

RESTRICTED

# NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE



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## Wanted Appeals Policy

Reference Number	21/17	Version	4.0
Department Responsible	Corporate Communications		
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Senior Owner	Richard EDMONDSON(C0635)		
Effective Date	18/05/2017	Review Date	04/09/2020
Date last reviewed	04/05/2018	Last reviewed by	[REDACTED]

### 1. Introduction

Policy for the release of images of suspects wanted by police.

### 2. Legislative Compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principals of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human Rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the individuals and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with Equal Opportunities legislation and policies. In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health Safety issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy or procedure will therefore ensure compliance with all legislation and internal policies.

### 3. Policy Statement

A person who is wanted by police can be subject to a wanted person appeal, issued via the force website and social media. This may be picked up by the press and public, locally and nationally.

### 4. NPCC Guidance

The police hold photographs of people for a number of reasons, such as custody images when someone is arrested or those taken from CCTV during the investigation of a crime. These images are classed as data and the use and public release of them is restricted by law. Key points are as follows:

*When other means have been tried and failed, police forces can release images of both named and unnamed suspects, to the media. The decision to release the images must be for the purpose of*

the **prevention or detection of crime** and must be **proportionate** and **necessary**. The balance between **protecting a person's right to privacy and acting legitimately to achieve 'policing purposes'** should be considered.

Where a suspect has been arrested the media should be notified that the wanted appeal is no longer live so that any images and information can be removed. Extreme caution must be taken with juveniles and people with mental health issues. A wanted appeal may still be appropriate, but the justification bar must be set significantly higher. **There should be direct consultation with the Corporate Communications Department in these cases.**

## 5. College of Policing Guidance

A photograph of a wanted person can be released to help apprehend that person when it is considered necessary and proportionate to the needs of the investigation. This must be approved by an SIO or officer in command. Once the person is apprehended, the CCD should be made aware so they can remove the photograph from the force's website as soon as possible and inform the media.

## 6. Information release

Careful consideration should be given to the proportionality of a wanted appeal and the related release of personal information versus the crime it relates to. When you are satisfied that the wanted appeal meets the guidance and criteria, then the appeal can be issued. It should be brief and include the name and age of the person. It should also contain some details about the offence. See point 9 Example Releases.

## 7. Wanted Appeals

The following wanted appeals can be released for people 18 years or older:

- ≠ Wanted on warrant for failing to appear at court
- ≠ Wanted on recall to prison
- ≠ Unable to locate to arrest/charge
- ≠ CCTV or other image\*

\* CCTV or other photographic material can be issued if we reasonably suspect the individual pictured to be 18 years or older and the image is clear enough to allow identification to take place.

## 8. OIC Responsibility

8.1 OIC must obtain Inspector or above level approval before a wanted appeal can be made.

8.2 OIC must ensure the following checks have been made **PRIOR** to making a request\*:

- ≠ PNC Circulation
- ≠ PINS (Prisoner Intelligence Notification System) – check offender is not in custody elsewhere in the UK
- ≠ Niche and Compact checks

\* Your request will be rejected if you have not made enquiries using these systems.

8.3 CCTV appeals must have been circulated on the internal photo library in the first instance to ensure every possible means have been exhausted to identify the individual **PRIOR** to their image being made public.

8.4 The OIC **MUST** have viewed the CCTV footage themselves, to confirm that the image being issued is of the correct wanted person.

8.5 It is of paramount importance that images/appeals are removed without delay from the website and social media when the grounds for a wanted appeal no longer exist, and that any relevant media are informed so they may take similar action.

- 8.6 It is the duty of the OIC to notify Corporate Communications Department (CCD) on news@northants.pnn.police.uk as soon as they become aware that the individual has been located/identified/arrested. CCD will remove the appeal as soon as practicable, inform the local press to take similar action and alert other forces where applicable. The OIC is urged to keep CCD informed of any charges brought in the case.
- 8.7 OIC should delegate responsibility for notifying CCD if they are likely to be off duty following an appeal being made.
- 8.8 If CCD are not notified and wanted appeals remain on the website or social media when they are no longer valid or required, then the force can be found in contempt of court and fined. It can also lead to formal complaints being received by the force.
- 8.9 Wanted appeals will remain on the force website and across social media for a period of one month and then removed unless informed otherwise by the requesting officer.
- 8.10 Once an appeal has been made the OIC must ensure:
- ≠ An occurrence entry is added to the offender's NICHE record to show that a wanted appeal has been issued for the offender/suspect.
  - ≠ The OIC/nominee checks the PNC regularly to ensure that the offender/suspect is still outstanding
  - ≠ CCD are notified once the offender/suspect is located, arrested or identified

## **9. Example releases**

Similar wording to the below should be used:

### Man sought in connection with assault in Kettering

*Police have issued the picture of a man they wish to speak with in connection with a serious assault in Margaret Street, Kettering.*

*The incident is believed to have happened on 21, February 2020, where a woman was physically assaulted.*

*Officers are keen to locate 23-year-old John Doe, who may be able to assist the investigation and are urging him to make contact.*

*Anyone with any information relating to his whereabouts can contact Northamptonshire Police on 101. Alternatively, they can call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.*

### Police appeal for public's help to trace man wanted on recall to prison

*John Doe, aged 28, previously of Brixham Close, Corby, is wanted on a recall to prison for failing to meet the conditions of his release.*

*Doe was sentenced to 150 days in prison on 15, July 2019 after facing a charge of theft.*

*He was released on license but failed to attend arranged appointments, a condition of his release, and as a result is wanted on recall to serve the rest of his sentence.*

*Anyone with information can contact Northamptonshire Police on 101. Alternatively, they can call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.*

### Police appeal for public's help to trace wanted man

*Officers have made an appeal for help in tracing the whereabouts of John Smith, who is wanted by Northamptonshire Police.*

*Smith, aged 27, of no fixed address, is wanted on a warrant for failing to appear before Wellingborough Magistrates' Court on 19 October, 2016 where he was facing two charges of common assault.*

*Anyone with information can contact Northamptonshire Police on 101. Alternatively, they can call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.*

### CCTV images released following theft and assault

*CCTV images of four women have been released in connection with a theft and assault at a shop in Billing Brook Road.*

*The incident happened between 4pm and 4.20pm on Monday, 3 October, 2017, at the Costcutter in Lings Local Centre.*

*A man was left with an eye injury requiring stitches.*

*Officers are keen to locate the women pictured, who may be able to assist the investigation and are urging them to make contact. Anyone with any information relating to their whereabouts can contact Northamptonshire Police on 101. Alternatively, they can call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.*

## **10. Monitoring and review**

The senior owner will review the content of this guidance annually to ensure that this is relevant and up to date. The author has agreed that this document will be reviewed within 12 months of the effective date.