

10<sup>th</sup> UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME  
AND THE TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS (10 - 17 APRIL 2000)

EFFECTIVE CRIME PREVENTION: KEEPING PACE WITH NEW  
DEVELOPMENTS

**United Kingdom**

New Developments

The United Kingdom government is committed to developing modern solutions to the crime problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The benefits will be felt by everybody.

A great deal of money and effort is being put into this work. Just three examples:

*Closed Circuit Television*

£153 million has been provided to help update and improve CCTV systems around the country.

CCTV is playing a crucial role in helping the police combat crime and, importantly, reduce the fear of crime.

The technology has proved its worth, contributing to significant reductions in crime when used as part of a clear crime reduction strategy. Surveys have shown that the presence of CCTV makes people feel safer. CCTV has helped improve security in car parks and has led to dramatic falls in crime as well as in increased use of the facilities.

*DNA Database*

£34 million is being invested in a DNA database.

When a suspect is arrested, the police have the power to take a non-intimate sample such as a mouth swab. The DNA profile is developed, put on the database and checked against profiles obtained from scenes of crime.

Matches between suspects and scenes of crime are notified to the police.

The database currently has about 600,000 profiles from suspects and matches around 600 crimes to suspects and to other crimes each week.

*Tagging of goods*

£4.5 million has been set aside to encourage industry to co-ordinate the infrastructure for electronic tagging of property. There are a number of pilot schemes with industry to test the effectiveness of technology and ensure that police requirements are met.

Some 84% of crime is related to property and research has shown that everyday domestic items are amongst those most at risk from theft - electronic goods, tools, bicycles, etc.

Tagging such goods could make a real and significant contribution to reducing crime. It should help reduce shoplifting and theft.

It is vitally important to reduce such crime and that a standard technology, meeting international standards, is made available.

### Evaluation

But the investment of this money and other resources will be of little use if we do not evaluate what we do to see if it works.

The Crime Reduction Programme is a £250 million programme running for 3 years from April 1999.

This will obtain evidence on what methods, employed by the police and their partners in the effort to tackle crime, are most effective. The knowledge gained will contribute to reversing the long-term growth in crime and ensure that the greatest impact can be achieved.

All projects selected for funding are selected because of their contribution to establishing what really works in reducing crime. They will be independently evaluated and the evidence gained will be carefully assessed and disseminated widely.

The programme looks in particular at reducing burglary, targeted policing, the effectiveness of co-ordinated interventions with children at risk, the impact of design on crime. Other projects will be developed as the programme proceeds.

### Sharing knowledge

It is vital that the learning from all these initiatives is shared with practitioners who are wrestling with local crime problems.

The Home Office is developing a website which will enable people to obtain a wide range of information related to particular types of crime. The idea is that someone searching on, for example vehicle crime, will be able to find the relevant guidance, protocols, good practice, funding statistics, training etc all in one place.

The aim is for the site, initially led by the Home Office to become a shared resource with those involved in crime reduction work.