



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

January 2026

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

Hello and welcome to the Taunton Policing Newsletter for the month of January 2026. As always, the newsletters contain a snapshot of some of the work the Taunton Policing Teams have been involved with in the previous month. **We hope everyone had a lovely New Year!**

Closure for Station Road Shop

A three-month closure order has been secured against a shop on Station Road which has been selling non-compliant vapes, illegal tobacco and counterfeit goods. Working with our licensing, anti-social behaviour teams and Trading Standards we secured the court order by demonstrating its links to criminality and associated antisocial behaviour in the area. Taunton Magistrates' Court was satisfied that the premises was used and linked to criminality, nuisance and disorder and granted the order on Monday 8th December. **PC Lydia Shipton**, from the Taunton neighbourhood policing team, said: *"The issues caused in the community as a direct result of the sale of these items cannot be understated. We are particularly aware of the concerns from parents and other members of the public in relation to the sale of products from these premises. The illegal sale of items has been ongoing for a significant period of time, and we've worked closely with our partners, including Trading Standards, to make sure we had a strong case to put before the court. We hope the closure of this premises reassures the community that we take action against those that harm our communities."*

Evidence to secure the closure order under Section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act was gathered by Avon and Somerset Police and its partners. The closure order is now in place for three months, and which could be extended for a further three months, and anybody who attempts to enter the property will be committing a criminal offence.



International Volunteer Day 5th December

On 5th December, we recognised the countless hours that volunteers committed to supporting their communities. At the time of writing, our volunteers contributed during 2025;

- Special Constables: 47,256 hours
- Police Support Volunteers: 14,060 hours
- Police Cadets: 4,206

That's an amazing 65,522 hours across Avon and Somerset. Every single hour makes a massive difference in achieving Avon and Somerset Police's mission to serve, protect and respect our communities.

MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

Cyber Protect Officer

Megan Haldane

POLICING AREA

Force wide

YEARS SERVICE

5 years

HOBBY

Reading books

FAVOURITE FOOD

Pizza!

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is Cyber Protect Officer Megan Haldane

I first joined Avon & Somerset five years ago as the Vulnerable Victims of Fraud Coordinator. This was a complete change of scenery as my career before was as a Veterinary Nurse. The covid era had unfortunately changed the career I once loved and I wanted a big change.

Three years ago I moved into my current role within the Cyber Team. My role as a Cyber Protect Officer has many different elements however it can be split into two main subcategories: preventing crime, and protecting victims.

To prevent cybercrime from occurring and targeting members of our community I travel force wide to run a variety of different workshops. One day this could be classroom based sessions within education, the next it could be working with a WI to increase online confidence. I also run more technical workshops with small/medium sized businesses and charities within our area.

To protect victims from becoming repeat victims of online and cyber crime, I provide bespoke crime prevention advice specially tailored to what they have experienced. I also specialise in tech-enabled VAWG safeguarding.

Outside of work I spend time with my partner and our small hoard of animals whilst anxiously awaiting the arrival of our first (human!) baby.

If you ever need support with cyber and online crime prevention or have an opportunity to collaborate please use

CyberProtect@avonandsomerset.police.uk

for all your cyber needs.

One of Taunton's volunteer is Kieran Vile who is one of our Data Processors in relation to Community Speed watch. Kieran had this to say:

"I have been volunteering as a Police Support Volunteer for just over 20 years having been invited to come to the Police Station on work experience to find out more about what is involving in Police. During my time as a volunteer, I have across many different teams. Since 2015, I have worked as a Data Processor for Community Speedwatch, which involves processing the data that comes in from roadside teams ensuring that warning letters are sent to drivers who break the speed limit. I find that volunteering makes a difference to me as it allows me to work as part of a team and contribute to my local community in a positive way. Working with everyone has also increased my confidence and give me a purpose which I also feel is a good thing. In my spare time, I am a member of Somerset County Cricket Club and enjoy watching them play whenever I can. I also watch a lot of football as well as many other sports."



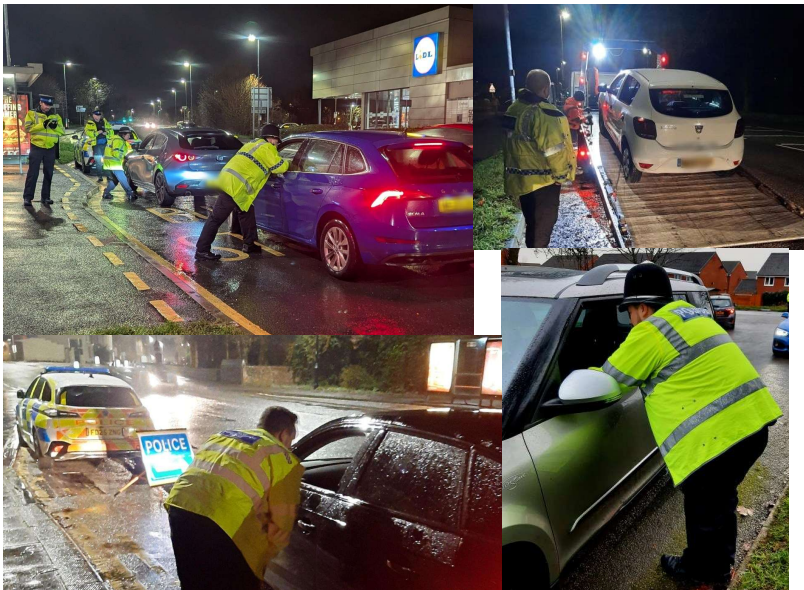
Cyber Crime Education at Kings College



Cyber Protect Officer Megan Haldane, provided an education lesson to students at Kings College during December. The students were taught how to remain safe online, including what dangers to be aware of when using the internet and specifically social media. The students from all ages, got the opportunity to ask questions not only on cyber crime and remaining safe, but also on other matters relating to Policing, including remaining safe and vigilant within their communities.

Op Limit in Action

Over the month of December, the team carried out vehicle stops as part of Op Limit, our drink and drug driving campaign launched on 1st December. Throughout the month, we conducted checks at multiple locations across the town. In total we stopped 144 vehicles. We are glad to report that during our routine stop checks, no drivers were over the drink or drug limit. However during these operations we seized 2 vehicles for revoked driving licences and no insurance. Both drivers will appear in court soon. They will appear in court soon.



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 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.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



On the last Friday before Christmas, PC's Lydia and Bella posed with one very drunk gentleman who had no recollection of where he lived following having one too many Sherberts. His friends (who took this photo and sent it to us) saw the funny side. After finding out where he lived, he was dropped back home to a very unhappy wife....

FRAUD AWARENESS

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 Report Fraud online at www.reportfraud.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 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 5 sessions that took place, 2,955 vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of 13 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 2025

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	105
Bicycle Theft	3
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	18
Criminal Damage & Arson	51
Drugs	5
Other theft	37
Possession of weapons	4
Public Order	92
Robbery	11
Shoplifting	74
Theft from the person	2
Vehicle Crime	14
Violent Crime	381
Other Crime	13

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
- Trull Community Centre—Saturday 31st January 2026 1100—1200hrs.
- Independent Market Town Centre—1st February 2026 1100—1300
- Priorswood Community Centre—5th February 2026 1000-1100hrs.

“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](#)

