



Exceptional demand

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It's been an exceptionally busy time for the force in recent weeks. The number of calls for service has been consistently high, with the hot weather and the World Cup requiring us to assess resource to meet demand.

Nationally the requirement to support President Trump's visit to the UK and deploy officers out of the county has meant additional pressure and we have had to make difficult decisions to cancel rest days and extend shifts.

I am clear this is a period of unprecedented demand and I am immensely proud of the force's officers. They have done an outstanding job to ensure the communities of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are kept safe and normal policing levels can be maintained. Officer numbers have continued to decline nationally and we are not alone in feeling the strain on the service at times like these. However, just as we support other forces, there will be times when we require them to support us and they have and will come.

You will all have seen and heard the tragic news of the death of 13-year-old Ryan Evans at Westport Lake in Stoke-on-Trent. This sad incident required a large-scale emergency response and we worked closely with partners and specialist teams from other forces to bring this incident to a dignified conclusion. In such sad circumstances the efforts of all agencies were extremely professional and thought-through, and I know I am not alone in feeling humbled by the outpouring of love and generosity from the wider community.

In these recent weeks we've also been launching the new operating model across the south of the county after its launch in the north last month. There's more about this in the article on page two but needless to say, it's going well and I am confident these changes will enable us to be more visible, preventative and responsive to those who need us.

Gareth Morgan
Chief Constable, Staffordshire Police

New policing model update

On 2 July the new policing model launched in the south of the county. As well as more officers based in neighbourhood teams, this move has led to the creation of two further response hubs and resolution centres.

Across the county, based at Hanley and now Burton and Cannock, the response hubs enable the force to provide a more seamless and agile service to emergency 999 calls. Officers, while based at one of these three hubs, are deployed on shift to various locations around Staffordshire, at key road junctions and in areas of high demand so they can respond more readily.

The resolution centres, also based in these areas, are designed to deal with non-urgent calls to the force where the physical attendance of an officer is not necessary, such as shoplifting, theft, fraud and damage-only road traffic collisions.

The resolution centre in Hanley, which was set up in December 2017, has led to 6,000 incidents being dealt with faster than they would have been with physical deployment.

Chief Inspector Mark Barlow said: "The change has helped us improve service and in many cases, made it easier and far more convenient for the public to speak to an investigator. Many people just need advice or guidance from the police rather than arrange a visit.

"We will always respond to emergencies and send an officer when we need to and the expansion of the resolution centres from one to three will enable us to respond better to emergencies."

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Crimewatch Roadshow overview

The Crimewatch Roadshow came to Staffordshire Police HQ on 28 June to broadcast crime appeals and learn about the force's dog handling team.

The show, which was broadcast live at 11am on BBC One, featured Detective Inspector Dan Ison renewing his appeal for help from the public, following the murder of 87-year-old Arthur Gumbley in Little Aston last November. During a violent burglary at Mr Gumbley's house offenders got away with gold and silver jewellery. He was taken to hospital with serious injuries and sadly died three weeks later.

Police Dog Cooper, and his handler PC Tim Moss, were also featured on the show conducting searches. Cooper became the force's first ever Staffordshire bull terrier when he joined in March after leaving the RSPCA West Hatch Animal Centre in Taunton. He was selected for us by Lee Webb, dog trainer for Avon and Somerset Police, who has close links with the animal centre and has experience in training Staffordshire Bull Terriers. He passed his six-week intensive dog training course at the end of April.

Latest crime figures for Staffordshire released

Recorded crime in Staffordshire has increased by 5% over the last 12 months, with a total of 4,379 extra crimes being reported to police between July 2017 and June 2018.

The latest figures reflect the national trend of increased recorded crime, as reported by the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

The stats reveal that Staffordshire has seen an increase of reports in some areas due to the changing complexity of crimes being reported to police.

There has been a rise of 14% in reports of violent crime against the person, but this figure isn't confined to offences that cause physical harm, it includes offenders who use social channels and media platforms to send messages intending to cause the victim distress or anxiety.

The county has seen a sharp increase in the number of cars reported stolen across the south of the county, with reports up by 42%. Technological advances are changing the way car criminals access and steal vehicles so we continue to work with the car industry to make it harder for criminals to commit these offences. Car owners are also being issued with security advice and extra patrols of officers are working to tackle the issue in the areas affected.

Figures show a rise in the number of sexual offences and online harassment and stalking crimes being reported to police, as more people have the confidence to report offences to officers.

However, house burglaries and drug offences have fallen significantly across the force over the same period.

Deputy Chief Constable Nick Baker said: "We understand people's concerns around any rise in crime and the impact it can have on the quality of life of those who live, work and visit Staffordshire and we will continue to prioritise the crimes that cause the greatest harm, as well as tackling the issues that cause local concern.

"Over the past 12 months we have introduced a more modernised service to policing in Staffordshire, which has seen a significant investment in neighbourhood policing. These officers are focusing more on proactive policing in communities, developing specialist capabilities for more complex crime and working with partners to find effective ways of intervening early to prevent crime and harm."





Supporting Stoke-on-Trent Pride

Staffordshire Police proudly supported Stoke-on-Trent Pride that took place in mid-June.

Stoke-on-Trent Pride is a vibrant annual community festival which welcomes not only Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) members of the community, but everyone who wishes to celebrate diversity.

Stoke-on-Trent Pride, which took place at Hanley Park on Saturday 16 June, celebrates equality and culture in the city, along with promoting compassion, understanding, equality and wellbeing.

Representatives from the Staffordshire Police LGBT Association hosted a stall and were available throughout the day to discuss homophobic and transphobic hate crime, provide support and encourage the reporting of such incidents.

Local officers, police community support officers and specials were also in attendance at the event.



All three stolen Ironman bikes recovered by police

Three high-performance bikes, stolen during a burglary ahead of the Ironman event in Stafford on 10 June, were recovered and returned to their owners.

The bikes, worth around £17,000 in total, were reported stolen from an outhouse at the rear of the Vine Hotel, Salter Street, Stafford overnight (8/9 June).

Two men, aged 33 and 37 from the Stafford area, were arrested on suspicion of burglary following the theft of the bikes. They have been released under investigation pending further investigation while enquiries continue.



Three men jailed after two kilos of cocaine found on dining table

Three men have been jailed for conspiring to supply two kilos of high purity cocaine, which was found on a dining table by officers searching a Stoke house.

Imthiaz Ghulam, David Gregory and Ubaid Rehman were all jailed on 7 June at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court for conspiracy to supply cocaine.

Ghulam, aged 27, was sentenced to 7 years 1 month; Gregory, aged 25, was jailed for 6 years 9 months; while Rehman, aged 34, received a 6 years 4 months sentence.



More patrols for the A500 road in Staffordshire

Motorists using the A500 in Staffordshire have seen an increase in patrols by the Central Motorway Police Group (CMPG) and the Highways England Traffic Officer Service (HETOs) after they assumed primary responsibility for policing the road on 18 June.

The partnership is in addition to its current role patrolling the motorway network in Staffordshire and the West Midlands.

The change also brings CMPG resources nearer to Stoke-on-Trent, creating further opportunities to disrupt criminals that use the roads in the north of the county.

Superintendent Dean Hatton, head of CMPG, said: "The main priorities are to make the roads safer for the public and to disrupt criminals who use the roads. Officers will be on the A500 looking for road users who put others in danger by committing traffic offences, as well as criminals who use this road whilst causing harm to local communities."

Staffordshire Police's Assistant Chief Constable Emma Barnett said: "CMPG and Highways England are a key part of the approach to roads policing in Staffordshire with their patrolling of the motorway network. We're really pleased that their patrols will now include one of the county's busiest roads – the A500 – as we continue to develop an integrated approach to road safety and denying criminals the use of the roads across the county."