

Subject: Fortnightly update to the Police and Crime Commissioner - 15 March 2024 [#231807152]
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From: Wiltshire and Swindon Community Messaging <alert@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk>
To: Elizabeth Martin <Parish.Clerk@lynehamandbradenstoke-pc.gov.uk>



Fortnightly update to the Police and Crime Commissioner - 15 March 2024

Dear Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson,

Last Friday 8 March, Wiltshire Police provided a public update that a suspended officer had been found guilty of common assault. PC Lee Prince had been charged with common assault on a 17-year-old boy whilst on duty as a Firearms Officer in April 2023. He will be sentenced on 16 April 2024. Misconduct proceedings will now commence within the Force.

The public have the right to expect nothing other than the highest standards of behaviour from my officers, staff and volunteers, and I will accept nothing less. Public trust and confidence depends on it.

Yesterday (14 March), saw the launch of the National Crimestoppers Anti-Corruption hotline, which is a dedicated phone line for the public to report information about corruption and serious abuse relating to police officers, staff or volunteers. This has been developed in a collaboration between the National Police Chief's Council and Crimestoppers and is available to all communities. The service provides an anonymous and confidential route for the public to report concerns, [online via the Crimestoppers website](#) or via a dedicated phone line on 0800 085 0000, about serving police officers, staff and volunteers who are suspected of being corrupt or committing serious abuse.

The reports will be taken by Crimestoppers before being passed on to the relevant Professional Standards Department of the Force to which it relates for further action to be taken. I encourage anyone who has a concern about a member of Wiltshire Police to use this service. I am committed to re-building trust and confidence in the Force, and this hotline is another way for me to listen and respond to public concerns.

From an operational perspective, last week was the seventh Operation Scorpion week of action across all South West police forces, including Wiltshire. Operation Scorpion, which has been in place since early 2022, is the regional commitment between yourself and your PCC counterparts, and all five Chief Constables across the South West, to carry out activity to make the region a hostile environment for drug supply. By working in this way, this enables us to harness the collective strength of all police forces across in the region to better coordinate our activity to target criminals engaging in drug activity and limit the harm they cause to our communities.

Last week, Operation Scorpion continued to focus on drug related criminality, but also knife crime. Over the week, my teams executed numerous warrants across the county, seizing class A and B drugs, cash and firearms. More than 30 people have been arrested and many more vulnerable people safeguarded. In addition, my officers, staff and volunteers were out and about across the county engaging with communities on the dangers of carrying knives, conducting education talks in schools, performing weapons sweeps and engaging with retailers around the laws on selling knives. Both you and I joined my teams in Tidworth for a weapons sweep and proactive patrol in Tidworth last Thursday. Thank you for joining the drugs warrant operation earlier in the week too.

Over the week, we saw the following results for Wiltshire:

- 31 arrests made
- £24,000 cash seized

- Class A drugs (cocaine and heroin) valued at £33,600
- 27 people safeguarded
- 79 cuckooed addresses visited
- Weapons seized included two real guns, one imitation gun, several knives (including 100 surrendered by the public), a Samurai Sword and a set of nunchucks
- Numerous assets seized including a car, designer jewellery and clothing
- As part of our week-long operation, we also found three children who were being exploited to run drugs as part of County Lines gangs and were missing from their homes from outside the county, whom we safeguarded.

Our communities may remember that the previous Operation Scorpion Week of Action focused not only on enforcement, but also on the importance of community intelligence. Since that time, we have seen an increase in community intelligence which has directly resulted in the arrest of some extremely harmful individuals. I would ask our communities to continue to report concerns, crimes or suspicious activity to us.

There is a common misconception that organised crime only happens in big cities. This is not the case and sadly, Wiltshire does have organised criminality embedded across our wonderful county. This organised criminality takes all forms, not just drugs, but includes exploitation, abuse, rural crime, theft and burglary. Wiltshire Police is continuing to arrest and bring more people to justice, and some crimes are reducing across our county. We are committed to doing more to prevent the harm and misery being caused to our communities. No crime is victimless, and I ask my communities to help me in Keeping Wiltshire Safe.

Last week was National Police Staff Week of Celebration and Recognition. This is the first time all forces have come together to recognise the incredible contribution of police staff who play such a significant and vital role in policing. Many of our police staff are at the absolute frontline of policing, whether that be answering 999 or 101 calls, conducting investigations, leading our operational security and drones response or managing forensic scenes - as just a few examples. But **all** police staff colleagues play a critical role in delivering our service, and there are so many different teams who are all doing tremendous work in supporting the delivery of policing in our county.

I would like to sincerely thank every member of police staff who works for Wiltshire Police for the superb work that they do - day in, day out. Policing simply couldn't continue without their incredible expertise, dedication and professionalism. We have publicly showcased some of the work of our Police Staff colleagues in a number of case studies, which are publicly available on the [Wiltshire Police LinkedIn page](#). I would also like to encourage anyone who would like to be part of this incredible work to look at the [career opportunities on our website](#).

March is International Women's History Month, and I am delighted to recognise the third birthday of our Wiltshire Police Connect network – a network set up to support, promote and empower women working within the Force. The network has been in place since 2021 and has gone from strength to strength - I thank everyone who has been and continues to be involved in this incredible group. Their third birthday fell on International Women's Day on Friday 8 March, and you can read some of the highlights from women working within Wiltshire Police [here](#). On this day we also launched the Wiltshire Girl Guide Police Challenge badge pack which I spoke of in my last letter to you – to encourage young females to think about the role that policing plays in their communities. The [badge pack can be found here](#) and is now available for all Girlguiding units to download to use at weekly meetings and gain the badge.

A further piece of work I would like to update you on this week is the [Walk Away campaign, which we launched on Monday 11 March](#). This is a campaign which encourages self-control and walking away from heated situations before they escalate and become violent. We know, from previous tragic cases, that a single punch can ruin lives and this campaign is aimed at changing behaviours and ensuring that nights out are safe for everyone. It also calls on friends and bystanders of potential offenders, as well as members of the public, to de-escalate situations when it's safe to do so. This campaign, which supports our operational priority of tackling violence, is also supported by Great Western Hospital, Swindon Town Football Club and Swindon Borough Council. Our communities can expect to see the campaign messages visible in our towns and communities and also hear about it on local radio stations. [You can read more about the campaign here](#).

In closing, this month we have seen the Holy month of Ramadan commence. May I take this opportunity to wish our Muslim colleagues and communities a wonderful celebration during this special and blessed time.

Kindest regards,

Catherine Roper

Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police



Message Sent By

Phil Mackie

(Wiltshire Police, Communications & Engagement Officer, Wiltshire)

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