

NEWS RELEASE



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22 October 2009

BUSINESSES IN WATFORD BAN SHOPLIFTERS FOR A YEAR

WATFORD BUSINESS AGAINST CRIME has taken robust action against three known shoplifters. After a string of separate incidents, some of them shop theft and some anti-social behaviour, members of Watford Business Against Crime agreed that the three individuals, two men and a woman, should be banned from all member stores for a year.

An Exclusion Order Scheme was introduced in Watford by Watford Business Against Crime earlier this year. These three individuals are the first people to be excluded under the scheme.

Pauline O'Brien, who manages Watford Business Against Crime on behalf of its members said:

"The Exclusion Order Scheme is one of a whole raft of measures that businesses are now using to combat shop theft and other crime in the town centre.

"Businesses and police keep records of who the most prolific offenders are, and if the individuals concerned continue to commit crime or misbehave in the town centre, then they will be banned from all WBAC stores."

Once an individual commits a number of offences in a specific timeframe, they will be sent a warning letter asking them to stop their criminal or unacceptable behaviour or risk being excluded from all member stores. Members include The Harlequin as well as every department store in the town and numerous shops in the high street and on the nearby retail parks. Offences carried out after receipt of a warning letter leads to a twelve month exclusion.

Pauline went on to say: "Businesses have had enough of putting up with shop theft and individuals intent on causing trouble in the town. Now they're fighting back.

"Shoplifters and trouble makers are often ignorant of the powers that businesses have when they join together to deal with problems. There exists an implied permission for people to shop in stores in Watford. And that permission can and will be withdrawn if individuals continue to behave in a way that most people who visit, shop and work in Watford find unacceptable."

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: For further information contact Pauline O'Brien on 07595 218136.