

British spy agency GCHQ seeks hipster cyber skills

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A general view of the 24-hour operations room at Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) in Cheltenham on November 17, 2015

Britain's communications intelligence agency said on Thursday it had spray-painted job adverts on London streets popular with hipsters to woo more employees with cyber skills.

East London's gritty but funky Shoreditch area is more known for its

bearded and tattooed denizens than the posh, well-dressed agents associated with British intelligence, but officials say they are trying to break the mould.

The Government Communications Headquarters message reads: "GCH-Who? Technical opportunities" followed by the department's website address.

Several [tech firms](#) are located in and around Shoreditch.

The agency is trying to broaden its employee and [skills](#) base against a background of government warnings of increased [cyber crime](#), both commercial and crimes related to national security.

"GCHQ is always looking to widen our recruitment focus to reach the people we would like to recruit and therefore we use a range of innovative channels for our advertising," a spokesman said.

"We look at areas which are likely to contain a high proportion of people who we would like to recruit, in this case [people](#) with technical skills and experience."

Also known as the government's eavesdropping agency, GCHQ activity increasingly involves code-breaking and disrupting hacker activity as more crime moves online.

The advert, painted in ink designed to fade, has also been sprayed on streets in the cities of Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds and Wolverhampton.

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