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## [West Country](#)

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1. ITV Report
2. 22 June 2020 at 6:30am

## **Police release images of people they want to speak to following tearing down of Bristol's Colston statue**



*Credit: ITV West Country*

Police have released photos of 15 people they want to speak to following the tearing down of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol two weeks ago.

The former slave trader was pulled from its plinth with ropes - during a Black Lives Matters march.

It was then graffitied and rolled through the city before being thrown into the harbour.

Its removal on Sunday 7 June - has polarised opinion and has been celebrated and also condemned by many.

Avon and Somerset Police has deemed the toppling of the statue as 'an act of criminal damage'.

At the time, officers made a decision to not intervene but instead they launched a criminal damage investigation following the protest.

They have now appealed for help from the public to identify an additional 15 people thought to be involved. Three people have already been contacted by police.

Following the appeal one was identified and voluntarily attended a police station for interview.



Police have released photos of 14 people they want to speak to following the tearing down of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol two weeks ago. *Credit: Avon and Somerset Police*



Police have released photos of 15 people they want to speak to following the tearing down of the Edward Colston statue in Bristol two weeks ago. *Credit: Avon and Somerset Police*

But there has also been worldwide support for those who pulled down the monument, including from celebrities and public figures.

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One Hood [twitter.com/philstoke/stat...](https://twitter.com/philstoke/stat...)

**Phil 🌴** @philstoke  
Replying to @icecube

No time for any slave trader statues over here in the uk #BLMUK #BLMbristol





29K 4:44 PM - Jun 7, 2020

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Detective Superintendent Liz Hughes of Avon & Somerset Police spoke to ITV West Country:

I absolutely recognise that there are very polarised views in relation to events that happened that day but in the eyes of the law there was a clear act of criminal damage and we're duty bound to investigate that.

I think it's a unique set of events we're faced with. In terms of the worldwide coverage and debate it's caused it's unique. My priority is to do a thorough investigation and I think that's what the public would expect us to do.

– *Detective Superintendent Liz Hughes*



*Credit: Bristol City Council*

Home Secretary Priti Patel, [who called the act 'utterly disgraceful'](#), is reported to have had a 'firm' conversation with Avon & Somerset Chief Constable Andy Marsh after the protest.

He defended his officers' action, saying: "They responded with common sense, sound judgement and in the best interests of public safety."

The hollow bronze statue [was retrieved from the water four days later](#) and is now being assessed before going on display in a museum at a later date.

Bristol City Council, which is thought to own the statue, confirmed: "As requested by police, we have provided an evidential statement which lists any damage to the statue."

Last updated Wed 24 Jun 2020

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