

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 26th October 2020

Cheshire News & Appeals



Latest Cheshire News

Blackmailer jailed after taking advantage of elderly man in Congleton

A 35-year-old blackmailer who took advantage of an elderly man in Congleton has been jailed.

Robert Hughes, known locally as Bungle, forced his way into the 79-year-old's home to take money from him after making the victim believe he had photographic evidence of him with a woman. Hughes was sentenced to six years in prison on Friday 16 October at Chester Crown Court after being found guilty of blackmail, robbery and five counts of burglary following a 5-day trial. He pleaded guilty to separate offences of theft from a motor vehicle and fraud before the trial began. The blackmail began in February of this year when Hughes told the woman to visit the gentleman's home and make sexual advances towards him. The victim believed he knew her and let her into his house. A couple of days later Hughes visited the victim claiming he had a photo of him with the woman and made demands for money. Almost every week afterwards Hughes would go to the man's house claiming to need the toilet and while he was there he searched for money. The victim believes Hughes had stolen a total of around £100. The court heard from a number of witnesses who saw Hughes coming and going from the man's home. They described the victim as extremely vulnerable due to his age and with no family to support him. On 10 June Hughes was arrested at his home address.



DS Keith Graham, of Macclesfield CID, said: *"Hughes took advantage of an elderly and vulnerable man by forcing his way into his home to take his money. Over four months he was left scared and feeling he had no choice but to keep giving into his demands. Despite the victim having no close family for support the local community were looking out for him and spotted something wasn't right about Hughes' actions and reported it to police. Following the actions of residents, officers from the beat initiative team, response and CID worked together to conduct an excellent investigation and securing enough evidence to ensure the jury found him guilty."*

Officers also applied for Hughes to receive a criminal behaviour order which was granted by the court.

Officers launch operation to help tackle community concerns in Winsford

Officers in Winsford are launching a new operation to help address concerns raised by the local community.

Following the death of Keagan Crimes after an incident in Cheviot Square on Sunday 11 October, the local policing unit has been contacted by residents raising a number of issues. Some are particularly concerned about knife crime following a number of recent incidents in the town. To help address those concerns, the local Beat Management Team is launching a new operation, which is being led by Sgt Danny Haddock.

Sgt Haddock said: *“Having been based in Winsford for more than 12 years I know the community well and I know how committed local residents are in wanting to keep the area safe. Understandably, recent events have caused concern in the local community and we want to reassure residents that, in the case of Keagan’s death, it appears that this was not a random attack and many of those involved were known to each other, although we don’t believe that Keagan was targeted specifically. It’s also important to remember that knife crime is not an issue that is unique to Winsford and it is worth noting that Cheshire has one of the lowest number of knife crime incidents in the country. However, just one knife in the community is one too many, and I appreciate the impact any incident involving a knife will have. This is why the local policing team is committed to working alongside local residents to help remove knives from our streets. Over the coming weeks we will be carrying out a number of proactive operations within the community to help reduce knife crime and address some of the concerns which have been raised by residents.”*

The operation will begin on Monday 26 October when there will be additional officers on foot patrol on the Over Estate along with a socially distanced pop-up police station on Cheviot Square. Residents are urged to attend to meet their local officers and raise any concerns they may have. There will also be pop-up stations on Wednesday 28 October and Friday 30 October. This will be followed by a Partnership Community Walk on Tuesday 27 October, where CI Gary Smith, along with other local officers, will be out and about in the Over area engaging with local residents. They will also be joined by the local PCSOs and representatives from Weaver Vale Housing Trust, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service. Then, on Thursday 29 October, Sgt Haddock will be leading a community knife sweep, anyone who wants to get involved is asked to email Sgt Haddock (Daniel.haddock@cheshire.pnn.police.uk).

CI Gary Smith, who is in charge of policing in Northwich, added: *“I know that recent incidents have caused concern in the local community and I want to reassure residents that my team are committed to doing all they can to tackle crime in the area and keep residents safe. My officers are working hard with our partners to educate the public and young people about the dangers of carrying knives. However, the police cannot achieve this alone and it is an issue that cannot be solved without the support of the public. If you have any information regarding knife crime or those who carry weapons please let us know. If you know someone who carries a knife then reporting it to the police could be enough to save a life.”*

As well as the ongoing community events, knife surrender bins are now available at Winsford and Northwich Police Stations, where residents can safely dispose of any unwanted knives to ensure they never get into the wrong hands. Local officers are also working with partner agencies, including Trading Standards, to speak to shop owners about the Challenge 25 scheme to stop the sale of knives to under 18s. A video has also been produced about the dangers of knives which will be shown in local high schools across the area.

PCC for Cheshire David Keane said: *“My deepest condolences go to Keagan’s family and friends who have been left deeply shocked by his death. We can never underestimate the impact that knife crime has on our communities and as Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire I am committed to working with all of our communities to tackle this issue. I hope that residents feel assured by the positive action taking place in Winsford and I’m pleased to see that a lot of effort has been going into educating our young people about this issue. It is vital that we make every effort to remove knives from our streets and I will work closely with the community in to provide any support that I can.”*

To report any type of crime involving weapons call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, or 999 in an emergency. Information can also be passed to the force online via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report> Anyone who knows someone that carries a knife can report it to Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111 or via <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/forms/give-information-anonymously>

Runcorn man with over 50 convictions handed a Criminal Behaviour Order

A prolific offender from Runcorn has been ordered to adhere to the terms of a CBO for the next three years.

The Criminal Behaviour Order was imposed on Clifford Smith by Warrington Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 13 October. The 48-year-old, of Grangeway Court, Runcorn, has more than 50 convictions, including for drug, theft and public order offences. The CBO, which was applied for by the Halton Problem Solving Team in a bid to curb Smith's offending, bans him from doing three things anywhere in Cheshire. They are:



- Acting in an anti-social manner that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to others
- Congregating in a group of two or more people in such a manner
- Begging in any form.

PC Chris Nicholls, of the Runcorn Beat Management Team, said: *“Applied for separately to prosecutions for criminal offences, Criminal Behaviour Orders are sought once all reasonable avenues of resolution have been explored regarding persistent offenders. In Clifford Smith’s case, he has a long list of convictions and his unacceptable behaviour has had a significant detrimental effect on those who have been subjected to it and on the community in general. He has persistently shown no consideration at all for the effects his offending has had on others. There comes a point when you have to say enough is enough and take additional action to protect the community. I welcome the court’s decision to impose a three-year CBO on Smith. I hope that it provides him with a wake-up call to change his ways and deters him from committing further offences. I also hope it reassures the people of Runcorn that we will not tolerate such behaviour and that we will use whatever powers we have at our disposal to ensure that the town is a pleasant place to live, work and visit.”*

Smith has been made aware that it is a criminal offence to breach the terms of a CBO. The sanctions imposed for doing so can be severe, with the maximum penalty being five years in prison.

David Keane, PCC for Cheshire, said: *“This successful CBO application sends a clear message that persistent criminal behaviour will not be tolerated in Runcorn. These preventative orders with strict restrictions are one of numerous tools that Cheshire Constabulary uses in a bid to improve our communities. They are having the desired effect of reducing offending, the number of victims of crime and the demand on the police and I hope that this continues.”*

Anyone who encounters Smith breaching the terms of his CBO is asked to contact Cheshire Constabulary on 101 to report it.

Eight charged in connection with large-scale burglary conspiracy

Detectives investigating a large-scale burglary conspiracy have charged eight people following a series of warrants in Merseyside and Lancashire.

The group were arrested on Tuesday 20 October following a twelve month joint investigation by detectives from Warrington Beat Initiative Team, in partnership with officers from Merseyside and Lancashire Police. The following people have been charged with:

- Anjum Nawaz, 37 years, of Oozehead Lane, Blackburn, Lancashire was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and conspiracy to steal motor vehicles
- Lewis Tankard, 19 years, of Seel Road, Huyton was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and conspiracy to steal motor vehicles
- Paul Wharton, 34 years, of Max Road, Knotty Ash was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and conspiracy to steal motor vehicles
- Stephen Hooton, 28 years, of no fixed abode was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and conspiracy to steal motor vehicles
- Neil O'Brien, 18 years, of Prestwood Crescent, Dovecot was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and conspiracy to steal motor vehicles
- Shamila Tabassum, 35 years, of Seacole Close, Blackburn, Lancashire was charged with conspiracy to commit burglary and conspiracy to steal motor vehicles
- Paula Heathers, 50 years, of The Green, Stoneycroft was charged with money laundering
- Susan Russell, 19 years, of Corner Brook, Stockbridge Village was charged with money laundering

The charges relate to a series of more than 160 offences across Cheshire, Merseyside and Lancashire. All eight people have been remanded in custody and are due to appear at Liverpool Magistrates Court today, Thursday 22 October.

Residents urged to work together to help tackle Covid-19

Cheshire Constabulary is urging residents to work together to help in the continued fight against Covid-19.

In recent weeks there has been a steady increase in coronavirus cases across the county, which has resulted in the introduction of a number of restrictions under the new three-tier system. As part of this, those living in Warrington, Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester are now classed as 'high-risk' areas, meaning that residents within the three boroughs cannot socialise with anyone from outside their household in any indoor settings. Halton is now classed as a 'very-high risk' area, meaning that as well as the ban on socialising with anyone from outside their household, a number of premises are now closed including betting shops, adult gaming centres and casinos. The new legislation is in addition to other existing measures in place, including the use of face masks and the 'rule of six'.

ACC Jenny Sims said: "I understand that there are lots of changes for people to take in and I want to reassure residents that we will continue to support them to navigate the measures in place. Our officers have been out and about throughout the weekend helping to explain the rules and to ensure people are following them, and this work will continue. To support this, we have also introduced a new dedicated team of officers whose role is specifically to respond to incidents involving possible breaches of the

coronavirus legislation. The vast majority are sticking to the rules and this is really encouraging. However, we do need people to continue to take personal responsibility and make sure they are fully aware of the rules that apply to them in the area they live and ensure they stick to them.”

So far the vast majority of people are sticking to the new rules. However, there have been a small number of breaches, which has resulted in enforcement action being taken against more than 20 individuals and businesses. These included a care worker in Warrington elderly care home who was issued with a £200 fine after failing to isolate and continuing to go to work following a trip to Romania. Meanwhile, the landlord of a pub in Warrington who fully understood the rules but was blatantly flouting them was issued with a £1,000 fine after failing to adhere to the legislation. During a joint visit to the premises with the local authority, officers found that tables and chairs were not adequately spaced out, meaning that customers were unable to socially distance. Elsewhere, three people from different households have £200 fines for socialising together at an address in Runcorn.

ACC Sims added: “Our officers will continue to adopt the 4Es approach to ensure that everyone is sticking to the rules. However, as these examples show, where people are blatantly breaching them we will not hesitate to take action. The rules are there for a reason – to keep us all safe – and we all need to play our part to protect our family, our friends, the communities we live in and, most importantly, the NHS.”

David Keane, PCC of Cheshire said: *“It’s been pleasing to see that the vast majority of residents have adhered to the new legislation, and I hope that this continues. It is clear that we all have a very important part to play over the coming weeks and months. COVID-19 is very much still out there, we must not let our guard down and the personal choices that we all make are crucial to protect others.”*

Anyone looking to report a breach of the coronavirus legislation is urged to do so online at <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/c19/tell-us-about-possible-breach-coronavirus-measures/>. Full details of the current regulations relating to Covid-19 can be found on the www.gov.uk/coronavirus website.

Criminal Behaviour Order imposed on persistent offender from Runcorn

A persistent offender from Runcorn has been handed a six-year Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO).

Anthony McNulty has been convicted of a series of public order offences in which the victims were women. The 30-year-old is currently serving a four-month prison sentence for the latest offence, which he committed at a gym in Runcorn on Tuesday 28 January. McNulty was sentenced for the public order offence at Warrington Magistrates’ Court on Friday 25 September. With it representing an escalation of persistent offending, Police Constable Chris Roberts subsequently applied for a CBO to be imposed on McNulty on behalf of Cheshire Constabulary’s Halton Problem Solving Team. Crewe Magistrates’ Court approved the CBO application on Friday 16 October. The banning order prohibits McNulty from doing any of the following for six years:



- Making contact via social media with any female that does not know him
- Refusing to leave any premises in Cheshire when asked to do so by members of staff
- Acting in an anti-social manner (a manner that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to others) anywhere in Cheshire.

PC Roberts said: *“CBOs are preventative orders with strict restrictions that are imposed in a bid to stop persistent offenders committing further offences. They are applied for separately to prosecutions for criminal offences as a last resort. In the case of Anthony McNulty, he has committed a string of public order offences against woman. His offending has had a significant impact on his victims and he has persistently shown no consideration at all for the effects his unacceptable behaviour has had on others. There comes a point when you have to say enough is enough and take additional action to protect members of the public. No-one should be subjected to such behaviour, or feel threatened or intimidated by the actions of other people. Such behaviour will not be tolerated and we will use whatever powers we have at our disposal to ensure that Halton is a pleasant place to live, work and visit. I am delighted that the CBO application for McNulty has been approved by Crewe Magistrates’ Court and I hope that it has the desired effect and deters him from committing further offences when he is released from prison. He has been made aware that it is a criminal offence to breach the terms of a CBO. The sanctions imposed for doing so can be severe, with the maximum penalty being five years in prison, and I am pleased to say that we have seen a significant reduction of offending in Cheshire from those who are subject to a CBO.”*

David Keane, PCC for Cheshire, added: *“CBOs are one of many tools Cheshire Constabulary uses in a bid to improve our communities. They address persistent criminal behaviour by giving those issued with CBOs strict requirements and prohibitions which they must adhere to. I am pleased to hear that CBOs have been having the desired effect of reducing offending, the number of victims of crime and the demand on the police and I hope that this continues.”*

Anyone who encounters McNulty breaching the terms of his CBO over the next six years is asked to contact Cheshire Constabulary on 101 to report it.

Man charged following petrol station robbery in Ellesmere Port

A 58-year-old man from Ellesmere Port has been charged following a robbery in the town.

Kenneth Brown was arrested on Heathfield Road at around 8.15pm on Monday 19 October. Brown, who lives on Heathfield Road, has subsequently been charged with robbery and possession of a bladed article in a public place. The charges relate to an incident at a petrol station on Whitby Road that occurred at around 8pm on Monday 19 October. Brown appeared at Warrington Magistrates’ Court, via a video link, on Wednesday 21 October. He was remanded in custody and is set to appear at Chester Crown Court on Wednesday 18 November.

Chester man jailed for the attempted murder of his friend

A 62-year-old man has been sentenced to 18 years in prison after being found guilty of attempted murder after stabbing his friend at his home in Chester.

Paul Andrews, from Alder Grove, Hoole, was sentenced on Monday 19 October at Chester Crown Court. On the afternoon of Thursday 3 October 2019, 58-year-old Russell Feeny visited his friend Paul Andrews at his address in Alder Grove in Hoole. As he got up from his chair to leave he felt as if he had been punched in the back and fell to his knees. He subsequently realised that he had been stabbed. Andrews walked past him, out of the door and drove his car to the police station in Blacon where he handed himself in, leaving Russell alone and badly injured. Meanwhile emergency services dashed to Alder Grove. Russell had managed to get out of the house and was lying on the ground outside the address with a life-threatening



stab wound. The 30cm knife was still embedded in his back. Russell was airlifted to Aintree Hospital and rushed into surgery to remove the knife and work on the critical injuries the stabbing had caused.

DCI Simon Draco said: *“We still don’t know the reasons behind why Andrews stabbed his friend that day as he refused to answer any questions on interview despite our detectives’ best efforts to find out what had triggered such a violent, life-threatening incident. What we do know is that one single action left a man, who thought they were friends, betrayed and fighting for his life in hospital as surgeons and nurses worked to save him. He is still recovering from his life-changing injuries and the emotional trauma of such an incomprehensible act, but I hope seeing Andrews brought to justice will help Russell in some way. I am pleased to say that detectives have delivered a cogent investigation that has resulted in the incarceration of a dangerous, violent offender who has used a knife in such a terrible way.”*

When sentencing Andrews, the Recorder of Chester, His Honour Judge Everett, noted that the actions of Andrews had left the victim a ‘completely and utterly broken man’. He also commended the police investigation and, in particular, the sensitivity and caring approach taken by Detective Constable Smith, the officer in the case.

David Keane, PCC for Cheshire, said: *“It’s important that victims are supported throughout and get the justice they deserve. I hope the victim and his family find some solace in the sentencing and his attacker being brought to justice. This was a shocking act of violence and goes to show just how lethal knives can be and the impact it has on our communities. I truly hope the family can begin to rebuild their lives following this traumatic event.”*

Two men charged following robbery at Warrington shop

Two men from Warrington have been charged following a robbery in the town.

David Holt and Simon Baker were arrested in O’Leary Street shortly after 11.30am on Monday 19 October. The pair, who both live in O’Leary Street, have subsequently been charged with robbery. Holt has also been charged with possession of a bladed article in a public place. The charges all relate to an incident at a shop in Bridge Street in Warrington town centre that occurred at around 11am on Monday 19 October. Holt, 44, and Baker, 50, appeared at Warrington Magistrates’ Court, via video link, on Tuesday 20 October. They were remanded in custody and are set to appear at Liverpool Crown Court on Tuesday 17 November.

Chester man jailed for burglary and fraud offences

A 41-year-old man from Chester has been jailed for burglary and fraud offences committed in the city.

James Benson, of no fixed address, began his crime spree on Thursday 2 July when he used a bank card belonging to someone else at a convenience store and a restaurant in Brook Street, Chester. A total of £45.46 was spent on the card, which was in a purse that a woman from Chester put on the ground whilst on a night out in the city centre. A PCSO subsequently identified Benson as the offender via CCTV footage from the convenience store. The same was true when he committed a burglary at a house on Grange Road in Chester on the night of Sunday 13 September before fraudulently using a bank card he stole from the address. Benson spent a total of £110.36 in four separate fraudulent transactions at a convenience store in Newtown, Chester, on Monday 14 September. The bank card was in a bag belonging



to a woman who lives at the house that was burgled in Grange Road, as was a purse, two sets of car keys, sunglasses, a case and some cash. The bag was located in a nearby alleyway. The victim's other belongings have not been recovered. Benson was located and arrested by officers in Brook Street on Wednesday 16 September. He subsequently pleaded guilty to burglary, handling stolen goods (the bank card that went missing in Brook Street) and six counts of fraud by false representation. Benson was sentenced for the offences at Chester Crown Court on Friday 16 October. He was jailed for three-and-a-half years.

DC Carl Humphreys, who led the investigation on behalf of Chester CID, 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. After burgling a house on Grange Road in Chester and stealing a number of items, James Benson fraudulently used one of them, a bank card, at a convenience store in the city on four separate occasions the next day. He also fraudulently used a bank card belonging to a different woman at a convenience store and a restaurant in the Brook Street area of Chester. Thankfully PCSOs were able to identify Benson as the fraudster from CCTV footage on both occasions. CCTV footage also led to Benson being located and arrested. With footage from convenience stores clearly showing him to be the offender and with a footprint from the burglary address matching the trainers he was wearing when he was arrested, Benson had little choice than to plead guilty to several offences. I am pleased that he has now been jailed for his crimes and I hope that this case deters others from committing such offences."*

David Keane, PCC for Cheshire, added: *"Offences like these are deeply upsetting for the victims. I would like to praise the work of the PCSOs and officers who were involved in the investigation for helping to deliver justice for the victims. I hope that the outcome of the investigation provides reassurance to residents in Chester and elsewhere in Cheshire."*

Woman charged following bicycle thefts in Runcorn

A 28-year-old woman has been charged in connection with the thefts of five bicycles in Runcorn.

Amy Hughes, of Breckfield Road North in Liverpool, was arrested in Main Street, Runcorn, at around 2.15pm on Sunday 18 October. She has subsequently been charged with going equipped to steal. Hughes has also been charged with five counts of theft. Those charges relate to the thefts of bicycles in Runcorn between Tuesday 29 September and Thursday 15 October. Hughes appeared at Warrington Magistrates' Court, via a video link, on Tuesday 20 October. She was released on conditional bail and is set to appear at the same court on Wednesday 18 November.

Latest Cheshire Appeals

CCTV image released in connection with robbery at convenience store in Birchwood

Detectives have released a CCTV image of two males they want to speak to in connection with an armed robbery at a convenience store in Warrington.



A man working at the shop on Admirals Road in Birchwood was threatened by one of the males holding a knife and demanded he open the till. The second male then grabbed the contents inside the till and the pair both fled the store with a large quantity of cash. Enquiries in relation to the robbery, which took place between 6.30pm and 7.20pm on Thursday 8 October, are continuing. Detectives believe that the males in the CCTV image may be able to assist with their investigation.

DC Darren Gibson, of Warrington CID, said: *“Understandably the store worker was extremely shaken by the incident and we are working hard to find those responsible. As part of our enquiries we have been looking through CCTV footage and we believe the males in this image may have important information to help the investigation. Although their faces are covered they are wearing distinctive clothing and if you recognise them please get in touch. I would also encourage anyone who was in the area at the time and has information to please contact us.”*

If you have information please contact Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 823257. Information can also be provided anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Investigation continues following death of man in Winsford

Detectives are continuing to appeal for information following the death of a man in Winsford.

Officers want to speak to anyone, who has not yet come forward, as part of ongoing enquiries into a disturbance on Cheviot Square at around 10.30pm on Sunday 11 October. Keagan Crimes, aged 27, died after he sustained serious injuries during the incident. Two other men, aged 26 and 36, were also injured during the incident. They both attended hospital and have since been discharged.

DI Adam Waller, who is leading the investigation, said: *“At this stage, we do not believe that this was a random attack and many of those involved were known to each other, however I don’t believe that Keagan was targeted specifically. I want to reassure the local community that we are doing everything we can to establish exactly what has taken place. This investigation is very much ongoing and we’re currently following a number of lines of enquiry. As part of this, we are keen to hear from anyone who was in the area at the time and witnessed what happened or anyone with any information, which may help our investigation. Even the smallest piece of information can be useful when piecing together a case.”*

Six teenager boys have been arrested on suspicion of murder in connection with the incident. The boys, one aged 17, four aged 16 and one aged 15, have all been released on conditional bail pending further enquiries.

CI Gary Smith, from Northwich Local Policing unit, added: *“I know that Keagan’s death has shocked the local community. In order to provide reassurance to the local community, patrols have been stepped up and I would encourage anyone with any concerns to approach my staff to report them.”*

Anyone with any information is asked to contact Cheshire Police by calling 101 and quoting IML 825705 or via the Major Incident Public Portal <https://mipp.police.uk/operation/07CH19D14-PO1> Alternatively, if you do not want to speak directly to an officer then information can be passed on anonymously, via 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/>