

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 5th April 2026

Cheshire News & Appeals



Latest Cheshire News

Man jailed for murder of former partner in Warrington

Gavin Shaw appeared at Liverpool Crown Court today, Thursday 2 April, where he was sentenced to 14 years and 196 days in prison.

The 62-year-old, of Manchester Road, Warrington, had previously pleaded guilty to the murder of 55-year-old Michele Kennedy. The court heard how the pair had been in a long-term relationship, which friends and family described as volatile at times, and had separated in August 2025. A few weeks before her murder, Michele went on holiday to Turkey with her mother, where she met a man and began a new relationship. They continued seeing each other in the UK, and Michele spent time with him the weekend before her death. From text messages found on Shaw's phone and comments he made to witnesses on the day of the murder, the investigation team established that he had discovered Michele's new relationship.

On Monday 13 October, Shaw consumed five pints in a local pub and at around 4pm, he went to Michele's home on Manchester Road, entering through the front door unannounced. Once inside, Shaw stabbed Michele twice in the chest, causing serious injuries, before leaving the property. The incident lasted just three minutes. Michele managed to leave the address but collapsed on the pavement outside. Shaw returned to his son's nearby home and told him that he had stabbed Michele. Passing members of the public provided first aid at the roadside, located the knife and moved it to a safe place, and identified Shaw to officers when they arrived.

On police arrival, Shaw was immediately arrested. He responded by saying, "It was me," and, "That's what you get when she's sh***ing someone in f**king Manchester." An air ambulance was deployed to the scene and specialist doctors provided life-saving treatment at the roadside before transporting Michele to Aintree Hospital. Sadly, despite the best efforts of all those involved, she passed away on Saturday 18 October. During questioning, Shaw provided officers with a pre-prepared statement in which he admitted stabbing Michele but claimed he had not intended to kill her.

Following the sentencing, Detective Inspector Eleanor Atkinson, who led the investigation said: *"This was an exceptionally traumatic incident for all those involved, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who assisted Michele following the attack, including the emergency services and the members of the public who stopped at the scene. I welcome the sentence that has been handed to Shaw and hope that it provides some closure to Michele's family and friends. Through our investigation, it has become apparent that Shaw was troubled by Michele's new relationship in the hours before he killed her, and it is my belief that he acted out of jealousy and an inability to allow her to move on with her life."*

Following her death, Michele's family issued the following tribute: *"Michele was a much-loved daughter, mother, sister, auntie and nana. She was a larger-than-life character who would leave a lasting impression on all that met her, who would help anyone, was beautiful, strong, fearless and one of a kind. The loss of her life has left a massive hole in our family, and we know that her friends and colleagues who were involved in her life will feel the same. We would like to offer our extended thanks to all the emergency services that attended the scene and any kind person that tried to help. We will miss her very much."*



DI Eleanor Atkinson added: *"While nothing can ever bring Michele back, if anything can be achieved from her death, I hope it encourages others to speak out and get the support they need. If you believe you are affected, support is available online at [Drug and alcohol support services | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk) or [Domestic abuse support | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk).*

Man fined thousands of pounds for causing serious injury by careless driving

A careless driver has been fined thousands of pounds and banned from driving after a woman lost her leg following a collision.

Peter Bowen, of Chelford, appeared at Crewe Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 31 March where he was handed a £4,154 fine and was banned from driving for two years. The 76-year-old will also need to pay a further £1,662 surcharge and £400 in court costs.

On 29 July 2024, police received reports of a serious collision in a car park in Broken Cross, Macclesfield. It involved an Audi A3, driven by Bowen, which had collided with a pedestrian outside the Tesco store. Bowen had been parked up when the now 80-year-old victim walked up to the cashpoint outside the store, which was directly in front of where Bowen was parked. As Bowen attempted to drive off, the car moved forwards instead of reversing out of the parking space and caused serious crush injuries to the victim's legs as she became trapped between the wall and the vehicle. She needed surgery as a result and sadly had to have her right leg amputated above the knee.

Following an investigation by the Serious Collision Investigation unit, Bowen was charged with causing serious injury by dangerous driving. He pleaded not guilty, claiming the incident was caused by a fault with the vehicle, however he was later found guilty of causing serious injury by careless driving at Crewe Magistrates' Court. Bowen will now need to pass an extended driving test after his disqualification period.

A spokesperson said: *"This case shows how dangerous vehicles can be, causing life-changing injuries at very slow speed. A woman sadly lost a leg during this incident and needed extensive surgery on her other leg. Cars are lethal machines and I hope this acts as a warning to always ensure you are fully concentrating when in charge of a vehicle – it can only take a very small error to cause catastrophic injuries."*

Serial car thieves jailed after stealing cars across Cheshire and North Wales

Two men have been jailed for stealing cars from driveways across Cheshire and North Wales.

Kyle Draper, 21, of no fixed address and Benjamin Evans, 20, also of no fixed address appeared at Chester Crown Court on 2nd April to be sentenced. Draper and Evans had both pleaded guilty to four burglaries, two thefts and dangerous driving at an earlier hearing. Draper was sentenced to 42 months in prison and Evans was sentenced to 45 months in prison.

Officers from Cheshire Police launched an investigation into the burglaries across North Wales and Cheshire between 2 and 3 February. They identified two stolen vehicles, a Hyundai and a Seat Arona, from North Wales travelling in convoy to Chester on the evening on 2 February. CCTV showed both vehicles approaching the city centre later that night. Further CCTV put them in the area when an Audi Q3 is then stolen from an Upton address. The Audi and the Seat were then captured traveling in convoy to Crewe where the Hyundai was dumped and later recovered by police. A Volvo was then stolen in Crewe, and both the Audi and Volvo were captured traveling in convoy between Cheshire and Staffordshire.

On the afternoon of 3 February officer from the Roads and Crime Unit spotted two stolen cars and made attempts to stop them. Both vehicles fled from the officers driving dangerously throughout the pursuit. The Audi crashed in the Staffordshire area and Draper was arrested. The Volvo continued into the West Midlands travelling at high speed and crashed. Evans was arrested at the scene. Their mobile phones were seized, and a footwear identification officer stated the footwear of Draper was found at the address in Upton and Evans's footwear was highly likely have been present at the same address.

PC Jack Ryder said: *"These two reckless young men targeted so many addresses in such a short period of time, but didn't count on us closing in on them and stopping them in their tracks, not only with the help of our colleagues in specialist departments but also our colleagues in the West Midlands. As a result of our combined efforts we were able to take them down and get justice for the victims. I hope this reassures people that we are relentless in our pursuit of those who break the law."*

<https://youtu.be/Ykj4RbzdBGU>

Police launch campaign urging drivers to wear a seatbelt on every journey

Motorists across Cheshire are being urged to make safer choices behind the wheel as officers launch a month-long road safety campaign in support of the National Police Chiefs' Council's Operation Spotlight.

Throughout April, Cheshire Constabulary will be carrying out increased enforcement and proactive patrols targeting the Fatal 5 offences - the main behaviours known to contribute to serious and fatal collisions. These include speeding, not wearing a seatbelt, using a mobile phone at the wheel, drink and drug driving, and careless driving.

<https://youtu.be/Ykj4RbzdBGU>

As part of the campaign, there will be a particular focus on seatbelt use, with officers highlighting the importance of wearing a seatbelt on every journey - no matter how short or routine. The campaign aims to challenge the mindset that short trips or familiar routes don't carry the same risks. Officers are also urging those who drive for work, including delivery drivers and couriers who may be frequently getting in and out of their vehicles, to ensure they are buckling up every time.

Inspector Andrew Dennison, for Cheshire Constabulary's Roads and Crime Unit, said: *"Seatbelts save lives. It really is that simple. We know that for some drivers, especially on short or familiar journeys, it can be tempting to take shortcuts and not put a seatbelt on. But collisions don't just happen on long-distance drives - they can happen close to home, on everyday roads, and often when people least expect it. Wearing a seatbelt significantly reduces your risk of serious injury or death if you are involved in a collision. It also protects others in the vehicle."*

"Throughout April, officers will be actively targeting those committing the Fatal 5 offences. If you choose to take risks on our roads, you can expect to be stopped and dealt with. This isn't just about enforcement - it's about trying to keep everyone safe on the roads."

Alongside enforcement activity, the Constabulary will be sharing road safety advice across its social media channels to encourage safer driving behaviours. For more information on how Cheshire Police are keeping the roads safe [visit the website](#).

Roads and Crime crackdown on dangerous driving in motorway safety operation

Cheshire's Roads and Crime Unit (RCU) have been tackling offences as part of a five-day operation focusing on keeping our county's roads safe.

Officers from the Roads and Crime and Commercial Vehicle Units have been out in force across Cheshire's motorways over the past two weeks as part of an operation ensuring HGV's drive safely through the county. The operation, known as "Operation Tramline", forms part of the force's ongoing efforts to improve safety for all road users and saw officers use an unmarked HGV to patrol roads and motorways - identifying any offences committed by drivers.

During the five-day operation that ran between Monday 23 March to Friday 27 March, RCU patrols were focusing their efforts on the main motorway corridors that run through Cheshire, namely the M6, M62, M56. Busy A roads including the A55, A556 and A500 were also monitored by officers, who were looking out for Fatal Five offences (careless driving, speeding, drink and drug driving, using a mobile phone whilst driving and not wearing a seatbelt) along with uninsured drivers and those with vehicles linked to crime.



As a result of the operation, a total of 90 vehicles, made up of HGVs (21), LGVs (27) and cars (42) were stopped. Results included:

- Speeding - 33
- Mobile phone usage - 24
- Insecure loads (TOR) - 12
- Various Construction & Use offences (such as defective tyres, window tints etc) - 9
- Driving without a seatbelt - 8

- Careless Driving - 8
- Contravening a red traffic light – 1

Two drivers arrested for driving under the influence of drugs and disqualified driving. Their vehicles were seized and had been initially stopped as a result of initial speeding offences. A concrete mixer on the M6 near Knutsford was also stopped. The unit was covered in dried concrete to the point there were numerous large clumps were easily broken off by hand, which would have posed a serious risk to other motorists.

Inspector Andrew Dennison, of the Roads and Crime Unit, said: *“Operation Tramline demonstrates our commitment to making Cheshire's roads safer and highlights that no driver is above the law – regardless of the vehicle they choose to drive. Our officers were deployed across some of busiest motorways in the North West with the intention of observing and ensuring HGV's and all drivers travel safely through Cheshire.*

“The Fatal Five — careless driving, speeding, drink or drug driving, using a mobile phone, and not wearing a seatbelt — are named that for a reason. Each one strips away safety and attention from the road. All can cause catastrophic, life-changing collisions. We'll continue doing everything we can to keep hauliers and the public driving safely. The last five days should make one thing clear: we will act — without hesitation — against anyone who chooses to ignore road laws and put others at risk.”

Revised Neighbourhood Policing Model sees 30 extra officers on the beat across Cheshire

From Wednesday 1 April changes to the Constabulary's Neighbourhood Policing Model came into effect.

The current Neighbourhood Policing Model is based on all 122 wards across Cheshire having a named officer or Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). While this commitment will remain, changes to how we deliver engagement, visibility and contact with the community and partners will evolve to meet the demands of modern-day policing, with an increased focus on enforcement and problem solving.

The Constabulary recognises the public's concerns following the recent departure of 30 PCSOs across the county as part of wider financial restructuring. However, under the new model, changes to staff distribution mean that an additional 30 Police Constables will now be allocated to neighbourhood teams across the county. This brings the total number of neighbourhood policing positions across the county to 327, reinforcing the force's commitment to investing in our communities. As part of this, every beat area in Cheshire will have a named, contactable Police Constable.

The Constabulary's 57 active PCSOs will continue working in their local areas and will now work closer with area Beat Managers in the communities they cover with a clear focus on engagement, further strengthening the crucial link between the police and the public. As part of this, each beat area will now be required to hold at least one police surgery or drop-in session every month, as well as visit every primary and secondary school in their area once per half-term, amongst other engagement expectations to ensure we are visible and accessible to our communities. Beat teams

will continue regular contact with local faith groups, parish councils, local councillors, and Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Recent updates triggered by the Sentencing Act 2026 will increase the likelihood of more offenders, including priority and sexual offenders being managed within the community. Integrated Offender Management (IOM) teams will prioritise the management of high-risk offenders as demand increases. Meanwhile, lower-risk offenders who still pose a threat will be managed by neighbourhood officers equipped with warranted powers such as arrest, search, and seizure of property and digital devices.

Head of Local Policing, Chief Superintendent Saf Ali, said: *“In an ever-evolving world, we as recognise that our approach to policing on every level needs to evolve and change with it to tackle the growing issues of the day. This new approach to neighbourhood policing, which is based on evidential factors such as Local Policing Unit area size, crime and incidents demand, the number of wards, local schools and engagement opportunities, builds upon the incredible efforts delivered by our officers and staff around the clock to keep our residents safe and the county a hostile environment for crime.*

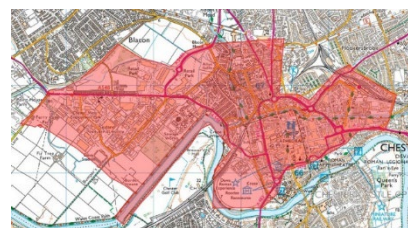
“We are aware of the level of concern felt across the entire force area following the recent departure of 30 of our Police Community Support Officers. However, through this revised approach, local communities can expect to see an additional 30 officers patrolling the beats across the county, with our remaining 57 PCSOs working closely alongside local Beat Managers to continue to strengthen the relationship between communities and police. The recruitment for the additional 30 officers is currently ongoing.

“Every Local Policing Unit has received an uplift in Police Constables numbers and every beat area in the county will continue to have designated named police officer residents can contact when needed. As always, Cheshire Constabulary’s top priority remains keeping our residents safe. Through these changes residents can expect to see a more visible policing presence, with officers tackling the issues that matter to our residents and communities the most.”

Dispersal order in place ahead of Chester v Telford match

Officers in Chester will be providing extra patrols in the city ahead of the Chester v Telford football match on Good Friday.

For the upcoming fixture at Deva Stadium on Friday 3 April 2026, a dispersal order will be in place to ensure that those attending the match can do so safely. A dispersal order gives officers and PCSOs in uniform the power to direct individuals away from the area for up to 48 hours if engaging or likely to engage in anti-social behaviour, crime or disorder. Those failing to comply with the direction will face further police action. The area covered by the order is indicated by the highlighted mapped area which will be provided to anyone issued with a direction to leave. The order is in place from 9am until 10pm on Friday 3 April 2026.



Inspector Nick Cooper said: *“We know a vast majority of supporters will enjoy the game peacefully, but the dispersal order allows us to better protect fans and the local community should any anti-social behaviour or disorder arise. We would like to remind people to have consideration for those around them and our officers will be on the lookout for anyone intent on causing harm and ensure that they are dealt with appropriately. Those in and around the area will see an increase of officers before, during, and after the game, and I would urge anyone with any concerns to please speak with them.”*

You can report anti-social behaviour to Cheshire Police via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report/> or call 101. In an emergency, always dial 999.

Man convicted following XL bully attack in Warrington

The owner of an unregistered XL bully which killed a pensioner in Warrington has been convicted of being the owner of dog dangerously out of control causing injury.



Sean Garner was found guilty of the charge following a six day trial at Liverpool Crown Court which concluded today, Tuesday 31 March. The 31-year-old of Hartsbourne Avenue, Liverpool, had earlier pleaded guilty to two counts of possession of a fighting dog. Garner has been remanded in custody and will return to court to be sentenced on Friday 17 April.

The court heard on Monday 24 February 2025, 84-year-old John McColl had been returning to his home on Mullen Close, Dallam. After getting off the bus, CCTV footage showed Mr McColl crossing the road before entering Garner’s driveway on Bardsley Avenue. It is unknown why he entered the driveway, however just moments later a member of the public heard Mr McColl screaming for help while being attacked by Toretto, an unregistered XL Bully owned by Garner.

Valiant efforts were made to help Mr McColl, with various objects used to try to stop the dog, however Toretto continued to attack him, and stood guard over Mr McColl preventing anyone from helping. Emergency services were called to the scene at 6.38pm and on arrival police found Mr McColl lying in the driveway with serious facial injuries. However, due to Toretto remaining in close proximity, officers were unable to provide first aid.

Firearms officers were called to the scene, and a decision was taken to dispatch Toretto in order to provide lifesaving treatment to Mr McColl. A second unregistered XL Bully was also located in Garners address. The dog, later identified as Malibu, was also dispatched by officers to ensure the safety of all those present. In total 19 on-target shots were required to end the horrific attack to a safe conclusion. After securing the scene, paramedics provided life saving treatment to Mr McColl at the scene before he was transported to Aintree Hospital and was later moved to Whiston Hospital.

Garner was quickly identified as the owner of dogs and was subsequently spoken to by officers over the phone and asked to return to his home. Following the call, Garner met with his partner at a retail park in Warrington and the pair agreed to return to the address. However, after leaving in separate vehicles, he failed to return and instead went on the run. A police manhunt was launched

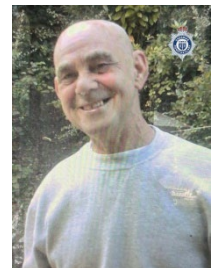
and Garner subsequently handed himself in at Runcorn Police Station on Wednesday 26 February. During questioning Garner claimed that Toretto had been locked inside a secure shed when he left the address, he also claimed that both Toretto and Malibu were American Bully's and not XL Bully's. Despite his claims, he was later charged in relation to the attack. Following the incident, a necropsy was conducted on Toretto. During the examination of the dog's stomach, pieces of human flesh were discovered, including a human ear.

Mr McColl spent over a month in intensive care, where he underwent several operations but despite the best efforts of all those involved, he passed away on Sunday 30 March.

Following the guilty verdict Detective Inspector Simon Mills, of the Major Investigation Team at Cheshire Police, said: *"Firstly, I would like to express my deepest sympathies to John's family, and I hope that the verdict reached today will provide them with some closure. The injuries sustained by John were absolutely horrific and left him unrecognisable to friends and family. Yet despite his injuries, he fought hard to survive as long as possible. I cannot begin to imagine the amount of pain and suffering he must have endured.*

"I would also like to take this as an opportunity to thank all those who provided help and assistance to John, including the members of the public, officers and medical staff, all of whom fought hard to save him. Many of those who attended described the attack as one of the most traumatising incidents that they have ever dealt with.

"John was a kind and generous dad, grandad, and great grandad who was well liked by all those who knew him. If anything can be achieved by his death, I hope that it acts as a reminder about the dangers of XL Bully's to ensure that nobody else has to go through the pain and suffering that his family have endured over the past year."



Man appears in court following Crewe sexual offence

A 19-year-old man has appeared in court after being charged with a sex offence.

Ibrahim Rahimzai, of Spring Gardens in Crewe appeared at Crewe Magistrates on 28 March to answer charges of causing a female to engage in non-penetrative sexual activity. The offence relates to an incident involving a teenage girl on 24 March in Crewe. He is next due to appear at Chester Crown Court on 27 April.

Man charged following sexual assault in Crewe

Detectives investigating a sexual assault in Crewe have charged a man.

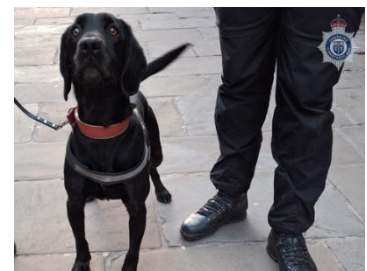
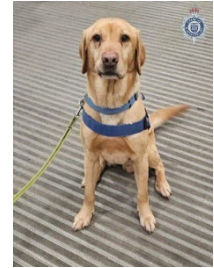
At around 6.40am on Sunday 29 March, police were called to reports that a 19-year-old woman had been sexually assaulted. Raja Ahabab, of Davison Street, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, was later arrested in connection with the incident. The 53-year-old, who is a Pakistani national, has since been charged with sexual assault, kidnap, and driving without due care and attention. Ahabab has been remanded in custody to appear at Chester Magistrates' Court today, Tuesday 31 March.

Officers carry out weekend of action across Chester

Multiple arrests have been made following a proactive weekend of action across Chester.

Between Friday 27 March and Sunday 29 March 2026, officers across Chester Local Policing Unit (LPU) carried out a 'weekend of action', targeting drugs offences, taxi licensing, driving offences and engagement with the public. The weekend resulted in:

- A dispersal order authorised from 4pm on Friday 27 March until 4pm on Sunday 29 March to prevent disorder.
- Two passive drugs dog operations at Chester Railway Station, working with British Transport Police (BTP), and then into the city centre, resulting in 106 stop searches, 34 of which were positive. A total of 21 community resolutions were issued, along with seven summons to court and three arrests.
- 12 licensing visits were carried out by the Licensing Enforcement Officer.
- The Roads and Crime Unit were deployed on the outskirts of the city, resulting in 19 stops and two arrests on suspicion of drink driving and drug driving, plus a summons.
- Further arrests were made in relation to possession of a weapon, drunk and disorderly behaviour, prison licence recall, and sexual offences.
- The Special Constabulary deployed with Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) Licensing Officers and Wolverhampton Taxi Licensing Officers. A total of 23 vehicles were stopped, with five vehicle defects reported by CWAC, and six drivers given words of advice for tyres, not having a first aid kit and failing to display their licence correctly.
- The Safety Bus was deployed to the city centre.



Inspector James Wilson said: *"The weekend culminated in some great results, including arrests for a variety of offences and multiple positive stops during passive drugs dog operations. Proactive activities like this are just a snapshot of the tools we use every day to tackle criminality, and I hope this will reassure the public of our commitment to ensuring Chester remains a safe place for those who live, work and visit the city. These operations provide a visible presence which sends a clear message that criminal behaviour will not be tolerated, and you will be caught and held responsible."*



Van containing illegal tobacco uncovered during Widnes Operation Azalea deployment

Officers from Cheshire Police's Foreign National Offender Team, alongside colleagues from HMRC, uncovered a van containing illegal tobacco and cigarettes just days after Widnes Beat Team shut down four retailers selling counterfeit goods.

On Monday 16 March, officers from the Constabulary's Foreign National Offender Team were deployed to Widnes, with support from colleagues in the Widnes Beat Team and HMRC, as part of Operation Azalea. During the deployment, they [secured four separate closure orders for properties in the town.](#)

Just eight days later, on Tuesday 24 March, officers were again deployed to Widnes alongside colleagues from HMRC as part of ongoing efforts to tackle the sale of illegal vapes and cigarettes at retailers across the county, as well as to identify those committing immigration offences through the exploitation of vulnerable people. During this second deployment, officers spotted a man repeatedly returning to and from a white van in the Robert Street area - just one street over from Albert Road. The man was seen meeting individuals on the street and handing over quantities of goods, prompting intervention from the Foreign National Offender Team and the Roads and Crime Unit. They found that the van contained more than 43,000 illegal cigarettes and 13.4kg of hand-rolled tobacco, which were promptly seized.

https://youtu.be/mG6xc-7T0_c

Police Constable Dave Carr, of the Force's Foreign National Offender Team, said: *"Along with our partners at His Majesty's Revenue and Customs, we are doing all we can to ensure that these products are not circulated in our local communities, and we will always look to prosecute those intent on doing so to the fullest extent of the law. My personal thanks go to members of the public in Widnes for providing us with the vital information surrounding activity of this kind. Community support is crucial in our ongoing fight to dismantle groups of organised criminals who think they can come to Cheshire to profit from the sale of illicit products and the criminal activity—such as money laundering, tax evasion, and the exploitation of vulnerable children and adults—that it funds."*

Inspector Ste Bradshaw, of Widnes LPU, added: *"In the space of days, we shut down four retailers actively involved in the sale of illegal produce, only to then recover a van full of illegal stock just metres away from one of the closed retailers. This is definitely not a coincidence. Yet this result shows that we remain equally undeterred. The two deployments alone resulted in over £105,000 worth of illegal products being removed from our high streets. Put simply, they will not get away with it. These four closures are just the start. Officers from the Widnes Beat Team will continue to remove this criminality from the local community."*

Anyone with concerns about organised immigration crime can contact Cheshire Police via 101 or visit: <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/tua/tell-us-about/soh/seen-or-heard/> and speak with a member of their local PVP Exploitation Team.

Chief Constable speaks out on behalf of families in relation to TV documentary

The Chief Constable of Cheshire Police has spoken out on behalf of two families about a documentary set to be broadcast on ITV.

Hunting the Silver Killer, a production by ITV Wales, is based on spurious claims by a former member of police staff that called into question the findings of detectives in relation to a number of historic homicide cases. The claims were later completely disproved by experts, and the member of staff responsible was later found guilty of seven counts of gross misconduct. The panel ruled that she would have been dismissed had she not already resigned. She was also added to the College of Policing barred list meaning that she is prohibited from working in roles in policing.

Speaking in support of the families, Chief Constable Mark Roberts QPM, said: *"From the outset we have been clear that there is absolutely no evidence that the Ainsworth and Ward cases were*

double murders, and that there is no serial killer at large in connection with these historic deaths. Following the spurious claims made by a former member of staff both cases were meticulously investigated by experienced detectives, along with specialist forensic scientists and officers from the National Crime Agency. All of whom concluded that there was absolutely no evidence to support further investigation into these matters.

“My heart goes out to both the Ainsworth and Ward families who have been deeply impacted by these harmful claims, and both have stated throughout that they were against any documentary and did not wish to have any involvement in the show. Yet despite this, both families feel that they have been harassed by the production company over the past two years, when it should instead have been focussed on conducting due diligence on the credibility of the sources they relied on.”

Chief Constable Roberts added: *“I would like to take this as an opportunity to acknowledge the unnecessary pain and suffering endured by the Ainsworth and Ward families over recent years. The person who wrote the original report was not a doctor or a lawyer, and their actions have had a deep and long-lasting impact on both families, and I hope that they are able to start to move forward with their lives in peace. We are clear that all staff and officers have the right to raise concerns, however this must always be done through the correct channels. In this case, the member of staff did not follow these procedures and her actions resulted in significant unnecessary concern and distress for the families of all those involved.”*

Warning issued in relation to gift card scam

Officers from Cheshire Police are urging residents to remain cautious following reports of a nationwide gift card scam.

‘Gift card draining’ involves the suspects copying the codes to the gift cards prior to the legitimate purchase of the card. This means that once a genuine customer buys the card and tops it up, the suspects have automated bots running in the background which allow them to drain the funds and use the card before the genuine customer is able to use it themselves.

There have been a number of reports of the scam across the country, and two men were arrested in Winsford on Thursday 26 March in relation to the scam. The pair, aged 45 from Telford and 35, from Woodford Green, were both arrested on suspicion of theft and going equipped. They have since been released on bail pending further enquiries. Initial intelligence suggests that the pair may have been travelling across Cheshire in the days prior to their arrests, including Cheshire Oaks, Runcorn, Neston and Chester.

A police spokesperson said: *“This is a concerning series and I would urge residents to be extremely cautious when purchasing gift cards. Where possible, purchase cards which have not been on open display, if not, check for any signs of damage or tampering before purchasing the cards.”*

Latest Cheshire Appeals

Appeal for witnesses following a burglary at a Fire Station in Stockton Heath

Police are appealing for information and video footage following a burglary at a Fire Station in Stockton Heath.

At around 7.20am today, Friday 3 April, police were called to reports of a burglary at the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Station on Ackers Road, Stockton Heath. The caller reported that unknown offenders have forced entry to the building overnight. Once inside, the offenders stole cutting equipment from the station. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and detectives are urging anyone with any information or footage that may help their investigation to contact Cheshire Police.

Detective Chief Inspector Katie-Louise Allen said: *“As part of the investigation I am keen to hear from anyone who was in the area around the time that the burglary occurred and believes they may have witnessed something suspicious. Some of the stolen equipment is used by our colleagues at Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service when rescuing casualties trapped in vehicles that have been involved in collisions and can be vital lifesaving equipment. I would urge members of the public to be wary as we believe the offenders may try to sell on the equipment - if the price seems a steal, it probably has been stolen. If you think that you have any information, CCTV, or dashcam footage that could help our investigation, please get in touch.”*

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service’s Area Manager Steve McCormick said: *“It is deeply disappointing that one of our fire stations was burgled overnight. This incident has a significant impact on the Service, both financially and operationally. We are doing everything possible to support the police with their investigation and urge anyone who witnessed suspicious behaviour in the area to get in touch. Most importantly, we want to reassure the public that the area is still covered and we will continue to attend incidents across Cheshire as normal.”*

Anyone who may have noticed anything suspicious or may have information which could help officers with their enquiries is asked to contact Cheshire Police [via the website](#) or call 101 quoting IML 2301534. Information can also be passed on anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for information following a road rage incident in Hartford

Police are appealing for witnesses and dashcam footage following a road rage incident in Hartford.

Sometime between 2pm and 3pm on Friday 20 March, a 31-year-old local man was driving a silver Ford Transit van on the westbound carriageway of the A556. As he passed over the Blue Bridge, he was undertaken by a small van, which repeatedly braked in front of him. As they approached the Hartford traffic lights, the driver of the smaller van then stopped in the middle of the carriageway, blocking the road. He then exited his vehicle and confronted the victim. Following a short verbal altercation, the victim was repeatedly punched in the face, causing serious injuries. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers are keen to hear from anyone with any information which may aid the investigation.

Detective Constable Adam Worth, of Northwich CID said: "This was a terrifying incident for the victim, and we're committed to doing all we can to establish exactly what took place. The A556 is a busy road and as part of our enquiries we are keen to hear from anyone who believed they may have witnessed the incident. The same goes for anyone with any dashcam footage which may aid the investigation."

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or at www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us quoting IML-2292776.

Appeal for information following collision in Middlewich

Officers are appealing for information following a collision in Middlewich.

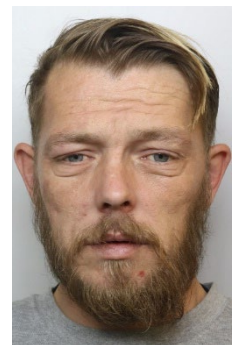
On Sunday 29 March, officers responded to reports of a road traffic collision in the Kinderton Street area of Middlewich. The collision occurred between a pedestrian and a black Vauxhall Mokka. The pedestrian, a 72-year-old local man sustained a broken collar bone and was subsequently taken to Leighton Hospital. The driver of the Mokka, a 33-year-old man from Sandbach did not sustain any injuries. No arrests have been made.

As part of their investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident, officers are now appealing to anyone who may have seen the incident to come forward. Anyone who witnessed the collision but has not yet spoken to police should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting incident reference number IML-2298806.

Appeal to locate missing man from Ellesmere Port

Officers in Ellesmere Port are appealing for help in tracing a missing man.

Martin Conway was reported missing on Tuesday 24 March and was last seen in the Chester city centre area. The 39-year-old is described as 5' 7" tall, of a proportionate build, with light brown hair and blue eyes. When he was last seen, Martin was wearing a grey jacket, black coat with fur on the hood, black gym-style leggings and white trainers. Martin has links to Ellesmere Port, Chester and Merseyside.



Chief Inspector Daniel Reynolds, of Ellesmere Port Local Policing Unit, said: *"Officers have been following a number of enquiries over the past few days to locate him and our top priority remains his overall safety and wellbeing. As part of these enquiries, we are asking anyone who may have seen Martin since he was reported missing to please contact us – no amount of information is too small. Martin's family are growing increasingly worried for his safety, so I would like to appeal to Martin directly and ask him to please get in contact with us to let us know that, if nothing else, are you safe and well."*

Anyone with any information in relation to the whereabouts of can contact Cheshire Police on 101 or report information through our website, quoting IML-2295216.

Appeal for information following assault in Chester

Officers in Chester are appealing for information following an assault.

At around 2.30am on Sunday 29th March, a 41-year-old man was walking home through the Foregate Street area of Chester city centre when he was attacked by three unknown persons. As a result of the assault, the victim sustained facial injuries including multiple facial fractures, a broken nose, eye socket and jaw joint. The incident happened on Foregate Street near to Boots and McDonalds, with the suspects believed to have fled on foot.

Detective Constable Laura Irwin said: *"This horrific incident has left the victim considerably shaken and with multiple injuries that will now require hospital treatment. As part of our enquiries into this incident, we are asking anyone with any information or has any useful CCTV or dashcam footage to please contact us. From early enquiries, we also believe that there will have been a number of witnesses who saw the assault occur. I would like to ask that they, or anyone else with further information about the assault, to please get in touch."*

Anyone one with any information in relation to the incident, is asked to contact Cheshire Police via the website or on 101, quoting incident reference number IML 2298879.

Police appeal for witnesses following serious collision in Siddington

Police are appealing for witnesses following a serious collision in Siddington.

At 12.26pm on Sunday 29 March two cars were in collision on Salters Lane. A Nissan Qashqai and a Skoda Citigo were traveling in opposite directions when the collision occurred. The passenger in the Skoda, a 67-year-old woman, was taken to hospital with serious injuries. The driver, a 71-year-old man, was injured and taken to hospital. The driver of the Nissan, an 18-year-old man, was also injured and taken to hospital.

Anyone who witnessed the collision but has not yet spoken to police should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting IML 2298470.

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (CNWA)

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Scan to visit 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: www.cheshirenw.org