

Britain: Arrested, caged and DNA tested - for using MP3

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Safe and sound: Darren Nixon recovers from his ordeal

A commuter was arrested at gunpoint and had his DNA and fingerprints taken simply for listening to his MP3 player while waiting for a bus.

Darren Nixon was surrounded by armed police after his music player was mistaken for a gun.

When a passer-by saw the 28-year-old get out his black Philips machine to change tracks, she panicked and dialled 999.

Police tracked Mr Nixon using CCTV. As he got off the bus home from work he was surrounded by a firearms unit, who bundled him into a van.

He was then put in a cell and his fingerprints, DNA and mugshot were taken before he was released.

Although police realised it was a false alarm, Mr Nixon, from Stoke-on-Trent, now has to live with his DNA stored on a national database.

The force will also keep on record that he was arrested on suspicion of a firearms offence.

Mr Nixon said: 'It was unreal - I had a completely clean record before this and have always been a law-abiding citizen.' The mechanic said that, as he got off the bus, he saw a policeman gesture but could not hear what he said.

Mr Nixon added: 'As I got closer, I could see that two of the cops had guns. My heart was racing a mile a minute. One of them was hiding behind a car door, looking down his sight at

me, and the other was shouting orders and pointing a gun at me.

'I turned the music off and they were telling me to put my hands up in the air.'

DNA records are kept for life so that they can be matched to future samples.

Even suspects who are wrongfully arrested normally stay on the database. Staffordshire Police said a member of the public reported seeing a man pull a gun from his pocket, grip it with both hands and aim.

A spokesman added: 'An operation was put in place and a man matching the description was detained.'

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