



Stockport Case Study

Raid-control - its origins

At the start of 2002 there was a rise in violent robberies against pharmacies in South London. The robberies were violent in nature, with knives used to threaten pharmacy staff. The target was cash. The response to this unexpected and frightening spate of robberies was the formation of a partnership between the police and the security industry, recommending the introduction of a series of measures to target-harden premises. These included staff training in raid awareness, cash minimisation, time delay systems in use, cameras in operation and stolen cash traceable. This approach was part of a fledgling crime reduction initiative called **Raid-control**.

Since then, **Raid-control** has developed into a successful national crime reduction initiative backed by a number of police forces around the country, the British Security Industry Association and the British Retail Consortium. In the region of 300 premises are now 'Raid-controlled'. See www.raid-control.org for more information.

Stockport

Stockport Division is leading Greater Manchester Police's drive to install **Raid-control**, with the largest number of **Raid-control** compliant premises in the Force area.

Since the start of 2004, 41 premises in Stockport have become certificated to **Raid-control** standards. £50,000 funding was achieved through Stockport Basic Command Unit for the financial year 2003-4 and another £50,000 for 2004-5. The Safer Stockport Partnership, which involves the local authority and the police, determined which premises would receive the funding. This enabled the majority of premises to receive full or part funding. A number of new **Raid-control** premises are about to come on line and funding has been agreed for the new financial year to continue to develop the initiative.

All 41 premises had been victims of robbery, with some retailers suffering multiple robberies in a short period. In the 12 months before they had **Raid-control** installed, these 41 premises had suffered 67 robberies between them. **Since Raid-control was installed there have only been 9 robberies, which is a reduction of 87%.**

Reaction - the retailers

Gary Brooks-Adams runs an independent Spar store in Bramhall. Before **Raid-control** was installed in his store in January 2004, Gary had been the victim of two robberies. "Thank god there has been no trouble since," Gary comments. "We'd had two armed robberies in the space of a week and I was relieved when the Police offered me a package to tackle the problem because we really needed something. I'd already tried some security measures but this package as a whole is having the desired effect. I don't really care about the stock or the money, it's my staff I'm worried about and now I have much greater peace of mind."

Gary has told all his customers about **Raid-control** and is keen to stress the positive impact it has had on the local community: "We got full funding for **Raid-control** but, now that I've seen the impact it has, I would definitely have paid for it myself. If the robberies had gone on I might have closed down and there are a lot of local people depending on this store. People were cautious about coming back into the shop at first having heard about the robberies, and parents weren't letting their kids come by themselves. But after I told them about **Raid-control** and they could see that something was being done they all came back."

Mr Knibbs, of Knibbs Newsagents, has had **Raid-control** in his store for four months and describes it as a 'godsend'. He had suffered two robberies prior to **Raid-control** being installed. In the first robbery a gun was pointed at his head and in the second his wife was threatened by a youth brandishing a knife. Both robberies had led to a sense of shock and a considerable amount of worry. "I feel much more assured now

and my wife feels safer,” comments Mr Nibbs. “She hasn’t worked since the robbery but now that we have **Raid-control** she’s going to come back to work in the shop.”

“My daughter also works here and she thinks **Raid-control** is a great idea. She has a lot less to worry about knowing that the money is in the safe and that the camera is watching over her. If other retailers are in my position I would tell them to have **Raid-control** installed straight away.”

Josie Salter, Store Manager at the Spar in Romiley, Stockport, had suffered four robberies in the 12 months prior to **Raid-control** being installed in July 2004. Since then, there have been no further robberies. Josie comments: “We had two robberies in the space of seven days and before that two armed robberies in the space of six weeks. In one incident customers and staff were hurt. We lost staff to stress and it wasn’t a good atmosphere for customers. **Raid-control** has not only stopped the robberies, which has made everyone’s lives so much easier, but it has also helped with staff retention and consequently the shopping experience has improved for customers. It has helped so much here.”

Clinton Bentham, Area Manager for Spar, adds: “There’s no doubt that **Raid-control** has helped to reduce crime in this store and we are looking at using it in other Spar stores where there are similar problems. It has paid for itself many times over as an investment in crime reduction and the health and safety of our customers and staff.”

Reaction - the Crime Reduction Advisers

Marie Brown and Rachel Fielding are the proactive Crime Reduction Advisers at Stockport Police. They have driven the installation of **Raid-control** in the division and have secured funding to enable them to achieve their objectives through an excellent relationship with the Safer Stockport Partnership. They have also got the backing of colleagues by producing a **Raid-control** pack for block inspectors, providing briefings at block meetings and establishing a system whereby **Raid-control** premises are flagged so that all officers are aware that **Raid-control** equipment is in place should a crime occur. In addition, Marie and Rachel have flown the **Raid-control** flag in other Greater Manchester Police boroughs and with other Police Forces. They have advised colleagues in West Yorkshire and Lancashire on what **Raid-control** consists of and how it can be implemented.

Marie comments: “Robberies are a big problem for retailers and it is refreshing for us to be able to do something about it. The impact on the people involved in a robbery is of greatest concern and we have heard some terrifying stories. Being able to help through **Raid-control** has made a real difference.”

Rachel adds: “This really has been a partnership approach because we’ve received excellent backing from the Safer Stockport Partnership and now we are seeing the benefits. It’s great to be able to do something proactive.”

Reaction - the Chief Superintendent

Chief Superintendent Neil Wain comments: “There is no doubt that the **Raid-control** initiative has had a significant effect on reducing what is a violent and very frightening crime. Those premises that have employed the range of crime prevention measures on offer have really benefited. Overall **Raid-control** has proved to be a very effective partnership scheme in making Stockport a safer place for small retail premises and stores.”

Reaction - the Safer Stockport Partnership

Steve Brown, Community Safety Manager at Safer Stockport Partnership, says: “The Safer Stockport Partnership takes business crime seriously. Small businesses are at the heart of our communities and they have every right to benefit from the work of the SSP in reducing crime. **Raid-control** has helped reassure the business community and increase confidence from that section of Stockport in the crime and disorder reduction partnership.”

Conclusions

Having already proved itself to be a workable and successful crime prevention tool, **Raid-control** is having an equally impressive impact on retailers in Stockport. Installed in 41 premises, the combination of the deterrent signage, the training awareness package and the security equipment has resulted in an 87% reduction in robberies in those premises. Retailers continue to respond positively to the help they are receiving and cite a series of benefits ranging from robbery reduction to improved staff retention. The Crime Prevention Advisers welcome the availability of a proactive tool that can be used to make a real difference,

the Chief Superintendent says that **Raid-control** has made Stockport a safer place for small retail premises, and the Safer Stockport Partnership describes an increase in confidence from the local community.

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