

## Press Release

# Putting crime out of business:

## Yorkshire & Humberside's Police Forces Tackle Business Crime

A ground-breaking initiative is being launched across Yorkshire and Humberside to help small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) reduce crime. The Business Crime Reduction Centre (BCRC) will allow SMEs to minimise the devastating impact of crime and boost the regional economy as a whole.

The BCRC has been operating in South Yorkshire since 2007 and has seen business crime reduce by 37% between 2007-2010. Throughout the three year period it has helped 1,300 SMEs, safeguarding nearly 500 jobs. The programme has now secured funding until 2013 and will be delivered across the whole Yorkshire and Humber region. It is hoped that the new extended programme will help to create similar crime reductions across the region.

The BCRC project is delivered in partnership with Yorkshire-based charity, People United Against Crime and the South Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Humberside Police forces. BCRC is part financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme 2007-2013.

2.3 million people are employed in Yorkshire and The Humber (Office of National Statistics December 2011), with 99.2% of businesses in the region classified as SMEs (Yorkshire Forward, 2010). Yet our region's economy and local jobs are under varying degrees of threat from business crime. In 2010, the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) found that, 20% of all crime is against businesses and that the average cost of crime against Yorkshire and Humberside's organisations was £25,108\*.

The cost of crime goes beyond the financial, threatening jobs, closing businesses and putting employee personal safety at risk. Crime also reduces business confidence, minimising regional investment and slowing growth. Cyber-crime is the fastest growing crime and costs UK businesses £21 billion annually (Office of Cyber Security and Detica report, February 2011). In a recent survey, taken at a business park in Hull, BCRC wireless security specialists found nearly half of businesses to be insecure.

The BCRC working in partnership with the four police forces of the Yorkshire and Humber region, identifies potential business-related crime, working with businesses, victims and other partner organisations to tackle crime head-on. Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who will act as Business Advisers are being trained to support SMEs across the region. The Business Advisors will offer advice and guidance to help businesses with cyber-crime, web threats, fraud, ICT security and

protecting physical premises and stock. BCRC is offering a free service to SMEs in Yorkshire and Humberside to check the security of their wireless networks and secure it for free if necessary.

On the 3rd February 2012, 10:00-12:00, the Business Crime Reduction Centre will be hosting a launch event at the Marriott Hotel, Leeds. The event will be attended by the regional Police forces, MPs and business owners.

Keynote speeches will be delivered by Sir Norman Bettison, Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police, Meredydd Hughes CBE, QPM, Chair of People United Against Crime and David Ransom, Chief Executive, People United Against Crime. The event will be used to share details of the programme including how the project will:

- Improve business competitiveness strengthening profitability and business confidence
- Support crime prevention through specially trained police staff
- Provide business advice and training on cyber security threats
- Reduce the impact of crime on the Yorkshire and Humber business community

For more information go to: [www.bcrc-uk.org](http://www.bcrc-uk.org)

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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **About the Business Crime Reduction Centre**

The Business Crime Reduction Centre (BCRC) is an initiative which helps small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Yorkshire and Humber region tackle problems caused by crime. BCRC together with dedicated staff from each police force support businesses that have been affected by crime and help them to prevent crime.

The BCRC project is delivered in partnership with charity, People United Against Crime, South Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Humberside Police forces. BCRC is part financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme 2007-2013. The partnership has received £4.2 million of investment. People United Against Crime has secured £2,243,930 of investment for the Business Crime Reduction Centre from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which is managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government. A further £2,012,000 of matching funding is being provided by the four police forces.

[www.bcrc-uk.org](http://www.bcrc-uk.org)

## **About People United Against Crime**

People United Against Crime was founded in 1996 by South Yorkshire Police. It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The organisation works mainly in the Yorkshire & Humber region.

Their responsibilities cover:

- The reduction of crime against business
- The reduction of the negative impact of drugs and alcohol
- The reduction of anti-social behaviour in communities
- The development of safer and more harmonious communities

<http://www.people-united.org/>

\*Localism and Tackling Crimes Against Business, Federation of Small Businesses (2010)

## **Photographs, photo-call and interviews:**

Journalists are invited to attend a photo-call at the event 10:00-10.30 or 11:30–12:00, please see photo-call sheet for further details. Off-site/studio interviews with People United Against Crime can also be arranged at your convenience.

Photographs:

BCRC – Meredydd Hughes CBE, QPM, Chair of People United Against Crime and David Ransom, Chief Executive, People United Against Crime.

High-res images are available. Please email [laura@wearecircle.co.uk](mailto:laura@wearecircle.co.uk) to receive them.

For further information and interviews contact:

Laura Pegg

PR Consultant

Circle Marketing

T: 07969 793150

E: [laura@wearecircle.co.uk](mailto:laura@wearecircle.co.uk)

[www.wearecircle.co.uk](http://www.wearecircle.co.uk)