

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Crime Statistics — Hampstead Garden Suburb

Since 1 August 1988 attempts have been made to record and analyse Suburb crime. The first attempt was for an odd period from 1 August to 21 October 1988 and was carried out as an experiment. The results which were broken down by Neighbourhood Watch areas were so interesting, however, that an analysis is now carried out each quarter and distributed to all 41 Suburb Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinates for their use in determining priorities and communicating lessons to members of their watches.

There are two major areas of crime in the Suburb which can be conveniently grouped under the two headings 'Attempted Burglary and Burglary' and 'Vehicle Crime'.

Figures under these headings for the four periods so far analysed are:

| | Att. Burglary and Burglary | Vehicle Crime |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 Aug-21 Oct '88 (12 weeks) | 60 | 86 |
| Last quarter '88 (1 Oct-31 Dec) | 60 | 53 |
| 1st quarter '89 (1 Jan-31 Mar) | 50 | 52 |
| 2nd quarter '89 (1 Apr-30 June) | 47 | 122 |
| Totals | 217 | 313 |

Some conclusions are:

* **Attempted Burglary and Burglary** would appear to be lessening although 217 of these crimes in same 12 months is still far too many;

* **Vehicle Crime** is erratic but far too high. And the figure of 313 is probably an underestimate when it is borne in mind that many people are not concerned if their company cars are stolen, broken into or vandalised on the principle that their companies and company insurance will sort it out for them! Consequently many incidents of vehicle crime are unreported.

But these figures can be further broken down as follows:

| | Attempted Burglary and Burglary | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| | In N.W. Areas | In other Suburb areas | Totals |
| 1 Aug-21 Oct '88 | 56 (93.3%) | 4 (6.7%) | 60 |
| Last quarter '88 | 52 (86.7%) | 8 (13.3%) | 60 |
| 1st quarter '89 | 38 (76.0%) | 12 (24.0%) | 50 |
| 2nd quarter '89 | 32 (68.1%) | 15 (31.9%) | 47 |
| Totals | 178 | 39 | 217 |

Conclusions from these figures would seem to suggest that as Suburb Neighbourhood Watches are becoming increasingly effective, burglaries in Neighbourhood Watch areas are falling dramatically. But this could be causing the remaining parts of the Suburb NOT covered by Neighbourhood Watch to be increasingly at risk. As more and more Neighbourhood Watches are formed, the area of the Suburb NOT covered by Neighbourhood Watch is decreasing. And yet attempted burglaries and burglaries in this area have increased substantially.

It is well known that burglars shy away from houses that have Marked Property stickers



displayed and so, as more and more Neighbourhood Watch members get their property marked, the attempted burglaries and burglaries in Neighbourhood Watch areas will become less and

less. And while, hopefully, this trend will continue for the Suburb as a whole, nevertheless burglars will be increasingly attracted to the 8% of Suburb houses and the 65% of Suburb flats not covered by Neighbourhood Watch. The sooner these parts of the Suburb join Neighbourhood Watch the better.

Some conclusions are:

* the fact that no wheels have been removed during the first half of 1989 is encouraging. May be the gangs that stole vehicle wheels have been caught, or maybe they are hunting elsewhere;

* the stealing of property from vehicles would appear to be increasing and Radio/Cassette

players and associated electronic equipment are particularly in demand;

* general vandalism of cars — bending aerials, breaking wing mirrors, bending windscreen wipers and scratching paintwork — would appear to be on the increase especially in areas near to Underground stations and public houses.

With the exception of vandalism, much of this vehicle crime could be prevented by

| | Vehicle Crime | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------|
| | Vehicles stolen | Radio/Cassette stolen | Other property stolen | Wheels removed | Criminal damage vehicle | Totals |
| 1 Aug-21 Oct '88 | 11 | 19 | 25 | 3 | 28 | 86 |
| Last quarter '88 | 1 | 19 | 10 | 2 | 21 | 53 |
| 1st quarter '89 | 9 | 31 | 8 | — | 4 | 52 |
| 2nd quarter '89 | 11 | 45 | 23 | — | 43 | 122 |
| Totals | 32 | 114 | 66 | 5 | 96 | 313 |

fitting a good car alarm activated by movement inside the car. But, of course, this presupposes that the car alarm is switched on. In many cases of vehicle crime over the past year, cars were not even locked!

Overall conclusions

These figures are for only three full quarters and an overlapping experimental period and any conclusions drawn from them must be treated as tentative. Nevertheless, from these figures and, indeed, from all that has been written about Neighbourhood Watch over the last two years, it should be apparent to all Suburb residents that we, the 41 Co-ordinates of Suburb Neighbourhood Watches and the 150 Neighbourhood Watch Wardens who assist us, are seriously attempting to rid Hampstead Garden Suburb of crime. As far as the burglar is concerned, we can probably claim to be succeeding, but with vehicle crime we must be much less confident.

However, we could succeed at a much faster rate for the real benefit of all Suburb residents if only:

* residents living in blocks of flats and those few other areas not covered by Neighbourhood Watch would realise how vulnerable they are becoming and form themselves into new Suburb Neighbourhood Watches;

* all households, without exception, who have not yet marked their valuables and other removable property with their postcode and house numbers, would contact their Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators and make arrangements to do so;

* all car owners would:
 — fit car alarms appropriate to the size and type of their cars and the value of electronic equipment, etc. installed in them;
 — hide valuables in the boot;
 — turn on their alarms and lock their cars whenever they are parked; and
 — always report any incident occurring to their cars to the Police by dialling 999 immediately.

Details of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinations are to be found in the yellow 1989-90 Suburb Directory.

Worrall & Reay

Professional
Decorating Service

209-1877 341-9087

Extracts from the Chairman's introduction to the Trust Report for 1988/9

The Trust Paid £77,500 for Ashdale's Interests

No one will dispute that the most important development in the Suburb's recent history has been the purchase by the Trust of the bulk of Ashdale's interests in the Suburb. The move means that the first time since the foundation of the Suburb the vast majority of properties will fall under the Trust's direct jurisdiction.

The significance of this development is that it removes the danger of the possible take-over of the Suburb, either in whole or in part, by a less responsible landlord. The Suburb is indeed fortunate that in Ashdale it had a landlord who was sensitive to the requirements of conservation. It is therefore appropriate that we should express our particular appreciation of the role played by Mr. Robert Vigars, the Director at Ashdale responsible for Suburb affairs since 1969, whose personal contribution to what has been an effective and constructive partnership has been of outstanding importance.

Defending Suburb Interest

The Trust has continued to play its part, in close and friendly cooperation with the Residents Association, in defending the interests of residents and of the Suburb as a whole where its involvement is legitimate. This has been the case over the Henley's Corner Traffic Scheme enquiry, the results of which are now awaited.

It continues to be the case over the London Borough of Barnet's proposed introduction of wheeled refuse bins. The pressure brought to bear on Barnet by the RA and the Trust acting together was directly responsible for Barnet's eventual and belated decision

to hold a public meeting at the Institute last autumn. As a result Barnet agreed to a joint survey of those properties where difficulties are most likely to be encountered.

That survey, in which the Trust Manager has been taking part alongside RA representatives, is likely to confirm that Barnet, has substantially underestimated the problems which will arise, thus throwing doubt on the financial assumptions on which the scheme is based.

Planning Matters

The Trust readily recognises that some residents find the Trust's rejection of their applications for planning consent or its requests for modification of the plans difficult to understand. Some see the Trust as excessively fussy about details and occasionally inconsistent in its decisions. The Trust appreciates that it can only effectively pursue its objectives through the cooperation and understanding of residents. Most residents claim quite sincerely that they support the Trust's objectives and guidelines. It is when these are applied to their own properties that difficulties start to arise. Good architecture is, in the first place, a matter of getting details, proportions and relationships right. Moreover individual houses have a character of their own, intended by the original architect, so that a modification or extension which may be perfectly

acceptable in one is not necessarily so in its neighbour.

There are three eminent architects on the Trust Council, all of whom regularly attend the meetings of the Properties and Plans Committee, where detailed consideration of planning applications takes place, as well as those of the Trust Council itself, where the final decisions are taken. Their judgement as architects is crucial to every decision, and they spend a considerable time, in difficult cases, in assessing the acceptability or otherwise of the plans put before them. That their judgement may occasionally conflict with the wishes of individual residents is inevitable. Residents need to bear in mind that while the Trust's purpose is not to inhibit change of any kind and to turn the Suburb into a museum, its function is to control change in such a way as to ensure that modifications and extensions to buildings are in character and properly designed, that they do not amount to overdevelopment of the site or adversely affect the amenities of neighbours, and that they respect the known intention of the founders and original designers of the Suburb. Only such a policy carefully and sympathetically pursued over the years, is capable of preserving the Suburb as the delightful place to live in which we all know it to be. There is too much visible evidence of the damage caused in the distant past by slack inconsistent controls for this to be in any doubt. As William Morris put it, writing in 1889 "It has been most truly said that these old buildings do not belong to us only; that they belonged to our forefathers and they will belong to our descendants unless we play them false. They are not in any sense our property to do what we like with them. We are only trustees for those that come after us."



The New Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Limited
 862 Finchley Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6AE
 Telephone: 01-455 1066 & 458 8085

Gerard Mansell
 Chairman

18th July 1989