

CHESHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY
16 DECEMBER 2008

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To update the Authority on operational matters within the Constabulary.

TYPE OF CRIME	RECORDED Sept to Nov 2007	RECORDED Sept to Nov 2008	DIFFERENCE
Criminal damage	4949	4156	-793
Violent crime	4024	3654	-370
Acquisitive crime	4173	4173	0
Domestic burglary	1044	1032	- 12
Burglary other	1268	1419	+151

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

- 2 The period September - November 2008 shows reductions in most crime groups, with small increases in Acquisitive crime groups. Particularly impressive reductions were evident in Criminal Damage (-16%) and Violent Crime (-9%). The Detection target of 29.6% has been met in this period. The level of Fatal casualties was of concern with an increase of over 50% compared to the same period last year, this being exacerbated with 16 fatalities in October.

Call Management Department

999 Emergency Calls

- 3 The Call Management Department continues to maintain levels of performance above the national target of answering of 90% of 999 calls within 10 seconds.

Public Non Emergency

	999 Calls Answered in 10 secs		Volume in numbers
	2007	2008	(2008)
August	91.6%	91.3%	13,307
Sept	92.4%	91.5%	11,781
Oct	93.7%	92.5%	12,071
	Non Emergency within 30 secs		
August	77.0%	87.4%	29,816
Sept	72.3%	82.2%	27,995
October	80.0%	83.5%	29,156

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- 4 The Call Management Department is continuing to improve its non emergency performance.

Call Management Quality of Service

- 5 In order to improve the quality of service, the Call Handling Centre undertakes an audit of calls taken. Performance is monitored and assessed against an accredited scoring matrix. This has seen significant improvements in comparison to the same period last year.

Quality scores	July – Sept 07	July – Sept 08
Average	60%	81%

- 6 The accepted pass mark for individual call operators is 75% and this improvement has been directly linked to positive comments from Customer Service Desk surveys.
- 7 The focus on obtaining the correct and most accurate information at the first point of contact rather than simply how quickly the next call is taken, has sustained an overall 8% increase in the number of calls resolved at the first point of contact in comparison with the same period in 2007/08.
- 8 In October 2008, the Constabulary’s Call Management Department was short listed in four of the Regional Call Northwest award categories, Supervisor of the Year, Trainer of the Year, Best Recruitment Program and Contact Centre of the Year (public sector). Over several weeks independent judging panels undertook a series of interviews and spot checks and the Call Management Department was awarded ‘best Contact Centre (public sector)’ and ‘best recruitment campaign’.
- 9 This is the first time that a Police organisation has won these categories, which together with the ‘Customer Service Excellence’ Government standard awarded to the Call Management Department in August 2008, is recognition of the significant contribution that Call Management staff are making to the improvements in overall customer satisfaction.
- 10 Grade one calls deployed to within 15 minutes (as per the Policing Pledge number 5)

	Grade one incidents deployed to	% of final grade one incidents	Arrived within 15 minutes	% of final grade one incidents
August	4389	96.4%	3386	74.4%
September	3936	95.6%	3024	73.4%
October	4104	96.1%	3179	74.4%

Crime Mapping (in support of item 8 of the policing pledge)

- 11 The Government's crime strategy 'Cutting Crime : A New Partnership 2008-11', contained a commitment to provide access to better local crime information for the public. More specifically, to make crime data available on a monthly basis to people throughout the country at a level that makes sense to them locally. Ward, NPU, and local authority level data must be published as well as force level data. This will be part of the availability of wider local data about neighbourhood issues.
- 12 Home Secretary Jacqui Smith will announce that all forces have introduced online crime mapping to provide this data, in the middle to end of December 2008. Cheshire Constabulary will be ready for the deadline. A key issue for the Constabulary, is the provision of contextualised commentary on why crime has gone up or down in areas. The commentary is needed to explain crime trends at a local level. These commentaries will be done by NPU representatives and will be completed once a month.
- 13 The crime types will include burglary, theft, robbery, vehicle crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. All other crime will in one category. This is not our decision; it is the national specification and the constabulary will follow the crime coding guidelines published by The Home Office.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY – ROADS POLICING

- 14 In September and October, a total of 21 people were killed on the roads of Cheshire, Halton and Warrington, with an unprecedented 14 dying in 11 days in mid October. The total number of deaths for the year so far is 55 and will therefore be higher than last year when 49 people died between January and December.
- 15 Media interest in the high number of fatal road traffic collisions and the tragic deaths of the Statham family on the M6 put Cheshire's roads in the public eye and the Chronicle newspapers are now campaigning for safety improvements on the M6. The Statham family was traveling back from a visit to family in Birmingham on October 20, 2008. While in queuing traffic on the M6 between Junction 16 and 17, a lorry collided with their car. Sadly, all six members of the family died at the scene. The story attracted national and international media attention. A 46 year old lorry driver from Portugal was arrested and charged with causing death by dangerous driving. His trial will begin on 9 February 2009 at Chester Crown Court.
- 16 The high number of deaths in a short period of time meant staff, from collision investigator and vehicle examiner to family liaison officers and roads policing senior investigating officers and staff have been stretched. This also included the press office staff who dealt with all of the fatal incidents. All of the officers in this force who are trained to undertake specific roads policing roles, such as those described above, have had their skills tested to the extremes of their capacity and professionalism.

Measures to improve road safety

- 17 Officers in the BCU's have been taking part in driver engagement days; multi-agency high visibility operations where drivers are educated and prosecuted for poor driving behaviour. These operations have been particularly well supported in the Eastern based NPUs. In the North, a successful bid for funds from the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (CSRP) has resulted in a series of recent operations that have produced an increase in enforcement activity.
- 18 In addition to educating drivers, the future will see further investment from the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership to provide equipment such as new in car CCTV and speed tracking devices.
- 19 "Red Routes" are being targeted in a winter safety campaign to cut the number of deaths and injuries on roads in East Cheshire. Police Officers are carrying out extra patrols on the roads which have shown above average rates of serious collisions over several years. Motorbikes and marked and unmarked cars are being used.
- 20 The results of an Impact Day on one of the red routes at the end of October show that it is successful. In six hours officers stopped 112 vehicles for a variety of offences. The motorists stopped had the choice of a fine and points on their license, or watching a short film about the consequences of not driving safely.
- 21 Action is also being taken in Crewe and Nantwich to make high-risk young drivers think again about the way they behave on the road. The Young Driver Initiative is aimed at helping them to think about that, to comply with the regulations and concentrate. Drivers aged between 17 and 25 who are caught by police officers committing traffic offences and who are considered to be at risk of being involved in a collision, are offered the option of attitude training as an alternative to prosecution or set penalties. This involves attending road safety presentations given by Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service. In the past five months 122 young drivers have been involved in the project.
- 22 The scheme aims to provide a significant long-term improvement in driver attitudes. It benefits the individual young drivers and everyone else on the roads. In this case the Constabulary works in partnership with Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and in both campaigns there is also the support of Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, which is providing funding.
- 23 In the run up to the festive season the Constabulary is clamping down on drink and drug driving on the county's roads. Running through December to the New Year, the campaign follows the same scheme which was run last year and resulted in nearly 3000 roadside breath and impairment tests. 10% of these people failed the test. This means 300 drink and drug drivers put themselves and other road users at risk.
- 24 During the period of the drink drive campaign the police will be taking all opportunities to enforce the drink drive legislation. The campaign coincides with

the National Department for Transport 'Think! Moment of Doubt' campaign, which was launched on 1 December 2008.

- 25 To help in the fight against drink driving in the county, Cheshire Police recently received 249 new roadside breath screening devices from the Department for Transport. The new hi-tech breathalysers allow each test to be recorded on the spot and downloaded for evidential purposes.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY - CRIME

Cash and Valuables in Transit

- 26 In the lead up to Christmas offences targeting cash and valuables in transit often increase slightly. As a response to this seasonal trend, Cheshire Police have taken the following measures:

Det Supt Marsden has taken on responsibility for chairing a regional cash and valuables in transit (CVIT) meeting on behalf of the British Security Industry Association (BSIA). Terms of reference for the group have now been set and the meeting brings together not only the regional forces (Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Cumbria, Merseyside and North Wales) but also the senior security advisors whose companies deliver cash within our region.

The Force has adopted a "Follow That Van" initiative for the past four months. Uniform patrols have been asked to overtly follow any CVIT vans if they are not deployed to other duties. If they see a delivery taking place, they are to stop and observe the transaction. If specific intelligence is received, this will result in the direct tasking for Cheshire Police Officers as appropriate.

The Force now has direct access to the Safer Cash incident data base through the Force Intelligence Bureau and has developed a response system for suspicious reports in relation to CVIT deliveries. This has been up and running since November 21 and provides a comprehensive police response to attacks against such deliveries.

Drug crime in Cheshire

Operation Autumn

- 27 The dynamic nature of crime intelligence requires the major crime unit to act swiftly in order to preserve evidence, seize drugs and other evidence and arrest offenders. It is often difficult to determine in advance the cost of such policing operations in terms of finance and staff time. Below is a summary of a long term drugs operation that has taken place in Cheshire. It involved a record seizure of controlled drugs and a large number of significant arrests.
- 28 On 22 May 2008, two men were arrested in Preston Brook for possession with intent to supply Class C controlled drugs. They had secreted 109 kilos of cannabis crystal in furniture imported from Spain. Both men will be sentenced in December, together with another man who arranged the importation. Cannabis crystal is more potent than normal cannabis, having gone through a process

- where the flower tips of the plant are used to produce a stronger drug. The street value is in excess of £500,000.
- 29 On 10 July 2008, a man from Runcorn was arrested in possession of one kilo of cocaine in his car which had 76% purity. He entered a guilty plea and was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment.
- 30 On 14 August 2008, a search warrant was executed at a rented barn in Dutton Cheshire. Four kilos of cocaine with a street value of £300,000 and a quantity of cannabis skunk cannabis valued at £1,880 were recovered together with firearms and ammunition. Three male offenders from Runcorn are charged with conspiracy to supply controlled drugs and various firearms offences. They will appear in court in December for a plea and direction hearing.
- 31 On 14 October 2008 two Cheshire men, travelled to Wakefield in Yorkshire and collected 104 kilos of cannabis with a street value of £500,000. A warrant was executed at the premises from which the drugs were collected and a further 3.5 tonnes of cannabis were recovered with a street value of £15million. The offenders are currently remanded in custody.
- 32 Another man (not connected to Cheshire) was later arrested at a hotel in London in connection with the seizure. Enquiries into this offender are continuing.
- 33 Police arrested two further men from Runcorn and in the process made a cash seizure of £12,000 and evidence of £54,000 in bank transactions which may be related to the importation of drugs.
- 34 The total value of drugs seized under operation 'autumn' is £16,599,880.00.

Economic Crime Unit

Operation Montana

- 35 In May 2008 £53,700 cash was seized from a man who had been arrested on the M6 at Knutsford Services. The suspect lives in Cambridgeshire, but has strong links to organised drug trafficking in Manchester and Spain. The cash was forensically tested and found to be heavily contaminated with drugs. A joint investigation with Greater Manchester Police is ongoing.

Operation Front

- 36 On 18 October 2008 and following a proactive ECU investigation, £50,000 cash was seized from an Irish national who was arrested whilst living in Cheshire. He is suspected of involvement in various other serious and organised criminal enterprises. The investigation is ongoing.

Operation Duffel

- 37 A man was subject to a stopcheck on the M6 in July 2007. He was found to have \$300,200 concealed in a sealed tissue box. He was arrested and following an

extensive operation, he was convicted of money laundering and sentenced to three years imprisonment. On 29 October 2008 Cheshire Police made a successful cash forfeiture application against the offender.

- 38 In summary, this continues to be a busy area of business and the Cheshire Constabulary Economic Crime Unit has exceeded the annual confiscation target of £1.8 million, by confiscating £1.93 million.

FMIT Operations and Investigations

- 39 The Force Major Incident Team have dealt with a high case load over recent months and currently have 9 live murder investigations underway, with offenders either charged or bailed. As is always the case, the vast majority of work in murder investigations takes place post charge with large amounts of effort going into evidence gathering and file preparation. A summary of some of the notable enquiries are as follows:

Operation Cairo – Update

- 40 This is the investigation into the murder of 84 year old Mrs Mary Bennett in a residential care home in Congleton. Following a complex and sensitive murder investigation involving over 70 staff and a hundred residents at the care home, a man has now been charged with murder.
- 41 FMIT has in addition to its own case load assisted BCUs with the investigation of other serious crime and high risk incidents. One case taken off the BCU by FMIT was a multiple wounding committed at a prison establishment. This incident involved three principal offenders at the beginning of this year. They together with others were involved in a violent disorder where two inmates and a prison officer received very serious injuries. Many of those involved in the incident were relocated to prisons throughout the country making the progression of the investigation logistically very difficult. Two offenders have been charged and are awaiting trial.

Thefts of agricultural vehicles and plant machinery

- 42 A review of thefts of agricultural vehicles from Northwich and Knutsford from 2008 suggested that two main offenders from the Northwich area were responsible. Operation Sphinx was commenced on 7 October 2008.
- 43 On 22 October, a covert phase of the operation took place and the offenders were arrested that day together with three further offenders in possession of a Ford truck stolen from High Legh, an Iffor Williams trailer stolen from Allostock and a three ton Volvo Mini digger stolen from Frodsham. A subsequent search of an industrial unit used by the suspects led to the recovery of further stolen items linking them to the theft of a speed boat overnight on September 25 at Northwich.
- 44 On 24 October, a warrant was executed in the Northwich area and more stolen property was recovered. Two further people were arrested at the location for theft of these items and the cultivation of over 500 cannabis plants that were found

there.

- 45 The Operation is ongoing and since these arrests, there have not been any recorded crimes of tractor or plant equipment in the Knutsford or Northwich areas.

Mischief, Halloween and bonfire night

- 46 At this time of year there is often a large increase in criminal damage offences, ASB and associated problems. Operations were put in place across Cheshire to prepare for Mischief, Halloween and Bonfire Night this year and 35,000 leaflets were produced and distributed to local residents by NPUs. As a result of this work, reported incidents were lower than in previous years.

Operation Pistachio - Widnes

- 47 Widnes historically suffers a significant increase in ASB and criminal damage incidents on "Mischief Night" (30th October) which in turn causes major distress to the local community. A working group was set up in August of this year comprised of Widnes NPU, the Halton Community Safety team and key members of the community. Their purpose was to develop a strategy to reduce the volume of incidents on "Mischief Night" and in turn provide reassurance to the local neighbourhoods of Widnes.
- 48 As a result of this collaboration Widnes NPU ran Operation Pistachio on 30 October 2008, which was a Partnership led Operation specifically targeting ASB and disorder within the community on Mischief night. Operation Pistachio utilised the services of over 70 officers as well as being supported by partner agencies.
- 49 Work was conducted on a preventative basis with local retailers and licensed premises in the area to prohibit the illegal sale of alcohol, fireworks, eggs etc to local youths. Many of the young people who came to the attention of the police last year were closely targeted on the lead up to the operation.
- 49 Community walks were conducted in four pilot areas in the Widnes area, which involved members of the community, police and partner agencies walking around the local streets engaging with local residents. The BBC and Granada Reports also accompanied officers on the operation and details of the operation were transmitted across the North West area to publicise the policing activity.
- 50 As a result of this Operation, the volume of recorded incidents was reduced by 34% on "Mischief night" and 33% on Halloween. The Operation resulted in significant reductions in criminal damage and vehicle crime incidents. (40% and 60% respectively) This was a stark reduction in crime and ASB compared to previous years and an excellent example of successful partnership working within the community. The media coverage was extremely positive and highlighted the strong links that had been formed with the local community. There has been positive feedback from all involved within the community.
- 51 The below table demonstrates the results:-

	31 October 2007	31 October 2008	Change
Total Crime	55	37	-32.7%
Total Criminal Damage	23	15	-34.8%
Criminal Damage to Dwellings	13	9	-30.8%
Criminal Damage to Vehicles	5	4	-20.0%
Violent Crime	7	7	0.0%
Vehicle Crime	7	4	-42.9%
Burglary	5	5	0.0%

Neighbourhood policing units

Eastern Area NPUs

Wilmslow

- 52 Operation Flood had two objectives – the first under the ArcAngel banner, was a response to an increase in alcohol related violence in the town centre believed to be committed by people travelling from other force areas. Operation Flood also provided a response to an increase in intelligence regarding the routine carrying of weapons by people associated with organised crime groups.
- 53 As part of the tactics a six week firearms operation deployed officers from all over the county utilising powers under Section 60 of the Public Order Act. 350 searches were undertaken recovering a variety of weapons including cross bows and knives as well as class A and B controlled drugs. Licensing conditions were vigorously enforced, which resulted in the closure of two premises which had been associated with disorder and drug activity.
- 54 The NPU has continued to target an OCG (organised crime group), which is concerned in the supply of class A drugs in Wilmslow and the importation of those drugs into the county from Manchester. The OCG are believed to be using firearms to support this activity. Tactics to disrupt this group have included several warrants (some pre-planned fire-arms ops), surveillance, undercover activity and test purchasing. This has resulted in numerous arrests and charges for drugs and fire-arms offences.

Crewe

- 55 Following a rise in the number of thefts of satnavs with the offences being committed overnight, an operation was undertaken by the NPU. Neighbourhood Policing Officers were detailed to work overnight and the SmartWater “Sting” car

was deployed. After receiving and developing intelligence about a man who might be responsible, officers from the Neighbourhood Policing Unit and the Targeted Patrol Teams worked together and the suspect was arrested soon after the commission of a further offence. This began a protracted and complex investigation jointly ran by the NPU and the PPT. It led to the man admitting 136 offences of theft from motor vehicles in the Crewe area over the past two years. He appeared before the court in September and was sentenced to 11 months imprisonment. The court made it clear the sentence gave him significant credit for helping the police with their inquiries.

Congleton

- 56 A major Christmas initiative in Congleton is the SafeZone campaign, which is operating throughout December on every Friday and Saturday evening. This campaign aims to provide a safe place for people to go when on a night out, if they need medical attention or time out to avoid domestic incidents. Funding has been secured via the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) for additional police and warden patrols. A "drop in" centre will be created in Congleton Town centre around the community wardens van, volunteer first responders are in attendance to deal with any medical incidents. Meanwhile officers are providing a high visibility patrol to reduce domestic or drink related incidents. The initiative was very well received last year and is expected to be so again in 2008.
- 57 The SafeZone initiative ties in with the ArcAngel "protected town" initiative launched for Congleton town in November. The scheme clearly sets out the standards of behaviour expected by those who live and drink in the town and from those who sell and profit from the sale of alcohol. It will involve regular licensing visits and test purchase operations to improve standards across the town in relation to ASB and alcohol.
- 58 Operation Rome was a Special Constabulary operation that ran over two weekends during November in Congleton town centre. Over 50 Special constables from across the BCU took part in the operation which tackled ASB, youngsters and alcohol and licensing visits. The staff also took full advantage of the availability of a passive drugs dog that was brought in from North Wales Police. This dog alone resulted in over 30 searches and led to several arrests for possession of cannabis and cocaine.

Macclesfield

- 59 A number of initiatives are being run under the ArcAngel branding and the following is a current example:-

Operation Unlink - This is a Poynton based initiative run in partnership with Poynton Parish Council. There has been an issue in Poynton for some considerable time where adults are believed to be purchasing alcohol which is then handed over to local youths fuelling their anti social behaviour. Preventative measures have previously been taken but have led to the problem being displaced. For this reason an evidence gathering and enforcement operation was

formulated. Each and every Friday and Saturday evening a PCSO works within the Borough Council CCTV office on overtime provided by the Parish Council. Their task is to monitor cameras that cover the two off licenses in the village centre. Any sightings of adults carrying quantities of alcohol into the local park are passed to a Police Constable on foot patrol in the park area. This initiative has resulted in large quantities of alcohol being seized from under age people, a reduction in anti social behaviour, criminal damage and litter in the park area. So far four adults have been issued with Penalty Notices for Disorder for purchasing alcohol for under age young people.

Knutsford

- 60 Rural Watch currently has in excess of 130 e-mail contacts who are part of an early warning system. Members receive appeals for information and advice about crime prevention. On 31 October, Silk FM broadcast an interview explaining what Rural Watch does, what the Force is doing to combat rural thefts and our successes so far. During October, the Knutsford Rural Watch recovered stolen property in excess of £60,000, much of this as a result of community intelligence from Rural Watch members.

Northern Area NPUs

Widnes NPU

- 61 Staff from Widnes NPU recently arrested two offenders believed to be responsible for more than 50 arsons (bin fires) and eight criminal damage offences across the Widnes town centre area. Both offenders are juveniles and were charged in connection with a number of these offences. They are due to appear in court in December.
- 62 A man was arrested in Widnes for exposing himself to a child from his home address. A warrant was executed at his address and during the search officers recovered a number of firearms, shotguns and ammunition. He is due to appear in court in December charged with exposure and possession of ammunition for a firearm without a certificate.
- 63 There had been an increase in Burglary (other than dwelling) offences in Widnes town centre and, as result of investigations, a prolific offender recently released from prison was re-arrested. He admitted a total of 16 offences. He was later charged with three burglaries at business premises in Widnes - and asked for a further 13 offences to be taken into consideration. He was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.
- 64 Operation Victoria involved the arrest of four teenagers in Widnes as part of a firearms operation. Officers executed warrants at four addresses in the town, arrested the four teenagers and recovered a number of imitation firearms. The warrants followed intelligence passed onto police in relation to an alleged incident involving imitation firearms in Victoria Park, Widnes, on October 12th 2008. Three of the teenagers were charged and the fourth teenager received a reprimand.

- 65 Another search warrant was executed at a premises in Widnes on November 18 and resulted in the seizure of 30 motor bikes/mini motos, 67 mobile phones, 56 car radios, eight push bikes, three play stations, two laptops, four motor cycle helmets and various other items. One offender has been arrested for handling stolen property and enquiries are ongoing.

Warrington Town Centre

- 66 Early intervention and enforcement continues and recent operations include a joint operation with the Gambling Commission and HM Customs and Revenue. This operation targeted eight fast food outlets and identified illegal gambling machines. A total of 12 illegal machines were seized. Another operation was conducted with Warrington Borough Council taxi enforcement to check local taxi firms were acting in accordance with their licences.
- 67 A Warrington night club was recently closed under Section 53a Licensing Act powers (Superintendent expedited review process). The management was considered ineffective, they were not adhering to an action plan they had been given and there were strong links to drug misuse in the premises.

Warrington East NPU

- 68 Over the past three months, Police and Community Support officers have continued to operate intelligence led patrols, predominantly on foot or by cycle offering maximum visibility across our communities. (The area has continued to see a fall in the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour).
- 69 In October, acting on intelligence, a joint Operation by NPU and Firearms officers took place. A warrant was executed at an address in Birchwood and a significant quantity of class A drugs with a street value in excess of £10,000 were recovered. A man was arrested and charged and enquiries are ongoing.
- 70 Following a number of violent incidents relating to licensed premises in Culcheth, the NPU staff have undertaken licensing visits across the area. Further visits are planned over the Christmas period and one premises is currently on an action plan with the management of the premises being closely monitored.

Western Area NPUs

Chester Outer

- 71 Chester Outer NPU has been working closely with Chester & District Housing Trust to tackle the criminal and anti social behaviour of a number of people from the same family who have terrified local residents. Disorder has included a petrol bomb set off outside the home. In March an incident led to a 14 hour siege where neighbours had to be evacuated from their homes. Previously, witnesses have been too frightened to give evidence for criminal proceedings, but on November 13 the Housing Trust, supported by the police gained a full possession order against the parents and a five year ASBO's against all five members of the family

were obtained. This has reduced their opportunity to continue their criminal and anti social behaviour, bringing respite to the residents of Chester.

Winsford

- 72 The NPU engaged with Cheshire Trading Standards Loan Shark Team in Operation Ferry, with the result that a 38 year old man was arrested after a warrant was executed at his home address. Evidence of illegal money lending, a section 5 prohibited weapon (a stun gun) and a quantity of amphetamine was recovered. The offender was later charged with these offences including offences under the consumer credit act.
- 73 Winsford NPU has conducted two significant drug warrants. One at a secluded farm premises led to the discovery of two underground concealed tunnels set up to cultivate cannabis plants, which resulted in the recovery a total of over 500 plants. Over £50,000 worth of stolen plant equipment was also recovered. The second operation identified cannabis cultivation in a concealed room in a house where over 20 plants were recovered.
- 74 Between 13 October and 9 November, Operation Humbug focused on the Wharton Estate in response to an increase in ASB and criminal damage offences. The operation was partner based and results included: two families being served notices for breach of tenancy agreements, seven search warrants and five joint searches with Weaver Vale Housing Trust being carried out. Cannabis and amphetamine were recovered. The DVLA seized 12 vehicles for road tax offences. Court officers and NPU staff executed warrants resulting in the payment of outstanding fines and the arrest of five offenders. Overall, the period saw a 41% reduction in damage offences an excellent result considering Halloween and Bonfire took place in the same period.

Western Rural

- 75 The NPU has sought to divert young people from committing crime by offering youth diversion activities to those involved in low level crime and ASB as well as young people who are problematic in school or who have been found on the streets with alcohol. This type of behaviour makes communities feel unsafe and the Rural NPU's initiatives to address such activities have been recognised at the National Justice Awards in London where officers were highly commended for their youth diversionary work. Their success is illustrated by the fact that there were 770 applicants throughout the country in their category.

Ellesmere Port and Neston

- 76 Operation Tree tackled a series of purse dipping offences where the offenders used a small dog to distract their elderly victims. Officers identified numerous offences with this method of operation across the BCU and other areas in the Northwest. From statements they were able to identify two suspects from the Ellesmere Port area. With surveillance unit support the suspects were observed approaching a lone elderly female in a charity shop and stealing her purse. Both suspects were arrested and charged with this offence. Since the arrests the

pattern of offending has stopped.

- 77 A burglary occurred in a dwelling in the Willaston area; and a high valued motor vehicle was stolen. The occupant on returning home notified the police that the vehicle was fitted with a tracker device. This indicated the vehicle was on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Ellesmere Port. Using the force aircraft, Vector officers, TPT officers, Roads Policing officers and officers from the NPU, the exits from the area were covered and officers conducted a safe arrest of local offender who was in the vehicle and still in possession of all the property from the burglary. He admitted the offence and appeared before Chester Crown Court five days later. He was sentenced to three years imprisonment.
- 78 Operation Asp is a pro active disruption operation reacting to intelligence regarding criminal activity in Ellesmere Port and Neston. To date, in the six weeks it has been running, 88 search warrants have been executed. There have been numerous arrests for drug offences, theft and handling. This operation will continue on the run up to Christmas.
- 79 On 20 November, Ellesmere Port officers uncovered a large cannabis factory containing thousands of plants. Officers discovered six 20-metre tunnels within the factory on Indigo Road and each tunnel contained several hundred plants. Although officers are awaiting the results of forensic tests, it is believed the plants could have a street value in excess of £1million.
- 80 The raid came about as a result of intelligence from the local community and police have been quick to praise those who came forward. No one has yet been arrested in relation to the discovery of the cannabis factory, but enquiries are ongoing.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT

CCTV Mapping

- 81 In August 2007, the Force began a CCTV mapping exercise which involved each NPU recording the location and details of CCTV cameras across their area. This information was obtained by officers whilst attending premises in the normal course of their duty. As well as gathering this vital information, staff had the opportunity to view the quality of CCTV available and give advice about the recording systems as well how they might be improved.
- 82 Over 10,000 camera locations have been recorded, but we estimate that this is only half of the systems located in our area.
- 83 The information has identified gaps in coverage which we will pass on to local authority CCTV managers to consider when installing new cameras.
- 84 The force is developing an IT capability so that in the future every officer will have access to the CCTV mapping system. This will enable officers to identify the locations of CCTV cameras, their recording retention times, the equipment used and an indication of the quality of footage. It will assist investigating officers

not only in their CCTV evidence collection, but in the prioritisation of CCTV recovery in major investigations.

- 85 The mapping process has been seen as a groundbreaking development in the world of CCTV evidence and has attracted the attention of other force areas within the UK. A number of forces have plans to visit Cheshire in the near future in order that they too can develop their own systems of mapping.

Quest

- 86 Quest intelligent investigation has now gone live. The intrusive crime management business case has been introduced at both Macclesfield and Wilmslow NPUs. Initial evaluation has taken place demonstrating that the concept is freeing up capacity within the. This time will be reinvested to enhance their overall quality of service to victims, progress crime workloads more quickly and continue to deliver key performance targets.
- 87 Training of operational staff to deliver street issue of penalty notices and restorative justice disposals has begun and staff are using these disposal options. The increased discretionary powers have been well received across the organisation and should contribute to improved public confidence.
- 88 Training of call handling staff to change the way in which they record and allocate crimes has started. This strand went live in the first week of December. Evidence review officers have been trained and introduced at Middlewich and again the initial findings of the business improvement this new role provides are positive.
- 89 A new performance framework to drive new behaviours around crime investigation has been developed with the key focus being on investigating crimes in accordance with our values and those of the community. The focus has been on doing the right thing, bringing the right offenders to justice and tackling re-offending.
- 90 Overall, the Quest approach in Cheshire has matured and is now being identified as good practice nationally with the force drawing positive attention from HMIC and other forces who are coming to Cheshire to see Quest in action.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Restorative Justice (RJ) Update

- 91 Restorative Justice training is currently being rolled out to all TPT and NPU staff. All frontline staff are being trained to a level 1 standard which will ensure they can deal with an incident or crime restoratively. This is quite an intensive training period as over a thousand staff will be trained over the next few weeks. This training is being delivered in conjunction with Operation Quest.
- 92 Following the completion of this training, all CAT staff including PC's and PCSO's will be trained to level 2 standard. This will allow these staff to resolve more

complex problems through RJ and tackle issues that have a wider impact on their local communities.

- 93 The RJ work being undertaken within Cheshire is being promoted at a national level and members of staff and as well as members of the public who had undergone a restorative conference, recently spoke at a national conference were talking very positively about their experiences.
- 94 The "Focus" brand, representing the Cheshire Restorative Justice approach, has been developed with literature and publicity materials to support the operational activity.

AWARDS

Northern area awards

- 95 The Northern Area hold its Chief Superintendents ceremony in November. Those present heard stories which featured everything from serious crime to outstanding community policing. The evening showed just how varied the work of Cheshire Constabulary can be. In all, 46 staff ranging from PCSO to Inspector level received awards.
- 96 One example was DC Warren Nomdedeu and DC Timothy Cope who, following a report of a rape in 2007, conducted an investigation which led to the arrest and conviction of a man responsible for several other attacks.
- 97 A number of officers also received attendance awards reflecting the fact that they had not recorded any sickness absences for periods of between ten and twenty three years.

Inside justice awards

- 98 The 2008 Inside Justice Awards recognised teams and individuals across the Criminal Justice System who have gone the extra mile to deliver justice. Nominations were put forward by colleagues and the winners were selected by senior Government officials and ministers including the Attorney General, the Secretary of State for Justice and the Home Secretary.
- 99 The Western Rural Neighbourhood Policing Unit has been highly praised by its peers at the Inside Justice Awards. The team was nominated for an award thanks to its work with youngsters in the area which has helped to see a decrease in anti-social behaviour. Although the officers, who are based in Vale Royal and Chester district, didn't claim the top prize, they were highly praised for their achievements.

RECOMMENDED:

That the report be noted.

DAVID WHATTON
CHIEF CONSTABLE