

# HOW TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL STREET STALL ON RETAIL CRIME

Retail crime is a scourge on our high streets which has a profound cost not just on retailers but the shopworkers who are too often forced to endure this criminality. Throughout 2023, reports from across the retail sector demonstrate the extent to which this crisis is escalating, with soaring rates of retail crime including shoplifting and the violence, threats and abuse directed towards retail staff. Across the first six months of the year alone, for instance, Co-op reported 175,000 recorded incidents, representing around 1,000 incidents a day and an increase of 35% from 2022.

Throughout the country criminals have been given the freedom to loot, with organised crime gangs often stealing to order and persistently repeating these offences in the same shops. What's more, these criminal acts often act as flashpoints for anti-social behaviour against retail staff who are subject to appalling levels of violence, threats and abuse as they go about their jobs.

Throughout last year, the Co-operative Party worked with the trade union USDAW and co-operative retail societies to secure a vital policy commitment from the Labour Party to address this crisis and go further in protecting shop workers from threats, violence and abuse they face at work. But without action from the current government, there is still more we must do.

That's why we're providing you with the tips and materials to take this campaign to your local high street to talk about the work we're doing to secure additional protections for shopworkers across the country.

## **Step 1: Set a date and choose a location**

**Date:** Choose a sensible 1-2 hour slot when you know it will be busy. Set the date a good couple of weeks ahead so you can promote it and people can put it in their diaries.

**Location:** Location is important. You want to choose somewhere with a large footfall, but which doesn't block shop entrances or the pavement. In most places it's OK to set up a street stall for a couple of hours but you may wish to check with the council if it's a busy market or high street.

## **Step 2: Promote it**

**Ideally, you want 4 or 5 people to help out on a street stall.**

Create an event on Facebook and share it with your networks. Don't be afraid to ask family and friends to help – often they'll come for 30 mins just to help out even if they are not members of the Co-operative Party. Make sure your local Co-operative Party branch (and if appropriate Labour Party branch) are emailed well in advance so that they can promote it and ask people to sign up to help.



## **Step 3: Figure out what you'll need**

**You don't need a trestle table for a street stall – but it often helps.**

You'll also want:

- a banner or 'feather flag' – so that you're visible
- leaflets – something to hand out
- pens or balloons – something for people to take
- GDPR compliant petition – something for people to sign (we recommend using our template petitions)
- membership forms – so that people can join
- a camera or smartphone – something that takes pictures
- and a briefing note for people who will be on the stall so they know what they're doing there.

**All this can seem quite daunting if you are starting from scratch– but party staff can generally provide you with most of what you will need. Drop us a line.**

## **Step 4: A few days before**

- Check the weather – you might want to remind people to bring an umbrella, wear a fleece, or wear sun cream.
- Remind people to come who have promised and get their mobile numbers so you can chase them on the day if they don't turn up & perhaps draw up a rota if you need to.

## **Step 5: Have fun!**

- Smile and be polite – and remember, if it's not fun you're doing it wrong!
- Don't all hide behind the trestle table – make sure at least one person is handing out leaflets and drawing people into the street stall.
- Take photos on your smartphone or camera (see our tips on taking great photos).
- And don't overdo it – two hours is plenty for a street stall.

## **Step 6: The day after**

Congratulations, you've run a good street stall, talked to dozens of people, collected signatures and taken some great photos. Now don't let all the hard work go to waste.

- Thank everyone who came to help – they're more likely to come back again if you thank them.
- Send the petition forms to the Co-operative Party ([mail@party.coop](mailto:mail@party.coop))
- Share the photos on social media and copy the Co-operative Party in so that we can amplify your success.
- Write a press release to the local paper telling them about the issue and how interested people were.