NEW WAYS TO TACKLE CRIMINALS WELCOMED

CRIME-busting proposals in the Queen’s Speech have been given an optimistic welcome by the force’s top detective.

Outlining measures which the Government hopes to see in place over the next parliamentary session, the speech made special mention of the formation of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and the introduction of ID cards.

And Det Chief Supt Wil Kennedy believes these – along with new legislation on drug testing for minor offenders – can only be a good thing in the fight against crime.

“People shouldn’t look upon SOCA as a new organisation,” said Det Chief Supt Kennedy. “And referring to it as ‘the British FBI’ does nothing to inform people of what the body is about.

“It’s an amalgamation of existing law enforcement agencies, and to have them working as one must improve their focus.”

He added that he would be watching with interest to see if the new body retained its commitment to cross-border crime or left a gap that forces would have to fill.

Meanwhile, the speech confirmed that the Government is intent on pressing on with identification cards, despite opposition from civil liberties groups.

Det Chief Supt Kennedy said: “For our officers on the street, it’s potentially a way of identifying and eliminating people from inquiries and will make life easier for those going about their lawful business.”

Media coverage

Less hyped in the media coverage of the speech were plans to test minor offenders for drug use, a plan which Det Chief Supt Kennedy believes has “a great benefit” for crime reduction.

“Nobody can dispute the link between drug use and acquisitive crime,” he said. “To be able to identify and treat those offenders would be a big plus for crime prevention. The issue we face is whether there are sufficient funds for treatment programmes.”

Fresh talk about the prospect of laws against incitement to religious hatred also get the thumbs up.

“We have to be very sensitive but we should welcome the fact that the legislation will allow us to tackle these crimes,” said Det Chief Supt Kennedy.

“Essex has a very strong record in identifying and tackling hate crime and I intend that to continue.”

Concern over support officers - page 3.

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The editorial team would be pleased to receive your feedback on the newspaper. Email Ben Pennington in the Press Office.

by Ben Pennington

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You’re bus-ted!

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As part of the Christmas campaign, road policing officers will also be making concerted efforts to eradicate drink-drivers from the roads by targeting the persistent hardcore who continually disregard the law.

Road policing manager Chief Insp Tom Diment is hoping the advertisements will keep the force’s drink-drive safety message alive throughout the month.

“The high-profile poster campaign should be visible to a large section of the community,” said Chief Insp Diment. “It’s there to ensure people know of the dangers and consequences of driving after having consumed alcohol.”

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**Standing firm on reform**

Insurance benefits

AS a reminder, don’t forget we have had an increase in group insurance benefits for serving officers, with no increase in premium.

If you are not in the scheme, or wish to find out further details, contact Trish Morley in the Federation Office on extension 54560.

Travel going nowhere

TRAVEL insurance is due for renewal in January and I am pleased to say I have negotiated renewal in January and I am not be disappointed.

Everyone who requires one will of this month and, hopefully, representatives at the beginning were sent out to the divisional Federation pocket diaries

of this month. Pocket diaries en route Federation Office on extension 54555.

Pocket diaries en route

FEDERATION pocket diaries were sent out to the divisional representatives at the beginning of this month and, hopefully, everyone who requires one will not be disappointed.

Thank you for all the letters of support we have received during the year from officers we have helped, although I appreciate we cannot please everyone. May I wish you all, on behalf of Sue Kelly, Mick Englefield, Trish Morley, Jackie Card, Marian Godwin and myself a very merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Subscription tax query answered

IF you are not already aware, Federation subscriptions are tax-deductible, but you do not have to claim this as we have an agreement with the Inland Revenue and Finance Department for this to be done at source.

I would like to thank the various departments at headquarters who assist us over the year, but particularly Finance for their constant help and patience with all sorts of inquiries.

**Federation news by Terry Spelman**

December 2004

**Police funding award is one of the lowest**

THE Government has given Essex Police a 3.75 per cent increase in funding for 2005/6 – one of the lowest awards to police forces across the country.

The national average increase is 4.87 per cent.

Essex will receive £166.972m from central funding – an increase of £6m on this year.

**Shortfall**

An increase of just three per cent was feared by Essex Police Authority and it says there will be a funding shortfall because it needs a 5.6 per cent rise just to maintain services.

The authority has pledged to continue lobbying the Government for more money.

Chairman Robert Chambers said: “We are pleased that we have got a better settlement than we anticipated, but it is still well short of funding police needs for the ensuing year.”

The chairman and Chief Constable David Stevens met MPs last month in an effort to secure extra funding.

Mr Chambers added: “We are grateful for all the support we have had from all of our local MPs who continue to lobby the Government for more resources and we shall be contacting them again to ask for their support once more.

“We shall be looking carefully at our budget for next year and considering various options over the next couple of months. But it would be too early to put a figure on council tax at this stage.”

The Government grant provides the lion’s share of police funding and this is topped up by the council tax contribution.

Police authority members will meet early in the new year to consider how much will be required from council tax payers.

**Authority opens doors to new home**

THE Essex Police Authority’s new base has been officially opened for business by former Northern Ireland chief Sir Ronnie Flanagan.

Police authority members welcomed more than 70 guests for the ceremony at the police authority offices in Hoffmans Way Chelmsford.

Chairman Robert Chambers spoke about the work of the police authority and highlighted achievements and current priorities.

“The authority is delighted we have managed to secure this building, which will be used to house authority staff on one floor and the police service will be using the other,” he said. “This shows real partnership working between the authority and the force to work efficiently for the good of Essex residents.”

Sir Ronnie Flanagan, new Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabularies, highlighted how the most important partnership is between Essex Police and the police authority.

He congratulated Essex Police Authority on securing a new building, saying it was another example of progression for the police authority.

Guests including representatives from the Association of Police Authorities, Essex district and borough councils, countywide police authorities, and staff and police officers from Essex Police then enjoyed lunch with members of Essex Police Authority.

**Police reform still is, and will continue to be, a major issue.**

It is not just about police community support officers, it is also about the long-term implications set out in the Government White Paper which again are chipping away at the very basic structure of policing as we know it.

Over the next year, no matter which political party will be in office, we shouldn’t and will not be complacent in our views which we are locally, and nationally, putting across on your behalf most strongly.
Government plans are met with scepticism

Concerns over PCSO proposals

THE prospect of increasing the powers and equipment of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) has been met with concern from officers and support staff alike.

The proposals came to light following the outlining of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill in the Queen’s Speech, which suggests giving CS spray, batons, body armour and handcuffs to PCSOs as their activities are increased.

In announcing the proposals, Home Office Minister Hazel Blears said that if PCSOs’ crime-fighting work was to be expanded by Ben Pennington

“They have got to be properly trained and equipped”. But concerns have been raised over asking lower-paid and lesser trained support staff to do the same work as an officer. In Essex, PCSOs receive four weeks’ training followed by up to four weeks with a tutor constable.

Training is a mix of police and PCSO procedure and powers, health and safety and problem-solving – all aimed at providing high-visibility reassurance.

And Essex PCSOs on the beat have been among the first to criticise the proposals. “We’re aware there’s always the possibility of confrontation in the job,” said one. “But for us to walk around with batons and CS spray is not what we joined for.”

Chief Constable David Stevens said the Essex role of the PCSO - based on the contribution they can make to the community - had received very positive feedback from both inside and outside the service.

He said: “Before we make any decisions about changes to powers or training, we would need to be very clear on how that would impact on the role they currently perform.”

Essex Police Authority Chairman Robert Chambers said: “PCSOs have a right to be protected when carrying out their duties; how that is ensured needs to be considered very carefully.”

PC Sue Kelly, of the Essex branch of the Police Federation, expressed concern over plans to change PCSO responsibilities before a study was carried out evaluating the effectiveness of their current role.

“I can’t understand why the role would be extended before that has been done,” she said. “I also think it’s very likely that most PCSOs did not join to do the role that’s now being suggested.”

THE first group of police staff scenes of crime examiners to be employed by the force is now fully operational.

The ten staff, who carry out exactly the same role as scenes of crime officers (SOCOs), were introduced to the force following a bid made in 2003 and are to work alongside Scientific Support’s 42 SOCOs while working under the same conditions for the same pay.

More support for forensics

For display advertising in The Law contact United Press on 01282 459533
The end of a journey

I have just got off the train having reached the end of the tunnel, only to witness a new batch of fresh-faced recruits getting on board. Still young in mind but slightly aged in body, I would like to express my thanks to all those friends who attended my recent retirement function. I have been fortunate to have packed so much into my career and experienced many unique, specific jobs and events.

I have many memories of notable figures, past and present, and will always remember the good times — although still undergoing treatment for the bad ones! Thanks for the memories and good luck to all.

Tim Mildinhall, Stansted

Where are those wellies?

On May 17, 1986, 54 intrepid men and women set up two unusual and silly world records which, unsurprisingly, still stand. They were completed by the Brentwood Police and Gateway International Custard-filled Welly Relay Marathon Challengers. I am tremendously proud of the runners, who each ran a mile wearing custard-filled wellies, to see if they would be prepared to repeat their efforts for charity at Shenfield High School.

We will be raising money for The Phoenix Retreat which will be set up to help child victims of sexual assault. Please contact me on 01443 730000, 07916 131164 or phoenixretreat@aol.com.

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Hoping to be reunited

I am an ex-member of Essex Police, having joined in 1972. I was stationed in Brentwood and then left the force in 1974 to join the RUC. I am now retired and would like to get in touch with anyone who remembers me. I am from Northern Ireland and have lost touch with anyone who remembers me. I have many memories of notable figures, past and present, and will always remember the good times — although still undergoing treatment for the bad ones! Thanks for the memories and good luck to all.

Nigel Nicholl

Northern Ireland

Gone . . . but not forgotten

ON Thursday, November 21, 1850, 20-year-old William Wood was arrested before magistrates at Billericay and was sentenced to three months imprisonment for poaching.

In those days prisoners were taken to Brentwood for onward conveyance to the County Gaol at Chelmsford. The task of escorting Wood on the seven-mile walk to Brentwood fell to 43-year-old Pc Robert Bambrough (sometimes referred to as Bamborghini). The officer came originally from Jersey, but spent many years in the army before joining the police in 1843.

Wood was secured to Robert Bambrough by manacles which comprised of a length of chain with a handcuff at one end (for Wood) and a shackle on the other (for Pc Bambrough). The two men reached Hutton without incident, but Wood instigated a scuffle which resulted in both men falling into a small stagnant pond close to the junction of Rayleigh Road and Church Lane. Pc Bambrough managed to retain his grip of the manacle. However, Wood was able to get to his feet and in his efforts to escape trampled the officer into the muddy water.

Still Pc Bambrough would not let go so Wood thrust mud into the officer’s mouth, soon rendering him unconscious. Wood began to make off, but then returned and lifted Pc Bambrough’s head and shoulders clear of the water. He then made his escape.

The whole event had been witnessed by 11-year-old Sarah Hatch who watched from a window. Her screams alerted workmen who pulled Pc Bambrough from the pond and took him to the Chequers Pub in Hutton.

The police and a doctor arrived at the pub and realised that it was only a question of time before Pc Bambrough died. The same magistrate who had dealt with Wood that morning took Pc Bambrough’s account.

Meanwhile Wood, pursued by the police, made his escape to Chatham in Kent, but by the time the police arrived he was in custody, having been recognized from a description in the morning papers. Wood was back in Billericay within 24 hours.

Wood was taken to Pc Bambrough’s bedside to hear the officer relate what had happened. Wood asked no questions, but stated that he had never intended to harm the officer. Pc Bambrough died the next day. Wood was charged with attempted murder.

The case went to court in March 1851 at Chelmsford. Wood’s assertion that he had not intended to harm Pc Bambrough was accepted. He was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to transportation for life. Pc Bambrough is believed to have been buried at Great Burstead.

A memorial stone was erected in his honour by members of Billericay Police on November 21, 1990. It is located beside the A129 Billericay to Hutton road, to the west of the Sir Winston Churchill public house, on the verge near Church Green.

For details of all those featured in the Essex Police Roll of Honour visit:

The Memorial Trust website at www.essex.police.uk/memorial. If you have any information you feel could be added to the website email memorialtrust@essex.pnn.police.uk.
Cracking the dealers

NEW powers to close crack houses under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act have been used for the first time in Colchester. Officers from the southern community policing team joined forces with council workers to clear and board up the flat in Church Lane, Stanway, after months of gathering evidence and intelligence.

PC Jim Finnigan said: “This piece of work is intended to bring to an end the misery endured by residents and will help reduce crime in Stanway.” One neighbour is glad that the “nightmare” is over. She said: “To be honest it has been a long, hard struggle for me in some very unpleasant circumstances, but the police have been a great help.”

Cash windfall for local charities

CHARITIES and voluntary organisations across the county benefited from nearly £30,000 worth of donations from funds raised through the Police Property Act during the past year.

From Victim Support to the NSPCC, 21 groups have been granted a share of the money. The Police Property Act Fund receives the proceeds from the sale of found or seized property where the owner cannot be traced.

The proceeds are distributed among charitable organisations, with cash given to groups in order to display a picture, and support people away from crime and to support victims of crime.

Helping you to Relate together

A PIONEERING arrangement between the force and a counselling service is giving officers and staff the chance to iron out relationship problems which can affect their work.

The agreement, between Relate and Occupational Health, means employees can be fast-tracked into counselling for a range of problems. Relate offer help for relationship problems between married couples or those living together, as well as difficulties involving children.

The force will fund a number of sessions with fully trained and qualified counsellors in complete confidence. Welfare Officer Vickie Bond said: “What is said in those sessions does not get reported back to Essex Police, as long as no one is at risk or being endangered.”

Relate are keen to explode some of the myths around the service they offer. For instance, some believe getting their services is a sign of weakness, or even ill health. Relate’s Chris Bullock says nothing could be further from the truth.

“We don’t work in the mental health field; we leave that to healthcare professionals,” said Mr Bullock. “The people who come to see us are normal people who are struggling because of something within their relationship.”

Chris says that police officers and staff have the same problems as anyone else, but sometimes take a different attitude towards them, adding: “Because police work is often very black and white, their relationships can become viewed in a very bad way. And on occasions, there’s some bravoado that needs to be broken through.”

In the coming months, Relate will be doing more work with the force to distribute leaflets about their services across divisions, for the benefit of both employees and people involved in domestic incidents.

“You don’t need to be on your knees to come to us,” said Chris. “And it’s not our job to stick you back together. Success is people understanding more about each other, and what can and can’t be changed.”

For more information about Relate, contact Vickie Bond on ext 58600.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGES FROM THE CHIEF AND THE CHAIRMAN

For display advertising in The Law contact United Press on 01282 459533

ESSEX Police has recorded some major achievements in the past 12 months.

In April, we reached full police officer strength for the first time for many years and we now have a waiting list of recruits waiting to join us. This success, combined with record numbers of police staff, means that we are bigger now than we have ever been.

In September, we became one of the first forces to be recognised as an ‘Investor in People’ across the whole organisation. In the same month we held our first ever awards evening and I was delighted to see so many colleagues, both officers and police staff, being recognised.

We have also received recognition for our work on creating cohesive communities, with the award of the Eastern Region diversity prize. All this means we are well placed to deliver on the challenges of the future.

Chief Constable
David Stevens

The recent Government white paper on ‘Building Communities, Beating Crime’ sets out the vision of ministers for the police service of the 21st century. Most of what is suggested has been in place in Essex for a number of years. Our commitment to community policing, to problem solving and to partnership, is producing outstanding results and many senior Home Office officials have visited the county to see what we are doing.

None of this could have been achieved without the support, enthusiasm and dedication of those who work for Essex Police, who give up their spare time, or who work in so many of our partner agencies. I would like, once again, to record my sincere thanks to everyone, to wish you a peaceful Christmas and another successful New Year.

2004 has been a very positive year for Essex Police Authority and a year where we have seen progression in many areas.

I would firstly like to thank all officers and staff for their hard work over the last 12 months. The police authority appreciates all their endeavours in making Essex one of the safest counties in the country.

Looking back to the last year, we were very pleased to officially open the new police authority building, home to both authority and police staff. This new asset is a great example of forward thinking and shows real partnership working. We hope we can continue to welcome the public to the offices to discuss their ideas on the future of policing.

By March, we will have nearly 200 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). These PCSOs help to reduce the fear of crime in Essex and address police authority priorities, including high visibility and reduction of anti-social behaviour.

This year also saw the police authority instigate a major project which will vastly improve our telephone call response system and will greatly enhance the way in which the police service deals with calls from the public.

We also had a successful trip to Westminster, which gave both myself and Chief Constable David Stevens the opportunity to lobby Essex MP’s and try to secure a greater financial settlement from the Government next year. The police authority will be doing all it can to ensure the burden does not fall on local taxpayers.

We will also carry on working hard with Essex Police and the public to continue to provide an efficient and effective police force for Essex.

My best wishes to everyone for a Happy Christmas and a successful 2005.

Police Authority Chairman
Robert Chambers
POLICING of the police is a subject of professional debate. The Law, or the service, or, for that matter, root out the scourge of the service – the corrupt cops? The service is under the intense scrutiny of the media microscope every day. How does Essex intend to remain clean?

The force handled nearly 500 items of correspondence in the last 12 months, relating to some form of complaint or conduct against an officer or incident in the force. This may seem a high number on the surface, but only a fifth of these actually bore any substantial backing, making Essex one of the most professionally-adept forces in the region.

However, this is not enough for Supt Jed Stopher, the department’s new head and, under his ACTION leadership, things are going to ‘freshen up’. ‘Professional standards and police ethics are two important attributes of this force and they come under my domain,’ states Supt Stopher. ‘My staff, my department, the conscience of Essex Police. We’ve all seen some high-profile cases in recent times – thankfully, none involving Essex. We exist, not only to prevent unprofessionalism, but also to correct it and identify malicious complaints.’

With a team of 25 investigators, ably supported by a team of support staff and members of the public to contact 01245 423100 (inside 40225) in order to alert PSD officers to potential problems or issues, the telephone is kept in a sealed, secure office and, although there is no financial reward, there is a reward being to identify a corrupt officer.

As part of the new-look department, Supt Stopher is keen to dispel any myths and build public confidence. ‘It is not a presumption of guilt.’

‘Officers have different perceptions of our role,’ Supt Stopher explains. ‘For example, the only reasons we serve a Reg 9 is so that we can bring to the attention of that particular officer the fact that there is an issue relating to him or her. It’s there for their own protection. It is not a presumption of guilt.’

‘Again, with the resolution champions – this is a force target and not a divisional one which aims to clear away any confusion, misunderstandings or issues at a local level. Clearly, if there’s a need for us to be involved, then we will be – however we’re not asking them to do our job.”

Supt Stopher joined the department in July 2004 on promotion after finishing at Brantree as the chief inspector (support). The 42-year-old, who is married with four children, has served 18 years with the force, beginning his service in CID and rising through the ranks at Chelmsford, Force Support Unit and weapons training. Supt Stopher is keen to address this by changing the “climate of suspicion” straight away.

“My message all along has been that we identify the ‘bad apples’, but at the same time afford protection to hard-working officers who make a mistake,” said Supt Stopher. “It’s my vision to have a department which attracts top detectives to apply for posts within it. All good, hard-working police officers should feel the same way about PSD and those who work within it they shouldn’t have anything to fear.

Those who are up to no good will soon end up in our radar.”

“The police service is publicly-funded so it’s important to instil ourselves to them by ensuring that any allegation of improper behaviour or complaint is investigated ethically, impartially and robustly. We’re not here to sit and be judgemental.”

“So there used to be a fear of lifting up a stone for what it may hide underneath, but no longer.”

By the end of this month, every individual within the organisation will have been sent a flyer endorsing Supt Stopher’s message outlining the necessity to rid the force of any ‘rotten apples that may still be in the barrel’.

ALL forces in England and Wales have professional standards departments (PSD) which examine such complaints and staff discipline and they work closely with the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) to uphold integrity and impartiality.

The force has already cemented a firm working relationship with the newly-formed IPCC, with three cases referred to them within the last month alone, demonstrating the desire to enforce impartiality.

Supt Stopher said: “They are, admittedly, still learning the ropes. However, nearly all of their staff originate from police backgrounds, with ex-police officers now enjoying roles as senior investigating officers. As well as the IPCC, PSD officers continually work with departments around the force, including legal services and the press office, as well as continually working with a close contact with divisional command teams.

A recently revamped training package aims to improve the way officers deliver their input to various courses, such as weapons training.

This package is also aimed at training senior and chief officers to a nationally-accredited level, enabling them to sit on any discipline tribunal panels.
FACING the press most days at Colchester did not phase former detective sergeant Roger Napier before his retirement last month.

Roger served a stint as a local journalist before joining Essex police as a uniformed constable at Witham over 30 years ago.

His career took him to Colchester as a detective sergeant before going to Harwich as a town officer and serving with special branch at the port before returning to Colchester.

Roger investigated many cases over the years, having his fair share of murderers and he is justly proud of his time as a detective sergeant at Colchester.

However, Roger recalls two incidents involving animals which happened while he was at Witham. A racehorse had broken out of races at Marks Tey and was carrying full speed up the A12 the wrong way when he was on patrol in the area car and he was instructed: “You get out and deal with it boy, while I deal with the radio.” Fortunately a woman in jodhpurs came to his aid and they managed to stop the panicked animal.

On another occasion, Roger was called by residents worried about the ‘Beast of Essex’ after they had heavy breathing coming from their tree hollow when they had been enjoying a snooze.

“His return down the ladder to ground level was greeted with round applause.”

When asked about his plans for his retirement Roger responded wryly: “I may write some animal stories.”

Moving on

Not many people can boast (or commiserate) of being filmed from a helicopter for a year but Dipped Blackinton could - and even now he isn’t putting his feet up, having taken on a new post with PITO (Police Information Technology Organisation).

David only joined Essex Police by chance in 1963. He was living in Germany at the time with his family and he had not fared very well in his exams. The family took a brief trip to England he lodged with a dog handler who suggested the police cadet scheme. “The rest, as they say, is history.”

On completion of his 30 police years, he continued on as a member of police staff managing the casualty bureau and HOLMES set-up.

“I was Sessional Officer at Essex Police in a box, but then PITO wrote a job description with his name on it. His new role will see him managing the development and implementation of a new casuality bureau and the major investigation aspect of the HOLMES system.”

The major investigation system will take a mutual aid approach to dealing with the vast number of inquiries received during a case such as that of the Colchester murder.

David will also be looking at the next generation of HOLMES once the contract expires in 2008 and, with his contract coming to an end in January, his work may well take him to more exotic climes.

A far cry from the days as a cadet sandpapering wooden posts to be painted in preparation for sunshine exhibitions in Southend.

Ken Ferguson bids farewell after 46 years’ service in various guise. He will be enjoying a good drink and some Olympic athletics on December 10 between 12 noon and 2pm.

Pc Donal Cailh has retired to the peace and quiet of Saxmundham after 26 years with Essex and four years with the civil service.

Pc Cahill, SS, was working in Community Safety at Colchester.

After 25 years, Pc Paul Barten has decided to hang up his cuffs. 44-year-old Paul, who lives in Colchester, ended his Essex career with Malton.

Sgt Don Dun can completed his 30 years recently, ending his time with the force in Personnel and Training at the Colchester Police Station.

Pc Stephen Daly has left the force with nearly 30 years on the clock.

Stephen, who worked at Stansted, worked for more than three years for Dyfed Powys Police before transferring to Essex in the late 1970s.

Pc Ken Bailey has left for pastures new following a career of 30 years but is 53 and remains a life member of the Colchester area, was serving as a communications co-ordinator at Brantview when he retired.

It’s feet-up time for Insp Ted Higgins after he completed his stint. Ted is 56 and was with IT developments at the time of his retirement. He spent seven years with Staffordshire Police prior to his time with Essex.

Wickford clerical assistant Linda Warren has retired after nearly ten years with the force. Linda is 60 and lives in the Wickford area.

Obituaries

Former Chief Insp Hugh Brown has died at the age of 83. Hugh, of Saffron Walden, served from 1950 to 1980 at Loughton, North Weald, Elm Park, Grays, Colchester, Tilbury and Chelmsford.

Ex-Pc Simon Gallie, who worked at Epping and Stansted village during his 31 years with the force, has died at the age of 54.

The former who living in Chatteris in Cambridgeshire, left the force in 2000. He leaves a widow, Angela.
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<tr>
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<th>60 monthly repayments</th>
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**Success in street bail trial**

NEW powers to bail suspects without taking them into custody will be rolled out across the county this month, following a successful trial earlier in the year.

Street Bail was introduced under the Criminal Justice Act 2003, allowing any officer to bail arrested people to a station after arrest.

The scheme’s aim is to make better use of time and resources, for example by avoiding instances when taking a suspect to custody would only result in their immediate bail anyway.

It was piloted in Southend, Epping, Harlow, Saffron Walden and around Lakeside between April and July, during which time 41 offenders were dealt with, from a total of 395 detainees.

Following the trial, it has been decided that while any officer can Street Bail a suspect, it must be with the authorisation of a sergeant.

Project manager Insp Shaw will be visiting divisions over the coming weeks to appraise them of the provisions.

For further information on when and how the powers should be used, see policy guideline F163/04, or call Insp Shaw on ext 54229.

Street Bail forms are available from headquarters.

**Dangers in the dark**

CAR dealerships across the county have been asked to refuse requests from motorists to add tinted film to windscreen and windows after a recent spate of prosecutions.

Road policing officers have learnt that several retailers are laying tint films onto front windscreen and front door windows, taking the light-entry levels below legal limits and leaving the driver open to prosecution for dangerous driving.

Ford, Renault, Toyota and Vauxhall dealerships are all being asked to remind their employees of the dangers of fitting tint to vehicles, increasing the risk of the driver being in collision with another car or even a pedestrian.

The force is keen to raise awareness among drivers that they could not only be breaking the law by causing danger to themselves and other road users, but that tinted windows can, in some cases, invalidate insurance.

The light standard for vehicle windscreen means front windows must allow at least 75 per cent of light through, while side windows must admit 70 per cent.

Road Policing Inspector Nick Burston is hoping both retailers and drivers heed the warning rather than risk prosecution.

“There are a number of issues here and a lot of decent people may not realise that they’re breaking the law,” said Insp Burston. “Retailers who carry out work for those who want tinted windows are not making their customers aware of the law.”

“We’re not picking on motorists. We just want to make sure drivers are aware of this issue so that they don’t find themselves in unnecessary bother. It’s not fair to motorists if they don’t know the rules.”

**Teams set to tackle immigration rackets**

A NEW intelligence unit geared towards disrupting organised immigration crime is now up and running.

The Operation Reflex team, based at headquarters, consists of a detective sergeant, two detective constables, an analyst and a member of the Immigration Service.

Set up as a two-year project fully funded by the Home Office, their work centres around levels two and three of the National Intelligence Model – cross-border and international crime.

The facilitation of people trafficking, forged documentation and identity fraud linked to immigration crime will all come under the team’s spotlight between now and the end of 2006, when it is anticipated that the new Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) will be formed.

The Reflex unit’s analyst will be producing problem and target profiles to support their work, and inform the force of where the problems are.

Assistant Director of Intelligence, DCI Paul Everett, said: “The unit links in with various organisations such as the Passport Service, HM Customs & Excise and the Department for Work and Pensions. By doing so, we can provide a cohesive response to the main problem of human trafficking – instances where people are being brought in as cheap labour, such as for sweat shops and the sex trade.”

There are currently in excess of 15 Operation Reflex teams in the UK. Many forces are in the process of submitting funding proposals to the Home Office, while others have a dedicated single point of contact who acts as a conduit for organised immigration crime intelligence.

DCI Everett added: “The team is there to give advice, and we want to encourage any officer who needs it to make contact.

“The Reflex unit has already made contact with all divisional intelligence units, as well as immigration cells at the county’s ports. Details of Operation Reflex intelligence requirements for 2004 to 2005 have been produced in a poster and circulated to divisions.

To contact the Operation Reflex unit, email DCI Everett and his team at opera@essex.pnn.police.uk or call them on extensions 55431/2/3.
Essex had to settle for runners-up spot behind Kent in both men and women’s team categories at the second fixture of the South-Eastern Police League.

The St Albans course proved to be more testing than at first appeared, with the cold, strong wind adding to the conditions.

In the men’s competition, Essex came home with 30 points behind Kent’s 31, while the Essex women lost out by 35 to 38.

Hertfordshire’s Angus Crosby led from start to finish, but some 20 metres behind him was a three-way race-long battle taking place. With the finish in sight, Russ Welch found enough speed to pull clear of former Essex team mate Matt Rees (City of London), who in turn held off Mick Bond.

Derek Walker and Alex Webb were next home for Essex in seventh and 18th, but could not stop the county pulling clear of former Essex runners.

In his best performance to date, Phil McCulloch led the remainder of the team home in 26th place.

In his last race before becoming a veteran, Chris Lacey (33rd), Lyndon Helt (42nd) and Steve King (43rd) enjoyed something of a race within a race.

In an improved women’s field, Essex were unlucky to miss the top spot, but success will surely come if they can continue to put out the required three runners.

Lisa Bolten finished 11th just one place ahead of Amanda Pollard, while Pauline Bowers showed her usual commitment to come home in 15th place.

Essex hosted the next fixture which was held at Basildon’s Gloucester Park earlier this month.

The charity run spanning the length of Britain has raised more than £62,000 for sick children.

Member of staff and officers from various divisions took part in the run from Land’s End to John O’Groats in the summer, passing the baton between employees from 50 police forces across the land.

The money raised will go to a charity which provides dream holidays for terminally ill children, and is the biggest single donation ever received by the organisation - ‘When You Wish Upon A Star’.

Epping’s Liz Chalk, who took part in the event, said: “It was a wonderful day and I’d like to thank all who supported it. So many children will now have smiles on their faces - it’s been well worth the effort.”

Kids feel benefit of charity run

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Southend Borough Annual ‘White Helmet’ Reunion

Friday, December 17, from 1200noon at Southend Police Station bar

Ploughmans lunch provided

Please notify club manager of lunch requirement on 01702 3412121 ext 30912 or email cpc@onetel.com

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The event takes place in Southend on February 27, with a fun day out for all. For further information contact 0208 438 9063.
Reassuring announcement . . . more support to curb community crime

High-visibility boost for patrols

TOWNS and villages across Essex will be ringing to the sound of almost 200 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) on the beat by the end of March.

The ranks of the extended police family have been swollen by the news that a further 41 PCSOs will be funded by the Home Office.

With around 125 currently in post in the county, and another 30 due to start by mid-January, divisions will be sharing about 195 PCSOs within the next four months.

PCSOs were introduced to Essex in April 2003, when 11 were posted to Loughton and Waltham Abbey in a trial run. Although as members of police staff they do not have police powers to detain suspects, they can issue fixed penalty notices for minor public order offences.

Analysis has shown that around 70 per cent of PCSO time is spent on patrol.

The main focus of their work in Essex is intelligence gathering, high-visibility policing and public reassurance, and feedback to date has shown that communities appreciate their work.

Project manager, Insp Glenn Mayes, said: “I’m very pleased at the number of extra PCSOs we have been given.

“This is more than we anticipated, but gives us a manageable number which keeps us among the top forces for utilising such staff and their powers.”

Chairman of Essex Police Authority, Robert Chambers, said he was pleased that the Government had seen fit to provide an extra 41 PCSOs, but “disappointed” not to get more.

Among the top forces for utilising such staff

“I hope that this figure will increase substantially by continued partnership working with district and unitary authorities who, I hope, realise the benefits that PCSOs contribute towards people feeling safer in their homes,” said Mr Chambers. “ If local authorities wish to build on this successful initiative, the police authority would be pleased to continue with the match-funding.”

The Home Office will provide 100 per cent of funding for PCSOs in their first 15 months, and 75 per cent of the funding for 2006 to 2007.

Report by Ben Pennington

More plaudits for PR players

THE combined efforts of the Community Safety Department and Media & Public Relations have won the force a prestigious national award for the second year running.

The team has been awarded the Association of Police Public Relations Officers (APPRO) Award for Excellence in a planned media campaign for Crack Under Pressure, a countywide initiative aimed at tackling the menace of crack cocaine.

Launched in May, the joint Essex Police and Crimestoppers campaign sought to gather intelligence about crack supply as well as provide information geared towards discouraging its supply and use.

A website, bus posters, a CD and street-chalking were all used to raise awareness of the issues, along with accounts from former addicts and police officers. The award is recognised as the most prestigious accolade in police press and public media relations work, with separate trophies in two categories – planned campaigns and operational response.

Last year, Essex won the operational award for its media liaison during the investigation into the disappearance of teenager Danielle Jones.

Winning streak . . . (l-r) Kate Batson and Helen Cook (press officers), together with head of Media and PR Department Angeline Burton, receive the award at the APPRO conference from John Bates of GSL who sponsor the awards.

Crafty website

A NEW website to search for and distribute details of stolen boats has been launched in conjunction with a marine insurance company. The site has taken 14 months to set up in collaboration with all regional police marine units.

It can be used as a research tool for officers investigating theft of marine equipment, while allowing the public to check that they are not buying stolen craft.

Marine Unit’s Dc Simon Lofting will be updating the site on a regular basis with craft stolen in the area.

He said: “The website has been produced at no cost and is being run free of charge.

“The public will have the opportunity to make tip-offs and inform police of anything they may know.”

You can visit the site at www.stolenboats.org.uk.