



Latest Cheshire News

Fraudster sentenced after stealing almost £80,000 from employer

A man who stole almost £80,000 from his employer has been sentenced to two years in prison, suspended for two years.

David Kissack was also ordered to pay £19,000 compensation during the hearing at Chester Crown Court on Friday 7 March. The 45-year-old of Bannister Way, Winstanley, had previously pleaded guilty to five counts of fraud by false representation. The court heard how Kissack was employed as a business director at recruitment agency near Chester between August 2016 and December 2022, earning more than £70,000 a year, plus additional quarterly bonuses.

His offending came to light in October 2022 when the recruitment company received an email from a customer which named an agency worker who they did not recognise. Following an internal investigation the company discovered that Kissack had been invoicing the company directly and had directed the payments into his personal account. In total the company discovered that Kissack had fraudulently received payments totalling £78,585 into his personal bank account. The payments related to 11 separate agency workers and occurred between September 2020 and October 2022. The matter was reported to Cheshire Police and following his arrest Kissack answered no comment to all the questions put to him by officers. Despite his silence, he later pleaded guilty to five counts of fraud by false representation.

Following his sentencing, PC Clarke, who led the investigation, said: *"Kissack was a trusted employee in a high paying job, yet he knowingly took advantage of his employer to commit audacious acts of fraud whilst in a position of trust. As the business director, he should have been managing and supporting the company, not exploiting it for his own financial gain. His offending has had a detrimental effect on the reputation of his employer and resulted in a significant financial loss for the company, and as a result, Kissack is now facing the consequences of his actions."*

To report suspected fraud offences, call Cheshire Police on 101, give the details via <https://cheshire.police.uk/contact/general-enquiries> or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Refreshed advice given to residents following courier frauds across Cheshire

Officers are issuing refreshed advice to Cheshire residents as they continue to see a rise in the number of courier frauds across the county.

Courier fraud is where a victim is contacted by fraudsters who pretend to be police officers or bank officials. This can be over the phone or in person. The victims are then told to withdraw or hand over cash or valuable items, to purchase EUROs or provide bank cards or pin numbers. These can then be collected from their home address or at another meeting place by a courier. Officers in Cheshire have seen an increase in this type of fraud offence and are reminding people that police officers would never ask anyone for money or to hand over valuable items – as a result of a fraud 'they are investigating', to help with 'an ongoing investigation', or any other reason.

DI Ross Hamilton said: *"It is important to note that the fraudsters can be extremely convincing. They are persistent and often target elderly or vulnerable people. Many people may think they would never be a victim to this kind of crime, however this really can happen to anyone. We react very differently when under stress and these criminals are very sophisticated and use a whole host of tactics to persuade people to follow their instructions. Please remember that police officers and bank officials will never ask you to withdraw money,*

purchase goods, hand over valuable items or disclose private banking details, for any reason. Help us to raise awareness by sharing this with your friends and family, especially if they are vulnerable or elderly."

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 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 officials.
- 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.
- The police or your bank would never unexpectedly ask you to withdraw cash, hand over valuables, or move your money to another account, as a result of fraud or any other reason.
- 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.

Pair who burgled the unoccupied home of sick pensioner jailed

Two burglars have been jailed after targeting the unoccupied home of a sick pensioner.

Krzysztof Barwinski and Szymon Antos were sentenced at Liverpool Crown Court on Monday 3 March after previously pleading guilty to the burglary of a dwelling and theft. Barwinski was jailed for 20 months, with his accomplice, Antos, being handed a 16-month sentence.



It was heard in court that on Friday 13 September 2024 officers in Warrington received a call from a concerned member of the public, stating they believed a property in Paul Street, Warrington, had been burgled by two men. This was captured on video doorbell footage. These men were later identified as Krzysztof Barwinski and Szymon Antos.

The property belonged to an 88-year-old man who had previously been in hospital with an illness and had subsequently been discharged to a residential care home where he had been recovering further since late July 2024. His home had been left unoccupied but it had been secured before he went into hospital. Further footage revealed the same men were seen only three days prior, paying close attention to the same property and clearly showed the two men's faces and clothing. Antos in particular was seen wearing a pair of distinctive black trainers with white detailing and a bright orange backpack on the night of the burglary.

Six days later, on Monday 16 September, the investigating officers were patrolling near to the burgled address when one of them spotted and recognised Antos, who was wearing the same shoes and backpack seen in the footage. He was subsequently arrested on suspicion of burglary. A later search of Antos' home address led to officers locating Barwinski, who was found partially dressed in the garden. He was subsequently arrested and taken upstairs in the property to get properly dressed. Upon entering Barwinski's room, officers found items including pieces of jewellery, family banking bonds and cash - all of which belonged to the man who lived on Paul Street.

During their subsequent interviews with investigating officers, the pair identified themselves on the video doorbell footage captured but denied any element of theft. Despite this, they were subsequently charged and pleaded guilty to burglary and theft on 21 September 2024.

Following the sentencing, PC Rhianna Latimer, said: *"As a force, we remain committed to doing all we can to bring thieves, like Antos and Barwinski, to justice and safeguard those who have been the subhect of burglaries. Antos and Barwinski deliberately preyed on a vulnerable and elderly person who was recovering from illness and a spell in hospital, and who definitely did not need his home being burgled and the thought of being permanently deprived of several sentimental items adding to his list of worries. However, thanks to the call to police from the concerned member of the pubic, we were provided with vital evidence that not only placed the pair at the scene on the night of the burglary but captured them scoping out the address three days prior."*

Police appeal for information following burglary in Audlem

Officers are appealing for any witnesses to get in touch following a burglary in Audlem.

At around 9.05pm on Wednesday 5 March, police were called to reports of a burglary at an address in Whitchurch Road, Audlem. The incident is believed to have occurred at some time between around 6.45pm and 8.30pm that evening. During the burglary, unknown offenders gained access to the property and stole a quantity of jewellery, watches, designer items and cash. As part of enquiries, officers are asking anyone who witnessed what happened, saw anything suspicious, or has any relevant footage to get in touch with them.

DS Laura Fox of Eastern CID said: *"We would like to reassure residents in the area that we are doing all we can to trace those responsible. As part of our investigation, we would urge any witnesses to get in touch with us. The same goes for anyone who saw anything suspicious around the time the incident is believed to have occurred, or anyone with any relevant CCTV, video doorbell or dashcam footage. Anyone with any information is asked to contact Cheshire Police via cheshire.police.uk/tell-us or call 101, quoting IML-2041185."*

Police seize cannabis plants from Saltney house

Police have disrupted the supply of an illegal class B drug after seizing hundreds of cannabis plants from a house in Saltney.

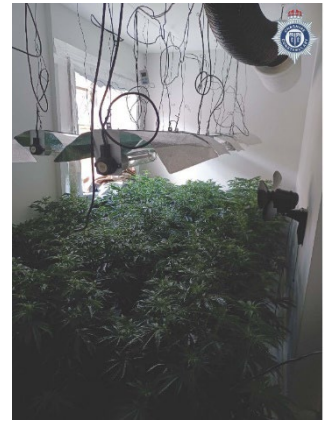
On Wednesday 5 March, officers were called to the house in Chester Street after it was discovered that the rental property was being used to grow cannabis plants and the electricity had been by-passed. Officers remain at the scene while the plants and equipment are removed from the property.

Insp James Wilson said: *"Criminals will go to great lengths to find spaces to grow cannabis on an industrial scale, whether that's finding disused buildings or renting properties from unsuspecting landlords or property agents. The grows can cause costly damage to property and the electric being bypassed can put the building at risk of fire. We can all play our part by looking out for the essential signs a property is being used for this type of illegal activity. If you are renting a property out it is a good idea to make regular checks on the house and if there is anything untoward such as the tenant being uncontactable check it out. Those living nearby can also keep an eye out for a number of signs that a house, flat or business is being used for growing cannabis."*

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.



To report a suspected cannabis grow or any other type of drug-related offence, call Cheshire Constabulary on 101, give the details online via the website or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Multi-agency day of action takes place across Chester

Officers across Chester have taken part in a multi-agency day of action targeting a range of criminality across the city.

On Wednesday 5 March, officers from Chester Local Policing Unit took part in a high-profile operation, working together with partners from several organisations to tackle and disrupt criminality, while providing a reassuring presence for the public and business owners. The activities that took place in Chester included:

- Passive drugs dogs were deployed within Chester City Centre to detect anyone carrying illegal drugs.
- Visits by the Western Exploitation Team to help protect vulnerable people
- A warrant was executed at an address in Blacon.
- The Roads and Crime Unit, plus the Motorcycle Unit, were deployed, targeting the illegal use of e-bikes and those using Chester's roads for criminality.
- The Sex Offender Management Unit carried out visits to registered sex offenders to ensure they were complying with any orders they are subject to.
- The Safer Streets Bus was deployed to the Countess of Chester Country Park to engage with the public and complete Residents Voice Surveys
- The Underwater Search Unit carried out proactive searches of the canal in the Cow Lane bridge area.
- The County Lines Task Force from British Transport Police was deployed to Chester Railway Station to target those travelling by train to commit criminality in the area.
- Licensing visits were carried out at various shops across Chester city centre.
- Taxi licensing checks were carried out in conjunction with Cheshire West and Chester Licensing Team to ensure they were compliant with their regulations.

Over the course of the day there were the following results:

- Eight arrests including for theft of a motor vehicle, disqualified driving and immigration offences.
- 14 Traffic Offence Reports issued
- Three vehicle seizures
- Three taxi drivers given advisory notices
- 25 stop searches during the passive drug dog operation

<https://youtu.be/33vcLH9tdww>

Insp James Wilson, of Chester Local Policing Unit, Cheshire Police, said: *"Today's operation has produced some great results. Throughout the day we used a whole host of tactics to disrupt criminal activity in Chester, as well as working with partners, but it is important to note that we use these regularly as part of our everyday policing tactics. As well as targeting criminality, the day was also about reassuring the public that*

we are proactively tackling those who are up to no good and we'll continue to run operations like this to support the communities we serve.

"If you have any information about criminal activity in your community, please contact Cheshire Police online or call 101. In an emergency, always call 999."

Mother pleads guilty to manslaughter of her baby almost 30 years ago

A woman has pleaded guilty to the manslaughter of a baby boy whose body was discarded in binbags in Warrington 27 years ago.

Joanne Sharkey, of Denham Close, Liverpool, pleaded guilty to causing the death of 'Baby Callum', named after the Callands district of Warrington in which his body was discovered, in 1998. The 55-year-old pleaded guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility and endeavouring to conceal the birth of a child at Liverpool Crown Court on Thursday 6 March 2025. She will appear back at court on Friday 21 March for sentence.



At around 10.45am on 14 March 1998, the body of a newborn baby boy was found by a local man out walking his dog with his young son in a wooded area off Camp Road, near to Gulliver's World. The baby's body had been discarded inside two knotted binbags and was discovered after the dog walker became curious as to what was in the bags and poked a hole in them with a stick. Following the shocking discovery, help was sought from nearby Gulliver's World and by chance a paediatrician happened to be present and confirmed the body to be a deceased baby boy. The baby was pronounced dead at 11.25am.

<https://youtu.be/wmSXttSh-UM>

The baby was estimated to have been born at full term within a few days of his discovery, but his identity, and that of his parents, was unknown. Due to findings at a post-mortem, Cheshire Constabulary launched a murder investigation. A full DNA sample was taken from the baby, as well as from blood found on the binbags. This identified the DNA profile of the mother of the baby, however there was no match on the Police DNA Database for her. A partial DNA profile for the father was obtained, but again, there was no match on the DNA Database.

As part of the investigation, DNA swabs were taken from a large number of people living locally at the time, but none provided a match. Officers also carried out extensive house-to-house enquiries with hundreds of people being interviewed, enquiries with local hospitals, midwife services, GPs and other medical services, as well as schools, to identify any women or girls who may have given birth recently. Despite the efforts of police, a large media campaign, and anniversary media appeals in the following years, nothing led to the identification of the baby's parents.

The case had remained on the list of 'cold' cases for Cheshire Constabulary and was subject to regular reviews, including refreshed searches of the national Police DNA Database and further DNA analysis as advances in science were made. The current investigation began in January 2022 as part of one of these reviews by Cheshire Constabulary's Major Crime Review Team.

Through further DNA analysis, the mother of the baby, Joanne Sharkey, and the father were identified. This occurred via the identification of a familial link between the baby and somebody who was related to him, who had been added to the Police DNA Database in the years since searches were last completed. Familial DNA identifies samples which have familial similarities to the target sample, which can come from distant or close relations.

Sharkey and the baby's father were arrested on 28 July 2023 on suspicion of murder. DNA samples were obtained which confirmed that they were the mother and father of the baby. Both were later released on bail while enquiries continued.

<https://youtu.be/qAyDdJuS44E>

Following a thorough investigation, a decision was made to take no further action against the father, the case being that he was unaware of the pregnancy, the birth, or the subsequent death. Sharkey was charged on 15 April 2024 with murder and endeavouring to conceal the birth of a child. It was determined that Sharkey had concealed her pregnancy, given birth at her home address and caused the death of the baby in the following hours. The baby was found to have wads of tissue in his mouth and throat. Sharkey then placed the baby's body within binbags and drove to the site in Warrington where she left him. She has now entered a guilty plea to manslaughter which has been accepted by the prosecution based on psychiatric evidence.

Following the guilty plea, DI Hannah Friend, said: *"The case of Baby Callum shocked the local community 27 years ago, with residents coming together to give him a proper funeral and try to help identify the person responsible for his death. Despite his life being cruelly cut short, he has not been forgotten, and his memory has lived on in the local area for the past few decades. Likewise, our efforts to locate who did this to him have not wavered and the case was subject to regular reviews and refreshed searches of the Police DNA Database. It was thanks to this that a familial DNA sample was identified, and following a thorough investigation and multiple enquiries, Sharkey was identified, arrested and later charged in relation to Baby Callum's death. While this guilty plea today will bring some closure to what has been a lengthy and complex investigation, ongoing for almost 30 years, the result will not bring back Baby Callum who should have had his whole life ahead of him. I would like to thank the team of officers and staff across the entirety of this investigation whose dedication has meant someone has now been held accountable for an innocent baby's death. Our thoughts remain with everyone affected by this case."*

Police in Chester and Ellesmere Port continue their action against retail crime

Police across Chester and Ellesmere Port have been tackling retail crime again this month in a targeted operation.

Officers working in collaboration with Chester Against Business Crime and the Business Crime Reduction Partnership visited Chester City Centre and Cheshire Oaks to carry out high visibility patrols and plain clothed patrols as well as give advice and reassurance to staff working in the businesses. In February's operation, patrols arrested those caught committing crimes, while other officers arrested those wanted for previous theft offences.

People were caught committing crimes in establishments ranging from garden centres and pharmacies to supermarkets and clothing stores. People were found with alcohol, clothing and cosmetics running into the thousands collectively. There were 41 people dealt with across both Local Policing Units. From these, 50 offences were brought to justice with 19 crimes resulting in charge and remand, 15 crimes resulting in charge and bail, 14 crimes resulting in community resolution disposals, one summons and one caution. A number of those charged have since been to court already and more are due for hearings in March and April. An ASB advisory letter was also issued at Cheshire Oaks following an incident in which a large group of young people were reportedly attempting to cause damage to the children's play area and refusing to leave.

Insp Scott Fletcher said: *"This operation continues into its third month and builds on the work we have been doing with our partners and business community to make Ellesmere Port and Chester no go areas for criminals and thieves. We are taking a stand against those who think this type of crime is victimless. It has a real impact on businesses with costly consequences. We are determined to support them and help them to thrive along with our communities. The shocking number of shops and businesses being targeted and the amount of items stolen is staggering and shows why we need to keep up with our focus on this crime."*

Anneliese Budd, Business Crime Manager for the Cheshire West & North Wales Business Crime Reduction Partnership added: *"This operation works proactively and in partnership with the business community reinforcing the importance of reporting business crime and working together to support positive outcomes. We're pleased to be able to support Cheshire Constabulary in our shared endeavour to tackle the problem of retail theft across Cheshire West."*

If you see suspicious activity, please report it on 101 or via the website. If it is a crime in action please dial 999.

Crewe man handed criminal behaviour order following theft offences

A man has been banned from entering several commercial and residential areas in Crewe after officers secured a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO).

Christopher Evanson, of Barncroft Road, Crewe, was served with the four-year order on Thursday 27 February, following numerous incidents of bike thefts across the town. As a result, the 36-year-old has been banned from entering the Dorothy Flude Retail Park, as shown on the map. Evanson has also been banned from entering the curtilage of any residential property, and must not be in possession of a pedal cycle of any type or description. If he fails to comply with the CBO, Evanson will be committing a criminal offence which may result in recall to prison or fine.



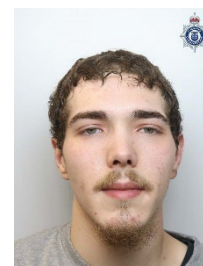
Insp Dan Welch, of Crewe Local Policing Unit, said: *"Evanson is a prolific bike thief that has frequently stolen from members of the public across the town for a long time; hopefully the securing of this four-year criminal behaviour order will deter such actions in the future. I also I hope the granting of this CBO, which bans him from entering a number of residential and commercial areas within the town, can provide some reassurance to residents that we are doing all we can to deter criminality and anti-social behaviour within Crewe."*

Anyone who encounters Evanson breaching the restrictions of his order is urged to contact Cheshire Police [via the website](#) or call 101, to report it.

Winsford man jailed after sexually assaulting a child

A man from Winsford has been jailed after he pleaded guilty to engaging in sexual activity with a child.

Bradley Challinor appeared at Chester Crown Court on Tuesday 4 March where he was sentenced to four years and four months in prison. The 24-year-old of Castlemill Court, Winsford, had previously pleaded guilty to engaging in sexual activity with a child and attempting to pervert the course of justice. He was also found not guilty of one count of rape at an earlier trial.



The court heard how in the early hours of Sunday 19 May 2024, Challinor sexually assaulted a 15-year-old girl in Winsford, by having sexual intercourse with the child. The victim reported that following the incident Challinor had encouraged her not to report the matter and had even purchased her a number of gifts in an attempt to persuade her not to contact police. Despite his pleas, the victim later made a disclosure to a family member who reported the incident to police.

An investigation was launched and Challinor was arrested in relation to the incident. During questioning he refused to answer any questions in relation to the sexual offences. Despite his silence, he was later charged in relation to the incident.

Following the sentencing, DC Felicity Gregory, of Northwich PVP Unit, said: *"Firstly, I would like to commend the victim for the strength and courage she has shown throughout this investigation, and I hope the sentence handed to Challinor will allow her to move forward with her life. Challinor is clearly a dangerous individual, he was in a position of trust, and he chose to take advantage of his victim. The fact that he attempted to bribe her not to report the incident to police, clearly demonstrates that he had no remorse for his actions and was only interested in himself. But thankfully as a result of the evidence gathered and the bravery of the victim, he is now being held accountable for his actions."*

In addition to the custodial sentence Challinor was ordered to sign the sexual offender's register and comply with a sexual harm prevention order for life.

DC Gregory added: *"Nobody should have to experience what the victim has been though and if anything can come from this case, I hope that it encourages other victims of sexual offences to come forward and report them to us. Cheshire Constabulary takes any allegation of sexual offences extremely seriously, and any allegation will be thoroughly investigated, with the wishes and needs of the victim as our main priority. Victims should never feel ashamed to talk about what they have been subjected to. They will receive the help and support they need from our specialist officers, as well as from other support agencies we work alongside, and all victims of sexual offences have the right to anonymity."*

To report any sexual offence, call Cheshire Constabulary on 101 or [report online](#). In an emergency always call 999. Information can also be given anonymously, via Crimestoppers, on 0800 555 111.

Reminder issued on usage of e-scooters after four seized under Crewe operation

Officers in Crewe are reminding residents of the rules around the usage of e-scooters after four were seized following reports of anti-social riding in pedestrianised areas.

Officers in Crewe have been responding to a number of reports of the anti-social riding of e-scooters in pedestrianised areas of the town, with four recently being seized by officers working under Operation Motors. Operation Motors was set up by Crewe's Local Policing Unit in direct response to concerns from local residents and aims to educate road users on their legality as well as seizing any seen being used outside of private land or are not a part certified providers under establish trial schemes, such as those in major cities, including Liverpool and Manchester. Officers have also been reminding the public that it is never legal for privately owned scooters to be ridden in public places and police do have the power and will to confiscate them where necessary.

PC Lorna Alix, of Crewe Local Policing Unit, said: *"It is not currently possible to get insurance for any privately owned e-scooters, which means it is illegal to use them on the road or in public spaces. You can however use them on private land with the permission of the landowner. Other than that, if you are using a private e-scooter you risk the vehicle being seized by police, who do have the powers to confiscate them. When it comes to younger people who may be inclined to use these scooters, I would like to remind parents of these rules and make sure their children are safe and do not use them where they should not be doing so."*

UPDATE | Ten people arrested in relation to the theft of almost £700,000 of plant equipment across the UK

Officers from Cheshire Police have arrested ten people in connection to the theft of high value plant equipment following a series of dawn raids in Lancashire.

Earlier today, Wednesday 5 March, officers from Ellesmere Port CID, with the support of officers from The National Construction and Agriculture Theft Team (NCATT) and Lancashire Rural Crime Team, executed eight warrants at premises across Padiham and Burnley, leading to the arrest of ten people. The six men and four women were all arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit theft and fraud. Below are the details of the warrants and arrests –

- Kay Street, Padiham – 44-year-old man and a 36-year-old woman arrested
- Caravan on Kay Street – no arrests made
- Milton Street, Padiham - 44-year-old man arrested
- Ribble Street, Padiham - 43-year-old man arrested
- Crosshills, Padiham – 69-year-old man arrested
- Crosshills, Padiham – 62-year-old man arrested
- Accrington Road – 57-year-old man arrested
- Devon Grove, Burnley– 29-year-old woman arrested

Another two 29-year-old women were also arrested at an address in Padiham.

The warrants follow a detailed investigation by Ellesmere Port CID, in partnership with the National Construction and Agriculture Theft Team (NCATT) and Lancashire Rural Crime officers, into the theft of plant

machinery from hire companies across the UK. They include incidents in Cheshire, Cumbria, Humberside, West Midlands, Lancashire, Hertfordshire, Avon and Somerset, Staffordshire, Merseyside, Derbyshire, North Yorkshire, West Mercia and Lincolnshire.

Following the warrants DS Graeme Carvell, of Ellesmere Port CID, who led the operation, said: *"Today's warrants are the culmination of a detailed investigation into the theft of around £700,000 worth of plant equipment from suppliers across the UK. Through our investigation we believe that those involved have been using false identifications in order to hire out plant equipment with no intent of ever returning the machines. I would like to thank all of the officers involved in this morning's operation for their support and I hope that the arrests provide reassurance to the business community, demonstrating that we take reports of this nature seriously."*

All ten suspects remain in custody at this time where they are being questioned by officers.

Residents invited to join independent panel to help improve equality and diversity at Cheshire Police

Residents from across Cheshire are being invited to join the Cheshire Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to help further improve equality and diversity at Cheshire Constabulary.

Cheshire's IAG was set up in February 2004 consists of a group of Independent Advisors who provide the force with independent guidance and advice on policies, procedures and police operations. All of the Independent Advisors are volunteers and as part of their role they act as 'critical friends' by advising and assisting Cheshire Constabulary and the Police & Crime Commissioner in the delivery of fair and equitable policing services. IAG members will have 'lived experience' or identify with one or more of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation.

What do they do?

- Provide advice and guidance from an equality perspective to the Constabulary and Commissioner on operations or incidents.
- Providing a sounding board for the Constabulary to understand the potential impact on police practices and policies.

The Constabulary and the Commissioner may also ask the advisors to appraise police activity from a community perspective.

Advisors:

- Ask challenging questions
- Provide constructive criticism
- Identify options for resolving policing problems
- Assist in maintaining community confidence in policing
- Advise on how to reassure communities in response to critical incidents.

If you live or work in Cheshire and are interested in having a chat about the role please email:

independent.advisory.group@cheshire.police.uk For more information about Cheshire IAG or to apply to become a member visit the [Cheshire IAG](#) webpage.

Man charged following incident in Congleton

A man has been charged following an incident in Congleton.

Matthew Wilbraham was arrested at around 3.43pm on Monday 3 March. Wilbraham has since been charged with outraging public decency and possession of a class A drug (cocaine). The 41-year-old has been bailed to appear at Crewe Magistrates' court on Wednesday 2 April 2025. The charges relate to an incident on Ullswater Road, Congleton, at 3.30pm on Monday 3 March.

Ask for Angela: Warrington officers met with positive results during night-time economy safeguarding operation

Officers from Warrington's Town Centre Beat Team conducted an operation at various bars and night-time economy venues to see how the scheme is working in the town.

With the days set to draw longer and better weather on the way, more of us will be heading out with friends, family and colleagues and visiting the night-time economy (NTE) venues such as bars, clubs and restaurants. In preparation for this, plain-clothed officers from Warrington Town Centre Beat Team, aided by a Council Licensing Officer, tested several premises in the town on Saturday 22 February to see how bar and NTE staff would react to members of the public in need and 'Asking for Angela'. Most NTE venues will be aware of the national Ask for Angela scheme, which is a safe way to seek support from trained members of staff without any fear of judgement. You can ask for Angela in a number of situations, including if you are on a date and it does not feel right, you have been sexually harassed, assaulted or spiked, need assistance from venue security or police officers, or even if you just need help in being safely seen off home in a taxi.

The evening of action fell under the Constabulary's Operation Banishing initiative, part of our ongoing commitment to tackle violence against women and girls and protect vulnerable people. Op Banishing involves regularly engaging with and reassuring the public whilst trying to disrupt those actively determined to cause harm and exploit the vulnerable. The specially trained officers who took part in the operation joined their uniformed colleagues and worked alongside Warrington Borough Council CCTV operators to tackle predatory and sexualised anti-social behaviour in a busy NTE setting, and despite it being a busy Saturday evening, officers were met with positive results. Bars including Gravity Social, Costello's and The Botanist on Time Square, all successfully responded to the officer's test when their staff were approached, recognising the individuals as potentially vulnerable people and immediately taking steps to safeguard them.

PC Juliet Taylor, who took part in the operation, said: *"No one should feel unsafe whilst on a night out in town and our officers regularly work alongside Warrington's venues in keeping everyone safe - we are always out and about on patrol and can support you in a number of ways when necessary. However, if for whatever reason you do not feel confident in speaking to a police officer, the Ask for Angela scheme is a way great of getting the help you need from specially trained staff. All these staff that we spoke to over the course of the evening deserve praise for their actions and taking the right steps to safeguard potentially vulnerable people and everyone who intends to go out and about in town should be confident these establishments will support them if required."*

"To have a 100% success rate is a really positive sign and we would encourage anyone who works in the night-time economy or hospitality sector and needs a refresher on the training to speak to their line management and utilise the free resources available on the [Ask For Angela website](#). I would like to mention that we would encourage staff not to panic if they find themselves in a situation. Do what these staff did and get the person asking to a place of safety and follow protocols as per their training. In an emergency always call 999."

In addition to the Ask for Angela testing, the team conducted further licensing checks at the venues and five stop and searches, one of which resulted in cannabis being located and seized.

Family of a man who died following a collision in Darnhall pay tribute

The family of a man who died in a collision in Darnhall have paid tribute to him.

Luke Nabi, 38, had been riding his motorbike along Hall Lane in Darnhall shortly before 7am on 26 February when he was involved in a collision with a car. Sadly, Luke died at the scene. The driver of the car, a 23-year-old woman from Nantwich, was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and has since been released under investigation pending further enquiries. Luke's family are being supported by specialist officers.



Luke Nabi with his late father Steve Nabi

Luke's family said: *"We are heartbroken that Luke was taken away from us so tragically in such awful circumstances. Luke was a very special person - one of a kind who lived his life to the full. He loved his family and friends fiercely and left a lasting impression on everyone who knew him. A cherished son to Gina and Steve, a devoted partner to Katie, and a loving stepdad to Daenerys, Luke was also a dear brother to Carly and Jake, and a doting uncle to Isabelle and Olivia. He was a much-loved nephew and a loyal friend to so many. Luke will be hugely missed by all who knew him. He was loving, caring, funny and selfless - Luke always had time for a chat with anybody. We love him dearly and our lives will never be the same without him."*

Anyone who witnessed the collision can contact police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting IML2035490.

Man charged following incident in Willaston

A man has been charged with criminal damage recklessly endangering life following an incident in Willaston.

David Taylor-Headon, of Lochleven Road, Wistaston, was arrested on Sunday 2 March. The 53-year-old has since been charged with criminal damage recklessly endangering life, dangerous driving, failing to provide a specimen of breath and failing to stop after an accident. Taylor-Headon has been remanded in custody to appear at Warrington Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 4 March. The charges relate to reports of an incident on Trevithick Place, Willaston, at 4.08pm on Sunday 2 March in which a car collided with a property.

Man arrested following Hartford drugs warrant

A man has been arrested and drugs seized following a warrant in Hartford by officers from Northwich Local Policing unit.

At around 8.30am today, Monday 3 March, officers executed a warrant at an address on Beaufort Close. While searching the property officers recovered a quantity of class C drugs (cannabis) along with other drugs paraphilia. A 28-year-old man was arrested at the address on suspicion of possession with intent to supply class B drugs. The man remains in custody at this time where he is assisting officers with their enquiries.

Insp Paul Heatley, of Northwich Local Policing Unit, said: *"I understand the concern that this incident is likely to cause, and I would like to thank residents in the local area for their ongoing support. Today's warrant is part of our ongoing efforts to tackle drug-related crime in the Northwich area and hope it provides reassurance for local residents. The impact of drugs is well known, and we're committed to doing all we can to ensure those responsible are held accountable. Information from the public is vital and I'd urge anyone with any information in relation to drug-related activity in their community to get in touch. Information can be reported online at www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime or via 101. Alternatively, you can report information anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111."*



Man who sexually assaulted a woman in a Warrington park jailed

A man who sexually assaulted a woman in Warrington in front of her child has been jailed.

John Whitfield, of Layton Close, Birchwood, Warrington, grabbed the woman from behind at around 1.55pm in July 2024. She was in a park in Warrington with her young son and had spotted 37-year-old Whitfield hanging around nearby shortly before the attack, he then went out of sight. Five minutes after that, he reappeared, came up behind her and



forced her into a wooded area. He attempted to rape her and committed further sexual assaults during the attack.

The victim fought back by kicking and biting Whitfield whilst trying to get free, her son was screaming nearby. She did manage to get free and was able to grab her son and run. Whilst doing so, she spotted that Whitfield's phone was on the ground and had the incredible presence of mind to pick it up. The victim then approached another woman who was nearby for help. The woman comforted her and called the police. The victim gave police a description of her attacker and Warrington response officers immediately made enquiries to locate the offender.

The phone picked up by the victim was key to the quick identification of Whitfield. He was found at his home address and arrested within an hour of the incident being reported. CCTV recovered by detectives during the investigation identified the exact clothing Whitfield had been wearing at the time of the attack. Whitfield had changed out of that clothing by the time he was arrested. Officers obtained a warrant for a further search of his residence and found the clothing hidden behind a shed in his back garden.

Whitfield was charged with attempted rape, sexual assault and assault by penetration and pled guilty at Liverpool Crown Court on 28 August 2024. He was sentenced on 28 February 2025 at Liverpool Crown Court to life imprisonment and must serve a minimum of 4 years 137 days before he can be considered for parole. If the Parole Board deem he is fit to be released at some point in the future, he will be on licence indefinitely and swiftly returned to prison if he reoffends. He was also handed an indefinite restraining order to prevent him from contacting the victim.

DS Dave Gerrard said: *"I would like to recognise the incredible strength and courage of the victim and her family throughout the investigation. The victim and the witness who stopped to help her were vital to our efforts to ensure Whitfield faced justice for this horrific crime. Our response officers used their initiative from the moment they arrived at the scene, collecting vital evidence that would rapidly lead us to the suspect. Our detectives and forensic staff then picked up and led the investigation, compiling compelling and overwhelming evidence that Whitfield was the man responsible for this terrible offence, resulting in his guilty plea. Our officers and staff are a formidable force and I am proud of the case they built against Whitfield. They have ensured that a dangerous individual is in prison where he belongs. I hope this reassures residents that when horrific incidents such as this, rarely, but sadly happen, we are on the front foot in our determination to protect the public by finding the person responsible for such horrific crimes against women."*

Crewe man jailed for possessing a 3D firearm

A Crewe man has been jailed for possessing a 3D viable firearm and other firearms offences.

Matthew Alcroft from Cheyney Walk, Crewe appeared at Chester Crown Court on 20th February to be sentenced after pleading guilty to Possession of a firearm of length less than 30cm/60cm – prohibited weapon, possessing ammunition for a firearm without a certificate and possessing a firearm when prohibited for five years. The 31-year-old was sentenced to 63 months in prison.



Acting on information, police arrested Alcroft on 6 November 2024 and executed a warrant at an address in Nantwich that he was associated with. Officers found a 3D printed firearm on the top of a chest of drawers. It was believed to be a 3D handgun, containing one bullet in the chamber and four bullets in its clip, and deemed a viable firearm. A forensic expert tested the firearm and confirmed it was a prohibited firearm. Alcroft, who has been convicted for previous offences which meant he was not authorised to have a firearm, was subsequently charged with the offences.

DC Lauren Constable said: *"There is no excuse for possessing an illegal firearm. This 3D printed gun is thought to be the first in the county to be seized and destroyed and we want it to be the last. Alcroft would only say that he found the gun on his car bonnet, but if that was indeed the case, what he should have done was*

report this to police and hand the gun to us. Alcroft is now paying the price for having this weapon in his possession."

If you have any concerns or information about firearms contact Cheshire Police by calling 101 or going to www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us. If you have a firearm you no longer want more information is available [here](#).

Man charged following dog attack in Crewe

Officers investigating an incident where a man and a woman were attacked by a dog in Crewe have now charged a man in relation to the incident.

Shaun Nolan was arrested at around 12.20pm on Friday 28 February following the incident on Davenport Avenue, Crewe where a man and a woman were attacked. The 38-year-old has since been charged with owning a dangerous and out of control dog. Nolan is set to appear at Chester Magistrates' Court later

Dangerous driver jailed following Cheshire Police pursuit

A man who led officers from Cheshire Roads and Crime Unit on a dangerous pursuit has been jailed.

The incident began at around 2.45am on Thursday 30 January, when police received reports of a black Volkswagen Amarok Highline which was swerving over the M6 southbound near to junction 19 and had collided with a number of cones. Officers were deployed to the scene and a short time later the vehicle was sighted at junction 18, Middlewich. Police attempted to stop the vehicle, but the driver made off at speed, before exiting the motorway at junction 17, Sandbach.

The police helicopter attended, and a pursuit was subsequently authorised. Officers followed the vehicle as it travelled at speed through residential areas, driving towards Middlewich. A police stinger was used to slow the vehicle, and the pursuit was subsequently brought to a safe conclusion on Honiton Way, Middlewich.

The driver, Kyle Perkins, attempted to flee the scene, but he was quickly located and subsequently charged in relation to the incident. The 35-year-old of Oak Street, Clydach, Tonypany, appeared at Chester Crown Court on Friday 28 January where he pleaded guilty to dangerous driving, failing to provide a specimen for officers and failing to cooperate with a preliminary test. Perkins was sentenced to 17 months in prison and banned from driving for two years and eight months. He will also be required to undertake an extended retest.

Following the sentencing CI John Forshaw, of the Cheshire Police Roads and Crime unit, said: *"This was a 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. Thanks to our officers working together, we were able to keep up with the suspect and eventually bring his dangerous behaviour to an end. As a result of their work another dangerous driver has been removed from the streets of Cheshire and he is now behind bars. This should serve as an example that if you try and commit crime in Cheshire, we will find you, and you will be arrested for your actions."*

Latest Cheshire Appeals

Police appeal for information following burglary in Audlem

Officers are appealing for any witnesses to get in touch following a burglary in Audlem.

At around 9.05pm on Wednesday 5 March, police were called to reports of a burglary at an address in Whitchurch Road, Audlem. The incident is believed to have occurred at some time between around 6.45pm and 8.30pm that evening. During the burglary, unknown offenders gained access to the property and stole a quantity of jewellery, watches, designer items, and cash. As part of enquiries, officers are asking anyone who witnessed what happened, saw anything suspicious, or has any relevant footage to get in touch with them.

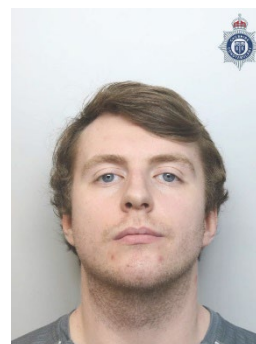
DS Laura Fox of Eastern CID said: *"We would like to reassure residents in the area that we are doing all we can to trace those responsible. As part of our investigation, we would urge any witnesses to get in touch with us. The same goes for anyone who saw anything suspicious around the time the incident is believed to have occurred, or anyone with any relevant CCTV, video doorbell or dashcam footage. Anyone with any information is asked to contact Cheshire Police via cheshire.police.uk/tell-us or call 101, quoting IML-2041185."*

Police appeal to trace wanted man from Widnes

Police are appealing for help to locate a wanted man from Widnes.

Callum Taylor, 26, is wanted for failing to appear in court. He is described as white, around 6'2" tall and with mousey brown hair. Taylor is from Widnes and has links to Liverpool and Ellesmere Port.

Anyone with information on his whereabouts can call 101 or 999, quoting 25000148749.



Police appeal to trace wanted man from Crewe

Police in Ellesmere Port are appealing for help from the public in tracing a wanted man from Crewe.

Mark Latham, 53, is wanted on recall to prison. Latham is described as white, around 5'7" tall, with short/thinning brown hair and green eyes. He is from Crewe but has connections to both the Ellesmere Port and the Liscard area of Wirral.

Anyone with any information regarding Latham's whereabouts is asked to contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the website, quoting 25000090854.



Appeal for information following sexual assault in Winsford

Police are appealing for information from the public following reports that a child was sexually assaulted in Winsford.

The incident is reported to have occurred in November 2023, however the matter was not reported to police until December 2024. The victim, a 11-year-old girl, reported that at around 3.30pm on Thursday 16 November 2023, she was walking on the public footpath bordering Over Hall Primary School when she was approached from behind by an unknown man who sexually assaulted her. Following the incident the man was fled the scene on foot in the direction of Over Hall Primary School.



Drawing of the tattoo on the suspects wrist.

The suspect was described as a tall white man with broad shoulders and possibly with ginger arm hair. He was wearing dark clothing and had his hood up at the time of the offence. He was also described as having a tattoo on his wrist and smelling of cigarettes.

Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and officers are appealing for anyone with any information to get in touch.

DC Felicity Gregory of Northwich PVP Unit said: *"I understand the concern that this incident is likely to cause, and I would like to reassure residents that we are doing all we can to trace the person responsible. The victim in the case is being provided with specialist support and as part of our investigation I'm keen to hear from anyone who may have witnessed the incident or anyone with any information which may aid the investigation. While I understand this incident took place over a year ago, even the smallest amount of information could prove vital, and I would urge anyone with any information to get in touch."*

Anyone with any information is asked to contact Cheshire Police on 101, or at www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us, quoting 24001038137. Information can also be reported anonymously 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