Police join Town Hall Gateway

People living and working in Weston are set to have access to police and council services all under one roof.

From January 2, police enquiry officers join up with their council counterparts in the newly refurbished Town Hall Gateway.

North Somerset District Commander, Chief Superintendent Julian Moss, said the move — the first of its kind — would bring huge benefits for the public:

“The new Town Hall is a far more accessible and much more welcoming environment for the public than the police station. Working side by side with the council will mean we literally work more closely with them to address and resolve issues reported to us.”

Councillor Nigel Ashton, Leader of North Somerset Council, said: “Accommodating the police extends the range of services available under one roof for local people.

“It makes it easier for us to work together to build safer and stronger communities in North Somerset. It makes sense for residents and helps both organisations financially and operationally.”

Police services available at the Town Hall Gateway include:

- General policing enquiries
- Crime reporting
- Crime prevention advice
- Lost and found property

Council services include:

- Weston Library
- Home Choice
- Housing Advice
- Council tax and benefits

From January 2, the opening hours will be:
Monday to Friday 8.30am – 8pm
Saturday 8.30am – 7pm
Sunday 10am – 7pm
Bank holidays 10am – 4pm (closed Christmas Day and Boxing Day)
Got a new bike?

- Make a note of your bike’s make, model and frame number and take a photo.
- Security mark your bike and register it for free at BikeRegister.com
- Use two strong Sold Secure approved locks, which should cost around 10% of your bike’s cost.
- Always lock it when leaving it. Secure it to proper stands or robust street furniture.
- Lock your bike through the frame and wheels.

Don’t suffer in silence

Victims of domestic abuse and those who know a potential victim are being urged to speak out.

Historically, incidents of domestic abuse increase in the winter, when the pressures of Christmas, family, money and increased alcohol consumption place additional strain on relationships.

Last year, more than 8,000 cases were reported to police, with nearly half resulting in an offender being charged.

Anyone who is at risk, or who thinks someone they know is at risk, is being urged to come forward and report it – whoever they are.

Detective Inspector Katie Boxer from the Public Protection Unit said: “Domestic abuse is a serious crime that can escalate easily and cause serious injury.

Stay safe this winter

We want you to stay safe this winter, so here are some top crime prevention tips to ensure you don’t become a crime victim:

- Don’t leave valuables, gifts or shopping on display in your car. Also, don’t bring purchases back to your car and then return to the shops.
- Keep purses and wallets in secure pockets and bags. Don’t leave handbags unattended in trolleys.
- Over Christmas, keep wrapped presents out of sight from household windows.
- Don’t leave the packaging from new goods, especially expensive electrical items such as flat screen TVs, outside your house. It advertises what new items you have. Take them to the tip or recycling centre.
- If you are out in the evening, leave a light on a timer switch and a radio playing. If possible leave a car on the drive. Don’t advertise the fact you are out.
- If you are on a night out, remember to drink within your limits – don’t make yourself vulnerable. Make sure you have travel plans organised before you start your evening. Don’t walk home on your own.
- Try not to use the cash point late at night or in a deserted street, and put your cash away immediately.
- Mark your new property with your postcode, particularly bikes and expensive items, and register any electrical goods on websites such as www.immobilise.com

If you need advice or support call the Domestic Abuse Freephone line on 0800 694 9999 or dial 999 in an emergency.

You can also visit us on Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, through your mobile or TV service.
Keeping you safe

Our priority is to keep you safe and help you feel safe in your home, your neighbourhood and your community without living in fear of crime. We need you to help us. Community knowledge and information is vital in helping us tackle crime and catch criminals.

We rely on people who live in the local area to be our eyes and ears, reporting suspicious behaviour or anything that could be linked to criminal activity.

Share what you know.

Relentless success

An Operation Relentless day of action in November saw 42 people arrested across North Somerset.

A series of raids were carried out throughout the day, targeting drug dealers, burglars, robbers and people who have been evading justice by failing to appear at court.

The arrests were for a wide variety of offences including conspiracy to supply Class A drugs, cultivation of cannabis, burglary and common assault, robbery, car crime, and racially aggravated assault. Three cannabis factories were also dismantled and around 80 wraps of suspected heroin and crack cocaine were seized, with a street value of around £1,000.

North Somerset District Commander, Chief Superintendent Julian Moss, said: "Since September, we have made nearly 150 arrests in North Somerset under Relentless, for offences ranging from burglary and theft to robbery and car crime.

"The message to our communities is simple: work with us, tell us what you know about anyone you suspect of being involved in crime, and we will act on it.

"Together, we will make North Somerset an even safer place to live, work and visit."

Drug dealers jailed

Four men have pleaded guilty to conspiracy to supply heroin and crack cocaine following an investigation by our specialist Targeting Team.

Three of the men are from Liverpool and one is from Weston-super-Mare. One of the offenders has also pleaded guilty to blackmail.

The quality of the evidence gathered by the targeting team, which included painstaking analysis of CCTV footage and meticulous cross referencing of taxi bookings, led the Judge to award two Crown Court Commendations.

Detective Sergeant Saj Rizvi said: "These men were selling drugs on the streets of Weston to people who were committing further crime to fund their habit.

"Our CCTV analysis showed them paying money into a Weston bank, which would then be drawn out within minutes in Liverpool. They thought they were onto a winner, but they are all now destined for prison."

A separate targeting team operation has led to a further four people, two men from Liverpool and two women from Weston, also pleading guilty to conspiracy to supply Class A drugs and money laundering.

DS Rizvi added: "While we can't physically stop people coming to Weston to sell drugs and commit crime, these cases show just how closely we work with landlords and other agencies under the IMPACT scheme to identify and target them.

"Hopefully it sends out a clear message that Weston is no easy target."

Avon and Somerset has a new Police and Crime Commissioner

In November, residents voted for independent candidate Sue Mountstevens to be the area’s very first Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). With nearly a 20 per cent turnout in Avon and Somerset and 125,704 votes, the highest mandates in the country, Ms Mountstevens officially took up her role on November 22. Ms Mountstevens said: “As your Independent Commissioner I will protect residents and police from political interference. I will reduce crime so you can be safe and feel safe in your community. I will be a fierce advocate on behalf of victims and I will ensure that offenders are dealt with robustly through the criminal justice system, and I never forget that it is your money. I will ensure that every pound is spent efficiently, effectively and wisely.”
National conman sentenced

A man who heartlessly conned people in North Somerset, Bristol and other parts of the country out of cash by posing as a vicar or ex-service man has been sentenced to 16 months.

The 53-year-old man of no fixed abode pleaded guilty to five offences of fraud by false representation and asked for another 15 to be taken into consideration.

Keith Harris, investigating officer based at Weston-super-Mare, coordinated the national investigation which culminated with his arrest in Romford, Essex, in September. He said: “This man travelled all over the country preying on vulnerable, elderly people to make money.

“While the amounts of money he made each time are relatively low, the humiliation and hurt he has caused his victims is a disgrace.

“He clearly thought he was untouchable, making up elaborate sob stories to con elderly people out of their money and travel the country.”

One of the 15 offences taken into consideration happened in Weston-super-Mare, while others occurred in Clevedon, Yatton and Bristol.

Police cadets launch in North Somerset

The first police cadets to be seen in North Somerset for almost 30 years donned their uniforms for the first time in November.

Thirty boys and girls aged between 14 and 17 from across North Somerset have joined a new unit of the Avon and Somerset Volunteer Police Cadets.

The unit, run by police officers, staff and volunteers in their spare time, is part of our commitment to engaging with young people and offering teenagers the chance to make a difference in their communities.

The Avon and Somerset Volunteer Police Cadet scheme has been running as a pilot for the past year in South Gloucestershire, where 29 cadets are learning about all aspects of policing. Almost all the young people in the pilot (96 per cent) would recommend it to family and friends.

The new unit, based at Churchill Academy, will meet each Thursday night during term time.

In the first few months, the cadets will receive training in basic police procedures, such as filling in their pocket notebooks, as well as first aid.

During December they will be assisting with Operation Jingle which sees an enhanced police presence in local shopping centres on Thursday evenings for late night shopping.

Once their training is complete next year they will be getting involved with local community events such as summer fetes and crime prevention days.

PC Ray Bradley QPM is leading the new unit. He said: “These young people – like the vast majority of youngsters – want to take on new challenges and make a contribution to the community.

“By volunteering as police cadets they’ll be making a difference and gaining valuable experiences which will help them become active members of society, no matter what career path they choose.”

If you need this document in another format
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Typetalk - 01275 816 888
or visit
www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/
WebsiteResources/accessibility/

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Crimestoppers anonymously on
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www.crimestoppers-uk.org
We never ask for your name or trace your call