

## **1. MAJOR INCIDENTS AND POLICING DIARY**

### **Murder/attempted murder**

#### **1.1 Operation Remora – North Devon**

Operation Remora was established to investigate the disappearance of 17-year-old Charlotte Pinkney from Ilfracombe who was last seen in the early hours of Saturday 28 February. The alarm was raised after she failed to make contact with friends or family, despite it being her birthday.

Nicholas Rose, 22, from Ilfracombe, has been charged with murder. He denied the offence when he appeared before Exeter Crown Court on 8 April and has been remanded in custody until 18 June. Extensive searches of the rural area continue. The levels of the Upper and Lower Slade reservoirs have been lowered to assist the search by police divers.

#### **1.2 Murder - St Austell**

Officers were called to St Austell on the evening of 16 March after a 23-year-old man received a stab wound to the heart. An ambulance crew attended and began treatment but the man was reported dead on arrival at Treリスケ Hospital. A 59-year-old man has been charged with murder.

#### **1.3 Murder - Torquay**

At about 11.15am on 2 April, police attended the Country House Inn at Ellacombe, Torquay, where a man was not breathing. CPR was given and an ambulance crew attended. A pulse was re-established and the man was taken to hospital. The 31-year-old victim died two days later.

A 49-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder and has been released on police bail while enquiries continue.

#### **1.4 Murder - Paignton**

Around midnight on 10 April, police were called to an address in Paignton, where a woman had been assaulted and was not breathing. It was confirmed she had died at the scene. A 35-year-old male was arrested on suspicion of murder and conveyed to Torbay Hospital for treatment of injuries. He has been charged with murder and appeared at Torbay Magistrates Court on 12 April. No plea has been entered and he is remanded in custody.

## **1.5 Double murder - Wadebridge**

On 20 April, two people from the St Dennis area were arrested as part of Operation Rowan, the investigation into the murders of Carol and Graham Fisher at Wadebridge last November.

The 27-year-old woman and 30-year-old man were arrested for suspected offences connected with the investigation and have been interviewed and bailed pending further enquiries.

The Crimestoppers Trust has posted a reward of up to £10,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators. The investigation continues.

## **1.6 Operation Sorbus - Plymouth**

On 29 March, a 31-year-old male from the Whitleigh area of Plymouth was charged with the murder of a six-month-old child. The offence occurred on 6 October 2003 and the death has been under investigation since then.

## **1.7 Murder trial – France**

A date has been set for the trial of the man accused of killing Cornish schoolgirl Caroline Dickinson in France eight years ago.

Francisco Arce Montes, 53, is due to stand trial in Rennes, Brittany, on 7 June. The trial is expected to last five days. The 13-year-old died at a youth hostel while on a school trip from Launceston College in July 1996.

## **Firearms**

### **1.8 Firearms incident - Plymouth**

On the morning of 1 March, police were called to an address in Plympton when a man threatened to take his own life with a hunting rifle. Armed officers contained the area and the man eventually gave himself up after intervention by police negotiators. He was arrested and taken to Charles Cross police station. A quantity of firearms was seized from the address, but no shots were fired and public safety was not compromised. The offender was cautioned for a firearm licensing offence.

### **1.9 Firearms incident - Cornwall**

A 53-year-old man was shot dead by police at 1.25am on 4 May at Lewannick, near Launceston in Cornwall. Police were called to the address just after 9pm on 3 May following reports of threats of violence.

The area of the incident was cordoned off and the incident referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

## **Suspicious death/suicide**

### **1.10 Sudden death - Honiton**

At 6.30pm on 12 March, a man was found dead in a barn at a Honiton farm. He was discovered among a herd of cows and bulls and it was first thought that the animals had killed him, however, there were no apparent injuries. Initial enquiries suggested the death might be suspicious. SOC and CID attended and examined the scene and the death is not being treated as suspicious.

### **1.11 Attempted suicide – Illogan, near Redruth**

Police attended a house in Illogan in the early hours of 26 February following a report of a man intending to commit suicide. Officers forced entry to the property where the man was found unconscious and not breathing. He was resuscitated and taken to Treliske Hospital, where he was later described as being in a stable condition with no life-threatening injuries.

### **1.12 Sudden death - Plymouth**

At 1.25pm on 5 March, police were called to an address in Plymouth, where the occupant had been found dead by his girlfriend. The officers who attended began CPR without success and the man was pronounced dead at scene. The death is not being treated as suspicious.

## **Violence**

### **1.13 Serious assault - Paignton**

A 30-year-old woman was walking home from an evening out with friends in Paignton around 2am on 21 February when a man approached her, grabbed her by the throat and punched her in the face.

He pursued the woman and repeatedly grabbed her in a violent manner while being verbally aggressive. She reached the flat where she was staying but the man forced his way into the premises, assaulting her and her boyfriend before making off. Enquiries are underway to locate the offender.

## **Robbery**

### **1.14 Robbery - Penzance**

A robbery occurred on the afternoon of 23 February when an offender pushed an 84-year-old woman to the floor and stole her handbag. The bag contained a small amount of cash and other belongings. She sustained broken ribs and cuts to her hands. Enquires continue.

### **1.15 Robbery - Plymouth**

A robbery took place at an off licence in Plymouth on the evening of 23 February, during which one of the two offenders stated he was in possession of a gun.

ARVs were deployed to support local officers searching the area, while intelligence research was progressed. Extensive enquiries have been carried out, with the assistance of the public, and a number of leads are still being followed up. The police are confident this incident is not linked to any series of robberies in the area.

### **1.16 Armed robbery - Plymouth**

A 26-year-old man was arrested in connection with an armed robbery at Goldsmith jewellers in Plymouth.

A robbery took place on 26 February and a member of the public apprehended the offender as he tried to make his escape in a taxi.

The offender threatened arresting officers with the handgun used in the robbery. He was taken into custody at Charles Cross and interviewed. He is suspected of other serious offences.

More than £50,000 worth of jewellery was stolen in the raid but has since been recovered.

### **1.17 Garage robbery - Paignton**

A man entered a petrol station on Torquay Road in Paignton at about 2am on 4 April and brandished a large carving knife. He demanded cash and managed to make off with £253. A search failed to locate the offender and Torbay CID are continuing to conduct further enquiries.

## **Drugs**

### **1.18 Drug arrests - Torquay**

On 27 February, officers from Torbay's town centre team witnessed a suspected controlled drug transaction near Torquay town centre. As a result, two men were detained and a quantity of drugs recovered. One man was arrested for being involved in the supply of a Class A drug.

A warrant under the Misuse of Drugs Act was executed at a nearby address where a large quantity of controlled drugs and £2,000 in cash were seized.

A male and female have been arrested. A 38-year-old male has been charged with drugs related offences and the female released on police bail.

### **1.19 Drugs seizure - Truro**

On 3 March, officers from Truro Targeted Policing Team and Truro Neighbourhood Teams executed search warrants at two addresses, one in Truro and another in the St Day area.

Controlled drugs valued at around £40,000 were located and property worth £50,000 recovered. Two men have been interviewed but no charges have yet been brought. Enquiries continue.

### **1.20 Drug seizure - Callington**

Officers seized cannabis resin with a street value of over £20,000 when conducting a Section 32 search of a house in Callington during the morning of 7 April.

The search involved officers from Callington Neighbourhood Team, Core Skills Unit and the Special Constabulary.

One woman has been charged with unlawful possession of cannabis, and unlawful possession of cannabis with intent to supply.

## **Arson / fire**

### **1.21 Fire - East Looe**

A member of the public reported a fire at the Osbourne House Hotel in East Looe on the afternoon of 1 March.

Eight fire appliances attended from across Cornwall and Plymouth to deal with the substantial fire, together with a command and support unit from St Austell.

The building and neighbouring house were evacuated and the immediate area cordoned off. There were no casualties as a result of the fire, which took a number of hours to contain. It has been confirmed that the fire was not suspicious.

### **1.22 Vehicle arson - Exeter**

Police were called to a vehicle fire at Alphington in Exeter around 3.30am on 9 March. Devon Fire and Rescue Service attended and extinguished a large fire, which had spread to three vehicles. It was suspected the fire(s) were deliberately started and that one vehicle had been moved next to a dwelling. Enquiries are continuing by SOC, the Arson Task Force, and Exeter CID.

## **Road traffic collisions**

### **1.23 Fatal RTC – Plymouth**

The rider of a black Kawasaki motorcycle was killed in a traffic collision at the Manadon flyover, Plymouth, around 11.30pm on 5 May.

It is thought the 61-year-old Plymouth man was travelling out of the city at the time of the collision. The flyover was closed for a number of hours and traffic diverted.

### **1.24 Fatal RTC - South Molton**

A single vehicle road traffic collision occurred on an unclassified road in South Molton on 25 February when a blue Suzuki Bandit 600cc motorcycle collided with a low stone wall.

The motorcyclist was airlifted to the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital with massive head injuries but he died later the same day.

### **1.25 Serious RTC - Newton Abbot**

A car being driven along the A379 from the Goodrington direction towards Paignton on 26 February was in collision with a 10-year-old boy.

The boy sustained serious head injuries and leg injuries and was taken by ambulance to Torbay Hospital. He was transferred to Frenchay Hospital with potential life threatening injuries. His injuries were very severe and he is still undergoing treatment.

### **1.26 Double Fatal RTC - Cornwall**

Police attended a two-vehicle RTC on the A374 between Trerulefoot roundabout and Torpoint at 11.50pm on 3 March.

Two occupants of a Renault Clio suffered fatal injuries. A third suffered serious injuries but died the next day in hospital. The occupants of the second vehicle, a Land Rover Discovery, suffered minor injuries and were taken to Derriford Hospital in Plymouth.

The road was closed for collision investigation and local diversions were put in place.

### **1.27 Fatal RTC – near Truro**

A single-decker bus and a motorcycle collided on the A3058 at Scarcewater Cross, Truro, around 6.30am on 4 March.

The motorcyclist was taken to Royal Cornwall Hospital but died a short time later as a result of injuries sustained in the collision.

The bus was not in service and was not carrying passengers at the time of the collision, and the driver was uninjured.

#### **1.28 Fifteen vehicle RTC -A30 Scorrior**

Fifteen vehicles were involved in collisions on the A30 after a sudden, unexpected and very localised downpour of hail in the area of Scorrior, Redruth, around 12.35pm on 12 March.

The carriageway was covered in hailstones several inches thick, which left the surface extremely slippery.

Numerous collisions occurred on both sides of the carriageway, leaving the A30 completely blocked.

In total, 15 vehicles were involved; four people were injured and were taken to Treiske Hospital but none of the injuries were life threatening or particularly serious.

#### **1.29 Serious injury RTC - Plymstock**

A car was in collision with an 84-year-old woman pedestrian in a shopping centre car park at Plymstock on 5 April. She received severe leg injuries to her lower legs; she is still undergoing treatment but is making a recovery.

#### **1.30 Fatal RTC - near Holsworthy**

A 28-year-old woman died after a two-vehicle fatal road traffic collision on the A388 between Holsworthy and Clawton on 12 April.

The vehicles were travelling in opposite directions and were involved in a head-on collision. The woman, from Bude, died at the scene. Two elderly women in the other vehicle suffered minor injuries.

Traffic diversions were in place for several hours while scene surveys were completed.

### **Other**

#### **1.31 Operation Yam**

On 27 February, a man was arrested in Plymouth and a warrant, under the provisions of the Protection of Children Act, was executed at his address as a result of a joint policing operation between officers from the paedophile unit and from the British Virgin Islands.

Enquiries into the offences will continue with other agencies as the man has been working in health care for children in the Plymouth area for the last few months. The man has been bailed awaiting the results of these enquiries.

### **1.32 Football match - Plymouth**

During the evening of 2 March, Plymouth Argyle played Sheffield Wednesday at home before a crowd of 17,500. Due to intelligence received, significant resources were deployed from the BCU, supported by custody, dogs, the tactical aid group and traffic. There was no significant disorder with just two people arrested and one was ejected from the game.

### **1.33 Football match – Plymouth**

Officers were deployed across Plymouth City centre on Saturday 13 March for the national league Division Two match between Plymouth Argyle and Swindon.

Specialist football intelligence officers were used to isolate known offenders and five arrests were made before the match.

A crowd of almost 20,000 saw Argyle win 2-0. Police effectively dispersed the crowds after the match and a further six arrests were made for disorder offences. The police continue to target individuals who cause disorder at football matches on the lead up to Euro 2004.

A more recent match on 24 April saw a capacity crowd of 20,000. Around 12 people were arrested for public order related offences.

At 5.40pm police were called to a disturbance at a public house in the city centre. The area around the pub was cordoned off and officers in protective equipment, together with police dogs and video evidence gathering teams were deployed. There were 28 arrests made for violent disorder. Police licensing officers closed the pub and custody offices across the Force were activated to deal with the exceptional demand. Enquiries into the incident are ongoing.

### **1.34 Chemical spillage A38**

Around 2pm on 9 March, a 38-tonne articulated goods vehicle carrying drums of chemical acetone/toluene waste shed part of its load onto the northbound carriageway of the A38 at Haldon Racecourse.

Police and highways officers contained the spillage until the arrival of fire crews, who made the leaking drums of chemicals safe. The nearby petrol filling station and a single lane of the A38 were closed for a short time.

Traffic was kept flowing and hold-ups were minimised. There were no injuries or danger to the public and the driver was reported for an insecure load.

### **1.35 Operation Nordic - Torbay**

Around 40 officers took part in Operation Nordic on 25 March. The objective was to target acquisitive vehicle crime, burglary and Class A drug offences, in conjunction with trading standards.

Thirteen search warrants were executed and 10 people arrested for offences involving burglary, vehicle crime and possession of heroin, cannabis resin and amphetamine. Officers recovered 98 mature cannabis plants, £12,000 worth of vehicles, £10,000 worth of drugs and £500 worth of stolen property.

### **1.36 Benefit fraud arrests - Saltash**

A man and a woman from London have been charged with benefit fraud offences in connection with a deception at a Post Office in Plympton.

The arrests in Saltash on 5 April were made due to the work of the Force Intelligence Centre, Crime Alerts and Caradon officers.

## **Court successes**

### **1.37 Five years for drug dealer**

A drug dealer from Kenton has been jailed for five years for intending to supply £44,000 worth of heroin. Exeter Crown Court heard that the heroin in his possession would have produced 8,800 wraps for sale on the streets.

He pleaded guilty to possessing a Class A drug with intent to supply and to an offence of obstructing a police officer. His co-defendant, from Exwick, also pleaded guilty to possessing a smaller amount of heroin with intent to supply.

### **1.38 Driver led police on high-speed chase**

A 37-year-old man who tried to escape police in a dramatic chase, driving at twice the speed limit while throwing items out of the window, has been sent to prison for 15 months.

During the pursuit – that went from Plymouth to Cornwall - he drove at speeds of up to 70 mph in residential areas as he tried to get away from police. A stinger device damaged the tyres and the driver then lost control. A police dog eventually tracked him down where he was arrested.

The man, of no fixed address, pleaded guilty to dangerous driving, driving without insurance and possession of cannabis.

### **1.39 Prolific burglar jailed**

A burglar nicknamed 'Froggy', due to his athletic ability to scale walls and leap from windows, has been jailed.

Operation Remand was set up to catch John Bale, whose offences included 329 burglaries in the South West, including 80 in Devon and Cornwall, and hauls amounting to £260,000.

At Taunton Crown Court, he pleaded guilty to four offences of burglary and one offence of handling and asked for 325 other burglaries to be taken into account. He was sentenced to five years in prison.

### **1.40 Drugs den uncovered**

A Torquay man who had almost £300,000 worth of cocaine and cannabis together with an arsenal of weapons in his home has been jailed for eight years.

Exeter Crown Court heard that police executed a search warrant at the home of Paul Walsh, 38, and found £69,000 worth of cocaine on top of a freezer and £230,000 worth of cannabis hidden in cardboard boxes in a kitchen cupboard.

They also discovered a sawn-off shotgun, an air rifle, a starting pistol, a stun gun, a crossbow, an eight millimetre black firing pistol and 42 12-bore cartridges which could be used with the shotgun.

Walsh told police he had run up debts with a dealer after developing a habit for crack cocaine and had agreed to let his home be used as a safe house for drugs.

### **1.41 Jailed for indecent assault**

A 22-year-old man has been sentenced to 18 months in prison for indecently assaulting a 14-year-old girl.

The assault happened as Adam Williams comforted the girl while she was mourning the death of a friend. Williams, who was living in Cornwall at the time of the offence, must also register as a sex offender for the next 10 years.

### **1.42 Fuel station raider jailed**

A robber, found hiding in an attic after holding up a Devon petrol station, has been jailed for four years.

He brandished a knife at the cashier at the garage in Sidmouth and escaped with more than £200. When arrested, he was identified by witnesses and his fingerprints found on the door of the garage. He pleaded guilty to the offence.

## **2 OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES**

### **2.1 CRIME LEVELS STABLE**

Levels of domestic burglary and vehicle crime in Devon and Cornwall have fallen to the lowest in six years.

There has been a drop of 16.4% in domestic burglary for the period April 2003 to March 2004. There were 6,027 burglaries during the year, the lowest number recorded since 1998.

The reduction exceeds the Force target to bring domestic burglary down by 15%. The detection rate for burglary also rose to 16.7%, again exceeding the Force target.

Vehicle crime is also down by 14%, with 16,601 offences recorded. This reduction was matched by an increase in the detection rate to 11.8% from 10.7% the previous year, this being slightly below the Force target of 13%.

The Force has seen a significant fall in robbery, which is down by 20.8% with 562 offences recorded. There was a total of 27,867 violent crimes recorded, of which 18,740 were 'other violence', largely actual bodily harm and harassment offences. Despite the rise of 8.9% in violent crime, 16 murders were recorded compared to 19 in the previous 12 months.

Overall, for the period April 2003 to March 2004, 131,453 crimes were recorded, a 0.2% rise on the previous year (131,240 crimes).

### **2.2 Putting vehicle crime in the picture**

Police in Plymouth have turned to the big screen in the ongoing fight to reduce vehicle crime. The Vue Cinema at Barbican Leisure Park is showing the 'Don't Be a Clown – Keep Car Crime Down' advertising campaign on the big screen.

The campaign, which will run for 12 months, encourages people not to leave their valuables on display when they park their cars. As the cinema is one of the busiest in the country, the advert could potentially be seen by over a million cinema visitors in the year.

Vehicle crime in Plymouth has been reduced by 33% over the last four years but there are still a few motorists who are not taking items out of their cars.

### **2.3 New car to step up foot patrols**

Police Community Support Officers have gone mobile for the first time in Devon and Cornwall in order to bring a greater policing presence to rural communities.

PCSOs in Honiton have taken delivery of a new sponsored vehicle, by Harts of Honiton, which will enable them to reach rural villages to provide high-visibility foot patrols.

The car will be used exclusively for PCSOs' work in outlying villages and enhances the patrols already conducted by regular officers based at Honiton. It will be a great help in bringing policing into local communities. This community policing initiative is a prime example of how the police service is responding to the needs of local people.

### **2.4 Mark it up – bring down rural crime**

Police Community Support Officers in Honiton are touring country areas in a determined effort to reduce rural crime.

They will be setting up property marking surgeries at 10 East Devon villages to help safeguard power tools, vehicles and agriculture machinery.

They are also making personal visits, mostly to farms, on request to provide the free service. Sheds, garages, barns and outbuildings containing anything from a power drill to a quad bike can be marked, and the building itself will be tagged with a loop fob to warn off any would be thieves.

The initiative links in with Operation Mackintosh, which targets criminals committing rural crime. One of the biggest problems is that stolen property cannot be returned to the owner due to a lack of identification marks and the failure to note down serial numbers.

Police in East and Mid Devon are currently holding £10,000 worth of seized property, which cannot be identified.

The Force has also issued a seasonal reminder to the public to protect their sheds and garden machinery from thieves.

The onset of spring prompts many to begin preparing their gardens, often using expensive garden machinery. These items are often stored in sheds that are not secured properly.

The public is being encouraged to take simple, inexpensive precautions to deter thieves, such as ensuring shed doors are locked. Window nets can be used to obscure the view into sheds and portable alarm systems are available.

Garden machinery, which can be extremely expensive, should be marked with the owner's postcode, photographed, and the serial numbers recorded.

## **2.5 Crackdown on persistent fine defaulters**

Police in Devon and Cornwall took part in a concerted weeklong drive to recover unpaid fines from persistent offenders. The drive was part of the Government's national Operation Payback campaign to seize criminals' assets and prevent money laundering. If fine dodgers don't pay up immediately, they may suffer serious consequences such as fines being deducted from wages or benefits, and could even face a prison sentence.

The enforcement effort sits alongside the Home Office's strategy to recover cash and assets from some of the country's most serious criminals. Magistrates' courts in the Force area have been working closely with police to identify fine defaulters, against who action will be taken. Operation Payback sends a strong message to fine dodgers and the wider community that the police are serious about enforcing decisions.

## **2.6 Community Website whizzkid**

East Devon's Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has gone online, thanks to the technical talents of a 16-year-old schoolboy. The East Devon group was looking for someone to devise a website and Kye Candy agreed to single-handedly build and maintain the site for them. The site is online and can be found at <http://beehive.thisisexeter.co.uk/eastdevonneighbourhoodwatch/>. The site has surpassed all expectations in order to produce a comprehensive and useful tool. Work will continue on the site in order to develop and improve it, subject to a sponsor for additional software.

## **2.7 Prevent car crime for £1**

Devon and Cornwall Constabulary is encouraging drivers to take advantage of tamper-proof tax disc holders and help cut down on disc theft from vehicles. The Force sells the 'securi-discs' for £1 each on the Force website. The protective holder works by using a special synthetic material as an adhesive covering, making it impossible for anyone to fraudulently alter the details on the tax disc. More people are becoming victims of the theft of their tax discs. While the majority of motorists pay for a disc, there are others who see stealing one as a cheap and easy option. The constabulary is encouraging all car owners to buy one of these holders and prevent themselves from becoming a victim of this type of crime.

## **2.8 'Catch A Rat' has a successful second run**

Plymouth residents have once again been helping police to 'Catch a Rat' and help put drug dealers behind bars. Operation Puma II, a repeat of last year's successful initiative, ran during April to clamp down on drug-related crime with the help of the city community.

People were asked to co-operate with the police in the first step of identifying drug dealers within their area, to increase public reassurance and the safety of communities.

The operation was run in conjunction with Crimestoppers to enable callers to remain anonymous. Officers issued 26 drug warrants and 20 people were arrested for a range of drug offences. Of the warrants, 22 proved positive, with drugs and/or cash found at premises across the city. During the campaign £20,000 in cash and £5,500 worth of drugs were seized.

## **2.9 On the spot fines**

Police in Exeter have handed out the first batch of ‘on the spot fines’ which were introduced at the end of March. Eight fixed penalty notices were handed out to people arrested for drink related offences after they had sobered up the morning after. Five of the tickets were £40 fines for being drunk and disorderly. The three other penalties were for more serious public order offences and the fines were £80.

The system frees up more police officer time so it can be better spent out on the streets; it also enables the justice system to focus on more serious offences and therefore provide a better service.

There are 11 offences for which the notices can be given including graffiti, vandalism and abandoned vehicles. By the summer it is expected the number will rise to 49 offences.

## **2.10 Bid to stop gang warfare**

Police have mounted a major operation to tackle gang related violence among youths in a Plymouth suburb. Officers have stop-checked more than 300 young people in a bid to crack down on gang clashes and are about to issue Antisocial Behaviour Contracts (ABC) on 14 young people, identified as being among a hard core of troublemakers. This comes after six months of problems and complaints from local residents. Operation Mansell has been running since October 2003 to tackle antisocial behaviour in the Plymstock area.

## **2.11 Car tax dodgers clamped in Torbay**

Torbay police, in partnership with the DVLA, are targeting unlicensed vehicles on the resorts’ main routes and residential streets.

Untaxed vehicles without owners present will be clamped and towed away. Vehicle owners who are present are offered the opportunity to purchase a vehicle excise licence as an alternative to the clamping and removal of their vehicle, providing they can also produce valid insurance and test certificates.

The operation takes the form of road checks in designated areas and a separate DVLA enforcement team supported by police officers working in other identified locations.

The police action is in support of the current DVLA enforcement initiative, which is a campaign to enforce the updated licensing legislation.

### **2.12 Operation Salmon**

Police in Exmouth have joined forces with other agencies with an interest in the Exe Estuary to launch a River Exe patrol boat.

Exmouth Neighbourhood Beat Manager, PC Andy Squires, is co-ordinating the long-term operation which aims to make the Exe Estuary safe for all users. The River Exe Patrol will help reduce marine crime and reassure the public that antisocial behaviour by some estuary users will be dealt with robustly.

The boat will be crewed by 10 qualified helms supported by 20 volunteer police officers that will patrol between Orcombe Point, Exmouth and Topsham during the summer months.

### **2.13 Pointing out the risks**

Police have launched a campaign in Cornwall to make the public aware of the dangers of drink spiking.

Reported incidents to the Force of drink spiking in the county's pubs and clubs went up by 21% between 2002 and 2003.

The campaign aims to educate people about the risks of drink spiking, particularly date rape, and is being run in co-operation with all clubs in the county and then expanded to all pubs.

Posters, showing campaign character Spike the Hedgehog, and other promotional materials are being used to warn people to look after their drinks and not to leave them unattended.

Nightclubs throughout Cornwall have been given testing devices which can screen for some of the common drugs used.

Falmouth College of Arts is supporting the initiative by highlighting the dangers to its pupils and one of them, graphic design student Jenny Coen, has designed the campaign poster.

### **2.14 Up a creek with a paddle**

Traffic officer Sean Morley is making a record breaking attempt to be the first man to paddle solo and unsupported around the British Isles and Ireland - by sea kayak.

He set out on 3 April from the National Maritime Museum in Cornwall and has six months to complete the challenge – a total of 4,200 miles, an average of 23 miles a day. The 38-year-old totalled 545 miles in the first three weeks – some of it in some very inclement conditions.

Sean is raising money for the RNLI's crew training programme and the Marine Conservation Society. Chart his progress and download a sponsorship form from his website at [www.expeditionkayak.com](http://www.expeditionkayak.com)

## **2.15 New seafront office**

A new beach office has been opened on Dawlish Warren seafront to improve the policing presence for residents and visitors.

The office, manned by the neighbourhood beat manager during the week, will increase contact between police and the community and provides a convenient base for the NBM to take statements from the public. Plans are also being made for regular police surgeries.

## **2.16 Stewards tackle training course**

Stewards helping to maintain public safety at major sports events have been getting into training with Cornish police.

The Force teamed up with the Cornwall Rugby Football Union and Redruth Rugby Football Club to run Accredited Steward Training sessions at Redruth RFC.

Neighbourhood Sergeant David Aynsley and Patrol Sergeant Nigel Jenkin ran the sessions designed to equip the stewards with the right skills to carry out their role with safety and professionalism, while greatly assisting officers to police sporting and other events.

## **2.17 Bogus caller website**

The Operation Litotes website [www.beattheboguscaller.com](http://www.beattheboguscaller.com) has attracted a thousand visitors over a nine-month period.

The website was set up to help in the fight against distraction burglars and promotes the simple message of Lock, Stop, Chain and Check. It also provides useful links to partner organisations, such as Help the Aged, Care Direct and Neighbourhood Watch.

A wide range of people have visited the site – all of whom have a particular interest in the safety and well being of older members of the community. The South West Neighbourhood Watch networks have been joined by partners from local and county councils, crime prevention panels, pension service advisers and health workers.

Operation Litotes links the five police forces in the South West together with the region's Crime Reduction Director to help prevent older and vulnerable people from becoming victims.

## **2.18 "Skating for Real" in St Cleer**

Neighbourhood beat manager PC Mark Smith is helping to provide youngsters in the rural parish of St Cleer near Liskeard with a skateboard park.

The parish council, parish project group, youngsters, parents and police have agreed that the park would benefit everyone, especially as young people have limited facilities.

PC Smith was instrumental in setting up a day of activities called 'Skating for Real' to get the ball rolling and gather ideas from young people. The event hosted several workshops including computer designs of skate parks, plan drawing and model building, skateboarding, BMX bike riding and in-line skating.

## **2.19 Argyle promotion sparks security shake-up**

As Plymouth Argyle fans celebrate their team's promotion to the First Division, police are putting together plans for increased security next summer.

With a predicted growth of fans at the games in the future, police are stepping up intelligence gathering to keep hooliganism at bay.

### **3 AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS**

#### **3.1** Chief Constable Maria Wallis presented officers and police staff with more than 22 years of service with Long Service and Good Conduct Medals:

Inspector Norman Amey, Honiton; Mrs Jean Bell, Barnstaple; Special Constable Jeremy Bore, Crediton; Chief Inspector John Clements, Exeter; Special Constable Simon Dunne-Barker, Kingsbridge; Inspector James Meakin, Charles Cross; Inspector Russell Mogridge, Plympton; Special Constable Angela Noar, Sidmouth; Mrs Gillian Pennington, Crownhill, Constable James Pollock, Launceston; Special Constable; Kenneth Richards (Rtd), Tavistock; Mrs Kim Schober, Paignton; Inspector David Taylor, Totnes, and Mrs Maggie Taylor (Rtd), Camborne.

#### **3.2** The annual South and West Devon BCU Chief Superintendent's award presentation ceremony took place at Dartington Hall, Totnes.

Chief Superintendent Liam McGrath presented commendations to Constable Alicia Smith, Torquay; Traffic Warden David Chapple, Tavistock, and Constable Deborah Richards.

Commander's Certificates were given to Sergeant Michael Norsworthy, Newton Abbot; Scenes of Crime Officer David Hornsby, Paignton; Assistant Personnel Officer Kim Schober, Paignton; Detective Inspector Stephen Carey, Torquay; Detective Constable Christina Kay, Torquay; Detective Constable Samantha Playford, Torquay; Detective Constable Raymond Hardy, Torquay; Detective Constable Jonathan Rowe, Torquay, and Detective Constable Gerrit Pope, Chudleigh.

Special Constabulary Long Service and Good Conduct Medals: Timothy Wills, Richard Gayton, and Peter Manning.

Special Constabulary Long Service Rosette and Bar: Beryl Plummer

The Royal Humane Society for the Protection of Life from Fire was presented to Constable Thomas Norrish, Torquay.

Constable Kevin Bowen, Kingsbridge, was honoured with the Royal Humane Society Testimonial and a Good Citizen Award was given to Mr Eddy Cole.

#### **3.3** On 31 March, Detective Chief Inspector John Clements presented Lance Corporal Adam Hughes with an award for his courageous and public-spirited actions, following his apprehension of an offender after a robbery.

## **4 SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES - UPDATE**

### **CRIME**

- 4.1** Total crime has increased by 0.2% during the year 2003/2004 compared to 2002/2003. However, the figure includes a 16.4% reduction in burglary, a 14.3% decrease in vehicle crime and a 21% reduction in robbery. Devon and Cornwall remain among the safest places to live in England and Wales, with the one of the lowest rates of crime per 1,000 population nationally.

### **ROAD TRAFFIC COLLISIONS**

- 4.2** The Force is committed to reducing the number of casualties and fatalities on our roads and this is demonstrated by the latest figures. At Force level there were 707 casualties in the period April 2003 to March 2004, which is down 23.9% on April 2002 to March 2003. This exceeds the 3% reduction target. Performance is on target for the 10-year ACPO target reduction of 40%. Most fatal and serious casualties occur in accidents on unclassified roads (35% of casualties), the A30 (6%), the A38 (5%), the A390 (3%) and A39 (2%). The main causes of accidents are “negligent manoeuvre” and “going too fast for circumstances”.
- 4.3** Casualty levels are at the lowest level for at least four years and all BCUs achieved target, with reductions in casualties ranging from 16% in Plymouth BCU to a 32% decrease in South & West Devon BCU.

### **RISE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD BEAT MANAGERS**

- 4.4** The focus on implementation of Neighbourhood Policing has prevailed despite the intense operational pressures of recent months. In some parts of the Force, beat managers are already becoming household names. This year’s intention was to appoint 334 beat managers across 305 neighbourhoods by 31 March 2004. This number was achieved by 2 February 2004. As of 30 April, there were 336 neighbourhood beat managers in post and 53 Neighbourhood Team Sergeants.
- 4.5** BCU Business Plans for 2004/5 clearly demonstrate a desire to continue increasing the number of officers allocated to neighbourhood beats. Activity continues to improve the accessibility and visibility of beat managers. Local communities are being made aware of who their beat manager is and how to contact them.
- 4.6** A corporate guide to Neighbourhood Policing has been compiled drawing on effective working practices from the last year and is currently out for consultation. It will define the role and responsibilities of beat managers, set minimum standards and give guidance on local variations necessary to meet the needs of a community.

## **PERSONNEL**

- 4.7** Police officer strength (as of March 2004) stands at 3310 officers. This is an increase of 97 on March 2003 and is above the required target level for 2003/4. The Force remained committed to delivering the budget promises made last year and succeeded in delivering them.
- 4.8** There have been five police medical retirements year to date. This achieved the target for not exceeding 21 by the year-end. This compares to 9.25 police medical retirements from April 2002 to March 2003. This builds upon the success of the previous year where the number of medical retirements reduced from 18 in 2001/2002 to nine in 2002/2003.
- 4.9** Similarly, there have been five police staff medical retirements. This also achieved the year-end target. This performance compares to 12.5 support staff medical retirements from April 2002 to March 2003. These reductions reflect the role of the Occupational Health Support Unit, in which the Force has invested significantly.

## **SICKNESS**

- 4.10** On average there have been 8.2 working days lost through sickness per police officer year to date. The year-end target was achieved. Performance is an improvement on the 8.7 days lost from April 2002 to March 2003 and is again an indication of the work of the Occupational Health Support Unit. Much time and attention has been devoted to reducing sickness levels within the Force and improvement has been made year on year. This is considerable improvement on the 11.3 days in 2000/2001 and 10.4 days in 2001/2002.
- 4.11** In respect of police staff, there has been an average of 11.7 working days lost through sickness. The year-end target of no more than 12.2 days was again achieved. Performance is also an improvement on the 12.6 days lost through sickness from April 2002 to March 2003.
- 4.12** The Force remains committed to developing a healthy working environment. The introduction of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and sickness standards as a criteria for receiving Competency Related Threshold payments, and an increase in occupational health specialists has contributed to the reduction in the figures.

## **CALL HANDLING PERFORMANCE**

- 4.13** Call handling continues to be a priority for the Force and 92.3% of 999 calls were answered within 10 seconds. This is above the required year-end target and performance has improved throughout the year. In total 243,453 emergency 999 calls were received, a decrease of 2.3% on the 249,154 calls received last year.

- 4.14** Of non-emergency calls, 91% were answered within 30 seconds compared to the equivalent period last year when the target of 80.9% was reached. This is also above the required year-end target. In total, 1,021,289 non-emergency calls were received, compared to 1,054,616 non-emergency calls in April 2002 to March 2003.
- 4.15** The effect of additional call-handling staff can be measured by this increased performance. The number of abandoned calls and length of queuing time has reduced and this improves month-on-month, as new staff become more proficient.

## **PROVIDING ASSISTANCE**

- 4.16** The Force responded to 86.5% of immediate incidents within target time. This is above the 85% required target and above the performance of last year (84.2%). The number of immediate incidents has fallen from 91,980 to 78,124. This is largely due to a change in Force policy that reclassified alarms incidents from immediate to prompt response. In addition, a change in the way silent 999 calls are handled by BT has resulted in fewer immediate responses being handled by the Force. These two factors have helped reduce the number of immediate response incidents.
- 4.17** In addition, 85.3% of incidents requiring prompt response were responded to within target time. This is also above the target level. A general increasing trend in performance has occurred over the year. In contrast to immediate response incidents, the number of prompt response incidents has increased from 69,815 to 88,236. This increase is largely due to the change in classification of false alarms to prompt response. It is noticeable that the urban areas are not achieving target, whereas the more rural areas of the Force are above the target response time. However, it is more important that staff get to the incidents safely and then give a good quality of service.

## **RECOVERY OF ASSETS**

- 4.18** One of the Force targets for 2003/2004 was to increase the amount of drug traffickers' and other major criminals' assets recovered to £855,000. Assets seized between 1 January and 31 March 2004 (inclusive) include:
- £20,007.98 - confiscation orders for crime and drugs
  - £7,456.87 - forfeiture in drug cases (plus a few vehicles)
  - £27,455.55 - this amount is currently secured by the Financial Investigation Unit (FIU) under the Proceeds of Crime Act seizure procedure.
- 4.19** In terms of the year to date, assets seized between 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 (inclusive) include:
- £600,398.11 - confiscation orders for crime and drugs
  - £125,169.23 - forfeiture in drug cases (plus a few vehicles)
  - £ 217,603.55 - this amount is currently secured by the FIU under the Proceeds of Crime Act seizure procedure.

In total, £943,170.89 worth of criminal assets has been recovered in 2003/04 and this is above the required target level.

