Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter **November 2025**

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

Hello and welcome to the Taunton Policing Newsletter for the month of November 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 Engagement at Taunton Mosque Open Day

On Sunday 12th October, we had the pleasure of attending the Taunton Mosque Open Day at the Taunton & Somerset Islamic Centre on Tower Lane. The event offered a fantastic opportunity for the local community to learn more about the Islamic faith and culture in an open and welcoming environment.

Visitors were given guided tours of the Mosque and engaged in informative discussions about Islamic traditions and practices. It was a privilege to be part of such a positive and educational day.

Given the current global climate, our presence also served to offer reassurance and support to the community. Of course, we also heard there might be food on offer—and if there's one thing we love, it's food!

The event was very well received, attracting attendees from across the region. We're already looking forward to the next one.

Pictured: ***PCSO Imran King*** *investigating the food stall… possibly for seconds!*

First Connect Somerset Neighbourhood Breakfast

PCSO Supervisor Sam Bushen and **PCSO Steve Chapman**, were delighted to be a part of the first-ever Connect Somerset Neighbourhood Breakfast on Monday 13th October at Brittons Ash Community Hall.

The event brought together professionals from across education, health, social care, the voluntary sector, and more, all working in and around the

MEET THE TEAM

OFFICER
Ch/Insp Rebecca Wells-Cole
POLICING AREA
Somerset West
YEARS SERVICE
24 years
HOBBY
Walking the Dog
FAVOURITE FOOD
Fillet Steak & Salad

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is Chief Inspector Rebecca Wells-Cole.

With 24 years of policing experience, I've had the privilege of serving in a wide range of roles across the Metropolitan Police Service and Avon and Somerset Police — from frontline response and custody to counter terrorism and neighbourhood policing. Each role has shaped my understanding of operational policing and deepened my commitment to public service.

In 2020, I returned to Somerset — the place I've always considered home — and I now feel incredibly fortunate to live and serve in the community I grew up in. Since joining Neighbourhood Policing in 2022, I've embraced the opportunity to lead teams in Sedgemoor and now Somerset West, where I was promoted to Chief Inspector in June 2023.

Being a leader is a huge privilege, and I love shaping the future of policing through strong, values-driven leadership — empowering officers, supporting victims, and building safer communities. I'm proud to lead a team that's passionate about problem-solving, partnership working, and putting people at the heart of everything we do.

Outside of work, I'm a proud parent to two sport-mad sons and a slightly chaotic dachshund, and a loyal supporter of Somerset County Cricket Club. (Thrilled to take home the silverware in this year's T20 Blast again!) Whether I'm at the touchline or in the office, I bring energy, empathy, and a deep belief in the power of neighbourhood policing to make a real difference.

Taunton area. Over pastries and hot drinks (*don't worry, we did complain about the lack of sausage and egg options),* attendees had the chance to connect, share insights, and learn more about the incredible work happening across our local services, as well as the opportunity put faces to names of those colleagues we have worked with across the agencies over the years, but also an opportunity to meet new supporting agencies. It was clear that there's a strong appetite for continued collaboration and connection across sectors.

Swift Action at Taunton Carnival Leads to Arrest

While on patrol at the Taunton Carnival, two PCSOs were alerted by members of the public to suspicious behaviour in a nearby car park. A woman had reportedly been seen attempting to open car doors.

The PCSOs swiftly responded and located a female inside a vehicle with its doors wide open. Upon exiting the car, she was found to be in possession of several purses and handbags. The PCSOs detained her at the scene until Police Constables arrived, at which point she was arrested on suspicion of theft from a motor vehicle. Investigations are ongoing.

We'd like to extend our thanks to the vigilant members of the public who reported the incident. Your awareness and willingness to speak up make a real difference—you are our eyes and ears, and we couldn't do it without you!

Thanks to the passing cyclist!

On Monday, 20th October 2025, at around 3:00 PM, we received a report of a missing young person in the Priorswood area of Taunton. Units were deployed immediately, and while on foot patrol located the individual. They were visibly distressed and had injuries consistent with self-harm.

When approached, the individual fled, and after a brief but intense foot chase, they began to pull away. At that critical moment, a passing cyclist kindly offered their bike, allowing the officer to catch up and ensure the young person's safety. It was almost a "Hot Fuzz" moment—commandeering a pedal bike to safeguard someone in need!

Once secured, arrangements were made to return them to a safe environment with their care staff. This was a positive outcome, thanks to quick thinking and public support.

Unfortunately, while the officers was occupied with the individual, the helpful cyclist retrieved their bike and left before we could thank them. Their assistance was invaluable and prevented further harm.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Pictured are just a few of our Neighbourhood Policing Team Officers, who were out and about at Taunton Carnival, helping to ensure the event ran smoothly. We're pleased to report that the evening was a great success, with minimal incidents requiring police involvement. A big thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to a safe and enjoyable night!

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 and school and friends. If its 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.

Investment Fraud

If someone contacts you with an investment opportunity that seems too good to be true… it is. Although investing can be a successful way of making money, it has resulted in many people losing their entire life savings. Fraudsters will persuade you to invest in all kinds of products, offering high rates of return, which often do not exist. It can be extremely difficult to tell a genuine investment opportunity apart from a fraudulent one – even for experienced investors.

Fraudsters are organised and convincing, and you may even see some initial small returns on an investment as an incentive to put a much larger amount of your money in. Requests to cash out will be met with excuses and demands for various fees to be paid. There will always be "just one more payment" needed to receive your money. They often have professional looking websites, glossy marketing materials and prestigious addresses in London to make you feel assured that they are legitimate.

Criminals can even be aware of the investments you hold, or have previously held, and they may make reference to these or target you with similar schemes. They may offer to "recover" funds you have lost in a previous investment. The same criminals may target you again, hiding behind a new identity.

Remember:

- Genuine investment companies will not cold call you – always be wary of any unexpected calls.
- Research the company and the offer that they have made to you – contact Trading Standards if you have concerns and seek independent financial advice before committing to any investment.
- Before you invest anywhere, check with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) register to see if the firm or individual you are dealing with are authorised (https://register.fca.org.uk/)
- Check the FCA Warning List of firms to avoid.
- The FCA also provide a ScamSmart test which can help you check if an investment is potentially a scam.

Whilst the above measures are useful, please also be aware of 'clone firm' investment scams, where fraudsters imitate real-life companies. 'Clone firms' are set up by fraudsters using the same details as real companies authorised by the FCA, making it even more difficult to establish whether or not a firm is genuine.

If you use the internet, it is also worth being aware of fraudulent cryptocurrency investments which often present themselves on social platforms. Never assume anything you are offered online is real. Criminals can even use technology to make it look legitimate, showing trusted personalities/celebrities supposedly endorsing their investment opportunities.

Don't be pressured into making any quick decisions.

Always seek independent financial advice.

Question whether an investment company would call you out of the blue.

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, **6** out of the **14** Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the **16** sessions that took place, **3,449** vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of **97** 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 2025

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	125
Bicycle Theft	6
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	21
Criminal Damage & Arson	57
Drugs	7
Other theft	63
Possession of weapons	7
Public Order	105
Robbery	10
Shoplifting	58
Theft from the person	2
Vehicle Crime	22
Violent Crime	343
Other Crime	27

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**
- **Taunton Local Community Network Meeting—10th November 2025 1800hrs at Quaker House**
- **Priorswood Community Centre—13th November 2025 1100-1200hrs.**
- **Trull Community Centre—Saturday 6th December 2025 1100—1200hrs.**

"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