

## POLICE NOTEBOOK

**T**HE CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE (CPS) was set up in 1986 to prosecute criminal cases resulting from police investigations in England and Wales. The head of the CPS is the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and is accountable to the Attorney General. They handle about 1.5 million cases every year and employ about 6,000 staff. Over 2,000 of these staff are barristers or solicitors.

Before 1986, the police investigated crimes, charged suspects and then took cases to court, sometimes using their own, or a local lawyer. This changed under the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 which created the CPS, and separated the investigation stage from the prosecution stage. The CPS now make the decision whether to continue a case and bring it to court. Most prosecutions are handled by local offices but, occasionally, a very complicated or sensitive case may be handled by lawyers at the CPS headquarters.

After the police have investigated a crime and passed the papers to the CPS a Crown Prosecutor carefully reviews the papers to decide whether or not to go ahead with the case.

The prosecutor's decision is based on the two tests set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors which are:

Is there enough evidence ?

Is it in the public interest for the CPS to prosecute ?



**Thames  
Valley  
Police**

Although the CPS acts in the public interest, and not just in the interests of one person, Crown Prosecutors must always think very carefully about the interests of the victim of the crime.

This is an important factor when prosecutors decide where the public interest lies.

Every criminal case begins in the magistrates court. But when cases go on to the Crown Court, the CPS instructs a barrister (often known as counsel), or a specially qualified solicitor so that he or she can present the prosecution for the CPS. If a defendant is found not guilty, he or she cannot be prosecuted again for the same offence. This applies to all types of cases.

### CRIME BUSTERS REVIEW

With your help three youths from Banbury have been interviewed and have admitted burglary at Ascott Tiddy Hall, Kingham Primary School and a building in Chipping Norton. Please report anything you find suspicious.

Pc 377 Salmon