

# ANSHIN CONSULTING:

## A CASE STUDY

Reducing burglary crime in the Canberra suburb of Kambah, by 42%

### The Challenge

In 2017 the Canberra suburb of Kambah had the dubious reputation for having the highest burglary crime rate in all of Canberra. This was not only by reputation, but also identified in news posts by Steven Trask of the Canberra Times, stating, 'The most burglaries (in Canberra) occur in Kambah'. This statement by Trask was reinforced by local law enforcement's burglary crime statistics.

At a luncheon with colleagues, this issue was raised with David Harding of Anshin Consulting. It was proposed that since his consulting firm was based in the suburb, he should volunteer some of his time and expertise to undertake to help reduce the incidence of crime in Kambah.

Subsequently, David volunteered to start a Neighbourhood Watch group in Kambah West, where a large portion of the suburb's burglary crime took place. David became the Neighbourhood Watch Kambah West Area Co-ordinator.

### Solution

David decided to utilise a method that he had successfully used against gangs, armed robbers, terrorists and insurgencies. Although obviously he would have to change aspects of the method to suit a residential area in Australia's capital city. The solution required using ethnography to learn about the beliefs and behaviours of varying deviant communities that were the root of the issues. Then developing and implementing interventions that would divert these communities along different non-deviant pathways. The interventions were delivered through the community program of Neighbourhood Watch (NHW).

By developing an understanding of the deviant communities, and how individual burglars went about their business, David was able to identify weaknesses in peer and social networks that the 'gangs' formed in, as well as the planning, preparation and intelligence gathering that the potential burglars utilised. David was also able to identify what the burglars were most fearful of. With this information, David was able to develop interventions that would guide potential burglars along alternative non-deviant pathways.

### The Interventions

Directed information was disseminated through NHW regarding the specific methods that the burglars were using, such as how deviants identified their target house, where the burglars would leave their getaway vehicle, and how they conducted their surveillance. Residents were provided with ways and means to identify burglars in the process of planning their burglary, and ways to prevent the burglary. This was based on the knowledge that had been gained through the ethnographical research that was conducted throughout the entire intervention period.

### Results

The aim of this method is to divert deviants to non-deviant pathways. For example, in some cases, peers and siblings were recruited to influence deviant siblings along non-deviant pathways. As one elder sibling said:

*"When I found out that my brother was in with that shit (referring to a small gang), and probably breaking into places, I changed his attitude."*

In other cases, NHW newsletters were delivered to high-risk areas of Kambah. These newsletters were also given to possible deviants that were identified within the same area. The purpose was to alert burglars that residents knew of the deviants' methodologies and would identify and report suspicious behaviours.

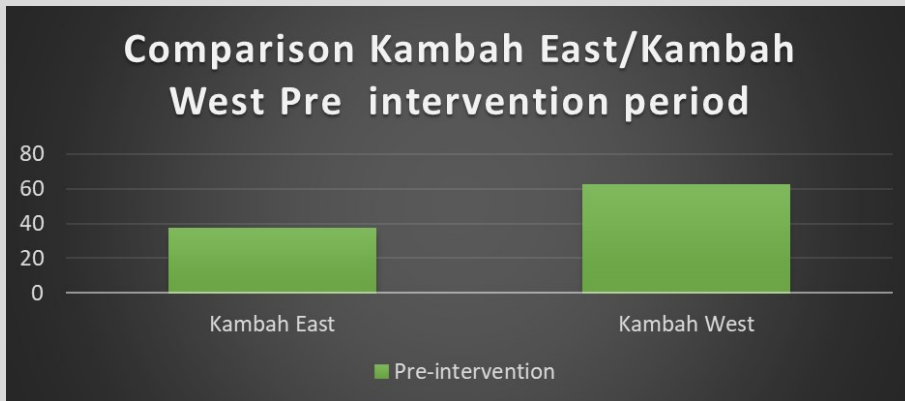
As a former burglary offender said:

*"If you had walked up to us and handed each of us a newsletter of this type, I would not want to go back to this area for a long time. This says exactly what we used to do. I would be worried that you, or some of the neighbors would be watching all the time."*

## The Incidence of Burglary

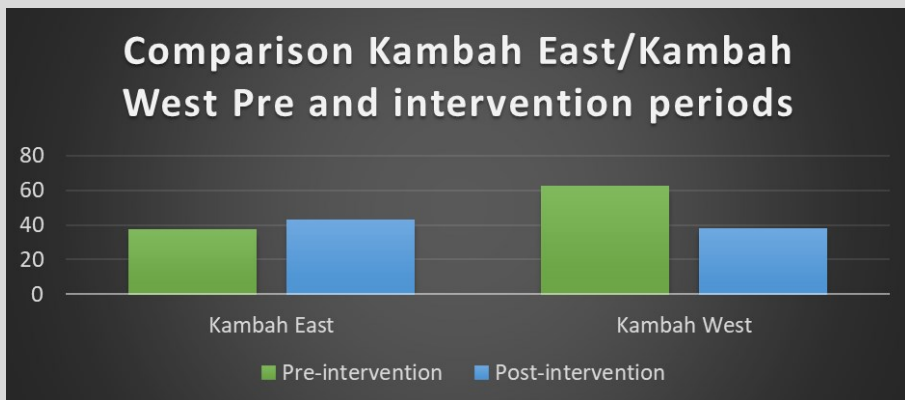
After exhaustive research to find other possible causes for the drop in crime, the interventions were found to cause a 42% drop in burglary crime.

The below graph illustrates the 19-month pre-intervention period comparison in burglary crime between the treatment area of Kambah West against the control area of Kambah East. As can be seen, Kambah West had a significantly higher crime rate.



Below is the 19-month comparison between the pre-intervention and intervention periods, and between the Control and Treatment areas. As can be seen, following the implementation of the interventions there was a significant drop in the rate of burglary crime in Kambah West.

It can also be seen that there was a slight increase in the incidence of burglary crime in the control area. This may indicate that there was a slight displacement caused by some burglars deciding to commit their burglaries in a different area. If this is the case, it shows the effectiveness of the implement methodologies.



## Conclusion

The method outlined in this project is substantially different to developmental crime prevention methods which focus on 'at risk' individuals, or environmental crime prevention methods which focus on changing the environment. However, as can be seen by the results, this method can substantially reduce crime. Also, when implemented through community programs such as Neighbourhood Watch, the method offers a very cost effective way to reduce the incidence of burglary crime.

## Contact

Should you wish to gain further information regarding the methods outlined here please contact:

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The methodology describe above has been peer reviewed and published in the Journal of Applied Security Research. You can read the entire article by following the below link:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19361610.2021.1956268?src=>

## Reference

Trask, S. (2017, March 6). Canberra's crime hotspots revealed. The Canberra Times.

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6035774/canberras-crime-hotspots-revealed/>