

KEEP IT SAFE, KEEP IT LOCKED

LET'S KEEP
CRIME
DOWN

WHAT IS NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH?

Neighbourhood Watch is one of the biggest and most successful voluntary crime prevention initiatives. Sometimes known as Home Watch, it originated in the United States and in the early 1980s came to the UK, where it quickly became very popular. Neighbourhood Watch is based around the idea of an active community working in partnership with local partners. At its most basic level, Neighbourhood Watch consists of a group of neighbours getting together to help reduce crime where they live and make their community safer.

Once the scheme has been set up, the co-ordinator may wish to take a more active role by assisting the Police, local authorities and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships by:

- supplying individual households with stickers for doors and windows as well as incident report cards or memo pads if they are available;
- passing information between the police and individual households;
- circulating newsletters, leaflets and any equipment available to members, such as property-marking kits;
- encouraging members to inform the police quickly of suspicious and criminal incidents;
- keeping in touch with other schemes in the area;
- monitoring the scheme's activities and keeping an eye out for vulnerable households and newcomers;
- identifying local environmental problems and reporting these to the local authority.

For further information please visit:

- The official Neighbourhood & Home Watch site www.mynhw.co.uk
- The Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds
- www.direct.gov.uk/neighbourhoodpolicing for details of your neighbourhood policing team.



Home Office

Home Office

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- to prevent crime by improving security, increasing vigilance, creating and maintaining a caring community and reducing opportunities for crime by increasing crime prevention awareness;
- to assist the police in detecting crime by promoting prompt reporting of suspicious and criminal activity;
- to reduce undue fear of crime by providing accurate information about risks and by promoting a sense of security and community spirit, particularly among the more vulnerable members of the community; and
- to improve communication between local residents and crime reduction services.

A popular initiative, Neighbourhood Watch has become the largest voluntary community safety organisation across the UK, with an estimated 10 million members. The 2008 British Crime Survey across England and Wales showed that:

- Neighbourhood Watch covered approximately 3.8 million households;
- an estimated 16 per cent of households were members of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme; and
- 75 per cent of households who were not members said they would join a scheme if there was one in the local area.

For more information, see the Home Office Research Development Statistics website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds



What is involved in setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme?

The first thing to do is to contact your local police station, who will be able to put you in touch with an established scheme, (if there is one in your area) and with your local Neighbourhood Watch association. If there is no established scheme in your area and others in your neighbourhood are also interested, the police will be able to arrange for a scheme to be set up. To assist in maintaining the scheme, someone will have to volunteer to take on the role of the coordinator. The coordinator is central to the success of the scheme.

His or her role involves:

- contacting individual households in the neighbourhood and arranging meetings to discuss setting up a scheme;
- setting up and maintaining a Neighbourhood Watch scheme within a specific area;
- conducting a local crime survey to ask residents how they perceive crime in the area and what would help make them feel safer;
- communicating relevant police information on crime in the area to the scheme members;
- communicating information from members to the police; and
- acting as the link between the scheme, other coordinators, the local police, the local Neighbourhood Watch association and the local authority.