



Artarmon Neighbourhood Watch - CW5 - Spring Update

by Ian Fletcher & Clare Hamilton-Bate

Trends in Crime – Willoughby Local Government Area

An examination of crime statistics for the Willoughby Local Government Area (LGA), which includes Artarmon, shows that over the last five years major crime has generally been stable or trending downward. Note that major crime refers to frequency rather than severity of the offence. The table opposite summarises these statistics and lists the most common offences. The data is from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research on the NSW Government Lawlink website (www.bocd.lawlink.nsw.gov.au).

'Break and enter - dwelling', 'Steal from dwelling' and 'Steal from motor vehicle' incidents are all stable over the last five years, while 'Break and enter - non-dwelling' and 'Steal from person' incidents are trending down.

Despite these encouraging results there were still over 570 break and enters and 280 theft from motor vehicle offences reported in the most recent year's data for the Willoughby LGA. These are offences that each and every one of us can play a part in reducing by being more security conscious. You've heard it all before:

- Lock windows and doors when you leave home
- Be aware that break and enters can take place even when you are at home
- Don't leave valuables in sight when you park the car.

'Steal from retail store' is one of the few offences that are on the rise (over 500 incidents in 2008-2009). One wonders whether this is really surprising considering the way business is moving towards minimum staffing levels and the accompanying lower levels of security.

Malicious damage, which includes graffiti, seems to abound in our community these days, but its frequency is trending down. However, with 510 incidents in 2008-09 it is still a very significant issue. This is an offence which people may not

Offence	Incidents Last Year (Oct 2008 - Sep 2009)	Five-year Trend (Oct 2004 - Sep 2009)	Average Annual Change
Assault - domestic violence related	52	Down	-12.3%
Assault - non-domestic violence related	180	Stable	-
Robbery without a weapon	29	Stable	-
Break and enter - dwelling	429	Stable	-
Break and enter - non-dwelling	145	Down	-12.6%
Motor vehicle theft	89	Down	-10.7%
Steal from motor vehicle	280	Stable	-
Steal from retail store	502	Up	+5.1%
Steal from dwelling	109	Stable	-
Steal from person	95	Down	-14.5%
Fraud	521	Stable	-
Malicious damage to property	684	Down	-7.7%
Transport regulatory offences	607	Up	+23.3%

always report to the police for one reason or another, but it is important that all incidents are reported. Chatswood police regularly plot malicious damage (and other major crime) incidents on a map and extra resources are applied to local "hot-spots". This strategy has contributed to the reduction of many types of offences, including malicious damage and break and enters.

Drug offences are generally not as high as might be expected. 'Possession and/or use of cannabis' is the most common offence with 73 incidents in 2008-09, way up on the 18 - 28 incidents for the years between 2004 and 2008. For the other 14 drug offences the highest number of incidents in any one year was 17, with the vast majority less than 10 per year.

Thank you to all those who have passed on information to NW in recent months, helping us to keep the Artarmon Community updated and informed. *If you would like to join the NW committee and help support the activities of Neighbourhood Watch in our area, contact Clare by email clarehb@telstra.com.* ■

Talking 2064

So, do you agree with the survey reported in the NST late in 2009, naming Artarmon as our most boring suburb? The better finger on the pulse seemed to be the follow up reactions of local residents and business people who cited the village feel and friendliness as why they live or shop here.

The more likely date for the proposed opening of **Home HQ North Shore** (behind Bunnings) would now appear to be around April.

2NSB / FM 99.3 resumed live programming in early January after financial difficulties and some time off air. The station is funded by listener donations and sponsorship from local businesses. They have been a feature of the Artarmon Fair in the past, and we hope to have them broadcasting for us again this year – so give them your support if you can.