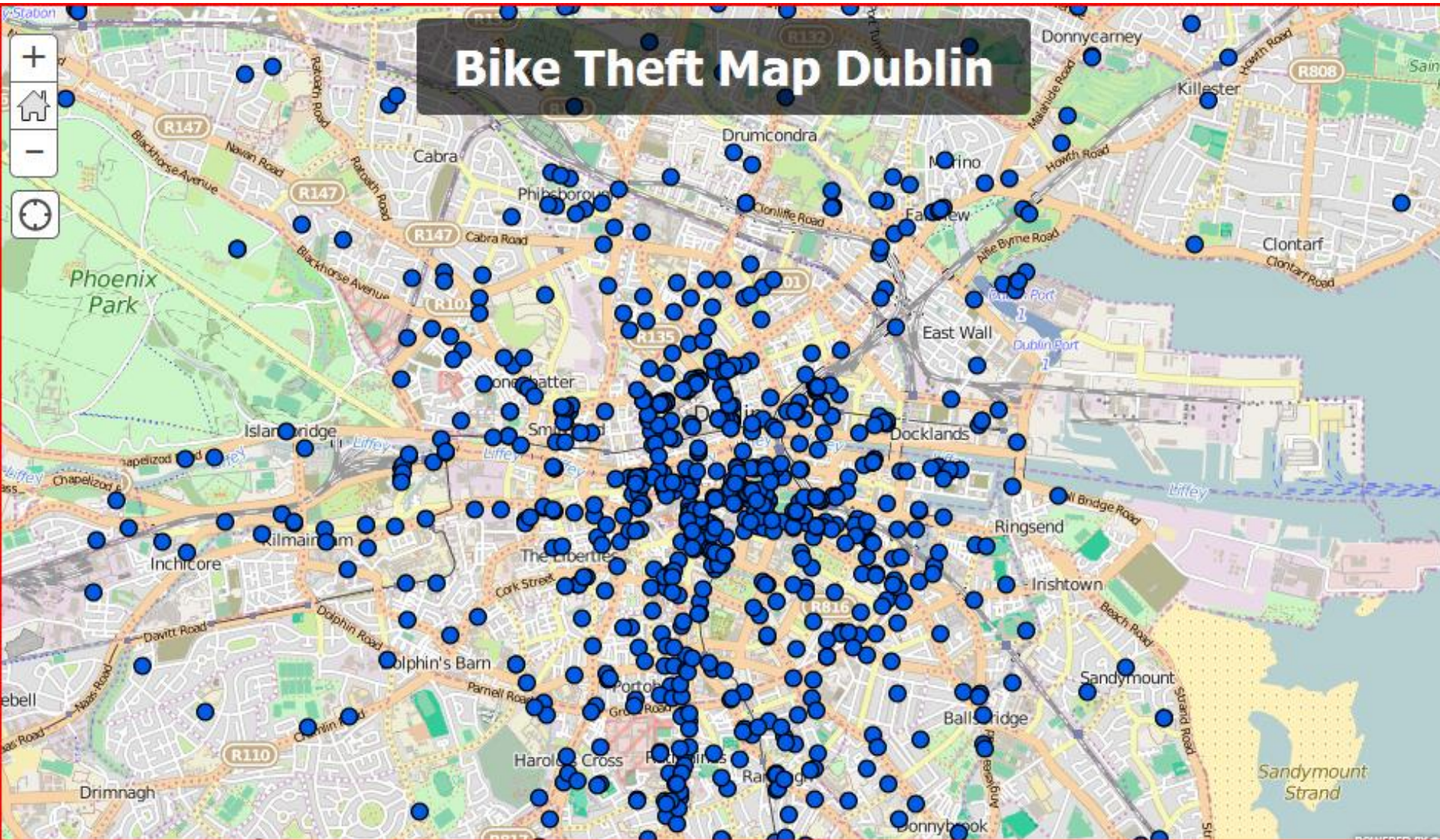


# Bike theft locations from survey



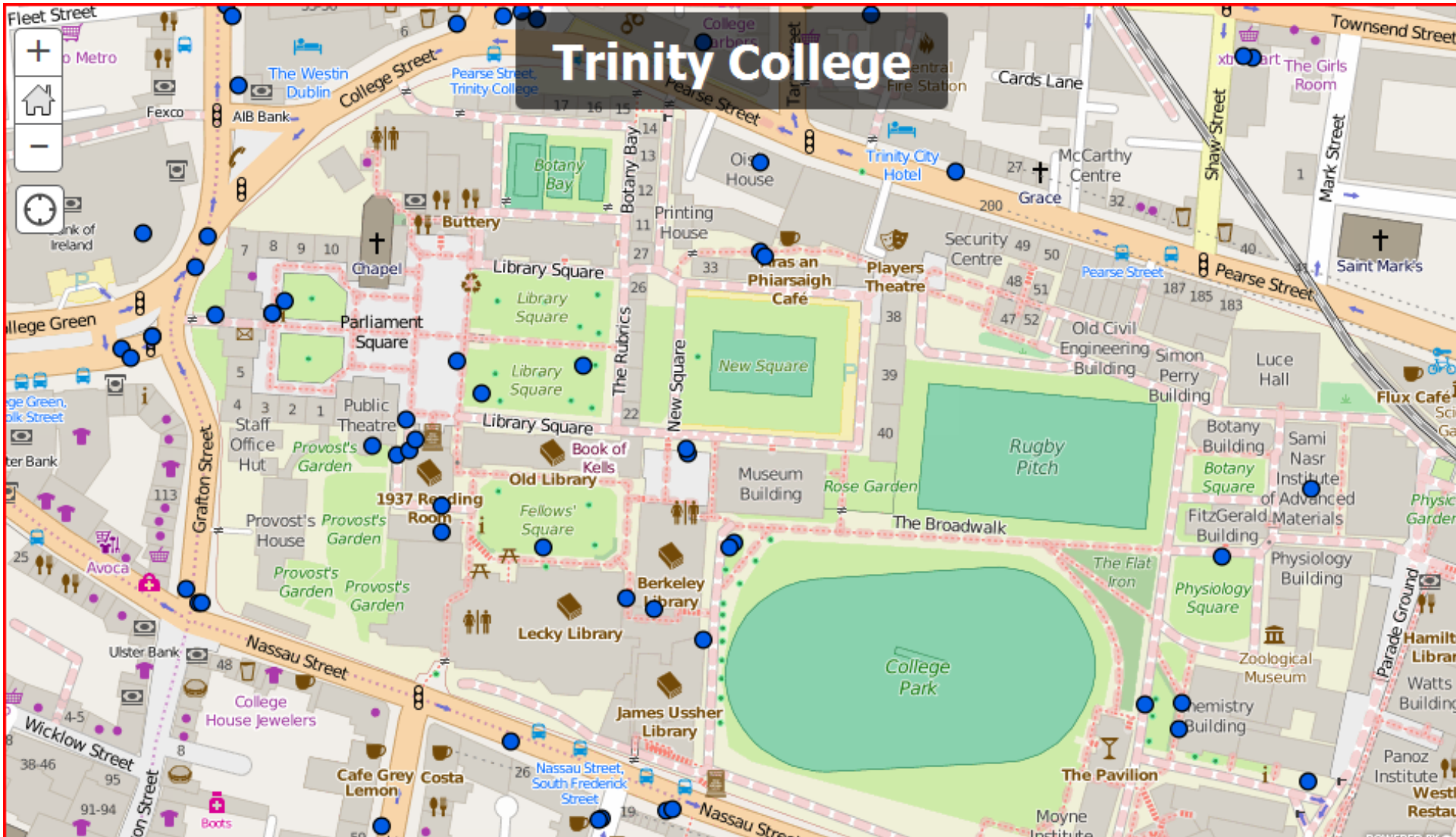
**DUBLIN  
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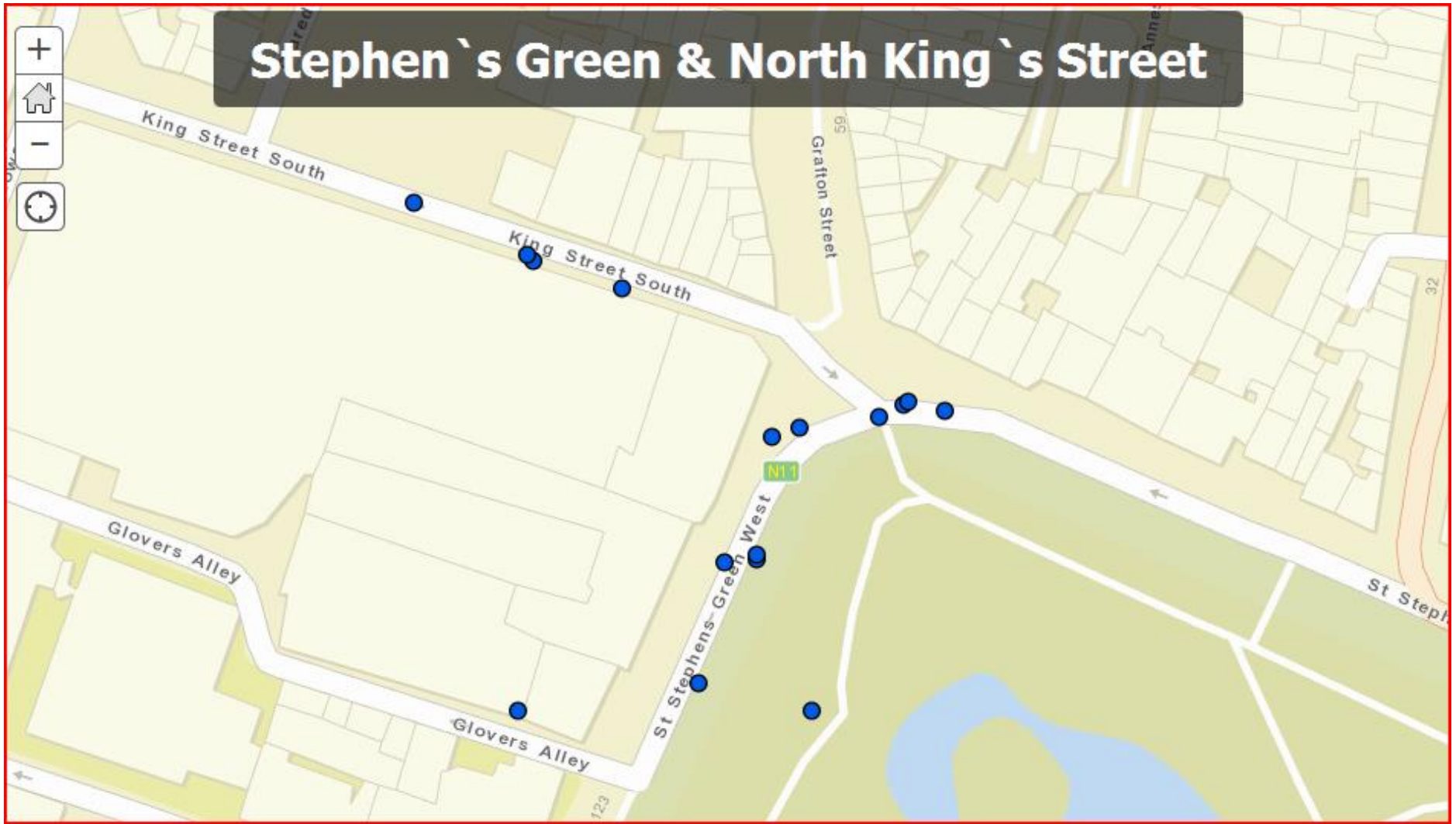


# Trinity College

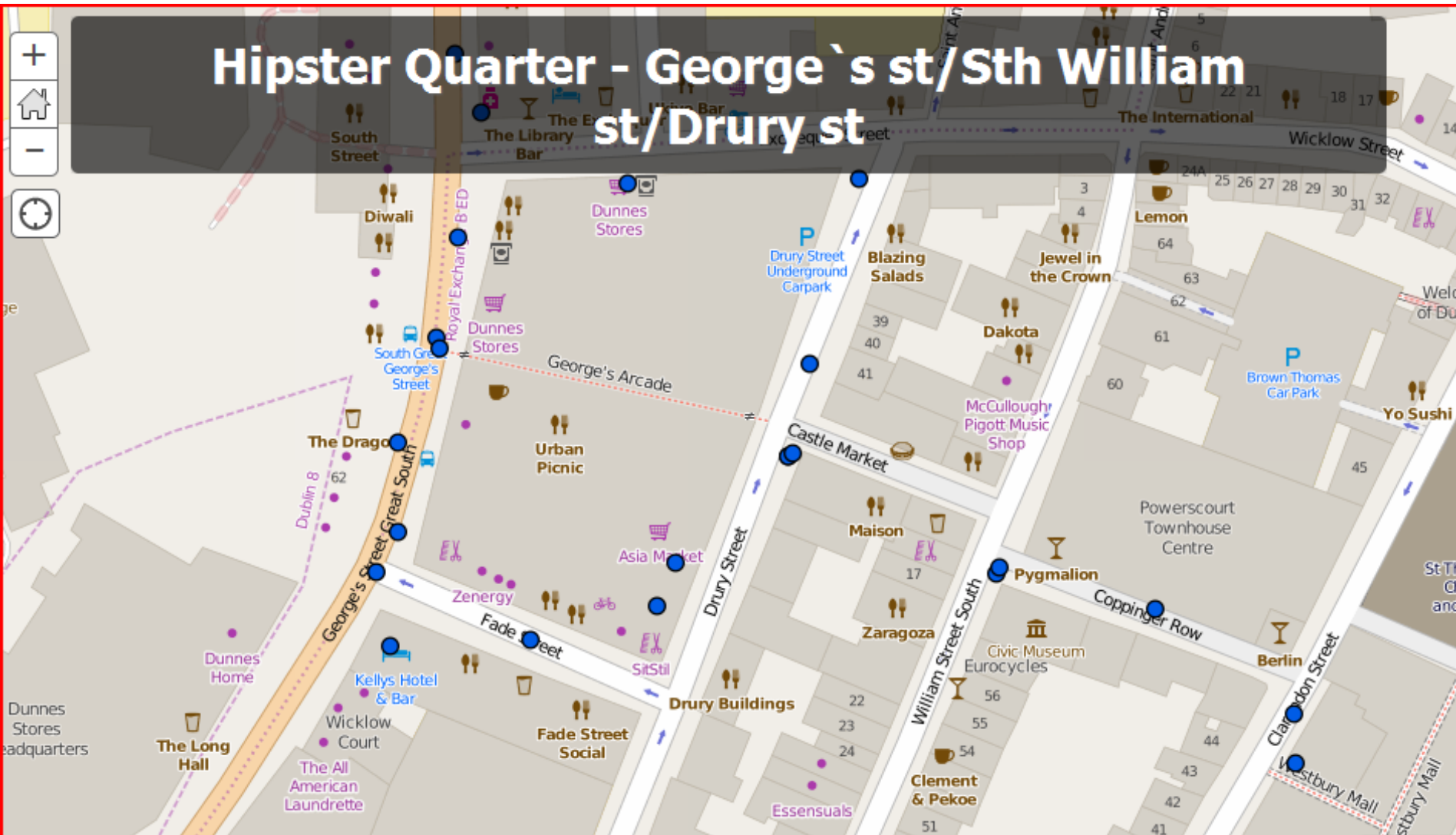
(1k responded, but 20k thefts..for each dot count 20..)



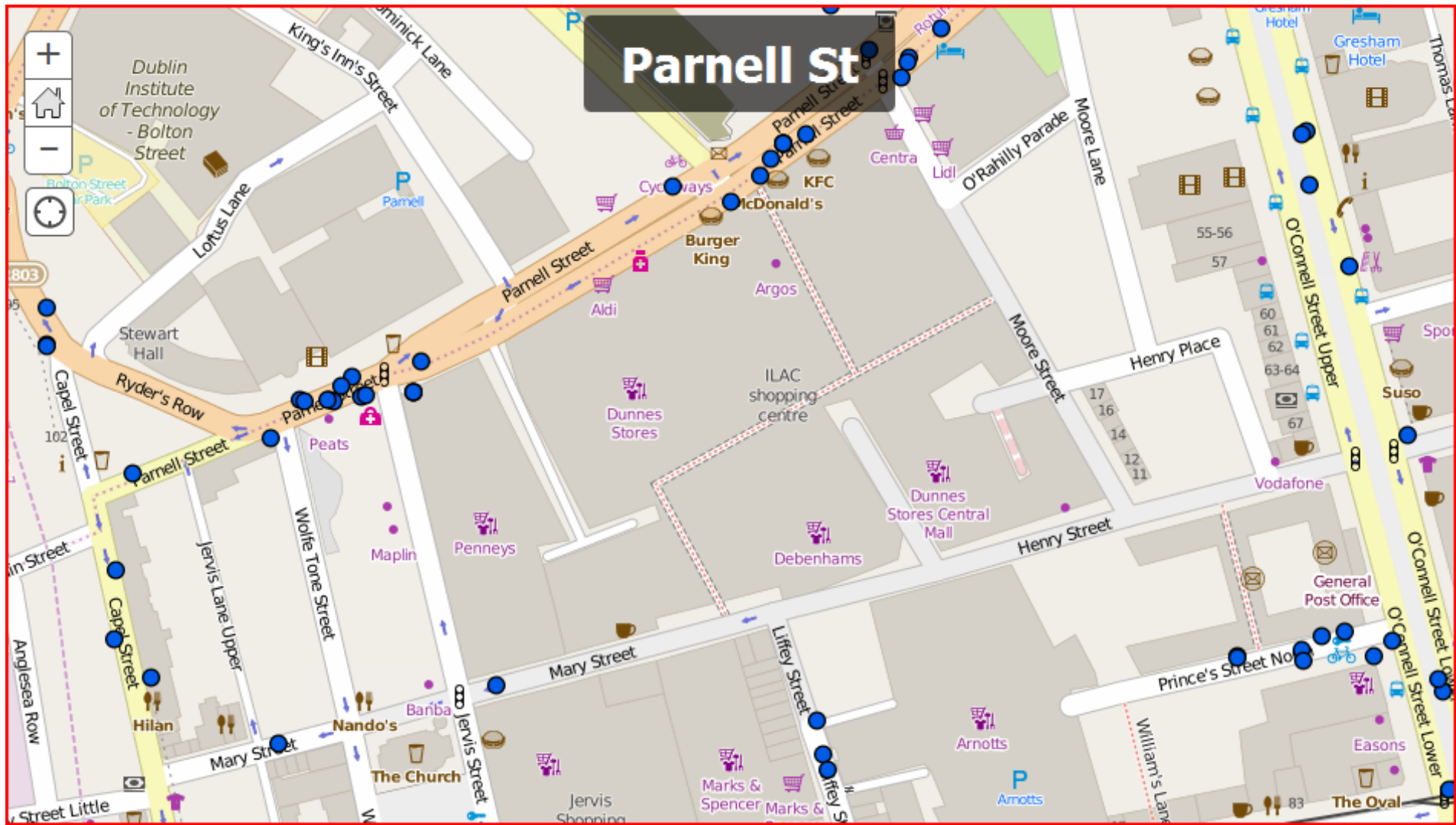
# Stephen`s Green & North King`s Street



# George`s st, South William St, Drury st



# Parnell st



# Some comments from the survey

## On bike theft

"Bike theft is rampant. I`d love to cycle to more places if I didn't think my bike would be stolen"

"Am very careful & still have had 3 bikes stolen. Everyone I know that cycles has had bicycles stolen. "

## On bike parking

"Drury street is great but we need much more secure bike parking places in city including the Northside"

"Much more on street bike racks. Often I cant find a place to lock my bike and end up locking to railings"

# Some comments from the survey

## On Garda action

"Gardai don` t take bike theft seriously. If this was car theft Guards would be all over it"

## On bike locking

"At all bike stands we should have: 1. Signs warning of bike theft & 2. Advice on best locking practices."

"Owners have to take responsibility too. Get a better lock! Double lock! Watch what you lock it to!"



# Bike Theft campaign

THE IRISH TIMES

Sun, Feb 8, 2015

NEWS

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## Just 4% of bikes stolen in Dublin are recovered - survey

Trinity college a 'hot spot' for bicycle theft, Dublin Cycling Campaign survey finds



The Dublin Cycling Campaign is calling for the establishment of a working group co-ordinated by Dublin City Council to develop a scheme to reduce bike theft in the city. File photograph: Cyril Byrne/The Irish Times

### Morning Ireland

#### Cyclists urged to be cautious with bikes, even at home

Listen



David Timoney from the Dublin Cycling Campaign, says a new survey show bikes are as vulnerable to theft in car parks and homes as they are on the street

## Cycling campaign chief has bike robbed - while meeting council about bike thefts



Independent.ie Newsdesk

PUBLISHED

06/02/2015 | 09:56

EMAIL



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Cycling campaign chief has bike robbed - while meeting council about bike thefts

A member of the Dublin Cycling Campaign who was surveying bike thefts had his own bike stolen while meeting with Dublin City Council about the issue

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CONVICTION RATE FOR BIKE THEFT 2%

What happens now?

# What the solution will look like

## **Education**

- Public information campaign

## **Enforcement**

- Better deterrence and detection

## **Engineering**

- More provision of secure bike parking
- Codes of practice for web sites & bike shops

## **Evaluation**

- Tracking and measuring of the campaign goals



# What can be done now?

| What                        | Detail   | Who                 |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Bike theft working group    | Group with stakeholders                        | City Council        |
| Surveillance, detection etc | Bait bikes, visible presence at hotspots etc   | Gardai              |
| Communications campaign     | Locking, bike details, reporting etc.          | Council/DCC         |
| E-record of bike details    | Email/invoice to buyers                        | Bike shops          |
| On-line selling changes     | Tighter code for buyers/sellers                | Web sites           |
| Better locks                | `Silver` or `Gold` grade locks ,no cable locks | Cyclists/bike shops |
| Warnings at hotspots        | Information at bike racks on bike locking      | City Council        |

# What can be done in the medium term

| What                          | Detail  | Who               |
|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Bike register                 | All new bikes on register                             | Dept of Transport |
| State run co-ordinating group | State body to drive forward an agreed approach        | Dept of Transport |
| Car parks (private)           | More secure bike parking                              | City Council      |
| Bike to work                  | Mandatory registration & `Silver` bike lock with sale | Dept of Finance   |
| Evaluation                    | Evaluations based on surveys and/or focus groups.     | External          |

# What can you do?

| What                    | Detail   |
|-------------------------|--|
| Bike registration       | Review current solutions from around the world                         |
| Communications campaign | Develop the elements of a publicity campaign for bike theft            |
| Lobbying                | Put together an effective communication plan to public representatives |
| Social Media            | Support and expand the work the campaign currently do                  |

# The solution has been known for a long time...

Irish Independent 1905-current \*, 30.11.1936, page 11

## CYCLE STEALING IN DUBLIN — INCREASED NUMBER OF OFFENCES — ADVICE TO OWNERS

Every month sees an increase in cycling in the city, and most owners constantly are in dread of a thief. Most continental cities provide parking in bike parks free of charge or for a nominal fee, the parking stands being in the charge of an official, who gives a numbered disk to the owner after locking his bike in a bracket. Bicycle thefts in these cities were very uncommon as a result.

The principal places of larceny are outside shops, churches and offices where bicycles are left unlocked and unattended. A lock can be purchased for 3d and in the past 3 years only 1 bike was stolen that was locked.

Registration of bicycles on the lines of motor vehicles has been suggested as a means of checking larcenies.

Supervised/secure bike parking

Better locks

Bike registration