

Subject **PCC Reply – 31514 – Hunting/Rural Crime**
From #PCC <PCC@avonandsomerset.police.uk>
To clerk@holford-pc.gov.uk <clerk@holford-pc.gov.uk>
Date 29/12/2021 01:15 PM



- Part 2.eml(~36 KB)
- Scanned from an Avon and Somerset Police multifunction device.pdf(~25 KB)

Dear Ms Stanley,

Thank you for your letter dated the 10 November 2021 that was received by my office on the 23 November 2021 highlighting your concerns regarding the police handling of hunt activities in West Somerset. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you and I hope you don't mind my response being via email but I find it is the quickest way to correspond.

I am sorry to read that you feel dissatisfied with the response from local officers and that you have lost some faith in the police ability to respond to incidents in your community.

I do fully appreciate the impact that hunting has on people in rural areas which is why I strongly believe in taking enforcement action where appropriate. Please be assured that the police do receive calls of illegal hunting and do attend some of them. Officers attendance of course depends on the demand at the time, grading of the calls and the content of the information given.

The force has a well-established and consistent position on hunting, which has been in place since the introduction of the Hunting Act in 2004. Avon and Somerset Constabulary have trained wildlife officers who offer expert advice in this matter, in fact over 80 new Rural Champions have been selected throughout the force recently. These officers have and will continue to get specific training around Rural and Wildlife legislation which strengthens the forces position on rural policing. The local police teams are also able to access internal training in wildlife crimes including hunting and further officers will be attending the National Wildlife Training course.

Avon and Somerset have worked with Crown Prosecution and other forces to provide help with such investigations so that the evidence in relation to these types of crimes is presented in the best way. The force have an agreed investigation plan for these events but they are based on evidence not opinion. Trail hunting remains a lawful sport and the legislation allows this which is a contentious issue and sometimes difficult to disprove but not impossible. Allegations of Illegal hunting are looked at by the police and the evidence gathered. If there is evidence of illegal hunting then the police do actively progress the case and supply a file to Crown Prosecution for a charging decision.

I strongly support the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) officers actively engaging with their communities and Parish Councils to address local concerns and I am sorry that you do not feel that this is happening in your area. The force have a strong stance outlined in police policy whereby PCSO's and beat teams should become involved and sort local issues out early.

I am sure you are already aware of whom your NPT consists of, but I have provided information [here](#), I have also taken the action of forwarding your letter to Inspector Mike Griffiths who is responsible for Williton and Watchet so that he is aware of the concerns that you have raised. I would urge all Councils to liaise closely with their NPT.

I am fully committed to strengthening community policing and actively reaching out and engaging with our communities to help address concerns in relation to this issue and I thank you for the invitation to attend your meeting on the 10th January 2022. Unfortunately I am committed on this date, however, if you could provide some alternative dates, I would be happy to attend provided my diary allows.

I hope that this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Shelford", written over a horizontal line.

Mark Shelford

Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner



Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner,
Valley Road, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 8JJ

avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk



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Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Working to make the communities of Avon and Somerset feel safe and be safe

Subject **POST – Stanley – Holford Parish Ccl**
From Emma James <Emma.James@avonandsomerset.police.uk>
To #PCC <PCC@avonandsomerset.police.uk>
Date 24/11/2021 09:48 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Emma.James@avonandsomerset.police.uk <Emma.James@avonandsomerset.police.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2021 09:43
To: Emma James <Emma.James@avonandsomerset.police.uk>
Subject: Scanned from an Avon and Somerset Police multifunction device

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