

## **MaidSafe – Background**

- 1.1 MaidSafe is well established having been in operation since the 1990's. It has 111 day time businesses and 37 night time business members. Primarily members to the scheme are within the town centre.
- 1.2 MaidSafe operates a network of security radios that link members to each other, the Police and CCTV. A BCRP is intended to enable businesses to work collaboratively to reduce crime and the impact it has on the businesses, by sharing information about known offenders in order to prevent shoplifting and other crimes.
- 1.3 As BCRP schemes have developed they have come to rely on the link CCTV provides and the information the operators are able to provide about known offenders who are in the vicinity of the town centre, the fact that CCTV have a direct line to the police's force control room is an added benefit as the operators can notify the police of an incident and provide real time information to anyone at the scene, either Police Officers, door security staff or Maidstone Borough Council staff.
- 1.4 Maidstone Borough Council's CCTV control room has always operated as 'control' for the MaidSafe partnership radio network; as stated above, a common thread for many BCRP partnerships in the County, but not all. Other areas, like Dartford, use the security hubs within large shopping centres in the town centre who answer the radio and act as 'control' for the radio traffic, they then direct key requests to CCTV operators.
- 1.5 Our CCTV operator's involvement is both in terms of communicating with the members and the Police, helping to identify offenders and having a visual overview of the town, has been crucial to the success of the MaidSafe scheme.
- 1.6 Because of this 'control' arrangement, any changes to the hours of monitoring are likely to have an impact on this relationship. If there is no operator to monitor the cameras, there will be nobody present to answer the radio either; the same would apply should the Police Force Control room request that an area or an offender is monitored.
- 1.7 However since Police policy on not attending shoplifting incidents has changed the businesses that are part of MaidSafe have not been using the radio to report crimes to the CCTV operators in order to get the police to attend. Businesses now have to report instances via 999 or 101 depending on the circumstances.
- 1.8 It could be suggested that this change has led to many business moving from reactively dealing with offenders to proactively preventing them from shoplifting in the first place.