

Giving victims of business crime a voice

When a business becomes a victim of crime it can have far reaching impacts including financial loss, loss of custom, medical expenses, staff left physically injured or traumatised as well as reputational damage and loss of customer confidence.



Under the Victims' Code, all businesses or enterprises, such as charities, that have had criminal offences committed against them are entitled to make an Impact Statement for Business (ISB), to set out how the crime has impacted them.

The ISB is a written statement intended to provide businesses that have been victims of crime with a voice in the criminal justice process. The statement can then be used as part of the evidence and taken into consideration by the court when sentencing.

Suraj Minocha OBE, Senior Court Business Advisor at the Crown Prosecution Service Court Business Unit said: "Where they are considered appropriate, courts can take account of the ISB when deciding what sentence to impose on the offender(s), as an ISB gives the business an opportunity to set out the impact a crime has had on it.

"These statements, significantly assist the prosecutor to inform the court of any direct financial loss, as well as wider impacts (operational disruption or reputational damage). The court is then able to consider these, when deciding sentencing and this supports a just outcome."

As well as crimes such as theft, the statement can cover Anti-Social Behaviour, or community problems such as begging, if it is affecting the business and copies of the ISB can be held by both the business and police for future relevant use. The ISB can cover one location, a number of locations, a region or the entire business depending on size. The statement will have the most impact if giving details of multiple offences by the same offender at one location.



A 'nominated representative' must be authorised to give a statement on behalf of the business and must be in a position to give evidence in court about the impact of the crime on the business.

Impact statements can be taken at any time, you do not have to wait for a suspect to be arrested to provide it.

The National Business Crime Centre have a detailed Impact Statements for Business guide on our website:

<https://nbcc.police.uk/images/2022/Reporting%20Crime/business-impact-statement-template%20final.pdf>

Get your views on Anti-Social Behaviour heard

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) takes many forms and includes a range of nuisance and criminal behaviours which cause distress to others, and we know through engagement that it is becoming an increasing issue.

Many businesses suffer from the effects of anti-social behaviour but particularly it can impact small independent retailers. Small outlets in local communities can act as a hotspot for ASB causing mental, physical and financial harm to a business.

It can also impact the customers of the business and local community because of the price in increased costs of goods, higher insurance premiums and potential loss of investment by businesses in the local area.

Examples of ASB that could affect a business include:

- Nuisance, rowdy or inconsiderate neighbours
- Vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting
- Environmental damage such as littering, dumping of rubbish and abandonment of cars
- Threatening behaviours towards staff or customers
- Inconsiderate or inappropriate use of vehicle



The Government have started to review its response to ASB, and we want to ensure that we represent your views in that discussion.

Attached is a link to a very short survey which we'd like you to complete so that we can fully understand your concerns and give you the opportunity to say what you feel should be done to respond.

<https://forms.office.com/e/YWg8hN4kEU>

The survey is open until the 22nd February.

NBCC asked to contribute to PCC business crime plan

On 18th January the NBCC attended an event ran by West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

The session brought together stakeholders from businesses, policing, security companies, trade unions, and trade associations to discuss the issue of violence against shopworkers.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner outlined the successes, and challenges, faced by policing in relation to business crime and West Midlands Police's ongoing strategy.

Statistics from crime surveys published in 2022 by the British Retail Consortium and Association of Convenience Stores, and the 2021 survey by USDAW (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers) showed the extent of the issue nationally and highlighted the unacceptable behaviour some shop staff are subjected to.

The group discussed examples of best practice on data sharing, identifying offenders, targeting the causes of criminal or anti-social behaviour with the NBCC providing the national perspective.

The contributions of the group will feed into West Midlands Police's strategic plan for business crime.

Police Force Focus

January has seen a number of positive criminal justice outcomes from police forces around the country, working hard to protect businesses:

Gang jailed over armed £10k Co-op and Spar robberies (BBC News)

A gang has been jailed for more than 50 years over a string of armed shop robberies across Lancashire.

The men threatened staff with weapons at Co-op and Spar shops in Leyland, Preston and Chorley as well as Warrington, Cheshire.

Staff were left "shaken" and "distressed" after the eight raids between November 2021 and April.

Lancashire Police said the gang netted more than £10,000 each time they hit the convenience stores.

Daniel Lewis, 35, of Battersby Street, Wigan, was jailed for 19 years after he admitted seven robberies.

His co-defendant Daniel Holding, 33, of Arley Close, Wigan, pleaded guilty to six robberies and was jailed for 15 years.

He was jailed at Preston Crown Court alongside Anthony Heaton, also 33, who admitted his part in five robberies.

Heaton, of Marshall Avenue, Warrington, was jailed for 14 years while Matthew Lowe, 34, of Petticoat Lane, Wigan, was jailed for seven years after he pleaded guilty to two robberies.

Stolen quad bike recovered using tracker device (Shropshire Star)

Police say a stolen quad bike was found in a van thanks to a tracking device.

PCSO Mal Goddard said that the bike was taken from a farm off the B4368 In the Aston Eyre area, near Morville.

The burglary, from an outbuilding, also saw two chainsaws and a Strimmer blower multi tool taken.

However, the quad bike has since been recovered.

PCSO Goddard said: "Significantly, The tracker on the quad bike was activated and following liaison with the tracker company and West Midlands Police the quad bike was recovered."

A Ford Transit van in which the quad bike was found was also seized by police.

Brighton and Hove's most prolific shoplifters have been jailed (Brighton Argus)

A police operation to catch Brighton and Hove's most persistent shoplifters saw 11 repeat offenders brought to justice in 2022.

Over the year, 148 charges were brought against 11 defendants, resulting in over 40 months of prison sentences.

Charges ranged from shoplifting and theft, to criminal damage, threatening behaviour, possession of drugs and breaches of behaviour orders.

Some of the offenders received multiple convictions over the year.

These prolific offenders were identified through work under Sussex Police's Operation Apprentice, which is a partnership with Brighton and Hove's Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) and Business Improvement District (BID).