

NEWS RELEASE



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SHOP THIEVES & TROUBLESOME DRUNKS TO FEATURE ON NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART INTRANET SITE

A NEW INTRANET SITE designed to help fight crime in the Borough has been launched this week.

Watford Safer Business Intranet will benefit businesses in Watford, including licensed premises, shops and hotels, by securely sharing information amongst themselves and with the police and council about:

- shoplifters
- Individuals subject to ASBOs
- Known pickpockets
- People banned or excluded from shops or pubs and clubs by Watford Business Against Crime or Watford's Pubwatches
- Graffiti 'taggers'

Pauline O'Brien who runs Watford Business Against Crime said:

"Sharing information between businesses has always been key to trying to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in town centres. What this intranet site gives us is the ability to share information more quickly and in a way that is convenient for our members to access whilst still being secure.

"On this site, we can share information about offenders and people who have been banned by Watford Business Against Crime or Watford's three Pubwatch schemes. We can also upload information about incidents that happen in our members' premises to help identify individuals who commit crime in and around our property."

"Someone stealing from one of the shops in Watford could be featured on the Watford Safer Business Intranet before they've had a chance to set down their heavy shopping bags! Similarly, an individual causing trouble in one of the towns many pubs or clubs could have their photograph emblazoned across the pages of our Intranet site before they've even got over their hangover!"

"The message to criminals and trouble makers is clear – businesses in Watford will employ every tool available to ensure that visitors, residents and shoppers alike have an enjoyable experience in Watford."

The site is administered by Watford Business Against Crime, a partnership of town centre businesses, and is supported by the Safer Watford Partnership – a coalition of Watford Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary and others. It is available to members of:

- Watford Business Against Crime
- Watford town centre Pubwatch
- Watford outer Pubwatch
- Oxhey Pubwatch
- Off-licences in the Responsible Drinks Retailing Areas.
- Watford's multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Action Group.

Chair of Watford Borough Council's Licensing Committee, Councillor Jan Brown said: "A key ingredient behind the success of schemes such as Pubwatch and Watford Business Against Crime is the timely sharing of information – about incidents that happen, and people who commit crime or anti-social behaviour.

"This innovative communication tool will make sharing information quicker, and easier, and I hope that all Business Against Crime, Pubwatch and Off-Watch members make full, regular use of it."

Richard Valentine, chair of Watford Town Centre Pubwatch and a director of Kandi Klub in The Parade said: "The town centre Pubwatch is fully behind this project to help reduce alcohol-related crime in the town centre, and to ensure that individuals banned from our premises for bad behaviour can be easily identified".

Rob Scott, the Business Protection Manager for John Lewis Watford said: "We welcome all efforts to help us to reduce business crime here in Watford. This Intranet site is a very convenient way to stay informed about offenders operating in our area. And the simple and accessible nature of this information sharing system is especially important for retailers who are extremely busy.

"This Intranet site means we can keep abreast of crime issues whilst staying focussed on customer service and selling."

Notes to editors:

Watford Business Against Crime is a Business Crime Reduction Partnership (or BCRP). These exist in many city and town centres across Britain and are designed to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in town centres.

The purchasing and installation of 'BCRP Intranet' in Watford has been made possible by funding from the Safer Watford partnership.

It is part of the work undertaken by Pubwatch Development Officer Andy McGrath, who is funded by a grant from Hertfordshire County Council.

The site will also feature good news, events information, job vacancies and other information of interest to businesses in Watford.

For further information please contact Pauline O'Brien on 07595 218136.