

Shoplifting in UK supermarkets has become a significant concern in recent years, contributing to the broader issue of retail crime. In this presentation, we've explored the definition of retail crime, examined the current rise in supermarket shoplifting, and investigated the root causes of the problem, propose some practical solutions, and reflect on why addressing this issue is vital for both businesses and communities.

One of the main root causes increased shopliftings is the cost-of-living crisis. As inflation and food prices rise, many individuals-especially those from low-income households-find it increasingly difficult to afford necessities. Some resort to shoplifting as a means of survival rather than criminal intent.

This highlights how economic hardship is not just a financial issue, but a social one that can lead to increased crime. Another key factor is the reduction in police presence and response times to retail crime. With limited resources, many police forces prioritise more violent crimes, leaving shoplifting incidents under-investigated. This reduced deterrence can embolden repeat offenders who feel there are few consequences for their actions. In addition, inadequate in-store security measures contribute to the problem. Not all supermarkets invest equally in CCTV, anti-theft systems, or trained security staff.

Firstly, supermarkets need to increase security in stores. This doesn't always mean hiring more guards-it can include better surveillance systems, smarter shelf designs to reduce blind spots, or even AI-assisted monitoring to detect suspicious behaviour in real time.

Secondly Control Store Access and Exits by designing designated entry/exit points to make it easier in monitor traffic.

One of the most beneficial strategies is to Understand the Root Causes as some theft stems from poverty or addiction. Shop can consider Diversion programs for first-time offenders

and partnerships with community services and social support organisations to tackle shoplifting.

