

Time to celebrate great work!

As the UK emerges from three months in lockdown, this seems a good time to reflect and celebrate the great work retailers have done to be prepared for business to resume.

COVID -19 has completely changed the way we shop and has had a real impact on the way businesses trade.

Retailers around the country have gone the extra mile to implement social distancing measures and to operate in the safest way possible for both customers and staff members. However, in Lewisham, one retailer stood out for the excellent organisation and management of the implementation of the 'new normal'.

Lewisham Primark store deserve a special mention (and Primark itself as Company). The study and analysis of other European markets has been the baseline for Primark UK: 'We thought to take advantage of the experience from markets that reopened earlier than the UK and from the successes and failures from the UK essential businesses'. The knowledge was out there, they implemented it in their assessment.

All the decisions that have been taken were based on a single but extremely important consideration: both staff and customers need to feel safe when back in store. This lead to all the following decisions and new measures: outside queues, hand sanitizers, blue standing dots, maximum number of customers in store at any given time, PPE for staff, sanitized baskets, customers not trying clothes on, customers direction of travel inside the premises, extra security.

Extra security is key: they concentrated most of their resources on the doors, hiring extra security officers, bringing the number of people involved in the control and management of the doors from 2 to 8. This was well received by shoppers, who particularly appreciated the



kindness and politeness of the security officers, always smiling, and very positive about being back at work.

Generally speaking, there has been a drop in terms of crime and ASB. In this specific case, with such great resources working on the door, the opportunity for offenders to run off with stock has been drastically reduced. The store had one incident on the first day of re-opening, but a coordinated response between the store, the BCRP and the SNT allowed the 4 thieves to be stopped and the items to be recovered.

Primark have noticed a change in footfall with their stores. Pre Pandemic their more central London stores were more popular and demand was higher, whereas now more local stores are busier, often those surrounded by a residential area. As a result Primark have had to ensure that these local stores are prepared for a higher demand as well as having all the safety measures in place.

Well done, Primark!

Would you like to tell your story? Contact us at info@saferbusiness.org.uk

BUSINESS REDUCTION CRIME PARTNERSHIP (BCRP)

For this particular store, the support made available by their local BCRP *'couldn't have been better'* (cit.). The delivery of a ShopWatch meeting the week prior to the reopening was very well received, and it had been found to be extremely helpful, especially with the opportunity to communicate with neighbour businesses and share, particularly relating to how the High Street will be organized.

The BCRP also provided a platform for them to raise any concerns, and share ideas with the Council and the Police.

Further to that, the BCRP assisted with physical presence on the ground the first day of re-opening, making sure they were available to provide solutions to any unforeseen problems.

