

JANURARY 2025

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

READING NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM



NEWSLETTER

**Spotlight on
Knife Crime**

**Neighbourhood
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Arnie**



SPOTLIGHT ON KNIFE CRIME

Addressing the Surge in Knife Crime

Knife crime remains a critical issue affecting communities across the UK. The rise in incidents involving knives has prompted urgent calls for effective solutions to ensure public safety and reduce violence. Knife crime encompasses any crime involving a knife or sharp object, including carrying a knife, using it to threaten or harm someone, or possessing a banned knife. The increase in knife crime over the past decade has been alarming, with a 75% rise in incidents in England and Wales between 2013 and 2022*. In the year ending March 2024, there were approximately 50,500 offences involving sharp instruments in England and Wales**.

*How Do We Truly Tackle Knife Crime - Some Solutions

** Tackling knife crime | COUNSEL | The Magazine of the Bar of England and Wales

CASE STUDY

Southcote

Recently, police in Southcote have made significant strides in combating knife crime by seizing a substantial number of knives during targeted operations. These efforts are part of a broader initiative to address community concerns and enhance public safety. The police have been actively engaging with local residents, conducting weapons sweeps, and increasing patrols in areas known for illegal activities. Their proactive approach has not only led to the removal of dangerous weapons from the streets but also raised awareness about the importance of reporting suspicious activities and the collective effort needed to prevent violent crime.

Prevention and Intervention

Efforts to combat knife crime focus on prevention through education, community engagement, and law enforcement.

Community Policing:

Building trust between police and communities is essential. Community policing initiatives, where officers work closely with residents, can help identify and address the root causes of knife crime.

Legislation and Enforcement:

Regular weapons sweeps and targeted operations have led to the seizure of numerous knives, and are making streets safer.

Impact on Communities

The effects of knife crime can be devastating and extend beyond the immediate victims. Families and communities suffer from the fear and trauma associated with violent incidents. Victims and their families often experience long-term emotional and psychological distress.

By focusing on education, community engagement, and enforcement, we can work towards reducing knife crime and creating safer environments for everyone.

The Abbey and Battle Outers Neighbourhood Police Team has been actively addressing various community issues with a dedicated and multifaceted approach. PCSOs Beeney and Williams have been focusing on the West Village, collaborating with partnership agencies to reduce anti-social behaviour by non-residents congregating in communal areas. Their efforts include regular patrols, community meetings, and working closely with local residents to identify and address specific concerns. They have also engaged with the community through activities such as the end-of-year celebration feast with ACRE, which brought together residents for a day of fun and connection, and a school talk on online safety for Year 6 students, educating young people on how to stay safe in the digital world.

PC Potter is working diligently with partners to tackle sex work and anti-social behaviour. She collaborates closely with CGL to provide outreach services, offering support and resources to those involved in sex work, while also making arrests and issuing community protection notices to offenders. Her proactive approach has led to a safer environment for residents and has helped many individuals access the support they need to make positive changes in their lives. The team has successfully obtained two closure orders to protect vulnerable individuals who were being exploited within their homes.

PC Weedon has made numerous arrests of prolific criminals, leading to several convictions and prison sentences for offenses including robbery, theft from motor vehicles, assault, and shoplifting. His relentless pursuit of justice has made a substantial impact on reducing crime on the Oxford Road. The team continues to address drug-related anti-social behaviour, working with the Stronghold team to identify and bring the main offenders to justice.

Abbey and Battle



Caversham



The Caversham Neighbourhood Police Team has made shoplifting their main priority, recently catching a prolific shoplifter who was sentenced to 16 weeks in prison. PC Ammundsen is actively investigating two other prolific shoplifters and is working closely with local shops to deter, prevent, and prosecute offenders. This collaborative approach aims to create a safer shopping environment and reduce the incidence of theft in the area.

The team is also addressing neighbourhood disputes in Mead Close through ongoing partnership efforts. By working with local residents and the council, they aim to resolve conflicts and improve the quality of life for everyone involved. We are completing regular follow-ups ensure that disputes are managed effectively and do not escalate.

The team has been conducting a road traffic operations focusing on road safety. This operation includes increased patrols in high-risk areas, speed checks, and educational campaigns to raise awareness about safe driving practices. We aim to reduce traffic-related incidents and enhance overall road safety in Caversham.

PC Bilanska has been confirmed to stay with the Caversham team, providing continuity and stability to her efforts. Meanwhile, PCSO Mellor is supporting vulnerable residents and planning "Have Your Say" meetings in the coming weeks. These meetings will provide residents with the opportunity to speak with officers, relay any concerns, and receive crime prevention advice. This initiative aims to foster a stronger relationship between the police and the community, ensuring that residents feel heard and supported.

The Southcote and Tilehurst area is pleased to welcome PC Wallace, who brings 20 years of experience as an officer in Reading. Her extensive knowledge and expertise will be invaluable during her time with us until May, as she covers for PC Basse-Korf, who is exploring detective work. We also bid farewell to PCSO Greenaway, who has transitioned from a PCSO to a PC and is currently undergoing training.

Our team has been collaborating with the Calcot NHPT teams to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and bike crime, leading to the identification of three individuals linked to drug activities.

PC Allen has been gathering evidence to support a Criminal Behaviour Order against a persistent offender responsible for significant ASB in the area. Meanwhile, PC Holdstock successfully identified and shut down a cannabis factory containing 120 plants, which have been seized and destroyed.

PCSOs Jerrom and Mason have been actively engaging with the community, focusing on ASB in Coronation Square and Jimmy Green Court. Their efforts have resulted in valuable intelligence that has led to proactive policing and crime identification. They have also gone above and beyond by locating and detaining two robbery suspects. They have also been supporting the community at the Lyndhurst Road Community Centre. Additionally, the Mini Police have been learning about police dogs and enjoyed a demonstration, further fostering community engagement and education.

Tilehurst and Southcote



East End



The East End Neighbourhood Police Team has been making significant strides in addressing various community concerns with a proactive and dedicated approach. Following reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and drug use in Avon Place, the team has implemented high-visibility patrols and conducted stop searches, which have yielded positive results.

PC Milsom and PC Najayi have been particularly effective in their efforts, arresting and charging multiple shoplifters and securing a closure order for a brothel, thereby enhancing the safety and security of the area. PC Milsom also continues to work closely with the Kicks Community Trust to

foster positive relationships with local youths while encouraging engagement in constructive activities. By supporting and promoting the Trust's free football and activity sessions, they aim to provide a safe and inclusive environment for young people to develop skills and build connections. Sessions are held at Hexham Community Centre on Mondays and Coley Community Centre on Tuesdays, offering an excellent opportunity for local kids to interact with officers in a relaxed setting, breaking down barriers and building trust within the community.

In addition to these efforts, the team has successfully addressed the issue of persistent begging, resulting in the arrest of a known beggar. PCSOs Irvine and Boshier have been proactive in issuing Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs) for begging, as well as organizing "Have Your Say" meetings to engage with residents. These meetings provide a platform for residents to voice their concerns and receive valuable crime prevention advice. Their school visits have also been instrumental in educating students about the role of the police and personal safety, further strengthening community ties. The team has also completed Operation Vigilant in Palmer Park in response to reports of suspicious males, this operation involves increased patrols and community engagement to ensure the safety of park visitors.

South Reading

The South Reading NHPT has seen a notable reduction in shoplifting incidents at the Co-op Whitley Wood and Tesco's Shinfield Road, thanks to a series of successful investigations. Our efforts have led to substantial prison sentences for prolific offenders, and we now have strong relationships with both stores, facilitating quicker justice. Additionally, numerous out-of-court disposals have been issued.

Currently, we have three closure orders in Whitley, all related to anti-social behaviour (ASB) and cuckooing. Two of these are full closure orders due to the significant impact the tenants were having on the wider community. We are collaborating with partner agencies to permanently remove these offenders from the area. We are also working with RBC to pursue two further closure orders on the Hexham Road Estate.

Our team has arrested a prolific burglar, who has been sent back to prison. We have also assisted our response colleagues in locating high-risk missing persons on the Hexham Road Estate.

Due to ongoing reports of drug dealing and targeted ASB around Chineham Court, we have increased our presence in the area.

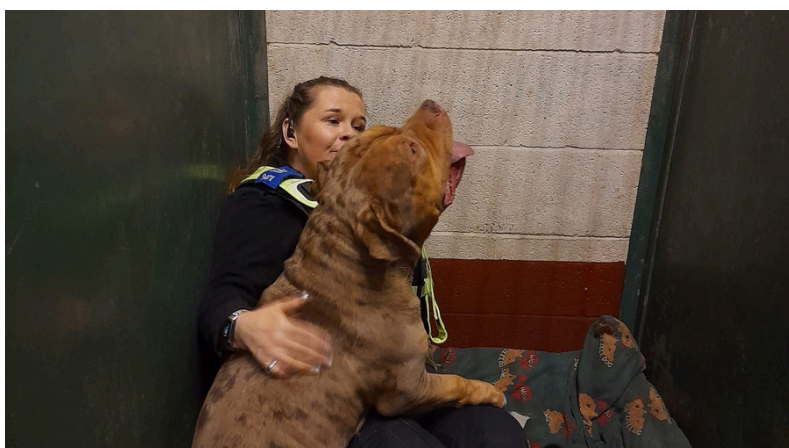
One male has been issued a Community Protection Notice (CPN) for persistent activity, and we are working with their housing association to take further action. A female has been arrested for breaching her CPN, and we are collaborating with RBC to prevent further offences.

PCSO Emin attended an MP meeting at Geoffrey Fields Primary School, where key topics such as knife crime and cuckooing were discussed. PCSO Cretu is working diligently on Kennet Island, identifying youths involved in ASB and minor damage to communal areas. The team is in the process of issuing Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) to control their behaviour and prevent them from returning to the location.



Katesgrove and Coley

The Katesgrove and Coley Neighbourhood Police Team has been actively working to improve community safety and address various issues. PC Hepburne-Scott has successfully obtained three closure orders to protect vulnerable individuals in the area, particularly targeting anti-social behaviour (ASB) related to drug use. These closure orders have been instrumental in safeguarding residents and reducing the negative impact of drug-related activities on the community. PC Hepburne-Scott's efforts have not only provided immediate relief to those affected but also sent a strong message that such behaviour will not be tolerated. PC Angell has made significant strides in tackling illegal drug activities by dismantling a cannabis factory. This operation not only disrupted the supply of illegal drugs but also highlighted the team's commitment to eradicating drug-related crime. In addition to this, PC Angell demonstrated compassion and dedication to animal welfare by ensuring the rehoming of a neglected dog found during the operation.



PCSOs Holmes and Grey have been proactive in addressing street drinking and ASB by issuing Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and a Community Protection Notice (CPN). Their efforts have deterred similar offending. Furthermore, they have conducted licensing checks and worked jointly with the licensing department to tackle and prevent these issues effectively.

Town centre

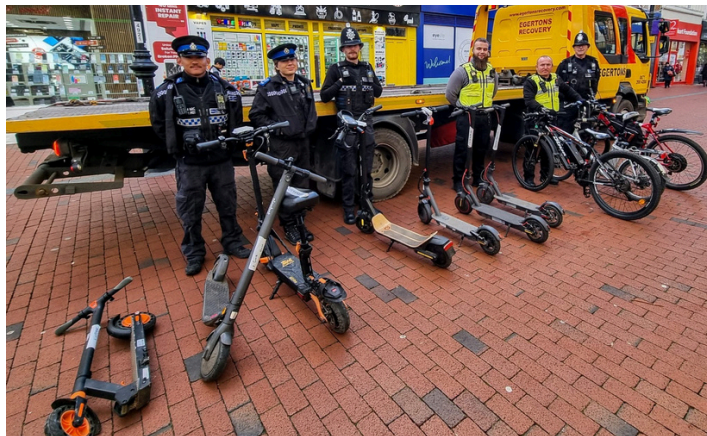
Your Town Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team has had a busy few months - focused on tackling crime and engaging with the community. We have made significant progress in addressing shoplifting, with several prolific offenders charged and remanded, which our PCSOs fantastic spotting skills within the Town Centre, including one individual responsible for nine separate incidents. PC Moore continues to collate the evidence needed to pursue these offenders.

We have also arrested individuals for violent offences in the Night Time Economy, drug-related offences, and other crimes, and recovered stolen property from local businesses.

We have started deployments as part of Project Servator, a proactive policing tactic designed to disrupt criminal activity. Many of our Town Centre team including PS Smith, PC Hong, PC Chamberlain and many more are now trained in Servator principles, enabling them to identify and respond to suspicious behaviour, further enhancing our ability to keep the town centre safe.

Our officers like PCSO Wakeling and Audus have been highly visible in the town centre, we have also conducted plainclothes and uniformed patrols, engaging with residents and businesses, and addressing concerns around anti-social behaviour.

We have also collaborated with partner agencies on various initiatives, including welfare checks, searches for missing persons, and community events like the 'Have your say' on Lynmouth Road, run by PCSO Nembang. We are looking forward to the next upcoming months of action, especially PCSO Wakeling's Party in the Park!!



READING NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

All of the neighbourhood teams have been busy with a whole range of issues over the last three months.

Neighbourhood crime is down by 21% over the last year compared with the past 12 months.

Knife crime offences are down 2% for the last 12 months, compared to previous 12 months.

Alongside this we have made 67 arrests in the last 10 weeks, attended 116 Incidents and been allocated 194 crimes. We have also had 99 charges and issued 11 out of court disposals.



Meet PD Arnie



Biography of Police Dog Arnie

Name: Arnie

Date of Birth: 19th August 2018

Age: 6 years (but with the energy of a 2-year-old)

Weight: 40kg

Career Highlights:

- **Early Career:** Arnie began his career in Devon and was first licensed in early 2020.
- **Thames Valley Police:** He joined Thames Valley Police (TVP) in August 2022.
- **Firearms Support Dog:** Arnie progressed to become an accredited Firearms Support Dog (FSD) in July 2024.
- **Retirement Plans:** He is expected to retire in late 2026.

Skills and Training: As an accredited FSD, Arnie is trained to assist firearms teams with various tactics, including vehicle, building, and open search operations. His training includes:

- Tracking and locating human scent, whether people are hiding outside or within buildings.
- Locating recently discarded items.
- Chasing, detaining, biting, and holding suspects.

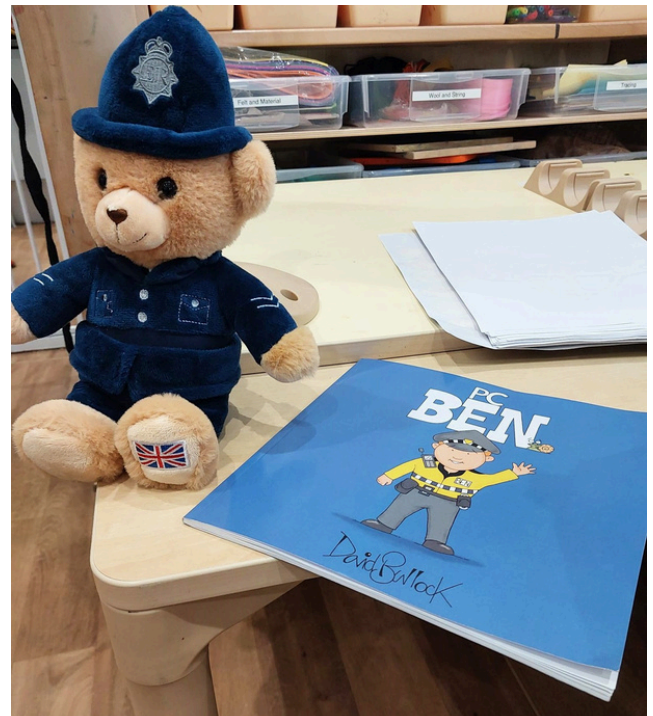
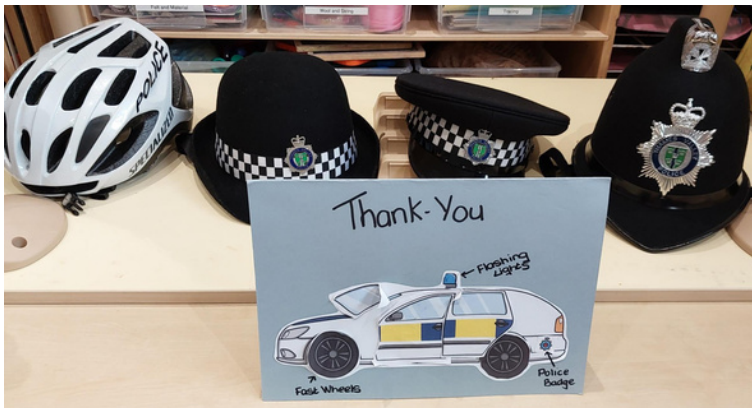
Personality and Interests: Arnie is a dedicated and enthusiastic worker who loves his job and eagerly jumps into the car for every shift. He has a playful side, enjoying Pilates (rolling around on his back during walks) and will do anything for his ball. Arnie has a hearty appetite and will eat just about anything.

Arnie's dedication and skills make him an invaluable member of the police force, and his playful nature endears him to everyone who meets him.



Invite us to your event!

PCSO MASON and BEENEY have been involved in the local community and have visited a day nursery to read the PC BEN book, detailing a duty day of a Police officer. If you would like this to be a feature at your school, nursery or kids event please let us know by completing a web form including the name and location of your school. We look forward to hearing from you!



WE NEED YOU

Communities play a crucial role in crime prevention. Here are some ways residents in Reading can get involved:

- Join or Form a Neighbourhood Watch: These groups work closely with Thames Valley Police to monitor and report suspicious activities, fostering a safer community environment.
- Participate in Community Safety Meetings: Attend local meetings organized by the Reading Community Safety Partnership to stay informed about crime trends and prevention strategies. These meetings provide a platform to voice concerns and suggest improvements.
- Engage in Local Initiatives: Get involved in community projects aimed at reducing crime, such as clean-up campaigns and Have Your Say meetings.
- Sign up to Neighbourhood alerts at www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk.
- Reporting suspicious activities is crucial for maintaining community safety. Here are some ways you can report such activities in Reading:
 - Emergency Situations: If you witness a crime in progress or if there is an immediate threat to life, call **999** immediately.
 - Non-Emergency Situations: For non-urgent matters, you can contact Thames Valley Police by calling **101**. This number is for reporting crimes that are not emergencies, such as suspicious behaviour or non urgent incidents.
 - Online Reporting: You can report non-emergency crimes and suspicious activities online through the Thames Valley Police website. They have a dedicated section for online reporting where you can provide details of the incident.
<https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>
 - Crimestoppers: If you prefer to remain anonymous, you can contact Crimestoppers at **0800 555 111** or use their online form.
 - Local Police Stations: You can visit your **local police station** to report suspicious activities in person. The staff there can assist you with filing a report and provide further guidance.

By reporting suspicious activities, you help the police take timely action and contribute to the safety of your community. By actively participating in these initiatives, community members can contribute significantly to reducing crime and enhancing safety in their neighbourhoods.

REPORTING CRIME HELPS TO SHAPE OUR POLICING

When reporting suspicious activities, providing detailed and accurate information can help us respond effectively. Here's what you should include:

- Clearly describe what you saw or heard. Include details such as the nature of the activity, any unusual behaviour, and why it seemed suspicious to you.
- Provide the exact location where the incident occurred
- Note the time and date when the suspicious activity took place.
- Describe any individuals involved, including their physical appearance (e.g., height, build, clothing, distinguishing features) and any other relevant details.
- If vehicles were involved, provide details such as the make, model, colour, and license plate number. Any distinctive features or damage.
- If the individuals or vehicles left the scene, note the direction they were heading.

Providing as much detail as possible helps us investigate and take appropriate action. If you're unsure about any details, just provide what you can remember. Your report can make a significant difference in keeping your community safe.

SIGN UP FOR THAMES VALLEY ALERT

Thames Valley Alert is a free email messaging system where you can receive regular crime updates, information on ongoing incidents and crime prevention advice relevant to your local area. By signing up to Thames Valley Alert you can get involved in helping to make your local area a safer place, tell us what the police should be doing in your area, shape the initiatives that help to keep people and property safe and tell us what matters are causing your communities harm. You can register now to receive messages of local crime alerts, witness appeals and information to the area in which you live or work.

www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk



JOIN US

Protecting our communities. This is our mission. Policing is fundamentally about working with people. Ensuring we treat everyone with fairness and respect, in every interaction, both within our communities and our organisation is one of our core values. Preventing and thoroughly investigating crime, supporting victims and bringing offenders to justice. These commitments require us all to be courageous and do the right thing and cannot be achieved by any one person alone; it relies upon a team of over 8,500 staff, officers and volunteers, working alongside partner agencies and the public. Policing evolves along with the challenges we face and we strive to improve every day. New digital technologies and ways of working are transforming the way we deliver our service and to do so at the highest standard, means we require the very best talent to join our TVP family. Policing is a unique and rewarding career. Take on a role with pride and confidence, inspiring change so we can become an excellent police force trusted by all our communities. We are proud to be Thames Valley Police and you will be too!