



Avon and Somerset Police
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

Taunton

Policing Newsletter

October 2026

NEWS FROM ACROSS TAUNTON

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

Understanding E-Scooters: The Law and the Challenges of Policing them

This month, I wanted to take the opportunity to discuss E-scooters, the legislation surrounding their use, how we respond to reports involving them.

Whilst many people associate E-scooters with their rise in popularity during the late 2010s, they have actually been around much longer. I can personally remember owning one after getting it from Bridgwater Fair around 2002 or 2003. Like many parents today, my own parents purchased it without knowing the legal position surrounding their use. As E-scooters became increasingly popular across the UK, concerns grew about their use on roads, pavements and cycle lanes. By 2019, the issue had become significant enough for the House of Commons Library to publish guidance clarifying that privately owned E-scooters could not legally be used on public roads, cycle lanes or pavements under existing UK law.

In July 2020, the Department for Transport introduced regulations allowing official rental E-scooter trial schemes on public roads in certain locations. Somerset Council participated in one of these schemes for a period of time, allowing residents to legally use rental E-scooters within the trial area.

Why Are Private E-Scooters Illegal on Public Roads?

Legally, E-scooters are classified as mechanically propelled vehicles. This means that, in theory, riders would require:

- A valid driving licence
- Insurance
- Vehicle registration
- A roadworthy test certificate

However, privately owned E-scooters cannot currently meet these requirements under UK law, meaning they cannot legally be used on public roads, pavements or cycle lanes.

Why Don't Police Seize Every E-Scooter?

At Avon and Somerset Police, like many forces across the country, we receive reports about E-scooters on an almost daily basis:

"There are children riding them around the park."

"Someone rides one to work every day."

The reality is that they are widely available online and on the high street, often with little information provided about the legal restrictions on their use. Many parents purchase them as birthday or Christmas presents without being aware of the law.



MEET THE TEAM



OFFICER

**PCSO Spencer
Turnbull**

POLICING AREA

Taunton West

YEARS SERVICE

4 months

HOBBY

Dog Walking

FAVOURITE FOOD

Chicken Curry

ABOUT ME

This month's 'Meet the Team' is PCSO Spencer Turnbull.

Hello, I'm Spencer, and I've lived in and around Taunton for more than 40 years. Before joining the police, I spent many years working in care and support, helping adults with autism and learning disabilities lead independent and fulfilling lives.

The skills and experiences I gained in that role really benefit the role of a Police Community Support Officer. I am passionate about supporting our communities and helping people feel safe, heard and supported when they need advice or assistance.

A key part of my approach is working collaboratively with local residents, organisations and community groups. By listening to different perspectives and bringing people together, we can ensure the right support is provided in the right way and that everyone feels valued and included.

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family and my gorgeous Collie, Parker. We can often be found exploring the many beautiful walking routes around our local area. When time allows, I also enjoy playing golf (although not always very well!) and both running and walking football.

Since starting my journey as a PCSO, I have learned so much about the role and the positive difference neighbourhood policing can make. If you see me out and about, please don't hesitate to stop and say hello. I look forward to meeting more members of our community and hope to see you at a local Beat Surgery soon.

When officers encounter children using E-scooters, our primary aim is often education. We ensure both the child and their parents understand the legal position and where E-scooters can legally be used, namely on private land with the landowner's permission. Taking immediate enforcement action can have significant consequences. Seizing an E-scooter for having no insurance would also require us to report the rider for offences such as driving without a licence and insurance. In some cases, this could result in penalty points being applied to a young person's licence record before they have even taken a driving test. Such outcomes may have long-term impacts on their ability to obtain motor insurance in the future.

Another significant concern surrounding the use of E-scooters is the risk they pose to both riders and the wider public. Hospitals continue to report increasing numbers of serious injuries linked to E-scooter incidents each year, affecting not only those using the devices but also pedestrians and other road users.

Many e-scooters are ridden by young people who may not fully appreciate the capabilities and limitations of these machines. Without the experience, awareness, and road safety knowledge required to operate them safely, riders can quickly find themselves in dangerous situations, increasing the likelihood of collisions and serious injury.

Education and Enforcement

Over the years, officers have seized numerous E-scooters and carried out extensive educational work to help raise awareness. This has included:

- Delivering inputs and presentations within schools
- Providing information for school newsletters
- Engaging with parents and young people
- Sharing advice through community events and social media

Where appropriate, we will continue to take enforcement action against dangerous and unlawful use.

However, with the volume of incidents police are required to attend each day, alongside competing demands from crime investigations, safeguarding concerns and emergency incidents, it would not be realistic to be able to completely remove all E-scooters from our streets.

Final Thoughts

If you own or are considering purchasing an E-scooter, please take the time to understand the current legislation and ensure it is only used where permitted by law. More information can be found on our website link here: [E-scooters: Your questions answered | Avon and Somerset Police](#)

Taunton Together 2026

Saturday 26 September saw the return of the annual Taunton Together event, the town's popular end-of-summer festival celebrating community, diversity, arts, culture and, of course, plenty of fantastic food. The Neighbourhood Policing Team deployed the Mobile Police Station in Goodland Gardens and spent time engaging with members of the public. Throughout the event, officers and PCSOs spoke with residents about local policing matters, addressed community concerns, answered questions about crime prevention, and discussed a range of wider policing topics. Events such as Taunton Together provide a valuable opportunity for the team to meet people face-to-face, strengthen relationships within the community, and increase awareness of the support and services available from local policing teams.

With the September sunshine making a welcome appearance, the team remained busy throughout the day, collectively averaging around 20,000 steps while engaging with visitors. Although tiring, it was an extremely enjoyable and rewarding day, and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to stop by and speak with us.



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

Trusted Official Fraud

Trusted official fraud is where criminals impersonate people or organisations that the public naturally trust, such as the police, banks, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC), or government departments. Their aim is to create panic, urgency, or fear so that victims act quickly without questioning the request. They may contact victims claiming there is a problem with their bank account, suspicious activity on their card, unpaid tax, or even asking that they assist with a police investigation. In some cases, victims are told they will be arrested if they do not cooperate, with fraudsters falsely accusing them of offences such as money laundering or tax evasion.

To appear convincing, they often use spoofed phone numbers, official-looking emails, and personal information gathered from other sources. Victims may be instructed to transfer money to a "safe account", purchase gift cards, share security codes, provide sensitive banking information or send money in the post. They may instead be asked to withdraw cash, purchase gold, high value goods, or foreign currency for collection by a "courier". In reality, the money and information are being handed directly to criminals.

In some cases, trusted official fraud is not a single interaction but a long-term deception that develops over weeks or even months, causing a great amount of emotional distress. Criminals build trust through repeated contact, convincing victims that they are helping with an ongoing police investigation, protecting their money from fraudsters, or resolving a complex tax or banking issue. Victims are often instructed not to tell family, friends, or bank staff about the situation, with fraudsters claiming that secrecy is necessary not to compromise the investigation. This isolation can make it harder for victims to recognise warning signs or seek advice from someone they trust.



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 September

Out of the 13 active Community Speedwatch schemes in the area, **7** schemes were operational, carrying out **24** monitoring sessions across various locations.

During these sessions, volunteers observed an impressive **6,670** vehicles, demonstrating the scale of community engagement and commitment. As a result of these efforts, **93** 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 - August 2026

(Latest information available to the public online)

Category	Crimes Recorded
Anti-social behaviour	158
Bicycle Theft	8
Burglary (Including Commercial Burglary)	21
Criminal Damage & Arson	62
Drugs	5
Other theft	44
Possession of weapons	2
Public Order	38
Robbery	9
Shoplifting	208
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle Crime	15
Violent Crime	315
Other Crime	12

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.

CHARIS Beat Surgery	CHARIS, Hammet Street	14th Oct	1100-0000hrs
Bishops Lydeard Talking Cafe	Bishops Lydeard Village Hall	15th Oct	1000-1200hrs
Taunton Carnival	Taunton Town Centre	17th Oct	1700-0000hrs
Holway Beat Surgery	Lisieux Way Hall	20th Oct	0930-1130hrs
Bike Marking & Road Safety	Taunton Town Centre	28th Oct	0900-1500hrs
Coffee with a Cop	Britons Ash Community Hall	28th Oct	1400-1500hrs

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](#)

