



Social Media - a force for good

Sussex Police hailed the positive aspects of social media in dealing with the prospects of unrest in August.

While there was a lot of focus on the negative aspects of the use of social media in other parts of the country, in Sussex we have seen how it can be a force for good.

People are increasingly turning to police Twitter accounts for timely, accurate and honest information. We used Twitter to engage with people, to quickly dispel rumours and put people's minds at rest. We would particularly like to thank everyone who helped us with this and also express our gratitude for the enormous number of messages of support and appreciation that we have received.

*** Nathan Sinden, 27, of St Leonards-on-Sea appeared before Hastings Magistrates on 11 August charged with intentionally encouraging / assisting the commission of an either way offence (via social media), namely burglary and criminal damage. He is due to appear at Lewes Crown Court on 9 September ***

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Welcome to the September newsletter from Brighton & Hove Division of Sussex Police. We want to provide you with a snapshot of current local policing matters, both here in the city and across Sussex, and also share some of our good news highlights from the last month with you.

Following the sad scenes of violence and disorder across England last month, Sussex Police reacted quickly to quash false rumours of unrest happening locally and also to provide support to our colleagues in London. Thankfully we did not witness the sort of scenes we all saw on the national news coverage and I believe this is down to a widespread determination that ordinary, decent people in Brighton & Hove and Sussex will not tolerate it. Indeed, I believe our communities have grown stronger and more united as a result.

Local policing will always come first. Some minor instances that could possibly be linked to what had happened elsewhere were nipped in the bud and everyone worked with us in ensuring that it was business as usual and that events such as football matches and Brighton Pride could take place.

Thank you for your support and I hope you enjoy this edition.

Chief Superintendent Graham Bartlett

News Update

Couple jailed for robbery

A Brighton couple have been convicted of robbing a Brazilian student in Hove.

Mark Mitchell of New Steine and Gemma Godfrey of Dewe Road were sentenced to five and four years' imprisonment respectively.

The 20-year-old victim was walking along Farm Road when they threatened him with a knife. They took £20 from him and ran off. However, the victim flagged down a taxi driver who called the police, and after a swift search of the area, officers stopped the pair in Western Road minutes later.

Detective Inspector Jason Tingley said: "These are substantial sentences and reflect the seriousness with which the courts regards this type of crime."

"Cooper is an instant hit here.

"Before long she will be out there helping put more criminals behind bars."

A very mini Cooper

Cooper is the latest addition to the Sussex Police team fighting drug and other serious crime.

The two-month-old cocker spaniel has been bought from the proceeds of the sale of a Mini Cooper car confiscated from a drug dealer and she will leap into action next year as a specialist drugs and explosives search dog working across the whole county.

The car was seized in 2008 after a man was arrested whilst driving it in Brighton after conducting a drugs deal. He was jailed for five years for supplying crack cocaine and money laundering.

He was also ordered to pay back the proceeds of his crime - £130,000 including the car.

The car was sold at auction for £4000 and the monies divided equally between charity Crimestoppers and the force Dog Unit where the money has helped support the starring appearance of Cooper.

Inspector Di Lewis of the force's Dog Unit said: "Cooper is an instant hit. She will need to grow and go through careful and patient training before she is ready to hit the road but initial signs are very positive and I'm sure that before long she will be out there helping put more criminals behind bars."



The above photograph shows Inspector Di Lewis with new recruit Cooper. To learn more about the Sussex Police dog unit you can follow them on Twitter [@suspoldogunit](https://twitter.com/suspoldogunit)

News Update

Crackdown on bicycle theft

A man has been arrested after five suspected stolen bicycles and £56,000 in cash was seized by police during a warrant at the man's home in Hove.

The raid followed an investigation into a series of bike thefts in the Hove area during recent weeks.

To raise awareness of the thefts, local officers held a Day of Action offering free security marking and general security advice to help prevent further crimes.

PCSO Darren Pentner said: "Bike theft victims not only lose a mode of transport, they can be losing an expensive personal possession.

"Savvy cyclists will invest both time and money in properly securing their bikes making sure they use a high quality lock to secure the bike to a fixed object.

"It is also important to record and register your bike - take a clear photograph, get it security marked and keep a full description such as any unique features."

The man arrested on suspicion of theft and money laundering has been released on police bail until 6 October pending further enquiries.

Glassing victim speaks out

The victim of a vicious glassing attack in a Brighton nightclub has spoken about her ordeal, after the man guilty of the offence was jailed for six years.

Salim Ali had pushed the glass into the 34-year-old victim's face in an

unprovoked attack in the Casablanca club in Middle Street last December.

The victim was attacked within 24 seconds of standing at the bar and received four significant wounds to her face which required stitches.

Speaking of her ordeal she said: "The last memory I have is the glass coming towards my face. I was terrified I was going to lose my sight.

"I didn't understand his reaction. I kept asking my friends 'why?' When I saw myself in the mirror I didn't recognise myself. I was living in hell for months. I couldn't sleep. I lost my job because I couldn't go to work in that condition. If I go out, it's with my friends but I am still afraid to talk to

people. I would like to ask him: Are you proud of what you have done to me and my life?

"It is not justified to hurt anyone and he has to be punished for what he has done. As frightened as I was, I knew I had to go to court to get justice and I would now encourage other victims of crime to come forward and act as witnesses."

Detective Constable Tracey Dixon said: "The victim has shown immense bravery and courage since being viciously attacked in what can only be described as a senseless crime. Nothing will ever take away the trauma she has experienced yet she is pleased with the sentence, hopeful that she will be able to move on with her life now justice has been done."



For more news stories and features, please visit our website www.sussex.police.uk

Sealing evidence with body worn cameras

Some Sussex Police officers are now wearing small video cameras to help gather evidence at incidents they attend.

The cameras, known as body worn video, are overtly displayed on an officer's uniform and capture actions and conversations that take place during an incident. The footage can then be used to prove or disprove what took place during a call-out and can be used as evidence in court.

The force has bought 78 new cameras, which are about five inches in size and use a memory card to record. They have been distributed to officers across Sussex.

They are expected to be particularly crucial during domestic abuse investigations, helping to successfully secure a conviction and bring justice for the victim.

Officers from Brighton's anti-victimisation unit (AVU) have been wearing the cameras throughout a summer initiative aimed at improving the way officers initially respond to reports of domestic abuse.

Detective Inspector John Wallace said: "Victims of domestic abuse are offered continued support by specialist officers throughout the investigation and court process, yet they will often retract their statement which makes securing a conviction extremely challenging for the officer.

"As police officers we have a duty to protect victims and children from harm and we will still pursue prosecution which is why it is crucial to gather evidence early in the

investigation.

"The evidence captured on body worn video can help bring these cases to court and can prove incredibly compelling to a jury as they can see for themselves the behaviour of the offender at the time of the incident, the fear and distress of the victim, and tragically in some cases the effect on children who have witnessed abuse."

It is estimated that 80% of domestic abuse cases go unreported. By the time someone reports being the victim of domestic violence, on average they have already been a victim 39 times.

"The evidence captured on body worn video can help bring these cases to court and can prove incredibly compelling to a jury."



Community messaging will be coming online later this year and will enable members of the public, businesses and key groups to sign up for community messages and alerts. If you would like to sign up for the service, please leave your email address on the link below and we will contact you with an invitation to join when we go live. www.sussex.police.uk/your-neighbourhood/community-messaging