



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

November 2024

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

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

Deaf Academy Workshop

PCSO Imran King and **PC Tom Walker** (pictured far right) attended the Deaf Academy, Exeter, to work alongside the NPCC and DA Languages to improve interactions with Deaf or hard of hearing members of the public. The below is from PCSO Imran King;

Earlier in the month I along with colleagues had the great opportunity to visit the Deaf Academy in Exeter which was part of improving communications with the Deaf Community. The day started with us introducing ourselves to the staff and the students with the help of the teachers interpreting for us. It was a very eye-opening experience learning that there are as many Sign languages as there are speaking languages in the world, and with the ever-increasing diverse population it's not always as easy as using a standard method to communicate. During the day we had a workshop on using the BSL alphabet to help sign our names as well as various signs on police related words such as Arrest, investigation and evidence. We also heard the very real concerns on how Officers would initially communicate should we ever have to initiate contact with Deaf members of the public during incidents which is now in the works with the College of Policing for future and current Officers. All in all, I had a very enjoyable time communicating with Staff and Students and I am now interested in learning BSL myself in the future.



Targeting ASB and serious violence forcewide: 4,500+ additional patrols in six months

Avon and Somerset Police, in collaboration with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and local authorities, have delivered more than 4,500 additional patrols across the force area between April and September this year. These targeted patrols are part of a wider operation funded by the Home Office, aimed at driving down anti-social behaviour (ASB) and serious violence in 72 locations forcewide where issues have been widely and continuously reported. With 327 police officers and PCSOs involved, a

MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

PC Lydia Shipton

POLICING AREA

Halcon

YEARS SERVICE

3 & 1/2 years.

HOBBY

Rock Climbing

FAVOURITE FOOD

Cheesy Garlic Bread

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is PC Lydia Shipton.

I was born and bred in Taunton and growing up I attended Parkfield Primary and then Castle School. I'd like to say that policing a town I grew up in is easy, but in fact it's quite the opposite as with Taunton being the small town that it is, you end up knowing someone you deal with in one way or another...positive or negative it is what it is.

I applied for the police initially having very little faith that I would be successful in the application process but 12 months later I was starting my new career. Before I joined the police I worked as a health care assistant on the postnatal ward at Musgrove Park Hospital, a very different job to the one I do now, but ultimately still serving the public in one way or another!

I have recently joined the neighbourhood policing team after having worked on response for 3 years. One of my favourite parts of policing is helping those more in need in the community as well as trying to deter youths away from crime. Recently I have been trying to build relationships with those susceptible to a life of criminality.

In my spare time away from work I enjoy being on holiday, somewhere nice and hot. I also spend a lot of time outdoors whether that be rock climbing, hiking mountains, dog walking and going away in our self converted campervan.

sustained police presence in city and town centres, high streets and public spaces has resulted in:

- 67 arrests
- 35 stop searches
- 9 weapons seized
- 71 ASB interventions issued.

As the operation reaches its halfway point, here are some examples of what has been achieved during the April–September period in the Taunton area:

- 3rd May 2024

PCSOs on patrol in the town centre of Taunton, were alerted to a report of a male in a nearby church yard who had been seen with a knife. A containment was put on by the PCSOs to secure the male until Officers carrying taser attended and secured the male and weapon, with thankfully no one coming to harm.

- 8th July 2024

Whilst patrolling along the High Street in Taunton at approximately 1030hrs, Officers detained a man and woman for suspected theft of some beer from Tesco Express in East Reach. The town individuals were also wanted for numerous other shop thefts and breaches of Community Behaviour Orders. They were both arrested and taken into custody. As well as targeting offenders, the patrols are designed to deter future anti-social and criminal behaviour and to reassure the public, helping them feel safer in public spaces. They have also provided further opportunities for officers to interact with their communities by visiting local businesses and speaking to members of the public in the street.

Success to date can also be attributed to close partnership working, with street marshals and community response officers delivering patrols both independently and alongside police officers.

We remain committed to working closely with partner agencies, such as local councils, social housing associations and early intervention teams, to problem-solve and tackle the biggest challenges within local communities, understanding that enforcement isn't the long-term solution and doesn't tackle the root of anti-social and violent behaviours.



Thursday 24th October 2024

Although the incident below mentions Minehead and Bishop's Lydeard specifically, the same incident involved thefts across the Taunton area too.

Two women have been arrested in connection with tool thefts in West Somerset.

We received a call from a man in Minehead at about 3.20am on Thursday 24 October that he had disturbed two people he believed were trying to break into a vehicle.

The two individuals fled the scene in a white car, but the witness was able to provide us with a description of the vehicle and a partial registration number.

Subsequent enquiries were carried out and we stopped a vehicle matching the description given on the A358 approaching Williton approximately 30 minutes after the initial call. When officers opened the boot of the car, they found a large number of power tools. We believe the power tools belong to

POLICE EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM

It's normal and healthy for young people to want to meet with friends, be sociable and feel part of the community. Somerset is a safe place to live and no young person should feel unsafe visiting our town centres and public spaces.

As part of our work with the Violence Reduction Partnership, the EIT and Young Somerset have been speaking with children and young people. 60% of young people have told us that they would like more information about what to do if they saw or were involved in a violent incident. They told us that they feel the right people to share this information with them include their parents and guardians, police and teachers.

It can be a good idea to talk to young people about how recognise and respond to situations. Encourage young people to spot the signs, to distance themselves and tell someone.

It's important that young people understand the difference between 'Snitching', to get someone else in trouble, to stop themselves getting in trouble or to hurt or upset someone and 'Reporting', to keep themselves or someone else safe, where they might need an adults help or speaking out because they know something is wrong.

Encourage them to be brave and speak up. There is lots of good advice out there to support you and them. [Town centre safety and young people \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/town-centre-safety-and-young-people/) has links to useful information.

When incidents occur in schools or colleges, they will need to decide whether to involve police or not. Many incidents can be dealt with and resolved internally. They will have their own behaviour policies and guidance. If you have a crime, incident or concerns that you want to report to police, the best way is often online.

If you are worried or want to report any concerns you can this online at [Report | Avon and Somerset Police](https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report)

[Your Police](https://www.instagram.com/yourpolice/) on Instagram can be a good source of information for teenagers on policing related matters.

Don't forget the Highlight Youth Hub run by Young Somerset, takes place every Saturday between 3pm and 5pm at McDonalds, East Street, Taunton. They are on hand to offer support and advice.

a number of victims across the West Somerset area in crimes committed overnight between Minehead and Bishops Lydeard on 23-24 October. We have recorded the serial numbers of the tools recovered and are attempting to reunite them with their rightful owners.

Two women inside the car, who are both in their 20s, were arrested. They have been released on bail while our enquiries continue.

Anyone who witnessed the thefts, or believes the tools may belong to them, is asked to contact us online or on 101 providing reference number 5224280222.



FRAUD AWARENESS

This new section on the newsletter will include information on scams that we as the Police are currently aware of and how to hopefully avoid falling victim to these types of crimes.

Parking Penalty Charge Notice Scam

Avon and Somerset Police are warning the public of a phishing text circulating recently which encourages recipients to click on a link to pay a fictitious parking fine. The link leads to a convincing looking fraudulent website which looks like the official government website. You will then be asked to enter your email address, vehicle registration number, and your card details to make a payment, usually of £20.

If you receive a text message like this, do not click on the link, as fraudsters can steal your personal and financial data to commit identity fraud and take your money. Even by clicking the link and not entering any information could result in malware being downloaded onto your device.

Phishing messages can be reported by forwarding to 7726, which spells 'SPAM' on your keypad. If you have become a victim of a phishing text scam, report this to your bank immediately, which can be done by calling 159, and report to Action Fraud.

Text Message
Today 10:53 AM

Parking Penalty Charge Notice:
Please Pay a parking penalty charge notice (PCN) issued by a local council.
If you do not pay a PCN within 28 days, you'll get a 'charge certificate' and you'll have 14 days to pay the original fine plus 50% more.
If you do not pay you'll be prosecuted - you may have to pay a bigger fine as well as court costs.
Please pay your fine at the link after reading the information.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

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 October

Over the month of October, 8 out of the 14 Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the **20** sessions that took place, **8,335** vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of **124** 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 - September 2024

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	132
Bicycle Theft	8
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	19
Criminal Damage & Arson	43
Drugs	5
Other theft	36
Possession of weapons	10
Public Order	108
Robbery	16
Shoplifting	132
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle Crime	14
Violent Crime	327
Other Crime	10

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](#)

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