

OSWESTRY WATCH INFORMATION FOR BUSINESSES



BID OSWESTRY

SHOPWATCH PURPOSE



The Shopwatch scheme is in place to allow Oswestry businesses to share relevant information regarding known shoplifters with the aim of keeping their staff safe, reducing stock loss and discouraging anti-social behaviour in the town.

Shopwatch partners with the Police and local authorities to achieve these goals, and the DISC app also allows GDPR compliant information sharing.

Shopwatch allows businesses to easily engage with the Police via email or regular meetings.

This allows both independent and national retailers to support each other and create a safer trading environment for local businesses in Oswestry.

Shopwatch is administered by Oswestry BID.



REPORTING A CRIME



If you or your business has been a victim of crime, it is vital that it is reported to the Police. This helps to ensure that not only is the incident investigated and a possible arrest made, but also helps to present a clear picture of the local issues, so resources can be directed appropriately.

We are well aware of a number of repeat offenders. Reporting all crimes, no matter how small, can help ensure that these individuals are dealt with.

Please note that this can range from actual shoplifting, verbal abuse and threatening behaviour to prevented or suspected shoplifting.

For all emergencies, always dial **999**.

In non-emergency situations you can report incidents via **101** or go online at <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report>

Descriptions

When an incident occurs, try and ensure that any descriptions contain as much detail as possible:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Approximate age
- Height
- Build
- Hair colour and style, any facial hair
- Clothes: colours, any logos
- Any distinguishing features, any tattoos
- Accessories: Bags, pram, dogs
- Associates: who are they with? People, children, large group

ALERTING FELLOW BUSINESSES



Any information can be shared with other businesses via the DISC app as an Alert or instant message. Alternatively, information can be shared via the private message group.

This can be to advise them of an incident that has occurred or of any suspicious activity within Oswestry.

The Police need to be contacted via **101**, if non-urgent; or **999**, if an emergency.

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CCTV



Oswestry CCTV is monitored by volunteers and based within Oswestry Police Station.

CCTV operatives are trained to recognise and monitor potential problems, and where necessary notify appropriate partners.

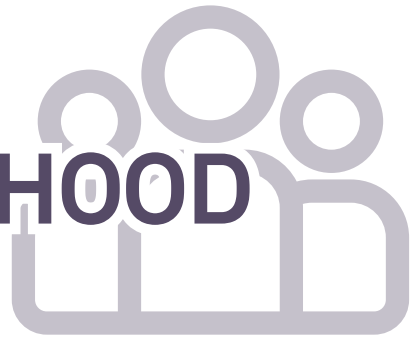
Utilising technology like this can help reduce crimes such as anti-social behaviour, drugs and violence, ultimately making Oswestry a safer place.

Oswestry BID worked closely with Oswestry Town Council, the CCTV Co-Ordinator, the Police and the Police Crime Commissioner, John Campion, to secure £22,000 in match funding to in-fill CCTV gaps in the town centre and extend the scheme onto the industrial estates.

On the industrial estate, cameras featuring number-plate recognition have been strategically placed at entrances to the estates providing Police with potentially vital evidence should business premises be targeted.

Finally, as part of the scheme, the infrastructure at Oswestry Police Station was upgraded to accommodate the additional cameras and 2 deployable units to monitor any particular 'hot spots' were also purchased.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM



Neighbourhood policing emphasises a local approach to policing, that is accessible to the public and responsive to the needs and priorities of the neighbourhoods. This is achieved by providing communities with access to policing services through a named point of contact, influence over policing priorities in their neighbourhood, intelligence-led collaborative partnership interventions to tackle identified priorities, and responses through feedback on the actions taken to address priorities.

Your Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) is a group of local police officers dedicated to serving your community. The team is made up of officers and PCSOs based in your area, supported by additional officers from the wider area.

The SNT work closely with local authorities, community leaders and residents to decide our policing priorities for the area. This helps us to find useful, long-term solutions to local problems, while maintaining our wider focus on reducing crime across Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire.

RETAIL CRIME PREVENTION



Applying the principles of crime prevention within your premises could help you reduce stock loss and keep your team safe.

Below you will find guidance from West Mercia Police on how to spot and secure your premises from shoplifters, keep burglars out of your business, and prevent other business crime. These loss prevention principles are effective tools for both small independent and larger, national retailers.



Scan the QR code
with your phone camera
to find out more about
preventing theft and
shoplifting

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/keeping-business-safe-from-crime/>

TOP TIPS

Unfortunately, despite all best efforts, shoplifting and anti-social behaviour can still occur and below are 6 tips that may help.



Meet and Greet

Shoplifters can always determine how easy it is to steal from a shop based on how soon they are spoken to on entrance. It is known as 'the three-to-five second rule'. Greeting customers can put off a potential shoplifter as it's clear that staff are on the shop floor and watching them.



Crime Mapping

Crime Mapping is where you try to map out locations, dates, times and CCTV incidents of suspicious behaviour. This can help to identify problem areas within your premises as well as problem days and times. Is there way to improve this?



Electronic Tagging

Tag your items with 'Electronic Article Surveillance'. Anti-theft systems encompass a wide range of devices and technologies.

A correctly installed and security accredited anti-theft terminal (and tagging system) at a store entrance is a statement to potential shoplifters that 'this store is protected'. Thieves will often target premises that don't have this equipment. Most shops see a marked drop in shoplifting once they install an anti-theft terminal on the door. They'll simply go elsewhere.



Keep it Tidy



A clean and tidy retail outlet with clear visibility across the shop floor tells a thief that everything is shipshape and that surveillance is also probably first class. Keep things security friendly, with uncluttered, wide aisles where possible, thereby making it extremely difficult for them to steal unnoticed.

Ensure that the exterior, the grounds and the building itself are also well maintained and clean, to keep the space as visible as possible.

Personal Safety



You can't predict who's coming into your shop or how they will behave. Both yourself and your employees need to be aware that shoplifters could respond aggressively when challenged.

Always trust your instincts and only engage a potential shoplifter if it is safe to do so. If you feel confident with the situation, keep a safe distance and then ask them if they need any help or if they require a basket or a bag.

If you're feeling uncomfortable, be polite, step away and quietly alert your manager or security team.

Safety in numbers



For as much of the day as possible, try not to be alone. Thieves target stores where there is only one member of staff. More eyes in the store, means you're more likely to spot a thief, so have a few members of staff and make sure they're trained in how to spot shoplifters.

TERMINOLOGY



ABA	Acceptable Behaviour Agreement
ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
BCRP	Business Crime Reduction Partnership
CBOs	Criminal Behaviour Orders
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
KCPO	Knife Crime Protection Orders
OCGM	Organised Crime Group Mapping
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioners
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
SNT	Safer Neighbourhood Team

NOTES



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