

On the beat in

Hereford Southside & Rural

Safer Neighbourhood Team Newsletter

June 2026

Where we work



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*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)*

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Vehicle Theft

What a start to the month of June ☹☹ We have received a few reports of vehicle thefts.

Larger vehicles have been the target for these offenders that seem to be hitting the South of the river.

- ★ A Blue Ford transit van was stolen from a property and was recovered by Police in less than 24 hours.
- ★ A Silver Land Rover was stolen from a yard having gained access by breaking a lock and gaining entry.
- ★ A white Ford transit van was stolen and later retrieved
- ★ Theft of a Moped which was later discovered smashed up not far from where it was stolen.
- ★ Theft of a Silver Audi A4 – recovered by owner a few days later.
- ★ Theft of a trailer – recovered in a field not far from incident occurred.
- ★ Theft of a bright red Suzuki Swift Ultra stolen from Wye Street car park.



West Mercia Police advise securing your vehicle out of sight in a garage where possible, using a steering wheel lock, and storing keyless entry fobs in signal-blocking (Faraday) pouches. Double-check that doors are locked, never leave the engine running unattended, and park in well-lit areas or Park Mark approved car parks.

Key Prevention Tactics

- **Keyless Car Theft:** Keep fobs far away from doors and windows, and utilize signal-blocking containers or turn off the fob's wireless signal entirely to stop thieves from relaying the signal to your car.
- **Physical Deterrents:** Add aftermarket security devices like a steering wheel lock, driveway parking post, or wheel clamp, which organized crime groups often consider "too much hassle".
- **Visible Security:** Ensure your number plates are secured using tamper-

resistant screws and utilize locking wheel nuts to deter thieves from stealing valuable parts.

- **Remove Valuables:** Never leave anything on display, and avoid leaving vehicle log books or spare keys inside the cabin.

If Your Vehicle is Targeted

- **In Progress:** If you catch thieves in the act, **do not challenge them**. Call **999** immediately and provide details on the offenders and their vehicles.
 - **If it's Stolen:** First double-check your parking spot and contact your vehicle's dedicated GPS tracking service if applicable. Otherwise, report the theft online using the [West Mercia Police Crime Reporting tool](#) or by calling **101**.
 - **Emergency Interception:** Modern alarms and trackers often allow you to remotely isolate fuel systems to safely bring the vehicle to a halt.
 - **Vigilance:** Report any suspicious individuals loitering around residential properties or cars via the West Mercia Police Non-Emergency 101 service
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✳ Parking Outside Schools ✳

Pick-up and drop-off times are busy outside schools. This can cause an increased safety risk to both children and parents.

Parking restrictions outside schools are there to keep you and your children safe. Parking inconsiderately can put people in danger and you also risk being fined.

Understanding yellow zigzag markings

Most school entrances and exits in the UK have yellow zigzag road markings with the writing 'School Keep Clear'.

Zigzags can also be found at entrances and exits of hospitals, fire stations, police stations and ambulance stations. They indicate the part of the road where motorists should not wait, stop, or park a vehicle.

Sometimes there may be an accompanying sign that shows specific times when these restrictions are in place. Motorists are legally allowed to park on the zigzags **outside** of these hours.

Both yellow and white zigzags also show areas that must be kept clear so that children and other road users can see clearly when crossing the road.

Safety tips for parking outside schools

When picking up or dropping off children at schools, you should do the following:

- Allow yourself plenty of time as the area is likely to be busy.
- Do not park on yellow zigzag lines and avoid parking opposite them.



- If you decide to park further away, please be considerate of local residents and avoid blocking driveways or accessways.
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The Weather Is Changing—And So Is the Road

The UK is experiencing more frequent and intense weather events—from flash floods to prolonged heatwaves. While climate change might seem like a global issue, its impact is very real for drivers here and now.

These changing conditions don't just affect the environment—they directly influence how we drive, learn to drive, and stay safe on the road.

1. Flooded Roads and Reduced Visibility

Flash floods are becoming more common in the UK, especially in low-lying areas and urban zones with poor drainage. For drivers, this creates multiple risks:

Aquaplaning: When tyres lose grip due to standing water.

Flooded Engines: Even shallow water can damage vehicles.

Hidden Hazards: Potholes, debris, or open drains may be submerged.

2. Heatwaves and Tyre Degradation

Extended periods of hot weather are affecting UK roads like never before. Tarmac can soften, expand, and even begin to melt in extreme heat—reducing tyre grip.

But it's the **tyres themselves** that are often overlooked.

Underinflated tyres heat up faster and are more prone to blowouts.

Old or worn tyres lose grip faster on hot, softened surfaces.

Incorrect pressure affects braking distance and handling—especially in high temps.

Did you know? Tyre blowouts are more common during UK summer months, particularly on motorways.

👉 **Make it a routine to check tyre pressure before every lesson, especially during a heatwave.**

3. Potholes, Road Erosion and Surface Damage

Rain followed by heat weakens road surfaces, accelerating the formation of potholes.

Hitting potholes at speed can damage suspension, tyres, and alignment.

Swerving to avoid potholes without checking mirrors is dangerous.

4. Glare and Low Sunlight Conditions

Longer, sunnier days might seem ideal for driving, but low-angle sun in early morning or late evening can create **intense glare**, especially on wet roads.

Glare can obscure road signs, lights, and pedestrians.

5. Climate-Conscious Driving Habits

Thinking ahead and adapting to weather conditions is no longer optional—it's essential.

Here's what to instil early on:

Adapt speed to conditions, not just speed limits.

Leave extra space in wet or hot conditions—stopping distances increase dramatically.

Plan ahead for shade, parking, or alternative routes in extreme weather.

Prepare for emergencies—a breakdown kit, water, and charger should always be in the car.

Final Thoughts: The Road Ahead

"Being a good driver isn't just about handling a car—it's about reading the road, the weather, and the world around you."



Don't Pass It On – The Real Cost of Buying Alcohol for Minors

West Mercia Police are reminding residents across the region that buying alcohol for anyone under the age of 18 is a serious criminal offence.

Known legally as "**proxy purchasing**," the act of an adult buying alcohol on behalf of a minor is a direct contributor to local anti-social behaviour, youth disorder, and vulnerability among young people.

The Legal Consequences

Many adults mistakenly believe they are simply doing a favour for a friend's teenager or a younger sibling. However, the law is clear:

- **Fines and Arrests:** If caught buying alcohol for a minor, you can face an immediate **£90 Penalty Notice for Disorder** or a police caution. Severe or repeat cases can lead to prosecution, a fine of up to **£5,000**, and a criminal record.
- **Retailer Crackdown:** Local businesses are also working closely with trading standards and West Mercia Police. Retailers strictly enforce the **Challenge 25** policy and will report any adults seen interacting suspiciously with minors outside their premises.

A Message from the Safer Neighbourhood Team

"We routinely see the direct link between underage drinking and anti-social behaviour in our parks and community spaces. By cutting off the supply of alcohol to minors, we can significantly protect young people from harm and keep our neighbourhoods safer. If you are approached by minors asking you to buy alcohol for them, please refuse and report it to us immediately."

How You Can Help

- **Refuse and Report:** Never agree to purchase alcohol, tobacco, or vapes for anyone under 18.
- **Share Information:** If you know of specific locations or individuals routinely engaging in proxy purchasing, you can report it via the "Tell Us About" section on the West Mercia Police Website.
- **Report Anonymously:** You can also pass on information completely anonymously by calling the independent charity Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

In an emergency, or if a crime is actively taking place, always dial 999.



Exercise Lock Stream

The team has recently been active across the city centre alongside immigration enforcement officers as part of a coordinated operation targeting illegal working. The initiative focused on identifying individuals who may be operating outside the law.

Checks were carried out on van drivers and individuals using bicycles while working for takeaway and delivery services. Officers also verified that workers had the legal right to live and



work in the country.

During the operation, one male was arrested after it was identified that he had overstayed his visa.

Vicky Bridge

The Team ran an operation where bicycle riders were spoken to regarding them riding on pavements and across the bridge. The bridge was built for pedestrian's to be able to cross from one side of the river to the other without the fear of being knocked down, however, cycle routes have been created where cyclists travel across the bridge to continue their ride. Please be courteous and think of those walking across the bridge when using cycles.

Victoria Bridge, Hereford is a footbridge in Hereford, opened in 1898 to commemorate the 1897 Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It is located on Mill Street and crosses the River Wye. The suspension bridge features iron lacework and was built to replace an earlier ferry across the river. It is classified as a Grade II bridge which the United Kingdom states deserves "every effort to preserve them." Its history is highlighted at the Hereford Library and Museum.



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

