



BUSINESS CRIME UNIT BUSINESS NEWSLETTER

10
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The Business Crime Unit working to support public facing businesses during the reopening phase

The past year is not one we hope to face again! - It has been bitter-sweet for policing in general; offences such as dwelling burglaries and street robberies have decreased significantly, however shoplifting has become more concentrated on areas of the retail sector still open and online fraud has increased as more people are buying online. We have also seen an increase in incidents of abuse and violence towards shop staff.

The police service now have to anticipate how society is likely to react to the lifting of restrictions and what resources might need to be available to cope with demand.

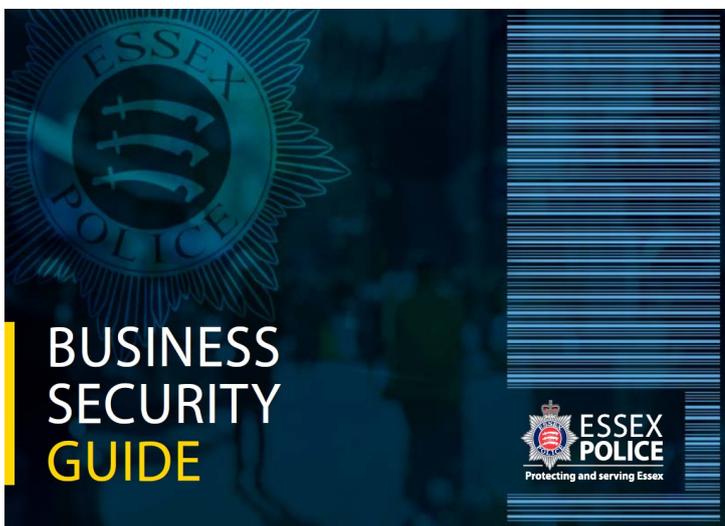
Monday 12th April 2021 sees the re-opening of non-essential retail. It will also see the launch of the Business Crime Unit 'Closed for Crime' campaign. The objective of this campaign is to raise awareness of incidents of abuse and violence towards retail staff and offer assistance to businesses to create the best prevention. We will also be identifying prolific repeat offenders and ensuring where possible that Criminal Behaviour Orders are presented to Magistrates courts against these offenders, therefore limiting their actions and giving us more powers.

We are launching the campaign with McColls newsagents, who unfortunately have suffered a number of violent incidents so we are working together to deter crime and protect their staff.

The Business Crime Unit has identified areas where criminal activity has increased and are holding focus groups with frontline retail staff to establish how we can continue to tackle violence and abuse together during the reopening phase.

17th May 2021 sees the reopening of the indoor hospitality sector. This may pose the greatest challenge to policing. The Night Time Economy generally is extremely labour intensive as officers deal with intoxicated people and public order on our streets. Drawing from the past years' experiences, we anticipate that people may forget COVID restrictions once intoxicated and this could be the biggest threat to seeing the end of the crisis. Plus generally people will want to go out again after being restricted from hospitality for so long. There will be restrictions on how people gather once inside a hospitality venue and we need to show support to businesses putting appropriate measures in place.

The public may see an increase in police activity around shops and hospitality premises during the reopening period, but our main objective, as seen throughout the pandemic, is to Engage, Encourage, Educate and then if necessary Enforce.



We are offering assistance to the retail and hospitality sectors on reopening plans and regulations set out by the government, so if we can offer any advice please do contact us at business.crime.unit@essex.police.uk

Launch of the Business Security Guide

We will never stop crime entirely, but we have been working with businesses to try and make premises as secure as possible and prevent crime. We have produced the business security guide.

Inside If you would like an electronic copy, please email us at business.crime.unit@essex.police.uk

Throughout the pandemic, the use of computers for remote working and for online sales has increased more than at any other time in history.

This, unfortunately, also means that fraudsters are working from home trying to come up with new ways to affect your life. There has been a noticeable increase in attempts which has prompted us to seek guidance from our sister team at Essex Police, the Fraud Co-ordinators who give advice and support to victims of cyber crime.

The guidance we would like to share with you is simple:

- Improve your password security: Create separate and different passwords for all your business and personal accounts. Use three separate random words that are easy for you to remember but not linked to any of your personal information. Do not use names of family members, names of places linked to you or things that interest you. Make it as random as possible, for example; RedLeopardOcean. You can then go one step further by exchanging some letters for special characters, like; R3dL3op@Rd0ceAN
- Change your passwords regularly. Using the example above, you might want to increase the numbers you use in the password each time you change, for example; R4dL4op@Rd1ceaAN
- Create 'Two Step' password authentication where you can. Some applications now ask for a telephone number or email address to be linked to it and will send you a code that is required to enter the site or application. This increases security. Also in the event of forgetting a password a link can be sent to your email address or phone for you to change the password and still be able to gain access to your information.
- National Cyber Security Centre guidance states that it is safe to save passwords to your browser. Your internet browser will often give you the option and it then gives you the opportunity to create strong, unique passwords without having to remember them all.
- Remember to update your devices when prompted to do so. Software manufacturers are constantly coming up with ways to keep their products and users safe. If you skip updates you may be missing out on vital protection.



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

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