



Andrew BAGNALL
Reading Town Centre Inspector
Reading Police Station
Castle Street
Reading
RG1 7TH

Tel. 01189 536368
Mobile 07800 702003
Fax .0118 9536064
Email andy.bagnall@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
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To whom it may concern:

Re: Drink Detective – Reading Anti-drink Spiking Campaign

The following letter looks to highlight how we have proactively responded to a growth of date rape reported incidents over the last twelve to eighteen months within Reading Town Centre. Part of our strategy has included getting a buy-in from local licensees under the umbrella of Reading Pub Watch and rolling out an aggressive marketing campaign. By proactively promoting the Drink Detective test kits we have also been able to promote Reading Town Centre as a safe venue to work, live and play.

Anybody involved in the management of a vibrant night time economy will understand how difficult it is to quantify the amount of drink spiking incidents. In many cases: victims of these crimes have little or no memory of the event; late reporting or near misses are not always reported; the drugs used often leave the system before there is the chance to take a urine or blood sample and in a number of cases individuals under the influence of alcohol blame spiking instead of taking responsibility for over-indulgence.

With support from Reading Borough Council (RBC), under the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), not only have we promoted Drink Detective but operationally with Reading Pub Watch, we have targeted visitors entering the town in the early evening. This has not been in a vain attempt to catch offenders but to educate visitors and warn potential offenders that cannot and will not be tolerated. By supporting the Product we have also been able to work with local media so that a consistent message which stresses the importance of responsible drinking that highlights the importance of looking out for your friends and promotes simple steps that can be taken personal safety.

One recent promotion that was highlighted by the press and fully endorsed by Reading Pub Watch was a roadshow that was held over two weekends in July and August 2006. During the campaign: a mobile police station was deployed into the heart of the Town; over £1,000.00 worth of kits were handed out; over 10,000 leaflets distributed; anti-spiking drink caps were distributed and passive drug dogs were deployed. All this was orchestrated by Reading Pub Watch supporting by RBC and Thames Valley Police. As it stands at the moment all major venues within Reading Town Centre now advertise that their venue is a zero tolerance drink spiking venue, Drink Detective test kits are readily available at the venues and venue employing proactively target groups who leave their drinks unattended.

Under the CDRP we continue to develop a locally based programme that deters this type of predatory behaviour using the Drink Detective tool kits. These kits, which test for the drugs used to spike drinks, are being given to bar staff at licensed premises throughout Reading. The kits are available to test drinks, both those that are suspicious and randomly. Bar staff are instructed what to do if a drink tests positive for a controlled substance. The purpose of this programme is not necessarily to catch criminals but education our communities to the dangers of leaving their drinks unattended, the importance of looking out for your friends and highlight that if offenders are caught they will be prosecuted.

As Reading Town Centre Neighbourhood Inspector I fully endorse the use of Drink Detective as part of an ongoing program to deter drink spiking incidents. Any product that seeks to prevent, detect and educate the local community needs to be fully endorsed.

Yours Sincerely



Andrew BAGNALL
Inspector, 3683
Reading Town Centre Neighbourhood
Thames Valley Police