

The Law



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March 2007

FORCE PAYS ITS RESPECTS

by Helen Cook

ESSEX Police officers and staff joined members of Essex Police Authority to say goodbye to Assistant Chief Constable Liam Brigginsshaw.

Mr Brigginsshaw died on February 19, having fought stomach cancer since being diagnosed with the disease last September.

On Thursday, March 1, officers and staff at force HQ paid their respects to Assistant Chief Constable Liam Brigginsshaw as his funeral cortege brought him on his final journey to the force.

As *The Law* went to print, hundreds of officers and staff from Essex Police, Mr Brigginsshaw's previous force, Sussex, and colleagues from forces across the UK joined family and friends at a funeral Mass held at the Cathedral of St Mary and St Helen in Brentwood to celebrate Mr Brigginsshaw's life.

Flags on Essex Police buildings were flown at half-mast on the day of his funeral as a mark of respect. A book of condolence has been opened.

Chief Constable Roger Baker paid the following tribute: "Liam joined Essex Police from Sussex in 2003, and it is clear that he touched the lives of many people in both organisations for the better.

"He loved, and was loved by, his family, his wife Alyson and his children. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time. He will be missed by us all as a friend, as a colleague and as an inspiration to everyone who met him."

New Deputy Chief Constable Andy

Hundreds attend ACC's funeral

Bliss worked with Mr Brigginsshaw both here and in their previous force, Sussex Police, which Mr Brigginsshaw joined as a constable in 1986.

He said: "I, like many others, have lost more than a colleague; I have lost a very close friend. Liam was an exceptional man, respected by all who knew him. He was one of the most outstanding Chief Officers of his generation and his loss will be felt across the police service."

And Robert Chambers, Essex Police Authority chairman, said that, although he had known Mr Brigginsshaw for only three years, he 'somehow felt like one of the family'.

"ACC Liam Brigginsshaw was truly a gentle giant," he said. "He was always kind-hearted, willing to listen, strict when necessary and a real leader of people. Liam put his mark on the Essex policing style, which is all about policing for the people."

"He was always thoughtful and willing to give advice when asked. Liam's loves were his family, policing and bird-watching. All our thoughts and prayers go out to his family. He will be sadly missed but never forgotten."

Tributes have been received from all the organisations with which Mr Brigginsshaw had contact, expressing their sympathy and high regard for his professionalism.

On the afternoon of Thursday, March 1, the force paid its respects to Mr Brigginsshaw at HQ as his cortege drove through the complex.

As officers and staff stood in front of the HQ buildings, the hearse and two cars carrying Mr Brigginsshaw's family paused in front of the Force Memorial. Floral tributes from the force, the police authority, ACPO, the Superintendents' Association, the Police Federation and Unison were laid.

Then, with a guard of honour standing to attention and with the flag flying at half-mast, the Last Post was sounded and the cortege drove slowly out of the gates past the officers and staff, with Mr Baker making his final salute.

The funeral Mass, with a eulogy read by Mr Baker and readings from Mr Brigginsshaw's Policy Development Officer Catherine Macpherson and Mr Bliss, at Brentwood Cathedral, on Friday, March 2, was followed by a private family burial in his home village near Halstead.

LIAM Brigginsshaw was appointed Assistant Chief Constable, with responsibility for Crime and Criminal Justice on January 1, 2003.

He was awarded a BSc (Hons) degree from Middlesex University and, in 2003, a Diploma in Applied Criminology and Police Management from Cambridge University.

Mr Brigginsshaw was a member of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Eastern Region Lifesaving Committee and the ACPO Eastern Region Community Race Relations Board. He was chair of the Essex Criminal Justice Board, Race and Diversity Action Team and the External Management of Equality of Service Group. He was also a member of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Strategy Board, Essex Area Child Protection Committee, Essex Youth Offending Steering Group and a board member of Victim Support, Essex.

Mr Brigginsshaw was born in London and moved to Sussex at a very young age. He was a keen ornithologist and travelled extensively in pursuit of his hobby. He was also chairman of the Essex Police Band.



● Assistant Chief Constable Liam Brigginsshaw, above, who died after being diagnosed with stomach cancer. Fellow Chief Officers will remember him as an 'inspiration'

Truancy scheme is a success Officers seize £35,550 drugs cash

BASILDON town centre and Pitsea have become Truancy-free Zones with the help of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

Retailers and local agencies got on board with the CDRP and signed up to the scheme.

Shops and businesses display special stickers which state that students in school uniform will not be allowed in during school hours unless they are accompanied by an adult. And a hotline number is given – encouraging the public to report to the district

council groups of young people hanging around during school hours who they believe to be students.

Reports can be made anonymously and the council refers details to the local Education Welfare Service, which will investigate and may instigate truancy sweeps if a particular problem is identified in that area.

The scheme has been successful in reducing truancy and anti-social behaviour in Basildon and has just been extended to Pitsea.

OFFICERS who seized £35,550 cash while searching for failed asylum-seekers have highlighted how useful the 2002 Proceeds of Crime Act can be.

Following a hearing at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court last month, it was ordered that the seized cash be forfeited under the act's cash seizure provisions.

Officers working on Operation Reflex, with HM Immigration Service Enforcement Unit, had executed a search warrant at the address,

looking for failed asylum-seekers.

The cash was found in a floor safe and the Serious and Organised Crime Directorate's Financial Investigations unit was informed.

The unit then investigated the ownership and origin of the cash.

Although no criminal charges were brought against anyone, Chelmsford magistrates were satisfied that the cash was the proceeds of criminal activity, specifically cannabis production, and ordered its forfeiture.

Federation news by Roy Scanes



On 'collision course' over pay

THE pay dispute last year certainly affected each and every one of us in one way or another.

The decision to delay the payment of the agreed index was a very real financial worry for many officers and their families.

Thousands of officers got involved in the Fair Pay Campaign and I, as your secretary, wrote to each and every MP representing Essex.

Fortunately, we managed to persuade the Police Pay Arbitration Tribunal Hearing that our demand for the annual index increase was neither excessive nor greedy – it was what we were promised and it was what we deserved.

On November 6, 2006, the Home Secretary announced ratification of our three per cent pay rise.

But, Governments being Governments, things soon moved on.

On November 16, the Home Office announced there would be a two-stage review, conducted by Sir Clive Booth.

This would include a review of the indexation arrangements and the future negotiating machinery that the police service would use.

Elements of this review, ie pay indexation, would report in time to inform the 2007 pay negotiations.

The first stage of this 'independent review' – and I'm probably stretching the term 'independent' to breaking point – should have been made to the Home Office by mid-February 2007.

A joint Police Federation and Superintendents' Association response was made.

However, ACPO submitted its own response, which was very disappointing. How long it will take them to make a decision is anyone's guess but, whatever the result, our position is abundantly clear.

Indexation is absolutely sacrosanct. For decades:

- it has given officers a fair annual up-rating
- it has ensured officers have confidence that they won't be exploited

• and it has provided stable industrial relations.

The Government must not forget how significant this is.

Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) officers, PCSOs and Highways Agency Traffic Officers (HATOs) have all been on strike. It was, of course, their right. We understand that. But, if we did the same, there would be nothing but anarchy and chaos.

And let's not also forget that PCSOs have only been around since 2003, HATOs since 2004 and SOCA officers not even 12 months.

The Federation has argued that the current arrangements should remain in place until another methodology is negotiated.

However, to know what our indexation figure for 2007 would be, the *Incomes Data Services Non-Manual Pay Award Survey* still needed to be conducted.

The Home Office has refused to fund this so the Police Federation of England and Wales has funded it and paid £38,000 for the work to be

conducted. This will at least give us our 2007 figure so we can work out what we are offered compared to what we will be entitled to under current arrangements.

When will the Government understand that police officers are different?

All we ask is to keep indexation and to preserve a pay negotiating mechanism that is fair.

Nothing more, nothing less.

On-call allowance update
Nationally, this matter is still in conciliation.

The Government requested that this be withdrawn to be considered in the next round of 'pay and conditions modernisation'. We, the Federation, refused and, hopefully, it will now be conciliated towards the end of April or early May.

This should have signalled to the Government that 'on call' is a big issue for us and one over which we will not be marginalised.

In the meantime, I would like to draw your attention to a potentially useful decision in the Newcastle County Court in relation to an over-

time claim. If an officer is rostered as on-call and that officer receives a telephone call related to their capacity for being on-call, then the telephone call amounts to a recall to duty.

This would be subject to a minimum payment of four hours overtime and not subject to the half-hour disregard.

The officer is being recalled to their duty by the fact of the call upon them being at a time when it is their duty to respond.

Once a recall is established, the four-hour minimum payment applies and the disregard does not, even if the time spent is less than 30 minutes.

This decision is useful to our members in two respects:

- In support of claims for overtime for those constables and sergeants who are required to be on-call
- It should encourage the force to consider carefully whether officers should be on-call and, if they are, whether they should actually be called.

Officers listen to public's crime concerns

POLICE held a two-day surgery in Clacton town centre as part of a crime-fighting drive. They took on board concerns, raised awareness of crime reduction measures and looked at the problem of bicycle thefts. Regular officers were joined by Specials,

PCSOs and a mobile police station for the weekend last month. Sgt Dave Beverley, of the Clacton Central Neighbourhood Policing team, said: "Police in Clacton are committed to making the streets a safer place for local residents and visitors."

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• Emma Brampton and Matthew Nichols on the Sentinel, one of the Marine Unit's RHIBs. At the helm is Pc Martin Winterbone, with Pc Clive Harding behind



Students get a taste of life with our marine unit

TWO 15-year-olds had the time of their lives when they gave up a day of their half-term holiday to spend it with members of Essex Police Marine Unit, at Burnham-on-Crouch. Emma Brampton, a pupil of St Marks' School, Harlow, and Matthew Nichols, of Rickstones School, Witham, went out with Pc Martin Winterbone, Pc Clive Harding, Pc Shane Burke and the unit's Marine Support Officer Clive Skingley, a former police officer. And their day was featured on Anglia TV's evening news, too. Emma, from Old Harlow, was the winner

of a prize for a day out with the Marine Unit when she visited the Inside Justice Open Day held at Harlow Magistrates' Court in November and Matthew, of Silver End, won his day out at the Colchester County Court open day. Emma, her mother Sharon, Matthew and his teacher, Jenni Gratzel, were taken out to sea on the force patrol boat launch and then had the thrill of being aboard the force's rigid hull inflatable with its powerful outboard engines. When they returned to dry land after six hours afloat, both agreed it had been 'brilliant'.

Steve stamps mark on charity collection

FOLLOWING an appeal by Communications Officer Steve Radford for used stamps, Essex Police collected seven sacks-full.

Steve collected the stamps to pass on to Guide Dogs for the Blind, which would collect funds from the stamps being recycled.

However, the charity has now changed its collection methods and is no longer collecting

the stamps for recycling but will still take any stamps still kicking around.

Steve, of the Force Information Room, said: "Thanks very much for the support but can I now ask that no more stamps are sent to me."

"If anyone has another good cause I will forward any stamps which do still get passed on to me."

Road racing marshals gain police powers

TWENTY road-race marshals are the first to graduate from the Essex Police Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS), giving them powers to stop and redirect traffic during a road race.

The volunteers, plus the chief executive of the British Cycle Foundation, received a certificate of graduation, after attending a CSAS course, from ACC Carmel Napier and Chief Supt Mick Thwaites.

The volunteers signed up for a course which covered theory and practical elements of road marshalling after hearing of the scheme from Senior Traffic Management Officer Adam Pipe.

CSAS Manager Jay Smith said: "The latest trainees are part of a pilot scheme which will be rolled out across the county and the British Cycle Federation is looking to further expand the scheme.

"Whereas in the past events would have been cancelled or re-routed due to a shortage of police officers, cycling groups can now police events themselves."

Since the launch of the CSAS pilot scheme exactly two years ago, we now have 150 accredited partners from various organisations.

The latest people to join the scheme are Tendring District Council's neighbourhood wardens, who now have police powers to tackle anti-social behaviour.

● For more details about the CSAS, visit www.essex.police.uk/csas

Couple race to support cancer funds

TAKING part in the breast cancer charity Moonwalk will be especially poignant for Clacton Pc Debbie Smith this year as her cousin has been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Debbie's husband Insp Pete Smith, also based at Clacton, will again run in this year's London Marathon in support of the same cause.

Pete is a regular marathon runner and this year the couple are determined to raise as much money as possible to help fund research into the killer disease.

Debbie, based in the Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Unit, said: "Last year I did the Moonwalk with my cousin and we were optimistic that, following breast cancer nearly five years ago, she would get the 'all clear'.

"It was devastating when we were told that the cancer had returned, but this time it is in her bones. She is 39, with two children aged nine and 11 but her courage is immeasurable."

● Debbie and Pete have a joint website and will be grateful for any support they receive. Visit www.bmycharity.com/3rdtimeout

● Turn to Page 10 to see which member of police staff has battled adversity to take up a London Marathon place

Police precept rises by just 11p a week

ESSEX Police Authority has agreed a budget of £242million for 2007/08.

Council Tax-payers will pay just 11p a week extra towards police funding. The police precept for a Band D property will be £116, an increase of approximately £5 on the current financial year.

The Home Office provides the lion's share of police funding, which this year saw a 3.6 per cent increase for Essex, equating to £162million.

Essex Police Authority chairman Robert Chambers said: "I am pleased the authority has managed to increase the budget by just 11p a week, which will

fund extra police officers on the front line.

"These officers will work in our now-established Neighbourhood Policing Teams, (NPTs) which serve every ward countywide. Our aim is to make policing in Essex more visible and accessible to the public and we are committed to ensuring continued improvement and value for money in our service."

The budget agreement means extra service investments will be implemented during the coming year, including increasing the numbers, visibility and effectiveness of uniformed police officers,

PCSOs and Special Constables in NPTs; further reducing crime and anti-social behaviour; increasing the capacity and capability in protective services; delivering a new centralised intelligence support bureau; and enhancing customer contact.

Chief Constable Roger Baker said: "For just an extra 11p per week, residents in Essex will see more officers on the beat forming more localised policing in their area. I am delighted that this budget allows us to deliver what the public wants and meets the operational needs of Essex Police."

Bikers be safe on roads plea

MOTORCYCLISTS across the force are being offered a 'cut-price' deal to improve their riding skills this summer.

Bikesafe Essex is offering police officers and staff a special discount – a day of education and rider assessment for £40, instead of the usual £60.

And the organisation will also run Bikesafe Days for the public.

The move follows a 'sad' 2006 which saw 16 bikers lose their lives in collisions across the county.

During the one-day workshops, riders have the opportunity to talk to police motorcyclists as well as receive practical assessments which will improve their handling techniques and road safety awareness.

Bikesafe Essex Co-ordinator Sgt Mick Green highlights the need for staff to take up the discount.

"We examine all aspects of riding and look at causation factors so that we don't continue to have to pick up the pieces from these crashes," said Sgt Green.

"It's hugely frustrating as we know most of these incidents could have so easily been avoided had the motorcyclist been on one of these courses and learnt a few things about technique and handling.

"So many lives are needless lost each year, with so many families' lives decimated by grief."

More than 150 people successfully completed a Bikesafe Day last year, and the force is looking to increase public uptake this summer.

Statistics show that, in Essex, people in their late 20s are more likely to be killed than 'born-again bikers', and further analysis shows that, despite women accounting for 20 per cent of



● Sgt Mick Green is joined by constables Martin Ackers and Jon Harman ahead of the Bikesafe Essex launch

Picture by Nishan Wijeratne

motorcyclists, very few are actually killed or seriously injured.

Bikesafe Essex 2007 will officially be launched in Burnham on Sunday, April 29, where the force's motorcyclists will be joined by colleagues and counterparts from the Marine Unit, Air Support Unit and Essex Safety Camera Enforcement Partnership.

A host of trade stands and demonstration bikes will be on show, with a Honda simulator available to test motor-

cycling and moped-riding skills of both seasoned professionals and newcomers.

Sgt Green added: "Motorcyclists just need to bring their driving licences and can try out any of the bikes on display during a ride-out with a police assessor. The all-day event is open to all and is free of charge."

● For further information on the discount days and Bikesafe Essex, contact Sgt Green on ext 480520 or visit www.essex.police.uk/bikesafe

Three life-sentences for a murderer and rapist

A MAN is serving three life-sentences after pleading guilty to the rape and murder of an Essex pensioner.

He had also admitted to the rape and unlawful wounding of another woman in east London.

While on bail for the east London offence, Scott Thompson, 24, raped and murdered 89-year-old Catherine Grosstephan in her Theydon Bois home.

While drunk, on April 23 last year, at Walthamstow Bus Station, he came across a 52-year-old woman, who was a mutual acquaintance.

He suggested they seek shelter from the rain and then pulled a knife on her, first raping her and then stabbing her several times as she tried to run away.

Thompson was arrested on the day of the offence by the Metropolitan Police but was released on police bail pending further inquiries.

Just over three weeks later, Mrs Grosstephan's son-in-law visited her home after a concerned neighbour noticed her curtains were still drawn, and found

Mrs Grosstephan dead in a chair. Initially there was nothing to suggest anything untoward had happened but then the family noticed some unusual things – and three gold rings were missing.

A post mortem examination revealed that Mrs Grosstephan had been strangled and raped. Forensic tests provided Essex Police with a DNA sample that was matched with Scott Thompson on the national DNA database.

Thompson was circulated as wanted and Essex Police, the Metropolitan Police and the British Transport Police joined forces in a manhunt.

Thompson was sighted in Valentine's Park, Ilford, where he had been living in a tent. He was arrested and handed over to Essex detectives.

At Chelmsford Crown Court on February 19, Thompson admitted raping and murdering Mrs Grosstephan and also admitted two counts of rape and one of unlawful wounding with intent to commit grievous bodily harm in respect of the 52-year-old woman.

In mitigation, the court heard Thompson had self-harmed since the age of 12 or 13

and had come adrift from his family. At the time of the offences, he was drinking six to nine litres of cider every day.

The defence stated Thompson could not remember committing the offences and was 'horrified' by what he had done.

Sentencing, Judge Ball said Thompson was another young man whose 'conduct was skewered and distorted as a consequence of using drugs and alcohol against a backdrop of a difficult life'.

Thompson was sentenced to three life sentences and will have to serve a minimum of 29 years before being eligible for parole.

Senior Investigating Officer Det Supt Tim Wills said: "This was an horrendous crime that will live on in the minds of her family for the rest of their lives."

He thanked the public for their assistance in the case, which had allowed such a stack of evidence to build up that Thompson had no choice but to plead guilty.

Mrs Grosstephan's son Roderick thanked the force for the manner in which it handled the case and 'for their support and kindness at difficult times'.

New 'caution' to speed up the process of justice

FIRST-time offenders who commit low-level crime in Essex will be issued with a new form of punishment from next month.

Conditional cautions will be issued for minor offences, such as criminal damage and common assault, and where the likely penalty at court will be a conditional discharge or a small fine.

The new type of 'disposal' will be rolled out across the force, with Central Division leading the way ahead of plans for all officers across the force issuing them by next January.

Five requirements must be met before a conditional caution can be issued – including the fact that there must be sufficient evidence to charge the offender and the suspect actually admits the offence.

At present, only adult offenders can be issued with conditional cautions but plans are afoot for juveniles to be given the same form of justice.

Project Manager Insp Kevan Griggs believes the Home Office idea is 'an ideal opportunity to free valuable court time for more serious offences'.

"They do not replace standard cautions or Penalty Notices for Disorder," he said.

"They are designed to modify offender behaviour and hopefully benefit the community in a similar way that Restorative Justice currently does.

"One example of where a conditional caution may be issued is where a drunk jumps on the roof of a neighbour's car, causing £1,000 of damage.

"He admits the offence and, had he been charged, he would undoubtedly receive a conditional discharge and a compensation order.

"If he were instead to be given a conditional caution, matters would have turned out better for everyone," said Insp Griggs.

"The victim knew the offender well and the whole incident has actually caused a bad atmosphere within the community.

"The victim purely wanted the payment of his insurance excess and a letter of apology.

"We would have seen a quick disposal where the victim was satisfied with the outcome and received his compensation far more quickly than had it gone to court," he added.

Offences under the Road Traffic Act are excluded from the new type of punishment, and conditional cautions won't be considered for more serious, indictable-only offences.

Respect scarf

WE would like to make it clear that, in the Front Page photograph in last month's issue of The Law, Pc Mark Sawyer was wearing a Respect scarf, which had been issued to people taking part in the launch event at Southend.

Correct uniform was being worn.

HAVE YOUR SAY: Write to Heather Turner, Law Letters, Publication Unit, Police HQ, PO Box 2, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6DA or via email to heather.turner@essex.pnn.police.uk
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Band CD can go free to a good home

I ENJOY brass band music very much and attend as many of the concerts given by the Essex Police Band as I can – I come from Leeds and appreciate the music. The other day I came across a 12in record of the band, called Police Brass – it has a blue cover showing a trombone and a police band on the front, with a picture of the band members on the reverse. The conductor is Robert O Coxon. The record is spare and I would like it to go to a good home. Ring The Law editor Heather Turner on ext 55819 or 01245 452029 if you would like it. I worked in the Accident Information Section at HQ for 16 years with Mr Green.

**Dorothy Brunton
Colchester**

Who knows Robin Naden?

MY father, Alan Deats, is trying to locate an old colleague – Robin Naden. They were in the Armed Forces together and both joined Essex Police in the late 1960s. My father believes that Rob was a Ds at Saffron Walden towards the end of his service. If anyone knows Rob, or my father, and would like to get in touch, could they please contact me at Rayleigh Road Policing Unit on 01268 798122 or, preferably, via email at steve.deats@essex.pnn.police.uk and I will forward contact details.

**Acting Sgt Steve Deats
Rayleigh Road Policing Unit**

Much valued support of friends and colleagues

MY husband Graham was diagnosed as having a rare cancer of the bone marrow in 2000. At the time he was on the Traffic Investigation Unit where he spent the last 18 years of his service. He retired in 2001 after 30 years with Essex Police. Graham's determination, great courage and positive attitude, along with a

wicked sense of humour, meant that many people did not realise just how ill he was. It was a great shock to everyone when he suddenly died after suffering a massive brain haemorrhage on December 9, 2006. I want to thank everyone for the touching cards and letters of condolence I have received since Graham's death.

The whole family and I were overwhelmed by the large number of serving and retired officers and civilian staff who attended Graham's funeral on December 20, 2006. Your support at such a difficult time was very much appreciated.

**Angelia Lowes
Colchester**

Thurrock reunion was a huge success

JANUARY 27 saw the long-awaited Thurrock, or Grays – whichever era you come from – Reunion evening.

As the organiser, I held my breath as the evening approached. I had received much interest from many old friends and colleagues but any event of this nature is, of course, 'hit and miss' and one never knows if the 'older' of our colleagues can at best be bothered to venture out on such inclement nights.

Well, I should never have doubted the wisdom of organising such an event – old friends from all over the county and indeed the country put themselves out to travel to meet old and dear friends.

It was particularly pleasing for me to once again meet many old colleagues, some who have inspired me throughout

my life, let alone in the police service. I think it is fair to say that it was probably the same for many, if not all, who turned out to make it such a memorable evening.

Can I through the pages of *The Law*, thank everyone who came along, for fulfilling a dream. Needless to say the dream will 'live on'. Next year's event is already being planned.

**Laurie Rampling
Stanford le Hope**

● I HAD great pleasure in attending the Grays Police Reunion on January 27.

And I would like to congratulate Laurie Rampling for his never-ending commitment and organising ability. Where would we be without the Lauries of this world?

Many of the old school were there and, as usual after a couple of beers, the old

stories began to flow and memories came flooding back. The lamps were certainly swinging that night.

John Sutton had some past photographs and was wishing to identify the faces they contained. What a surprise when he asked if I knew some of the faces on the football team of 1965 and there I was, young fit and with dark hair and still able to name all but two.

It was nice to see Derek Nicholls, after all he had been through, and others who are too numerous to mention.

The food was excellent, well done Marilyn. It was also a fond farewell to Chris Odell and I wish him the best of health in his retirement – special thanks to him when he turned out when my home was burgled.

**John Papple
Grays**

No easy answers when dealing with criminals

I WAS surprised to note the observations of B M Williams (The Law Letters Page, January 2007) in concluding that Robert Miller was attempting to project a political view. I felt that it was a valid view of the way in which we deal with criminals. It is quite clear that prison sentences do

not work as there is no real rehabilitation. This, of course, costs money and, in the public's eye, prison rehabilitation costs money which might be better spent elsewhere.

Other measures, such as community service and non-custodial sentences

again need resources and, if effective, may be the answer.

How, though, do you deal with a persistent offender after all other measures have failed? Sadly, there is no easy answer other than prison.

**Terry Mortimer
Holymoorside, Derbyshire**

Letters of appreciation to the force

This month we start a new feature – letters of appreciation sent to our divisions and departments thanking us for a job well done. The first two are below:
Snow service

HAVING recently moved to Roxwell, we were delighted to read in the Roxwell Recorder that the mobile police station would be in the village on Thursday, February 8, from 5.30 to 6.30pm.

My husband and I had a couple of issues to discuss and looked forward to meeting our Neighbourhood Policing Team.

However Thursday, February 8, proved to be the worst day of winter with Chelmsford blanketed with snow. Having convinced ourselves that policing priorities would lie elsewhere, we were even more delighted that, as advertised, they were all set up and raring to go at 5.30pm as planned.

I understand the mobile police station will be visiting Roxwell village on a monthly basis and I would encourage all local residents to show support and to raise any issues or concerns they may have.

Thanks go to Pc Graham Thomas, PCSO Claudia Carey, PCSO John Gipson and PCSO Ian Hilton for braving the weather.

**Sally Farrow
Recruitment Officer
Police Recruitment Section**

Amazing visit

THANK you ever so much for the amazing work experience that you allowed me to have with Territorial Policing at HQ.

Compared with a lot of people's experiences, mine was one of the best that I had and I have Pc Victoria Wilson, Insp Trevor Williamson and Denise Long, of Human Resources, to thank for the opportunities that you gave me during those three weeks.

2Smart4Drugs is looking amazing and it was really awesome being filmed. Could you please pass my thanks on to Marc Berners and Stuart Creasey in the TV Unit.

And being able to see some of the departments that make up the force was incredible – my visit to the Force Information Room was one of the best days, with a visit to the Air Support Unit and Transport Support at Boreham.

I am grateful to all the departments for taking time out of their working day to show me around.

And please pass my thanks to all in Territorial Policing who made my experience an amazing one and were so kind and welcoming.

**CB
Chelmsford**

Gone . . . but not forgotten

**John Towers – Essex County Constabulary
Died January 26, 1941**

WAR Reserve Pc John Towers was a painter in peacetime. Born in 1889, by the time he was serving with Essex County Constabulary, he was married with a son, Norman, and daughter, Joan.

On the dark evening of January 22, 1941, Pc Towers and his colleague Pc Pyman, were requested by their sergeant to go from Grays Police Station to Hangman's Wood in Little Thurrock to help collect the body of a suicide victim.

The pair obtained a three-wheeled hand-bier from the fire station which they pushed to Hangman's Wood. There they met Pc Jennings and the three men loaded the body on to the cart and left for Grays mortuary.

With the blackout in force there was little to illuminate the party. Shortly after they had passed Palmer's Avenue, an Army lorry approached from the rear, hugging the kerb in the darkness. The driver of the lorry saw a torch ahead of him and, assuming it to be a cyclist he pulled out and a collision occurred.

The impact knocked Pcs Pyman and Towers to the ground. Pc Towers was taken to Tilbury Hospital with injuries to his head and body. However, he became unconscious, and on January 26, he died from hypostasis pneumonia following concussion and other injuries.

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 memorial-trust@essex.pnn.police.uk or write to the Memorial Trust at Essex Police HQ.

Down Memory Lane . . .



THIS month we introduce a new, ad hoc feature called Down Memory Lane, featuring archive photographs from the Essex Police Museum at HQ. We have the photographs but we don't always have the names, and this is where you can help. If you can identify people in the pictures we feature, Museum Curator Becky Latchford would love to hear from you. Contact her on 01245 457150 or ext 50771 and leave a message, email her at becky.latchford@essex.pnn.police.uk or write to her at the Essex Police Museum, Essex Police HQ, PO Box 2, Springfield, Chelmsford CM2 6DA. The picture above was taken in about 1988 – Pc 245 Brunning is on the police vessel MV Alert III with two colleagues. Can you help us to fill in the gaps in our knowledge?

Corner the chairman



● Essex Police Authority chairman
Robert Chambers

Delivering what the public want

“MEMBERS of the police authority have been out and about in recent weeks talking to the public at a series of road shows all over the county.

Members were extremely pleased to hear vast amounts of positive feedback.

People were, first and foremost, happy to see us in many town centres, which proves how vital it is to have a continuous, visible police presence on our streets. In a short space of time I believe we made a great impact on public reassurance.

Many people also commented on how many extra police officers they had seen in recent months and many knew about our style of policing and supported our aims and achievements.

A great deal of people also approached us for details about joining the force, as police officers, special constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), which is extremely encouraging. Members of the authority, with valuable assistance from Neighbourhood Policing officers also managed to resolve many issues and answer questions or concerns.

One of the main functions of a police authority is to act as the link between the public and the police, so the force is fully aware of any concerns the community may have and, I am pleased to say, there were no surprises.

The public all want the same thing – more officers on the streets and a visible police presence – and Essex Police is going in the right direction to meet these needs. I am pleased that, through these road shows, we were able to assist the public and gain valuable feedback which will help us to shape our policing priorities in the future.”

‘Snow’ excuse for coping thanks to well-laid plans

SNOWY conditions brought some parts of Essex to a standstill one chilly Thursday morning but, thankfully, there were no serious consequences.

February’s second Thursday saw inches of snow falling across the county, which led to an increase in the number of collisions on Essex’s roads as well as some nuisance behaviour.

The Force Information Room received more than 400 snow-related calls during the day, with 46 road collisions.

Thankfully the majority of these were damage only with the others seeing only very minor injuries.

Nuisance youths caused more of a problem, with 343 calls regarding snowball throwing and seven reports of large snowballs causing obstructions in the road.

Only five roads were closed because of the snow, all had a relatively steep incline. They were re-opened before the evening rush hour once most of the

snow on the roads had been displaced or melted.

The force was especially pleased with our contingency plans for the county following the severe weather warning from the Met Office.

Advice was issued to the public via the Essex Police website and a special information line, as well as via mainly the broadcast media.

So people had no excuse when it came to coping in the snow.

Youngster helps in the crime fight

A DREAM came true for a little boy from Southend, with the help of some of our officers and the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Three-year-old Oliver Wishick, who suffers from kidney disease, is a great fan of Spiderman and wished that he could meet him.

However Oliver was rather surprised and a little apprehensive last month when his web-throwing hero abseiled the outside of Essex Police HQ and ran to the nearby play area to ask for his help.

A swag-carrying baddie dressed all in black was lurking around the complex and Spiderman, alias Pc Simon Driver, needed urgent assistance.

The pair quickly tackled the sinister figure – a masked and hooded Pc Bob Knight – snapping on the cuffs before he was able to ‘make good his escape’.

Sgt John Eagles was so impressed with such a speedy arrest that he presented the tiny hero, who was dressed in his own Spiderman outfit, with a medal and his own police hat.

A chuffed Oliver went on, with the assistance of Spiderman, to open some



Spiderman-themed presents awaiting him, including his own web-thrower.

And Oliver was so unfazed by all the press attention which resulted from his escapades that he went on to do some radio and television interviews, too.

Then he rode off in a stretch limo for a well-earned pizza with sister Rosie, five and mum and dad, Joanne and Mark.

● Oliver Wishick, three, teaches Spiderman (practical skills instructor Pc Simon Driver) a thing or two about ‘throwing a web’ after their successful ‘arrest’

Picture by Heather Watts

Six sentenced to 68 years for drugs plot

SIX men have been sentenced to a total of 68 years in prison after a joint investigation by Essex and Norfolk Police.

Back in March 2001, a group of men were observed exchanging Ecstasy tablets and cocaine with a street value of £132,000 at Southend Airport Industrial Estate by members of the Norfolk Drugs and Serious Crime Squad.

A series of arrests followed and more than 10,000 ecstasy tablets and 250 grams of cocaine destined for the streets of Norfolk were recovered.

Officers also seized in excess of £40,000 in cash. A joint investigation involving the Drugs and Serious Crime Squads from Norfolk and Essex was launched, centring on a fishbait-producing factory in Essex.

A nine-week trial at Norwich Crown Court in summer 2002 resulted in the convictions of Essex men John Hales, 61, jailed for 14 years; Stephen White, 49, 14 years; Winston Jelbart, 57, 13½ years; and David Poxon, 39, nine years; plus John Clarke, 35, of Norfolk nine and a half years.

Due to outstanding inquiries, reporting restrictions were put in place which prevented publication of the trial results. Further inquiries showed Leigh

plumber Brian Tate, 56, was involved. He was charged with conspiracy to supply controlled drugs but failed to attend a 2002 crown court hearing.

In 2005 Tate featured on BBC’s Crimewatch programme, was arrested in Spain and extradited.

At two crown court hearings, he pleaded guilty to unlawful possession of personal amounts of cannabis and cocaine which had been seized from his home address.

Last month, Tate was jailed for eight years for conspiracy to supply cocaine and for three months, concurrently, for unlawful possession of cocaine and reporting restrictions on the case were lifted.

Sign up to help mental health trust

VOLUNTEERS are needed to sign up as members of a local Partnership NHS Trust dealing with mental health issues.

That way they can become more knowledgeable about the services that are provided and be consulted about future arrangements.

Unfortunately one in four people will suffer from a mental health problem during their lifetime.

Many of us have people in our families or circles of friends who suffer with mental health problems at some stage in their lives, including learning or

mental disabilities or illnesses ranging from depression to dementia.

Police officers and staff frequently deal during their working day with people who have mental health conditions and the South Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SEPT) would welcome their participation.

SEPT works in partnership with Essex Police and is looking for members of the public and particularly police staff, to sign up so they can keep people up to date about what services are available and how they can be accessed in South Essex.

Steve Currell, of Corporate Support, represents Essex Police as the stakeholder governor on the SEPT Trust board. He retired last year as a superintendent in South-Eastern Division.

He said: “I would encourage people to join the trust as members. It does not necessarily entail you doing anything but allows the trust to raise awareness on a personal level of what and how they work.”

● Contact Steve Currell by email or ext 51056 or contact SEPT direct via email at mike.waddington@south-essex-trust.nhs.uk or on 01375 364650

Feelings are as father is convicted of murder

DETECTIVES were left with mixed emotions last month following the successful conclusion of a murder trial in Chelmsford – 28 months after the offence was committed.

Harry Ansell sustained massive head injuries following the attack on a family boat moored at Tollesbury Yacht Harbour in October 2004. The four-month-old died in hospital.

Child Abuse Investigation Unit officers charged Harry’s father, Matthew, with murder and the 40-year-old former builder was found guilty by a unanimous verdict at Chelmsford Crown Court.

Investigating Officer DI Gary Glassfield said afterwards: “Harry was an innocent baby. He was defenceless when he was killed by his father Matthew Ansell.

“He sustained three fractures to his legs as well as fatal head injuries. The death of a child under any circumstances is a tragedy and, in these cases, there are no winners, just losers.

“The facts have been presented to the jury who have reached their verdict, for which we must be grateful. Our thoughts are with Harry’s family and there will obviously be mixed emotions.

“I appreciate the dedication and professionalism of the investigators when they presented the facts to the jury.

“The verdict followed a difficult inquiry and then two trials, the first aborted, both of which in the circumstances were stressful.

“We will not be celebrating the verdict but can take pride in a job well done.”

Matthew Ansell was remanded in custody prior to his sentencing later this month.

Force shows what it has to offer you

AN open day for potential transferees into the force is being held this month.

Joint organiser Sgt Jo Byrne, of HQ Staff Development, asked: “Do you know anyone interested in transferring to Essex Police? “Or maybe you know of a colleague who left us for another force only to find it wasn’t all it was cracked up to be?”

“If so, encourage them to come along and find out what we have to offer.”

Representatives from various divisions, including Crime, Mobile Support and Stansted, will be on hand to answer any questions.

● The open day will be held at HQ Sports Pavilion, behind Essex Police College, between 3 and 9pm on Tuesday, March 27.

● For more information, ring Staff Development on 01245 452319 or ext 54103 or visit www.essex.police.uk and click on Recruitment, then Transfer Opportunities

'Help us to communicate even better'

STAFF are being urged to contribute views ahead of the development of a new Communications Division intranet site.

Following the division's launch in the autumn – as an amalgamation of Administrative Services and the Force Information Room (FIR) – command team members are now keen to revamp the current FIR website while also incorporating information from the pages of its new fellow sections.

Paddy Cocks, intranet author and a FIR controller, said: "We're naturally looking to update our pages following the amalgamation of several units to form the new division. "The site will be key to future force performance and therefore has to be accessible, clear, and informative.

"We're also looking to help out other divisions and departments across the force who will also wish to visit our website and so would like some feedback on the current websites of those departments which now fall under the division."

• Any suggestions should be emailed to Paddy Cocks

Manager credits force with a visit

THE Essex manager of Police Credit Union is visiting the force this month.

And prospective members are invited to meet Ian Curley at the Essex Police Federation Office at HQ between 11am and 2pm on Tuesday, March 20.

Police Credit Union launched its services to officers and staff last month and the Federation supported this by distributing joining forms to police officers, however it has not been possible to do the same for police staff.

If any staff feel that payroll deduction savings or loans might be of interest to them, they should contact Police Credit Union on 0845 241 7509 or pop along on March 20.

• POLICE Credit Union paid a dividend of 4.2 per cent to its savers during 2005/06.

Charity meal

SOUTHEND Community-in-Harmony Partnership is fundraising for this year's open air fun day on June 24.

It is holding a charity Indian and Nepalese meal at Tandoori Parlour Indian Restaurant, 61-63 Hart Road, Thundersley, on Sunday, March 25, from 7.30pm at £12 per head for a 52-dish buffet menu.

• Contact Chand Sood for details on 01702 331448 or email chandsood@hotmail.com

NARPO meet

THE annual meeting of the Southend Branch of the National Association of Retired Police Officers (NARPO) is at 7.30pm on Friday, April 20, at Southend Police Club.

• Contact branch secretary Peter Yorke-Wade on 01702 545934 or email yorkepeter@tiscali.co.uk for more details



Lost children are safe shopping

A PIONEERING safety scheme to reunite children with their parents, should they become lost has been launched in Harlow.

Harlow District Commander Chief Insp Paul Eveleigh launched the Child Safe Zone at the town's Harvey Centre last month. Families should look out for the Child Safe Zone's smiley orange balloon stickers on shop windows throughout the Harvey Centre, which carry the centre's helpline number. Any parent losing sight of their child, or any shopper finding a lost child, can call to speak directly to the centre's security team should the worst case scenario happen.

Chief Insp Eveleigh said, "The first few minutes of losing your child sends you into a state of panic and distress. "This excellent scheme helps the parent to focus on what to do, to ensure their child is found quickly and safely."

Parents can also pick up a free, colourful children's wristband, to write their telephone number on, making sure that their child carries contact details at all times. Child Safe Zones have been successful in other parts of the country but Harlow's is the first in the area.

Harvey Centre manager Bryan Young said: "We attract thousands of visitors every week and, at busy times, small children can easily get distracted and separated from their parents.

Child Safe Zones mean we can bring people back together quickly, providing a much more pleasant and relaxed shopping experience."

• Families are also encouraged to register with Child Safe, either by visiting www.childsafezones.co.uk or by picking up a leaflet in the Harvey Centre, Harlow

• **New Harlow District Commander Chief Insp Paul Eveleigh, director of Child Safe Zones Richard Manville, Harvey Centre manager Bryan Young, and Rebecca and Jasmine help to launch the Child Safe Zone**

Picture by Denise Harvey



The force is with Tilly as it kicks off charity match

A FOOTBALL match is being held to raise money for a little girl who needs to go to America for essential operations.

Essex Police fields a football team to take on Debenhams Lakeside in a charity match to raise funds for her hospital treatment.

Tilly Bailey, eight, of Hutton, was born with dislocated hips caused by a very rare genetic condition. She needs to have her hips rebuilt so she can live a normal life but, due to the complexity of her condition, Tilly has been refused the operation in this country and the pioneering treatment is taking place at the National Institute of Health in Washington DC. So far, £28,000 has been raised towards Tilly's treatment and after-care but the target is £50,000.

The charity football match will kick off at 7pm on Sunday, March 11, at Thurrock Football Club.

A similar game between the Lakeside and Basildon stores raised £1,100 last year. Tilly is currently in the USA with her mother, Debra, having just undergone the operation on her right hip and will stay there for six weeks while she is in plaster.

PCSO Dave Newman, of Wickford, said: "The last match came about after a conversation I had with Tilly's grandmother, who works for Debenhams. It raised £1,100 including £300 for an auctioned, signed shirt. After the success I'm keen to get £2,000-3,000 this time."

• Tickets can be bought on the gate at Thurrock FC on the night. For details or to offer donations or raffle or auction prizes, contact PCSO Newman on 07828 461198

Mr Mathipalarajah said: "Customers have so far been unhappy with the change but we will stick to our guns for now and hopefully they will come round and understand why we are doing this. "All service stations suffer from this problem at some point and we hope we can put a stop to it once and for all."

Incidents of making off without payment from petrol stations are, on average, reported to police three or four times a week in the Colchester and Tendring areas.

Colchester Crime Reduction Officer Colin Stiff said he would be delighted to discuss the matter with managers of garages and petrol stations in north-east Essex.

• Mr Stiff can be contacted at Colchester Police Station on 01206 717624

Recruiting

ESSEX Police College will be opening its doors on Saturday, April 21, for a recruitment day.

Anyone interested in becoming a police officer, a PCSO, a Special, a Cadet, a member of support staff or a Volunteer in Policing (ViP) can pop along to the college at Essex Police HQ at any time between 10am and 3pm and find out more.

Help Crimestoppers help us

CRIMESTOPPERS is appealing for more witnesses to come forward with information on crime in the county and needs our help.

Crimestoppers' policy of passing on information anonymously is an extremely useful tool in accessing hard-to-reach groups and those frightened of coming forward.

As an incentive, it also offers a reward scheme – also anonymous – for information leading to an arrest and conviction.

Supporting the call, Supt Tim Newcomb, of Crime Division, said: "Essex Police benefits hugely from information given anonymously to Crimestoppers, helping to secure leads which result in more than a hundred arrests countywide each year.

Officers, PCSOs and staff can help in the fight against crime by encouraging people to call Crimestoppers with any information they may have on crime being committed in their neighbourhood about which they may not be keen to tell us.

"If you can emphasise that the call is anonymous and

they won't need to appear in court, it could be that one little piece of information which makes all the difference."

Essex Police is helping to publicise the Crimestoppers charity's work by displaying posters giving the Crimestoppers number – 0800 555 111 – and by encouraging all officers and PCSOs to leave calling cards, bearing the Crimestoppers phone number, with potential witnesses.

Every four to five days, countrywide, an arrest for murder is made through information given to Crimestoppers, a notable recent success being the arrest and conviction of the killers of Bradford Pc Sharon Beshenivsky.

Every day, 17 arrests are made following calls to Crimestoppers, and 50 per cent of these arrests are drug-related. In Essex alone, the Crimestoppers service helped in 140 arrests during 2004/05 and in 103 arrests for 2005/06.

• For more information, visit www.crimestoppers-uk.org

New penalties for obstructing emergency workers

NEW rules to crack down on people who obstruct emergency workers have come into force.

A new offence means that anyone who gets in the way of an emergency worker responding to emergency situations can now be prosecuted and fined up to £5,000.

Home Office Minister Gerry Sutcliffe said: "The Government is committed to ensuring the safety of those serving their communities.

"Too often, emergency workers are unable to get to incidents as quickly as they should due to a minority of people obstructing their rescue efforts.

"This seriously impacts on both the emergency workers' ability to do their jobs effectively and, even more worryingly, on those who require an emergency response.

"In some instances a delay of just a couple of minutes can have terrible consequences.

"Such behaviour will not be tolerated and deliberate attempts to obstruct or prevent emergency workers, or anyone assisting them, from doing their very difficult jobs, will face a stiff penalty."

Those covered by the new offence are firefighters, ambulance workers, people transporting blood, organs or equipment on behalf of the NHS, coastguards and lifeboat crews.

Police and prison officers are not included as there is already a separate law protecting them from obstruction.

Violence against emergency workers can be dealt with under existing laws, such as assault or actual bodily harm.

Sentencing guidelines stipulate that the court should impose tougher sentences for offence committed against public sector workers.

Youngsters urged to take care online

CHILDREN throughout the UK are being urged to protect themselves online as part of a European campaign to promote Internet Safety.

The risks and benefits associated with social networking were highlighted as part of European Safer Internet Day.

The theme of Crossing Borders drove an international programme of events designed to increase awareness around online safety and to encourage people to learn more about a range of topics, including personal security, cyberbullying and illegal content.

The rise in popularity of social-networking sites, online gaming and chatting on Instant Messenger means that more young people than ever are sharing their personal experiences and details with strangers.

• Young people and their parents are urged to find out more about how they can help safeguard themselves and their families by visiting www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Car thieves are 'crippled' by our petrol theft drive

ORGANISED crime has been 'crippled' following an operation to reduce petrol theft at filling stations across south Essex.

Criminals were committing five thefts a day – nearly 900 incidents were recorded in Basildon and Thurrock in six months – with thieves mostly targeting BP forecourts in order to fill their cars and vans with large quantities of petrol and diesel.

Operation New Cross was instigated last October as a way of drying up the watering holes which gangs were using to fill up vehicles used in armed robberies and other crimes.

The results of the police operation have astounded officers, with similar tactics now planned for other parts of the county.

Detectives have been working with road policing officers at all the petrol stations dotted along the A13 and A127

If you're unsure, keep bogus callers at your door: residents told

IN a bid to stop bogus callers on the doorstep, Essex Police is launching an awareness campaign to advise people what to do when answering a door to strangers.

The insides of buses in Basildon, Harlow and Thurrock are displaying the message 'Don't open the door to strangers'. Alongside the bus adverts are posters and door-hangers providing simple steps on how to avoid being a victim.

Most people who knock on front doors

corridors. South-Western Crime Manager DCI Keith Dobson was surprised the operation was successful in such a short space of time.

"We've literally slashed this problem in half," he said. "The covert and overt work on forecourts has gone a long way towards eradicating the gangs from Essex as well as saving the petroleum industry hundreds of thousands of pounds.

"We started out with the intention of drying up the watering holes that criminals use and we have succeeded in doing this very quickly – the crooks clearly got the message that they had to stop or pay the price behind bars.

"The add-on to this operation has been the record number of vehicles we've seized from motorists after they have been found to have been travelling without insurance or even a licence.

Petrol theft is an every day crime which usually goes unnoticed by the every day motorist.

However, the reality is that the cars stolen from residents' driveways are

refuelled by the gangs before being used to commit serious crime such as cash-in-transit robberies.

A taxi driver was recently intercepted by police at a BP station on the A13 after failing to pay for £40 of fuel. Officers discovered he had changed number plates to avoid detection and was found to have an imitation firearm, baton and hunting knife in the car.

• AND a petrol station in north Essex has taken a stand against motorists who fill up on fuel and leave without paying.

Police have welcomed the introduction of a new pay-up-front system at the Spar Q8 Service Station in Elmstead Market.

Petrol theft is a continual headache for police in Colchester and Tendring and officers hope the stance will be copied throughout the area.

The scheme has proved unpopular with road-users so far, but garage manager Kanagarajah Mathipalarajah hopes the initiative will provide a long-term solution.

Posters have been put up at the service station clearly outlining the system. Customers are asked to enter the store first and pay for their fuel before filling up.

Mr Mathipalarajah said: "Customers have so far been unhappy with the change but we will stick to our guns for now and hopefully they will come round and understand why we are doing this. "All service stations suffer from this problem at some point and we hope we can put a stop to it once and for all."

Incidents of making off without payment from petrol stations are, on average, reported to police three or four times a week in the Colchester and Tendring areas.

Colchester Crime Reduction Officer Colin Stiff said he would be delighted to discuss the matter with managers of garages and petrol stations in north-east Essex.

• Mr Stiff can be contacted at Colchester Police Station on 01206 717624



will be who they claim to be, however a minority will not. Often these people target vulnerable members of society but, by taking some straightforward steps, you can protect yourself from falling victim to a bogus caller.

To remind people of these safety tips, Essex Police are distributing door-hangers with guidelines on how to deal with bogus callers, which work as an instant reminder every time people answer their front door.

It is important to remember of few simple guidelines:

- Do check ID carefully
- Don't let anyone into your house
- Don't keep cash in your house
- Don't believe all callers are genuine

Many utility providers operate pass-word systems to help verify a caller's identity but, for added security, householders should fit a door chain.

Crime Reduction Sgt Nathalie Carr said: "Bogus callers are deceitful but often look very respectable. If a caller gives you any reason to doubt their intentions, do not let them in."

The campaign is supported by Age Concern and Help the Aged who are assisting with the distribution of information to vulnerable communities.

Visible policing attracts attention



A SPECIAL operation aiming to detect criminals through the use of ANPR has been trialled in Southend.

Operation Native took place over a fortnight in Southend.

During the operation, around 150 stop-checks were performed on vehicles. And, to date, several vehicles have been seized for being driven with no insurance and a number of people arrested in connection with vehicle crime, arrested or reported under road traffic law and via outstanding warrants / wanted.

The operation was led by Territorial Policing sergeant Mark McQuade, who said the most pleasing part of it was the public's reaction.

He said: "We were constantly being praised for our efforts in



targeting burglary, vehicle crime and drug-dealing."

Visible operational signs were displayed at each stop-check area and members of the public appeared to take more notice of what was going on because of them, he said.

The areas targeted were in the A120 sector of Ruskin Avenue/Sutton Road, Chichester Road/Warrior Square, Victoria Road, Eastern Esplanade and Hamlet Court Road. ANPR vehicles were used at the stop-check areas as well as in the surrounding streets to further widen the scope.

Operation Native was another example of increasing high-visibility police in the Southend area. Due to its success, the operation is ongoing and is contributing towards the division's core crime targets.

Court to specialise in domestic abuse cases

VICTIMS of domestic violence will be offered an improved service in Essex when a court service specifically catering for such cases is launched next month.

by Nishan Wijeratne

Grays Magistrates' Court has been chosen to front a 12-month pilot scheme, hearing cases referred from Basildon, Grays and Brentwood.

Custody sergeants will be able to bail suspects to the court for all first-time hearings.

The court will then manage all pre- and post-trial hearings and, where court time allows, some trials will also be heard.

A number of partner agencies, including

Women's Aid and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), have helped the force set up the pilot, with a £40,000 Government grant also assisting with the ground-breaking initiative in Essex.

Project Manager Insp Kevan Griggs anticipates the trial being a success and one which will rolled out across the rest of the county.

"This long-awaited, much-needed court will allow us and our partners to deploy specifically-trained officers, magistrates, CPS lawyers, probation and court staff to deliver an even better service to victims here in Essex," said Insp Griggs.

"Training for front-line staff will raise

domestic violence as a social issue as well as identifying ways of improving the early stages of an investigation.

"Taken as a whole process, these steps will ensure that the criminal justice system meets the needs of victims."

Essex had the opportunity to witness the success of other courts specifically catering for domestic abuse cases across England and Wales.

Insp Griggs added: "A new group of independent advisors will work with victims and support them through the court process as well as communicating with agencies, such as those concerned with housing and education, to make the court process less stressful."

It is anticipated that the court will hear, on average, 15 cases each week.



Holiday lets

COSTA Blanca, La Marina, luxury two-bedroom, two-bathroom villa. Sleeps four to six, fully-fitted. Communal pool. From £150-£300 per week. Four weeks for price of three. Ring Mick Ager on 07775 676142 or +34 617 110 096 or email casadomi02@hotmail.com

COSTA Brava, Empuriabrava, two-bed, waterfront apartment, 300m from long, sandy beach. Close to Girona and Perpignan airports. From £35 per night. Call Fiona on 07817 821316 or visit www.jemideas.co.uk

FLORIDA, Disney, four-bedroom villa, three bathrooms. Private pool, air conditioning, cable TVs, DVD, CD, PlayStation, games room. Ring Karen or Chris McAulay on 01625 431373 or 07881 614045, or email mcaulay60@hotmail.com

FLORIDA, four-bedroom pool home, overlooking water, quiet location, Davenport, Orlando, close to Disney and airport. Ten per cent discount, free DVD. Call Pete or Lin on 01245 321378 or email petew.taylor@yahoo.com

FLORIDA, luxury, four-bed villa, private pool near Disney and golf. Police discount. Free brochure. Contact Jill on 01702 586092 or visit www.my-florida-villa.net

FLORIDA, Sarasota villa, quiet village environment, communal pool, tennis, barbecue, clubhouse, hot-tub, beautiful beaches, recently renovated. Email Norma at norma@normagill.com

FRENCH farmhouse, Loire Valley, rural location, facilities nearby. Available August 1 to 15 only. Ring Phil Dawes on +33 243 007 947.

NORTHERN France, rural setting, modern, comfortably furnished gites, original beams. Just over one hour to Calais. Ring 01375 483045 or visit www.le-petit-hameau.com

LAKESIDE chalet, Cotswold Water Parks. Exclusive, fully-equipped, two bedrooms, one bathroom, kitchen, lounge and terrace. Leisure centre on site. From £150 to £300 per week. Ring Stuart on 07973 639342.

LA Manga, two-bed, two-bath apartment, pool, sea view, seconds from sea and restaurants. For brochure, contact Bernie on 07986 098422 or email Bernie99-9tompsett@www.yahoo.co.uk

ORLANDO, luxury villa, four bedrooms, three bathrooms, sleeps up to ten. Private pool near Disney and other central Florida attractions. Contact Alison and Michael on 01245 266949 or 01376 573406.

SCOTTISH Highlands. Associates

to police are welcome at B&B, en-suite facilities. Outdoor pursuits or 'chilling out' in the Cairngorms National Park. Reductions for police. Ring Andy Nunn on 01479 841717 or e-mail apf.nunn@btinternet.com

SPANISH, rural, pretty Andalucian cottage, newly refurbished, sleeps seven. Ideal for walking, fishing and outdoor activities. Ring Claire or Paul on +34 953 718 140 or mobile +34 646 522 500. £250/£400 any week or fortnight or visit http://casa.cazorla.blogspot.com

TUSCANY, Italy. Romantic, rustic, Medieval romantic village retreat nestling in the foothills of northern Tuscany. Perfect base - one hour to Florence, Pisa and Italian Riviera. Ring 07919 057437 or visit www.tuscanlife.co.uk for details.

WELLS-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, delightful character cottage, renovated to high standard. Two bedrooms, walk to quayside, shops and beach. Private parking and courtyard garden. Ring 07919 057437.

For sale

2002 Suzuki Marauder GZ125, black, 2,028 miles, taxed, MoT'd, learner legal, low seat, manual 5-speed, pannier cover, chain and padlock. £900 ono. Contact Clare Fordham on 07917 532400.

HONDA Shadow ACE, P-reg, 13,000 miles, very good condition, MoT'd and taxed. £2,950 ono. Ring 07779 305051.

KAWASAKI motorbike GPZ 500S, black, registered 1977, 14,500 miles. MoT June 2007, tax October 2007. Service history. Excellent condition. £1,200. Contact 07967 406755.

VAUXHALL Zafira, 2l turbo diesel Elegance, seven-seater, 2002, black, alloys, sunroof, privacy glass, full service history, 40,000 miles, £6,200. Contact Andy Kenny on 07717 730228.

Miscellaneous

ROLLS Royce wedding car hire. Extra special service for your special day. Braintree, Colchester and Uttlesford districts. Uniformed chauffeur, full insurance. Contact Pete Caulfield on 01787 477537 or visit www.rweddings.co.uk

WEDDING car hire. White Rolls Royce Silver Shadow II. Discounted rate for police employees. Visit www.specialdaycarhire.co.uk email info@specialdaycarhire.co.uk or contact Dave or Sally Swann on 01277 364626.

Toasting the new president

EXTENDED Policing Family Manager Insp Glenn Mayes is the toast of his colleagues as he has just been elected President of the Association of the UK School of Professional Toastmasters (AUKSPT).

It was quite an accolade since Glenn has only been toastmastering for three years.

He celebrated his inauguration with fellow toastmasters at the association's annual meeting and dinner at Hethersett in Norfolk, which was attended by the Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk, John Alston, and the Sheriff of Norwich, John Drake.

The AUKSPT is the largest professional toastmasters' organisation in the UK with 68 members in the UK, Europe and New Zealand, and is affiliated to the Toastmasters General Council, the profession's national governing body, on which Glenn will now sit.

Glenn said: "It is a great honour and privilege to be recognised by one's professional colleagues in this way. I am looking forward to representing the association at the highest level and taking it forward as a leading organisation in this most professional field."

Retirements

Custody sergeant **Philip Dodd**, 48, of Central Division, retires this month after 30 years' service.

He has served at Harwich, Mistley, Colchester, Halstead, Castle

Hedingham, Braintree and Saffron Walden.

Dc **Teresa Earl**, 51, of South-Western Division is leaving at the end of this month after serving 30 years with the force.

Teresa started and finished her career in Basildon, also serving at Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers CIDs with a secondment to Harlow Regional Crime Squad.

Pc **Alan Diver**, 53, is also leaving Central Division - the Resource Management Unit - again having served 30 years with the force. He served at Grays, Corringham, Braintree and Halstead.

Professional Standards officer Pc **Mark Spellman**, 49, is retiring after just over 30 years service with the force. During his career with Essex Police, he has also served at Harlow, Witham, Saffron Walden, Braintree, Halstead, Stansted and Chelmsford.

Obituaries

Former superintendent **Leslie Brewer**, of Weeley, has died, aged 78. He leaves a widow, June.

Mr Brewer served for 30 years, from 1956, at Colchester, Rochford, Eynsham Hall in Oxfordshire, Debden - as a trainer - Basildon, Rayleigh, Billericay, Clacton, Colchester and Chelmsford Traffic. Donations may be made in Mr Brewer's memory to the Gurkha Trust, c/o Leslie Barlow and Family funeral directors, 98 Station Road, Clacton on Sea CO15 6AA.

Ex-inspector **Douglas Willey**, of Colchester, has died, aged 82.

Mr Willey served from 1954 to 1968 at Hull City Police and then transferred to Essex Police and served at Colchester until 1979. Donations may be made in Mr Willey's memory to the RSPCA, c/o W H Shephard funeral directors, 93/94 High Street, Colchester CO1 1TH.

Former sergeant **Jack Draper**, of Clacton on Sea, has died, aged 86. He leaves a widow, Meta. Mr Draper served from 1946 until 1975 at Romford, South Ockendon, Chelmsford and Basildon. Donations may be made in his memory to the British Heart Foundation, c/o Leslie Barlow and Family funeral directors, 98 Station Road, Clacton on Sea CO15 6AA.

Ex-constable **Sidney Cox**, of Wivenhoe, has died, aged 62. He leaves a widow, Sally. He served with the force for thirty years until 1997, at Brentwood, Benfleet, Clacton CID and Wivenhoe.

Donations may be made in Mr Cox's memory to St Helena Hospice, c/o Kemble Funeral Services, 61-67 Rectory Road, Wivenhoe CO7 9ES.

Awards

Pc **Kevin Carter**, of Mobile Support's Traffic Investigation Unit, and Pc **Clive Fry**, of Chelmsford Road Policing Unit, have both passed the City and Guilds examination in police forensic collision investigation.

Apology

We would like to apologise to force Fingerprint Expert **Louise Pugh** for misprinting her name last month and for any embarrassment this may have subsequently caused.

Christians and police officers play their part in making town safe

MORE than 100 people attended a Playing Our Part conference in Westcliff last month - aimed at making Christians in Southend more aware of how political, civil and social structures work and how they can play their part.

It was organised by the Rev Rick Williams, the area dean, and sponsored by Love Southend and the local Anglican diocese.

Topics included Police, Thames Gateway, Council, Safer- Stronger Communities, School Governors, Social Services, Hospital, Constituency Politics, Local Strategic Partnership and the Magistracy.

The Police workshop was led by Steve Currell - a former Superintendent at Southend and who now works at HQ - and included a session conducted by the Chief Officer of Essex Special Constabulary, George Cook.

He encouraged people to consider playing their part by joining the Specials. Steve Bright, the South-Eastern Division Public Contact Manager, also took part.

Mr Cook said: "It was good to engage closely with over 30 people and be able to market the key work done by, and the opportunities that exist for, those working in the Special Constabulary. Hopefully this is something that could be done elsewhere."

Participants heard about Adoptacop - an initiative in Southend and South-Western Division which results in 10 prayer points being compiled, with contribution from both command



● Chief Officer George Cook, of Essex Police Special Constabulary, Steve Currell, Steven Timms MP, Steve Bright and Special Constable Ben Lilleystone

teams, and emailed by the police chaplains to churches monthly to encourage people to pray for their community and vital issues.

A Neighbourhood Policing Stand was on display with details of the South-Eastern Division's Neighbourhood Policing Teams' nominated officers and good news stories.

The Safer-Stronger Communities workshop was led jointly by the Rev Rob Cadman, Southend Police Chaplain, and former Southend chief inspector Tony Payne, now Southend's Neighbourhood Manager. Chief Secretary to the Treasury

and East Ham MP Steven Timms enthused the audience by outlining how Christians over 200 years had played a key part in the major changes involving society eg the abolition of the slave trade.

Mr Currell, who is leader of the Essex Police branch of the Christian Police Association, added: "It was great to see people from all over the borough and from different denominations and backgrounds coming together to see how they can make a difference to the community.

"I am sure it will result in positive initiatives."

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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. No internal or direct-dial work phone numbers should be given as contacts in the adverts. Only adverts from those directly connected to Essex Police (either serving or retired) will be accepted. Adverts should be restricted to a maximum of 24 words and repeat ads should be re-submitted on a monthly basis. The Law team reserves the right to edit or omit any advert which doesn't meet these criteria.



Giving a bit back to your community

ESSEX Police Special Constabulary is recruiting in earnest to support its campaign to bring the force's contingent of officers up to 1,000 by 2010.

They offer exciting and challenging opportunities for men and women from all walks of life who have the drive and determination to devote some of their free time to working with the police to improve the quality of their communities.

More than 400 Special Constables currently volunteer across the county. Chief Officer George Cook says: "Specials have full police powers and perform their duties supported their regular colleagues.

"If you are looking for a career with Essex Police but aren't sure where to begin, then the Special Constabulary could be the place to start. There are also considerable benefits to employers."

To be a Special Constable, you need to be aged over 17 and nine months, be physically fit, have a mature attitude, enjoy working as part of a team and have good communication skills.

Your commitment to Essex Police would be a minimum of four hours' duty per week plus training. You will be given full training and support, uniform, equipment, expenses and other benefits.

● Visit www.essex.police.uk or call 01245 452824 for more



● Special constables Debbie and Lee Taylor

Picture by Heather Turner

Joining a Special family of people

MOTHER and son Debbie and Lee Taylor are patrolling the streets of Central Division after volunteering to become Special constables.

The pair began training last August and were attested in October, taking to the streets a month later after they had finished their defensive skills training.

Both volunteered for different reasons.

Debbie, 46, had always wanted to be a Special – her father Ron Marshall was in the force, finishing up at HQ drugs squad – and one day thought 'if I don't do it now ...'. The time was right as her sons were older and she felt she wanted to put something back into her community – Maldon and the surrounding area.

While Lee, 20, joined the Specials to see whether he would want to become a regular officer.

"I would go out in Chelmsford on a Friday night and wanted to see it from the inside out," he explained.

Both enjoy the wide variety of incidents they are called to deal with – as Specials, they have the same powers as regular police officers, the difference is simply that they don't get paid.

In the past four months, Debbie has policed Maldon Victorian Evening, directed traffic at Heybridge Swifts football matches, taken part in Purleigh Infants' School torchlight procession, and attended a car crash, a domestic incident and a fight.

"I am really enjoying it. The regular officers at Maldon Police Station are really helpful

and I feel like one of them," she said. "When we are on duty, we are all doing the same job and they really support us. My inspector, Adam Pipe, is really inspirational."

Debbie particularly valued the knowledge she had gained after coming across the scene of a crash on the way to a shift on duty.

"I never thought I could deal with someone who was hurt – there was blood everywhere – but I put my professional head on and my training kicked in," she said.

Lee finds the same helpful attitude at Chelmsford Town, where he is based.

"The regulars say Specials have a crucial part to play. We mix very well and they support us," he said.

"Friday nights in Chelmsford can be very busy but sometimes we'll just go to one or two incidents. I prefer it when it's busy because I feel I have done more.

"I like chatting to members of the public and can learn more from chatting to people than from putting handcuffs on them – they tell you more. I enjoy the spontaneity and not knowing what's going to happen."

Specials give at least 16 hours a month to police duties.

And, as police staff – Debbie is an assistant caseworker in Professional Standards while Lee is a Phoenix Support officer, updating the Police National Computer – the pair are entitled to an additional eight hours paid leave a month to complete their duties. Part-time police staff have this additional leave calculated on a pro-rata basis.

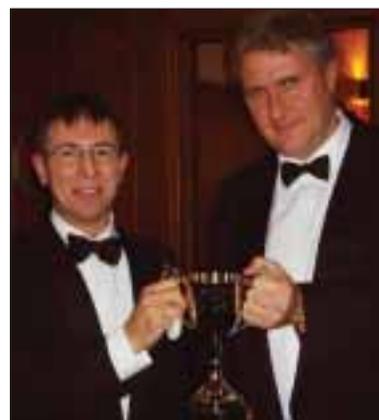
● If you are a member of police staff interested in joining the Specials, visit the Specials intranet site, under Divisions & Departments or ring Sarah Brown on ext 58710



● District commanders are now in charge of recruiting Special Constables for their local area. Left, Special Constable Roger Went, Special Supt Debbie Rudd, Brentwood District Commander Chief Insp Luke Collison, Sgt Shirley Cole and Special Sgt Bill Sparks launch their recruitment drive.

Picture courtesy of Essex Chronicle Series

Mark's operational dedication recognised with ACTION award



● Eastern Divisional Commander Chief Supt Dave Hudson presents Special Insp Mark Barham with his ACTION leadership award

ESSEX Police's very first awards event dedicated to special Special Constables was a stunning success. Eastern Division staged the evening at the Officers' Club in Colchester to recognise the work and contribution members of the Special Constabulary make behind the scenes.

And Special Insp Mark Barham was the first winner of the Eastern Division Special Constabulary ACTION leadership award.

"It was presented to him for his outstanding dedication to the Special Constabulary over the last year," Special Supt Leon Dias said.

"His work in the organisation of our operational commitments was one of major reasons the Eastern Division Specials performed so well.

"Mark also has taken on responsibility for managing all the division's training for the Special Constabulary and has ensured we were one of the only divisions to fully meet our training commitment."

A raffle was held in aid of the Essex Air Ambulance and raised £240. The prizes were donated by local business, including Kent Blaxhill, Vodafone, the Hub Bar and BHS.

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More police musicians called by symphony

THE British Police Service has its own 70-strong Symphony Orchestra, the British Police Symphony Orchestra.

Police officers, police staff as well as family and friends of officers and staff are all eligible to become members.

And the orchestra is always keen to recruit new players in any section, but especially strings.

Rehearsals are held over eight weekends of the year and, in addition to preparing for the next concert, are great social occasions.

Founded in 1990, the BPSO has played throughout the British Isles and Western Europe. It has a full symphonic and concerto repertoire, and plays the Last Night Of The Proms programme annually in December at Symphony Hall, Birmingham and at other venues across the country.

The orchestra has also played at the Police Memorial Services in St Paul's Cathedral, London, and the Waterfront, Belfast.

● To find out more about the BPSO, contact secretary John Morgan, of Dyfed-Powys Police, on 07811 356778 or email john.morgan@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk



Broken back won't stop Deb's marathon bid

TO complete the London Marathon course successfully will be an achievement in itself for accident-prone Deb Butler.

A broken back, a broken and dislocated shoulder and a smashed face are some of the injuries the Harlow Service Desk Assistant has overcome in the last few years – but she is hoping to be on the start line next month.

Deb, 37, is running her third marathon, but first London event, to raise money for the Breast Cancer Campaign in memory of her Nan.

Most of Deb's past injuries have been a result of her love of horse riding but she is determined to run as it is the first time she has got through the public ballot for places after four years of trying.

She says, however, that she would not recommend anyone sponsoring her by the hour.

● Those wishing to help can find forms at Harlow police station or visit Deb's on-line sponsorship page, which can be accessed from private computers, at www.justgiving.com/gingerloon_flm

● If you are running the London Marathon, contact The Law editor Heather Turner with your details, on ext 55819 or 01245 452029 or via email at heather.turner@essex.pnn.police.uk

Picture by Denise Harvey

Croker cricket will be played

A CROKER Cup cricket tournament will take place this season for the first time in a number of years.

It is likely to be played in August/September, with the format to be decided once numbers are known.

The competition will be played at a venue in mid-Essex.

Eastern and South-Eastern divisions have already expressed an interest.

● Contact Adrian Garnham via email for details

New race date

THE date and venue for this years PSUK Marathon Championships has now been changed.

The event will now be held in conjunction with the Luton Marathon on December 2 in order to avoid a clash with the PSUK 10-mile race, which Essex is hosting on September 12.

● As yet, no entry details are available for the marathon

Fell challenge

THE Annual Cheviot 2000 Fell Race is being staged by Northumbria Police on June 16.

Teams of three only.

● Visit www.cheviot2000.com for details and entry form, or write to Pc Dave Speedy, Market St Police Station, Newcastle Upon Tyne, or ring him on 0191 2323971.

Police divorce representation, it's an open and shut case.



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Continuing mix of fortune for soccer vets

THE Essex Police veterans' football team's mixed fortunes have reversed. They have won in the Greene King Essex Veterans' League Premier Division but lost in the PSUK Veterans' League – previously they had won all four of their PSUK matches but drawn only one of their Greene King matches, losing the rest.

The highlight of the Greene King League season so far has been their 3-2 win over Witham – it started late but this gave two players the chance to play after they initially turned up at the wrong ground. Scorers were Neil Offord (two) and Sean James. It was a crucial result for the vets' bid for premiership survival.

Sadly, the vets had previously lost 3-1 to Writtle, an Offord header giving them some consolation in what was a hard-fought match against a very strong side. Despite an excellent team performance – and four wins out of four, to date – Essex Police went down 2-0 to the Metropolitan Police in the PSUK league.

The Met goals – one in the first half and one in the second – were quite scrappy. Craig Carrington filled in goal, in place of the injured Matt Clarke, and ensured the score stayed 2-0.

The team pulled together in the second half and stopped the Met playing the football they wanted to, and were in control for long periods, creating a few chances but not being able to finish them off.

As The Law went to print, the veterans had outstanding PSUK matches against the Metropolitan Police, Hertfordshire and City of London.

If they win their group, they automatically qualify for the PSUK quarter-finals. If they are runners-up there is a play-off against another regional group runner-up.

Tough guys take it to the wire

TOUGH guys from Stansted Airport proved they had hearts of gold by completing the gruelling course and raising money at the same time.

Chris Oliver, Simon Blaxland and Chris Henley – together with Chris Henley's brother Wayne, from City of London Police – all made it round the tortuous Winter Tough Guy course on a farm near Wolverhampton on a cold day at the end of January. They hope to have raised around £200 for the Tuberous Sclerosis Association. The young son of colleague Andy Bartlett suffers from the genetic disorder, which causes the body's organs to fail.

Wayne Henley went round the course in about 1hour:40mins, Chris Henley finished in 1:50 and Simon Blaxland followed in at 2:10, while Chris Oliver 'limped in' at 2:54.

Chris Oliver said afterwards: "We all enjoyed it. I believe the conditions were the mildest I have ever experienced doing Tough Guy."

"The other three did it for the first time and found it tough going but they all agreed it was very enjoyable all the same." They competed against 6,000 others – only 5,000 of whom finished the course, including Chelmsford PCSO Al Barley.



● Tough guys Chris Oliver, Wayne Henley, Simon Blaxland and Chris Henley

Runners take title with a clean sweep

ESSEX men's cross-country team have taken the South-East Regional league title with five wins out of five.

And they completed the double by winning the South-East Regional Championships, too.

The final league race, at Amphill in Bedfordshire on February 15, proved to be the most challenging of all with only six men and two women competing, following the late change of date.

With both Derek Walker and Andy Jopson unavailable it was never going to be easy to defeat Kent and the emerging City team – but beat them they did.

Russ Welch came third – missing out on the overall individual title by just one point to Matt Rees (City of London) who came second behind team-mate and former GB International steeplechaser Ben Whitby.

Dan Sorrell was fifth, improving again, as he has done in every race this season.

Forced to drop out with an Achilles injury in the last race, team captain Mick Bond finished this race in tenth

place, in agony, but still did enough to claim the over-50 award.

It was left to another Vet-50 to complete the team score to ensure the victory, with John Mackenzie in 11th place, holding off Dave Browning in 12th.

Dave Willis produced a strong run but it was left to Steve King, 27th, to close the veterans' team.

Disappointingly again, the Essex women's team were one short of a team, with only Rachel Wood and Jane Davis competing – albeit in respectable second and sixth places, respectively – leaving any medal hopes gone.

But, as well as topping the men's table, Essex were runners-up in the veteran men's category and third in the women's

Plus, Russ Welch was runner-up in the men's individual placings while Mick Bond – despite his injuries – was not only first in the Vet-50 competition but also came first in the Vet-45 section as he had finished ahead of his younger rivals.

And John Mackenzie took second in the Vet-50 competition – rounding off an outstanding performance in the men's competitions. At the Regional Championship, at Bramshill on

February 21, the men's team were missing Andy Jopson and Mick Bond through illness and injury.

However, they rose to the challenge, led by Russ Welch, second place, Derek Walker in fifth and Dan Sorrell in seventh.

There was then an anxious wait until John Mackenzie secured the team victory in 17th place – he was also placed second in the Vets-50 competition.

There was the usual superb support from Dave Browning, 20th, Dave Willis, 25th, and veterans Mark Finbow, 33rd, John Jackson, 34th, and Steve King in 36th place.

The only disappointment was again the fact that Rachel Wood was the only competitor in the women's race, coming a respectable seventh.

At the fourth regional league race on January 31, results were: Men – 2 Russ Welch, 3 Andy Jopson, 7 Del Walker, 8 Dan Sorrell, 12 Paul Curtis, 19 John Mackenzie, 24 Dave Browning, 39 David Willis, 42 Terry Balding, 43 Mark Finbow, 46 Paul Norman, 51 Steve King, 52 Courtney Cowell. Women – 11 Kirsty Potterton, 15 Jane Davis.

Fancy a sporting challenge?

WHY not test your fitness and stamina by joining police teams from across the country in the Snowdonia Challenge.

Saturday, August 18, will see participants traverse seven of the most picturesque mountains in the Snowdonia range, over 20 miles.

Organiser Dave Owens, of North Wales Police, said: "People don't need to have any mountaineering experience as fitness, teamwork and endurance will see them through."

● For information and an application form, visit www.snowdonia7.co.uk

● THIS year's Blackwater Charity Triathlon is being held on Sunday, September 16, at the Blackwater Leisure Centre, Park Drive, Maldon.

There are two races, Novice – 200m swim, 12km cycle and a 3km run – and Sprint – 400m swim, 23km cycle and a 6km run.

The race is in aid of Farleigh Hospice, Chelmsford.

● Contact Andy Jopson at Southminster on ext 61009 for details or an entry form



● Kerrie Barkway ext 58883

Launch of new cinema scheme

SOME members encountered problems with the two-for-one deal we had in place with Odeon and UCI cinemas. As a result, the Essex Police Sports Association (EPSA) is launching an alternative and, we hope, more beneficial scheme. EPSA has purchased a number of subsidised movie vouchers from both cinema companies. These vouchers can be used at any Odeon or Cineworld cinema outside the M25 – West End excluded.

Adult vouchers will be available to EPSA members at a reduced price of £5 each and are valid for nine months, saving about £2.

Vouchers can be used to view any film at any time. Simply take the voucher to the ticket office at the cinema in question and hand it over to secure a seat for the film of your choice.

And, to launch the scheme, EPSA is giving away every tenth ticket free.

● For further details, visit the EPSA intranet sites and look at Member Benefits, Cinema Launch or contact Kerrie Barkway on ext 58883

Great performance was a little bit 'crazy'

CRAZY For You is an updated version of the 1930s Gershwin show Girl Crazy and is all the better for it. The cast of Essex Police Musical Society gave a smooth performance and their jokes were funny and well-presented, rather than forced.

The cast credited choreographer Pam Corrie with their slick dance routines but it was obvious they had put in a lot of hard work, too.

Crazy For You is set in New York and Deadrock, Nevada, during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Stage-struck Bobby Child is thwarted in his ambition to star on Broadway and his banker mother sends him to Deadrock to foreclose on the local theatre. However, he falls in love with the owner's daughter – the only woman in town – and resolves to save the theatre.

She doesn't believe him but, through the usual but well-acted plot of mistaken identity, it all turns out well in the end – even for Bobby's shrewish mother, ably played by EPMS chairman Lynda Barkway.

George Lambeth and Jenny Hillyard gave a wonderful performance as an eccentric English couple who are reviewing the Deadrock hotel for a travel guide and Paul Walker and Simon Brett (Bobby Child and theatre impresario Bela Zangler) handled a complicated, and 'drunken', mirror scene with dexterity – it was highly amusing too.



● Part of the cast of Crazy For You in the Deadrock hotel

Picture by Mary Cotter

Footwear database steps out in Southend

NEW legislation will allow police to take footwear impressions from people in custody for examination against a crime scene mark and for a speculative search against a new database of crime scene marks.

With the development of the first online footwear coding and detection management system by the Forensic Science Service, the force is stepping out with a pilot scheme in South-Eastern Division.

Footwear Intelligence Technology (FIT) offers secure access to thousands of footwear patterns, including sole and upper shoe images, brand logos and examples of each type of footwear.

Intelligence software can quickly search and identify the majority of footwear impressions, even partial marks.

As well as a reference collection, FIT can be used as a repository for both scene and suspect data, enabling a search for crime links based on footwear data at a local and national level.

Head of Scientific Support DCI Tom Harper said: "Initially footwear impressions will only be taken from people arrested for or suspected of burglary, as the highest number of footwear marks are recovered for burglary offences."

"Footwear comparisons can provide strong supporting evidence or, from time to time, stand alone as conclusive evidence in its own right."

Feedback from the division, Scenes of Crime and the Forensic Science Service will help determine best practice before a rollout of the service across the force.

PCSOs boost community

PCSOs aim to bring some happiness to the lives of children touched by a death in Colchester last month.

They are planning a fun day for youngsters in the Balkeke Heights area.

The move follows the death of Lisa Sweeney, 34, at her home in Henry Laver Court on February 21.

Town centre PCSOs Helen Calver and Alison Howe came up with the community rebuilding plan after seeing firsthand the impact of Mrs Sweeney's death.

The pair have asked businesses and members of the public to contribute towards the event, as well as to raise money for Mrs Sweeney's eight children.

● ANTHONY Sweeney, 36, was remanded in custody after appearing at Colchester Magistrates' Court on Friday, February 23, charged with murder. He made no plea.

Andy Bliss is our new Deputy Chief Constable

ANDY Bliss has been appointed Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) for Essex Police. Mr Bliss has been acting DCC since January 1, following the retirement of Charles Clark at the end of 2006 after almost 40 years with the force. Acting Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) Peter Lowton will permanently replace Mr Bliss as ACC responsible for Protective Services. Essex Police Authority chairman Robert Chambers said: "The authority is

pleased to appoint Andy Bliss as Deputy Chief Constable.

"We have appointed one of the best chief officers in the country to complement our established command team.

"I am sure they will work together to continue to keep Essex a high-achieving force."

And Chief Constable Roger Baker said he was delighted that Mr Bliss had been permanently appointed as DCC.

He added: "He has been exceptional in

the role during the last couple of months and previously as ACC.

"His loyalty and commitment to serving the people of Essex is second to none.

"I am also pleased that we have also permanently appointed Peter Lowton as ACC.

"He has made a tremendous start with Essex Police and I look forward to working with both of these dedicated officers in the future."



● England and Essex cricketer James Foster hopes the mobile phone message will hit home with drivers

Picture courtesy of Timma Ramos/GNN

Motorists ignore mobile message

TEN motorists were issued with Fixed Penalty Notices in the Colchester area alone on the first day new mobile phone legislation came into force.

Officers at Stanway Road Policing Unit issued the £60 tickets, which carries three penalty points, to drivers for using a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

Insp Steve Brewer said that despite it having been an offence to drive while holding a mobile phone since December 2003 'we continue to see drivers breaking the law daily'.

"Offenders who continue to drive and use their phone are posing a real risk to both themselves and other road-users," he warned.

The Fixed Penalty notices were issued despite a glut of national and local publicity about the change in legislation, which now makes the offence an endorsable one.

Insp Brewer warned motorists that his officers would continue to watch for illegal mobile phone usage.

He revealed his figures just days after England and Essex wicket-keeper James Foster had urged shoppers in Chelmsford to take note of the law change.

He was accompanied by Essex Police officers, county council road safety officers and members of the county fire and rescue service in trying to get the message across.

Chief Insp Tom Diment, of Mobile Support Division, said: "Drivers have had more than two years to take steps to stop calls whilst driving, but we are still issuing tickets to offenders on a daily basis. There will be no grace period with the new penalties.

"The message is quite simple: don't phone whilst driving or face a substantial penalty and the very real danger of being involved in an accident."

Between January and December 2006, Essex Police officers issued 6,289 Fixed Penalty Notices to motorists for using a mobile phone whilst driving.

The offence includes texting as well as speaking into a phone and drivers can also be prosecuted for using a hands-free device if they are not in proper control of their vehicle.

Mother jailed for killing four children

A WOMAN from Tilbury, whose careless driving led to the deaths of two of her children and two teenagers, has been sentenced to nine years in prison.

Davina Smith showed no emotion at Snaresbrook Crown Court when Judge Radford sentenced her to nine years for each of the four counts of causing death by careless driving while unfit through drugs.

She was also jailed for five years for the aggravated taking of a vehicle without consent, banned from driving for ten years and ordered to take an extended driving test. All the sentences will run concurrently.

Smith, 31, had admitted taking the vehicle without consent but was found guilty of causing death by careless driving after a trial.

She was driving a stolen Ford Fiesta

when she was involved in a collision in St Chads Road, Tilbury, on January 31, 2006.

The crash resulted in the deaths of two of her children, Kalli Goyette, four, and her sister Karis, eight, of Darwin Road, as well as those of Lee Gray, 16, of Dickens Avenue, and Kezia Adger, 16, of Leicester Road, all in Tilbury.

Sentencing last month, Judge Radford told Smith: "It is plain your use of amphetamine, your driving of stolen motor cars and your driving without a licence or insurance had become a settled pattern of behaviour before that dreadful evening.

"Even now, you continue to deny that your use of amphetamine would have affected your driving that night and to insist that you were a good driver, and that the collision occurred without any error on your part."

Judge Radford also gave a stark warning to other drug-drivers that their behaviour would not be tolerated.

The sentencing was the culmination of Operation Ribbon, mounted following the tragic crash and led by Chief Insp Tom Diment.

After the case, he said: "Davina Smith unlawfully took four young lives, including those of her own children, by her criminal driving actions. She will have to live with what she has done for the rest of her life."

"Her situation must be a lesson to any other person who drives a motor vehicle, stolen or otherwise, whilst under the influence of intoxicants.

"Essex Police will pursue such criminality in a robust manner and such behaviour will not be tolerated on the roads of Essex."

He said the investigation had been complex and protracted but had allowed the jury to arrive at the verdict.

"I recognise and applaud the efforts of all individuals who worked so hard in investigating and bringing this case to justice," he added.

Time called on pub at centre of drugs raid

A PUB at the centre of a police drugs operation will remain closed until its licence is reviewed by the licensing authority.

The Queen Elizabeth pub in Saffron Walden was ordered by magistrates to remain closed after the raid on February 5.

It was the first time in Essex a pub will remain closed until its licence is reviewed under recently-introduced legislation.

And officers were pleased that their strong stance against premises which turn a blind eye to illegal activity has received this sanction.

Substance Misuse Inspector, Trevor Williamson, warned after the operation: "We will not tolerate drug dealing, especially in public places, and we will gain intelligence on those responsible.

"Every day, somewhere in Essex, officers will be planning their next operation against drug dealers. This is a safe county and we want to keep it that way."

The force works closely with the licensing authority and licensees to ensure that pubs, clubs and bars provide a pleasant and safe experience for their customers and, indeed, there are many excellently-run establishments which attract customers from near and far.

Two schemes operate in Essex to support publicans and bar owners in this aim. The Behave Or Be Banned (BOBB) and Safer Bars Accreditation schemes both see licensing officers, who are based on all divisions, offering licensees advice and support which is in the best interests of all.

This year, in Clacton, another pub voluntarily gave up its licence, while a drugs operation in Colchester resulted in arrests.

And, between April 2006 and the end of January, 635 drug offenders who were caught dealing Class A drugs have been brought to justice across the county.

● REPRESENTATIVES from 17 pubs in north-west Essex are backing police ahead of a crime prevention scheme.

Pub Watch is on the verge of an official launch that will assist licensed premises in Uttlesford to stamp out crime and anti-social behaviour.

The force held a video briefing last month to illustrate how the scheme operates.

Uttlesford District Commander Chief Insp Graham Stubbs said: "By working together we can reduce disorder and make Uttlesford an even safer place in which to live and work. We cannot do this on our own and the involvement of responsible licensees is absolutely vital to achieve our collective goals."

Six similar schemes are already running in Essex.