



FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD TO CYBERHOOD
2021 PERCEPTIONS OF CYBERCRIME IN THE UK



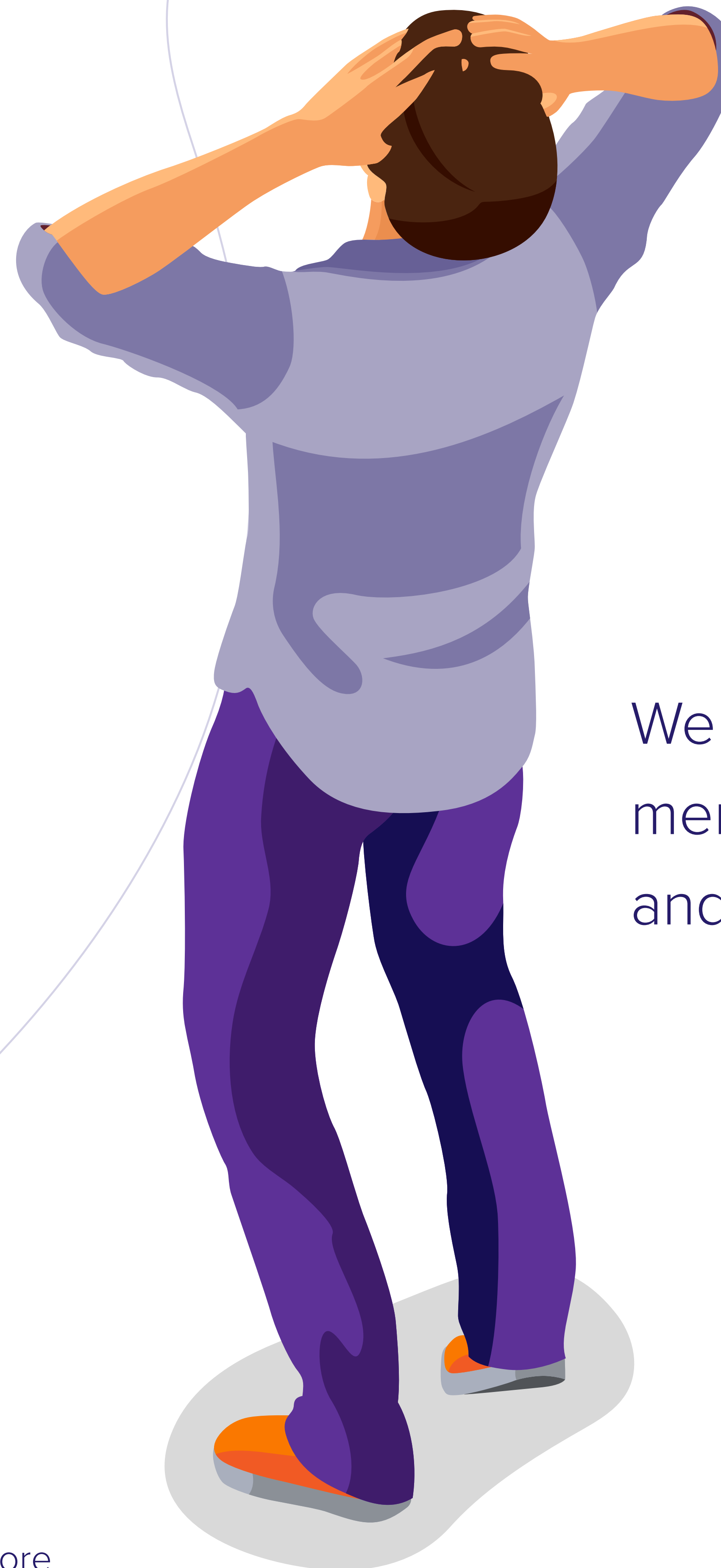
WHAT DO PEOPLE FEAR MORE – COMMUNITY-BASED CRIME OR CYBERCRIME?

Over a third of people, 39%, said they are more worried about cybercrime today.

Most people aren't aware of how easily they could become a victim of cybercrime, and why they would be a target. The truth is that the online world is evolving fast and everyone with a digital footprint has something valuable cybercriminals crave - personal data. Criminals are always looking for and finding new ways to target unsuspecting people so the prospect of protecting yourself from these threats can seem insurmountable. The good news is there are some simple steps you can take to stop you becoming an easy target.

In 2019, Avast partnered with the U.K.'s Neighbourhood Watch organisation to help members understand how to protect

themselves online and provide useful resources, guidance and support. As a global leader for digital security and privacy products, we have a deep understanding of the scale of cyber threats facing people online. We wanted to find out more about how people perceive cybercrime. In early 2021 we surveyed over 28,000 members of Neighbourhood Watch who told us how they rate their understanding of it, the impact on those affected and misconceptions around how safe they are online today.



Almost **1/5** have been a victim of cybercrime personally

32% believe the internet is a more dangerous place than before the Covid-19 pandemic hit

For those who have fallen victim, **36%** lost money

We surveyed over **28,000** members of Neighbourhood Watch, and this is what they told us:

27% lost data and almost two thirds said they'd lost time sorting the problem out

39% say they are more concerned about cybercrime than community-based crime

33% know at least one person who has suffered from cybercrime





WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF CYBERCRIME?

It's not just about financial loss; cybercrime also has a significant emotional impact.

One in four people reported losses of more than £1,000 to cybercrime and online scams, while others mentioned the significant time spent fixing the problem and more talked about how being a victim of cybercrime made them feel.

17%

of respondents said they felt unsure of what to do next after falling victim

36%

(over a third) said they felt foolish and embarrassed

5%

sadly felt they couldn't tell anyone

35%

said they were 'very upset'

26%

said they reported it to the police

DO WE UNDERSTAND CYBER THREATS ENOUGH?

Avast asked Neighbourhood Watch members about specific types of cybercrime. Well-known threats were generally recognised, with only 6% of people not knowing of phishing, and 7% hadn't heard of malware.

This was not the case with emerging threats where awareness was much lower. For example, 'stalkerware' which is malicious software that allows someone to track you and monitor everything you're doing via your device, was a threat of which almost nine in 10 (88%) said they had never heard of.

devices like smart speakers, smart thermostats and smart TVs are a target for cybercriminals, yet almost half of those surveyed didn't know they could be hacked.

Despite Neighbourhood Watch members being engaged with the ongoing fight against crime in their community, just 6% of respondents rated their understanding of cyber threats and protection as excellent, and everyone said they would like more information, resources and support.

45% had also never heard of cyberattacks via connected devices. In a world where we are increasingly enjoying the benefits of smarter homes,



HOW ARE PEOPLE PROTECTING THEMSELVES?

Most people have security on their computers but 16% have no protection on their mobile phones.

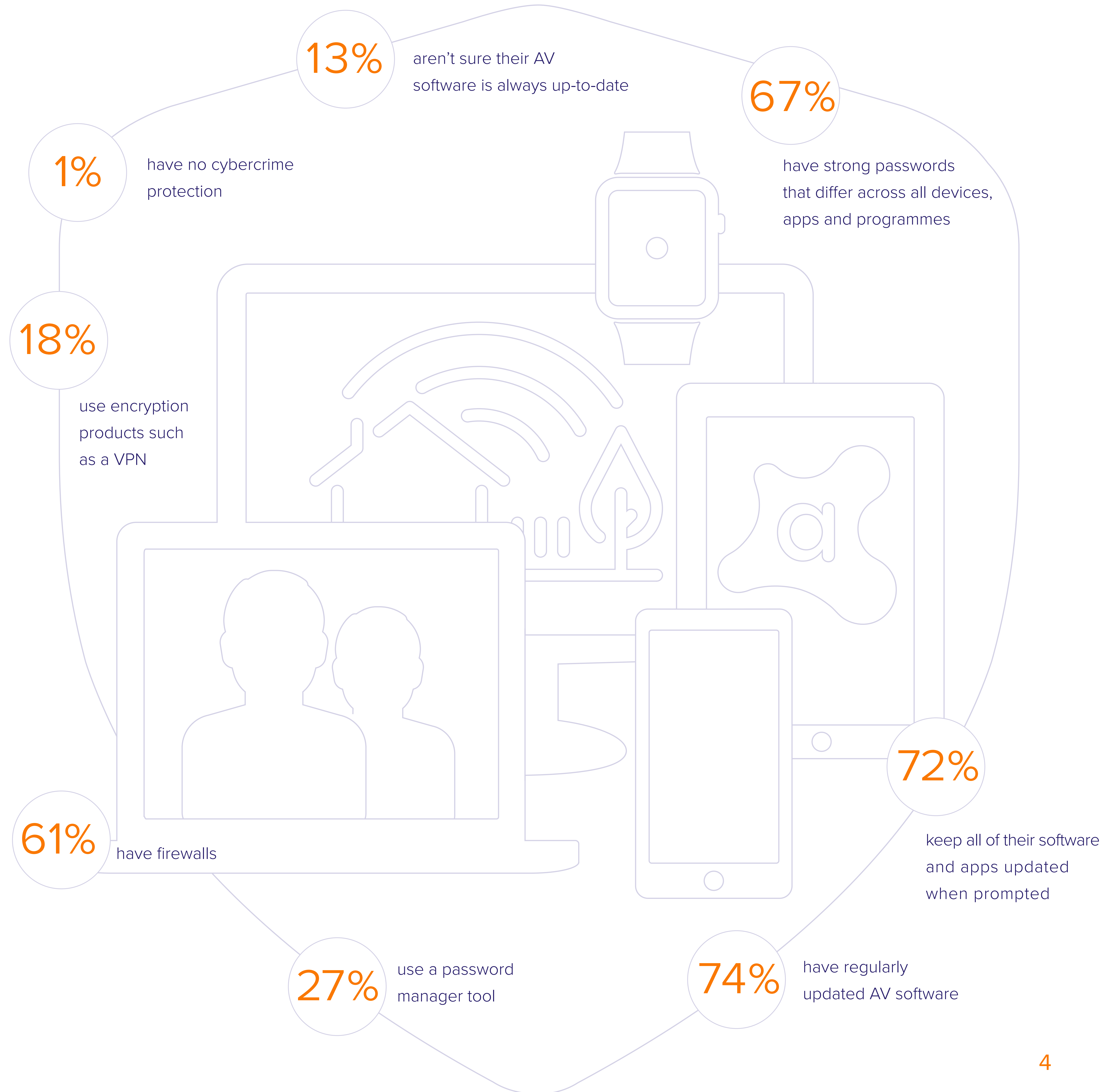
In the survey, respondents shared the types of activities they regularly carry out digitally. Over half (59%) of those we surveyed fell into the over 65 age bracket showing that people of all ages are engaging online for services and schemes, not just for browsing or accessing social media.

- 88% bank online
- 82% shop
- 81% access the DVLA
- 77% pay bills online
- 69% pay TV license
- 67% access council services
- 67% make GP bookings and access prescriptions

Many take some steps to keep themselves secure while carrying out these activities online.

For computers, most people have firewalls (61%) and antivirus (AV) software they regularly update (74%). Two thirds (66%) have strong passwords that are different across all their devices, apps and programmes, and 72% keep their software and apps updated when prompted.

However, 13% aren't sure if their AV software is always up-to-date, only 18% use encryption products such as a Virtual Private Network (VPN) and 27% a password manager tool. Only 1% claim they have no cybercrime protection on their computer. On mobile phones, in contrast, 16% admit they have nothing in place on their phone to guard against cyberattacks. Another 38% claim they don't keep their software and apps updated when prompted.





PROTECTING YOURSELF ONLINE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE COMPLICATED OR EXPENSIVE

The online threat landscape is constantly evolving, but there are hassle-free ways you can protect yourself without costing you time and money. Below are our 5 Top Tips for a safer online experience.

- 1** Get a strong AV installed across your devices - this is a very important first line of defence. You don't need to spend a fortune as Avast offers [free, award-winning antivirus \(AV\) software](#) for PC, Mac, Android and iPhone.
- 2** Ensure your computer and phone software is always up-to-date. Software updates often include security patches which are important for keeping your devices safe.
- 3** Use different passwords across your accounts so if one account is compromised, the rest are still secure. Use passphrases that include a mix of symbols, numbers and characters to make it easier to remember, for example, B0bLov3sFootb@11.
- 4** Change default passwords shipped with new devices. This is a relatively easy but effective way to improve the security of your internet-connected gadgets and home routers.
- 5** Get a password manager to help manage all your passwords and keep them secure. That way, you can choose hard passwords without having to remember them.

Please visit our new [Cyberhood Watch](#) page for updates from Neighbourhood Watch and Avast on this new initiative. The page will be updated regularly with new materials on keeping safe online and additional modules of the security training course, which gives formal certification for those successfully completing the modules.

