

### Community Messages

#### **26/04/19 - Multi-agency taskforce joins together to tackle modern slavery**

#### **A multi-agency taskforce has visited premises in Telford to take action against modern slavery.**

Last week police, fire and trading standards were among those who took part in the multi-agency taskforce enforcement to target those involved in labour exploitation.

The activity supported Operation Aidant, a national campaign aiming to raise awareness of modern slavery offences such as labour exploitation and human trafficking.

Across Telford 15 car washes, food venues and houses of multi-occupancy (HMOs) were visited to ensure staff and those living there were not being exploited.

The Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority and Immigration also supported the visits.

Telford's Harm Reduction Hub Sergeant Ed Pontin said: "We know modern slavery is taking place right across the country and want to make sure, together with our partner agencies, we're doing all we can in Telford to tackle this issue and ensure those who are among the most vulnerable in our communities have help and support to break from this exploitation."

The initiative is the latest as part of the multi-agency taskforce enforcement strategy that sees a range of organisations work together.

Angie Astley, Assistant Director for Customer and Neighbourhood Services said "The MATES approach has proved to be a very effective means of problem solving for our communities. As you can see from this operation our officers have been working really hard around the clock to ensure that citizens are kept safe. I am really happy that as partners agencies we are coming together, pooling our resources and expertise, and jointly tackling the scourge of modern slavery as part of Operation Aidant."

Over the past few months police have also been working with fuel stations to encourage them to sign up to West Mercia Police's We Don't Buy Crime, as part of the initiative staff are trained to spot the signs someone may be a victim of or at risk of being criminally exploited. Due to its success the initiative has been rolled out to other areas of the force and now includes food venues and coffee shops and reinforces the borough's vulnerability and exploitation training delivered across the town.

Sgt Pontin added: "Our local communities are our eyes and ears, they see and hear what is going in their local area and we want to make sure they are empowered to do something if they suspect something untoward, such as modern slavery or exploitation, is taking place."

Modern Slavery is a form of serious and organised crime. West Mercia Police is currently running its Protect campaign aimed at targeting those involved in serious and organised crime. To find out more about Protect visit [www.westmercia.police.uk/protect](http://www.westmercia.police.uk/protect)

**If you suspect modern slavery is taking place, ring the UK Modern Slavery Helpline run by @UnseenOrg on 08000 121 700 or download The STOP APP to report human trafficking.**

\*\*\*End of Message\*\*\*

## 25/04/19 - PCC Welcomes Continued Decrease in Crime

### Overall crime has continued to fall in West Mercia, conversely to the national trend, according to figures published by the ONS\* today.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has welcomed the 1% decrease in overall reported crime, as well as decreases in areas including violence with injury, sexual offences, theft, burglary, vehicle offences, bicycle theft, criminal damage, drug offences and public order.

Whilst there have been slight increases in areas such as violence against the person, robbery, possession of weapons and computer misuse, these increases are at a lower rate than the national level.

West Mercia has seen an increase in knife offences, however the volumes of these offences continue to be low, when compared to the rest of the country.

Work will continue, within the force, to address shoplifting and theft where increases have been seen.

Commissioner John Campion said "This is again positive and reassuring news for our communities who want to be safe and feel safe. I will continue to ensure West Mercia Police are well resourced to tackle emerging crime types. Whether it be through the funding of diversionary schemes to help young people defer from involvement in crime, or investment in Smartwater and Rural and Business Officers who can help to tackle issues around shoplifting and theft, I am committed to ensuring our communities can continue to live safely. Whilst we must not be complacent about the figures, I am pleased that they reflect that the overall approach is working."

\*\*\*End of message\*\*\*

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/article/59785/PCC-Welcomes-Continued-Decrease-in-Crime>

## 25/04/19 - A rural community's commitment to tackling speeding - Crowle

### A Worcestershire village that has been suffering with speeding is adding another preventative measure in the hope that motorists will heed the 30mph limit.

West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion has allocated £1,500 to purchase and install five pairs of white gates to sit at all entrances to the village of Crowle.



Crowle currently has a vehicle activated sign and a community Speed Watch group, however motorists are still choosing to ignore the 30mph limit. The sign has recorded between 700 and 3,000 hits per week and speeds in excess of 45mph when the police have carried out speed monitoring sessions on the main road through the village.

PCC John Campion said: "Crowle residents have tried to find a solution to reducing speeding through their village but motorists continue to ignore the measures that have been put in place - ultimately putting people's lives at risk.

"Residents are so passionate about creating a safer community, that I am more than happy to support them. I hope these white gates will act as a reminder to motorists that they should respect the village and speed limits that are in place for a reason."

Marie Eastwood, Crowle Parish Council Chair, said: "Speeding traffic has been a massive problem in Crowle, and it is only getting worse. Data we've collected from Speed Watch and speed monitoring signs provide the hard evidence and we are determined to tackle the issue.

"Thanks to the Police and Crime Commissioner, we have been able to fund five pairs of white gates, one at each entrance to the village. We know that from empirical evidence that these gates can reduce speeds by up to 10mph. This sort of difference can save lives. We are in the process of buying another speed sign with the help of New Home Bonus money from Wychavon District Council and we are hoping that the Safer Roads Partnership will run monitoring sessions too.

"We want to thank the PCC and those who have dedicated so much time and effort to these projects; we hope that drivers will slow down through Crowle and other villages to help make rural roads safer for pedestrians, cyclists and horses as well as other vehicles."

To view this article with picture please click on the **'Read more'** link at the bottom of the email message.

Thank you

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/article/59784/A-rural-communitys-commitment-to-tackling-speeding---Crowle>

## 25/04/19 - Police continue to crackdown on drivers using a mobile phone at the wheel

**As the national mobile phone campaign continues into its second week, West Mercia Police and the Safer Roads Partnership are reminding motorists of the dangers involved in using a mobile phone at the wheel and police are continuing to crackdown on any motorists who do so.**



Caught on mobile phone while driving

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) campaign started on the 15th April and is running until the 28th April. During the first week of the campaign (up until 22nd April), 133 motorists across West Mercia were caught using their mobile phone at the wheel, and police officers will continue to crackdown during the rest of the campaign period and beyond.

It's over two years since new legislation was introduced, increasing both the fine and licence points if caught using a mobile phone whilst behind the wheel. **Motorists caught using a handheld mobile phone while driving face a £200 fine and six points on their licence. Drivers caught twice face a lengthy ban - which could also then lead to a £1,000 fine. While new drivers - those who have passed within the last two years - face having their licence revoked if caught just once.**

**Drivers using a mobile phone are slower at recognising and reacting to hazards, and are four times more likely to be involved in a collision. Drivers are encouraged to put their phone away before starting a journey so they are not tempted to use it, and only use their phone once they've stopped in a safe place.**

Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion said: "I am staggered that there are still so many people choosing to ignore this law. We know all too well the dangerous consequences that a lack of concentration for even a split second can have. The use of phones whilst driving is simply not acceptable and, two years after the new legislation was introduced, it appears that more people need to understand that.

"There is still a lot of work to be done around changing the culture and I will continue to support the police by ensuring they have the resources to make our roads safer. However, this isn't a problem that can be tackled by the police alone. That is why I will continue to work with our communities to show that this dangerous behaviour will not be tolerated."

Since 2016 there have been 4 fatalities, 15 serious injuries and 54 slight injuries in West Mercia where use of a mobile phone was recorded as a causation factor.

\*\*\*End of Message \*\*\*

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/article/59766/Police-continue-to-crackdown-on-drivers-using-a-mobile-phone-at-the-wheel>

## Contact Details

Malinsgate Police Station  
Malinsgate  
Telford  
TF3 4HW  
101 (In an emergency always call 999)

