



Understanding and Demonstrating the Impact of Neighbourhood Watch

1. Introduction

1.1 In this document we set out how Neighbourhood Watch groups can collect information from their members and residents by using the Neighbourhood Watch Impact Assessment Tool that will enable them to understand where they can make positive changes in their community and demonstrate the impact of this activity.

2. What do we mean by impact?

2.1 'Impact' in this context means demonstrating that a change has taken place as a result of some activity.

3. Why do we need to understand impact?

- Understanding where Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and members can make a positive difference and what they need to do to achieve this helps them to target their activity to achieve a positive impact in their local areas.
- By identifying where positive impacts are being achieved Neighbourhood Watch can share what local coordinators are doing in those areas to help others.
- Providing Neighbourhood Watch groups with a means to measure the impact of what they are proposing to do helps support funding bids and evidence to funders, the local community and partners that their project or activity has been successful in making a difference.
- Coordinators and members are better motivated and engaged if they can show they are making a difference to their community.

4. Neighbourhood Watch Impacts

4.1 Work by University College London (UCL) on behalf of Neighbourhood Watch Network and research with other charities has mapped out the possible impacts of Neighbourhood Watch activity. These are:-

- Decreased perceptions and fear of crime
- Reduction in levels of crime
- Increased willingness of communities to act together
- Increased neighbourliness
- Reduced feelings of loneliness.

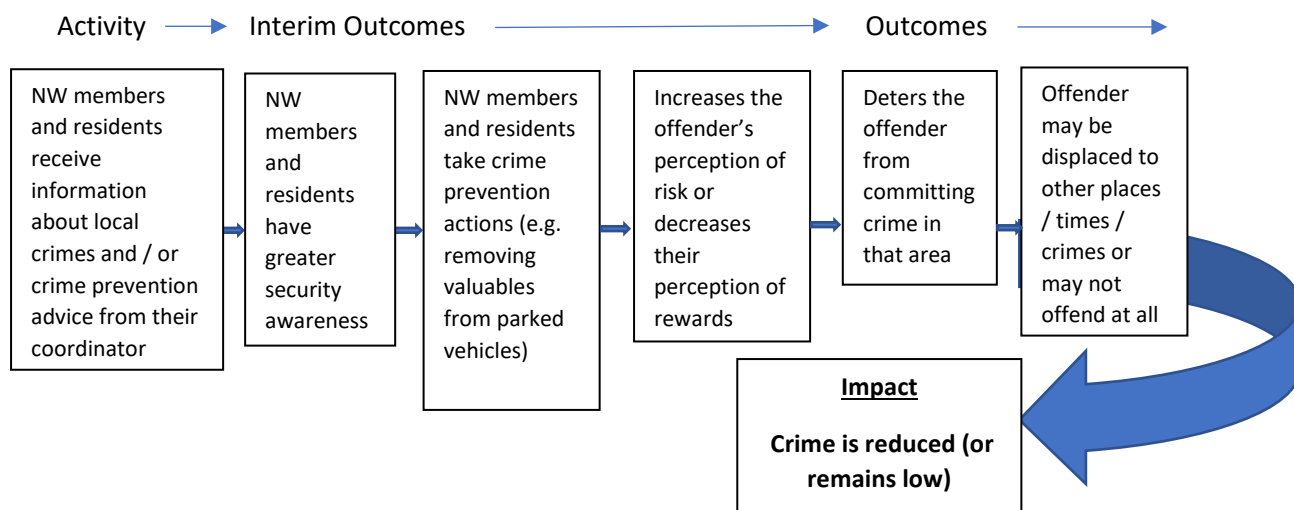
5. Theories of Change

5.1 Theories of change are process maps that set out the steps from the activity to the impact. Some of the above potential impacts of Neighbourhood Watch are supported by theories of change that you can find in the full UCL report

(<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/knowledge/evidencing-the-impact-of-neighbourhood->

[watch/](https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/knowledge/evidencing-the-impact-of-neighbourhood-watch/)). These theories of change help identify what Neighbourhood Watch groups can do to help achieve the impact.

5.2 For example, in order to make an impact on crime reduction:-



5.3 In simple terms, for Neighbourhood Watch to achieve the expected impact on crime reduction the following actions need to be taken by Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and their members and residents: -

- Information about relevant crimes and how to prevent them needs to be circulated to members and residents
- Members and residents need to act on the information they receive

5.4 Understanding these theories of change can help you better articulate the role that Neighbourhood Watch can have in making this impact when encouraging coordinators or your members to take some action or explaining to funders, partners and your local community members how Neighbourhood Watch can make a difference in their communities.

5.5 For other theories of change please see the full UCL document at <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/knowledge/evidencing-the-impact-of-neighbourhood-watch/>)

6. Evidencing impact

6.1 We have prepared a bank of questions relating to perceptions and fear of crime, crime victimisation, collective efficacy (the willingness of communities to work together) and neighbourliness that can be used by Neighbourhood Watch groups in their local surveys with Neighbourhood Watch members and residents. The questions have been designed to help Neighbourhood Watch groups to understand the issues affecting their local community and where activity by Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and their members may be having a positive impact.

- 6.2 In addition, the What Works Centre for Wellbeing has developed guidance and a survey tool for measuring loneliness. (<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/knowledge/guide-to-measuring-loneliness-for-charities/>). Certain questions from this survey tool have been integrated into the question bank to enable Neighbourhood Watch groups to understand levels of loneliness in their local areas and measure the impact of their activity to combat it.
- 6.3 Questions from the ‘bank’ have been pulled together into a ready-made survey that local Neighbourhood Watch groups can use with their members and residents to understand how they can make an impact locally. The **Neighbourhood Watch Impact Assessment Tool** (Annex A) contains all questions from the ‘bank’ grouped into three sections: -
- **Perceptions and experience of crime** – to help you understand levels of crime victimisation, fear of crime and feelings of safety of residents and the impact of crime prevention and reassurance activity by Neighbourhood Watch groups.
 - **Neighbourliness** – To help you understand levels of neighbourliness, community cohesion and loneliness in your local community and the impact of activity by Neighbourhood Watch groups to bring their community together to support each other.
 - **Neighbourhood Watch reach and diversity** - to help you understand the current reach and diversity of your Neighbourhood Watch membership and the impact of any activity you take to diversify and grow your membership.
- 6.5 Each of these sections is also available as a shorter survey for areas that wish to focus on a particular area of impact, for example to evidence the impact of their activity to grow and diversify their membership.

7. What needs to be in place to make the impact that you wish to achieve?

7.1 There are certain fundamental factors that need to be in place for NW to have an impact in communities.

7.1.1 Neighbourhood Watch needs to be **present** in the communities where there is a need for change and to reach people who are most in need of support.

Using the Neighbourhood Watch Reach and Diversity survey will enable you to understand whether people from different communities / of different ages or gender or living in particular accommodation types are Neighbourhood Watch members and / or have a greater need of support from Neighbourhood Watch. This will help you target your activity in areas of need or to increase Neighbourhood Watch membership in communities where no Neighbourhood Watch scheme is operating.

7.1.2 Neighbourhood Watch needs to be **active** in the communities where there is a need for change.

Developing a local means of measuring Neighbourhood Watch activity (e.g. number and location of schemes, diversity of your members, frequency of information disseminated, number of relevant projects, reports to the police, etc.) can assist you to understand whether the necessary factors are in place to lead to the outcomes you are looking to achieve.

- 7.1.3 Neighbourhood Watch activity and communications need to be **relevant** to the issue being tackled those who are affected.

Results from the Impact Assessment Surveys may identify where there are local areas or people or communities with high fear of crime, loneliness or lack support between neighbours etc. and help you to understand where you need to act. Clearly identifying the issue that you are trying to tackle and who is most affected will enable you to decide on your activities and adapt the content of your communications and the means by which they are delivered. These activities can take many forms, but you need to be clear about the impact that you are trying to achieve and what activities are going to make that change. The relevant Theory of Change may assist you decide what action to take in these areas.

8. Using the Neighbourhood Watch Impact Assessment Tool

- 8.1 Neighbourhood Watch groups that have access to a local survey tool are free to use the question bank at Annex A to develop a survey or surveys to suit their particular needs and analyse the results themselves if they wish.
- 8.2 Alternatively a free subscription to Survey Monkey allows you to send a survey of up to 10 questions to an unlimited number of people, but limits the number responses you may receive back to 100.
- 8.3 To assist local Neighbourhood Watch areas that don't have access to a local survey tool or aren't comfortable using on line survey tools, the Central Support Team will send you a link to the survey that you can then circulate to local Neighbourhood Watch members and/or residents via e-mail or social media for them to complete using the Central Support Team survey tools. You can request the Impact Assessment survey link by e-mailing enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk . Please specify the area (force area, district, town, village etc.) that you wish to send the survey to and the date that you would like the survey to close (generally after three weeks or so).
- 8.4 Once your responses have come in the Central Support Team will send you a link so you can access a simple analysis of these results. If you wish more information or help to interpret the results please send your request to enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk and a member of the Team will get back to you.
- 8.5 The surveys can be downloaded for use as a hard copies if preferred. It is, however, recommended that the use of hard copy surveys is limited to small areas (e.g. streets) to enable the results to be analysed locally.

9. How to use the results of the Impact Assessment Tool

- 9.1 Conducting a full Neighbourhood Watch Impact Assessment survey in an area before any activity is undertaken by Neighbourhood Watch groups will give a benchmark of residents' perceptions and experience and identify where crime prevention or community support activity by Neighbourhood would be beneficial.
- 9.2 Respondents are asked whether they are a member of Neighbourhood Watch or live in a Neighbourhood Watch area. Comparing results between respondents who are

Neighbourhood Watch members or who live in an area where NW is active with those respondents that are not NW members or not living in a NW Watch area can show any differences in people's experiences of crime and neighbourliness and help show where Neighbourhood Watch makes an impact.

- 9.3 Should results indicate that there are crimes or other issues of particular concern for residents, perceptions of a lack of cohesion within local communities or local people feeling lonely and isolated, then activity to target these concerns can be undertaken by NW groups.
- 9.4 Conducting the survey and / or sharing the results with local partners may support greater partnership working to address issues of mutual concern.
- 9.5 The survey can then be repeated over time – either in full or just concentrating on the areas of concern being targeted by local activity. This will allow NW associations, coordinators, NW members and local residents to see what is working and what may need more emphasis going forward. This can be useful and motivating for all involved.
- 9.6 Sharing successful approaches that have had a positive impact with the NWN Central Support Team or on the Inspiration database (<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/inspiration/>) can help other Neighbourhood Watch groups with their own activity and contribute to a wider understanding of the collective impact of NW at a national level.

Neighbourhood Watch Impact Question Bank

Annex A

This survey is being administered by <a Neighbourhood Watch group local to you>.

The purpose of the survey is to collect information and data to better understand the diversity and reach of Neighbourhood Watch and its effectiveness in reducing crime and the fear of crime in this area and supporting a more neighbourly community. The data will be used by Neighbourhood Watch to target our activity to make Neighbourhood Watch membership more inclusive and our activity more effective. All data will be anonymised and will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR 2018.

If you decide to take part you are free to not answer any of the questions without giving a reason. You are also free to withdraw from the survey at any point.

Should you have any questions about this survey please contact <insert name> on <insert telephone number or email address>

Perceptions and Experience of Crime

Q1. Is there a Neighbourhood Watch group covering the area where you live?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

Q2. Are you currently a member of Neighbourhood Watch?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Would prefer not to say

Q3. Do you receive any information from Neighbourhood Watch?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I don't know

Q4. How frequently do you receive the following types of information from your Neighbourhood Watch group?

	Once a month or more	Every three months or so	Every six months or so	Every year or so	Never	I don't know
Details about local crimes						
Prevention advice about fraud and cyber crime						
Prevention advice about home security						
Offers for discounted security equipment						

Advice or information from the national Neighbourhood Watch Team						
Do you receive any other information from Neighbourhood Watch? (please specify)						

Q5. How often have you acted upon the prevention advice given by your Neighbourhood Watch group?

1. Usually
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely
4. Never

Q6. How frequently does your Neighbourhood Watch group / coordinators do the following?

	Once a month or more	Every three months or so	Every six months or so	Every year or so	Never	I don't know
Arrange / run community social events						
Arrange/ conduct crime prevention talks						
Arrange property marking						
Support vulnerable people in the community						
Arrange / support activity to look after the local environment						

Are there any other activities that your Neighbourhood Watch group run? (Please specify)

Q7. In the past year do you think crime levels in your neighbourhood have: -

1. Increased
2. Remained stable
3. Decreased
4. Don't know

Q8. In general, how satisfied are you with your personal safety from crime?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very Dissatisfied
6. I don't know

Q9. How often have you worried about becoming a victim of :-

	Not once in the last month	Once or twice in the past month	Once or twice in the past week	Every day
Having your home broken into and something stolen?				
Having your car stolen?				
Having things stolen from your car?				
Being attacked by a stranger in the street?				
Being robbed or mugged in the street?				
Being harassed, threatened or verbally abused in the street?				
Online crime?				
Other frauds and scams?				
Are there any other crimes you particularly worry about? (Please specify)				

Q10. In the past two years, have you been a victim of any crime?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say

Q11. Taking everything into account how good a job do you think the police IN THIS AREA are doing? (This area being within 15 minutes' walk of where you live)

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Very poor
6. I don't know

Neighbourliness

Q12. Which, of the following things, have you done for your neighbours in the past year (tick all that apply)?

1. Kept an eye on their house when they were on holiday
2. Taken their bins out/put bins away
3. Taken in deliveries/parcels
4. Visited elderly or vulnerable neighbours
5. Helped elderly or vulnerable neighbours with shopping or errands
6. Cleared a walkway (of snow, wet leaves, debris, etc.)
7. None of the above
8. Other (Please specify).....

Q13. How often do you chat to your neighbours, more than just to say hello?

1. On most days
2. Once or twice a week
3. Once or twice a month
4. Less than once a month
5. Never
6. Other (Please specify).....

Q14. How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?

1. Very strongly
2. Fairly strongly
3. Not very strongly
4. Not at all strongly

Q15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
This area has a close, tight-knit community					
This area is a friendly place to live					
This area is a place where local people look after each other					
Most people who live in this area trust one another					

Q16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
If I needed help, there are people who would be there for me					
If anyone around here is causing trouble, local people round here will challenge their behaviour					
If anyone around here is causing trouble, local people will support the police and local agencies to resolve the problem					
The people who live here can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously					
If I sensed trouble whilst in this area, I could get help from people who live here					

Q17. Overall, how satisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very Dissatisfied

Q18. How often do you feel: -

	Hardly ever or never	Occasionally	Some of the time	Often	Always
That you lack companionship?					
Left out?					
Isolated from others?					
Lonely?					

Diversity and Reach

Q19. Which age group do you fall into?

1. 16-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-44
4. 45-54
5. 55-64
6. 65+
7. Prefer not to say

Q20. Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?

1. Female
2. Male
3. In another way (please specify) _____
4. Prefer not to say

Q21. What is your ethnic group?

White

1. English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
2. Irish
3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any other White background, please describe _____

Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups

5. White and Black Caribbean
6. White and Black African
7. White and Asian
8. Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please describe _____

Asian/Asian British

9. Indian
10. Pakistani
11. Bangladeshi
12. Chinese
13. Any other Asian background, please describe _____

Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British

14. African
15. Caribbean
16. Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please describe _____

Other ethnic group

17. Arab
18. Any other ethnic group, please specify _____

Q22. In which of these ways do you occupy your accommodation?

1. Own outright
2. Own with a mortgage
3. Part own and part rent (shared ownership)
4. Rent from private landlord
5. Rent from housing association or local authority
6. Other (Please specify) _____
7. Prefer not to say

Q23. What is your Annual Household Income?

1. Under £20,000

2. Between £20,000 and £39,999
3. Between £40,000 and £59,999
4. Between £60,000 and £100,000
5. Over £100,000
6. Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing our survey

If you are not already a Neighbourhood Watch member and would like more information about Neighbourhood Watch and how to join, please visit our website www.ourwatch.org.uk . If you are interested in starting your own Neighbourhood Watch scheme, you can find help and guidance in our starting a scheme toolkit. <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/crimes-archive/setting-up-and-running-a-neighbourhood-watch-scheme/>