

Birmingham's Shoplifting Epidemic - The latest crime stats

Birmingham, a city renowned for its thriving shopping districts, is currently grappling with a concerning increase in shoplifting incidents

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Birmingham, a city renowned for its vibrant culture, diverse communities, and thriving shopping districts, is currently grappling with a concerning increase in shoplifting incidents, as revealed by the latest data from the

new [hyperlocal crime map](#). This alarming trend has prompted discussions about the implications and measures required to address the rising incidence of retail theft.



Central Birmingham, the heart of the city, has experienced a staggering 73% surge in recorded shoplifting crimes over the past year, totalling 959 offences. This unsettling surge places Central Birmingham as the sixth most shoplifted neighbourhood in all of England and Wales. Not far behind, North Central & Dartmouth Circus recorded 507 shoplifting crimes, followed by Selly Oak with 336 incidents. These areas, being major shopping hubs, naturally attract a higher number of visitors and unfortunately, opportunistic thieves.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the situation, it is essential to consider the number of shops in each neighbourhood and calculate the rate of theft per ten shops. Hodge Hill stands out as the most heavily affected by shoplifting, with 187 crimes reported last year. This translates to approximately 74.8 shoplifting offences for every 10 shops, the highest rate in Birmingham and the 11th highest in all of England and Wales. Selly Oak follows closely with 61.1 crimes per 10 shops, while Northfield Victoria Common faced 37.6 crimes per 10 shops.

In contrast, Birmingham Central, with its numerous shops, recorded a comparatively lower rate of 30.9 crimes per 10 shops. It's worth noting that neighbourhoods with a minimum of around 25 shops were considered in these rankings.

Birmingham's shoplifting problem is not isolated. Reported national retail thefts have cost businesses nearly £1 billion in 2021/22 the British Retail Consortium (BRC) said and shoplifting incidents have surged by a shocking 22% compared to the previous year, with the total number of offences rising from 256,000 to 314,000, according to separate Home Office figures. This alarming trend has sent shockwaves throughout the retail industry and law enforcement agencies across the country.

In response to the rising cost of living crisis that continues to impact communities, retailers have been compelled to adapt their strategies to protect their assets and customers. Large stores have implemented measures like tagging high-value items, such as meat and cheeses, to deter theft. Additionally, there is mounting evidence that a significant portion of shoplifting incidents is committed by repeat offenders, and organised raids on shops have also seen troubling increases. Shopkeepers have even started resorting to [shaming criminals on social media](#) in an attempt to curb the problem.

Darrell Coghlan, Director of [3000 Security Services](#) says “The spike in retail theft is a major concern for our community. In response, we have seen a marked increase in requests for our skilled retail security personnel. Our team is dedicated to providing effective, on-the-ground support to protect local businesses and maintain a safe shopping environment.”

Birmingham's struggle with shoplifting mirrors a larger national issue. The alarming surge in retail theft poses a significant challenge for local businesses, retailers, and law enforcement agencies. As the government explores measures to combat this problem, it is crucial for communities to remain vigilant and support initiatives aimed at curbing shoplifting. Together, we can work towards a safer and more secure retail environment for all.

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