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February 2009



● The first 20 student officers recruited under Operation Apex at their passing out parade at Essex Police College on February 1 with Essex Police Authority member, Susan Hughes, ACC Peter Lowton and Operation Apex programme director Rick Tazzini

Picture by Kate Batson

Increasing officer numbers while maintaining low Council Tax

GROWING OUR OWN PROVES SUCCESSFUL

IT'S official – Essex Police is one of the leading forces in the country for growing its number of police officers – whilst still having the lowest Council Tax of the 31 shire forces.

According to a recent Home Office statistical bulletin, in the 12 months to September 2008, Essex Police increased its police officer numbers by 58.

This 1.7 per cent rise is the seventh highest out of the 43 forces in England and Wales, in percentage terms.

Over the same period, the total rise in police officer numbers in England and Wales was just 0.6 per cent, with 18 of the 43 forces recording a reduction in

by **Kate Batson**

police officer numbers.

Since September, Operation Apex – the ambition for policing in Essex – has added to this success, recruiting 110 extra police officers.

And the force won't stop giving the public what they want – which includes even more police officers.

Operation Apex aims to increase the total force strength by 600 additional police officers over the next three to five years; reaching a total of 4,000 officers.

This will ensure the force continues to reduce crime, improve the quality and coverage of our services and, ultimately, increase public confidence.

Early success

Our most recent recruitment drive, Operation Apex, has already seen early success with the recruitment of 100 new student officers since September, plus the creation of ten new sergeant's posts.

The force also has the fifth highest number of PCSOs in England and



Wales – 480 – and, since 2005, we have almost doubled the number of special constables to 670.

Essex Police is committed to responding to public priorities, which includes increasing front-line visibility and accessibility, and improving public confidence and customer service.

Operation Apex programme director Rick Tazzini said: "We are delighted to be one of the leading forces in terms of police officer growth.

"Having more police officers provides vital reassurance for the public and enhances our performance in reducing crime, nuisance and disorder.

"It also sends a very clear message to the small number of criminals and to those whose anti-social

behaviour can blight Essex communities.

"The message from Essex Police is this: we're significantly growing our police numbers to protect the good people of Essex; if you commit offences here, you will be rigorously pursued and dealt with – so think twice."

Passing out parade

The first group of police officers funded by the introduction of Operation Apex have now completed their basic training and are serving Essex residents on the front line.

The group of 20 police officers pictured above started their training in September and, since then, the force has opened its doors to an additional 80 police officers.

The other 80 continue their training at the Essex Police College, with the majority due to start on the beat by the end of next month.

The 110 officers – the 100 student officers and the ten sergeants – have been recruited in addition to the force's normal recruitment drives, which will continue as usual to replace vacancies which arise through retirement or promotion.

They will be posted in equal numbers across the five territorial divisions.

Throughout the course of the Apex programme, new posts will be created in neighbourhood policing teams – to increase visibility on the front line – and in Protective Services – to enhance our many specialist areas.

Chief Constable Roger Baker said he was delighted to have the new officers in post.

"We are pleased to deliver even more police officers to the county and it is our promise to put as many officers on the streets as we can," he said.

"Increasing visibility will not only help to reduce crime, nuisance and disorder but it will also provide valuable reassurance, which will undoubtedly benefit our communities."

- All we want is more officers on the beat: the public give their response to Essex Police Authority consultation – see Page 2
- Bright ideas sought to raise performance – see Page 2

OPERATION APEX

Ambition for policing in Essex

Bright ideas sought to raise performance

THE Force Suggestion Scheme seeks proposals which lead to an improvement in force efficiency, performance, quality of service, morale and/or the gaining of best value.

Now, under Operation Apex – the ambition for policing in Essex – it has been agreed that employees can benefit financially from this scheme if an idea which results in monetary savings for Essex Police is submitted and then progressed.

Financial awards can be made if the idea can be counted as a saving under Operation Apex, with the money being re-invested in front-line policing.

Awards will be directly proportionate to the amount of savings the force has made, up to a maximum of £5,000.

Savings would have to be counted and verified before any award was paid.

● So, if you have an idea which could potentially save the force some money, submit it via the Force Suggestion Scheme in the usual way – either by emailing Force Suggestion Scheme or visiting the Force Suggestion Scheme intranet site, listed under the Information menu

Response to police authority consultation on policing in Essex

Give us more officers on the beat, say public

by Jenna Smith

THE results from Essex Police Authority's *All I want for Christmas...* campaign revealed that top of the wish list was more officers on the beat, second was an improvement in customer service and third was for the force to crack down more on traffic offences.

1 More officers: the majority of people asked for more officers on the beat – on foot, in cars, on bikes and on horses
2 Improved customer service: quicker response times, more 'approachable' officers, longer police station opening hours, local officers to be more easily contactable, better follow-ups after a crime has been reported and better communication with the public
3 Road/traffic issues: cracking down on traffic offences, particularly speeding and the use of mobile phones, dealing with illegal parking, increasing the number of speed cameras, addressing parking issues outside schools and reducing the incidence of drink-driving.

The results from this public consultation will now be presented to members of Essex Police Authority (EPA), with a view to feeding them into the local policing plan.

The wish lists will also be sent to district commanders so that suggestions and concerns can be addressed locally.

EPA chairman Robert Chambers said: "It is really interesting to see the final results of the campaign.

"More than 1,000 wish lists were

collected, meaning that a great deal of 'wishes' and valuable suggestions were made, which is fantastic.

"We can't give the people of Essex what they want unless we know what it is, which we now do!"

He added: "The top wish was for more officers. To provide more 'bobbies on the beat' is definitely one of our top priorities, which is already being addressed through Operation Apex – the ambition for policing in Essex – which will see an additional 600 new officers on the streets of Essex within the next three to five years.

"Operation Apex will have a massive impact on Essex as more police officers will give the public a 'feel-good factor', which should reduce the fear of crime and give them a better customer service."

Head of Customer Services Claire Heath said the force was committed to giving the best possible service.

"We were the first of 43 forces to deliver promises on the Policing Pledge which tells the public the service standards they can expect to receive.

"We have extended police station opening hours, increased the use of our mobile police stations and introduced a single non-emergency telephone number and a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week call-handling centre for all non-emergency calls.

During 2009 we will be building on our

customer service standards and aiming to further improve our response times.

"We will also be working to improve the timeliness and quality of feedback and updates given to members of the public.

"We will publish better public information about our local neighbourhood policing teams, the work they are doing in your area, monthly crime information and updates on the progress against neighbourhood priorities."

In response to wish for a crackdown on traffic and road offences, Chief Insp Tom Diment – in charge of road policing – said the force took road safety very seriously.

"We have over the past years undertaken many operations and actions in order to reduce the amount of people killed and injured on the roads.

"Our activity is not in isolation and we work with many partner agencies to achieve our overall success."

He said the public of Essex often acted as a 'silent' partner.

"Without their support and co-operation our job would be a lot harder. I therefore take some comfort that the survey reveals some of the public concerns are the very issues we are dealing with.

"The public can rest assured that the principal offences that cause crashes, such as drink-driving and speed, are robustly tackled and will continue to be enforced."

'Rewarding role' commemorating fallen comrades

THE Essex Police Memorial Trust is looking for new volunteer trustees.

The trust remembers officers and staff who have been killed whilst on duty and ensures their sacrifice is not forgotten.

Trustees Brian Hindley, the treasurer, and former chairman Geoffrey Markham are retiring from their posts and are looking for volunteers who would like to take on their rewarding roles.

Mr Hindley said: "The trust is our heritage and it is important to remember the dedication to duty of officers.

"This should always be in the forefront of our minds whilst officers continue to put themselves at risk to serve the people of Essex."

He added: "To be a trustee is a privilege and honour to those officers."

Commemorating officers who have served the county since 1840, the trust is a registered charity, established in 1993, and it continually works to ensure they are not forgotten.

The trust has overseen the creation of a Roll of Honour, Memorial Book and a Memorial Stone to commemorate fallen comrades, including officers killed in the two World Wars.

● Meetings are held twice a year with the chairman, DCC Andy Bliss, the next is in May. Contact Michelle Bradley via email at michelle.bradley@essex.pnn.police.uk to find out more



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● Insp Iain Fraser ready for his last day as a police officer – out on the beat in the town where he started and ended his 37-year career

Picture by Alan Jones



RAYLEIGH custody manager Insp Iain Fraser marked the last day of his 37 years with the force by retracing part of his first 'beat' through the town wearing his original police helmet, boots and cape.

Insp Fraser joined Essex Police in 1971 in an era when Pcs were still equipped with pencils – ink might run in the rain – and personal radios were not in widespread use.

He was posted to Rayleigh and first ordered to walk the boundaries of the town, a 'beat' of several miles.

"I had new boots on as well and my feet were bleeding by the time I got back to the station," he said.

After two years, he transferred to Burnham-on-Crouch and then spent the first of two spells with the Royal Hong Kong Police

(RHKP), including a year with the Hong Kong Island Crime Unit as a detective inspector.

He rejoined Essex Police at Chelmsford, initially as a uniform Pc, and later transferred to CID. He spent a further three years in Hong Kong in various roles including spells with Special Branch, as a police prosecutor, and on promotion to acting chief inspector, as an instructor at the RHKP training school.

He returned to Essex Police in 1985. Postings around the county followed, interspersed by two training school assignments, before he joined the Child Protection Unit as a detective sergeant for the next 11 years.

He returned to Rayleigh in 2004 as the critical incident inspector and last July took on the role of custody manager.

● See Page 10 for more news of retirements

Man who shot at Essex officer gets 22 years

A MAN has been jailed for 22 years for the attempted murder of an Essex Police officer in Loughton.

Kenny Spence, 23, of Collier Row, had previously admitted attempted murder and being in possession of an illegal firearm, as well as a charge of causing grievous bodily harm with intent, relating to a separate incident.

And on February 6, he was sentenced to 22 years' imprisonment for attempted murder, seven years for the firearms offence and eight years for the assault charge; all to run concurrently. As part of his indeterminate sentence, he must serve a minimum 11 years.

Sgt Huddleston received a judge's commendation.

Spence shot a man in Romford on June 25 last year. The following day

just before 8am, Essex Police was contacted following a motoring complaint in Pyrles Lane in Loughton.

Officers stopped a car and Sgt Rob Huddleston's vehicle was shot at – while he was sitting inside.

While the window was damaged, Sgt Huddleston was left uninjured.

Spence was arrested 90 minutes later in Hornchurch in a joint operation with the Metropolitan Police, after firearms officers, assisted by colleagues from the Air Support Unit, stopped a black VW Golf.

After sentencing at the Central Criminal Court in London, senior investigating officer Det Supt Tim Wills said: "I am pleased Kenny Spence has been put behind bars so that he will not be a danger to anyone for a significant period of time.

"Spence committed a number of serious offences which could have had very grave consequences.

"Thankfully, Sgt Huddleston was not seriously injured and is a credit to the force in the way he recovered from his ordeal and swiftly returned to front-line duties.

"He is somebody the community he serves can be rightly proud of."

Det Supt Kevin Davies, from the Metropolitan Police's Operation Trident, said: "This investigation was brought to a successful conclusion as a result of excellent partnership working between Operation Trident and Essex Police.

"I would like to pay tribute to the professionalism and dedication of the investigating officers and thank the numerous members of the public who provided information and evidence."



● View from the inside of Sgt Rob Huddleston's police car after he was shot at, above
● Inset, the shotgun used

Teenager gets five years for manslaughter

A TEENAGER has been sentenced to five years' detention for the manslaughter of a Grange Hill schoolboy.

Jack Large, 14, was stabbed in the back and head in Limes Avenue, Grange Hill on November 30, 2007.

He died at the Royal London Hospital two days later.

Two boys from Chigwell were arrested and charged with murder.

They stood trial last autumn and, on December 11, the elder, now aged 16, was found guilty of manslaughter, while his 14-year-old accomplice pleaded guilty to being in possession of an offensive weapon.

Last month, the 16-year-old was sentenced to five years' detention while the 14-year-old was ordered to serve a three-year supervision order.

Western divisional commander Chief Supt Tim Stokes believes a strong Neighbourhood Policing ethos helped to solve the murder because of the links built up with the community by Chigwell Neighbourhood Policing Team.

● Sgt Mick Green out and about in the Chelmsford district

Picture courtesy of the Essex Chronicle Series



Motorcyclists finding out traffic priorities

ROAD policing motorcyclists are out and about in north, mid and east Essex in a bid to improve the quality of life for some residents.

Since the introduction of neighbourhood policing, people have been given more opportunity to shape the way they are policed locally and to highlight their priorities and concerns.

And road policing officers have consulted neighbourhood policing teams and read the minutes of neighbourhood action panels (NAPs) to identify areas where traffic problems and inconsiderate motoring are local "bug-bears".

Now the motorcyclists have embarked on a six-week operation to speak to people and find out about specific traffic-related problems affecting their everyday lives.

Road policing inspector Justin Smith is keen for his officers to spend time in outlying villages talking to residents.

"I want my teams to speak to people, listen to what they've got to say and address problems that we can get involved with," he said. "We will deal with local problems and priorities and analyse the feedback before embarking on an operation to crack down traffic-problem areas highlighted."

Chauffeur in landmark case jailed

A CHAUFFEUR from Westcliff has been jailed for three years for causing grievous bodily harm to a woman left paralysed following a crash near Stansted Airport.

The case was the first time Essex Police had successfully prosecuted a motorist for this offence following a road crash.

Peugeot driver, Cate Stephens, 28, of Leicestershire, was airlifted to hospital after sustaining head and spinal injuries in the crash at Takeley in September 2006.

She was paralysed from the neck down and will have to use an electric wheelchair for the rest of her life.

Audi driver Paul Prior, 39, was uninjured in the crash.

He was prosecuted for dangerous driving and causing grievous bodily harm and admitted the motoring offence before standing trial at Chelmsford Crown Court in December, after which he was found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm.

Last month, Prior was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and disqualified from driving for two years and five months.

Santa makes a belated appearance

FATHER Christmas, a gorilla, Snow White and a snowman – just some of the characters spotted in Clacton Police Station last month.

The festive outfits were all part of the annual children's Christmas party, held on January 3.

PCSO Chrissy Bloomfield, who organised the event with PCSO Wendy Crowson, said: "The children enjoyed party games, dancing and balloon modelling from an entertainer.

"They were also treated to a visit from Santa – Pc Steve Smith – who was very tired from his round-the-world trip on Christmas Eve," she added.

Data quality matters: make it your priority

DO you want to ensure you and your colleagues are safe?

Do you want to ensure you have access to all the intelligence on someone when you go to arrest them?

And so do chief officers who, last year, embraced the opportunities now available to improve the quality of the data managed by the force.

Quality data can help to improve officer safety, decision-making, efficiency and customer service.

The creation of the Data Quality and Compliance team, within Corporate Development, is an early step in the force's commitment to adopt a comprehensive approach to addressing issues surrounding the quality of the data we all use on a daily basis.

The Data Quality and Compliance team will help various divisions and departments to improve the quality of their data management – collection, retention and disposal – and risk management and to ensure compliance with legislation and standards.

The safety of our officers is of paramount importance and one way of improving their safety is to ensure that accurate, relevant, timely, consistent and

Accurate information can help us all in policing the county

precise information is recorded on our IT systems, such as intelligence and crime recording.

It is essential that officers are able to gather all possible information in an arrest package before someone is arrested.

Top-quality and accurate information will also aid operational decisions, including those based around the allocation of resources.

This year, the team will be working to deliver compliance with the National Data Quality Standards as established by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA).

This will ensure that all employees will have greater confidence in the quality of the data held on the IT systems we use every day.

Chief information officer Wil Kennedy, said: "The quality of the data we hold is key for many areas of policing, not least ensuring officer safety and making sure

Essex Police gives the best service it possibly can.

"We are looking for officers and staff inputting data into our systems, to take responsibility for ensuring the accuracy of the information they are storing, to understand its collective importance and to make sure that it is as useful as possible for the next person.

"None of us would want to be responsible for a colleague being injured as a result of sloppy recording.

"The national standards for data quality emerged as a result of the Soham murders and the way information about murderer Ian Huntley was stored and shared.

"Essex Police needs to make sure officers and police staff can trust the information we have, especially when sharing it with other agencies.

"By adhering to a set of data quality standards, officers and police staff could potentially cut down on wasted time, meaning more hours spent out in the local community."

● Contact Jo Ella, senior data quality and compliance officer within Information Management on ext 54420 if you have ideas as to how to improve the quality of our data

Banding up together for music night

THE Essex Police Band join the Metropolitan Police for the 63rd Metropolitan Police annual concert at the Barbican Centre in London.

Once again, they will be joined by the Pipes and Drums Band from the Emerald Society – the Metropolitan Police Irish Police Association – the Metropolitan Police Male Voice Choir, the Harlow-based Brenda Taylor School of Dance and guest soloist, soprano Marilyn Hill-Smith.

The concert is on Monday, March 2, at 7.30pm. Tickets, £12 each, are available from The Metropolitan Police Athletic Association (MPAA) office on 0207 161 3088 or email mpaa@met.police.uk



Federation news by Roy Scanes



ON January 9, I attended a meeting chaired by Chief Constable Roger Baker.

Mr Baker is a Manchester United supporter. That Sunday, January 11, my team, Chelsea, were to play United at Old Trafford.

I had been fortunate – although in hindsight maybe I wasn't – to get tickets for what should have been a spectacle of the British game.

At the end of the meeting I explained to the Chief that I was going to Old Trafford and gave my future condolences about the predicted result.

He retorted that he would be watching the game on television and he believed my journey home would be a very long one – intimidating, of course, a Red victory.

In his next breath, he said he believed 2009 would be a very good one for everyone who worked for Essex Police and for the public we serve.

Unfortunately, the Chief was spot on about the football – Chelsea crashed 3-0 – and I hope that he is spot on again about the year ahead.

What a difference ...

It's incredible what a difference a year can make.

Last January, we marched in our thousands through Westminster, protesting against Home Secretary Jacqui Smith's interference with the 2007 arbitration award.

At that time, her talk of a new three-year deal that the government would honour in full failed to impress our angry members.

At the Police Federation conference in May, Ms Smith and the government were left in no doubt of the anger of the entire police service.

But now, for the first time in the history of police pay negotiations, going back to World War Two, we have a deal that should look better at the end of the term, than it did at the beginning.

And, as you should all now be aware, new Police Misconduct and Performance Regulations came into effect on December 1.

The new procedures are firmly based around learning the lessons from mistakes rather than punishment, being locally rather than centrally investigated and with strict, but much-reduced, timescales for dealing with matters.

This is possibly the biggest change to police misconduct processes in decades and follows the Taylor report into Misconduct Procedures – with most of his recommendations having been actioned.

I am pleased to say that the Federation has been widely consulted on these matters and, indeed, some of the new processes have been firmly based around proposals submitted by our national committee.

The new procedures are actually based around a new code called *Standards of Professional Behaviour*, and, unlike its predecessor, the *Code of Conduct*, it highlights the positives of policing and what is expected of police officers.

Complaints and allegations of misconduct will, hopefully, now be managed in a more focused and proportionate way.

The new procedures introduce timescales which must be adhered to, and matters should be dealt with sometimes in days but mainly within a few weeks – and not months or even years as happened before. This can only be to the benefit of our members, the force and complainants.

The advice to members is that, if you are served with a notice that you are under investigation, you accept it politely, say nothing and contact a Federation representative.

The new procedures do not deal with misconduct in isolation. The *Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures*, initially introduced in 1999 but which fell into disrepute, have been revamped and again brought in line with ACAS procedures.

We have been informed by Professional Standards that where performance is the issue, it will be dealt with as a performance matter rather than a misconduct one. We fully support this.

Again any member subject to the procedures should contact a Federation representative immediately.

We know that these changes will test us all, not least in local area management, but I believe we in the Federation are ready to meet the challenges ahead, representing our members impartially and to the best of our ability.

Unison news by Mike Frost



Unison and Essex Works – for you!

SPRING is almost here and, despite everything the media throw at us, it's not all doom and gloom.

Compare your lot with those facing the horrors of war or starving under dictatorial political systems – you will find much to be glad about.

In fact, when you are feeling low, try starting each day by writing down three "reasons to be cheerful" – you'll be surprised how easy it is and how much better you will feel!

For a start, you are either in jobs that are safer than most in the private sector or you are drawing a pension that has not itself suffered from the effects of the financial downturn.

However, this is no time to be complacent!

Employers constantly look for ways to reduce costs. That means they are searching for that holiest of grails "... new ways of working to increase efficiency and productivity..."

And that usually entails reducing employee numbers, because that is where the greatest savings are to be made in the shortest possible time.

Neither Essex County Council nor Essex Police are immune from the effects of the 'credit crunch'. Both must cut costs because the alternative is to reduce services or increase income from personal taxation.

Your branch of Unison is very alive to the possibilities and works hard to stay informed about the various schemes under consideration.

One such is *Essex Works* and many of you will have become aware of leafleting by our Essex County Council branch colleagues.

Your branch executive has been addressing this 'initiative' with the 'powers that be' for some time now and have been assured that Essex Police is not involved with this process.

However, at the heart of *Essex Works* is a proposal to outsource back-office functions into the private sector – and there is a precedent in Avon and Somerset that has included police resources.

Your executive will not indulge in

speculation but rest assured that the interests of Unison members across the force will be rigorously represented.

Pension considerations also tax your branch executive in these straitened times, not that anyone is suggesting that local government pension schemes are under threat again but 2007 still revives memories of pickets at the doors of Essex Police HQ.

Basically, there are four types of pension: Stakeholder, private schemes – including Additional Voluntary Contributions – and 'funded' and 'not-funded' Final Salary schemes.

Our pensions are 'funded', which means the money that pays our pensions each month can only come from the Local Government Pension Scheme pension fund and the 'live' contributions of our working colleagues.

Our pensions are subject to the vagaries of the stock market and are becoming a huge strain on the budgets of local government. It would be amazing if such outpourings from council coffers were not subject to stringent scrutiny.

But again, Unison has the interests of its members very much at heart in this context.

Members can be absolutely certain that in these and in every other aspect of life in the Essex Police family, your representatives seek to work positively and constructively with our employer – so innovation is not stifled but the interests of employees are fully and properly considered.

And, the more members the branch has, the more effectively your views can be represented.

So, if you are a member, encourage your colleagues to join. If you are not a member, speak to your local steward – who will be pleased to show the benefits of membership – or just go to our website for more information.

The Essex Police Unison annual meeting is on Thursday, February 12, at HQ Sports Pavilion at 5pm.

There is a buffet but, much more importantly, it is an opportunity to hear and question your executive about any employment issues that concern you.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Disability Network news

by Denise Chaplin



LAST year was another very busy and productive one for the Disability Network.

The Buddy scheme continues to be a successful and integral part of the network's objectives.

When becoming a member of the network, police officers and staff are given the opportunity to volunteer to become part of this scheme. If I receive an enquiry for support and advice, I will ask a Buddy to contact the enquirer to share their experiences or knowledge of disability.

To volunteer to join the Buddy scheme or simply to become a member of the Disability Network, please contact me.

Alternatively you can download and print a membership form from the Disability pages of the Equality and Diversity section of the intranet.

On the same pages you can also view a list of the divisional Disability Network representatives. Again, any volunteers to join this list are always welcome, whether you are a new or an existing network member.

In June, we had a very successful second annual meeting, with approximately 40 members in attendance. Some valuable speakers contributed and our new executive committee was elected.

We have continued our community links with the Royal Association for Deaf People, MIND, Autism Anglia, extra 21 (the Down's Syndrome charity), Epilepsy Action, Dyslexia Rooms and Disability Essex.

As a result of these links, we are working on the production of a series of awareness leaflets as well as the promotion of disability awareness to police officers and staff through the provision of information cards, leaflets and aides memoire.

Regular attendance at the Independent Advisory Group and input into these meetings also aids our liaison with community groups.

Following a request from Hampshire Autistic Society, we were able to work closely with it to support the launch of alert cards in Hampshire. This scheme has also expanded from Essex and Suffolk into Norfolk, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

It is an initiative of Autism Anglia and is funded by the organisation in order to give

young people and adults with autism a way of being recognised and dealt with appropriately by the emergency services and other bodies.

For more information on this scheme, visit www.autism-anglia.org.uk

Regular monthly attendance and input at the Probationers and Core Leadership Development Programme courses by either myself or a member of the executive committee provides essential information to staff and officers about being confident when dealing with customers or colleagues who have a disability.

This also provides the opportunity to discuss other disability-related issues in detail and in confidence.

Working with Occupational Health, we have promoted health awareness campaigns relating to disability issues. These have included poster and leaflet campaigns as well as emails and intranet articles.

This has been possible due to the dedication and hard work of our disability awareness officer, Gwyneth Brown.

The production last year of a Dyslexia Support Action Plan has led to further initiatives to improve the support on offer in-force.

This includes in-house screening – available via dyslexia adult screening tests – and the ability to carry out workplace assessments and to offer coping strategies and study skills.

I have completed British Dyslexia Association workshops for screening for dyslexia and for making reasonable adjustments and I will be working on an accreditation course to expand on the services I can offer for screening.

I have also liaised with the Metropolitan Police Dyslexia Support Team (START – Skills to Achieve Results Team) to discuss strategies for coping with dyslexia in the workplace.

The support which can be offered as a result of the initiatives above and also from dyslexia liaison officer Louise Linzell-Williams and the dyslexia support network have been publicised throughout the force by a screensaver. This successfully led to much contact being made by officers and police staff in need of help and advice.

● If you wish to contact me about any Disability Network issue, please send an email or ring me on ext 54102 or 01245 452298

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New officers to make us all feel safer

“SO the results are in from the *All I Want For Christmas* campaign and top of the wishlist was more bobbies on the beat.

In particular, people said they would like to see more police in rural areas.

Essex is a very diverse place in which to live and work – having both a lively urban environment and beautiful rural areas.

It is important to Essex Police Authority that everyone in Essex feels safe. One way of ensuring this is to provide an increased and visible police presence on the streets.

We are moving towards this with the help of Operation Apex – the first tranche of 110 officers will have been recruited by the end of next month.

These officers will be divided between all territorial divisions so both rural and urban areas will be gaining some of the new recruits to our Essex Police family.

As the need for a police presence is sometimes greater in town centres, rural residents may feel that they do not see police officers and PCSOs as much as they would like.

It is therefore important that you all continue the fantastic neighbourhood policing work which you are carrying out.

I would particularly ask rural neighbourhood policing teams to encourage your local communities to speak up and let you know what their priorities are and to make sure that they contact you with any issues or concerns that they may have.

Then, together, we can all help to make the county even safer. ”

Specials' training is now condensed

EIGHT members of police staff and two members of the local community are the first group to complete the Essex Police Special Constabulary condensed, three-week foundation training course.

In a move supported by ACC Derek Benson, police staff have been given dedicated duty time to complete training so they can take on duties with the

Essex Police Special Constabulary.

He said: “This will give police staff the opportunity to experience front-line policing and benefit from the high levels of training in teamwork, leadership and problem-solving.”

Matthew Walden, of IT, was one of the first people to complete the training course. He said: “This was a fantastic

opportunity to compress what would have otherwise been 16 weekends of training into three uninterrupted weeks.

“Since completing the initial training I have enjoyed being teamed with my full-time colleagues over several shifts, putting what I learned into action.”

● Police staff can contact Nichola Hurley on ext 56142 for more

MORE people will be aware of the history of Essex Police thanks to the kind generosity of the late Anthony Peel, former chairman of Essex Police Authority and trustee of the Essex Police Museum.

Mr Peel left a £500 bequest to the museum in his will and last month his widow Julia, accompanied by Mr Peel's sister Angela Marks, presented a cheque for £500 to the chairman of the museum committee, DCC Andy Bliss, chairman of the museum trustees Barbara Liggins and committee members Alan Cook and Bryan Turner. Mrs Liggins said: “Tony was held in the highest regard and the trustees were grateful for his very generous bequest, which will be used in his memory, in a very wise way.”

Museum curator Becky Latchford said: “The donation is very welcome as it will enable us to purchase material for a travelling exhibition, which can be used for events, such as police station open days.”



● Angela Marks née Peel, far left, and Julia Peel present a cheque to chairman of Essex Police Museum trustees Barbara Liggins, right, and chairman of the Essex Police Museum committee DCC Andy Bliss

Picture by Heather Turner

Streamlined Activity Analysis benefits all

THE introduction of a new user-friendly, tailor-made Activity Analysis computer package will provide the force with better quality information, more quickly.

The new eForm – introduced last month in Central Division – will help to improve safety and increase efficiency.

The annual, two-week Activity Analysis survey is a mandatory Home Office requirement. It was previously completed on paper and it used to take the team seven months to manually collate, analyse and publish the results.

Now, divisional results will be available a fortnight after the conclusion of each survey and the forward results will be published a month after the last divisional surveys finish on March 30.

A pilot was carried out in Western last September and the quick results gave a valuable insight into various areas of policing and deployment of officers, police staff and resources, said divisional commander Chief Supt Tim Stokes.

“We were able to ascertain a number of things, including that the Safe Crewing

Policy was being adhered to, ensuring safe deployment of officers,” he said.

“The results also showed that we deployed far more double-crewed units at night, when safety is more of an issue.”

Chief Supt Stokes said that the division would look to use future surveys to look at other areas, such as reducing paperwork.

He added: “The new electronic system was much easier to use and gave results very quickly.”

A new, small leaflet will be issued to all police officers and participating police staff prior to their divisional Activity Analysis fortnights to help them fill in the intranet-based eForm – which can also be completed on PDAs.

Participants will each receive an email detailing their user ID, password, a link to the eForm and ‘help’ contact details.

As usual, time spent on policing activities will have to be completed on a daily basis for the entire fortnight.

But Cathy Mansfield, who leads the Activity Analysis team, said that eForm was a positive development because it was much quicker and easier to fill in.

“Not only is the new, electronic system more sophisticated, it allows us to produce more refined results.

“One of its features is that you can ‘select’ several blocks of 15 minutes for the same task, rather than selecting each block of 15 minutes individually,” she said.

“Another is that all information comes straight back to us – cutting out the need for it to be double-checked by a sergeant and divisional liaison officer, which was very time-consuming.

“This simplifies the process even more and this can only be beneficial to divisions. “As we will provide results so much more quickly, the information will be more timely and relevant.

● Find eForm by clicking on the link provided on your Activity Analysis email, alternatively, it is listed on the Applications menu on the intranet or on the Activity Analysis intranet site, which can be found on the Information menu

Central Division's Activity Analysis fortnight ended on February 9, Western's runs from February 2-16, South Western's is February 23-March 9, South Eastern's survey is from March 2-16, Eastern's runs from March 9-23. Finally, Mobile Support, Crime and Stansted Airport divisions fortnight is March 16-30.



Ian Mott, of Property Services, looks at our carbon emissions

Looking after Essex Police and the environment

LAST month I said I would look at the environmental impact of our energy consumption.

Well, if I just take the measured gas, electricity and fuel oil we use in our buildings so far this year, we have created in excess of 7,000 tons of CO₂.

And this does not include any of our transport or any indirect contribution from police officers and staff in getting to work etc.

In fact, the contribution to our carbon

footprint from direct energy consumption is likely to be considerably above this figure.

This is because we have a large number of buildings where, due to access problems, meters are not read as often as they should be and known readings are always approximately a month behind.

So the actual figure for our energy consumption is likely to be in excess of 1.25million tons for the year.

It can be seen from this figure that there is a considerable incentive to look at how we can reduce this impact.

The ten per cent reduction in our gas bill by dropping the temperature to which we heat rooms and buildings by 1°C equates to about 210 tons of CO₂ with a saving of about 42 tons of CO₂ from our oil consumption!

A final thought – the average car contributes four tons of CO₂ for every 12,000 miles it travels.

● Next month I will look at how we can reduce the cost of and carbon emissions from electricity – which is one of the highest contributors to both cost and carbon emissions

New intranet site to help in rape cases

A READILY-accessible point of reference for all staff dealing with victims of rape or sexual assault can now be found on a new intranet site – Managing Rape Investigations.

Through this site, divisional rape co-ordinators, their deputies, sexual offences trained officers (SOTOs) and investigators can access all relevant material to assist their respective tasks.

The site also provides an ideal opportunity for all employees to brief themselves on the latest policies and procedures.

It also includes a library containing local and national information, which details the latest developments on how rape allegations are investigated, our performance and other agency material that seeks to provide an over-arching view on multi-agency work currently being undertaken to improve conviction rates.

Specialist senior investigating officer on rape investigations Det Supt John Quinton said: “The new intranet site provides a wealth of information and practical benefits, including the ability for staff to access the on-call SOTO list, book the relevant sympathy or vulnerable victim suite, training and links to other associated information.”

The intranet site will continue to be developed with regular updates and new initiatives to ensure that it maintains its purpose as a point of reference.

● The Crime Division – Rape Investigations intranet site is listed under the Divisions & Departments menu

Unit opens to look at online child crimes

THE Police Online Investigation Team (POLIT) has opened for business.

Based at Landon Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU), the office will be under the supervision of Ds John Woodley.

POLIT will concentrate on tracking down and prosecuting online paedophiles – investigations that were carried out by either the CAIU or by officers on division.

Head of CAIU DCI Dave Peplow said the POLIT was a “great step forward”.

“It will allow us to further develop our expertise in this highly-specialised and growing area of crimes against children.

“There has been significant investment from the force for this year and next, recognising the importance of this work.

“The POLIT will work with the CAIU and the Hi-Tech Crime Unit and working practices are being developed to ensure that not only will the best possible service be delivered to the victims of crime but that we have the highest possible chance of bringing offenders to justice.”

● Contact POLIT on 01268 244099

Extended air support leads to 42 per cent rise in arrests

THE Air Support Unit (ASU) flew into 2009 on a high note when it broke its yearly record for hours spent in the air. The helicopter – call sign Quebec Hotel 99 – passed the 1,000-hours mark for the first time while flying operations on New Year's Eve.

QH99 has averaged just under 1,000 hours a year for the past five years but the ASU collaboration with Kent, which started last year, has dramatically increased flying time for the team.

The unit is expected to have clocked up around 1,300 hours when the current fiscal year ends in March.

Now that the helicopter is covering Kent, the total number of tasks has increased by 30 per cent and resulted in a 42 per cent increase in arrests, as a result of direct or indirect helicopter support.

Sgt Russ Woolford said: "The collaboration with Kent has allowed us to extend our hours to benefit both Essex and Kent. It has meant that Kent gets cover and Essex gets extended flying cover."

"Working on the other side of the Thames has not hindered our local operations at all and, very often when flying back from Kent, we are quickly diverted to a job in Essex."

The extra funding has also enabled the unit to extend its operation times and shifts now start earlier and finish later.

Two extra full-time observers have been taken on and the team of pilots has been augmented with "floaters", freelance pilots who also fly for other forces.

Between April 1, 2008, and January 23, 2009, QH99 attended 2,323 incidents, flew 1,078 hours and was involved in 84 direct arrests and 195 assisted arrests.

Thirty missing people and 52 missing vehicles were located and the aircraft carried out area searches totalling 3,082 square km.

0300 333 4444 is our 'one-stop' for non-emergencies

THE Essex Police non-emergency number 0300 444 3333 will replace individual phone numbers for Essex police stations when they are disconnected this month.

Unless it is an emergency – in which case, dial 999 – everyone should be using 0300 333 4444 to contact us.

The 24-hour, seven-days-a-week service, introduced last March, connects callers to the switchboard, which then directs them to the most appropriate person, department or station.

Head of Customer Services Claire Heath said: "The non-emergency telephone number has been in use for almost a year and we now receive over 40 per cent of non-emergency calls through it."

She is encouraging all police officers and staff to give out either their direct dial number or their extension together with the 0300 333 4444 number.

Cougar task force is a roaring success



● Pc Anthony Kopf, from Rochford and Pc Jo Barnes, based at Brentwood, during a Cougar search team investigation in Central Division

Pictures by Bill Stock

OPERATION Cougar encompasses a rapid reaction squad – that goes anywhere, anytime to tackle crime problems, track down prolific offenders and make arrests – and a specialist team – on stand-by every day to search crime scenes and the homes of arrested suspects.

It was launched in September 2008 for a three-month trial but has proved so successful that the team is expected to be made permanent and expanded.

The figures speak for themselves: more than 320 people have been arrested; detections stand at 48.62 per cent and the search team, whose members are all police search team (PST) qualified, has a 70 per cent strike rate in finding evidence.

Operation Cougar was born when Chief Constable Roger Baker and his executive team identified a need for a flexible squad that could help the force's five territorial divisions with tasks based purely on priority.

Where divisions might struggle to release enough officers from their regular duties when urgent tasks arise, the Cougar team can be called in almost instantly.

Assistant Chief Constable Peter Lowton said: "Operation Cougar is something I am passionate about because it has resulted in fewer crime victims and many more arrests in Essex."

"Task forces are nothing new in policing but we have created a dedicated team that is small, can do anything and can go anywhere to complement the hard work being carried out on divisions."

"It is about giving a high level of support at the right time and in the right place."

"We have taken the task-force concept, re-shaped it to meet our needs and added a highly-skilled search team that is available every day."

"A lot of people have come up with little ideas that have refined the team and made it the tremendous success that it is," said Mr Lowton, who heads up the Territorial Policing portfolio.

"The officers who work on the team have worked tirelessly to achieve such outstanding results. I have the highest regard for their professionalism and dedication and they are a good reminder of what brilliant officers and staff we are lucky to have in Essex."

Topping the Cougar task force's agenda is the targeting of known offenders, especially prolific and priority offenders (PPOs), and the team has had considerable success in finding burglary and robbery suspects, including many from outside the county, who regularly travelled into Essex to commit their crimes.

Reacting to crime trends 'on the day' is another task for Cougar officers, who can quickly be sent to crime hotspots to make specific inquiries or to carry out high-visibility or covert patrols, as required.

The innovative Cougar search team is being hailed as a major breakthrough, thanks to the speed with which highly-trained search officers can be dispatched.

Ten officers a day are assigned to Cougar duties and a sergeant in charge of the search unit will check overnight incident reports or custody details early each morning to decide where the team or teams should be deployed.

This initiative has already produced impressive results. One



A MOUNTAIN lion known for its stalking and hunting skills and wide variety of prey has provided the perfect operational name for a successful task force launched by Essex Police, writes press officer Bill Stock.

of the most significant successes came during the search of the property of a man arrested on suspicion of drink-driving and possessing drugs.

The Cougar team recovered three stolen vehicles, a safe containing cash, jewellery and crack cocaine and items stolen from a parked lorry. The discoveries led to two other properties being searched.

Cougar's task force consists of a sergeant and nine officers from territorial divisions and Mobile Support Division (MSD). They are split into two teams, which can work together or separately on a six days on, four off shift pattern.

Sgt Gerry Parker said: "The team was set up in two weeks last September. Each territorial division in Essex was asked to send one officer, including a detective, and there were three, including a traffic officer, from MSD."

"Team members had to be highly motivated, enthusiastic and have specialist training in using riot gear, dealing with public order offences and also, where necessary, breaking open doors to arrest people."

"The great thing about the team is our wide range of skills. In all, it's a really useful unit to have prowling around Essex."

"When we started there was no lead-in time. We had a meeting for a couple of hours then hit the ground running. We had some significant arrests in Basildon on our first day when, during high-visibility patrols, we detained two people for drugs offences."

"The results have been astonishing and are testament to the tremendous effort being put in by all of the Cougar team," said Sgt Parker.

"Divisions are warming to us because we are taking over jobs that we can do a lot faster than a team that might have to be

Significant investigations

- Police in Basildon received intelligence identifying suspects from a burglary an hour earlier. A Cougar team was diverted from its original task, arrested them and recovered stolen property
- Thurrock officers called in a Cougar team to help execute a large number of drugs warrants. Two significant cannabis factories were found and several suspects were charged
- Cougar officers were called to Burnham to help find a man suspected of causing grievous bodily harm. The team helped

put together locally.

"We have the skills to go looking for wanted people and have the time to keep on looking until we find them, whereas a division might not have that flexibility."

"It took us a week to find one prolific burglar by waiting and watching various addresses he was linked to. The divisional commander was delighted with that arrest and sent us a message thanking us for nicking a man who had been causing big problems on his ground for several weeks."

Sgt Steve Powell, who runs the Cougar search team, said: "We carried out 225 searches between September 1 and December 31 and recovered evidence from 70 per cent of them."

"The results overall have been stunning and more than double the average success rate of searches carried out overall around the county."

"The difference is that our teams are made up of search specialists, rather than any officers who might be free and brought together on a division."

"We also have the luxury of dedicated resources and can take as long as we wish."

Sgt Powell explained that a search team was put on stand-by every morning and he selects where they should go after checking who is detained at the various custody suites around the county.

He looks for incidents where an arrested suspect's home could be searched to seek further evidence for a prosecution. The team might also be assigned directly to the scene of an overnight crime.

Sgt Powell said: "By 8.30 to 9am, we know where the team or teams will be going for the day and they are called into our base at Boreham to be taken to the scene of incidents or to the home of arrested suspects."

"We often go out of the Essex area if the Metropolitan Police or neighbouring forces say they do not have the capacity to search the home of someone arrested in Essex."

"We have had some cracking results and have found a whole range of things, from firearms and explosives to evidence from a large brawl in which people were seriously injured, and have recovered many items taken in burglaries."

"In one case, a man was arrested in Essex on suspicion of a series of burglaries in the south-east of the county and, when we searched his home in London, we recovered most of the jewellery it was believed he had stolen."

"And one of the most unusual incidents came one morning when we were carrying out a series of searches on addresses in connection with a wide-ranging investigation."

"Word obviously got round on the grapevine after the first two raids because, when we arrived at a third place, a suspect was walking out carrying a box full of just the sort of information we were looking for."

to preserve the crime scene and arrested a man who later pleaded guilty at crown court

● A man suspected of a series of burglaries at supermarkets in central Essex was traced to an address in London. Although he was known to be violent towards police and did react violently when approached, Cougar officers were able to deal with him

● After a mini-crimewave, in which parked cars were broken into at Lakeside shopping centre, West Thurrock, the Cougar team laid in wait and made an arrest



● Pc Andy Sumner taking a suspect under arrest into custody at Chelmsford

Memory card proves useful in case of a missing child

POLICE officers, PCSOs and special constables are being sent an aide memoire which will help them respond appropriately if they come across someone who has an autism spectrum condition and carries an autism alert card.

Two thousand of the cards have already been issued, which were produced with help from Autism Anglia.

The aide memoire reminds officers how to respond to card carriers and what information can be found on the card.

Disability Network coordinator Denise Chaplin said an officer investigating the case of a missing child had told her how useful the card was to him.

He was able to speak to the missing child's parents with an understanding of the condition and, when the child was found, ensured that the child was treated with patience and allowances made for the child's behaviour.

Use of the alert card has been expanded further, with the Norfolk, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Hampshire forces now taking part in the scheme, and interest from Canada has been forwarded on to Autism Anglia by Essex Police.

● Visit www.autism-anglia.org.uk

Chief briefs chambers of commerce on force budget

MORE than 60 business leaders attended an Essex Chambers of Commerce business budget briefing to hear Chief Constable Roger Baker set out his policing priorities for 2009/10.

Mr Baker and Essex Police Authority chairman Robert Chambers took questions from them and encouraged feedback in order to find out how the force can work better with businesses across Essex to improve services and reduce crime even further.

Last month's meeting followed on from the launch of the Essex Crime Against Business Forum in November, at which the force pledged to work more closely with firms to combat crime.

Mr Baker told business leaders that successful policing in the county would continue to drive down crime and anti-social behaviour, while improving detection rates and taking a customer-first approach.

Achieving the highest levels of confidence and satisfaction were his ultimate aims, he told them.

At the briefing, the force's draft budget

and Council Tax precept for 2009/10 were set out.

The intended service investment in front-line policing includes the first 110 of the planned 600 additional officers under the banner of Operation Apex being recruited by the end of March, the meeting heard.

Mr Baker said: "We are delighted to have a genuine dialogue with our business community partners and look forward to working with them now and in the future to improve our service."

"Essex Police aims to do business differently and we certainly hope to gain support and expertise from those in the business community to assist us with that aim."

Essex Chambers of Commerce chief executive John Clayton said he was delighted to co-host the event with Essex Police "which enables them to engage with local businesses."

"We are pleased that feedback from Essex Chamber members shows that business crime levels in Essex are only about one-third of the national average."

"It is important to us that this continues

● Budget briefing: Chief Constable Roger Baker



and businesses are not troubled by crime issues.

"We have had a good working relationship with Essex Police for many years. They are and continue to be responsive to the needs of business members."

Working with business community to fight crime

FOLLOWING the launch of the Essex Crime Against Business Forum in November, police officers and police staff should be aware that Essex Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) is carrying out its annual Crime Against Business survey.

Every business in the county is being encouraged to complete and return the 2009 survey forms – being distributed this month – to the Essex FSB.

National surveys suggest that one in five crimes against businesses go unreported and one of the reasons given for not reporting such crimes is that it will affect insurance premiums.

In 2004, Essex FSB launched its first Crime Against Business survey, coordinated by home affairs spokesman Ken Wickham.

Mr Wickham said the organisation had been receiving anecdotal evidence that Essex business owners were not reporting crimes committed against themselves, their staff and their premises, so it decided to test this with an extensive survey.

The results supported the anecdotes and a

second survey two years later showed similar results.

But the force is hoping that such attitudes will change, following the launch of the Essex Businesses Against Crime Forum in November and closer working with the business community.

Insp Chris Willis, the Volume Crime lead at HQ Territorial Policing, said: "The results will be shared with the force as part of this ongoing partnership and will assist us in maintaining and improving our quality of service to businesses which suffer crime and disorder."

Mr Wickham added: "The Crime Against Business Survey 2009 is being distributed in February, thanks to partnerships with several local councils, crime and disorder reduction partnerships and other business organisations."

The deadline for completing the survey is April 30.

● To find out the questions the Essex FSB is asking its members, neighbourhood policing officers and PCSOs should visit the survey at www.fsb.org.uk/essexcrimesurvey

Getting all jazzed up

A CHARITY jazz-a-cise at Essex Police HQ helped to raise money for the Essex Police Benevolent Fund and the Helen Rollason Heal Cancer Charity. Organiser Sandra Higgins, head of Procurement, thanked everyone who turned up or made a donation to raise a total of £290 – £165 was given to the benevolent fund and £125 to the cancer charity.

Intelligent PDAs

INTELLIGENCE reports can be submitted quickly now PDA users have the facility to remotely input CID 61s via their PDAs.

Instructions on installing the 'mobile' CID61s, including links, have been emailed to users. Problems with installation should be reported to IT Service Desk.

Feedback – positive or negative – can be sent to the IT project team via the PDA Feedback email address.

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A selection of letters sent to our divisions and departments, thanking us for a job well done.

TO Chief Supt Graeme Bull: I AM writing you to commend two of the finest in the Braintree police district Pc Andrea Ford and fraud investigator David Ware.

In mid-August I purchased a collectable piece of Beatles memorabilia from a resident of Braintree and sent him a banker's draft for £312.

The seller acknowledged receipt and cashed it at his bank in Braintree.

He then notified me that my item had been sent and would arrive in Dallas within five days.

I didn't receive the item so I emailed the seller and left a voice message on his phone. It wasn't long before I realised I was being defrauded out of the money.

I visited the Essex Police website and found a number for Pc Ford and emailed her.

She forwarded my email to fraud investigator David Ware, of Great Dunmow, and he was happy to assist.

The seller was visited and confessed to fraud. He was given a deadline to refund my money but failed to do so and was arrested and bailed. Then on November 6 he walked in to Braintree police station with a banker's draft for the full amount, which Pc Ford posted to me.

She said she had also explained the consequences to the man should he ever commit fraud again.

Because of the actions of Pc Ford and Mr Ware, I have been repaid the money I sent. They never wavered in their efforts to bring a successful conclusion to this case. I never believed I would see a penny of my money again.

I can't speak highly enough of these two fine members of your police force. They are a credit – completely professional, responsive and willing to go the extra mile for me despite the great distance between us.

It was their effort alone that put an end to a very upsetting and frustrating ordeal for me.

**MN
Dallas
Texas**

I WOULD like to acknowledge Pc Karen Davis and Pc Paul Singleton's helpfulness in our local area.

In particular, I would like to thank them for their co-operation with all our enquiries and minor problems – which, thanks to their quick responses, have been solved within a very acceptable time.

They are both a credit to the force and we would like to thank them both for their joint cooperation with all our surgery.

**The Rigg-Milner Medical Centre
East Tilbury**

TO Dc Gary Sainty, Pc Duncan McMaster, Dc Mark Robinson, Dc Paul Restarick, Pc Gareth Hennessy, Pc Eva Verlander and PCSO Mark Ling:

I would like to express my thanks and great appreciation for the way in which the break-in at my house was handled.

I was treated with great care and consideration; it

made the whole experience so much easier for me and less stressful.

Thank you for all the support you gave me.

**K M
Sturmer**

TO Pc Duncan McMaster:

We would like to thank you very much indeed for the tremendous support and community contact you have given our village over the past year and for taking the time to come to our monthly parish council meetings.

Your skill with the young has really helped to restore stability in our village and your softly, softly approach, we are convinced, has proved that the 'old copper' style – being about and talking to everyone – has borne more fruit than any heavy-handedness could ever have achieved.

Everyone in the village knows you now and respects you, which is a great bonus.

We look forward to your being in our community for many years to come.

Thank you on behalf of all the parish councillors and parishioners of Castle Hedingham for all you have done for us over the past year.

Castle Hedingham Parish Council

TO Chief Insp Alan Gooden:

I am writing to express my thanks to Pc Duncan McMaster – I know the police do not normally deal with these matters.

My puppy was taken from me by a young girl who gave me a cheque which bounced.

Pc McMaster made several enquiries and managed to locate the whereabouts of my puppy.

He made arrangements for me to collect my puppy from Maldon police station. I now have him back, which is all due to his hard work. I really cannot thank him enough.

**JH
Sible Hedingham**

TO Chief Insp Alan Gooden:

After a boy was assaulted in Sawbridgeworth, your officers from various stations quickly responded to assist Hertfordshire units when two suspects made off from the scene.

They acted with a high degree of enthusiasm and in a highly professional way and, as a result of their excellent work, two men were quickly apprehended at Stansted Mountfitchet railway station.

On behalf of Hertfordshire Constabulary, I would like to convey my grateful thanks for the outstanding way that Pc Hannah Griffiths, Pc Mark Hercules and special constable Joseph Berman acted to help detain these men.

**Chief Supt Al Thomas
Eastern area commander
Hertfordshire Constabulary**

TO Chief Constable Roger Baker: I write to congratulate you on the excellent performance of two of your officers, Pc Gemma Crowson and Pc Andy Quinn, both from Braintree Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime Unit (DAHCU).

In the course of their duties, they had to call at my address to take a statement from my wife and then take her to a subsequent interview in Takeley.

They were a credit to your force. They were extremely efficient, obviously very well trained, and accomplished

their work in a very friendly manner. It was a pleasure to meet them, and to co-operate with them.

**MK
Great Dunmow**

TO Chief Constable Roger Baker: I have once again had occasion to speak to Martin Reed and Trina Goodchild about licensing.

In these days when it is so easy to complain, I would like you to accept this as a letter of much appreciation for their outstanding kindness, help and forethought and informality of approach to me, best summarised as 'nothing was too much trouble to please'.

I know that many other people who come in to contact with Trina, particularly, also have the same sentiments as me. She really is the most delightful person.

May I wish you well in all your efforts to police Essex, in the thorough way you set out initially.

**CG
Witham**

I WOULD like to thank Pc Adam Bowsett for his great effort in aiming to assist me in trying to resolve a water damage problem to my ground floor property in Springfield from an above flat where the occupants have not been around for some time.

Pc Bowsett was able to alleviate stresses incurred as a result of the situation, just by his co-operation and going the extra mile.

I trust that his reassuring effort is what is needed for the police force today with a desire to solve problems.

**AF
Danbury**

TO Chief Constable Roger Baker: In these days when so often it is easy to criticise, a few words of praise will not go amiss.

On November 9, a Remembrance Sunday service was held at St Andrew's Church, Hatfield Peverel.

A very large congregation from a cross section of the village attended.

The first reading was read out in a clear and faultless manner by our village PCSO Nikki Doubleday.

There were a number of compliments given to her for being at the service and participating in this special Remembrance Sunday event.

**PA
Nounsley**

TO Chief Constable Roger Baker: Tonight, someone broke the glass in my front door. I was in the lean-to at the side of the house and, by the time I'd got to the door, whoever had done the deed had disappeared.

I felt angry enough to phone the police. Within minutes, which seemed like seconds, two officers were at my door asking for a description of two adolescent boys I had seen on my way back from my neighbour's house.

They left immediately to see if they could spot anyone.

Within minutes, Sgt David Goodchild and a colleague arrived. They were calm and very efficient, sympathetic and kind.

Sgt Goodchild took a statement, which I signed, and he reassured me the police would keep watch.

I am writing because all I know about the police comes from audio-book detective

stories. Coming into contact with the real thing – Sgt Goodchild, Sgt Andy Jopson and PCSO Michael Joslin – left me feeling impressed and somewhat overwhelmed by how good they are, how considerate of my feelings, how gentle and how efficient.

It is very good to know that when things like this happen a good, strong police force is ready and waiting to help.

**EB
Maylandsea**

TO Chief Insp Alan Gooden: Following an incident involving both me and my wife, we were in trauma.

My wife was not only physically injured but was, and still is, severely shaken mentally, her confidence – so strong normally – has been shattered.

The officer on the day of the incident, and over several subsequent visits and phone calls is Pc David Tann. I want to express my sincere thanks to him for the careful, courteous and professional way he has dealt with us and particularly the way he has dealt with my wife.

His manner and professionalism are both to be admired and commended in the way that he has dealt with the brittle psyche that is my wife at this time.

His patience has helped enormously to start the rebuilding of the confident person that I know of old.

**SJ
Stisted**

TO Pc Mark Thomson:

I wanted to thank you and your colleague Pc Kirsty Lucas for taking the heat out of a rather nasty domestic situation.

My wife and I apologise for any inconvenience and appreciate the efficient and sensitive way in which you handled the matter.

**JR
Walton on the Naze**

TO Becky Latchford:

Thank you for letting us come to Essex Police Museum.

I enjoyed making gas masks and I enjoyed going into the bomb shelter where the little girl spoke and where we had to sing a song.

I learnt how the children felt when they had to go in to the bomb shelter. I also learnt how the people in World War Two had to get to the bomb shelter and how hard it was.

My favourite part was all of it – I loved every second.

**A Year 6 pupil
Chalkwell Hall Junior School
Leigh on Sea**

TO Insp Simon Werrett and Loughton Neighbourhood Policing Team:

Thank you so much for allowing me to accompany your officers as they went about their duties.

I found the experience most instructive. I feel I have a better appreciation of the diversity of incidents to which they respond.

Also, in speaking with your

community response officers, I gained an appreciation of their commitment to the communities they serve.

Observing their interaction with the young people from their respective areas, I realised that positive relationships have been forged.

**Cllr Ann Haigh
Buckhurst Hill West**

I WOULD like to thank Sgt Mark Galbraith and Pc Michael Budd, who assisted in the recovery of my van and the subsequent arresting and successful charging of the thief.

I see at a real level what you have to deal with on a daily basis and, as such, I was pleasantly surprised at the time and effort taken on my behalf. I really did feel as if my case was important.

My particular thanks must also go to Pc Janine Spokes, who was extremely helpful and kept me informed throughout.

I have before considered joining the force both full-time and as a Special and, having seen the example set by your staff over the last month, that would have been exactly to what I would have aspired.

**RW
Westcliff on Sea**

THIS is just to thank Pc Paul Clarke, Pc Sarah Brunt and Sc Mick Chatten at Braintree police station for the help that I was shown following the theft of four geese from my garden.

I cannot thank them enough as they have shown that they do care.

**PW
Braintree**

TO Chief Insp Alan Gooden: Just a line to let you know how very observant your officers are.

I had left my front door ajar and also my porch door to let my cat out and Pc Clive Meakings and Pc Paul Clarke noticed this.

They knocked on my door to see if everything was alright. In hindsight it was a stupid thing for me to do and I shall not be doing it again.

They were so kind and I though the least I could do was to write in and have them thanked for being so observant. Our policemen are on the ball!

**EW
Braintree**

TO Chief Constable Roger Baker:

I suspect you don't get as many letters complimenting your staff as they deserve and so I thought I would bring this matter to your attention.

A camera lost in Saffron Walden was traced, via a car-owner in Belgium, back to the camera owner in Saffron Walden.

It would have been extremely easy for service desk assistant Paul Webb to file the camera with all the other lost property but he was obviously prepared to go the

extra mile to find the owner.

One one hand, a lost camera is an almost insignificant event to Essex Police. On the other, if one could stack up the goodwill created by thousands of tiny events like this, one might move the world.

**TR Register
Didcot
Oxfordshire**

TO Central Division Tactical Team and Pc Lee Humberstone: With reference to the concrete crusher stolen from the yard at Takeley, we would like to thank all those involved in its safe return.

Thank you for your assistance and concern.

**R A Swann Ltd
Great Hallingbury
Hertfordshire**

TO Chief Supt Graeme Bull:

I am writing to thank all the officers who helped in the search for my father.

Although the outcome was not the one we hoped for our family felt we should write to say how impressed we all were with everything you all did.

We were very grateful for the very kind way you coped with my father's wife.

Please pass our special thanks to Pc Hannah Kirk and Pc John Hallworth for all their help and support, particularly Pc Kirk, who, we know, went out of her way on many occasions to help us.

**ST
Roxwell**

TO Insp Susan Heaton:

I would like to thank the officers who helped when my son lost his bicycle.

From Pc Aman Taylor, who initially attended to interview my son, through Sgt Jeff Moye, at Wickford, and to Pc Chris Burch and his colleague, from Billericay, who accompanied me when I thought I had found it – only to be disappointed.

All your team have been extremely helpful and supportive.

I realise that, in the scheme of things, my son's loss is not of great importance and this makes the service received even more refreshing.

**PW
Shotgate**

TO Chief Supt Maurice Mason: I would like to commend Pc Darren Fountain and Pc Michael Bray, who attended the surgery.

I was extremely pleased with the level of support shown to us in a frightening situation where we were being threatened and abused.

Pc Sharlene Cronin and Pc Joanne Borawski came to see me and were equally supportive, providing pragmatic advice and counselling.

Thank you for having such a good team. It is good to know that, even with all the complexities and challenges of managing resources in the public sector, you have made us feel secure and protected.

**Murree Medical Centre
Basildon**

NINE ACTION awards were made by the £100 awards were: Pc Glen Higbee and Pc Sean McHale, of Stansted Airport Division; Pc Trevor Edhouse, Pc Neale Gleeson and Pc David Frost, of Mobile Support Division; Pc Mairhi Mowbray, of South



Western Professional Development Unit; Steve Sears, of IT; Paul Anley, of Communications Division; and Sue Foxon, of Crime Division.

Achievement focus; Customer first; Taking responsibility for performance; Inspiring high standards; Overcoming hurdles; Never accepting second-best. The recipients of



HAVE YOUR SAY: Write to Heather Turner, Law Letters, Internal Communications, Police HQ, PO Box 2, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6DA or email heather.turner@essex.pnn.police.uk
Letters and emails must be no longer than 300 words and must include your full name and home town. The deadline is the 20th of each month.
We reserve the right to edit or omit letters. Please be aware *The Law* is reproduced on the internet and circulated to the media.

Thanks to all who helped me celebrate my retirement

I WOULD like to say a big thank you to everyone who came to see me on December 31 to celebrate my retirement.

I was absolutely amazed by the number of people who arrived and can only apologise that I wasn't able to chat to everyone properly.

I'd like to thank everyone for their presents, cards and good wishes and I think it is fair to say that I was completely overwhelmed on the day.

Special thanks to ex-Chief Insp Geoff Crux, who came along and said a few words to the assembled crowd. It meant a great deal to me as it was Mr Crux who gave me my first job as

uniform audio typist at South Ockendon in 1971.

I enjoyed the 32 years I spent with Essex Police, particularly the seven and a half years at South Ockendon and the last 16 years as command team secretary based at Grays.

I met some lovely people along the way and, hopefully, will keep in touch with some of them. I will miss lots of the people I worked with at Grays and would especially like to thank the three lovely ladies in Grays Admin who made my last few weeks at work very happy ones.

Dee Wakeling

**Former command team secretary
South Western Division**

Mum would be honoured

ON behalf of my family, I would like to thank both officers and police staff, past and present, who attended my mother Jean Fisk's funeral at Harlow Crematorium on Friday, January 9.

It was nice to see so many familiar faces and I am sure she would have been honoured by the number of people who attended.

Pc Paul Fisk
HQ weapons Training

That Neighbourhood Policing works is not news to me!

THE first issue of *The Law* for 2009 really taught me something, with the opening headline 'Neighbourhood Policing works'.

Well, well, that's exactly what I said 40 years ago when my detached beat was about to be closed.

Guess what, no-one took a blind bit of notice – surprise, surprise. I suppose I was a mere Pc.

Observation 2. Why is it that the police service has to follow Government jargon and use the term 'rolled out' whenever some new system or procedure is about to be launched (sorry) or introduced?

As Basil Fawlty would have said, does the Government have a department for silly phrases?

Dave Rose
Linton

Down Memory Lane ...



THIS photograph of the Southend Borough rugby team was taken in about 1968 or 1969. It was sent in by former constable Fred Simpkins, who is pictured in the front row, second from left.

Mr Simpkins is trying to identify the man pictured seventh from left in the back row and those pictured in the front row, numbered one, three, five and six, from the left. Mr Simpkins is hoping to trace them in order to invite them to the reunion of Southend Borough which he has organised for March 28 at the County Hotel in Aviation Way, Southend.

Southend on Sea County Borough Constabulary amalgamated with Essex Constabulary on April 1, 1969, to become Essex & Southend on Sea Joint Constabulary. Five years later, to the day, the force was re-named Essex Police.

The Law is planning a special anniversary issue in April as, not only is April 1 the 40th anniversary of the amalgamation, it will also be 40 years since the first issue of The Law was printed.

- Contact Fred Simpkins at fsimpkins@talk21.com for information about the reunion.
- If you have any reminiscences or pictures about life in the Southend County Borough force or the amalgamation, please contact The Law editor Heather Turner at the address given at the top of this page

ESSEX POLICE



OUR PLEDGE TO ESSEX

Our local Policing Pledge:

- tells the public what they can expect from our neighbourhood policing teams and how to contact us
- sets our standards of customer service
- ensures the public are consulted when setting local priorities and influencing actions
- ensures the public are updated on our progress with their neighbourhood priorities

What part do you play in the Essex Policing Pledge?

To find out more, visit the Neighbourhood Policing intranet site and click on Policing Pledge

*The Essex Policing Pledge –
policing our communities together*

ACTION



Is the force cueing in new Croker Cup champs?

THE force cue sports championships saw several representatives through to the regional competition. Winners were: Snooker singles - Lee Heaton; snooker doubles - Alan Gooden and Steve Oakes; retired snooker - Rick Matthews; billiards - Peter Orpe; men's pool singles - Andy Myers; men's pool doubles - Chris Holmes and Mick Pitcher; women's pool singles - Annamaria Tabrett; women's pool doubles - Emily Freeman and Jackie Cade; retired pool singles - Mark Jones.

● THE Croker Cup swimming gala on February 1 saw a win for South Eastern Division.

Other results were: 2 Eastern; 3 HQ; 4 Western; 5 South Western; 6 Central.

● SOUTH Eastern are also stretching out their lead at the top of the overall Croker Cup table.

Last year's runners-up have 65 points, eight more than second-placed HQ.

Central Division, holders of the cup for the past few years, are languishing back in joint third place with Eastern Division, on 31 points each.

Western Division, on 28 points, and South Western, with 27 points, are bringing up the rear.

● FORTHCOMING Croker Cup events are:

Darts on Sunday, March 8 at Southend police station, at 11am. Contact organiser Ian Collins via email.

Men's five-a-side football on Friday, March 27, from noon. Contact organiser Denis Angell via email to register.

Stuart selected as senior rep

STUART Ashton, Communications Division operations manager, has been selected as the senior British Police representative for the national PSUK snowsports squad competing in the European Championships next month in Sweden, which are held every four years.

Sadly, keen skier Stuart won't have time to compete because he will be representing the squad at official functions, which include meeting the Swedish Chief of Police.

Stuart is the treasurer of the PSUK snowsports section.

Put the dates in your diary now
Hello Dolly!

by Essex Police Musical Society

Tuesday, April 21-
Saturday, April 25
all performances start
at 7.30pm
plus a Saturday matinee
at 2.30pm

Set in turn-of-the-century New York, Hello Dolly! tells the story of a 'matchmaker' who sets out to snare the man for whom she has been asked to find a wife
Ticket details to follow



● The Essex Police Sunday League team are playing their second season of competitive football

Bright lights on the football horizon

THE force's Sunday League team are the bright lights in an otherwise bleak football landscape.

Sadly, the football section this season is desperate for players to participate in several competitions.

Now in their second season of competitive football, the Sunday team - who compete in Division Three of the Braintree and North East Essex Sunday League - are currently lying eighth in the table.

Sadly, the Saturday side, which had been playing in Division One of the Mid Essex League, folded at the end of September through lack of players

And now the Veterans' team are finding themselves short of players because of a growing injury list.

They have defaulted on two of their PSUK fixtures this season and lost to the Metropolitan Police while a home game against Hertfordshire on February 4 was called off because of snow.

However, the Vets are hoping to complete their home fixture against Suffolk, due to be played on Wednesday, February 18, at HQ.

The situation for the Vets side is particularly ironic as they are the national title-holders. And they are sitting third in Division 2 (East) of the Essex Veterans League.

Manager Joe Wrigley said: "As national champions we should have a queue of players trying to get in but I am really struggling to field teams to fulfil our group fixtures."

"I understand that people are busy these days with work and with their home lives but competitive sport is a fantastic way of keeping fit both in body and in mind."

The force also enters a team into the South Midlands Cup - who are lying mid-table - and the PSUK national knockout competition, which has yet to start.

Football section secretary Gary Heard said he would be glad to hear from keen footballers who could give up their time on Saturdays, Sundays or Wednesdays to play.

"It is a shame that we have so few people able to play at the moment, especially given our success in the past."

"The Sunday League team is the one bright spot at the moment but even then we struggle to put out the same side every week, which makes it difficult for the team to gel. However, they have not had to call off a game through lack of players."

● Contact Gary Heard or Aaron Heard by email to find out more or, if you are a veteran player - over 35 - contact Joe Wrigley by email

● Alternatively, visit www.essexpolicefootballclub.co.uk

In with a chance!

OUR cross-country runners will be keeping their fingers crossed until the Regional Police Cross-Country League results are announced.

They had been due to compete in the final fixture at Thetford on February 4 but it was called off the previous day.

Then, Essex were lying in first place in all three competitions - well-placed to complete a truly historic 'double triple' by repeating last year's triumph in the men's, women's and veterans' categories.

However, they will have to wait until the Regional Police Championships on February 25 to see how the final results are calculated.

Section captain Mick Bond says the team's ambition is now to complete this year's 'double' by winning the championships, to be held in Gravesend, Kent.

The teams' positions after what turned out to be the final race last month in Reading (Thames Valley Police) were: **Men:** 1 Essex 129 points; 2 Norfolk 179 points. **Women:** 1 Essex 72 points; 2 Norfolk 80 points; 3 Hertfordshire 81

points. **Veterans:** 1 Essex 51 points; 2 Norfolk 119 points.

● Essex were leading all the team categories after the three pre-Christmas fixtures and so were hoping for a good showing at the January race.

Despite worries about fielding their smallest squad of the season - six men, including five veterans, and one woman - things turned out well.

Bond said: "Fortunately for Essex, these seven were the most committed and determined bunch of runners you could ask for."

"And, luckily, no women's team were able to field the three runners required."

Leading by example - having found a late opportunity to compete - Bond was determined to make the most of his chance, gaining his highest placing (fifth) for over three years and also ensured himself of at least the individual over-50 award at the end of the season.

This season's Croker Cup winner, Russ Welch, the only non-veteran man in the Essex side, found the slippery, water-logged course difficult to cope with but was still placed seventh.

Great efforts by Veteran Over-40 (V40) Dave Wood (tenth) and V50 Don English

(12th) not only saw the team home but should also see both amongst the individual awards for their respective age groups.

Once again, vital support came from V40 John Jackson (15th) and V50 Pete Bryan (17th).

It was fortunate for Essex that they were not the only team unable to field three runners and Amanda Pollard (6th) did enough to keep Essex at the top of the women's placings.

● In December, Essex had hosted the third regional fixture, incorporating the Croker Cup.

The women's course of 2.8 miles was won by Essex runner Wendy King. She was ably backed up by Rachel Wood (4th), Rachel O'Connor (6th), Stacey Cocks (8th), Amanda Pollard (9th) and Jo Taylor (13th).

Paul Cardy, of Hampshire, won the men's race of 5.9 miles but Russ Welch (5th) claimed the Essex title, ahead of Bond (6th).

V40 Dave Wood (7th) and Nick Morris (11th) ensured the Essex men secured a win on home soil. English (12th) completed the Essex veterans scoring team and added yet another win to the tally.

Thurrock detective wins the jackpot

THE winner of the January force lottery draw, was Dc Jeremy Gay, of Thurrock, who wins £3,000.

Jason Keyte, of Colchester South, took home second prize of £1,000 and Jacqui Barrett, of Southend, won the third prize of £500.

Winners of the £100 prizes were: Vic Murphy, retired; Pc Barry Edwards, of Stanway Road Policing Unit (RPU); Pc Paula Pettet, of Basildon; Pc Gavin Freeman, of Rayleigh RPU; Pc Nicola Coote, of Colchester; Pc Kevin Thomas,

of the Force Support Unit; Pc Dale Beverton, of Dunmow; Kate Heard, of HR; Pc Matthew Geldart, of Laindon RPU; Kelly Field, of Brentwood; Rebecca Duff, of St Osyth; and Lester Elkington, of Essex Police College. Winners of the £50 prizes were: Heidi Evans, of Southend Central, Sgt Mark Wilson, of Witham South; Robert Rogers, of Southend; Pc Martin Richards, of Colchester Professional Development Unit; Ds Mark Merry, of Colchester; Chief Insp Mark Schofield,

of Mobile Support Division; Dc Patrick Ring, of Rayleigh Major Investigation Team; Dave Swann, of the Criminal Justice Department; Pc Adam Clarke, of Castle Point; Pc Sarah Paterson, of Chelmsford Town; Sc Darren Forest, of Laindon; Pc Tracey Bishop, of Chigwell RPU; Raymond Finch, of Chelmsford; Pc Gary Jackson, of Southend; Insp Justin Smith, of Chelmsford RPU; and Pc Stephen Bolingbroke, of Epping Forest.

Cricket nets beckon in a new season

THE force cricket team is gearing up for the new season by organising a number of pre-season net practices.

New players are encouraged to attend the nets at Essex County Cricket Club's County Ground in Chelmsford.

This season, the team will be taking part in the PSUK national and regional competitions.

Organiser Adrian Garnham said: "If you are new to the force, whether you are an officer, Special, PCSO, or member of police staff, please feel welcome to come along and demonstrate your skills."

"Once nets have finished, we hope to arrange a trial match to give new players the opportunity to break into the First XI."

Practice dates are Tuesdays March 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31. All sessions are from 2-4pm.

● Email Adrian Garnham or ring him on ext 489604 to express an interest in playing or to ask any cricket questions



● Christian Robinson ext 58883



HERE at Essex Police Sports Association HQ, we are busy planning budgets for next year and looking for new ways to ensure our members are getting value for money.

Sports shop - one of our plans is to open the shop five days a week and it will also be open two evenings per week.

We have already started to diversify the stock range by introducing perfume at greatly reduced prices.

We are also stocking the new range of Magnum boots.

If you have any suggestions for other items you would like to us to stock, please pop in to the shop, at HQ Sports Pavilion, and let us know.

Member benefits - we will carry on looking for new and different types of benefits to add to our present list, which is available on the EPSA intranet site - listed under Divisions & Departments on the intranet.

I will be re-designing our intranet site to make it easier to navigate.

We plan to launch an external website this year, which will help those members who do not have access to the Essex Police intranet, to keep up-to-date with all the member benefits on offer.

Again, if you have any helpful suggestions, please let me know via email at christian.robinson@essex.pnn.police.uk or by ringing 0300 333 4444 ext 58883.

David gives someone the gift of life



● New media manager David White has donated his blood stem cells to help to save someone's life

Picture by Marc Berners

NEW media manager David White is encouraging people to volunteer for the Anthony Nolan Trust (ANT) Register after being called in to make a donation of blood stem cells. Although he does not know any details about the recipient of his stem cells, David says the experience was worth it as he knows he may well have helped to save a life.

David, of Media & PR, has been donating blood for over 20 years and is also on the ANT Register, which lists more than 390,000 people who are prepared to donate their blood stem cells to those with leukaemia and other fatal bone-marrow diseases. David was contacted in December and after a medical he was confirmed fit to donate. After a series of painless injections at home, carried out by a nurse, David spent two days at University College Hospital, London.

He said: "A popular myth about stem cell donation involves associations with long needles pushed into your bones under general anaesthetic and lots of pain but times have moved on and the modern methods are quite different. You don't even have to be the same blood type.

"The trust is careful to fit in with your work and home life and I was able to work normally right up until the days before the donation."

In hospital, David's blood was collected, the stem cells separated out, and then the remaining blood returned to his body via a needle in his arm.

"After a final blood test on the second day I travelled home. Apart from being a bit tired over the weekend I felt fine and returned to work the following Monday," he said.

"I would really like to encourage others to join the register. If you are already a blood donor you probably qualify already and it's easy to join. All you need to do is check the general criteria, fill in a form and give a small sample of blood."

To join the Anthony Nolan Trust Register, you must be between 18 and 40 and you can donate until your 60th birthday.

● To find out more, contact David on 0300 333 4444 ext 55818 or visit www.anthonynolan.org.uk



● Maldon mace-bearer Sgt Richie Miller

Picture courtesy of the Essex Chronicle Series

Town honours sergeant with historic role

A FAMILIAR face in Maldon has a new role as the town's ceremonial mace-bearer.

Sgt Richie Miller was appointed when his predecessor retired after holding the post for more than 20 years.

As the local sergeant working closely with the town council for the last ten years he was honoured to be asked to take on the role.

The mace-bearer attends meetings of the full council and ceremonial occasions attended by the mayor, including Victorian Evening and Remembrance Day.

Sgt Miller said: "It's an honour to be given the job and I am looking forward to this new role. I am recognised as the local police sergeant and it will be nice to have recognition for other work in the community.

"Maldon is such an old town, full of old traditions dating back hundreds of years, and it is nice to be a part of that civic pride and living history."

Historically, the mace-bearer would protect the mayor, using the mace to clear crowds who lined the streets at public events.

Today's mace was created in 1687 out of silver gilt and is inscribed with the initials of Queen Anne, who reigned from 1702 to 1714.

Changes to OSPRE syllabus

THE National Policing Improvement Agency has revised part of its OSPRE syllabus for Part 1 Constable to Sergeant and Sergeant to Inspector exams.

The changes are due to revisions and updates to PACE Code A and Conduct and Performance Regulations.

As a result, some sections of the Blackstone's manuals are out of date.

● For more details, visit the OSPRE intranet site, listed under the Information menu

Dignity at work is paramount for everyone

ALL force personnel will be sent a copy of the revised Dignity at Work policy which now relates to the new disciplinary codes of conduct for police officers and staff.

The policy was last updated in 2001 and since then there have been changes in legislation, including the introduction of age discrimination. The revised policy also incorporates job titles.

Assistant Chief Constable Sue Harrison, who holds the Operational Support portfolio, said: "Not treating people with dignity and respect is not an option – you will know that Essex Police expects the highest standards of all our people and I am confident you will not let us down."

All employees are asked to read the policy, which supports the Confidence and Equality strategy.

Line managers will be discussing the Dignity at Work policy with police officers and staff during the forthcoming round of PDRs – personal development reviews – and a copy of the policy will be retained on personal files.

Cadets celebrate LGBT month

CADETS have put up a display in Essex Police College for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender (LGBT) month.

If you haven't yet completed your National Occupational Standard (NOS) AA1 assessment on Promoting Equality and Valuing Diversity for your PDR (personal development review) – visiting the display before the end of this month may help.

Farmers won't be caught napping

FARMERS and police in west Essex have joined forces to combat rural crime in a pioneering project that is attracting interest across the county.

Nearly 70 farmers around the Epping Forest district are linked to police and each other via email and are exchanging information about thieves and how to keep them at bay.

The email network is run by crime reduction officer Tony Ellis, who circulates news of local rural crimes and details and descriptions of suspicious vehicles or people seen lurking on farms.

The farmers also exchange images caught on their CCTV systems.

by Bill Stock

As a result of sharing information, rural crimes have been reduced and arrests made.

In one case, a farmer circulated details of a suspicious vehicle seen on his land – three weeks later this led to a vehicle being stopped and two people arrested on suspicion of stealing fuel and farming equipment.

The success of the scheme has led to the setting up of a farmers' neighbourhood action panel (NAP) and a ride-along scheme where farmers join officers on patrol to check for suspicious activity and show them little-known tracks across their land.

Acting Insp Tom Simons, who devised

the project with Mr Ellis, said: "The email 'family' allows us to quickly circulate information to remote farms.

"The NAP is proving to be a great success and our second meeting in January attracted many farmers and landowners and also representatives from the local council, the National Farmers Union, The Corporation of London, which runs Epping Forest, and the Young Farmers Association."

Further initiatives are planned, including a tack-marking scheme and specialist crime prevention advice visits in conjunction with the NFU.

Mr Ellis added: "The idea has attracted a great deal of attention from police and farmers across Essex and in other forces and we are giving them advice on how to set up their own networks."

'Determined to identify bodies'

TWO and a half years after the bodies of two men were found just off the A12 near Witham, officers from Stanway Major Investigation Team have finally been able to draw a line under the case.

At the end of December, confirmation came through from India of their identities.

The case began in June 2006 when two immigrants were dumped down a small side road at Little Braxted by Lithuanian lorry driver Georgji Negatin and left for dead.

They had nothing on them that gave clues to their identity and the case initially appeared unsolvable.

However dogged investigation, involving travel to Belgium, Denmark

and India, finally resulted in sufficient evidence to convict Negatin of manslaughter.

In December 2007 he was jailed for eight years, with the recommendation that he was deported on his release.

But the identities of the two dead men were still outstanding.

After working with police in India, case officer Dc Angela Hastings believed she had names for the two men and, last June, she travelled to the country with senior investigating officer Det Supt Tim Wills and Dc Richie Adams to collect blood samples from the families and to make other enquiries.

Dc Hastings said: "There is no DNA database in India and the families had

no understanding of how we could identify their sons through their blood."

Finally, at the end of December, confirmation came through that the men had been formally identified as father-of-three Gurbaksh Singh, 34, from Fatehabad and Chaten Walia, 22, from Jalandhar. Now, when formal procedures have been completed, their bodies will be repatriated.

Dc Hastings said: "While it is sad for their families at least they know what happened to their sons or husband and they can grieve for them.

"It has been a very long, complex case that has been the biggest challenge of my career but ultimately it is satisfying to reach this conclusion."