

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 28th February 2021

Cheshire News & Appeals



Latest Cheshire News

Deputy Chief Constable Julie Cooke reflects on policing and LGBT+ History Month 2021

NPCC Lead for LGBT+ Deputy Chief Constable Julie Cooke reflects on Policing and LGBT+ History Month 2021. After an extremely challenging year for many of us, this year's LGBTHM seems more poignant than ever. I have taken time to reflect on the many blogs, articles and social media posts which have been shared by colleagues and our LGBT+ communities. I have done this with the backdrop of It's a Sin and the memories that has evoked in many, myself included. If I am honest, this month alongside that TV series, has spurred me on to do more and make more progress. I have remained connected, via our National Police LGBT+ network, with local networks to ensure we are there for each other. I have been so aware of the isolation, the lack of LGBT+ community events, no Pride season, people/colleagues living in anti-trans or homophobic, biphobic homes or relationships during Covid and the impact this has had on so many. I am the National Police Chiefs' lead for LGBT+ and I am a proud ally for my LGBT+ Police colleagues. I have had this role now for 4 years and I volunteered to do it because I want inclusion for all within policing and within society. My focus is LGBT+ as that is the portfolio I lead on; and we have other leads for race, religion and belief; gender; disability; age; gypsy Roma & Traveller and many other aspects of policing. We are all working towards a much more representative and inclusive policing organisation. This is vital and a key Peelian principle, we are the public and the public are the Police. When challenged about the work I do around LGBT+, be it on social media or otherwise, I reassure myself that no I am not virtue signalling, (meaning that I do this work to try to show others that I am a good person..... and want to say things that will be accepted by others.). I am doing the right thing for the right reasons. This is to ensure we work within the Equality Act, that we deliver on our public sector duty and that I do all I can to ensure every single Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Non-Binary colleague, can come to work each day knowing they can be themselves. I wanted to reflect on why we have LGBT+ History Month (LGBTHM). The event came in the wake of the abolition of Section 28 (of the Local Government Act 1988) in 2003, which stated that a local authority "shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality" or "promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship'. This meant that LGBT+ teachers and pupils were not allowed to be open about who they were and conversations could not take place. Only a couple of days ago I heard a non-binary police officer talking about going to school under S28 – '6 years of bullying...my life was utter hell' – and no one could stand by them and support them. This was following on from the extremely homophobic AIDS epidemic and at a time when LGBT+ people still could not marry or adopt, nor did they have protection in some basic laws.

As the National Police Chiefs' lead for LGBT+, it is a time to consider where are we now with LGBT+ inclusion within policing and take a look at the battles that have taken place over the years purely for LGBT+ people to be accepted. I looked on the LGBTHM website which said 'educate out prejudice and make LGBT+ people visible in all their rich diversity'. I find it incredible when I hear people being negative about someone simply because they are LGBT+, when it is so obvious just how much of a difference it makes to have a society and workforce that is made up of rich diversity. Difference makes such a big difference. So what is it about our

society that still makes people worried about telling others they're LGBT+? Many people ask me why we still need to keep pushing LGBT+ inclusion as everything is fine these days. And yet when we hear of a top class sport person, TV celebrity or other well known person coming out as gay or bi or trans, it is newsworthy and surprising for people and still causes discussion and support, as well as negativity and hate. When did I come out as straight – well of course never? But it still remains a big thing for some people in the LGBT+ community to be able to be honest about who they are. I can walk down the street holding hands with my husband and no one bats an eye lid. When two women or two men walk down the street holding hands, then they may get looked at, pointed at, stared at, verbally abused or even physically attacked. And if you're trans – you will be extra vigilant about being able to be you most days. The impact this can have on someone's wellbeing is huge and we all have to be allies for each other, regardless of whether or not we are part of the LGBT+ community. These are our colleagues and friends and many are not afforded the same rights or privileges that non-LGBT+ people are. Human rights are not politics and my support of LGBT+ matters is about doing the right thing and making our workplaces welcoming and inclusive. I am also told that I should get on with proper policing – lock up burglars, robbers, paedophiles etc. And of course we do that and I lead a force where my officers and staff are doing that on a daily basis. Those within LGBT+ networks and those running LGBT+ social media accounts, all have busy, full time jobs embracing many, many varied roles in policing. The work they do to progress LGBT+ equality is often done in their own time and with good will and intention. The work I do is to ensure that we attract the very best into Policing, to encourage a wide diversity of officers and staff (our duty to be representative of our communities); that we are an inclusive organisation; that our staff can deliver their best by being able to be open about who they are (if they wish); and our communities are likely to get a better service because we educate our staff about all elements of society – including LGBT+. So why am I writing this article? I want to continue to raise awareness that it's still not always easy to be LGBT+ in policing. Many people will say – 'why do we still need to march at Pride, why all the rainbows, aren't we done with that now?' Well the answer is a deafening 'No'. Although many of us know someone who is lesbian or gay and therefore have some sort of understanding, a lot of people have no understanding of being Bisexual (Bi) or Trans. I speak regularly to police colleagues who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans, non-binary, intersex; their experiences enrich me, they make me think differently and that can only be a good thing. I want to make sure that they get the support they need to feel valid about who they are and can feel confident in work.

Thankfully our workforce make up is changing. Trans colleagues are feeling more confident than ever to be themselves, there are supportive leaders, networks and teams out there. We still see however that all too often their identity is questioned, queried in a way many others are not. It is in my gift to ensure that we continue the dialogue, the conversations, the education and the awareness of trans matters. People don't choose to be trans, they are trans and they are trying to live the life to which they are entitled. I am working with many internal departments and areas of business to continue to update systems, working within the law to progress LGBT+ matters across the piece. As I close this article I am delighted to see that the MoD is allowing former personnel discharged over their sexuality to have their medals restored. And in policing we are about to publish our new LGBTQ+ Role Models booklet – such great diversity of people in policing who can be role models and advocates for others. Every day in February the National LGBT+ Police Network has tweeted about a piece of LGBT+ history – some of it has shown the incredible bravery of individuals who have fought to ensure inclusion for all LGBT+ people – but some seem disappointing that it has taken so long for parity and equality for LGBT+ people. We have also seen what we believe to be a first in Policing with Adrian Hanstock becoming the first openly Gay male to be Chief Constable at BTP. So as we head towards Pride season – and hopefully the opportunity this year for something other than virtual Pride - consider what it's like to be persecuted just because of the person you love or the person you are. People don't choose their sexual orientation or gender identity, it's who they are. And like everyone else, they have the right to

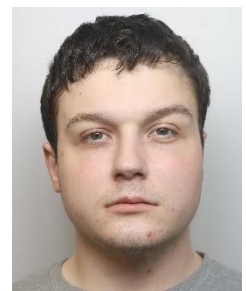
feel comfortable and confident in work as well as when they walk down the street. Every day, thousands of LGBT+ officers and staff in the service help to keep the public safe and build bridges with their local communities (giving them confidence to report the abuses they face).

Reflecting on the past, and the importance of celebrating LGBT+ History Month, I would like to celebrate the successes of our LGBT+ staff and thank them for their contribution and ask others to consider what they can do to be a positive ally. The impact of being visible and wearing a rainbow badge or lanyard is incredible, working with your local LGBT+ networks and supporting their work makes a huge difference. Whilst an ally who calls out Homophobia / Biphobia / Transphobia and explains why what was said may impact in a certain way, especially when there aren't LGBT+ staff in the room is a valuable asset to any team. The work continues all year round to progress LGBT+ matters and I am proud to be the lead for this NPCC portfolio. Thank you for reading.

Deputy Chief Constable Julie Cooke
NPCC Lead for LGBT+

Man jailed following armed robbery at Widnes supermarket

A 22-year-old man from Widnes has been jailed for carrying out a knifepoint robbery at a supermarket in the town. Daniel Flanagan, of Rivenmill Way, approached a cashier in the occupied store off Derby Road at around 8.15pm on Monday 23 November. He demanded cash and told the man working behind the till that he had a knife. Flanagan then produced a bread knife from his trouser pocket and was subsequently given the cash from the till by the supermarket's manager. After discovering that there was no cash in the other till, he fled the store on foot. The robbery was reported to the police. Aided by directions given from a member of the public who had been shopping in the supermarket, officers located and arrested Flanagan in nearby Mill Lane a short time afterwards. Flanagan – who was in possession of the money stolen from the supermarket, as well as a quantity of cannabis – said to the arresting officers: *"Fair enough, you caught me."*



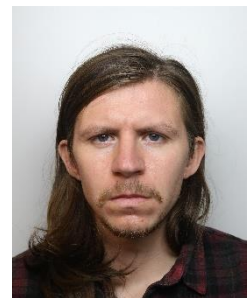
When questioned in custody Flanagan admitted being responsible for the robbery. He also admitted having a hammer and a mallet on him when he committed the crime. Unlike the knife, he kept those concealed. Flanagan said that he was 'pretty drunk' when he carried out the robbery and that he did so to pay off a debt that he had built up through his addiction to cocaine. He also said that losing his job earlier in November had left him unable to pay off his drug debt. Flanagan was charged with robbery, possession of a knife in a public place and possession of a class B drug (cannabis). He pleaded guilty to the charges and was sentenced at Liverpool Crown Court on Friday 26 February. Flanagan was jailed for two years and eight months and ordered to pay a £181 victim surcharge. DC Kerif Smythe, who led the investigation at Widnes Local Policing Unit, said: *"Daniel Flanagan carried out an armed robbery at a supermarket containing customers as well as members of staff. He may have been desperate for money on the back of his drug addiction, but that in no way excuses him subjecting those who were in the store that day to such a frightening ordeal. It was particularly traumatic for the people working at the supermarket that Flanagan demanded money from whilst brandishing a knife. I hope the fact Flanagan has now been jailed for his actions gives them some reassurance and closure. I also hope that it deters others from committing similar offences."*

Chief Insp Sarah Heath, Cheshire Constabulary's knife crime lead, added: *"We are committed to doing all we can to tackle knife crime. We will respond robustly to any knife related incidents and do all we can to ensure that anyone found to be carrying a knife or committing a knife related offence is brought to justice. Members of the public have a vital role to play in our fight against knife crime by giving us information about crimes involving knives and those who carry weapons. I would like to thank the member of the public who helped us locate Daniel Flanagan as he attempted to flee on foot with the cash he had stolen during the knifepoint robbery."*

David Keane, police and crime commissioner for Cheshire, said: *"I would like to thank everyone involved in securing this conviction. As a result of the good work of the officers involved in the case, and the information provided by a member of the public, an armed robber is behind bars facing the consequences of his actions."*

Man jailed after assaulting pensioner in an unprovoked attack in Warrington

A man who assaulted a pensioner in an unprovoked attack in Warrington has been jailed. Jack Brooke punched the 81-year-old man several times at around 1.30pm on Thursday 22 October. Both men were walking alone near Bridge Foot until they came face-to-face between St Marys Street and Miller Street. As the victim tried to side step around the 22-year-old, he grabbed hold of him, raised his fist and struck him two or three times to the head. The attack caused the victim to fall to the floor onto his knees and Brooke walked away into the town centre. Following the assault the gentleman attended Warrington Hospital a few days later after his injuries, involving a bruised ear and repeated headaches, became more painful. He then told his family what had happened and they reported it to police. Officers launched an investigation and appealed to the public for information on the attacker. It resulted in a number of people coming forward including a cyclist who went to the man's aid shortly after the attack. Once identified, Brooke was arrested at his home address on 28 October and taken into custody. He was questioned by officers and subsequently charged.



In the victim impact statement read out in court, the victim said he still replays the attack over and over in his head and has suffered flashbacks of Brooke's fist coming over him. Sergeant Chris Webster, from Warrington Local Policing Unit, said: *"I will never understand why Brooke chose to repeatedly punch an elderly man who was simply walking past him on a street. The attack has understandably had a significant impact on him physically but also mentally and also shocked the local community. Before Brooke's assault the victim would regularly go for long walks without a care in the world. I only hope this doesn't deter him from continuing to do this. I want to thank the victim for having the courage to come forward and to the public who provided us with information to ensure justice was served."*

Brooke was sentenced to 18 weeks at Warrant Magistrates Court on Wednesday 24 February. He was also sentenced for a separate offence of criminal damage after breaking the window of a property on Whitefield Road in Warrington in August. Brooke picked up a plant pot and threw it at the living room window causing between £2500 and £3000 of damage. David Keane, Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, said: *"It's despicable to target some of the most vulnerable people in the community. I hope the victim is able to overcome this ordeal and return to his daily walks. I want to thank the public and the officers for ensuring this man has been brought before the courts and punished for this shocking attack."*

Man and woman charged with murder following death of baby

A man and woman have been charged with murder following the death of a baby. At 1.05pm on Thursday 18 February police were notified that a six month old boy had been taken to hospital after becoming unresponsive at an address in Widnes. The boy was taken to hospital where he passed away. Gabriela Ion, 35, and Mihai-Catalin Gulie, 28, were arrested and subsequently charged with murder. The pair appeared at Warrington Magistrates' Court on Thursday 25 February. They were further remanded into custody to appear in court on Monday 1 March.

Two men charged in connection with pedal bike thefts in Chester

Police have charged two men in connection with bicycle thefts that occurred in Chester. Christopher Macbeth, aged 38, of Farm Road, Garden City in Flintshire and Steven Tebble, aged 44, of Tan Y Bryn in Buckley have both been charged with conspiracy to steal pedal cycles. Macbeth has also been charged with possession of a class B drug. Both Macbeth and Tebble were arrested at their home addresses on Wednesday 24 February. The pair have been remanded in custody and are due to appear at Chester Magistrates Court on Thursday 25 February. The charges relate to pedal cycles being stolen in the Chester area between 2 October 2020 and 9 December 2020.

Chester man sentenced after admitting making hoax calls to police

A 35-year-old man from Chester has been jailed and handed a Criminal Behaviour Order after making a series of hoax 999 calls to police. James Robert Woodiwiss of Western Court, Chester appeared at North Cheshire Magistrates on 17 February after being charged with misusing the 999 service. He pleaded guilty to 'cause to be sent by public communication network a false message to cause annoyance or inconvenience.' He was then sentenced to nine weeks in prison and handed a two year Criminal Behaviour Order prohibiting him from calling 999 unless it is an emergency. Between 29 October 2020 and 15 February this year, Woodiwiss made six hoax calls to police. The calls were similar in nature and tended to involve drugs and knives. Chief Insp Gareth Wrigley said: *"The calls involved dangerous situations that required robust emergency responses which included the likes of armed response officers and the police helicopter. This had a huge impact on the Constabulary's finances and resources at the time. Woodiwiss showed no remorse and failed to comprehend the enormity of his actions on policing in Cheshire. He tied up resources needlessly for his own unfathomable reasons. When Woodiwiss has finished his time in custody, he will be subject to a Criminal Behaviour Order which will mean that if he calls 999 and it's not an emergency, he risks going straight back to prison. I hope this goes as a warning for anyone who intends on misusing the 999 system, which is there for genuine emergencies, crimes in progress and where life is at risk. It is not something to be taken lightly and could put lives at risk if it is misused."*



Officers tackle waste crime in Cheshire as part of multi-agency operation

More than 20 people are being investigated following an operation to tackle waste crime in Cheshire. Cheshire Constabulary's Rural Crime Team led the five-day operation in collaboration with the Environment Agency and three local authorities (Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council). Vehicles and companies believed to be involved in the illegal disposal or management of waste were targeted between Monday 15 February and Friday 19 February. Officers pulled over target vehicles that had been spotted via ANPR cameras. They also performed stop checks near to

particularly busy arterial routes into Cheshire. Everything from small commercial carriers to large HGVs were stopped to check if they were transporting waste, and if they had the necessary licences and paperwork to do so. In total, well over 100 vehicles were pulled over during the multi-agency operation. Many of the vehicles were searched and over 10 of them were subsequently seized. In addition, more than 50 tickets were issued, for a range of offences. Sergeant Rob Simpson, of the Rural Crime Team, said: *“Waste crime is a big problem across the country. It causes significant environmental and public health problems, blights local communities and drains the UK economy of hundreds of millions of pounds a year in clean-up costs and lost tax revenues, and those involved in waste crime are often involved in other serious criminal activity, including large scale fraud and in some cases modern slavery. We take waste crime extremely seriously at Cheshire Constabulary. We have been liaising with the Environment Agency to identify and tackle organised crime groups and anyone else who breaks the law by conducting unlicensed collection, transportation and disposal of waste, including toxic waste. Acting on the intelligence gathered, target vehicles and companies were located and stopped during the five-day operation, called Operation Permits. Any other vehicle with the capacity to transport waste illegally was also stopped and checked. The Rural Crime Team was assisted by local officers, the Motorcycle Unit, the Roads and Crime Unit, the Commercial Vehicle Unit, the police drone and members of our Special Constabulary. Environment Agency and local authority waste enforcement officers also took part in the operation, which saw us stop, search and seize a substantial number of vehicles and begin appropriate investigations for each case. More than 20 people are being investigated in the aftermath of Op Permits. The operation was a success and we will continue to target those who use our roads to commit waste crime.”*



- Stop checks were carried out near to particularly busy arterial routes into Cheshire
- Officers stop and search a van during the operation
- One of the stop check points
- One of the vehicles stopped and checked by officers

There were five bases for the stop and check operation. They were in Warrington, Chester, Crewe, Macclesfield and Northwich. Both large and small (fly-tipping) illegal waste disposal was targeted during the

operation. David Keane, the police and crime commissioner for Cheshire, said: *“Waste crime is a blight on our communities. It poses a real threat to the environment, causing nuisance, environmental contamination and public health problems, is expensive to clean up and can also harm the economy by taking business away from legitimate, responsible firms and damaging the reputation of the waste and resource management industry. As the county’s police and crime commissioner, I am fully aware of the hard work being done at Cheshire Constabulary to tackle those who illegally exploit the waste industry and the environment and I applaud all those involved in this successful five-day operation.”* Nigel Glasgow, Cheshire’s Environment Agency area manager, said: *“The Environment Agency works in partnership with the police to tackle illegal waste movements. We would like to remind all householders they have a duty of care to check that anyone taking away their waste is registered as a waste carrier with the Environment Agency. This includes hired builders and contractors who offer to take the waste away as part of their service. There are some tell-tale signs to be mindful of when dealing with a waste operator. Is the waste business only advertising on social media? Are the rates significantly cheaper? Are they insisting on being paid in cash only? These are some of the signs for a business operating illegally. As a householder or business owner, you have a responsibility to check the legitimacy of anyone collecting waste from you. Anyone with concerns about illegal or suspicious activity in your area should contact the police on 101. Environmental incidents can be reported to the Environment Agency 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0800 807060.”*

Cllr Judith Guthrie, cabinet member for environment and public protection at Warrington Borough Council, added: *“Cross agency support is welcomed to focus on tackling waste crime. Whilst individually we all deal with this issue, we are able to achieve more collectively.”* Cllr Karen Shore, Cheshire West and Chester Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for environment, highways and strategic transport, said: *“Cheshire West and Chester Council is committed to tackling waste crime. This operation is an excellent example of how we can work with partners across Cheshire to closely monitor and regulate activities involving waste disposal. By working with our partners, and our communities, we can make a positive difference and protect our countryside from fly-tippers.”* Cllr Mick Warren, cabinet member for communities at Cheshire East Council, said: *“Waste crime is deeply anti-social and damages the local environment for everyone. The council has issued repeated messages about the actions it is taking to clamp down on such illegal activity across the borough. We are working with our partners to try to achieve a healthy and clean environment for the people of Cheshire East through enforcement and via education and awareness campaigns. Illegal waste disposal is a serious offence, which can lead to a maximum £50,000 fine and/or prison, and the council will act where there is evidence to bring about a prosecution. Unfortunately, the nature of waste crime – sometimes carried out under darkness or in isolated spots – means that it can be more difficult for enforcement officers to catch those responsible. That is why the council continues to work closely with partner agencies and members of the public to provide any eye-witness account of fly-tipping, or other illegal waste disposal, which could lead to prosecution. This sort of environmental crime simply will not be tolerated. People can [report fly-tipping or other waste crime via our website.](#)”*

Chance for cyclists to have their say

Cyclists have an opportunity to express how safe they feel on the roads by filling out a [short survey](#) designed to help make the county’s roads safer for everyone. Any cyclist who lives and or cycles in or through Cheshire is being encouraged to complete the short survey from Cheshire Police’s Roads and Crime Unit. Officers will use the results of the survey to help shape the way they police the county’s roads. PC Lee Spencer, from the force’s Roads and Crime Unit, said: *“Everyone has the right to use the roads safely and we want to get a better understanding of the cycling landscape in order to make better informed decisions when completing education and enforcement activity, to help make the roads safer for everyone. A lot more cyclists*

have been getting out on their bikes throughout the pandemic to get their daily exercise or to commute to and from work. With the increase in cyclists on the roads, the county has also sadly seen an increase in the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured. Cheshire can be a safe place to cycle and we want all road users to feel as safe as possible when out on the county's roads. This survey will give cyclists an opportunity to have their say on how they feel about cycling on Cheshire's roads and help shape how we police the roads."

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, David Keane, said: *"Since the national lockdown, we have seen a big increase in the number of people who have taken up cycling and there has been an increase in the number of fatal collisions involving cyclists in Cheshire. One life lost on our roads is one too many. I want cyclists to feel safe on the roads and I am encouraging anyone who cycles in or through Cheshire to complete the survey and tell us how safe they feel on the county's roads. I'll then work with the Constabulary to ensure cyclists' views are taken into account when we look at how we police Cheshire's roads now and in the future."*

Cyclists have until Sunday 7 March to complete the survey. To complete the survey click here: [Cycling Safety Survey](#)

Latest Cheshire Appeals

Appeal for help to find missing Warrington man

Police appealing for information from the public to help find a missing man from Warrington have released a new photograph of him. Geoff Sutcliffe left his home in the Woolston area of the town between 10.30am and 12 noon on Wednesday 24 February. The 61-year-old has not been seen since. He is white, around 5' 7" tall and has a large build and very short grey hair. At the time of his disappearance, Geoff was wearing a black zip-up hooded jacket, blue jeans and black and red Nike trainers when he left his home on foot. He may have had a blue fleece jumper on underneath his jacket. Officers have now issued a



new picture of Geoff and a CCTV image of him on the day of his disappearance. PC John Teasdale of Warrington LPU: *"We have had a number of specialist search officers out searching for Geoff since he was reported as missing. We have continued to follow any new lines of enquiry that have come in from the public but so far this has come to no avail and we are becoming increasingly concerned for his welfare. He lives in Warrington but we can't rule out the possibility of him having gone further*



afield so I continue to urge anyone who thinks that they may have seen Geoff since he went missing to come forward. The same goes for anyone with information regarding his whereabouts, or CCTV or dashcam footage of him that was recorded since 10.30am on Wednesday 24 February. I also ask people living in the Woolston and surrounding area to continue to help by checking their sheds and other outbuildings for any signs of Geoff. I also want to ask Geoff, if you see this, please contact us or your family so that we know that you are safe and well." Anyone with information or footage that may assist officers in finding Geoff is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 924672.

Appeal for information following attempted robbery in Crewe

Detectives investigating an attempted robbery in Crewe are appealing for information. At 3.50pm on Tuesday 23 February a 44-year-old man was riding his pedal bike along Hope Street when he was approached by two men as he reached the alleyway. One of the men, armed with a hammer, pulled at the victim's coat and hit him on the face and arm. The other man, armed with a large knife, pulled at the bike and caused injuries to the victim's head. The victim managed to leave the scene with his bike and report it to police. The injuries sustained by the weapons required hospital treatment. One of the men is described as white, aged in his late teens, of a skinny build and around 5'4" and was wearing dark clothing. The second man is described as being of mixed heritage, aged between 18-22, of a medium build and approximately 5'8" and was wearing dark clothing. Enquiries have been ongoing and officers appealing for anyone who witnessed the incident or has CCTV or dash cam footage to get in touch. DC John Horsham, from Crewe Local Policing Unit, said: *"This was a terrifying attack which has understandably left the victim shaken. "Since it was reported to police we have been carrying out a number of enquiries and are appealing to the public to come forward with information. Please get in touch if you witnessed the incident, believe you saw the men involved or if you have CCTV or dash cam footage which could assist the investigation."* If you have information, dash cam or CCTV footage please contact Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 924026.

Appeal for information to help find missing man from Crewe

Police are appealing for information from the public to help find a missing man. Josef Skrdlant has not been seen since he left his home in the Queens Park area of Crewe on foot at around 10am on Friday 19 February. The 51-year-old is around 5' 2" tall with a proportionate build. He is white with a tanned complexion and has brown eyes and black hair that is greying and receding. When Josef was last seen he was wearing a black or blue jacket, blue jeans and blue shoes. He is originally from the Czech Republic and speaks very little English. Josef has recently moved back to Crewe from



Missing man Josef Skrdlant

Birmingham. Cheshire Constabulary is urging anyone who sees him or has any information regarding his whereabouts to come forward. Inspector Dave Levins, of Crewe Local Policing Unit, said: *"This is the first time that Josef Skrdlant has been reported as missing to the police. A number of officers have been searching for him, so far to no avail, and we are becoming increasingly concerned for his welfare. He lives in Crewe but has recently been living in Birmingham. I urge anyone in those areas or elsewhere who thinks that they may have seen Josef since he went missing to get in touch with us. The same goes for anyone with any information regarding his whereabouts, or CCTV or dashcam footage of him since he went missing on the morning of Friday 19 February."* Anyone with information or footage that may help officers find Josef is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary immediately on 101, quoting IML 922551.

Detectives appeal for information following burglary in Ellesmere Port

Detectives are appealing for information following reports of a burglary at a property in Ellesmere Port. At sometime between 8.30pm to 9pm on Monday 22 February, unknown offenders gained entrance to an address on Hope Farm Road. An untidy search was made and a quantity of jewellery was taken. Officers are now asking anyone who has information to get in touch. DS Graeme Carvell said: *"Burglary is a particularly distressing crime where victims are targeted in their own home, a place where they should feel most safe. A number of enquiries are underway to find those responsible. As part of these enquiries, I would like to hear*

from anyone who may have witnessed anything suspicious in the area around the time of the incident to get in touch. The same goes for anyone who may have CCTV footage from around the Hope Farm Road area or dashcam footage from the scene around the time of the incident."

Anyone with information is urged to call Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 923536 or report it via [the Cheshire Police website](#). Information can also be provided to Crimestoppers anonymously via 0800 555 111 or via [the Crimestoppers website](#).

Police investigating suspicious behaviour appeal after a second incident

Police investigating a suspicious incident in Alsager are looking into a second similar report. At around 4.30pm on 21 February a 19-year-old woman was walking along Ashmores Lane when she was approached by a man who attempted to befriend her. The woman walked off in the opposite direction. He was described as being around 5ft 8ins tall with short brown hair, glasses and approximately 30 years old. PC Kerrie Cummings said: *"We're continuing to investigate the circumstances surrounding the man's odd behaviour and have had a number similar reports of a man with a similar description trying to speak to women and teenagers in the area of Audley Lane and nearby. I'd appeal to anyone who sees the man or knows who this man may be to contact us as he is causing some concern in the community with his behaviour."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via www.cheshire.police.uk quoting IML 918405. Alternatively information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for witnesses and dashcam footage following collision in Chester

Officers are appealing for witnesses to come forward following a collision in Chester. At 4.25pm on Tuesday 16 February police were called following reports of a collision involving a Fiat Doblo van and a pedestrian on A41 Ring Road. The male pedestrian was taken to hospital but has since been discharged. The driver of the Fiat Doblo van stopped at the scene and is assisting officers with enquiries. Police are now appealing to anyone who may have witnessed the collision or may have any dashcam footage of the vehicles to come forward. Anyone with information is urged to call 101 quoting IML 919038 or report it via [the Cheshire Police website](#). Alternatively anyone with information can report to Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via [the Crimestoppers website](#).

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/>