Op Instinct.
Cannabis Grow Aware Scheme (CGA).

Sgt Anthony Sullivan – Northern Problem Solving Team.

...ortion of 16 to 59 year old's in England and Wales reporting ...f cannabis ever in their lifetime from 2001/02 to 2019/20

© Statista 2022

The "underground," cannabis market in the UK is worth an estimated £3 Billion*, with 29.4% of 16 – 59 year olds in England and Wales believed to have now used the drug during there lifetime. *(Statista Survey 2022).*

Organised Crime Groups (OCG's) are using increasingly sophisticated methods to ensure yields are maximised and detection opportunities are limited; increasing profits along the way.
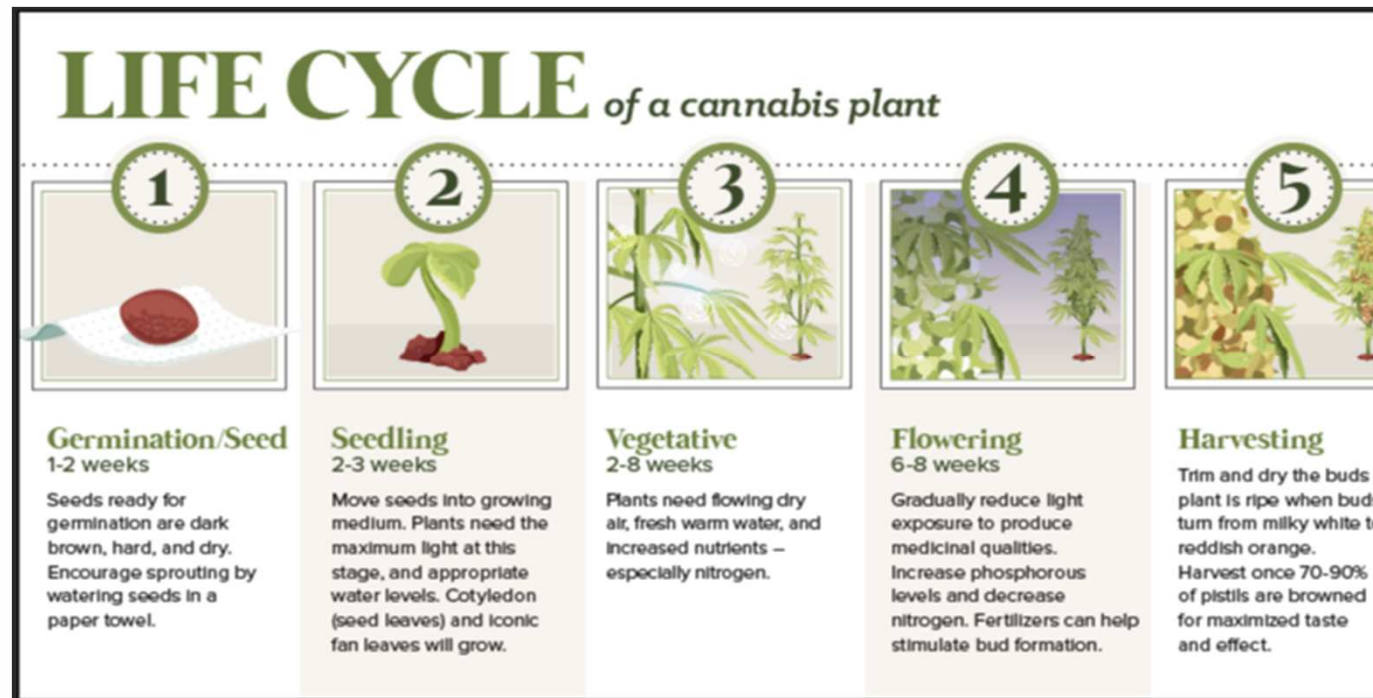
There has also been an increase in cannabis produced on a "personal," level, as opposed to cultivated in more commercial circumstances.

*(*Institute of Economic Affairs report 2021.)*

The cannabis life cycle is shown opposite this is not an exact science and the grow rate will depend on the knowledge and experience of the person setting up the hydroponic system.

The average plant price in Cheshire varies with yields netting between *£1000- £1400* a plant depending on the strain and care taken in the production process.

LIFE CYCLE *of a cannabis plant*

1

Germination/Seed
1-2 weeks

Seeds ready for germination are dark brown, hard, and dry. Encourage sprouting by watering seeds in a paper towel.

2

Seedling
2-3 weeks

Move seeds into growing medium. Plants need the maximum light at this stage, and appropriate water levels. Cotyledon (seed leaves) and iconic fan leaves will grow.

3

Vegetative
2-8 weeks

Plants need flowing dry air, fresh warm water, and increased nutrients – especially nitrogen.

4

Flowering
6-8 weeks

Gradually reduce light exposure to produce medicinal qualities. Increase phosphorous levels and decrease nitrogen. Fertilizers can help stimulate bud formation.

5

Harvesting

Trim and dry the buds plant is ripe when bud turn from milky white t reddish orange. Harvest once 70-90% of pistils are browned for maximized taste and effect.

ta was needed and obtained from the following:

Cheshire Constabulary.
Halton Borough Council / Warrington Borough Council /
Chamber of Commerce.
Cheshire Fire and Rescue.

entified issues so far:

Private rent properties being utilised for grows.
Criminals taxing cannabis growers (often with force).
Fires at residential & business properties attributed to grows.
Environmental issues associated with cannabis waste.

Information sharing.

Cheshire
Constabu

Information suggests that there is a link between landlords renting out their properties and a disproportionate number of cannabis farms in these properties.

81% of grows take place in private rented properties (commercial or residential).

Little is being done to prevent and deter criminals from using private rented properties.

Cannabis grows place a large demand on police resources.

Cost the owner of property between **5k**-**10k** in damages.

8.3% of cannabis grows in the sample group resulted in house fires.

There is an environmental cost from the fly tipping of the cannabis grow waste.

A check on a property between *weeks 8-10* would make it *unsuitable* for growing cannabis as it takes 8-12 weeks to grow.
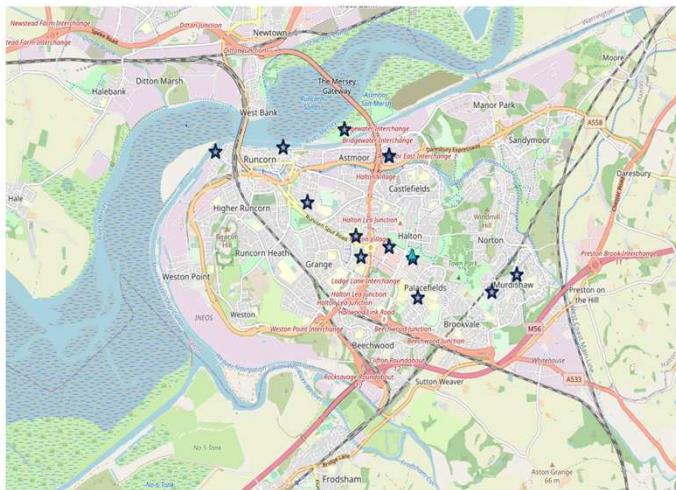

Cheshire Constabulary data:
North Area - 36 offences: Jan 21 –
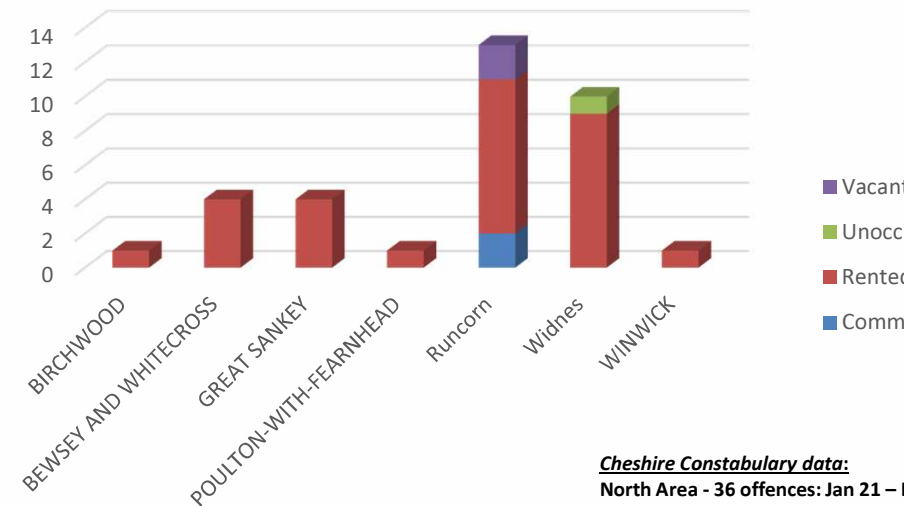
cation:

Across North Local Policing Unit (LPU) there is <u>*no identified*</u> hot spot production area.

Runcorn   *Widnes*   *Warrington*
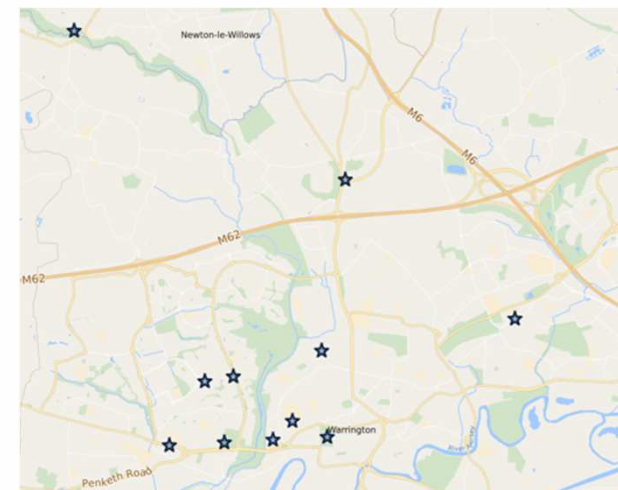
Victims:

81% of the properties used to grow cannabis were rented either privately or through a letting agent. The other properties were vacant commercial / residential or owner-occupied.

(*Cheshire Constabulary data*: North Area - 36 offences: Jan 21 – Dec 21)

It is estimated that the average cost for damage caused to property involved in the production of cannabis was between **£5k** & **£10K**

(Association of British Insurers (ABI) report 2020).

Media Profile – Cheshire Constabulary and Local Council media. Constabulary & Councils to work in partnership to promote the scheme.

Leaflet Drop (Housing Providers/social landlords etc.) Promote the scheme and idea.

Promote the scheme through *Crime Stoppers*.

Sign up scheme (Cannabis Grow Aware (CGA)) promote the checks/visits & benefits of this to landlords and monitor uptake.

Op Initiators – Problem Solving Team to visit top <u>10 addresses in each area</u>. All addresses in the sample group are to be re checked and CGA stickers to be placed in the windows.

Liaise with Royal Mail re increasing calls to crime stoppers (Smell/sealed letterboxes)

Landlords who avoid the scheme, and where evidence/intelligence suggest involved in cannabis grows will have all their properties as a whole scrutinised.

Cheshire
Constabu

ual:

of CGA stickers on properties is aimed at targeting the psychology of the offender so his or her perception of
g caught would deter them from using the address.

logy, Crime and Law 6(1), 45-59, 2000).

certainty of being caught is a vastly more powerful deterrent than the punishment:

earch shows clearly that the *chance of being caught* is a vastly more effective deterrent than even draconian
ishment.

al Institute of Justice Report - Department of Justice (2016).

ce deter crime by increasing the perception that criminals will be caught and punished:

Police deter crime when they do things that strengthen a criminal's perception of the certainty of being
ght. Strategies that use the police as "sentinels," such as hot spots policing, are particularly effective.

iminal's behavior is more likely to be influenced by seeing a police officer with handcuffs and a radio than by a
law increasing penalties - **Perceptual Deterrence Theory**.

ford Handbook of Criminological Theory (2012).

ssessment: *Did the response work?.*

Cheshire Constabulary

20ᵗʰ April

Poster and sticker draft design completed by *20th April*

1ˢᵗ June

Crime Stoppers Intranet sites promoting scheme ready by *1st Jun*

June – July

Monitor sign up rate to the scheme.

Assessment Completed

Poster and stickers printed by 20th May.

20ᵗʰ May

Launch mid Jun 22 (date to be confirmed).

Mid- June 22

Assessment Phase Commences.

July - August 22