

1. MAJOR INCIDENTS AND POLICING DIARY

MURDER / ATTEMPTED MURDER

1.1 Murder - Plymouth

On 30 April, police and paramedics were called to an address in Plymouth where they found a man suffering from head injuries. The man was treated at the scene before being conveyed to Derriford Hospital where he died of his injuries. Three men were initially arrested in connection with the incident. Two were released with no further action while the third was charged with murder. He is currently being held in custody awaiting trial.

1.2 Stabbing - Plymouth

On 4 May, police attended an address in Plymouth after a report of a stabbing. A male was taken to hospital and treated for head injuries and other wounds. A female was arrested in Plymouth later the same day on suspicion of attempted murder. She was charged with grievous bodily harm and released on bail pending trial at crown court.

1.3 Attempted Murder -Torquay

On 28 May, a 22-year-old man was seriously injured during an incident in Torquay. The man was taken by ambulance to Torbay Hospital where he received treatment for a stab wound.

A Torquay man was arrested and charged with attempted murder. He appeared at Exeter Crown Court in June and a plea and directional hearing was set for August.

SUSPICIOUS DEATH

1.4 Suspicious Death - Truro

On 31 May, police attended an address in Truro where they found the body of a 45-year-old man. Enquiries are being conducted into the death, which is currently being treated as suspicious. The results of the post mortem were inconclusive and the results of toxicology tests are now awaited.

VIOLENCE

1.5 Violent Disorder - Exeter

On 15 May, police were called to Sidwell Street, Exeter, where fighting had broken out between two groups of men. Around 30 people were involved in the incident, during which chairs were taken from shops and used as weapons. Several people received minor injuries.

Exeter response officers, neighbourhood beat managers and traffic officers attended and arrested six men for violent disorder. They have all been released on bail while enquiries continue. Although the Exeter diversity officer has been made aware of the disorder it is not being treated as a racist incident at this time.

ASSAULT ON POLICE

1.6 Officer Injured - Bodmin

On 26 May, police received a report of a suspicious male on the platform of the Bodmin and Wenford Steam Railway, Bodmin. Officers attended and arrested the man for attempted burglary. While restraining the man, one officer sustained broken ribs.

The man pleaded guilty to grievous bodily harm and will be sentenced at Truro Crown Court on 21 July.

FIREARMS

1.7 Armed Robbery - Exeter

On 28 April, an armed robbery took place outside Tesco in Rydon Lane, Exeter. A man with a handgun stole a container containing a substantial amount of cash from a Securior officer. The offender made off and was traced by police to an address in Paignton where he was arrested. He has been charged with robbery and remanded in custody until a court appearance in July.

1.8 Firearms Operation - Newquay

On 3 May, police received a report of two suspicious men in the Bodmin area. The men were identified as being wanted by Kent Police for rape. Information also indicated that one of the men was involved in drug dealing and had been seen in possession of a firearm.

A community message was circulated and on 5 May police received information that linked the men to a caravan in a holiday park in Newquay.

Authorised ARVs stopped the men in their car on a road in Newquay and they were arrested. Both men were detained at Newquay police station until officers arrived to take them back to Kent. No firearm was located.

1.9 Firearms Incident - Saltash

On 7 May, a man contacted police claiming that he and a friend had been confronted by a man with a handgun while they attempted to visit a relative in Saltash.

The caller said the man denied them entry to the relative's house then followed them a short distance. ARVs were authorised to provide armed containment of the premises and access was gained. A male was arrested in

possession of a 'BB' airgun on suspicion of possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life. He has been released on bail pending further enquiries.

1.10 Firearms Incident - Ivybridge

On 1 June, police received a report that a man was holding a baby hostage at a house in Ivybridge and firing an air weapon at anyone attempting to approach him. The man was also in possession of a number of fireworks.

ARV units were dispatched to contain the scene while negotiations with the man were carried out. One firework was thrown from the window of the bedroom in which the man had barricaded himself.

The man later handed over the baby and surrendered into police custody. He was charged with possession of an air rifle with intent to cause fear of violence and granted conditional bail at Plymouth Magistrates Court. He is due to appear at Plymouth Crown Court at a later date.

ARSON

1.11 Arson - Exeter High Street

On the 10 May, reports were received of two separate fires at the Dingles department store and Topshop, both in Exeter High Street. The premises are close although on opposite sides of the road.

Police, fire and ambulances attended and officers cordoned off the area to pedestrians and vehicles. Staff at Dingles were able to extinguish the fire which caused minor damage to clothing on the second floor. The fire in Topshop was dealt with by Devon Fire and Rescue Service and resulted in significant smoke damage to clothing displays and fittings on the second floor. A man has been charged with two offences of arson with intent to endanger life. He has been remanded in custody at HMP Exeter and will appear at Exeter Crown Court for a plea and directions hearing on 29 July.

ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

1.12 Fatal Road Traffic Collisions

Between 29 April and 9 June 2005 there were six fatal collisions resulting in six deaths on the roads of Devon and Cornwall.

1.13 Serious Road Traffic Collisions

Between 29 April and 9 June 2005 there were 13 serious injury collisions on the roads of Devon and Cornwall resulting in 15 people being seriously injured.

1.14 Collision With Police Vehicle – Bovey Tracey

On 15 May, a car being driven by a 28-year-old man collided with a marked police car in Bovey Tracey.

The driver was taken to hospital and subsequently remanded in custody after being charged with aggravated taking without consent, disqualified driving, driving without due care and attention and no insurance.

The police officer involved in the collision received minor injuries.

The man appeared before Torbay Magistrates' Court on 8 June and has been remanded in custody while results of psychiatric reports are awaited.

1.15 Pursuit - Cornwall

On 24 May, a police unit in Perranporth reported having been hit by a large recovery van which then made off. Traffic officers observed the offending vehicle a short time later and a pursuit began after the driver failed to stop. The pursuit was concluded when a stinger was deployed and the driver was arrested. One officer received minor whiplash injuries as a result of the incident.

The driver of the van was remanded in custody and charged with 11 offences, including criminal damage, harassment and driving offences. A date for trial is awaited.

1.16 Serious Injury RTC – South Devon

On 5 June, a serious injury road traffic collision involving three vehicles occurred on the A381 Totnes to Kingsbridge road. Seven casualties were taken to hospital and the road was closed for approximately four-and-a-half-hours.

OTHER

1.17 Warrants Executed – Torbay

On 27 April, a series of warrants under the Misuse of Drugs Act and the Theft Act were executed across Torbay. These resulted in the arrest of nine offenders and the seizure of Class A and C drugs with a street value in excess of £7,500.

The warrants formed part of an ongoing police operation aimed at tackling theft and drug dealing.

1.18 Drugs Operation – Penzance

During the morning of 29 April, officers from Cornwall's targeted policing team at Camborne and Force passive drugs dog handlers conducted a covert drugs operation on the quay at Penzance. This was part of Operation Indigo, aimed at combating the supply of controlled drugs to the Isles of Scilly. Four men from Cornwall, aged between 17 and 37, were cautioned for possession of Class C drugs.

1.19 Drugs Warrant – Camborne

On 4 May, officers from Cornwall's targeted policing team and neighbourhood beat managers for the Kerrier district executed a Misuse of Drugs Act warrant at an address in Camborne. A large number of cannabis plants were seized and a man was arrested. He was later released on bail pending further enquiries.

1.20 Drugs Seizures - Plymouth

On 4 May, officers involved in Operation Magnus together with Plymouth's targeted policing team seized crack cocaine and heroin with a street value in excess of £5,000. A handgun was also recovered.

Two men and a woman were arrested and detained at Charles Cross as part of the ongoing operation to target those bringing drugs into the region from the North West.

One of the men was charged with the possession of a Class A drug with intent to supply at Plymouth Magistrates' Court and was remanded in custody to appear at Plymouth Crown Court. The two other persons arrested were released on police bail until August.

1.21 Criminal Damage - Penzance

Overnight, between 9 and 10 May, an incident of criminal damage took place at a farm in Newmill, near Penzance.

It is suspected that the attack, in which the property and a vehicle were damaged, was the result of discussions between the landowners and O2 over the possible erection of a Tetra mast on their land.

The local neighbourhood beat manager attended a meeting of Zenner Parish Council the following evening to offer public reassurance while high-visibility police patrols continued in the area.

Enquiries are ongoing to identify those responsible.

1.22 Threats to Burn House - Plymouth

On 18 May, police and other emergency services attended a house in Plymouth where a man was threatening to cause an explosion using a gas oven. The adjoining premises were evacuated and officers were able to talk the man out of the premises. Transco ensured the property was safe before residents were allowed to return to their homes.

The male was charged with threats to cause criminal damage with intent to endanger lives and property. He was released on police bail until 18 July.

1.23 Anti-Nuclear Protests – Plymouth

Between 19 and 22 May, officers from Plymouth BCU provided resources to the HM naval base in Devonport to deal with anti-nuclear protesters. The

protesters had planned a number of events over the four-day period in support of the Trident Ploughshare protest.

Officers from Devon and Cornwall Constabulary and Ministry of Defence Police ensured minimal disruption to the public and the dockyard while allowing Trident Ploughshare supporters the right to protest. A 60-year-old woman from the London area was arrested for obstructing a public highway and later released with no further action.

1.24 Missing Diver – Brixham

On 21 May, HM Coastguard at Brixham reported that a diver had gone missing while diving off Whitsand Bay, Cornwall. The diver, a male in his 40s, was a member of the Cardiff Diving Club visiting the area and staying in Plymouth. It is believed he got into difficulties after completing a dive. The man's body was recovered on 27 May. No foul play is suspected.

1.25 Fatal Cliff Fall – Cornwall

Just after midnight on 2 June, emergency services were called to Port Gaverne near Port Issac to a report of a man having fallen from the cliffs. HM Coastguard removed the body of a man in his 50s who had sustained fatal head injuries as the result of a fall. Enquires are continuing but indicate the death was an accident. A report will be prepared for the coroner.

1.26 Burglary Arrests – Torbay

On 2 June, police received a report of a burglary in progress at the English Riviera Centre in Torquay. A suspect vehicle was located a short time later in the Paignton area. The vehicle failed to stop for police and a short pursuit ensued in which three police vehicles sustained damage and six police officers received minor injuries.

Three men were arrested and charged with an offence of burglary. They have been remanded in custody until their case is heard at Torbay Magistrates' Court.

2. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

2.1 Catch a Rat campaign is a success

A campaign encouraging people in Exeter to provide information about local drug dealers has been hailed a great success.

Thirteen people were arrested in connection with drug offences, while officers seized Class A and C drugs with a street value of £13,223 and recovered £2,200 of stolen property.

Catch a Rat, the first campaign of its kind in the city, called on the public to help police clamp down on drug-related crime by identifying drug dealers within their area.

The six-week campaign was run in conjunction with Crimestoppers to enable callers to remain anonymous and give confidential information.

The full breakdown and street values of drugs seized during Catch a Rat is: heroin £8,622.25; amphetamine £143.30; cannabis £3,191.87; crack £97.50; pills (Class A) £15; pills (Class C) £1,006; nitrazipam tab £102; dihydrocodeine £28; and a crushed mix of nitrazipam and dihydrocodeine £18. Calls to Crimestoppers led to 94 pieces of intelligence being received by police.

The campaign prevented the drugs from reaching the streets of Exeter, while sending out the positive message to the public that the Force is willing to listen and take positive action against one of the main concerns in the community.

2.2 Saddling up for a local cause

Nine police officers from South and West Devon got on their bikes for 10 hours for a marathon cycle ride in aid of a young road accident victim.

The Torbay officers were among 100 riders who pedalled 115 miles from Bristol to Torbay to raise money for 11-year-old William Clarke who was involved in a collision with a car in Paignton.

The cycle ride raised an impressive £35,000 towards the long-term care of William, who is wheelchair-bound after suffering serious head injuries in the accident.

The ride also provided an ideal first outing for six new police-liveried mountain bikes which will be used by neighbourhood beat managers to help them get around their beats in the Torbay area.

2.3 Targeting crime against ethnic minorities

Officers in Exeter stepped up visits to city takeaways to help reduce racist crime.

The North and East Devon Basic Command Unit's diversity team visited 40 premises to speak to black and ethnic minority staff and encourage them to report any incidents.

They have been urging staff to report any incidents so more offenders can be brought to justice and to increase the confidence ethnic minorities have in the Force.

Takeaway staff told police that crime against them tends to be either racial abuse or vandalism to their property. Some staff did not realise that verbal racial abuse is a crime and should be reported to police, while others are scared to report incidents for fear of reprisals.

Meanwhile, Chinese takeaways across East and Mid Devon area recently formed an association to look at the issues affecting their businesses, including racially-motivated crime. Police have visited the association to provide advice and discuss any concerns.

2.4 Officers go back to school

Neighbourhood beat managers and traffic wardens lined up alongside children at a Paignton primary school to receive certificates of achievement.

The 12 officers and two wardens undertook a six-week hazard awareness course to earn tutor qualifications so that they could teach youngsters about road safety.

They then went into Curledge Street Primary School to teach six and seven year-olds about vital road safety issues, such as where kerbs are shared with vehicles or what a white reverse light means.

The children were paired off and met a neighbourhood beat manager for half an hour each week for six weeks.

An award ceremony was held at Torbay Council, which assisted with the scheme, where officers and wardens collected their tutor qualifications and the children were presented with their road safety awards.

2.5 Devonport police maintain high profile

Officers in the Devonport area of Plymouth staged a day-long high-profile event to raise awareness about crime reduction.

Around 20 officers and special constables took part in the operation designed to provide public reassurance, generate Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, and to show residents how to better protect their homes and vehicles.

Residents met up with their neighbourhood beat managers to raise any concerns, while representatives of Victim Support were on hand to explain their involvement and provide information.

2.6 Prize that's hard to beat

Hundreds of children jumped at the chance to win an exclusive behind the scenes look at police headquarters in Exeter.

The day trip to Middlemoor was a competition prize offered each day at the Force marquee based at the Devon and Cornwall County Shows.

A total of 855 entries were received and the winners will visit Middlemoor in August to see how the dog and traffic sections work, experience aspects of police training, and visit the Force helicopter.

The theme for the Force stand this year was 'Building Safer Communities Together' and featured a wide range of activities, information and advice to show people how they can help reduce crime by securing their homes and cars.

Visitors had the opportunity to try on uniforms and test out police equipment, sit inside a patrol car, see police dogs and check the name of their neighbourhood beat manager.

Crime prevention officers offered advice about home and car security and property-marked 1,370 mobile phones free-of-charge.

2.7 Drive to reduce crime

Officers in the South Hams have taken charge of a sponsored car to help them spread the message about crime prevention.

The Vauxhall Astra enables the community safety team to visit more people to offer advice and practical help, while providing increased support to victims of burglary and anti-social behaviour.

The car was donated by alarms company, ADT, which has also sponsored this year's production of burglary advice packs for victims of crime in Devon and Cornwall. They contain a marker pen to record property, crime prevention advice, stickers and information about Victim Support.

Research has shown that 96 per cent of people who have received the packs have improved their home security as a result of the advice offered. Burglary is at its lowest level in Devon and Cornwall in six years according to latest Force figures.

2.8 Troubleshooting in Exwick

Police and other agencies linked up to troubleshoot problems in part of Exeter to improve the quality of life for local residents.

Problems like anti-social behaviour, graffiti, litter, untaxed vehicles and fire hazards were addressed during Exwick Community Action Week.

During the initiative, run by the St Thomas Neighbourhood Policing Team, officers conducted high-visibility patrols and offered crime prevention advice.

Neighbourhood beat managers were on hand to meet residents and joined staff from various agencies to call at almost 500 homes to discuss issues of concern.

Other agencies involved in the scheme included Devon Fire and Rescue Service, Exeter City Council housing department, DVLA, Devon Probation Service, Exeter City Council refuse services, Guinness Trust Housing Association and Devon Youth Service.

2.9 Safe night out in Mid Devon

Police in Mid Devon have launched a 'Safe Night Out' scheme to build on the 12 per cent fall in violent crime in their area in the last two months.

As part of the initiative officers are visiting pubs and clubs to encourage people to drink alcohol wisely and to think about their personal safety during nights out.

They are handing out flyers featuring 10 top tips for a safer night out as well as anti-drink spiking bottle caps. Beer mats and posters carrying messages about the sensible use of alcohol have also been put into licensed premises.

The campaign builds upon the success of the award-winning Operation Krake, a problem-solving approach to drink-related violent crime in Mid Devon.

2.10 New weapon in war on crime

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary has taken charge of 40 new Tasar guns to be used by firearms officers.

The device fires two barbs attached to insulated wires, which hook onto the clothes or skin of an offender over a range of up to 21 feet. The gun sends out a five-second electric shock to disable the offender temporarily by causing their muscles to deaden.

The Tasar guns give officers a less lethal option when faced with violent or threatening offenders in a firearms incident.

2.11 Charity cycle ride

Police officers and staff from Cornwall were in top gear for a sponsored 100-mile cycle ride - raising £5,000 for charity.

They cycled from Axminster to Saltash police stations – stopping off to collect money from colleagues at Honiton, Exeter, Torquay, Newton Abbot and Ivybridge in aid of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Around 25 present and former police officers and staff took part in the cycle ride on 14 June, supported by 15 other family and friends who collected money en route.

The officers have previously raised £14,000 towards the charity from other events and are now close to their target of £20,000 by 2007.

2.12 New firearms unit for Cornwall

A new armed section of the Tactical Aid Group will increase the Force's firearms capability in Cornwall.

The seven-man team was introduced in May to help target and tackle violent crime in the county. They will specialise in pre-planned firearms incidents such as drug raids on suspected dealers and provide back up to Armed Response Vehicle Units.

The new move fits in with the National Intelligence Model where Basic Command Units can ask the TAG to help them address local problems. The specialist firearms TAG team in Cornwall adds to ones already based in Plymouth and Exeter.

2.13 Pole position for team

A patrol sergeant who took part in a husky-drive across the Arctic Circle has helped bring home more than a quarter of a million pounds for charity.

Sergeant Olly Tayler was among a team of 12 adventurers who trekked 150 miles on dog sleds in temperatures as low as minus 45 degrees Centigrade in aid of St Luke's Hospice near Plymouth. They drove six huskies across the frozen wasteland from Alta in Norway, sleeping in tents and log cabins along the way.

Sgt Tayler, based at Charles Cross, received pledges from businesses, colleagues and members of the public. The team was reunited at the hospice where the fund-raising total of £261,982 was revealed.

2.14 Anti-bullying initiative grows in Cornwall

A major anti-bullying initiative has proved to be so successful that it is to be rolled out further into West Cornwall.

The “Safe Street, Safe School Project,” was first launched in Hayle and the message from the multi-agency scheme struck a chord with local youngsters.

In the six weeks before the launch, there were 14 incidents of violence-related crime involving young people in the area. There were no reports in the six weeks afterwards.

The campaign was initiated by Hayle police and various youth agencies and has been awarded funding through Crimebeat, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Hayle Safe Team (Cornwall Fire Service).

A series of localised interventions with local youngsters were carried out at Hayle Community School, a number of feeder schools and within the local community itself.

Some of the young people within the town produced a DVD exploring some of the bullying problems and this formed part of a presentation made at the recent Anti-Bullying in Cornwall Conference in St Ives.

Additional funding has now been secured from various agencies and the local authority, enabling the programme to be extended to Cape Cornwall School in St Just.

3. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES - UPDATE

3.1 CRIME

In the period April to May 2005 the Force has recorded a 10.3% decrease in British Crime Survey Comparable crime (the target is a reduction of 7%). This figure includes a 13.4% reduction in theft from vehicles and a 25% reduction in common assault. It is projected that the year-end target for BCS crime will be exceeded.

Although not a target for 2005/6, total violent crime is showing continued improvement in recorded levels compared to last year. To date, a 13% decrease in total violence has been recorded.

The Force has detected 26.9% of recorded total crime. The sanction detection rate is 22.3%, above the year-end target of 22.1%. An increasing trend in sanction detections has been seen over recent months, with the target projected to be achieved at year-end.

3.2 ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS

The Force is committed to reducing the number of casualties on our roads. Casualty levels are at the lowest in over four years, with the number of casualties (fatal and seriously injured) in April 2005 down 4.5% to 64 casualties compared to the previous year's figure for April of 67 casualties.

3.3 RISE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD BEAT MANAGERS

As at 1 June 2005 there were 352 (338.60 full time equivalent (FTE)) Neighbourhood Beat Managers across the Force, the breakdown per BCU is as follows: North and East Devon, 121 (117.40 FTE); Cornwall and Isles of Scilly, 101 (99.25 FTE); Plymouth, 46 (42.90 FTE); South & West Devon, 84 (79.05 FTE). There are currently 16 vacancies across the Force which, when filled, would give a full compliment of 368 NBM's.

These figures show an increase of two in the actual numbers of NBMs since the previous report based on April 2005 figures. BCUs are actively recruiting as a priority in order to fill these vacancies.

3.4 PERSONNEL

Police Officer strength as at 31 May 2005 stood at 3,390.3 officers. This shows a marginal increase of 4.4 officers in the two months since 31 March 2005. While the recruitment programme continues to meet its schedule for new intakes and transferees (41 officers as at 31 May 2005), this has been negated by 34.5 officers leaving during the same period (26 retirements), combined with a slight increase in the number of seconded/part time officers.

3.5 SICKNESS

Average working days lost per staff member through sickness for the year ended 31 March 2005 were as follows:

	<u>Apr-Mar 2005</u> (Actual)	<u>Apr-Mar 2006</u> (Projected)	<u>Variation</u>
Police Officers	7.65	8.28	+ 8.2%
Police Staff	10.02	11.70	+ 16.7%

The figures for 2005/06 are based on the actual average sickness for the two months ended 31 May 2005 which has been annualised to provide a projected position at the year end for comparison.

3.6 CALL HANDLING PERFORMANCE

For April and May 2005 a total of 41,025 999 calls were received. Performance against target of answering 90% within 10 seconds was 90.6%. There was a decrease in demand of 1,187 calls or 2.89% from 2004-05.

90.85% of non-emergency calls were answered within 30 seconds at the switchboard to the end of May 2005. In total 166,789 non-emergency calls were received at the switchboard for April and May 2005, compared to 168,154 for the same period the previous year. This equates to a 0.81% decrease in demand, or 1,365 less calls.

Secondary call handling has seen a decrease in performance for April and May 2005. A total of 99,290 calls were offered to the Force Enquiry Centre (59.90% answered in target, against a target of 75%). May has been particularly challenging with a monthly performance of 51.74% calls answered in target. This is an overall decrease in performance of 14.90% over the same period in 2004-05 year (66.64% answered in target). 96,690 calls were offered for the same period last year. These figures show a rise in demand of 2.61%.

3.7 RECOVERY OF ASSETS

Recovery of assets ordered by the courts in the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary area from defendants recorded in the months of April and May 2005 as to confiscation/forfeiture and Civil Forfeiture Orders under the appropriate acts of Parliament were:

April 2005: Seven court orders, £15,080.16 of assets in total.

May 2005: Four court orders, £2,725.50 of assets in total.

Total: £17,805.66