

On the beat in

Hereford Southside & Rural

Safer Neighbourhood Team Newsletter

February 2026

Where we work



Team contact details

Team email: herefordsouthside.snt@westmercia.police.uk

Safer Neighbourhood Officer: PC 21946 Jack Davies **Mobile:** 07817 158224

Safer Neighbourhood Officer: PC 21198 Brian Gosson **Mobile:** 07973 846336

Safer Neighbourhood Officer: PC 21260 Martin Gillett **Mobile:** 07970 544262

Safer Neighbourhood Officer: PC 2347 Lyn Johnson **Mobile:** 07773 048377

Safer Neighbourhood Officer: PC 22088 Dan Ovel **Mobile:** 07929 721340

Police Community Support Officer: PCSO 6324 Carol Marsh **Mobile:** 07890 524667

Police Community Support Officer: PCSO 40259 Hayley Warne **Mobile:** 07773 052560

Police Community Support Officer: PCSO 40272 Lewis Thomas **Mobile:** 07773 051508

*We are happy to receive calls from Members of The Public, however, please **do not** use these to report crimes and/or incidents. For more information on reporting a crime/incident please go to www.westmercia.police.uk and select 'Report' or call 999 (Emergency) / 101 (Non-Emergency)*

In this edition

- Local Policing Changes
 - Criminal Damage
 - National Holocaust Memorial Day
 - Traffic Op
 - Coffee with a Cop
 - Be Bright, Be Seen
 - ASB ASDA
 - NHM
-

Local Policing Changes

Inspector Julie Watson of Hereford City and South Herefordshire Safer Neighbourhood Teams informing you about some positive changes that have been made to the organisation of West Mercia Police.

On Monday (19 January) the force changed the way it organises and delivers local policing to make sure services continue to meet the needs of local communities.

As part of these transitions, Herefordshire and Worcestershire has gone from being two local policing areas to a combined one (Herefordshire & Worcestershire).

This new structure is designed to strengthen resilience, improve coordination and ensure resources are focused where they are needed most.

Herefordshire's communities will continue to receive the same level of service from their Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), where we have recently seen an uplift in officer numbers.

The force has operated under its current structure since 2018, and feedback from the public has highlighted several ways to enhance how it functions and meets demand.

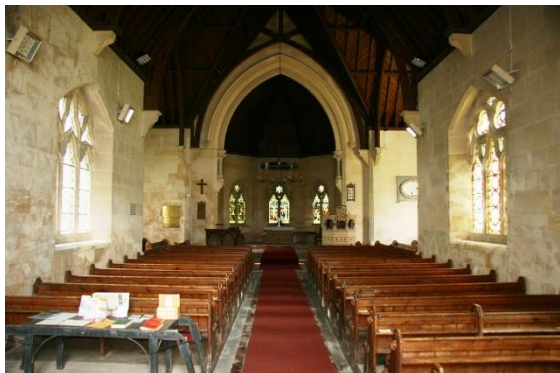
The planned investment supports the Police and Crime Commissioner's Safer Communities Plan and contributes to the national Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, helping ensure policing remains visible, accessible and responsive.

The updated operating model is expected to provide a stable, long-term framework that better supports officers and staff, adapts to evolving demands and maintains a high standard of service for the public.

We look forward to engaging with our communities as we continue our duties to protect and serve the people of Herefordshire.

Criminal Damage – Local Village Church

We've received a report of criminal damage at a small village church, where part of the carpet has been ripped up, the Altar cloth removed and folded up and several objects inside the building have been moved around. Incidents like this are upsetting for the whole community, especially when they target a place of worship that many residents value.



Our Safer Neighbourhood Team will be carrying out reassurance patrols in the area and working closely with the church to aid the investigation further due to some information collated by the Church warden and members of the community.

You can report information online at

www.westmercia.police.uk or by calling 101. In an emergency or if a crime is in progress, always dial 999.

National Holocaust Memorial Day

West Mercia Police participated in Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) on January 27th by remembering victims of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides, often through campaigns encouraging reflection, candle-lighting, and challenging hatred, as seen in past social media posts where they urged public participation in "Lighting the Darkness" to stand against prejudice and support the Jewish community. They promote the core themes of HMD, focusing on learning from history to combat modern antisemitism and discrimination, aligning with national efforts to educate future generations and honour survivors.



Traffic Op



Members of the Southside Safer Neighbourhood Team recently carried out a traffic operation following the fatal accident on Belmont Road. During the operation, officers stopped several vehicles whose drivers were found to be using mobile phones while driving. As a result, TORs were issued, each carrying a £200

fine and six penalty points.

Driving Whilst Using a Mobile Phone

Using a **hand-held mobile phone while driving is illegal in the UK**, and the law is now stricter than ever. It applies **even if you are stopped at traffic lights, queuing in traffic, supervising a learner, or your engine is stopped by start-stop technology**. Drivers must not **hold or use** a device for *any* purpose—this includes calling, texting, taking photos or videos, checking notifications, using apps, changing music, or holding the phone to look at navigation.

Only **true hands-free use** is permitted, and only if the device is secured in a cradle or mount and **does not obstruct the driver's view**. Police can still prosecute if a driver is distracted or not in proper control of the vehicle, even when using hands-free equipment.

Penalties

If caught holding or using a mobile phone while driving, you can receive:

- **£200 fixed penalty**
- **6 penalty points**
This means **new drivers** (within two years of passing their test) will **lose their licence**.

Courts can also issue:

- A **driving ban**
- Fines up to **£1,000** (or **£2,500** for lorry/bus drivers)

Recent updates confirm that UK law is now *crystal clear*: **it is illegal to touch or hold a phone for any reason while driving**, including unlocking it, checking notifications, illuminating the screen, or interacting with apps.

Exceptions

You may only hold a device if:

- You are **safely parked**, or
- Calling **999** in an emergency when stopping is unsafe, or
- Making a **contactless payment** when the vehicle is **stationary** (e.g., drive-through)

Coffee with a Cop

Members of the Team are holding **Coffee with a Cop** sessions at various locations across the Southside over the coming months. The first event of the year took place at **The Forge, Garway**.

These sessions are designed to give members of the community the opportunity to drop in at an advertised venue, enjoy a coffee with the team, and have a friendly, informal chat. They provide a welcoming environment where the public can speak with Officers about any concerns or issues they may have.

The next event is at **Pontrilas Community Café** on Wednesday 18th February from 0900 - 1100

Are you involved with a group that would benefit from a visit? Invite the team to your club or event – it's all about being part of the community

Email: herefordsouthside.snt@westmercia.police.uk



Be Bright, Be Seen



A table of items along with members of the SNT will be in Tesco's Belmont between the hours of 16:00 and 18:00 on Friday 13th February.

If you are a jogger, a cyclist, a dog walker or a concerned parent regarding safety during the darker evenings – then please pop along and take away an item to help you or loved ones feel safer.

ASB Asda

The local policing team has introduced a targeted, intelligence-led patrol strategy to tackle ongoing ASB driving at the Asda car park on Belmont Road. Officers are carrying out both high-visibility and covert patrols, focusing on peak times such as evenings and weekends. This approach helps deter offenders, gather real-time information, and ensure a rapid response to incidents.

The team is also working closely with Asda and partner agencies, reviewing CCTV and identifying repeat vehicles involved in ASB. Where offences are detected, officers will take positive action, including issuing warnings, Traffic Offence Reports, or using Section 59 powers to seize vehicles when appropriate.

The aim is to maintain a consistent policing presence that reduces risk, reassures the community, and ensures offenders—whether drivers or vehicle owners—are swiftly dealt with.



Neighbourhood Matters

Sign up to Neighbourhood Matters your brand-new community messaging service.

Neighbourhood Matters enables residents, businesses and community groups to keep in touch with local policing teams. You can choose exactly what type of alert you wish to receive and how you receive them, whether that be by email, text or telephone.

Sign up now at: www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk

