

Metropolitan Police Service

Advice for Businesses

We are committed to making your neighbourhood a safe place to live, work, visit and do business. We listen and talk to our communities and work with partners to find lasting solutions to the crime issues that affect them.



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

**MORE
TRUST**

**LESS
CRIME**

**HIGH
STANDARDS**

Introduction

Dear Business Owner,

As the Met's Senior Lead for Business/Retail Crime and Engagement, I write to assure you that we are listening to your concerns around the impact resulting from the recent level of protest and demonstration in London.

London experiences demonstrations and events on a daily basis ranging from small local protests to recent high profile events like Notting Hill Carnival and the Kings Coronation. The policing of all these events has a primary aim to ensure that everyone who uses London is kept safe, free from crime and the fear of crime, and that the impact is minimised as much as practicable.

Often the policing of these many events has no direct impact on your business, but there may be occasions where it is necessary for the policing operation to impede movement around an area through tactics such as road closures or barrier builds. We know this can be impactful, but I want to assure you that we do work hard to balance the rights of those using the city for leisure or commercial reasons with those wishing to exercise their rights to protest. On these occasions we endeavour to ensure any such closure is only as a last resort and only for as long as is necessary.

Where appropriate, police will reach out in advance to local business leaders, Business Improvement Districts and Business Crime Reduction Partnerships so that we can work together to support you, understand the impact, listen to concerns and ideas to try and reduce negative impacts. In addition, I have asked for this document to be created to offer some practical advice about what you can do to protect and prepare your business and identify how to get information and support.

May I thank you in advance for your support and understanding as we police these events.

Kindest regards

Commander Owain Richards

Crime Prevention

There are some steps that you can take to protect your business and reduce the chances of being a victim of crime.

Outside appearance

- A well-maintained exterior to your premises, free of graffiti and rubbish, will give out the message that the premises are well looked after and reduce the likelihood of criminals targeting your business.
- Whilst you will need to arrange removal of graffiti from your own premises, you can inform your local council if there is graffiti in the vicinity (but not on your property) and they will make arrangements to have it removed.

Review your security set-up

- Identify areas that may be vulnerable to forced entry and rectify these.
- Ensure service doors are locked and secure when not in use.
- Ensure that you have a monitored and fully operational alarm.
- Review your CCTV to confirm that it is operational, provides good quality images and covers your vulnerable areas.
- Make sure that you have a list of key holders who can be contacted in case of emergency.
- Consider moving high value goods away from window displays overnight.
- Try not to keep cash on the premises and use a safe with a time lock.
- Ensure that stock rooms are locked and stock is kept out of sight.
- Ensure your keys are not left in the shop and that only designated staff have access to them.
- Consider the environment – e.g. are there overgrown bushes that could help someone hide from view, or wheelie bins that could help them gain access?
- Ensure that there is sufficient lighting around the premises – especially loading areas.
- Consider that the presence of any combustible materials left outside premises, such as packaging, that could create an arson fire risk.

Physical protective measures

- Doors and windows are particularly vulnerable – use security rated products.
- External shutters are recommended but some buildings may be subject to planning approval before installation.
- Alternatives are laminated glass or security film that can be applied to existing glass to make it more resistant.

- An insurance rated safe should be bolted down to the floor. Anti-tamper sensors can be fitted to set off an alarm if attacked.
- Anti-ram raider bollards mounted externally can be used to protect frontages but may require planning approval.
- Smoke-generating devices which will activate on entry can be used.

To help prevent crime in your area and against your business consider joining a 'Business Watch' or 'Shop Watch' scheme

What to do in the event of protests near your premises

Protests on public land

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is fully aware of the potential impact of any demonstrations on the local community and is well-equipped to deal with events should it be required.

The majority of protests are peaceful and under Human Rights legislation they are to be facilitated on public land unless certain exceptions apply.

The core role of the police in this situation is to:

- Prevent and detect crime
 - Maintain the Kings peace.
 - Protect life and limb
 - Activate contingency plans where there is an immediate threat to life and initial co-ordination of resultant emergency service activities.
- Traffic regulation (only under statutory powers)

Protests within private property

If a protest takes place on private property then the primary responsibility for the security of the property and the management of any trespass within the premises rests with the land owner or company.

The venue being open to the public implies an invitation to all persons but the land owner, manager or representative of the company can withdraw this invitation at any time if required.

Should there be an incursion onto your premises that is not disorderly and police are requested to attend, it should be stressed that the officers attending will expect a representative of the premises to request those trespassing to leave, whilst in the presence and hearing of the officer.

If the representatives are asked to assist in the ejection of the trespassers then they are acting as an agent of the company or premises and have no more powers and privileges than that of

an ordinary member of the public. They would look to stand by to prevent a breach of the peace whilst the persons are encouraged to leave and escorted onto public land.

If there are criminal offences apparent then officers will deal with these as they would in any normal situation.

Sec 68 and 69 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (Aggravated Trespass)

With reference to additional legislation, should a situation occur individuals enter venues whom are not patrons, officers may seek to use powers under Section 68 and 69 of the above legislation.

They would look to the land manager to support this process by providing confirmation of the manner in which the business is being affected and that they are willing to provide a statement and attend court if necessary. Any CCTV in relation to the incursion would also need to be provided to the police at the earliest opportunity.

The practical aspect of this would be that a person in a position of decision-making ability in the company is willing and able to state in the presence of the person(s) that they reasonably believe that the person(s) have trespassed on private property and that they have acted/ are acting in a manner which is disruptive to the normal business of the store.

It is worth noting that if those who are deemed to be trespassers are not behaving in a manner with intent to Deter, Intimidate, Disrupt or Obstruct lawful activity, Police have no additional powers to remove persons. If Police are present, they may monitor to ensure there is no Breach of the Peace, but will have no statutory power to physically remove people.

Protecting your business from protests and trespass

You can help to protect your business by taking a few sensible precautions. The following is a list of things to consider and is by no means exhaustive:

- Premises should be adequately staffed with prominent management present who can make themselves identifiable to police in the event of an incursion.
- Where possible security officers should have a visible presence on the premises.
- Ensure that all staff are fully briefed in the days leading up to a planned event.
- All staff should remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to security and / or police.
- Consider minimising the number of entry points to your building.
- Ensure building perimeters are clear of any debris, dustbins, ladders or loose tools and equipment that could assist entry.

- Check that your emergency equipment / grab bags / first aid supplies and radio communications systems are stocked and fully operational.
- Check and test your building security and emergency systems.
- Ensure all members of staff are fully aware of any emergency / evacuation procedures.
- Ensure CCTV coverage is fully operational and can provide the highest recording resolution possible.
- If your building has scaffolding erected, or is in close proximity to scaffolding, then security staff should be aware of its potential for aiding access.

Contacting the police.

- If you fear for the immediate safety of your staff and property or it's an Emergency please **Dial 999**
- Please **Dial 101** to contact the police in non-emergency situations or to report a crime.
- Or alternatively, you can report online at: www.police.uk

Always report crime to police. This allows police to capture the data and understand the full scale of the crime, which in turn informs their resources and tactics to tackle it.

For more advice from the police.

- To keep yourself and business informed about events in real time please follow [@metpoliceuk](https://twitter.com/metpoliceuk) on X (Formally known as Twitter)
- Please contact your Local Safer Neighbourhoods Team to ask for the local Dedicated Ward Officer (DWO) to visit.
- More advice about protest can be found by visiting the National Business Crime Centre Website <https://nbcc.police.uk/>
- Increase your counter terrorism awareness with the award winning eLearning available on Protect UK. Visit <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>
- The Met Business Crime Hub are experts on crime prevention and would be happy to advice about longer term solutions to issues. They can be contacted by emailing. businesscrime.mailbox@met.police.uk