



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

September 2026

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

MEET THE TEAM

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

Motorcycle Security Information Day

On Saturday 1 August, PCSOs Sean and Imran hosted a Motorcycle Security Information Event at Graham’s Motorcycles on the Galmington Trading Estate, bringing together a range of partners to help riders better protect their motorcycles from theft.

Working alongside the Road Safety Team, Somerset Road Safety, Doc Bike and other partner agencies, the event provided practical advice and demonstrations on effective motorcycle security measures. Visitors were able to learn about the various steps they can take to reduce the risk of theft and improve the security of their bikes when unattended. Despite ongoing awareness campaigns, many motorcycle owners are still not using additional security devices, leaving their vehicles vulnerable to opportunistic thieves. The event aimed to highlight the importance of investing in appropriate security measures and adopting simple preventative habits that can make a significant difference. As the first event of its kind, it proved to be a valuable opportunity to engage with the motorcycle community, share crime prevention advice and strengthen partnerships. Following its success, the team and partner organisations are already looking at opportunities to hold similar events in the future. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the day a success. Together, we can continue to reduce motorcycle theft and keep our communities safer.



OFFICER
PC Tom Walker
POLICING AREA
Taunton North
YEARS SERVICE
4 years
HOBBY
Cars
FAVOURITE FOOD
Meatfeast Pizza

ABOUT ME

This month’s ‘Meet the Team’ is PC Tom Walker.

Since joining Avon and Somerset Police in 2022, I have been serving the communities of Taunton. My policing journey began on the Response Team, where I spent two years attending incidents, supporting victims, and responding to a wide range of emergencies. In 2024, I joined the Neighbourhood Policing Team, allowing me to take a more proactive role in preventing crime. Policing has always been a career I aspired to pursue. Growing up, I was inspired by my father’s service and developed a strong interest in following a similar path. In 2022, I joined Avon and Somerset Police. What attracted me most to policing was the opportunity to help others, make a positive difference within the community, and work alongside partner agencies to support vulnerable people and those most in need. Building relationships with residents and local organisations remains one of the most rewarding aspects of the role. Since joining the Neighbourhood Policing Team, I have developed a particular interest in tackling road-related criminality. This has included proactively targeting offenders who use the road network to facilitate crime and identifying opportunities to disrupt their activities through effective enforcement. This work has delivered a number of positive outcomes, including the seizure of vehicles being used unlawfully and the removal of offenders’ ability to access the road network.

The variety of neighbourhood policing means no two days are the same, but the opportunity to make a tangible difference to the lives of local people continues to be the most rewarding part of the job.



Taunton Flower Show 2026

The Taunton Flower Show has been a cherished part of Somerset life for generations, with records dating back as far as 1831. Over the weekend, members of the Taunton Neighbourhood Policing Team, supported by our dedicated Special Constables, were delighted to attend this fantastic event across both days. Events such as the Flower Show provide a valuable opportunity for us to engage with our communities in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Throughout the weekend, we spoke with visitors from across Somerset and beyond, offering crime prevention advice, answering questions, and discussing local policing issues. The event also gave us the chance to connect with people of all ages. From children meeting a police officer for the

very first time to adults seeking clarification on stories and information they have seen online, these conversations help us build trust and strengthen relationships within our communities. We were particularly pleased to dispel a few common myths and misconceptions, helping ensure residents have access to accurate information about policing and the law.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to stop by and speak with us. We always enjoy attending community events like the Taunton Flower Show and look forward to returning next year.



Town Centre Patrols Target Illegal eScooter and eBike Use

Following concerns raised by members of the public regarding the use of eScooters in Taunton town centre, neighbourhood officers recently carried out patrols and engaged with a group of young people seen riding eScooters in the area. As a result, one eScooter was recovered, and enquiries remain ongoing.

We continue to work with young people, as well as their parents and guardians, to raise awareness of the legal responsibilities associated with eScooter use and to promote safe and responsible behaviour.

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep the town centre safe, officers also conducted patrols using police pedal cycles. During these patrols, officers stopped and identified a modified electric bicycle that was being used unlawfully. The bicycle was subsequently seized.

These proactive patrols help us address community concerns, educate road users, and ensure that vehicles being used on our roads and public spaces comply with current legislation. If you have concerns about anti-social behaviour or the unlawful use of vehicles in your area, please continue to report them to us through the appropriate channels.



POLICE EARLY INTERVENTION TEAM

Early Warning Signs of Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation can affect any young person, regardless of background. Offenders often use grooming tactics; building trust, offering gifts or attention to gradually pull a child into situations that become risky or criminal. Many young people don't realise they are being exploited, which makes early awareness essential.

Recognising the Signs

While every child is different, certain changes may indicate they are being groomed or exploited. These can include unexplained items or gifts, going missing or staying out late, regularly missing school, or losing interest in activities they once enjoyed. For more information on signs of exploitation, please visit [Protecting children from child criminal exploitation | NSPCC Learning](#)

What You Can Do as a Parent or Carer

Parents can feel powerless when something doesn't feel right, but there are practical steps you can take that will make a difference.

Keep Communication Open

Start conversations gently and avoid blame or confrontation. Approaching a young person in this way helps them feel listened to and safe, which can make them more willing to open up. Keeping communication open also gives you the opportunity to support them and help them navigate the situation.

Strengthen Digital Safety

Grooming is increasingly happening online, making digital safety an important protective factor. You can support your child by:

- Enabling built in phone safety features, including location tracking (Find My iPhone, Google Family Link).
- Setting screen time limits and content filters using parental control settings.
- Using reputable monitoring tools that help identify concerning patterns such as messages from strangers, explicit content, or manipulative behaviour.
- Reviewing social media privacy settings to ensure they only communicate with people they know.

For more digital safety guidance, visit: [Use Parental Controls to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC](#)

Trust Your Instincts

If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts. You know your child better than anyone. Try to keep communication open and keep a note of any signs that concern you. Over time, these small details can help safeguarding professionals build a clearer understanding of what may be happening. If you are worried, please reach out for help early. Early intervention can make a huge difference.

You can contact:

- Police (non-emergency 101) or report online via [Report a crime or incident | Avon and Somerset Police](#).
- Children Social Care, information can be found here [Report a Concern - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)
- Your child's school safeguarding lead and charities such as the NSPCC, who offer confidential advice and guidance.

FRAUD AWARENESS

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH



Celebrity Scams



Avon and Somerset Police are seeing an increase in cases where victims are being approached by supposed “celebrities”. This type of fraud often has romantic element, where it can look very similar to a typical romance fraud, but not always. There are also very common uses of celebrities in AI videos promoting investment scams, including well known figures like Martin Lewis, Elon Musk and Richard Branson.

How do they start?

The victim will usually comment on a post on the verified social media page of the celebrity, or a fan page. They may instead comment on a YouTube video of them. Fraudsters create a fake profile of the celebrity, taking photographs from the internet. They then trawl the verified social media pages looking for their fans. They will then contact the commenter using the fake profile. They initiate conversation saying something like, “Thank you for your kind comment on my page – it’s nice to have a fan. Maybe we could talk some more on this private account”. They explain that their verified profiles are managed by their management company, and they have no control over them.

How do they progress?

Like in romance frauds, the fraudster will present as extremely caring, making the victim feel like the only person in the world and contacting them every day. They will often suggest that they would like to start a relationship with the victim, insisting that they can trust each other. If the celebrity has a partner, they will claim to be unhappy or separated, and that everything the media present is fictitious. They often confide in the victim regarding how miserable they are and how their management company are “Controlling” and that they need to “Break free” from them. They then suggest that they need the victim’s help with this and that they want to meet the victim.

The money requests...

This is where the fraudster starts making arrangements for the meeting. However, they say that they will need some special VIP card or to pay for a meet and greet. At this stage, the victim will often be put in touch with their “management company” to arrange the meeting. Many issues will start to arise with the meeting, requiring more money or gift cards from the victim. The meeting will keep getting pushed forward with numerous excuses being made. In reality, the victim was never going to meet the celebrity, as they have never really spoken to them. The “celebrity”, the “management company”, and any other characters the fraudster has introduced, are just the same criminal.

Protect Yourself

- Think before sending money to people you have only ever communicated with online.
- Gift cards are not a legitimate form of payment but are very desirable to fraudsters – if you are asked to purchase gift cards, it’s a fraud.
- Verify the person you are communicating with is who they say they are – does the profile have a blue tick next to their name to show that they are verified? Was the profile created very recently, as this is indicative of a fraudulent profile.
- Talk about it with someone you trust and get a second opinion.
- Fraudsters will exploit people for their money and portray themselves in a different light to gain your trust and ultimately obtain money from you.
- Remember – a genuine relationship/friendship should never involve you having to send money
- As a general Celebrities will not communicate with fans outside of their official channels

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 August

Out of the 13 active Community Speedwatch schemes in the area, **8** schemes were operational, carrying out **31** monitoring sessions across various locations.

During these sessions, volunteers observed an impressive **5,525** vehicles, demonstrating the scale of community engagement and commitment. As a result of these efforts, **357** 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](#)

CRIME STATISTICS - July 2026

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	146
Bicycle Theft	20
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	27
Criminal Damage & Arson	77
Drugs	10
Other theft	55
Possession of weapons	8
Public Order	43
Robbery	15
Shoplifting	151
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle Crime	36
Violent Crime	351
Other Crime	10

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.

If you would like to learn more about what constitutes a domestic relationship, you can find further information here:

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

- Trull Community Centre — 12/09 10am—11am.
- Coffee with a Cop at Britons Ash Community Hall—23/09—2pm.
- Taunton Together Event, Town Centre—26/09

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: [SomersetWest-](#)

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

To report a crime anonymously, contact Crimestoppers on

0800 555 111 or visit

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

