# Greggs locks fridges and trials body cameras amid soaring retail theft



The rising tide of retail crime has prompted Greggs, the popular UK bakery chain, to take substantial measures to secure its inventory. In a decisive response to an alarming increase in theft, Greggs has removed self-service fridges from at least five of its outlets. This action underscores the company's commitment to combating shoplifting, which has reached staggering levels in recent years.

Notably, one branch in West Norwood, London, has resorted to using bike locks to secure its drinks fridge during operating hours. This makeshift security measure involves staff directly serving customers from behind locks, a practice born out of necessity rather than company mandate. Footage of this initiative, showing an employee securing the fridge after allowing a customer to select a drink, underscores the desperate measures being taken in the face of ongoing theft. Following a number of frustrating incidents, including one where a thief brazenly claimed he was discarding items, the staff's ingenuity has drawn both praise and concern.

The gravity of the situation is evidenced by recent statistics. Nearly 90,000 shoplifting offences were recorded in London alone in the first half of 2024, a marked rise from previous years. Retailers are feeling this pressure acutely, with a record £15 million lost to theft in 2023, and projections suggest that 2024 may see even greater losses. In light of these alarming figures, other prominent retailers, such as Tesco, have also implemented various anti-theft measures, including sliding plastic shields on their shelves.

The challenges faced by Greggs extend beyond just managing inventory. In addition to securing fridges, the company is trialling the use of body-worn cameras among staff in select locations, including the busy London Bridge station store. These cameras, capable of recording up to 90 minutes of audio-visual footage, aim to deter thieves while enhancing the safety of employees. A sign at these stores informs customers about the recording, reinforcing the message that retail crime is taken seriously.

Amid these escalating security measures, the conversation surrounding the state of retail safety has intensified. Many customers and staff members are expressing growing concerns over the overall environment in which they operate. The adoption of body cameras, along with other initiatives, serves as a stark indicator of the lengths to which retailers are going to protect their assets and their people.

Greggs' situation is emblematic of a broader retail crisis currently unfolding in the UK. The pandemic has left many businesses vulnerable, and the spikes in theft are creating an increasingly hostile atmosphere for employees who are simply trying to do their jobs. As firms like Greggs continue to adapt to this changing landscape, one can only speculate whether these measures will be enough to stem the tide of crime or if more comprehensive solutions are required.

In a landscape where retail theft is becoming commonplace, the actions of firms like Greggs reflect a pivotal moment in the fight to reclaim safety for both customers and staff alike. As the company continues to navigate these challenges, the hope remains that such measures can foster a more secure retail environment for everyone.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4
2. Paragraph 2
3. Paragraph 3
4. Paragraphs 2, 3
5. Paragraph 4
6. Paragraph 4
7. Paragraph 4

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/news/greggs-axes-self-service-fridges-in-shoplifting-clampdown/704670.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/london-greggs-branch-forced-to-put-d-locks-on-drinks-fridge-to-halt-shoplifting/> - A Greggs branch in London has installed D-locks on its drinks fridge to prevent shoplifting incidents. A video shows staff securing the fridge after allowing a customer to select a drink. This measure comes amid a rise in retail crime, with nearly 90,000 shoplifting offences recorded in London in 2024, a significant increase from the previous year. Other retailers, like Tesco, have also implemented anti-shoplifting devices, such as sliding plastic shields on shelves, to deter theft.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-greggs-fridge-drinks-locked-shut-viral-video-b1204216.html> - A Greggs store in London has been observed locking its drinks fridge during operating hours, leaving beverages like Coke and Lucozade inaccessible to customers. This action has sparked widespread discussion online, with many expressing concern over the state of retail security. The incident highlights a broader issue, as London shops lost a record £15 million due to shoplifting in 2023, with projections indicating even higher losses for 2024. The rise in thefts has led to increased security measures across various retailers.
4. <https://needtoknow.co.uk/2025/05/08/greggs-staff-secure-their-goods-with-bike-lock-during-shoplifting-crisis/> - In response to a surge in shoplifting, staff at a Greggs branch in West Norwood, London, have used a bike lock to secure the drinks fridge. This makeshift security measure involves staff standing by the locked fridge to serve customers directly. The move comes after repeated thefts, with one incident where a thief took items from the fridge, claiming they would be discarded anyway. Customers have praised the staff's initiative, though it's noted that this is not official company policy.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/greggs-body-cameras-shopping-security-thefts-bakery-b1148562.html> - Greggs is trialling the use of body-worn cameras for staff at some London outlets, including the London Bridge branch, due to a reported rise in thefts and threats from customers. The cameras, which can record up to 90 minutes of footage, are intended to deter shoplifters and protect staff. A sign in the store informs customers of the trial, stating that audio and video will be recorded. This initiative follows similar measures by other retailers like Tesco and Co-op to enhance staff safety.
6. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/surging-sausage-roll-thefts-force-greggs-staff-wearing-body-cameras/> - Greggs has begun equipping staff with body cameras following a surge in sausage roll thefts and attacks on employees. The cameras, capable of recording up to 90 minutes, are being trialled in some of the UK's busiest stores, including the London Bridge station branch. A sign in the store notifies customers of the trial, stating that audio and video will be recorded. This move aims to deter thieves and protect staff amid increasing concerns over retail crime.
7. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/greggs-staff-to-wear-body-cameras> - Greggs has announced that some of its staff will be using body cameras in an attempt to deter customer attacks and theft. The bakery chain has rolled out the cameras, which can record up to 90 minutes of footage, at certain stores nationwide, including busy locations like London Bridge station. A sign in the bakery informs customers of the trial, stating that audio and video will be recorded. This initiative follows similar measures by other retailers to enhance staff safety.