

# Safeguarding Your Business During Public Events

CRIME PREVENTION SERIES

## TOP TIPS

- Prioritise employee protection
- Brief your staff
- Review existing business continuity and/or incident management plans
- Ensure CCTV is working correctly and captures highest resolution images possible



**At any large gathering there is the potential for a minority of people to use the event as an excuse to cause trouble.**

**Occasionally, peaceful protests can escalate into violent and dangerous situations.**

**Businesses may face increased risks during periods of public protests and social unrest, which can threaten employees, disrupt operations, and damage property.**

## Prioritise Employee Protection

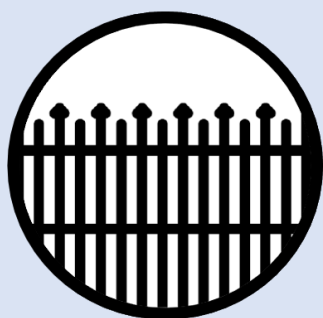
On the days leading up to the event, or when civil unrest, volatile demonstrations and public disorder are likely, ensure all staff are fully briefed. Share your concerns with your staff, emphasise the importance of situational awareness, and provide guidance to ensure employee and customer safety.



- Urge employees to avoid city centres and areas where protests may occur. Promote virtual meetings where possible, to avoid travel to these areas
- Anticipate travel disruptions, check local government, news websites and social media for official information regarding road and rail closures
- Consider allowing casual dress for those having to attend work. Discourage staff from wearing clothing bearing your company name or logo, particularly if your business is associated with industry sectors targeted by demonstrators, such as finance or ecommerce
- Ensure all employees are familiar with the companies emergency, security, evacuation and invacuation procedures
- Ask employees to update their contact information, so they can be easily reached
- Your business premises should have a strong, visible management presence, who should identify themselves to the police in the event of any trespassing or criminal behaviour
- All staff should be vigilant and report any suspicious activity to security or the police

## Protect your business premises

The vast majority of events, demonstrations and protests are peaceful and without incident. Property in areas with unrest faces the threat of damage, looting and arson. The following steps can help protect your business premises.



- During large events where disorder is not anticipated, if you have decided to remain open, minimise the number of entry/exit points. This limits the number of people that are able to enter, and staff/security can make the decision to close the doors in the event that tensions rise



- Some events will attract a criminal element, intent on causing civil unrest, in order to be able to steal from retail premises. Wherever possible remove valuable or desirable items from window displays.
- Review existing Business Continuity and/or Incident Management Plans and update them as necessary prior to events. If you do not have a plan in place, consider developing one. There are resources online from open source public websites, to professional consulting firms
- Social media can be used to quickly organise activist or protest events, limiting your opportunity to plan. Prepare to adjust business operations at short notice
- Follow social media accounts of local police, government and reliable media outlets to ensure you and your business has the most up-to-date information available
- Test fire and burglar alarm systems, and review notification procedures with alarm companies
- If you have security staff, brief them on the possibility of disruptions and plan their response, where possible they should be highly visible
- Consider conducting site specific assessment for buildings that are likely to be exposed to protest activity, and means for reducing risks that arise
- Ensure that the outside areas are free of debris, dustbins, tools etc, Removing these types of items, reduces the opportunity that those wishing to cause disorder have to use them as weapons or missiles. Remove combustible items that protestors may try to set light to
- Assess windows, doors and other points of entry; provide additional protection such as boarding up if necessary
- Check your staff are first aid trained and that all first aid kits, are fully stocked if the need should arise to use them. Ensure staff radios are working and there are sufficient batteries
- Ensure your CCTV is operational, can provide the highest resolution possible and that you have staff trained to download or send to the police where required
- Inform security, if your building has scaffolding erected, or in close proximity





## Secure vacant premises

Vacant buildings are particularly vulnerable to attack during periods of civil disorder. In extreme cases first responders may be spread thin and may not be able to provide immediate protection.

For more information on vacant premises security, please visit our website [www.nbcc.police.uk](http://www.nbcc.police.uk) and visit the NBCC guidance page (under the Crime Prevention tab)

## Protests Impacting your Business

Should there be a protest impacting upon your footprint, please consider the following from the outset;

- The effect or impact protests are having on your business or organisation (considerations – footfall, loss of business)
- The effect or impact on your staff, customers and other stakeholders (considerations – work/life balance, staff travel, reliance on transport links, delivery issues)
- Estimated costs, either financially or otherwise of this impact (considerations – financial impact compared with a typical business day, environmental e.g. refuse collection, traffic congestion)
- In the event of a protester incursion, do **not** close the business, as this denies police the opportunity to arrest for Aggravated Trespass as the protesters are no longer impeding business activity (because none is taking place), thereby removing the key evidential component for the offence.



## Always Report Crime to the Police

Always report crime to police. This allows police to capture the data and understand the full scale of the crime, which in turn informs their resources and tactics to tackle it.

When a crime is taking place, dial 999 in an emergency. You can also report to the Police on 101 or alternatively, you can report online at: [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk)

Increase your counter terrorism awareness with the award winning e-Learning available on Protect UK. Visit <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>

