

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 9 February 2025

Cheshire News & Appeals

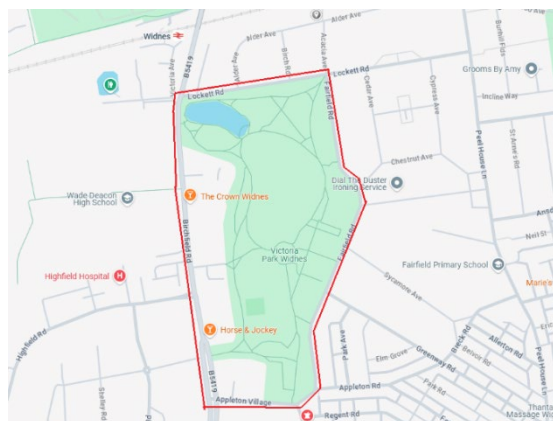


Latest Cheshire News

Extra stop and search powers granted in Widnes

Extra stop and search powers have been granted in Widnes in response to a concerning incident yesterday evening (Friday 7 February).

Officers in Widnes have been given more powers to stop and search anyone they suspect of carrying a weapon. It was reported that a large group of youths had descended on Widnes Skate Park and chased two young people. Police with the assistance of armed response officers and the police helicopter made a search of the area and stopped and searched a number of people. No arrests were made, no weapons were found and there no further reports.



As a precaution to prevent any further issues the powers have been granted temporarily under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994). The order means that officers can stop and search any person or vehicle they believe may be carrying weapons or causing serious violence in a particular area, whether or not they have any grounds of suspicion. The powers will be in place from 5pm today (8 February) and remain in place until 7am tomorrow morning (9 February). It applies to the area displayed on the map, namely Victoria Park, bounded by and including Fairfield Road, Appleton Village Road, Birchfield Road and Lockett Road.

Supt Sarah Heath said: *“The behaviour of these youths last night was concerning and caused fear and intimidation to residents. We are taking a zero tolerance approach to this behaviour by imposing this order and we’re working hard to identify and locate those responsible. Along with the order, there will be an additional police presence across the town and anyone believed to be causing disruption in the community will be targeted robustly. Anyone who has any concerns about this – or, indeed, any information that can help us – please speak to an officer.”*

If you have information about someone who is carrying a weapon, please call Cheshire Police on 101 or go to the [website](#). You can also provide information anonymously through Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555111. If a crime is taking place, dial 999 immediately.

Local Policing Newsletters Winter 2024-25

Below you can read all about your local area in our Local Policing newsletters from your beat officers.

- Chester LPU
- Congleton LPU
- Crewe LPU
- Ellesmere Port LPU
- [Ellesmere Port East Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Ellesmere Port Rural Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Ellesmere Port West Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- Macclesfield LPU
- [Macclesfield Knutsford Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Macclesfield North Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Macclesfield South Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Macclesfield Wilmslow Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- Northwich LPU
- [Northwich North Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Northwich South Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Winsford Tarporley Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- Runcorn LPU
- Warrington LPU
- [Warrington Central Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Warrington East Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Warrington North Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Warrington South Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Warrington Town Centre Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Warrington West Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- Widnes LPU
- [Widnes Inner Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)
- [Widnes Outer Newsletter Winter 24-25.pdf](#)

Two men plead guilty to drug dealing in Ellesmere Port

Two men have pleaded guilty to being involved in the supply of class A drugs in Ellesmere Port.

Gary Harmes, 43, of Kingsley Road, Ellesmere Port, appeared at Chester Crown court on Thursday 6 February where he pleaded guilty to possession with intent to supply class A drugs (crack cocaine) and being concerned in the supply of class A drugs (crack cocaine). The 43-year-old also admitted possession of a controlled class B drug (Cannabis). Callum Mozzano, 24, of Woodfield Road, Ellesmere Port, had already pleaded guilty to being concerned in the supply of class A drugs (crack cocaine) at an earlier hearing on Friday 10 January. The pair are set to be sentenced at Chester Crown Court on Friday 21 March.

Harmes and Mozzano were both arrested as part of Operation Ironworks, an investigation into the supply of crack cocaine in Ellesmere Port. The case began on Friday 9 June 2023 when Harmes was stopped by officers on patrol in the town. During a search, officers discovered six street deals of crack cocaine and a larger bag of crack cocaine weighing 3.25 grams. He was also in possession of two mobile phones and a set of scales.

Harmes was arrested and a search was conducted at his home on Kingsley Road where officers recovered bicarbonate of soda, which is often used in the production of crack cocaine. He was subsequently released under investigation pending the examination of mobile phones, telecoms and forensic examination of the drugs seized.

During the analysis of the phones, officers discovered that Harmes had been working with Mozzano and the pair had been in charge of a mobile phone which was being used to sell illegal drugs in the town. The phone was being used on a regular basis to send flare messages offering to supply crack cocaine. After gathering a catalogue of evidence Harmes and Mozzano were both arrested on Friday 29 December and the pair were later charged with various drugs offences.

Following the guilty pleas, DS Roy Wellings, of Ellesmere Port Proactive CID said: *"The team here at Ellesmere Port are dedicated to disrupting the drug supply network and this is another example of how we are continually pursuing those intent on making money out of other people's misery. We recognise that drugs and drug use have a detrimental effect on our communities, and we will stop at nothing to rid the streets of this illegal activity. You too can help us by reporting drug dealing in your area to police. Every bit of information helps us to gather intelligence and close in on those dealing in illegal drugs."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the website (www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us/). Alternatively, information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Man jailed for drugs offences in Warrington

A drug dealer has been jailed for more than five years for facilitating the supply of class A drugs in Warrington.

Tony Monroe appeared at Liverpool Crown Court on Tuesday 28 January where he was sentenced to a total of five years and 32 weeks. The 35-year-old, of no fixed abode, had previously pleaded guilty to being concerned in the supply of class A drugs and possession with intent to supply class A drugs.



Officers were investigating a county lines drugs gang operating in the Warrington area, supplying class A drugs – crack cocaine and heroin – on a daily basis. The officers were able to identify three mobile phone numbers which had been used to advertise the drugs since 4 November 2024. It was also discovered that Monroe was the 'controller' of the county lines gang.

Following enquiries, officers attended a holiday park in Rhyl on 11 December 2024 to conduct arrest attempts for Monroe, who was believed to be residing on a caravan on the site. Monroe was

arrested at the site on suspicion of class A drugs offences. A search of the caravan was conducted and a number of mobile phones were seized, as well as £246 in cash, a quantity of cannabis, heroin worth more than £8,900, and a bag of white powder later identified as cocaine, worth more than £22,900. Monroe was subsequently charged with the offences.

Insp Robert Balfour said: *"Monroe is facing a considerable custodial sentence for his role in bringing illegal drugs to the streets of Warrington. Not only this, but our officers were successful in seizing more than £30,000 of drugs. The dangers of drugs are well-known and our fight against these illegal substances is never over. We will continue to crack down on those who bring drugs into our communities and hold those responsible to account."*

Woman jailed for defrauding elderly Congleton man

A woman who took hundreds of pounds off a vulnerable man in Congleton has been jailed.

Abigail Wright from Flag Lane in Crewe appeared at Crewe Magistrates' Court on 3 February where she pleaded guilty to four counts of fraud by false representation.

The 37-year-old was sentenced to 27 weeks in prison and handed an indefinite restraining order preventing her from contacting the victim and his family. She also has to pay the victim £800 which was the amount she took from him.



Wright had only just been released from prison for a similar offences against the victim when she began contacting the victim again. A resident spotted Wright attending the 92-year-old's address and contacted police on 6 November 2024 to report her concerns. PC James Rowley attended the victim's house to do welfare check and it became apparent that Wright had been visiting the victim again. As a precaution he advised the victim's son so that he could keep an eye on him.

The following day the victim's son discovered £800 had gone out of an account which his dad had access to. He suspected Wright was responsible due to previous offending against the family and informed PC Rowley. The card was immediately cancelled and the transactions scrutinised. Some transactions immediately stood out as unusual, including three withdrawals from an ATM at the Shell petrol station in Congleton, one on 5 November of £250 and two of £250 and £50 on 6 November. CCTV showed Wright was the person withdrawing the money. As the investigation continued, PC Rowley visited the victim to complete a welfare check and discuss the case. He discovered the victim in an alleyway handing over a quantity of cash.

PC James Rowley said: *"While he was doing this willingly, he lacked a full understanding of the situation and felt sorry for her so would give in to her demands for cash. I found £150 on Wright but she said she'd got it from another friend even though I'd seen the transaction take place in the alleyway. She had also used his card without his permission to withdraw a significant amount of money on three occasions."*

Wright was arrested for the card offences and the £150 was seized. Despite being on conditional bail which meant she shouldn't contact the victim, just two days later officers had information that she had arranged to meet the victim at Crewe bus station to get more cash. Officers located him at

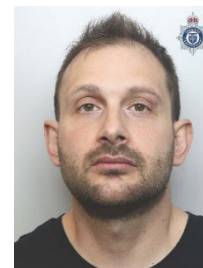
Congleton bus station and took him to Crewe to look for her because she was wanted for breaching her bail conditions in contacting him. She was located in Asda and immediately arrested.

PC James Rowley said: *"The moment she got out of prison her offending was relentless and the amount she was taking from him was significant - clearly taking advantage of his vulnerability. I would like to thank the public for being good neighbours by keeping an eye on their elderly neighbours and reporting their concerns to us. I'd also like to thank colleagues involved in this case. A lot of time and work went into obtaining justice for the victim, which demonstrates our commitment to protecting the most vulnerable members of our community. Congleton Beat Team takes pride in this result and will continue to be there for those who need us the most."*

Man jailed for rape and attempted rape in Warrington

A man has been jailed for the rape and attempted rape of two women in Warrington.

Mariyan Grudev, formerly of Thelwall Lane, Latchford, Warrington, was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 14 years at Liverpool Crown Court on Thursday 6 February after previously pleading guilty to one count of attempted rape. The 39-year-old was also found guilty of one count of rape after a trial in July 2024.



On Saturday 29 July 2023, at around 3.10am, a woman was walking along Winwick Road when a man, who was unknown to the woman, began following her. He then grabbed her from behind and attempted to drag her into bushes. Thankfully, the woman escaped unharmed and sought help from a passing taxi driver. A media appeal was subsequently issued by Cheshire Police using a CCTV image of the suspect. He was later confirmed to be Grudev, who was arrested on Sunday 30 July 2023 and later charged with attempted rape on Tuesday 1 August 2023. Following these charges, he was investigated as a suspect in a previous similar incident in Warrington. This occurred on Sunday 22 December 2019, when a woman who had been on a night out in Warrington town centre was walking back to her address at around 2.20am, and described being approached by a man.

The victim was not able to recall the exact events following this interaction but she was in pain and believed she had been raped. Forensic swabs taken from the victim did not come back with any results or DNA matches at the time. In 2023, following Grudev's arrest, his DNA was tested against DNA from the 2019 incident, which provided a match. He was subsequently charged with rape in November 2023. On top of his custodial sentence, Grudev will also need to sign the Sex Offender Register.

DC Paul Beesley, of Warrington CID, said: *"Firstly, I would like to commend the bravery of the two victims who went through such traumatic events but found the courage to report what happened to them and engage with the subsequent investigations. Grudev is evidently a dangerous individual, on both occasions targeting women who were walking home following nights out. He was clearly only thinking about satisfying his own twisted sexual desires, with no regard for how his victims must have felt and the lasting consequences of his despicable actions. I hope the fact that Grudev is now behind bars will give the victims some sense of closure, with the knowledge that he cannot do this to anyone else."*

To report any sexual offence call Cheshire Constabulary on 101 or visit

www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report/rsa/alpha-v1/v1/rape-sexual-assault-other-sexual-offences.

Always call 999 in an emergency. Information can also be passed anonymously, via Crimestoppers, on 0800 555 111.

Two men who caused a major fire and mass evacuation to be sentenced

Two men who pleaded guilty to setting fire to a former print works in Crewe during the summer disorder causing widespread disruption and displacing hundreds of residents will be sentenced in April. A third was found not guilty following a trial.

James Evans, 19, from Welles Street in Sandbach, Justin Keeling, formerly Evans, 18, from Catherine Street in Crewe and Peter Lord, 20, of Pedley Street, Crewe, appeared at Chester Crown Court on 29 January for a trial. Evans and Keeling pleaded guilty to arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered on the first day and Lord was found not guilty on 3 February. Keeling also admitted to perverting the course of justice at an earlier hearing. Evans and Keeling have been remanded in custody to be sentenced at Chester Crown Court on 14 April.

James Evans



Justin Keeling (formerly Evans)



The disused industrial premises targeted by the men is located on the junction of Catherine Street and Frances Street in Crewe town centre and is surrounded by a number of terraced houses. The two entered the building on the afternoon of Friday 9 August and set fire to a large pile of cardboard. The fire quickly set hold significantly and it was declared a major incident. A large-scale evacuation of five streets was undertaken, while firefighters from all over the county descended on the compact terraced streets of the town and remained on scene for several days.

Residents were displaced to leisure centres, or friends and family while firefighters fought to put out the fire. More than 350 people were affected by the evacuation as their homes were at risk, in fact some houses were damaged as a result of the fire. When officers arrived to manage the crowds and put cordons in place, Keeling was in the crowd of onlookers. He laughed at police and swore at them. He was told to move away and he shouted for people to riot.

The media descended on the chaotic scenes and interviewed residents about their plight. Justin Keeling, formerly Evans, despite being one of the two men who had caused the devastation, had the audacity to do an interview with the BBC. The excerpt from the article read: Justin Evans, of Catherine Street, said he had been left devastated, shocked, confused and annoyed by the incident. "I had to move out on Friday night along with other residents on Catherine Street because the flames were that big," he said. He added: "All the businesses stuck together and they helped deliver

food to everyone which was great, it's great to see in a crisis everyone worked together." He also said he would now have to get his house deep cleaned to get rid of lingering smoke particles.

Two days later when police visited Keeling at home while doing door to door enquiries, he said he saw the fire when he was walking back to Catherine Street with Evans and Lord. He claimed to have seen some youths near the building, climbing over a gate onto Bedford Street. As a result, further enquiries led to a 12-year-old boy being arrested. But he was later released without charge.

Keeling then admitted to a friend that he was inside the building with two others and police were informed. He was arrested and then released on bail. Days later a video filmed by him was discovered on his seized mobile phone by police. The footage filmed inside showed a large amount of cardboard in there - one pile could be seen alight. As the phone panned round more piles of cardboard could be seen on fire. As a result, all three men were re-arrested that day on suspicion of arson being reckless to endanger life. Despite the video evidence they still denied the offence, though Keeling later admitted to perverting the course of justice for deceiving police with the false sighting of the youths.

DC Mike Edwards said: *"This incident ripped residents out of the comfort of their own homes. The men's cowardice, ideocracy and selfishness put residents in significant danger. Their actions put a substantial strain on the police service and could have put people who needed police at that time in danger or harm. Thankfully, other officers from the surrounding areas assisted Crewe LPU during this time. The fire also left officers with considerable health issues and caused them to have time off work. All thanks to the act of two individuals. They took such a casual approach when starting the fire as evidenced in their flippant filming of the act and showed no understanding for just how quickly it can get dangerously out of control.*

"Following their actions, they left the scene and walked casually back to Keeling's home address, laughing and joking along the way. Keeling and Evans had ample opportunity to come forward to tell us what had happened, but they failed to consider the effect their actions may have on the lives of the surrounding people and their properties. Instead, they decided to show no remorse for their actions or the danger that they not only put themselves in, but also the residents of Crewe.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all residents who were evacuated in assisting us in our investigation and providing CCTV to help with our enquiries. Your efforts have helped in convicting these people of a serious crime and they deserve the justice they are served."

DS Ryan Ogden said: *"The fire caused such devastation and disruption to the community. Some families have still not been able to return home due to the fire damage caused. Lives and family homes were put at risk that day. Police and Firefighters remained on the scene for days trying to dampen down the fire and prevent further homes from ruin. The clean up afterwards and the cost borne by Cheshire East Council and the taxpayer was significant. Keeling had the audacity to taunt and verbally abuse police officers on the day of the fire and also told other people present at the cordons that they should cause disorder making what was already a difficult incident harder to manage. The fact he then gave an interview to the BBC days later and played the victim only rubs further salt into the healing wounds of the community.*

"Their motive for setting fire will never be known but their actions are incomprehensible and was further exacerbated by the fact it took place during the summer disorder. Their stupidity has now seen them in court for the very serious offence of arson and no doubt will be expecting a substantial prison sentence for their mindless actions."

<https://youtu.be/tvi34diFQhM>

Man jailed after strangling police officer whilst being arrested

A 31-year-old man has been jailed for a year and a half for strangling an on duty police officer.

David Poultney was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment after he pleaded guilty to criminal damage and intentional strangulation. The 31-year-old, of Saxon Crossway, Winsford, also pleaded guilty to possession of a class B drug (cannabis).



During his court hearing it was heard that on the evening of 30 August 2024, officers were called to reports of a domestic disturbance, in which Poultney had attended an address whilst drunk and was being verbally abusive to the occupant while her three young children were inside the property. A Cheshire Police patrol responded to the call and, upon arriving at the address, two officers separated Poultney and the victim, who disclosed to them that he had smashed her television.

Poultney was subsequently arrested on suspicion of criminal damage, however during his arrest he became aggressive toward the officer, wrestling him to the floor. Footage played in court showed that Poultney preceded to put the arresting officer in a headlock, ever-tightening his arm around his neck, taunting and threatening him that he was going to "choke (him) out".

The second officer, who had previously been upstairs with the victim, quickly intervened and came to his colleague's aid - thankfully the officers were able to break Poultney's tight grip. He was further arrested again on possession of cannabis, with a quantity of cannabis being located on his person when searched, despite claiming it was tobacco. Poultney was subsequently charged with criminal damage, intentional strangulation and possession of a class B drug (cannabis), pleading guilty at a court hearing in December, before appearing at Chester Crown Court on Friday 31 January, where he was jailed for 18 months.

<https://youtu.be/Jk9FUAebC2k>

An officer from Northwich Local Policing Unit, who supported the arrest of Poultney, said: *"We as a force will never tolerate any form of violent or threatening behaviour against anyone, and I'm glad that Poultney is being held accountable for his actions. Officers regularly put their own lives at risk to protect others and they don't go to work to be assaulted. Poultney could have caused significant harm and I hope that this result demonstrates we will not stand this type of behaviour in Cheshire."*

Macclesfield officers close down anti-social behaviour house with court order

Macclesfield Local Policing Unit have secured a closure order following reports of drug abuse, violence and anti-social behaviour at a property in Macclesfield.

The house on Byron Street has been shut down by officers who secured a closure order under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 from Crewe Magistrates' Court on 5 February. The order, which came into effect from 5 February and will run for three months, is a direct result of officers responding to the concerns of residents regarding the behaviour at the house, including drug activity, antisocial behaviour and escalating violence.



Residents in the local area provided enough evidence of the issues coming from the address for the team to be successful in obtaining the order. This closure order will hopefully bring some peace for the local community which was having to endure such disruptive and harmful behaviour. Closures such as these could not be possible without the valuable input of residents, local authority, housing associations and private landlords. By working together, communities can only benefit from the positive action the team can take on their behalf.

The occupant of the property has been ordered to leave and find alternative accommodation, with all windows and doors being secured for a period of three months. Anyone who enters the address during that time will be committing a criminal offence and could be arrested.

Sgt Matt Bassirat from Macclesfield Local Policing Unit said: *"Residents told us their lives were being ruined by the noise, fights and anti-social behaviour at the house all hours. Alarming they were seeing fights spill out onto the street, sometimes with weapons. They no longer felt safe in their own homes and their health and wellbeing was beginning to suffer quite significantly. Our intervention will hopefully help them feel safer and they can have their lives back after what has been a very traumatic and disruptive time for them. I want to urge anyone with concerns about ASB or other criminality in their community to please contact local officers and we will do everything we can to address these issues like we have today."*

Anyone with concerns about anti-social or suspicious behaviour in their area is asked to report it to Cheshire Police via the [Cheshire Police website](#) or call 101.

Teenager arrested following police pursuit in Tabley

Officers from the Cheshire Police Roads and Crime Unit have arrested a 17-year-old male following a pursuit in Tabley.

At around 2.20pm on Wednesday 5 February officers on patrol on the A556 in Tabley when they came across a black Vauxhall Astra which was travelling at speed and undertaking vehicles. Officers followed the vehicle as it travelled towards the M6 and a pursuit was subsequently authorised. Following a short pursuit, three men abandoned the car and fled the scene on foot near to the Esso Garage on Tabley Hill Lane. A search of the area was undertaken by officers and a 17-year-old male from Warrington was subsequently arrested nearby on suspicion of dangerous driving, driving

without a licence, failing to stop for officers and driving without insurance. The teenager has since been released on conditional bail pending further enquiries. Enquiries to identify the two outstanding suspects remain ongoing.

Following the incident CI John Forshaw, of the Cheshire Police Road and Crime unit, said: *"This was another great example of teamwork from different units across the force, each of which were pivotal in securing the arrest of an individual who clearly showed no regard for the safety of members of the public. Following his arrest our enquiries to trace the outstanding suspects remain ongoing and I would urge anyone with any information to get in touch. The same goes for anyone with any video footage which may aid the investigation."*

Anyone with information or footage in relation to the incident is asked to call Cheshire Police on 101 or visit www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us, quoting IML 2021076. Information can also be reported anonymously he details via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

Cheshire Constabulary graded as 'outstanding' at protecting vulnerable people and managing offenders and suspects

Cheshire Constabulary has been congratulated on its excellent performance in keeping people safe, reducing crime, and giving victims an effective service.

This comes following the publication of the PEEL (Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy) Inspection Report by HMICFRS (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services). The police inspectorate evaluated Cheshire Constabulary across nine different areas of policing in 2024. The results published today, Thursday 6 February 2025, assess the force as 'outstanding' in two areas, 'good' in four areas, and 'adequate' in two.

Chief Constable Mark Roberts has welcomed the publication of the positive report, affirming Cheshire Constabulary's position as a leading police force committed to protecting the communities it serves.

<https://youtu.be/iNvL1dZi2nU>

Chief Constable Mark Roberts said: *"I welcome the outcomes of the report and must firstly commend our officers and staff, whose efforts have secured these outstanding results and highlight their dedication to ensuring Cheshire remains a hostile place for criminals. I am particularly proud that we have been graded 'outstanding' for the work we do to protect vulnerable people and how we manage offenders and suspects. The recent PEEL Inspection by HMICFRS is a testament to the fact that we are one of the best performing forces in the country - we are not complacent, and we will always strive to improve. We are now protecting more vulnerable people, prosecuting more sex offenders, arresting more criminals and getting help to people who need us more quickly and more effectively. We have achieved a great deal across the force during the past three years and I am glad the report recognises the continued improvements and investments that have been made across the board to make it even safer for those who live, work and visit Cheshire."*

Within the report, HMICFRS congratulated Cheshire Constabulary on its excellent performance in keeping people safe, reducing crime, and giving victims an effective service. The inspectors stated that the force has improved or maintained performance across all areas of policing since its last inspection and has been graded 'outstanding' in the way it protects vulnerable people and manages offenders and suspects. They also commended the force's strong leadership team and effective governance processes.

Inspectors gave special praise for the way officers and staff manage sex offenders, handle online child abuse investigations and safeguard those who are vulnerable. This was on top of the force's commitment to neighbourhood policing and using innovation and technology to effectively deal with criminality and anti-social behaviour.

His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Michelle Skeer said: *"I congratulate Cheshire Constabulary on its excellent performance in keeping people safe, reducing crime and giving victims an effective service. The constabulary has improved or maintained its performance across all areas since our previous PEEL inspection, with four areas receiving higher graded judgments. This success is thanks to strong leadership, as well as the hard work of all its police officers, staff and volunteers. I was particularly pleased to see improvements in safeguarding vulnerable people and managing offenders. The constabulary has invested in resources and training in these areas.*

"It has also developed robust and effective governance structures to oversee crime investigations. But it should continue to closely monitor workloads and the quality of investigations. I am confident that Cheshire Constabulary will continue to make improvements based on the findings of this inspection and its internal scrutiny processes. I will continue to monitor its progress and I look forward to seeing the improvements it makes as a result."

Chief Constable Roberts added: *"While it is clear that Cheshire Constabulary has made significant progress and improvements over the last few years, we recognise the Inspector's recommendations and are committed to putting them into practice. We have already introduced positive changes which have enhanced our performance in answering 999 and 101 calls, plus implemented new standards to improve the way we respond to Grade 3 non-emergency incidents. Our ambition is to build on our strengths and be outstanding in every aspect of the service we provide to the public of Cheshire."*

Couple jailed for facilitating illegal entry to the UK

A couple has been jailed for illegally bringing two teenagers into the UK from Vietnam.

Thi Kieu Anh Hoang, 29, and Tuan Khac Doan, 38, both of Sandfields, Frodsham, previously pleaded guilty to facilitating illegal entry to the UK. The couple appeared at Chester Crown Court on Tuesday 4 February where Hoang was sentenced to 27 months and Doan received 54 months.



An investigation revealed two teenagers had travelled to the UK from Vietnam on 27 June 2023. Also on the same flight was Doan, who had travelled from Frodsham to Vietnam shortly before. Papers showed the two teenagers, a 16-year-old boy and a 14-year-old girl, were travelling to the UK as part of a two-week educational visit to Oxford with nine other students. Initially, the two teenagers went to Oxford with the rest of the students, while Doan returned to Frodsham. However, following their arrival in the UK, the two teenagers were given mobile phones, and they made contact with a phone number attributed to Doan on multiple occasions.

On 29 June, Doan travelled from Frodsham to London, and at the same time the teenagers travelled from Oxford to London as part of their educational trip. Doan left London just after 5pm that day, and it is believed that he had arranged to pick up the teenagers there and bring them back to Frodsham. A few months later, on 29 September, an employee at an estate agency attended an address in Frodsham which was being rented by Hoang and Doan, who were in a relationship. During the visit, he encountered the 14-year-old girl.

On 12 December, officers from the Western Exploitation Team attended a nail bar in Church Street, Frodsham, in company with immigration officers, as part of a routine visit to check on the welfare of staff members. Hoang was present. The 16-year-old boy was also at the nail bar and after checks were carried out, it was established that he had been reported missing.

Hoang, who was believed to be running the business, stated she did not know the boy and he had walked into the nail salon shortly before police. However, she was arrested under the Modern Slavery Act and a Police Protection Order (PPO) was put in place to safeguard the 16-year-old. Doan was also present, but he was not arrested as he presented as a worker and did not show any signs of his relationship with Hoang during the visit.

On 14 January 2024, shortly after the immigration visit, Doan made contact with a number attributed to the 14-year-old girl. They both travelled to London, however Doan travelled back to Frodsham without her, in an attempt to stop officers from finding out about her too. On 15 January 2024, the girl contacted police and asked for help, stating she had been homeless for six months. An investigation was subsequently launched, which linked her to Doan. As a result, Doan was arrested and charged alongside Hoang.

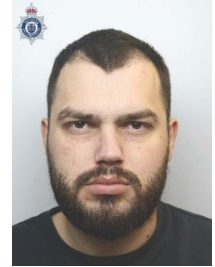
A third person was originally charged in relation to these offences, however he has since been released with no further action against him.

DS Huxley said: *"It's clear that Hoang and Doan brought the two teenagers to the UK for the purpose of exploitation. These were young, vulnerable teenagers, who thought they were coming for a better life, but instead they were being used for financial gain. Following our initial visit to the nail bar in December 2023, Hoang and Doan thought they could cover up their offending by denying any knowledge of the teenage boy and by taking the teenage girl to London. But thanks to our partnership working, we were able to piece together a catalogue of evidence against the pair, leaving them with no option but to plead guilty to the charges. While this case has now concluded, our work will continue in tackling this type of crime, but we can't do it alone. We strongly need the community to come forward with any information or suspicions they have and report them to us. Together we can help protect the vulnerable and punish the perpetrators."*

Man jailed after Crewe Police thwart town centre cannabis production

A 24-year-old man has been jailed following a warrant by Crewe Beat Team.

Gledis Mousaku, from Edleston Road in Crewe appeared at Chester Crown Court on 31 January and pleaded guilty to the production of Cannabis. He was sentenced to six months in prison, the drugs and drug paraphernalia were ordered for destruction, and he had to pay a victim surcharge of £154.



The court heard how Crewe Beat Team, acting on information, executed a warrant at the address – a closed down takeaway on the ground floor, with a flat above. Mousaku was living above the empty takeaway looking after the 95 plants which officers discovered on the second floor with lighting and other equipment needed to grow cannabis. Mousaku admitted to producing cannabis but denied he had modified the flat and its electricity supply. Following interview, he was later charged with producing cannabis.

PC Justin Taylor said: *“We understand the impact illegal drugs have on our community and will stop at nothing to disrupt the supply. I hope this latest result reassures you that we do listen and do take action. It’s vital we all work together to make Crewe too difficult for criminals to ply their trade.”*

How to spot cannabis cultivation:

- There are a number of signs that could indicate that a property is being used as a cannabis farm, including:
- A strong and sickly sweet smell.
- Equipment to grow cannabis being taken into a property, such as lighting and ventilation equipment.
- Constantly covered or blocked-off windows – cannabis farms often have constantly closed curtains, black-out blinds or foil coverings.
- People coming and going at all hours or neighbours you never see.
- Strong and constant lighting day and night.
- High levels of heat and condensation – cannabis farms often give off heat and the windows stay misted up.
- A constant buzz of ventilation – listen out for a whirring sound as the growers try to create an ideal climate for cannabis plants to grow.
- Lots of power cables – offenders often dig underground to lay cables that hook up to things like lamp posts so they do not have to pay for the enormous amounts of electricity they use.

Anyone with information on illegal drug activity should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or [via the website](#). Alternatively, information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Appeals

Police appeal for witnesses following Widnes assault

Police are appealing for witnesses following an assault at an address in Widnes.

The incident occurred around 5.30am on 2 February at a flat on Childlow Close. At some point a man intervened and helped the female victim. As part of our investigation a 57-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of domestic assault and has since been released on conditional bail.

PC Amy Jones said: *"I'd urge the man who intervened to contact us to help us with our investigation, likewise anyone who may know who this man, please contact us so we can progress with our enquiries. This male has assisted a vulnerable assault victim and may be worried about being in trouble - however, we can confirm that we just want to speak to them as a witness. He may have vital information which could help us with our investigation."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting IML 2018752. Alternatively, information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for information following fatal collision near Northwich

Police are appealing for witnesses and video footage following a fatal collision near Northwich.

At around 5.43pm on Wednesday 5 February, police were called to a collision at the junction of Chester Road and Dalefords Lane in Sandiway. The caller reported that there had been a collision between a grey Hyundai I10 and a black BMW. A short time later, at around 5.45pm, police were called to reports of second collision on Dalefords Lane, near to Daleford Manor Caravan Park.

On arrival at the scene officers found that there had been a collision between the black BMW and a Renault Master panel van. Sadly, the driver of the BMW, a 45-year-old man from Winsford, was pronounced dead at the scene. His next of kin have been informed and are being supported by specialist officers. The drivers of the Hyundai and the Renault both sustained injuries that are not believed to be life threatening.

Enquiries in relation to the incidents are ongoing and officers are keen to hear from anyone who witnessed the collisions or anyone who believes they have any dashcam footage of the incidents. Anyone with information or footage in relation to the collision is asked to call Cheshire Police on 101, or visit <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us>, quoting IML 2021216.

Appeal for information following serious assault in Warrington

Detectives are appealing for witnesses and video footage following a serious assault in Warrington.

Shortly after 5pm on Wednesday 5 February, a 41-year-old man was walking in the St Elphins Close/Farrell Street area of Warrington, when he was approached by a group of unknown men. The men, who were all dressed in black, were then involving in an altercation with the victim, during

which one of the men slashed the victim across the face. The victim has since been taken to hospital where he is currently receiving treatment, his injuries are not believed to be life threatening.

DC Keri Spears of Warrington Reactive CID said: *"Enquiries in relation to this incident are in the early stages and we're committed to doing all we can to establish what took place. As part of our investigation we're keen to hear from anyone who was in the area at the time and believes they may have witnessed anything suspicious. The same goes for anyone with any video footage which may aid the investigation. I'd urge anyone with any information, no matter how small, to contact the team here at Warrington."*

Anyone with information or footage in relation to the incident is asked to call Cheshire Police on 101 or visit www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us, quoting IML 2021189. Information can also be reported anonymously he details via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (CNWA)

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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: www.cheshirenw.org