

Crime against business – What partnerships need to know



▶ Foreword

Businesses are a vital part of our local communities. Crime has financial consequences for businesses and affects the quality of life of both customers and staff, sometimes leading to relocation or even to businesses closing down. The Government is therefore committed to tackling crimes against business effectively.

Effective local partnership working is essential. That is why the Government set up Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in England and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Wales, where statutory agencies, local authorities and communities come together to fight crime. Other local partnerships, such as independent business crime partnerships and business improvement districts, work alongside CDRPs/CSPs focusing on crime against business.

This shift towards empowering communities to make decisions for the benefit of their areas is reinforced by the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing. The National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) has recently published the latest in its series of guides for the police on working with business. Our guidance and that of the NPIA are clearly complementary.

Much has been achieved in tackling crime against business, yet there is still more to be done. Some businesses are not aware of the various partnerships that could assist them. In turn, partnerships may not have engaged local businesses as effectively as they would like. This document draws on real-life examples to give practical advice to businesses and partnerships.

We are grateful to the partnerships of Bath, Bolton, Coventry, Liverpool, Rugby, Stafford and Stoke, and their members, as well as to the Scottish Centre for showing our officials their work. We also thank the Association of British Insurers, Association of Convenience Stores, Association of Town Centre Management, British Chambers of Commerce, British Council of Shopping Centres, British Retail Consortium, Co-operative Group and Federation of Small Businesses for their support and contributions.



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▶ Introduction

This is the second of two related documents designed to give businesses and local business crime reduction partnerships practical advice on reducing crime, including how better to work together. The tips in this document are for partnerships and cover:

- ▶ engaging business;
- ▶ influencing the local agenda; and
- ▶ promoting your partnership locally.

The National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) has recently published the latest on its series of guides for the police on working with business. This can be found at

www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk



▶ Engaging businesses

Adopt a business perspective to run your partnership

Think about the methods you use to engage with businesses.

Why?

Businesses work differently to local partnerships. It is therefore crucial to identify the most practical ways to get them involved.

- ▶ Think about the **specific skills** that your staff on the ground may need in order to liaise with and consult businesses; they may have a business background to draw on.
- ▶ Have **one central co-ordination point** for businesses – someone visible who receives feedback and communicates progress regularly.
- ▶ Consult businesses on **when to hold meetings**, avoiding key productivity times.
- ▶ Encourage businesses to form **clusters** so that one person will be able to represent the views of the whole cluster, as they will not all be able to attend regularly.
- ▶ Consider carefully **how to run partnership meetings** since they will be made up of a diverse group with differing needs. Keep the focus on business.
- ▶ Use a variety of **means of communication** including surveys, newsletters, face-to-face contact, emails and texts.
- ▶ **Engage employees as well as employers:** crime can affect them in a different way and these differences should not be overlooked.
- ▶ Translate any costs to businesses into messages about the **savings** they will make through loss prevention.

▶ Engaging businesses

Consult businesses on what they think should be addressed in their local area

Think beyond crime and ask businesses about what would improve the area more generally. Clearly communicate the benefits of being in the partnership.

Why?

Businesses are much more likely to get involved where partnerships cover a range of issues and there are wider benefits, in addition to crime prevention.

Talk to businesses and ask them what they think are the most important issues. You can then establish how tackling crime links to these and show businesses how you can help.

- ▶ Businesses might be as interested in **street cleaning or promoting the area** to increase footfall as in tackling crime.
 - ▶ Partnerships can reduce members' costs by encouraging them to use **shared procurement**, thus accessing a range of products more cheaply.
 - ▶ **Security benefits** include free security surveys and access to CCTV. (Security surveys are also available from the statutory agencies e.g. police and fire service.) Take businesses to CCTV viewing rooms to show them how it works.
 - ▶ Consider charging non-members for services in order to **generate income** or reduce fees for members.
 - ▶ **Training** for members' staff, for instance conflict resolution, can also encourage businesses to take part.
- ▶ Members might seek **accreditation** through partnerships; awards for good practice include Best Bar None for safe pub environments and the Park Mark® Safer Parking Award.
 - ▶ Have a good **mix of members**; for example, hotels, shops, other commercial premises, offices, car parks, universities and hospitals. Acknowledge that different businesses might have different needs and priorities: for some stock losses might be a problem, while for others safety of staff might be the main concern. Try to keep refreshing your partnership with new business members.

▶ Engaging businesses



▶ Case study

How Rugby has been delivering a service to its local businesses beyond just tackling crime

The Rugby Business Improvement District (BID)* delivers a number of services designed to maximise the volume of customers; these services were suggested by local businesses themselves. They are in addition to services already provided by the local authorities and are funded by a levy on every business whose rateable value is £2,001 or more. They include:

- safer streets through CCTV, including speaker cameras to issue verbal warnings, a two-way radio system and town centre Rangers;
- a cleaner environment, free of chewing gum and graffiti, with enhanced cleaning machines removing deep stains from the streets, and mess removed before businesses open up in the morning; and
- a comprehensive marketing programme to promote businesses in the BID, including mini guides and a 'Business 2 Business' services booklet advertising all retailers and services.

www.getintorugby.co.uk/

*A Business Improvement District is a partnership arrangement through which local authorities and the local business community can take forward schemes such as crime reduction which will benefit the local community, subject to the agreement of ratepayers. Ratepayers agree to pay an additional levy on their rate bill to finance a BID.

▶ Be informed about what support is available

▶ Case study

How the Liverpool Business Crime Partnership dealt with intimidation of bar staff

- As in many towns, Liverpool's city centre licensees are often presented with customers who are intoxicated and want to purchase more drinks. Despite a clear message from government and enforcement agencies not to serve such customers, some staff do because they are intimidated, fear abuse or are concerned about potential assault.
- Business Crime Direct, the Liverpool Business Crime Partnership, commissioned Merseyside Police to deliver a package of conflict resolution to bar staff. So far 300 bar staff across the city have become involved. The package covers body language, early intervention, defusing situations and confidence in refusing sales. It includes an interactive element where bar staff can discuss actual experiences and challenges, and receive advice. Of those attending the course, 96 per cent reported feeling more confident to refuse sales afterwards.

www.businesscrimedirect.org.uk/



▶ Be informed about what support is available

Collect and use intelligence well, and feed back on reported crime

Consider how to use information and ensure that businesses know about responses to crime.

Why?

One of the key reasons that businesses fail to report crime is that they do not feel that anybody will deal with it.

Using intelligence well and feeding back to businesses on how it has led to convictions will make them more likely to get involved.

▶ Learn about **information sharing protocols** and think about what you can usefully tell businesses. The Association of Chief Police Officers reissued its 'Police and Watch Schemes Guidance on Information Sharing' at the end of 2008: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/neighbourhoodwatch/nwatch0302.htm

▶ Think about people who could capture and provide you with **intelligence**, for example security staff and door staff in the night-time economy.

▶ When thinking about staff recruitment for your partnership, think about **intelligence-gathering skills and local knowledge**.

▶ **Share low-level information** among partners that people might not report to the police but that could be significant.

▶ Train staff to use **radio networks**; the practicalities of using the device, how to share the information effectively, and what sort of information to share.

► Be informed about what support is available



► Case study

How Stoke-on-Trent used intelligence gathering

- Stoke-on-Trent city centre bus station and precinct saw an increase in anti-social behaviour and minor crime, beginning to escalate into more serious crimes. Local press headlines fuelled fears that it was becoming a no-go area: 'Retailers under siege from bus station gangs'.
- There was limited business engagement and no community intelligence from that area.
- The Stoke-on-Trent Business Crime Initiative took steps to identify the group responsible and share their profiles with staff working in the pro-active business community. Members were encouraged to report every incident, even those normally considered too minor. They were visited by Crime Initiative staff who collected information. Forty-five individuals were identified and their profiles raised by the Crime Initiative staff, based in police headquarters.
- In two weeks over 1,100 pieces of information were gathered. Outcomes included several successful prosecutions; 12 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders; better engagement with the partnership; positive press coverage; and development of a more successful model for extracting community intelligence, to be deployed elsewhere.

www.businesscrimeinitiative.co.uk/

▶ Influencing the local agenda

Find out about your local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) or Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

Find out who represents business in the partnership and, if no one does, establish how this can be arranged: www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/regions/regions_map.htm

Why?

CDRPs and CSPs monitor crime levels and determine priorities in local areas, including crime against business.

They are in a position to bring together and co-ordinate the actions of a wide range of partners that could have a role in reducing crime against business.

There are potentially significant benefits to engaging with the local CDRP/CSP, including the potential to influence CDRPs/CSPs in the partnership planning process where they set out their approach for addressing local priorities.

- ▶ CDRPs and CSPs ensure that police, police authorities, local authorities, fire authorities, primary care trusts in England and local health boards in Wales come together to **establish the level of, and address, crime and disorder** in their area.
- ▶ The CDRP works with the **Local Strategic Partnership** (LSP) which brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors, so that different initiatives and services support one another and work together.

▶ Influencing the local agenda

Know your local priorities and what is in your Local Area Agreement

Priorities for your area can be found at www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk

Look at the rationale behind each indicator and consider how they can have an impact on business.

Why?

Local areas have targets to meet to show they are delivering on local priorities. By identifying which targets relate to crime against business, you can gain leverage with the statutory agencies because addressing the crime you want tackled helps to achieve their targets; for example, the Serious Acquisitive Crime indicator includes robbery of business property.

- ▶ The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is responsible for delivering the **Local Area Agreement** which sets out the priorities for an area, agreed between central government, the relevant local authority, the LSP and other key partners.
- ▶ Once you have identified the **priorities agreed for your area**, find the ones that relate to crimes that affect business. Talk to local authorities and others on the LSP and discuss how you can work together to address these priorities.

▶ Promoting your partnership locally

Develop a media strategy and an identifiable brand

Communicate good news stories and promote activity with local newspapers and radio stations.

Why?

Local media can help to advertise the successes of your partnership and encourage other businesses to participate. It can also get your brand recognised by local people.

- ▶ Use a **variety of local media**.
 - ▶ Use a **recognised brand** and include **marketing the area** as an aim of your partnership.
 - ▶ **Link crime reduction to other business activity** going on in the area, for example enterprise and regeneration.
 - ▶ Get a prominent local **sponsor** for your partnership, such as the mayor.
 - ▶ Consider giving one of the team **responsibility for media work**.
- ▶ Establish a **focal point for the receipt of funding**.



▶ Promoting your partnership locally



Use performance measurements to demonstrate your successes

Why?

You can give a more convincing argument for joining the partnership if you are able to measure crime reduction.

- ▶ Devise **performance measurements** together with the partner organisations.
 - ▶ **Use all the levers available to you** to try to drive high performance, for example:
 - ▶ licence conditions can stipulate being an active member of a partnership;
 - ▶ link to truancy teams; and
 - ▶ get support from other relevant agencies, such as your local Trading Standards office, in an advisory as well as an enforcement capacity, to encourage businesses to work on crime reduction.
- You can find your local Trading Standards office at www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/advice/advice-business.cfm



Useful links

Arson Prevention Bureau

www.arsonpreventionbureau.org.uk/

Association of British Insurers

www.abi.org.uk

and specifically insurance protection for small businesses:

www.abi.org.uk/BookShop/ResearchReports/SME_Guide.pdf

Association of Convenience Stores

www.acs.org.uk/

Association of Town Centre Management

www.atcm.org/

British Chambers of Commerce

www.britishchambers.org.uk/

British Council of Shopping Centres

www.bcsc.org.uk/index.asp

British Retail Consortium

www.brc.org.uk/

British Security Industry Association

www.bsia.co.uk/

Business Improvement Districts

www.ukbids.org/

Business Link

www.businesslink.gov.uk

The Co-operative Group

www.co-operative.coop/

including the 2008 retail crime survey:

www.co-operative.coop/Corporate/PDFs/Retail_Crime_Survey_2008.pdf

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/regions/regions_map.htm

Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

www.berr.gov.uk/

Federation of Small Businesses

www.fsb.org.uk/

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk/ including specific advice for people who work in pubs, clubs and shops on tackling violence:

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg423.pdf



Useful links

Local priorities and Local Area Agreements

www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Policing Teams

www.direct.gov.uk/neighbourhoodpolicing

Secured by Design

www.securedbydesign.com

Town Centre Partnerships guides for practitioners

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/towncentrepartnerships

and

www.cleansafergreener.gov.uk/en/1/towncentre.html