



NBCC NEWS

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Over 170 SaBA Days scheduled for March

The NBCC has received a fantastic response from police forces across the country, with over 170 individual SaBA Days planned to take place in March as part of the national month of action to tackle retail and business crime in local communities.

The annual crime report from the British Retail Consortium released this month, reported a significant increase in incidents of violence and abuse which now number over 1300 a day. It also reported nearly £2 billion is lost to customer theft, which is almost double last year and the first time it has gone over £1 billion. There is also a growing lack of confidence in the police response to reports of retail crime.

The SaBA month in March will see police work with retailers and private security in a defined area for a day of targeted activity, which will include joint high visibility patrols, proactive activity against known offenders and crime prevention campaigns.

Warwickshire Police are holding the first SaBA Day of the month on Friday 1st March in Nuneaton, and are quickly followed by SaBA Days in Gloucestershire, Kent, Sussex, and Devon & Cornwall to name just a few. In total 30 police forces have so far confirmed their support for the month with dates of activity.

To view the list of confirmed SaBA Days taking place across the country in March click here: [Police Force SaBA Days - March 2024](#)

The NBCC has developed specific SaBA Month branding which forces can use and bespoke SaBA Day branding which can be adapted to include the location of the SaBA Day taking place. The branding can be accessed via the website links below:

<https://nbcc.police.uk/business-support/saba-days>

<https://nbcc.police.uk/media/sabamonth/safer-business-action-month.zip>

Current guidance and branding can be accessed via the website: [SaBA Days \(nbcc.police.uk\)](#)



NBCC on the road

National Retail Crime Steering Group (NRCSG)

On the 1st March, the NRCSG met at the Home Office. The meeting is jointly chaired by the British Retail Consortium and the Policing Minister, Chris Philp MP with the aims to work in partnership to tackle the issues raised by the retail sector. Also in attendance was the Association of Convenience Stores, a selected group of senior leaders covering a wide sectors within retail range of sectors, and senior colleagues from the Home Office and police, including Supt. Patrick Holdaway from the NBCC, and Chief Supt. Alex Goss, the NPCC lead for Retail Crime.

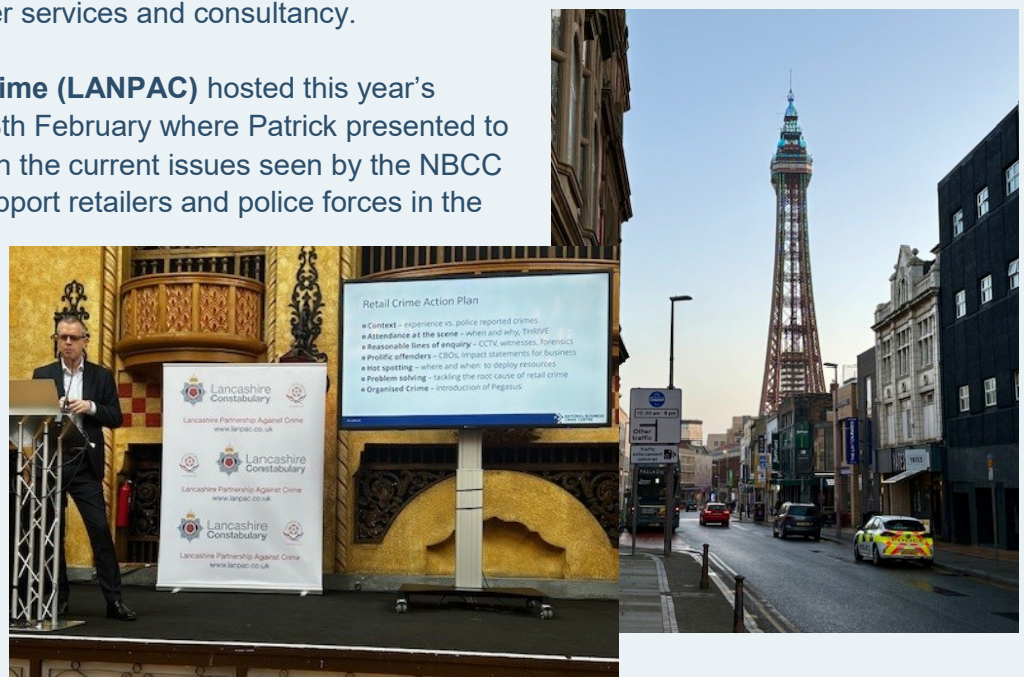
The focus was on the implementation of the [Retail Crime Action Plan](#) (RCAP), a plan commissioned by the Policing Minister and developed by policing in partnership with Government to drive down retail crime is already showing positive results. The RCAP set out policing's commitment to tackling shoplifting and prioritising attendance where violence was involved or a shoplifter was detained, was launched in October 2023.

To assess the operational implementation of the plan the NBCC carried out a national audit and during the meeting Patrick presented the NBCC findings which included a dip sample of 31 police forces. Of over 1,500 crimes were reviewed, police attended 60 per cent where violence had been used, with 16 per cent of forces sampled reporting 100 per cent attendance to this type of incident.

Police attendance for a detained shoplifter was 76 per cent with 21 per cent of forces again showing 100 per cent attendance. A number of factors impact attendance in both types of incidents. This includes whether an offender has left the scene or been let go before police were called, how soon after the incident it is reported, whether a retailer may not support a prosecution, or when officers are dealing with or are diverted to an urgent incident elsewhere. Further NRCSG's will continue to track police performance against the RCAP.

On the 13th February support the **British Security Industry Association's (BSIA)** Thought Leadership event In Birmingham. Patrick gave a presentation on the work of the National Business Crime Centre, particularly the [safe spaces](#) campaign, which we will shortly be encouraging the private security industry to sign up to and follow the principles. The (BSIA) is the trade association for the professional security industry in the UK. Their members are responsible for more than 70% of privately provided UK security products and services (by turnover) including the manufacture, distribution and installation of electronic and physical security equipment and the provision of security officer services and consultancy.

Lancashire Partners Against Crime (LANPAC) hosted this year's conference in Blackpool on the 28th February where Patrick presented to an audience of over 250 people on the current issues seen by the NBCC and the work they are doing to support retailers and police forces in the delivery of the Retail Crime Action Plan. The event was also supported by Lancashire Police, and they highlighted the successful partnership work they had put in place to tackle anti-social behaviour and highlighted Operation Vulture, which is their response to the RCAP.



Guidance on Social Media Audit Activity

The National Protective Security Authority have released guidance for security personnel and general staff on Social Media Auditor activity and how to respond to it.

The term Social Media Auditors refers to individuals who attend premises and outside spaces, with the aim of capturing staff and property on camera, the content from which is often uploaded to social media and video platforms.

In the UK there have been a small but increasing number of reports of this kind of activity which is also sometimes referred to as Citizen Journalists which understandably can cause concern when staff and premises are being photographed.



Unfortunately, in some cases the Auditors attempt to provoke staff and security in order to elicit a reaction which they capture on film and then upload to social media. The suggestion being that staff are overstepping legal boundaries. They are well versed in their own rights and frequently cite legislation when challenged.

It is not an offence to be an Auditor or to film personnel and property from a place the Auditor is allowed to be. This includes filming private property with a drone where a drone is allowed to fly.

Auditing activity is mostly harmless, and the amount of compromising information gathered by filming vehicles, personnel, equipment, or the facility itself is generally minimal. Issues typically arise when staff and security engage in a hostile manner, by quoting legislation incorrectly, or by giving inaccurate statements such as "You are not allowed to film here".

While the Auditors themselves might not have hostile intent, the content they create and post online could be viewed by genuine hostile actors. As such, conveying an air of a professional security culture is helpful - such as highlighting the CCTV which alerted you to their presence - but without giving unnecessary insight into your security infrastructure or procedures.

When interacting with suspected Auditors, the NPSA recommend a CALM approach - Chat, Assess, Limit, Monitor. It is important that all personnel remain polite and professional if responding to a situation where someone is recording premises and/or staff. When engaging, remember that your first words will often dictate the tone of the interaction.

The full guidance and additional resources can be found here: [Social Media Auditors | NPSA](#)

Responding to a Bomb Threat

Although most businesses and retail outlets will never have to deal with a bomb threat or hoax, it is important that staff are trained to know how to act swiftly in the event that it does happen.

While many bomb threats involve a person-to-person phone call, an increasing number are sent electronically using email or social media. No matter how ridiculous or implausible the threat may seem, all such communications are a crime and should be reported to the police by dialling 999.

Any member of staff with a direct telephone line, mobile phone, computer or tablet etc. or who has any contact with the public, could possibly receive a bomb threat. Your staff must, therefore, understand the actions required of them as the potential first response to a threat message and their duty of care to others.

Protect UK, have comprehensive guidance for businesses and their employees on dealing with a bomb threat. [Bomb threats | ProtectUK](#)

NBCC launches night time economy crime prevention initiative

Following the success of the NBCC Safer Business Action (SaBA) Days initiative, the NBCC has launched a new crime prevention initiative aimed at tackling business crime in the night time economy.

SaBA Nights will follow the same principles as SaBA Days, with police, private security and other partners joining together to tackle night time economy crime in their communities.

Whilst the vast majority of people enjoy a night out safely and sensibly, the night-time economy can be associated with issues around alcohol fuelled violence and crime and anti-social behaviour.

The overall objective of any SaBA operation is to deliver a focussed operation with joint patrols, the targeted intervention of offenders and a range of crime prevention activity and engagement.

As part of the new initiative, bespoke branding has been developed to help police forces and partners promote SaBA Night events and sits alongside the branding already available for SaBA Days. Police forces can also request a location brand from the NBCC to promote their individual operations.



NBCC lead, Supt Patrick Holdaway said: “The new SaBA nights initiative has come about after feedback from retailers, private security and policing. The success of SaBA Days has been great, but many crimes which impact retailers and communities happen in city and town centres at night. By extending the SaBA campaign to include night time operations, police and partners can build on the success of previous SaBA events and demonstrate that they are listening to their local businesses and communities.”

Download the SaBA Nights branding here: <https://nbcc.police.uk/media/sabanights/saba-nights-logo.zip>

The Criminal Justice Bill 2023 is currently going through Parliament and seeks to enhance the powers available to the police and other local agencies under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) to tackle ASB:

- Increase the upper limit for a fixed penalty notice for breaches of a Community Protection Notice (CPNs) from £100 to £500
- Extending the power of arrest to include all breaches of a civil injunction, rather than just those where there is a threat of violence.
- Extend the powers available under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) to allow CSAS officers to issue fixed penalty notices for breach of CPNs.

Nuisance begging & rough sleeping:

- Prohibit begging where it is causing a public nuisance, such as by a cashpoint, in a shop doorway, on public transport, approaching people in their cars at traffic lights, and any broader incidence that cause harassment or distress.
- Introduce a new offence targeted at organised begging, which can be facilitated by criminal gangs to obtain cash for illicit activity.
- Introduce powers for the police and local authorities to address rough sleeping where it is causing damage, disruption, harassment or distress, or a security or health and safety risk, such as by obstruction of fire exits and blocking pavements.
- Failure to comply with a move on direction, notice or order will be an offence with a maximum penalty of one month imprisonment, a level 4 fine (£2,500), or both.

For more details visit — [Criminal Justice Bill 2023: factsheets - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/factsheets/criminal-justice-bill-2023)

Digital Evidence Management Software (DEMS)

Within the Retail Crime Action Plan, the ability to capture CCTV is an important activity to help identify offenders. Traditionally police have had to physically visit retailers and collect CCTV via CD discs or USB pens, issues arise when there isn't anyone to download the video leading to another visit at a later date, or having loaded it, it can't be played due to the software player (CODEC) not being compatible.

Advancements in technology has seen many forces adopt Digital Evidence Management Systems (DEMS), which allows the retailer to securely upload any CCTV into the cloud via a link sent to them by the police. This approach gives police quick and easy access to the CCTV, moreover the software players can be constantly updated with new versions allowing for a greater range of CCTV to be read. Access to digital images also creates greater opportunities to identify offenders by using retrospective facial matching against the Police National Database, which includes millions of images of offenders.

Currently there is a mixed picture with some retailers using DEMS having heavily invested in CCTV, whereas others are on the journey or for some it is still an aspiration.

The NBCC are taking the lead nationally to encourage more retailers to adopt the use of DEMS, or where it is already being used, to improve the user experience. In the year 2022/23 over 55% of shop theft offences were closed with no further action due to no suspect being identified, on many occasions this will be down to a lack of available CCTV footage for the police to progress with any investigation.

Activities being driven by the NBCC include the development of a national template statement that all retailers can use to exhibit their CCTV, consistent standards and guidance to improve information sharing. The NBCC has created a page on their website, which includes a map of which forces uses which system. [Can your CCTV transfer digital evidence to police? \(nbcc.police.uk\)](https://nbcc.police.uk)

Tobacco crime

In 2019, the EU introduced a Tobacco Track and Trace (TT&T) initiative, the purpose of which was to target the growing threat of counterfeit tobacco. Following the UK's exit from the EU our own legislation was developed to continue the initiative. TT&T is where tobacco products are given a unique reference number at the point of manufacturer which can then be tracked through the supply chain to the delivery of the product to the retailer.

Crimes involving tobacco take many forms from burglary and robbery in stores, through to targeting the vehicles delivering the tobacco or even at the point of sale at wholesalers. The rules around buying tobacco are very clear so if a retailer is selling tobacco which is shown as being registered on the TT&T database to another retailer it means that they may have got it illegitimately and therefore maybe stolen. Evidence suggests that one of the routes to sell stolen tobacco is through independent retailers, if they knew that police could track stolen tobacco would they still buy it to resell?

Through some external funding the NBCC have commissioned Professor Emmeline Taylor, from City, University of London, to carry out a review which will highlight how the theft of tobacco influences a wide range of crimes across different sectors and to consider the involvement of organised crime groups. Moreover, to see if and how the TT&T system, with the support of Operation CeCe run by Trading Standards, could be used to reduce the attraction of tobacco as a stolen commodity.

