

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Research and Evidence

Neighbourhood and Home Watch

- Started in Mollington, Cheshire in 1982 where the crime prevention mechanism came over from the USA. 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of Neighbourhood Watch in the USA.
- Neighbourhood & Home Watch effective in 79% of cases¹
- Neighbourhood & Home Watch associated with a crime reduction of 16%-26%²
- Some areas (approximately 10% of members) are known as Home Watch. It is the same as Neighbourhood Watch but with just different branding.
- All schemes are community owned and driven and work in partnership with other likeminded organisation, especially with the police.
- Trusted and well know brand - Only 1% of the public had never heard of Neighbourhood Watch in 2000, compared to 6% in 1992. ³
- The movement saw an increase in membership in the 1990's, but the membership appears to be falling in recent years with 14% of adults being members. ⁴ However, the movement places themselves on average in 17% of households [please note that there are variances in counting methodology and recording and may differ over time. The Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network are working with members to collate a definitive national database which drives the postcode search on www.ourwatch.org.uk to find your nearest scheme].⁵
- Membership is more prevalent in affluent area – 25% of adults compared with 6% in the most deprived areas. ⁶
- British Crime Survey (2009) places Neighbourhood and Home Watch (NHW) with 3.8 million households as members but this does not include all of the other types of 'watches' including countryside watch, boat watch, horse watch etc.
- NHW membership demographic goes against the national trend and has more males (56%) volunteering compared to women. This increases to 62% when looking at the coordinators role.⁷
- 84% of members are aged 50 years or above and 89% of coordinators⁸.
- The national office for Neighbourhood and Home Watch opened in May 2010 and is called the Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network (NHWN) and covers England and Wales. The team of five members of staff work to the board of trustees, whom are the legal guardians for the movement and ensure that adequate support and tools are available for the independent members.⁹

¹ Slatter, R. (2009) Measuring the Effectiveness of Neighbourhood Watch

² Bennett, Holloway and Farrington 2008

³ Home Office (2001), British Crime Survey

⁴ 2010-11 Crime Survey for England and Wales. Please note that the methodologies behind the calculations may vary between the two time periods, which is why the membership figures of the two periods may not be directly comparable.

⁵ The Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network (England and Wales) internal membership audit (04/08/2014)

⁶ Office for National Statistics (2012), Crime Survey for England and Wales 2011/12

⁷ The Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network (England and Wales) (2014) Evaluation of Neighbourhood and Home Watch. Unpublished

⁸ ibid

⁹ www.ourwatch.org.uk



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To operate as a successful informal social control mechanism in communities, there needs to be four basic principles:

- 1) Members must act as the 'eyes and ears of the police'
- 2) Signs and stickers should be used and displayed to indicate Neighbourhood Watch operates in a particular area to act as a situational crime prevention mechanism to warn potential offenders
- 3) Members should give advice on ways to improve security of person and property
- 4) Members must mobilise to look out for one another and apply informal social control methods on those who might offend in their community¹⁰

What influenced you to join your local NHW scheme?

- 1) To interact with my community and reduce crime – 61%
- 2) To give something back to my community – 15%
- 3) Other – 10%
- 4) To interact with friends and neighbours – 10%
- 5) I enjoy working with and helping people – 4%¹¹

How strongly do you agree or disagree with this statement? NHW increase community interaction among residents

Agree – 38%

Somewhat agree – 36%

Strongly agree – 20% (all three combined = 94%)

Disagree – 6%

Strongly disagree – 0%¹²

90% believe that NHW reduces crime.¹³

General community engagement and participation

- ❖ 66% of the public felt that they could play a role in tackling or preventing crime.
 - ❖ 29% would feel encouraged to help reduce crime if they had more information about how to get involved.
 - ❖ 19% wanted more schemes to get involved with.
 - ❖ 17% simply wished to be approached¹⁴.
- Police need to be better at enabling the public to participate in policing. In 2011, police beat meetings became a statutory requirement. Only 3% had attended one in 2011-12.¹⁵

¹⁰ Tilley, N. (2009) Crime Prevention. United Kingdom: Willan Publishing

¹¹ Shaid, S. (2014) City University London

¹² ibid

¹³ ibid

¹⁴ Casey, L. (2008), Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime

¹⁵ ONS (2012), Crime Survey for England and Wales 2011/12



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- 60% of adults already engage with the police and crime prevention through, either, the use of crime maps, the 101 non-emergency number, Neighbourhood Watch membership, and/or attending beat meetings; as much as 40% of adults do not.¹⁶

Decline in people who chat to their neighbours at least once a month (2012-13 / 2013/14):

- Females - declined from 80% to 74%
- Males - declined from 80% to 77%
- Most chatty – 65 to 74 year olds
- Least chatty – 16 to 24 year olds
- North West – most chatty region last year with Yorkshire and Humberside now being top
- London – Least chatty for last year and this year¹⁷

Domestic household security

Reasons for not having home security devices¹⁸

| Percentage | Burglar Alarm | Double/deadlocks on outside doors | Window Locks |
|---|---------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Home is Rented (security is responsibility of landlord) | 21 | 36 | 41 |
| Don't think home is at risk | 22 | 18 | 17 |
| Haven't got around to it/never thought about it | 19 | 15 | 13 |
| Too expensive | 12 | 6 | 6 |
| Have dog or other animal in the house | 12 | 5 | NA |
| The reminder have not been noted here as too small a % | | | |

- People with Secured by Design products and materials are half as likely to be burgled, with a 25% reduction in criminal damage.¹⁹
- Based on the Greater Manchester Police pilots, 'Super Cocooning' reduces burglaries by 27% in the first year and 42% in high risk areas²⁰.

Perceptions of the police

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics (2011), Crime Survey for England and Wales 2011.

¹⁷ Cabinet Office (2014) Community Life Survey, England 2013/14

¹⁸ ONS (2012) Crime Survey of England and Wales 2011/12

¹⁹ Glasgow Caledonian University, 2009.

²⁰ Chainey, S. (2012) JDI Briefs: Predicting mapping (predictive policing), UCL Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science



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“When thinking about the role of the police, which of the following roles should be the most important part of the police’s role?”²¹

- Preventing crime top (34%) most but when combined to second and third choose, helping those in immediate danger came top with 76%, investigating offences and catching criminals second with 73% and preventing crime, third with 70%
- Interaction with the police is declining – 1981, 43% of contact with the police was initiated by the public. 2005-06, 27%. ²²

Crime trends

Cyber Crime

- Estimated cost to UK economy approx. £27b a year, with the true cost being much greater. The cost to UK citizens is estimated to be £3.1 b a year, mainly from identity theft and online fraud.²³
- Only 25 out of 41 Police and Crime Commissioners consider cyber-crime as a threat in their Strategic Threat and Risk Assessments²⁴.

Vehicle Crime

- Vehicle crime reduced by 71% across England and Wales since 2001 to 2013, as opportunities decreased due to designing out crime with central locking, immobilisers, tracking devices and alarms.²⁵

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<http://irissproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/D3.2-Surveillance-Impact-report1.pdf>

²¹ Populous polling data commissioned by Reform

²² ONS (2006), Crime Survey for England and Wales 2005-06

²³ Detica (2011), the Cost of Cyber Crime

²⁴ Winsor, T. (2014), The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of the arrangements that police forces have put in place to meet the Strategic Policing Requirement, HMIC

²⁵ Farrell, G et al. (2011), “The Crime Drop and the Security Hypothesis”. Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency.

