



CrimeStoppers.

Connections

Spring 2019

30 years:
our origins,
influence and
today's challenges

Lord Ashcroft, Founder and Chair of Crimestoppers, reflects on the origins and importance of our charity



“Since Crimestoppers began, we have received nearly two million actionable pieces of information.”

As we celebrate our 30th anniversary, it's a perfect time to contemplate our charity's origins. It seems unfathomable today, but before 1988 there was no way for people to pass on their information about crime whilst remaining completely anonymous or without speaking directly to the police.

Whilst most people are willing to speak up about crime, there is a sizable proportion who refuse to do so. There are many reasons why this is the case. For some, it's cultural; for others, it's fear of reprisals or negative consequences.

Crimestoppers started as the Community Action Trust following enthusiasm and support given by Metropolitan Police Commissioners Sir Kenneth Newman and Sir Peter Imbert. They could see the huge advantage to police investigations of having intelligence available that is given by the public anonymously – information that otherwise would simply be lost.

Invaluable charity status

At the time of formation, we resolved to set up as a charity. Hindsight is a wonderful thing

and it's a great relief that charity status was our preference. This works legally – in terms of how the police and courts manage information guaranteeing anonymity – but also in terms of public perception. Being an independent charity, separate from the normal apparatus of government and law enforcement, means that people are more trusting of us.

Last year over 450,000 people contacted us to pass on their crime information. This represents a wealth of information and useful leads that help police to make strides in investigations or enable them to have a better picture of what is happening on the ground. This is especially useful at a time when resources are stretched.

Current achievements

Crime is rarely out of the headlines and we regularly receive important information from the public that gives investigators a vital missing piece of the jigsaw. With anonymity at the heart of everything we do, you will appreciate that I am unable to give you any specifics because of that fundamental promise.

However, we know anecdotally that information we pass on to

police – including that relating to high-profile crimes – is often incredibly useful.

Since Crimestoppers began, we have received nearly two million actionable pieces of information. This has led to more than 145,000 people being arrested and charged, almost £140 million of stolen goods being recovered and drugs worth nearly £350 million being seized.

Most Wanted

I'm also proud of Crimestoppers' Most Wanted. I was keen for us to provide a one-stop shop where people can search for individuals who are wanted by law enforcement and on the run. Our Most Wanted campaigns, both in the UK and abroad, such as Operation Captura with the National Crime Agency, have caught the public's imagination. Since its introduction in 2005, there have been over 4,230 arrests.

True value

Crimestoppers' value is not just in terms of achieving results, such as our information leading to arrests and convictions. An external consultant estimated that Crimestoppers' value to policing was in the region of £145 million each year. And yet our current costs are £5 million. That is a significant rate of return.

It demonstrates that our charity can continue to build on its unique position, offering a vital lifeline to often the most vulnerable who feel they have nowhere else to turn.

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Our CEO Mark Hallas assesses our charity's influence, both today and in the future

Crimestoppers is a charity with a great history; even more importantly, though, it has a bright future.

Our core appeal is providing a voice for the disenfranchised, to reach out to those people who want to do the right thing but can't quite bring themselves to talk to the police directly, for whatever reason. This resonates as strongly as ever.

Building on our strong foundations, we want and need to encourage more people to 'Speak up and stop crime'. We are doing more in the area of high harm and are making sure that critical issues, such as domestic abuse, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation, are focused on in a way that produces demonstrable results and helps improve lives.

Team Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers works best when pulling together as a team. From our professional call agents, to our committed volunteers; our inspirational Regional Managers, to our supportive Central Office staff: we all believe in what we are doing and work as hard and innovatively as possible to protect the public.

Everyone at Crimestoppers believes passionately in the worth of our work and this brings people together, in common cause, to get things done.

The Contact Centre staff are indispensable. They listen carefully, judge no one, and turn information into invaluable intelligence for law enforcement agencies. Their skill, commitment and professionalism is confirmed daily and gratefully appreciated.

At a time of rising anger and violence among younger people, often due to adverse childhood experiences, our Fearless team's role is especially important.

"Keeping pace with technology and the way that we all communicate is critical."

Having tangible options around responding to crime counteracts a sense of hopelessness that many genuinely feel.

Our footprint is bolstered throughout the UK by our hundreds of volunteers. Their direct connection helps spread the word at a truly local level and their input is vital for the future relevance and well-being of the charity.

Changing face of crime

So how do we prepare for the future?

I firmly believe we need to respond to the changing nature of crime whilst remembering that much remains the same. Keeping pace with technology and the way that we all communicate is critical, including social media engagement, use of video and tailoring our campaigns for today's audiences.

Fifteen years ago we only took telephone calls. Now, two-thirds of our information is received online. We need to keep pace with that shift in communications and make the most of opportunities whilst

remaining available and open to all.

In addition to raising awareness and prevention, we are focusing on upskilling our analytics capability. We are investing in automation to allow forces to instantly receive information reports. This improves feedback and provides a full audit trail.

Working collaboratively with our partners – commercial, charity and public sector – we can do more for the common good. Our business partners share our ethos of staying safe and, in turn, are better able to manage reputational risk and improve security. This benefits us all, especially when tackling new challenges such as raising awareness and preventing cyber-crime.

Blueprint for the future

I am proud of the impact Crimestoppers is having and the way that we have remained relevant in a dynamic and changing world. But we are not resting on our laurels.

We are currently embarking on a comprehensive programme of engagement with volunteers, staff and wider stakeholders to see what is working well and what's not. At the end of this, we will be in a position to build an even better Crimestoppers that works for us all.

Key to that, alongside a focus on people, is our promise of anonymity, which remains at the heart of who we are and what we do.



Exciting, exhausting and emotional – welcome to life as a Crimestoppers call agent



Photos by Emily Dews Photography ©

Answers come from discussions with staff at our Contact Centre

Do you get an extra buzz from certain calls?

There is an escalated sense of purpose whenever something about a bomb threat or murder comes in. It's partially due to the event happening in real time. When we receive the same name and details several times for a high-profile appeal which has captured the public's imagination you can feel the energy go around the room. There is a special urgency about getting the information passed on quickly and hoping for a good result.

Some of us have been here so long that we tend to be a little immune to the impact of the big reports. This can work in our favour, as we also develop an immunity to the more harrowing cases.

Which call meant the most to you for whatever reason?

My most memorable call was one on a cannabis farm which led to over £1 million worth of drugs being seized.

I have had so many calls about County Lines. I remember them and use them to warn others of the dangers these gangs pose to children.

I am proud about one I took relating to a prisoner who was going to escape and our information and quick response stopped it from happening.

My favourite was about a chap who would pack an ice-cream

van full of drugs, pretend to break down a couple of miles from his house and get a breakdown service to take him to his destination where he would unload his drugs and drive home.

I remember a call about a man who was following his ex-girlfriend and had installed a tracker to her car. The information we received said that he was going to kidnap her and when police caught him they told us he had been arrested with a 'kidnap' kit in the boot of his vehicle and that they had indeed recovered a tracker from the victim's car that was being monitored by a mobile telephone.

Is it hard to deal with certain calls?

All agents discuss some calls with one another; sometimes you need to clarify the best way to process the information or want a second opinion.

Some calls can be upsetting or tough and you need to clear your head and share what has upset you. Some of the child abuse ones stay with you after your shift.

What happens on a shift?

As shift leaders, we decide if information should be passed on to the police and how to respond if we feel there's an immediate threat to life. We also have to manage the flow of calls and forms to make sure it is well balanced across the call

floor, meets the skillsets and ensures agents don't become disheartened with too much of one type of call. Taking calls on drugs for ten hours straight can wear down an agent.

Shifts vary in their nature. During the day the phones never stop while overnight is quieter and you'll spend more time catching up on the online forms that have come in. Whichever shift you are on you'll come away exhausted but feeling you have made a difference to society.

- **Hours:** The majority of staff work four days on, four off with a mixture of 12- and ten-hour shifts. There is a bank of part-time staff who can cover shortages or increased demand.
- **Staff numbers:** At the peak time of 2pm there can be 17 agents working. This drops to five during the night.
- **Phone lines:** Currently about 25.
- **Current split of CONVERTED calls to online forms:** Per month 37% calls: 63% forms.
- **Support:** Counselling and an employees' support hotline.

Road to Crimestoppers UK began in Wichita, Kansas, and had a few detours

If you were to guess the place which led to the birth of Crimestoppers in the UK, Wichita in Kansas would be a long way down the list. Yet it was there that I attended the USA's national Crimestoppers Conference in 1985 with Ian Harley (later chairman of the first London Board).

At that conference we met Detective Greg MacAleese from Albuquerque, New Mexico, who had the original idea in 1976. He was investigating the murder of a young student working in a petrol station, one of a series of armed robberies in the area, but had no leads.

Greg set up a telephone hotline offering anonymity to callers. He persuaded local businesses to fund a reward and the local media to broadcast the appeal, including the unique offer of anonymity. Within 72 hours, he had the information that led to the arrest and conviction of the murderers. Information about other unsolved crimes and unknown criminal activity was given freely.

I had recently moved from the Flying Squad to 'C' Department Planning Group at New Scotland Yard, a think tank for improving detective work. I went to the conference, listened

with great interest and also visited Crimestoppers' Units at Houston, which was then the USA 'murder capital', and New York, for its comparable size to London.

Having listened to the skill and sensitivity of detectives taking the calls, I knew we should do that in the UK. Flying home, I formulated the headings for my report with great excitement. Opening a channel to hear the voice of the disenfranchised, while removing fear of reprisals. A partnership with business. Mobilising the media.

Dashed hopes

My hopes were soon dashed. A report and presentations to my senior officers and the Home Office Crime Prevention Unit were met with strong objections: anonymity would be a dangerous precedent in our legal system; besides, every citizen should be encouraged to do their civic duty and report what they know to the police.

It was shelved until 1988, when I met Michael (now Lord) Ashcroft and Angela Entwistle to work out how his idea for business to support policing by rewarding informers could work. The Community

Action Trust was formed as a registered charity. The cash for rewards was promised by Michael's business friends. A blank sheet of paper and six months to deliver is pure fantasy for most projects but it happened for this one and Michael and I presented our proposals to business, media and law enforcement.

Thanks to the late Lord Imbert, then Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the Home Office had a change of heart over anonymity. Legal precedent was set and has remained: it is in the public interest to protect the anonymity guarantee. Within ten years, by public demand, Crimestoppers' footprint was UK-wide, based on the London design that was launched in October 1988.

Unimaginable growth

I like to think I am a big picture man but even I did not think beyond my task to be ready for launch in London within six months. I certainly did not or could not imagine what Crimestoppers could become in the UK.

I had recommended the new unit be staffed by detectives.



"The crime landscape is vastly different now, with cyber-crime, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation, unheard of back in the day. Society has changed greatly, including attitudes towards contacting the police."

From listening in to the calls in the USA, I was convinced of the need. Twelve years later, as the Association of Chief Police Officers lead on Crimestoppers, I penned a chapter in 'Informers: Policing, Policy, Practice': "The use of detectives to receive the calls has proved to be the best way of ensuring that corroboration and opportunities are identified so that action upon anonymous information is both feasible and legal."

Change of mind

Thanks to the vision of Crimestoppers CEO Mick Laurie and support from Sir Paul Stephenson, chair of

the ACPO Crime Committee and later Metropolitan Police Commissioner, I changed my mind and we secured national police support for what is now the Contact Centre. It would be completely ineffective now to offer a limited-hours telephone-only service.

Thirty years on, I have sat with call handlers in the Contact Centre, which is open every hour of every day, and they are every bit as good as the team of detectives who picked up the phone in 1988. Most do not have police experience but all have the requisite skills of listening, reassurance, empathy and negotiation

to elicit the best from those who give us their information, whether by phone or online.

The crime landscape is vastly different now, with cyber-crime, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation, unheard of back in the day. Society has changed greatly, including attitudes towards contacting the police. One thing has stayed the same: at its core, Crimestoppers listens to the public, preserves their anonymity and helps to bring criminals to justice.

Bill Griffiths CBE BEM QPM is a former Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service and a current Trustee of Crimestoppers.



“Our two institutions have developed a strong partnership based on mutual respect and the experience built over 30 years of close working.”

Met Commissioner says ‘Crimestoppers is invaluable’

As Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, I am delighted to have been asked to contribute. During my career I have witnessed countless occasions where Crimestoppers has provided a crucial role supporting the Metropolitan Police Service in our mission to keep people safe and reduce crime.

Policing faces ever increasing challenges in discharging our core function, faced with reducing budgets, new, complex and anonymous crimes such as cyber-crime and modern slavery, together with the serious threat posed by violence and terrorism. All these factors are creating a strain on a finite number of officers and staff.

Unique bond

Working in collaboration is something I am passionate about. The bond that exists between Crimestoppers and the Metropolitan Police Service is unique and has without question contributed to ensuring that the capital remains a safe destination, whether you are visiting, a resident from our very many diverse communities or one of the countless people who work in our great city.

In 1985, after the murder of PC Keith Blakelock, the police experienced the challenge of gathering crucial information from within some communities, many of which were vulnerable

and afraid. Those challenges remain relevant today and the role of Crimestoppers is an essential bridge between our communities and the police service.

I am acutely aware of the challenges associated with encouraging members within our diverse communities to provide information direct to the police, if they are fearful of reprisal, or have cultural distrust of police and for some who may also be concerned about speaking to police directly because of their own {perceived} vulnerability.

Supporting the bond and collaboration between us is something I care deeply about. I am delighted to say that in 2019, the relationship between Crimestoppers and the Metropolitan Police Service has strengthened immeasurably since those early days.

Mutual respect

Our two institutions have developed a strong partnership based on mutual respect and the experience built over 30 years of close working.

I have ensured I maintain a dedicated team of Police Officers and staff within my Intelligence Command, with the specific aim of taking in the information received from Crimestoppers and developing this into actionable intelligence. My team have built a strong working relationship with

staff at Crimestoppers, sharing experience, training and knowledge to enhance the opportunities of gathering and managing the information and working more collaboratively together.

Plays an invaluable role

Today, Crimestoppers continues to play an invaluable role in supporting our communities in providing information anonymously. They also provide an important function to my colleagues across London in locating outstanding wanted persons through their Most Wanted pages, and through campaigns supporting key Metropolitan Police priorities such as the current campaign tackling knife crime violence amongst our young people.

The important task performed by Crimestoppers yields over 1300 separate pieces of information every month; often they include a crucial missing piece of the jigsaw that leads my officers to making vital arrests for some of the most serious offences or recovering property or evidence. Information from our communities is vital to supporting the efforts of the police to meet our mission of maintaining London as one of the world's safest cities, and the mission of Crimestoppers in gathering that information anonymously is key.

Cressida Dick CBE QPM is Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service.

Regional work shows how crime infiltrates communities

With more than a decade in police crime and intelligence, Gemma Gibbs thought little at Crimestoppers would faze her. But she was wrong.

As a Regional Manager I cover Yorkshire, Hull and Lincolnshire and the Humber for Crimestoppers, but I also lead nationally for the charity on Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA). I have been running campaigns on the subject since 2013, ranging from how to spot signs of victims, to organising a conference aimed at helping child protection staff to understand perpetrators' behaviour.

During my first year with Crimestoppers I attended a conference where a victim of CSEA spoke and it took all my professionalism not to break down and cry at hearing what this girl had gone through. When she was abused, she wasn't much older than my daughter was at that time and I'd never heard anything like it. It's one of the reasons I'm passionate about raising awareness of this crime.

I used to get my children to read my posters and leaflets on CSEA, asking them if it made sense to people their age. I was educating and safeguarding them without it

feeling too formal, while making sure the material was right for the relevant age group.

That is growing harder as audiences for digital and printed media platforms are split more and more by age groups. Digital is becoming increasingly important for our campaigns but we have to be smart because to reach young people, for example, we are better off using Instagram than Facebook.

Targeted digital campaigning

The big advantage of digital campaigning is the targeting. A drugs turf war can be confined to a tight area and so we will run text mobile, social media advertising and leaflet drops over as small an area as a single postcode. Campaigns for other crimes, such as County Lines, require a wider approach and could include press releases, an ad van, billboards and printed advertising on the backs of the bathroom doors in service stations and lorry parks on the main route between the two areas.

The nature of crimes and criminal behaviour is also changing. Burglary and car theft have been replaced as major priorities in

most forces by the likes of modern slavery. Much of my job is about engagement with the police, community groups, local government, universities, volunteers and so on, and that means that I hear about people's perception of crime from diverse sources.

The public often have anti-social behaviour as their main concern, partly because it is visible. We tackle this issue whenever we can, with one example being a campaign in South Yorkshire in response to an outbreak of graffiti. As long as we have the police's support in place to handle the information and guarantee it's passed to local policing, we'll run a campaign.

Police priorities

However, it often happens that these issues are pushed down the list from a force or Regional Organised Crime Unit perspective, with knife crime, modern slavery and County Lines being prioritised.

Whilst people may not directly understand how these police force priorities impact upon their own communities, the fact is crime gangs work across a host of areas and this includes trafficking young people across the country



"We will run text mobile, social media advertising and leaflet drops over as small an area as a single postcode."

to transport and sell drugs, shootings and stabbings to take out the rival dealers, buying into modern slavery in nail bars or car washes to launder money and selling guns to other criminals.

Crime hits all communities

This affects a community through school children being lured out of school and into a life of crime when they hear that a peer got hundreds of pounds for a month's drug dealing in another county. It means local businesses are struggling to compete with slave labour or being intimidated and forced to pay for 'protection' from organised crime groups.

Part of my job is to help people understand how crimes impact upon their lives and how they can speak up about them to us, remain anonymous and stay safe.

The work-life balance is hard to manage, especially as I am a single Mum with two teenaged children on the autistic spectrum, and it can be emotionally and physically draining but it will always be worth it.



Craig Douglas on how Crimestoppers helped his family search for his missing sister Lisa Brown

“We need to know where Lisa is, we need to bring her home and Crimestoppers is helping us do that.”

My sister Lisa Brown disappeared on 4 November 2015.

These past three years have been the most painful time of our lives.

Pain that no family should ever have to endure, where every day our thoughts are consumed with not knowing what happened to someone you have known and loved all your life.

People lose loved ones every day. Sometimes it is through tragedies that should never happen and, for them, their lives are never the same again.

I can tell you that the pain of losing someone you love never goes away.

Most people can mourn those loved ones after a death. They know where they are, they can go to their grave. There are few families worldwide who are suffering like us without a grave, without any knowledge where Lisa is. This is unbearable.

We need to know where Lisa is, we need to bring her home and Crimestoppers is helping us do that. We are offering a reward of £100,000, an amount which can change someone's life. If it inspires them to give information to Crimestoppers which reveals where Lisa is then it would change my family's life.

Appeal gave hunt fresh energy

Crimestoppers helped us to launch the appeal in Spain last year with the Spanish regional government and the British Ambassador. The launch brought a huge response from the media and some important

new leads for the Spanish police through the information given to Crimestoppers.

It has definitely given fresh energy to the hunt for what happened to Lisa and I am sure that came about because of the combination of the reward and that the information given through Crimestoppers is 100% anonymous.

People's loyalties change or their consciences nag at them but

“We believe that the combination of the reward and the guarantee of anonymity should make people feel able and willing to give information.”

they still have their own needs and motives. We believe that the combination of the reward and the guarantee of anonymity should make people feel able and willing to give information.

My sister Lisa was a beautiful young woman, someone who was kind and gentle, but more than anything else she was a brilliant mother. She worked tirelessly to provide her son with the best possible life he could have.

“We are asking people to please look deep inside themselves and do the right thing.”

This little boy went to school one day and came home that night to find that his Mum had been taken away from him and from us for ever. We can't understand how anyone could do that to Lisa, so how can a child be expected to understand?

Have loyalties changed?

There are people out there who know who has wrecked our family – we are certain of that. They are allowing those responsible to get away with stealing a mother, a daughter, a sister, a friend and yet they go about their daily lives as if nothing ever happened.

We are asking people to please look deep inside themselves and do the right thing. People who have been thinking about coming forward or whose loyalties have changed.

Whatever the reason, please come forward with any information you might have, regardless of whether or not you think it's important. The information you give through Crimestoppers is 100% anonymous.

My family and everyone who knew Lisa has suffered enough. There is a little ten-year-old boy who is still a child but has had to grow up too fast so he can understand what has happened to the most important person in his life.

He has suffered enough and God only knows what he thinks.

You can end his suffering.

You can end the suffering for all of my family.

Pick up the phone, fill in the web form and help Crimestoppers tell us what you know.

“Please come forward with any information you might have.”



Name:

Lisa Brown

Last seen:

04/11/15

Last seen in:

Guadairo, Andalucia, Spain

From:

Alexandria, Scotland

Emigrated to Spain

aged 18

Age at disappearance:

32

Appeal launched:

23/03/18

Reward:

up to £100,000

Keeping young people away from crime is only for the Fearless

By Andrea Accison

Working for Fearless – the youth service of Crimestoppers – I thought I'd seen and heard everything. That's until I was taking a secondary school class through a narrative about a real-life stabbing and one young man started laughing. I have worked with young people in and around Birmingham for years but even I was astonished by his blasé manner.

I didn't want the other young people thinking it was OK to act that way but this generation often responds with bravado if challenged so I had to speak slowly and calmly to avoid making him look foolish in front of his friends.

He ended up saying that he laughed because he didn't understand the seriousness of what I was saying and didn't know what to say or do. He thought stabbing could never happen to him. Like a lot of his peers, he struggled to articulate how he felt and was not getting any guidance at home.

This is one small example of the need for Fearless, which has been steadily growing since its creation as the youth wing of Crimestoppers in 2011 to work with those aged 11 to 16. It will have 15 youth outreach workers like me by the end of 2019 in all parts of the country.

As well as guaranteeing anonymity for anyone giving information online about crime, Fearless provides educational resources and tools covering everything from gangs to child sexual exploitation, illegal drugs to weapons.

We give training suitable for anyone working with young people such as Safer Schools Officers, sports coaches, school nurses, teachers, Safer Neighbourhood Teams and youth workers as well. These are free, as are sessions for the young people.

County Lines' evil influence

Gangs are targeting teenagers and even younger children as members and as victims to a level never seen before. Much of this is down to County Lines, where big-city gangs forcibly take over the drugs trade in smaller towns.

Children see their classmates earning what looks like big money delivering or selling drugs and want to do the same without understanding the risks involved. Gangs also pretend to be a surrogate family for those who might feel forgotten at home. Once they are involved in crime it can be hard and



dangerous to get out. So, it's far better if services such as Fearless warn them of the dangers.

Crime and gangs are constantly changing, however, making it hard to keep up with what is happening to young people. It is why I am seeing demands for Fearless grow exponentially both geographically and in the type of professionals who need to know what is happening.

Despite this, there are schools which don't want me coming in. They think that it will affect their reputation. They think it will never happen to their pupils. But, as I told the young man who was laughing in my session, crime can, and does, happen to anyone.



“Once they are involved in crime it can be hard and dangerous to get out. So, it's far better if services such as Fearless warn them of the dangers.”

Inmate hotline cuts crime behind bars

I am sometimes asked why it matters that so many of our prisons are awash with drugs and mobile phones. So what if drug dealers and other criminals carry on their business behind the prison walls? At least communities are being spared their attentions for a while, the argument goes. Well, let me tell you what I see in the many jails I visit as Chief Inspector of Prisons, and then you can make your own mind up as to whether it matters, and whether Crimestoppers has a vital role to play.

Drugs have undermined the stability of many jails. They get in by being thrown over the wall, through visits, by prisoners smuggling them in, on drones and of course, through corrupt staff. Drugs generate debt, bullying and violence. They are directly connected to many, many deaths in prisons. Medical emergencies because of drugs are daily occurrences and cases of extreme self-harm are far too common. On occasions, emergency services have been stretched to the limit responding to multiple drug casualties in a prison.

Criminal gangs fight for control of the trade, threatening and corrupting staff. Debts reach out into communities, following prisoners on release, and are transferred onto family members. Gang affiliations are reinforced by criminals plying their trade behind bars, and it's all made easier because of the ready availability of illicit mobile phones.

Why does this matter? Quite apart from the fact that there are huge criminal profits to be made either side of the prison walls,

violence and fear are getting in the way of prisoners serving their sentences with any hope of emerging less likely to re-offend.

Drugs fuels prison violence

Violence in prison has risen hugely in recent years, fuelled by the drugs trade. As a result, far too many prisoners don't get to training, education or employment during their sentence. They are locked in their cells for almost every hour of the day and night, using drugs to kill the time, building up resentments and not being prepared for eventual release into the community. Many have little or no chance of turning their lives around.

So how can Crimestoppers help? I honestly believe we have a vital role to play. It is in everyone's interest for prisons to become places where prisoners are held safely and securely, where they don't spend their entire lives in fear, where they can get out

of their cells to do something worthwhile, and where they can focus on what they are going to do after their release rather than worrying about staying alive until that day comes. Crimestoppers already does a lot in prisons, but I'm sure we can do more.

Prisons are communities, too

Last year we disseminated some 2,500 intelligence reports, many of which had a positive outcome. This year we are expanding our work in more than 20 prisons which, between them, house men, women and young offenders to encourage prisoners, visitors and staff to give information. Our 100% guarantee of anonymity is crucial in giving prisoners the confidence to contact us. Prisons are themselves communities, and just as on the outside, there are plenty of people who want to live peaceful lives, untroubled by threats, intimidation, violence and corruption.

Crimestoppers can help, but so far, we only receive calls from less than a third of prisons. We need to build awareness and trust in what we do amongst prisoners and visitors alike. They must have confidence in the expertise of our call handlers, and know that calls to us can help make prisons safer places where violence and criminality give way to hope and rehabilitation. In other words, we can do in prisons what we have been doing so successfully in communities for well over 30 years.

Peter Clarke CVO OBE QPM is a Trustee of Crimestoppers, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons and a former Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police Service



"Our 100% guarantee of anonymity is crucial."



Minister applauds work on ‘hidden harms’

A lot has changed in the past 30 years.

Unfortunately, crime has also developed and criminals are committing ever more complicated crimes which present new and complex challenges for the police. Thankfully, what has remained constant is Crimestoppers' mission to protect the anonymity of people wishing to report crimes.

For 30 years, Crimestoppers has been there for people who want to do what's right, but, for whatever reason, feel like they cannot go to the police. They have grown in ambition and their support provides those who are vulnerable, or afraid, with the confidence to speak up and stay safe. This anonymous

service has provided a way for communities to feel protected and it is thanks to Crimestoppers that 26,000 crimes were prevented or solved in the past 12 months.

The charity has campaigned to great effect against the hidden crimes that blight society such as domestic abuse, child exploitation and modern slavery. Friends, family and colleagues who are often aware of these crimes taking place are able to speak up and provide intelligence through the charity. For example, more than 100 potential modern slavery cases were identified last year in a joint campaign between Crimestoppers and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority.

The Government's Modern Slavery Act means there are currently more than 800 live police operations targeting these awful crimes. At the Home Office we have increased law enforcement activity leading to around 400 arrests a month for child sexual exploitation. Through £100m investment to tackle violence against women and girls and the new Domestic Abuse Bill and White Paper we will strengthen our response to domestic abuse by intervening early to stop perpetrators and protect victims.

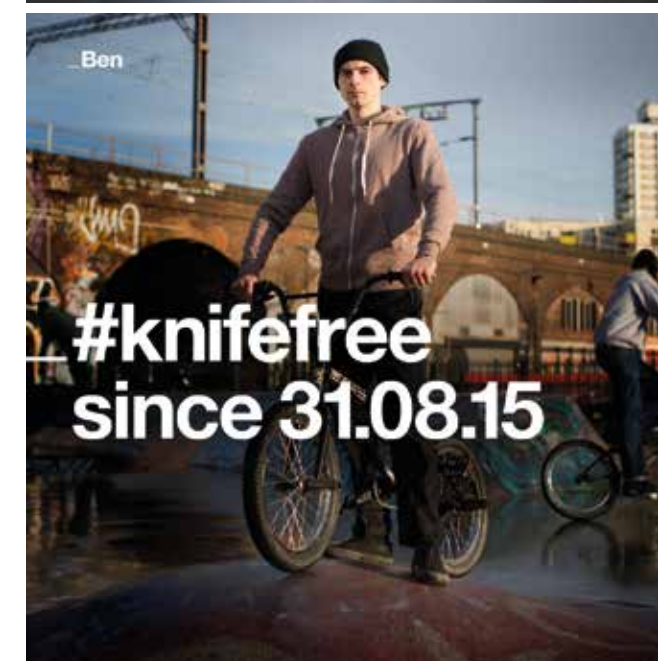
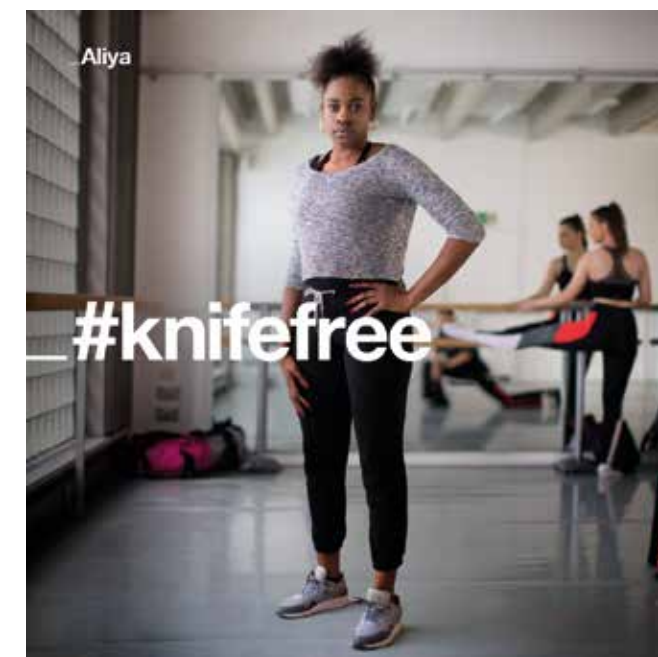
This Government is also taking its duty to tackle crime seriously through its Serious Violence Strategy, which represents a step change in our approach with a focus on early intervention and tackling the root causes of the

issue whilst continuing to ensure a robust law enforcement response. We must be tough on the perpetrators of violent crime and we are making sure that the police have the resources and powers they need to tackle crime. The Offensive Weapons Bill, currently going through Parliament, will restrict the sale of knives online and to under 18s, while co-ordinated police action is taking knives and guns off our streets.

Local communities often make possible changes that government cannot do on its own. Crimestoppers stands for community support, and making communities safer together forms the Government's Serious Violence Strategy. We are clear that tackling this issue is not for law enforcement alone, but needs to involve people from all manner of groups. By supporting these communities through initiatives such as the Early Intervention Youth Fund, the anti-knife crime Community Fund and the #knifefree campaign, we hope to help local communities tackle violent crime and prevent young people from getting involved.

Crimestoppers' work has an impact every day. Whether it is helping support victims of domestic abuse, or providing the police with more information about County Lines gangs, the information they receive can be invaluable. As the charity celebrates its 30th anniversary, I would like to congratulate them on their fantastic achievements and urge people to continue to come forward and use their service.

Victoria Atkins MP is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability.



“Through initiatives such as the Early Intervention Youth Fund, the anti-knife crime Community Fund and the #knifefree campaign, we hope to help local communities tackle violent crime and prevent young people from getting involved.”

Fugitives on the run can't hide for long

It was back in 2006, with the backdrop of the Spanish coast, that members of Crimestoppers, the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the Guardia Civil joined forces to launch the first multi-agency campaign to track down some of the UK's most wanted fugitives.

Here we saw the birth of Operation Captura, a public-facing campaign that appealed to the Spanish and ex-pat communities living on the Spanish Costas, with the aim of locating and extraditing some of the UK's most wanted individuals.

The very first appeal featured ten wanted subjects, which

"Over 700 calls were received in the two weeks that followed the launch, with 65 pieces of actionable information generated."

resulted in an overwhelming response from the public.

Over 700 calls were received in the two weeks that followed the launch, with 65 pieces of actionable information generated. The Most Wanted section of the Crimestoppers website also received eight times its usual traffic on launch day, with 77,000 page impressions. During the pilot period of the campaign (October – January), 1,316 calls were received, resulting in 82 pieces of actionable information. Four of the ten individuals had been arrested by May the following year.

The campaign has continued to go from strength to strength in the 12 years that have followed, with 82 arrests made from 96 individuals appealed for, wanted for crimes including murder, sexual assault and fraud.

On the tenth anniversary of the campaign, Matthew Sammon, a man wanted for possession of indecent images of children, was arrested following information into Crimestoppers on the same day the appeal went out for his whereabouts. The man who gave the information, his former employer, waived his

"The success of Captura has prompted further fugitive campaigns to be launched in the Netherlands and Cyprus."

anonymity by appearing on Sky News to tell his story.

The success of Captura has prompted further fugitive campaigns to be launched in the Netherlands and Cyprus, with the same objective as our campaign in Spain – appeal for the public's help in keeping their community safe by telling us where some of the UK's most wanted individuals are hiding.

In 2010, we launched our first appeal in Amsterdam, with six wanted individuals sought as part of the campaign. To date, there have been 12 arrests from 19 appeals, with one of the most high profile being Robert Gerrard, who handed himself into police after three years on the run.

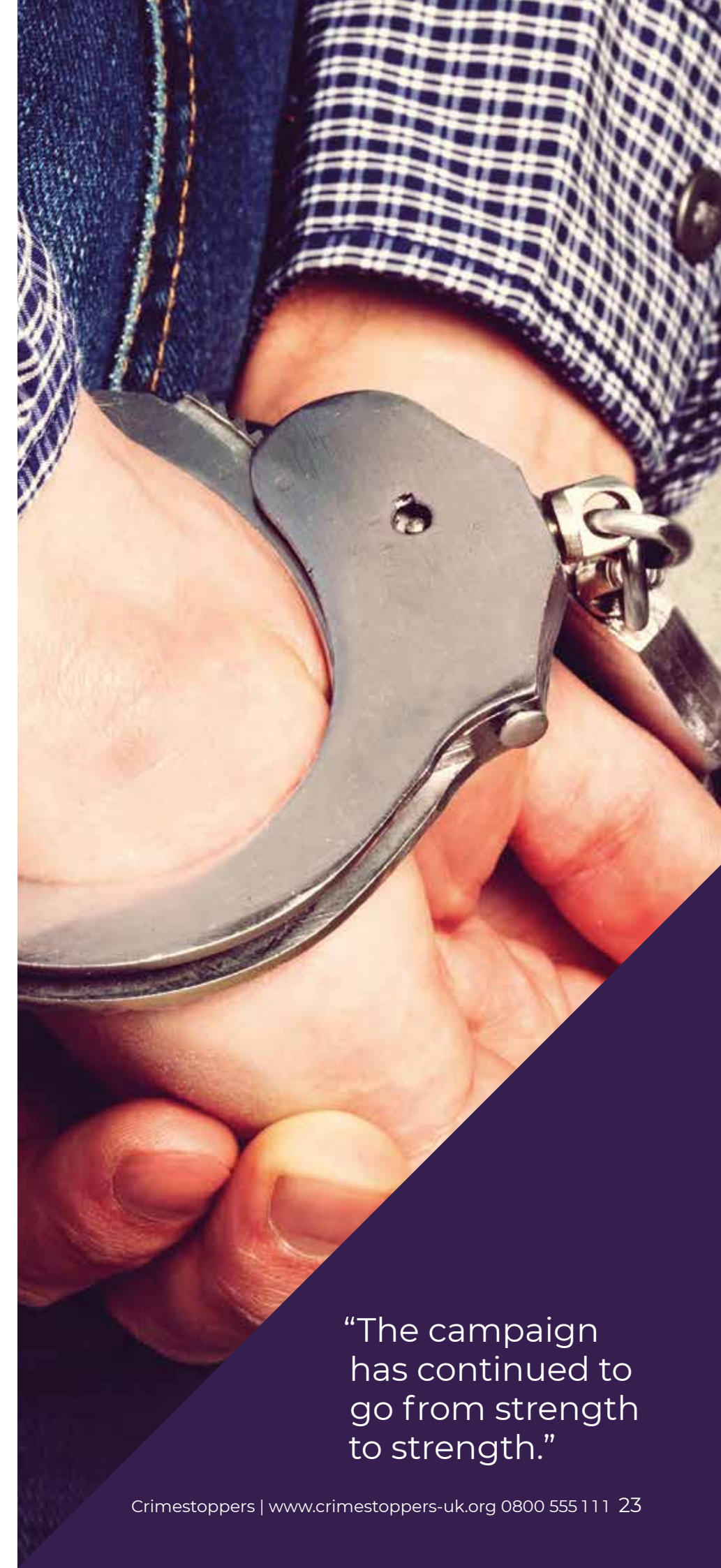
In Cyprus, Operation Zygos was launched, with an initial appeal for six wanted individuals, who were wanted for crimes including sexual assault, tax fraud and assault.

An instant success saw a couple, Wayne Smith and Julie Ann Skelding, cross the green line from the northern territory into southern Cyprus to hand themselves in to the authorities. The couple, wanted for death by dangerous driving and perverting the course of justice, respectively, had been living within the Turkish-occupied territory of North Cyprus, where no one knew of their previous crimes. To date, there have been seven arrests from 14 subjects appealed for.

The collaborative work with the NCA and our partners abroad has been vital to locating some of the country's most wanted fugitives, but the public and media has also played its part in putting pressure on those looking to evade law enforcement.

There are still a number of wanted individuals across the three campaigns, and our hope, along with the help of local communities, is to keep finding their hiding places, wherever they are.

"The campaign has continued to go from strength to strength."





“This is our fourth season of working with Crimestoppers and I’ve always kept my affinity with the charity and my desire to help and support it.”



Motorbikes, drama and hampers all help committees further Crimestoppers’ work

Our 34 committees across the United Kingdom play an integral role for Crimestoppers by bringing together local volunteers who want to make their communities safer.

They achieve this through fundraising, generic awareness raising, targeted campaigns with voluntary and public sector agencies and working with Crimestoppers’ Central

Office on national initiatives. Volunteers support their Regional Managers with professional expertise, introduce them to connections and serve as a sounding board. Committee meetings are a forum for the local community.

One of our most enduring achievements came when local police asked Crimestoppers’ West Country committee to

help address the grooming of children together with anti-social behaviour and drug dealing in inner-city Bristol involving those as young as nine.

With social enterprise Unique Voice, the committee designed and delivered a programme called What Would You Do? that used drama, song and dance to explore issues raised by the pupils.

An audience of 150 saw the pupils of three inner-city Bristol schools showcase their learning at Bristol’s Colston Hall in March 2015. The campaign, working with children aged 9 to 11, has grown every year.

Peter Anderson, Chair of Crimestoppers West Country, says that it shows what a well-balanced and motivated committee can do.

“Having the right balance of voluntary agencies and businesses represented helps us to understand the local crime and disorder hotspots, engage with communities and secure resources. You also need people who are prepared to do the work, including those with specialist skills.”

Although Gary Dale had to stand down as Chair of our West Yorkshire Committee,

he kept his commitment to Crimestoppers and saw a chance to help when appointed Team Manager for Barrett Steel Racing, where his son Liam is a rider. He offered Mark Iveson, an old Crimestoppers colleague who is now our Chair for North Yorkshire, free sponsorship with our logo on the race motorcycle, rider’s leathers and support vehicle.

“This is our fourth season of working with Crimestoppers,” said Gary, “and I’ve always kept my affinity with the charity and my desire to help and support it.”

A national programme for our committees called CommuniTea came out of our 30th anniversary celebrations with more than 20 events, which included workshops with the Traveller and Roma

communities in Wales, working with the Romanian and Polish Consulates in Greater Manchester to publicise the charity and engaging with the public at historical re-enactments.

Hampers for communiTea

Jim McFedries, Chair of the East of Scotland Committee, works with Scotmid, an independent co-op. He supplied 15 CommuniTea hampers of tea, coffee, biscuits, cakes and so on to diverse community groups across Scotland so they could host a tea party.

Jim said “I was delighted to bring my work and volunteering lives together and help launch CommuniTea and I’m sure it will be bigger and better this year.”

Helping the fight against NHS fraud

The NHS Counter Fraud Authority (NHSCFA) launched on 1 November 2017 – we are a special health authority tasked with leading the fight against fraud, bribery and corruption across the NHS and wider health service. We are an intelligence-led organisation investigating complex economic crime matters, as well as having a range of specialised services including staff and organisational development, fraud prevention, and digitalisation and technology. All of these areas help us in our bid to lead and encourage fraud reporting across the NHS and wider health service by raising the profile of fraud. We estimate that fraud, bribery and corruption cost the NHS £1.29bn a year – that is money that should be going into patient care, but is instead being siphoned out of the NHS and pocketed by criminals.

In November 2016, the NHSCFA's predecessor organisation NHS Protect began working with Crimestoppers. The partnership continued after the launch of the NHSCFA, and Crimestoppers has been an integral part of the

“We estimate that fraud, bribery and corruption cost the NHS £1.29bn a year – that is money that should be going into patient care.”

work we do. Experienced phone operators in the Crimestoppers Contact Centre take calls to our Fraud and Corruption Reporting Line, and log the details of all fraud reports securely so that our intelligence team are able to review them. The anonymous phone line enables anyone to report suspicions or concerns about NHS fraud, in total anonymity if they wish. Working with Crimestoppers enabled us to turn this into a 24-hour service, which has made it easier for people to come forward and

report fraud. As well as a phone number, people can report their concerns on the NHSCFA website at <https://cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud>.

Our official reporting channels are there to encourage reporting by those who suspect or know anything about a fraud that is being committed against the NHS or wider health service. Any and every referral is important and could potentially lead to a case, where people who are wrongfully obtaining funds meant for front-line patient care are brought to justice and, where possible, the money stolen from the NHS is put back where it belongs.

We cannot do this alone, which is why the NHSCFA works on building relationships with its stakeholders, both internal and external, to fight fraud and other economic crimes affecting the NHS and wider health service. Working collaboratively with other organisations is essential in disseminating information and raising awareness of fraud and the risks that exist. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Crimestoppers to fight NHS fraud.



“Any and every referral is important and could potentially lead to a case.”

Only the callers should be anonymous, not the charity

Danny Shaw, BBC Home Affairs Correspondent, on how he came to report on Crimestoppers' record output

Crimestoppers – is that the BBC programme that used to be fronted by Nick Ross?

No – that's Crimewatch.

Crimestoppers is the anonymous crime reporting service that perhaps isn't as well understood by the public as it could be.

That was roughly how my conversation went with a colleague when I suggested doing an item for Radio 4 about the organisation.

It all came about last year after two chance encounters with Mark Hallas, Crimestoppers' Chief Executive Officer.

We'd both attended a conference on digital policing and law enforcement. I remember Mark sitting opposite me across a big boardroom-style table. A lot of people said a lot – but Mark, in his typically understated way, spoke very little.

Some weeks later I bumped into him at a reception and we got talking.

I realised that although I'd spent 20 years covering home affairs for the BBC, going to police

conferences, meeting Chief Constables, reporting on court cases, I knew very little about Crimestoppers.

I'd almost taken it for granted that it existed.

So, during the summer I travelled to Surrey for a full briefing on its work and to see the Crimestoppers Contact Centre team in action.

Then in October, just ahead of publication of the quarterly crime figures, I returned, with my digital recorder, to do some interviews and record sound effects for a radio package, for the Today programme.

Stories for news programmes generally work best when there's a 'news line' – a newsy and significant angle that hasn't been reported on before. A news line helps give a reason for the coverage and can draw listeners, viewers and readers in.

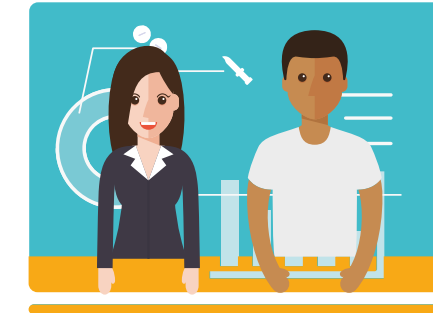
“That's where the main challenge lay: the guarantee of anonymity is at the heart of everything Crimestoppers does – but anonymous cases don't work well for the media.”

Media coverage of Crimestoppers' national crime statistics campaign

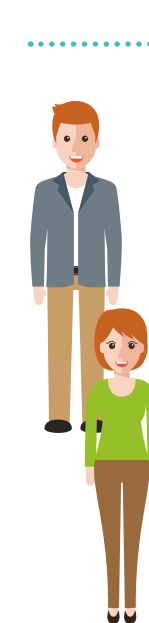


38 pieces on the **radio**
3 national **print** pieces

14 pieces of **TV** coverage



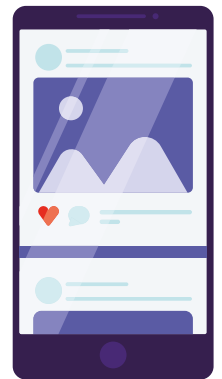
14 pieces **online**



9,249 new **website** users
Over **3 mins** spent **online**



30,000 **social media** impressions and **700** **social media** interactions



The line that stood out for me was that Crimestoppers was handling a record number of phone calls and online messages, partly because some callers were struggling to get through to police when they dialled 101.

And that's how we framed most of the coverage, certainly on radio, and also on television where Mark was asked to appear as a guest.

As for BBC News Online, the editors were more interested in the popularity of Crimestoppers

among young people and those from black and ethnic minority communities.

So I wrote the online story with that in mind and tried to hook people in by focusing on a real case in which Crimestoppers had played a key part.

And that's where the main challenge lay: the guarantee of anonymity is at the heart of everything Crimestoppers does – but anonymous cases don't work well for the media.

To bring an issue to life we need examples of real crimes.

Thankfully, there are some cases in which Crimestoppers has been involved that can be talked about. There are many, many others, I am told, that can't and never will be – to ensure that those who gave information or helped bring people to justice are kept safe.

And that's exactly how it should be.

Why our data gives a unique view on crime trends

Nicola Roadnight-Brooks, Intelligence Support Supervisor:

I analyse Crimestoppers data, using categories such as location and offence. It aids learning for future campaigns and helps us work as effectively as possible and make best use of our funds. I also help the business development team to show potential partners how valuable our data is to them.

Hunter Thorburn, Operations Assistant:

I collate statistics ranging from what is passed to the police by our Contact Centre to what the police have done with that information. These can be used to provide feedback to demonstrate the impact of the service provided. Sometimes the Crimestoppers information confirms an existing line of a police enquiry or it might be the key or sole bit of

information which enables the police to solve a crime.

NRB: We just slot together.

HT: We have also been at Crimestoppers a long time. I've worked here 24 years plus another one as a volunteer.

NRB: Twelve for me. Eight in the Contact Centre and four here at Head Office.

HT: The figures I produce give an alternative view to the official crime statistics. The last set of annual statistics I produced on the total amount of pieces of intelligence sent to us, together with a breakdown by crime type, created such media interest that our CEO was interviewed on the Today programme, BBC and ITV news and various local media stations. The *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* also wrote about them.

NRB: My analysis work involves Hermes, which holds Crimestoppers' data, and ESRI, an outstanding geographical mapping tool. ESRI, also referred to as ArcGIS, is a geographic information system that allows us to place data onto a map. We can then visualise, question, analyse

and interpret data, helping us to understand relationships, patterns and trends. ESRI also allows us to use free data to layer demographics such as health, housing and environment on a map so we can see what that tells us about the locations of the information we get.

HT: It's all changed since I joined Crimestoppers. No computers then. We have also had to react to other technology such as mobile phones and websites. More than 60 per cent of our information now comes from online forms.

NRB: Technology is great but nothing can replace our experience. I look through 600 pieces of information on an average day and I have to know what to look for and spot what leaps out as having changed significantly in the past few months or years based on my memory. There's no short cut to that knowledge.

HT: It's the same with building up relationships with our police SPOCs (Single Points Of Contact). I work with police forces to put suspects on the Crimestoppers Most Wanted website, which can often tie in with local or national campaigns. I also organise our offering of rewards ranging from £1,000 to £10,000. I am the liaison between a police officer in an understandable hurry to catch a significant criminal, our

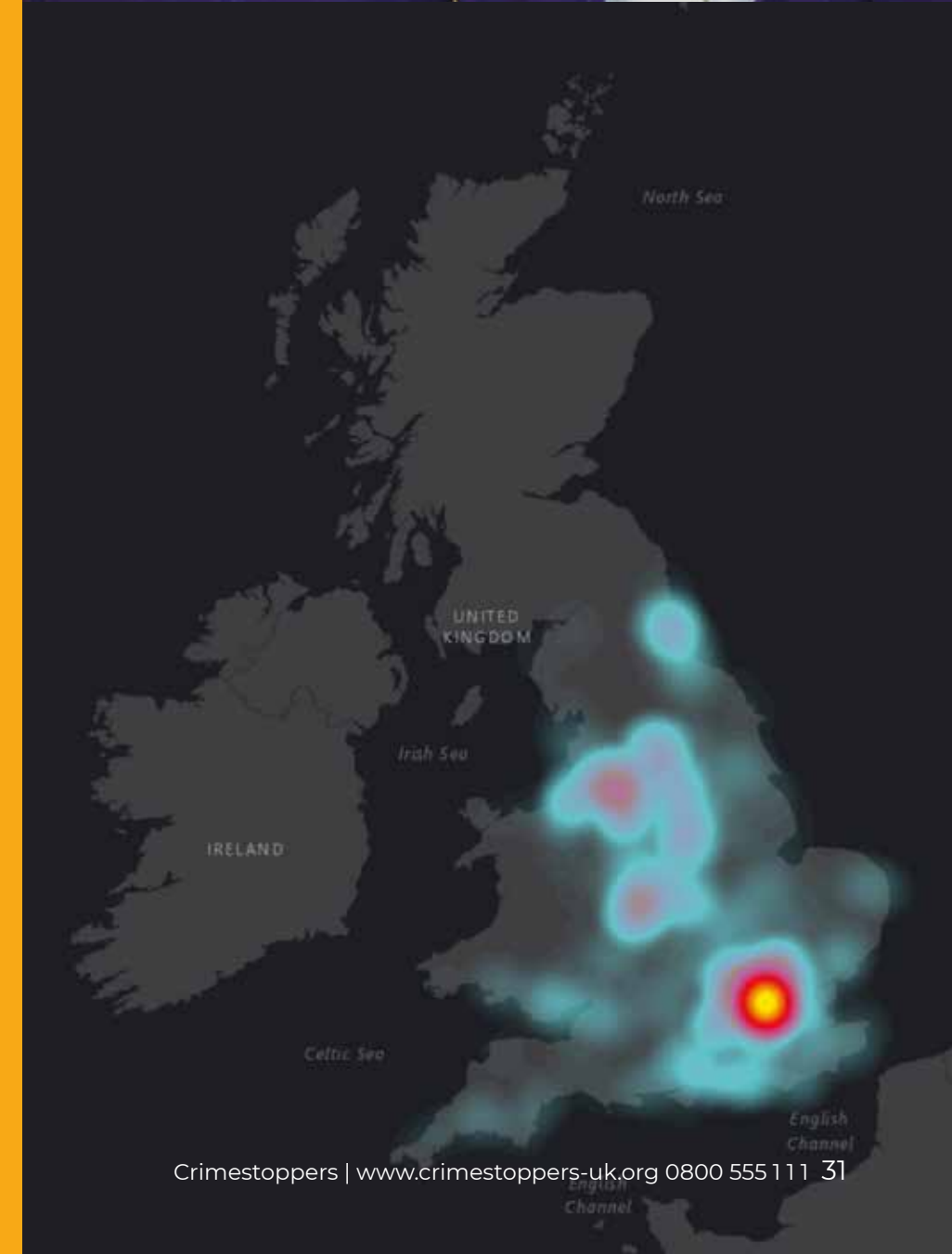
CEO who has to be satisfied with the paperwork and the legalities before he signs off on the reward, and our press office who have to drop what they are doing to put the word out.

NRB: I know the police appreciate how useful these rewards can be.

HT: They help catch quite a few criminals, sometimes when the police have run out of lines of enquiry. We've also had Chief Constables saying that, even though the crucial information on a manhunt didn't come through Crimestoppers, the publicity around our reward kept the crime in the public eye and meant people were on the lookout for the suspect. Interestingly, only a tiny amount of rewards are claimed, which suggests that the public are motivated by the anonymity provided by Crimestoppers and the desire to do the right thing.

NRB: I find that so encouraging. I also like it when I see the growth in the amount of intelligence we've had on a crime such as modern slavery after a campaign. I like that we are the ones to prove Crimestoppers is making a difference.

Top: Hunter (left) and Nicola make up our Research and Analysis team
Below: The type of heat map we use



“I like that we are the ones to prove Crimestoppers is making a difference.”

CrimeStoppers.

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