



**CrimeStoppers.**

Spring 2025

# Connections

Giving people the power to speak up and stop crime

## Be the change

How Crimestoppers supports people,  
communities and businesses

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### MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The views of police chiefs on our  
charity's growing significance

### EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Clear, Hold, Build campaign builds  
safer neighbourhoods

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# Breaking the silence:

## how Crimestoppers enables communities to speak up about crime

Welcome to the 7th edition of Crimestoppers' Connections, where we reflect on the charity's recent achievements and offer those who champion our services an opportunity to share their stories.



**Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC**  
Founder and Chair  
of Crimestoppers

It seems unfathomable today, but before 1988 there was no way for people to pass on their information about crime whilst remaining completely anonymous or without speaking directly to the police.

Whilst most people are willing to speak up about crime, there is a sizable proportion who refuse to do so. There are many reasons why this is the case. For some, it's cultural; for others, it's fear of reprisals or negative consequences.

Crime is rarely out of the headlines, and we regularly receive important information from the public that gives

investigators a vital missing piece of the jigsaw. This includes information that ensures the most vulnerable in our society, such as domestic abuse or modern slavery victims, are safeguarded and receive the support they desperately need.

We have been and will continue to be open and available 24/7, 365 days a year to all our beneficiaries who trust Crimestoppers to pass on what they know about crime 100% anonymously. That commitment is as strong today as it was when I established the charity back in the late 1980s.

“

It seems unfathomable today, but before 1988 there was no way for people to pass on their information about crime whilst remaining completely anonymous or without speaking directly to the police.

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# Driving change through innovation and anonymous reporting

Crimestoppers offers a discreet way to share vital information, helping to safeguard vulnerable individuals and foster a safer society for everyone.



**Mark Hallas OBE**  
Chief Executive of  
Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers is a unique charity with a great history and huge amounts of passion for the critical work we do, giving the public the means to speak up anonymously about crime.

Our core purpose is providing a voice for the disenfranchised, to reach out to those people who want to do the right thing but can't quite bring themselves to talk to the police directly, for whatever reason.

Crimestoppers communications, through improved use of data analytics, behavioural insights and knowledge, always strives to encourage more people to contact us about crime.

Over the past few years, we are doing more in the area of awareness raising; from delivering targeted national and local campaigns, to encouraging those to continue to support our ever increasing need to tackle crime. This produces

demonstrable results and improves lives.

The way that we communicate is critical, including digital engagement through social platforms and tailoring our campaigns for today's audiences.

Similarly, whilst we receive ever more contacts from the public online, we will always be available to speak to those who need us.

In addition to raising awareness and crime reporting, we are focusing on upskilling our analytics capability. We are investing in automation to allow forces to instantly receive information reports. This improves efficiency and increases accuracy and helps feedback. AI, too, carefully controlled, has a role to play.

I am proud of the great work our staff, volunteers and supporters do, to make Crimestoppers more relevant than ever in a changing world.

“

**Our core purpose is providing a voice for the disenfranchised, to reach out to those people who want to do the right thing.**

”

# Insights

How Crimestoppers staff work with stakeholders to jointly fight against exploitation and criminal activity. The fight would be so much harder for everyone without these mutually beneficial partnerships.







**Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner**

# Championing victims and advocating for communities – a PCC's commitment

Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, shares...

I am tremendously grateful to Crimestoppers for all of the work that they do to make our communities safer. I was pleased to see this again first-hand when I visited their Contact Centre recently. The professionalism, compassion and dedication that they show whilst dealing with matters that are often difficult or traumatic is commendable. On behalf of my residents in Kent – thank you.

As the Police and Crime Commissioner, I have many legal responsibilities, but there are two key principles that I promote when speaking with local groups. First, is that your PCC is the local Victims Champion, and it is important that we ensure that the criminal justice process can be easy to deal with at all stages, no matter which one you are at. That includes everything from

making it as simple as possible to report, to ensuring that there are effective investigations and that there are services available to you for support, regardless of need.

And the other is to be an effective Community Advocate, ensuring that the voice of your neighbourhood is heard no matter how much crime and antisocial behaviour you are affected by, and that your local force is responsive.

### Providing reassurance

Unfortunately, when I speak at community events, the common feedback is that people are worried about reporting crime or anti-social behaviour and that's when I step in to remind people of the valuable work that Crimestoppers does. With high-profile scandals involving some police officers, trust and

confidence in policing has taken a hit, so some people are not coming forward when they have been affected by crime.

I have therefore been pleased to highlight the brilliant work that Crimestoppers does in partnership with Kent Police. In giving people the confidence to speak up about crime, anti-social behaviour, corruption or misconduct, we can do more to address these problems and rebuild confidence. I am always delighted to hear that in Kent and Essex, we are using Crimestoppers' reports effectively to ensure that victims are heard and suspects are brought to justice.

Thank you again, Crimestoppers, for all that you do, and I will continue to cherish the relationship that my Office has with Crimestoppers.

# Crimestoppers welcomes Kate Johnston as the new Director of Business Development and Fundraising

In January, Crimestoppers was delighted to announce the appointment of Kate Johnston as Director of Business Development and Fundraising.

Kate brings a wealth of experience from the commercial and charity sectors. She held senior positions at two leading intelligence and investigation software companies, Altia and Harod. Her extensive background in the industry is complemented by a deep-rooted connection to Crimestoppers, having held commercial and operational roles at the charity during a previous 13-year tenure.

Kate said, "I'm thrilled to return to a charity that has always had a special place in my heart. I look forward to building on Crimestoppers' remarkable achievements and the strides made in innovation, technology, people, and performance in recent years. It's truly an honour



**Kate Johnston, Director of Business Development and Fundraising**

to work for an organisation that operates tirelessly, 24/7, 365 days a year, offering the public a safe and anonymous platform to report crime, and supports the police in their vital mission to keep communities safe."

She also highlighted Crimestoppers' unique position as a charity: "What sets Crimestoppers apart is its ability to offer an invaluable public service and also provide services to organisations and industries to enable them to gain critical insights into crime and misconduct issues affecting them. This dual approach strengthens the impact we have in tackling crime from multiple angles."

Kate is looking forward to collaborating with Crimestoppers' police, government, and commercial partners as the charity continues its crucial work to prevent crime and promote safety across communities.



# Campaign success in Grahame Park Estate, Barnet

Working together with local partners, Crimestoppers ran a campaign on the Grahame Park Estate in Barnet, aiming to empower local residents to come forward and speak up about crimes that are affecting their local community. The initiative first aimed to raise awareness of the service that Crimestoppers and Fearless offer, explaining how we keep people's identity anonymous.

This was followed up with a second phase of the campaign, encouraging residents to report criminal activities anonymously, helping to make their neighbourhood safer and creating a community spirit where everyone can play a part in speaking up about crime.

The campaign was a collaborative effort, bringing together local authorities, housing providers, neighbourhood policing teams, faith groups, and healthcare providers. It was part of the Clear Hold Build (CHB) project,



**Shane Roberts - creator of CHB and National Policy lead.**

which aims to tackle serious and organised crime through a structured approach. The campaign used social media, a dedicated landing page, localised artwork, leaflet mail-outs, and a toolkit for partners to spread the word.

Shane Roberts, creator of CHB, said: "Crimestoppers has made an incredible contribution to the impact Clear Hold Build

has had in making communities safer across the UK.

"Crimestoppers enhanced the response between local partners, agencies and groups with the community itself. The outreach work undertaken by Fearless and Unity provided a platform to capture the community voice, including the fears that paralyse communities, the current harm caused by exploitation and insight into emerging trends.

"This has enabled delivery partners to understand the "lived experience" of the community firsthand, enabling all to work collaboratively to craft a CHB response to address their specific needs. This has significantly enhanced trust and confidence and secured community support for CHB.

"Crimestoppers, in putting CHB at the heart of supporting communities to fight organised crime, has become a key trusted stakeholder and delivery partner for which I am exceptionally grateful."

## The campaign achieved:



**71,323**

people reached on Crimestoppers social media with

**390,000**  
impressions



**412,774**

young people engaged on Fearless social media, generating

**2,284,515**  
impressions



**186**

reports were sent to the MPS intelligence bureau, with an additional

**112**  
reports post-campaign

**9%**

increase in reports on serious organized crime in Barnet

**8%**

Rise in information on drug trafficking and supply

**33%**

surge in reports on knives and weapons

**9**

reports were received about wanted persons in Barnet





# fearless

Part of Crimestoppers

## Protecting young people from sextortion

Fearless has launched a powerful campaign across Scotland to protect young people from sextortion – a growing form of online blackmail where criminals threaten to share explicit images of the victim unless demands are met.

The initiative was developed and run by our charity's youth service with funding and support from the Scottish Government and Police Scotland. The campaign targeted young people aged 13-21, who are disproportionately affected by sextortion.

Co-production by young people for young people ensured that the campaign messaging resonated with

the target audience. The social media outreach was focused on the platforms most commonly used by young people, including TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram.

The campaign's key message is simple: if a young person becomes a victim of sextortion, they should not panic, they should not pay or comply with the blackmailer's demands, and they should get help. It goes on to reassure the young person that they are not to blame. The initiative also provides crucial advice for adults who work with young people, equipping them with the knowledge and resources needed to recognise and respond to cases of sextortion.

Since launching in November 2024, the campaign has gained over 12 million impressions on social media, and the custom landing pages providing vital information have been accessed over 80,000 times.

Assistant Chief Constable Steve Johnson said: "Police Scotland wholeheartedly welcomed the opportunity to support the innovative and powerful national sextortion campaign delivered by Fearless. Being part of it allowed us to convey what can be difficult messaging to a large audience of children and young people as well as parents, carers and guardians."

## The only way is (JD) UP for Fearless

Fearless had the privilege of being invited by the JD Foundation (the charitable arm of JD Sports) to take part in their JD UP events in London and Manchester. These are unique immersive experiences designed to inspire young people, provide insight into a wide range of careers and help them to reach their unlimited potential.

These events gave the Fearless team an opportunity to engage with thousands of students in a fun and interactive environment (imagine a DJ on the decks, panel Q&As and dance-offs in the auditorium and a full-size JD store built especially for the occasion!).



We spoke to young people about Fearless and anonymous reporting, invited them to get curious about how they would

handle difficult situations and gained valuable knowledge about the types of crimes that concern them the most. The thoughts and ideas they shared with us will help shape our future plans and campaigns, enabling us to better connect with our key audience of 11 to 17 year olds.

Spending four days surrounded by brilliant young people, passionate JD Sports crew and other charities committed to breaking down barriers for the next generation was incredibly rewarding. We were also grateful to have support (and energy!) from our colleagues from across the charity.

## My internship at Crimestoppers

by **Lucie Crooks**

As a third-year Criminology and Criminal Justice student at the University of Greenwich, my placement with Crimestoppers has probably been the most rewarding and inspiring part of my degree so far.

When I first heard about the opportunity at Crimestoppers at a university placement fair, I knew I had to apply. I interviewed for the role on my birthday and was thrilled to hear back the same day. From my first trip to the office, everyone was friendly and welcoming. This has remained the same throughout my time with the charity and I will forever be grateful for this.

My main role has been with the Crimestoppers' youth service, Fearless, where I've been running their TikTok and Instagram accounts – I've become quite a

social media wizard! It has been lots of fun, and we've had many a giggle behind the camera. It has also taught me a lot about social media, marketing and ethical debates surrounding targeting advertising towards young people, which I will carry through into whichever career path I choose. I also attended a board meeting where I took notes and compiled minutes which have been shared throughout the charity.

I attended two JD UP events (immersive careers fairs run by the JD Foundation, see above) with the Fearless team, in London and Manchester. This was incredibly exciting, and we've been using insights from the thousands of young people we met there to influence content for socials. I have learnt so much from this placement and am grateful for everyone



**Lucie celebrating her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday at Crimestoppers HQ**

who has guided me, given me opportunities to develop new skills, taken me for coffee and cake or just smiled and said hello. I am so proud of the work I have done during my time at Crimestoppers and can't wait to see what else I will achieve as an undergrad on student placement but also as a volunteer beyond my degree!



# Partnerships

## keeping communities safe together

Our busy Business Development and Fundraising team works in partnership with over 100 commercial, public sector and governmental organisations. Here we shine the spotlight on just a few of them.





## Enhancing accountability with police integrity lines

Jon McAdam, National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Crimestoppers, discusses the impact of our Police Anti-Corruption and Abuse Reporting Service.

"In the spring of 2024, I was appointed as National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) lead for Crimestoppers, which forms part of the National Intelligence Coordination Committee.

Having visited Crimestoppers Head Office and chaired working group meetings, I believe that I can build on the successes of the charity and interactions with police forces across the United Kingdom.

### Rooting out corruption

Crimestoppers offers integrity-based services, both internally to policing and externally as a public facing initiative. The Police Anti-Corruption and Abuse Reporting Service has been running for over a year now and gives the public an anonymous route to speak up about the police – whether that's a member of staff or a volunteer – who they believe is corrupt or committing serious abuse.

These actions and behaviours have no place in modern policing, and the public's response in using this service has been very welcome. While we don't want to see bad behaviours from our police officers, it is key that there are good reporting mechanisms for the public so that these issues can be appropriately managed. The service has resulted in vital information being logged and passed on to professional



Jon McAdam, National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Crimestoppers

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**It is key that there are good reporting mechanisms for the public so that these issues can be appropriately managed.**  
”

standards units across the UK who, in turn, investigate the reports.

### Further collaborations

I'm keen to help build on the good practices I've seen at

Crimestoppers and work towards more proactive involvement in emerging issues. The charity has been a great resource for policing, providing vital information and intelligence from our communities.

Over the last year, with large-scale, far-reaching national problems such as the summer rioting and high-harm issues like County Lines, exploitation and police integrity, Crimestoppers' service has been more valuable than ever. I look forward to working with the team in the years to come.”

## Bread baskets: essential for sustainable supply chains

Paul Empson, General Manager at Bakers Basco, discusses the significance of bread baskets in the supply chain and their role in promoting sustainability.

“At Bakers Basco, we know the humble bread basket is more than just a piece of delivery equipment; it’s a crucial part of an efficient supply chain. Nineteen years ago, the UK’s five largest plant bakers joined forces to establish Bakers Basco to design and source industry-standard bread baskets and dollies to efficiently and sustainably deliver bread to retailers across the country.

### The problem of misuse

But the misuse of our bread baskets threatens the sustainability of our system. Too often, they end up in landfill sites or unauthorised recycling centres. To tackle this issue, we’ve implemented tracking systems and, when necessary, taken legal action. In 2024 alone, we identified thousands of listings for stolen equipment on platforms like eBay and Facebook Marketplace.

### Efforts to recover stolen equipment

Despite the success of our awareness campaigns in 2023 and 2024, the problem still persists. The ease of listing stolen goods online makes it increasingly difficult to track

and recover equipment. This adds to environmental and operational costs. We’re intensifying efforts to monitor online activity and recover stolen goods. It’s clear that preserving the integrity of the supply chain, protecting food safety and supporting sustainability requires collective action.

### Speaking up

In collaboration with Crimestoppers, we encourage people to speak up anonymously about anyone stealing or illegally disposing of equipment and hope our partnership goes some way to raise awareness about these thefts and how information shared with Crimestoppers can make a big difference. In addition to this, Bakers Basco offer a service through which free collections of recovered equipment can be arranged. Contact Bakers Basco helpline: 08000 327323”

## Crimestoppers and eufy have joined together in a new partnership to help keep people safe from crime

Our charity has been working for almost 40 years, gaining expert knowledge on how to encourage people who might otherwise stay silent to speak up, completely anonymously. The information we receive and pass on to law enforcement helps prevent, tackle and solve some of the most harmful types of crime.

eufy is focused on creating a new generation of connected devices that simplify the smart-home experience and make it more accessible, be it indoors or outdoors. eufy’s technology delivers expert protection that’s tailored to the end users’ lifestyle, giving them peace of mind so they can spend more time doing what they love.

Office of National Statistics

(ONS) figures have revealed that police recorded burglary has more than halved in volume over the last decade, with 271,449 burglary offences recorded by the police in the year to December 2023. The ONS has recently said that it’s widely accepted that improvements to home security have been an important factor in this reduction in domestic burglary offences.

Whilst the impact of crime is most acutely felt by the victim, burglary and theft have wider negative consequences by instilling insecurity in public spaces and in homes. Our partnership with eufy demonstrates the importance that both our organisations put on keeping people safe. It helps

amplify messages on how to protect homes and businesses from crime, giving people the power to safeguard themselves and their property.

Faraz Mehdi, General Manager of UK & Ireland at eufy and Anker Innovations Ltd, said: “We are thrilled to join forces with the charity Crimestoppers, as we share the same value that everyone has the right to feel safe from crime no matter where they live. Our goal is to construct communities with a safe environment, and with eufy’s range of security cameras you can ensure continuous surveillance, and provide a protective layer around your home that is both preventive and responsive.”

## How DPD and Crimestoppers are securing safer deliveries across the UK



### DPD joins forces with Crimestoppers to safeguard staff and parcels

Leading parcel delivery company DPD has teamed up with Crimestoppers to protect drivers and make sure of safe delivery of customers' goods. Tim Jones, Director of Marketing, Communications and Sustainability DPD UK, explains why:

"DPD operates more than 10,000 vehicles in the UK from

85 locations and delivers over 360 million parcels a year. We are often referred to as the UK's favourite parcel company, having topped the Money Saving Expert annual parcel delivery customer satisfaction poll for a record nine times.

"We are proud to be working with Crimestoppers to keep our drivers and their deliveries safe.

Violence against anyone just doing their job is completely unacceptable. It is important that we talk about driver protection and support and to deliver our customers' parcels safely. Our partnership with Crimestoppers supports the work that our own security team are doing to stay one step ahead of the criminals.

"DPD have created a bespoke sticker, used on our DPD vehicles to show how we are working with Crimestoppers. We have also produced leaflets, posters and email footers to inform our customers and staff on what the DPD and Crimestoppers partnership is delivering.

"The bespoke Crimestoppers confidential phone line is there for DPD staff and members of the public to report any concerns, as we want to ensure that anyone with relevant information knows who to contact, and that they know that their call or email will be 100% anonymous."

## Transforming lives with Vivastreet's vocational support programme

**Written by Will Bandy –  
Head of Safety & Compliance  
at Digital Ventures**

Vivastreet has worked with Crimestoppers since 2023, as part of our mission to provide users with a safe and trusted advertising space that is free from stigma. We are a classified advertising platform that allows users to post adverts for goods and services

across a range of categories.

We allow sex workers to advertise on our platform, and we recognise that this presents unique risks and challenges, and means that we have a responsibility to ensure that we keep our users safe, rooting out any attempts to post illegal or exploitative content.

Our partnership allows users to make anonymous reports about adverts, directly to

Crimestoppers, ensuring that any potentially problematic content or concerns are placed in the hands of the authorities as swiftly as possible.

Having set in place systems and partnerships that focus on safety, such as our relationship with Crimestoppers, we wanted to develop complementary programmes that would go beyond keeping our users safe, also offering them



# Working together to reduce crime in the communities that we all live in and serve

Carl Probert (right), Morrisons Corporate Protection Manager, gives us an update on their longstanding partnership with Crimestoppers.

Morrisons and Crimestoppers have worked together for over ten years, with the aim of reducing crimes that impact Morrisons' business, customers and the communities in which we operate.

Information received and passed on by Crimestoppers ranges from internal thefts to specific targeted attacks against our business. The intelligence we receive helps us to strategically increase or decrease guarding or mobile unit support, depending on the threat, risk and harm it has on the business. The intelligence certainly helps us react quickly and efficiently to keep our colleagues and customers safe.



## Positive messages

Over the last few years, initiatives have been implemented to successfully promote the partnership, getting the message out to a wider audience that Crimestoppers is here for them to pass on information on about crime, whilst guaranteeing their anonymity.

## CCTV vans

The first initiative, introduced in July 2023, was the addition of the Morrisons/Crimestoppers partnership message to five CCTV vans used by Morrisons across the UK. These vans are sent to

hotspot areas, not only to act as a deterrent to crime, but also to encourage people to speak up and stay safe from crime.

## Increased information

This has led to a substantial increase in the volume of relevant reports received – up by 87.7% in the space of two years – and passed on to Morrisons investigation team. This has in turn led to an increase in the action taken in response to this information.

## A positive outcome

Due to intelligence received through Crimestoppers regarding an ATM attack in the north west of England, Morrisons were able to deploy a mobile unit to the area to deter future crime. It also supported the local police force to be proactive in their approach to catch the offenders in the act. When the offenders targeted another retailer, they were caught by the CCTV van and successfully apprehended by the police.

meaningful routes to create transformational changes in their lives.

This has included the creation of a new vocational support service, in partnership with National Ugly Mugs (NUM), the UK's national sex worker safety charity.

We know that some of those carrying out sex work wish to diversify their income or develop new career opportunities outside of sex work, but are prevented from doing so by various barriers to entry or advancement-such as social barriers, limited financial

access, family responsibilities, and stigma.

Our industry-leading Vocational Support Scheme offers individuals engaged in sex work a dedicated space to pursue their career, financial, and educational aspirations.

This programme includes CV writing workshops, interview skills training, and targeted mental health support.

These sessions create a supportive space where individuals can explore their strengths and gain insights into how their experiences can translate into other

professional and educational environments. So far, nearly 650 people have engaged with the support services, and workshop participants have rated the sessions with an average score of 4.8 out of 5.

Taken together with our work on safety with Crimestoppers, we believe that our work stands as a powerful example of how targeted vocational support can make a lasting difference, reinforcing the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to build a fulfilling and sustainable future.

## Scottish Food Crime Hotline aids recovery of illegal products

“Established in 2015, Food Standards Scotland (FSS) is the competent food authority in Scotland. We have a dedicated food crime unit, staffed by experienced investigators, intelligence officers and analysts, and work in close partnership with local authorities, law enforcement agencies and industry bodies to protect consumer interests and the risks to public health in all matters related to food, drink and animal feed.

Since August 2024, FSS has been leading on a joint investigation with local authorities, assisted by Police Scotland and other partner agencies, into the sale of counterfeit vodka, labelled as Glen’s, from independent licensed convenience stores across Scotland. Analysis confirmed the ‘vodka’ contained isopropyl alcohol (IPA), which can be toxic to ingest in any amount and in larger quantities can be fatal.

This undoubtedly presented a significant risk to consumers, which we managed in consultation with Public Health Scotland and other key partners. Media releases warned of the dangers to health and advised consumers how to identify the counterfeit product.

In partnership with Crimestoppers, FSS promoted the Scottish Food Crime Hotline phone number and online form, asking people to speak up 100% anonymously, and Crimestoppers briefed their call handlers on the type of information sought in relation to our

investigation. Consequently, we were able to act immediately on information received via the Hotline, which proved instrumental in the recovery of counterfeit vodka from several stores.

Other callers to the Hotline had consumed counterfeit vodka and experienced symptoms associated with IPA, including nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain, providing evidence of the risk to human health. One caller was keen to highlight



**Ron McNaughton,**  
**Head of the**  
**Scottish Food**  
**Crime and**  
**Incidents**  
**Unit (SFCIU)**  
**at Food**  
**Standards**  
**Scotland**

## Connecting the dots

“Altia and Crimestoppers have had a long-standing partnership – based on our shared passion for and commitment to improving the safety of communities and businesses across the country.

That is why we’ve been a supporter of the Crimestoppers Annual Dinner, where partners and stakeholders exchange ideas, discuss common challenges and explore collaborative solutions.

It is a ‘one of a kind’ event bringing together a broad range of organisations and individuals

with a shared mission. The relationships and conversations we’ve built through this spirit of collaboration have often been the source of innovative ideas and solutions.

The ethos of collaboration and partnership has long been fundamental to how we work at Altia. It flows through everything we do, including our approach to developing investigation software. Last year we launched our new cloud native platform – Altia HQ – which makes our investigation software

interoperable.

The goal is to make sure any investigation or operational team can pick a combination of modules that work best for them – from tools to capture information and intelligence right through to case management, incident management and court file preparation. Along with having the latest security and technology advances, it also been built to enable enhanced linking capabilities to reveal new investigative avenues.

We’ve also invested significantly in an Open-Source (OSINT) Intelligence solution. As

to investigators how well Crimestoppers had dealt with their call, putting them at ease and giving them the confidence to assist in the investigation.

Through a combination of investigation, information from the public via Crimestoppers and targeted initiatives, 234 bottles of counterfeit vodka were recovered, which had been sold or stocked for sale at nine licensed stores.

Prompt enforcement action has prevented further sales of this dangerous product, and enquiries continue to identify those behind its production and distribution.

This case illustrates the key role that Crimestoppers plays in the development of intelligence to support investigations by providing a reliable and professional service for the public to use to pass on information in complete confidence.”

**Written by Ron McNaughton, Head of the Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit (SFCIU) at Food Standards Scotland**

criminals increasingly exploit digital platforms, leveraging this information is essential. Altia OSINT Investigator has been designed for ease of use while ensuring that captured data adheres to ethical standards and privacy regulations, so anything captured is relevant and admissible.

I'm looking forward to another year of inspiration and collaboration with the Crimestoppers community. Here's to connecting more dots and tackling more crime, together.”

**Written by Rob Sinclair, Chief Executive Officer at Altia**

## Crimestoppers supports efforts to halve knife crime in a decade

Working alongside the Home Office, Crimestoppers ran a campaign to highlight a significant increase in knife-enabled robbery figures, as well as emphasising the importance of personal safety in such situations: your life is more valuable than any property owned.

Knife-enabled robbery can be incredibly distressing for victims, so tackling this specific crime is key to the Government's Safer Streets Mission to halve knife crime in a decade, to make communities safer for everyone.

The campaign ran organically from 29 November to 27 December 2024 across the Crimestoppers national channels. Despite running no paid social media, there was an active, engaged audience, as the campaign webpage saw a 90% increase in session duration compared to other campaigns running during this time.

**Dame Diana Johnson, Policing Minister, said:**

“As a country, we have a duty to do everything we can to stop young people carrying knives and stop other young people becoming their victims. That is why we have put the pledge to halve knife crime at the heart of this Government's Safer Streets Mission.

“We also know that carrying a knife is all too often a gateway to other crimes. In particular, knife-enabled robbery now accounts for 43% of all knife crime across England and Wales.



“**As a country, we have a duty to do everything we can to stop young people carrying knives and stop other young people becoming their victims.**

**Dame Diana Johnson, Policing Minister**

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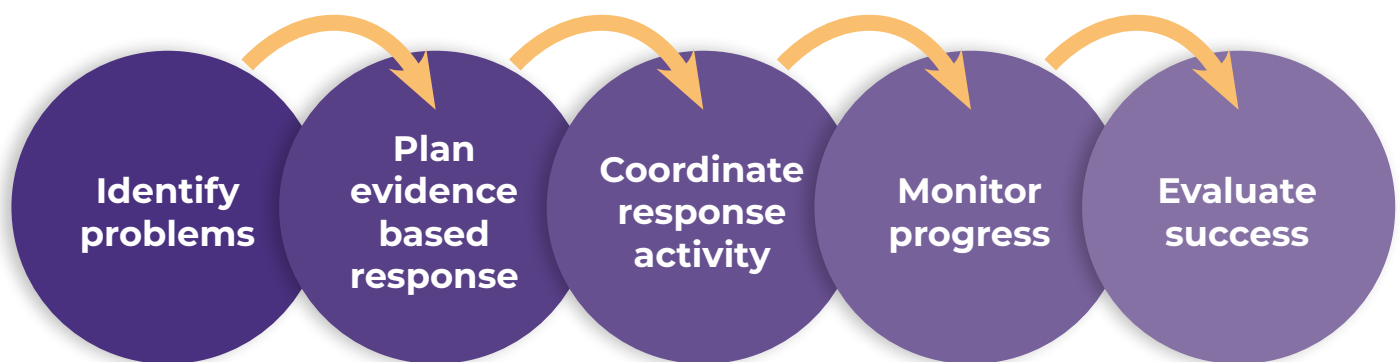
“I know how traumatising this type of robbery is for victims, and we are determined to tackle the fear it is causing in our communities. That is why we have launched a new Knife-Enabled Robbery Taskforce specially dedicated to this type of crime.

“It will bring together policing leaders and criminal justice partners to focus on improving police tactics and addressing the wider systematic challenges that are holding back progress.

“This mission will demand a massive effort across the whole of government and the whole of our society, but together it is one we can achieve.”



# The geographic approach to tackling violent crime: insights from West Midlands Police



In the realm of public safety, the integration of geographic information systems (GIS) has revolutionised the way we approach crime prevention and law enforcement. At Esri UK, we have witnessed first-hand the transformative impact of GIS technology in various sectors, but perhaps nowhere is this more evident than in the field of policing. The case of West Midlands Police serves as a prime example of how a geographic approach, combined with problem-oriented policing and hot spot policing tactics, can significantly enhance public safety and reduce crime. We're going to tell you the story of how West Midlands has halved the cost of crime by £4m in a specific area, reduced violent crime by 16%, and delivered over 35,000 hours of patrols, resulting in the seizure of 500 weapons and 812 arrests.

## Understanding the challenge

The West Midlands region has faced a daunting challenge with

a surge in knife crime and other violent offenses. In the 12 months leading up to March 2024, there were 7,000 recorded knife-related offences, making it the region with the highest rate of knife crime per capita in England. This alarming statistic underscores the urgent need for innovative solutions to combat violent crime and protect communities.

## The geographic approach

West Midlands Police embarked on an ambitious initiative, Project Guardian, with the support of the Home Office. The goal was to leverage technology to identify hotspots of violent crime and deploy targeted neighbourhood policing to these areas. This approach, known as Targeted Guardian Patrols, relied heavily on the advanced capabilities of Esri's ArcGIS software.

## Hot spot policing and problem-oriented policing

Hot spot policing involves focusing law enforcement efforts on specific geographic areas where crime is most

concentrated. Problem-oriented policing, on the other hand, emphasises identifying and addressing the underlying causes of crime. By combining these two strategies with the power of GIS, West Midlands Police was able to gain a deeper understanding of crime patterns and develop more effective interventions.

## Advanced geospatial analysis

The analysts at West Midlands Police received training from the Jill Dando Institute and began using ArcGIS to analyse data on knife crime and other violent offences over the past three years. This analysis resulted in the creation of an interactive map that highlighted circular hotspots of violent crime, each approximately 0.2 km in diameter. This granular level of detail allowed the police to pinpoint specific areas in most need of interventions.

## Harm scores and density

To further enhance their crime intelligence, the police

incorporated harm scores into their analysis using the ArcGIS spatial analysis techniques. This allowed them to pinpoint locations with high levels of harm, both within and outside the initial hotspots. By identifying specific premises associated with high harm, the police could increase patrols in these areas and take proactive measures to prevent crime.

### Monitoring and adapting

One of the significant advantages of using ArcGIS is the ability to monitor changes in crime levels over time. West Midlands Police could repeat their analysis and use techniques such as weighted displacement difference analysis to assess the impact of their policing methods. This dynamic approach enabled them to rapidly re-focus their activities as hotspots diminished in some areas and emerged in others, so helping them stay one step ahead in the fight against serious crime.

### Crime reduction impact achieved

#### Precise allocation of police resources

With the new intelligence from ArcGIS, West Midlands Police could direct their Targeted Guardian Patrols to the right locations, helping to prevent more people from becoming victims. The analysis informed location-specific SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) plans, contributing to a 16% reduction in violent crime across fifteen SARA areas.

### Effective action to stop knife crime

ArcGIS-derived intelligence directly informed the locations of 35,000 hours of patrol between January 2024 and January 2025,

leading to the seizure of over 500 weapons and 812 arrests. This proactive approach helped stop knife crime before it happened, providing a sense of security to the communities in the West Midlands.

“  
**Just as the West Midlands’ story illustrates, we take immense pride in the contribution we make to support Crimestoppers.**  
”

### Cost of crime reduced by £4 million

While the primary focus of Project Guardian was to reduce deaths and injuries from violence, the targeted patrols also had a broader impact on crime in general. In the Washwood Heath area, the use of ArcGIS helped reduce the annual cost of crime on society by half, from £8 million to £4 million.

### Deeper understanding of harm hotspots

Through the use of ArcGIS, the police gained a comprehensive understanding of the locations the most harmful crimes. They discovered that 20% of harm, including stabbings, occurred in just 1.5% of the region. The map-based visuals produced in ArcGIS made it easier for all officers to understand the analysis and see exactly which streets and locations presented the highest risks.

West Midlands Police demonstrates the profound impact of a geographic approach, supported by advanced GIS technology, on public safety.

By combining hot spot policing and problem-oriented policing with the powerful analytical capabilities of ArcGIS,

the police force has been able to gain a deeper understanding of crime patterns, allocate resources more effectively, and take proactive measures to prevent crime. The success of Project Guardian serves as a model for other police forces looking to enhance their crime prevention strategies and protect their communities.

At Esri UK, we are proud to support West Midlands Police in their efforts to create safer neighbourhoods and reduce crime. The geographic approach to policing, underpinned by the advanced capabilities of ArcGIS, is not just a tool for analysis but also a powerful strategy for making our communities safer and more secure.

**To hear about this story in more detail, sign up for Esri UK’s upcoming events. Visit [esriuk.com](https://esriuk.com), click on ‘About’ and then ‘Events’ where you’ll find upcoming conferences in London, Edinburgh and Cardiff.**

Esri UK has been a long-time supporter of Crimestoppers, not only by providing ArcGIS to their Contact Centre, but also by using ArcGIS to provide modern information reporting dashboards to regional managers who directly support Police and Crime Commissioners and Police forces with valuable crime prevention information. Just as the West Midlands’ story illustrates, we take immense pride in the contribution we make to support Crimestoppers in providing the public with a place to report crime 100% anonymously and to help investigations, arrests and prosecutions.

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**Written by Chris Gardiner – Head of Public Safety at Esri UK**

# Campaign highlights

Our charity remains as busy as ever, with the last 12 months bringing a wide range of impactful national, regional and business development-led campaigns.

## National campaigns



### ▲ Serious violent crime

A campaign informed the public about a wide range of violent crime, including the rise of knife-enabled robberies, and featured new data from the Home Office. Alongside traditional media, this campaign had a wider outdoor presence, which included bus/tram internal passenger panels, phone kiosks and posters, further expanding its potential reach across the UK.

### ▼ Acquisitive crime

An evolution of the campaign delivered in 2023, this year's focus was on the emotional and psychological impact of acquisitive crime on victims and communities. Emphasising loss of security

in homes, one relevant statistic referenced that 40% of burglary victims are afraid to be alone in their property during the weeks following the incident, which was one of many figures utilised for campaign development.



### ▼ Domestic abuse

Developed new creatives based on internal feedback, highlighting a range of different scenarios to demonstrate that anyone can be a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse. The campaign was delivered

across the web, social media, Google Ads, press and through outdoor media, such as street hubs, as well as additional paid activity across the UK with participation from seven Regional Managers.





## Regional campaigns



### ▲ Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The campaign launched on the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM. Working in partnership with Sussex Police, non-profit organisation HERSANA CIC and other partners, the campaign activity highlighted the lasting effects of the procedure, as well as signposting those in need of support.

### ▼ North West Euros

During the last football World Cup and Euros, there was a large increase in information given to CrimeStoppers about both domestic abuse and drug and drink driving incidents. This campaign highlighted to communities in the North West that these crimes increase during major football tournaments and encouraged the public to speak up anonymously with information to CrimeStoppers.



### ▼ Predatory money lending



Created and developed in Northern Ireland, the campaign concept centred around a snake video, emphasising that criminal and predatory money lenders make their living from exploiting and intimidating others, and taking advantage of the current economic times to tighten their grip.



# Community of Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers believes that everyone has the right to feel safe from crime, wherever they live, and in the power of people to help deter, solve and prevent crime. That puts us at the heart of the community, whether at a business event or an agricultural show.



## £50,000 reward offered for return of rare Scottish coins

In November 2024, Crimestoppers Scotland held a reward event in partnership with Glasgow's Hunterian Museum to appeal for information about the unsolved theft of one of the most important collections of early Scottish coins.

A reward of up to £50,000 was offered for information about the theft of more than a thousand coins from the 12th and 13th centuries, stolen in June 2007 from the home of Lord and Lady Stewartby in Broughton, near Peebles.

Lord Stewartby, a renowned numismatist, has since passed away. The Lord Stewartby Collection of Scottish Coins was



gifted to The Hunterian at the University of Glasgow in 2017.

Angela Parker, National Manager of Crimestoppers Scotland, and Jesper Ericsson, Curator of Numismatics at The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, jointly presented the appeal.

The event generated extensive coverage, both in the UK and internationally, with major TV and radio outlets attending, reaching an audience of nearly 2 billion.

Jesper Ericsson said: "These medieval coins are smaller than a modern penny. Portraits of kings and inscriptions may be worn down to almost nothing, and the coins might be oddly shaped, perhaps even cut in half or quarters. You could fit 1,000 into a plastic takeaway container, so they don't take up a lot of space. They may look unremarkable, but these coins are the earliest symbols of Scotland's monetary independence."

## Campaigning against rural crime via social media and radio

In July, Crimestoppers was at the Royal Welsh Show 2024 to tell visitors about the dangers of rural crime.

Over 200,000 visitors from 40 different countries attended the 2024 show, which was celebrating its 120th anniversary. The four-day event, held at Llanelwedd, near Builth Wells in Powys, is renowned for showcasing the best of Welsh livestock, including competitions for sheep, cattle, pigs, and horses, as well as sheepdog trials and carriage driving displays. Beyond agriculture, the show features stalls, exhibitions, and displays of country sports and traditional Welsh crafts.

During the event, we focused on raising awareness about rural

crime through our campaign, supported by a strong social media and radio presence. It was an incredibly busy week where we distributed over 3,000 Crimestoppers windmills and around 6,000 pens, engaging with the public and spreading our message. Our attendance was made possible thanks to the tireless efforts of Wales Committee Chair Jon Drakes, who worked closely with the event organisers to secure our presence.

Jon said: "Bringing Crimestoppers to the Royal Welsh Show 2024 was essential because rural crime affects farmers, businesses, and communities across Wales. With so many visitors from

many different countries, this event was the perfect platform to raise awareness and start conversations about tackling crime in our countryside.

"I worked closely with the organisers to ensure we had a strong presence throughout the four days. Our goal was simple: to let people know they can speak up about crime 100% anonymously. We engaged thousands of visitors, and seeing people learn about how they can help protect their communities made all the hard work worthwhile. Rural crime impacts entire communities, which is why I was determined to give Crimestoppers a voice at the Royal Welsh Show. We plan to do the same in 2025."



# Recognising impactful collaborations at Rewarding Partnerships and the Annual Dinner 2024

Our charity is proud to be a trusted partner to over a hundred well-known and respected bodies, including commercial companies, the public sector, other charities, local authorities, housing associations, and of course, the police forces and law enforcement agencies to whom we provide our core service.

We host events throughout the year that aim to bring us and these partners closer together. These events present an opportunity to celebrate successful partnerships and cultivate long-lasting relationships between us and our partners.

## Rewarding Partnerships

In May 2024, the event was held at the iconic BT Tower, sponsored by our partner Openreach, who helped organise the event.

Rewarding Partnerships gives us the chance to recognise the valuable contribution all partners make to our charity through funding and raising awareness.

## Annual Dinner

Crimestoppers celebrated its achievements and impact at



Lord Ashcroft, Sir Mark Rowley, Mick Creedon and Mark Hallas at the 2024 Annual Dinner

the Annual Dinner in November 2024, held at the prestigious IET Savoy Place in London and sponsored by Altia.

The evening featured inspiring speeches, including one from our Founder and Chair, Lord Ashcroft, who highlighted the growing demand for Crimestoppers' services, and an insightful talk from Metropolitan Police

Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley.

Both events provide an opportunity for us to recognise and celebrate the work we do together, an occasion where we can talk face-to-face in an informal setting, and a forum where our business partners can meet members of our wider charity and understand more about the diverse work we do.

## Celebrating volunteers with Room to Reward

This year, Crimestoppers registered with Room to Reward as a way of rewarding some of our top volunteers.

Room to Reward is a unique volunteer recognition charity that works with partner hotels to donate unsold hotel rooms to reward volunteers for

their hard work. The rewards are typically a one or two night hotel break on a bed and breakfast basis from a choice of over 700 UK hotels. Crimestoppers received an allocation of nine hotel rooms and was able to reward eleven exceptional volunteers – all

of whom have made an outstanding contribution to community engagement.

The recipients were: Alan Black, Sam Illing, Carole Eniffer, Dave and Lynn Baker, Derek and Paula McFaul, Joy Muir, Julie Davison, Paul Bateman, and Pete Anderson.



## Hunter Thorburn reflects on an illustrious 35-year career at Crimestoppers

From starting as a volunteer to becoming a near-indispensable fixture in the office - find out more about the career of a Crimestoppers institution.

A job for life is a rare occurrence now, with the average person changing jobs between 5 to 7 times in a working lifetime (careersadviceonline.com). Some jobs do lead to longer careers, but within the charity sector, restructures and reorganisations are commonplace, especially in these tight economic times.

Hunter, whose name uniquely reflects his character, originates from the Anglo-Saxon tradition when its first bearer worked as a hunter. One may imply that for most of his career, Hunter

was responsible for hunting and gathering data and has bucked the trend when it comes to changing careers, as the analysis of data is even more important in this austere economic climate.

Having studied maths at the University of Sterling (renowned for being the only university with a loch and a golf course) and having completed his first job at Standard Life, Hunter embarked on a lifelong journey with Community Action Trust (CAT), Crimestoppers' original name, in 1993. Hunter, first as a volunteer, undertook data

analysis by reviewing various sets of statistical data without the use of any computers (or even calculators).

Shortly after volunteering at CAT, a role became available: Operations Assistant, and so Hunter began his career of crunching data for Crimestoppers. When Hunter was offered the role, he was asked, "How much do you want to be paid?" Having made various on-the-spot calculations, Hunter reasonably requested £15k p.a., which after some complex negotiations, was granted.

Hunter started his role by staying with family in Clapham, allowing him to walk or take a quick bus ride to work in Putney. As we have all come to enjoy, Hunter has always been an early bird, especially as being trusted to “do one’s hours” allowed for some degree of flexibility.

Back in the early 90s, CAT was based at Lord Ashcroft Academy in Putney, where several of Lord Ashcroft’s charities were based, along with Angela Entwistle. Now the school has evolved into the Anglia Ruskin University Faculty of Business and Law (formerly Lord Ashcroft International Business School; LAIBS).

Due to Ashcroft’s efforts, both CAT and the school expanded: CAT moved premises to Apollo House, above Morden tube station. There, not only was there proximity to the tube, but the office also had the benefits of air conditioning.

While campaigns were carefully planned along with estimated coverage and reach, huge amounts of items had to be printed, stored, handpicked, packed and mailed out by post – costing sometimes more than the actual advertising campaign in the days before PDFs and colour printers.

Large amounts of posters and cards were ordered, and these were distributed by forces and Regional Managers around the country. To offset the print costs, the cards carried the News of the World logo – one of the first sponsors of Crimestoppers.

As the publicity element of Crimestoppers grew, so did the demand for monthly reports, increasing Hunter’s standing in the organisation. Hunter’s first boss, ex-Army Digby Carter Cernel, was Head of Operations at the time. Hunter, under Digby’s watchful eye, spent the days hand calculating statistics to be distributed to police forces.



### “ Another achievement of Hunter’s was a bespoke outstanding service award by the National Police Chiefs Council. ”

Hunter also attended national committee meetings around the country which demanded an ambitious networking policy. Hunter fondly recalls swanning around the Liverpool Conference, in and out of meetings, feeling extremely important and enjoying not being stuck in the office.

In the early days, Crimestoppers head office was in Putney, with calls being answered in rooms based in police stations around the UK. Hunter was responsible for gathering stats and data where he could. Working alongside his boss, he also worked with a senior trustee also based in the academy building with four secretaries and their typewriters, alongside a fundraising colleague.

During these days, within the police offices, there were often virtual barriers blocking the exchange of information

between departments to prevent conflicts of interest or ethical violations. It worked well, as people were informed on a need-to-know basis.

The way these “reports” were sent to Hunter involved a fax machine with thermal paper (which, of course, fades in sunlight). One of the benefits of Crimestoppers within the police is providing both a mutually beneficial “out of hours” service for the evenings and weekends.


However, back in Morden, Hunter was responsible for gathering the monthly data from the satellite offices scattered around the country. Hunter’s job was made easier by the consolidation of these locations into a contact centre (a room with 4 people in Morden). The Contact Centre grew steadily over the years and with the introduction of Regional Managers, more responsibilities and different procedures were established by providing more relevant data in their respective areas.

One of Hunter’s claims to fame was that he was on University Challenge with Bamber Gascoigne, where his team managed to beat Selwyn College, Cambridge, but lost to St Anne’s, Oxford.

Another achievement of Hunter’s was a bespoke outstanding service award by the National Police Chiefs Council. When asked about his time at Crimestoppers, Hunter spoke fondly of his career, spanning an impressive 35 years, and prides himself on always getting on well with bosses.

In summary, our unique and irreplaceable Hunter has managed to outstay 5 CEOs, 6 Directors of Operations, and countless Heads of Marketing. He will no doubt be spending his retirement, albeit relaxing, still following Crimestoppers’ progress whilst enjoying thrillers, crime movies and books.



A photograph of a man with brown dreadlocks, seen from the side, wearing a white shirt and a dark green quilted jacket. He is holding an orange smartphone to his ear. In the background, a white dog is visible, and the scene is set outdoors with trees and a body of water in the distance.

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