



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

September 2024

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

Hello and welcome to the Taunton Policing Newsletter for the month of September 2024. As always, the newsletters contain a snapshot of some of the work the Taunton Policing Teams have been involved in the previous month.

Taunton Flower Show & Somerset County Ground Open Day

The Summer period is always an exceptionally busy time for Policing. Not only do we see a significant rise in crime reports across all areas, there are also the various community events that take place. As years have gone by, we unfortunately have to be more and more selective of what community events we have the capacity to attend. The Taunton Flower show is always one we try our hardest to commit to due to the sheer amount of people that we are able to speak to. We are able to engage and influence those early positive relationships with children, as well as handing out crime prevention advice to those requiring it. It's also a great opportunity to 'Myth Bust' any misinformation that people may have heard.

Below is our display at the The Flower Show, as well as one happy member of the public who had always wanted to wear a Police Hat!



And then on Sunday 4th August, PCSOs Imran and Brian attended the Somerset County Ground Open Day.

Another great opportunity to engage and meet with the members of our community and build those early positive relationships.



MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

Superintendent
Lisa Simpson

POLICING AREA

Somerset

YEARS SERVICE

28 years

HOBBY

Music

FAVOURITE FOOD

ALL!

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is Somerset Commander—Superintendent Lisa Simpson.

"So what would Avon and Somerset Police want with a musician?!" queried my Assistant Chief Constable in 1996. Well, I was as stumped as he was—but I knew I wanted to join something exciting, thrilling and where I could help people. What little I knew!! Having grown up in the New Forest, in a warm family, playing classical piano and violin, I had no experience of hardship, diversity, death, hatred and violence. Overnight, I went from frilly ball gowns to black boots, from pretty concert shoes treading 'the boards' to stomping in you-know-what in police cells. Policing on the TV—or around the Christmas dinner table as depicted by four uncles all in 'the job' didn't tell me what I needed to know! Starting out in Bristol though was the best teacher. From response policing, through neighbourhood teams and into CID, I soon caught up and found that, despite the sadness, fear and frustrations that always come hand in hand with our roles, there was a privilege and fulfilment in policing that I never anticipated. The privilege has moved on over the years from being involved with families as perhaps their worst moment to now leading the most passionate and professional teams in outstanding neighbourhood policing. I am extremely lucky and grateful... oh, and must not forget two gorgeous children and a long-suffering husband in the mix!

National Disorder and Tensions

Over the month of August, we unfortunately saw violent disorder across the country. Our Policing services were stretched even further and many of our team supported not only the events taking place in Bristol, but also those events that happened further afield through what's known as mutual aid. Neighbourhood Sgt Andy Gloyn alongside several of our Neighbourhood Police Officers, spent the week driving around the country, supporting other constabularies with the various disorder incidents.

On Saturday the 17th August 2024, there was a planned Protest in Taunton and there were many members of the public that were very concerned that the protest could escalate into similar situations that had been seen in the media. The event caused a great deal of concern amongst community members and we would like to like remind everyone to not believe everything they hear or read on social media as there was unfortunately a lot of misinformation spreading regarding this event. Thankfully, we had made the necessary arrangements that should the protest escalate, then we had adequate resources including mutual aid from other constabularies to deal with any disorder should it happen. The day went by without any issues, with only 1 member of the public being arrested for drunk and disorderly.

A huge thanks to the Somerset County Cricket Club to allow us to use their facilities to brief all attending officers and thanks to Rapid Relief Team

[Home - Rapid Relief Team \(rrtglobal.org\)](https://www.rrtglobal.org) who kept Officers well fed!



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



All smiles here!

Despite working 12 hour shifts over the busy period during the National disorder, our Neighbourhood Officers were still proud to wear the uniform and come to work. The officer in the light blue body armour is a designated protest liaison officer, and their role is to liaise directly with key individuals within the protest, to ensure it remains peaceful throughout.

POLICE EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM

Lots of us, including children and young people have been worried or upset by recent events in the news. It can be difficult to answer children's questions but its important that children feel listened to and that they are able to talk about the things that they see and to process the feelings they are experiencing. The below links offer advice about how to have these conversations;

[Talking about distressing current events with kids \(savethechildren.org.uk\)](https://www.savethechildren.org.uk)

[How to speak to children about trauma and tragedy, Psychologists offer expert advice | BPS](#)

There is a lot of information out there but make sure that you use reliable sources. Recent events have demonstrated how misinformation and untrustworthy sources can cause harm. Encourage your children and young people to speak to you or other trusted adults about the things that they see and help them to understand that not everything they see is the truth. Think before you share online, do you know the information to be true and the source. Use the Share Checklist to help you understand if a story can be trusted.

[Share Checklist | Take care with what you share - Home](#)

When anything is reported to Police, we always encourage people to use the crime reference number. If you aren't sure, don't share it.

[Your Police](#) on Instagram can be a good source of information for teenagers on policing related matters.

A hate crime is when someone commits a crime against you or someone else based on disability, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, religion, sex or other perceived differences. Help your children understand racism by talking about it with them.

[Talking to children about racism | NSPCC](#)

If you or anyone your know is the victim of Hate Crime, please report it:

[Report hate crime | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

SARI can provide support [SARI - Stand Against Racism & Inequality \(saricharity.org.uk\)](https://www.saricharity.org.uk)

Don't forget the Highlight Youth Hub run by Young Somerset, every Saturday between 3pm and 5pm at McDonalds, East Street, Taunton, offering support and advice.

MORE NEWS FROM THE AREA

Eco transport

The Neighbourhood Policing Team is pleased to be trialling a 3-wheeled motorcycle as part of Avon and Somerset Police's wider Environment and Sustainability Plan. The motorcycle, loaned to us free of charge by the manufacturer, uses hybrid technology capable of far greater fuel efficiency and lower CO2 emissions than the majority of our regular patrol fleet. The trial will involve testing the vehicle for its suitability in a wide range of community policing roles in both urban and rural settings. It is unlikely this will ever fully replace car or pedal cycle patrol, but it is an interesting alternative and so we are looking forward to putting it through its paces and providing valuable feedback.

Pictured below is PCSO Steve Hill from the Wellington Neighbourhood Team. We are sharing the loaned motorcycle between the Taunton and Wellington Neighbourhood Team to trial the bike in a variety of locations/situations.



Farewell to PCSO Lyndsay Smith

Unfortunately we said farewell to **PCSO Lyndsay Smith** at the end of August. Lyndsay has worked within Policing for nearly 20 years, starting her career in Hampshire Constabulary as a victim care officer, then a Criminal Justice officer within CJU, before then becoming a PCSO, in Portsmouth. Lyndsay then transferred to Avon and Somerset in 2017 where she spent most of her time as a PCSO for the Taunton West area, covering the areas of Trull, Bishop's Hull, Norton Fitzwarren and other areas. Lyndsay will be moving on to a new role within education and she will be hugely missed by all the team. Lyndsay pictured front and centre with the team on her last shift.



Roads Policing



Roads Policing officers stopped this vehicle on the M5 driving from Junction 25 to 26 as the vehicle looked overweight due to being extremely low and bouncing. The vehicle was found to be weighing a total gross weight of 5240kg, however the vehicles total permitted weight was 3500kg...meaning that the vehicle was overweight by 1740kg (49% more than permitted!)

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

For those that don't know what 'Community Speedwatch' is, it is where volunteers from the local community carry out speed monitoring checks on specific roads across the community.

The aim of Community SpeedWatch is to make motorists who speed through residential neighbourhoods aware of the impact their actions have on local residents, or the danger they pose to other road users and pedestrians. This is something we are working with communities to address.

The 14 CSW groups in the Taunton area operate in a variety of environments with different speed limits and traffic flows. The urban sites that they operate at have far higher traffic flows with typically 500 to 1400 vehicles per hour whereas the rural sites have approximately 50 to 200 vehicles an hour. However the rural sites have a higher proportion of speeders. Unfortunately the 20mph limits have a higher proportion of speeders whether they are an urban site or rural.

Activity during August

Over the month of August, 7 out of the 14 Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the 17 sessions that have taken place, **5,835** vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of **73** letters have been sent out to drivers that have not adhered to the speed limit.

The Community Speedwatch is a great service that greatly assists the Constabulary in reducing speed across the communities. Should you wish to join an existing Speedwatch, or would like to set one up for your area, you can find more information here:

[Community SpeedWatch](#) | [Avon and Somerset Police](#)



CRIME STATISTICS - July 2024

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	128
Bicycle Theft	5
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	24
Criminal Damage & Arson	70
Drugs	4
Other theft	35
Possession of weapons	3
Public Order	107
Robbery	9
Shoplifting	104
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle Crime	9
Violent Crime	342
Other Crime	18

You can access and find out more about crime statistics for a specific area by clicking either of these two links:

[Your area | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

[Avon and Somerset Constabulary | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](#)

What I would like to reassure you all with regards to these statistics is that certain crime types are grouped together in one category. On our systems we can see far more detailed information, but for what we are allowed to share with the public, crime types are grouped together.

For example one of the categories above is '**Violent Crime**'. Domestic incidents fall within that category and Domestic incidents are one of the most common type of incidents we as the Police attend. If you would like to know the definition of what a Domestic relationship is, you can find it here:

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Hopefully this somewhat reassures you of why the number of crimes within that category are high.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Have you ever thought of a role within the Police?

Avon and Somerset Constabulary employ over 2000 different roles across the organisation. Not only is the organisation made up of Police Officers, but we also have a huge variety of roles across the area, including PCSOs, Crime Scene Investigators, Call handlers, Dispatch officers, Victim Care officers, Store Management Clerks and also a huge variety of volunteer roles that are critical to the day to day operations of the constabulary. There really is something for everyone. Unfortunately, PCSO recruitment is closed until at least April 2025, however there are other vacancies available.

You can find more information and Police Staff vacancies at the following link; [Jobs and volunteering | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

"To recognise always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them."

TAUNTON POLICE STATION

Opening Times

Monday: 08:30—16:30

Tuesday: 08:30—16:30

Wednesday: 08:30—16:30

Thursday: 08:30—16:30

Friday: 08:30—16:30

Saturday: CLOSED

Sunday: CLOSED



USEFUL LINKS

STREET SAFE

StreetSafe is an online tool that can be used by anyone to anonymously tell us about public places where they have felt or feel unsafe.

You might have felt unsafe in your local area due to anti-social behaviour or environmental factors, such as a lack of street lighting. We encourage you to share your experience using the StreetSafe tool.

The information you provide will be considered alongside evidence already gathered by police forces and will be used to inform policing and local authority safety activities within your community.

Link to Website to report:

[StreetSafe | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](#)

KEEP UP TO DATE



Facebook is a great way to keep up to date with your local Neighbourhood Policing team. Follow us on:

Facebook: [West Somerset and Taunton Neighbourhood Policing](#)

GET IN TOUCH

In an emergency always call 999

For non-emergency matters call us on 101 or report online via

[www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report](#)

Contact the Neighbourhood Team directly:

[SomWestNPTTaunton@avonandsomerset.police.uk](#)

To report a crime anonymously, contact Crimestoppers on

0800 555 111 or visit

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](#)

WRITTEN & EDITED BY
PCSO SUPERVISOR
SAM BUSHEN

