# Police arrest nearly 2,000 in UK county lines crackdown seizing 178kg of class A drugs



Police have arrested nearly 2,000 individuals in a recent week-long nationwide crackdown targeting county lines drug networks, according to the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC). The operation, conducted between June 23 and 29, resulted in the closure of 241 county lines, the seizure of approximately 178kg of class A drugs, over 500 weapons, and nearly £2.4 million in cash. This enforcement action marks one of the significant efforts in the ongoing campaign against drug trafficking networks operating across the UK.

London, in particular, saw intense police activity, with the Metropolitan Police arresting 301 people, 111 of whom have already been charged. The Met also shut down more than 100 drug lines, seizing nearly 70kg of class A substances and a vast array of weapons, including firearms and unusual items such as samurai swords and Zombie knives. One arrest on the Isle of Dogs unearthed a suspect in possession of luxury goods, sports cars, and over £5,000 in unexplained cash, illustrating the scale and sophistication of these criminal networks.

County lines operations typically involve urban gangs using dedicated phone lines to distribute drugs like crack cocaine and heroin to other counties. A particularly disturbing aspect of these networks is their exploitation of vulnerable individuals, including children and those with mental health or addiction problems, both as drug couriers and by turning their homes into bases for dealing. The Metropolitan Police safeguarded 260 vulnerable or young people during the crackdown, part of a wider total of 1,179 across England aimed at preventing further recruitment into organised crime.

This operation echoes previous crackdowns, which have painted a similar picture of county lines as a growing national issue requiring coordinated law enforcement responses. For instance, a December 2024 operation arrested 1,660 people, closed 261 county lines, and safeguarded around 1,400 vulnerable individuals, many of them children, while seizing over 500 weapons and significant quantities of drugs. Authorities have increasingly stressed a prevention-first approach, recognising the importance of protecting vulnerable communities while dismantling these dangerous networks.

Moreover, the involvement of children in these gangs remains a critical concern, compounded by the emergence of synthetic opioids within the UK drug market. The NPCC has repeatedly highlighted the need to tackle both the supply chains and the underlying social vulnerabilities exploited by county lines gangs. Past operations have also uncovered the diversity of weapons used by these groups—ranging from firearms to bladed weapons—and the vast sums of cash generated from drug trafficking.

The Metropolitan Police's Detective Superintendent Dan Mitchell reinforced this view, stating that disrupting county lines is essential not only for safeguarding society’s most vulnerable members but also as a crucial part of tackling broader violent crime. Dedicated forces continue to work closely across the country to apprehend those responsible, reflecting a sustained national commitment to addressing this deeply entrenched problem.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/police-arrest-almost-2000-people-in-week-long-county-lines-crackdown-64SQPL77NJIXBC4OBRRQAAFAPM/), [[6]](https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/over-1-800-arrested-with-245-drug-lines-shutdown-during-crackdown-targeting-county-line-drug-dealers-and-1-600-people-safeguarded)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/police-arrest-almost-2000-people-in-week-long-county-lines-crackdown-64SQPL77NJIXBC4OBRRQAAFAPM/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/police-arrest-almost-2000-people-in-week-long-county-lines-crackdown-64SQPL77NJIXBC4OBRRQAAFAPM/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/police-arrest-almost-2000-people-in-week-long-county-lines-crackdown-64SQPL77NJIXBC4OBRRQAAFAPM/), [[2]](https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/over-500-weapons-seized-and-1-400-vulnerable-people-safeguarded-during-crackdown-of-county-line-drug-dealers), [[3]](https://news.sky.com/story/more-than-1-600-arrested-in-county-lines-crackdown-across-england-and-wales-in-intensification-week-13267752), [[7]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/week-long-county-lines-crackdown-sees-1-600-arrested-as-3-million-worth-of-drugs/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://news.sky.com/story/more-than-1-600-arrested-in-county-lines-crackdown-across-england-and-wales-in-intensification-week-13267752), [[2]](https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/over-500-weapons-seized-and-1-400-vulnerable-people-safeguarded-during-crackdown-of-county-line-drug-dealers), [[5]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/county-lines-gangs-smashed-in-national-police-blitz)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/police-arrest-almost-2000-people-in-week-long-county-lines-crackdown-64SQPL77NJIXBC4OBRRQAAFAPM/), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/2021-10-21/nearly-1500-arrests-made-in-county-lines-drug-dealing-crackdown), [[5]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/county-lines-gangs-smashed-in-national-police-blitz)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/police-arrest-almost-2000-people-in-week-long-county-lines-crackdown-64SQPL77NJIXBC4OBRRQAAFAPM/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/over-500-weapons-seized-and-1-400-vulnerable-people-safeguarded-during-crackdown-of-county-line-drug-dealers> - In December 2024, UK police forces arrested 1,660 individuals and closed 261 county lines during a seven-day operation targeting drug traffickers. The crackdown resulted in the seizure of 557 weapons, including firearms and bladed items, and the safeguarding of 1,400 vulnerable people, nearly half of whom were children. The operation aimed to disrupt county lines drug dealing, which often exploits vulnerable individuals, including children, to distribute drugs across regions. The National Police Chiefs’ Council emphasized the importance of a prevention-first approach to tackle this issue.
3. <https://news.sky.com/story/more-than-1-600-arrested-in-county-lines-crackdown-across-england-and-wales-in-intensification-week-13267752> - In December 2024, a week-long crackdown on county lines drug networks across England and Wales led to over 1,600 arrests. The operation resulted in the closure of 261 county lines and the seizure of more than £3 million worth of drugs, 557 weapons, and four XL bully dogs. The National Police Chiefs’ Council highlighted concerns over the involvement of children in these gangs and the emergence of synthetic opioids in the UK drug market. The crackdown aimed to disrupt the supply of illegal drugs and protect vulnerable individuals from exploitation.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/2021-10-21/nearly-1500-arrests-made-in-county-lines-drug-dealing-crackdown> - In October 2021, UK police forces arrested nearly 1,500 individuals during a week-long operation targeting county lines drug dealing. The crackdown led to the seizure of 289 weapons, including firearms and bladed items, and the safeguarding of 2,664 vulnerable people, predominantly children. The operation aimed to dismantle violent county lines networks that exploit vulnerable individuals to distribute drugs from urban areas to towns and rural regions. The National Police Chiefs’ Council emphasized the significant inroads made into dismantling these networks.
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/county-lines-gangs-smashed-in-national-police-blitz> - In October 2023, a national police operation targeting county lines drug gangs resulted in 1,613 arrests and the closure of 250 county lines. The operation led to the seizure of over £1.2 million worth of Class A and B drugs, 33 firearms, 377 bladed weapons, and over £1.2 million in cash. Additionally, 710 vulnerable individuals, including 58 children, were referred to safeguarding services. The government emphasized the importance of disrupting these networks and protecting vulnerable individuals from exploitation.
6. <https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/over-1-800-arrested-with-245-drug-lines-shutdown-during-crackdown-targeting-county-line-drug-dealers-and-1-600-people-safeguarded> - In March 2024, UK police forces arrested 1,874 individuals and closed 245 county lines during a seven-day operation targeting drug traffickers. The crackdown resulted in the seizure of 660 weapons, including firearms and bladed items, and the safeguarding of 1,653 vulnerable people, over half of whom were children. The operation aimed to disrupt county lines drug dealing, which often exploits vulnerable individuals to distribute drugs across regions. The National Police Chiefs’ Council emphasized the importance of a prevention-first approach to tackle this issue.
7. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/week-long-county-lines-crackdown-sees-1-600-arrested-as-3-million-worth-of-drugs/> - In December 2024, a week-long crackdown on county lines drug networks across England and Wales led to over 1,600 arrests. The operation resulted in the closure of 261 county lines and the seizure of more than £3 million worth of drugs, 557 weapons, and four XL bully dogs. The National Police Chiefs’ Council highlighted concerns over the involvement of children in these gangs and the emergence of synthetic opioids in the UK drug market. The crackdown aimed to disrupt the supply of illegal drugs and protect vulnerable individuals from exploitation.