



# NBCC NEWS

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## New Retail Crime Action Plan published

On Monday (23/10), NBCC lead Supt Patrick Holdaway attended a meeting chaired by the Policing Minister Chris Philp and 13 of the UK's biggest retailers to launch the Retail Crime Action Plan.

The plan, which the NBCC was heavily involved in drafting, sets out advice for retailers on how to provide the best possible evidence for police to pursue in any case, making clear they should send CCTV footage of the whole incident and an image of the shoplifter via the digital evidence management system as quickly as possible after an offence has been committed.

Where CCTV or other digital images are secured, police will run this through the Police National Database using facial recognition technology to further aid efforts to identify and prosecute offenders – particularly prolific or potentially dangerous individuals.

The action plan outlines how police attendance at the scene for retail crime will be prioritised in circumstances where violence has been used, where a repeat or prolific offender has been detained or where evidence needs to be promptly secured.

It also outlines how all reasonable lines of enquiry will be pursued to identify offenders, secure evidence, seek to recover property and ensure witnesses are identified and interviewed.

Patrick said: "We are pleased to have played such a key role in drafting and developing the new Retail Crime Action Plan along with the NPCC. It demonstrates policing's commitment to tackling shoplifting and provides clarity on how the police should respond to reports of retail crime. Importantly it also provides practical advice on how retailers can secure the best evidence possible to aid police investigations and help bring those responsible to justice."

The meeting also saw Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne launching a new business and police partnership called Pegasus. [Find out more here: Pegasus](#)

Click below to download the Retail Crime Action Plan and the template statements which retailers can use when reporting crimes to the police:

[Retail Crime Action Plan](#)

[Template Retail Statements.](#)



## Police and retailers launch safer spaces scheme for anyone feeling vulnerable

The NBCC has teamed up with leading supermarkets and retailers, including Tesco, to launch a scheme to make retail outlets a safe space for people in need of help.

The Safer Spaces scheme, also known as Operation PORTUM, is an overarching scheme that businesses can sign up to and support to create safer spaces in retail outlets for employees, customers and people in the community that feel vulnerable.

The NBCC, working in partnership with a number of national retailers including Tesco, has developed guidance and a step-by-step process to assist businesses in the planning, creating and implementation of a safe spaces scheme within their business.

Supt Patrick Holdaway, NBCC lead said: “Due to the national focus around the safety of women and girls it was identified that no formal safe spaces scheme existed primarily within the retail sector, however, many retailers were keen to provide this support but were unsure of what they needed to do.

“We have looked at the different safe space schemes in existence, consulted with various functions and developed some guidance. Our approach is to empower retailers to introduce their own scheme through informed support and training, rather than try to develop a once size fits all approach. The Operation Portum branding is something for retailers to use and develop their own safe spaces schemes around.”

The scheme was launched as part of the national Safer Business Action Week SaBA Week and already has support from the likes of John Lewis Partnership, Asda, Sainsbury’s, Morrisons, Marks and Spencer, Next and Boots meaning that there are in excess of 10,000 retail units offering a safe space.

Tesco Shrink and Security Director Rachel Bennett said: “The safety of our customers and colleagues is a key priority for Tesco, and that is why offering safe spaces in our stores to people who feel vulnerable is so important to us. The more safe spaces that people can access the better, and we hope the guidance we have helped the NBCC develop will encourage other retailers to get involved with this initiative, and to create safe spaces of their own.”

As well as the guidance, the NBCC has also worked with Tesco to develop a short awareness video for retailers: [Safe Spaces on Vimeo](#)

The video looks at specific scenario where a young woman exits a train station and then feels she is being followed by someone. She heads directly to a Tesco supermarket and speaks to a member of the security team who takes her to a safe space within the store where she can contact her Mum and Dad to come and pick her up.

Deputy Chief Constable Maggie Blyth, National Police Chiefs’ Council lead for violence against women and girls added: “It is vital to ensure that anyone who needs it is supported in finding a safe space, particularly when they are away from home. This new initiative will give people an option should they need to quickly find somewhere safe, and it’s heartening to see so many big and small retailers wanting to take part. The National Business Crime Centre’s work in encouraging such an important discussion and finding solutions is a great example of working collaboratively to protect any individual who requires a safe space.”

The NBCC hope to extend the initiative to other sectors such as hotels and banking. More information can be found on the Safe Spaces area of the website: [Safe Spaces \(nbcc.police.uk\)](#)



## SaBA Week Round Up - 16-22 October 2023

The second national Safer Business Action Week, coordinated by the NBCC, took place in October with police and partners from across the country joining forces to tackle retail and business crime in their local communities.

The week of action was supported by the Police, Crime and Fire Minister Chris Philp MP who provided a video message of support as did Helen Dickinson, CEO of the British Retail Consortium and James Lowman CEO of the Association of Convenience Stores

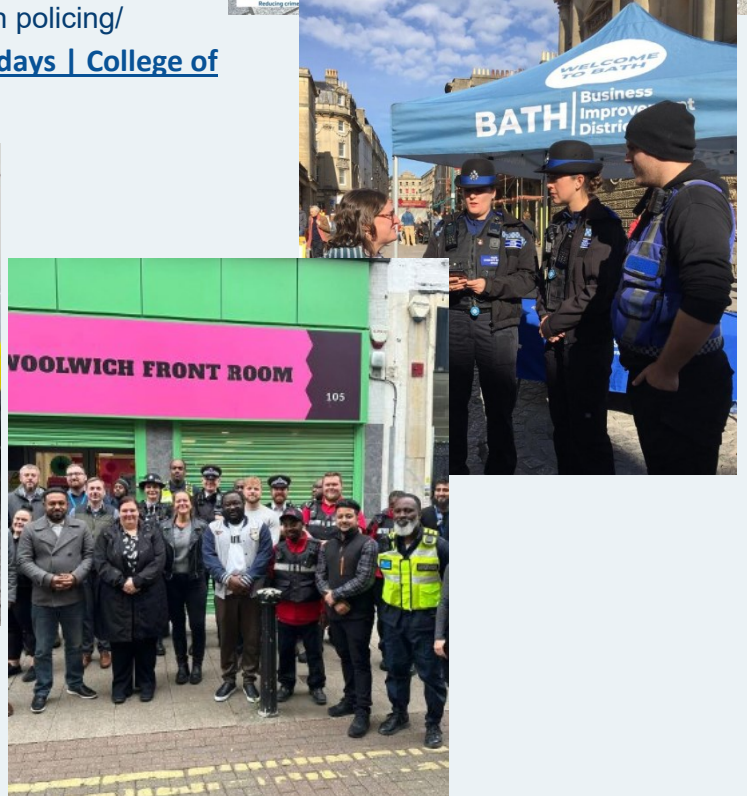
The NBCC believes that every police forces took part in the week with over 100 arrests already being reported. In Derbyshire alone, 20 arrests were made and in Maidstone one may was arrested for trying to steal £580 worth of clothing.

The NBCC are collating all the results from the forces that took part and we hope to update in a later issue.

NBCC lead Supt Patrick Holdaway said: "I just wanted to thank everyone for the remarkable support we have received during our Safer Business Action Week, the volume and breadth of engagement has been truly amazing and has surpassed anything that we could have hoped for.

But we must not stop here, we want the momentum from the week to continue. We need to use the new connections, the greater levels of understanding and awareness to identify new opportunities to work in collaboration to protect our businesses, safeguard the employees, so that they can continue to support our communities through the services, investment, employment and leisure that we all rely on."

The College of Policing has also added SaBA Days to their practice bank which is an open resource hosted on the College of Policing website which allows any organisation with an interest in policing/ reducing crime to share practice: [Safer business action days | College of Policing](#)



 **SAFER BUSINESS**  
ACTION WEEK

## Pegasus to improve information sharing between police and retailers

On Monday (3/10) the NBCC joined retailers, the Policing Minister Rt Hon Chris Philp, and Police and Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne to launch Pegasus, a partnership between retailers and policing to tackle retail crime.

The initiative, convened by Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne, is a business and policing partnership that will radically improve the way retailers are able to share intelligence with policing, to better understand the tactics used by organised retail crime gangs and identify more offenders. This will include development of a new information sharing platform and training for retailers.

So far, 13 of the country's top retailers have pledged to fund a new police team of specialist officers & analysts to work within policing in a structure called OPAL - a national team that oversees serious organised acquisitive crime, run by North Wales Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman.

NBCC lead, Supt Patrick Holdaway said: "The NBCC is looking forward to supporting the development and implementation of Pegasus and will be using our established network of contacts within policing, business and private industry to feed into the OPAL team. Establishing a clear picture of the role organised crime plays in retail crime will undoubtedly help police better target those responsible and understand the level of influence and impact it has on the local community."

The team will build a comprehensive intelligence picture of the organised crime gangs that fuel many shoplifting incidents across the country, to help target and dismantle them.

Sussex PCC and APCC National Lead for Business and Retail Crime, Katy Bourne said: "Pegasus will be a game changer in the fight against retail crime providing for the first time, an accurate national picture of the organised groups from local families to cross border criminals driving organised shop theft.

"Retailers will agree ways to capture information that can be shared and analysed to create intelligence packages for police forces to target and track perpetrators. I am very grateful to all the contributors to Pegasus and to Mitie in particular for helping to get Pegasus airborne."

The retailers currently involved in Pegasus are: Aldi, B&Q, Boots, Coop, John Lewis Partnership, Lidl, M&S, Mitie Security (providing secretariat for Pegasus), Morrisons, NBCS (National Business Crime Solution), Next, Primark, Sainsbury's, Tesco, TJX.

For more information visit the [Sussex PCC website](#)

## Revisit security measures as the clocks go back

The clocks have gone back and the nights get darker much earlier. Unfortunately that can also benefit opportunistic criminals looking for the cover of darkness to target business premises, building sites and farms.

According to Newgate Asset Solutions, a recent survey showed there were 103,931 burglaries against commercial premises and we know most of those aren't carried out in daylight. More hours of darkness provides more opportunity for criminals.

As well as burglaries and thefts from vehicles, mindless vandalism can also be extremely costly to businesses. It is estimated that theft and vandalism affects one in five construction sites and costs the sector £800 million per year.

There are lots of easy, practical things you can do to make your business premise more secure whether it's a warehouse, retail outlet or a construction site or a farm in the middle of nowhere. We have developed bespoke crime prevention guidance to help you deter and prevent criminals and vandals. Download via the links below or by clicking the images.

[Building Site Security](#)

[Premises Security](#)

[Crime Prevention Tips for Farmers](#)



## Force Focus - Northamptonshire Police Op Elegance

Northamptonshire Police is trialling a dedicated Retail Crime Team.

Launched in May, Op Elegance consists of three constables and a sergeant who work closely with two Retail Crime Investigators, managed by the local Business Crime Partnership (BCP) and funded by the Office of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (OFPCC).



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This follows a pilot scheme the OFPCC and the BCP ran which saw a Retail Crime Investigator employed in the north of the county to try and increase successful outcomes for retail crime.

The results were really positive, meaning a second Retail Crime Investigator was employed to work on the West of the county.

Now, overseen by a Chief Inspector, Op Elegance is a small team making a big impact having contributed to the force shoplifting positive outcome rate more than doubling, reaching 37% in July.

Op Elegance is aligned to the Force's Initial Investigation Team that primarily investigates and resolves demand statically, sending investigations out to the local policing areas for secondary investigation if arrests / interviews are required for example.

All shoplifting demand with a named suspect or with viable lines of enquiry over a certain value that hasn't been deployed to via emergency or prompt deployment will come into the team. Digital evidence packs are sent out to the victim stores consisting of a statement template and a link to upload CCTV.

Op Elegance officers will work with the Retail Crime Evidence Gatherers to support stores in the return of the evidence, taking statements where required and collecting any physical exhibits. The Business Crime Partnership and Op Elegance identify many suspects with local media and internal suspect galleries being used to enhance this.

Op Elegance officers will ensure any linked crimes are identified and appropriately collated, and in cases where the evidence is suitable, charges will be pre-authorized before the case is sent to secondary investigation. This releases capacity in local policing areas as the suspects effectively just need to be arrested and presented to custody for charge. This approach was agreed with local justice partners.

Op Elegance assists in producing strong case files for prolific offenders to ensure the custody officers and court takes their holistic offending into consideration. Such individuals offend across a spectrum of crime including drug harm which is a Matter of Priority for Northamptonshire Police, so this focus provides wider community safety benefits.

Op Elegance is taking a prevention and intervention approach, holding joint meetings with the most frequently targeted stores to explore target hardening and their own security considerations. Public Protection Notices are submitted to partner agencies for suspects who are vulnerable due to substance misuse in order to provide them with all options to divert them from offending. For the most prolific offenders, Op Elegance is working with Neighbourhood Policing Teams towards ancillary orders.

This partnership approach has achieved some excellent results so far and a review is taking place to consider permanently establishing this team going forward.

## Retail Risk Awards - NBCC wins collaboration award

The NBCC were delighted to be part of the team who were announced as the winners of the Retailer and Policing Collaboration Award at this year's Retail Risk Awards

The award recognised a collaborative initiative between Sainsbury's, Mitie, West Mercia Police and the NBCC to tackle a specific high value series of burglaries targeting locations on a National level.

Through working in partnership with West Mercia Police, who took primacy and ownership amongst 16 Police Force Areas, 24 arrests and 19 charges resulted with significant sentences resulting for all offenders.



## How to report a business crime in an emergency

It might sound obvious, but many businesses are unsure when they should dial 999 to report a business crime or when it can be treated as a non-emergency.

The NBCC has developed a new video which retailers and other businesses can use as a simple training resource for themselves and their employees, explaining when and how to report an emergency to the police.

All crimes and instances of anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police, particularly crimes involving violence, the threat of violence or abuse.

The video explores when a the crime is in progress and how the most important thing to think about is safety for all those at the scene.

It is also explains how important it is that key information is conveyed calmly and accurately to the operator so that they can assess the information and decide on the appropriate response.

The video and a supporting poster can be viewed and downloaded from the NBCC website:



[Reporting a Business Crime in an Emergency Video](#)

[Reporting a Crime—Digital Poster](#)