Community Wardens in Scotland:

Practitioners’ Views

Introduction

Policing has been in a constant state of change since the days of Robert Peel. Recent police reform has reflected the complex shifts in contemporary society and the need for a more professional police organisation to combat new challenges to the police and community relations. However, in recent decades the responsibility for community safety has fallen to all community members, whether individual citizens or public, private and voluntary sector agencies. The traditional multi-talented police officer, who purportedly can deal with any situation, is on the way out. They cannot solve all of society’s problems as growing pressures and demands on them increase.

This has led to policing becoming more political with a resultant explosion in legislation. For example, since 1997 there have been 50 criminal justice Bills introduced in the UK, as opposed to one or two major pieces of criminal justice legislation every ten years or so prior to this period. Ultimately, this has impacted on the workload of the police organisation at a time when the public are demanding positive action to combat anti-social behaviour. As a consequence, the twenty-first century has given birth to the ‘surrogate’ policeman in the form of the ‘community warden’, who assists the police and reassures the public with an increased visible presence of a uniform authority on the streets.

The move to delegate police functions to non-sworn officers is not dissimilar to the introduction of traffic wardens and other municipal auxiliaries. In the last few years this has led to differing versions of Wardens and Community Support Officers in the UK, some with and some without enforcement powers. Evidence to date suggests Warden schemes have helped to reduce crime, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and improve the overall quality of the environment (Crawford 2004, 2005; DCLG 2006; Doran 2003; Fife Council 2007; Neighbourhood Wardens Unit 2000; Scottish Executive 2007; Smithson & Armitage 2007; Stevenson 2006). The present study focuses on Community Wardens in Scotland who at the present time have no police powers.

In 2003 the Scottish Executive provided £20 millions over two years to enable the development of a Community Warden scheme in all 32 local authority areas. Now, in 2007, there are some 550 Wardens officially funded in Scotland. While they are not a replacement for the police and do not have police powers, they are, according to Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland an extra resource which provides a ‘reassuring
presence to local people, promoting community safety and community development' (HMCiC 2006 p.25).

Scottish Community Warden Schemes developed within the guidelines set by the Scottish Executive, which were to combat anti-social behaviour, reduce the fear of crime, prevent crime and improve the environment. As there was a degree of flexibility in the design and organization of the Community Wardens, local authorities produced their own versions based on local needs. As a consequence, a variety of models now exist across Scotland that primarily deal with crime prevention or environmental improvement or embrace both. It is generally accepted that a combination of both functions is an effectual way of engaging anti-social behaviour. An analysis of the original aims and objectives of the Warden Schemes recognised a mix of intended outcomes, the main themes being:-

* Reduce fear of crime and increase public confidence
* Improve environmental quality
* Reduce anti-social behaviour
* Reduce crime and increase crime prevention
* Reduce youth crime
* Increase community safety
* Deter vandalism
* Improve quality of life
* Improve communication between partners and community
* Reduce fire-raising
* Contribute to best value
* Encourage community engagement
* Improve housing
* Increase use of mediation
* Reduce litter and fly-tipping
* Reduce the number of void properties
* Support victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

(Scottish Executive 2007)
Community Wardens are characterised as a “uniformed, semi-official presence in a residential area with the aim of improving quality of life” (Scottish Executive 2003). Wardens are not police officers, but the two groups do have common aims that necessitate a close working partnership. That said, the police have no management control over Wardens, who are local authority employees, except for three Warden schemes in the Grampian area, which are run by the police. Wardens were launched under the catchphrase of being the ‘eyes and ears of the community’ with a remit to improve the links between the public and partnership agencies. High visibility uniform patrol and responding quickly and efficiently to community concerns is a major part of their function. In the words of the Scottish Executive: ‘Wardens derive their effectiveness not from the power they themselves possess, but from the links and relationships they establish not only with local people but with local agencies’ (ibid., 2003).

The present research is not about repeating previous evaluation projects, some of which have produced a wealth of information on the world of Wardens. Rather it seeks to achieve the following objectives within a narrower research span:-

1) to examine the views of community wardens
2) to compare the role of community wardens with the implementation of community policing
3) to consider the future role of wardens.

These objectives are aimed at producing a general picture of Community Warden Schemes across Scotland. The general consistency found in the content of responses and views between city and rural or large and small schemes, leads to the possibility of speaking of the Wardens as a clearly homogeneous group. The adoption of this approach facilitates a national perspective on Wardens and enables a better understanding of the positive and negative issues requiring debate and discussion.

Research Methodology

A central element of this research is the questionnaire survey of Community Wardens and their Managers, designed to elucidate the attitudes, opinions and perceptions of Wardens. Questionnaires were used as they are a proven method of survey research and enable a large population to be surveyed within a short timescale. A combination of self-completion and open question formats ensured no interviewer bias. Some of the arguments against questionnaires are relevant for this study and include the dangers of subjectivity and one-sidedness of respondents. Although an element of subjectivity inevitably exists, the data gleaned from the questionnaires supported earlier studies into Community Wardens in Scotland. The potential for a low response rate and the risk of receiving back illegible, incomplete and incomprehensible questionnaires did not materialise. The overall response rates were acceptable and many of the respondents produced thoughtful and comprehensive comment.
An important part of the study was the interviewing of a selected number of Warden Scheme Managers. Although these interviews followed a similar format to the questionnaire, they offered respondents the opportunity to give a wider range of information and opinion on the topics being discussed. Officials at the Scottish Executive and police officers of various ranks were also consulted. A literature review of Community Wardens in the UK was conducted, which included some aspects of the role of Wardens in the emerging model of municipal policing in Scotland. The research methodology has allowed an insight to be quickly gained into the broad organisation of Wardens in Scotland.

Research took place between January and August 2007 and 21 of the 32 local authority Warden Schemes took part. A self-completion questionnaire was administered to a target group of 480 Wardens in the 21 council areas and a total of 192 respondents took part (Table 1). This gave a response of 40%. Included in the total are 27 Managers, 17 of whom were also interviewed. Although the Scottish Executive fund around 550 Wardens, some local authorities employ additional wardens from other budgetary lines.

Table 1  Respondents by Council Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Areas</th>
<th>Wardens (respondents)</th>
<th>Total complement of Wardens in each council scheme</th>
<th>Manager / Supervisor (respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen City Council</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeenshire Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angus Council</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argyll and Bute Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Edinburgh Council</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clackmannshire Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundee City Council</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Ayrshire Council</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Dunbartonshire Council</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Renfrewshire Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow City Council</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverclyde Council</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moray Council</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Ayrshire Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Lanarkshire Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orkney Islands Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renfrewshire Council</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Borders Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shetlands Islands Council</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lanarkshire Council</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stirling Council</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>165</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questionnaires and interviews covered the following themes:-

* What types of work do Wardens do?
* What training have you received and who trained you?
* Do you work with the police?
* Are relations with police satisfactory?
* What other agencies/partners do you work with?
* Are relations with agencies/partners satisfactory?
* How are your relations with the public?
* Are the public happy with the service given by wardens?
* How would you rate the wardens impact on the community?
* Is there other work you feel the wardens should do?
* Do you feel your salary accurately reflects the work you do?
* Should wardens acquire additional powers?
* Should there be a national organisation similar to the police service?

In addition to these themes the Community Wardens manager questionnaire included questions on funding, organisation and the future of the Wardens service.

**Community Wardens’ Views**

Based on information furnished by the Wardens, the following tables were compiled. Tables 2 and 3 depict a wide variety of nomenclature for Wardens and their managers, highlighting an absence of standard identification which is indicative of many aspects of the Warden schemes across Scotland.
Table 2 Warden Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Wardens</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Wardens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Support Officers</td>
<td>Community Safety Concierge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Safety Patrol Officers</td>
<td>Community Enforcement Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Safety Wardens</td>
<td>City Wardens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Management and Supervisor Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Safety Manager</th>
<th>Warden Lead Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Safety Patrol Officer Manager</td>
<td>Project Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Wardens Manager</td>
<td>Co-ordinator of Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Wardens Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Anti-social Behaviour Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Warden Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Senior Community Warden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study also revealed the variation in primary departments responsible for Community Wardens. Some council areas placed Wardens in Housing departments while in others they would be under Community Services or Anti-social Behaviour (Table 4). No doubt there will be good reason for this; nevertheless, it is another example of the wide variations in the organisation and management of Wardens.

Table 4 Selection of Primary Departments Responsible for Wardens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anti-social Behaviour</th>
<th>Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Safety</td>
<td>Housing &amp; Neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Safety Unit</td>
<td>Housing &amp; Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>Housing &amp; Technical Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Safety Services</td>
<td>Housing, Community Safety Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>Leisure, Arts and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Community Protection</td>
<td>Operational Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Services</td>
<td>Chief Executive Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 lists a selection of work presently being carried out by Wardens which gives some insight into the extensive range of duties on offer by the Wardens schemes.

Table 5 Selection of Community Warden Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Acceptable Behaviour Contracts</th>
<th>24</th>
<th>Litter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Advice to Citizens</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 contains the Scottish Executive’s guide to types of anti-social behaviour (ASB). As can be seen from comparing Tables 5 and 6, Wardens are actively involved in combating many categories of ASB. Limitations in their powers prevents action being taken against minor offences such as street drinking, urinating in public and drugs, although Wardens do inform the police and submit intelligence reports in these circumstances.

Table 6 Scottish Executive Typology of Anti-social Behaviour

| Abandoned Cars | Animal Related Problems | Criminal Damage/Vandalism | Discrimination Issues | Drug Dealing | Drugs/Substance Abuse | Hoax Calls |}
|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-----------|
Noise Issues
Inappropriate Vehicle Use
Intimidation/Harassment
Kerb Crawling
Litter/Rubbish
Noisy Neighbours
Nuisance Behaviour
Prostitution
Rowdy Behaviour
Urinating in Public
Street Drinking
Vehicle-related Nuisance

(Scottish Executive 2004)

An examination of the extensive range of partner agencies engaged with Wardens on a regular basis, gives some insight into the wide scope of their involvement with the community safety of communities (Table 7). The uniqueness and flexibility of the Wardens’ position allows them to take part in multifarious activities in the community.

Table 7  Selection of Agencies engaged with Community Wardens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Animal Welfare</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>Housing Associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anti-social Investigation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lands and Parks Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>British Transport Police</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Local Businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>British Waterways Scotland</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Mediation Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CCTV Operators</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cleansing Department</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>National Health Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Police / Community Police</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Planning Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Community Learning</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Registered Landlords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Community Renewal Team</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Roads and Lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Community Safety</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>SACRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Safer Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Countryside Rangers</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>SEPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Drugs Action Teams</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Sports Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Technical Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Fire service</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Victim Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although, Warden Schemes vary in size and workloads, an examination of the above Tables reveals the wide variety of work they carry out and how they have become an integral part in local community service.

**Training**

Local authorities developed training programmes for the Wardens during the implementation stages to prepare staff with the knowledge and skills for the job. However, due to retirals and resignations, there is a continuous demand for training as new Wardens are regularly appointed to fill the vacancies. Warden training varies throughout the council areas with some schemes giving 5 or 10 days in-house tuition with requisite training bought in. Other Schemes satisfy their training needs internally on-the-job with experienced Wardens and with inputs from other agencies as required. Table 8 lists a selection of agencies involved in delivering training.

**Table 8 Agencies involved in Warden Training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority Departments</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Agencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Health Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Action Team.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Welfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Scotland Beautiful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most training programmes have proved effective, enabling Wardens to carry out their new duties. Managers are continually seeking for new inputs to fill gaps in training needs due to the ever changing landscape of community safety. Table 9 contains a selection of training courses offered to Wardens.

**Table 9 Selection of Training Courses**

| Child Protection          |  |
| Community Fire Safety     |  |
| Drug Awareness Training   |  |
| Environmental Issues      |  |
| First Aid and Manual Handling |  |
| Mediation                 |  |
A number of local authorities also take part in joint training, which is seen as both an efficient use of resources and good practice. Through the efforts of the Scottish Wardens Network, a Scottish Vocational Qualification, based on a model developed in England, is presently being piloted with a view to being rolled out across the country in the future. Training is still an issue with some respondents who have only received tuition from their manager or other Wardens.

Work with the Police
The vast majority of Wardens (80%) said they regularly work with the police whilst the remainder (19%) do so on ‘occasions’ and (1%) not at all (Figure 1). To be more accurate Wardens who only have dealings with the police when reporting incidents or passing intelligence describe their relationship as ‘working together’. In some schemes Wardens patrol jointly with the police and could in these circumstances be described as actually working with them. Very few Wardens have no links with the police. Not surprisingly, community police officers are the main interface with Wardens. The three schemes in Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and Moray are line managed by the police on a daily basis and have good liaison with each other.

Figure 1

Work with Police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>On occasion</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly three quarters of the Wardens believe their relationship with the police to be good (Figure 2), commenting that the existing protocols work well. The remaining 28% of Wardens either experienced problems ‘sometimes’ (10%) or stated that police relations were ‘not good’ (18%). Poor communication and an inadequate flow of information and feedback were identified as key problem areas.
Figure 2

Relations with Police

![Bar chart showing relations with police: 72% Good, 10% Sometimes, 18% Not good.]

A number of other statements about working with the police were given by Wardens.

“Police could make more use of us as we have forged strong links with Our communities and if they chose to they could tap into these links on a regular basis”

“We would like to hold regular meetings with the Community Police to forge better links and share best practice”

“Attitude of police is that we are not there”

“Police could make better use of our services and free up their time”

“We have problems with police response times – could be quicker”

Most Community Warden managers believe the working relationships with the police are good, citing regular meetings with police liaison officers and local senior management. Some managers did admit that, in particular areas, the rapport with police and Wardens was not that good. In these instances the police officers involved were non-community police officers who did not have a regular interface with the Wardens. Similar comments have been made in other recent studies (Fife 2007; Scottish Executive 2007). Another reason given for the reluctance of the police to share information is their concern over data protection issues, even though there are sound ‘protocols’ in place to give guidance.

“Relationships with some police officers are strained as the Community Wardens appear to be undermining the status of the police and are able to deal with local issues of concern which fall
outside the criminal law”. [Manager]

Some Schemes have dedicated police officers within anti-social/community warden units to assist in the exchange of information. In some Schemes the supervisors attend the police Tasking and Co-ordinating meetings and are regularly requested to target particular issues in their communities. Close liaison exists in many areas and in some Schemes dining with the police is encouraged to improve relationships. The development of Wardens as professional witnesses in some schemes is generating better relationships between both groups. In one local authority area Wardens have received over 100 court citations in the past year, some of which have been for serious crimes. In some instances the police have commented there would have been no case but for the Wardens’ involvement and testimony.

It is evident that at the beginning of the Warden Schemes there was a level of scepticism on both sides, but over time, as roles have become more defined, the police and Warden partnerships have worked well. There remain, however, pockets of scepticism in the police organisation.

Relations with Other Partners
The vast majority of Wardens believe that they have good relationships with the rest of their partners. Some comment was made that some agencies are not fully aware of the Wardens’ role and that better feedback and clearer lines of communication could improve partnership working (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Relations with other partners

Wardens also have close relationships with local businesses, sheltered housing complexes, community and leisure activity complexes, and the voluntary sector.
Relations with the Public

Most Wardens believe their relationships with the public are good despite the slowness of initial liaison processes in some areas (Figure 4). Wardens now feel that they are gaining trust and respect.

Figure 4

Relations with the public

Although the public regularly stop and chat, Wardens commented that some of the community’s expectations are too high due to their limited knowledge of the Wardens’ powers and role. “The public look at us as community police and expect us to sort out things beyond our control”, was one response. Typically, there are those in the community who believe the Wardens to be ‘police grasses’ and this leads to confrontation and abuse. “Some people on the estates do not want us there”. Most Wardens find this easy to resolve.

An interesting feature of the positive public response to Wardens is the regular flow of information and intelligence imparted to them from community members who (according to the Wardens) would be unwilling to approach the police for a variety of reasons. It is also apparent that a number of communities would like the Wardens to be given more powers, with additional coverage on their leave days.

Public Satisfaction

Wardens and their managers were asked if they believed that the public is happy with the service they give. 92% of respondents believed the public is generally happy with the Warden service. This is supported by the number of letters of appreciation received from the public and the positive results of departmental and independent surveys. The remaining 8% believe the public are unhappy with the service and relationships could be better with those community members who are frustrated with the Wardens’ lack of powers and who do not, as yet, fully understand the Wardens’ role. A customer care survey in one council area involved 500 questionnaires issued to persons who had used the service, over 90% of the responses to which were very positive.
The following are a selection of comments made by Wardens and their managers during the present study.

“Public expect us to do more with anti-social behaviour”

“Youths think we grass them up to the police and become aggressive”

“Most are happy but the unruly minority wish we were not there”

“Some will never be happy with us”

“Public have come to depend on us”

“Neds know our shifts and cause bother when we are not there”

“Shopkeepers keep asking us to call in”

“They are happy to see a uniform presence”

Wardens’ Impact

The vast majority of Wardens (93%) are convinced that they have made a difference to the well-being of their communities (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Wardens’ impact

The level of impact depends on the particular area and its problems. Most Wardens believe they have benefited their communities through their ability to tackle local problems quickly and efficiently – “the public can see us fast-tracking facilities and get repairs done quickly”. Wardens are proud of their contribution to environmental improvement, although a number of Wardens feel they are less successful as a cheap form of crime prevention, blaming this failure on the limitations of their powers. However, many Wardens believe anti-social behaviour, vandalism, fly-tipping and litter has decreased as a
direct result of their efforts. Wardens also give communities someone to report things to, a voice that leads to effective communication links, joint working and ultimately improvements in the area –

“walking our areas and talking to the public seems to work and has a positive impact”

“the public see someone out there looking out for them”.

There is a realisation within some communities that the Wardens can resolve issues and problems which the police and other agencies are unable to do. One positive feature of the successful impact of Wardens is witnessed in those areas where additional numbers have been introduced as a result of public and political pressure – “those who do not have wardens want them”. One independent public survey carried out in a council area reported the public as highly satisfied with Wardens’ responses to reported incidents and 77% said the area was a better place to live compared to the period prior to the introduction of Community Wardens three years earlier. A similar independent survey in a different council area reported comparable findings, with community members in areas covered by Wardens feeling much safer in and around their homes and the fear of crime being reduced. This is indicative of many independent surveys commissioned by local authorities, results of which generally came out in support of the Warden Schemes.

Managers are also convinced the Wardens’ impact on the community has been considerable and that they are now an integral part of community life. They are seen as a useful and versatile resource, especially those who are trained as mediators, those who facilitate ‘acceptable behaviour contracts’ and those involved in restorative justice work. Wardens and managers believe each local council is fully supportive of their work, judging the overall impact of Wardens on the well-being of the community to be a success.

**Additional Work**

Just over half of the respondents are against the allocation of additional work as they believe they cover most tasks at present and have little capacity left (Figure 7). Of the remainder, 9% are unsure or don’t know and 40% said they would be happy to take on additional work and made the following suggestions :-

* Work with school liaison officer

* More school inputs

* Work more with young people.

* Do more environmental work.

* Take to do with dog fouling as it is our main complaint.

* We could do the job of environmental wardens

* Target chaotic families
* Cycle proficiency training in schools
* Educate school children in good citizenship
* Investigate cases from beginning to end
* Litter, dog fouling and parking problems
* An enforcement role to curb anti-social behaviour
* Could assist police with low level tasks like door to door enquiries
* More involvement with breach of tenancy (housing)
* Mobile CCTV unit
* Taxi Marshalls
* Expand Junior Warden Scheme
* More joint operations with other agencies

**Figure 7**

**Other work wardens can do**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Do not know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 18 managers supporting additional work, 10 were from Schemes with powers and 8 from those without powers. Of the 9 managers against extra work, 6 were from areas with powers and 3 without.

Wardens were then asked if they should acquire additional powers (Figure 8). Respondents are in two categories those with existing powers and those without.
57% of respondents are keen for more powers while 36% are not and 7% don’t know. Of the 94 respondents wishing additional powers, one third already have fixed penalty powers, the other two thirds do not. There is an obvious confidence in both these groups to take on additional enforcement responsibility as they regularly come across situations when attending calls or on patrol that could be successfully resolved if they had the requisite powers. In addition, Wardens recited stories of communities continually reminding Wardens of their limitations due to lack of powers.

Responses from Wardens with powers who wish an increased enforcement role included: -

* Definitely, as the public continually ask us to do things outside our remit

* We could do with more authority in particular areas of work

* Would be helpful to ask youths for their names and addresses

* Power to confiscate alcohol from under-age drinkers would be great

* Yes, for minor road traffic offences and speeding

* Combat urinating in public, vehicle excise offences and drinking in public

* Need powers similar to Police Community Support Officers in England

* Yes, to disperse groups of youths
* Yes, but limited powers so they are not abused
* Yes, but need to be careful not to become police officers
* Yes, but not a cheap alternative to police
* Yes, could be helpful to other agencies
* Yes, but need more support from police as we would be more vulnerable
* Yes, as we lose a lot waiting for the police to arrive

However, a substantial 36% or 59 Wardens are against a change in the status quo and of these one quarter already have powers and three quarters do not. The following responses were given :-

* Powers are sufficient as we have police back-up
* No - would lose our close relationship with the public
* Not a good idea only as last option
* No - some already have fixed penalty powers for dog fouling and litter
* We are trying to build community relations, this could be step backwards
* No - it would lead to confrontation with the public
* No - we are not at a stage where we can enforce new powers
* Wardens achieve same aims through persuasion

Managers’ views included –

“Fixed penalty powers are sufficient Wardens are not the type for police powers”

“Not in favour but we certainly need to standardise throughout Scotland”

“Some council areas are due to get additional powers for dog fouling and litter”

“No but can see it happening due to public pressure”

“Not wanted or needed”
Of the 19 managers who do not support extra powers, 17 were from Schemes without powers and 2 had enforcement powers. Of those 8 managers who supported extra powers, 6 had no powers and 2 had powers.

At present there are a number of Schemes were wardens have fixed penalty powers for litter and dog fouling and additional council areas are hoping to introduce similar powers in the future. Managers in particular have mixed feelings about additional powers and some are opposed to an enforcement role other than for anti-social behaviour, believing it would have a negative impact on the community. Those areas with current enforcement powers specifically mentioned that they did not wish detention powers similar to those in England. The majority of managers believe fixed penalty powers are sufficient, citing low pay scales and limited skills and aptitudes of some Wardens as a barrier to additional responsibilities.

A recent evaluation report on Community Wardens in Fife (2007) found little support for extra powers:

_There was little support for providing the Wardens with more powers, largely as a result of the potential for upsetting the balance of the relationship between Warden Teams and local residents._

One recent national development from the Anti-social Behaviour Act etc. (Scotland) 2004, introduces new mechanisms for tackling anti-social behaviour. This is the empowerment of police officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for ten offences of an anti-social behaviour nature committed by offenders of sixteen years or over. It is hoped this move will reduce paperwork for police officers and give them more time on the street. The following is a list of the offences for which a FPN can be issued:

* Riotous Behaviour whilst drunk in licensed premises
* Refusing to leave licensed premises on being requested to do so
* Urinating or defecating in circumstances causing annoyance to others
* Being drunk and incapable in charge of a child
* Persisting to the annoyance of others in playing musical instruments, singing, playing radios etc on being required to stop
* Vandalism
* Consuming alcoholic liquor in a public place
* Breach of the Peace
* Malicious Mischief
Clearly, there is an issue surrounding enforcement powers for Wardens and police officers at the local municipal level and one requiring consideration and debate by all parties.

Salaries
Community Warden salaries vary considerably across Scotland depending on council area and can have an approximate range between £15,000 to £18,300 with enhancements for shift or weekend working if appropriate. It is obvious from the responses shown in Figure 9 that salaries are an issue with some Wardens as 46% are unhappy with their present rate. A number of examples were given of Wardens transferring to other council schemes in search of higher rewards and better conditions of employment, in some instances to secure a more permanent job. A police constable during an extensive two year probationary training period earns approximately £21,000 - £24,000.

Figure 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some comments reflected fairly positively on salary:
“Yes it accurately reflects the job”
“Yes but there is a risk of being injured”

Others were unhappy with the salary position:
“No some wardens do more specialist work than others”
“No because our duties have expanded from the original job description”
“No as there is a need for a good standard of skills”
“No we seem to have more responsibility than other wardens”
“No not enough because of shifts”
“No as there is a risk of violence”
“No as there is a pay difference across Scotland”
“No as we multi-task and there is a life-saving and hazardous dimension”
“No as there is an element of danger”
It is apparent that there are some issues needing to be addressed, particularly if Wardens are given additional powers and responsibilities. The salaries position is indicative of the general lack of consistency and balance in the organisation of Wardens in Scotland.

**Uniforms**
As with salaries, Wardens’ uniforms vary depending on council areas. In some local authorities uniforms are similar to the police and in others, quite deliberately, the exact opposite. A selection of uniforms and colours cover a wide range from high visibility yellow jackets, green jumpers, red tops and fleeces, navy trousers and combat trousers to red anoraks and orange cycle jackets, most with council and/or warden logo. The wide disparity in uniforms is indicative of the individuality of Warden Schemes in Scotland. However, if the Wardens service is to expand and strengthen across Scotland then a recognisable image of a Warden in a generic uniform would be a step towards achieving that goal.

**National Organisation for Community Wardens**
As part of the theme of standardisation and uniformity, respondents were asked if they were supportive of a national organisation for Wardens – 74% are in favour with 18% against and the remainder don’t know (Figure 10).

Figure 10

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents in favour of a national organisation for Wardens](chart.png)

Comments made by respondents in favour of such a move included the following.

“Possibly, as there is a definitive role emerging that could be further developed nationally”

“Good idea would instil uniformity across councils”

“Yes but hard to implement as local authorities jealously guard their own
There were also some voices against the idea.

“No only for training - leave local authorities to their own schemes”

“No it may change the public view of us”

“No each council should have responsibility for their own”

“No as it would be run by COSLA and taken from police”

This last comment, intriguingly, reflected a concern of those Wardens in Schemes managed by the police that a move towards a national organisation would reduce local police control.

There is an argument for a more robust national structure to look after the interests of Wardens in place of the present loose framework. At present Warden managers meet regularly in a national network and discuss issues of interest. However, the national organisation proposed could have a statutory framework and put the present network on a more formal footing. Before such a move was possible the issue of permanent funding for Wardens would have to be resolved.

**Funding**

At the present time there is a ‘cocktail’ of funding for Wardens with financial support coming from the Scottish Executive and a variety of local authority sources. The main funding from the Scottish Executive ceases in March 2008 and there is a degree of apprehension as to what happens next, as a number of Warden Schemes will be unable to continue without sufficient funds. This
uncertainty is cited as a major concern amongst Wardens and their managers. The absence of security of employment means few local authorities have any meaningful medium to long-term plans involving Wardens. As one would expect, this lack of sustainability and continuity leads to managerial and organisational difficulties for frontline managers who have to cope with a temporary workforce who are in ‘limbo’, not knowing if they will be in post the following year. An announcement from the Scottish Executive on future funding is expected in October/November 2007.

**Deployment and Accountability**

The deployment of Wardens is based on levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the targeting of complaints and concerns from local communities. Regular intelligence gathering also feeds into the system and facilitates Wardens’ briefings and patrol strategies. However, while on patrol Wardens do have discretion and flexibility to prioritise their duties and are expected to use a great deal of common sense. Managers continually remind the Wardens to seek advice and guidance on any doubtful issues, but personal safety above all is paramount. The balance between proactive and reactive work is very dependent on the profile of the council area and the Wardens’ powers.

At present Wardens are employees of the local authority and subject to local government employment, discipline and grievance procedures. This is unlike police officers who are governed by their own discipline and misconduct regulations and unique police ‘complaints system’. There have been a number of Wardens disciplined in recent years for unacceptable conduct during the course of their duties. In these cases the individuals were disciplined under local authority regulations. The question of accountability of Wardens could become a sensitive issue in the future if the Warden Schemes expand in size and additional powers are allocated.

**COMMUNITY POLICING AND COMMUNITY WARDENS**

When community policing was introduced in the 1980s it was open to numerous definitions from academics, practitioners and members of the public. It was not a clear concept because it was not a simple marginal change to policing – it was a major cultural shift in the way the police operated. It involved a significant transformation since the onset of professional policing at the turn of the twentieth century (Brown & Iles 1985; Fielding 1994, 1995; Smith 1986, 1987; Weatheritt 1982, 1987). It placed police officers at the centre of the community and represented a change, not only in the way they thought about their work, but also in the way communities viewed policing methods in their localities. Similar comment can be made of the introduction of Community Wardens into the community as there are many analogous features between the two aims of crime prevention and community safety.

Although Wardens do not possess police powers, their aims and objectives are identical in many respects to those of community police officers (CPOs). The list below is a selection of goals and objectives given by Community
Wardens in their responses during the present study which coincide with those of CPOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities in Goals and Objectives of CPOs and Community Wardens</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Pursuit of community well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Work with the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Act as ‘eyes and ears’ of the community and other agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Reassure the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Improve quality of life in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Link between public and service Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Assist speedy resolution of incidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Advise on matters of community safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* High-visibility patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Engender environmental improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Deter crime and the fear of crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Report anti-social behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Support multi-agency and partnership initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Engage positively with young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Support and reassure victims of crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Facilitate Neighbourhood Watch Schemes</td>
</tr>
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As previously indicated, poor communication lines hamper any improvement in community liaison, whether between police, Wardens, partners and the general public, and apathy within communities to the police and Wardens does not help the situation either. There is also the danger of occasional friction between police, Wardens and the community. In particular localities there will be no immediate improvements in police/Warden community relations, as many of the problems are deep-rooted, although the presence of both are still essential in these areas.

The literature on the development of community policing teaches that a successful community relations model should include a number of features and approaches if it is to achieve its desired aims. The following is a list of similarities in the work-related characteristics of CPOs and Wardens.
Similarities in the Occupational and Operational Context of CPOs and Community Wardens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>* Flexibility of deployment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Ability to take on extra non-police-related work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Non-confrontational approach encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Gather Community and Crime Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Majority of work is non-enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Major input into schools and locally run events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Areas without CPOs/Wardens continually request coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Strong links developed with local agencies, especially housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Need for coverage on days off, annual leave and sickness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Gradual move from ‘proactive’ to ‘proactive and reactive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Over time CPOs became enforcers due to public pressure and rising crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Lack of understanding of the roles of CPOs and Wardens by agencies, colleagues and public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Communication problems with colleagues, public and other agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the early stages of implementation of CPOs the organisational structure of the police hampered its efficient working. It was found that all police officers had to be involved in its implementation, no one should be excluded, particularly supervisors and management. A small team of highly motivated CPOs could not by itself make the necessary cultural and organisational changes required.

Demand for cultural change did not stop with the police, but was necessary in participating organisations, for example, social work, housing and education. Local elected members and officials also had a duty to change their outlook and support the new approach to community safety. The situation with Community Wardens is not dissimilar.

According to some Wardens, cultural barriers to change and misperceptions of what they are trying to achieve are present in a number of council areas and come from sources inside and outside the community safety organisation.
Wardens play a key part in municipal policing, where they are one of many non-police players carrying out a variety of community safety roles. It will take some time for all participants, including community members, to understand fully the Wardens’ role. Better marketing, awareness, tuition and improved training all have a part to play in raising the profile and image of the Community Warden.

Many of the concerns experienced by CPOs in their early years also ring true for today’s Community Wardens. For example, the present research positions Wardens on the threshold of a new approach to policing and community safety with visible street patrol no longer the sole domain of the sworn police officer. This raises the question of who should now be involved in local policing and what part might be played by auxiliaries such as Wardens?

At the present time CPOs and Community Wardens play a leading role in community planning, social partnerships and community safety initiatives. In the past, the difficulty for the CPO was to achieve a balance between the role of law enforcer, accountable to the police organisation and to carry out non-enforcement duties within the community to whom accountability also lay. Community Wardens are likely to face this dilemma if enforcement powers increase. Similarly, new enforcement responsibilities and increased proficiency as witnesses could lead Wardens to increased court appearances and abstractions from their primary role as high visibility street patrollers – just like police officers.

**The Future of Community Wardens in Scotland**

The future of Community Wardens in Scotland is very much in the hands of the Scottish Executive and, to a lesser degree, the local authorities. Since 2003 the Scottish Executive has financed the Warden programme and the local authorities have supported and implemented the various schemes. The new administration in the Scottish Parliament is committed to making a decision on the future funding of Wardens in late 2007. However, the expansion of police auxiliaries in England and Wales is of interest in any review of the future of Community Wardens in Scotland, as police and local authorities south of the border have led the way in this style of reassurance policing since the turn of the century.

**Community Wardens in England and Wales**

There are two main types of auxiliary in England and Wales: the Community Support Officer (CSO), who is similar to our Community Wardens, and the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), who normally works for the police and possesses some police powers. Both models cover low level crime, reassurance policing and anti-social behaviour.

An interesting example of the work of the PCSO is to be found at Gatwick Airport. A team there is made up of an Inspector, 2 Sergeants, 2 Constables and 12 Community Support Officers. The PCSOs do not have powers to detain suspects, but draw down their authority from the Gatwick Airport Byelaws to stop and check individuals. The public knows the PCSOs can contact police officers within minutes. Their value lies in the comment of one of the
CPSOs - “Because we have not got handcuffs, batons, sprays or guns, I think we are more approachable.” (Police Review, 13 July 2007, p. 19).

Another dimension to the ubiquitous ‘extended police family’ comes in the legislation that allows accredited personnel in England and Wales to be given a limited range of police powers similar to PCSOs under the Police Reform Act 2002 (s.40). A large number of schemes have been introduced and those who can be accredited to work within the community safety industry include “neighbourhood wardens, security guards, park rangers, hospital and university security staff, fire and rescue service personnel, housing association employees, environmental health officers and parking attendants” (Grieve 2007, p. 57). Their powers range from fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for anti-social behaviour offences, requiring names and addresses of individuals, confiscation of alcohol, removal of abandoned vehicles, stopping vehicles for testing, limited traffic control, stopping cycles to issue FPNs, dealing with begging issues, and photographing individuals to issue FPNs (ibid., p.58).

**Non-Emergency Telephone Number**

Another innovative feature of community interaction is the ‘101’ non-emergency number which was introduced in a number of areas in England and Wales in 2006. This system is designed to improve the delivery of non-emergency services by ensuring a more co-ordinated response by local agencies, while freeing up the 999 service to handle emergency incidents. It is estimated that in the UK 70% of calls to 999 are non-emergencies (Home Office 2006).

The service can be used to report a variety of anti-social behaviour related incidents including :-

- vandalism and graffiti
- threatening and abusive behaviour
- drunk and rowdy groups
- broken street lighting
- drug-related anti-social behaviour
- abandoned vehicles
- fly-tipping
- noise nuisance

Specially trained advisers handle the calls and give information and advice when necessary, with community support officers/wardens, police or local council officials taking any further action. Community Support Officers in the ‘neighbourhood teams’ spend a great deal of their time answering ‘101’ calls as opposed to ‘999’ calls. The Scottish police are presently reviewing call handling systems and there is the future prospect of a single non-emergency telephone number being introduced in Scotland.

**Glasgow Model**

One recent Scottish initiative is the new limited liability company with charitable status established by Glasgow City Council in 2006. Glasgow Community and Safety Services (GCSS) is a new organisation which aims to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and promote community safety. It
brings together council staff, police, CCTV and partnership agencies. The model incorporates a number of auxiliary staff similar to Community Wardens, namely community safety patrol officers, community support officers, community security officers, noise enforcement officers, restorative justice workers, graffiti removal teams and many more. The presence of a sizeable strategic community safety model in Scotland may have a significant impact on the future organisation of Community Wardens.

**Police Views**

Senior police management is supportive of Community Wardens, particularly if they are based within and employed by the local authority. The general view is that Wardens have proved to be a useful resource and play a key role in the evolving ‘extended police family’. On the other hand, the Scottish Police Federation, which represents the rank-and-file police officers, takes the view that crime and anti-social behaviour are matters for the police and has commented in the past that the funding for Community Wardens would have been better spent on police officers. An interesting observation on the Federation’s position in England and Wales was recently made when referring to Community Support Officers and the wider extended police family.

> "Having actively resisted the introduction of CSOs it is now difficult for the Federation, should it need to, to attempt to represent what the public will come to see as the range of actors providing a visible presence on the streets. In the none to distant future the Federation may need to rethink, not just its stance but also its role in relation with at least some of these other actors."  
> (Newburn 2007, p. 233).

The status given to Community Wardens will depend on the standpoint of the group, organisation or individual making the observation. However, the summing up by the sheriff in a case where a youth was found guilty of disorderly behaviour and assault on a Community Warden at Greenock Sheriff Court in 2006 is worth noting.

> "Behaviour of this type, particularly attempts to threaten or interfere with the works of the Community Wardens, will be treated in exactly the same way as if it were police officers."

Similar observations were made in the courts in support of the ‘new police’ during the early days of their implementation in the nineteenth-century.

**Conclusions**

The main findings of the present study are as follows:-

- Available evidence shows Wardens are a success in their communities.
- Funding of Wardens is the major concern of all respondents.
- Differential salary scales are a concern among many Wardens.
• Differing titles for Wardens and their managers do not help public understanding of their roles.

• There is evidence of inconsistent training across the Warden Schemes.

• Each Warden Scheme has its own unique uniform which can hamper Wardens’ national image.

• The range of duties carried out by Wardens varies noticeably across Schemes.

• Wardens have developed a key role as professional court witnesses.

• The main difficulties for Wardens are dealing with young people and anti-social behaviour.

• Some communication problems continue to exist between police and Wardens.

• 50% of Wardens desire extra powers.

• Whether or not Wardens should have additional powers remains controversial.

• Most Wardens support the creation of a national organization.

• The public and local councils are supportive of the Warden Schemes.

• Wardens are a key link between the community and partner agencies.

• Warden implementation problems are similar to those of community policing and lessons can be learned from these comparisons.

The present study illustrates how Community Wardens in Scotland have been flexible enough to reflect the needs of local communities. The absence of interference and tight control by the Scottish Executive has led to a variety of models with widespread differences in training, uniforms, roles, powers and salaries. This is understandable in the early years of the initiative. However, when dealing with enforcement measures in the public domain, a nationally co-ordinated, strategic and standardised approach to Community Wardens would now seem more appropriate. Such a move could be realised without interfering with the ‘holy grail’ of flexibility and decision making at the local level.

Community Wardens are a response to the constant need for more visible patrolling as it is highly unlikely extra police resources will find themselves tackling anti-social behaviour, dog fouling, litter, environmental and noise issues. In the past the police were rarely in a position to address these
community problems, but as a result of the presence of Community Wardens there is now a proactive group with a specific remit to tackle these issues.

As with community policing, a lot of the Wardens’ work goes unseen, and although their efforts may not be perfect, they do have potential to invigorate communities, engage with young people, empower community members, facilitate environmental improvement and advance community safety. Wardens can be a conduit to involving young people and, more importantly, to engage those difficult to access minority groups in local decision making. They are a mechanism that offers a consistency of interface between partnership agencies and the public, giving community members more control over community safety issues in their area. A regular Warden Patrol system constantly interacting with the community is more representative than a ‘community meeting’ with 20 people or local partnership agencies making decisions on their own.

It is not easy to assess the impact of Community Wardens as there are difficulties in evaluating the qualitative element to their work that does not lend itself to satisfactory measurement. However, this report has referred to a number of comprehensive studies in Scotland and the rest of the UK which have substantiated an improved quality of life for communities as a result of interventions by Wardens. There is a sufficiency of positive feedback from Wardens and their management, partner agencies and the police, local politicians and community groups, crime statistics and other survey information, to conclude that Community Wardens are playing a valuable role in community safety. Community policing experienced similar qualitative evaluation difficulties in its early days, but with the appropriate support and development it has become a robust approach within contemporary policing. There is no reason why this cannot be replicated for Community Wardens.

That process would benefit from further consideration of a number of issues which the present study has highlighted.

- Examining the mix of agents in the emerging model of ‘plural and municipal policing’ in Scotland.
- Evaluating the role of Community Wardens in the new world of ‘plural and municipal policing’ in Scotland.
- Considering what powers Wardens should have.
- Assessing to whom Wardens should be accountable.
- Investigating Wardens’ relationships with partnership agencies.
- Reviewing the role of policing at the local municipal level.

Wardens have a key role to play in community wellbeing and safety and have the potential to contribute solutions to many of the perennially difficult issues
that have existed for so long in our communities. The hope is that the data from this study will stimulate and contribute to that ongoing debate.
References


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16 October 2007