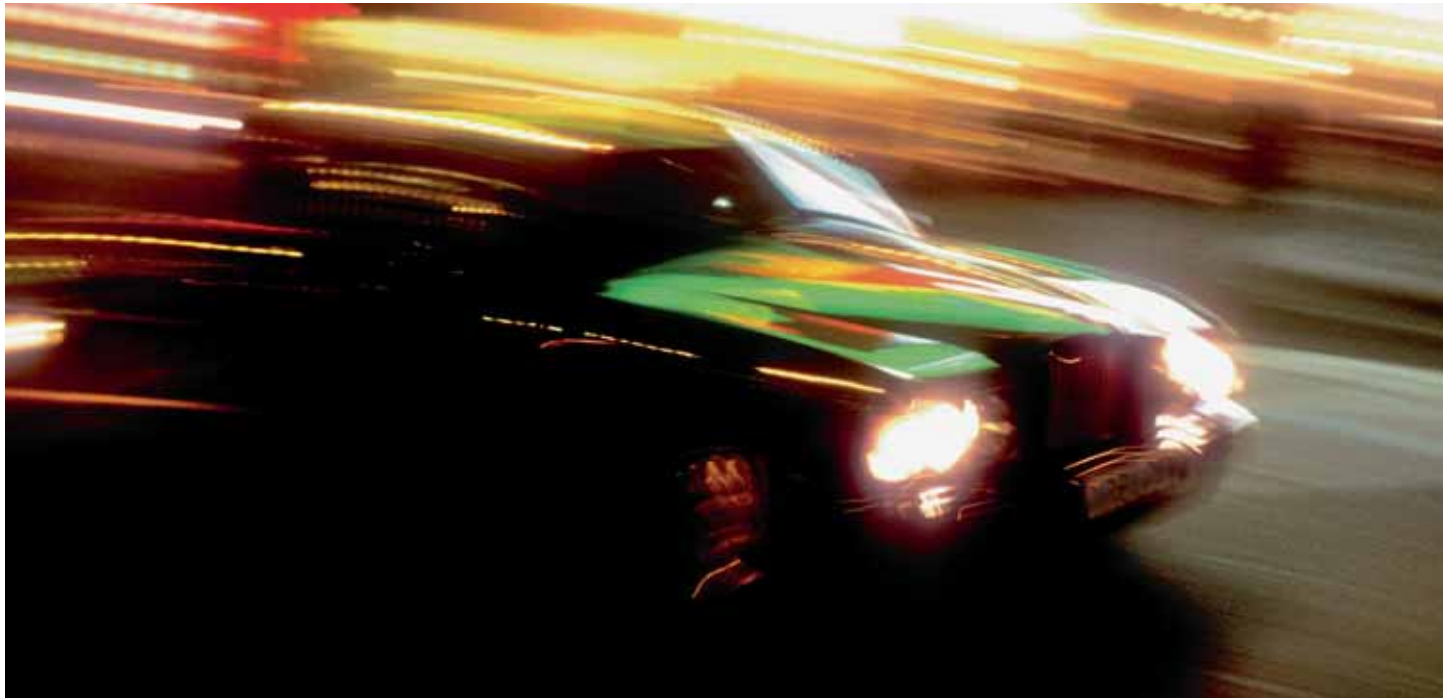


## IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD



## AVON &amp; SOMERSET WEST YORKSHIRE

## FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE

**HOW A REGULAR IN AVON AND SOMERSET HAS TAILORED TWO OPERATIONS TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS OF THE SPECIALS SHE WORKS WITH**

Special Constables in Avon and Somerset are making a real difference to the lives of local communities through two initiatives that target anti-social behaviour and traffic offences.

Operation Echelon was established in Radstock, part of the Bath District, to tackle the issue of anti-social behaviour among local young people by setting up a community awareness campaign to educate parents and the wider public. The problem was so bad that it was featured on a Panorama programme.

Large quantities of alcohol were regularly seized from groups of up to 100 youths. Culprits had letters sent to their parents, who were very supportive of police action and often unaware of what their children were up to. High-visibility patrols and proactive intervention by Specials has almost completely eradicated the problem.

The operation was nominated for the Regional Arthur Ellis award last year and is now used as a framework in other problem areas.

In Operation Enigma, which is run in conjunction with regular officers, Specials play an integral part in tackling traffic offences covering mobile phone crime, faulty vehicles, cars with illegal tinted windows and illegal number plates, and a host of other offences.

Specials are positioned at a designated checking zone and in patrol cars staffed by officers from the Road Policing Unit (RPU) and the Neighbourhood Team. They identify cars to be stopped and then deal with each driver, issuing warnings or penalties as appropriate. They also use the specialist skills of the RPU officers, who can prohibit the use of any vehicle that is deemed unroadworthy.

Enigma has now been run on six occasions, and another three operations are planned by the end of the year.

Both operations were set up by Sergeant Georgina Dahl, who was a Special for 10 years with Surrey Police. During her time with the force she won Special of the year and several chief constables' commendations.

"I am so grateful for everything I learnt during my service, which stood me in good stead for the job I now do. I've not forgotten how valuable the experience has been and so I've taking a real interest in working with [the Specials] and developing projects for them."

Operations such as Enigma and Echelon also foster closer working

**OPERATION ENIGMA – RUN IN AVON AND SOMERSET – SEES SPECIALS WORK ALONGSIDE REGULARS TO TACKLE TRAFFIC OFFENCES**

relationships between Specials and regulars as well as getting them out and about in the community.

"Both these operations were designed predominantly for Specials as a way to develop existing skills, but they are also used to build up confidence among inexperienced officers and to provide an ideal safe learning/training environment for officers being tutored."

The most recent Operation Enigma focused on criminals travelling along the A37, the link road between Bath District and Bristol that is used by a lot of travelling criminals.

Special Constable Alistair Cauldwell, who has been a Special for a year with Avon and Somerset, took part in the operation. "Getting the opportunity to work directly with traffic officers and finding out more about traffic law and how to deal with this type of offence has been something I've particularly enjoyed," he says.

Special Constable Denise Osborne, who has been a Special for three years, has taken part in several Enigma operations and benefited from the experience.

"When you are taking part in such targeted activity you get clear results at the end of it. You can see how much crime you have tackled and detected and that makes your job all the more worthwhile."

Georgina says both operations have helped Specials widen their skills, which makes them a more effective resource.

## DEVON AND CORNWALL

## TACTICAL TASKING

**A PILOT SCHEME HAS BEEN SET UP IN PLYMOUTH USING SPECIALS TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC AREAS OF LOCAL CONCERN THAT FALL OUTSIDE THE DAY-TO-DAY REMIT OR RESOURCES OF REGULAR OFFICERS**

Devon and Cornwall's first ever Special Constabulary Tactical Policing Team (TPT) has been launched to carry out specific operations to address local crime problems.

The pilot, which will run until the end of the year, is based on an idea at the force's Specials conference. Members of the National Strategy committee told delegates how they had conducted a gap analysis to look at policing tasks that weren't owned by other members of the extended police family.

Inspired by this, the force decided to trial the SC TPT in an attempt to tackle some of the concerns of the public in Plymouth BCU on a Friday night. The force already has a Tactical Policing Team of regular officers and the SC TPT operates along similar lines.

## FOCUSING RESOURCES

Paul Holdship, who is the Acting Specials Superintendent responsible for the Plymouth BCU, explains that the group of between six and eight officers is assigned to tasks identified each week by senior management.

"The team is deployed to areas where they are most needed to help deal with crime prevention or reduction and anti-social behaviour," he says.

"The tasks could include high-visibility targeted patrol, mobile intervention to deal with community problems or covert patrols, and we have a secondary back tasking of carrying out bail and warrant checks," he continues.

Paul explains that the key to the effectiveness of the group is the tasking, which is carried out by the BCU tasking committee every Tuesday.

Each sector has to bid for the resources and state how they

"The key is for Specials to feel they are making a difference"

want to use them, and it is up to the superintendents to decide where best to deploy the SC TPT. This ensures that the resources are deployed to the areas that need them the most and that specific crime problems are dealt with swiftly and positively.

"If this tasking is worthwhile and focused then it can lead to some really good results," Paul explains. "It will also ensure that we retain the interest of the Specials themselves and make their roles more worthwhile. The key to the success of this pilot is for the Specials to feel that they are making a real difference to the community."

The SC TPT is being well tasked and well used by the BCU and has received positive feedback from regular officers as well as from members of the public. On recent Friday nights, the team has talked to young people to challenge their anti-social behaviour, seizing 50 cans and bottles of alcohol, making a number of arrests, carrying out stops and searches and engaging in numerous other interactions with the public.

## INSTANT ACTION

The SC TPT was called into one area that had such a problem with youths that even the local PCSOs felt threatened and intimidated by their behaviour. They managed to provide much-needed support and back-up for their colleagues and also dealt with any anti-social behaviour on the spot to prevent it from escalating further.

If this pilot scheme is successful, Devon and Cornwall hopes to roll it out across the force.

CONFISCATING ALCOHOL FROM UNDERAGE DRINKERS AND DEALING WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR HOTSPOTS ARE SOME OF THE TASKS TACKLED BY THE SC TPT IN DEVON AND CORNWALL





# END OF YEAR REVIEW

We look back at some of the teams and individuals we've featured in the magazine over the last few months and years and catch up with them to find out how their stories have progressed

## BEYOND TEAM TARGET

### WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE, AUTUMN 2005

Sharon Whitehead is a Special with West Yorkshire police. When we spoke to her three years ago, she and her fellow Specials had been trained to take part in the Target initiative, which was the force's biggest ever crackdown on crime and the fear of crime. As part of her role, Sharon, who is a Section Officer, was trained in Level 2 PSU as well as Method Entry Training.

Since then the Target initiative has come to a natural end, but the force was keen to retain the specialist skills the team of Specials had received as part of the initiative and, as a result, they were

redeployed to the force's Operational Support Unit (OSU), which is based in Wakefield.

The original Target team drew 24 Specials from across the force. This number has now fallen to 15 Specials as people have left, some of whom have gone on to join the regular force. Two of the remaining Specials have since been trained response drivers and all of them are now trained in Method Entry, which allows them to operate as a self-contained group that can be deployed to any division in the force, as required.

"The Specials do carry out their work alongside the neighbourhood policing teams, but when the need arises they have the skills to support major events where public order is paramount," says Sharon,

now in her seventeenth year as a Special.

The initiative has been so successful that the OSU is now looking to recruit more Specials into its unit.

## CANNABIS CONSTABLES

### BEDFORDSHIRE, AUGUST 2008

This year Special Officers Mark Young, Elinor Mathieson, Karen Connolly, Konstantino Alexopoulos, Mark Streeter and Derek Gray scooped the Ferrers Trophy Team Award for their work in dismantling cannabis factories.

The team is the first in the country dedicated solely to dealing with the threat of cannabis factories. Last year, the cannabis factories team seized enough



equipment and paraphernalia to produce £1.5 million worth of cannabis.

The team's tasks include carrying out arrest warrants, closing down the factories and preparing evidence for court. Six factories were dismantled in as many months.

The team also had to deal with challenging situations, and although team members admitted their work can be physically and mentally draining they all agreed that the end results are worth the effort.

Since winning the award the initiative has gone from strength to strength. The number of Specials involved in the initiative has now risen to 16 and it has been rolled out across the force.

All the participants are now trained in a range of techniques, including method of entry and house searches. This has enabled them to be used in other areas of



CANNABIS FACTORIES TEAM FROM BEDFORDSHIRE. BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: SC MARK YOUNG, SPECIALS SERGEANT MARTIN STREETER, SPECIALS CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT WAYNE HUMBERSTONE, SC ALEXOPOULOS KONSTANDINOS. FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: CHIEF OFFICER NIGEL GREEN, SC KAREN CONNOLLY, SPECIALS SERGEANT ELINOR CONNOLLY, SPECIALS CHIEF INSPECTOR DEREK GREY



SHARON WHITEHEAD, A SPECIAL WITH WEST YORKSHIRE POLICE



ON PATROL IN POOLE WITH DORSET SPECIALS AS PART OF OPERATION VENUS



DORSET SPECIALS MAKE AN IMPACT ON ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

"We have the skills to support major events where public order is paramount"

policing, in particular economic crime, says Nigel Green, Specials' Chief Officer.

"It has been a very successful initiative. We have even had a couple of other forces contact us to ask about developing the scheme," he adds.

#### VENUS GETS A SHARPER EDGE

##### DORSET, MAY 2008

Operation Venus quickly scored a number of successes when it was set up in summer 2007 to tackle underage drinking.

The team of Specials performed more than 13,000 hours of duty between them and seized over 350 items of alcohol. The officers also issued over 150 juvenile referral forms. Seventeen premises were identified for inclusion in a campaign to tackle sales of alcohol to under-18s.

Now called Operation Razor, the initiative ran every Friday throughout the spring and summer months.

The first few weeks of spring gave very good results for alcohol seizures. At the beginning of the season, large groups of youths (250 plus on some evenings) were gathering on the beach. However, once they realised that the Specials were running regular patrols across the entire division, taking details of anyone found in possession of illegal items (alcohol, tobacco, drugs and associated paraphernalia), confiscating the items, and dispersing any groups where antisocial behaviour had been reported, things changed. The numbers soon dropped to the point where the team were dealing with quite minor anti-social behaviour incidents involving groups of no more than half a dozen at a time, and some weeks there were no reports of any anti-social behaviour.

After a short break, the operation began again on Friday 24 October in the run-up to halloween and bonfire night and now includes a number of mid-week

## REVIEW

van crews. David Way, the Special behind the initiative, and Tim Luck have both been promoted to Section Officers.

## ROC CAFÉ

## SOUTH YORKSHIRE, AUGUST 2008

We featured the Specials who run the Roc café in our summer issue this year. The idea for the café was conceived two years ago by Special Nichola Kirkham, who galvanised local churches and community groups to support a scheme to provide a safe and constructive environment for young people to hang out – rather than getting into trouble on the streets. The café, run by a team of local Specials, has been open to young people for the past 12 months and has been incredibly successful.

Nichola explains how the local school has now become involved: “The new school year has brought opportunities for the new starters at Dinnington Comprehensive School to attend the ROC café and earn points in the school reward system. Each child who attends the ROC will earn five points every week and extra points for good behaviour, helping on local community projects.”

The Headmaster of the school, Mr Blackwell adds: “I have been following with great interest the developments at the ROC café. I am pleased to support any organisation that encourages young people to take responsibility for themselves.”

The attendance at the café has risen to 47 teenagers registered, with up to 35 attending at any one time, and new people are arriving each week.

The team reports that local council funding has been secured for next year, which will ensure this successful scheme continues.

## THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

## SURREY, JANUARY 2008

In September 2006 Surrey Police launched a pilot scheme that saw four Specials, including their Assistant Chief Officer Colin Dowman attached to the force's Roads Policing Unit (RPU). The success of the initial pilot led to a further four Specials joining the unit who were deployed onto two RPUs in Chertsey and Godstone.

The incidents the officers attended varied from enforcement duties, such



“Each child who attends the ROC will earn five points every week”

as issuing speeding tickets, to attending fatalities. Specials also patrolled the M25, one of the busiest motorways in the country.

Since the initial pilots, the project has continued and even attracted interest from other forces, says Colin.

“The project has worked well. We have had a number of inquiries and one force visited us recently to see how the scheme worked. They were very positive about it and intended to try and take it forward in their own force.”

The scheme has also been widened. Earlier this year four Specials were deployed onto the force's dedicated ANPR team, which comes under the umbrella of the RPU.

“The regulars could see what the Specials had achieved in the RPU and the benefits that having them on board could bring, so we extended the concept. We had four Specials attached to the ANPR unit initially and we have just recruited an additional four Specials to join them.”

ABOVE LEFT: BOB TERRY, A ROADS POLICING SPECIAL FOR SURREY

ABOVE RIGHT: NICHOLA KIRKHAM ON DUTY AT THE ROC CAFÉ

BELOW: LINDEN RILEY, STILL ON DUTY AFTER 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

## FORTY YEARS AND COUNTING

## GMP, MARCH 2008

We met Linden Riley in our March issue this year as he was coming up to celebrating his 40th year as a Special. In May Linden collected his 3rd bar from the Acting Chief Constable of Greater Manchester police at that time, Dave Whatton, in a ceremony held at Sedgley Park Police Training college on 8 May. The Lord Lieutenant for Greater Manchester, was also in attendance.

Even after clocking up such an impressive length of service, Linden still isn't considering retirement. Over the course of the extended Specials Weekend he was on duty at two football matches at the Reebok stadium and at a firework display.

In November he was on duty at his 40th Remembrance Day parade and is pleased to observe: “The crowds are greater for this event now than they were when I first attended and the public actually claps as a mark of respect as the servicemen march past.”

For the Remembrance Day parade Linden escorted the army representatives from the barracks to the cenotaph and made sure that no motorists disrupted the parade by trying to squeeze through between the representatives of the army and the airforce.

Linden is also looking forward to the annual police carol service in Bolton parish church where he takes a collection, but he's keen to point out that in addition to all the ceremonial “safe” duties he's involved in he still goes out on the “riskier” police operations, for example by assisting the warrants officer at least twice a month.



## TRAINING AND DUTIES

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

The similarities between Chester and York led to the first half of a Specials exchange to promote and share best practice

A workshop session at this year's National Conference led to an invitation from Cheshire Specials to their North Yorkshire counterparts to show them how they carried out community role-play training for new recruits.

A group of five North Yorkshire Specials visited the Western area of the force to observe the training, which involved student officers taking part in a mock street disturbance in order to test their skills in a "real life" scenario. Cheshire is one of the few forces to include community role plays as part of its training for new recruits.

The visit also included a tour of force headquarters in Winsford as well as a visit to Blacon to meet the Neighbourhood Policing Unit staff from Chester. A variety of issues were discussed including the integration of Special Constables, performance management, training, welfare, tasking and deployment.

Then the visiting officers hit the streets and went out on patrol around the city to see what duties Specials perform in Chester and also to look at how they are utilised to deliver improved policing.

## Views from the west

Special Sergeant Emma Kirwin, who works as part of Cheshire Inner Neighbourhood Policing unit, took one Special from North Yorkshire out on patrol. Emma has been a Special for three years and admits she has "loved every minute" of her time with the force.

"They seemed really impressed with the way we integrate with the regulars and the way that we are very focused on matching the right skills and abilities to the right roles," says Emma.

"It gave us an opportunity to promote the work we do and the high standards that we aspire to. It brought home



to me the fact that we have a Special Constabulary that we are all proud of."

Celvyn Jones, Specials Chief Inspector for the Western Area of the force, says: "Not only was the visit valuable for North Yorkshire, but it also gave us the opportunity to take a step back, examine our own working practices and realise just how far we have come."

Celvyn says Cheshire was widely recognised as having some of the best working practices in the country: "It was a very proud moment for us as it demonstrated how well we are performing and also that this has been noticed by other forces. We are now looking forward to a visit to North Yorkshire to see what best practice points we can learn from them."

## View from the east

Kevin Moore, Central Area Commander for North Yorkshire Specials, says: "The visit was extremely successful and allowed us to compare the working



CENTRE ROW LEFT:  
GETTING TOGETHER  
- VISITORS FROM NORTH  
YORKSHIRE SPECIAL  
CONSTABULARY WITH  
REPRESENTATIVES OF  
CHESHIRE SPECIAL  
CONSTABULARY

TOP: A VIEW OF YORK

CENTRE RIGHT: A VIEW  
OF CHESTER

practices of both forces. The similar policing requirements of Chester and York have enabled the chance for improved methods being developed.

"The Specials in Cheshire have shown a high standard of professionalism in the conduct and organisation of officers and these will be taken back to York as best practice."

Special Constables in the Western Area demonstrated their dedication to the role in July when they gave more than 3,000 hours of unpaid time. ●

# HOW TO... TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Specials can do much to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Steve Woodcock, Specials Superintendent for Lincolnshire Special Constabulary, provides some top tips for dealing with anti-social behaviour

Dealing with anti-social behaviour is a key element of the National Intelligence model and of the National Strategy for the Special Constabulary. To tackle anti-social behaviour within a community the police service must be responsive to its concerns and Specials are ideally suited to fulfil this role. It is about knowing the community, and being fully engaged with it.

Through a highly visible and accessible police presence in a specific area and by responding to community needs, some anti-social behaviour can be prevented. Successfully tackling incidents of anti-social behaviour can bring feelings of great worth for the Specials concerned. If you have ownership of a problem that needs a solution, often as part of a neighbourhood policing team, you're making a difference and having a positive impact on your local community.

## What to remember when on patrol:

- Your safety as well as that of the public is of paramount importance.
- Evidence gathering: keep first descriptions in pocket notebook of alleged offenders.
- Record witness details.

- Check CCTV footage availability.
- Preserve the scene in the case of serious incidents.
- Ensure the preservation and continuity of exhibits.

## How to issue penalty notices for disorder:

- Ensure you have evidence that a relevant offence has been committed.
- Ensure that the offender can be issued with a PND, ie that he or she is compliant, not intoxicated or mentally ill, and able to understand the process.
- No other offences should be involve unless they are so minor that a warning/caution can be given.
- If a group is involved, no-one below the age of 18 should be implicated in the offence. This prevents allegations of unfairness, which can arise when someone over 18 years is given a PND but a minor is only reported.
- Ensure you have sufficient evidence of the offender's name, age and address. The PND cannot be issued to someone who is of no fixed abode.
- The offender must not be a resident of Scotland.
- A notice cannot be issued to a third party.
- An offender cannot demand the issue of a notice.

- You cannot demand the acceptance of a notice.
- Penalty Notices for Disorder should not be issued for offences involving domestic or racial violence.

## How to deal with incidents:

- Identify and assess relevant information.
- Establish the nature of the incident – it may differ from what's on the initial report.
- Obtain relevant information from victims and witnesses.
- Prioritise and plan your actions.
- Respond appropriately, arresting alleged offenders, administering first aid where needed, and controlling the scene.
- Provide all relevant information to colleagues and update the computer system.

## Always remember

At all times Specials need to consider and show respect for the opinions, circumstances and feelings of colleagues and members of the public. Specials must always be tactful and diplomatic when dealing with people, treating everyone they meet with dignity and respect.



# COMPLETE OUR READER SURVEY TO BE ENTERED INTO A FREE PRIZE DRAW TO WIN A HAMPER WORTH £150 FROM CO-OPERATIVE FOOD



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Question: What kind of food will be in the hamper?

- a) Christmas goodies
- b) Fruit and veg
- c) Healthy options

**PLEASE TICK a), b) OR c) TO INDICATE YOUR ANSWER WHERE REQUESTED AT THE END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

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NATIONAL SPECIALS WEEKEND

# NATIONAL SPECIALS WEEKEND GALLERY



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For NPIA  
**HEAD OF SPECIALS  
AND VOLUNTEERS  
TEAM**  
Trisha Dash-O'Toole

**Story Worldwide  
EDITOR**  
Lisa Finnis  
**ART DIRECTOR**  
Dan Bailey  
**DESIGNER**  
Ogo Ikeogu  
**PICTURE EDITOR**  
Nicola Duffy  
**PICTURE RESEARCHER**  
Miguel Lamas  
**SUB EDITOR**  
Kate Guest  
**PRODUCTION  
CONTROLLER**  
Louise Foster  
**PRINTER**  
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**COVER PHOTOGRAPHY**  
PA



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