

# Neighbourhood Watch Membership and Demand

Ferhat Tura and Andromachi Tseloni

Crime Surveys Users Conference  
26 November 2018

The study has been funded by the Neighbourhood & Home Watch Network

Office for National Statistics. (2017). *Crime Survey for England and Wales, 2016-2017*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. Retrieved from

<https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/series/series?id=200009>

# Aims

- Neighbourhood Watch (NW) membership trends, profile and relationship with crime experiences and perceptions
- Demand for NW membership trends, profile and relationship with crime experiences and perceptions

# Outline

**Neighbourhood Watch (NW) – History**

**NW Data and Variables**

**NW Membership and Demand Trends**

**NW Membership Trends by:**

- Area type
- Age groups

**NW Membership across Police Force Areas**

**NW Membership and Demand Profiles over:**

- Household and area characteristics
- Household Reference Person's crime perceptions and victimisation and Household's victimisation

# History - Previous research

Established in England & Wales in 1980s

Neighbours -“Eyes and ears” of the police (Laycock and Tilley 2018)

Based on 36 (14 UK) evaluations NW schemes prevent 26% (15% UK) of crimes (JDI 2015; Bennett et al. 2007)

In England and Wales each household in a NW area experiences on average 11% less household crimes than the same household in a non-NW area; and

lone parents, households in flats or maisonettes and social renters in high crime NW areas are additionally protected than in non-NW ones (Tseloni 2006; Pease and Tseloni 2014)



NW membership proliferates in low deprivation areas but also in high deprivation and high crime areas (Brunton-Smith and Bullock 2018)

# Data – NW relevant questions

## Crime Survey for England and Wales, 1992 – 2016/17

(Follow up/ Crime Prevention modules)

Household weight throughout the analyses

- *Filters:* - Have you heard of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes before? [IF YES] Has a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme ever been set up in this area, covering this address?; or
  - Is Neighbourhood Watch Scheme currently operating in this area?; or
  - Is there a NW scheme currently operating in this area that covers your address?
- [IF YES] Is your household a member of Neighbourhood Watch Scheme?  **NW Membership**
- [IF NO] Would you personally join a scheme, if there was one in this area?  **NW Demand**

# NW Membership & Demand

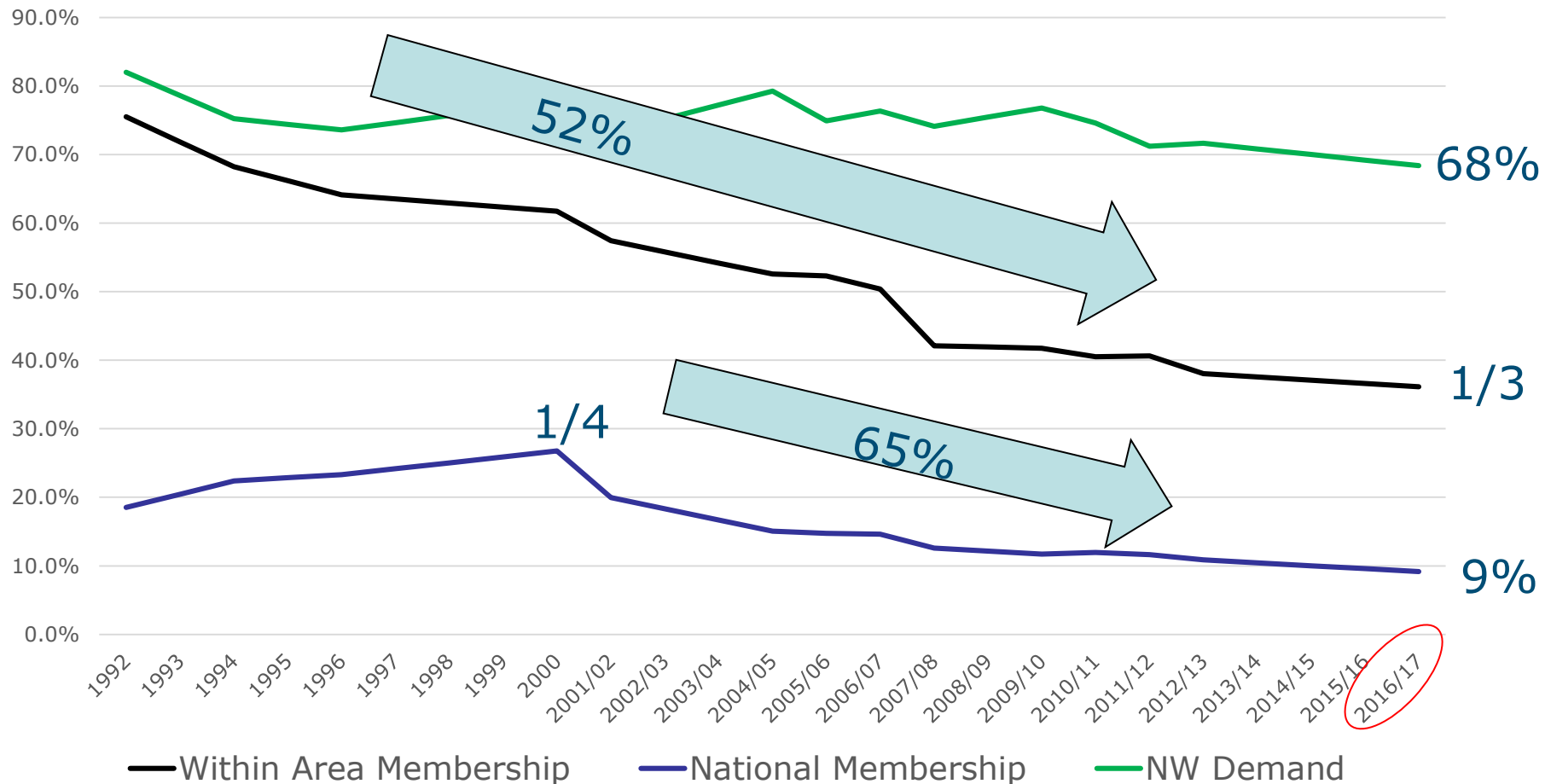
**NW membership** is measured in two ways:

- The percentage of households which are NW members in England and Wales – *national NW membership* - and
- The percentage of member households within areas where NW operates – *membership within NW areas*

**NW demand** is measured as:

- The percentage of households which would join a scheme if there was one in their area

# Fig. 1: National and Within NW Areas Membership and Demand Trends

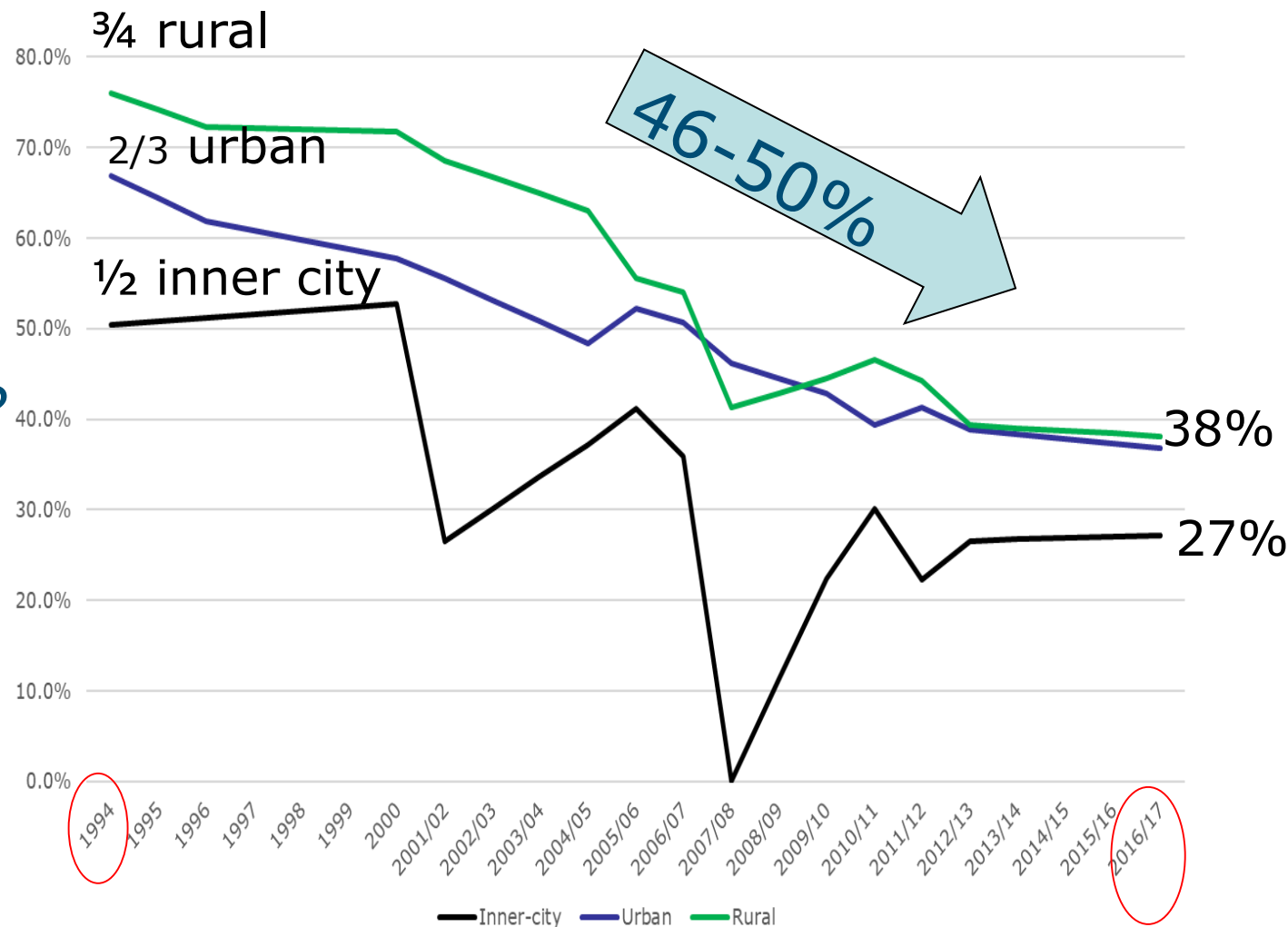


Interpolated for 1993, 1995, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002/03, 2003/04, 2008/09, 2013/14-2015/16

# Fig. 2: NW Membership by Area Type

In which kinds of areas does NW operate?

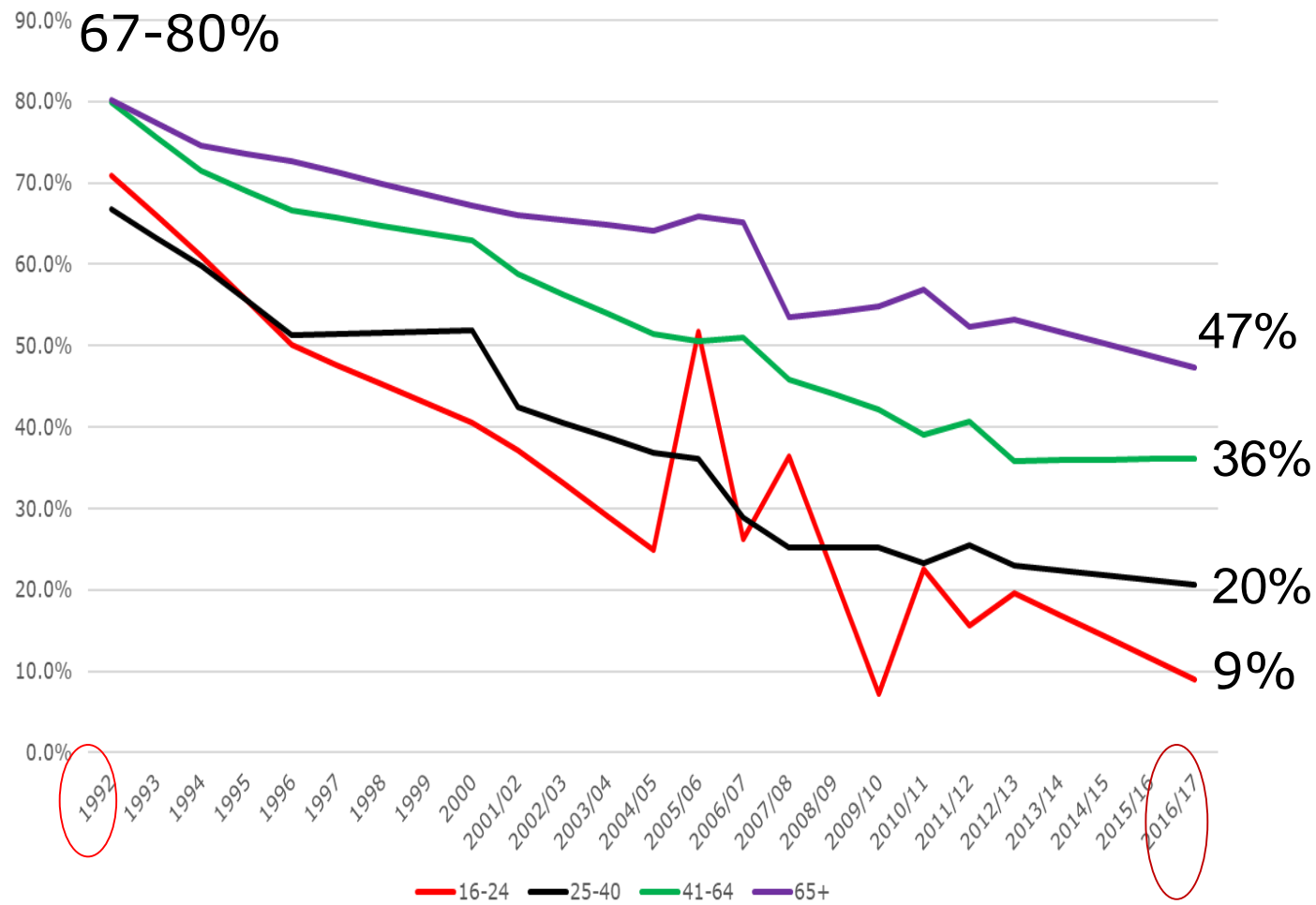
Have they changed over time?





# Fig. 3: NW Membership by Age Groups

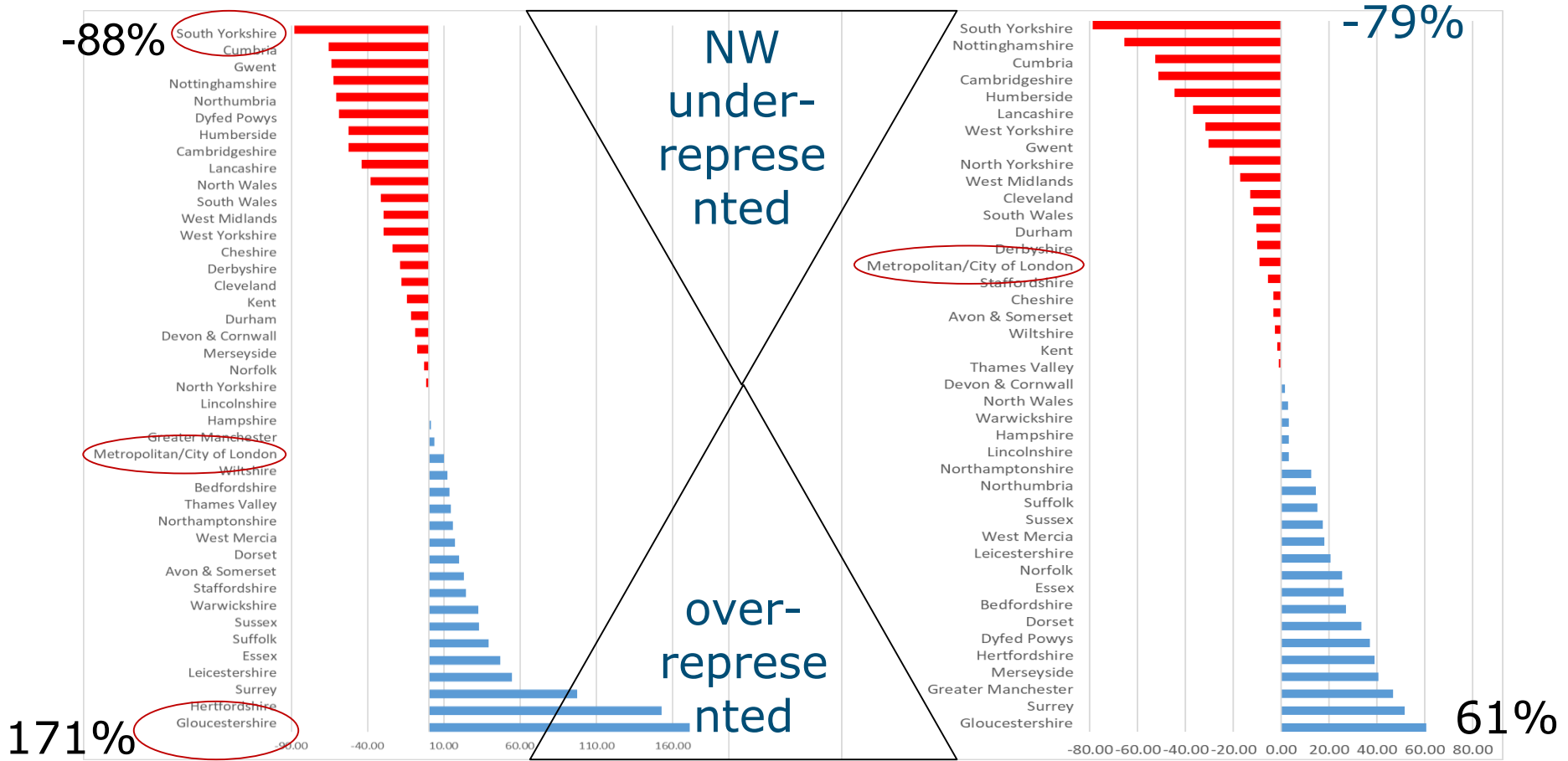
Which age groups participate in NW? and Have they changed over time?



# Fig. 4: NW Membership across PFAs

Fig. 4a: Odds ratio difference (%) of NW members compared to *all households*

Fig. 4b: Odds ratio difference (%) of NW members compared to *households in NW areas*



# Modelling

Hierarchical Logit  
Model of NW  
Membership or  
Demand

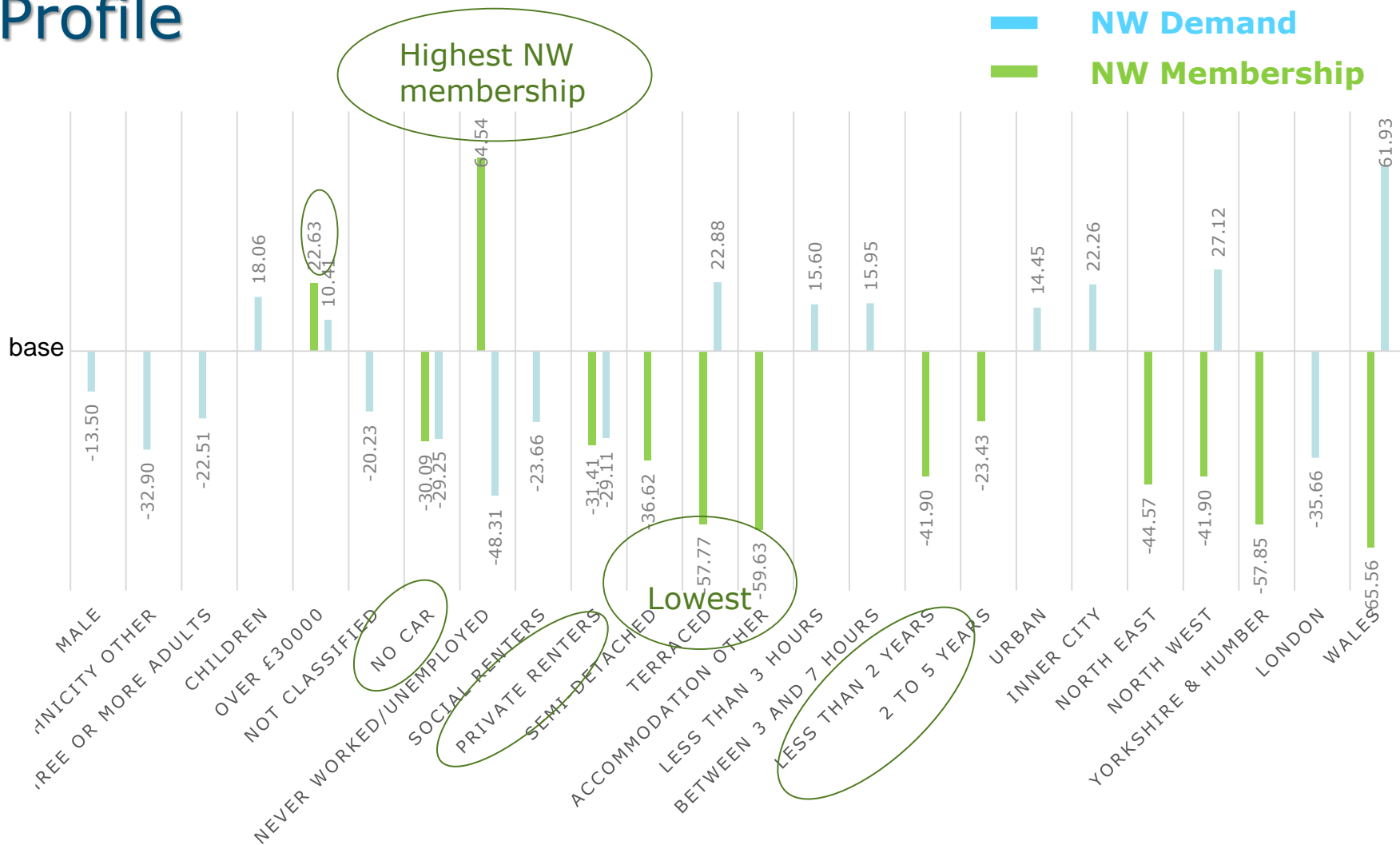
Units: Households  
Nested within PFAs

# Covariates

- Household Reference  
Person's sex, age,  
ethnicity & social class
- Household's composition  
(adults - children),  
annual income, cars,  
accommodation type,  
tenure, home occupancy,  
length of residence in  
the area
- Area type and Region

# NW Membership and Demand Household Profile

% odds ratio difference compared to Base household



# NW Membership and Demand Household Profile

% odds ratio difference compared to Base household



# Modelling

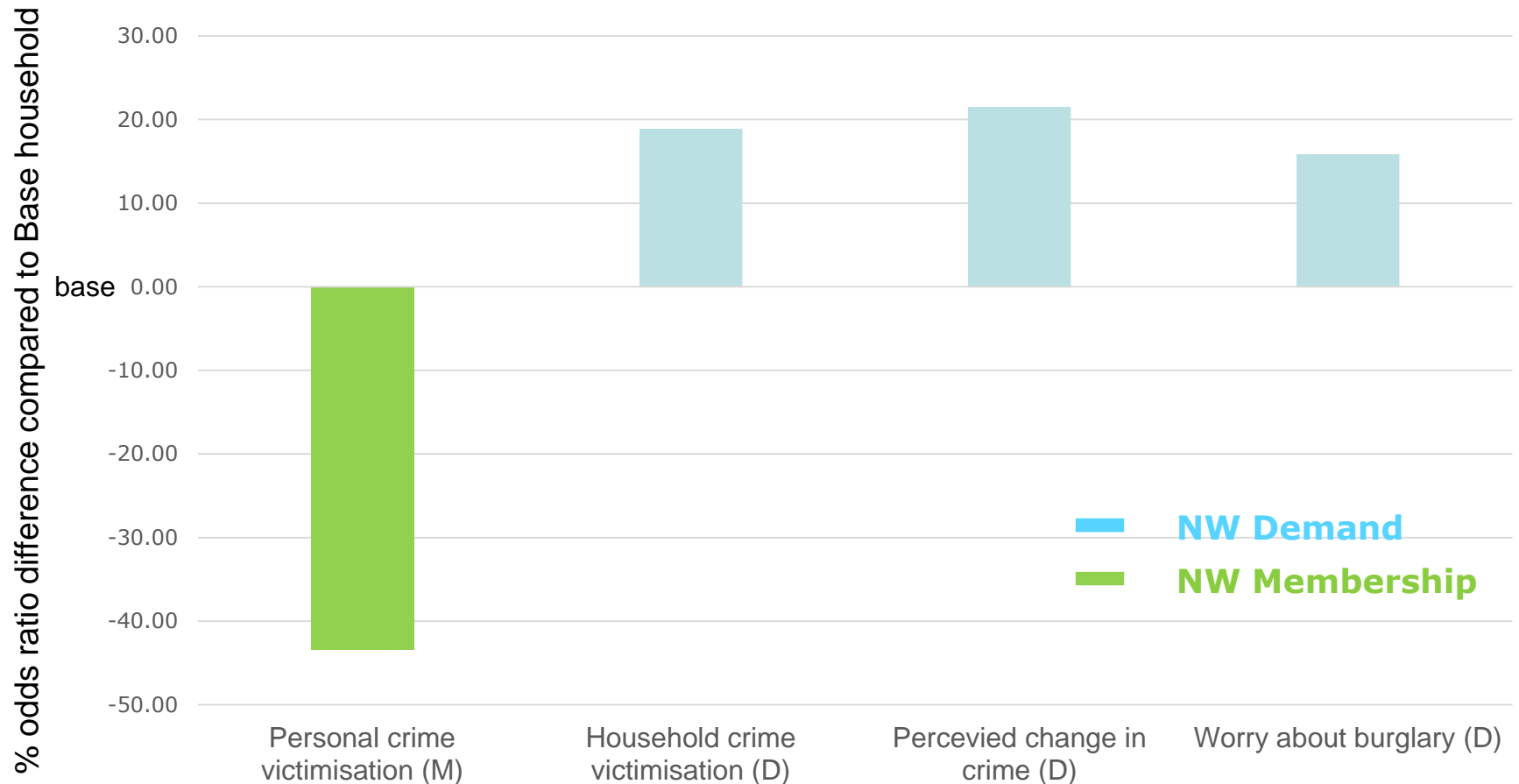
Hierarchical Logit Model of NW Membership or Demand - Households Nested within PFAs

Bivariate (Joint Dependent) Logit Model of NW Membership or Demand and each of the opposite

# Covariates

- Household Reference Person's sex, age, ethnicity & social class
- Household's composition (no. adults & children), annual income, cars, accommodation type, tenure, home occupancy, length of residence in the area
- Area type and Region
- Victim of: Personal crime; Household crime; Fraud or Computer misuse
- Worry about burglary
- Perceived rise in crime

# NW Membership and Demand over Crime Experiences and Perceptions



# Conclusions – NW membership

- After an expansion period (reaching 1/4 households in England and Wales), NW membership fell, especially from 2000 to 2006/07, and since then plateaued at 9%.
- NW membership varies considerably across PFAs – partly but not completely due to PFAs' residents profile
- NW members are older age, affluent households with at least one car, of intermediate or professional social class, reside either in social housing or their own detached house and have lived in the same area of the South or East of England or the Midlands for at least 5 years.



# Conclusions – NW demand

- NW demand has fallen slightly since 1992 and remains at just over 1/3 households in England and Wales.
- NW demand varies across PFAs – partly but not completely due to PFAs' residents profile
- NW demand comes from households of older age with female HRPs of almost all ethnicities except Chinese or Other, with 1-2 adults and children, affluent, with 1+ cars, from all social classes, owner occupiers of terraced houses, leaving their house empty < 7 hours per weekday, in urban and inner city areas, especially in Wales
- Victims of household crime, who worry about burglary and/or believe crime has gone up have increased NW demand
- Linking information about NW and how to join immediately after a burglary is arguably an effective policy to increase membership amongst households which are not currently the typical NW member

# References

- Bennett, T., Holloway, K. and Farrington, D. (2007) The Effectiveness of Neighbourhood Watch. *Security Journal*, 22(2), 143-155.
- Brunton-Smith, I. and Bullock, K. (2018) Patterns and Drivers of Co-production in Neighbourhood Watch in England and Wales: From Neo-liberalism to New Localism. *The British Journal of Criminology*. online first <https://academic.oup.com/bjc/advance-article/doi/10.1093/bjc/azy012/4999983> [Accessed 28 October 2018].
- UCL Jill Dando Institute (2015) Neighbourhood Watch. What Works Centre for Crime Reduction. Available online at: <http://whatworks.college.police.uk/toolkit/Pages/Intervention.aspx?InterventionID=8> [Accessed 22 November 2018].
- Laycock, G. and Tilley, N. (2018) A short history of the England and Wales national burglary security initiatives. In Tseloni, A., Thompson, R. and Tilley, N. (Eds.) *Reducing Burglary*. Social Sciences/Criminology. NY: Springer.
- Pease, Ken and Tseloni, Andromachi (2014) *Using modelling to predict and prevent victimisation*. Springer-Brief Criminology Series, NY: Springer.
- Tseloni, A. (2006) Multilevel modelling of the number of property crimes: Household and area effects. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series A-Statistics in Society*, 169, Part 2, 205-233.