

The PCC's Approach to Business Crime

Safe, Resilient and Connected
Communities 2017-2020



PCC

Office of the Police
and Crime Commissioner
Devon and Cornwall

Foreword

As the elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly I am delighted to set out here my approach to business crime and the actions that we are taking to help keep our businesses and our communities safe.



My vision is to secure

“A flourishing business community working closely with the partners, police, local and national government to prevent and reduce crime.”

Having run a small businesses myself, I recognise the important contribution businesses of all sizes play in keeping our communities safe and prosperous.

Many of our businesses here in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are small enterprises with only a few employees or are sole traders. I am acutely aware that becoming a victim of crime can have a devastating impact on both the prosperity of the business and the welfare of the owners and staff. As our everyday lives move increasingly online the threat to businesses is becoming more complex and challenging. It is important that we recognise this and continue to work together to address emerging threats.

Through our Police and Crime Plan ‘Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities’ we are already taking a number of important steps to help our business community. This includes our investment in the development of a connected CCTV network across a large number of our towns and cities, dedicated care pathways for business victims through our Victim Care Network and key developments in policing like the new road safety strategy and investment in additional officers. We have also been working with businesses to explore the wider role they can play in keeping our communities safe and we will continue to do this, for example by seeking to improve employment pathways for offenders to help prevent reoffending.

However there is still more to be done and this strategy sets out 5 key areas for the focus of my work going forward. It has been developed following consultation with business groups and online via my website in 2018. I will be working closely with business and community leaders, the Chief Constable and partner agencies as we move forward to ensure our businesses, as well as our people benefit from ‘safe, resilient and connected communities.’

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Hernandez'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Alison Hernandez

Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Introduction

- 1** The Police and Crime Plan sets out the vision for 'Safe, Resilient and Connected Communities' with a focus on better connecting communities and policing and ensuring that policing is Accessible, Responsive, Informative and Supportive.
- 2** A vibrant and healthy business community is vital to the wellbeing to the community. Strong businesses encourage growth and investment often meaning more jobs and prosperity all of which have a positive effective on economic confidence and community safety.
- 3** The business community in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is diverse, encompassing a wide spectrum of industries from tourism, to agriculture and fishing to science, engineering and the creative arts. In 2017 it was estimated that there were nearly 95,000 businesses in the two Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas which cover our policing area (the Heart of the South West LEP also includes Somerset) – with businesses based in these areas contributing over £45bn to our economy each year¹. Our area has higher than average levels of micro and small businesses.
- 4** Businesses, just like people, can become victims of many different types of crime. From acquisitive crimes such as shoplifting, burglary or theft to property-based crimes such as arson or criminal damage or economic crimes such as fraud or cyber crime. The vast majority of businesses in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (over 80%) are classed as 'micro' businesses and crimes against the person like violence suffered at work can have a devastating emotional, physical and financial impact on them and their business.
- 5** The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) would like to help businesses work closely with the police in order that both these new and more traditional types of crime can be better prevented. The PCC, the police and the Government are clear that a collective effort to work differently based upon prevention and protecting the most vulnerable is needed if we are to continue to keep communities safe.
- 6** A wide range of actions are already underway under the Police and Crime Plan help our business communities and this approach brings those activities together. It also identifies additional action in 5 key areas which will be taken forward by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), in partnership with businesses, Devon and Cornwall Police and our wider partners.

¹ 2017 GVA figures from Heart of the South West LEP and Cornwall LEP

7 **Our vision**
“A flourishing business community working closely with the partners, police, local and national government to prevent and reduce crime.”

8 **Five areas of focus for the future**

- Building a better understanding of the crime and community safety issues affecting businesses
- Improving the support and assistance we provide to victims of business crime
- Increasing the opportunities for businesses to support wider community safety initiatives
- Providing clear opportunities for businesses to work with the police and partners to help prevent and reduce business crime
- Maximise the use of national resources to help tackle business crime locally and influence national policy to support action to tackle business crime.

Understanding levels of business crime

9 Identifying the true scope and scale of business crime, locally and nationally is a challenge. There is no national estimate provided by government on the impact of crimes against business on the economy.

10 Levels of under-reporting by businesses when a crime occurs is considered by business groups and by the police to be high and this creates difficulty in understanding the scale of such crimes and the response that is needed. There is more work to be done to encourage businesses to come forward, report crimes when they occur and this is one of the 5 areas for action under this approach. The reason why a victim may chose not to report will be varied – but it is important we do more to understand them and to encourage reporting in order to understand the true levels of business crime within our community.

11 Research conducted by the Federation of Small Businesses in 2016 of around 1000 of its members suggested that nearly a quarter of smaller business owners (24%) do not report any crimes committed against their business. When asked why, most said they felt they would not see a positive outcome (46%), reporting a crime would be too time consuming (26%) and a negative experience of previously reporting a crime to the police (21%).

12 A further challenge is the correct identification of a victim as a ‘business’ and the application of a ‘business crime marker’ on police ICT systems. This is an issue experienced nationally, not just locally and is an area where greater progress is needed. In some instances, in particular in relation to crimes involving micro businesses or instances of violence it may not always be clear at the time a crime is reported who the victim(s) are.

13 Comparing business crime levels across different forces is not straightforward as there is currently no standard definition of 'business crime' in use across all forces. The National Police Chiefs Council has set a definition that it is encouraging all Police Forces to adopt but its use is still not universal.

Crimes against rural businesses

14 During 2018, the OPCC took part in national survey of local communities and business owners as part of the National Rural Crime Network. The local results of this survey found that around 58% of businesses reported they had been a victim of crime in the previous 12 months. Of these, nearly half (48%) stated the crime had not been reported to the police. Of these, 54% had incurred a financial loss because of the crime - with the average loss being £2,120. The most common crimes were criminal damage/vandalism, harassment, and theft. Despite these figures the survey also found that the majority of business owner respondents stated they were either not very worried or not at all worried about being a victim of crime in the area where they live.

15 Rural businesses are a fundamental part of our local economy - it is estimated that over 70% of businesses in Cornwall operating within a rural setting. Our rural businesses are varied, with the industries of tourism, agriculture, forestry and fishing accounting for around a third of all rural businesses in Devon and Cornwall. Rural businesses can often feel more vulnerable given that they are more likely to be smaller organisations and less resilient. Across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, a third of rural businesses have no employees meaning their resilience is lower.

Office of National Statistics: Annual Commercial Victimization Survey 2017

16 For the last six years, the Office for National Statistics has run a Commercial Victimization Survey (CVS), which examines the extent of crime against businesses in England and Wales. Not every business sector is included in the survey annually, however wholesale and retail sector tends to be included each year.

17 According to the 2017 CVS survey the wholesale and retail sector experienced 8.1 million crime incidents in England and Wales in that year, with 44% of businesses in the sector experiencing crime. The findings of the survey estimate the average cost of shoplifting at £500 compared with £237 in 2012 with only 36% of businesses reporting the shoplifting to the police.

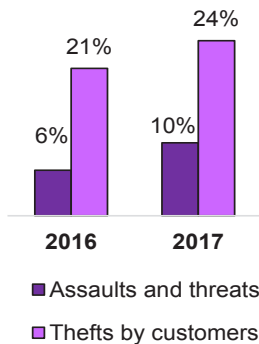


CRIMES AGAINST BUSINESSES

2017 Commercial Victimisation Survey

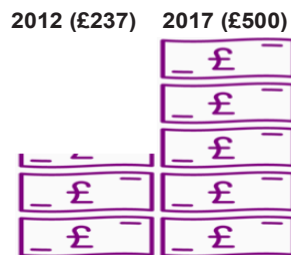
WHOLESALE & RETAIL

Proportion of businesses



Shoplifting and assaults and threats at highest estimate since 2012. **24%** of businesses experienced shoplifting and **10%** experienced assaults and threats – both higher than in 2016.

Shoplifting accounts for **63%** of all crime against the W&R sector



MEDIAN COST OF SHOPLIFTING PER VICTIM



36% of businesses reported shoplifting to the police, little change from 2012 (41%).

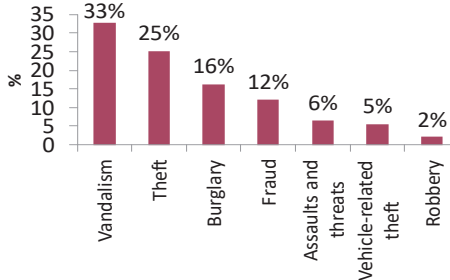


40% reported assaults and threats, an increase since 2012.

AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHING

Increase in **robbery** prevalence – affected around **1,400** businesses in 2017.

Proportion of CVS crime by type



Vandalism accounted for a **third** of all incidents and had the highest repeat victimisation rate at **5 incidents per premises**.



ONLINE

Proportion of premises that experienced online crime:



Retail 7%



Agriculture 12%



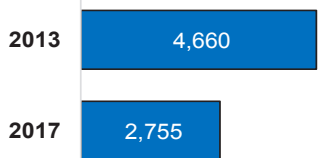
Arts 11%



Manufacturing 14%

ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

Overall crime has fallen since 2013.



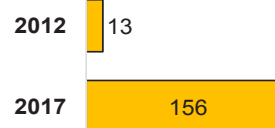
Incidents per 1,000 premises



In 2017, **34%** of businesses affected by crime. Most common crime type in this sector was **assaults and threats**. In 2013, theft was the most common.

MANUFACTURING

Shoplifting has risen in this sector since 2012 and it affected **5%** of businesses in 2017.



Customer theft, Incidents per 1,000 premises



Theft and fraud were the most common crimes types in this sector – **296** thefts per 1,000 premises; **257** fraud incidents per 1,000 premises.



Home Office

For more information please visit the Crime against businesses statistics collection at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/crime-against-businesses>

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Policing and business crime

National Business Crime Centre

18 The National Business Crime Centre (NBCC) was created in 2017 as a result of a Home Office Police Transformation Funding and is overseen by a senior police officer who leads for Business Crime within the National Police Chiefs Council.

19 The NBCC's objectives are to improve partnership with the business community and to accurately understand and reduce the impact of crime, allow businesses to target resources more efficiently, whilst prioritising prevention, enabling businesses to protect themselves from crime. The NBCC does not offer an investigative capability but supports both police and business communities and act as a conduit for sharing advice and trends nationally. The NBCC sets the national accreditation standards for Business Crime Reduction Partnerships (BCRPs).

20 BCRPs provide a well-structured approach to addressing local issues and enabling a two way exchange of intelligence and best practice between businesses and law enforcement agencies. They can play an important role in local community efforts to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by providing a valuable source of information and delivery of practical steps to identify offenders and anti-social elements and to allow police, partners and businesses to work together to manage their behaviour more effectively

Action Fraud

21 Action Fraud is the national reporting facility for all fraud and cyber related crime. The service is hosted by the City of London Police and also offers a 24/7 reporting facility for businesses that are undergoing a live cyber attack or data breach.

22 Action Fraud works closely with the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau which builds an intelligence picture of the type and volume of fraud and cyber crime and victim profile and then shares this with local police forces and other law enforcement agencies to take action where appropriate.



Devon and Cornwall Police

23 Devon and Cornwall Police has a strong tradition of community based policing and works with the business community across the peninsula to look ahead at emerging threats and seek opportunities to use early intervention. The OPCC will work with Devon and Cornwall Police to support the delivery of the activities set out in this Approach.

24 Devon and Cornwall Police have recently established a Business Crime Governance Group chaired by a senior police officer who leads on business crime for the organisation. The group is taking forward a range of actions to tackle business crime and has focused its initial work on reviewing the way the Force records business crime to deliver a more accurate picture of its scope and scale and examining levels of repeat victimisation within the business community.

Supporting businesses through the wider Police and Crime Plan

25 'Safe, resilient and connected communities' the Police and Crime Plan 2017-2020 sets out the PCC's policing priorities for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.



26 The plan, which was developed jointly with the Chief Constable, contains a wide range of programmes and investments across the five priorities which have a direct role to play in helping us to keep our businesses safe from crime, including:



27 The PCC also continues to support wider activity by businesses linked to community safety, such as financial support to aid the launch of schemes like Best Bar None and Shopwatch.

The importance of engaging with communities

28 The PCC has placed connectivity at the heart of the Police and Crime Plan and has jointly published a Connectivity Framework – Connect to Protect² with the Chief Constable.

29 The Connectivity Framework sets out how the police will work to engage communities and sets 10 minimum standards that communities, including businesses, can expect to receive.

The connectivity framework

The framework aims to better connect the police with members of the communities, to keep people safe

Accessible

- Listen to communities and encourage positive dynamic communication
- Improve accessibility options for the public
- Make use of new technology to provide remote access options
- Provide opportunities for communities to meet policing team members

Responsive

- Work to understand issues of concern to communities, so we can recognise signs and symptoms and improve our proactivity
- Improve coordination with our partners to tackle issues jointly
- Improve the consistency and timeliness of our feedback

Informative

- Share agreed priorities with communities and explain what we are doing about them
- Share information appropriately
- Use a range of communication methods, including an increased online presence
- Strengthen our relationships within communities and our teams to hear their voices

Supportive

- Involve our wider policing family more in connecting with our communities
- Working to signpost the public to help and support more effectively
- Assist watch schemes to develop with resilience
- Build partnerships to resolve persistent issues

² Devon and Cornwall Police and PCC Connectivity Framework 2017-2020 – Connect to Protect <https://devonandcornwall.s3.amazonaws.com/Documents/Our%20information/Key%20document/Connect%20to%20Protect%20Leaflet%20compressed.pdf>

30 Alongside these wider police and crime plan commitments the PCC undertook to work closely with businesses to better understand their needs – drawing together representatives from a broad range of businesses to gather views on policing. As a result of that engagement 5 specific areas of focus for the PCC’s work with businesses have been identified and are being taken forward through this Approach to support delivery of the shared vision of:

“A flourishing business community working closely with the partners, police, local and national government to prevent and reduce crime.”

The PCC’s Approach to Business Crime – 5 Areas for Additional Action



Building a better understanding of the crime and community safety issues affecting businesses



Improving support and assistance for victims of business crime



Increasing the opportunities for businesses to support wider community safety initiatives



Providing clear opportunities for businesses to work with the police and partners to help prevent and reduce crime



Maximising the use of national resources to help tackle business crime locally and influence national policy



Building a better understanding of the crime and community safety issues affecting businesses

The PCC will convene a series of roundtable discussions on a regular basis with business leaders and those representing business communities in the south west. This will aid the PCC to understand the issues affecting their members and to discuss opportunities to take forward projects and initiatives individually or jointly.

Understanding the true scope and scale of business crime is important to inform resourcing decisions by the Chief Constable and the provision of victim services by the PCC. Levels of underreporting are high and the PCC will take action to encourage businesses to actively report crime when it occurs. The police have developed a range of reporting and information sharing options with the introduction of email@101, the new webchat service and improved online crime reporting forms and we will work with business groups to highlight these options to businesses as well as wider opportunities to report like Crimestoppers.

The PCC will:

- 1 convene a Business Forum meeting each quarter to strengthen the voice of business and publish the findings from those forums and any agreed actions
- 2 carry out an awareness campaign across 2019/20 (with businesses, partners and Crimestoppers) to encourage businesses to report crime when it occurs.

Improving support and assistance for victims of business crime

The PCC seeks to ensure comprehensive support services are available for victims. Services are already available for victims of crimes against business including a referral mechanism to the South West Business Council but more can be done to promote the service and improve take up. The PCC recognises that certain types of business are more vulnerable than others to physical violence and wants to ensure that businesses and their staff can access support and victim care services when needed.

The PCC will:

- 3 review the existing victim services available for businesses, in particular in instances of violence and
- 4 work with the South West Business Council and other business groups throughout 2019/20 to ensure that businesses are aware of the victim care network and the support that is available to them and their staff.

Increasing the opportunities for businesses to support wider community safety initiatives

Businesses are an integral part of our communities, delivering services, goods and jobs into local towns and cities across the peninsula. There are many good examples of businesses delivering added value into their communities as well – from businesses working together through schemes like Best Bar None to help ensure members of the public stay safe in our night time economies to supporting their staff to take up volunteering roles in areas like policing, neighbourhood watch or St John's ambulance. Under this approach the PCC will focus their activity on two key areas; employer supported volunteering and the employment of ex-offenders.

Devon and Cornwall Police have a well established volunteering programme. In the year to 31st March 2018 we saw over 30,000 hours of valuable service provided by our dedicated volunteers. Policing provides a diverse range of volunteering roles from special constables to volunteer drivers/vehicle checkers to administrators to speedwatch to event organisers. The value that volunteering brings to policing and communities is immense and it is important that we support our volunteers and celebrate their contribution. A person's ability to volunteer can be dependent on the flexibility of their employer to support such activity and the PCC wishes to encourage more businesses to support their staff to volunteer and to celebrate and thank businesses who are already doing so.

The opportunity to work is a key determinant in ensuring people can break the cycle of offending and local businesses can play an important role in helping to prevent crime by providing employment opportunities for people who are coming out of the criminal justice system. The PCC is supporting work through the Local Criminal Justice Board's Reducing Offending Board and Devon and Cornwall Police's award winning pathfinder scheme to help a wider range of businesses actively recruit ex-offenders.

The PCC will:

- 5 Work with Devon & Cornwall Police to encourage businesses to support their staff to volunteer in policing*
- 6 Deliver an event, in November 2019 to celebrate the contribution that employers play in helping our volunteers.*
- 7 Work with LCJB partners to lead work to increase employment pathways for ex-offenders.*



Providing clear opportunities for businesses to work with the police and partners to help prevent and reduce crime

The PCC's engagement with businesses across the peninsula has identified a strong desire within towns and cities for greater engagement and collaboration with the police to help tackle crime in the local area. There are some excellent examples of partnership working and collaboration between the police and local Business Crime Reduction Partnerships (BCRPs) and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in areas like Plymouth, Exeter and St Austell. The PCC has also supported a number of towns to set up shopwatch schemes recognising the important role they can play in helping businesses feel safe and tackle crime.

The PCC will:

- 8 *Work with the South West Business Crime Centre and local towns to raise awareness of the benefits of BCRPs and other crime reduction initiatives*
- 9 *Provide seed funding to help local areas (including our 3 Rural Crime Partnerships) deliver schemes and initiatives like BCRPs.*

Maximise the use of national resources to help tackle business crime locally and influence national policy

The PCC will continue to work with PCCs and Chief Constables nationally to champion an increased focus on issues such as cyber crime and modern slavery which can have a significant impact on our business communities. It is also important that national structures like the new National Business Crime Centre and Action Fraud deliver an effective local response in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and the PCC will work with the Chief Constable to continue to work with the Chief constable to ensure that we receive a fair and equitable focus from national structures.

- 10 *The PCC will carry out a scrutiny review (with the Chief Constable) to understand the level of service provided locally by the National Business Crime Centre and Action Fraud and will take forward any issues that arise from this scrutiny work at the national level.*

Key contacts page

How to report a crime or feed in intelligence

Report a crime or a suspicion to Devon & Cornwall Police (non-emergency)

T: 101

E: 101@dc.police.uk

W: devon-cornwall.police.uk/contact/contact-forms/101-non-emergency

Devon and Cornwall Police Web Chat

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/>

Report a crime online

<https://services.devon-cornwall.police.uk/crimereporting/>

Crime update request

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/contact/contact-forms/crime-update/>

Message an officer

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/contact/contact-forms/message-an-officer/>

Report Fraud or Cyber crime (Action Fraud)

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-fraud-and-cyber-crime>

T: 0300 123 2040

Rural crime reporting line (NFU and CrimeStoppers)

T. 0800 783 0137

W: <https://forms.theiline.co.uk/ruralcrimereportingline>

Report a crime anonymously to CrimeStoppers

T: 0800 555111

W: crimestoppers-uk.org

Neighbourhood Watch

Contact Devon and Cornwall Community Watch Association (DaCCWA)

E: DaCCWA@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Driving for Better Business (Highways England)

<https://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/>



Victim care services in Devon and Cornwall

The Police and Crime Commissioner funds a Victim Care Unit, managed by Devon and Cornwall Police, to help victims of crime find the support they need.

Victim Care Unit

01392 475900 (Lines open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm;
Saturday and Sunday 9am to 5pm)
www.victimcaredevonandcornwall.org.uk/

If you have reported a crime, you will have been given a direct dial number to the victim care unit. Please remember that the victim care unit is a police based unit and as such cannot deal with victims who have not or do not wish to report a crime.

For victims who do not wish to report the matter to the police or for self-referrals
Victim Support 0300 3030 554 or devon.cornwall@victimsupport.org.uk

The South West Business Council will provide free specialist support to victims of crime against businesses. Their business crime advisor can be contacted on 0333442133 or by email on business.crime@dcbbc.co.uk

We have worked closely with the South West Business Council to understand what is the impact of crimes against businesses. A survey of their members found that in addition to emotional support potentially required by staff; there was a need for more specialist business advice.

In response to this need, the South West Business Council will be coordinating support to the business community. For victims of reported crimes against businesses, they will be provided with the option of being referred to the business council to receive additional professional and/or peer support. All offers of initial free support will be provided by businesses registered with the Buy with Confidence scheme or by their relevant professional body for example the Law Society. This advice will be provided in a way that suits the client.

Businesses of any size (including sole traders) and from any sector qualify for this support and will typically include:

- Retail
- Agricultural
- Construction/engineering
- Professional Services/Business Support
- Creative Media
- Utilities
- Manufacturing

Advice maybe provided on a range of areas such as:

- Security
- Insurance
- Financial
- Legal
- HR
- IT (including cyber security)

Modern Slavery Helpline

T: 08000 121700

W: modernslaveryhelpline.org

Getting involved in keeping communities safe

Devon and Cornwall Alert

<https://alerts.dc.police.uk/>

Volunteering with Devon & Cornwall Police

There are a number of opportunities to volunteer with the police. More information on how to find out more is available here.

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/your-right-to-information/our-people/recruitment/police-support-volunteers/express-an-interest-to-be-a-volunteer/>

Business related watch schemes

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/advice/your-community/your-watch-schemes/>

Contacting the OPCC

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon & Cornwall

Alderson Drive, Exeter, EX2 7RP

T: 01392 225555

E: opcc@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

