# Man in scuba gear launches samurai sword rampage before arson in Pontypool



In a shocking incident that unfolded in Pontypool, South Wales, a man armed with a samurai sword, an axe, and a spear went on a wild rampage, threatening his neighbours and ultimately setting fire to his own home. Michael Hockey, 55, dressed in scuba gear during the siege, engaged in an erratic display of violence that left his community reeling. Security footage captured the disturbing events as he smashed through doors and windows of the neighbouring flats before barricading himself inside his own, prompting a police response that included armed officers and negotiators.

Court proceedings revealed that Hockey caused an estimated £31,000 worth of damage during the tumultuous two-hour standoff. Prosecutor Tom Roberts described Hockey's behaviour leading up to the incident as increasingly erratic, motivated by what he claimed were communications with Tarot card readers. During the confrontation, he reportedly screamed threats at a neighbour, who is on the autism spectrum, leaving the victim terrified for his life. Hockey's violent behaviour included claiming he would kill the neighbour “like a traitor” and using an axe to strike his front door.

When police finally entered the premises, they found Hockey submersed in a bathtub filled with water, equipped with scuba gear. Officers were required to use a Taser and water hoses to subdue him. In a further disturbing twist, authorities discovered that Hockey had been cultivating cannabis in his residence, housing 11 plants, alongside other weapons including a bow and arrow and an old police truncheon.

After admitting to several charges—including reckless arson and affray—Hockey was sentenced to two years and six months in prison. Defence attorney Alice Sykes indicated that the incident might have been triggered by a psychotic break linked to his cannabis use, expressing that Hockey had shown genuine remorse for his actions. The presiding judge, Matthew Porter-Bryant, emphasised the gravity of the situation, noting the potential for serious injury or fatality during the episode.

Hockey’s incident coincides with an unsettling rise in sword-related violence across the UK. A spate of recent events has put a spotlight on similar occurrences; in January 2024, two men armed with samurai swords invaded a home in the same region, prompting concerns about public safety. Separately, two teenagers confronted a boy with a sword in Cheltenham, further underscoring the increasing prevalence of such alarming behaviour.

Reports over the past decade reveal a troubling history of sword-related violence in the UK. Notable cases include a horrific attack in 2002 involving MP Nigel Jones, where an assistant was fatally wounded, reinforcing the broader issue of weapon-related crime. In contrast, the use of samurai swords in criminal acts has often been met with swift police response, with officers trained to tackle such dangerous encounters.

While Michael Hockey's case may seem isolated, it reflects a concerning trend within the community and beyond. The escalating nature of these incidents raises questions about mental health, substance abuse, and societal norms surrounding violence. As local authorities strive for solutions, the need for preventive measures and community support is becoming increasingly apparent.

In a climate where safety is paramount, the role of the community, law enforcement, and mental health services is more critical than ever. It serves as a grim reminder that vigilance and proactive intervention can play a significant part in preventing future tragedies rooted in violence.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
3. Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
4. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
5. Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
6. Paragraph 6: [[2]](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/men-carrying-samurai-swords-enter-28416088), [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-65315337)
7. Paragraph 7: [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-26535571), [[5]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-31521376), [[6]](https://www.pembroke-today.co.uk/news/police-drew-guns-on-samurai-sword-man-458024), [[7]](https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-general/medieval-knight-vigilante-0010881)
8. Paragraph 8: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14735007/neighbour-scuba-armed-sword-axe-spear-attack.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/men-carrying-samurai-swords-enter-28416088> - In January 2024, two men entered a property in George Street, Pontypool, carrying weapons believed to be samurai swords. They threatened the occupants, resulting in the theft of a handbag, wallet, perfume, and cash. No injuries were reported. Gwent Police are investigating the aggravated burglary and have appealed for information, including CCTV or dashcam footage, to assist in their inquiries. The incident occurred around 10 pm on Saturday, January 6, 2024. Anyone with information is urged to contact the police or Crimestoppers anonymously.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-65315337> - In April 2024, two teenagers in Cheltenham were arrested after threatening a boy with a samurai sword. The incident took place on Princess Elizabeth Way, where the youths, both wearing balaclavas, approached the victim and one attempted to slash him with the sword. The youths chased the boy on an e-scooter before he managed to escape. The suspects, aged 16 and 14, were arrested on suspicion of attempted grievous bodily harm and have since been released on bail. Gloucestershire Police are appealing for witnesses or footage of the incident.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-26535571> - In September 2013, a man in Belfast was attacked with a samurai sword and knife as part of a family feud. Martin Heaney suffered stab wounds after being dragged from his home in the middle of the night. The attackers, William Mongan and another man, allegedly shouted threats to kill Heaney. His wife and her sister managed to pull him to safety. The incident was described as a 'barbaric attack' by the judge during a bail hearing for Mongan, who denied the charges.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-31521376> - In August 2013, police in Belfast were justified in firing plastic batons at a man wielding a samurai sword, according to the police ombudsman. The man attacked a PSNI Land Rover during rioting in the New Lodge area. Officers fired two rounds at the man, who was reportedly hit in the groin and lower leg. The man later admitted to attacking the police vehicle and received a suspended prison sentence for having an offensive weapon and causing criminal damage.
6. <https://www.pembroke-today.co.uk/news/police-drew-guns-on-samurai-sword-man-458024> - In April 2014, armed police in Pembroke drew their guns on a man with a collection of samurai swords who had threatened a man and a woman. Michael Paul Davies, 37, admitted affray and possessing three wraps of amphetamine. The incident occurred when Davies, initially friendly, suddenly changed and returned holding a large samurai sword. Police entered his bungalow two hours later and found him asleep on a sofa with three swords on the coffee table next to him.
7. <https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-general/medieval-knight-vigilante-0010881> - In 2002, Cheltenham MP Nigel Jones and his assistant were attacked by a man wielding a samurai sword. Jones attempted to wrestle with the attacker, but his assistant, Andrew Pennington, was unable to defend himself and died at the scene. The attacker, who had claimed to represent Wales in the sport’s World Cup, was later cleared of assault but found guilty of possessing offensive weapons. The incident highlighted the dangers of sword-related violence in the UK.