

# Press Release

Wednesday 11 June 2008

## Crimestoppers calls for support to combat gun and knife crime epidemic

Lord Ashcroft, Crimestoppers' founder and Chairman of Trustees, will call upon businesses tonight to pledge funds towards supporting the charity which is expanding its anti-gun and knife crime campaign which is currently being piloted in the London boroughs of Southwark and Lambeth.

In his speech this evening at the charity's annual fundraising dinner at New Scotland Yard, Lord Ashcroft will address the issue of gun and knife crime in front of Senior Police Officers and prominent businessmen and say: "I want to pick out one particular type of crime that disturbs me, indeed concerns all of us in the charity. It is the slaughter of so many teenagers.

"If we can get more information in, leading to more of the criminals being taken off the streets, and we sustain the effort, and the numbers of deaths are reduced, then these young people must start trusting the police and the criminal justice system."

"We are on a mission to make an impact on these crimes and have already made a start, here in London, where we have a couple of people talking directly to the teenagers in these gangs, convincing them that it is safe and the right thing to do, to call Crimestoppers."

Phil Pyatt, Crimestoppers' Head of Youth added: "It's important to get the message out to young people that they can report any crime they witness in complete anonymity to Crimestoppers without fear of any repercussions or reprisals. We hope that they will understand the seriousness and the dangers of getting involved in gun and knife crime and spread the word to deter others from committing such violent acts."

The success of the pilot projects has encouraged the charity to go nationwide with this scheme which in Southwark alone has already seen a 440% increase in the number of actionable calls from the borough.

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#### Notes to editors

Crimestoppers is an independent charity dedicated to solving crimes and taking criminals off the streets. Around 17 people are arrested and charged every day as a result of information given to Crimestoppers. One person every 5 days is charged with murder, as a result of information given to Crimestoppers.

Since Crimestoppers began in 1988, it has received almost 950,000 calls with useful information, resulting in over 84,000 arrests and charges. Over £100 million worth of property has been recovered and over £144 million worth of drugs.

Crimestoppers UK was founded by Lord Ashcroft KCMG, Chairman of Trustees. In 1988 he launched Crimestoppers in the Metropolitan Police area. Crimestoppers is built on a three-way partnership between the business community, the police and the media.

Charity number: 1108687