

Safer Retail MCR

Retail Teams Guidance
cityco.com/saferretailmcr



Operation Portum
**Creating Safe
Spaces in Retail**



**MANCHESTER
CITY CENTRE
BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT**

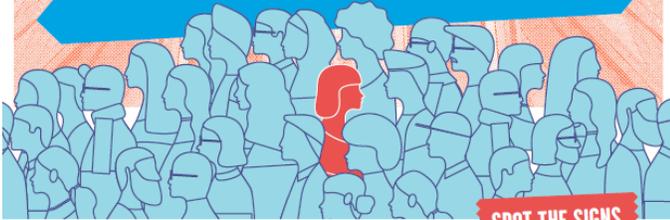


**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

THIS STORE IS PART OF THE SAFER RETAIL MCR INITIATIVE

We're proud to be a safe, welcoming space in Manchester city centre — a place where anyone feeling vulnerable can pause, get support, and speak to a friendly face.

SUPPORTING OUR CUSTOMERS



**SPOT THE SIGNS.
TAKE ACTION.
LET'S BE A SAFE SPACE**

**IF SOMEONE NEEDS HELP,
WE'RE HERE.**

Our staff are encouraged to stay aware, be ready, and step in when needed. A simple offer of support can make a real difference.

KNOW WHAT TO DO.

Talk to your manager about the scheme and visit [SaferRetailMCR.com](https://www.saferetailmcr.com) for guidance on how to respond safely and effectively.



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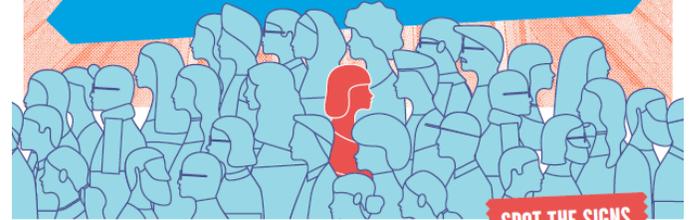
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Safer Retail MCR

The main aim is to create as many 'safe spaces' in the retail footprint of Manchester city centre as possible.

Each business owns and manages their scheme in a way that suits their business and aligns with their values and processes.

The Safer Retail MCR initiative supports a national scheme: Operation PORTUM led by the National Business Crime Centre.

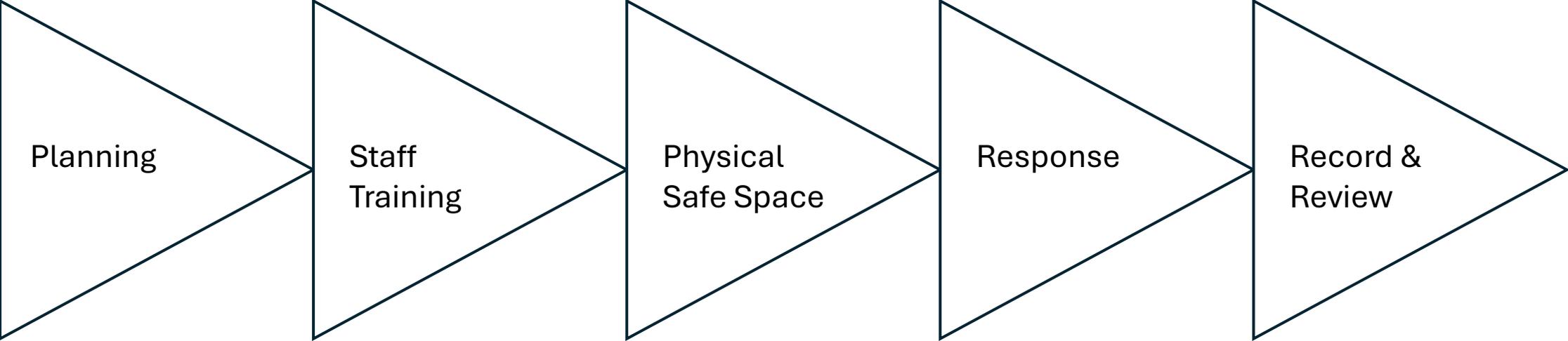
For more information go to:

Framework

This document offers guidance and provides a systematic process to assist businesses in the creating and implementation of the Safer Retail MCR scheme within their business.

Due to the bespoke nature of businesses, a 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate. This guidance does not seek to replicate or replace any internal Risk Assessments but outlines some factors to consider.

No expertise or specialist training is required; any response should provide basic support or a referral to a relevant support network or organisation.



Planning

Be clear and realistic about what you want to achieve and how you are going to deliver the scheme in the store. It will be different for each business.

Who owns/manages the risk? Local Store or Head Office? Store Assistant or Manager?

Set clear expectations and parameters: What is your definition of a Safe Space? What is expected from staff i.e. the Do's and Dont's

Insurance: Does it cover you to do this? Do you need to review or consult your insurer?

What is your approach? 'Proactive' e.g. staff trained and actively look to identify vulnerable people of safe spaces scenarios and offer support, or 'Reactive' with staff only dealing with a safe spaces scenario if one arises.

Manage risk: Some factors to consider include customer demographics, location of store, opening hours (i.e. late night or 24 hours could pose more risk), resources, brand reputation.

Staff Training

Your staff are at the heart of the safe spaces scheme. Have you provided them with what they need to stay safe and deal with a safe space scenario confidently and professionally?

Are your staff aware that your business runs a safe space scheme? How will you ensure your staff are aware of the scheme and are kept updated?

What level of training to you give? Does everybody get the same level of training or is it bespoke to their role? How will you deliver training e.g. in person or remotely? Does training give staff the knowledge, skills and confidence to deal with a safe space scenario?

Can your staff identify a safe space scenario? Have you trained the correct staff? Consider new staff, high turnover of staff and include part time/seasonal/agency staff.

Designated staff member: Do you designate a specific staff member to deal with a safe space scenario? Consider additional training and resilience if they are off work.

Consider additional training for staff, e.g. first aid, trauma informed support, crisis management.

Consider additional vetting/checks on staff. Your staff may be supporting vulnerable people in vulnerable situations.

Physical 'Safe Space'

Think about the suitability and practicality of the physical safe space you intend to use. Is this consistent across your estate or will it vary from store to store?

Where is the physical safe space within the premises? Do you have a designated safe space e.g. a room? or is there a section of the shop floor that is suitable?

Can you adapt the safe space depending on the circumstances? Do you have the ability to adjust the setting according to the circumstances? Balance the privacy of the user against the safety and security of staff. The privacy of the user will differ in importance depending on the scenario.

Are there accessible exit routes? Having an exit route is important to ensure you and the user feel like you have space and the option to leave if circumstances change. Is the safe space covered by data protection compliant CCTV? This may be monitored by a central control room for live supervision or you may need to view the CCTV footage as part of review.

Is there anything contained within the space that could be used to cause harm? It is advisable to use a space that is uncluttered and free from unnecessary objects within reach of the user.

Physical 'Safe Space' [2]

Do you have access to a first aid kit/ defibrillator? Minor first aid may be the response required for a safe space scenario. Anything more serious should be referred to professionals such as a doctor or ambulance.

Does the safe space have a phone / internet connection? In order to assist the user to make a call to a family member or friend, or make a referral to another agency, an internet connection or access to a phone is key.

Is there adequate lighting? Basics such as good lighting will enable you to see and effectively communicate with the user.

Is there line of sight/communication with other staff members? It is good practice to ensure you can be monitored by other staff members for confidence and security when dealing with a safe space scenario.

Is the safe space appropriate for the user and their vulnerability? This may vary or change depending on the user. people-arrows Conduct a dynamic risk assessment: Use the information you have to assess the situation. Be prepared for the unexpected and for things to change. Always think 'safety first'.

Response

The actual act of dealing with and responding to a vulnerable person. Making sure your staff behave safely and professionally and support the user the best they can. It is important to remain realistic and manage the expectations of the user.

Is there a clear and simple process for staff to refer the user to the appropriate agency if necessary?

Consider contact details of emergency services, authorities, charities and support organisations.

Consider the chain of command in response to a safe space scenario: CCTV, manager, designated safe spaces staff, Security Operations Centre, Body Worn Video etc.

Conduct a dynamic risk assessment: Use the information you have to assess the situation. Be prepared for the unexpected and for things to change. Always think 'safety first'.

Do you need any contingency plans when dealing with safe spaces? E.g. additional cover or leniency for roles conducted by safe spaces staff members.

Consider the diversity (cultural, racial, religious, age, sex/gender, sexual orientation, disability) of the user and the staff dealing. You may need to adapt your response accordingly, e.g. responses to a young person may be different to an elderly person and may require different processes to protect your staff

Response [2]

Follow your business code of ethics/ expectations of behaviour. The way your staff behave in a safe spaces scenario should be in line with the minimum standards set by your business.

Consider utilising SIA accredited staff if you have them? They have basic training around vulnerability and undergo periodic vetting checks.

Is the safe space area going to be pre-checked prior to the user entering and again after a safe spaces scenario? Consider personal belongings and high value items.

If staff have Body Worn Video, consider using it if appropriate for the circumstance. It will give a true account of the events.

Do staff have the ability to raise an alarm/ phone for assistance? In the majority of cases this maybe all that is needed to assist a user.

Does the staff member feel safe, comfortable and appropriately trained/ resourced to respond? If not, have an exit strategy.

Be prepared for the possibility somebody may attempt to misuse the scheme. Have a plan to respond e.g. a repeat user to stay warm.

Record & Review

Ensure you have a process for recording/ auditing the use of the scheme and use that information to review and learn.

Are you recording details about the use of the scheme? Do you need them? Have you got their permission? Consider Data Protection and GDPR.

Consider the confidentiality and wishes of the user when offering support and recording details. The scenario may involve a personal matter or be of sensitive nature.

Consider recording and sharing information to appropriate agencies in the interest of safeguarding the user. You will need to exercise your discretion and keep the users welfare at the forefront of any decisions.

Consider setting formal and periodic review points of the scheme. Seek feedback from different people within the process.

What is working well? Give praise and recognition where appropriate and share best practice

Record & Review [2]

What is not working so well? Be prepared to make changes if necessary. Can any lessons be learnt and shared to improve the scheme?

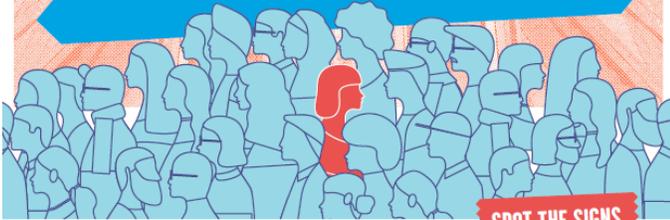
Feedback to Head Office to enable a wider oversight of the scheme? You may only be aware of local feedback where as Head Office will have a holistic perspective.

Additional/ongoing support for staff: Consider regular welfare checks on safe spaces staff to ensure their continued wellbeing. People react and deal with things differently.

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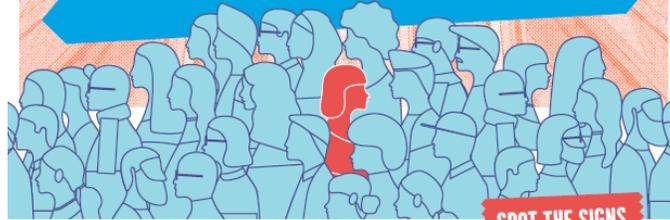
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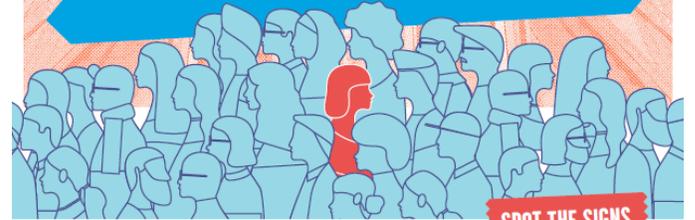
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