

DATE: February 2021

Theft of Beer Kegs and Casks from closed Public Houses

There has been an increase nationally of the theft of beer kegs and casks from closed public houses and bars. As the preferred material used to preserve the contents is aluminium or stainless steel and the size of these containers can hold between 9 and 18 gallons, the scrap value of these containers is considerable. To help prevent theft, modern kegs and casks usually have an inscription on the top or side which indicates the owning brewer, and the fact that it always remains their property, but this will not deter an offender or an unscrupulous scrap dealer.

Kegs and Casks carry a 'Gyle' label, with codes to indicate the owner, the contents and the 'fill' life of the container. These labels are unique to the container so the brewer knows the history and it can be traced in the event of theft. These containers do reach the end of their useable life and when this happens they will need to be scrapped, but the process is carried out by the owners of the container or through professional contractors on their behalf. They are taken to an authorised recycler and the journey of the container is tracked to prevent theft.

'Keg Watch' has been set up to monitor the recycling process and help to prevent and detect offences. All known Scrap Metal Dealers and Metal Recycling Companies are contacted to advise them that the disposal of kegs and casks, without the authority of the owning brewer, is illegal and a prosecution will follow. Keg Watch also scan the internet and selling sites looking for adverts selling these containers. They will launch prosecutions if they have the evidence to do so.

Metal theft continues to be a national problem and until the scrap value of metal decreases, the offence will remain attractive to the thief.

If you have any information or would like to report the sighting of containers please contact 'Keg Watch' on 0808 100 1945 or at www.kegwatch.co.uk



Criminal Behaviour Orders

We continue to have success with our criminal behaviour orders on prolific offenders.

A CBO is designed to restrict the movements of offenders and lower or stop criminality and protect victims, by placing conditions on the individual. The conditions may prohibit the offender from entering an area, road or town, further it can specifically prohibit them from entering a particular business premises. The CBO can be applied for upon conviction of an offence and the applicant has to present the argument for the application to the courts, giving justification for why this action should be taken.

We have now secured 10 orders and we have seen a dramatic reduction in offences reduction in offences being committed against businesses across Essex.

Building Strong working relationships

One of the objectives of the Business Crime Unit is to build strong working relationships with businesses in the private sector, to look at crime prevention measures, support loss prevention officers and ensure the best investigation practices are followed when businesses become victims of crime.

Our network reaches out to thousands of businesses across Essex and we are proud to support business. Two relationships we have become very proud of are with Morrisons supermarkets and McColl's newsagents chain. Both companies have remained open during the pandemic and both have seen an increase in criminality as offenders look for opportunities to continue offending.

Together with national loss prevention officers at McColl's, we are introducing prevention measures to tackle anti-social behaviour around some of its stores and protecting staff from abuse. One idea is 'Employer Supported Policing' which sees Essex Police train staff to be a Special Constable. Specials have the same policing powers as regular police officers and therefore can deal with any situation that may occur within their stores at the time it happens. They also get to support the wider community. We also advise on building security and CCTV.



We are currently working with Morrisons on a number of initiatives to tackle violence towards shop staff following an assault on a shop assistant by a disgruntled member of the public who was asked to wear a mask on the premises. We want the retail sector to know that Essex Police take a tough stance against people who abuse shop assistants, especially when they are working during this unprecedented time.

We are also working with other national and independent businesses, forming Business Crime Reduction Partnerships in towns affected by criminality and working with small businesses to advise on criminal matters.



Sgt Terry Jacobs

Terry has had a career on frontline local policing teams and in his most recent role managed service recovery and complaints



PC Alex Plakhtienko

Alex has extensive partnership experience working in Community Policing Teams within South Essex



PC Michael Lee

Michael has worked within partnership policing for several years and leads the force CSAS training accreditation.



PSE Katie Roberts

Katie is an experienced analyst and joins the Business Crime Unit from her previous role in force performance analysis

If we can offer any advice or support, please contact us at

business.crime.unit@essex.police.uk

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