



NPIA
National Policing
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Specials

The voice of the Special Constabulary



Special Constable and Police Support Volunteer Awards 2010

A Full Review

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Introduction

The awards ceremony was a great occasion in that it reminded us of the great diversity of effort within the work of specials and volunteers. There was tremendous innovation in some of the projects celebrated but also examples of long term dedicated effort. The various speeches reminded us of how relevant specials and volunteers are to the current focus on improving engagement with the public, and the Government's ideas on the 'Big Society'.

The award for Cumbria showed how specials can assist with times of extraordinary demand but also their strong local knowledge and links with local people. The Ferrers award was very well deserved and showed how specials can take up distinctive roles in different parts of the country, such as the unique territory of the City of London.

The new police minister is clearly very committed to volunteers and specials in particular. I do not regard this as about saving money, it is about the fundamental relationship between police and people, and the fact that we are all citizens in uniform and we want everyone to play their part in making their community safer.



I am always conscious at these awards ceremonies that award winners are just the tip of the iceberg and merely some examples of many other fine individuals doing outstanding work and providing great service week in, week out.

Chief Constable Peter Fahy QPM
ACPO National Lead for Special Constabulary

The 2010 Awards Ceremony

This year's ceremony was held at the Church House Conference Centre in Westminster on 17 June. The ceremony celebrated the roles performed by specials and volunteers from forces throughout England and Wales, recognising their tremendous efforts in supporting the police service and assisting local communities.

Angela O'Connor, Chief People Officer at the National Policing Improvement Agency, said, "It is vital that we thank the thousands of community-minded people who carry out a wide range of work to prevent and tackle crime. The NPPIA is committed to finding ways of working closely with forces to see how volunteers can help paid officers and staff work even more effectively."



"We are helping forces attract and retain high quality candidates to ensure they continue to give a first-class service to their colleagues and the public."

Views of the Home Office Policing Minister

Nick Herbert, Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice, presented the awards and paid tribute to the work carried out by special constables and police support volunteers, commenting that:

"Special constables and police support volunteers embody the proud British tradition of people giving up their own time to help others.

They are a shining example of the 'Big Society' in action, demonstrating the role which individuals and communities have in helping to fight crime.

I want to see more special constables and new ideas to unlock the potential of volunteers in the police workforce.

I would like to offer my thanks to all the award winners and hope their example will inspire others to offer their services to the community."

He further indicated that he was delighted to see that 131 nominations had been received for these awards compared to 77 last year.



"Special constables and police support volunteers embody the proud British tradition of people giving up their own time to help others."

About the awards

The Ferrers Awards, first held in 1993, were created by the then Home Office Minister Earl Ferrers. These awards recognise, at a national level, the importance of the duties performed by special constables. The awards were subsequently renamed the Special Constable and Police Support Volunteer

Awards in order to recognise the tasks performed by non-attested, non-uniformed volunteers who also give-up their time freely. Their time and effort allows regular police officers and police staff to attend to other operational duties. These awards are a key component of the yearly calendar for those performing voluntary duties in support of the police service.

The judging panel for the 2010 awards comprised of an Independent chair, representatives from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Association of Police Authorities (APA), Association of Special Constabulary Chief Officers (ASCCO) and the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA).

Ferrers Trophy

Winner – Special Constable Patrick Rarden, City of London Police

This year Special Constable Patrick Rarden from City of London Police was chosen to receive the Ferrers Trophy Award.

Patrick took on the task of building a skills register and a list of officers willing to help the force to improve efficiency and reduce costs. He then set out to demonstrate personally how special constables can contribute to the Economic Crime Department.

Patrick, a special for four years, started as a special delivering training courses for the department's detectives to improve their understanding of the financial system, and how complex financial instruments may be used to launder cash. He quickly moved on to use his skills and experience in banking to contribute directly to solving cases. He has been involved not only behind the scenes but in interviewing



suspects. The Serious Fraud Office has now requested his secondment to assist and support them in a complex investigation.

At the same time, Patrick's deep interest in community engagement and policing saw him working in uniform with the Wards Policing Department to solve community problems, one of the largest of these being the safety and security of people sleeping rough on the streets. He established a new charity called 'Waste Not Want Not' in partnership with the 'Worshipful Company of Fruiterers' and 'Eat', the sandwich shop chain. The charity uses electric vehicles to collect surplus products from 'Eat' shops and

distribute them to those in need, via the Salvation Army and Veterans Aid.

Patrick is a tremendous example of a committed and dedicated special constable using his skills and experience to best advantage the community.

“It's a great privilege to win the award and I'd like to thank the City of London Police's Economic Crime Unit for allowing me to work with their investigators to tackle financial crime”.

Runner-up

– Area Officer Nigel Kettlewell, North Yorkshire Police

Area Officer Nigel Kettlewell of North Yorkshire Police was chosen as the runner-up for the Ferrers Trophy. He was presented the award for identifying a trend in the Eastern Area of North Yorkshire, which covers hundreds of square miles of countryside and is traditionally subject to an upturn in theft offences in

the winter months. Nigel organised what became 'Operation Drystone – Rural Crime', which had the aim of increasing police visibility in the rural area to improve confidence and deter offending.

In addition Nigel also brought another police force on board and worked closely with colleagues to co-ordinate efforts as well as arranging for support from local park rangers and neighbourhood watch schemes.

The operation itself resulted in over 400 vehicles being stopped and checked by



police in the rural border areas. These stops resulted in eight arrests, over fifty breath tests and tickets being issued for motoring offences.

Team Award

– Cumbria Specials, Cumbria Constabulary

This year's Ferrers Team Award was not given to a particular team but instead was awarded to all Cumbria Constabulary specials. This was due to the tremendous work carried out by the specials team during a prolonged period of significant flooding in the area during 2009. At that time special constables throughout the force turned out on duty, from the initial response to rising flood waters, right through to the end of the recovery phase.

Throughout both the response and recovery phases, specials were employed on a variety of duties from cordons and bridge guards to evacuation and rescue, the searching of flooded properties and also working in their own Neighbourhood Policing Teams to cover for abstracted regular officers.



The specials demonstrated resilience; working long hours in challenging conditions helping to cover

12-plus hour shifts day and night to keep people out of severely flooded areas and away from danger.

On receiving the Team Award, Area Officer John Coward said, "I was honoured to accept the

best team award for the duties carried out by specials during the November floods. It is fabulous to be nationally recognised for the sheer hard work that was carried out by officers in demanding and arduous conditions."

These efforts demonstrated the value of the Special Constabulary in times of emergency and their support was invaluable in protecting and supporting the community.



Highly Commended

– Gipton and Harehills Neighbourhood Policing Team, West Yorkshire Police

The Gipton and Harehills Neighbourhood Policing Team were commended for the efforts they made to become fully integrated into neighbourhood policing by effectively using their skills and local knowledge. The overwhelming challenge for the Neighbourhood Policing Team was to reduce crime and increase public confidence. The team has been involved in delivering neighbourhood policing

through community projects and meetings, problem solving initiatives, plain clothes operations and two dispersal orders. After a concerted and prolonged effort the team have helped to reduce burglary in the area by 10 per cent over 12 months through their tremendous work in managing offenders, tackling burglary and building public confidence through partnerships.

Highly Commended

– Special Constables Team, Cleveland Police

The Special Constables Team at Cleveland Police were commended for playing a key part in increasing public confidence through integrating themselves within neighbourhood policing in the district of Cleveland.

They assisted with drugs raids, led warrant operations and anti-social behaviour patrols as



well as providing high profile and plain clothes patrols, demonstrating an excellent

example of a dedicated and highly organised Special Constabulary team.

Highly Commended

– Special Constable Susan Holliday, Cumbria Constabulary

Special Constable Susan Holiday of Cumbria Constabulary was commended for introducing 'Farm Watch' for the farming community. Susan spent many hours of her own time at local auction markets meeting the farming communities, outlining the benefits of the scheme, visiting farms, carrying out crime prevention surveys and installing

data tags to vulnerable equipment. She is now also issuing smart water kits.

“I am very pleased to have been nominated and delighted to have been highly commended”

There are now in excess of 330 members signed up to the scheme and overall crime in relation to theft of quad bikes and farming equipment has fallen considerably since the scheme has been running.



Highly Commended

– Special Constable Christopher Coombs, West Yorkshire Police

Special Constable Christopher Coombs of West Yorkshire Police identified a challenge, and through his own sense of personal responsibility, provided a solution.

He has developed a range of successful products which includes the development of a drink driving Envitec Intoxiliser learning aid (which ensures that officers remain within the law) and a language tool, which comprises of visual aid cards enabling officers to deliver a more focused service in an increasingly diverse work environment.



Christopher has ultimately been instrumental within Wakefield in breaking down both internal and external barriers, initiating learning

and effectively utilising technology for the benefit of the public.

Police Support Volunteer Individual Award

Winner

– Jurek Wozniak,
Wiltshire Police

The Police Support Volunteer Individual Award was presented to Jurek Wozniak. A volunteer with Wiltshire Police, Jurek has played an important role in the development of a call-back facility to improve public confidence and the availability of information for the Neighbourhood Policing Team

(NPT) tasking group meetings. This has resulted in a high success rate of contact and a positive response from within the community.

In the eight months that the call-back scheme had been running (at the time of nomination), a total of 524 members of the public in the Trowbridge NPT areas had received feedback calls from Jurek. Additionally he has also helped to improve the use of local data systems, helping to reduce bureaucracy.

“The work I do gives me great satisfaction, as I can see the benefits it brings to the community and to the police officers that I support, it’s also interesting”

His skills as an interpreter have also proved invaluable, assisting with translation for Polish non-English speaking members of the public during investigations and searches for Polish missing persons.



Highly Commended

– Alison Prefontaine,
Metropolitan Police
Service

Alison volunteered in a complex and sensitive area of policing and provided commendable assistance in the review of materials relating to investigations of serious sexual offences.

Using her previous expertise to apply systems and processes Alison’s efforts helped free-up police officer time to investigate other crimes and increased the efficiency of the systems



supporting the unit’s work. Alison’s involvement in this area has made considerable

improvements to the investigation team with which she has worked.

Highly Commended – Wayne Tudball, Gwent Police

Police Support Volunteer Wayne Tudball has assisted Gwent Police in raising awareness of mental health issues by talking to student police officers and police community support officers about these issues. Wayne has shared stories with officers and staff to increase awareness of mental health issues in a number of ways. He has also assisted in delivering formal mental health training for custody officers and police officers as well as attending focus groups on these issues.

Wayne’s commitment to raising the profile of mental health issues means that he is very effective in raising officers’ understanding of mental illness, the impact this can have, and the wide range of people that can be affected.

Wayne’s significant input into the design and delivery of ‘Listen Harder, Listen Better’, a community-led training event, has further demonstrated how effective his input has been. Of the 200 officers that attended ‘Listen Harder, Listen Better’, around 95 per cent agreed that they would apply the learning from their mental health session to their everyday role.



Winner – Leicestershire Volunteers Team, Leicestershire Constabulary

This year’s Police Support Volunteer Team Award went to the Leicestershire Volunteers

Team who are providing support to Leicestershire Constabulary. The team’s efforts have been instrumental in raising awareness of the issue of distraction burglary by creating ‘No Cold Calling Zones’. The team devised a short questionnaire and information pack which was delivered to all households, they liaised with the local council and information was provided at public forums and local residents’ meetings.

A total of 67 zones have been set-up involving 2,200 households, with more planned for the future. This has helped to protect many vulnerable people and to free-up valuable police time. Distraction burglary has subsequently reduced by over 62 per cent in the borough which is testament to the success of the team’s dedicated efforts.



Highly Commended

– Brent Mystery Shopper Project, Metropolitan Police Service

The Brent Mystery Shopper Project for the Metropolitan Police Service is an initiative aimed at developing an ongoing process of mystery shopper checks. The volunteers make monthly visits to all borough stations to help quality assure service delivery, monitor calls to assess whether they have been responded to within 24 hours and check the internet sites of all 21 Safer Neighbourhood Ward Teams to assess the quality and accuracy. After completing these checks the volunteers produce



a detailed report outlining their observations and feedback. Progress made against these reports is monitored by the volunteers on a monthly basis to ensure the improvements are being or have been carried out. This project is being delivered as an ongoing process rather than

one-off spot check.

Latest police confidence figures have risen in Brent from 28 per cent to 34 per cent. This is the first time in 18 months that an increase in these figures has been achieved, which is a testament to the efforts of these dedicated volunteers.

Highly Commended

– Bikesafe Volunteer Observers, North Wales Police

The Bikesafe Volunteer Observers team from North Wales Police ensure that vulnerable road users are provided with education to influence attitudes, behaviour and reduce road injuries. The intention of BikeSafe is to address these issues and encourage riders to take further training.



The volunteers give practical demonstrations of enhanced rider skills by using the System of Motorcycle Control and assess attendees during a workshop to provide developmental feedback. The volunteers use their own motorcycles and fuel, and provide their time free of charge, clearly

demonstrating how highly committed they are.

Statistics for the area show that the number of fatalities fell by 62.5 per cent (from 8 deaths to 3) between 2008 and 2009 and serious injuries to motorcyclists

fell by 33 per cent (from 88 to 59). This is a testament to the work carried out by the Bikesafe Volunteer Observers in educating individuals. Their work is an excellent example of the valuable expertise that volunteers can bring in support of the police service.

Achievement in Recruitment Award

Winner

– Volunteers Team, Cheshire Constabulary

This year the award for Achievement in Recruitment went to the Volunteers Team from Cheshire Constabulary. The team were tasked to implement the new National Specials Assessment Recruitment Process, while significantly increasing the number of special constables.

The team increased the efficiency and effectiveness of their



application process, and candidate processing by holding monthly open evenings.

The team's achievements included implementing the national process, which enabled consistency in the recruitment of specials, ensured robust quality assurance systems were in place, and resulted in a 75 per cent

average pass rate.

The cost per candidate more than halved and their target of 105 special constables was exceeded by 74 per cent for 2009/10 due to the new recruitment process allowing all assessment tools to be delivered at one time.

Highly Commended

– Buxton Division Community Safety and Human Resources Team, Derbyshire Constabulary

Buxton Division Community Safety and Human Resources Team of Derbyshire Constabulary were tasked with:

- increasing the number of applications to the Special Constabulary

- increasing success in the recruitment process
- improving retention during training by using the training period to generate commitment and contribute to retention.

This team were the driving force behind a local recruitment campaign and training programme which required a commitment of support from the force and then a great deal of time publicising this initiative in the local media. They went over and above their normal roles in conducting numerous interviews and taking part in weekend courses to progress the successful applicants through the training process. At the time their nomination was submitted the team had managed to achieve a 100 per cent retention rate.

Accepting the award on behalf of the team, Inspector Tony Dales said: "I was delighted to receive this award, which recognises the hard work undertaken by both divisional and headquarters staff."



Highly Commended – Senior Section Officer Brendan Black, West Yorkshire Police

Senior Section Officer Brendan Black of West Yorkshire Police played a leading role in developing a structure of management and communication, where responsibilities are clarified and delegated appropriately.

Among Brendan's innovations is the development of a sophisticated and flexible statistical monitoring of hours and other performance data. This has enabled the development of individual and team performance management and enhancement systems, as well as the recognition of the excellent commitment shown by specials under Brendan's leadership.

Yet it is perhaps through his commitment to training in division and at force level that Brendan has done most to enhance the professional development of officers. Brendan took the Certificate in Education in order to equip himself to play a leading



role in the initial training weekend courses for specials. At the same time, he shared responsibility for delivery of the training programme to the division's current specials; identifying team training needs and often devising and delivering content to meet that need.

He remains a key member of the divisional management team for specials, whilst increasing his commitment to force-wide recruitment, selection and training.

