In 2004/5 nationally released crime statistics revealed that residents of Nottingham City were more likely to be a victim of burglary than in any other part of the United Kingdom. In 2006 the Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership developed an initiative entitled the ‘Weeks of Action’ programme, which included the strategic marking of 1,000 homes with SmartWater® every eight weeks in identified ‘hotspots’ across the city. Locally elected members became ‘SmartWater Champions’ for their wards ensuring that all vulnerable families were identified and protected.

The programme ran for four years and involved neighbourhoods throughout Nottingham. During the programme over 65,000 homes were issued with SmartWater traceable liquid packs, making it the largest deployment of SmartWater ever seen at the time.

**GENERATING AWARENESS**

A high profile media and awareness campaign was used to support the programme, including regular articles in the local press and high visibility advertising aimed at known offenders. Adverts were placed at local bus stations and on noticeboards throughout the area. Buses and trams were also wrapped in SmartWater advertising making it almost impossible not to be confronted by the SmartWater logo and brand name at some point during the day. This had the dual benefit of raising awareness amongst criminals whilst also promoting reassurance amongst the communities of Nottingham City.

**COVERT TRAPS**

To demonstrate to local criminals that SmartWater posed a genuine threat, trap flats rigged with SmartWater spray systems and CCTV were deployed to great effect. Multiple arrests were made as a result of the trap flats, including 19-year-old serial offender Darren Stokes. CCTV cameras caught the moment that Stokes broke into a trap flat in Lenton, taking just 14 seconds to steal a laptop. He was sprayed with SmartWater as he made his exit and was arrested by police officers shortly afterwards.

He later admitted to four burglaries and one attempted burglary. Stokes was initially given a community order, but he re-offended less than three months later, resulting in 18 months detention in a youth offender’s institution.

**ACHIEVING RESULTS**

At the conclusion of the programme burglary figures in the city were reduced by **50%**. Based on the Home Office figure that an individual burglary costs an average of £3,950 to tax payers, it has been calculated that this project created a saving to the public purse of **£18,000,000** every year between 2006 and 2010. financial year.

**TESTIMONIAL**

“SmartWater has had a big role in cutting down burglaries. Not only does it help make people feel safer, it also gets people thinking about other ways they can protect their homes. It also acts as a powerful deterrent.”

Allan Breeton, Deputy Director, Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership