

## Police urge public to report drink- and drug-drivers as Operation Limit begins



Avon and Somerset's Roads Policing Team has launched Operation Limit, a dedicated winter campaign to combat drink- and drug-driving.

Throughout December, officers will be conducting proactive roadside checks, engaging with motorists about the dangers of impaired driving, and acting on intelligence provided by the public.

Driving under the influence of drink or drugs can impair driving ability in numerous ways, affecting ability to judge speed and distance, reaction and coordination skills. Alcohol and drugs can also create a false confidence, which can lead to an increase in risk-taking behaviour.

Drink-driving remains a leading cause of road deaths, accounting for 17 per cent of fatalities on UK roads. Recent government figures reveal that between 290 and 320 people are killed each year in collisions involving drivers over the legal alcohol limit – the highest figures seen in 15 years.

In the Avon and Somerset Force area, 55 fatal and serious injury collisions since the start of 2024 are known to be linked to drink- and/or drug-driving. Seven of these were fatal.

Operation Limit continues to emphasise the importance of community reporting. Information from the public is used alongside Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and CCTV to locate and stop suspected drink- or drug-drivers quickly and effectively.

As part of the operation, police are working closely with licensed premises across the force area to spread the message about the dangers of drink- and drug-driving. Pubs, bars and clubs are being encouraged to display Crimestoppers posters in prominent areas, such as washrooms, to warn against driving under the influence and remind customers they can report suspected offenders anonymously. This collaboration is key to reaching people before they make the potentially life-changing decision to get behind the wheel after drinking or taking drugs.

**Chief Inspector Rob Cheeseman**, Head of Roads Policing and Road Safety for Avon and Somerset Police, said: "Please help us keep our roads safe. If you know someone who regularly drinks or takes drugs and drives, please don't stay silent. Your report could stop a dangerous driver before they hurt or kill someone.

"Alcohol affects everyone differently and any amount can impair your ability to drive. There is no way to know how much you can drink and stay under the limit.

“Our officers will be out on the roads every day and night this December, conducting checks and targeting those who pose a risk to others.”

Chief Inspector Cheeseman added that the force’s commitment to tackling drink- and drug-driving doesn’t stop at Christmas – it’s a priority all year round. Throughout 2024, there have been 2,562 arrests for drink- and drug-driving offences in Avon and Somerset.

“We can’t be everywhere, but we’re always somewhere,” he said. “With the public’s help, we can be exactly where we’re needed to prevent tragedies before they happen.”

**Police and Crime Commissioner Claire Moody** said: “I fully support this initiative to combat dangerous driving.

“It’s encouraging to see that many more people are reporting instances of impaired driving, whether due to alcohol or drugs. Those who speak up are helping to save lives. The statistics in our area alone demonstrate that – driving under the influence puts lives at risk.”

Data from Crimestoppers UK suggests that the public are becoming more inclined to report drink- and drug-drivers. The Independent charity, which allows people to report crime 100% anonymously, received more than 45,000 reports in 2023 about people who regularly drive under the influence of drink and drugs – a 20 per cent increase on the previous year.

**Karen MacDonald**, South West Regional Manager at the charity Crimestoppers, said: “You can help to put a stop to regular reckless drivers by telling our charity what you know 100% anonymously. Information previously given to our charity has helped to remove dangerous drivers from our roads, which has saved lives.

“Our charity is here for you 24/7, 365 days a year, both online at [Crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org) and on the phone by calling 0800 555 111. If you know of someone involved in drink- or drug-driving – it could be a friend, neighbour, colleague or family member – tell our charity what you know. It’s better to be safe than sorry and it will make our roads safer for everyone.”

If you are caught driving under the influence of drink or drugs, you could get a hefty fine, a driving ban, or even a prison sentence. Causing death by careless driving while under the influence of drink/drugs carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Reports of drink/drug drivers can be made online at: [Report drink and drug driving | Avon and Somerset Police](#) or by calling 101. Alternatively reports can be made anonymously to the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 and useful information is available on their website: [Drink and drug driving | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](#). **If someone is currently driving under the influence of drink or drugs, always call 999.**

For key facts about the effects and potential consequences of drink and drug driving, visit [Alcohol and drug driving | British Transport Police \(btp.police.uk\)](#)