



NBCC NEWS

August 2024 - Issue 21

Show your support for the NBCC SaBA Week

With this year's SaBA Week fast approaching, the NBCC are urging police, partners and businesses to show their support for the national week of action against business crime by downloading the supporter and partner social media graphics from the website:

SaBA Week Social Media Graphics

This third annual Safer Business Action (SaBA) Week will involve every police force in England and Wales and starts on Monday 14th October.

Police forces will work with Business Crime Reduction Partnerships, Business Improvement Districts, private security partners and other crime prevention groups, to carry out targeted operations, engagement events and high visibility patrols to tackle local crimes and issues facing retailers and other local businesses.

As part of the initiative, police and partners will be holding Safer Business Action Days throughout the week and visiting local retailers and other businesses to understand more about the issues they are facing on a daily basis.

Those taking part are being asked to show their support by sharing photos of their activity, downloading the supporters graphics and using the hashtag #SaBAWeek on all the social posts to increase awareness and visibility of the national event.

NBCC Lead Supt Patrick Holdaway, added: "When we launched the national week of action three-years ago, we never anticipated it would have such widespread support from policing and partners.

Only this year in March we ran a SaBA Month of action which resulted in hundreds of arrests. However, it is as much about engaging with businesses and the public as it is about identifying and catching prolific offenders. Last year's week of action saw some fantastic results in targeting those who cause the most harm to businesses and also in building ongoing relationships between business, partners and the police."

"This is a great opportunity to shine a light on some of the current issues businesses face and also to highlight the ongoing work that police and partners are doing, supported by the NBCC, to tackle the problems that matter to local retailers and other businesses."

For more information about the NBCC and the SaBA Week please visit the website: [SaBA Events](#)



ADD LOGO HERE

We're supporting



What next by Supt. Patrick Holdaway

As the new government starts to implement its manifesto pledges, it has already committed to tackling retail crime with two policy commitments; the first is to introduce a new offence of assault on a shopworker. The previous government started the process to introduce a new offence but the proroguing of government meant the legislation failed. Whilst I don't believe that this new offence will alone reduce offences it does provide a powerful message to shopworkers that the issue is recognised and being treated seriously. From a police perspective it will allow policing to better capture the data so that we can see how many offences there are, where they are taking place and by whom; furthermore, we will be able to monitor police performance in terms of solved crimes and identify best practice to tackle this pernicious problem.

The second commitment is the removal of the suggested £200 limit for shop theft. Introduced under the [Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#), the legislation enabled cases of shop theft with goods of £200 or less, to be subject to more efficient court procedures if the defendant was likely to plead guilty. I have no doubt that after its introduction there were some localised examples where the value of £200 was used to determine investigation, but in 2020 we at the NBCC carried out a survey across all forces and could find no examples or policies to indicate this. Four years later rumours still exist that police forces are using the value of £200 to determine if a shop theft is investigated or not; in short, the legislation has become a distraction and undermines confidence in the police so its value and purpose needs to be reviewed.

Both of the above topics came up in discussion as part of the [House of Lords Justice and Home Affairs Committee inquiry 'Tackling shoplifting'](#). The inquiry has seen a range of key stakeholders give oral evidence and is shortly to present its findings.

The [Retail Crime Action Plan](#) is coming up to a year old, during this time police have seen increases in reporting of offences, which I take as a positive step. Similarly, police forces are reporting on increasing numbers of detections for shop theft following a greater focus on retail crime.

The [NBCC](#) continues to help retailers and police meet the requirements of the Retail Crime Action Plan. Current work includes developing a new approach to data sharing, which when launched will be NPCC supported and will greatly improve the process to encourage the sharing of information, needed to help target prolific offenders and allow retailers to protect themselves.

Other areas of focus include working with police and retail colleagues to identify and share best practice, which will be shared via new 'What works' section on the NBCC website. This will consider areas such as facial recognition, intelligence sharing and criminal behaviour orders, which are being increasingly used to influence the behaviour of offenders i.e. setting exclusion orders or conditions to reduce offending.

Sign Up To Receive the NBCC Newsletter

Be the first to find out the latest news, campaigns, crime prevention guidance and support for businesses by signing up to receive the NBCC newsletter straight to your inbox.

[Click here to sign up](#)

Over 150 high harm offenders identified by national intelligence team

Back in October 2023, the NBCC joined retailers, the Policing Minister and Police and Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne to launch Project Pegasus, a partnership between retailers and policing to tackle retail crime and to create a comprehensive national picture of organised retail crime offending.

A dedicated team of specialist officers and analysts were established to improve the way retailers are able to share intelligence with policing. Funded by the Pegasus Partnership, they sit within a national team called OPAL that oversees intelligence around serious organised acquisitive crime.

Just over three months into opening up referrals from police forces and retailers, Opal has identified more than 152 individuals linked to organised retail crime and facilitated more than 23 arrests of high harm offenders.

The team analyses the referrals received, looking for opportunities to identify offenders and map offending patterns where individuals are targeting multiple police force areas. A package will then be collated and shared with the most appropriate police force to progress the investigation and take action against offenders.

One individual was recently sentenced to four years in prison after stealing over £55,000 worth of goods from different Boots stores across Wales. Opal's work identified his pattern of offending which impacted a number of force areas and South Wales Police then progressed the investigation.

Another offender was undertaking high value thefts such as electricals, sunglasses, fragrances and baby products. His offending impacted at least 16 police force areas with offences totalling over £33,000. Opal developed further intelligence to support the location of individual and then Devon and Cornwall Police took on the investigation, arresting the man who subsequently received a 16 month prison sentence.

Several more investigations are in the pipeline with arrests of offenders responsible for further tens of thousands of pounds worth of thefts.

Assistant Chief Constable, Alex Goss, is National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Retail Crime. He said:

"We know retail crime has a significant impact on victims which is why we are committed to doing all we can to reduce thefts and pursue offenders, especially those

prolific and habitual offenders, who cause misery within the community.

"Late last year we worked with the Government to develop the Retail Crime Action Plan which sets out clear guidelines for the response to retail crime, including following all reasonable lines of enquiry. Police forces have embedded the plan in their operational work and we've already seen positive results and increased retailer confidence.

"This renewed focus, working alongside Opal's highly effective intelligence work in tackling organised retail crime, is showing a marked improvement in our response, dealing robustly with offenders and supporting retailers of all sizes."

Sussex PCC Katy Bourne said:

"Retailers, shopworkers and customers will be pleased to see the results of this unique collaboration between the retail sector and police. Over the past two years, retailers and police business crime leads had been calling for a more co-ordinated approach that shared information about known offenders and suspects and their patterns of behaviour and movements.

"With 152 criminals identified for sustained criminal activity in just four months, the OPAL team have made a great start in mapping and disrupting organised retail crime which will give businesses, their staff and shoppers the confidence that police take shoplifting seriously.

"I would like to commend the OPAL team for their work and thank those businesses who had faith in my concept of Project Pegasus and provided vital funding to support this specialist intelligence capability."

In the months May – August 2024, Opal's intelligence team for serious organised retail crime has:

- Identified 152 high harm individuals involved in organised retail crime
- Affected 23 arrests, impacting at least 16 businesses
- Received 86 referrals from police forces, retailers and organisations
- Supported 47 businesses and organisations, impacting 45 police forces

Help prevent thefts from your shop

Those responsible for shop thefts range from amateurs acting impulsively to career criminals and organised crime groups. Individuals who are vulnerable may also be coerced by others into stealing. Shops owners should look at ways to reduce the opportunity for theft from their premises, to protect their livelihoods.

The NBCC have worked with retailers to create a handy crime prevention guide with common shoplifting techniques, what to look out for and how to deter those responsible.

Theft from Shops Crime Prevention Guide



- ☑ Proactive customer service shows staff are observant and is an effective deterrent to thieves.
- ☑ Keep high value products covered by CCTV if possible and away from entrances and exits.
- ☑ Ensure there is good natural surveillance in all areas of the premises. Avoid blocking sight lines or CCTV cameras angles.
- ☑ Ban known offenders from your premises. Inform colleagues and partners that a ban has been issued.
- ☑ Work with partners such as police and business crime reduction partnerships to stay alert to potential offenders.

ACT in a BOX

ACT in a BOX is an interactive exercising experience which enables businesses to rehearse and explore their response to fictional terrorist incidents at or near their premises.

The immersive digital tool enables businesses to rehearse and explore their response to a fictional terrorist incident at or near their premises.

The fully interactive experience puts you, your staff and colleagues at the heart of a scenario by allowing you to influence the content and decide what to do next. Throughout each exercise, participants will also collectively reflect on their own workplace arrangements and physically complete activities, recording key considerations within the experience. You will have the opportunity to download a bespoke summary document at the end.

All scenarios are designed to be completed in a group format with a nominated facilitator to run the experience on a digital device and guide discussions. Further information can be found in the comprehensive Facilitation Guide, downloadable at the start of each scenario.

Click the link below to find out more and access the online training:

[ACT in a BOX Exercises | ProtectUK](#)

