



# NBCC NEWS

May 2023 - Issue 8

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## Equipment Theft (Prevention) Bill: Call for evidence

The theft of hand-held power tools has a significant impact on tradespeople's business, such as plumbers, carpenters, and builders. These tradespeople tend to operate as small businesses or sole traders and the theft of tools can have a significant impact on their ability to work, and therefore their livelihoods.

Following some excellent work by a number of people, including Paul Fagg from the NBCC, the Government has released a Call for Evidence on the security marking of tools and equipment.

Included in the document is a proposal that hand tools, with an RRP over a specified threshold, will be required to be forensically marked and registered on a database before sale.

The Equipment Theft (Prevention) Bill is a private members bill which has Government support. It was introduced to Parliament by Greg Smith MP on 16 June 2022 and is sponsored by Lord Blencathra in the House of Lords, where it was introduced on 6 March 2023.

The purpose of the Bill is to prevent the theft of machinery and equipment used by the agricultural sector, in particular quad bikes and All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs).

The Government is asking for feedback and thoughts on the proposed bill particularly from those who may be affected by the proposals should they become legislation, including manufacturers, dealers, retailers, forensic marking companies, trade associations, tradespeople, and law enforcement practitioners.

It will run for 8 weeks from 18 May 2023 to 13 July 2023.

## How to Respond?

[Respond online](#)



## NBCC team on the road

The NBCC have had a busy month again with a range of meetings and presentations.

On the 2nd May, NBCC lead Patrick Holdaway presented at a national **Retail Charity Association** meeting, providing advice and answering questions in relation to the challenges shown on page 3.

On the 9th May, Patrick and Paul attended the **ORIS Forums Risk Summit** in Stratford Upon Avon where Patrick presented on the work of the NBCC to the audience, which totalled around 180 and included an eclectic mix of retailers and health and safety leads.



A trip to Blackburn on the 17th May followed where Patrick supported **Retailers Against Crime and the Lancashire Partnership Against Crime** at their conference with another presentation on the work of the NBCC.

The last conference of the month was in Birmingham on the 25th of May at an event held by the **Chartered Trading Standards Institute**. Here Patrick talked about the work taking place around the tobacco track and trace legislation and how the NBCC plan to use it to help reduce the theft of tobacco. Patrick also highlighted the guidance and free knife training offered to retailers on the NBCC website. This topic is particularly relevant given the focus on stopping the selling of knives to young people.

### [Knife guidance and training](#)



Safer Business Network in partnership with the Metropolitan Police are holding a series of Safer Business Action (#SaBA) Days across the months of May and June in several of town centres across London, to help tackle local crime and anti-social behaviour impacting the business community.

The objective of the SaBA days is to deliver a focussed operation with joint patrols, the targeted intervention of prolific offenders and a range of crime prevention activity supported by the National Business Crime Centre and a variety of their members and their security partners.

They are defining the last few details and hosting a steering group meeting every Monday to work with partners and businesses to make this a success.

### Dates

- Stratford the 8th of June
- Bromley Town Centre the 15th of June
- Lewisham Town Centre the 21st of June

**For more information or to get involved contact:**

**[admin@saferbusiness.org.uk](mailto:admin@saferbusiness.org.uk)**

## Abuse of Staff and Volunteers in Charity Shops: A Rising Concern



The retail sector has seen a worrying rise in abuse and violence towards shop teams. Unfortunately, charity shops are not immune to this trend, with growing reports of staff and volunteers facing abuse and even being assaulted in extreme cases. The British Retail Consortium reports that levels of abuse and violence have almost doubled compared to 2019/20.

Charity shops hold an indispensable position in our communities. Charity retailers not only raise over £360 million annually for charities, but they also make a significant contribution to environmental sustainability. By promoting reuse, they also aid in reducing carbon emissions. Typically, a charity shop operates with a full-time manager, two part-time staff, and a team of around 15 volunteers. This approach ensures that the shop is efficiently run and raises as much as possible for charity. A particular challenge within charity shops is that staff and volunteers are often away from the shop floor due to the requirement to sort, value, price and steam clean donated items. This reduces the number of people in the public areas of shops available to spot signs of potential trouble.

Whilst the number of charity shops remains at around 10,000, the closure of many well-known high street retail chains means that in some areas charity shops are more likely to be targeted by shoplifters and pickpockets as other shops have closed. Increasingly charity shops are investing in CCTV, panic alarms and other security measures in response to problems in specific areas.



Charity shops saw an increase in incidents of abuse following the end of Covid-19 lockdowns. Whilst trigger points such as promoting people to wear face coverings and restrictions on donations are long in the past - increased levels of impatience and hostility persist. The current cost of living crisis has seen economic crimes coming to the fore. This can be straightforward theft of stock or more subtle methods such as switching price tags.

Shoplifters and pickpockets can often be abusive towards staff and volunteers if they feel their activities are being interrupted or monitored. Staff training can reduce the risk by helping de-escalate situations, but even with this shoplifters or pickpockets can become abusive and threatening. Likewise, shop teams often have to deal with people who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol and can unpredictably become abusive due to this. Staff and volunteers are also exposed to people who make illegal racist or sexist remarks.

The route to supporting staff and volunteers is training, support, additional security measures, ensuring that every incident is reported and that the police are in a position to attend incidents and to pursue the prosecution of offenders.

The NBCC has produced a suite of training videos designed to help staff who work in a retail setting in the areas of personal safety and de-escalation, saying no - refusing service, deterring and interacting with thieves and handling disruptive behaviour:

### [Shopworker Training Videos](#)

## National Crime Reduction Standards

Since the release of Professor Emmeline Taylor's report on BCRPs a lot of work has taken place. The newly appointed National Standards Board have been meeting regularly to drive an ambitious agenda. A key objective is to improve the accreditation process for local crime partnerships and encourage greater take up. The Board have identified a particular need for Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to become accredited as part of their safe and secure agenda.

### Introducing the New National Standards Board

A new Standards Board has been established by the NBCC with them providing the secretariat support. Professor Emmeline Taylor chairs the group, which includes a wide range of expert members including:

- Police CPI, the accrediting organisation
- the two assessing bodies - National Association of BCRPs and National Business Crime Solution
- crime partnerships - Safer Business Network, Brighton BCRP and Retailers Against Crime
- British BIDs and the BID Foundation
- retailers including JD Sports, Co-op and Boots

We are delighted to welcome our new members and are grateful for their participation.

### Objectives and Updates

One of the first actions of the group was to review the Standards in light of the feedback that came from the survey carried out by Prof. Taylor. The review has resulted in a more succinct version with areas considered a duplication or unnecessary removed. The focus is now developing a single assessment document, ensuring consistency and transparency, whoever carries out the assessment. These, and other documents, will be made available on the NBCC website so that there crime partnerships can carry out an early assessment as to their own standards before applying for the accreditation.

The accreditation logo is also being redesigned, making it clear for all to see that the crime partnership has attained the national standards, which will serve to provide reassurance and confidence to members, businesses and the local police that it is a well-run partnership.

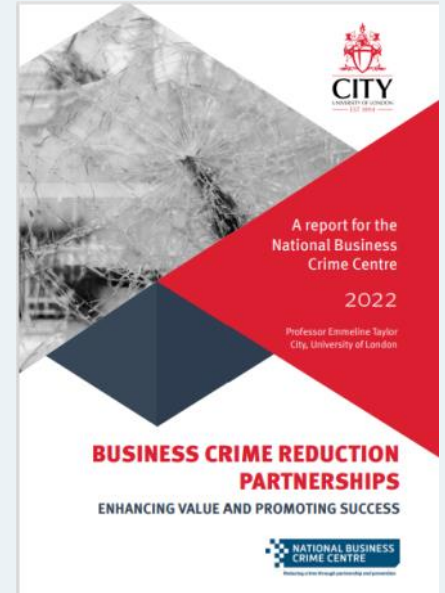
Future work will look at how the information sharing process can be improved thereby increasing the critical information exchange between police and local businesses.

### National BCRP conference: London 6<sup>th</sup> July

City, University of London in collaboration with the NBCC are hosting the national BCRP conference on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023. The agenda has a stellar line up of speakers including PCC Katy Bourne, Prof Chris Turner (British BIDs), NABCP, NBCS, and many more from police, government and industry.

Places are free, but capacity is limited so don't delay and book a space using the following link (or search City University and BCRP) and use the password - **conference6723**

<https://www.city.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/2023/july/bcrp-conference>



## New research

### Commercial Victimisation Survey

The Home Office have recently released their **Commercial Victimisation Survey**, which is an annual survey of businesses in England and Wales. Headline findings included an estimated 28% of all business premises had been a victim of any crime asked about in last 12 months. The most common type of crime was theft (15%) followed by burglary and vandalism, both at 9%.

[Crime against businesses: findings from the 2022 Commercial Victimisation Survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-data-and-analysis/2022-commercial-victimisation-survey)



### Fortress Stores

Always with an eye out for new research the NBCC wanted to highlight a recent study carried out by Professor Emmeline Taylor on Fortress Stores.

This report outlines the findings from an in-depth study into 'most-at-risk stores', i.e. those with the highest rates of crime, threat and vulnerability. The project aimed to explore the risk mitigation strategies being deployed, their rationale, and how they are experienced by store associates. Companies located in 11 different countries took part in interviews and more than 30 stores were visited in person in six different countries.

For a copy of the report please visit.

<https://www.ecrloss.com/research/fortress-stores-keeping-the-most-at-risk-grocery-stores-trading/>

### New York City

The NBCC have a number of international links and pay particular attention the USA, who are experiencing increasing levels of organised retail crime. With in excess of 16,000 different law enforcement agencies across the US coordination will always be a challenge, however there are some excellent innovations taking place. New York has recently released their strategy, Combatting Retail Theft in New York City, to tackle the issue through prevention, intervention and enforcement.

We will be watching with interest to see how this is implemented.

[combating-retail-theft-report-may-17-2023.pdf \(nyc.gov\)](https://www.nyc.gov/combating-retail-theft-report-may-17-2023.pdf)

