

February 2021

Foreword from Fordingbridge and Ringwood Sergeant, Sgt Helen Mitchley



Welcome to the February edition of the Policing New Forest partnership newsletter.

In recent months you've heard from our District Commander, Chief Inspector Helen Andrews and Inspector Mike Minnock

While last month you heard from one of my colleagues Sergeant Kat Smith (New Milton and Lymington) and going forward we will be looking to profile our other Sergeants across the New Forest.

I am Sgt Helen Mitchley and I am responsible for managing an area which comprises both Fordingbridge and Ringwood. In total our team consists of six police officers and three PCSOs.

I know that most of the partners in the Ringwood and Fordingbridge area will know me quite well – but I thought it would be useful to give you a bit more background about my experience in the policing sector.

I joined Hampshire Constabulary back in 1999 – so currently have over 22 years' service. Initially I began by serving in the east of the county and qualified as a Detective in early 2004 working in the Criminal Investigation Department. I then worked across numerous roles as a Sergeant in Response and Patrol, Custody and as part of the Prisoner Interview Team

In 2011 I moved across to the New Forest district, where I have remained ever since. Again, I followed familiar routes and began in a Response and Patrol role before becoming part of the local Neighbourhood Policing Team at Ringwood. I've held this role for the last five years, and while very rewarding it is also quite a large rural area which is incredibly challenging to police at times.

We as a team take a massive amount of pride in providing the best service that we can to the community we serve – and that includes with working with key partners. We have established positive working relationships with those in the local community and hope we can continue to do so moving forward.

Despite the challenges that 2020 brought, we continue to target those who commit crime within our community – successfully executing a number of drug related warrants, along with making significant arrests following a recent increase in burglaries to garages, shed outbuilding and commercial premises. This has resulted in a reduction in offending.

As such, we will continue bringing offenders to justice and tackling crimes such as burglary and theft, as we know and appreciate the significant impact that this can have on our local community, and businesses in the surrounding areas.

Yet it is important to flag that we cannot continue to police the local communities without the information or reports of criminal activity or suspicions incidents. Local residents are urged to report these incidents to us via 101 or the Hampshire Constabulary website – and not on social media networks – so that we have a true picture of offending in order to provide resourcing in the correct local areas. We, together with the support of partners, can then begin to tackle any increases in crime – especially in these difficult times.

Despite the pandemic, our local officers are very keen on being more visible in the local communities, giving local residents the opportunity to stop and talk to us when they can – giving them a platform to really engage with residents on the issues that matter to them the most.

Our [Facebook page](#) is a great way to follow the teams and the work we are doing to tackle crime in order to keep our communities safe.

While we are working hard on seeking suitable locations for our beat surgeries and ways in which we can conduct these in accordance with Government guidelines – as we feel that this form of engagement is important. We can then understand the issues faced by residents in the local community. We will advertise these on our Facebook pages, so please do encourage your local residents to come along to meet the team.

Below are some of the investigations that we'd like to update you on. We would like to regularly highlight the work we have been doing to tackle issues, reduce crime, and apprehend offenders.

Investigation update



Officers charge Bransgore man with various offences

Police officers have charged Todd James Edward Cooper, aged 26, of Whitelands, Thorney Hill, Bransgore with;

- one count of ABH assault
- two counts of using abusive or threatening behaviour causing harassment, alarm or distress
- one count of causing criminal damage

The charges come after a woman was assaulted in Sway on Tuesday 8 September 2020 and threats to kill were made towards another woman in New Milton on Sunday 8 November 2020.

He has been remanded in custody and will next appear at Southampton Magistrates Court on [Friday 26 February](#).

We're thankful to Lydia Davies and Paul Rodford as the Officers in Case in securing these charges with the support of colleagues from across our Response and Patrol units, Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Criminal Investigation Department.



Man charged following burglary at Ringwood industrial estate

A Southampton man has been charged after police officers responded to reports of a burglary in progress in Ringwood.

The charges come after a business owner on the Parkside industrial site notified police about an alarm activation at around 11.15am on Sunday 17 January 2021.

Darren Witcher, aged 48, of Pat Bear Close, Southampton was charged with one count of theft and one count of criminal damage.

He was released on bail but is next due to appear at Southampton Magistrates Court on Thursday 4 March 2021.

We're thankful to PC Scott Piggot as the Officer in Case in securing these charges with the support of colleagues from across our Response and Patrol units, Neighbourhood Policing Teams and Criminal Investigation Department.



Two people arrested following burglary in Ringwood

Police officers investigating a burglary in Ringwood have arrested two people in connection with the incident.

Officers were called out at 2am this morning (3 February) to reports of a burglary in progress at The Original Vape Shop on Monouth Court, Ringwood.

Four persons have entered the premises through a smashed window and a number of items, including vape machines, were stolen in the process.

Officers pursued a vehicle in the area believed to be linked to the burglary, when the occupants decamped and fled from officers. Two of the offenders were located by officers and detained.

A 16-year-old girl and a 17-year-old boy, both from Southampton, were arrested on suspicion of burglary.

They were also both subsequently arrested on suspicion of taking a motor vehicle without the owner's consent following a burglary in Sway on Monday 1 February.

They were both released on bail until Thursday 4 March 2021, pending further police enquiries.



Two teenagers arrested for drug offences following warrants in Lymington

Officers investigating reports of drug-related activity in the Lymington area, arrested two teenagers on Wednesday 20 January.

Police officers carried out two simultaneous, pre-planned warrants, at addresses in Lymington early on Wednesday 20 January between 7.35am and 7.45am.

A property in South Street, Pennington was searched by a team of specialist officers at around 7.35am and located a quantity of Class B drugs and a quantity of cash inside the premises, which were subsequently seized.

An 18-year-old man from Pennington was arrested on suspicion of possession of a Class B drug with intent to supply, possession of criminal property and possession of counterfeit bank notes.

While officers also executed a warrant at a business premises on Lymington High Street at around 7.45am. They located a quantity of Class A drugs and cash at the address.

A 17-year-old boy from Lymington was arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply a Class A drug.

Both were released under investigation, pending further police enquiries.

Community cohesion

Burglaries and thefts across the New Forest

We are aware that there has been a recent spike in burglaries in the Ringwood and Fordingbridge areas, while there have also been a rise in thefts from motor vehicles in New Milton and Lymington.

Please know that we are committed in preventing these crimes from occurring and bringing offenders to justice.

Tackling these thefts and burglaries is a district priority for us, which involves deployment of specialist officers and equipment, twinned with an increase in local policing and utilising intelligence drawn from reporting made by the community.

We want to tell you when we are doing that work because it's important you know what we are trying to do to address the issue.

We can see that some people think there is no point in reporting these crime to us, that we don't care. We absolutely care.

We may not be able to attend every report, but every report is important because it helps us build up an intelligence picture of the scale of the issue and helps us identify patterns in crime so that we are able to target the areas that most need our help.

Our local Neighbourhood Policing Teams review all crime in the local area that is reported to us via 101 or our online reporting tool – with dedicated officers conducting extra patrols during the early hours in order to try and apprehend those individuals committing these crimes.

Unfortunately, we are unable to take reports of crime via social media and unable to monitor neighbourhood social media groups – so please do consider encouraging your local residents to contact us in the first instance to report the crimes before publishing on social media. This will allow us to identify all possible lines of enquiry and follow-up opportunities with victims to bring offenders to justice.

We fully appreciate the concerns in the community and that people's livelihoods are being affected and possessions stolen, but rest assured we are doing all that we can.

Please do continue to report any suspicious or criminal activity to us by calling 101 or by using our online reporting tool on the Hampshire Constabulary website.

[Click here to sign-up to receive regular Hampshire Alerts](#)

Keep in touch with us on social media

If you want to know what our officers are doing in the district to reduce criminal activity in our local community, why not follow us on social media?

Join us on Facebook [@NewForestHeartCops](#) / [@LymingtonAndNewMiltonCops](#)
/ [@RingwoodPolice](#) / [@FordingbridgeCops](#) / [@TottonPolice](#) / [@WatersideCops](#)

