



The Canterbury Beat – Edition #26: Bringing a Missing Person Home Safely

While much of our public-facing work involves high-visibility patrols and tackling crime, a significant and vital part of policing happens behind the scenes: protecting and locating vulnerable people. When an individual goes missing—particularly someone who is elderly, unwell, or in distress—time is of the essence, and our entire city response mobilizes instantly.

A Coordinated Search Across the City

Earlier this week, our team was alerted to a vulnerable adult who had wandered away from care and was believed to be confused and lost somewhere within the city centre.

Rapid Deployment: NPT officers immediately flooded key transit areas, checking pedestrian corridors along the High Street, open parks like the Dane John Gardens, and bus routes near Westgate.

A Safe Return: Thanks to sharp observations from local officers and swift coordination across our radio channels, the individual was located near the city edge and found unharmed. Officers sat with them, offered reassurance, and ensured they were safely transported back to a place of safety.

REUNITED IN MINUTES: How We Find Missing Children

A bustling city centre can be overwhelming for families, and it only takes a split second for a curious toddler or child to slip away from a parent's side—especially in busy retail areas like Whitefriars or along the High Street.

Fortunately, Canterbury has one of the most effective and tightly integrated missing child protocols in the region.

The Power of Joint Working & District Watch

When a child is reported missing in the city centre, an immediate alert goes out across the District Watch radio network.

An Instant Search Team: In under 30 seconds, hundreds of eyes are on the lookout. Security guards at Whitefriars, the BID Street Team, and staff in dozens of retail stores stop what they're doing to check aisles, doorways, and street corners.

Rapid Reunification: This joined-up network means missing children are almost always located within minutes. Shop staff are trained to keep lost children safe inside their stores until our officers or the BID Street Team arrive to happily reunite them with panicked parents.



DID YOU KNOW?

What to Do If Your Child Goes Missing in Town

Question: What should I do immediately if I lose sight of my child while shopping in Canterbury?

The Answer: Don't wait—step directly into the nearest shop and alert the staff or security guard immediately. Ask them to broadcast a description over the District Watch radio network. While you call 999, every store guard, BID Street Team ambassador, and police officer in the area will instantly receive the description and start searching the immediate vicinity.

OVER TO YOU

As we work together to keep Canterbury a safe place for everyone:

Did you know that local shop staff play such an active role in keeping lost children safe?

If you ever see a young child or vulnerable adult who appears lost or distressed, please alert a shopkeeper or approach an officer straight away.