



**Avon and Somerset Police**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING**

# Taunton

**Policing Newsletter**

**January 2025**

## NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

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

### Operation Glitz

The start of December also meant the start of Operation Glitz for the Neighbourhood Team. Operation Glitz is where we focus our attention on business crime and direct all of our officers to patrol both the town centre and the retail parks in both uniformed and plain clothes. The objective was to deter and apprehend our most prolific shoplifters who target the businesses on a daily basis. Within just 5 days of the operation, the results were really positive, having arrested a prolific burglar and 4 prolific shoplifters. All were remanded to custody. All individuals had been involved in an estimation of £25k worth of stolen goods over a very short period of time. As we got closer to Christmas, we issued two Section 35 dispersal notices to two youths following their poor behaviour in the town centre. These individuals thought it was acceptable to scream and shout as our officers following their poor behaviour in a fast food restaurant. They were taken home to their parents for them to deal with and were warned that should they return to the town centre within the next 48 hours, they would be arrested.

### Storm Darragh



Wowzers....what a storm this ended up being. At certain points over the weekend, we had over 100 calls for service on our system for the West Somerset Area alone. For reference the West Somerset area spans from Burnham-on-Sea all the way down to Porlock. You can imagine what the majority of reports consisted of...."Tree Down" "Power Line Down" "Road Traffic Collision".

The safety advice given from the Government was to avoid all travel at all costs as there was a risk to life. They really weren't joking, as one tree fell down onto a moving vehicle in the Milverton area, crushing the roof of a car down onto the drivers head. Thankfully the driver came away with minor injuries, but if the tree had fallen a few milliseconds later, it could have been fatal for the driver. The picture above in Bishops Lydeard shows several trees in pieces on the floor, dragging down a power line with it, ripping the power line out of the junction box and hanging dangerously over the road and

## MEET THE TEAM



### OFFICER

**PCSCO Supervisor**  
**Sam Bushen**

### POLICING AREA

**Taunton**

### YEARS SERVICE

**10 and 1/2 years**

### HOBBY

**Gym**

### FAVOURITE FOOD

**Roast Chicken Dinner**

## ABOUT ME

*This month's 'Meet the Team' is PCSCO Supervisor Sam Bushen.*

I joined A&S as a PCSCO in April 2014 with the intention of being a PCSCO for a couple of years and then I would apply to be a Police Officer. Well...following having children with my partner and then the thought of working nightshifts with newborn children made me put that idea on hold. After then committing myself long term to the PCSCO role, I realised the real beauty of the role. PCSCOs are here to problem solve those ongoing community issues, be that a prolific shop lifter or aggressive beggar, even assisting with ongoing Neighbour disputes. Throughout my career so far, I've written CBO applications for prolific offenders, educated hundreds of pupils in schools and much more. I've designed a crime review process that was enrolled out across the whole organisation where we review crime of a specific types which led to the arrest and sentencing of a prolific catalytic converter thief in the Williton area alone. Since 2020, I was promoted to PCSCO Supervisor. I now manage a team of PCSCOs, all of whom give their best every day to try and make the community a better place for all...a tough task as you can imagine in these difficult economic times. When not working and managing family life, I am passionate about improving my health through natural bodybuilding...mainly to try and stop the aging process... as losing my hair at 24 was hard enough. However, those grey beard hairs are next on my 'To sort' list!

pedestrian footpath....but several families with young children thought it was perfectly safe to climb over to 'Pop to the pub for a bit of food'. We'd be a bit more sympathetic if they had a power cut, but in this case they hadn't. Whilst many officers stayed on long after their shifts ended to try and assist with the continued calls of help from the public, it was frustrating for us to see the public continue to ignore the advice of staying home. What I'm trying to say is, during these events...please stay home and stay safe. You'll not only stay safe, but also reduce the demand on the emergency services.

### Operation Limit



Operation Limit—previously Op Tonic is a long-standing Avon and Somerset Constabulary and National Policing initiative designed to address the issues of drink and drug driving. Research shows that August and December as being peak months of the year for collisions involving offences of drink and drug driving. Over the month, we carried out several overt operations where we were stood in full uniform with marked police vehicles and signs and pulled drivers over to conduct roadside checks. Throughout the month we stopped over 230 vehicles, all whom were driving as they should be.

### Vehicle Seized from anti-social driver



The above vehicle was seized after receiving a second section 59 notice for driving anti-socially. The driver, who having received their first section 59 within the last 12 months, was given another after again being seen to drive in an anti-social manner. The second section 59 notice within a twelve month period means that we can seize it.

### **So we did.**

The section 59 notice, is not only issued to the driver, but also issued to the vehicle. So, if the driver was to get into another vehicle or someone else was to drive their car in an anti-social manner, but there was no record of a

## **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.

In Highlight Youth Hubs, 69% of young people told us that they aren't aware of how to report anonymously.

Young people can visit the **Fearless** reporting site:

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/fearless> or call 0800 555 111

If you are worried about something or have information you can report anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or visit [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)



section 59 notice on that particular vehicle or driver, then we would still have the power to seize it as the driver or vehicle had received 2 within a 12 month period. I hope that makes sense...

#### **Partnership working with licensed premises**

PC Bella Fitzgerald has been working with licensed premises over the Christmas period to continue to improve the awareness around spiking and to improve the safety for women and girls in their premises. Conversations were had about whether the premise had 'Ask Angela' posters and that staff are trained, that they have anti-spiking posters and potentially anti-spiking kits. Ways to avoid/reduce the chance of being spiked could be using bottle stoppers and re-usable/disposable drink covers. Just for your own reassurance, Taunton doesn't have a issue with spiking, but that doesn't mean we can't continue to try and reduce the chances of it happening! PC Bella Fitzgerald is also working on Project Vigilant for the Taunton area. Project Vigilant is an initiative we're piloting that takes perpetrator-focused to preventing harassment and predatory behaviour outside bars, clubs and pubs. The aim is to prevent violent sexual offences. It involves officers receiving specialist training in covert policing to patrol outside bars, clubs and pubs in plain clothes to spot signs of predatory behaviour. If these behaviours are observed, uniformed officers intervene before the individual commits an offence. If you wanted to read more about Project Vigilant, you can do so here at this link;

[Proactive police operation tackles sexual violence in Bath nightlife | Avon and Somerset Police](#)



## **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.*

#### **Winter Fuel Allowance Texts**

Have you received any texts similar to this?

Avon and Somerset Police are warning the public of text messages linked to winter allowances and fuel payments. Criminals keep an eye on the news too and send out fraudulent messages linked with current events. With recent headlines about winter fuel allowances and the ongoing cost of living crisis, the above messages are two examples of such messages.

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. Take your time reading any unexpected messages. There are some signs which indicate that the messages are fraudulent, such as spelling and grammar errors and/or strange use of language. Remember to 'Stop! Think Fraud' whenever you receive unsolicited contact. 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.

You have received a new round of heating allowance issued to you by the local city hall. Please be sure to fill in your information completely before November 4, 2024. If you can receive this subsidy within the specified time, we will issue it to citizens who need it more.

<https://rebrand.ly/600pfqu?omZtA=QD8Gk7bXiyF>

Thank you for your support to the UK home office.ank you for your support to the UK home office.

Please note: the DWP winter allowance for 2024 cannot be paid to you, we have not received your claim information, the claim channel will be closed on December 12, 2024, please fill in your information as soon as you receive the information, if you fail to directly fill in, we will consider you have abandoned the claim for this subsidy.

<https://qrco.de/bfd9HF?Ro=Z3FRPdJCK8j>

May you have a wonderful and warm winter.

## **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 December**

Over the month of December, 3 out of the 14 Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the 7 sessions that took place, 2,482 vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of 62 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 - November 2024

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	159
Bicycle Theft	6
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	24
Criminal Damage & Arson	50
Drugs	9
Other theft	41
Possession of weapons	7
Public Order	99
Robbery	5
Shoplifting	125
Theft from the person	5
Vehicle Crime	14
Violent Crime	338
Other Crime	23

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

## DID YOU KNOW...?



A 33-year-old man has been jailed for more than two years after pleading guilty to supplying class C drugs in Taunton.

Dawid Dankiewicz, of Staplegrove Road, Taunton, was arrested in January after warrants were executed at his home address and at a business property in East Reach where large quantities of morphine, prescription-only medication and tens of thousands of pounds in cash were seized. The warrants were pursued following information Dankiewicz was selling the drugs through his dietary supplements business. He was then charged with 13 counts of being concerned in the supply of class C drugs and one count of possessing a class A drug.

After pleading guilty to all the offences, Dankiewicz was sentenced to 26 months in prison on Wednesday 20 November.

## 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

