# Doorbell cameras help secure convictions as Saddleworth crime watch flourishes



The recent episode of the new BBC series "Doorbell Detectives," hosted by Matt Allwright, sheds light on the increasingly vital role that domestic CCTV systems, particularly video doorbells, play in neighbourhood crime prevention. The five-part series explores various cases where footage from these devices has helped locate and apprehend criminals. In the latest episode, which aired on June 2, viewers were introduced to Pauline, a retired teacher from Saddleworth. One early morning, she received an unsettling alert from her doorbell camera, revealing two men attempting to gain access to her home. This alarming situation left her feeling both frightened and vulnerable.

Pauline's experience is not merely anecdotal; it reflects a broader trend in the UK where police forces are integrating doorbell camera footage in their crime-solving strategies. Data from Greater Manchester Police, as highlighted in recent discussions, shows a significant uptick in the use of such footage, aligning with findings from a 2017 trial in Los Angeles that reported a remarkable 50% reduction in crime in areas equipped with video doorbells. However, the rise of this technology is not without concerns; privacy issues came to the fore in 2021 when a case deemed a Ring doorbell's usage to be in breach of data protection laws.

After noticing the suspicious activities captured on her doorbell camera, Pauline took proactive measures. Initially reaching out to her son, she eventually shared the footage within her community crime watch WhatsApp group, initiated by local councillor Alicia Marland in 2022. This platform has become an essential tool for residents in Saddleworth, allowing them to exchange information about suspicious activities and fostering a sense of community vigilance. In response to her footage, neighbours, including another resident named Trevor, shared their similar experiences, effectively creating a neighbourhood network committed to safety.

Trevor recounted his concerns on the show, noting that he too had captured footage of individuals trying vehicle doors in the vicinity. He reported this to the police, who subsequently informed him that two suspects had been arrested but there was insufficient evidence to substantiate a case against them. This led Councillor Marland to take further action, highlighting the role of community involvement in crime detection. The identification of one of the men from the footage—dubbed ‘bare-faced Baz’—ultimately resulted in a conviction for attempted burglary and vehicle interference, with Baz sentenced to eight months in prison.

Allwright summarised the episode's themes by underscoring the power of community cooperation, remarking on how the collective effort and the technological advancement of doorbell cameras can be leveraged to enhance public safety. Councillor Marland echoed this sentiment, affirming her satisfaction with the outcomes achieved through collaborative engagement between the community and local law enforcement.

As communities like Saddleworth continue to form crime watch groups, the use of platforms such as WhatsApp is expected to flourish, promoting faster reporting and discussions around suspicious incidents. The episode serves as a compelling reminder of the interplay between community, technology, and law enforcement in the ongoing battle against crime. With viewers able to catch the Saddleworth episode on BBC iPlayer, the series aims to not only entertain but also to inform and empower residents to utilise these tools in safeguarding their neighbourhoods.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theoldhamtimes.co.uk/news/25210543.oldham-crime-watchers-appear-bbcs-doorbell-detectives/), [[4]](https://www.objectivemedia.group/news/view/bbc-daytime-commissions-unique-crime-programme-from-purple-productions)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theoldhamtimes.co.uk/news/25210543.oldham-crime-watchers-appear-bbcs-doorbell-detectives/), [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/business-66360030), [[5]](https://saddind.co.uk/communities-help-crime-watch-groups-flourish/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.theoldhamtimes.co.uk/news/25210543.oldham-crime-watchers-appear-bbcs-doorbell-detectives/), [[5]](https://saddind.co.uk/communities-help-crime-watch-groups-flourish/), [[6]](https://saddind.co.uk/armed-police-brought-in-to-tackle-spate-of-burglaries-across-saddleworth-villages/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/mediacentre/2025/bbc-daytime-commissions-back-seat-cops-and-doorbell-detectives), [[6]](https://saddind.co.uk/armed-police-brought-in-to-tackle-spate-of-burglaries-across-saddleworth-villages/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.theoldhamtimes.co.uk/news/25210543.oldham-crime-watchers-appear-bbcs-doorbell-detectives/), [[4]](https://www.objectivemedia.group/news/view/bbc-daytime-commissions-unique-crime-programme-from-purple-productions), [[5]](https://saddind.co.uk/communities-help-crime-watch-groups-flourish/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theoldhamtimes.co.uk/news/25210543.oldham-crime-watchers-appear-bbcs-doorbell-detectives/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-66360030> - This article discusses the increasing use of video doorbells in the UK and their impact on crime prevention. It highlights how police forces, including London's Metropolitan Police and Greater Manchester Police, are utilising footage from these devices to solve crimes. The piece also addresses concerns about privacy and data protection, referencing a 2021 court case where the use of a Ring doorbell was deemed to have breached data protection laws. Additionally, it mentions a 2017 trial by the Los Angeles Police Department that reported a 50% reduction in crime in areas equipped with Ring video doorbells.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/mediacentre/2025/bbc-daytime-commissions-back-seat-cops-and-doorbell-detectives> - The BBC has commissioned two new crime programmes for BBC One and iPlayer: 'Back Seat Cops' and 'Doorbell Detectives'. 'Back Seat Cops' offers viewers a ride-along experience with police officers, providing insight into modern policing. 'Doorbell Detectives', presented by Matt Allwright, investigates neighbourhood crime through the lens of home CCTV and doorbell footage, showcasing how these technologies assist in tracking down criminals. Both series aim to engage audiences with real-life crime-solving stories and are set to air later this year.
4. <https://www.objectivemedia.group/news/view/bbc-daytime-commissions-unique-crime-programme-from-purple-productions> - Purple Productions, part of Objective Media Group, has been commissioned by BBC Daytime to produce 'Doorbell Detectives', a five-part series presented by Matt Allwright. The programme explores the role of home CCTV and smart doorbell footage in solving neighbourhood crimes. Each episode features real-life cases where victims have used their doorbell cameras to assist police in tracking down criminals. The series aims to highlight the impact of community engagement and technology in crime prevention and is set to air on BBC One and iPlayer later this year.
5. <https://saddind.co.uk/communities-help-crime-watch-groups-flourish/> - This article reports on the rapid establishment and success of new community crime watch groups in Grotton, Springhead, and Lees, formed just eight weeks prior. Organised by Alicia Marland, these groups have grown significantly, with members using WhatsApp to share information and alert neighbours to suspicious activities. The initiative has led to tangible results, such as the swift identification and seizure of a stolen vehicle. The piece underscores the effectiveness of community collaboration in enhancing local security and deterring criminal activity.
6. <https://saddind.co.uk/armed-police-brought-in-to-tackle-spate-of-burglaries-across-saddleworth-villages/> - In response to a surge in burglaries across Saddleworth villages, armed police officers have been deployed to act as an additional deterrent. Inspector Bash Anwar clarified that their presence was not linked to any specific threat but aimed to prevent further crimes. The article also highlights the importance of community vigilance, urging residents to secure their homes and report any suspicious activities. It features insights from local Homewatch chair Royce Franklin, who emphasises the role of community involvement in crime prevention.
7. <https://saddind.co.uk/police-use-social-media-connect-community/> - Oldham Borough Neighbourhood Police are leveraging social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to enhance communication with residents and keep them informed about local incidents and events. By promoting these channels, the police aim to provide timely updates and create a more effective means for the public to report neighbourhood issues. The initiative reflects a broader strategy to engage the community actively in crime prevention and awareness efforts, fostering a collaborative approach to maintaining public safety.