



Make friends with SID - Page 5



Protecting our children - centre



Cancer charity dog walk - Page 11

New initiative will keep front-line officers in the community

NEW BAIL LAW HITS STREETS

NEW powers to bail suspects without taking them into custody are being trialled in a bid to free up front-line officers.

by Benedict Pennington

Overseeing the project, Insp Jim Shaw said: "We're using this as an opportunity to test Street Bail out and see what works and what doesn't."

"This should allow officers on proactive patrols to stay out and about in the community even after making an arrest."

"There have already been some good successes in Saffron Walden, where officers have arrested and immediately bailed people for matters such as possessing small amounts of cannabis."

Although there are no offences that Street Bail cannot be used for, officers must judge each case on its merits and the more serious the offence the less likely it is to be used.

Insp Shaw added: "Issues such as whether evidence would be lost or not, and the possibility of further crime being committed, have to be weighed up as part of the process as well as the officer's confidence in the suspect answering bail."

Statistics from the trial will be collated and presented to the Crime Policy Group later in the year before a force policy is formulated, and Insp Shaw will be keeping officers and staff updated with developments.

Street Bail was introduced under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and allows any officer to bail arrested people to police stations for any offence immediately after arrest.

The scheme, being piloted in five areas of the county, will mean the arrested person will make their own way to a station at a later time. There is no minimum or maximum amount of time applied to the bail.

It is hoped effective use of the powers will lead to less time spent unnecessarily by prisoners in custody, while freeing up officers to remain on the streets.

In addition, the initiative will aim to reduce delays through better planning and preparations, for instance by ensuring legal and parental representatives are present.

Areas under trial are those covered by Southend town policing unit, Epping rural section, Harlow town policing unit, Saffron Walden community policing team and the vicinity of Lakeside.

Eyeing up their options



● The youngsters get to grips with life in the army during a tactical skills exercise.

Photo: Colchester Evening Gazette.

DISCIPLINE, hard work and no sleep is hardly the recipe for a fun-filled school holiday, but it is exactly the Easter break that a group of youngsters from Witham chose. Nearly 30 spent four days and three nights at Goojerat Barracks in Colchester with the Army Youth Team (AYT). For full story, turn to page 3.

Holidays aplenty

Force push PC skills

THE force showed its support for Adult Learners Week earlier this month by making a special presentation to the newest, successful students who have completed the European Computer Driving Licence.

Assistant Chief Constable (Personnel) Andy Bliss made the presentation to officers and police staff, while extolling the virtues of the 13th Adult Learners Week and the success of the ECDL within Essex Police.

Officers and members of staff from headquarters, Great Dunmow and Basildon received their British Computer Society certificates.

Mr Bliss said: "These people have shown tremendous enthusiasm and skill in completing the ECDL modules. This demonstrates the success of the course and shows how much Essex Police is committed to adult education particularly in the area of IT."

"Computers are used in a whole range of ways to help us tackle crime and disorder, so we need staff who are IT literate. The ECDL helps our staff to gain the skills that they need."

Over 70 people have so far successfully completed the course, with nearly 1,100 applications received since its launch two years ago.

Insurance boost

THE Group Insurance Scheme run by the Federation has, unfortunately, had a bad claims' experience. That said, I have managed to negotiate an increase in benefits for serving Officers.

The life cover will increase to £109,000, with an increase to £36,500 for spouse cover with no increase in premiums.

The same, unfortunately, cannot be said for our retired colleagues. If you are in the retired officers' insurance scheme, the premiums will increase to £11.10 per month, or £14.04 if you have spouse cover, with the same benefits as before - £48,000 life cover and £16,000 for spouses.

If you do not wish to continue your payments, please contact Trish Morley in the Federation Office on 01245 452798 or extension 54560 who will arrange cancellation of your cover.

I am sorry for this but, as stated earlier, our claims' experience is regrettably more than any of us would like to see.

Opening closed doors

WE have had enquiries about the assisted home purchasing scheme, originally set up by the Government to help key workers with housing problems and to help them with buying properties within a reasonable distance of their work.

Recruitment manager Sue Adkins is continuing to find out further details, with relevant information published as soon as possible.

However, officers can contact Moat Housing direct on 07002 662846 or visit their website at www.moat.co.uk in the meantime.

If you require mortgage advice on this subject, contact the Stuart Harvey Mortgage Desk on 0870 837 5724 for free advice with no arrangement fee.

Federation Newsline

by Terry Spelman



relevant leave year (April 1).

It is anticipated that the Home Office (and equivalents for Scotland and Northern Ireland) intend to adjust sickness targets so as to minimise the impact of these leave improvements on police cover.

Copperpot deposits

JUST a reminder that you can save money by payroll deduction, receive a dividend on your savings and borrow money at very competitive rates. If you are interested, ring CopperPot direct on 0116 2444 874 for application details.

An agreement has been reached regarding an increase in officers' annual leave at a recent meeting of the Police Negotiating Board, which has yet to be ratified by the Home Secretary.

Despite this, I outline below the proposals, which will start from the

LENGTH OF SERVICE	2004	2005	2006
Less than two year's relevant service	22	22	22
Two or more years' relevant service	22	23	25
Five or more years' relevant service	24	25	25
10 or more years' relevant service	27	27	27
15 or more years' relevant service	28	28	28
20 or more years' relevant service	30	30	30



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		Total	£25,322.20	£19,001.66	£22,208.45	£17,811.18	£19,514.13	£16,668.97	£18,234.77	£16,115.89
6.9% APR	£10,000	Monthly	£199.14	£149.44	£245.11	£196.58	£359.87	£307.40	£505.08	£446.39
		Total	£16,727.60	£12,552.26	£14,706.27	£11,794.41	£12,955.07	£11,066.24	£12,121.77	£10,713.22
6.9% APR	£5,000	Monthly	£99.57	£74.72	£122.56	£98.29	£179.94	£153.70	£252.54	£223.20
		Total	£8,363.77	£6,276.12	£7,353.08	£5,897.21	£6,477.50	£5,533.11	£6,060.88	£5,356.61
8.9% APR	£3,000	Monthly	£63.45	£47.61	£76.87	£61.65	£110.99	£94.81	£154.42	£136.48
		Total	£5,329.00	£3,998.98	£4,611.82	£3,698.64	£3,995.36	£3,412.82	£3,705.99	£3,275.35

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Offbeat

ANOTHER ripping yarn from the cells.

Well done to the custody sergeant who managed to calm a volatile prisoner in the custody suite by a rather unusual method.

As the prisoner threatened his fellow officers in a tense stand off, the sergeant spotted his chance, bent over and split his trousers loudly and neatly up his derriere.

The laughter that followed completely calmed the situation.

Fortunately he had taken his mother's advice always to wear clean underwear.

However this, or any other variation on the theme, will not be appearing in policy guidelines.

□□□□

Alcohol-related crime can be a problem in town centres on a Friday or Saturday night.

Alcohol can blur the senses and cause incidents that wouldn't normally happen to somebody who was sober.

The officer interviewed by Anglia Television about alcohol-related problems went out with colleagues afterwards for a drink before catching the last train home.

We are led to believe that on a previous occasion where he had gone out for a drink he stood on the station platform having a conversation with a constable, who said she didn't realise he lived in London, luckily before he got on the wrong train.

New posters and pages

ANTI-social behaviour is one of the latest issues highlighted in the force's poster gallery for use across the county.

The posters, produced by Graphic Designer Rachel Stiff, are for use in public and include one reminding officers of their powers.

These, and the full range of material available, can be viewed by visiting the graphic design poster gallery on the Media and PR intranet site.

The posters are A4 and in colour, and can be used in any public place or police station as required.

For more information contact the Public Relations Unit on ext 50770.

● A NEW page offering advice on latest anti-social behaviour developments is now available on the Community Safety website.

The page gives guidance on the criteria to be applied when considering whether an individual is suitable for a post-conviction anti-social behaviour order.

Also covered are the media policy and new requirements under the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

Fleets ahead in transport

TRANSPORT Services has announced its arrival as a major national player in fleet management by winning top plaudits in the industry's most prestigious awards.

The team was nominated for the UK Fleet of the Year Awards 2004, held at a top London hotel and regarded as 'the Oscars of the fleet business'.

Despite fierce competition from some of the largest fleet organisations in the country - including IBM and Lloyds TSB - Essex Police romped into a highly commended second place behind HM Customs and Excise.

By Benedict Pennington

The award continues the team's impressive performance over recent years and comes hot on the heels of this year's accreditation to the global quality system ISO 9002:2000.

Head of Transport Services John Gorton said: "I am immensely proud of the team whose work has brought us this award and the recognition they richly deserve.

"For a local police transport organisation, we are now punching at a very high level. The credit for that goes to the people at the sharp end, the technicians and staff that make sure our fleet runs smoothly."

As part of its nomination, Transport Services had to fulfil a range of criteria and offered the judging panel an overwhelming array of qualities from

customer choice and cost effectiveness to its collision reduction strategy.

Among the initiatives which impressed judges was the decision to change the livery of road policing vehicles and methods of fitting equipment, resulting in resale increases of up to £1,500 per vehicle.

The judges said that the team has "helped lead a commitment to a national benchmarking programme" throughout the fleet of nearly 800 vehicles, and praised "flexible management techniques" which allow the fleet to deal with daily police demands.

Mr Gorton added: "We were up against the industry's big players and my team has shown it can stand shoulder to shoulder with them at the highest level.

"This award demonstrates that public authority fleets are no longer to be considered the poor relations to the commercial players of the fleet world."

Highway frolics lead to murder arrest

A MURDER suspect was arrested by road policing officers from Chigwell following an arrest on the motorway for a routine traffic offence.

The man was stopped after he was caught travelling down the hard shoulder of the M25 in a bid to avoid stationary traffic.

A PNC check showed that a warrant was outstanding for his arrest in connection with the murder of a Currys delivery driver in Chingford last summer.

Arresting officer Pc Martin Hatfield said: "It was a great shock and surprise to us all when we discovered this information at the roadside. It just goes to show how worthwhile motorway patrols can be."

Former Thurrock officer Dc Jerry Ryder and a colleague from Barking Murder Squad travelled to Brentwood and collected the 25-year-old man from east London. He was later charged with assisting an offender for murder.

Boot camp starts early for some

SCHOOLCHILDREN from Witham were given the opportunity to sample army life following an innovative idea from local police officers, writes *Kim Perks*.

It began when police in the town contacted schools for volunteers to sample army life, with the idea of giving local teenagers something more positive to do with their free time and to help boost their confidence and self-esteem through team-building.

They stayed on camp at Colchester's Goojerat Barracks, wearing full military fatigues, carrying mock weapons and enduring intense physical exercises as well as tests such as night navigation and tactical attack skills.

Some even got to test their leadership skills as section commanders and, after a full-night exercise, there was no time for sleep, just breakfast and onto the physical assault course and a four-mile orientation run.

The trip has been hailed a "huge success" by Pc Nicola McNally - breaking down barriers between youngsters and the police.

Pc McNally oversaw the initiative with Pc Anna Brown, with the local council providing adult supervision. Two police probationers also joined them on each day.

"The difference in the children is amazing," said Pc McNally. "They all began to look out for one another, helping out the weaker members and taking real personal pride in their sections.

"It's great to see those who usually hang around street corners bored, prove to themselves that they are capable of achieving so much more.

"It has also been a good opportunity for them to see the police in a different light. Once the barriers were down they were talking to us a lot more recalling the tales of the day. We've been so impressed to see how well they have coped and kept their spirits high."

One 15-year-old girl, Jaz, went on the scheme "to prove that girls can do it too". Had she not been on the scheme she would have been shopping and, although tough, says she would "absolutely" do it again.

Fourteen-year-old Jay wanted "to do something a bit different" and admitted it was a "bit harder than he expected" but would definitely do it again if given the opportunity to do so.

The AYT provides this service full-time and it is completely free.

Anyone who wants to know more should contact the team at Goojerat Barracks or speak to Pc McNally at Witham police station.

Next steps for minority staff

THE Essex Black Police Association has appointed a new chairperson following their recent AGM, with Rayleigh's Suky Kalar now taking up the reins.

Jason Stephens had been filling in on a temporary basis following the departure of then chairperson Alison Newcomb to Norfolk Constabulary.

Sgt Kalar said: "As chairperson, I wish to reassure members that we will work with the force and the community towards achieving an environment that promotes fairness, equality of opportunity and development among both its diverse workforce and the communities of Essex.

"We are committed to taking a lead and working with all such partners to achieve these positive outcomes and, in particular, will seek to support minority ethnic members of the workforce in this respect."

The EBPA was launched in October 2000 when Chief Constable David Stevens opened proceedings at Chelmsford's Shire Hall.

Sgt Kalar added: "We've not been as effective as we would have expected so far due to a lack of independence and accountability, but as with any new organisation we have learnt lessons through experience and become stronger.

"My responsibility will be to ensure that these issues are addressed and that all our members are both motivated and focused to serve the EBPA membership, Essex Police and the community with the common aim of having a police service that accurately reflects the community we serve."

A fighting fit force

THE force is looking healthy with less days being lost through sickness by police officers.

With only eight days being lost per officer between January and December 2003 the force target of 10 has been surpassed.

Police staff are meeting their target figure of 10 and with a strong support network in place for all staff, work is underway to find out why this is not lower.

One option being looked at is a reward-and-sanction scheme for officers and staff.

This may include good attendance being regarded as part of overall good performance with tighter measures being put in place to control bad performance which may include bad attendance.

Law letters

Ah, soot alors!

NORMALLY if I ask for space in the newspaper, it is connected with NARPO.

This time however it is something that happened when I was stationed at Saffron Walden in the late 50s.

On one occasion I was on night duty and, prior to coming on, I had been to a friend's house in Newport. He had a motorcycle and I had a scooter and we were working on them.

I changed at his house into uniform and as I did so I saw that some dirty oil which I had spilt earlier on my trousers and which had gone through on to my white underpants.

Later that night I was on duty in the office. I shredded some hand soap into a large saucepan with water and added my pants and left it to boil.

I returned to the stove sometime later and, lifting the saucepan lid, saw my underpants glowing red at the bottom of the pan. It had boiled dry.

The other occasion was when I was on early turn one Sunday morning.

The town beat man spent the first half of his shift tidying up the station. In the winter, this meant clearing out fireplaces and relighting the open fires.

On this particular morning, our one and only female constable had been on duty overnight as we had a female prisoner in the cells.

The officer, with her handbag on the floor beside the chair, had settled for the night in an armchair in front of the sergeant's office. This fire had not been allowed to go out.

Sharing the same chimney but on the floor above was the CID office. This fire had gone out so I relaid and lit it.

I went back a short while afterwards and saw that it had not taken hold. I poured a small amount of paraffin from the garage on it.

After a short while I went and had a look at this fire and saw that it had taken very well.

The chimney was glowing red, as was the metal fire surround. I could also hear a

roaring sound from the chimney.

I tried to put this fire out without success so decided to call the fire brigade out. In those days before radios or mobiles, there was a push button above the police station switchboard.

Pushing this button sounded the siren and a very short while afterwards I saw some of the firemen riding their cycles past the police station on their way to the fire station, returning shortly afterwards with the fire engine.

They were unable to put the fire out in the grate, so they went on the roof and directed their hoses down the chimney.

This put the CID office fire out but at the same time dislodged a large amount of soot which came out of the fire in the sergeant's office.

Fortunately our woman officer was not in the chair at the time as the soot went over it, the floor and into her handbag.

Tony Cooper
Hon Sec, NARPO

Sad news for the star dog

IN the run up to this year's national police dog trials, I had to take Ronnie to the vets for what I thought was a simple muscle pull that occurred during normal exercise.

I was stunned when the examination showed it to be a hip-related condition that Ronnie has been carrying for some while.

I know his exploits in dog trials have carried a lot of media attention but, at the risk of even more exposure, I would like to take this opportunity in thanking all who have helped me along the way.

This not only includes those actively involved in hiding up as criminals and other such activity, but also to those left to cover an extra division when we went out of force.

Ronnie, for his part, is as willing as ever and able to continue working with medication.

We have received tremendous support both from within and outside the force for which I have been truly humbled by. My thanks to you all.

Pc Colin Elsegood
Laindon Dog Unit

Send your letters to:
The Law, Press Office,
Police Headquarters,
PO Box 2, Chelmsford,
Essex CM2 6DA

Fond farewell to loving father

MAY I extend mine and my family's thanks to all those who attended the funeral of my late father Tooms Hardy.

While these ceremonies are distressing for the family left behind, I know that our family took great comfort from the kindness of the many of his colleagues who attended.

I would especially like to thank those whose kind words expressed the respect that Dad was held in and, in doing so, eased some of the pain of that sad day.

Keith & Diana Hardy
Southend

The trophy trackdown

ONCE upon a time, some of the display cabinets at the training school were full of trophies.

I am trying to track down the trophies that relate to the old cadets, 1969 to 1977.

If anybody has any knowledge of their whereabouts can you please get in touch with me at Harlow on ext 20446.

Dc Mick Dunion
Harlow CID

A stroll in the street for a cure for cancer

I WISH to thank those members of the Southend branch of NARPO and former members of the Southend Borough Constabulary who sponsored me in my walk from Dover Priory railway station to Buckingham Palace gates in aid of Cancer Research UK - a distance of 85 miles.

My son, who started his part of the walk from Brugge to Calais, had crossed over to England by Seacat and joined me in Dover from where we continued together to Buckingham Palace Gates.

Between us, we have raised approximately £900. Last year, my son walked from Amsterdam to Buckingham Palace Gates and raised £1,300.

We are still getting donations and if anyone would like to contribute, they can forward cheques (made payable to Cancer Research UK) to me.

Any amount is always welcome for this very worthy cause.

Alan Cundy, retired
Shoebury

A haul full of goodies

FOR the past 10 years, the Essex Police Band has given an Easter Egg concert in Chelmsford where an audience of some 350 people (mainly the general public) give an egg for admission.

This year Caroline Goodey approached me with the donation of an egg, but was unable to attend the concert.

She then kindly offered to collect from others who may wish to donate.

This added a further 333 eggs from police staff and officers across the county, hence an almost doubling of our numbers.

On behalf of the band, I would like to thank Caroline for her valiant efforts and also extend thanks to all those who donated an egg along with the drivers that brought them to headquarters.

Joy Madigan
Essex Police Band

service | line

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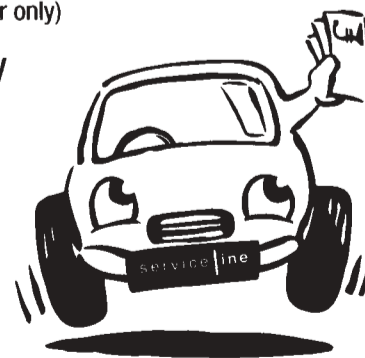
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Open day for Air Support

OFFICERS interested in joining the Air Support Unit (ASU) are being given the opportunity to see for themselves if a career in the sky is what they desire.

An open day is being held at Boreham Airfield on Friday, June 11 with presentations running throughout the day on the various aspects of the unit's operations and training courses.

A number of air observer posts will become available, with advertisements soon to be published through policy guidelines.

Women are under represented on the ASU and so applications from female officers are encouraged.

Pc Dave Manders said: "Our work is both interesting and varied, utilising one of the most advanced police helicopters in the world.

"This day will provide an excellent opportunity for officers interested in applying for these posts to get a flavour of ASU activities."

Officers will be able to look around the force helicopter, speak to ASU personnel, and, weather permitting, participate in a brief familiarisation flight.

Refreshments will be provided at the base between 10-4pm.

Those interested in attending are asked to reserve their places via the homepage on the intranet using the application link as bookings cannot be taken over the telephone.

● SENIOR officers are evaluating the results from the ASU's month-long trial in which they provided around-the-clock support.

It is envisaged that details will become available next month.

Accolades for Essex duo

ROAD policing officer Pc Pete Harris has been recognised for his services to family liaison work by being presented with an award at a ceremony held in London.

The 43-year-old officer from Laindon Road Policing Unit was nominated because "he has made a big difference" to the lives of many others by approaching bereaved families on many occasions about tissue donation.

Pc Harris said: "It was a privilege to pick up this award, but I don't want it to detract from the equally good work that my colleagues in road policing undertake. Over the past year, we have all made some very significant contributions."

The National Blood Service had been running a thank-you campaign in order to acknowledge the enormous amount of unpaid support they received from individuals and organisations.

The presentation recognised the work of individuals from across the south east.

Kazi Quinton was also recognised for her contribution to promoting tissue donation in her previous role as a coroner's officer.

Mrs Quinton, who is now an investigating officer with the Western Major Investigation Team, took it upon herself to organise a news conference in her office to highlight the issue.

Force first for fastest forensics

A GROUNDBREAKING agreement with the Forensic Science Service (FSS) has put the force at the head of the pack for detections through crime scene analysis.

The latest feather in the cap for the force's Scientific Support Department came after a deal was struck with the FSS to speed up results sent to its Huntingdon laboratories.

The agreement was a pledge to prioritise the force's residential burglary crime scene stains, to provide a turn around of five days.

That meant that from finding a crime scene stain - blood or cigarette ends, for example - to matching it to the DNA database would take seven days. Prior to the arrangement, the process could take almost a month.

To bolster the new arrangement, an extra driver was hired to make more regular runs to the FSS.

Head of Scientific Support DCI Tom Harper said: "It was important to be able to fast track results from dwelling burglaries, which is a significant issue for the force.

"This gave us the potential not only to catch criminals quicker but also to retrieve stolen property before it could be disposed of."

The deal has worked out so well that, as of last month, scene samples from all crimes are now dealt with as quickly.

Results from the last year back up the force's pioneering approach. In 2002, 42 per cent of crime scene stains yielded a DNA profile capable of being loaded on to the database.

As a result of improved procedures that rose to 57 per cent in 2003, just short of the highest achieved nationally, 61 per cent.

DCI Harper added: "The quality of procedures and the turnaround of results have put us at the forefront of using forensic science to detect offences, a position I am confident we can build on for the future."

Promising start for PCSOs

INITIAL reactions to the first year of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) on the beat show a warm welcome for the new additions to the police family.

Following a six-month trial run of 10 PCSOs in Harlow division, another 80 were added to the force and have spent the last six months working around the county.

Over the next year, another 46 will swell the ranks, with feedback from both the public and the force showing PCSOs in a positive light.

Project Manager Insp Glenn Mayes said: "PCSOs have been warmly welcomed both internally and externally, particularly when it comes to reassuring the public through high visibility patrols.

"They are able to spend the vast majority of their shift on patrol, getting to know and keeping an open line of communication with the public they serve."

The response from Crime and Disorder Act partners and their commitment to providing match-funding has been similarly encouraging. In Thurrock, numbers have been boosted from 11 last year to 16 for the next 12 months.

Divisions have embraced the capabilities of PCSOs, who now find themselves dispensing penalty notices tickets in some areas or facilitating the removal of abandoned vehicles. During a six-month period in Epping, PCSOs shifted 90 abandoned cars.

Insp Mayes added: "PCSOs are filling a service niche which police have struggled to provide in recent years.

"Communities are getting to know their PCSOs by seeing them outside the post office or at their schools, and that's increasing confidence in the force as a whole."

Good causes the focus for new Sheriff

THE county has a new High Sheriff, with Andrew Streeter installed in post last month.

The 65-year-old farmer has been a district councillor for the past 40 years and is looking to continue the good work which has been carried out by former incumbents of the post.

Mr Streeter lives with his wife in Great Hallingbury and has four grown-up children.

"I want to support and visit the many voluntary services we have here in Essex and also visit as many police stations as possible," said Mr Streeter. "I will be looking to report and reward local people and organisations who fight crime in their community."

The High Sheriff is looking to raise money for not only his award scheme, but also the various cancer research charities which he has nominated this year.

Slow down for a smile

RESIDENTS in the county's rural areas are being offered reassurance of the commitment to reducing road casualties with new technology to catch the motorist's eye.

Essex County Council has provided Traffic Management with nine speed indicator devices (SIDs) to be deployed at locations served by divisional rural mobile police offices.

The equipment is used as a monitoring device and displays the speed of approaching vehicles, along with a smiling face for those adhering to the speed limit, and a frown for those who do not.

It is hoped the devices will compliment other force wide enforcement techniques.

Senior Traffic Management Officer Adam Pipe said: "This will be especially beneficial to those areas that do not meet the criteria for



● Traffic Management officers Adam Pipe and Pc Dennise Saunders with children from Fyfield Primary School.

either a static or mobile safety camera.

"This simple device gives people a reminder and makes them aware of speed.

"Initial results have been very encouraging with very

positive reaction from both residents and drivers."

If you would like to nominate a location at which the signs may be of benefit contact Adam on ext 51053.

GIVING CHILDREN BACK THEIR FUTURE

CAREER SPOTLIGHT



● Detectives Amanda Puttnam (left) and Jane Egerton work through disclosure case papers.

FROM perverted teachers to postman; from baby-sitters to family members - child abusers linger in every corner of society. And who is there to protect the innocent children - your children?

offences, including those of a physical, emotional and sexual nature. With 300 current live investigations, matters are going to become further complicated following the introduction of the Sex Offenders Act 2003 legislation. Despite all this, DCI Roy Fenning, who heads the force's CPU, has remained upbeat and positive throughout this interview. However, for one moment he ponders how people who should protect their children instead turn on them, leaving immeasurable psychological scars. He regards his team as one of the best groups of investigators in the county. "We have several areas of responsibility, including any suspicious deaths or allegations of offences occurring within the family and extended family," said DCI Fenning. "In addition, we investigate cases where the suspect is a carer such as a baby-sitter, schoolteacher or youth worker. We'll work on child

In recent years, crimes committed against children have grabbed the headlines. NISHAN WIJERATNE explores the force's fight against this grisly crime. murder investigations because we have the expertise and a cohesive approach, but a senior investigating officer from the Major Investigation Section will oversee the case." Since its inception in 1988, all CPOs now undergo a series of training to ensure they are well-equipped to cope. As well as the basic investigator's course, officers are taught how to conduct video-interviewing of witnesses. A number of the detectives, who are supervised by seven sergeants and three inspectors, are also trained family liaison officers and/or sex offence-trained officers. DCI Fenning said: "We're always on the hunt for new talent as we prefer to

classed as a sexual assault, with such attacks becoming non-gender specific, except for the offence of rape where a man is still only considered the offender. Those men who force women to give oral sex without their consent are now liable to prosecution for rape under the new legislation. DCI Fenning believes the new piece of legislation will increase both referral and arrest rates. "Having looked very closely at the Act, I have taken a considered view that there will be a significant increase in referrals in relation to the numerous offences specifically regarding children." DCI Fenning adds: "If little Charlie can only watch television by sitting in the same room in which his elder sister and her boyfriend are having sex, then this is also now an offence and shall require investigation if reported to the police. "Furthermore, whereas before abusing a position of trust only applied to teachers in certain circumstances, it now covers a wide

range of people who have a responsibility to supervise, instruct or provide accommodation for a child and engage in any consensual sexual activity with them. **Incest** "The offence of incest has been replaced with four new offences that stipulate that not only immediate family (blood relatives) are able to breach this legislation but it now incorporates having sex with aunts, uncles, step-parents or foster parents. "In theory, if you live in the same household as a person who cares for you or previously cared for you - be it a step-sister or brother, then you may both commit an offence." DCI Parker works in Colchester and has handled many incestuous cases during his four-year stint on child protection. "It's a difficult offence to prove because such activities tend to happen in the privacy of people's homes and behind closed doors - there are hardly ever any independent witnesses," said

Dc Parker. "Incestuous offences are not normally one-off situations. In general, the victims won't speak to us because they have been put through a sustained period of fear. We regularly deal with a handful of offences each month here in north Essex." The 35-year-old detective recalls a recent case. "It was around this time two years ago when a 15-year-old girl made a complaint against her father," said Dc Parker. "She had returned home from school after completing her exams where she was confronted by her father. An argument ensued in which he dragged her upstairs to a bedroom where he committed an indecent assault. "The girl had finally found the courage to report the offence after living through many years of fear. Furthermore, she also reported a rape in which her father had attacked her two years previously." The father was arrested and charged on the same day. "Both girls were taken into social services care. There was a noticeable difference in the kids' demeanour and attitude when they went into foster care." The 37-year-old unemployed man was sentenced to life imprisonment last summer after he was convicted of a series of indecent assaults and rape against two of his three daughters. With officers coming into contact with a multitude of shocking scenarios, it is important that they know how to cope and how to let others know when they are not. Each officer has two mandatory visits to the welfare department each year, with further additional referrals if required. More than 100 abused children in the UK were saved by police as part of the much publicised Operation Ore. Launched in 2002 following an investigation into an internet site selling pornography and images of child abuse, Ore officers in Essex arrested 154 people. "Operation Ore was a prime example of various agencies working together with the protection of children at the forefront," said DCI Fenning. "The fact that more than 18 children in Essex alone have been identified and removed from areas of abuse is good news, but is a statistic we cannot celebrate." Operation Ore certainly brought child abuse into the media spotlight. DCI Fenning is certainly grateful for this exposure. "The increase in the media reporting of child abuse is primarily because people now have a greater awareness of what child abuse is," he said. "More people feel confident enough to contact either ourselves or social services. Teaching staff are now duty-bound to report kids' injuries if they believe that little Charlie is more than just an accident-prone. "If anything, there may well be less abuse because we are intervening at an earlier stage and this is having a positive impact."

JANE EGERTON is no ordinary police officer. The detective constable specialises in one of the most disturbing fields of crime. As a child protection officer, Jane has experienced and witnessed numerous cases involving "kids who have been let down by their adult supervisors". Jane joined the police service after qualifying as a solicitor in Bishop's Stortford. After having had an interest for the law since a teenager, she graduated from law school before leaving the profession after three and a half years. "I didn't feel right defending people who had committed crimes," said the 35-year-old. "I stopped and joined Essex Social Services where I worked with adults who had learning difficulties. "However, after nearly two years there I soon wanted to rejoin the criminal justice sector - but definitely not as a solicitor in a private practice. It was then, when I saw an advert in the *Harlow Star* - Essex Police were looking for new recruits." Jane passed all the necessary stages and joined the force in 1998. Her interest in child protection stemmed from one of her probationer courses and continued to simmer inside her until she joined Harlow's child protection unit. "One of the more experienced child protection officers came to deliver a talk at training centre and this input really got me thinking. "It's an area of policing which is well-defined where each and every case is focused with one aim in mind - a wish to safeguard children. We have a strong drive to protect children as we realise they are vulnerable. "As with any area of policing, the most rewarding aspect of the job is getting results. We usually gain a strong sense of satisfaction upon completion of an investigation even if it doesn't always conclude in a conviction. "We may not totally resolve a family problem, but we often ease it by just opening up people's minds. We actually do get thank-you cards from some families."

During her two years at Harlow CPU, Jane has handled a number of cases ranging from common assault to sex offences against a child or a baby. Family members are frequently the suspects in cases, yet dealing with them is something which Jane finds "quite easy". "Parents have never had any issues with me. The attitude of an officer is crucial; it is important to talk to people in a reasonable manner as then hopefully it is reciprocated just as with any aspect of police work. "As well as acting as the investigating officer, we also act as family liaison officers and this can place us under some pressure, especially when the suspect is a parent. "This scenario is further worsened when parents have to be removed from the house for the duration of an investigation or the child having to be placed into social services care." Like many of her colleagues, Jane ensures she leaves her work behind in the office or court house at the end of each day. "My husband's also a police officer, but elsewhere in the force. He knows the strain I sometimes come under and understands when I have to work longer hours than usual. "I like to see my family and friends in Yorkshire, but I also go to the gym and socialise with both police and non-police friends here in the county." As well as having completed the video-interviewing and investigators' courses, Jane is also a sex offences trained officer. "While on division, you acquire many skills which often aren't recognised by the job - I'm not having a go, it's just the way it goes. I was better in some areas of policing than in others and I chose to do something about it. "I'm now using these skills to good effect in child protection. I would definitely encourage anyone who thinks they have the necessary skills to join, regardless of how many years' policing experience they may have."

'We have a strong drive to protect children as we realise they are vulnerable.'

Every schoolchild's nightmare



IAN SHEFFIELD was jailed for seven years after having sex with two schoolgirls. The 29-year-old former schoolteacher had a six-month fling with 15-year-old Heidi last year, but was also two-timing her to have sex with 14-year-old fellow pupil Michelle. The twisted teacher was managing a school pop group which the girls were involved with and coached them during and after school. His interest in the girls turned sinister early last year when he told both girls he loved them; showering Michelle with text messages, proposing marriage, writing love poems and even claiming he would run off with her to the south coast. Investigating officer Dc Amanda Puttnam outlines the nature of the case, while the victims and their parents share their sentiments towards the perverted music teacher who seduced their two girls with promises of moulding them into pop stars. The names of the two girls have been changed to protect their identity. "I was actually in the office when I took the initial telephone call from the headteacher," said Amanda. "She had been approached by one of Michelle's friends who had got fed up of lying and covering for her." Ian Sheffield had been working at the school in Brentwood for just over a year, with this his first full-time teaching post. Following this initial allegation against Michelle, he had been

suspended and moved back to his parents' home in Swansea. Amanda continues: "We were interviewing Michelle's friend during the Easter holidays when we heard Sheffield was returning in order to pick up some items from the school. "When we arrested him, he denied the allegations. He was bailed and this is when we then we spoke to Michelle and her parents. At first, she too denied the allegations. "However, when she discovered that Sheffield had denied any existence of a relationship, she changed her mind. We interviewed her, seizing her mobile phone and computer in the process. The computer contained an email sent from Sheffield to Michelle asking her to deny the allegations." Michelle, who was at the time 14, said: "We had formed a girl band and he managed us. He told us that we would be famous one day and that he would send off our CDs to record companies. **Burger King** "He took us to Burger King one day last summer after which we shot a music video on the school field. We all wore these little shorts and bikini tops. "My cousin knew about us and she was always covering up for me. She was so distraught that she started cutting herself with a razor." Amanda says: "A couple of weeks had passed when I received another call from the school - another pupil was making similar allegations against



● Disgraced teacher Ian Sheffield.

Sheffield. We interviewed 15-year-old Heidi. This was a really, really hard interview as she was in a very distraught state. "Sheffield then returned from bail whereupon he made certain admissions in relation to Michelle, but denied ever having formed a relationship with Heidi. Despite this, I charged him with offences against both girls." A three-week trial was heard at Basildon Crown Court in March this year - "an horrendous period" for not only the victims and their parents, but also for Amanda who herself was experiencing her first big trial. "The girls were worried and scared, especially Heidi as it was basically her

word against his and she was worried that nobody would believe her," said Amanda. "Her parents were shocked to learn how their daughter had lied about her daily movements." During the trial, Michelle was in such a state of distress that she took an overdose of paracetamol tablets. A jury found Sheffield guilty of 12 sex charges, including seven of indecent assault, two counts of indecency with a child and three counts of having sex with Michelle, breaching his position of trust. He has been placed on the sex offenders' register for life and he has been barred from ever working with children again. Heidi's father said: "This man is a monster. He fooled us all. At parents' evening, he even told us: 'Your daughter's so talented and is going to go far.' Little did I know that he was grooming them to abuse them. I can't praise Essex Police enough for their work, especially Amanda." Asked how she coped with the ordeal of the trial and the complexities of the case, the 35-year-old detective pays tribute to those around her. "I have to thank my colleagues for being extremely supportive throughout the case, especially Simon (Ds Parkes) who made it more bearable. I'm additionally lucky as I have a partner who is superb." Amanda remains in touch with the families while both girls undergo counselling sessions.

● A distraught Heidi recalls the traumatic events. Photo: Andrew Parsons, Press Association.

Yobs kicked into touch

AS England prepares to meet France in the first of the Euro 2004 group matches in Portugal, Essex Police is advising those intent on causing trouble that they will be heading for an early bath.

With 1,250 banning orders issued nationally under the Football (Disorder) Act 2000, authorities at all ports will ensure known football hooligans are prevented from leaving the mainland.

Those with banning orders are required to hand in passports to police during the control period, which begins on June 7 for the game against France on June 13, and will end on July 4 or when England are knocked out.

Immigration desks at ports and borders across Europe have also issued stern warnings to so-called fans to think twice about travelling to their countries.

Special Operations Chief Insp Tim Stokes said: "If you are going to travel abroad with the intention of causing trouble, you will be turned back."

"In Essex there will be a high level of policing concentrated around the games, ensuring that people who want to enjoy the football can do so in peace."

Police have been pleased with the relatively low number of public disorder incidents across Essex during recent international games and hope everyone can enjoy England's Euro 2004 campaign in a similarly safe and peaceful environment.

Anyone with intelligence relating to the tournament is asked to contact the Public Protection Unit at the Force Intelligence Bureau.

Diverse new role for Tina

THE drive to increase the diversity of staff has been given a boost with the appointment of the force's new positive action officer.

Pc Tina Royles, who has been with Essex for 14 years, took up the post last month after nine years with Harlow division, six of which were as a domestic violence liaison officer.

By using initiatives to encourage recruitment of minority groups in the community, the main aim of the positive action officer is to "assist the force in achieving a workforce that reflects the diversity of the public it serves".

Pc Royles is relishing the challenge, while acknowledging the work that has been done to date.

"There's some way to go but we've already made good



● Pc Tina Royles

progress," said Pc Royles. "I'll be going into communities to find out how we are seen, what they want from us and what would make people want to join us."

"Part of my role will be to ascertain whether those from under-represented groups already working for the force have the same opportunities open to them. For me to be aware of this I need issues to be highlighted to me, and for people to work with me."

The coming months will see Pc Royles working with staff to

develop positive action strategies, as well as taking on board the good work produced by other forces.

With the festival season approaching, she is wasting no time in seizing opportunities to have an Essex Police presence at a wide range of cultural events.

Other work includes looking into the reasons why people leave the force and working with colleges to try to ensure educational opportunities around literacy, numeracy and IT skills are available to all members of the community.

Pc Royles added: "Some officers think the positive action officer is there to get people in by special measures or preferential treatment - nothing could be further from the truth."

"Everyone has to go through the same process, but some members of the community don't have the same opportunities to achieve their potential. I am here to create opportunities and promote Essex Police as an organisation."

No to illegal raves

RAVE organisers are again been notified of the strenuous efforts police will be taking this summer to ensure the safety of all members of the public.

Following the stark warning from police two years ago where they invited known organisers to meet with them, senior officers have only had to shut down a small handful of illegal musical events which have begun.

Police will be liaising with the county's other emergency services, local councils and the National Farmers' Union.

Chief Inspector Tim Stokes is under no illusions as to what the force's priority is when people's lives are being needlessly risked.

Revellers

"Organisers here in Essex should know by now what our stance is," said Chief Insp Stokes. "Our primary concern is for revellers who are being exposed to many hazardous risks such as unsafe buildings, not to mention the potentially lethal, illegal drugs which are freely available."

"With the increased dangers on our roads caused by the massive influx of vehicles, the risk to public safety both inside and outside these events is a matter which we won't and don't take lightly."

"Many premises are wholly unsuitable and often downright dangerous when used for such events, so we will do everything to ensure these raves do not go ahead and if we can't, then we will safely close them down."

Police have powers to gather and seize evidence, including equipment, in order to assist with prosecutions.

Local authorities issue Public Entertainment Licences (PELs) only after evidence is submitted satisfying issues in relations to public safety, noise pollution to local communities and traffic congestion matters.

A fine of up to £20,000 or six months' imprisonment awaits those organisers who fail to obtain a PEL ahead of an event.

The force message is clear: "We will prevent, disrupt and enforce measures to ensure raves do not take place in this county, thereby ensuring public safety," concluded Chief Insp Stokes.

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Brave trio acclaimed

A SERGEANT from Rayleigh and two Southend constables have been presented with an award for outstanding courage after rescuing a woman from a house fire.

At a ceremony, Mayor of Southend Councillor Charles Latham presented the Mitchell Certificate to Sgt Dave Rudd, Pc Leigh Norris and Pc Carly Wickes before a special dinner.

The three officers had responded to a house fire in Chinchila Road, Southend, in January 2003 from which four young people had managed to escape. However, Pc Wickes learnt that an elderly female could still be inside the house next to the one on fire.

Pc Norris forced entry to the house, where the officer found the woman in one of the upstairs bedrooms. The pensioner was treated by paramedics at the scene, but thankfully required no further treatment.

Mayor Councillor Latham said: "We are delighted to honour these outstanding acts of bravery and courage by awarding the Mitchell Certificate."

New law warning to airgun owners

POLICE have issued a warning to some airgun owners that they face jail from this month if they do not apply for a certificate under new laws.

Owners of self-contained gas cartridge air weapons needed to apply before the end of April or be faced with a minimum five-year prison sentence.

The new law came into force on January 20 under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 which made it an offence to manufacture, sell, buy or acquire any air weapon that uses a self-

contained gas cartridge system.

Owners who do not wish to apply for certificates can hand weapons into police.

To date, around a dozen weapons have been handed in, and about 100 new certificates have been issued.

The new laws covering ownership of self-contained gas cartridge weapons are part of a range of measures introduced by government. These also include a ban on carrying imitation and air guns in public, and raising the age limit for air gun ownership to 17.



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Our loss is their gain

ESSEX has lost one of its most technically-minded officers following Paul Butler's retirement.

The former detective constable is sorry to have left Essex after completing 23 years' service with the force.

Joining Essex from the Metropolitan Police was "one of the best decisions" the 52-year-old ever made.

Although he served in his home patch of London's East End, he recalls how everybody was known by their collar number.

"It was such a refreshing change to join a force where I was known by my name," said Paul. "I started my Essex career as a neighbourhood beat officer in Harlow where there was a real family atmosphere."

However, pounding the streets was to become a distant memory as Paul's career became highly technical.

Names in the news

He was one of the first CID officers to be involved with HOLMES before joining the National Crime Squad to develop intelligence on their computer system.

Following time at the Home Office honing his computer skills, Paul returned to the force working at headquarters on IT projects.

His grand finale was his contribution towards the National Special Branch intelligence system.

Paul's skills have now been captured by a local company for their CCTV systems.

Former constable **Sue Yeoman** retires this month after 30 years' service with Essex. The 50-year-old former Thurrock officer is "sad to leave" and will miss everybody that she has worked with over the years.

"The force has become a second family to me," said Sue. "I have met some really lovely people and have many good friends as a result of it. I have really enjoyed my 30 years and have a lot of fond memories.

"We all say we cannot wait to retire, but when the day draws near it's very different."

Ex-sergeant **Brian Wilkins** has called time on his days with the force after nearly 31 years' service.

Brian, 54, from Bishops Stortford, retired this month from his duties at Stansted Airport.

Martin Bowditch retired from the force last month after just over 25 years' service. The 50-year-old leaves behind his road policing work to set up life in France.

Bob Ward has retired from the force (again), with Dick Madden rejoining and carrying on from where Bob left off in Corporate Support.

Bob joined Corporate Support in June 1997 as a superintendent, retiring as police officer in April 2000.

However, the very next day he re-entered the office as a police staff member.

The 57-year-old will be utilising his spare time by indulging in a spot of house decoration and, with the summer sun now shining down upon us, he will also be tending to his shrubs and flowers in the garden.

Furthermore, he will continue to help out with the force's hockey team when required.

Obituaries

FORMER inspector **John Hooper** died last month aged 93.

Mr Hooper served at Rochford, Laindon, Hornchurch, Great Wakering, Grays, Canvey Island,

Clacton and Rayleigh during his 25 years' service.

Frederick Ratcliffe from Harlow died last month.

The 77-year-old ex-constable served from 1946 to 1971 at Clacton, Ongar, Harlow traffic and as a warrant officer.

He leaves behind widow Eileen.

Ex-constable **Daphne Edwards** died at the beginning of April aged 49.

The Braintree woman leaves behind widower Richard.

The 49-year-old served at Braintree, Chelmsford, Epping and Harlow from 1974 to 1988.

Former constable **Derek Whymark** died last month aged 63, following 29 year's service, serving at headquarters, Chelmsford, Rayleigh and Grays.

Derek's funeral took place in Cornwall.

John Tracey died last month aged 60.

The former constable served at south Bentley, driving school and Stanway Road Policing Unit during his 30 years' service.

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NARPO

DUE to a variety of reasons, the date for the NARPO branch AGM has been rescheduled to Wednesday, May 19.

It will start at 7.30pm in the sports pavilion at police headquarters.

Members are urged to attend and to let honorary secretary for Chelmsford, Tony Cooper, know if you will be going. Tony is contactable on 01376 329563.

Long service recognition

POLICE staff members who joined Essex straight from another force are now entitled to count their previous year's employment as continuous service.

Following a recent Chief Officer's Management Group meeting, it was decided that the force will honour 22 years of continuous service within the police service, in line with the criteria for police officers who qualify for the Police Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Bon voyage Bill

COLLEAGUES past and present are being asked to share in the retirement celebrations of Sgt Bill Prowse.

A send-off for Bill is planned for June 11 at the sports pavilion at Police HQ starting at 7.30pm.

Anyone who wants to attend is asked to contact Martin Spensley on 07773 221957.

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● Advertisers should be aware that The Law is now published on the internet and any telephone numbers given will be in the public domain.

Top Dutch trip is in the pot

A FUN-filled weekend in Amsterdam has been booked again by popular request, with four-star bed and breakfast accommodation available at a bargain price of just £95.

The three-day trip on Friday, October 29 includes a visit to Bruges, with the Le Shuttle fare included in the price.

Booking forms are available from the sports secretary on extension 58888 or via the EPSA homepage on the intranet.

● CORPORATE membership is available for members of EPSA to the Devon House Health and Leisure Club in Chelmsford for a limited period at just £3.99 per week, an annual saving of £240.

This offer is only on a first-come first-serve basis.

You will need to produce a letter, copies available from the Force Sports Secretary.

To reserve membership, contact Sharon or Belinda on 0800 9520521.

● EVERYONE likes a great deal when they go out shopping and so the Essex Police Sports Association has teamed up with Perkz to bring you and your family a bunch of great deals from leading retailers.

Perkz features offers from leading high-street retailers and online specialists, with chart CDs, electrical equipment and toys all on offer.

For further information, visit the EPSA website on the intranet.

Charity walkies for cancer cash

MILES the Mouse visited the force's dog section recently to drum up support for a sponsored dog walk in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief.

The walk is taking place at Hylands Park at the end of this month and is aimed at raising £2.5 million.

The organisation's mascot, Miles the Mouse, was invited to meet up with some of the force's experienced dogs by Sgt Dan Elford.

"We hope that many dog owners will participate in this event to continue the help in Essex for such a worthwhile cause," said Sgt Elford.

"The weather is usually kind to us whenever we hold any form of charity event at Hylands Park."



● A rodent's respite for our dogs at Sandon as Miles the Mouse comes to play.

Dog handlers Pc Terry Collinson and Pc Paul Nicholls, along with their dogs Sire and Sabre, kept an eye on Miles during his visit.

The dogs were curious to meet a six-foot mouse and it

was touch and go as to whether Miles would be allowed to leave.

Macmillan's Community Fundraiser Eleanor Burgess said: "Please invite your four-legged friends to help

Macmillan Cancer Relief raise £2.5million for people with cancer in Essex."

To register for the dog walk phone Eleanor on 01245 345280 or email eburgess@macmillan.org.uk.

Marathon marvels

ESSEX Crime Squad's Gary Barber raised £600 for cancer research in last month's London Marathon as he finished in a time of 5hrs 5min - a fine performance in his first-ever marathon.

Other sections of the force were well-represented with 47-year-old Mick Bond once again leading the way to finish 217th overall.

Colchester's Derek Walker was just behind, beating his personal best by over 10 minutes.

The only other sub-three-hour competitor was Braintree's Alex Webb.

However, John Gwillim (MIS) and Gary Jones (FSU) made it inside the four-hour mark, with Mark Giles (MIS), Scott Blythe (Colchester) and Martin Maudsley (Southminster) all completing the run inside five hours.

The traditional uniform squad consisting of Al Barley, Pete Bryan and Kirste Snellgrove reached the end of the Mall in a time of just under 5hrs 42mins,

Cycle tribute to Graham

A GROUP of Essex officers are teaming up with their counterparts in the Metropolitan Police to participate in next month's London to Brighton bike ride.

The day will see current detectives from Thurrock and Basildon reunited with their former colleagues who transferred to the Barking

murder squad as they use the day to celebrate the life of Graham Carter who died in March.

Joel Henderson said: "A lot of Graham's friends transferred across the border over the course of the past year or so and this will be a good time for all of us to catch up and reminisce over

many jobs that Graham and ourselves got involved with.

"We'll be stopping at various pubs along the way for some refreshment."

The day starts at Clapham Common, with the 15 officers joining 27,000 other cyclists as they head towards the south coast.

A generous hand for little Lucy

THE disabled daughter of a Clacton member of staff has benefited from a fund-raising event in which the £607.50 raised will purchase of special developmental toys and equipment.

Service Desk Assistant Lindsey Chadwick's young daughter Lucy suffers from a rare chromosome deletion which has affected only four other children in medical history, making her condition unknown and

therefore difficult to treat.

The money was raised from Tendring Sports & Social Club's third charity quiz night held last month.

Lindsey said: "I'm very grateful for all those who participated in this event. Lucy is already enjoying her new toys and this is as a result of friends and colleagues. I feel completely choked at how generous everyone has been."

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Sport
and Leisure

Double final heartbreak

By Nishan
Wijeratne & Sue
Bakewell

Wet, wild and windy

ESSEX were flying the flag in the hockey stakes this year, with both the men's and women's team reaching the Police Service UK finals.

Amazingly though, both teams lost 4-3 to their respective opponents.

The men faced Lothian & Borders in Edinburgh, with a hard-fought performance under the blue skies.

Having gone 2-0 down into the half-time interval, the men came out fighting.

Two goals from Gaz Ingram, who had scored seven in the semi-final against Warwickshire, and one from Lee Ward saw the game stand at 3-3 with just minutes remaining.

However, a 'foul' in the box led to a dubious penalty stroke being awarded and the Scottish team walked off champions.

Captain Lee Ward said: "I would like to thank all the players for their efforts and particularly those officers who changed their duties to allow others to get away during a busy operational spell. Furthermore, I would like to thank those who helped out as, without their co-operation, it would not have been possible."

Got your eyes on a different bail?

COLCHESTER ladies cricket team is looking to boost its squad of players as they attempt to drive up the league this season.

Open to anyone with a police connection, however tenuous the link, the team is additionally looking to fine tune its current crop of talent by inviting anyone who has any cricketing knowledge or experience to assist with coaching sessions.

Team captain Nikki Gander said: "We practice every Thursday evening at Holmewood House School in Lexden and would love to see anyone, male or female, who could help us out.

"You really don't need any experience or know the rules of the game. All our games are played in a friendly atmosphere."

Matches are every Friday night throughout the summer, with home games played at Colchester Grammar School.

Anyone who is interested should contact either Nikki or Katie Mead at Bocking Road Policing Unit.

The previous week, the women had their turn in the Ladies National PSUK Hockey final where they took on the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Captained by Sharn Taylor, the team were looking to regain their champions' status and, after a short welcome to the teams by former assistant chief constable Geoff Markham, a fast and furious game took hold.

The first half saw Essex with their backs against the wall and goalkeeper Katie Mead in the thick of it from the start.

The road policing officer could not prevent the side from going 1-0 though at the half-time interval.

The second half started poorly for the women, with PSNI quickly going 3-0 up despite some fierce defending from Debbie Batey and Teresa Lucas who had to contend with some larger forwards.

Katie prevented it from being four when PSNI thought they had struck from only a metre out, but the keeper deflected the ball over the crossbar.

Spectators on the touchlines could be heard saying: 'You never write Essex off', recalling the 2002 final where West Midlands were defeated when they were beaten 4-3 after taking a 3-0 lead.

The comeback started with only 15 minutes left on the clock when a great cross from



● Debbie Batey flicks a pass through to Teresa Oxley (right).

Wendy Brown on the right was met by Sarah Bamfield who fired home what many thought was Essex's consolation goal.

However, a few minutes later Di Taylor went on a mazy run into the opposition box and scored a reverse goal with a reverse stick-sweep.

It very much looked like history was going to repeat itself as Essex battled on, but PSNI scored another to make it 4-2.

Lucy Robinson was having a superb game up front, but the PSNI defending was

proving too good.

However, still refusing to be beaten, Sarah took the ball from her own half and dodged past several players to score a cracking third goal, albeit with a PSNI player on her back.

Sadly, the scoreline remained 4-3 at the final whistle with PSNI now winning the trophy in back to back years.

Teresa Oxley was forced to retire towards the end of the game after being struck in the face by a hockey stick.

The Essex captain made a

few post-match comments at the awards ceremony where Essex at least won the karaoke competition.

"Despite the result, it was a great day and I would like to thank the squad for their commitment," said Sharn. "A big thank you must go to Tracey Bishop for her organisational skills - it's just a shame she wasn't there on the day - you were sorely missed.

Teresa is on the road to recovery after seeking hospital treatment for her facial injuries.

The north sweep up once again

BRAINTREE has once again won the Croker Cup, beating Harlow into second place for the third consecutive year, winning by a margin of over 30 points.

The final rounds took place last month, with Tendring, Basildon and Harlow claiming the top spots in the ladies football, and Braintree, Southend and Harlow taking the honours in billiards.

Colchester claimed the overall bronze-medal position in the final table, with Tendring propping up the rest.

●**RAYLEIGH** are hosting this year's Croker Cup golf competition, but co-ordinator Roger Culham is yet to hear from representatives from Thurrock, Chelmsford or Tendring.

Benfleet's Boyce Hill Golf Course is the venue on Thursday, September 23.

Divisional captains who have yet to register their interest is urged to contact Roger on extension 38321 or 01268 697119.

Run pair perform at their peaks

THE Derbyshire hills proved quite a challenge for two officers taking part in the Ashbourne Duathlon.

Sgt Graham Perks, Harlow, completed the eight-mile run, 25-mile cycle, and 2.5-mile run in 2hrs 47mins, with Pc Mark Jones, Kelvedon Hatch crossing the line at 3hrs 6mins.

The event sees the start of the police triathlon series, with members of the Essex team competing in the annual Basildon competition (see next month's issue) and the Braintree Triathlon, which is also the PSUK Triathlon Sprint Championship.

