

Meet your local policing team



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Message from Paul Laity, local Sector Inspector for Devonport and West.

In this winter edition of our quarterly newsletter, we are sharing information and community news. Keep informed about how you can stay safe from spiking and scams, find out updates on local issues and priorities, as well as vital crime prevention advice for Christmas and New Year.

We're proud to serve our local community, working hard to keep you safe 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you see us out and about, please come and say hello - we'd love to meet you.

Please remember that if you need us but you're not in immediate danger or a crime isn't taking place, you can get in touch via our website: www.dc.police.uk - it's a quick and simple way to log a report and get advice online.

In this edition:

- Local updates
- Find out what's happening near you: sign up to community alerts.
- Keeping your festive gifts safe
- How to look out for spiking
- Be scam savvy
- Protecting your car and home
- Taking action on business crime
- Getting in touch

Meet your local team

To connect with our community throughout the year, we attend various events and organise local meetings. It is a great opportunity to meet us and learn more about what we are doing - you can also raise any issues or concerns with us directly. If you're able to come along, it would be great to meet you. Dates below:

Meet the team, St Budeaux Library - Thursday 20th February 2024 3pm – 4pm

Crime prevention information, Life Centre - Friday 7th February 2025 3pm – 4.30pm

Meet the team, Devonport Library – Wednesday 5th February 2025 2pm – 3pm





Want to know what is happening near you?

Sign up to Devon and Cornwall Alert, our two-way community messaging system to find out what's happening in your area. You can choose the type of information you would like to receive about crime, antisocial behaviour, witness appeals, crime prevention, community events and good news.

Alerts are sent by email and you can respond directly if you have anything you want to share with us. You can opt out at any time and your email address cannot be seen by any other subscribers.

There are already more than 39,000 people signed up to the system so why not give it a try?

Sign up here: <https://alerts.dc.police.uk/>

Local updates:

The end of 2024 saw several great results for your local Policing team, some are highlighted below.

Shoplifting – A prolific offender in the St Budeaux area was arrested by members of the local team and presented to the courts, where they were sentenced to 16 weeks in prison.

Vehicle crime – After numerous vehicle break-ins in the Peverell and Hartley area, a male was arrested and charged with a number of offences, resulting in a 16-week prison sentence.

The local team were very busy dealing with a series of criminal damage to vehicle tyres towards the end of 2024, some great work by the team resulted in an arrest being made. Enquiries are still ongoing.

Drugs – A cannabis grow was located by the local team in the Peverell area recently, this resulted in a large seizure of cannabis plants.

A partial closure order was granted on an address in the Weston Mill area due to ongoing reports of drug dealing from the property, this was gained by the local team in conjunction with Plymouth City Council.

Protect your presents – don't gift wrap them for thieves!

Top tips to keep your Christmas gifts just for you:

- Make sure to dispose of your packaging carefully so as not to advertise your new items to people outside.
- Register your expensive items online. This can help us to identify the rightful owner if they are lost or stolen:
 - Electronics - log the item(s) serial number online with the 'UK National Property Register.'
 - Bikes – add your bike details to the 'National Police-Approved database.'
 - For more information on how to mark your property, visit: www.securedbydesign.com

Keeping safe from spiking

If you are heading out in the new year, please keep in mind that spiking can happen to anyone, so be aware of your surroundings and keep an eye out for each other.

Spiking is illegally giving someone alcohol or drugs without them knowing. Contrary to popular belief, it is not limited to slipping a drug into someone's drink and includes:

- Adding extra alcohol to someone's drink.
- Injecting drugs into someone with a needle.
- Giving someone drugs in a cigarette or vape.
- Adding drugs to someone's food.

It can be hard to tell whether your drink has been spiked as it may not change the taste, smell or colour of your drink. If you notice any changes, stop drinking it and report it immediately to staff or security if you are in a bar or club.

Look out for symptoms such as confusion, nausea or vomiting, hallucinations and paranoia, disorientation, poor co-ordination or falling unconscious. If that happens, let a trusted friend or member of staff know immediately if you can.

We would encourage anyone who thinks they have been a victim to contact us. We are here to help you: we will listen without judgement and we will take you seriously.

You can use the dedicated form online, for whenever an incident has happened. Search for 'spiking' on the Devon & Cornwall Police website.

Remember to call 999 if you or someone else is injured or if you are in immediate danger.

To find out more information about spiking and what happens when you report it to police, search 'spiking' on our website.



Be scam savvy

At this time of year, many people are hunting for January bargains. But fraudsters are also keeping busy trying to steal your money.

Scammers take many forms, from posing as police officers asking for your bank details and cash, to rogue traders selling goods and services.

Some of the most common scams involve online shopping, social media messages and texts offering bargains, and parcel delivery texts.

Our top tips for keeping your money safe:

- Be suspicious of 'too good to be true' offers and deals. Delay and seek advice first.
- Never send money to someone you don't know or trust.
- Buy securely – only make online payments if there is a padlock symbol in the browser.
- Always log on to a website directly rather than clicking on email links.
- Safeguard your details – never divulge passwords or PIN numbers.
- Delete any suspicious emails and block telephone calls if necessary.
- If you spot a scam, please report it.

Don't be embarrassed to report it if you have fallen victim to a scam; these criminals are cunning and can be easily believable. You may make it more difficult for them to defraud others.

If you have been a victim of fraud please contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or www.actionfraud.police.uk

You can also report information to us [online](#) or by telephone on 101.



Burglars targeting your home for cars

In some areas of Devon and Cornwall we are seeing burglars targeting homes specifically for car keys before stealing the vehicle itself.

There are a few preventative measures you can take to reduce the risk of this happening to you:

- Offenders often scout target addresses at night so report any suspicious vehicles or individuals.
- Secure your home overnight; check doors are locked before bedtime.
- Consider a motion sensor light or doorbell camera – these are visible deterrents.
- Do not keep your vehicle keys in a quickly accessible or visible place. A common factor in these crimes is that car keys were within easy reach.
- Consider registering your vehicle with a stolen car tracking app - there are several available online.

Shoplifters have no business here

Businesses have become more vulnerable to crime with the rise in the cost of living. Such crime can take many forms, from shoplifting and non-paying customers to burglary and theft from premises.

We are undertaking regular operations, extra patrols and crime prevention advice events to help you outsmart shoplifters and deter burglars.

A few simple ways to help safeguard your business:

- Greet customers – this can deter shoplifters as it shows that staff are paying attention.
- Consider adding CCTV or repositioning stock/shelving in areas not seen from the till.
- A security accredited anti-theft terminal (and tagging system) sends the message that ‘this store is protected.’
- Keep it tidy – clear visibility across a shop tells a thief that they are likely to be noticed.
- Make sure you have a monitored alarm and 24-hour operational CCTV with facial recognition.
- A well-maintained and well-lit exterior can reduce the likelihood of being targeted. Store wheelie bins away to reduce access to upper floors.
- Lock and secure service doors when not in use.
- Try not to keep cash on the premises overnight and always use a bolted down safe with a time lock and anti-tamper sensors.

We recommend joining business collectives who share intelligence and warnings about criminals, and work to create a safer environment for all.

Examples include a [Business Improvement District](#), [Pubwatch](#), or a shared radio network which is monitored by police, CCTV suites and other businesses.

For further help and advice: [Search for business crime prevention on our website.](#)

Keep up to date with what's happening in your area:

Facebook: @Devonport and West Plymouth Police **X:** @DevonportPolice

Website: www.dc.police.uk and enter your postcode