

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

Week ending 16th February 2025

Cheshire News & Appeals

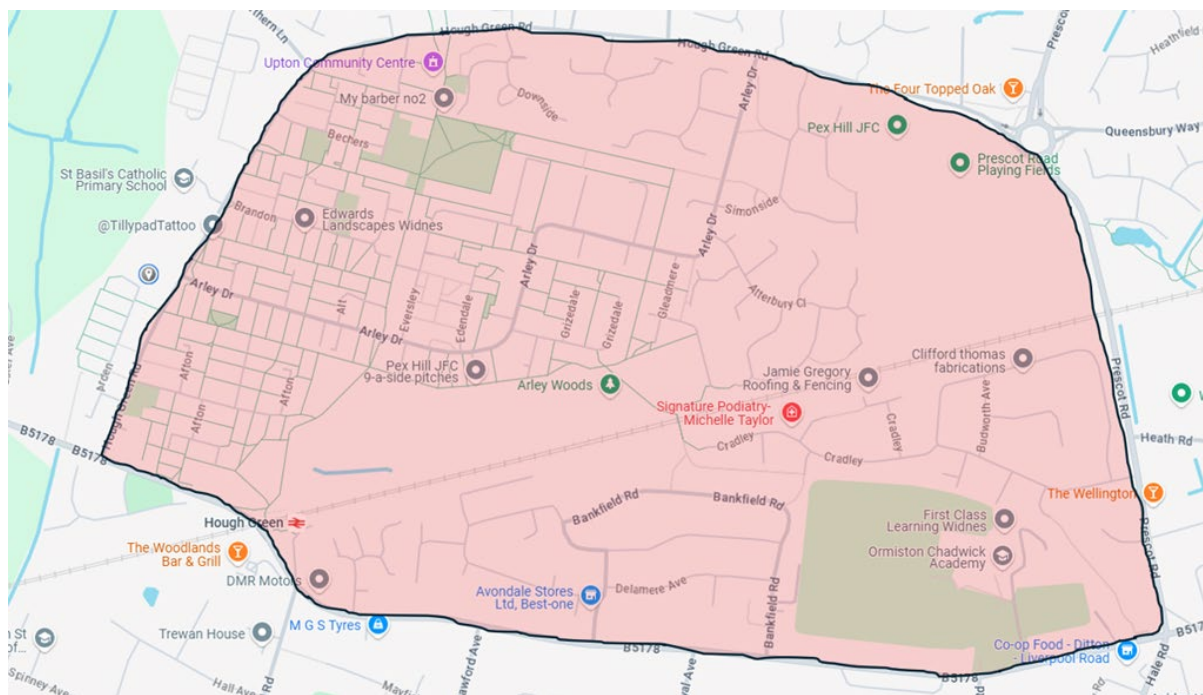


Latest Cheshire News

Extra stop and search powers granted in Widnes

Extra stop and search powers have been granted in Widnes in response to a concerning incident today (Saturday 15 February).

Officers in Widnes have been given more powers to stop and search anyone they suspect of carrying a weapon. It was reported that a large group of youths had descended in Bechers and chased a man. Officers attended and made a search of the area. No arrests were made, no weapons were found and there no further reports. As a precaution to prevent any further issues the powers have been granted temporarily under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994). The order means that officers can stop and search any person or vehicle they believe may be carrying weapons or causing serious violence in a particular area, whether or not they have any grounds of suspicion. The powers will be in place from 6.23pm today (15 February) and will remain in place until 6pm tomorrow (16 February). It applies to the area displayed on the map, namely Bechers, bounded by and including Hough Green Road, Prescott Road, and the B5178.



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

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

Serial domestic abuser from Chester jailed

A 59-year-old man who physically abused, degraded and controlled his partner has been jailed for over a year and handed a restraining order.



Steven Ison appeared at Chester Crown Court on Monday 10 February, where he was jailed for 18 months after pleading guilty to assault and criminal damage offences. Ison, of Aldford Road, Upton, was also handed a five-year restraining order, preventing him from contacting his victim. During his court hearing, it was heard that in August 2024 a Cheshire Police Constable attended the address of a 34-year-old woman following concerns for her welfare. Upon arriving at the address, the Constable noticed visible injuries and enquired into how she sustained them, to which she replied, 'Idi, Idi did it'. She was referring to Ison, her 59-year-old ex-partner. The victim told the officer that Steven Ison had been released from prison a day prior, having completed a sentence for assaulting her, and had strict conditions not to make contact. But despite this, upon his release he asked if she could meet him at his address.

Ison made threats towards her and accused her of cheating on him. He became angry and aggressive, taking her phone from her and going through it to look for any evidence, smashing it when he found nothing. It was at this point Ison became violent, verbally degrading the victim, before going on to headbutt her. The force of the headbutt resulted in considerable swelling to the victim's head as well as a large cut. Ison then continued to hit her, causing several other injuries. Officers subsequently arrested Ison at his address in Upton on suspicion of assault and criminal damage, and he was taken into custody for questioning. He answered 'no comment' to all questions put to him. The victim was understandably left considerably shaken by this violent ordeal and did not initially feel confident in supporting a police investigation into Ison's horrific attack.

Western Area Investigation Team's PCs Walker and Cochrane, and then Upton Beat Manager PC Hackett, went above and beyond in supporting the victim's needs and vulnerability, developing her confidence and helping her in disclosing Ison's torrent of abuse. This resulted in officers uncovering that the victim had been the subject of a range of abuse by her former partner on several occasions between 2023 and 2024. This, in turn, resulted in Ison being further arrested on suspicion of four additional assaults. After being charged, Ison was set to start trial at Chester Crown Court on Monday 10 February, but at the last minute he pleaded guilty to assaulting a person thereby occasioning them actual bodily harm and criminal damage. Alongside his 18-month prison sentence, Ison was issued with a restraining order that will come into place upon his release from prison. The order prevents him from contacting the victim for a period of five years and he could face an immediate prison sentence if he chooses to breach it.

Following the sentencing, CI Paul Fegan, of Chester Local Policing Unit, said: *"Prior to his arrival in court, Steven Ison refused to accept responsibility for his actions but when faced with the evidence against him he was forced to admit his guilt. We have a zero tolerance stance to abuse of any kind, with violence against women and girls a force priority that our officers work very hard to combat day-in-day-out. I would like to commend the victim on her bravery in coming forward to police and disclosing how she was treated. I know this could not have been easy for her, so her bravery and courage are truly admirable. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank PCs Walker, Hackett and Cochrane from Chester AIT and Beat Teams for their continued efforts in helping her build her confidence to allow her to feel strong enough to speak about the abuse she suffered. I do hope that, while we may not be able to undo the horrific abuse our victim suffered, Ison's return to prison and subsequent issuing of a five-year restraining order will give her the confidence she needs to begin to move forward with her life and not live in fear of violence anymore."*

If you, or someone you know, are a victim of domestic abuse please report it by calling 101 or visiting www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us. In an emergency always call 999.

Police urge people to be vigilant of fraudsters contacting elderly Crewe residents

Cheshire Police are warning people in Crewe to be vigilant against fraudsters contacting elderly residents following a number of concerning incidents reported to police.

There are several reports coming in of incidents where elderly residents have been targeted by scammers posing as police officers. The fraudsters contacted the victims by phone, claiming to be from the police, telling them their cards had possibly been compromised and that they needed to take action. This is not the case and police would never phone people asking them to hand over cards or money.

Insp Dan Welch said: *"This is very concerning. I would urge anyone who has elderly relatives or neighbours to warn them not to be taken in by this scam. There are a number of ways to prevent fraud, and I would advise you make them familiar with these tips to keep them safe from fraudsters."*

Here are some safety tips to help prevent courier fraud:

- Never provide personal or financial information to someone you don't know, especially over the phone.
- If you receive a suspicious call, hang up immediately.
- Contact your bank directly using a known and trusted phone number to verify any requests for money or sensitive information.
- Never withdraw large sums of money based on instructions from someone claiming to be from the police or a bank.
- If you think you have been a victim of courier fraud, contact the police immediately on 101 or Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.
- Remember, genuine organisations will never cold call you asking for this information. If you're ever in doubt, hang up and contact the organization directly using a known and trusted phone number.

Sheffield woman charged with theft offences

Officers have charged a woman in connection to a theft in Warrington town centre.

Elenka Georgieva, of Shoreham Street, Sheffield, was arrested at 12.55am on Wednesday 12 February at Sheffield Train Station by colleagues from the British Transport Police. The 32-year-old has since been charged with one count of theft from a person and has been remanded in custody. Georgieva is next set to appear at Chester Magistrates' Court on Friday 14 February. The charges relate to an incident that occurred in Warrington town centre at around 1.06pm on Wednesday 12 February.

Operation Apollo continues crackdown on County Lines with over 300 years in jail time secured

Operation Apollo has reached a significant milestone in its ongoing efforts to tackle County Lines, with over 300 years of collective sentences secured.

The operation was launched in November 2022 by Cheshire Police's Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) in a bid to proactively target County Lines operating across the county. Since then, Operation Apollo has played a vital role in dismantling county lines, disrupting drug supply networks, and bringing offenders to justice.

<https://youtu.be/K-kMKfU0-tM>

Their work thus far has resulted in a combined total of 300 years in custodial sentences being handed out to offenders who have tried to establish drug supply lines within Cheshire. During this financial year, Operation Apollo has secured 57 arrests and closed 61 county lines operating within Cheshire. Detectives have enlisted a range of tactics throughout the year to arrest and remand those involved in the drug supply and put them before the courts. The team have also seized substantial quantities of drugs with a total estimated value of £129,560, all of which were destined for the streets of Cheshire. 44 weapons and more than £65,000 in cash have also been seized as a result of the work undertaken by Op Apollo. In addition to their proactive work, much of which is intelligence led, the team continue to work closely with external partners and neighbouring forces to ensure communities within Cheshire are safeguarded from those involved in serious and organised crime.

DI Robert Balfour, from Cheshire Constabulary's Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: *"This latest milestone reflects the dedicated team of officers and staff that work tirelessly to protect Cheshire from county line drug networks and supply chains. We are well aware of the devastating impact illegal drugs can have on communities, while those who supply them reap the benefits and live luxuriously. Drug related crime fuels violence and anti-social behaviour, and those who are most vulnerable, including children and at-risk adults, are often preyed upon. I want to make it clear that this type of crime is far from victimless and the ripple effect it can have on people's lives is significant. That is why Operation Apollo will continue to target those who are foolish enough to believe they can establish illegal drug supply lines here in our county and go undetected. Our work speaks for itself and the message is clear, those found to be involved in county lines will be put before the courts and face the full weight of the law. If you believe a county line is operating in your community, please get in touch with us here at Cheshire Police and we will take action."*

If you believe drug activity is taking place in your community and have information, please contact Cheshire Constabulary [via our website](#) or you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Man arrested in Crewe thanks to community intelligence

Officers have arrested a man in Crewe on suspicion of attempted burglary thanks to information from an eagle-eyed member of the public.

At around 3.30am on Thursday 13 February, police were contacted by a concerned member of the public who reported suspicious activity at the Morrisons Daily Store on Gainsborough Road. The caller reported that they had witnessed a man climbing over a rear wall. Officers were deployed to the store and on arrival they spotted the man inside the secure service yard at the back of the building. The 39-year-old local man was arrested on suspicion of attempted burglary and theft. He remains in police custody where he is assisting officers with their enquires.

Sgt Andrew Shields, of Crewe Response Team, said: *"This is a fantastic result which truly shows the value of information from the local community. Thanks to information from an eagle-eyed member of the public, we've arrested a man on suspicion of theft and attempted burglary. If you have any information about other criminal activity taking place in Crewe then please report it to us on 101, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 and we will take action."*

Three charged with drug offences in Nantwich

Three people have been charged with drug offences following an investigation by Crewe Proactive CID.

A 45-year-old woman, a 43-year-old man, and a 17-year-old boy were all arrested on Monday 10 February at an address on Station View, Nantwich. Lynsey Allan and Adam Kerr, both of Station View, Nantwich, have since been charged with being concerned in the supply of crack cocaine, and being concerned in the supply of heroin. The teenager, who is of the Salford area, has been charged with being concerned in the supply of crack cocaine, being concerned in the supply of heroin, and two counts of possession with intent to supply class A drugs (crack cocaine, heroin). All three have been remanded in custody to appear at Chester Magistrates' Court today, Wednesday 12 February. The charges relate to an investigation into county lines drug dealing in Nantwich.

Tribute issued following fatal collision near Northwich

A man who died following a fatal collision near Northwich has now been named.

Mark Bennett, 45, died on Wednesday 5 February following a collision on Dalefords Lane in Sandiway. Following his death Marks family said: Mark Bennett, aged 45, was a father of four from Winsford and he will be sadly missed by family who have requested privacy at this time of grief.

Enquiries in relation to the collision are ongoing and officers are continuing to appeal for information in relation to the incident. Anyone with information or footage in relation to the collision is asked to call Cheshire Police on 101, quoting IML 2021216, give the details via <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report> or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800



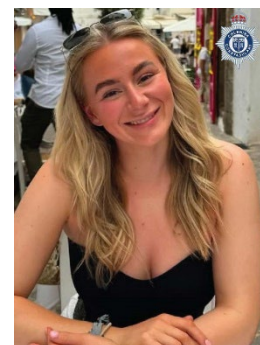
Tribute issued following death of Warrington woman in America

The mother and boyfriend of a 23-year-old woman from Warrington who died America have paid tribute to her.

Lucy Harrison died on Friday 10 January following an incident at her father's home in Prosper, Texas. An inquest into the circumstances surrounding her death was opened at Warrington Coroners court on Wednesday 12 February. The inquest was adjourned until Friday 28 March 2024.

Following the hearing, Lucy's family said: *"Lucy was life. she lived it fiercely and fearlessly, not being afraid to feel all that life has to offer. Lucy unashamedly loved – she had a huge capacity to love and be loved. She was the embodiment of wonderful contradictions; she adored travel and being away, experiencing new places and cultures, yet at the same time, she loved nothing more than snuggling up in her pyjamas with her candles on at home. She could be dramatic and elaborate situations like it was the end of the world, yet she could also be straight talking and not afraid to have bold conversations. She was truly thriving in life and although this gives us great comfort, we are utterly heartbroken at the loss of our beautiful, gorgeous Luce."*

Lucy's family have requested that their privacy is respected at this difficult time.



Man jailed for raping a child in Northwich

A man has been jailed for raping a child in Northwich.

Connor Behan appeared at Chester Crown Court on Friday 7 February where he was sentenced to 18 years in prison. The 33-year-old of Heath Avenue, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, was previously convicted of a string of sexual offences following a seven-day trial at Chester Crown Court.

On Wednesday 18 December, Behan was found guilty by unanimous verdict of multiple rapes of a girl under 13, multiple sexual assaults by touching of a child under 13, and engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child on multiple occasions. He was found not guilty of an additional count of sexual assault by touching of a child under 13.

Cheshire Police launched an investigation into the abuse in October 2022, following a disclosure made by the victim to a teacher at her school. The jury heard how Behan had sexually assaulted the victim on multiple occasions, starting in May 2019, when the victim was just seven years old. As part of the investigation, a seminal detection dog was deployed which found traces of Behan's semen on a blanket owned by the victim. Behan was immediately arrested and subsequently charged.

DC Georgia Hughes, who led the investigation, said: *"Firstly, I would like to commend the victim for the strength and courage she has shown throughout this case, and I hope the sentence handed to Behan will provide her closure and a chance to move on with her life. Behan is a dangerous individual, who sexually*



abused a little girl for years. He showed no remorse throughout the entire investigation, and even made his victim relive the experiences in court. Thankfully, as a result of the evidence gathered and the bravery of the victim, the jury were able to see through his lies and he is now being held accountable for his actions."

DC Hughes added: *"Cheshire Constabulary takes any allegation of sexual offences extremely seriously, no matter how long ago they relate to, as this case shows. 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 for life."*

New command at Warrington following retirement of longest serving LPU Inspector and Chief Inspector

Rob McLoughlin is set to become Warrington's newest Chief Inspector after being passed the reins by Chief Inspector Neil Drum, who is set to retire from the force after joining the Constabulary in 1997.



Chief Inspector Neil Drum (left) and Chief Inspector Rob McLoughlin

Rob McLoughlin began his career with Cheshire Constabulary in 2002 at the age of 18 and has since dedicated his service to policing the communities of northern Cheshire. Initially assigned to Widnes, Rob spent the first five years of his career serving as a constable across various policing areas within Halton. In 2007, he transitioned to the role of Detective Constable, dedicating seven years to the CID and Northern Crime Unit in Warrington before being promoted to Sergeant.

As a Sergeant, Rob served in Response, Beat and as the Proactive CID Detective Sergeant for Runcorn. Upon his promotion to Inspector, he undertook the roles of Beat Inspector for Widnes Local Policing Unit (LPU) and Detective Inspector for the Northern Area Investigation Team in Halton. More recently, as Chief Inspector, Rob held the positions of LPU Commander at Runcorn and Detective Chief Inspector for the Northern Area. In addition to his command at Warrington LPU, Rob serves as Cheshire Constabulary's force lead for robbery investigations as well as night-time economy policing.

Outside of work, Rob is married with two daughters. He enjoys spending quality time with his family and following football.

Upon his appointment as Chief Inspector for Warrington, Rob expressed his pride, stating: *"I am extremely proud to serve as Chief Inspector at Warrington. My colleague Chief Inspector Neil Drum is leaving the LPU in a very healthy position but my role is crucial in continuing to ensure our officers receive the support necessary to meet the needs and expectations of our residents. I have a deep personal connection and investment in this town, having spent several years policing the area in various frontline roles, I can definitely understand and relate to the challenges of neighbourhood policing and recognise the impacts on our communities - I am committed to ensuring public confidence in the police."*

"My priority is to put our residents first, striving to make our area an even safer environment for all who live, work, and visit our great town. Supported by a strong team and established relationships with our partner agencies, I plan to harness their passion and energy to enhance safety in Warrington. I am a strong advocate for preventive and proactive policing and expect my officers to maintain a commitment to hard work, pragmatic policing and keep their composure. I will ensure that our officers excel in the basics and work tirelessly to target those who seek to harm our communities."

CI McLoughlin succeeds Chief Inspector Neil Drum, who is set to retire on Tuesday 11 February after spending the majority of his policing career serving the people and communities of Warrington in most policing ranks. Neil began his policing career in 1997 as a Police Constable with the response team at Warrington's Arpley Street Station and wanted to join Cheshire Constabulary because of its upstanding reputation.



Neil during his first few years at Cheshire

Following his start in Warrington, Neil then became a Detective Constable with the town's CID unit, before being promoted to the rank of Sergeant in March 2003 and serving in Wilmslow, Widnes and Warrington in Patrol, Detective, Neighbourhood and Staff Officer roles.

The majority of Neil's work has centred around protecting and serving Warrington's neighbourhoods. In 2010, Neil was appointed to the Town Centre Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU) Temporary Inspector role for 14 months. His time here would greatly benefit the town, with the NPU being awarded the Kevin Brinkman Northern Area Award for making a significant reduction in crime and incident demand and an effective robust policing approach. Neil then led the Warrington Central NPU, the largest NPU in the Northern Area from 2012. In July of 2015, with the introduction of the Local Policing Unit model, Neil would become Neighbourhood Inspector, meaning he was in charge of managing all six Beat Management Teams that sit within Warrington LPU. He would be in this role for the next five years.

In November 2020, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, Neil faced new previously unseen challenges alongside the day-to-day running of the largest LPU in Cheshire, following his promotion to his current role of Warrington's Chief Inspector and has led the LPU to date. Whilst here, he played a part in the delivery of the AIT Proof of Concept Team at Warrington in 2022 and oversaw the LPU achieving reductions in incident demand, reduced crime and improved arrest and detection rates. Neil has served at Warrington at PC, Sergeant, Inspector and Chief Inspector rankings and is the longest-serving Inspector and Chief Inspector to serve in Warrington.

CI Neil Drum said: *"There is never a quiet day here at Warrington, it's fast-paced and demanding, so you are never bored - I will miss that pace and I will miss the vibrancy of working at Warrington and I will certainly miss the people. The journey we have taken over the last few years in terms of our performance improvements and making a difference and keeping people safe has been superb and that is down to the work of everyone here at Warrington - it is a testament to the calibre of officers, staff and volunteers we've got. We have some fantastic officers, staff and volunteers at Warrington who do some tremendous work day-in-day-out to help keep the public safe. To lead people like that and to do extraordinary things has been an honour - that I would say is the highlight of my career."*

"I have seen many people come and go from Warrington, many leadership teams change and other changes and many serious and tragic big incidents, but the pinnacle of my career has been leading Warrington LPU. I am very passionate about policing in Warrington and keeping people safe, so to obtain the post of Chief Inspector has been an absolute privilege. I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who works and has worked at Warrington LPU, and across the Northern Area, for their outstanding work, dedication to duty and commitment to deliver safer communities and achieve the results they have. I am proud to see the Constabulary praised for its excellent performance in the recent PEEL inspection report and be amongst the best forces in the country, is testament to the hard work of everyone across the county over the last three years."

Over the next few months, Neil intends to spend quality time with his family, with plans for a much-deserved holiday with his wife Jayne, who works for the Constabulary's Northern Area Performance Team, and their two sons, Jack and Josh, as well as a trip to see his brother, Mark, in Sydney.

Chief Inspector Drum added: *"I have yet to determine my future path, but I certainly intend to do something productive, something of interest and I will start to shape that path in the coming months. I love my military history, that's one of my passions, so doing some travelling is definitely on the radar. In the short term, my intention is to take some time with my family and enjoying watching my sons do their boxing and watching them develop."*

Despite all he has planned for the future, Neil has reassured incoming Chief Inspector McLoughlin, Area Commander Superintendent Adam Ross and the hard-working policing team at Warrington's Arpley Street station that he will make sure to come in and visit from time to time to see how they are faring in his absence.

Everyone at Warrington LPU and the wider Cheshire Constabulary family wish Chief Inspector Neil Drum the very best in his retirement ahead of his final working day on Tuesday 11 February.

Two men charged with drug offences in Nantwich

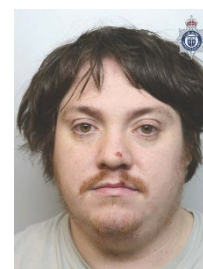
Officers from Crewe Proactive have charged two men with drugs offences in Nantwich.

Ebrima Touray, 29, and Sheriffo Touray, 24, were arrested at around 2.10pm on Thursday 6 February after officers on patrol spotted suspicious behaviour near to an address on Cronkinson Oak, Nantwich. The men, both of Charles Street, Sutton-in-Ashfield, have since been charged with being concerned in the supply of crack cocaine, concerned in the supply of heroin, two counts of possession with intent to supply class A drugs, (heroin and crack cocaine), and possession of criminal property. The pair have been remanded in custody and are set to appear at Chester Crown Court on Monday 10 March.

Runcorn man jailed after sending explicit messages to a child

A 27-year-old man has been jailed for two years after sending sexually explicit images and videos to a decoy profile purporting to be a 13-year-old girl.

Connor Grant, 27, was handed a two year prison sentence after he pleaded guilty to one count of engaging in sexual communication with a child and one count of attempting to incite a child to engage in sexual activity before he was due to start trial.



Between 20 August 2024 and 21 August 2024, Grant had directly messaged an account belonging to a 13-year-old girl. Unbeknownst to Grant, this account was a decoy account. After initially engaging in conversation with the 'girl' on Facebook Messenger, she told Grant that she was 13 and he responded by saying "damn you're young" and that he was 27. Grant provided her with his phone number and asked if they could continue talking on WhatsApp for fear that his account was being monitored by social services. On WhatsApp the exchange quickly became sexual.

The child made it abundantly clear that she was under the age of consent, but this did not stop Grant from going into graphic detail about sexual intercourse and even sending her graphic videos and images of sexual

acts and explaining the actions in them. Grant then began to request images of her and even went so far as to tell the child that he could help her lose her virginity, despite saying that those who do engage in intercourse with anyone under the age of 16 can "get arrested big time and put on the sex offenders register... for life". Despite this, he continued sending sexually explicit videos and images to her.

Throughout this conversation, Grant repeatedly requested that the girl delete the chats that had been recorded between them and asked whether her parents had gone through her phone. His behaviour finally came to an end on 21 August 2024, when officers received a phone call from a paedophile hunter group, telling them they were outside of Grant's address and going to confront him.

Two officers attended the scene and found the group outside with Grant, who was initially calm, but after being told he was going to be placed in handcuffs he became aggressive. Grant, refusing to be handcuffed, lashed out at officers whilst he was being captured, which resulted in the officers being injured by the spray itself. Despite this, they eventually secured Grant and he was taken into custody. Following Grant's arrest, officers conducted a number of digital devices including mobile phones, game consoles and laptops with hard drives. Subsequent enquiries would reveal that the messages sent on both Facebook and WhatsApp were linked to his devices.

During his interview, Grant answered no comment to all questions posed to him regarding sexual communication with the child. Despite refusing to answer any questions, Grant pleaded guilty to one count of engaging in sexual communication with a child and one count of attempting to incite a child to engage in sexual activity in December 2024 and was sentenced to two years imprisonment on Friday 7 February. He was also handed a Sexual Harm Prevention Order that will remain active until 2035. Under the order, Grant is banned from being in any household where a child under 16 is present unless with the express approval of Social Services and having unsupervised communication with any female child under the age of 16. Grant is also banned from using any device that can access the internet unless he notifies officers that he has access to it and can immediately provide it to them for inspection.

DC Becky Warburton, of the force's Protecting Vulnerable People Unit, said: *"Grant, by his own admission, was most definitely aware that what he was doing was wrong and was only out to satisfy his own warped sexual desires. Whilst, in this instance, there was no direct victim involved, Grant's conviction means that we have taken a dangerous paedophile, who was intent on using the internet and social media to sexually exploit vulnerable people, off of the streets. Not only this but following his release from prison, Grant will be continually monitored by our officers under a Sexual Harm Prevention Order to ensure that he does not reoffend. We are committed to pursuing and bringing to justice those who engage in online child sexual exploitation and play a part in the sexual abuse of children, and I hope that the sentence that has been handed to Grant deters others from committing similar offences."*

To report any sexual offence call Cheshire Constabulary on 101 or visit cheshire.police.uk/ro/report/rsa/alpha-v1/v1/rape-sexual-assault-other-sexual-offences. Always call 999 in an emergency. Information can also be passed anonymously, via Crimestoppers, on 0800 555 111.

Man jailed for possession of indecent images and voyeurism

A former teacher in Macclesfield has been sentenced for possessing indecent images of children and voyeurism.

Richard Lees, a former teacher at a school in Macclesfield, appeared at Chester Crown Court on Friday 7 February where he was sentenced to two years. The 43-year-old, of Heald Green, Cheadle, had previously pleaded guilty to five offences of voyeurism, possession of indecent images of children, and possession of extreme pornography.



Lees was first arrested in July 2022 for an unrelated offence which resulted in no further action against him. However, as part of this initial investigation, officers seized a number of devices from his home address. This included his personal hard drive and a school-issued laptop, which he still had in his possession despite him leaving the school the year before.

During an investigation, a number of indecent images of children were discovered on the laptop and hard drive, including images of category A, B and C, plus extreme pornography. Lees was arrested in relation to these offences and denied possession of the images, stating someone else must have gained access to the device. However, following enquiries, he was charged in September 2023.

As further enquiries were carried out before the case appeared in court, more material was discovered on the encrypted hard drive. This included voyeurism offences where he had secretly filmed women in the bathroom of his previous address in Macclesfield without their knowledge. Further upskirting images believed to relate to female pupils were also discovered. Data suggested these images were taken on school grounds when Lees was still in employment there as a rugby coach. He was arrested for these offences in September 2024 and charged the following month.

DC Alison Shields said: *"Firstly, we would like to commend the victims of the voyeurism for their courage throughout this investigation and subsequent court process. Lees held a position of trust and should have been someone children could go to for support. Instead, he was hiding a twisted secret. He even had the audacity to store some of the indecent images of children on a school-issued laptop. Thankfully, Lees' shocking crimes were uncovered and our officers worked hard to gather a catalogue of evidence against him and bring him before the courts. I hope this will also encourage anyone who may have been a victim of any similar offences to come forward and report it to us."*

Two men sentenced for supplying class A drugs in Northwich.

Two men have been sentenced for their involvement in the supply of class A drugs in Northwich.

Kane Farghaly and Paul Slicher were both sentenced at Chester Crown Court on Friday 7 February after they admitted various drugs offences. Farghaly, of Pulford Close, Northwich, was sentenced to 50 months in prison after he pleaded guilty to two counts of being concerned in the supply of class A drugs (heroin and cocaine). The 25-year-old also admitted possession of class B drugs (cannabis). Slicher, aged 37, of Chester Way, Northwich, was sentenced to 24-months in prison, suspended for 18 months after he pleaded guilty to being concerned in the supply of class A drugs (Heroin).



The court heard how in October 2024 police uncovered evidence suggesting that Farghaly and Slicher, were linked to two mobile phones which had been used for the sale of class A in the Northwich area. Arrests attempts for Farghaly were undertaken on Friday 25 October, and upon entering his address he was witnessed throwing a mobile phone out of a first-floor window. The phone was quickly recovered and during analysis officers recovered numerous messages from people asking to purchase class A drugs.

Farghaly was arrested on suspicion drugs offences and during a search of his address officers recovered a small quantity of cannabis and a knuckleduster. Slicher was arrested later the same day after he presented himself to officers at Northwich police station. During questioning both men denied their involvement in the supply of illegal drugs, however upon appearing in court they pleaded guilty to all of the charges.

Following the sentencing PC Dean Butterworth, of Northwich Proactive CID, said: *"Illegal drugs have a devastating impact on our communities as such, cutting off supplies of and removing drug dealers from our communities is of paramount importance. Although we do extensive work with our partners to break the cycle of serious and organised crime, we cannot achieve this alone. We need the public to be our eyes and ears, and to come forward with information regarding drug dealing in their communities. Your support is crucial in the ongoing fight against drug dealing and all other forms of serious and organised crime. Together we can help to make Northwich an even safe place to live, work and visit. If you have any information about illegal drug activity or any other criminal activity taking place in our town, please get in touch. You will be listened to, and we will investigate the matter."*

To report drug activity in your area, call 101 or visit <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/ro/report>, in an emergency always call 999. You can also call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Macclesfield LPU puts on show of force to tackle burglaries

Macclesfield Local Policing Unit officers have been patrolling the streets of Wilmslow and surrounding areas following a rise in burglaries.

As well as increasing patrols in the area to deter thieves, detectives have also been working with specialist departments in the force, such as forensics and the intelligence bureau, to track down those responsible for the burglaries and have been sharing information with our neighbouring forces to close in on those responsible. Officers have also been advising residents to be vigilant and to report suspicious activity. The burglaries have generally taken place across Alderley Edge, Wilmslow, Prestbury and Poynton.

CI Zoe Bowden said: *"We totally understand the impact having your home violated by thieves can have and we are treating this rise extremely seriously. We are making every effort to address the issue and find those responsible, including increasing our patrols in the area - stopping any vehicles we suspect are up to no good. We're using all the methods at our disposal and are relentless in our pursuit to get justice for the victims. As well as trying to track down the suspects, we have also been visiting residents to give them crime prevention advice to help make their homes more secure. I'd also urge people to tell us if they see something out of place or that doesn't quite seem right. Please report it to us on 101 or [via the website](#). By working together, we can deter thieves and help prevent burglaries in your area."*

Here are some handy tips to help you secure your home:

- Consider CCTV and a doorbell camera. If you have it, make sure it is working and recording.
- Ensure outside security lighting is in working order if you have it. And if you don't consider getting some - burglars are shy and don't like being in the spotlight.
- Smart plugs will help make it look like someone is in when you're not at home by enabling you to switch on lighting or even radios to make it look and sound like someone is in.
- If you haven't already considered it, get an alarm. If you have one check it's in good working order. In light of these thieves using first floor windows and doors to gain access, it's advisable to put your sensors on the first-floor windows and doors, rather just the ground floor.

For more tips go to the section of our [website](#).

<https://youtu.be/s4eutq7SEUE>

Latest Cheshire Appeals

Police are appealing for information following suspicious incident in Macclesfield

Detectives are investigating a report of a suspicious incident in Macclesfield.

Sometime between 6.10am and 6.30am today, Tuesday 11 February, a 26-year-old woman was walking in the South Park area, towards Maple Avenue, when she was approached from behind by an unknown man who grabbed her and brought her to the floor. The woman then got free and made off from the man. The victim is being supported by officers and enquiries are continuing to establish the circumstances.

DI Simon Mills said: *"We are in the early stages of our investigation and are working tirelessly to identify the suspect. We understand this may cause some concern in the community and we have increased patrols in the area to provide reassurance. Officers are carrying out house-to-house enquiries and checking CCTV and video doorbell cameras to identify the suspect, and the victim is being supported by specialist officers. We would urge any witnesses or anyone who was in the area around the time of the incident and saw anything suspicious to get in touch with us."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or [via the website](#) quoting IML- 2024876.

Police appeal for witnesses following Alsager ATM fraud

Police are appealing for witnesses following reports of ATM fraud in Alsager.

On 6 February police were made aware of suspicious activity at the ATM at Asda in Lawton Road, Alsager. A cloning device had been placed in the machine resulting in reports of at least three people having had their cards cloned and cash stolen from their accounts. The device was removed by staff and handed to police. CCTV is being reviewed and two suspects have been seen on the CCTV with the machine - enquiries are ongoing to identify them.

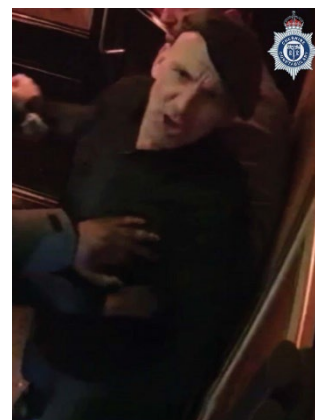
PC Lawrence Price said: *"I'd urge people to always be vigilant at any cash machine they use. As well as being aware of your surroundings and making sure no one is getting too close to you when you type in your pin number, check the machine for anything unusual. Things to look out for are devices attached to the machine – some are more obvious than others. If you do see something suspicious contact the police and if the ATM is attached to a shop, staff there too."*

Anyone who saw suspicious activity by the machine before or on 6 February should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting 25000086708. Alternatively, information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 08000 555 111.

CCTV image released following serious assault in Knutsford

Detectives have issued a CCTV image of a man they are looking to speak to after a man was seriously assaulted in Knutsford town centre.

At around 1.20am on Saturday 8 February police were called to reports of an incident at the Cuckoo Bar on Princess Street. Officers attended and found that the victim had been punch in the face and knocked unconscious during an unprovoked attack. The victim, a 31-year-old man from Sheffield, sustained head injuries as a result of the incident and was taken to Aintree Hospital where he is currently recovering from his injuries. Enquiries in relation to the incident are ongoing and as part of the investigation officers have now released a CCTV image of a man they are looking to speak to.



DS Thomas Binder, of Macclesfield CID, said: "Enquiries in relation to this incident are ongoing and we are committed to doing all we can to identify the person responsible. As part of our investigation, we are keen to speak to the man in the CCTV images as we believe he may hold important information. Anyone who recognises the man is urged to contact us on 101, or visit www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us, quoting IML 2022864. I would also like to appeal directly to the man in the CCTV images to get in touch."

Appeal for information following burglary in Mere.

Officers are appealing for information or footage following a burglary in Mere.

During the early hours of Sunday 2 February, police were called to reports of a burglary at an address on Chester Road in Mere. The offence is believed to have occurred at around 8pm on Saturday 1 February, in which unknown offenders have gained access to the address via the rear balcony before leaving the address in the direction of the golf course grounds behind. Officers are now appealing for anyone who has any information in relation to the incident to get in touch with them.

DS Laura Fox said: *"Enquiries have been ongoing since the incident was reported and as part of our investigation we would like to appeal to anyone who witnessed what happened to get in touch with us. The same goes for anyone who has any information, saw anything suspicious around the time of the incident, or has any relevant CCTV, video doorbell or dashcam footage. You can report information to Cheshire Police via cheshire.police.uk/tell-us or call 101, quoting IML-2018651."*

Police in Widnes advise residents to be vigilant following bike robberies

Following two attempted bike robberies and one robbery in Widnes over the weekend, officers are advising residents to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity to police.

There have been reports of youths on electric bikes targeting those on electric or expensive looking bikes and stealing them. On 8 February two Sur-on bikes were stolen from two teenage girls at around 10.40pm in Queens Avenue.

Insp Phil Brown said: *"We have been making several enquiries to find those responsible and have increased patrols in the area. I'd urge anyone who sees anything suspicious or anything that doesn't look right to contact police. If you have any CCTV, doorbell footage or Dash Cam footage in the Queens Avenue area which may have captured a number of youths dressed in dark clothing on electric bikes we'd urge you to also contact police. We will not tolerate this type of intimidating and criminal behaviour and will take robust action."*

Anyone with information should contact Cheshire Police on 101 or via the [website](#) quoting IML 2023433. Alternatively, information can be given anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association (CNWA)

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Scan to visit [website](#)

To find out further information about the Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Association, to log into your account or for Cheshire Neighbourhood Watch Literature please visit our website: www.cheshirenw.org