



Winter 2007 Issue 3

# S.C.S.N

## Somerset's Community Safety Newsletter



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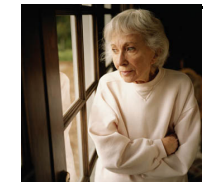


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Members of the community often complain they feel helpless about tackling low level crime when it is left to the police and the courts to deal with, and for some they feel their faith in the system is reducing as victims are often ignored.

Restorative Community Justice is an alternative where the community helps offenders and victims agree an outcome to resolve an issue, whatever that might be. This system has been running in Chard for years and by May 2007 had heard 102 cases ranging from neighbourhood disputes, speeding motorists, dog fouling, assaults, thefts and racial abuse. Of those numbers only 2 people had re-

offended giving an impressive 98% success rate.

Instead of having to be sent to a court, the offender has to face the victim to explain their actions and be given punishment such as working in the community, writing a letter of apology or repairing damage they have caused. The



offender will not get a criminal record, but could be sent to a traditional court if they breach the agreement made with the justice panel. It is thought that communities can find more appropriate solutions for injustice, and in doing so feel the matter has been dealt

with successfully. The system is not focused on punishing an offender but getting them to take responsibility for what they have done. Val Keitch, who is responsible for Chard's panel said, "This is about giving the community and victims a say. It's not about punishment, but restoring community and a sense of balance while working to put a stop to the behaviour, which the court process frequently doesn't."

It seems this system has been so successful a similar scheme is due to be launched in the New Year in Wellington. For more information about this and other schemes in Somerset please call Richard Stoate on 01823 357837

### Have You Got The S Factor?

A new Award has been launched in a search to find the unsung heroes helping make the county a safer place to live.

Nominations are now invited for the first ever 'Safer Somerset Awards' to recognise those who have gone the extra mile to help

reduce crime and improve safety.

The Award values the most innovative and effective approaches to raising the profile of community safety and bringing down crime. Nominations could be for a school tackling cyber bullying or a volunteer who has

helped stop anti-social behaviour in their community. The deadline for entries is 15 January 2008. Forms can be downloaded from [www.somerset.gov.uk/communitysafety](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/communitysafety) & clicking 'Events' or calling :

01823 357836 / 357837 or 357128.

## Car Crime.. Is Yours Safe This Christmas?



Christmas is a good time for criminals. We go shopping for expensive presents and need extra clothes to keep warm. All these things are frequently left in the car in full view. The nights are also long and dark giving plenty of time for criminals to identify targets.

A lot of car crime is opportunistic which means a criminal could

walk by, see something on display, smash a window and steal it, all of which takes seconds.

Criminals have been known to break into vehicles for spare change and coats. Its all worth money. Be aware that satellite navigation equipment is a key target now, so take it with you. But they're also looking for brackets and suction cap marks, so make sure

you remove those too. Also take your stereo and other fittings, fully close all windows and if possible deadlock your doors, even when you visit a kiosk at a petrol station. It may seem like a lot of effort, but it much less than dealing with a break in or stolen vehicle. So don't be a victim this Christmas. Help keep you and your property safe.

## Alcohol And Crime.. Is There A link?

*"There is no doubt there is a link between alcohol and crime"*



Any Police officer or A&E consultant would answer this question by showing you their workplace at the weekend. Often the majority of incidents they deal with, particularly during the evening and early hours, are as a direct consequence of the misuse of alcohol. As a result the police and councils, together with the majority of the licensing trade and Health Departments are working hard with local

charities in Somerset to combat these issues. However, wholesale change will not be achieved until there is a major culture shift nationally and that takes time. It is therefore essential that partnerships such as **STARC** (Somerset Tackling Alcohol Related Crime) continue to work towards this aim. There are already changes being witnessed within Somerset, but these need to gather



momentum to make a real difference. For More information on STARC visit:

[www.somerset.gov.uk/communitysafety](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/communitysafety)

Or call Phil Lincoln on 01823 357114

## Seaward Way Clean Up Their Act!

People in Seaward Way, West Somerset didn't just complain about the litter and general untidiness in their community, they did something about it.

The local Community Group, together with agencies and residents, devoted a day to improve their local area by sweeping the streets, picking up litter, recycling, and filling skips with unwanted, non-recyclable items. In fact the skips proved so popular more had to be hired during the course of the day to deal with the demand. Many young people were involved who were offered the opportunity for professional soccer coaching and a trip to watch a Plymouth Argyle match as thanks for helping out. For more information call Peter Hughes on 01984 635302 .



## Police Community Support Officers

PCSOs are employed to perform a high visibility, patrolling role providing reassurance to the communities they serve.

They complement the work of police officers by focusing on lower level crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. However, they do not have the same powers as police officers. For further information about PCSO powers,

visit: [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/recruitment/pcsos/need\\_to\\_know.aspx](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/recruitment/pcsos/need_to_know.aspx)

PCSOs operate within Neighbourhood Police Teams. Recently the Yeovil Sector Team attended an award ceremony where they were presented with an award for 'outstanding contribution to engaging local communities'.

Local initiatives include organising Neighbourhood Watch schemes, setting up Residents Associations, Community Speed Watch and Dispersal Orders.

In Taunton PCSOs ran an event called Energize, which is part of a youth diversion project. On the last Friday of every month a local nightclub opens its doors to bring

young people together between the ages of 11–16 years, therefore helping them avoid the temptations of evening anti-social behaviour.



## Challenging Violence In The Home

Female footballers across Somerset teamed up in a campaign blowing the final whistle on domestic abuse.

From Wembdon to Winsham, players wore black armbands in November as a mark of



respect and support for anyone who has suffered domestic abuse.

In addition, men from Somerset who abuse their partners are being given the opportunity to enrol on a programme that could change their behaviour and their lives.

'Make the Change' is a voluntary initiative which works with statutory and voluntary agencies across Somerset. The programme includes 30

weekly group sessions that help men address the factors that can lead to abusive behaviour and equip them with the emotional and social skills to avoid it. Currently the programme runs in Yeovil and Sedgemoor and the aim is to start a third in Taunton in 2007. For more information contact Ruth Mackie on 01823 353456/353028



*"On average a woman will have been assaulted 35 times before she reports it."*

## Congratulations!

The winners of a prize draw using names of those who took part in the public consultation event to find out "What you want to see stopped in Somerset" were:

Harry Barnes from Frome, Sophie Pearce from Taunton, Sheila Edwards from Wellington, Mrs Treen from

Chard, Sue Burt from Kilve, Ian Dodd from Sparkford, and Enzo DeGregorio and Roberta Burns from Bridgwater.

For a copy of the consultation results please email: [crimereduction@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:crimereduction@somerset.gov.uk)

## No Cold Calling in Sedgemoor

The Safer Sedgemoor Partnership will be rolling out the No Cold Calling initiative to deter unwanted persistent sales people who, research shows, can increase fear of crime in the community. Warning signs are put in place, which if ignored, can result in action by the Police and Trading Standards. For more information and to get involved in the scheme, call 01278 435235

## Crime Statistics

Crime Category	West Somerset No. of crimes in financial yr 07/08	West Somerset change on same period yr 06/07	East Somerset No. of crimes in financial yr 07/08	East Somerset change on same period yr 06/07
Homicide	1	0	0	-2
Greivous Bodily Harm	46	+12	25	-20
Actual Bodily Harm	994	+54	893	-73
Common Assault	501	-100	519	-37
Harassment	332	-73	448	-163
Other Violence Against the Person	171	-53	132	-36
Robbery	37	-5	36	+2
Sexual Offences	132	-24	124	-15
Domestic Burglary	390	+36	421	+30
Non-Domestic Burglary	809	+84	695	-134
Theft of Motor Vehicles	254	-110	275	+21
Theft From Motor Vehicles	928	+84	781	-25
Criminal Damage	2597	-200	2492	-186
Fraud/Forgery	228	-194	304	-93
Other Crimes	3263	-211	3079	+317
<b>Total Crime</b>	<b>10683</b>	<b>-700</b>	<b>10224</b>	<b>-414</b>

Source: <http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/>

## Beat The Burglar This Christmas

There are many things you can do to reduce the risk of a break in this Christmas, such as recycling your waste quickly. This can be more than just good for the environment, it can also help reduce burglaries. Partnerships in Somerset are concerned over the number of people that leave cardboard boxes out too early for the refuse collection. These boxes, that may

have previously contained expensive Christmas gifts, are an advertisement to opportunist criminals that new goods have recently been bought, and can make a property vulnerable to break-ins.

Also, look at your home through a burglars eyes and imagine how you could break into it unseen to see where the security weaknesses

are. Then fix them quickly!

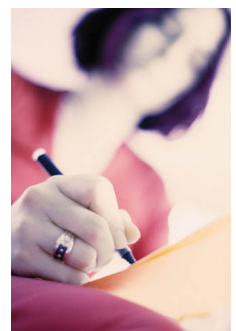
Always answer the door with the chain on, ask for identification, check it well, and consider joining the Nominated Neighbour Scheme. This will help protect you from distraction burglary. For more information visit: [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk) and [www.saferhomesinsomerset.org.uk](http://www.saferhomesinsomerset.org.uk)

## Crime Matters! Your Views ...

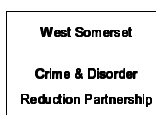
Do you have a view on **crime matters** in your community or work? If so we want to hear from you. You might want to share an experience you've had or be

interested in hearing how to protect yourself against a certain crime. You might even have advice you want to share with others. Please email your views to:

[crimereduction@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:crimereduction@somerset.gov.uk)  
or call: 01823 357836



This publication is produced in partnership with:



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