

**SURREY POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 28 NOVEMBER 2024
PROCEDURAL MATTERS – PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES**

1. Question submitted by Dr. Rishi Shah, Camberley

Q: I own Myfroyoland in Camberley on Park Street and experience significant amount of crime and antisocial behaviour. I have never seen it so bad but what is worse is the age of people.

On Sunday 17th, two very young girls walked in and stole food and walked out. They very clearly knew that nobody would touch them or stop them. Before they come to ours they tried to steal from Tresspass and B&M. Both of them have CCTV recordings. When I put in my incident I asked to police to also get the CCTV recordings from these two companies in addition to my CCTV. They police refused to do so stating that they should raise their own incidents and submit the recordings. They don't want to waste their time as they know it does not result in anything.

Today I was informed that my case is now closed.

In summer I was assaulted by an adult male in my shop and it took the police nearly one month to ask for the CCTV.

I am getting tired and fed up.

1. What specifically is Surrey Police doing about the crimes being committed by children specifically in Camberley town centre?
2. What is Surrey police going to do about retailers losing faith in even raising Police incidents?
3. What can Surrey Police do to bring retailers together in Camberley to exchange information better. The radio system does not work for us as we can have a radio on in our Desert Bar as our customers would feel very uncomfortable.

However, the underage kids is a very dangerous situation in Camberley. We cannot touch them, we cannot stop them and they know this. It is not legal or fair to expect me to pay Council Tax and Business Rates and not receive the Police service we deserve.

Police and Crime Commissioner's response:

As Police and Crime Commissioner, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the specific incident referenced without the full facts, especially not in a public meeting. I would however encourage anyone that has been unhappy with the service they have received from Surrey Police to raise that matter formally through the established complaints process. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.surrey.police.uk/fo/feedback/complaints/complaints/>

I am currently running "Policing Your Community" events in every Borough and District, where residents can come and put questions directly to myself and the Borough Commander. The Surrey Heath event is due to take place on Monday 2 December, and you are most welcome to attend. For more information please visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/policing-your-community-surrey-heath-tickets-1010588456277>

Naturally, your local Borough Commander will be much better placed to address specific local issues, such as those raised in your question.

More generally, I want to reassure all Surrey residents that tackling shoplifting is a priority for both myself and Surrey Police. While we've no doubt seen a substantial rise in reported shoplifting offences, this also reflects improved reporting practices, enabling us to better understand the scale of the issue and take decisive action.

As part of my current consultation on a new Police and Crime Plan for Surrey, my team has met with business groups and retailers to better understand their concerns and look at how we can support in the coming years.

In the meantime, significant progress has been made in tackling shoplifting across Surrey, with shoplifting charges increasing from under 400 in the year ending October 2023 to over 1,200 in the year ending October 2024 - a threefold rise. Additionally, the arrest rate has more than doubled, climbing from 8.1% to 18.4% over the same period. These figures demonstrate our commitment to holding offenders accountable and improving safety for retailers and their staff.

This sends a clear message: no act of shoplifting, no matter how small, will be overlooked. Shoplifting is not a victimless crime, and we are determined to protect retailers and their staff.

We are also focused on prevention, supporting businesses through tools like the DISC scheme, plainclothes patrols, and expert advice from our Designing Out Crime officers. I encourage retailers and residents to report all incidents and engage with ongoing consultations to help shape our future strategy.