



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

March 2025

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

Hello and welcome to the Taunton Policing Newsletter for the month of March 2025. As always, the newsletters contain a snapshot of some of the work the Taunton Policing Teams have been involved with in the previous month.

Working in partnership to make Taunton streets safer



On Tuesday 25 February, Avon and Somerset Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner met key representatives from Taunton Chamber of Commerce, Taunton Town Council, Somerset Council and local businesses to discuss and problem-solve the biggest community issues affecting the town.

The meeting, which took place at Mr Miles Tearooms in Taunton town centre, was an opportunity to highlight the proactive policing work taking place to drive down anti-social behaviour, retail crime and violence. It also provided a platform for open dialogue around community safety, improving crime rates and outcomes, and how all attending agencies can work in partnership to achieve this.

The mood of the evening was optimistic as attendees shared their commitment to tackling crime in Taunton through closer partnership working.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Clare Moody, and **Police Commander for Somerset, Superintendent Lisa Simpson**, gave a regional update, focusing on their priority to strengthen neighbourhood policing and rebuild the public's trust and confidence through highly visible police patrols, meaningful community engagement and tackling anti-social behaviour and its detrimental impact.

The Taunton Neighbourhood Policing Team echoed this sentiment by presenting their recent success in targeting the town's top offenders. Between November 2024 and January 2025, officers delivered a proactive operation that saw increased town centre patrols, culminating in the arrests of these offenders (see previous report [here](#)).

During the evening, **Lily Crowther-Luke, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Co-ordinator** for Somerset West, shared what the police are doing to manage offenders causing harassment, alarm and distress in the local community. She answered questions from the audience on ASB tools and powers, and how

MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

PC Ross Henderson

POLICING AREA

Taunton East

YEARS SERVICE

6 & 1/2 years

HOBBY

Dog Walking

FAVOURITE FOOD

Chicken Madras

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is PC Ross Henderson.

My name is Ross Henderson, and I'm a Police Constable on the NPT in Taunton. I have been a Police Officer since 2018, have held a number of roles and was previously a Counter Terrorism Authorised Firearms Officer. I have completed a range of training, which has required me to travel the length of the country to take part in.

I have recently joined the Taunton Neighbourhood Team as the Beat Manager for Taunton East. I am keen to get out and about in the community and get to know the area. I have a passion for getting stuck into the problems that the rural community face and will be patrolling on foot and by car in your area. If you see me out on patrol, feel free to say hello!

I am also a Disruptive Effects Officer, which involves being part of Project Servator. Project Servator deployments are pre-planned high-visibility police deployments carried out to identify and disrupt anyone who may be planning to commit a criminal act. They can happen at any time on any day but please be assured the objective of them is to keep the public safe and the fact they are happening does not mean there is any perceived threat.

her dedicated ASB Team uses stepped interventions to deal with and deter children from engaging in further ASB and related crime.

PS Charmaine Dyne, from the Early Intervention Team, gave a presentation on targeted work tackling violence among children on East Street, Taunton. The problem-solving plan, involving close collaboration with multiple partner agencies such as local authorities, the Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership, Young Somerset and the local McDonald's (where Youth Hubs are hosted on Saturday afternoons), has led to a 59 per cent reduction in violent crime on East Street.

Despite these positive outcomes, the team acknowledged that more needs to be done to address anti-social behaviour and business crime (e.g. shop theft, burglary and robbery) and are keen to support retailers to support the police in bringing perpetrators to justice.

Chief Inspector Rebecca Wells-Cole, Business Crime Lead, reinforced the importance of developing local relationships with businesses, sharing emerging risks and best practice when supplying CCTV, and empowering business owners and staff to protect their assets through crime prevention strategies.

Following the event, **Supt Lisa Simpson** said: "We welcomed the opportunity to share, with our key partners and local businesses, what our policing teams are doing to tackle crime levels and anti-social behaviour in Taunton.

"We were also able to explain what we need from the community to identify offenders and progress prosecutions – that is, through increased reporting and high-quality CCTV submissions.

"2024 was a challenging year for community policing as we navigated increasing demand, in both volume and complexity, with finite resources. However, we want to iterate to the communities and businesses in Taunton that we are committed to keeping everyone safe, and to allowing all residents and visitors to feel confident that they are safe.

"We're listening to your concerns and know improving our police response to crime and anti-social behaviour in the town, and Somerset more widely, is critical to restoring your trust and confidence.

"By closely collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce, local authorities and other agencies, we'll prioritise the biggest issues, steering people away from criminal behaviour through early intervention and prevention work, empowering businesses with crime prevention and reporting advice, and relentlessly pursuing those who seek to cause harm."

Speedwatch with Neighbourhood Policing Team

During February, we have been busy focusing on local road safety following reports from residents and our volunteer speedwatch coordinators of speeding vehicles in certain locations.

Colleagues teamed up and completed various speed watch sessions in key locations. PCSOs Marshall Bernhardt and Imran King were monitoring cars on Honiton Road in Trull following reports received around potential speeding.

Any vehicle captured not adhering to the speed limit will be receiving a letter in the post educating them on the speed of the road they were travelling on.

As a Neighbourhood Team we will continue to work closely with our volunteer speedwatch co-ordinators, if you are interested in becoming a volunteer please click on the link below.

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



POLICE EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM

Child Exploitation Awareness Day is on the 18th of March 2025. The Early Intervention Team will be sharing information with partners including schools and youth organisation to raise awareness of exploitation and share information about how we can all work together to fight it. We will also be visiting colleges on the day along with colleagues from Children's Social Care.

Exploitation of children can take many forms including criminal, sexual and financial exploitation and child trafficking. There is often a crossover between the different types of exploitation. A child maybe criminally and sexually exploited and be being trafficked at the same time.

In all these cases, we are talking about children, and they come from all walks of life. This isn't just a problem for big towns and cities, this happens in villages and rural areas as well. Exploitation can happen online, in person and in our communities.

Children often won't recognise that they are being exploited and may see their exploiter as a friend or someone they can trust, they may be in a position of power over them.

Many types of exploitation will share similar signs to look out for including;

Changes in friendship groups, maybe older friends

- Going missing or staying away from the home

- They may get unexpected expensive gifts or items that they couldn't afford

- Being especially secretive, especially around their phone

- Changes in their health and or appearance.

If you are worried about a child, please see our website [Report | Avon and Somerset Police](#) which lists different types of crimes including exploitation and gives advice as well as details about how to report.

It also has information and support;

[Support for victims of child sexual exploitation | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

[Support for victims of modern slavery | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

[Help for Parents & Carers - NWG Network](#)

[Child Criminal Exploitation \(CCE\) | Crimestoppers](#)

[Understanding Child Sexual Exploitation \(CSE\): Information and Resources | Crimestoppers](#)

[Understanding Child Financial Exploitation \(CFE\): Resources and Information | Crimestoppers](#)

FRAUD AWARENESS

This 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.

Identity Fraud

What is Identity Fraud?

Identity fraud is the misuse of personal details to commit crime. Criminals can use personal details to obtain credit cards, bank accounts or take out financial agreements for their own gain.

Personal data is valuable to criminals and can be sold on to other criminal groups

Criminals also use stolen information to access individual's bank and saving accounts or even their pensions. There are many methods that criminals use to steal personal data, including hacking databases or accessing letters or bank statements that people throw away.

How to protect yourself

- Sign up to a reputable credit agency – this will mean you are notified when a credit check is completed using your details, letting you know if someone is doing so without your knowledge
- CIFAS Protective Registration Service places a flag next to your name meaning that extra steps will be taken to protect you and ensure that your personal details aren't being used by anyone but you. There is a fee for this service, which is currently £30 for two years
- Be wary of anyone asking for your private information, even if you believe that they are calling from the bank or any other trusted authority – ask yourself why you are being asked for your personal details and is it necessary for you to provide them
- Check your bank and credit statements for any suspicious activity and be conscious of how you dispose of these items
- Stay safe online – don't share lots of personal details on social media, check your privacy settings, and only accept invitations from people you know
- Don't click on attachments or links on emails, unless you know and trust the source – this could lead to downloading software onto your computer to steal your information or viruses

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.



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 February

Over the month of February, 5 out of the 14 Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the 11 sessions that took place, 5,068 vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of 81 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 - January 2025

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	97
Bicycle Theft	2
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	34
Criminal Damage & Arson	46
Drugs	3
Other theft	53
Possession of weapons	1
Public Order	75
Robbery	6
Shoplifting	67
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle Crime	25
Violent Crime	329
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...?

Help us Promote Safer Roads: Submit Your JourneyCam Footage

Dangerous and careless driving puts lives at risk every day on our roads. To tackle this issue, Avon and Somerset Police encourage the public to play an active role in promoting road safety by submitting JourneyCam footage of potential traffic offences. Known nationally as Operation Snap, this initiative allows members of the public to report incidents they've captured on their dashcams, helmet cameras, or other recording devices. Whether it's dangerous overtaking, failure to wear a seatbelt, or a driver using their phone, the footage you share can make a real difference in holding offenders accountable and preventing future harm on our roads.

Submitting your footage is straightforward:

- Visit: Go to www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/roads.
- Answer questions: Complete a short series of questions to determine whether the footage is eligible.
- Follow instructions: Upload your footage and any required information as directed.

More information can be found here - [Help us Promote Safer Roads: Submit Your JourneyCam Footage | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

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

