



NBCC NEWS

March 2025 - Issue 26

Food Retailer Iceland provide over 1,000 safe spaces on NBCC scheme

Over 1,000 Iceland stores across the country are now part of the National Business Crime Centre's award winning Safe Spaces Scheme, otherwise known as Op Portum. providing local communities with a place to go if they need help.

The scheme, which was launched in October last year, now has over 15,000 locations in towns and cities across the country providing a safe space for people feeling vulnerable.

Iceland joins the likes of Tesco, Asda, KFC, Cineworld, John Lewis Partnership, Sainsbury's, Morrisons, Marks and Spencer, Next, Boots and 13 of the largest private security companies in training their staff on the scheme and how to keep people safe. In addition, 21 shopping centres and BIDs are also now supporting the scheme offering the training to over 6500 businesses.

Sian Roberts, Security Manager at Iceland said:

"Being part of Op Portum has provided key training and guidance for our retail teams and security officers to offer support for people who may be in need of help. We believe working together will create safer environments across our town centres, retail parks and local communities and in turn safer working environments for our store teams"

NBCC lead Supt Patrick Holdaway said: "We are delighted that Iceland have signed up for the Safe Spaces scheme and demonstrated their commitment to protecting vulnerable people in the communities where they have stores. We have already received feedback from Iceland that the training has helped staff deal with a number of difficult incidents. Anything we do as police and partners together to make our communities a safer place is a positive for all."



To find out more information and to sign up to the scheme, click this link: [Safe Spaces \(nbcc.police.uk\)](https://nbcc.police.uk/safe-spaces)

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](#)

Demystify crime classifications for businesses

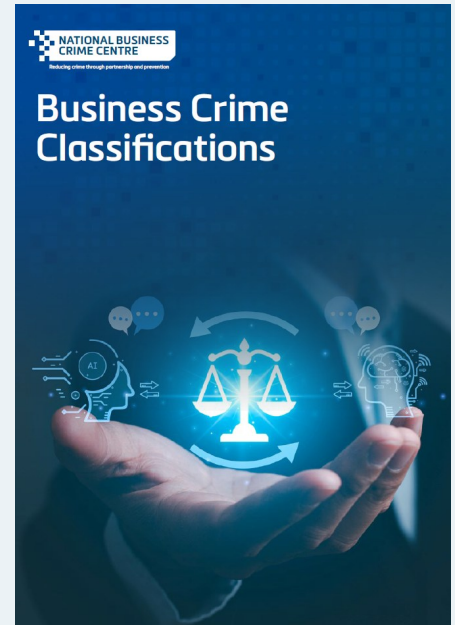
The National Business Crime Centre has produced a comprehensive guide for businesses to help them understand different crime classifications and what they mean.

The aim of the guidance is to help provide consistency to businesses about what different types of crimes are called and recorded as and what differentiates one from another.

The guide includes new changes to the robbery crime classification. Previously shop thefts which included violence, were often recorded as shop theft with a separate offence of assault, now they will be classed as the more serious offence of robbery. A typical example is where a shop thief uses or threatens violence to security guards or shop staff in order to escape the store with the stolen goods.

NBCC lead Supt Patrick Holdaway said: "The guide provides a breakdown of key crimes which impact businesses as well as practical examples of each crime type to bring them to life and help businesses understand why certain crimes are classified in certain ways. We hope it helps demystify the world of crime classifications for the business community who may be confused and frustrated by why crimes are recorded as something different to what they reported them as."

You can download the Business Crime Classifications Guide by clicking the image above.



NBCC named Police Service of the Year 2025

The NBCC was honoured to be named UK Police Service of the Year 2025 in the iESE Transformational Public Sector Awards for our work on the national Safer Business Action campaigns and the national Safe Spaces, scheme also known as Op Portum.

NBCC lead, Supt Patrick Holdaway, was there to receive the award with Michelle Nichols from Purple Pitch PR who worked on all the PR and promotion of the campaigns.

Patrick commented: "We are very grateful for the recognition of our work in helping to tackle retail crime and creating thousands of Safe Spaces for people needing support. Thank you to the organisers iESE for putting on a great event and to all the police, partners and retailers who have supported the campaigns."



NBCC on the road

March proved to be a very busy month with various events across the country. There was particular interest around the Crime and Policing Bill and how the suggested legislation could help support a reduction in retail crime.

4/5th March - Patrick attended the NPCC's Serious Organised and Acquisitive Crime Conference in Kenilworth, Warks where a number of key presentations were given from both police and industry on the work to tackle organised crime.

5th March - Patrick and Michelle attended the iESE Public Sector Awards in London, where the NBCC was recognised as the 2025 Police Service of the Year.

6th March - In Birmingham, Patrick gave a presentation at a regional BSIA meeting to a number of private security leads.



11th March - At the Norwich BID Business Crime Conference, Patrick gave a presentation to an audience of retailers, police and private security highlighting the work of the NBCC.

12th March - Patrick gave the keynote speech at the launch of the Association of Convenience Stores Crime Survey in Birmingham. The results of the survey are highlighted on page 4.



13th March - Patrick attended the Government's Security and Policing Expo in Farnborough. Lord Hanson gave a speech where he referenced the work the NBCC have been doing around the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme, in particular developing a national approach to vetting.

24th March - Supporting Professor Emmeline Taylor, Patrick presented to a number of criminology students at City University.

26th March - The Retail Crime Advisory Group met in London where Patrick provided some updates on the work of the NBCC.

27th March - Patrick attended the Retail Risk event in Hammersmith along with a number of police colleagues.

31st March - As part of his role on the Retail Trust steering committee, Patrick updated the group on the Crime and Policing Bill and how it could support the prevention of retail crime.



ACS crime survey reports alarming incidents of violence

The Association of Convenience Stores has released its annual crime survey which reports there were 59,000 incidents of violence in the retail sector.

Over the past year, the UK's local shops have recorded an estimated 6.2 million incidents of shop theft, compared to 5.6 million in the previous year.

Key figures from this year's report include:

- Crime cost retailers an estimated £316m over the last year
- Retailers have spent over £265m on crime prevention and detection measures in their store over the last year
- Taken together, the cost of crime and investment in crime prevention amount to a 10p crime tax on every transaction in a convenience store
- There were over 59,000 estimated incidents of violence in the convenience sector over the last year, and 1.2million incidents of verbal abuse
- 59% of retailers believe that incidents involving organised crime have increased over the last year

NBCC lead Patrick Holdaway has responded to the report saying: "We know that the policing response to retail crime is improving, but that more needs to be done. The Retail Crime Action Plan and the work of the NBCC and others to help implement the plan is starting to make a difference in terms of increased reporting and retailers providing digital evidence to police to aid investigations and bring offenders to justice. We also welcome the introduction of a separate offence for assaulting a retail worker. By recording these incidents as a separate offence, police, partners and the retail sector will have a much clearer picture of how many incidents are happening, where they are happening, and better understand the level of police and partner resources needed to tackle the issue."

You can read the full report here: [ACS Crime Survey](#)

Energy Theft and Digital Warrants Crime Prevention Guide

The NBCC has produced a new crime prevention guide aimed at helping police support energy companies when tackling energy theft.

Through the act of energy theft, the meter and other associated equipment is nearly always compromised, which represents a real safety risk for those involved along with other persons and property.

The guide covers different offences, police involvement, rights of entry and redress, safe and legal use of energy supply equipment and digital warrants.

The guide can be downloaded from the website via this link:

[Energy Theft & Digital Warrants](#)

