

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



Crime on the Suburb

The fear of crime

Many of us are probably aware that people's fear of crime often bears no correlation to its actual incidence. A recent police factsheet has quantified this in a most interesting way, summing it up in the statement, 'While young men have a 1 in 83 risk of being assaulted in a year, only 1 in 50 feel very unsafe. Yet 1 in 3 older women feel very unsafe, with an annual risk of assault of 1 in 4,000.'

A recent qualitative study among Suburb residents has demonstrated that this fear of crime is equally felt by people living here, where it was stated: 'the crime rate was also a source of worry for many.' This is in spite of the fact that Suburb crime is low compared to other areas and low compared to the situation ten years ago.

Communication and its results

The problem for Neighbourhood Watch is how to communicate the true facts about the crime situation on the Suburb - the types of crime and the levels of these crimes - in such a way as to dispel the fear of crime but also to persuade people to take action to protect themselves, their homes, their cars and other possessions. We have been trying to do this for the past ten or more years through Neighbourhood Watch meetings, newsletters and through this column. But with what results? Ten years ago, the

NW11 and N2 postal districts were among those with the highest burglary rates in London and with correspondingly high rates of vehicle and other crime, too. However, in a survey carried out in mid-1992 where all London postal districts were divided into ten areas of burglary risk, NW11 was in the lowest and N2 in the second lowest. And these burglary risk levels have certainly not changed significantly over the last four years.

The facts of crime

These results have not been brought about by chance but because a large number of people in this area have heeded the advice which they have received and taken sensible security precautions. But, although much lower than in the past, we have still had 922 crimes committed in this police beat over the past twelve months (September 1995

to August 1996) as follows:

Attempted murder	1
Threat to murder	1
Rape	1
Attempted rape	1
Indecent assault	1
Theft person - snatch	8
Robbery (i.e. mugging)	10
Bodily harm	15
Drugs possession	15
* Common assault	16
Indecent exposure	17
Other theft generally	59
Theft of vehicle	78
Criminal damage to vehicle	101
+ Other miscellaneous crime	109
Burglary	170
Theft from vehicle	304
Other vehicle crime	15

* Mostly young men brawling outside pubs.
+ Such as 'Criminal damage', 'Arson', 'Handling stolen

goods', 'Absconding on bail', 'Possession of an offensive weapon', 'Threatening behaviour', 'Threatening phone calls'.

Some conclusions

From the above, it will be seen that crimes of murder, rape or mugging are thankfully rare; vehicle crimes generally are far too high; the number of burglaries fall in between. But, all in all, these 922 crimes are far too many, especially when it is realised that at least three-quarters of the burglaries and vehicle crimes took place needlessly through the carelessness or forgetfulness of the victims.

Herein lies the great problem for Neighbourhood Watch! The police and Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators can tell everyone precisely what they need to do to protect their homes and their cars. But as this is a free country,

we can only try to persuade. We have no powers to force anyone to do anything. We cannot save a fool from his folly - folly which then puts us all at risk by encouraging more criminals to work in this area. To take the highest crime category as an example, the theft from cars of radio/cassettes, car phones, camcorders, briefcases, jackets, handbags, wallets, money, credit cards, wheels, even television sets - all left in cars for all to see and just asking to be removed by forcing open a car door or by a brick through the window. Why do people leave these temptations in full view in their cars? Why don't people take sensible steps to secure their property?

One answer may be what might be called the 'It won't happen to me' syndrome! However, it is questionable whether those of us in Neighbourhood Watch are competent to elaborate on this.

Perhaps there is a qualified psychologist somewhere on the Suburb who could help?

But if only we could crack this one, there is no reason whatever why we could not cut our crime level to half of what it is at present. And in any case, even the present level of crime certainly does not warrant anyone on the Suburb being fearful or conscious of the crime rate as a source of worry.

Peter Loyd



"I THINK THEY'RE READING TOO MUCH INTO THE SUBURB CRIME STATISTICS!"

Concert sell-out

It was standing room only at the North London Hospice on 18 September for a concert given by students of the Purcell School of Music - brother and sister, Jamie and Emily Pringle, accompanied by Anthony Ingham on the piano. This was one in a series of 'At Home' evenings organised by the hospice fund-raising staff, bringing members of the community into the hospice for an evening of entertainment. The programme included works by Schubert, Paganini, Brahms and Tchaikovsky. The reception afterwards was held in the hospice day care centre.

Other hospice 'At Home' evenings have included a talk on the Globe Theatre by Humphrey Burton, and coming up is an evening with Martin Bell, journalist and war correspondent, but this is also sold out!

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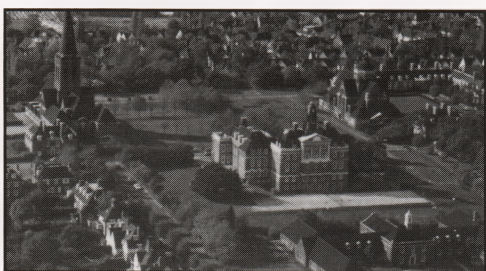
To the Members of THE NEW HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB TRUST LIMITED

Notice pursuant to Article 30(6) of the Company's Articles of Association

Following the election to fill two vacancies on the Trust Council we hereby declare that:

- (a) the number of valid voting papers received was 515;
- (b) the number of voting papers rejected was 15;
- (c) the number of votes cast for each Candidate was:

EDWARD CAPLIN	293
MERVYN MANDELL	366
LORNA PAGE	278
- (d) EDWARD CAPLIN and MERVYN MANDELL have been duly Elected Members of Council.



Aerial colour photographs of the area around Central Square are amongst a large range of cards available from the Garden Suburb Gallery.



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GRIFFIN STONE, MOSCROP & CO
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