New Year - New Challenges

Welcome to the New Year and the winter newsletter. As predicted, both Neighbourhood Teams were very busy as the days became shorter and the evenings became longer. The Cardiff team focused their attention on the Rhymney Valley whilst the Pontypridd team addressed issues in the Merthyr Valley. As Halloween and Bonfire Night approached I saw some great examples of both teams engaging with staff and passengers. Sadly, the run up to Christmas saw some of my PCSOs being assaulted and attacked whilst carrying out their duties. Fortunately their injuries were not serious and those responsible were arrested.

I commend their bravery and hope the courts will deal with those responsible in an appropriate way.

On a more pleasant note, there have been some excellent examples of community engagement by both teams in schools and community groups across the region. Both teams took part in the ‘walk in my shoes’ project, taking out on patrol senior managers from Network Rail and Arriva. Positive feedback from both partners was graciously received.

In November both teams were deployed during the autumn rugby internationals in Cardiff.

Policing these events are always challenging and both teams responded with great enthusiasm, mixing reassurance policing with enforcement with the thousands of rugby fans who descended on the capital.

The final game had a great atmosphere despite the bitterly cold weather.

With the New Year brings new challenges. I anticipate the work load of all my staff will increase to meet the needs of our communities. To successfully achieve this will depend on sound engagement and keen service delivery.

I look forward to speaking with many of you in the next few months.

Gary Ash
T/Inspector
Neighbourhood Policing Wales
**News - Gotcha!**

On Sunday 19 December, PC Allun Thomas from the Cardiff Neighbourhood Police team (NPT) caught up with a young graffiti vandal who had earlier been caught on camera damaging property at Barry Dock railway station.

T/Inspector Gary Ash said: “I viewed the CCTV and was amazed at the audacity of the youth. He randomly sprayed various areas of the station before turning his attention to the station’s CCTV camera itself. “His mistake, however, was to look at the camera a split second before coating the lens in orange paint, leading to his identification. “The station isn’t the most inviting at the best of times, so catching this youth makes it all the more satisfying.”

**News - Gotcha!**

On Friday 26 November, PC Derek Anderson and PCSOs Enfys Evans and Matt Rees from the Pontypridd NPT arrested a 24 year old man from Ystrad Rhondda on suspicion of theft of a purse on a train at the station. Despite the man making good his escape to a nearby house he was caught inside the premises with the property in his jacket pocket. He is due to return to for further questioning in January.

**Pontypridd PCSO Assaulted**

On Friday 3rd December PCSO Tim Kane from the Pontypridd Neighbourhood Policing team was assaulted following an incident at Pontypridd railway station. During the incident the PCSO was kicked in the face and head butted by the attacker. The PCSO was taken to hospital and treated for minor injuries. A 13 year old youth from the Aberdare area was arrested at the scene on suspicion of assault. He was later bailed until the New Year pending further enquiries.

**Cardiff NPT get the ‘WOW’ Factor**

Following an email from Mr. John Couzens, the manager of the Castle Shopping Centre in Caerphilly, the Cardiff Neighbourhood Policing Team has received a very kind message of appreciation, via the Area Commander, following their response to his concerns. Mr. Couzens reported regular anti social behaviour allegedly occurring within the bus and train station at Caerphilly. The Cardiff NPT focused their activity on regular foot and train patrols in the area, a leaflet drop outlining anti social behaviour, engagement with staff and local businesses. Working closely with the NPT from Gwent Police in Caerphilly, the team virtually eradicated the problem over several weeks’ activity during October and November. A large amount of alcohol was seized from underage drinkers.

The following is an extract from the letter from Mr. Couzens to the Area Commander, ‘Our initial report on anti social behaviour went simultaneously to Gwent Police, the local authority and your good selves. Your officer, T/Inspector Gary Ash was the first to respond, and was the most comprehensive in addressing the problem, and utilising a commercial expression – provided a ‘WOW’ factor. Can we go on record of complimenting your team, and saying a big thank you.’

**Operation Bang Update**

Both the Cardiff and Pontypridd Neighbourhood Policing Teams were kept busy over the Halloween and Bonfire Night period. The Cardiff team concentrated their efforts in the Rhymney Valley, paying particular attention to the Caerphilly area, whilst the Pontypridd team targeted issues on the Merthyr line. A number of youngsters were spoken to at various locations, although Caerphilly proved to be the most productive with alcohol and eggs being seized by police. T/Inspector Gary Ash said: “Both teams have worked exceptionally hard in adverse weather over the Halloween period. The seizure and disposal of alcohol illustrates how well they are engaging with the youth element in the Valleys. The seizure of the two dozen eggs clearly prevented them being thrown at innocent passers by. A great result.”

[Image of bottles and cans in a pile]

**0800 40 50 40 or visitwww.btp.police.uk**
Neighbourhood Community News

Safety Campaign
PCSO Matt Rees from the Pontypridd Neighbourhood Team teamed up with The Suzy Lamplugh Trust to produce a personal safety campaign leaflet in the run up to Christmas. The leaflet is aimed at raising safety awareness around three main aspects in the month of December - social, shopping and transport.

T/Inspector Gary Ash said; “Matt has worked really hard to get this produced. The leaflet has been circulated force wide for use by all the Neighbourhood Teams. This is tremendous acknowledgement for Matt and the work he has put in.”

Wales and Western NPTs distributed over 1000 leaflets on various safety initiatives during the run up to Christmas.

February Football Competition
During the December PACT meeting Sergeant Jaci Thomas announced that funding had been agreed to host a five a side football competition on February 24 in the Merthyr Valley. Invites will soon go out to local community groups and schools to arrange participation. For more details contact Jaci at jaqueline.thomas@btp.pnn.police.uk

Operation Triangular
Operation Triangular relates to the police response to combat the theft of cable from the rail network. The activity focuses on detecting those committing the theft of cable, educating scrap metal dealers who may be offered stolen metal for disposal and engaging with communities to gather information regarding suspicious activity at vulnerable locations. The Neighbourhood Policing Teams have been actively involved in visits to scrap dealers and community engagement to assist the investigating teams.

Detective Inspector Mark Cleland from Cardiff, who leads for the sector on metal theft said; “The theft of metal, particularly cable, continues to be one of our primary objectives. We work tirelessly with Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales to tackle the problem. The work of the Neighbourhood teams is extremely valuable, particularly through their community engagement. We have had some notable arrests over the Christmas period.”

Any information on metal theft should be passed to the First Contact Centre on 0800 40 50 40 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 555

Safety Awareness Updates
At the end of November PCSO Mike Watson from the Cardiff Neighbourhood Team gave a presentation to pupils from years 10 and 11 at St Martins Comprehensive School in Caerphilly. The main presentation focused towards safety awareness on the railway; however Mike also touched on the dangers of knife crime using material developed by safety campaign groups in Glasgow. The ‘noknivesbetterlives’ safety film shows the harsh reality of knife crime in a very simple way.

No knives, better lives.
www.noknivesbetterlives.com

Truancy Success
December 7 saw PCSOs Dan Heath and Mike Watson working with Education Welfare Officers on a truancy operation at Ystrad Mynach in the Rhymney Valley. Evidence shows that truancy is linked with anti social behaviour and the rail network is used by those not attending school.

Throughout the morning 10 individuals were spoken to regarding their absence from school.

Future initiatives are planned in the next few months.

0800 40 50 40 or visit www.btp.police.uk
Looking Ahead…

**Operation Anode – 28 January**

Cardiff PACT Meeting – 8 February

Station surgery dates can be found on the NPT web page.

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**Christmas Activity**

During the run up to Christmas both the Neighbourhood teams were involved in operations to provide reassurance to passengers and tackle low level anti-social behaviour.

The Cardiff NPT focused their activity around Central Square and Queen Street, whilst the Pontypridd team worked with South Wales Police under their operation, named Crystal Clear. Early indications suggest both operations were successful with only a handful of people being dealt with for minor offences.

**Operation Nirvana**

Bonfire Night saw officers from the Pontypridd NPT working with officers from South Wales Police to execute a warrant at a suspected illegal drinking premises, located close to Treherbert railway station. A number of individuals were found inside the building along with evidence of alcohol being made available to buy. PC Jon Dando assisted throughout and processed one of the occupants for drug and weapon related offences.

**NPT and UK Borders Unite**

On Thursday 8 December the Cardiff NPT joined forces with officers from the UK Border Agency to take part in an initiative at Cardiff Central station. The aim of the initiative was two fold, firstly to provide reassurance policing during the busy commuter period and secondly to speak to individuals suspected of committing immigration offences. A number of individuals were spoken to including a Chinese national who was later arrested on suspicion of immigration offences.

For more information about the UK Border Agency and the work they undertake, why not visit their website at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

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**Cardiff Day of Action**

On Wednesday 23rd November, PCSOs Beth Davies, Kumar Hirani and Sue Wibley from the Cardiff NPT joined forces with the Cardiff City Centre NPT from South Wales Police on a joint day of action to tackle vagrancy and anti-social behaviour in Central Square. The results included seizure and disposal of alcohol, five people issued with dispersal orders and a knife incident in the vicinity of the main station. T/Inspector Gary Ash said; “This was the first of several planned initiatives on the run up to Christmas. Clearly the results have shown some emerging problems that need addressing. The team is thanked for their work. Further action days will go ahead in the New Year.”

**Staff News**

NPT Temporary Sergeant Ian Farrow is congratulated on successfully passing part 2 of his promotion exam.

Congratulations to PCSO Beth Davies following her attendance at the Service of Remembrance in London. Beth received impressive feedback from Home Office staff regarding her smart appearance and conduct during the day.

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**Operation Anode**

Operation Anode is a force wide operation taking place on January 28 aimed at reducing notifiable crime and increasing passenger perception of safety across the rail network. The operation will start at 3pm and run throughout the evening. Both NPTs will be proactively involved across the region. For more information contact T/Inspector Gary Ash at Cardiff.

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**Looking Ahead…**

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