



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

February 2026

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

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

Monthly engagement Musgrove Park Hospital

Each month, the Neighbourhood Policing Team visits Musgrove Park Hospital to host an engagement event, giving both staff and patients the chance to speak directly with our officers about any questions or concerns.

Working closely with Claire Poole, Musgrove's NHS Violence Prevention and Reduction Lead, the team focuses on a range of important topics throughout the year. These include crime prevention advice, personal and property safety, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), and other community safety priorities.

Pictured: Claire Poole (NHS Violence Prevention and Reduction Lead) and PC Ross Henderson.



Man Jailed following attack at petrol station

A man has been jailed for leaving another with permanent scarring after attacking him with a wine bottle during an incident at a convenience store in Taunton.

Christopher Cornish, 35, of no fixed abode, Taunton, was carrying out a theft at a store in East Street before his victim intervened on the evening of Monday 18 August.

Cornish pleaded guilty to section 18 grievous bodily harm, intent to resist arrest and theft and was jailed for four years and six months at Taunton Crown Court, sitting at Worle, on Wednesday 14 January.

The victim, a man in his fifties, detained Cornish while he was carrying out a theft in the store, before he was struck with force to the neck with a glass bottle, causing it to smash.

Cornish then continued to attack the victim with a second bottle, by striking him to the forehead, causing him to lose consciousness and a significant amount of blood.

MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

Enquiry Officer
Louise Ashmore

POLICING AREA

Somerset West

YEARS SERVICE

18 months

HOBBY

Travelling

FAVOURITE FOOD

Lamb Tagine

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is Taunton Enquiry Officer Louise Ashmore

I am a relative "newbie" to the Taunton Enquiry Office team as I joined in July 2024. I work part-time (Wednesday—Fridays) with two wonderful colleagues — Bethan and Marie.

Nothing really prepared me for the diversity of this role. We are the first point of contact for anyone coming into Taunton Police Station to report a crime or simply looking for advice. Hopefully we welcome people with a friendly smile, no matter who they are or why they have come into the station. We are here to listen to worries, concerns and (sometimes) complaints and try to help or at least point people in the right direction.

Needless to say no day is ever the same! One minute you are dealing with a seized vehicle or someone handing in a firearm, the next you are taking a report of an assault, theft or a problem with a neighbour as well as signing in bail and RSO registrations. We also process on-line crime reports but I prefer the face-to-face contact with the public. The job is very varied, interesting and I love it. With no prior police background, I am always very thankful for the help and advice we get from Police Officers in the station—although I'm sure they must be thinking "Oh no, here she comes again with another question!"

Prior to joining Taunton EO, I was an English as an Additional Language teacher and also taught French and German. I grew up in North Yorkshire but lived in Stuttgart, Bruges and Brussels, where I worked in the European Parliament and a consultancy. I love travelling with my family and enjoy meeting up with friends.

Police and paramedics were on the scene within minutes of the reported attack, and the victim was taken to hospital for treatment for serious injuries, including deep wounds to the neck and forehead, resulting in permanent scarring.

The victim required 16 stitches, 10 hours of hospital treatment and a 90-minute operation, but he has since been discharged to continue his recovery at home and we have maintained contact with him throughout the investigation.

Severe Weather and Flooding – Local Policing Update

In the final days of January 2026, our area experienced exceptionally heavy rainfall brought by Storm Chandra — likely making this one of the wettest Januarys on record. The impact across Taunton and its surrounding villages was significant, particularly to communities east of Taunton and those bordering the Somerset Levels.

Throughout the storm, officers responded to a wide range of incidents. These included vehicles stranded in floodwater, fallen trees blocking roads and footpaths, and, in the most serious cases, assisting residents who needed to be evacuated from their homes. For those affected, this will have been an incredibly distressing experience, and our thoughts remain with everyone who had to leave their property for safety.

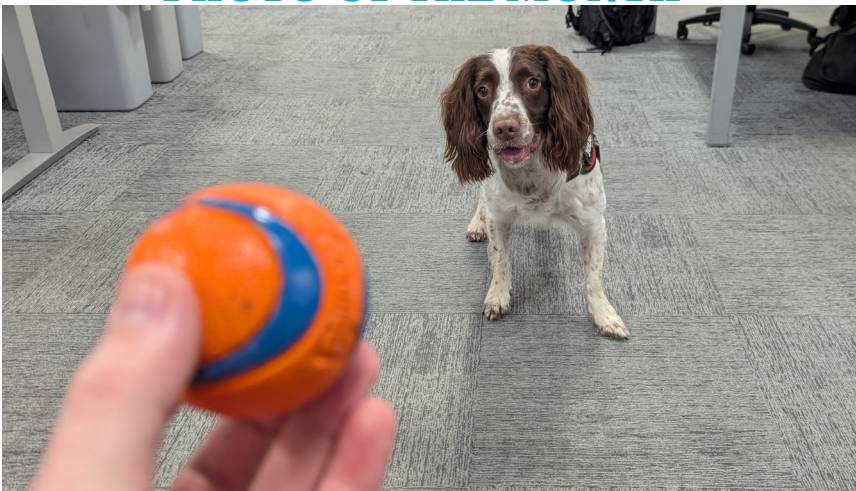
Since the storm, we've been supporting our colleagues in the Sedgemoor Neighbourhood Policing team with ongoing work in the village of Moorland, just outside Bridgwater. Given their devastating flooding in 2014, it's completely understandable that the community feels anxious whenever heavy rain returns.

In Taunton, the River Tone often rises quickly but usually recedes within 12 hours — however, the excess water continues its journey and ultimately settles across the Somerset Levels, including the fields and surrounding areas of Moorland. This continued flow means that communities downstream often face the effects long after rainfall stops.

During the final week of January, our officers carried out reassurance checks at properties where we knew vulnerable residents lived, as well as at locations likely to be affected by flooding in the hours that followed. By working closely with the Environment Agency, Somerset Council, and Highways, we were able to share accurate information and deploy officers where they were needed most.

We're all hoping for drier weather in the coming weeks so the ground can recover and, hopefully, avoid further disruption or the need for more evacuations.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



This is Percy. Percy is training to be one of the forces welfare dogs. Every now and then, the welfare dogs turn up to the station for a visit. Usually driven around the force by volunteers, the dogs are a great opportunity for officers and staff to unwind from the stresses of the role. These dogs do really provide a valuable service to the team...but only if we throw their ball when they say so.....

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 it's 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

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 refer 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 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 January

Over the month of January, 6 out of the 14 Community Speedwatch schemes in Taunton have been visibly active across the different communities. From the 13 sessions that took place, 3,233 vehicles have been monitored by our Speedwatch volunteers. From those, a total of 68 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 - December 2025

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	105
Bicycle Theft	7
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	20
Criminal Damage & Arson	63
Drugs	9
Other theft	29
Possession of weapons	4
Public Order	89
Robbery	12
Shoplifting	102
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle Crime	14
Violent Crime	386
Other Crime	15

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 28th February 1100—1200hrs.
- Independent Market Town Centre—1st March 1100—1300

“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](#)

