



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

May 2025

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

Hello and welcome to the Taunton Policing Newsletter for the month of May 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.

Suspected Burglars disturbed and goods recovered

In the early hours of the 17th April, Police received a call to the Churchinford area regarding a suspicious van, and then two individuals seen searching around a driveway with torches. The informant was aware that there recently had been several dwelling and non-dwelling burglaries in the area. On Police arrival suspects had fled the scene in a van, however this vehicle was seen 2 hours later by our Roads Policing team where individuals then abandoned the vehicle. The photos below show the items that were recovered from inside the vehicle. A great effort from our Response team and our Roads Policing team. Enquiries are ongoing to identify owners of the items as well our investigation into the suspects. We thank the member of the public who called us initially and for the communities support in preventing these types of crimes.



Prolific Offender arrested and re-called to Prison

On Monday 28th April, a prolific offender who was wanted on a recall to prison, was spotted in the vicinity of the Priory Fields retail Park by one of our patrolling officers. Upon seeing officers, the individual ran off into the housing estate of Priory Park. A request was made by the pursuing officers for additional resources, where they were joined by officers from our Response team, additional resources from our Neighbourhood teams and one of our finest Police Dogs and their handlers. Following lots of confusing directions of where the individual was last seen (Priory Park and Wintersfield all gets very confusing knowing which is which) the offender was seen running out onto Priory Bridge Road and then towards St Augustine street. It was at this point, where the offender was stopped by one of our PCSOs....riding an electric bike. The offender at this point realised there really was no point in running any further! The individual was arrested and sent back to prison for the remaining of their sentence.

MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

PC Bella Fitzgerald

POLICING AREA

Taunton

YEARS SERVICE

3 years

HOBBY

Football

FAVOURITE FOOD

**Prawn cocktail
flavoured crisps**

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is PC Bella Fitzgerald.

I joined Avon and Somerset Constabulary as a Police Constable through the PCDA programme in June 2022. I have recently just passed my degree and will be graduating in July. I began as a Response Officer in Taunton for the first 2 years and within my 3rd year I received a placement post within the neighbourhood department as a Beat Manager. Within my time on neighbourhood, I have become the VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) SPOC for the Taunton area whereby I have been working on partnership working with licensed premises within the town and Project Vigilant which is an initiative we're piloting that takes perpetrator-focused to preventing harassment and predatory behaviour outside bars, clubs and pubs.

Within my role I have gained a better understanding of the local community whereby I have been able to provide reassurance where I can.

Outside of work, my hobbies are rather active. I began playing football 7 years ago with a local women's football team, which I play as much as I can between my shifts. I also love being in the sea and enjoy pumping up my paddleboard and catching high tide for a paddle. In between all that I love to run with my dog a crazy cockapoo who keeps me on my toes and go to the gym.

St George's Day Parade

The Neighbourhood Policing Team supported the St George's Day parade on Sunday 27th April 2025. It was great to see all of the young people taking part from all of their different groups. The weather was perfect for it too!



Arrest after Taunton minibus fires

On Sunday 27th April 2025, a teenager was arrested by officers investigating a fire in Taunton in which seven specially adapted minibuses were destroyed.

We were called by the fire service shortly after 7:50pm on Saturday 26th April reporting the vehicles, which are used by people with disabilities and schoolchildren, were alight at Silk Mills Park and Ride. No one was injured.

Fire service investigators later determined the cause of the fire to be deliberate ignition, and a police investigation began.

The 17-year-old boy, from Taunton, was arrested on suspicion of arson, assault by beating of an emergency worker and affray.



Warrant at an address in North Taunton

On the morning of Tuesday 29th April, the Neighbourhood Policing Team supported by our Operational Support Team, conducted a warrant at an address in the North Taunton area. At the address, multiple packets of white substance were found, suspected to be a Class A controlled substance, along with a large amount of cash, other drug paraphernalia, mobile phones and multiple weapons were also seized. The individuals at the address will be interviewed at a later date.

So what happens now and why does it take so long to finalise?

The suspected substances will be sent off to be tested. Whilst the substances are being analysed, the mobile phones and its data including messages, call history, location data and images will be reviewed of which you can imagine takes a significant amount of time. Once this has all been completed, the case is then put before the Crown Prosecution Service for their review, where they will make the final decision of whether there is enough evidence to charge and send them to court in relation to possession or supply offences.

POLICE EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM



Monday 19th May to Sunday 25th May 2025 is Knife Crime Awareness week which focuses on raising awareness of knife crime and empowering communities to tackle it. It aims to highlight the ongoing efforts of individuals, charities and organisations that are dedicated to reducing knife crime and ensuring the safety of young people. Knife Crime Awareness week was founded by the Ben Kinsella Trust in 2023 [Knife Crime Awareness Week](#)

Somerset is a safe place to live and knife crime offences are relatively low, making up less than 5% of recorded serious violent crimes. When incidents occur, they are most likely to involve adults and can occur in the home as well as in the community.

Although 99% of young people do not carry knives, 7 out of 10 young people who end up in Accident and Emergency departments with a knife injury have been stabbed with their own knife. Although levels here are low, they can have devastating consequences for individuals and their families and an impact on the wider community.

The Early Intervention Team is working with the Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership [Home | Avon & Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership](#) , [Safer Somerset Partnership](#) , Somerset Foundation NHS Trust, Stand Against Violence and other organisations to put on a week of activities and in schools, colleges and the community.

We will be consulting you as part of the community to help understand how you feel about knife crime and what you would like to see happen locally to tackle the issue.



Please take the time to complete the survey via the QR code or at <https://forms.office.com/e/1ewuzLzxQm>
Thank you

“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.”

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.

Holiday Fraud

The latest data from Action Fraud shows that victims across the UK lost a staggering £11.18 million to holiday fraud last year. They are urging holiday makers to be safe online and do their research before booking their trip.



Unfortunately, many victims of holiday fraud only find out they have been defrauded when they turn up at the airport, or at the holiday destination, only to find that no booking has been made.

How can you protect yourself from holiday fraud?

- **Check the travel company is legitimate:** about to book a holiday? Do some research first to check that the company is legitimate, especially if you haven't used them before. Use consumer websites, or reviews from people (or organisations) that you trust.
- **Look for the logos:** look for the **ABTA**, **ABTOT** or **ATOL** logos on the company's website. If you're unsure, you can use the links below to verify membership:
 - **ABTA** - <https://www.abta.com>
 - **ABTOT** - <https://www.abtot.com/abtot-members-directory/>
 - **ATOL** - <https://www.atol.org>
- **Use a credit card to pay:** use a credit card for payments (if you have one). Many of these protect online purchases as part of the [Consumer Credit Act](#).
- **Only provide required details at checkout:** when making your payment, only fill in the mandatory details (often marked with an asterisk) such as your address. Unless you think you'll become a regular customer, don't create an account for the store.
- **Keep your accounts secure:** create a strong and unique password for your email. If 2-step verification is available, always enable it.
- **Watch out for suspicious links:** whether it's in an email or social media post, be wary of promotions for unbelievably good holiday offers. If you receive a suspicious email, report it by forwarding it to: report@phishing.gov.uk

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 April

Over the month of April, 6 out of the 14 Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the 14 sessions that took place, 3,709 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 - March 2025

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	105
Bicycle Theft	14
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	24
Criminal Damage & Arson	68
Drugs	4
Other theft	47
Possession of weapons	13
Public Order	82
Robbery	9
Shoplifting	60
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle Crime	19
Violent Crime	358
Other Crime	17

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

