

## PRESS INFORMATION

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## CREDIT CRUNCH CRIME WATCH

Humberside Police Authority is keeping a very close watch on whether the economic downturn is increasing the risk to the public of becoming victims of crime.

The Authority has supported a proactive strategy against crime which has led to significant reductions in theft, robbery and vehicle crime. However, alongside many other forces, burglary figures across the Humberside area have seen an increase in the last six months and the Authority is keen to ensure that this rise is turned round to a fall.

Chair of the Police Authority, Ms Alene Branton MBE, said that crime is not the answer to financial problems. "I'm pleased that overall crime has fallen across the Humberside Police area," she said. "But we are asking the force to step up their work to try and reverse the recent upswing in burglary.

"People who commit crime should be aware that its effects can be devastating for the victims and indeed, their own families. Those convicted of a crime could impose even greater hardship on their families and they will, of course, have a criminal record in the future.

"We are monitoring the situation closely and have asked the force to provide regular reports on progress. We will also work with our partners to see how we, as an Authority, can support campaigns against property crime.

"It is also worrying that people trying to reduce their energy bills may leave themselves more vulnerable to burglary. Cutting back on intruder lighting devices and turning lights and radios off when you are out could prove to be false economy, so we hope that people will act on crime reduction agency advice, which can be found at <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk> or by talking to a local officer."

Ms Branton also warned people to be suspicious of goods for sale at prices that appear 'too good to be true'. "If common sense tells you that something is far too cheap to be honestly acquired, then your instinct is probably right, so don't touch it. You could end up out of pocket in more ways than one."

Crimes such as shoplifting also tend to rise in harder times. One of the priorities of the Police Authority this year was shoplifting due to the high-volume of crime which the Home Office is not specifically focusing on but which blights local communities. This request to the Chief Constable by the Police Authority, asking the Force to focus on reducing shoplifting (and also commercial burglary) is starting to produce results.

- Ends -

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