

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 28th March 2021

Cheshire News & Appeals



Latest Cheshire News

Police in Ellesmere Port will be cracking down on anti-social behaviour this weekend

Police in Ellesmere Port are cracking down on anti-social behaviour in Whitby Park. A small number of young people are causing trouble to the detriment of legitimate users of the park. Acting Chief Insp Ian Stead said: *"We want everyone to enjoy Whitby Park, but just a small minority of children are ruining it for the majority by causing trouble and setting fire to bins. I'd like to take the opportunity to remind parents that it's important that you know where your children are, especially due to the Covid restrictions. We will be stepping up patrols in the area over the weekend. So be warned, if your son or daughter is one of the small minority of children committing anti-social behaviour, you could find us on your doorstep returning your child home, and you could be facing a Covid fine if your child is under 18 - which could make this an expensive weekend for you. So the message is enjoy the park and what it has to offer, but respect other users and behave responsibly. If you're in the park and see anti-social behaviour, tell us about it by calling us on 101 as its happening so that we can respond appropriately. By working together we can reduce anti-social behaviour and make our open spaces enjoyable and safe for everyone."*

Man jailed for 15 years after using EncroChat to supply large quantities of class A drugs

Stephen Christian, previously of Roscommon Way in Widnes, was found to have used the encrypted messaging service to engage in conversations with other criminal associates around the organisation and for the onward supply of cocaine. The 43-year-old was sentenced on Friday 19 March at Liverpool Crown Court after pleading guilty at an earlier hearing to conspiracy to supply cocaine. Christian's encrypted data was analysed by detectives from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) from May 2020 to 1 July 2020, after it was cracked by international law enforcement. Under the user name 'Tribal-Quest' he negotiated prices for 12 kilograms of cocaine from criminals who were involved in importing bulk amounts. On one occasion on 22 May 2020 he travelled to Blackpool to collect a large amount of money from an associate he was speaking to on EncroChat. After detectives had gathered evidence, on 1 July 2020 Christian was arrested and his two addresses, one on Roscommon Way in Widnes and another on Roseheath Drive in Halewood, were searched. A search of Roscommon Way led to police seizing designer clothing, shoes and a Rolex watch, as well as almost £3,000 in cash and eight mobile phones. Christian was then cautioned and subsequently charged. DCI Mike Evans, from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: *"This is a significant sentence resulting solely from detectives analysing telecoms data over a two-month period under the codename Operation Venetic. Christian was a well-established organised criminal who supplied multi-kilograms of class A drugs which he profited from and led to him living a lavish lifestyle. He used this service to speak openly about his criminality believing it to be safe and secure. It means the evidence was so strong that he had no choice but to admit to his involvement in the conspiracy."*



Warrington house closed following persistent anti-social behaviour

A house in Warrington has been closed for three months in response to persistent anti-social behaviour. Officers from the Warrington North Beat Management Team applied for the closure order under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The anti-social behaviour stemming from the address in Fallowfield Grove included groups of people coming and going at all hours, even when the country has been in lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Those going into the house included people who have additional legal requirements to stay away from the address. In recent times the police have been called to the house on multiple occasions to deal with anti-social behaviour. There have been



From left, PCSO Connor Wright, PC Gareth Milby and PCSO Neil Potter outside the closed house in Fallowfield Grove, Warrington

reports of loud music, drug taking, foul and abusive language, littering, drunk and disorderly behaviour and intimidating behaviour stemming from the house. There have also been reports of loud arguments and violent incidents, including ones in the street. Granted by Warrington Magistrates' Court on Wednesday 19 March, the closure order makes it a crime for anyone other than the landlord to be at the property over the next three months. PC Gareth Milby, of the Warrington North Beat Management Team, said: *"The unacceptable behaviour of people inside and outside the house in Fallowfield Grove has blighted the community for a sustained period of time. It has caused significant alarm, harassment and distress to those who live in the area and has showed no sign of abating, despite the lockdown restrictions imposed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. No-one should have to put up with persistent anti-social behaviour in their street. We will use the full remit of the law to tackle such behaviour, as this case shows. I hope that it provides reassurance to Warrington residents and serves as a warning to others who incorrectly think that they can persistently make their neighbours' lives a misery through anti-social behaviour."* Officers will conduct regular checks of the house over the next three months to ensure that the order is not breached. If anyone is found to have breached it they are liable to be arrested and face up to six months in prison, an unlimited fine or both.

PC Milby added: *"I want to thank the members of the public who played a key role in the closure order being secured. The information they supplied was key to us gathering the evidence needed for such an order to be imposed via the courts. We want every Warrington resident to be able to live in their home without having to suffer from the effects of unacceptable issues at neighbouring properties. The closure order is another example of our commitment to targeting those who undermine our communities through unacceptable behaviour, and of our considerable efforts to make Warrington an even better place to live, work and visit. I hope that this case encourages others to report and give statements regarding such behaviour at properties they live near. We will do something about it, as this case proves."*

The law on antique firearms is changing

From 22 March 2021 some firearms previously regarded as antique, and therefore exempt from control, no longer qualify as such and must now be licensed. **Owners of these firearms must act by 23:59 on 21 September 2021 to license them or lawfully dispose of them.** Further information and advice is available on the [Government website](#).

Closure orders secured for three addresses in Warrington

Closure orders have been imposed on three addresses in Warrington in response to anti-social and criminal behaviour linked to them. Cheshire Constabulary executed warrants at the International Mini Market and Tymbark shops and the flats above them in Orford Lane, Warrington, at around 2pm on Wednesday 17 March. This followed reports of anti-social behaviour linked to the premises having a significant detrimental effect on the local area. Approximately 50,000 packets of counterfeit cigarettes and around 3kg of counterfeit tobacco were seized as a result of the raids, as was a quantity of cash. Officers imposed 48-hour closure notices on the stores and one of the flats, and subsequently applied for three-month closure orders to be enforced on the three addresses. The application was granted by Chester Crown Court on Friday 19 March, under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Inspector Danny Haddock, of Warrington Local Policing Unit (LPU), said: *“The closure orders being secured stem from us receiving numerous reports of activity linked to the addresses having a substantial negative impact on the quality of life of local residents. Criminality of any kind will not be tolerated here at Warrington LPU. We will not let criminal and anti-social behaviour of others continue to have a detrimental effect on the people who suffer from it. The closure orders make it illegal for anyone to be at any of the three properties for three months. I want to thank the members of the community who reported their concerns regarding the premises to us. I hope the action we have subsequently taken sends a strong message to people living in Warrington. The message is that we will listen to their concerns and use the full remit of the law to tackle criminal and anti-social behaviour and make the town an even better place to live, work and visit. I also hope that these closure orders encourage other members of the Warrington community to inform us of any concerns they have regarding criminal or anti-social behaviour where they live.”*

Sergeant Alex Reeves, who applied for the closure orders on behalf of the Warrington Problem Solving Team, added: *“The closure orders that have been secured and the large quantity of counterfeit tobacco products that have been seized are the results of a multi-agency operation. Acting on intelligence supplied by members of the community, we launched an investigation and requested the assistance of HM Revenue and Customs, Warrington Borough Council’s trading standards department and the UK Visas and Immigration service. We subsequently worked together to tackle criminal and anti-social behaviour involving the addresses in Orford Lane. The premises were sources of significant anti-social behaviour and environmental issues in the area. There were parking problems caused by the amount of people going to the shops where the counterfeit tobacco products were being sold, as well as issues stemming from children trying to get adults to buy the products for them. There were also littering and fly-tipping issues linked to the addresses. I am pleased the*



closure orders have been secured. The orders will no doubt have a positive impact on the local area. We will conduct regular checks of the premises whilst the orders are in place to ensure that they are not breached. If anyone is found to have breached a closure order they are liable to be arrested and face up to six months in prison, an unlimited fine or both. I am also pleased that a large quantity of counterfeit tobacco products are no longer destined for members of our community. Not only does the sale of counterfeit tobacco products harm legitimate businesses, and society in general due to no tax being paid for them, it is also dangerous. Those who buy such products don’t know what is in them and what the money they have paid will be used for. Counterfeit cigarettes also present a greater risk of causing a fire than legitimate cigarettes that conform

to reduced ignition propensity (RIP) regulations.” Four men were spoken to at the addresses when the raids were carried out. Their details have been passed on to HM Revenue and Customs, who are investigating the counterfeit tobacco products that were found in the properties. Anyone with information regarding anti-social behaviour or counterfeit tobacco products in Warrington or anywhere else in Cheshire is asked to call 101, give the details via - [Report](#) - or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Latest Cheshire Appeals

CCTV footage released following the theft of two dogs in Nantwich

The footage shows the men running along Market Street with the two black Labradors shortly after the dogs had been stolen from outside a Marks & Spencer store in Beam Street. The Labradors’ owner had tied the dogs up outside the main entrance of the store before going inside to do some shopping. The dogs were untied and stolen shortly after 6pm on Saturday 27 March. The men in the CCTV footage are both white, have average builds and short dark hair and had dark footwear on. The man holding the dogs’ leads was wearing a dark jacket and light coloured jogging bottoms. The man running in front of him had a black jacket and dark pants/jeans on. He was carrying a dark bag. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers want to hear from anyone who believes they may know who men in the footage are. DS Vicki Shelton said: *“The dogs’ owner is understandably deeply upset. Pets are part of the family and having them stolen is a harrowing and distressing experience. I would like to reassure members of the community that we take incidents of this nature extremely seriously and are doing all we can to establish who stole the dogs, make them face the consequences of their actions and have the pets returned to their rightful owner. Enquiries are ongoing and I urge anyone who believes they may know the identities of the men in the CCTV footage to get in touch. You cannot see their faces clearly in the footage but we are hoping that some members of the public may recognise them from their builds, the clothes they were wearing and the way they run. We also want to hear from anyone who witnessed the dogs being stolen or has any other information that may aid our investigation. Perhaps you think you know where the dogs are, or have CCTV or dashcam footage that may be relevant to the investigation.”*

Anyone with information or footage that may help the investigation is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting incident number 21000195850, or give the details [via our website](#). Alternatively, information can be reported to Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or [via the CrimeStoppers website](#).

Police appeal after Salford man escapes from Warrington prison

Police are searching for a prisoner who has escaped from HMP Thorn Cross in Appleton, Warrington. Michael Ratcliffe absconded at around 4.30am on Saturday 27 March. The 34-year-old is from Eccles in Salford, Greater Manchester. He is white with a slim build and has very short dark hair. When Ratcliffe was last seen he was wearing a grey coat, black tracksuit bottoms and black gloves, and he was carrying a green and white JD Sports bag. Extensive enquiries are ongoing to in a bid to locate Ratcliffe and police are appealing for anyone with any information regarding his whereabouts to get in touch. Inspector Helen Cooper said: *“I would like to assure members of the public that we are doing everything we can to find the escaped prisoner and return him to lawful custody. Michael Ratcliffe is from Salford and may be intent on heading back to that area. He might try to get a lift there, if he hasn’t already done so, or he may still be near the prison in Warrington that he escaped from.”*



Whilst we do not believe that Ratcliffe poses a risk to the public, anyone who sees him is urged not to approach him but to call 999 as soon as possible."

Information regarding Ratcliffe's whereabouts can be given by calling Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 948418, or via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report>. Alternatively you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for information following collision in Warrington

Police are appealing for information following a collision in Warrington. Just after 4pm on Saturday 20 March, officers were called to Penketh Road following reports of a collision involving a green Mazda and three pedestrians. One pedestrian, a woman, was taken to hospital with serious injuries. She has since been discharged from hospital. The two other pedestrians, both women, were taken to hospital for minor injuries. The driver of the car stopped at the scene and is assisting police with enquiries.

Anyone who witnessed the collision or may have captured dashcam footage can contact Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 943236 or report it via [the Cheshire Police website](https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report).

CCTV images released following burglary in Runcorn

Detectives have released CCTV images of two men they want to speak to in connection with a burglary in Runcorn. The incident occurred between 5pm and 6pm on Wednesday 24 February. It saw a quantity of jewellery stolen from a house in Lodge Lane, Halton Village, after the property had been broken into when no-one was at home. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and detectives believe that the men in the CCTV images may have vital information to aid their investigation. They are urging anyone who recognises them or thinks they may know who the men are to get in touch. DC Daryl Gavin, of Runcorn Local



Policing Unit, 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. We are determined to establish who carried out the burglary in the Halton Village area of Runcorn and bring them to justice. We believe that tracing and speaking to the men in the CCTV images will help us to achieve those goals. If you think you recognise them, please let us know. I would also like to appeal directly to the men in the CCTV images to get in touch."* Anyone with information that may help the investigation is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 924890, give the details via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report> or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for information in relation to an incident at a park in Warrington

Detectives investigating an incident in Warrington are appealing for information. On Wednesday 24 March a sexual offence occurred at a small park located between Wellington Street and Ellesmere Street in Warrington. It involved a child who is believed to have been inappropriately touched by a man at some time between 6pm and 6.20pm. The child told his mum what had happened and it was reported to police. Officers have begun an investigation and are now conducting a number of lines of enquiry.

DS Darren Reid, from Warrington Local Policing Unit, said: *"I understand how concerning this will be for the local community and I want to reassure you that there will be a visible policing presence in the area. Our*

investigation is underway and we are conducting enquiries including speaking to witnesses and reviewing CCTV footage. I am also appealing directly to the public to come forward with any information, or if you may have witnessed the incident and not yet spoken to police to get in touch. If you have CCTV footage overlooking the park or surrounding areas, please also make contact with us. If you have any concerns please speak to an officer.” Information can be provided by contacting Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 946546.

Police investigating spate of damages to windows in Warrington

Police investigating a spate of criminal damage to windows in Warrington are appealing for information. Between 12pm and 4pm on Tuesday 23 March offenders drove around Poplars and Hulme and Padgate firing ball bearings from a catapult at cars and windows. An 11-year-old boy and a 42-year-old man were also hit and received minor injuries. Following a number of enquiries police quickly located and stopped a white van in Newton-le-Willows and arrested two men, aged 22 and 32, on suspicion of assault and criminal damage. They were taken into custody to be questioned and have since been released under investigation while enquires continue. Sergeant Lee Hillyard, from Warrington Local Policing Unit, said: *“Understandably this has been an alarming and quite frightening incident for the local community and the public can expect to see officers out on patrol in order to provide reassurance. I want to reassure the public that we quickly located and arrested two men and are continuing to work incredibly hard to gather evidence as part of this ongoing investigation. As part of our enquiries I am appealing to anyone who has CCTV or dash cam footage which could assist us to please get in touch. At this stage we have received 19 reports of criminal damage and two reports of people sustaining injuries however we believe there could be more victims and encouraging people to come forward. If you can assist or have any further information please call Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 945517.”*

Appeal following incident in Malpas

Officers investigating an incident in Malpas are appealing for information and footage from members of the public. Shortly after 3.15pm on Monday 24 March a 10-year-old girl was walking along Chester Road in Malpas, from the direction of High Street. When she was around halfway between High Street and Bishop Heber High School, a white 4x4 vehicle pulled up alongside her. It had travelled from the direction of the high school and the A41. A man got out of the driver’s door and offered the girl a lift. She declined and began to walk back in the direction of High Street. The man followed her on foot for a short distance. He stopped doing so before she reached High Street. The man is believed to be in his 40s and around 5’ 11” tall. He was stocky and had brown hair and a messy brown beard and he was wearing a red hooded top, blue jeans and black and white trainers. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers are urging anyone with any information or dashcam footage that may aid their investigation to get in touch. Sergeant Andrew Collinson said: *“Incidents of this nature understandably cause concern within the local community. I would like to reassure residents that at no stage did the man attempt to touch the girl. She did the right thing by ignoring him and walking away. We have had no further reports of any similar incidents in the area, but we take any incident of this nature extremely seriously and are doing everything we can to identify the man and establish why he stopped to offer the girl a lift. Enquiries are ongoing and I urge anyone who was in the area and witnessed anything that may be relevant to our investigation to get in touch. The same goes for anyone who believes they may know who the man is, or have dashcam footage of him or the white 4x4 he was driving.”* Anyone with information or dashcam footage that may help the ongoing investigation is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 944746, or give the details via - [Report](#)

Detectives investigating sexual assault in Poynton appeal for information

Detectives investigating a report of a serious sexual assault in Poynton are appealing for witnesses. The incident took place around 7.45pm – 8.15pm on Sunday 21 March in the Middlewood Road, Coppice Road area and officers have since made an arrest following their extensive enquiries. As part of the investigation, police are keen to speak to anyone who was in the area at the time and saw a van parked in the road. DI Duncan Gouck said: *“There has been a significant police presence while officers have been making a number of enquiries in the area, including door to door and CCTV. We understand this incident will be of concern to many and we want to reassure that this appears to be an isolated incident and we have made an arrest. The 14-year-old victim is being supported by specialist officers. We’d ask anyone who was in the area between 7pm and 8.15pm and has dash cam footage to check their footage in case there is anything that may help us with our enquiries. Or if you were in the area and saw a teenage girl and a man together with a van please get in touch.”* A 53-year-old man has since been released on conditional bail. Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting IML 944830. Alternatively information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for witnesses following serious collision in Warrington

Police are appealing for witnesses following a serious collision in Warrington. Officers were called just before 4.30pm on Monday 22 March to Enfield Park Road following reports of a collision involving a cyclist and a pedestrian. The pedestrian, a woman in her 80s, was taken to hospital with life-threatening injuries. She remains in a critical condition. The cyclist stopped at the scene and is assisting police with their enquiries. Officers would like to hear from anyone who may have captured CCTV, dashcam footage or witnessed the incident. Anyone with information can contact Cheshire Police on 101 quoting IML 944773 or report it via the [Cheshire Police website](#).

Appeal after burglars steal motorbike in Runcorn

Detectives are appealing for information from members of the public after a motorbike was stolen by burglars in Runcorn. Two males wearing dark clothing and face coverings stole the blue and silver bike after breaking into a shed at a domestic address on Maryhill Road in the Heath area. They fled the area with the motorbike at around 12.30am on Friday 19 March. The offenders and the bike arrived at Muncaster Court in the Castlefields area of Runcorn around half-an-hour later. The motorbike was recovered by the police from Muncaster Court later that morning. The offenders were nowhere in sight. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers are urging anyone with any information or footage that may help their investigation to get in touch. DS Rob McLoughlin, of Runcorn Local Policing Unit, said: *“We take all burglary incidents seriously at Cheshire Constabulary and are doing everything we can to establish the identities of the offenders and make them face the consequences of their actions. Enquiries are ongoing and we want to hear from anyone who was in the Heath or Castlefields area of Runcorn on the morning of Friday 19 March and believes they may have seen the burglars. We also want to speak to anyone who thinks they may know who the offenders are, or have CCTV or dashcam footage of them.”*

Anyone with information or footage that could be relevant to the investigation is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting IML 941992, give the details via - [Report](#) - or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Man from Winsford wanted on recall to prison

Police are asking the public to help them trace a man who is wanted on recall to prison. Michael Hill is from Winsford and is believed to be in the town. The 35-year-old is white and around 5'11" tall with a proportionate build. He has receded brown hair and brown eyes. Anyone who sees Hill or has information regarding his whereabouts is asked to call Cheshire Constabulary immediately on 101, quoting IML 940650. Alternatively, information can be given anonymously to 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/>