

Police urge the public to report suspected offenders as Christmas anti-drink/drug drive operation begins

As the festive season gets underway, Avon and Somerset's roads policing team will be out in force conducting proactive roadside checks and talking to motorists about the dangers of drink and drug driving.

Our Christmas roads policing operation, which will run throughout the month of December, will also utilise community intelligence to target drivers potentially under the influence of drink or drugs. For this reason, we're urging the public to let us know if they suspect someone may be driving while intoxicated.

Information we receive from the public is used in conjunction with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and CCTV data to alert officers to the whereabouts of potential offenders, enabling them to take swift action.

Drink and drug driving was a factor in a third of road traffic collisions (RTCs) in 2021, which involved the deaths of 12 people.

Inspector Rob Barker, Roads Policing lead at Avon and Somerset Police said: "My message to the public this Christmas is this.

"If you know someone that regularly drinks or takes drugs and gets behind the wheel, then your action- or inaction - could make a real difference to the wellbeing of other road users.

"Your report could prevent serious consequences by helping us take a dangerous and irresponsible driver off the road before they can cause harm.

"During December, we'll be actively targeting motorists who pose a risk to others by choosing to drink and drug drive, as well as carrying out proactive stop checks at key roadside locations both day and night."

Police and Crime Commissioner Mark Shelford said: "It is shocking that despite the well-known risks, individuals continue to make the reckless choice to drink and drug drive, endangering the lives of others.

"As Police and Crime Commissioner; I urge everyone to choose responsibility over recklessness during the festive period and beyond. I support this proactive operation to tackle dangerous drivers as every journey should be a safe journey."

Data from Crimestoppers UK suggests that the public are becoming more inclined to report drink and drug drivers. The national charity, which allows people to report crime 100% anonymously, received more than 34,000 reports between January and September this year about people who regularly drive under the influence of drink and drugs – a 25 per cent increase on the previous year. In [several cases](#), this information has directly led to an arrest.

Mick Duthie, Director of Operations at Crimestoppers, said: “Those under the influence of drink or drugs are far more likely to cause a crash, sometimes with fatal consequences. Many of those drivers regret their behaviour, but by then it’s too late.

“You can help ‘put the brakes’ on regular drink and drug drivers by telling our charity what you know. Being able to give information anonymously with no comeback is so worthwhile as it helps tackle these kinds of dangerous and criminal behaviours.

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

Causing death by careless driving whilst 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 Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 and useful information is available on their website: [Drink and drug driving | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](https://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 \(btp.police.uk\)](https://www.btp.police.uk)