



# European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA)

## Annex I

Please answer the following questions in English language.

1. Is this your country's ECPA entry or is it an additional project. (Only one ECPA entry per country plus up two other projects)

This is the Swedish ECPA entry

2. What is the title of the project?

Neighbourhood Watch in Multi-Family Dwellings

3. Please give a short general description of the project.

Neighbourhood watch is a method that focuses on preventing crime and increasing perceptions of safety and security by getting residents to themselves assume responsibility for their own immediate environment. It is in widespread use in areas of detached housing in Sweden. In neighbourhoods comprising multi-family dwellings in socially disadvantaged areas, however, which experience high levels of residential mobility by comparison with neighbourhoods comprised of detached housing, the police have found it very difficult to start long-term and well-functioning neighbourhood watch projects.

The project Neighbourhood Watch in Multi-Family Dwellings has involved the local police in Halland working together with insurance companies and property owners to successfully reduce crime – first and foremost in the form of burglaries – in two socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods with multi-family dwellings, in which crime levels prior to the initiation of the project were high. The neighbourhood watch projects have now been ongoing in the two neighbourhoods for over five years.

An evaluation conducted by Halmstad University shows a significant reduction in crime between the period before and after the introduction of the neighbourhood watch project. The evaluation shows that crime was reduced by 37 and 23 percent respectively in the two neighbourhoods following the introduction of neighbourhood watch. The crime reductions were primarily related to theft offences such as burglaries of apartments and of cellar and attic storage spaces, but incidents of vandalism have

also declined. Comparisons have also been conducted in relation to surrounding areas, which found that incidents of burglary had increased in these other areas during the corresponding period. Today, just over five years after the initiation of the project, the vast majority of the stairwells in the apartment blocks in both neighbourhoods are involved in the neighbourhood watch project.

4. Please describe the objective(s) of the project?

The project's primary objective has been to:  
(1) reduce crime in the residential neighbourhoods of Sörse and Andersberg.

A second project objective has been to:  
(2) improve the residents' perceptions of safety and security

5. How was the project implemented?

The Neighbourhood Watch in Multi-Family Dwellings project was initiated by the local police in Halland together with both the Länsförsäkringar insurance company and housing companies following pressure from residents. The parties involved were keen to initiate crime prevention work in the neighbourhoods of Sörse and Andersberg since there were continuous reports of crime and insurance claims from these two residential neighbourhoods, which despite not being large in geographical terms nonetheless accounted for a large proportion of the offences reported in the police district. The residents demanded amongst other things that the insurance company should work to *prevent* crime in apartments and car crime rather than merely handing out money after the event. The neighbourhoods comprise multi-family dwellings and are both socially disadvantaged areas with relatively high levels of crime and with many residents experiencing feelings of insecurity. Residents born outside Sweden in particular reported to a greater extent than others that they avoided spending time outside on their own after dark.

A number of the residents were given crime prevention training by the police, following which a number of contact representatives were appointed, 20 in Andersberg and 17 in Sörse, who served as the driving force in establishing the neighbourhood watch project in the different buildings in the neighbourhoods. The activities conducted within the framework of the project included neighbourhood night patrols to check buildings, parking areas and cellar storage spaces. Neighbourhood security surveys have also been conducted regularly, with residents noting problems such as dysfunctional street lighting etc. The police have also increased their foot patrol activities by about one hour per week in both areas. The contact representatives for the different neighbourhood watch groups were also given direct phone numbers to the local police station, which they could ring 24 hours a day. The police, the insurance company and the housing companies have held regular follow-up meetings with the residents, and together it has been possible to monitor changes in crime. The project has been in

operation for six years in Sörse, Varberg, and is run by the tenants in the area. In Andersberg, Halmstad the project has been in operation for almost five years, and here it is the housing company that serves as the organisational driving force.

6. Were partners involved in planning and/or development and/or implementation of the project? If so, who were they, and what were their roles?

The police: Neighbourhood watch is a method that is ultimately run by the police in collaboration with the residents. The police were involved in the initiation of the neighbourhood watch projects in both of the neighbourhoods, they organised crime prevention training and have continued to play an important service provision role right up until today. The police have also followed up the work by monitoring crime trends on the basis of reported crime statistics and have increased the extent of their foot patrols in the two neighbourhoods involved. The police have also been a key member of the project's steering group.

Länsförsäkringar (insurance company): The company was involved from the beginning of the project, participated in the training of the contact persons and has provided materials and support. The company has also been a key member of the project's steering group.

Halmstads Fastighets AB (housing company): The housing company operates the neighbourhood watch project as part of its social housing work in the neighbourhood. The housing company provides support and assistance in developing the work of the project to meet the changing needs and opportunities found in the area. The housing company has been responsible for the organisation of parts of the work conducted within the project and through its contacts with tenants has worked to get more of the residents involved in the neighbourhood watch programme.

Varbergs Bostads AB (housing company): Supports the residents who worked to initiate the project in Sörse.

Halmstad University: Has monitored the project for two years and evaluated the effects of the neighbourhood watch activities and identified the factors that have produced the successful outcomes noted as a result of the project. As a result of Halmstad University's inclusion in the project's steering group, it has been possible to continuously implement the results of this monitoring work in the project activities.

Residents: Neighbourhood watch projects cannot work without the involvement of committed residents. The day-to-day work of the project is largely conducted by residents in the form of night patrols, neighbourhood security surveys, in which problems are noted as they arise, and meetings with the police and housing

companies.

7. How did you build in plans to measure the performance of the project? Has the project been evaluated? How, and by whom?

Over the course of the project, the project steering group (the police, the insurance company and the housing companies) has continuously followed up the project's results. One important part of this work has involved the police compiling crime figures for the two neighbourhoods. Using the police's computerised crime system HOBIT, it has been possible to produce detailed statistics on the theft and vandalism offences committed, which has allowed those active in the project to receive continuous feedback on the project's progress.

In Sörse, the housing company, Varbergs Bostads AB, has taken repeated measures of perceptions of safety and security among the residents. These surveys show that levels of perceived safety and security have improved over the course of the project.

The project has been evaluated by Halmstad University (the research group has been lead by Dr. Ove Svensson). The research group has employed a form of method triangulation based on three different data sources as a means of measuring change. In addition to using police statistics on reported offences, the research group has also constructed a questionnaire that has been completed by 503 individuals from the two neighbourhoods and has conducted 48 interviews with key informants.

8. What were the results? How far were the objectives of the project achieved?

In order to describe the extent to which the objectives of the project have been achieved, the research group has employed a form of method triangulation, involving both qualitative and quantitative methods, as a means of measuring change. In addition to using police statistics on reported offences, the research group has also constructed a questionnaire that has been completed by 503 individuals from the two neighbourhoods and has conducted 48 interviews with key informants.

The project's primary objective (1) was to reduce crime in the neighbourhoods of Sörse and Andersberg in the county of Halland.

With the help of police statistics on offences (RAR) reported in Sörse and Andersberg respectively, the research group has examined the extent to which the neighbourhood watch project has contributed to a reduction in the level of crime. The evaluation employed three categories of offences in order to measure crime trends in the two neighbourhoods: theft offences (burglaries in apartments and in cellar and attic storage spaces, and thefts of and from cars), vandalism and crimes against the person.

**Table 1. Theft and vandalism offences and offences against the person in Sörse, Varberg, during the period 2005–2011 according to police statistics on reported offences.**

Year	Theft	Vandalism	Crimes against the person	Total	Index
2005	144	28	27	199	100
2006	75	23	33	131	66
2007	108	42	25	175	88
2008	78	31	30	138	69
2009	57	17	36	110	55
2010	47	14	21	82	41

**Table 2. Theft and vandalism offences and offences against the person in Andersberg during the period 2005–2010 according to police statistics on reported offences.**

Year	Theft	Vandalism	Crimes against the person	Total	Index
2005	260	79	105	444	100
2006	233	68	94	395	89
2007	238	138	124	500	113
2008	190	86	124	400	90
2009	189	61	135	385	87
2010	138	91	80	309	70

The tables show the trends for different crime categories for the two neighbourhoods in which the neighbourhood watch programme was introduced. The horizontal line in the tables marks the point at which neighbourhood watch was introduced (2007 in Sörse and 2008 in Andersberg). Overall, the number of reported offences has declined markedly in both neighbourhoods since the introduction of the neighbourhood watch programme. In Sörse, reported offences declined by 37 percent between 2006 (131 offences) and 2010 (82 offences). In Andersberg, reported offences declined by 23 percent between 2008 (400 offences) and 2010 (309 offences).<sup>1</sup> The reduction is most marked in relation to theft offences in the two neighbourhoods, but vandalism has also declined significantly since the introduction of the neighbourhood watch programme. Crimes against the person have remained more stable, but even here a small decline

<sup>1</sup> The research group chose to proceed from the year 2008 in Andersberg. The reason for choosing not to conduct the comparison with the year prior to the introduction of neighbourhood watch, which was what was done in relation to Sörse, was that it took over a year to establish the neighbourhood watch programme in Andersberg, which was not the case in Sörse. In Andersberg, the project was initiated in 2008 but was not completely implemented during the year 2009. After consideration, the research team felt it was better to use figures that presented a more cautious picture of the effects of the neighbourhood watch programme, rather than showing levels of crime reduction that may not in fact have been due to the neighbourhood watch programme.

can be noted.

If the crime trend in Sörse and Andersberg is compared with the trends in the municipalities of Halmstad and Varberg, i.e. the municipalities in which Sörse and Andersberg are found, we find that burglaries increased in the two municipalities during the period 2006–2010. The figures for the county of Halland as a whole show that residential burglaries increased by 36 percent (from 619 to 843) during the period 2006–2010 at the same time as burglaries declined in the two areas in which the neighbourhood watch programme had been introduced.

The second goal of the project (2) was also to increase perceptions of safety and security among the residents. The evaluation states that on the basis of interviews with key informants and a questionnaire survey conducted among just over 500 residents prior to and after the introduction of the neighbourhood watch programme, it is possible to say that feelings of safety and security have improved among the residents.

Neighbourhood watch has shown itself to be both a successful and a durable crime prevention programme in both Sörse and Andersberg. One of the reasons for this is that the programme was allowed to develop organically in the two neighbourhoods on the basis of differing local conditions. Today, a little over five years after the initiation of the project, the majority of the stairwells in the buildings in both areas are involved in the neighbourhood watch programme.

9. Give a concrete description of the implementation of the project and the references.

A concrete description of the implementation of the project can be found in the response to question 5 above. A more detailed description of the implementation can be found in the attached evaluation report "Grannsamverkan i flerfamiljshus".

10. Are there reports or documents available on the project? In print or on the Web?

Please, give references to the most relevant ones.

The following link leads to the evaluation conducted by Halmstad University.

<http://www.polisen.se/Global/www%20och%20Intrapolis/Rapporter-utredningar/01%20Polisen%20nationellt/Brottsforebyggande/Studie%20-%20Grannsamverkan.pdf>

The evaluation is also included as an attachment to this entry form. An English translation of the most important results from the evaluation has also been attached. Unfortunately there is no English translation available of the entire evaluation report.

11. How is the project funded? Has a cost-benefit analysis been carried out? If so, how? What were the findings? Please provide supporting information.

No over-arching cost-benefit analysis has been conducted in relation to the question of whether the project has produced financial benefits that would not have been achieved if the neighbourhood watch programme had not been implemented in the two neighbourhoods.

The insurance company has however estimated the costs of burglaries in multi-family dwellings, with each such burglary costing the insurance company an average of 11,000 SEK (about 1100 euro). To this sum, we should also add the excess paid by the individual insurance holder, additional costs involved in the purchasing of replacement goods, all the societal costs of crimes, such as the costs incurred by the police, the time spent on investigations that could otherwise be spent elsewhere, and costs incurred by the housing companies.

A total of 250,000 SEK (about 25 000 euro) were assigned to the evaluation of the neighbourhood watch programme. These costs were shared between the housing company and the Halland office of the insurance company. Otherwise the majority of the project costs have involved the time spent implementing the work. A very rough estimation is that each of the parties, i.e. the insurance company, the police and the housing companies, has devoted half a working day per week for eight months of the year during the period in which the neighbourhood watch programme has been in effect.

The tenant index produced by the housing companies shows that the residents of the two neighbourhoods are experiencing markedly higher levels of perceived safety and security and lower levels of worry about crime. The monetary value of these changes has not been calculated however.

12. Please, write a *one page* description of the project:

Neighbourhood watch focuses on preventing crime and increasing perceptions of safety and security by getting residents to themselves assume responsibility for their own local environment. It is widely used in areas of detached housing in Sweden. In socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods comprising multi-family dwellings, however, which experience comparatively high levels of residential mobility, the police have found it very difficult to start long-term, well-functioning neighbourhood watch projects.

The project Neighbourhood Watch in Multi-Family Dwellings has involved the local police in Halland working together with insurance companies and property owners to successfully reduce crime – first and foremost burglaries – in two socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods with multi-family dwellings in which crime levels prior to the project were high. Surveys among residents showed that residents born outside Sweden in particular reported worrying about going out after dark. The neighbourhood

watch project was initiated in Sörse in 2007 and in Andersberg in 2008, and has continued for five years or more in both areas.

The project activities included the police training a number of contact representatives in crime prevention, night patrols by residents and neighbourhood security surveys in which residents and the housing companies could together examine locations in the local environment that felt unsafe, e.g. as a result of untrimmed bushes and poor lighting. The police have also increased their own foot patrols in the areas.

An evaluation conducted by Halmstad University shows a significant reduction in crime between the periods before and after the introduction of neighbourhood watch. The evaluation shows that crime declined by 37 and 23 percent respectively in the two areas following the introduction of neighbourhood watch. The project activities have primarily led to a reduction in theft offences such as burglaries of apartments and cellar and attic storage spaces, but vandalism has also been reduced. Comparisons have also been conducted with surrounding areas, where the number of burglaries has increased over the corresponding period. Questionnaire surveys among just over 500 residents show that perceptions of safety and security have also improved. Today, a little over five years after the initiation of the project, the majority of the stairwells in the buildings in both areas are involved in the neighbourhood watch programme.

According to insurance company statistics, every burglary costs approximately 11,000 SEK (about 1100 euro). This amount does not include either societal costs such as police measures and time spent investigating the crimes or the costs incurred by the housing companies. No overall cost-benefit calculation has been conducted in relation to the project, but since crime has declined by more than 20 percent since the initiation of the neighbourhood watch programme, it is likely that the project has been cost-effective. The police have noted that the project constitutes a form of local police work that has succeeded in reducing theft offences by more than 20 percent. By comparison with many other forms crime preventive police work, this is a very good figure.

Through the insurance company Länsförsäkringar, the project has been given an award by the international organisation the Centre for Sustainability and Excellence, which holds an annual competition on best practice in the field of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).