

# Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## Cheshire News & Appeals



### Latest Cheshire News

#### **Focussing on a safe Christmas in Chester**

Police and council workers in Chester have joined forces to make sure that everyone who lives, works and visits the city has a safe Christmas.

Over the festive period, extra council and police staff will be on the streets of the city, offering people advice and guidance on a range of community safety issues. The Festive Focus campaign covers issues such as how to move around the city safely and observe Covid-19 social distancing rules, through to how to spot the signs of domestic abuse and what to do. Officers are talking with city centre workers, including taxi drivers, security staff and door supervisors about how to keep their customers safe by ensuring their workplaces are Covid-19 compliant. The Festive Focus team has also been handing out mini PPE gift packs. At the same time, the team is promoting local domestic abuse campaigns, with stickers and posters being placed in taxis and venues telling people how to spot the signs and how to get help.

Cheshire West and Chester Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Cllr Robert Cernik, said: *“We want people to have a safe and enjoyable time in Chester, whether they are visiting the city to work, shop, or for leisure. This Christmas is very different because of the Covid-19 pandemic. We all must do as much as we can to reduce the spread of the virus. Our officers are encouraging everyone to observe social distancing rules, wear face coverings in public and wash or sanitise their hands regularly. It is only by working together, that we can beat the virus and look towards a return to normality.”*

Digital screens in shop windows are also displaying several key safety messages about Covid-19, domestic abuse and staying safe on the roads.

CI Gareth Wrigley, the lead for Chester Local Policing unit, said: *“Christmas should be a time for celebration, but this time of year can be one of the hardest for victims of domestic abuse. Nobody should have to endure the pain and suffering of domestic abuse and I would say to all victims that now is the time to be brave, have a fresh start and begin the year by speaking out and putting a stop to it. Domestic abuse doesn’t have to stay behind closed doors. The team here at Chester, along with our partners, are here to help people get the support and assistance they need and to bring this hidden crime out into the open.”*

The Festive Focus campaign has been made possible through funding from Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership.

Helen Brackenbury, Chair of the Community Safety Partnership, said: *“We are delighted to have been able to provide extra funding to help towards the Festive Focus project keeping everyone visiting the city safe over the festive period. It is important that visitors to the city feel reassured and safe during their visit, especially as Christmas is looking very different this year”.*

Cheshire PCC for Cheshire, David Keane, added: *“I know that this year has been a real challenge for many residents, and I hope this Christmas period will provide some much-needed cheer. Officers and frontline staff will be on duty helping to keep their communities safe over the festive period. Please help them to help you by following their safety advice and information.”*

For information about COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing in Cheshire West and Chester, visit the [Council's website](#). For information about support for people living with domestic abuse, visit [Open the Door](#)

### **Two teenagers questioned following hoax bomb threats**

Detectives investigating a series of hoax bomb threats at schools Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Devon have questioned two teenagers.

The boys, aged 14 and 15, were both questioned under police caution on Thursday 17 December in relation to hoax bomb threats at Culcheth High School, Golborne High School and Bedford High School as well as two schools in Barnstaple, North Devon. The two boys, who are both from the Greater Manchester area, have since been released pending further enquires. Their questioning forms part of a joint ongoing investigation by detectives from Cheshire Constabulary, Greater Manchester Police and Devon & Cornwall Police.

DS Alison McLoughlin from Chester Constabulary said: *“I know that these incidents caused considerable concern to both the pupils and parents at the schools involved and I hope that this development will provide some reassurance. Enquiries are continuing and I would like to thank the schools involved for their support along with our colleagues at Greater Manchester and Devon and Cornwall Police.”*

### **British fugitive arrested in Amsterdam days after warrant issued**

A British fugitive has been arrested in Amsterdam on suspicion of firearms and drugs offences just days after his arrest warrant was issued.

Cheshire Police obtained a European Arrest Warrant for Jamie Rothwell, 34, last Thursday and the National Crime Agency (NCA) immediately began working with Dutch partners to trace and arrest him. On Monday, after a successful NCA operation involving its international liaison network, National Firearms Targeting Centre and partners, Dutch National Police arrested Rothwell while travelling in a taxi in Amsterdam. Rothwell, from Salford, Greater Manchester, was wanted by Cheshire Police for nine alleged offences including two counts of conspiring to possess firearms with intent to endanger life, two counts of conspiring to commit grievous bodily harm with intent and conspiracy to supply cocaine and heroin. He is in Dutch Police custody awaiting extradition proceedings.



DCI Mike Evans, from Cheshire Police’s Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: *“Following an international search, he was located and detained within days of us securing the European Arrest Warrant. This sends a clear message that we will relentlessly pursue those suspected of being involved in organised crime who travel abroad in the hope that it puts them out of the reach of UK law enforcement. We have worked closely with, and been supported by, the NCA, Greater Manchester Police and Dutch partners and would like to thank colleagues for all of their assistance in ensuring he faces justice.”*

Rothwell's arrest relates to a shooting in Orford, Cheshire, at 8.50pm on Friday 24 April. A 55-year-old man sustained serious and life-changing injuries to his leg. He also faces the charges of conspiracy to supply ketamine and cannabis, and acquiring criminal property.

Rob Hickinbottom, head of the NCA National Firearms Targeting Centre, said: *"Any arrest of a fugitive over extremely serious allegations is a great result. But the speed of this successful operation is testament to what the NCA – leading the UK's fight against serious organised crime – and our partners at home and abroad can achieve."*

### **Warrington power station site not safe for intruders**

Officers are warning people to stay away from Fiddler's Ferry Power Station for their own safety.

Police have received several reports regarding intruders having gained access to the site in recent weeks. The coal-fired power station in Cuerdley, which is in Warrington and close to Widnes, has been closed since March. It is expected to be demolished following decommissioning, which could take up to two years. While the power station is no longer generating electricity, it is still connected to the National Grid, meaning that a number of the cables there are still live.



PC John Teasdale, of Warrington Local Policing Unit, said: *"We are becoming increasingly concerned about people intruding at Fiddler's Ferry. It is simply not safe to do so. The power station may be closed but it contains live electricity cables, which can be lethal. The site also presents other considerable hazards to anyone trespassing at the site. As such, I urge people to stay safe by staying away from the site. I must also remind people that it is against the law to trespass on private land and that you can be prosecuted if found on the premises. We are working alongside the on-site security team at SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy), the energy firm that owns the power station, to tackle the problem. Patrols have been stepped up and anyone found to have gained unauthorised access to the site will be dealt with accordingly."*

Fiddler's Ferry Power Station Manager Peter Woosey added: *"Thankfully, there have been no reports of members of the public having been injured at the site. We are more than happy to be working alongside Cheshire Constabulary in a bid to ensure that this remains the case. The site is not safe for anyone looking to trespass here. It is manned at all times by SSE employees and our on-site security team, and anyone found to be within the grounds without authorisation will be handed over to the police."*



David Keane, PCC for Cheshire, said: *"Keeping the community safe and crime prevention are very important to me in my role as police and crime commissioner. I am pleased to hear Cheshire Constabulary is working alongside SSE to address this issue and I hope that their efforts have the desired affect and that people stop putting themselves at risk by trespassing at the closed down power station."*

### **Marbury drink driver sentenced**

A 62-year-old man from Marbury has been sentenced for drink driving.

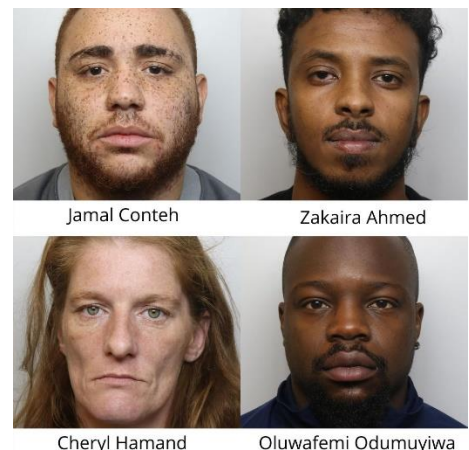
William Warrington from Hollins Lane, Marbury appeared at Crewe Magistrate's Court on 8 December to be sentenced to 16 weeks in prison suspended for 18 months. He was also disqualified from driving for 20 months as well as being subject to rehabilitation and prevention measures. On the evening of 31 July 2020 police had a report of a suspected drink driver in Wrenbury. Officers were dispatched to the scene and at 10.15pm they came across a Ford Ranger which had crashed into a field between a telegraph pole and a metal gate on Cholmondeley Road. The driver wasn't at the scene. Members of the public alerted the officer to Warrington who was walking across a field away from the vehicle. The officer stopped Warrington and on smelling alcohol conducted a breath test and Warrington admitted to driving the vehicle. The test was positive and he was arrested. He was later summonsed to court to face the charge of driving a motor vehicle when the alcohol level was above the limit.

PC Martin Randle, neighbourhood policing officer for Wrenbury and Bunbury said: *"Thankfully due to people being community-minded and helping us identify this drink driver we were able to catch him in the act and arrest him. By getting behind the wheel while under the influence and going on to crash the vehicle shows that he was not fit to drive and posed a risk to other road users. Thankfully he didn't injure anyone and he is now banned from driving. If he commits any further offences in the next 18 months, he faces going to prison for 16 weeks. I'd urge residents to keep up the good work of reporting those who break the law to keep people safe and make their community an even better place to live in."*

### **County lines gang responsible for supplying crack cocaine and heroin in Macclesfield jailed**

A county lines gang responsible for supplying crack cocaine and heroin from Liverpool to Macclesfield have been jailed for a combined total of more than 25 years.

Four members of the 'Mitch' gang were sentenced on 14 December at Chester Crown Court for their part in a drugs conspiracy with a potential value of between £71,000 to £142,000. They pleaded guilty to conspiracy to supply class A drugs at an earlier hearing. Between July 2019 and July 2020, Jamal Conteh and Zakaira Ahmed worked as a team along with others, using two 'graft' mobile phones to advertise and facilitate the supply of Class A in Macclesfield. The first graft phone was activated on 16 July 2019 when Conteh travelled to Macclesfield to establish and develop the line, sending various messages advertising drugs to vulnerable users in the town.



In September 2019 Conteh recruited three youths from Northamptonshire to assist with the drug dealing operation. During separate interventions, officers from the Macclesfield County Lines BIT team recovered 91 wraps of heroin and crack cocaine, multiple phones and £860 in cash. Ahmed took turns in managing the graft phone in Liverpool while Conteh spent his time in Macclesfield dabbling in street dealing. When Conteh wanted to 'sit off' he would order Oluwafemi Odumuyiwa and Cheryl Hamand to deal on his behalf. In a bid to avoid detection, Odumuyiwa began hiring vehicles and chauffeured Conteh around Macclesfield to conduct drug deals and both would travel from Liverpool to Cheshire couriering commodity on behalf of the 'Mitch' county lines team. Hamand would allow the gang to operate from her property in the town. Officers raided this address in October 2019, discovering 91 wraps of heroin and crack cocaine along with three knives believed to be for protection and more than £330 in cash.



Officers stopped a taxi in Wilmslow with Conteh inside, he was arrested and passed two packages containing 249 wraps of heroin and crack cocaine worth an estimated £2,490 which he had concealed inside him. While in custody Ahmed repeatedly attempted to get in contact with Conteh. On 9 July 2020 Cheshire Constabulary arrested Ahmed at his Liverpool home where officers discovered £19,470 in cash in his wardrobe along with a Norwegian passport and Dior training shoes worth around £850.



In sentencing the four defendants, Justice Michael Leeming said: *"Conteh and Ahmed worked as a team and recruited and exploited others to assist. This was undertaken with complete disregard for the impact on society and the way in which drugs wreck people lives and lead to increased crime as users commit crimes to fund their addiction – the misery that creates has been caused or at the very least contributed to by each of one of you."* Justice Leeming added: *"... youths were used to reduce the risk to you Conteh and they were exploited by you because of their age..."*

They were all sentenced to the following:

- Jamal Conteh – 12 years (subject to a serious crime prevention order)
- Zakaira Ahmed – 7 years 6 months
- Oluwafemi Odumuyiwa – 44 months
- Cheryl Hamand – 31 months

Two more defendants Ammin Hassan and Edson Pereira will be sentenced in the new year.

DI Adam Alexander said: *"I welcome the sentences passed down by the courts today. This gang brought misery to the people of Macclesfield while relying on vulnerable youths to help deal drugs for them on their behalf. I'd like to say thank you to the officers who helped apprehend and bring this gang to justice over the 12 month operation. Illegal drugs have a devastating impact on local communities so by cutting off the supply and removing dealers from our streets, we are working to break the cycle of serious and organised crime and make Macclesfield a safer place. I hope that this sentence acts as a deterrent to anyone who feels that they can travel into Cheshire for their own selfish criminal gain."*

DC Luke Browczuk, of Macclesfield County Lines BIT Team, said: *"This was a particularly complex case and I'd like to echo DI Alexander's comments on welcoming sentencing of the defendants. We were determined to bring these criminals to justice and prevent them bringing more heartache to the town. I hope the residents of Macclesfield feel safer in the knowledge that this gang is off the streets. This case proves that crime does not stop at the border and no matter where you are from, if you are coming to Macclesfield to deal drugs, we will identify you and hold you responsible for your actions."*

PCC David Keane said: *"Organised crime gangs bring misery not only to the victims but to communities around them. I want to take this time to praise the work of the officers and investigation team for bringing this complex case to the courts. I would urge anyone who has any concerns about illegal drug activity in their neighbourhoods to get in touch with Cheshire Constabulary."*

## Latest Cheshire Appeals

### Appeal for information following Ellesmere Port burglary

Police are appealing for information from the public after a pensioner was injured during a burglary in Ellesmere Port.

At around 7.45pm on Thursday 17 December the victim, a 76-year-old man, heard a knock at the front door of his home on Oldfield Road. Upon opening the door the man was greeted by an unknown woman who barged her way into his home. The man has had previous contact with this woman however she is not known to him personally. The woman then grabbed a number of bottles of alcohol from the house before fleeing the property. The victim attempted to chase the woman as she left the address, during the process he fell to the floor causing him to hit his head. The man was subsequently taken to hospital by ambulance, his injuries are not believed to be serious. The woman is described as around 5' 6" tall and in her early twenties; she was wearing a black hooded jacket and jeans.

DC Phill Hunt, who is leading the investigation said: *"The victim in this case has been left shaken as a result and we are doing all we can to trace the person responsible. This was a targeted incident and there is nothing to suggest that this woman presents any risk to the general public. Enquiries are ongoing and as part of our investigation we want to hear from anyone who believes they may have relevant information or footage in relation to the incident. Perhaps you were in the area and saw the offender, either before she entered the house or as she was fleeing the scene. Or maybe you have CCTV or dashcam footage that would assist with the investigation."*

Anyone with information or footage that may aid the ongoing investigation should call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 876012, give the details via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report> or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

### Detectives release images of jewellery stolen in Appleton burglary

Detectives have released images of jewellery stolen in a burglary at an address in Appleton.

Sometime between 5pm and 6pm on Monday 7 December a house on Delphfields Road, Appleton was broken into and jewellery stolen.

DC Chris Little said: *"I'd urge anyone who recognises the jewellery or has been offered similar items for sale to contact us. We are making a number of lines of enquiry and are keen to hear from anyone who may be able to help with our investigation."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 868436. Alternatively information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



### Police investigating Northwich shop robbery issue CCTV

Police have released CCTV images following an armed robbery at a shop in Chester Road, Castle.

At 9.40pm on Monday 16 November a man entered the Go Local shop with an axe and demanded tobacco and cash. The man escaped with cigarettes in a large blue bag, making off toward the Blue Barrel pub. He also stole a gold-coloured Sai Baba statue (Hindu God). The suspect is described as a white male wearing a blue/grey hoody, blue denim jeans and black and white trainers.

DC Stacey Connor said: *“The staff member, who was on his own at the time, was thankfully unharmed during the incident and was able to raise the alarm. Officers made a search of the area but the suspect was not located. We are continuing to make a number of enquiries to identify this man and would urge you to contact us if you recognise him or have any information on his identity.”*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via [www.cheshire.police.uk](http://www.cheshire.police.uk) quoting IML 853311. Alternatively information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



### **Appeal for information following incident in Prestbury**

Police are appealing for information following reports of an incident in Prestbury.

Sometime between 3.30pm and 4pm on Sunday 22 November a 16-year-old girl was walking along Chelford Road when a man approached her. He made an inappropriate comment and grabbed her shoulder before the girl managed to run away towards the village centre. The man was aged in his mid-20s, around 5'7" tall, of regular build with a beard and black hair. At the time of the incident he was wearing light blue jeans, grey trainers and a navy jacket. Officers have been carrying out a number of enquiries in the local area – including house-to-house enquiries and checking CCTV. They are urging anyone who witnessed what happened or has any information, which could assist with their enquiries, to get in touch.

PC Dave Wilkinson said: *“I would like to reassure residents that, at this stage, this appears to be an isolated incident. Thankfully the girl was not injured and managed to run away but she was left shaken by what happened. We have increased patrols in the area and I would urge anyone who has any concerns to speak to a local officer. Officers have been carrying out several enquiries in the Prestbury area and I am urging anyone with any information to get in touch. We are also keen to hear from anyone who may have seen a man fitting the description. He referred to himself as ‘Adam’ and left the scene in the opposite direction to the girl.”*

If you have information, which could assist with the ongoing enquiries, please call Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 857380 or report it via [the Cheshire Police website](http://the Cheshire Police website). Information can also be reported to Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via [the Crimestoppers website](http://the Crimestoppers website).

## **Appeal for witnesses to robbery in Warrington**

Detectives are appealing for information from the public following a robbery in Warrington.

A man was walking along Hudson Close near the junction of Old Hall Road in Old Hall with three other people when the incident occurred at around 11.15pm on Saturday 12 December. As the group approached the junction a man, armed with a knife, demanded they each empty their pockets. The offender then stole the man's mobile phone. He then ran from the scene along Hudson close. The offender is described as slim, around 5'9" in height and he was wearing a black top with a black balaclava. Enquiries in relation to the robbery are ongoing and detectives are appealing for witnesses and for anyone who may have CCTV or dash cam footage of the area around the time of the incident to get in touch.

DC Joe Davies, from Warrington CID, said: *"This has understandably left the victim and his friends extremely shaken. Thankfully no one in the group was injured. Enquiries are ongoing and I urge anyone who was in the area and may have information or dash cam footage to get in touch. I am also keen for anyone who has CCTV operating in the Hudson Close or Shackleton Close areas to come forward."*

If you have information, CCTV or dash cam footage that may help the investigation please call Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 872444. Information can also be provided anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## **Appeal for information following Chester bike thefts arrests**

Police are appealing for information from members of the public as part of an investigation into bicycle thefts in Chester.

On Wednesday 9 December officers from Chester Local Policing Unit (LPU) arrested two men in the city on suspicion of theft and going equipped to steal. The pair from North Wales, a 38-year-old from Garden City and a 44-year-old from Flint, have since been released under investigation pending further enquiries. The investigating officers have recovered a number of bicycles that are believed to have been stolen.

PC Melissa Sawojka, of Chester LPU, said: *"Over recent months there have been a number of bike thefts in Chester and we are doing all that we can to trace the people responsible. As part of our investigation into the incidents we have arrested two men and recovered a number of what we believe to be stolen bikes. While we have been able to reunite some of the bikes with their rightful owners, a number remain unclaimed at this time, which is why we are reaching out to the public. I urge anyone who has been a victim on bike theft, no matter what the value of the bike, to ensure that they report the incident to us so that we can investigate."*

Anyone with any information in relation to the investigation, or anyone who has been a victim and not reported the incident, is urged to call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 869835. Information can also be reported online at <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report> or via Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.