



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

October 2025

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

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

Community Voices at the Heart of Policing: Chief Inspector Meets with IAG and Youth IAG

In early September, Chief Inspector Rebecca Wells-Cole, Somerset West Neighbourhood Chief Inspector, recently met with members of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and Youth IAG from Courtfields Secondary School in Wellington.

These quarterly meetings are a cornerstone of community engagement, offering a direct line for local voices to be heard. During the session, Chief Inspector Wells-Cole shared local crime statistics and led a discussion on current community tensions. IAG members had the opportunity to raise concerns, share insights, and help shape the policing approach in their area.

What is an Independent Advisory Group (IAG)?

An IAG is made up of volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds who work alongside the police to provide independent advice, challenge perspectives, and influence decisions that affect their communities.

These groups play a crucial role in:

- Building trust between the police and the public
- Promoting transparency and accountability
- Offering insight into how policing affects different communities
- Supporting fair and inclusive practices

Importantly, IAG members are not part of the police—they are community representatives helping to ensure policing is ethical, responsive, and community-focused.

Want to make a difference in your community? Get in touch with your local policing team to find out how you can get involved with an IAG.



MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

**PCSO Marshall
Bernhardt**

POLICING AREA

Taunton West

YEARS SERVICE

5 and half years.

HOBBY

Competitive Shooting

FAVOURITE FOOD

Doner Kebab

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is PCSO Marshall Bernhardt.

I joined Avon & Somerset Police nearly six years ago as a Police Community Support Officer, becoming part of the Taunton neighbourhood team.

Since then, I've trained in several specialist areas of community policing, including radicalisation early intervention where I help safeguard vulnerable individuals from extremist influence, and Hate Crime, providing tailored support to victims and advice to officers investigating such crimes. I also serve as a dedicated liaison officer for Musgrove Park Hospital, as well as our Military services and their families who are an integral part of our community.

What I enjoy most about neighbourhood policing, especially across the Taunton West beat, is the variety. One moment I might be tackling antisocial behaviour in the town centre, and the next I'm responding to crime in one of the many villages and farms that make up our rural communities.

Before joining the police, I worked in the hospitality and retail industries and also served in the Territorial Army as an instructor for the Cadets, these experiences have given me valuable life skills that continue to support me in my role today. Outside of work, I enjoy competitive shooting at local rifle ranges and exploring the stunning countryside of the Southwest and travelling abroad.

Taunton PCSOs attend Somerset NFU Countryside Day

PCSOs Steve, Tony, Marshall, and Mike represented the Taunton Neighbourhood Policing Team at the Somerset NFU Countryside Day, held on 29th September in Radstock. Hosted by Mark Humphry (Somerset NFU County Chair) and Jeremy Padfield (NFU Deputy Chair & Rural Crime Lead), the event brought together rural officers from across the county for a day of valuable training and collaboration. Guest speakers from the NFU and the Rural Crime Team shared insights into current rural crime trends, including livestock theft and traceability, agricultural machinery theft, hare coursing, poaching, and wildlife crime. The day also provided a vital opportunity for officers to engage directly with local farmers, hear their concerns, and discuss proactive crime prevention strategies. Topics included vehicle marking, farm site security assessments, and the introduction of a new online rural crime reporting form. Form can be found here — [Report rural or wildlife crime | Avon and Somerset Police](#). This event highlighted the importance of partnership working in tackling rural crime and supporting our farming communities.



Improving Safety and Security at Former Gasworks site

In response to multiple incidents and concerns raised by nearby residents and local businesses regarding the disused land off Tangier Way—formerly the site of the old gasworks—we've taken action to improve safety and security.

Working in partnership with Taunton Town Council, we addressed issues including unauthorised encampments and the illegal dumping of abandoned caravans. Reports of fires, loud noises, and other disturbances prompted a coordinated effort to secure the site.

Thanks to these measures, we've seen a significant reduction in complaints and incidents. We hope this brings reassurance to the community and helps restore peace of mind for those living and working nearby.



POLICE EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM

For children there isn't a difference between online and offline life, it is all very real. Understanding technology and its changes can be really hard and it can be difficult to know how to start talking to your child about what they're doing online, who they are talking to and discussing the risks and the information they may access.

Talking with your child can help keep them safe online and it can be treated like any other area of their life such as school and friends. If it's part of your everyday conversation, they are more likely to speak to you if they are worried or have concerns. There is a lot of advice and guidance out there that can be trusted.

Some messages and posts on social media may be upsetting, distasteful or express an unpopular view but are not necessarily criminal. You should report abuse to the social media site administrators or if they relate to;

- A threat to a person's life, safety or property.
- Targeting specific individuals, including persistent harassment and ongoing abuse.
- A breach of court orders, including identifying people protected by law.
- Grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or false and of a malicious nature.

You can report direct to us:

Report online bullying and threatening messages | [Avon and Somerset Police](#)

If you are concerned that your child is being groomed or exploited you can report direct to us

[Report child sexual exploitation | Avon and Somerset Police.](#)

Here are some other sources of advice and support;

[Barnardo's](#)

Children's charity Barnardo's, supports children and families affected by issues such as sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

[NSPCC](#)

The NSPCC provide a wide range of services for both children and adults, including national helplines for 24/7 help and advice.

[CEOP safety centre](#)

If someone has acted inappropriately online towards you, a child or young person, or someone you know, find out what to do and how to report it to police, by visiting the CEOP safety centre.

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.

Computer Software Service Fraud

Computer Software Service Fraud typically involves a cold call from a fraudster pretending to be from a company, such as your broadband provider. They might say that they are calling to improve the speed of your internet, that there is a virus on your computer, or to “fix” something. They will convince you to download a remote access tool onto your mobile phone or computer which will allow them access to your device. They will then coerce you into logging onto your online banking. The problem is, they will now also have access to it and will be able to transfer money to their own account.

There are other scams which involve an element of remote access, such as the well-known “Amazon” calls. In these scams, the fraudster will usually gain access to your online banking by making you believe that they are supporting you with a refund due to an unauthorised payment.

The bottom line is that as soon as the caller asks you to get your computer, or ask you to download an app on your phone, hang up – it’s a scam.



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Saturday 27th September, we assisted Wellington with their Carnival (yes it’s carnival season already). The two females pictured with the rest of the team, assured us that they were undercover Police Officers and that it was really important we had a photo with them...

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 September

Over the month of September, **4** out of the **14** Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the **7** sessions that took place, **3,363** vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of **27** 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 - August 2025

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	133
Bicycle Theft	9
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	15
Criminal Damage & Arson	46
Drugs	7
Other theft	59
Possession of weapons	5
Public Order	92
Robbery	8
Shoplifting	51
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle Crime	4
Violent Crime	334
Other Crime	8

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming events where you can speak with a member of the Taunton Neighbourhood Policing Team.

- **Rural Crime Prevention — First Saturday of the Month 12pm-2pm Unicorn Saddlery in Hatch Beauchamp**
- **Independent Market—12/10/2025 11am-1pm. On the parade in the town centre.**
- **Taunton Carnival 18th October 2025**

“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:

[SomersetWest-](#)

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

To report a crime anonymously, contact

Crimestoppers on
 0800 555 111 or visit

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

