Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton Policing Newsletter November 2026

News From Across Taunton

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

National Hate Crime Awareness Week



Pictured above: PC James, PC Lydia and PCSO Spencer ready to engage with members of the public at Castle Green.

During October, we supported National efforts to highlight the effects of Hate Crime during National Hate Crime Awareness week.

What is a Hate Crime?

A Hate Crime is a criminal offence motivated by hostility and prejudice towards a person or group's *actual* or *perceived:*

- Disability
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender identity

These are known as *protected characteristics* – although some protected characteristics like age, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity and sex are *not* covered by hate crime legislation. Perpetrators of hate crime can show contempt for one or more of these five categories in different ways. Whether their hate-fuelled actions are physical, verbal, involve property damage or occur online or offline, they *all* constitute hate crime.

Throughout the week, the Neighbourhood Policing Team continued its community engagement work at schools, community halls and other public spaces across the area. Officers and PCSOs spoke with the public about Hate Crime, offering advice, information and guidance on the support available to anyone who may experience or witness such incidents. These conversations help raise awareness, encourage reporting, and reinforce the message that Hate Crime has no place in our communities.

Meet The Team



Officer
PCSO Supervisor Jason Routley
Policing Area
Taunton
Years Service
14 years combined
Hobby
Travelling
Favourite Food
Anything Italian

About Me

This months 'Meet the team' is PCSO Supervisor Jason Routley.

I began my policing career with Avon and Somerset Police in 2008, joining the Business Improvement District (BID) team in Taunton. Working closely with local businesses gave me valuable experience and a strong understanding of the town and its communities. I later moved into a variety of neighbourhood policing roles, supporting residents, working with partner agencies, and leading problem-solving initiatives to address local issues. After leaving policing to pursue a different career, I soon realised that serving communities was where my passion truly lay.

I was fortunate to rejoin Avon and Somerset Police and return to neighbourhood policing. When I returned, I set myself a five-year plan: complete my probation, become a PCSO Tutor, and achieve promotion to PCSO Supervisor. I am proud to have achieved all three goals. Following a period as a Temporary PCSO Supervisor, I was promoted to the role in 2026 and have recently returned to the Taunton Neighbourhood Policing Team. It is fantastic to be back serving a town I know so well. For me, effective neighbourhood policing is built on listening to our communities and working together to solve problems.

Outside of work, I enjoy travelling, spending time with family and friends, keeping active at the gym, and discovering new places to eat.

There's More to Policing Than What You See Online

At the recent Local Community Network held during October, I shared with those attending about the difficulties we have with what we can and can't share to the public and on social media when it comes to our work.

If you follow the West Somerset and Taunton Neighbourhood Policing social media page but also the main Avon and Somerset Facebook page, you may notice that many of our posts relate to road safety, speed enforcement, vehicle seizures, community events and other visible policing activity.

We know these updates are popular and help keep residents informed about what is happening in their area.
However, what you see on social media is only a small part of the work carried out by your local policing teams every day.

Much of our time is spent helping people through some of the most challenging moments of their lives. We regularly support victims of domestic abuse, assist people experiencing mental health crises, safeguard vulnerable adults and children, respond to concerns about exploitation, investigate harassment and neighbour disputes, and work closely with partner agencies to protect those who may be at risk.

These incidents often require patience, compassion and significant amounts of time. They can involve multiple visits, ongoing support and close partnership working to ensure people receive the help they need. In many cases, the impact of this work is felt deeply by the individuals involved, even though it may never be seen by the wider community.

So why don't we share more of these stories?

The simple answer is that the people we support deserve privacy. Many of the incidents we attend involve sensitive personal circumstances, vulnerable individuals, victims of crime, or ongoing investigations. Sharing details publicly could unintentionally identify those involved, affect an investigation, or discourage someone from coming forward for help when they need it most.

While a speed enforcement operation or vehicle stop can often be shared safely and publicly, much of our safeguarding and victim-focused work must remain confidential. Protecting people will always take priority over promoting what we do.

We understand that social media can sometimes create the impression that policing is mainly focused on roads, speeding, or traffic offences. While these are important issues that residents frequently raise with us, they represent only a fraction of our overall workload.

Every day, officers and staff across our communities are working quietly in the background to support victims, protect vulnerable people, prevent harm and help those who need us most. Often, the most important work we do is the work that cannot be photographed, posted online or publicly discussed.

We hope this provides a little insight into the wider role of policing and reassures you that even when you don't see it on social media, a great deal of work is taking place every day to keep our communities safe, supported and cared for.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we balance keeping our communities informed while protecting the privacy, safety and wellbeing of those we serve.

Community Speedwatch

Many of you may have heard of *Community SpeedWatch* (CSW), but for those who are new to the initiative, it's a local volunteer-led effort aimed at improving road safety across our neighbourhoods.
Community SpeedWatch involves trained volunteers from within the community carrying out speed monitoring checks on selected roads. The purpose isn't enforcement, but awareness—encouraging motorists to slow down by highlighting the very real risks and impact of speeding in residential areas. Whether it's the danger posed to pedestrians or the disruption caused to daily life, speeding affects everyone, and addressing it is something we are committed to working on alongside our communities.
Across the Taunton area, there are currently 13 active Community SpeedWatch groups operating in a range of locations. These sites vary significantly:

- **Urban areas** typically experience **higher traffic volumes**, ranging from *500 to 1,400 vehicles per hour*.
- **Rural locations**, while quieter with *50 to 200 vehicles per hour*, tend to see a higher proportion of drivers **exceeding speed limits.**

A key finding across both environments is the ongoing challenge with compliance in 20mph zones, which consistently record a higher proportion of speeding vehicles—regardless of whether the setting is urban or rural.
The insights gathered by CSW volunteers are vital in helping us understand local traffic behaviours and identify areas for improvement. By continuing to support and expand Community SpeedWatch, we can build stronger, safer communities where everyone feels more secure on the roads.

Activity during October

Out of the 13 active Community Speedwatch schemes in the area, **6** schemes were operational, carrying out **15** monitoring sessions across various locations.
During these sessions, volunteers observed an impressive **4,158** vehicles, demonstrating the scale of community engagement and commitment. As a result of these efforts, **141** advisory letters have been issued to drivers who were found to be exceeding the speed limit. If you're interested in getting involved or learning more about Community SpeedWatch in your area, we encourage you to get in touch. Your contribution could make a real difference.

Community SpeedWatch | Avon and Somerset Police

Fraud Awareness

Warning over fraudsters impersonating Avon and Somerset Police officers

Avon and Somerset Police is warning the public to be vigilant after receiving multiple reports of fraudsters contacting people while posing as police officers. What is particularly convincing about these calls is that fraudsters are using spoofed numbers, which show on the phone display as genuine Avon and Somerset Police phone numbers. Criminals use 'spoofing' software to intentionally cover up their real caller ID and instead, mirror the phone number of a legitimate organisation. They can use this to make it appear that calls or text messages are coming from a trusted organisation like the police, banks or government agencies.

People have reported receiving telephone calls from individuals claiming to be officers from Avon and Somerset Police. Callers often claim the recipient's personal data has been compromised, that their bank accounts are at risk of fraud, or that their personal information has been linked to criminal activity.

In some cases, callers claim a suspect has been arrested and that enquiries have uncovered the victim's details among information obtained during the investigation. Victims may even be provided with what appears to be a genuine crime or case reference number to make the call seem legitimate.

Victims may be told their finances are at risk and instructed to transfer money into a purported "safe account" or provide sensitive banking information to protect their funds. In reality, any such account would be controlled by fraudsters.

The callers are often extremely professional and convincing, and we suspect, in some cases, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been used for the voice. Some victims have reported that the fraudsters appeared to know personal information about them. Some people who have attempted to call the number back have subsequently been connected to Avon and Somerset Police, leading them to believe the original call was genuine.

As well as receiving many reports of this from Avon and Somerset residents, they have also been received from people living outside the Avon and Somerset policing area, suggesting the fraudsters are targeting individuals in other parts of the country while falsely claiming to represent Avon and Somerset Police.

How to protect yourself

If you receive a call from someone claiming to be from the police:

- Remember that fraudsters can spoof telephone numbers, meaning the number displayed on your phone may appear to belong to a trusted organisation when it does not.
- Police will never ask you to move money into a "safe account". This will belong to a criminal who intends to steal your money.
- Police will never ask you to withdraw cash, purchase goods, buy gift cards, or hand over bank cards to assist with an investigation.
- Fraudsters may provide a crime reference number, collar number or other details that appear official. Do not rely on these as proof that the caller is genuine – always verify with the organisation, using the contact details provided on their official website.
- Never share banking passwords, PINs, one-time passcodes or other financial security information over the phone.
- End the call if you feel pressured or are being told to act urgently.
- A genuine police officer will never object to you ending the call to verify their identity.

To check whether a call is genuine, contact police on 101 or, in an emergency, 999. Ideally use a different phone, or allow time for the line to clear before making the call.

Alternatively, visit your nearest police station and speak to an officer in person.

Anyone who believes they may have been targeted is encouraged to report it to Report Fraud at www.reportfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. If money has already been transferred, victims should contact their bank immediately.



Crime Statistics – September 2026

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes
Anti-social behaviour	122
Bicycle Theft	11
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	41
Criminal Damage & Arson	49
Drugs	6
Other theft	33
Possession of weapons	9
Public Order	55
Robbery	14
Shoplifting	142
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle Crime	24
Violent Crime	373
Other Crime	11

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)

We understand that crime statistics can sometimes be difficult to interpret, and we'd like to take a moment to reassure you about how this information is presented.

When crime data is shared publicly, certain offence types are grouped together into broader categories. While our internal systems allow us to view much more detailed and specific information, what we are permitted to release is simplified to make it accessible for the public.

For example, one of the categories you may have seen is "Violent Crime." This category includes a wide range of incidents, one of the most common being domestic-related incidents. These types of calls make up a significant portion of the incidents we attend as Police.

It's important to understand that not all offences within this category carry the same level of severity, and grouping them together can sometimes give a misleading impression of the overall risk within the community.

Upcoming Events

Meet your local neighbourhood policing team at one of the events below.
Please note that, due to the unpredictable nature of police work and emergency incidents, there may be times when we are unable to attend as planned.

CHARIS Beat Surgery	CHARIS, Hammet Street	11th Nov	1100-1300hrs
Bishops Lydeard Talking Cafe	Bishops Lydeard Village Hall	12th Nov 19th Nov 26th Nov 3rd Dec	1000-1200hrs
Holway Beat Surgery	Lisieux Way Hall	10th Nov 17th Nov 24th Nov 1st Dec	0930-1130hrs
Coffee with a Cop	Britons Ash Community Hall	25th Nov	1400-1500hrs
Winterfest	Taunton Centre	22nd Nov	1500-2200hrs
Trull Beat Surgery	Trull Church Community Hall	5th Dec	1000-1100hrs

TAUNTON POLICE STATION

The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton, TA1 1HE

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: SomersetWestNPT@avonandsomerset.police.uk

To report a crime anonymously, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or visit www.crimestoppers-uk.org