# Greggs battles soaring shoplifting with bans, body cameras and locked fridges



A dystopian clash between retail and crime is emerging as a significant issue for high street chains in the UK, exemplified by recent events involving a prolific shoplifter at Greggs, the beloved bakery and eatery known for its pastries and coffee. Patrick Verry, 33, was apprehended in Wood Green, north London, on 15 May, while attempting to conceal multiple bottles of drink in a plastic bag. The dramatic incident, caught on camera by police, underscores the growing challenges faced by retail staff in the face of rising theft.

Following his arrest, where he initially defied the plain clothes officer attempting to intervene by dismissively responding with “whatever mate,” Verry admitted guilt to six counts of theft at Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Court. His punishment included an unprecedented ban from every Greggs branch across England and Wales. This singular case reveals not just a personal failing but also highlights a systemic issue, with significant implications for retailers battling theft.

The surge in shoplifting has reached alarming rates across London, with nearly 90,000 incidents reported in 2024 alone—a staggering increase of approximately 58,000 compared to the previous year. In response, some Greggs branches have taken extreme measures; for instance, a location in Southwark recently employed D-locks on its drinks fridge to stem rising theft. This physical alteration reflects a worrying trend where shops must adjust their product accessibility for fear of theft, severely impacting customer experience.

Beyond locking fridges, Greggs has taken other proactive steps to bolster its defences against theft and protect its staff. Selected stores, including one at London Bridge station, have begun equipping employees with body cameras capable of recording both audio and video, in an effort to deter criminal activity. Clear signage informs customers of this measure, highlighting the dual aim of ensuring safety for employees while also capturing evidence against potential offenders.

This initiative follows a spike in violent incidents and thefts targeted at retail workers. The employment of security measures is not limited to technology; in Coventry, for instance, a Greggs outlet has enlisted a security guard to mitigate shoplifting and anti-social behaviour, signalling a shift in the retail environment toward greater security. Such measures, while necessary for safety, muddle the community-oriented ethos that many customers associate with the brand.

Moreover, the actions against Patrick Verry mirror broader societal responses to repeat offenders, as seen in the case of Tashaun Pink, another serial shoplifter. Pink was barred from all Greggs locations in Northamptonshire after multiple thefts, serving a prison sentence for his crimes. Both incidents underscore the increasing trend of retailers adopting stricter measures against habitual offenders to ensure a sense of order and safety within their establishments.

As retail chains like Greggs continue navigating this grim landscape of theft, the implications extend beyond mere financial loss. They represent larger societal issues of crime and community standards. The question remains: how can businesses balance security with customer accessibility, fostering safe environments while still being welcoming to patrons? As the theft epidemic challenges the norms of high street retail, the answers will likely evolve continuously in response to an ever-changing social fabric.

In essence, while the rise in shoplifting poses serious challenges, it also incites a necessary dialogue about consumer behaviour, security measures, and the responsibilities of both retailers and customers alike. The situation appears to be far from resolved, suggesting that ongoing adaptations will be crucial in the fight against theft and in ensuring the viability of beloved establishments like Greggs.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/greggs-shoplifting-video-ban-police-b2755930.html), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/greggs-shoplifting-video-ban-police-b2755930.html)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/greggs-shoplifting-video-ban-police-b2755930.html), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/greggs-shoplifting-video-ban-police-b2755930.html)
* Paragraph 3: [[3]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/london-greggs-branch-forced-to-put-d-locks-on-drinks-fridge-to-halt-shoplifting/)
* Paragraph 4: [[4]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/greggs-staff-to-wear-body-cameras)
* Paragraph 5: [[5]](https://www.northantstelegraph.co.uk/news/crime/northampton-magistrates-ban-shoplifter-from-every-greggs-in-the-county-4806708)
* Paragraph 6: [[6]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cdrjn2d4zpro)
* Paragraph 7: [[7]](https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/coventry-greggs-hires-security-guard-28963040)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/greggs-shoplifting-video-ban-police-b2755930.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/greggs-shoplifting-video-ban-police-b2755930.html> - A 33-year-old man, Patrick Verry, was arrested for attempting to steal multiple drink bottles from a Greggs store in Wood Green, north London, on 15 May. After being reprimanded by an undercover officer, he was restrained and arrested. Verry pleaded guilty to six counts of theft at Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Court on 16 May and was subsequently banned from all Greggs stores across England and Wales.
3. <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 Southwark, London, installed D-locks on its drinks fridge to combat rising shoplifting incidents. A video shows staff securing the fridge with a lock after allowing a customer to select a drink. This measure comes amid a significant increase in shoplifting offences in London, with nearly 90,000 recorded in 2024, a rise of approximately 58,000 compared to 2023.
4. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/greggs-staff-to-wear-body-cameras> - Greggs has equipped some of its staff with body cameras to deter theft and protect employees following a surge in shoplifting and attacks. The cameras, capable of recording up to 90 minutes, are being trialled in select stores, including the London Bridge station branch. A sign in the store informs customers that audio and video will be recorded to ensure safety.
5. <https://www.northantstelegraph.co.uk/news/crime/northampton-magistrates-ban-shoplifter-from-every-greggs-in-the-county-4806708> - A serial shoplifter, Tashaun Pink, 36, was banned from all Greggs stores in Northamptonshire after admitting to stealing nearly £100 worth of food and drink in seven incidents over eight days. Pink was sentenced to 48 weeks in prison and issued a criminal behaviour order, which includes restrictions on entering Greggs stores in the county for three years.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cdrjn2d4zpro> - A Greggs branch in Bradford experienced 11 break-ins over six months, leading to the installation of security shutters. The company applied to Bradford Council for permission to install security blinds, acting on the advice of police and its in-house security team, to deter opportunistic thieves and prevent further damage to the store.
7. <https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/coventry-greggs-hires-security-guard-28963040> - A Greggs store in Coventry hired a security guard to address high levels of shoplifting and anti-social behaviour. The guard, employed by Firm Lodge Security, is stationed at the Foleshill Road store to prevent thefts and disturbances, with plans for additional security measures in other affected areas.