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Colne Town Centre – Retail Businesses

On the 27th of June 2022, myself Danii Wohler, Designing Out Crime Officer for East and the local Neighbourhood Policing Team completed an Environmental Visual Audit of Colne Town Centre regarding high demand areas. Below I have gathered some best practice recommendations for all retail businesses in the area to help tackle shoplifting. To tackle shoplifting, we appreciate this needs a partnership approach and hopefully by working together we can achieve this.

Below I have made some recommendations based on an Environmental Visual Audit carried out on the above date.

- I would highly recommend for all highly targeted items by shoplifters within you're retail store to be placed in an area of high staff presence. For example, by the tills, near security guards podium etc. Additionally, you could remove contents of high targeted products and display boxes only' or use display laminated cards which can be exchanged at the till for the real item etc
- All high value items over a certain threshold value to be security tagged. Please ensure that if you have products in your store that are tagged these are connected to an active tagging system to sound the alarm when shoplifters are attempting to leave the store. The tags are a visual deterrent however the alarm system is a physical deterrent, to work effectively both need to be in place.
- Convex Security Mirrors are a low-cost security measure for preventing shoplifting. I would advise for the use of convex security mirrors to be looked at being introduced to the areas of the highly targeted products for example the pharmaceutical products, meat aisle, beauty products.
- The presence of a capable guardian in retail stores is important. This can be any staff member, including security staff who work on the shop floor. Staffing levels are a key part of deterring shoplifters as they offer the presence of a capable guardian which will increase the risk of shoplifters being caught.
- To prevent shoplifters from easily gaining access to the store I would recommend introducing push barriers to access and exits points in the store. This will cause delay/disturbance for shoplifters.

- By having CCTV installed internally and externally on the premises this will allow more evidence to be obtained if incidents do occur. CCTV is also to support monitoring of behaviour and the identification of offenders and assists in deterring offences where criminals feel they are being watched. A full review of the CCTV system should be conducted by a qualified CCTV engineer to ensure good camera quality both internally and externally and that locations / directions of cameras are correct for hotspot areas. Clear signage should be displayed both internally and externally advising of CCTV on site. Such signage should be placed at regular intervals of around 3 metres, and above a minimum height of 2 metres so they are clearly visible.
- Ideally, access points into retail stores should be restricted to a single point to make it easier for staff and security to monitor. This is easier for a security guard / members of staff to monitor who is entering and exiting the business. It is always key to limit access points to the minimum to give shoplifters opportunities to exit the premiss, having 2 or more access points in your store will allow more opportunity for shoplifters to escape.
- I would recommend for all businesses to have a monitor or screen displaying CCTV footage which is clearly visible to those entering the premises in the entrance of their shop. The CCTV monitor will act as a deterrent as all customers that enter to store will know they are being observed from as soon as they step foot into the store, it is important the screen isn't obstructed by any signage or object and is of clear view of all customers/offenders entering the store.
- I would highly encourage all businesses to consider employing a security team to manage security within your store. Having a security guard fully trained will act as a capable guardian which will deter offending behaviour from your store. Also, security staff should be clearly identifiable in high visibility uniform to give the correct presence of security to your customers and staff. The presence of security staff increases feelings of safety for both staff and legitimate customers. All security staff should be trained to the correct standard and have an SSA License.
- Please ensure all crimes are reported to the Police. By ensuring all crimes in store are reported to the Police it gives us a clear indicator of the level of crimes occurring at your business. Please do this by reporting via 101 for non-emergency crimes, with the online reporting QR card which your local neighbourhood policing team will be able to provide you with. **For all emergencies, please call 999.**

This summary of recommendations has been distributed to all business in Colne Town Centre. I would advise all business to carry out the Business Crime Self-Assessment, which is attached to the report this will help identify areas of weakness within your business which leave your premises vulnerable.



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