

CrimeStoppers.

Spring 2021

Connections

Giving people the power to speak up and stop crime



DOMESTIC ABUSE

Reaching out to bystanders and employers to get help to victims of the domestic abuse 'shadow pandemic'.

MODERN SLAVERY

Unmasking hidden victims with our #SlaveryOnYourDoorstep campaign. Plus how working with logistics companies is a key driver to identify those being exploited.

ECONOMIC CRIME

Businesses open to customers, but #ClosedtoCrime: tackling the threat posed by opportunistic thieves and organised crime gangs.

Reporting Domestic Abuse

It's estimated that a typical victim endures up to 35 assaults before speaking up.

Agility, commitment, patience and an eye on the future are key to driving our success



Don't let criminals profit from the COVID crisis

Tell our charity what you know about people taking advantage of the COVID grant and loan schemes.

Contents

Founder and Chair's column	3	Keeping communities safe	14
Chief Executive's column	4	How we work to support investigations	18
Crimestoppers during the pandemic.....	6	Country connections	20
Domestic abuse	8	Community of Crimestoppers	
Modern slavery.....	10	- making tackling crime your business.....	22
Economic crime.....	12		



Welcome to the 3rd edition of Crimestoppers' Connections, where we round up our charity's recent activity and give people who rely on, and support, our services a chance to share their experiences.

Crimestoppers, like all organisations including law enforcement, has had to respond quickly to the huge challenges resulting from the ongoing and disruptive Covid-19 pandemic. Agility, commitment, patience and an eye on the future are key to driving our success and enabling our charity to survive and adapt to constantly changing and difficult circumstances.

Let me be clear – throughout the pandemic 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.

The assurance of anonymity

Providing a cast-iron anonymity guarantee to the public gives law enforcement and wider agencies access to vital information about criminal behaviour and patterns that otherwise would not be accessible. Often it is a bite-sized piece of information that can make all the difference to an investigation. A call for help from witnesses or bystanders can ensure that the most vulnerable in our society, such as domestic abuse or modern slavery victims, are safeguarded and receive the support they desperately need.

Our hard-earned reputation for independence, along with our charity status, continue to be fundamental. It means we are perceived as a safe haven for anonymous information for the significant minority of people who are concerned about possible reprisals or who are unwilling to go on the record for cultural reasons. Many tell us they are closer to the individuals involved in crime than they wish. They want to do the right thing, but feel unable to speak directly to the police.

Supporting communities

The pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have both highlighted the good and exposed the bad in all our communities. Our charity has responded by running a series of high-profile national campaigns designed to improve public awareness of developing threats. Whether it's doorstep illegal activity, online scams or high harm crimes, that cause so much pain and suffering, we are here to help.

Our reward appeals, offered for some of the most heinous crimes from murder to violent assaults that have left innocent people traumatised, gain important publicity, and subsequently attract crucial intelligence that enhances investigators' ability to ensure victims and their families see justice.

We continue to be guided by Home Office priorities and respond at a regional and local level to pressing needs by working closely with police forces, elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), the Scottish Government, and Welsh and Northern Ireland assemblies.

Crimestoppers COVID Fraud Hotline

I am also delighted that we were commissioned by the Cabinet Office to launch the Crimestoppers COVID Fraud Hotline. This service is proving itself to be invaluable against those who have, or are attempting to, illegally claim Government loans and grants.

When we last published Connections, the true scale of the pandemic was only just beginning to become apparent. One year on, there appears to be light at the end of the tunnel.

I hope you find some time to read the varied selection of articles that follow. I believe it shows Crimestoppers delivering in extraordinary times, working closely with our partners to give people the power to speak up and stop crime in communities and workplaces across the UK.

Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC, Founder and Chair of Crimestoppers

Being anonymous, the information can be the difference between life and death, helping to prevent harm and saving vulnerable people from exploitation

As I write this column, I think it's safe to say that this period of time has been one of upheaval, but also one of pride to see how Crimestoppers has adapted to cope with the pandemic, along with completing the move of our frontline Contact Centre to our new, combined HQ in south London.

It was a relatively seamless transition, with police partners and other clients reporting no impact on the service – a fitting testament to the hard work and planning by all those involved.

Whilst our activity with, and in, communities has inevitably been affected by lockdown, I'm comforted by the fact our staff and volunteers used the restrictions to create new opportunities to continue our work. This was particularly noticeable with our Fearless outreach youth team, who devised innovative online training sessions for youth professionals. We generated new video content and developed engaging quizzes for young people, along with relevant messaging to the general public around youth crime.

Impactful national campaigns

As referenced by Lord Ashcroft, we have responded to the pandemic by launching a series of campaigns of particular relevance during these uncertain times. From child neglect to domestic abuse, business burglaries to Covid scams, Crimestoppers has remained visible to our beneficiaries, offering hope to those concerned about crime and wrongdoing in their communities. These campaigns encourage people to speak up about what they know and offer important leads for police to analyse and act upon.

Focusing on high harm crimes and helping raise awareness of these issues remains a major element of our work. I'm pleased that during an easing of restrictions we were able to welcome to our HQ the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Dame Sara Thornton, who also supported our recent modern slavery campaign.

From murder to rape, child neglect to domestic abuse, Crimestoppers has a critical role to play by offering another option when it comes to reporting crime. And being anonymous, the information can be the difference between life and death, helping to prevent harm and saving vulnerable people from exploitation.

Fit for the future

Whilst the global pandemic continues to restrict some of the things we are able to do, I know you'll share with me the hope that through the vaccine we may be able to return to a sense of normality in the near future.

The professionalism of the team at our charity has ensured we have changed with the times. However, there is always more we can do and if you have suggestions on how Crimestoppers can assist, then we are always keen to receive feedback.

I hope you enjoy browsing this edition of Connections, and thank you for your continued support.



"From murder to rape, child neglect to domestic abuse, Crimestoppers has a critical role to play by offering another option when it comes to reporting crime.

And being anonymous, the information can be the difference between life and death, helping to prevent harm and saving vulnerable people from exploitation."

**Mark Hallas OBE,
Chief Executive of Crimestoppers**



Crimestoppers during the pandemic

Crimestoppers.



Kept our Contact Centre running 24/7



Identified emerging national crime concerns



Raised awareness of our service



Made prompt decisions

Crimestoppers weekly call volumes

02/03/2020	7,304	4,793	12,097 total	11
09/03/2020	6,899	4,568	11,467 total	20
16/03/2020	6,191	4,282	10,473 total	19
23/03/2020	9,012	5,050	14,062 total	140
30/03/2020	9,830	4,823	14,653 total	294
06/04/2020	13,436	5,730	19,166 total	405
13/04/2020	11,037	4,750	15,787 total	221

■ Online forms
 ■ Phone calls (BT data)
 ■ Disseminated Covid crime related information sent to police.

16 March

Government announced non-essential travel restrictions as well as to work from home if possible.

Crimestoppers action

- Contact Centre staff identified as key workers
- Head office staff told to work from home
- Covid-related crime information threshold agreed with law enforcement
- On March 18th, we published our response to Covid on our website

April

Domestic abuse campaign

Lockdown poses an increased risk to those in abusive relationships.

Result

44% increase in reports disseminated to police forces on this crime type compared to the two weeks previous.

May

Child neglect campaign

Concern for child welfare.

Result

We saw a **16% increase** in reports relating to keyword 'neglect' during the campaign.

June - July

Modern slavery campaign

Easing of lockdown makes modern slavery more visible.

Result

22% rise in disseminated reports on this crime.

October

COVID Fraud Hotline campaign

Helping to protect the public purse.

Result

Within 11 days of operation we received information that prevented **half a million pounds being fraudulently claimed.**

December

Drink and drug driving campaign

One in five daily drinkers have increased the amount they drink since the first lockdown.

Result

9.6% increase in reports during the campaign compared to the same period the year before.



23 March 2020

Lockdown begins

- Calls from the public increased
- National campaign plan implemented

April - May

Doorstep crime and Covid scams campaign

Scammers take advantage over Covid fears.

Result

15% increase in disseminated reports on this crime type post campaign compared to prior.

May - June

Business burglary campaign

Unoccupied shops and businesses put at risk.

Result

We saw a **25% rise** in reports relating to commercial burglary during this campaign compared to the weeks prior.

September

Domestic abuse campaign

Fear for second wave due to restrictions easing. Identified a need to challenge abusive behaviour to help prevent abusive relationships.

Result

29% increase in reports relating to domestic abuse in the first week of the campaign compared to the week previous.

November

Serious Organised Crime campaign

Criminals take advantage of vulnerable youths. The lack of job prospects due to Covid heightens the risk.

Result

Increases have been seen during the campaign compared to prior to the campaign in a number of keywords including:

- 5% in Firearms**
- 17% in Gangs**
- 15% in County Lines activity**
- 66% in Cuckooing**



Taking community engagement online

- 125 digital sessions delivered resulting in over 2,000 professionals being reached.
- Sessions included: An introduction to Fearless as well as awareness of knife crime and County Lines.
- We created new digital content to reach youth audiences.
- Scheduled Fearless social media campaigns doubled from Oct-Mar (18) compared to Apr-Sept (35)

Surge in domestic abuse reports as lockdown bites

The UN described the worldwide increase in domestic abuse as a “shadow pandemic” alongside Covid-19.

During the first national lockdown starting in March 2020, Crimestoppers saw a 49% increase in domestic abuse reports. Comparing April to August 2020 with the same period last year, we saw a staggering 70% increase in reports about domestic abuse.

It's estimated that a typical victim endures up to 35 assaults before speaking up. This is often for a host of reasons, including fear of losing their children or home, fear of not being believed, and even thoughts that they are somehow to blame for the abuse.

We reached out to bystanders – those ‘in the know’, whether that’s because they’ve heard or witnessed abusive behaviour, or because the victim has confided in them – and appealed to them to speak up straight away to help stop the abuse and get victims the support they desperately need.

Our national #YouAreNotPowerless campaign had the support of the Home Office, Refuge, Respect Phonenumber, the Employers’ Initiative on Domestic Abuse (the EIDA), Hestia and Neighbourhood Watch.

Launched on 1 September and running until mid-October, it had three key strands. The

first two weeks aimed to improve the public’s understanding of what domestic abuse is and who it affects, with the strapline ‘Not all abuse is physical’. We urged people to flag up concerns if a friend, neighbour, colleague or family member is suffering in silence.

In weeks three and four, we worked with EIDA, an umbrella organisation of large and small companies that helps employers take action on domestic abuse, by raising awareness among all employees.

Finally, in the last two weeks, we took a more preventative approach, focusing on perpetrators. Domestic abuse is a complex issue and we recognise that some people can be stopped if they acknowledge their behaviour and accept that they need help. Whilst we normally focus on people with information about those involved in crime, this approach was directed at those whose behaviour has ‘crossed the line’, encouraging them to seek help via the Respect Phonenumber. Respect charity works with perpetrators, male victims and young people who have used violence in their close relationships. One in four perpetrators reoffends. We hope that by encouraging abusers to face up to their behaviour and to get help to change their ways, it may prevent some future domestic abuse tragedies from happening.

Lorraine O'Brien, CEO, EIDA



New domestic abuse handbook to guide businesses

The Employer’s Initiative on Domestic Abuse has a mission to enable employers to act against abuse – by raising awareness of it, supporting employees, and accessing services to help perpetrators stop.

For a business, knowing where to turn for reliable up-to-date practical guidance is often the first hurdle. Our new handbook is a single reference guide, with a raft of practical steps for employers to take to establish a domestic abuse policy and support an employee who makes a disclosure.

The guidance has been assembled with the help of our partners, founders, and Beacon members and is available to download for members of our network.

Membership is free, find out more: eida.org.uk

Change Project’s success stops perpetrator behaviour

Most attention is rightly focused on the victims of domestic abuse and ensuring they get the support they desperately need. However, a new project has proven to successfully challenge and reduce the reoccurrence of domestic abuse in the future.

The Change Project’s **Perpetrator Learning and Understanding Self course** (Change PLUS) is a domestic abuse awareness training course. It’s designed to provide education and support to those who are suspects for the first time in connection with a domestic abuse offence. It ensures they face up to their abusive behaviour, the consequences of their actions, and also gives them the skills, such as taking responsibility and learning how to manage conflict without resorting to abuse. It is open to first-time suspects as an alternative to receiving a caution.

The course is delivered over two days to a group of up to 10 offenders who have been referred by Bedfordshire police. During the pandemic, it has switched to online, running across four evenings.

The project has been working in Bedford for the past three years. Encouragingly, those who complete the course are, on average, five times less likely to come into further contact with the police than those who do not take the course.

Many suspects had little understanding of what constitutes domestic abuse and had never been given tools to control their emotions. This course gives them a genuine alternative to violence and confrontation and helps them to communicate in healthier ways, thereby de-escalating situations.



Lora Draper, CEO, The Change Project.

The course covers:

Awareness of domestic abuse

- Understanding abuse
- Emotional management
- Effects of abuse
- Responsibility

Strategies to cope

- Thought management
- Learning
- Communication
- Coping strategies

The feedback from service users is unanimously positive with comments like:

“It was much better and more informative than I thought it would be. I definitely learned something.”

Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs on the extra challenges due to the global pandemic

Domestic abuse is a terrible crime that still affects far too many people across the UK, and yet it remains largely hidden.

In the last year, over 2.3 million adults experienced domestic abuse in England and Wales, and 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lifetime.

As the designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales, my role is to raise awareness, improve the response to domestic abuse, and to hold local and national Government to account. By the time you read this, the Domestic Abuse Bill will be in its final stages in the House of Lords and we will be closer to making this a reality through the powers the new law will give me.

#YouAreNotPowerless campaign

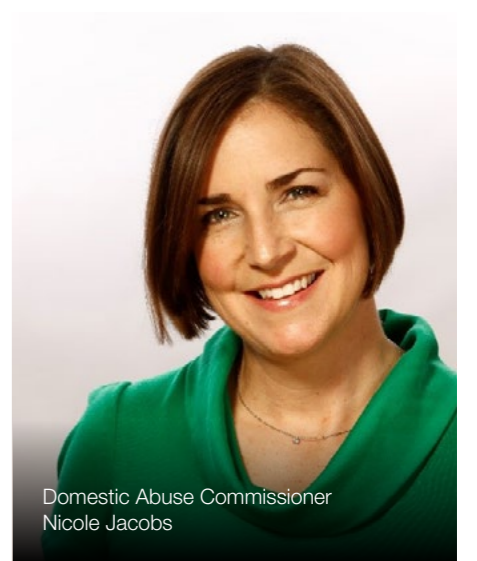
We all have a role to play in identifying and responding to domestic abuse, whether that’s as employers, healthcare professionals,

school teachers or friends, family or neighbours. That’s why organisations like Crimestoppers can be so important in shining a light on this issue. I welcome campaigns like #YouAreNotPowerless, which highlights that individuals can contact Crimestoppers anonymously to make a report.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, we’ve seen neighbours and communities come together to support one another, and this has never been more vital than in relation to domestic abuse. Normal avenues for support and help for victims and survivors have been restricted just at a time when it is most needed.

It’s vital that neighbours, employers, or anyone else who retains a window into someone’s life keep their ears and eyes open for signs of domestic abuse. And for anyone reading this who is currently experiencing domestic abuse, remember that lockdown restrictions do not apply if you need to seek help, and services remain available.

The National Domestic Abuse helpline can be reached 24/7 on 0800 2000 247.



Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs

Our campaign reached over 2 million people, with 26,700 visiting our campaign landing page, resulting in a 29% increase in reports relating to domestic abuse.

Social media resulted in more than 10,000 engagements. Online user sentiment was mostly positive with a lot of positive and sympathetic interaction between users, often encouraging others to get help.





Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM

Modern slavery

Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, said:

“The Coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of victims and survivors, leaving more people isolated and disconnected from society than ever before. Crimestoppers is playing a vital role in these challenging times, empowering victims and members of the public to raise concerns anonymously. When I visited Crimestoppers in October, I was impressed by the hard work and dedication of the staff who have been keeping the service fully operational throughout the pandemic, whilst monitoring the shifting pattern of threat and risk.

“I was also proud to lend my support to Crimestoppers’ **#SlaveryOnYourDoorstep** campaign as education and outreach are essential activities in the fight against slavery. I’m delighted that Crimestoppers is finding new ways to support vulnerable parts of society, and strongly encourage this to continue.”

#SlaveryOnYourDoorstep

Mick Duthie, our Director of Operations, on our national approach to tackling modern slavery.

Modern slavery is an under-reported crime - victims are vulnerable and they may not even realise that they are being exploited. It’s known that criminal gangs take advantage and move these workers around from place to place, depending on society’s demands. Over the course of the initial national Covid-19 lockdown in March 2020, we were concerned for the hidden victims of modern slavery.

As lockdown restrictions eased in June, we foresaw that victims would become visible, and recognised the public’s role in helping spot them so that the necessary support can be provided by specialist agencies and action taken against the criminals involved.

This led us to devise a comprehensive four-week social media campaign, **#SlaveryOnYourDoorstep**. Timed to coincide with the modern slavery police

intensification period, our aim was to achieve a spike in anonymous information on this crime type to help forces with their investigations. It was supported by the Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Salvation Army and GLAA (Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority).

Our **#SlaveryOnYourDoorstep** campaign, and targeted activity aimed at Romanian workers, reached close to 2.5 million people, engaging 42,000 of them - with our awareness messaging resulting in 31,000 link clicks. Ultimately the campaign was a success, resulting in a 22% increase on reports on this crime type during the campaign period.



Our regional approach to tackling modern slavery

The Garment Sector is one of the biggest industries in Leicestershire. Working in partnership with Leicestershire Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire, Leicester City Council, GLAA and De Montfort University, our regional team ran a localised campaign to raise awareness of the signs to spot of modern slavery within this industry and encourage those with information to speak up. This project was recognised in Parliament and was mentioned by Liz Kendall, Member of Parliament for Leicester West, who secured a Westminster Hall Debate on “Tackling worker exploitation in the textile industry in Leicester”.

‘Power of Logistics’ initiative



Elaine Mitchel-Hill, Business & Human Rights Director, Marshalls plc

Elaine Mitchel-Hill, Business & Human Rights Director at Marshalls plc, on the unique role transport and logistics have in tackling modern slavery.

The pandemic has inflicted pressure in unprecedented ways, including on business operations, supply chains and how goods are moved around, both nationally and internationally. Like any system under increased pressure, it has served to highlight points of weakness and dysfunction. But it has also lit up areas of strength and underscored the essential function of transport and logistics in keeping the wheels of our economy and day-to-day lives turning.

We perhaps now better appreciate and really see not only the scope and scale of the transport and logistics sector, but also the human face of the drivers making those deliveries.

Marshalls’ Power of Logistics initiative was developed to enable our own drivers to spot and safely report modern slavery because we absolutely recognised the unique role of our transport team in working to end slavery. Delivering to construction sites and also domestic settings both early in the mornings and late into the evenings, our drivers have eyes on locations not routinely on public view, or visible to law enforcement. All are trained to spot the signs of modern slavery and to report safely in a way which feels most appropriate and comfortable for them.

Spot the signs driver training

In-house team training, a short training video – produced with input from the GLAA – ‘spot the signs’ information cards left in all vehicles, and a smaller wallet-sized version with essential reporting channels for easy reference all combined to empower our drivers to spot and report. But more than that, what shone through, when I witnessed the many training sessions, was the impact on my colleagues of the realisation of what it means to be enslaved right here and now in the UK; the degradation, the deception, the inhumanity, the callousness, the criminality. This was met by our drivers with humility, compassion and a gritty determination to

do what they could to help a fellow human being and stop this exploitation of the most vulnerable for profit.

Counteracting construction industry’s higher risk

Construction has consistently been highlighted as at high risk of modern slavery. The sector has managed better than many to keep working pretty much throughout the pandemic, albeit in restricted and Covid-safe ways. Early on, we saw government-backed calls and commitment to ‘build, build, build’. Construction’s existing business model – to sub-contract, seeking to drive down cost, and often substitute specified materials at site level – contributes to increased risks of modern slavery, which have been further exacerbated as a result of the pandemic.

The sector’s response has to be to empower its greatest assets – its people – to spot and safely report. In late 2019, both Tarmac and Hanson joined with us to implement the Power of Logistics initiative across their own operations, and we would warmly welcome others. It will be to the detriment of the construction sector as a whole if we don’t now finally work together to ensure that any gains made to eradicate modern slavery before the pandemic are not lost. To this end, you can download all Power of Logistics collateral here* to use and connect with us on poweroflogistics@marshalls.co.uk if you feel we can be of any help at all.



Drivers are trained to spot the signs of modern slavery and to report safely.

Julia Lopez, Cabinet Office Minister, on tackling Covid fraud



Julia Lopez, Cabinet Office Minister

For the UK as a whole, the new year has started where 2020 left off – dominated by the need to tackle the unprecedented challenge of Covid-19.

We can look ahead to brighter days thanks to the accelerating vaccine programme. But for millions of hard-working citizens and previously buoyant businesses that are unfortunately experiencing their third national lockdown, the significant financial support

packages put in place by the government are their lifelines.

For fraudsters, those same stimulus schemes – more than 150 of them, swiftly created to help the anxious and vulnerable – can be a target. In a world where everything is suddenly so different, they hope that their crimes will go unnoticed.

But that's where the independent charity Crimestoppers comes in. Its reputation for encouraging and collecting intelligence makes it the ideal partner for the Cabinet Office as we form a picture of the type and extent of the fraud. Who are these pitiless criminals looking to abuse our support schemes and undermine trust in them? In their search to make a quick profit at the expense of taxpayers, they are siphoning off money that could be spent on hospitals, schools and police officers.

Crimestoppers COVID Fraud Hotline

It was in October last year that I launched the COVID Fraud Hotline at the Crimestoppers head office – allowing people with knowledge of fraud in the public sector to report their information anonymously, knowing it would be acted upon. The hotline built on the work

of a dedicated Covid-19 intelligence unit, set up in March 2020 for government and business sectors to share information.

In just three months, nearly half a million pounds of taxpayers' money has been prevented from being paid to criminals, thanks to more than 700 reports made by public-spirited whistleblowers, and to the Crimestoppers staff who have acted on the evidence they have supplied.

Derailing criminal activity

While I am delighted that this money can now be routed to frontline services, where superhuman efforts are being made each and every day to help the country through the Covid-19 crisis, there is no room for complacency about the scale of the challenge.

Criminals thrive on disruption and uncertainty, and the pandemic is an ideal breeding ground for both. Fraudsters are targeting citizens, businesses, charities as well as government schemes. With the help of Crimestoppers, however, we are successfully derailing their activities – and I look forward to hearing about further progress for the COVID Fraud Hotline in the months ahead.

Focus on Covid fraudsters and door-to-door scammers

Back in the spring of 2020, as the pandemic first took hold, there was a genuine sense of coming together in neighbourhoods across the country as we learned to cope with this new medical menace. However, a small minority used people's fears and isolation to thieve, defraud and scam vulnerable and older people.

We ran a Safer Streets campaign warning the public that doorstep criminals are still out there, prompting a 15% rise in disseminated reports.



Public support has never been more important in the fight against insurance fraud

It may not be obvious, but an insurance scam takes place every minute in the UK, leaving victims devastated and costing honest consumers over £3 billion each year. Whether it's fake car insurance being sold on social media, people being tricked into thinking they can get compensation, or gangs causing deliberate 'Crash for Cash' motor collisions with innocent road users – these scams take many guises and the impact is considerable.

Fraud detection

The Insurance Fraud Bureau (IFB) is at the heart of the UK's fight against organised insurance fraud. Our unique position as a fraud-detecting intelligence hub for the insurance industry helps us to detect suspicious activity, open lines of enquiry and work with the police to stop scams.

Whilst industry collaboration and technology are integral, without public support many of our investigations would not exist or would be less likely to lead to successful prosecution.

Championing CheatLine's success

In 2012, we partnered with Crimestoppers to manage the CheatLine phone service to provide a quick, easy and confidential way for the public to report signs of insurance fraud. We have since been alerted to over 17,000 insurance scams, which has protected countless people from falling victim to fraud, and stopped criminals in their tracks.

With this great progress in mind, we must sadly acknowledge that fraud thrives in times of economic hardship and the disruption of Covid-19 may prove to be our greatest challenge yet.

Business open to customers but #ClosedtoCrime

Businesses are having the toughest of times as a result of the ongoing pandemic. Our charity recognises the threat posed by opportunistic thieves and organised crime gangs whose actions only compound the challenges of operating during this uncertain period.

To support businesses, we ran a #ClosedtoCrime campaign in May and June last year that highlighted the issues and urged people to be aware and report anonymously if they have suspicions.

The campaign saw a 25% increase in reports relating to commercial burglary, and was reinforced by specialised advice blogs written by Crimestoppers volunteer Brett Lovegrove (London Chamber of Commerce) and Carl Nickson from York-based Security & Facilities Management company Eboracum UK.

Crimestoppers gives people the power to speak up and stop crime, and the IFB along with the counter-fraud industry are championing its cause.

Now more than ever, people need to feel empowered to speak up. If anyone has evidence of insurance scams, they can contact the CheatLine on 0800 422 0421.

"Insurance fraud is commonly perceived as a victimless crime, but the reality is far from this..."

Ben Fletcher, Director of the Insurance Fraud Bureau

Working together to report food fraud

Food Standards Scotland's Ron McNaughton on partnerships protecting public health.

Food crime – serious fraud and related criminality within food supply chains – takes many forms and presents risks to public health, the reputation of the food and drink industry, and Scotland's economy.

It's estimated food crime costs the UK food and drink sector around £1.2bn each year and examples include substituting (swapping or adding cheaper, lower quality or dangerous ingredients), mislabelling (falsifying information on food labels), and illicit goods (selling a product as something it isn't).

Our Scottish Food Crime Hotline – 0800 028 7926 – is run in partnership with

Crimestoppers for those working in the industry and members of the public to report potential food-related crime.

Food Standards Scotland's Food Crime and Incidents Unit takes an evidence and intelligence-based approach, working with partners and industry to identify key areas of concern which have previously been and continue to be targeted by criminals. This summer, we published our food crime priorities for 2021, which are red meat, fish, counterfeit/illicit alcohol and wild shellfish.

If illegal activity is not reported, the Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit and our partners cannot take the necessary action, so we urge everyone to report their suspicions.

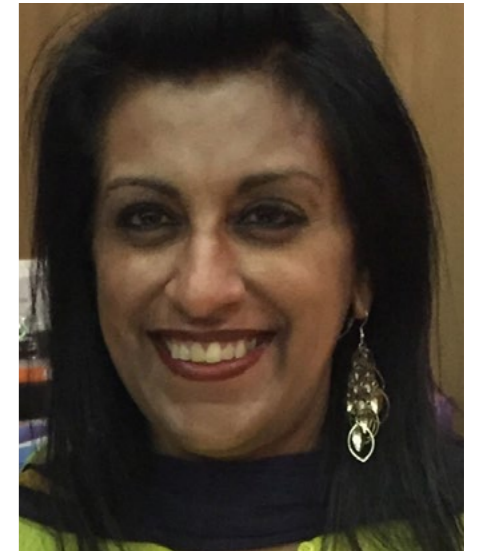


Ron McNaughton, Head of the Scottish Food Crime and Incidents Unit



Abuse survivor uses experience to change hearts and minds

Bal Kaur Howard on ending violence against women and girls.



I applied to become a volunteer for Crimestoppers in September 2016. At the time, I had resigned from Suffolk Constabulary after seven and half years of working in their Domestic Abuse Team as Projects Officer for Honour Based Abuse (Forced Marriage & Female Genital Mutilation).

I have been advocating and training frontline practitioners on the issues of 'Ending Violence Against Women & Girls', especially in the BAME communities, since 2008. My passion has been and is to challenge professionals, to change hearts and minds, to reduce the isolation of victims and survivors, and to increase reporting.

Voice of victims and survivors

During training, I share my own experience of domestic/honour abuse/child forced marriage & modern slavery, which happened to me when I was just 17

years old in County Durham. I want to be the voice of victims and survivors who experience crimes and are silenced by their abusers, family and community. My darkest past has become my greatest possession, as I can educate professionals on these issues.

I set up my training business - Bal Kaur Howard Training - in September 2016 and found that Crimestoppers totally reflected what I wanted to do. It sat hand in hand with all of my core subjects, which include radicalisation, child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, domestic abuse, honour based abuse, forced marriage, FGM, and substance misuse/addiction.

Influencing campaigns

During training sessions, both locally in Suffolk and nationally to a whole host of practitioners in Health, Social Care, Police, Education, Housing and the Voluntary Sector, I regularly raise awareness about what Crimestoppers can offer.

And it was an honour to recently deliver training to all of the regional managers and staff at Crimestoppers - which has sparked many discussions on how, as a team, we can conduct future campaigns to increase reporting from different communities.

"I have been advocating and training frontline practitioners on the issues of 'Ending Violence Against Women & Girls', especially in the BAME communities, since 2008."

Ending violence against woman and girls

Crimestoppers is working collaboratively with law enforcement and specialist professionals to tackle FGM. There is a lack of data, information and intelligence regarding those committing offences under the FGM Act - but through NHS data it is clearly happening in the UK. Our pilot, launching this summer, will target six locations across the UK and hopes to engage teenagers and men to be the 'Stoppers' of FGM in their communities.



Thousands of youth professionals receive Fearless training online

With the core delivery of our Fearless programme taking place face-to-face within schools, the Covid-19 lockdowns required a rapid response from the team.

Fearless workers have risen to the challenge by changing tactics and devising a series of engaging online sessions. This led to a first for Fearless – delivering sessions directly to nearly 5,000 youth work professionals online between April and November of last year alone.



Public support for energy theft reporting line grows

Meter tampering – to avoid paying for electricity or gas being used – is not a victimless crime. It can cause life-threatening fires, explosions, shocks and gas leaks, along with significant upheaval to the immediate street and community affected.

Fortunately, our Energy Theft Tip-Off Service (ETTOS), which is branded publicly as Stay Energy Safe, remains strong, with the number of people contacting us to give information on suspected energy theft continuing to show significant growth.

FireStoppers scheme helps dampen down arson threat

FireStoppers was launched as a pilot in 2018 with the County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CD&DFRS). The aim was to help them identify those starting fires, and to reduce and deter fire setting in the area by encouraging people to report what they know using our anonymity guarantee.

Following a successful first year, which saw FireStoppers form part of the wider fire-reduction strategy, CD&DFRS reported “more than a 20% reduction in deliberate fires following year-on-year increases over the previous five years”.

As a result, Tyne and Wear and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Services added FireStoppers to their fire-reduction armoury in 2019.

The success of FireStoppers in the North East of England enabled us to start rolling this initiative out across the UK in 2020, with Northamptonshire and Derbyshire being the most recent services to promote FireStoppers to local communities. Another five services are also showing interest in joining.

FireStoppers empowers people to speak up and stay safe, and gives fire services added impact to their activity around fire prevention and reduction.

“FireStoppers now forms part of our core delivery framework aimed at reducing deliberate fires across the Service area.”

Ian Warne, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.



Homing in on housing associations

Crimestoppers is well placed to work with many different partners toward the common goal of making our communities safer. One of the most obvious and logical partnerships we have is with housing associations. They often manage large housing stocks across particular areas or estates and they work hard, often with a dedicated team, to ensure that their customers feel both safe and protected.

Working together benefits householders, the housing associations and ourselves, especially in some of the hard-to-reach communities where there is historically low engagement with any of the services, whether that be police, social services or the local council.

Community Ambassadors

There are opportunities for housing associations to become Community Ambassadors for Crimestoppers, displaying our posters and information on estate block notice boards, which not only reassures people that there is a joint commitment to tackle and reduce crime in the local area, but also brings about a much better understanding of how people can report crime 100% anonymously via our charity.

North East and Thirteen Group

Another example of working together happened last year in the North East where, together with housing association Thirteen Group, we launched a campaign in Hemlington, Middlesbrough targeting drug dealing, illegal money lending and violence. The campaign advertised on social media and we also produced a postcard which was delivered to all of Thirteen Group's customers. The results of the campaign were overwhelmingly positive, with overall reports from Crimestoppers to Cleveland police increasing by 27%, and all drug-related reports to the force up by 41% following the campaign.

London: Haringey and Enfield

There is also ongoing work across many areas of London. In particular, we involved Homes for Haringey and the London Borough of Enfield's housing teams in our campaign tackling serious and organised crime networks operating in the north London boroughs.

Both housing providers supported the campaign by sharing and pushing out adverts on their social media channels and displaying posters on housing estate notice boards, encouraging residents to come forward and to report gang-related crimes anonymously. Materials were translated into around nine different languages to ensure the campaign was understood and accessible to residents.

We saw some great results with members of the community coming forward: 128 reports relating to County Lines, firearms, knives, gangs and organised crime were sent to the Metropolitan Police Service for further investigation.

The true value of Crimestoppers information

Our Director of Operations, Mick Duthie, who previously ran one of the world's busiest homicide teams, believes anonymous information is as valuable today as it has always been.

In my previous Connections article, I mentioned that my last role in the Met was leading the Homicide Command. However, between 2003 and 2009, I was a Detective Chief Inspector on the same command running my own murder team. In this time, I dealt with around 100 investigations, including cases on domestic abuse, youth violence, gangs and serious organised crime. I was based in Sutton, close to our Headquarters, but took cases all over London and beyond and was fortunate to travel to Iraq, Hong Kong, the USA and Sri Lanka.

Building a case

At the start of every investigation, you never really knew what the case would throw at you. I always had a mixture of emotions, from sadness that someone had lost their life to excitement in trying to find out who had committed the crime and then trying to catch them. Leading a murder team was a great honour and I always believed that, whilst there was nothing I could do for the person who had died, I could help the family and community get justice.

Golden nugget

No case was ever the same, and you always started with very little information. There was many a time when I sat in my office late at night scratching my head thinking why

has this person died, who did it and what can I and my team do to move the case forward? Sometimes it stayed like that for long periods, and this was when tracking down a previously unknown witnesses and/or receiving a 'golden nugget' of information from Crimestoppers became so important.

I previously mentioned a particular example where Crimestoppers information was the starting point for a line of enquiry that helped solve a case. However, throughout my career, Crimestoppers has helped me in numerous investigations: a partial index of a car; a description of clothing worn by a suspect; a place where a weapon has been disposed of; or a location where a dealer hides their stash. This all helps build a better picture.

Valuing our service

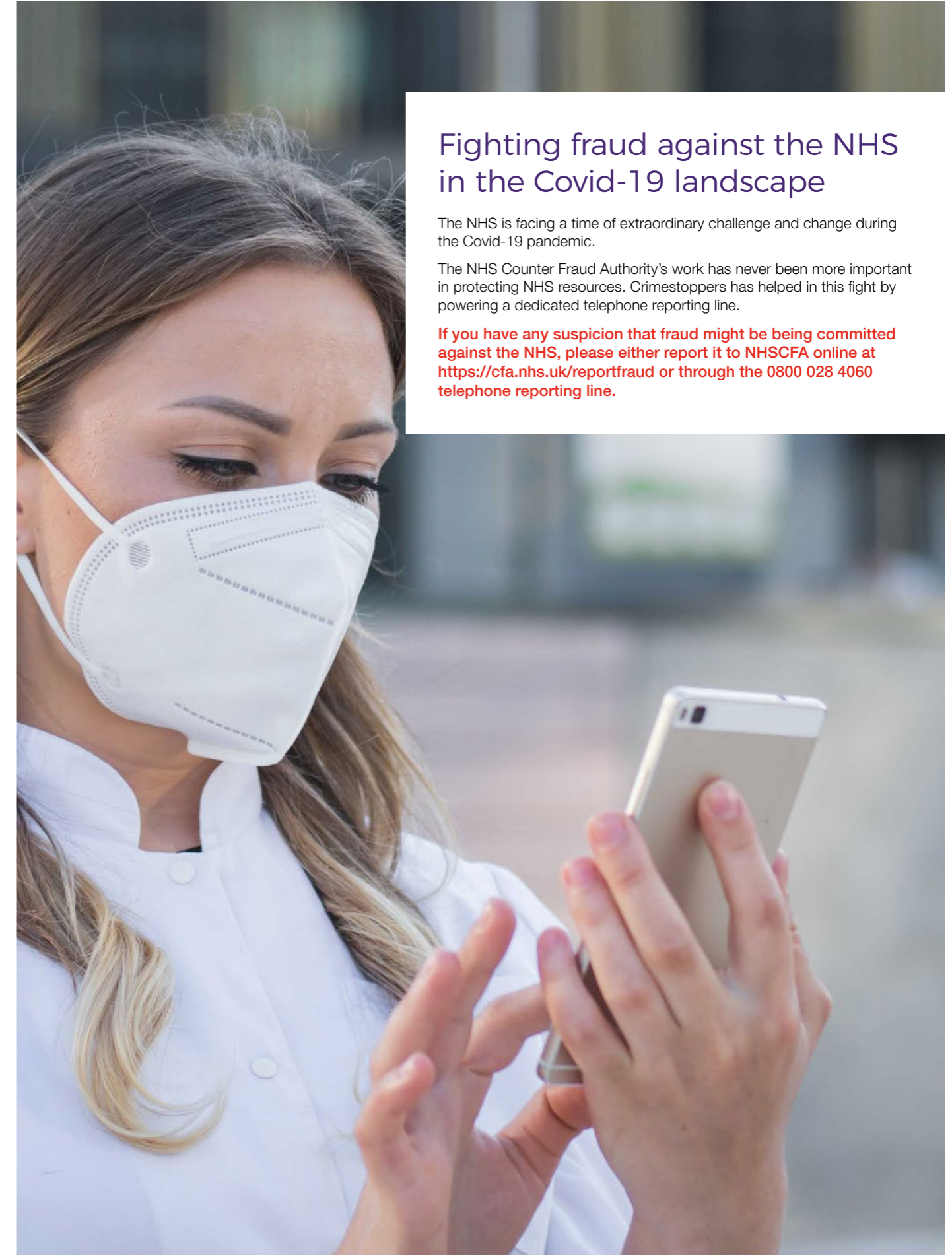
As we all know, policing has been through a long period of austerity, so getting a piece of information that speeds up an investigation not only saves money but helps bring offenders to justice and keeps communities safe.

During my work here at Crimestoppers, I speak to officers and units across the country on a regular basis. They all really value our service and think it remains a crucial part of modern policing. Whilst it is difficult to speak publicly about our success stories due to our anonymity guarantee, it



is good to know just how many cases our charity continues to help make a real and tangible difference with.

“As we all know, policing has been through a long period of austerity, so getting a piece of information that speeds up an investigation not only saves money but helps bring offenders to justice and keeps communities safe.”

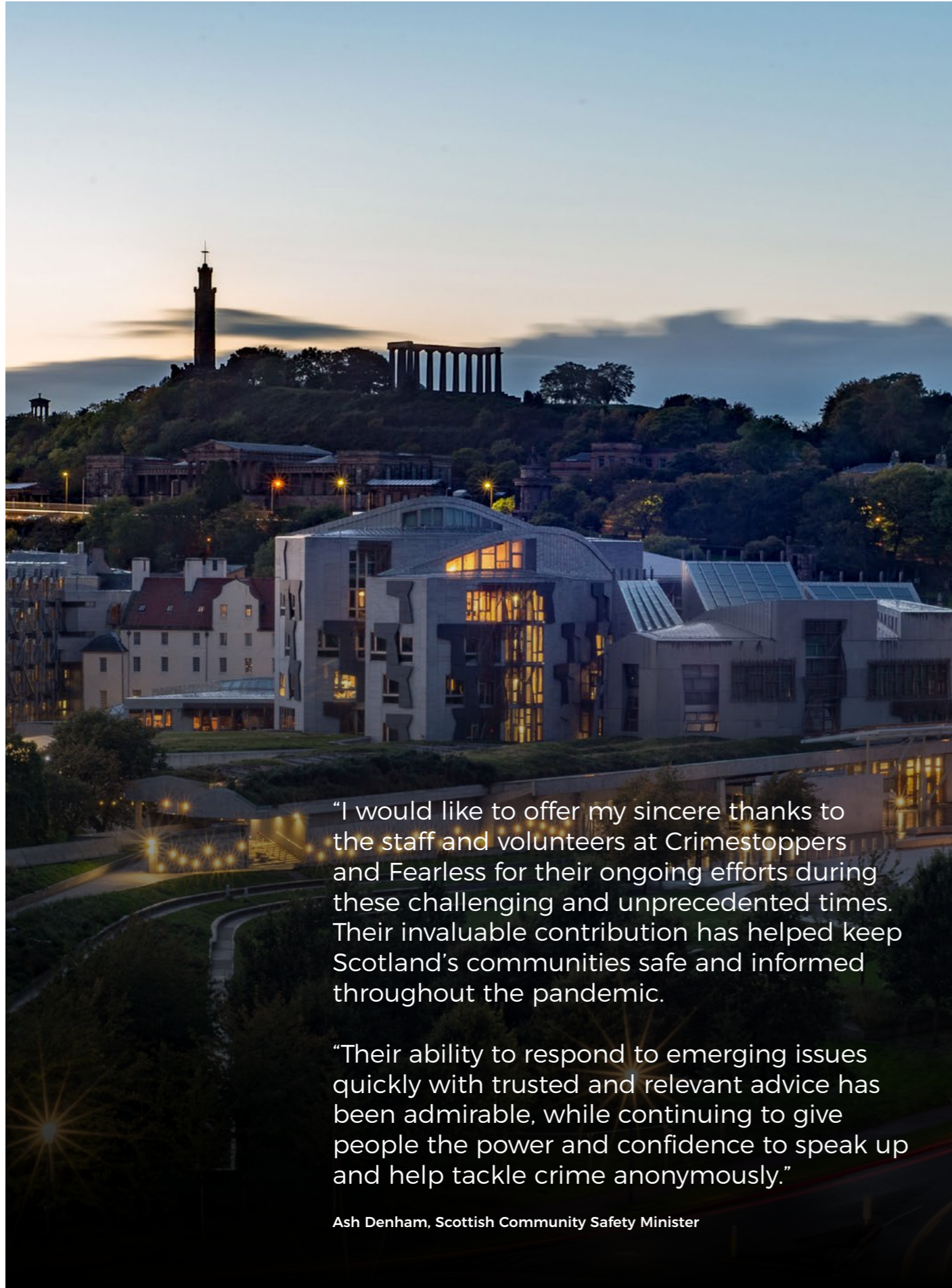


Fighting fraud against the NHS in the Covid-19 landscape

The NHS is facing a time of extraordinary challenge and change during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The NHS Counter Fraud Authority's work has never been more important in protecting NHS resources. Crimestoppers has helped in this fight by powering a dedicated telephone reporting line.

If you have any suspicion that fraud might be being committed against the NHS, please either report it to NHSCFA online at <https://cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud> or through the 0800 028 4060 telephone reporting line.



“I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the staff and volunteers at Crimestoppers and Fearless for their ongoing efforts during these challenging and unprecedented times. Their invaluable contribution has helped keep Scotland’s communities safe and informed throughout the pandemic.

“Their ability to respond to emerging issues quickly with trusted and relevant advice has been admirable, while continuing to give people the power and confidence to speak up and help tackle crime anonymously.”

Ash Denham, Scottish Community Safety Minister

Making life safer in Scotland

When Covid-19 hit and we entered lockdown, Crimestoppers and Fearless Scotland responded to the challenge by delivering a series of campaigns to help communities cope with the crimes they experienced.

Many Scottish police divisions and partners reported an increase in Covid scams and fraud, so we actioned a national doorstep crime campaign to help reach the most isolated and vulnerable.

Our Fearless youth programme also received record information on drug dealing across Scotland and, with schools closed, Fearless

produced an online media resource for Scottish secondary schools. This enables pupils to create their own Fearless social media marketing campaigns and learn about branding, media engagement and content creation. It also gave us an opportunity to raise awareness of Fearless.org.

In tandem with high harm crimes, we knew domestic abuse was sadly increasing. Our domestic abuse campaign reached cities and rural areas across Scotland, appealing to friends, relatives and neighbours to report concerns to us. As a result, we saw a 60% increase in contacts from Scotland to Crimestoppers.

Many areas also reported an increase in damage and arson to premises, including empty schools and shops. Our #ClosedtoCrime campaign helped encourage those with information on those responsible to speak up.

We also produced and shared an emotional animation that recognised that lockdown wasn’t easy and thanked the public for trusting our charity more than ever with their information – ultimately making life safer for many in Scotland.

Northern Ireland rewards supporting PSNI investigations

In Northern Ireland, we have had a successful year, which included the Justice Minister attending our board meeting, along with our Chief Executive. This shows the level of support that Crimestoppers has in Northern Ireland.

We have also backed many high-profile investigations in Northern Ireland by offering rewards and appealing for anonymous information. Cases include the murder of former BBC broadcaster Mike Kerr, who was found dead after being brutally

attacked in his home in 2019; and the attempted murder of a 61-year-old grandmother, who was sleeping in a chair downstairs due to her various health problems when she was shot in the head. We also marked the 10th anniversary of the murder of Leslie White, whose body has never been found; and in June we offered £5,000 for information on the whereabouts of Thomas McCabe, who was wanted by PSNI and caught in July.

Wales: Jon Drake, Director, Wales Violence Prevention Unit



Jon Drake, Director, Wales Violence Prevention Unit

Last year proved difficult for everyone, but for some it was a frightening and even dangerous time. Experts from across the globe warned of the consequences the social distancing restrictions may have on violence in the home, with the United Nations describing it as a “shadow pandemic”.

During the lockdown measures, children and young people have had fewer opportunities to rely on the support of friends, family and the community, meaning vulnerable young people may suffer the effects of abuse and neglect at home in silence.

Helplines have seen a large increase in child welfare contacts in relation to sexual abuse online. There has also been a significant increase in calls from adults regarding concerns about a child relating to neglect, physical and emotional abuse.

The lack of routine for many children and young people may also leave them more susceptible to child sexual or criminal exploitation, youth violence and radicalisation.

To help address these challenges, the Wales Violence Prevention Unit have implemented a public health approach to violence prevention. Working with partners, including Crimestoppers, we seek to understand the causes of violence based on evidence, which are used to develop focused interventions. Together, our aim is to make a greater impact to help protect young people across Wales.

Find out more about the work of Wales Violence Prevention Unit at www.violencepreventionwales.co.uk

Crimestoppers' partner ESRI offers invaluable tech tools to help identify patterns and trends of criminal behaviour



Simon Imbert, ESRI



ESRI's Simon Imbert explains that this has shown its worth, especially during the pandemic...

"Covid-19 changed policing in the City of London overnight," states PC Dan Baker, who was assigned to a rapidly-assembled Covid-19 command group at City of London Police (CoLP) as soon as the scale of the pandemic became evident.

The City of London usually attracts 500,000 workers, students and tourists every day, but when lockdown commenced, the area's historic streets and thriving businesses emptied almost completely, creating a host of new challenges. In particular, CoLP needed to optimise the security of business premises throughout the City, as quieter streets created potential criminal opportunities. It immediately became apparent that CoLP needed to know who was travelling into London and where these people were working, to enable the force to identify the vulnerable groups and buildings.

New dashboard

Within days, PC Baker was able to utilise ESRI's new operational dashboard in order to provide commanders with up-to-date data on the premises that were closed, the workers that were still travelling into the City and estimated footfall.

The Operations dashboard displays the latest footfall information in the City and shows on an interactive map which business premises are open or closed. Beat officers use an Esri Survey 123 app on their mobile devices to add observations about busy areas, and this up-to-the-minute data is automatically synchronised to the dashboard.

As a proponent of embracing technology to support modern policing, this confirms what I have always felt – that we at ESRI can help

those involved in maintaining security and community safety with simple tech solutions that have a major impact.

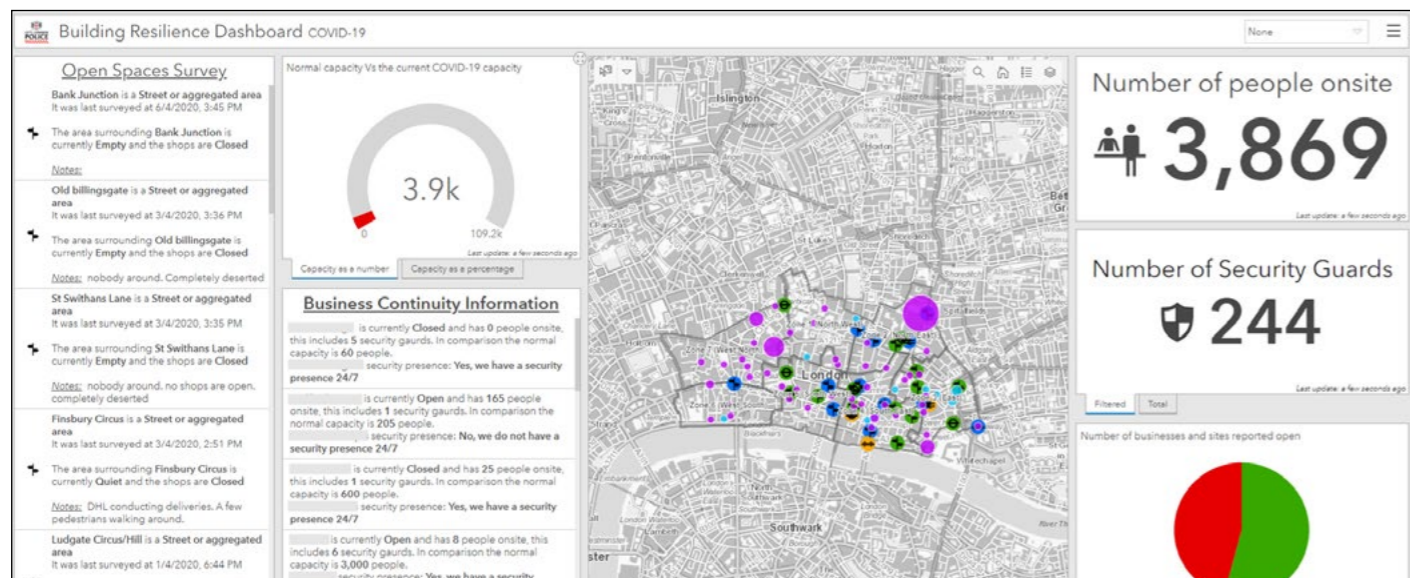
Real-time monitoring

Integrated into the dashboard is a game-changing facility for gathering up-to-date data from as many of the 23,890 businesses based in the City of London as possible, including the large businesses that together provide 50% of jobs in the City. Surveys are sent by email and responses automatically collated and included. One of the first surveys conducted using the ESRI solution indicated that just 3% of the City's usual workforce was still working in the City. Senior officers can then use the dashboard to better monitor changes and vulnerabilities, making informed policing decisions.

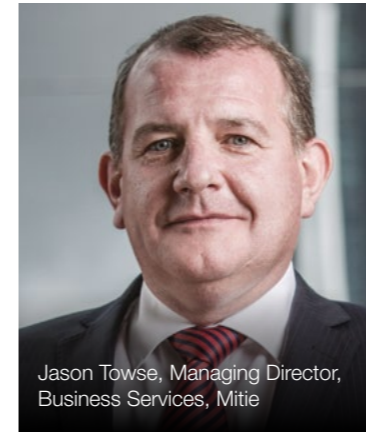
PC Baker believes that the bespoke dashboard solution is now fulfilling a vital role by helping City of London Police to optimise the allocation of police resources during the pandemic. Commanders can ensure that officers are allocated to the appropriate locations.

The example set by the City of London Police and other forces, along with Crimestoppers, who adopt new technology that utilises real-time data underlines its importance, at a time when we are all facing a host of new and evolving challenges.

City of London ESRI's dashboard



Insights are key to new Mitie agreement



Jason Towse, Managing Director, Business Services, Mitie

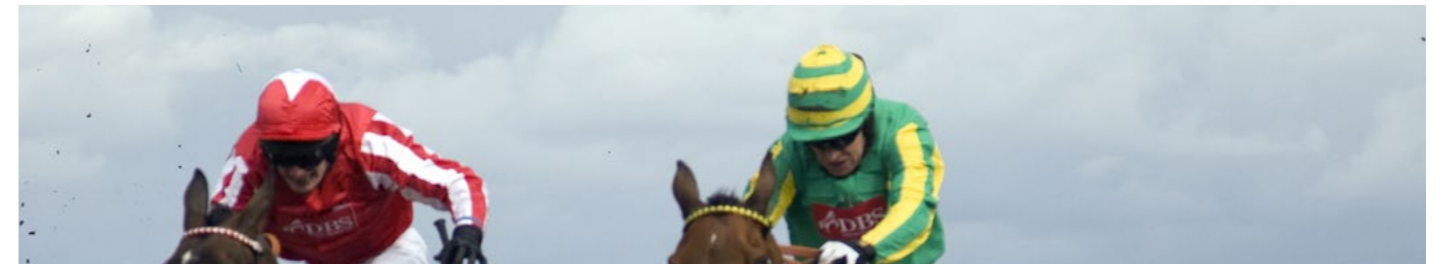


Mitie Security has teamed up with Crimestoppers in an innovative new partnership to help keep communities and businesses safe from crime and wrongdoing across the UK. The agreement will see the organisations working together to share information on criminal behaviour gathered by businesses, which can feed into police investigations.

Mitie is the first security company to form such a partnership with Crimestoppers, with the aim of bridging the gap between the public and private sectors to help keep people, customers and communities safe.

With Mitie Security having hundreds of customers spanning every sector, this collaboration will also help create new relationships between the charity and businesses that have not worked together before.

Mitie will also use its experience delivering security services to hundreds of public and private sector clients to provide Crimestoppers with insights on the key security issues that businesses and communities are currently facing. Working closely with the Home Office, Crimestoppers will then use this information to create national awareness campaigns, to help tackle these challenges.



Clearing hurdles to protect horse racing's integrity

The British Horseracing Authority relaunched their integrity line service as RaceWISE in February 2020.

Despite it being a difficult year, with elite sport being heavily impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, they promoted it through a number of channels including social media, stakeholder associations (such as The National Association of Racing Staff and the Professional Jockeys Association), and poster campaigns at racecourses. They are using new assets to promote welfare, integrity, safeguarding and equality – all facets of their vision of "building a brighter future for our sport, our horses and our people."

This activity, along with broadening the scope of information taken, has led to RaceWISE achieving a 225% increase in anonymous reports between April and September 2020, compared to the same period the previous year. RaceWISE is now an important key to enabling the BHA to prioritise the health and welfare of the sport's participants.

We believe everyone has the right to feel safe from crime, wherever they live, wherever they work, for ourselves and all those we care about.

But sometimes people might be worried about a crime, or something that's wrong, and want to pass on information. Which is why it's good to know they can always trust Crimestoppers.

We're an independent charity that gives people the power to speak up and stop crime, 100% anonymously. By phone and online, 24/7, 365 days a year. No police contact. No witness statements. No courts.

Every year we help stop thousands of crimes. So let's make communities safer together.

Find out more about our work.

Contact us at hello@crimestoppers-uk.org.

CrimeStoppers.

0800 555 111

100% anonymous. Always.

[crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

© Crimestoppers Trust, registered charity in England & Wales (1108687), Scotland (SC037960).