

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 31st May 2020

Cheshire News & Appeals



Latest Cheshire News

Cheshire Police reminds people to stay alert and stay safe this weekend

Cheshire Police is reminding people to keep up the good work of staying alert and staying safe this weekend. The vast majority of people have been sticking to the guidance put in place to protect us all and keep us safe. As a force we are confident people will continue to act responsibly. As many of us will now be able to spend more time away from home, undertake more activities and meet up with more people than before, we each need to take responsibility for doing that within the regulations - and also follow the guidance which will help reduce the spread of the virus.

Supt Richard Rees said: *"The guidance has been changed to give people more flexibility and there are understandably some questions about this as people get to grips with what it means for them. The best way to inform yourself of the new guidelines announced this week is to go to the government website. Our overall aim is to continue to encourage and support our communities to comply with the regulations and keep everyone as safe as possible. We will continue to use our 4E approach of engaging, explaining, encouraging and only enforcing as a last resort. I'd like to take the opportunity to remind people we cannot enforce social distancing and are relying on your good nature to remember to keep two metres apart, which on the whole people are remembering to do. It's vital for your own safety and that of others. People will also need to be mindful of the difference in the regulations between Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England and check before you travel."*

Police and Crime Commissioner David Keane said: *"It has been pleasing to see that the majority of Cheshire residents have been following government advice during the lockdown period to help keep our communities safe. However, as more flexibility is given we are now entering a fairly critical phase where a second wave of the virus may occur if we don't continue to be vigilant. It is as important as ever that we continue to closely follow the advice issued by the government so we can continue to halt the spread of the virus and save lives."*

For more information on government advice during the lockdown go to <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Appeal for information after offenders target cash machine in Latchford

Detectives are appealing for information after a cash machine in Latchford was targeted by offenders.

At around 10.46pm on Thursday 28 May offenders approached the Co-operative convenience store at Bridge Shopping Centre on Maybrook Place in two vehicles – a black BMW and a white van. Offenders forced open the shutter doors. Once inside they attempted to remove the cash machine however it remained intact. The van was left at the scene and the offenders fled in the BMW. The car was later found abandoned on Hardwick Road in Partington.

DSgt Tom Hall said: *“The investigation is progressing and a scene remains in place. I believe the offenders were disturbed during their attempt to steal the cash machine meaning they left empty handed. While we follow a number of enquiries I am appealing to the public to come forward with information to help us find those responsible and ensure they do not strike again. If you have CCTV or dash cam footage please do submit it through to us.”*

Anyone with information is asked to call Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 716381 or report it though the website <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/> Information can also be submitted anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or by visiting their website <https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Ringleaders of a family-run drugs gang in Warrington jailed for almost 25 years

The two ringleaders of a family-run drugs gang who supplied large amounts of drugs in Warrington have been jailed.

The pair recruited their girlfriends and grandma to help run their criminal business. Their activity came to the attention of detectives after purchasing large supplies of cocaine from another local drugs gang who were under police surveillance. This led to Cheshire Constabulary’s Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) conducting a nine-month investigation – codenamed Operation Iconic. The operation found the gang were selling cocaine with a high purity of 68 per cent and MDMA to customers across the town. Half a kilo of cocaine with a potential street value of almost £150,000 and £7,000 of MDMA were seized in Warrington.

On Thursday 28 May five men were sentenced at Liverpool Crown Court after pleading guilty to all charges. The four women were given suspended sentences. The main ringleader was 25-year-old Lewis Turner – the nephew of Anthony Cullen. He was ordered to take over the running of the gang’s supply of cocaine when the previous members – Wesley Williamson, Uktu Tig and Robert Musson – were sent to prison. Turner would live a leisurely lifestyle as his organised crime gang turned over £1,000 a week. He would entice customers by telling them the cocaine he supplied was cheap, the best and referred to himself as the big boss baby. His 21-year-old girlfriend Samantha Gerrard was in charge of the drugs debt list. She also calculated and handled the money generated from the criminal enterprise. On at least one occasion she supplied drugs to a customer on behalf of Turner from his flat at Sedgewick Court on Central Way. Turner meanwhile would spend his day collecting money from those who had purchased large drug supplies. He did this with a serious level of violence in order to set his authority at the top of the chain and show others he wouldn’t be messed with. On one occasion Turner was with Gerrard in his car when he assaulted a man for not paying him the drugs he had supplied. His aggression was also aimed at the local community when on 10 October 2018 he instigated a road rage altercation with an innocent member of the public.

To keep the drug distribution and money flowing Turner recruited his close friend and previous customer Antony Morgan to be his right hand man. Morgan widened the organised crime group to include his 58-year-old Nan, Julie Morgan, his 21-year-old girlfriend Maria Beeby and her older sister Katie Newton. Julie Morgan prepared, stored and supplied drugs on behalf of her grandson at her home on Windermere Avenue. The £150,000 of cocaine was recovered by police from her address and another address linked to Beeby and Newton on Armour Avenue. Numerous text messages would be exchanged from Morgan to his Nan discussing the conspiracy. He would ask how many drugs were left at her house and instruct she bring the drugs to him. She would do this while on her way to work or after she had taken the children to school. Beeby and Newton were caught delivering cocaine, wrapped in a shopping bag with snap bags and gloves, to

a house on Armour Avenue. This is part of the drugs seized with a potential street value of £150,000 seized by officers.

Gang member, Paul Ratcliffe allowed his home to be used as a safe house. A safe bought by Turner in Warrington town centre was taken to Ratcliffe's home on Bewsey Park Close to store drugs including almost £7,000 of MDMA, cash and paraphernalia. Turner had control of the key to the safe which was found by detectives in his car. When Turner and Anthony Morgan needed cocaine to be delivered to customers they enlisted Anthony Bond. He was trusted to drive the drugs and cash under the ringleader's instruction. Cannabis worth almost £8,000 was stored at his home in Widnes and seized by detectives upon his arrest. He would regularly take trips between Densham Avenue and Sedgewick Court for the purpose of delivering drugs.

Kayvon Allen stored and packaged drugs for the organised crime group. He was previously one of Turner's customers and is believed to have owed him almost £2,000 after buying MDMA. On 10 July 2019 nine homes were raided by police and arrests were made to disrupt the gang.

DCI Giles Pierce, from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: *"Turner taking over as the ringleader gave him a huge ego, he was arrogant and often displayed acts of serious violence in order to mark his authority. He was motivated by the money he was generating from the supply of drugs and would be constantly splashing cash. The gang itself was very close-knit. It recruited close family and friends who were relied upon, but fully complicit in the conspiracy, to ensure the gang made a profit. Often when one organised crime gang is put in prison there is an attempt to fulfil the void, however sooner or later, they come to our attention. Here we are once again seeing a gang disrupted in Warrington and put behind bars. Another warning that Warrington isn't the place to commit organised crime."*

Five people charged following operation to target organised crime in Warrington

The Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) have charged five people with drug offences following an operation to target organised crime in Warrington.

All five have been charged with conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and will appear at Warrington Magistrates Court on Thursday 28 May. Ryan Baker, 31, from Bridgewater Avenue, Latchford was charged with two counts of conspiracy to supply Class A. Nadia Khatib-Shahid, 32, from Durley Avenue, Cheetham Hill was charged with two counts of conspiracy to supply Class A. Matthew Parrack, 39, from Bridgewater Avenue, Latchford was charged with two counts of conspiracy to supply Class A. Thomas Rayment, 29, from Brookvale Close, Burtonwood was charged with two counts of conspiracy to supply Class A and possession of a taser. Sheldon Simpson, 27, of no fixed abode but from Rochdale, was charged with two counts of conspiracy to supply Class A. All were remanded in custody.

The charge relates to arrests made on Wednesday 27 May as part of a number of early morning warrants in Warrington, Rochdale and Cheetham Hill in-connection with a serious and organised crime operation involving the supply of cocaine and heroin. After the warrants took place local officers carried out patrols to provide reassurance to the community.

Special Constabulary dedicate thousands of hours to protect Cheshire communities during coronavirus pandemic

The Special Constabulary dedicated thousands of hours to protect the communities of Cheshire last month after enhancing the force's continued work during the coronavirus pandemic.

Since the launch of the force-wide Operation Business, led by the Specials, a total of 968 business premises have been visited and more than 3,750 leaflets have been dropped. Since Friday 17 April, the specially trained volunteer police officers have worked a total of 5,123 hours and made 30 arrests.

Cheshire's Special Constabulary Chief Officer Celvyn Jones said: *"Operation Business has been a great success. It has seen fantastic leadership from the Specials team in terms of planning, organising and providing a visible presence to our business and education community. I am immensely proud of every member of the team who have committed hours during this challenging period. The impact the Operation has had speaks for itself in terms of the numbers but more importantly the team have played a key role in providing that visible, reassuring presence that the public expect. We are planning to keep the Operation running for National Specials Weekend which takes place on 6 and 7 June. I would encourage members of the community to consider if the unique and rewarding role of Special Constable could be one for them in the future, information can be found on the Cheshire Constabulary website."*

The operation, led by Special Inspector Lewy Lewtas who, while continuing to work from home for Lloyds Bank, has been working with regular and special constabulary colleagues to co-ordinate resources that deter criminals from targeting schools and businesses across the county.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Keane said: *"The diligent efforts of our Special Constabulary during the pandemic have not gone unnoticed. The thousands of hours worked by these selfless volunteers teamed with the success of the Special Constabulary led operation show the vital role they have in supporting frontline officers and protecting the communities of Cheshire. We are extremely grateful to the collective commitment of the Special Constabulary during the pandemic and I want to again thank them all for their dedication and hard work on behalf of everyone in Cheshire."*

For more information on how to sign up to become a member of the Special Constabulary, please visit <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/police-forces/cheshire-constabulary/areas/cheshire/careers/careers/special-constables/>

Man charged with assault following Knutsford collision

Detectives investigating a collision in Knutsford have charged a man with section 18 assault and dangerous driving.

A 41-year-old man was arrested on Thursday 21 May in connection with a collision between a van and a 12-year-old cyclist. The incident occurred at around 8.30pm on 21 May in the Mobberley Road area of Knutsford. The cyclist was taken to hospital via ambulance and has since been discharged having sustained minor injuries. Clinton Macrae of Springwood Avenue, Knutsford has since been charged with section 18 assault and dangerous driving. He appeared at Warrington Magistrates' Court on Saturday 23 May and was remanded in custody. He is next set to appear at Chester Crown Court on Friday 19 June.

Rudheath man charged with sexual offences

A 52-year-old man has been charged with sexual offences.

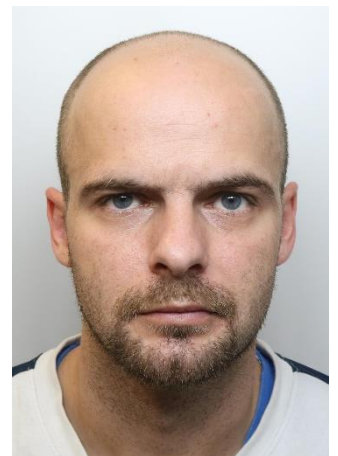
Stephen Bushell was arrested at his home off School Road in Rudheath, near Northwich, at around 11am on Thursday 21 May. He has subsequently been charged with three counts of sexual assault, as well as breaching a sexual harm prevention order. Two of the sexual assault charges relate to incidents on a canal path off Middlewich Road in Rudheath. They occurred at around 6pm on Wednesday 6 May and at approximately 5.30pm on Friday 8 May. The other sexual assault charge relates to an incident that occurred on the Chester Way roundabout in Northwich at around 3.30pm on Wednesday 20 May. All of the charges relate to a teenage girl from Northwich. Bushell appeared at Warrington Magistrates' Court on Friday 22 May. He was remanded in custody and is set to appear at Chester Crown Court on Friday 19 June.

Macclesfield sex offender jailed for arranging to meet a teenage girl

A Macclesfield sex offender has been jailed after arranging to meet a girl under 16 and failing to adhere to his Sexual Harm Prevention Order.

James Rowe, 34, from Torr Road, Macclesfield appeared at Chester Crown Court on Thursday 21 May and was sentenced to seven years in prison. He pleaded guilty to two counts of breaching a Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO) and inciting a child to engage in sexual activity at an earlier hearing. The breaches relate to continuing to be in contact with children, not declaring an online address and possession of a mobile phone.

The breaches came to light following a spot check from the designated sexual offender liaison officer acting on information. An investigation followed and revealed Rowe was in possession of mobile phones, which he denied when asked, and was inappropriately messaging girls under the age of 16 under aliases.



DC Chris Jackson said: *“Rowe is back behind bars because of his continued behaviour. I hope this sends a message to those with a SHPO that we are monitoring you. I hope this also reassures residents and that our designated sexual offender liaison officers take their role and the safety of the public extremely seriously.”*

Latest Cheshire Appeals

Appeal after four bikes stolen from sheds on the same night in Widnes

Detectives are appealing for information from members of the public after four bikes were stolen by burglars on the same night in Widnes.

They were all stolen from sheds, which were broken into. Two of the bikes – a grey and red Cube Acid mountain bike and a small white battery-powered MXR500 bike – were taken in Westminster Close between 10.30pm on Tuesday 26 May and 5.30am on Wednesday 27 May. The other two – a blue and black Orbia

mountain bike and a red Trek Roscoe mountain bike – were stolen in Briarfield Avenue on the same night, some time before 7.40am. Enquiries in relation to the incidents are ongoing.

The detectives investigating the burglaries are urging anyone with information about the incidents or the locations of the stolen bikes to come forward. They are also appealing for residents to take action to reduce their chances of becoming victims of such burglaries.

DC Stuart Clay, of Widnes Local Policing Unit, said: *“I would like to reassure members of the community that we are determined to establish who stole the bikes, make them face the consequences of their actions and do all we can to have the bikes returned to their rightful owners. With Westminster Close and Briarfield Avenue being a short distance apart, we believe that the burglaries may be linked. We have launched an investigation and I urge anyone with any information or footage that may aid our ongoing enquiries to get in touch. Perhaps you were in the area and witnessed something suspicious, or maybe you saw the offenders or have CCTV or dashcam footage of them. We also want to hear from anyone who believes they may have seen any of the bikes since they were stolen, or know where the bikes are. Residents can also help us and themselves by making it as difficult as possible for thieves to enter outbuildings and steal their bikes or other possessions. They can do this by following our outbuilding and bike security advice.”*

If you have any information or footage that may help our investigation please call us on 101, quoting IML 714811, or [give the details via our website](#). Alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Cheshire Constabulary’s tips for deterring burglars from targeting your sheds and other outbuildings include:

- Never leave a shed, garage or other outbuilding unlocked and easy prey for opportunist thieves
- Fit strong padlocks to outbuilding doors and make sure the doors are solid enough not to be kicked in
- Good external security lighting can put off or draw attention to a burglar – the most appropriate form is high efficiency low energy lighting controlled by a dusk-to-dawn switch so it only comes on when it is dark
- If you have external security lighting that comes on when sensing movement, make sure the lights are directed downwards to prevent them from annoying neighbours and being dangerous to passing traffic
- Strong fencing or gates will make it difficult for intruders to get onto your land
- Solid fences or walls, particularly those with a flat or rounded top, are relatively easy for a burglar to climb over – fixing trellising to the top can make it more difficult
- Check for weak spots where a burglar could get onto your land, such as a low or sagging fence or a back gate with a weak lock
- A thorny hedge along the boundary of your property can put burglars off, as can gravel areas due to the noise of walking on them.

The force’s anti-theft advice for bike owners includes:

- Get your bike security marked and registered at BikeRegister for a highly effective visible deterrent to bike thieves
- Remember to record details of your bike, such as the frame number, the BikeRegister number and any other distinguishing features, and take a photo

- Take the same care to lock your bike securely at home as you would on the street
- It can take thieves as little as a few seconds to cut through some locks, so use two good quality locks, with at least one of them being a D-lock.

Appeal following burglary in Congleton

Detectives investigating a burglary in Congleton are appealing for information and footage from members of the public.

Upon returning to his home in High Lowe Avenue at around 1.50am on Thursday 28 May, a man saw an intruder inside the house. He confronted the offender inside the property and a struggle ensued between the two men. The altercation continued outside before the offender ran off along High Lowe Avenue. The offender, who had conducted a search of the house and stole the victim's wallet, is described as white, around 30 to 40 years old and approximately 5' 9" tall. He had a bald head and a slim build and was wearing a royal blue zip-up hoody and dark trousers. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and detectives are urging anyone with any information or CCTV or dashcam footage that may aid their investigation to get in touch.

DC Rob McCubbin said: *"Burglary is a serious offence in which victims are targeted in their own home, which is the place they should be able to feel most safe. Being the victim of a burglary is always a traumatic experience, but in this case that is exacerbated by the fact that the victim saw the offender in his home and had an altercation with him. I would like to reassure members of the community that we are determined to establish the identity of the offender and bring him to justice. Enquiries are ongoing and as part of our investigation we want to speak to anyone who was in the area and believes they may have seen the offender. We also want to hear from anyone who thinks they may know who he is, or have CCTV or dashcam footage of him."*

Anyone with information or footage that may help the investigation should call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 715627, [give the details via our website](#) or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Appeal following altercation involving two men in Ellesmere Port

Detectives investigating an altercation in Ellesmere Port are appealing for information and footage from members of the public.

The incident involving two men occurred in Parklands, Little Sutton, at around 3pm on Tuesday 26 May. No-one was injured as a result of the altercation in the street. Two men from Ellesmere Port have been arrested on suspicion of public order offences in connection with the incident. The 30 and 40-year-old men have both been released on conditional bail pending further enquiries. As part of their enquiries detectives want to speak to anyone who witnessed the altercation. Detectives also want to hear from anyone who was driving in Parklands and believes they have dashcam footage that may help the investigation.

DC Jake Connolly, of Ellesmere Port CID, said: *"We are determined to establish exactly what happened and then progress our investigation accordingly. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and we are appealing for anyone with information or footage that may aid our investigation to come forward. If you have any information or dashcam or CCTV footage that may be relevant to our investigation, please call us*

on 101, quoting IML 714356, or give the details via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report>. Alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.”

Appeal following arson incident at closed down restaurant in Ellesmere Port

Police are appealing for information from members of the public following an arson incident at a closed down restaurant in Ellesmere Port.

Firefighters were informed of a fire at the former Agra Fort Indian restaurant shortly after 7.30am on Wednesday 27 May. They were able to extinguish the blaze before it could spread beyond a ground floor extension at the back of the two-storey building. The fire caused significant damage to the extension. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers are urging anyone with any information or footage that may aid their investigation to get in touch.

Insp Ian Stead, of Ellesmere Port Local Policing Unit, said: *“A fire investigator has confirmed that the fire was started deliberately. It caused significant damage to a ground floor extension at the back of the building, but the consequences of this incident could have been far worse. We believe that people have been going into the extension since the restaurant closed down. Thankfully, no-one was inside the building when the fire took hold, no-one was injured as a result of the blaze and firefighters were able to extinguish it before it had chance to spread beyond the extension. Fire spreads quickly and can endanger lives as well as properties. I would like to reassure members of the community that this is believed to be an isolated incident and we are determined to establish who started the fire and make them face the consequences of their actions. Enquiries are ongoing and as part of our investigation we want to speak to anyone who was in the area that morning and witnessed anything suspicious. We also want to hear from anyone who thinks they may know who started the fire, or have CCTV or dashcam footage of them.”*

Anyone with information or footage that may help the investigation should call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 714844, [give the details via our website](#) or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Appeal following large fire at closed down pub in Runcorn

Detectives investigating a large fire at a closed down pub in Runcorn are appealing for information from members of the public.

Firefighters were informed of the fire at the former Croft pub in Halton Lodge Avenue shortly before 1.30am on Tuesday 26 May. The blaze caused extensive damage to the disused building before being extinguished by fire crews. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and detectives are urging anyone with any information or footage that may help their investigation to get in touch.



DC Amanda Antrobus, of Runcorn Local Policing Unit, said: *“A Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service investigation into the cause of the fire has not yet been complete. However, at this stage the fire is being treated as suspicious and an investigation has been launched by the team here at Runcorn LPU. The fire caused extensive damage to the building but thankfully no-one was injured as a result of this incident. The consequences of the blaze have been far worse – fire spreads quickly and can endanger lives as well as properties. As part of our enquiries we want to speak to anyone who was in the area on the night of Monday*

25 May and witnessed anything suspicious. We also want to hear from anyone who thinks they have other information, or CCTV or dashcam footage, that may aid our investigation.”

Anyone with information or footage that may be relevant to the police’s investigation should call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 713988, [give the details via our website](#) or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

DC Antrobus added: *“As a result of the fire the building is currently structurally unsafe. As such I urge members of the public to stay outside the cordon that has been set up around the building.”*

Appeal to trace man wanted in Ellesmere Port

Officers from Cheshire Police are appealing to the public to help locate a man in Ellesmere Port. Rikki Aston is described as white, around 5’8” tall, of a proportionate build with dark brown hair and eyes. The 33-year-old is wanted for assault. Aston is believed to be in either the Ellesmere Port or Neston areas. Anyone who sees Aston or has any information regarding his whereabouts is asked to contact Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 709437. Information can also be reported anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

To find out further information about the Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association, to log into your account or for Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Literature please visit our website: <http://cheshire.ourwatch.org.uk/>