

# BROMLEY BOROUGH COMMANDER'S NEWSLETTER



JULY 2012

## Welcome to July's newsletter.

The opening ceremony of the Olympic Games on 27th July is fast approaching, and our marathon policing operation is already well underway. There's no doubt that this summer will be exciting and challenging in equal measure.

Thousands of people will come to the capital to take part in the hundreds of events and enjoy the sport. They will be staying in and visiting all of London's boroughs. This is not just about the Olympic policing operation, but also how we police the rest of the capital. This requires everyone in the Metropolitan Police Service, in whatever role they undertake, to play their part, and to ensure that the Games are safe and secure and our communities are well served throughout.

Prior to this, the Torch Security Team - which has been on the road since May protecting the Olympic torch as it travels around the country - will be arriving in London on 21<sup>st</sup> July and, more importantly, in Bromley on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. One of our Bromley officers – Sergeant Alex Baldwin – is part of the team for this once in a lifetime occasion. You can read more about Alex inside the newsletter.

From the start of July Bromley Borough Police will be able to deploy Taser equipped vehicles to quickly and directly respond to emergency calls. The arrival of Taser in Bromley is part of a gradual rollout of Taser to all London Boroughs, so that each borough will have two Taser equipped vehicle available to respond to violent incidents - in addition to the support that the MPS Territorial Support Group and Firearms Unit provide. The rollout of Taser to borough based police officers is about making sure that our officers are best equipped in their duty to protect the public.

Criminals using the boroughs roads - beware! We are now using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to target offenders, with cameras being placed at covert locations across Bromley in a scheme to catch wanted criminals. Major routes in and out of Bromley will now be monitored by ANPR cameras, which will alert police to the presence of motorists wanted for outstanding crimes or driving offences.

Our Safer Transport Team scooped this years prestigious Problem Orientated Partnerships (POP) awards, for the third time in four years in June for the innovative 'Operation School Bike', the first such project of its kind. Operation Schoolbike was introduced to address overcrowding and disorder on the bus routes serving Charles Darwin secondary school in Biggin Hill and encourage pupils to cycle to school instead of being driven there, thus supporting London's ever increasing cycling revolution.

Two more items of interest that you can read about inside this months newsletter – one of our ex-officers has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list and one of our young residents has come up with a groundbreaking scheme to get youths involved in their communities.

**Steph Roberts**  
Borough Commander

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## **Bromley officers equipped with Taser**

From Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July Bromley police officers will be able to deploy Taser equipped vehicles to quickly and directly respond to emergency calls.

The arrival of Taser in Bromley is part of a gradual rollout of Taser to all London Boroughs, so that each borough will have two Taser equipped vehicle available to respond to violent incidents - in addition to the support that MPS TSG (Territorial Support Group) and CO19 (Firearms) provide.

The Metropolitan Police currently has 1140 Tasers, of which 446 are deployed overtly by CO19 Firearms Command and the Territorial Support Group. The remainder are allocated to training sites, or used in covert operations that are not deployable in support of normal Borough operations.

Bromley will have forty officers trained in the use of Taser - at any one time a maximum of four of these will be on patrol in two vehicles.

Taser has been safely and effectively used by the Metropolitan Police since 2003. This is about making sure that our officers are best equipped in their duty to protect the public. It enables restraint of violent individuals safely and efficiently, it is often less harmful to offenders than striking them with an asp or using CS spray and it is a less lethal option than using a firearm.

Any time that a Taser is discharged the circumstances will be looked at for monitoring purposes and for transparency. There is a robust system of accountability including unique identification on each discharge and downloads from the Taser itself.

## **ANPR Cameras launched in Bromley**

Criminals using Bromley's roads - beware! We are now using Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to target offenders. Cameras have been placed at covert locations across Bromley in a scheme to catch wanted criminals.

Major routes in and out of Bromley are now monitored by ANPR cameras, which will alert us to the presence of motorists wanted for outstanding crimes or driving offences. The cameras will be constantly operational with number plate details being fed into a national database and officers alerted if the driver has an outstanding crime on their record.

ANPR systems can scan up to 3000 number plates an hour and works by feeding the images through a camera into a computer system which then checks the details of each vehicle against information held on various enforcement databases.

ANPR cameras are an important tool to help us deny criminals the use of the borough's roads; they're not used simply to target people committing traffic offences. ANPR helps us to monitor any criminal who uses vehicles to commit crime. This is another valuable tool in the fighting of crime.

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## **Cycle scheme triumphs at awards ceremony**

Bromley Borough has triumphed for the third time in four years at the prestigious Problem Orientated Partnerships (POP) awards, which took place at New Scotland Yard on June 18th 2012.

Bromley's Operation School Bike, the first project of its kind, was introduced to address overcrowding and disorder on the bus routes serving Charles Darwin secondary school in Biggin Hill and encourage pupils to cycle to school instead of being driven there, thus supporting London's ever increasing cycling revolution.

The initiative saw the police source 30 unclaimed bicycles from the local police property store - bicycles recovered by the police which don't have any identifying marks for police to match them with their owners and therefore remain unclaimed - and then have them serviced, repaired and donated to the school for students to use.



**PC Darren Barlow, Steve Burton from TfL and PC Dave Catlow**

The bikes remain the property of the school and are loaned out to students allowing them to cycle to and from school instead of being taken to school in cars, which in turn alleviates overcrowding on the roads and promotes exercise and better health amongst students. Bromley Council's School Travel Plan Unit lends their expertise in terms of cycle proficiency training for students to obtain their badges. All repairs have been professionally completed by qualified staff at a local bicycle repair shop (Queensway Autos in Petts Wood).

I am really pleased at the recognition that this initiative has received as, in addition to the obvious health benefits to the students, it demonstrates all elements of the community coming together to solve a problem. We all know that the roads get packed with vehicles at school times and here we have the local Police, a local school, a local company, the local authority and TfL all working together and coming up with a brilliant and sensible solution to the problem. Cycling is one of the healthiest and greenest ways of getting around and we are looking to extend this initiative to equip even more schools and students in Bromley with their own method of transport.

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## Local officer Alex Baldwin protects Olympic Torch

Working as part of the Metropolitan Police Service's specialist Torch Security Team (TST) is Sergeant Alex Baldwin.

Sergeant Baldwin, 32 is currently stationed in Bromley. He has been a serving MPS officer for four years, having spent six years before in Hampshire Constabulary. He was chosen to take on this challenge from an initial 664 applicants and following an eight month selection process. Alex applied for the role as he is a keen sportsman and wanted the ultimate challenge. He is looking forward to celebrating his 33rd birthday while out on the road, at which point the TST should be in Luton.



Alex is a big Rugby fan playing for his local Rugby club - the Tonbridge Juddians. Alex has also completed a number of half marathons which have been useful in preparing for 70 days on the road. Numerous hours have gone into preparing for the role, but outside of work Alex has been preparing with his own training regime, which includes maintaining his fitness by going for very long runs.

On his return to London Alex will be heading off to two of the Olympic venues as he has tickets to watch the men's hockey and they very popular beach volley ball final. Once the Games begin Alex is looking forward to watching the hockey and cycling and will be paying particular interest to his Olympic hero, Chris Hoy. His ultimate and most inspirational Olympic hero is Lord Sebastian Coe.

With a keen interest in sport Alex has climbed in India and Mount Blanc traveled to Fiji to watch rugby.

Alex says: "Training for this role is very different from anything that I have ever experienced and 70 days traveling around the UK has been exciting. This has been a once in a life time opportunity made even more special as I will be celebrating my birthday on the road. The Olympics in London will be a very exciting event showcasing sporting excellence. It is going to be a great chance to see athletes performing at their optimum".

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## **Burglar jailed after DNA identification**

A 20 year old burglar from Downham has been jailed after being snared by DNA evidence.

Harry Whitten, age 20, of Farmfield Road, Downham pled guilty to burglary at Croydon Crown Court on 28th May 2012 and was jailed for two years and eight months.

Whitten was linked to a burglary of a house in Clarendon Way, St Paul's Cray on 11th January 2012 after traces of his DNA were found at the scene. An appeal was put out in the local media for details of his whereabouts and he was traced to an address in Heaton Avenue, Romford, where he was arrested in the early hours of 3 April.

## **Cash box robbers jailed for 15 years**

Four robbers have been jailed for 15 years after being caught attempting to clean dye off stolen cash in a washing machine.

At the Old Bailey on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012:

Cornell Burrell, age 26, unemployed of Vassall Road, Kennington was sentenced to 42 months imprisonment after pleading guilty to robbery and money laundering

Nicholas Hazelden, age 23, unemployed of Bridgetown Close, Gypsy Hill was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment after pleading guilty to robbery and money laundering

Gary Walker, age 42, a painter of Grove Road, Thornton Heath was sentenced to a total 42 months imprisonment after pleading guilty to robbery and money laundering

Ray Lewis, age 27, unemployed of no fixed address was sentenced to a total of 4 years imprisonment after pleading guilty to robbery and money laundering

On 31 October 2011 a cash box was snatched from security guards making a delivery to the Santander in Penge High Street. The box was traced to an address on the Chulsa Estate in Croydon, as the robbers had used a vehicle registered to one of them as the getaway car.

When police entered the address, the men were attempting to clean the cash, after dyed liquid was sprayed over it when they broke open the security box. Wet £20 notes were hanging out to dry in the bathroom of the flat, after the men had put the cash in a pillow case before loading it into a washing machine.

"The washing machine was switched on, and the iron was switched on," prosecutor Allister Walker told an Old Bailey judge. "The method seems to have been to put the cash in a pillow case before loading the machine. They quite literally laundered the cash."

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## Orpington Police Station

The future of nine Police Stations across London was raised at the Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime last month, one of them Orpington Police Station.

The Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime estate contains over 800 buildings many of which, including some of our police stations, provide poor working conditions for staff, are inefficient for modern day policing and are being replaced by more modern, efficient and geographically responsive facilities.

The MPS is reviewing the whole of the property estate to ensure we are making best use of it and identifying efficiency savings that can be reinvested into operational policing. As part of this review of the estate we are looking at how we vacate some buildings including Orpington police station which currently accommodates a limited number of officers and volunteers (as other functions previously in the building have already been relocated). The building is therefore has very limited operational hours. It is also far larger than is needed and, because of its age, very costly to run and maintain.

We have approval in principle from the Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime to relocate from Orpington Police Station during this financial year. We will continue to develop our strategy for this building. This will provide an opportunity to improve the estate at the same time as delivering substantial savings that will allow the MPS to protect operational capability.

Orpington Police Station has not been a fully operational police station since the new Bromley Police Station opened in October 2003. It is currently a base for the local Safer Neighbourhood Team with two hour a day front counter service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

## School Youth Panels link in with Neighbourhood police teams

You may have read recently in the News Shopper about Bethany Archer and Nathan Bird, two of our teenagers who have come up with an innovative and groundbreaking scheme to get youngsters involved in their communities.

Bethany and Nathan have been instrumental in setting up a youth panel at their school, where representatives from every year group get together to discuss issues concerning them or the local area. Two people from the panel then represent the school at the local safer neighbourhood team ward panel meeting, ensuring that there is a youth voice on the panel.

The intention is that the scheme will be rolled out in secondary schools across the borough, as well as setting up a borough youth panel made up of representatives from all the schools.

I think that this is an absolutely fantastic idea. The established structures of community engagement are totally invaluable but when it is police run we do not get the full gambit of opinions. This scheme has come from the youth. They have a right to a voice for public services and they can now say 'This is happening, can you explain it?' This is moving away from the traditional police engagement process to reach a wider audience and that can only be a good thing. I am fully supportive of Bethany and Nathan's scheme.

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## Cadets praised for Jubilee celebration role

Bromley Police's cadets have been praised for their role in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee parade. The cadets, aged between 14 and 19, were posted by the King James I statue on 5th June, as the Diamond Jubilee weekend culminated with a day of celebrations in central London.



The cadets supported police officers at the parade by assisting with general crowd control, assisting in the disabled area and engaging with the public and VIPs in attendance,

It was great to see our cadets out engaging with the crowds, chatting to them and helping them have a great day out. The cadets all looked very smart, turned up looking the part and were well briefed, and well able to represent us. I'm incredibly proud of them.

## Queen honours ex-Bromley officer



One of our popular ex-Bromley police officers has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Chief Superintendent Matt Bell, who served at Bromley between 2003 and 2009 as both a Chief Inspector and the Deputy Borough Commander, is receiving an MBE the Birthday Honours for his work in the borough of Barking. Matt, now the Borough Commander for Lambeth, was specifically chosen to restructure the area to help bring the community and police together as relations had broken down.

Matt said: "I've had a fantastic 27 years in the Met and this award is the icing on the cake".

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**\*\*\*Sign up now to regularly receive information from the Police\*\*\***

## Neighbourhood Link

Neighbourhood Link is a free service that enables you to regularly receive information from the police about crime and safety in the areas you sign up to. It will also be used by the Metropolitan Police Service to keep you informed in the event of a major incident impacting on London.

To register please visit [www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk).

## Contact numbers for Bromley Police's Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Bickley	07920 233 852
Biggin Hill	07880 783 736
Bromley Common & Keston	07920 233 855
Bromley Town	07887 826 502
Chelsfield & Pratts Bottom	07920 233 857
Chislehurst	07920 233 850
Clock House	07920 233 847
Copers Cope	07766 804 406
Cray Valley East	07880 788 942
Cray Valley West	07920 233 851
Crystal Palace	07920 233 858
Darwin	07920 233 859
Farnborough & Crofton	07920 233 856
Hayes & Coney Hall	020 8649 3548
Kelsey & Eden Park	07920 233 846
Mottingham & Chislehurst Nth	07880 781 483
Orpington	07766 804 412
Penge & Cator	07843 065 880
Petts Wood & Knoll	07920 233 853
Plaistow & Sundridge	07920 233 849
Shortlands	07920 233 848
West Wickham	07920 233 854

Internet Address: [www.met.police.uk/bromley](http://www.met.police.uk/bromley)

Non emergency contact number 101 **In an emergency always dial 999**

Bromley Community Engagement Forum 020 8658 7168

