

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 2 November 2025

Cheshire News & Appeals



Latest Cheshire News

Operation Machinize: 27k illegal cigarettes seized in joint partnership operation led by police in Warrington

Cheshire Police have executed enforcement visits at retailers in Warrington alongside community partners to tackle the distribution of illicit products and the exploitation of vulnerable people.



On Thursday 30 October, Cheshire Police's Northern Protecting Vulnerable People Exploitation Team, supported by community partners including Trading Standards, HMRC, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Immigration, and a Wagtail UK search dog, attended two retailers in the Orford Lane area of Warrington. The shops, a short walk from one another, were being visited in relation to the distribution of illicit products and potential immigration and modern-day slavery offences being committed.

Entering the shops, officers and their Trading Standards colleagues, assisted by a specialised search dog from Wagtail UK, located numerous concealments used to hide large volumes of illicit tobacco products from view. No duty had been paid on any of these products meaning they had likely been smuggled into the UK with the business owner benefitting. From the two shops, a total of 27,000 illicit cigarettes and 3.5kg of illicit tobacco with a total value of £25,000 was seized by Trading Standards.

<https://youtu.be/SIOCNwGuk-U>

HMRC will now pursue the business owners for unpaid duty and taxes who will also be liable for large fines from both HMRC and Trading Standards and may face prosecution. The exploitation team carried out safeguarding enquiries at both of the stores to identify signs of modern-day slavery as cash-heavy business environments historically pose a higher risk of these offences occurring. Both shopkeepers were found to have successfully claimed asylum and were legally employed.

DS Joe Davies, of the Protecting Vulnerable People Exploitation Team, said: *"I'm really grateful for the support of our partners, in particular, Warrington Trading Standards and colleagues from HMRC who dramatically enhance the*



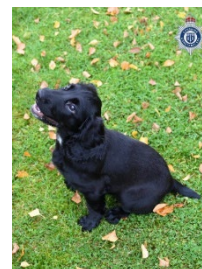
partnership capability to disrupt this criminality in our communities. Illegal activity such as tax avoidance, money laundering, smuggling of illicit products for the benefit of criminals is a scourge on our communities and on the taxpayer. Such offences are the warning signs of modern-day slavery offences and the exploitation of some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

“Officers from my Exploitation Team have historically visited these two and other businesses in Warrington and found there to be illegal working which can be indicative of exploitation. This outcome, having found no illegal working, reflects the sustained preventative efforts by the Exploitation Team to eliminate the opportunity for exploitation in environments where the risk is naturally higher. It is our intention to continue to work closely with our partners and would like to make it abundantly clear to anyone who is engaging in this form of criminality: the Warrington partnership will not tolerate it, and we will bring you to justice.”

Cheshire Constabulary welcomes its newest four-legged crime fighter ahead of her Police Dog training

Sprocker Spaniel Peppa is set to begin her training to become Cheshire Constabulary's newest canine crime fighter.

The Constabulary has a diverse group of police dogs that regularly assist their two-legged colleagues in numerous ways, whether that be through sniffing out criminals who have fled the scene of a crime, detecting concealed drugs and weapons, or even locating electronic equipment of minute size that is hidden from view. The 12-week-old Sprocker Spaniel has recently been taken on by the force after she was kindly donated by Lisa Haughton from the Protecting Vulnerable People Unit.



Lisa Haughton, who donated Peppa to the force, said: *“Peppa is a Sprocker spaniel bred from my own home-bred working Sprocker spaniel, Ruby. Her father is Merlin, a working cocker spaniel from the renowned ‘Spanbella Gundogs’ based in Whitchurch, Shropshire. She is very special to us.”*



Following her arrival, Peppa is now living with her new handler from the Constabulary's Dog Section full time ahead of her rigorous Police Dog training that will commence in the coming weeks. Whilst her role within the force's Dog Unit is yet to be decided, the team will be documenting Peppa's training as she progresses, with more 'pup-dates' coming soon. Peppa's training is set to commence in the coming weeks.

Call for vigilance following spate of attempted burglaries in Warrington

Officers are urging car owners in Warrington and neighbouring towns and villages to be vigilant.

The call comes after a number of houses were targeted across Warrington and one car was stolen. Over the past month, police have received approximately 27 reports of attempted burglaries across the town. The majority of these incidents are believed to be attempts to gain entry to properties in order to locate the keys to vehicles parked on the driveway. An investigation has been launched by Warrington CID, and while enquiries are ongoing officers are urging residents to review their CCTV or doorbell footage, report all suspicious activity, and take action to reduce their chances of becoming victims.

DS Christian Gordon said: *“Our investigation is in its early stages, but the initial indications are that at least some of these incidents are linked. Enquiries in relation to the incidents are ongoing and I*

urge anyone with any information that may aid our investigation to get in touch. I'm particularly keen to hear from any residents with CCTV cameras who believe they may have captured the offenders, or any suspicious activity on camera.

"I'd also urge car owners in the area to be vigilant, to review any security measures they have in place and to take steps to reduce their chances of becoming a victim of this type of crime. "Car thieves often scout for desirable cars in the day before returning to steal them at night, so I also ask residents to keep an eye out for suspicious behaviour in this regard and report any suspicions to us. Additional security devices such as mechanical steering locks and trackers are also effective in protecting vehicles from thieves."

It's important that you make sure you always lock your vehicle, even if you are just stepping away from it momentarily. Vehicle crime is more than often committed when the vehicle is left insecure. Fuelling up or popping back into your house to get something are perfect examples of how easy it is to turn your back for a moment and forget your vehicle is unsecured. If you have a garage, use it to keep your vehicle safe from thieves. If you are parked on the drive or roadside, think about how you could improve lighting, or consider doorbell cameras or CCTV. If your car has keyless entry, make sure your key, and spare, are stored well away from the car. If you can, use a faraday bag. You can also turn off wireless signals on your fob if it isn't being used. Considering these options will make life difficult for thieves.

Anyone who sees suspicious activity should report it to police on 101 or visit the website. If you see a crime in action dial 999.

Cheshire Constabulary's tips for deterring thieves from targeting your homes and vehicles:

- Ensure that all windows are closed and doors are locked at your property, even when you are at home or in the garden
- Never leave your house keys, car keys, purse or wallet on display near a door or window
- Use the security measures on modern windows which allow them to let some air in but still be locked
- Keep all valuables out of sight of prying eyes
- If you are replacing or fitting new doors and windows, get ones that are certified to British Standard BS7950 (windows) or PAS 24-1 (doors)
- Fit mortise locks (Kitemarked BS3621) to all front and back doors, as well as locks to all windows which are easy to reach
- Have a burglar alarm fitted at your home, but make sure that it is installed properly and works
- Use security devices, such as steering locks, to keep vehicles secure
- Park vehicles in well-lit areas and never leave them unlocked or with windows down
- Items of value should never be left in full view and should not be kept inside a vehicle overnight wherever possible
- If your vehicle does not have an alarm, get one fitted by a professional so that you and anyone nearby will be alerted to a break-in.

Man disqualified after dangerous driving in Widnes

A man has been banned from the roads after reaching speeds of more than 130mph in Widnes.

Robert Kelly, of East Street, Leeds, was sentenced to 16 weeks suspended for 12 months after pleading guilty to dangerous driving. The 31-year-old appeared at Chester Magistrates' Court on Friday 24 October where he was also disqualified from driving for two years and must then pass an extended driving test to regain his licence.

At 9.35pm on Thursday 23 October, officers were travelling in an unmarked police vehicle along Watkinson Way, Widnes. The officers witnessed Kelly driving a Volkswagen Golf travelling in excess of 130mph along the 70mph-limit dual carriageway, appearing to be 'racing' another vehicle. Officers from Cheshire Constabulary's Roads and Crime Unit intercepted Kelly and stopped him in his vehicle near Earl Drive.

It was established that Kelly had bail conditions not to engage in car meets or anti-social driving and he was subsequently arrested and later charged with dangerous driving. Kelly pleaded guilty at court the following day.

<https://youtu.be/tjUDt09nlk8>

A spokesperson said: *"Despite being under conditions not to engage in anti-social driving, Kelly got behind the wheel and reached incredibly dangerous speeds, almost double the speed limit. This isn't officers 'spoiling the fun'; driving at such speeds in dark, wet and windy weather conditions could easily have ended in a collision, with Kelly injuring not only himself, but also innocent motorists."*

"Some people forget that driving and being in control of a vehicle which can easily injure or kill someone is a privilege, not a right, and respecting the rules of the road is not just to keep you safe, but also the others who you share the road with. I hope Kelly's disqualification will reassure people that action will be taken against those who abuse the rules of the road."

Man pleads guilty to breaking into Congleton address and attacking two people

A man has pleaded guilty to breaking into an address in Congleton and attacking a man and woman inside.

Stuart Whittaker, of no fixed address appeared at Chester Crown Court on 21 October for a trial, but pleaded guilty to aggravated burglary with intent, possession of an offensive weapon in a public place, breach of restraining order, section 47 assault, and section 18 wounding. He will be sentenced on 1 December.

On 12 May this year the 49-year-old forced his way into an address armed with an axe which he had brought to the scene. The female victim and her friend were in the bedroom at the time Whittaker broke in. Following a struggle Whittaker forced his way into the bedroom and shouted at the woman. Whittaker then spotted her friend and started swinging the axe at both of them. The man tried to pull Whittaker off balance by grabbing his free hand, but Whittaker swung the axe down on the top of his head causing serious injury. In a dazed state he tried to grab the axe as Whittaker swung it at his face. He managed to grab the axe and push Whittaker down onto the bed, then knelt on his arm and pulled the axe from his grip. He then pushed Whittaker into the bathroom to contain him as she called the police. Whittaker was arrested and the man was taken to hospital to have the wound on his head treated.

DS Victoria Greenhoff said: *"This was a horrific and violent attack which left both victims traumatised by their ordeal. Thankfully, the victims have recovered physically, but the psychological trauma of being subjected to such violence is more difficult to recover from. The female victim in this case has come a long way in her journey to pull through this ordeal. I hope seeing Whittaker face the consequences for his behaviour, and his disregard for the harassment order being dealt with robustly has helped her in some way move on from this truly horrific experience."*

DC Caitlin Clark added: *"Both victims have shown extreme courage in continuing to support the police through this investigation against such a violent perpetrator. I hope this brings them some closure and a feeling of security so that they can get the time and support they need to recover. Without the male victim's bravery in that terrifying moment, it could have been a very different case. We will all be eagerly awaiting the sentencing."*

Two teenagers arrested in Macclesfield

Two teenagers have been arrested following an incident in Macclesfield.

At around 7.30am on Tuesday 28 October, police were called to reports of a black Ford Fiesta mounting kerbs and driving dangerously through a residential area on Saville Street, Macclesfield. Three men abandoned the vehicle and fled the scene on foot after colliding with a parked car. Officers swiftly attended and after a search of the area, two teenagers, aged 19 and 15, from the Macclesfield area were arrested on suspicion of theft of a motor vehicle.

DS Laura Fox said: *"This investigation is in the early stages, however I am sure that these arrests will provide reassurance for residents in the area and the wider community. I also hope that it acts as a warning to other offenders who think they can commit crime here in Cheshire. As our enquiries continue, I would urge anyone with any information or video footage which may aid our investigation to get in touch."*

The teenagers have since been bailed pending further enquiries.

Anyone with information can report it to Cheshire Police [via the website](#) quoting IML 2203330 or call 101.

Man jailed for role in courier fraud

A man has been jailed for his role in a courier fraud in which an elderly woman was scammed out of thousands of pounds of cash and jewellery.

Sharmarke Ahmed, of Maysoule Road, London, appeared at Chester Crown Court on Thursday 23 October. The 34-year-old was sentenced to 28 months for his role in the scam which occurred in the Malpas area of Cheshire. He had previously pleaded guilty to one count of handling stolen goods.



On 5 March 2025, the victim in this case – a woman in her 90s – received a call to her landline from a man who posed as a detective from Chester. The man told the victim there had been criminals operating in her area and if she had any cash or jewellery at home,

he would arrange for a 'police officer' to come and collect it to keep it safe. The victim explained she had £11,000 in cash and various items of jewellery, valued at £16,000. The phone call lasted for many hours, during which a password was set up, so the victim knew the man who was coming to collect the items was 'genuine'. The 'police officer' – later identified as Ahmed - attended the victim's address, gave the password and collected her money and jewellery.

Later that evening, the victim's friend reported the incident to police. Police also received further calls in relation to courier frauds in the area between 5 March and 7 March. The phone number which had contacted the victim was withheld, however checks revealed it was a prepaid number that only became live on the day of the phone call and was traced back to the Brixton area of London. Further analysis revealed the phone number was attributed to travelled from London to Malpas on 5 March 2025. Ahmed was pictured on CCTV collecting the victim's cash and jewellery and matched the description of a man seen on footage at Chester Bus Station later that evening, departing on a coach heading back to London. Following a number of enquiries, officers from the MET Police arrested Ahmed in London on Tuesday 1 April. He was subsequently charged in relation to the courier fraud.

DC Niall Dudley said: *"Anyone can fall victim to courier fraud and sadly we have seen many incidents of this nature in the Cheshire area. We all react very differently under duress, and this is what these despicable criminals take advantage of. I am grateful that Ahmed has been jailed for his role in such an awful scam, targeting a vulnerable individual and preying on their good nature. But he underestimated the dedication of our officers in locating him, tracing him all the way to London where he was ultimately arrested. But Ahmed was just one piece of the puzzle and our fight against this type of crime is not over."*

"If you believe that you have been a victim of courier fraud, please contact Cheshire Police on 101, using a different phone to the one used to communicate with the fraudsters. You can also report information to us via www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us. You can report to Action Fraud via actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040. Call 999 immediately in an emergency or if you suspect a fraud is currently in progress. Do not wait to report the fraud to police. The quicker police are told, the more likely officers can identify those responsible."

Please see some crime prevention advice:

- Be sceptical of unexpected calls, texts or visits, even from those who claim to be police officers or bank officials. The police or your bank would NEVER ask you to withdraw cash or hand over items, for any reason.
- Don't be afraid to stop the conversation with a brief 'no, thank you'.
- Never give personal information, such as your date of birth or bank details, to unexpected callers.
- Remember, criminals will use urgency or threats to cause panic and fear. When you are under stress you are less likely to think clearly about your actions.
- If callers suggest you call your local police or bank to check who they are, use another phone or hang up and ensure the line has been fully disconnected by phoning a friend or relative first, or by waiting at least five minutes. Otherwise, you may think you've phoned a number, but you're simply talking to the fraudsters again. This is a common tactic used by fraudsters.

- If a caller asks you to type your bank PIN number into your telephone handset - do not do this, as fraudsters can use technology to identify the numbers.
- You can opt out of many cold calls by registering for free with the Telephone Preference Service on 0845 070 0707.

Man charged with drugs offences in Knutsford

A man has been charged with drugs offences following a stop check in Knutsford.

Kevin Prendergast, of Hamman Drive, Knutsford, was arrested on Friday 24 October. The 41-year-old has since been charged with being concerned in the supply of cocaine, possession with intent to supply cocaine and possession of criminal property. He appeared at Chester Magistrates' Court on Monday 27 October and will next appear at Chester Crown Court on Monday 24 November. The charges relate to a stop check in Brook Street, Knutsford, at around 8.20pm on Friday 24 October.

Man sentenced for repeatedly exposing himself to women in Alsager

A 66-year-old man has been sentenced after admitting to a series of exposures in Alsager.

Mervyn Richards from High Lane, Burslem appeared at Chester Crown Court on 29 October to be sentenced after pleading guilty to seven exposures. He pleaded not guilty to a further four which were to remain on file. He was sentenced to 30 months in prison, banned from obtaining a driving licence for 39 months, has to sign onto the Sex Offenders Register and handed a 15 year Sexual Harm Prevention Order.



The court heard that between November 2022 and December 2024 Richards travelled to Alsager to target women of pension age. On each occasion he drove alongside a woman walking on her own in the town and attracted their attention by either asking for directions to the clinic or help with a medical issue. They went to his car and it is then they noticed he was naked from the waist down and exposing his penis. The women were shocked and scared by his actions and reported the incidents to police.

DC Lauren Constable said: *"I would firstly like to thank the victims who have shown bravery and trust in the police for reporting this and supporting the investigation. Without their support he would not have been caught and brought to justice. I'd also like to thank the collective efforts of Crewe CID for their ongoing and tireless work in identifying him, knowing the risk he posed to these women."*

"Richards showed no remorse for his actions, and he offered no explanation or apologies for his continued behaviour, which had caused these women and others to feel unsafe in their community. I hope this conviction reassures the community that we take the safety of our residents seriously and will stop at nothing to identify and prevent this type of behaviour by putting these offenders before the courts for their intolerable actions."

“Indecent exposure is not a trivial act that can just be dismissed as something that just happens, it is a crime which causes real concern. We should all feel safe and free to go about our business, but people like Richards choose to act in a manner that impacts this greatly. That’s why we’re committed to finding these offenders and getting justice for those affected by such arrogant and selfish behaviour.”

Exploitation teams seize illicit goods from retailers across Cheshire East during joint operation

Officers from the Constabulary’s Eastern Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) and Exploitation team were joined by colleagues from Cheshire East Trading Standards teams for a deployment targeting illegal products and immigration crime at retailers across the area.

On Friday 24 October, officers from the Eastern PVP Exploitation team, alongside a colleague from the Foreign National Offender team and partners from Cheshire East Trading Standards undertook a number of visits to retailers



in relation to the National Crime Agency’s Operation Machinize initiative. The teams visited four premises on West Street in Crewe, with seizures conducted by both police and Trading Standards. Officers also returned to a number of premises across the east that had been visited on previous deployments and were again found to be selling the illegal products.

A follow up visit was conducted at a premises on Bradwall Road, Sandbach, that had been previously visited a week earlier, and a considerable number of illicit products were seized. Despite already having been visited on this occasion, more even illicit cigarettes and tobacco was seized from the premises. Another follow up visit was conducted at a premises in Congleton, where a concealment was discovered within a wall containing banned single use vapes and cigarettes that were the seized. In total, over 1100 packets of cigarettes, 3kg of hand rolling tobacco and over 50 counterfeit toys were seized, along with over 90 banned single use vapes as well as other non-compliant products. The retail value of products seized is believed to be estimated at around £28,000. A number of vulnerable people have also been safeguarded.

DI Martin Caldwell said: *“We work hard to tackle criminals operating in our communities and Operation Machinize demonstrates just some of the work we do all year round to keep our residents and vulnerable people safe. We have seen links to the sale of these illicit substances and organised immigration crime and modern slavery offences, which is why we are committed to doing all we can to identify those involved. Whilst was disappointing to see that some of the premises we had already visited were, again, choosing to sell these dangerous and illegal products, today’s operation has demonstrated that will not just visit a premises and not return to take action against any further offences. We regularly pay visits to all our retailers, especially those who have previously offended, to ensure to no criminality is occurring- always taking action when and where we find that it has.”*

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 a member of their

local PVP Exploitation Team. You can also report businesses that you think may be selling illicit cigarettes and tobacco at <https://keep-it-out.co.uk/> or <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Moped rider who failed to stop for police on motorbike safety day of action sentenced

A moped rider who fled on foot after being signalled to pull over by police conducting a road safety operation, and was then found to be in possession of Class A drugs when officers caught him, has been sentenced.

Alan Evans appeared Warrington Magistrates on Friday 24 October where he was handed a community order and a 36-month driving disqualification. During his sentencing hearing, the court was told that on 4 July 2025, officers in Warrington were conducting a day activity known as Operation Lawmaker, a bespoke operation designed to target the dangerous and anti-social riding of off-road vehicles and bikes in our town centres.

During this deployment, a Constabulary Motorcycle officer spotted Evans riding a white Yamaha XF 50 moped in poor condition in the Chester Road area of Warrington. Following checks on the moped, it was confirmed that it was not insured, and officers attempted to stop the vehicle. However, before this could be done, Evans decamped from the moped in the Fennel Street area of the town and made off on foot towards School Brow.

Officers followed swiftly behind Evans and soon found him nearby. During his attempted escape on foot, Evans had abandoned his biker helmet, gloves and jacket that he had been wearing when he was spotted by officers on Chester Road – these items were collected following his eventual arrest. The 28-year-old was subsequently detained and subjected to a roadside drug test, which came back positive for traces of cannabis. Officers also found two snap-bags of cocaine on his person, which were subsequently seized.

He was then arrested on suspicion of failing to stop for police, driving without insurance, driving under the influence of drugs and possession of Class A drugs (cocaine). In custody, he answered "no comment" questions put to him by the interviewing officers and was subsequently charged. Evans, of Budworth Avenue, Latchford, would later plead guilty to the aforementioned offences on 24 September.

PS Andy Griffiths, of the Constabulary's Motorcycle Unit, said: *"There is never a right time to go for a drive without insuring your vehicle or using it under the influence of drugs, but choosing to do so on a day when our Roads and Crime Unit is conducting a day of action specifically focusing on the safe use of two-wheeled vehicles means you are almost guaranteed a trip to our custody suites."*

"Operation Lawmaker, which was already underway in Warrington on the day Sands was caught, is an ongoing deployment being rolled out in towns and communities across the county in response to the anti-social and dangerous driving of non-legal and off-road bikes. "The unsafe use of high-powered vehicles on our roads and in pedestrian areas is a priority issue for our officers and I want to reassure the public that we will continue to take a robust approach with those causing such harm within your communities."

Man charged in relation to supplying Class B drugs in Macclesfield

Officers investigating the supply of illegal drugs in Macclesfield have charged a man in relation to the offence.

Michael Houghton was arrested on Friday 24 October. The 30-year-old of Hulme Square, Macclesfield has since been charged with possession with intent to supply class B drugs (cannabis) and being concerned in the fraudulent evasion of a prohibition on the importation of a class B drug. Houghton appeared at Chester Magistrates' Court on Saturday 25 October where he was remanded in custody to appear at Chester Crown Court on Monday 24 November. The charges relate to an investigation into the supply of cannabis in the Macclesfield area of Cheshire.

Local Policing Newsletters Autumn 2025

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

Chester LPU

[Chester City Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Chester North Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Chester Rural Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Chester South Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Congleton LPU

[Congleton Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Sandbach Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Crewe LPU

[Crewe Central Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Crewe East Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Crewe South Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Nantwich Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Ellesmere Port LPU

[Ellesmere Port East Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Ellesmere Port Rural Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Ellesmere Port West Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Macclesfield LPU

[Knutsford Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Macclesfield North Poynton Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Macclesfield South Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Wilmslow Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Northwich LPU

[Northwich North Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Northwich South Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Winsford Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Runcorn LPU

[Runcorn East Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Runcorn West Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Warrington LPU

[Warrington Central Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Warrington East Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Warrington North Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Warrington South Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Warrington Town Centre Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Warrington West Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Widnes LPU

[Widnes Inner Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

[Widnes Outer Newsletter Autumn 2025.pdf](#)

Men jailed following Widnes car and key burglary

Two men have been jailed for their parts in a car and key burglary in Widnes, after traces of their DNA were found on items they left in the stolen vehicle.

Joshua Clark, 20, and Robert Lee, 20, appeared at Liverpool Crown Court on Monday 20 October, where they were sentenced. Clark, of Haig Road, Widnes, was handed a 15-month custodial sentence after pleading guilty to theft of a motor vehicle and burglary of a dwelling and theft. Lee, of Town Road, Birkenhead, was handed a 22-month custodial sentence after pleading guilty to theft of a motor vehicle. Both men will serve their sentences in a youth offender institute.



L: Joshua Clark R: Robert Lee

The case began on 14 June 2023, when the victim in the case received a call from officers from Merseyside Police who stated they had found an abandoned vehicle, a Ford Focus, registered to his address in Widnes that had been believed to have been stolen and had been involved in a

pursuit earlier that evening. Upon receiving the call, owner of the Focus then checked their property and found that the Focus and its keys were unaccounted for. Not only this, but a second car belonging to the victim, a red Mercedes Coupe, and a Tag Hauer watch worth around £1200 had also been taken from the property.

The Red Mercedes Coupe was found a couple of hours later in the Wavertree Avenue in Widnes and was recovered by Cheshire Police, who then took on the wider investigation. As enquiries into the incident progressed, Cheshire detectives were informed by their colleagues in Merseyside who had initially found the stolen vehicle that a vape and a cap had been found inside. DNA testing had been done on these items, with the vape proving a match for Joshua Clark and the cap having traces of Lee's DNA. As well as this, CCTV enquiries at the property in Widnes would also show two men approaching the house on the night of the burglary and then leaving in the stolen car.

On 23 August 2023, officers from Merseyside stopped a black Ford Focus after Robert Lee was spotted in the passenger seat. He was subsequently arrested and transferred to Cheshire. On 5 October 2023, Cheshire Police attended an address on Haig Road, Widnes, and arrested Joshua Clark. When interviewed by Cheshire Police, both Clark and Lee answered "no comment" to all questions posed to them, with Clark only adding that he had been in bed all night on the night of the incident and he had witnesses that could corroborate his alibi. Despite this, the pair were charged and plead guilty to the charges before they were due to start trial.

DC Kyla Lloyd of Widnes CID said: *"Despite both Joshua Clark and Robert Lee refusing to provide any answers to our questions relating to the theft of the vehicle in question, their mistake of forgetting to take their belongings with them when they abandoned the car proved to be their undoing. Nobody has the right to forcibly access someone else's home with the intention to deprive them of their personal belongings, causing them alarm and distress in the process."*

"So, I am very glad to see that the obtaining of the vital evidence that tied this pair directly to the crime resulted in them having no choice but to plead guilty before they went to trial, securing justice for our victim. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues from Merseyside, who supported us throughout this investigation. It goes to show that when we work collaboratively with our fellow forces, we get the results we need to put them before the courts and further reinforce the message that there is no place for criminals to hide in our respective counties."

Man arrested after being spotted carrying a crossbow

A man from St Helens has been arrested after an off-duty police officer spotted him carrying a crossbow in public.

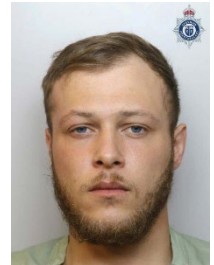
At around 7.50am on Sunday 26 October, Cheshire Police received a call from an off-duty colleague from Merseyside Police. The officer said that he had witnessed an unknown man carrying a crossbow in the Victoria Avenue area of Widnes. Following this call, armed officers were swiftly deployed to the area and located a 50-year-old man who was in possession of a crossbow wrapped inside a bag. Luckily it was not loaded. Just half an hour after the call, at 8.20am, officers arrested the man on suspicion of possession of a firearm. The man, from St Helens, remains in custody at this and is assisting officers with their enquiries.

CI Fez Khan, of Armed Policing, said: *"The decision to take a walk with a crossbow in your hand, thinking you will not get armed police officers running at you and detaining you is either very brave or very foolish as it will always result in a trip to our custody suites. I would like to thank our officers for their swift action in responding to this incident as well as our off-duty colleague from Merseyside who was in the right place at the right time and reported this to us."*

Man jailed for drug dealing in Runcorn

A drug dealer has been jailed for facilitating the supply of class A and B drugs in Runcorn.

Leon Cook appeared at Chester Crown Court on Thursday 16 October where he was sentenced to four years and two months in prison. The 27-year-old of Hoylake Close, Runcorn, had previously pleaded guilty to two counts of being concerned in the supply of class A drugs (cocaine), and four counts of being concerned in the supply of class B drugs (ketamine and cannabis).



The court heard how officers investigating the supply of class A and B drugs in the Runcorn area, had attributed a mobile phone number used by Cook to advertise the sale of cocaine, cannabis, and ketamine on a daily basis. On Monday 12 May, officers on patrol spotted Cook riding an illegal E-bike near to the Knoll in Runcorn. He fled but dropped his mobile phone in the process, which was subsequently seized by officers. Following a digital forensic download of his phone, officers found significant evidence of Cook's involvement in onward sale of cocaine, cannabis, and ketamine.

Cook was arrested on Wednesday 3 September at an address on Worcester Court, Runcorn and was later charged with the offences.

PC Clark said: *"Cook believed that he was operating under the radar, but thanks to the work of the team here at Runcorn, he was quickly identified as a dealer and removed from the streets of Cheshire. I welcome the sentence imposed on Cook by the Court and hope this acts as a stark reminder that our officers are committed to tackling drug dealing head on."*

Man charged with weapons and assault offences

A 19-year-old man has been charged with numerous offences.

Bryn Jones, of no fixed address was arrested at around 2.15am on Saturday 27 October. The 19-year-old has since been charged with two counts of assault by beating, two counts of the rape of a woman over the age of 16, sexual assault, common assault and intentional strangulation. Jones was also charged with threats with a bladed article in a public place and engaging in controlling and coercive behaviour. He is next set to appear at Warrington Magistrates' Court on Monday 27 October.

Four people charged following serious assault in Winsford

Detectives investigating a serious assault at an address in Winsford have charged four people in relation to the incident.

At around 5.10pm on Sunday 14 January 2024, police were called to reports that a man had sustained serious injuries at an address on Wharton Gardens. On arrival, officers found that a 20-year-old man had been stabbed. The man was taken to the Royal Stoke Hospital for treatment and has since made a full recovery. Seven people were initially arrested in connection with the incident.

Following a detailed investigation into the circumstances surrounding the incident, the following four people have been charged with conspiracy to commit grievous bodily harm with intent.

- Ellis Webb, 20, of Baywillow Close, Winsford
- Catherine Clare, 33, of Middlewich Street, Crewe
- Luke Kirton, 20, of Esk Road, Winsford
- Connor Baldwin, 18, of Dee Way, Winsford

All four defendants have been bailed and are all set to appear at Chester Magistrates Court. Webb is due to appear on Friday 21 November. Clare, Kirton and Baldwin are set to appear on Friday 12 December.

Latest Cheshire Appeals

Appeal to trace wanted man from Ellesmere Port

Police in Ellesmere Port are appeal for help in tracing a wanted man.

Robert Forbes is wanted in connection with a series of theft from motor vehicle offences. The 45-year-old is described as white, around 5' 7" tall, and is bald with blue eyes.

Anyone with any information regarding the whereabouts of Forbes is asked to contact Cheshire Police via 101, or [via the website](#), using incident reference number 25000735436.



CCTV images released following serious assault in Warrington

Officers have released a CCTV image of a man they want to speak to in connection with a serious assault in Warrington town centre.

The incident occurred at Reef Bar on Bridge Street at around 5.06am on Saturday 27 September. A 21-year-old man, and a 20-year-old woman were subjected to an attack which left them with serious facial injuries.

Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers believe that the man in the CCTV image may have vital information to aid their investigation. They are urging anyone who recognises him or thinks they may know who he is to get in touch.



DC Rebecca Jubb said: *"We believe that the man in the CCTV image may have important information to help with our ongoing investigation into a serious assault in the town centre. The victims both suffered serious facial injuries, and we are determined to establish who was responsible."*

"If you think you recognise the man in the CCTV image or know who he is please call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, quoting 25000797303, give us the details [via the website](#) or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. I would also like to appeal directly to the man in the CCTV image to get in touch."

Appeal for witnesses following fatal collision in Runcorn

Officers are appealing for witnesses and video footage following a fatal collision in Runcorn.

At around 7.35pm on Monday 27 October, police were called to reports of a serious collision on Halton Lodge Avenue, Runcorn. Officers attended and found the collision involved a black Talara Sting E-bike and a bus. The rider of the bike, a 30-year-old local man, sustained serious injuries and was sadly pronounced dead at the scene. Enquiries are ongoing and officers are keen to hear from anyone who witnessed the collision or anyone who believes they have any dashcam footage of the incident.

Sgt Amy Hollis, of the Serious Collision Investigation Unit at Cheshire Constabulary, said: *"Our thoughts are with the rider's family at this time, who are currently being supported by specialist officers. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing, and as part of our investigation we're keen to hear from anyone who witnessed the collision, or anyone with any dashcam footage. The same goes for any residents with any CCTV or doorbell footage which may aid the investigation."*

Anyone who witnessed the collision, or anyone with any information in relation to the incident, is asked to contact Cheshire Police on 101, or [visit the website](#) quoting IML 2203130.

Police appeal for witnesses following e-bike robbery in Widnes

Police are appealing for witnesses following an e-bike robbery in Widnes.

Between 1am and 1.17am on 16 October a man had ridden his e-bike to The Grapes Pub in Widnes Road. He pulled up at the pub and saw two men with their faces covered in the beer garden. One of the men approached him and a second man put him in a headlock from behind and took the bike off him. The men then walked the victim onto Widnes Road and took his coat. They continued to walk him toward Elizabeth Court when the victim started to shout and they assaulted him and fled with his bike and coat.

The bike is described as a grey mountain bike electrically modified after purchase. It had a triangle electric unit between the crossbar and pedals. The coat was a black Technicals down jacket with the wrist straps cut off. The first suspect is described as white, around 5ft 6 - 5ft 7ins tall, around 19-20 years old, and of slim build. He was wearing all black including a face covering - possibly a snood, and he had a local accent to Widnes. The second suspect was described as white, around 5ft 9-5ft 10, around 23-24 years old, of slim build, wearing an all-black jacket with a face with a snood-like covering up to his eyes, dark grey jogging pants and Airmax 95 trainers - the bubbles on them were possibly a light blue. He also had a local accent.

DC Jenny Tasker said: *"As part of our enquiries we're looking to identify if there is any CCTV or Ring doorbell footage along Keble Street, Vine Street, Lacey Court and Elizabeth Court which may have captured the victim being walked along the road by the two suspects. I'd urge anyone who may have any information which will help us to find those responsible to contact us."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting IML2195756. Alternatively, information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Appeal for witnesses following assault in Warrington

Officers investigating reports of an assault in a park in Warrington are appealing for any witnesses to come forward.

Sometime between 1.45pm and 2.15pm on Sunday 5 October, it was reported that a 64-year-old woman had been assaulted while walking her dog in Orford Park by a man and woman. The man and woman were in the park with a young child at the time of the incident. During the incident, the victim was knocked unconscious and left with bruising to her head. She also sustained a broken hip as a result. As part of ongoing enquiries, officers are appealing for any potential witnesses to contact them.

DC Rebecca Jubb said: *"Our investigation into this incident is ongoing and we are now appealing for any witnesses to get in touch with us. The same goes for anyone who may have any footage of the incident or any areas which border the park."*

To report information, [visit the website](#) or call 101, quoting IML-2189134.

CCTV appeal following mobile phone theft in Widnes

Officers investigating the theft of a mobile phone in Widnes have released a CCTV image of a man they would like to speak to.

The victim had advertised the phone for sale on Facebook Marketplace and had arranged for a buyer to come and collect the phone on Friday 12 September. On arrival, the buyer told the victim that they had transferred the money for the phone to their bank account, and the victim handed the phone over. However, the victim later discovered that no money had been sent.



PC Leon Mansley said: *"As part of our enquiries, we are appealing to anyone who recognises the man in the CCTV image and ask that they contact us as we believe he may hold vital information. We would also like to appeal directly to the man pictured to get in touch with us."*

Anyone with information is urged to contact Cheshire Police quoting 25000756537 [via the website](#) or call 101. Information can be passed on to Crimestoppers anonymously by calling 0800 555 111.

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (CNWA)

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