



A History of Greater Manchester Police 1974 - 2004

1974 Greater Manchester Police came into existence on 1 April 1974. The Manchester and Salford joint force amalgamated with portions of the Lancashire, Cheshire and West Yorkshire Constabulary forces, producing the largest provincial force in England and Wales. At that time it had an establishment of 6,628 officers (actual strength 5,545) and 1,796 civilian staff, and dealt with 102,144 crimes reported to the police.

The amalgamation followed local Government reorganisation throughout the country. A Force Advisory Group had been set up in June 1972 comprising senior police officers from those areas in and around Manchester affected by the changes. The new areas to be policed covered a total of almost 500 square miles with a population of 2.75 million inhabitants.

From the outset it was agreed that administrative, personnel and other services, including traffic and CID, would be centrally controlled by five Assistant Chief Constables based at the former City police headquarters at Southmill Street, Manchester. The City of Manchester was to be divided into five separate police areas to be known as A-E Divisions with their Divisional headquarters in A-City, B-Collyhurst, C-Bradford, D-Longsight and E-Rusholme. The boundaries of the nine outer territorial Divisions would be co-terminus with those of the newly created local Metropolitan Borough Councils; thus F-Salford, G-Tameside, J-Stockport, K-Bolton, L-Wigan, M-Trafford, N-Bury, P-Rochdale and Q-Oldham. Upon amalgamation on 1 April 1974 the Greater Manchester Police Authority, comprising councillors and magistrates representing the Greater Manchester area, replaced the old City police Watch Committee.

The first Chief Constable of GMP was Mr William James Richards. He took over the force at a time when there was unprecedented growth in crime such robbery and assault. Newer crimes such as large-scale drug trafficking, hi-jacking of expensively laden lorries and armed raids on stores and building societies also threatened the fabric of local life. It was finally decided to set up specialised police squads to attempt to tackle these problems, often liaising at a national level, and the success of these squads in combating many forms of high-level crime continues today. Within five days of amalgamation, the new force was put to the test when on 6 April the IRA planted bombs at the Manchester Magistrates' Courts, resulting in many deaths and injuries.

1975 Less than a year after the bombing at the courts, Manchester suffered a three week spate of IRA bombings, including an incendiary device in the basement of Lewis's de-



partment store that injured 19 people. PC Ian Rodgers died in hospital after being struck by a train while trying to stop children playing on the railway line at Brinnington, Stockport.

1976 On 1 July 1976 Mr Cyril James Anderton became the new Chief Constable of GMP, having served as the Deputy Chief Constable for eight months. From the outset Mr Anderton adopted a policy of 'public accountability' and steered the force towards closer contact with the public, introducing many new initiatives to promote his beliefs. One such step was the establishment of the Community Contact Departments to foster good relationships with the public through school talks and many other community relations events. During this and the ensuing years, there were major changes in the force. In this year the Hough End site in Chorlton-cum-Hardy was opened as the main kennels and stables for GMP's dogs and horses, as well as becoming the home of the central Sports and Social Club for the force.

Also in 1976, the 'D' Division of GMP took over the policing of Manchester International Airport, which prior to that had been carried out by a separate Airport Police force.

1977 On 8 October 1977 Greater Manchester Police had to control a National Front march in Hyde. Over 6,000 officers from several forces were involved and the whole operation cost around £140,000. A fire in China Lane, in the centre of Manchester, killed seven women workers. PC John Cameron died in an accident after responding to an emergency call in fog on the M66 at Bury.

1978 Thirteen months after the death of PC Cameron, PC George Main was killed in a road accident at Collyhurst, north Manchester while he was an observer in a patrol car. Sir Robert Mark, the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner and Manchester PC, opened the new police station at Grey Mare Lane, within sight of the old police station at Mill Street, where Sir "Bob" began his police career as C202 in the 1930s.

1979 Despite the size and complexity of GMP the main administrative and command functions of the force were still carried out in a number of separate buildings. In the interests of efficiency it was decided that a new headquarters would have to be provided in order to house everything under one roof. Chester House in Stretford, a speculative office block, had therefore been purchased in 1976. After more than two years of preparation for police use, staff moved in during January 1979. The building was officially opened by HRH The Princess Anne on 30 May that year. The year was also marked by the notorious fire in Woolworth's store at Piccadilly, Manchester. Ten people died.

1980 In 1980 GMP took over the Sedgley Park Teacher Training College in Prestwich as its new residential force training school, moving from its previous building at Peterloo House in the city centre, which was on the site of the Peterloo Massacre of 1819.



Similarly land at Openshaw, which had been purchased in 1973, was transformed into the force's central stores, workshops and Traffic Services Branch, with the three phases being completed by 1981. On 22 February 1980 thirty-two officers from GMP were flown to Rhodesia to assist in supervising the General Elections which marked the end of the Rhodesian Government's Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

1981 The summer of 1981 was over-shadowed by outbreaks of serious public disorder in areas around the country. In particular between 8-12 July there was rioting and criminal damage throughout Greater Manchester but primarily centring on the Moss Side area. This led to 241 people being arrested in Moss Side and a further 229 arrested elsewhere in the force area.

1982 The year 1982 was memorable for many reasons, not least of which was the visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to Heaton Park in Manchester. It was the largest public event ever policed in the area and careful planning of the whole event by GMP ensured that the visit was a resounding success. However, 1982 was also the year when two GMP officers were fatally injured on duty. PC John Egerton was stabbed while trying to arrest a thief who was siphoning petrol in a yard at Farnworth and DC John Sandford died after being struck with a wheel brace while investigating a complaint at Manchester Airport. On 25 September that year a huge explosion occurred in premises storing chemicals in Flax Street, Salford. One hundred and fifty officers attended and carried out a general evacuation, ten of whom were hospitalised as a result of breathing poisonous fumes.

1983 On 1 May 1983 GMP introduced the Lay Visitors' Scheme throughout the force area. This allowed members of the County Council to visit people detained in police custody to ensure their rights were being observed.

1984 The national Miners' Strike was a dominant feature of 1984 and put great strain on GMP's resources. The police aspect of the strike was under the direction of the National Reporting Centre at Scotland Yard and members of GMP were dispatched to various parts of the country to assist other forces. Despite having several pits to police in their own area, GMP did not require assistance from members of any other forces at any point during the dispute. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984 (which took effect in 1986) had wide-ranging effects on police powers. It also triggered a major refurbishment programme to standardise stations in accordance with PACE regulations. Also in this year, there was a rail crash in the Weaste area of Salford. A Liverpool to Scarborough express hit a slow moving tanker train, killing the driver and one passenger and injuring 100 others.

1985 On 22 August 1985 a major tragedy occurred at Manchester Airport when a British Airtours Boeing 737 aeroplane burst into flames on take-off, killing fifty-five people. The



crash attracted worldwide attention and there was widespread praise for the way in which the harrowing investigation was handled by officers and civilian staff from GMP.

1986 Her Majesty the Queen graced the force on 21 March 1986 when she officially opened the new Communications and Computer Centre at Chester House Phase II. This purpose-built complex alongside the Chester House headquarters building is one of the most advanced units of its kind in Great Britain and will ensure efficient communications and information processing by the force into the twenty-first century. Detective Sergeant Thomas McCarthy was killed in a road accident in Lancashire while on a surveillance training course. The year 1986 also saw the abolition of the Metropolitan County tier of Local Government and Greater Manchester Council was wound-up on 31 March. The administrative functions of the former Council were shared between the local borough councils and there were many changes in the membership of the Police Authority.

1987 This year saw the horrific discovery on the bleak Saddleworth Moors of the body of sixteen-year-old Pauline Reade from Gorton who had disappeared from home in July 1963. Pauline was one of victims of the infamous Moors Murderers Myra Hindley and Ian Brady and her body was recovered only after a renewed search in the area that lasted many months. Sadly, the body of another victim, Keith Bennett, remained undiscovered.

1988 One of the most bizarre incidents in Manchester's aviation history occurred on Tuesday evening, 7 June 1988, when a Max Holste super-light aircraft crash-landed on the eastbound carriageway of the M62 motorway at Eccles. Three vehicles were hit, one of which had its roof sliced off, but mercifully only one person received serious injuries in the accident.

1989 The year that saw the Hillsborough disaster and the opening of Terminal 2 at Manchester Airport also marked the 150th anniversary of policing in the Manchester area. In 1989 GMP had over 7,000 officers and 2,259 civilian staff spread over its fourteen territorial Divisions and six administrative Departments throughout the force. It managed 102 police buildings and had over 1,100 vehicles in its fleet.

Amidst the celebration of this anniversary, however, there was also a tragic reminder of the dangers faced by GMP officers. While carrying out a routine vehicle check at Birch Motorway Service Station, Inspector Ray Codling was shot dead, and his colleague Sergeant Jim Bowden severely wounded, by a man who later took his own life. Constable Nigel Heap of the Mounted Section also died of injuries after being kicked by his horse.

Policing literally took off with the purchase of GMP's first ever helicopter. The Twin Squirrel Aerospatiale machine, which could be flown from one side of the county to the other in only ten minutes, was called out 40 times in its first week of operation.



This year also saw several concentrated police campaigns targeted on specific areas of criminal activity: Operation Reef focused on Street Robberies, while operations Pegasus and Fastback tackled Autocrime.

1990 The new decade saw a new look for the central divisions of Greater Manchester Police, as the former "D" and "E" divisions in the south of the City merged. In the Ambulance Strike of this year, GMP vehicles were converted for use as ambulances, and over 4,000 casualties were taken to hospital. Further additional demands on the service were made in April of this year, with the outbreak of serious rioting at HM Prison Strangeways. Policing the riot, assisting in the relocation of prisoners and conducting a lengthy and successful investigation into offences committed during the riot, all made in-roads into police resources.

This year saw a number of "firsts"; in response to Home Office guidelines on domestic violence, the first post of Domestic Liaison Officer was created. A Victim Support Scheme was inaugurated at Manchester Crown Court and a Central Identification Suite dedicated to the organising and holding of Identification Parades was opened at Longsight Police Station. Finally the "Drugs Alert" scheme, a partnership between the police and publicans, was launched.

Staying with drugs, a "hotline" allowing members of the public to pass on information about drug misuse and drug dealing was set up in Oldham and GMP officers in co-operation with Customs and Excise seized a Range Rover which had been converted to hold cannabis worth a quarter of a million pounds. The vehicle, used by a German Drug Ring, had two special storage tanks concealed within the bodywork. In a breakthrough for forensic science, evidence supplied by the newly developed identification technique of DNA sampling was used to help secure two convictions of men for serious sexual offences.

1991 This year marked the end of an era with the retirement of Sir James Anderton as Chief Constable of the force. He was succeeded by the then Deputy Chief Constable David Wilmot in July. Domestic violence intervention units were combined with child protection units to form family support units. An Architectural Liaison Officer was appointed to advise on crime prevention, including the new "Secured By Design" scheme for commercial premises.

Other appointments included a Career Development Officer for staff, a Scientific Support Manager and a Psychologist to assist, among other things, with staff recruitment. This year also saw GMP launch the Young Citizen of the Year award scheme for young people who have made a noted contribution to society.

1992 A feature of this year was the publication of a document outlining the philosophy of Greater Manchester Police. This gave detailed guidelines for the professional, courteous



and non-discriminatory conduct of all staff. Wide-ranging consultations were undertaken with the public in order to identify priorities for police action.

These included generating full confidence in the service amongst members of the ethnic minorities, dealing positively with all incidents, but particularly those involving women, children and the elderly and the placing emphasis on initiatives to divert young people from criminal activity.

Growing concerns about the use of firearms by criminals surfaced in Salford, where police and fire officers were fired on while attending an incident and four shots were fired at Pendleton Police station, fortunately without causing injuries.

Public Assistance Desks were also introduced on some divisions, to deal with routine and non-urgent enquiries. A vice squad initiative, which used the deployment of a police vehicle clearly marked "Vice Squad" led to a dramatic reduction in the nuisance by kerb crawlers and prostitutes in the North Manchester area, and may also have contributed to a reduction of 35% in street crime offences in the same area. The Road Traffic Act of 1991 permitted the use of automatic speed detection systems and these "Gatso" camera systems were installed on certain traffic light junctions.

In a remarkable achievement, two members of the service, PC Sandra Douglas and Special Constable Louise Fraser represented Great Britain at the Olympics in Barcelona, Sandra Douglas securing a Bronze medal as part of the 4-x 400metres relay team. The year ended on a dramatic note, with the explosion of two IRA bombs within the City Centre just before Christmas.

1993 This year saw a rise in 31% in the use of firearms. By way of example, three men in a Manchester pub were injured when a man discharged an automatic weapon. Two men were shot dead in a Stockport garage and in the Alexandra Park area of Manchester there were two armed attacks on motorists.

Drug misuse was the subject of a force wide strategy adopted in 1993. This addressed not only issues of law enforcement, but also that of prevention, and sought to both reduce the illegal supply of controlled drugs and also reduce the number of drug related crimes. To combat burglary and theft of and from vehicles, there were a number of concerted campaigns, which resulted in dramatic reductions of these types of offences of between 60% and 70% on individual divisions.

New technology came to the aid of police work in the form of more efficient handcuffs, known as "speedcuffs" or "quickcuffs", with a rigid bar instead of a chain link between the two wristlocks. More ballistic body armour was issued, and the force helicopter received an imaging sensor and daylight video camera. Video surveillance was also used to monitor and take action against anti-social behaviour by youths.



1994 In a marked break with tradition, Greater Manchester Police introduced a metal and plastic side handled baton in place of a wooden truncheon. Associated with this was the introduction of a new Blouson-style uniform for men and women with a purpose made equipment belt.

A major restructuring programme also saw the four Manchester divisions of the force merged into two, the North and South. The divisional headquarters for the South Manchester division was the brand new police station at Elizabeth Slinger Road, opened in 1994. This year also saw a reduction in recorded crime of nine per cent. In a major development with the communities of Greater Manchester, the Greater Manchester Shrievalty Police Trust was set up. Aiming to raise one million pounds from business and other sources, the Trust invested this money and the proceeds were used to fund police-led community initiatives.

Among work undertaken to instruct young people, "Crucial Crew", a multi-agency project, where children are taken through a series of mock-up situations to test how they would react to potentially dangerous events, proved most successful in schools throughout the area. There was also multi-agency work against drugs, with the establishment of the Force Drug Strategy Group and Drug Prevention Section in 1994.

1995 The first Greater Manchester Policing Plan was launched in April 1995, in accordance with the requirements of the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act of the previous year. This was a mix of national objectives stated by the Home Secretary and local objectives specific to Greater Manchester. Among the national objectives were the improvement of detections for violent crime and burglary and the use of high visibility policing and the use of partnerships to solve local crime problems. Locally, GMP also focused on burglaries, autocrime and nuisance as priorities. As a practical aid to crime detection, GMP patrol cars began to carry a forensic equipment bag to better preserve the scenes of burglaries.

1996 In a significant change to the way that calls from the public were handled, 1996 saw the transition from a single Force Operations Room to a number of Area Operations Rooms (AOR). New buildings at Claytonbrook and Leigh were constructed, with the complex at Claytonbrook also providing purpose built facilities for public order and firearms training. Orders were also placed for Body Armour to be worn under the uniform by officers, which provide protection against both knife and gun attacks. The blouson style uniform was adopted and in March 1996 trials of a C.S. spray canister began on the Oldham division. Recorded crime dropped for the 3rd successive year.

Intensive planning went into police preparations for the EURO 96 international football competition, which kicked off in June 1996. Old Trafford became "home" to the German national team. No one, however, could have predicted that while successfully managing the thousands of supporters and visitors travelling around the area, GMP would simultaneously be called upon to deal with the aftermath of the largest ever mainland terrorist bomb. When the IRA planted the one and a half ton bomb in a vehicle outside the Arndale Centre on Saturday June 15th, 80,000 people were speedily evacuated from the packed centre of Manches-



ter. There was not a single fatality in the blast, which destroyed or damaged 4,500 businesses, and showered potentially lethal debris half a mile across the City Centre. In all, 105 Commendations and Citations of Merit were given out to GMP Officers and Support Staff as a result of the IRA Bombing.

With an eye to future, GMP established a home page on the rapidly expanding Internet in September 1996. Anyone in the world could now access information about the service using a computer and modem. In November of the same year "X Cars" a "fly-on-the-wall" documentary series about the GMP Tactical Vehicle Crime Unit was broadcast and attracted a peak audience of 14 million. The year ended with GMP being awarded the prestigious Charter Mark, for excellence in public service, together with the first ever award given by the Plain English Campaign to a police force. On December 5th, the Claytonbrook complex was officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen. Sadly, also in this year, Detective Constable Kevin Dearnaley was killed in a motorcycle training accident in Cheshire.

1997 The building of the second runway at Manchester Airport attracted a makeshift camp of environmental protesters. GMP made special efforts to ensure that all parties were aware of the police role in any dispute, even appointing a special liaison officer to establish a good rapport with the "Eco-warriors" and other protesters. When the camp and protest "bunkers" were cleared in July, the operation drew universal praise for the sensitive way that the work had been done.

There came a reminder of world events when in April 1997, a GMP officer joined other British police volunteers to form part of the International Police Task Force in Bosnia, under the supervision of the UN peace keeping operation. A second officer went out in October.

GMP became the first force in the country to issue a high visibility suit to traffic officers. It was announced that new style uniforms for support staff were to be introduced and the force began using a new generation of alcometers. The first Sports Person of the Year award was held. Top award went to PC Joe Chiappe as Rugby League coach-player-administrator. Continuing the sporting theme, August saw the end of an era when Burnden Park, home of Bolton Wanderers was closed and a century of soccer was ended. For the record, at the final game police made just two arrests, both male streakers!

1998 Four GMP units, Crime Scene Examination, Statistics, Design and Print and Vehicle Fraud & Autocrime, received the international quality assurance standard ISO 9002, only months after the Fingerprint Unit received the accolade. It was announced that GMP had become one of only two forces selected to pilot the Government's Best Value project. The new Longsight sub-divisional HQ, housing the country's most up-to-date custody complex and identification suite opened. It was announced GMP would be one of the first forces in Britain to use a new radio system taking police communications into the 21st century. Plans were unveiled to test electronic screen access points similar to cash point machines. GMP was one of 19 forces to start conducting trials of a proposed national police uniform. Home



Office Minister Paul Boateng opened Bradford Park, GMP's new centre containing operational crime investigation units and crime support services, together with the Forensic Science Service's Northern Ballistics Laboratory.

In response to rising levels of crimes involving firearms, the Armed Response Unit was formed, with dedicated Armed Response Vehicles on patrol across the force area.

GMP became the first police force in the country to apply for a curfew to be imposed on a sex offender under the new Crime and Disorder Act - and GMP's first crime appeal on the Internet went out.

1999 In the first few months of the year, racist crime was one of the big issues with publication of the report into the Stephen Lawrence case. The response of GMP was the unveiling of operation Catalyst, which established 23 projects, all with the aim of increasing trust and confidence in the police amongst minority ethnic communities. In an encouraging development, in 1999/2000 over 2,300 racist incidents were reported to GMP, an increase of 91% compared with the previous 12 months. Forty airlines joined GMP in signing up to a reinforced crackdown on rowdy passengers. A £10.4 million savings package was approved by Greater Manchester Police Authority for the year 1999-2000. And it was announced that a freeze on police recruitment, imposed in 1998, was being lifted. As a result, 378 new officers were appointed.

Even with this increase it was calculated that each year GMP was dealing with around 17,500 incidents per 100 officers – the highest in Britain. Recorded offences stood at 377,086 in the financial year 1999/2000, with staff attending over 50,000 crime scenes. The force control rooms also received a staggering 559,000 999 calls in 12 months, an average of more than one call for every minute of the year.

In a terrifying example of what could result from just one 999 call, 8 officers in Stockport overpowered a man armed with a razor sharp samurai sword. The man, who was later found guilty of attempting to murder his wife and two of the police officers, slashed and stabbed at police vehicles. He hacked out chunks of metal from the vehicles and plunged his sword through windscreens. One officer's hand was almost sliced off and a second narrowly missed a fatal slash to the stomach.

In August 1999 came the shocking news of the murder of PC Raja Bashrat Ahmed, whose motorcycle was deliberately shunted into the path of an oncoming articulated lorry by a man later sentenced to life imprisonment.

Finally, as the last seconds of the old millennium ticked away, all the GMP telephone and computer equipment continued to function normally into the year 2000, thanks to measures taken two years before to prevent damage by the feared Millennium Bug.

2000 The new millennium marked the 10th anniversary of Crimestoppers. The highest use of the confidential phone line is in Greater Manchester, and in the anniversary year



11,072 calls were made, 752 arrests resulted and £1.5m worth of stolen goods, firearms and drugs were recovered. A total of £7,845 was paid out in rewards for information.

As part of GMP's commitment to improving trust and confidence of minority ethnic communities in the police, Dr. Brian Holland was appointed as the first ever Race Advisor to the force.

In January 2000, Harold Frederick Shipman was found guilty of murdering fifteen of his patients. Dr. Shipman ran a popular surgery in Hyde, but when one of his patients died suddenly and apparently left all her property to Dr. Shipman in a will, relatives became suspicious. It emerged that the will had been forged by Dr. Shipman and that he had been instrumental in the death of a number of his patients. The often harrowing investigation lasted 18 months, and a subsequent public enquiry ruled that Shipman had killed over 200 hundred of his patients.

In August 2000, Operation Hawk was launched. This was a force wide initiative aimed at reducing street robbery figures by 20% over the next 5 years. Alongside this, City Centre Safe was unveiled. This project addressed fears about rising levels of alcohol related crime associated with Manchester's new cafes and bars. It sought to reduce crime caused by excessive drinking in a number of different ways including a new byelaw banning the carrying of glasses and bottles in the street. Part of the crime reduction package for the City Centre included the use of mobile CCTV, which proved its worth by spotting an offender only 20 minutes after being switched on!

A major Private Finance Initiative was announced, which would see the building of 18 new police stations across Greater Manchester. These were to open between 2002 and 2004. A £6.5m development of the force training school Sedgley Park also got underway.

Fingerprinting moved into the 21st century with the growth of the "Livescan" system at GMP police stations. The new system allowed suspects' fingerprints to be electronically scanned and quickly compared with prints held on computer databases.

Staying with scientific detection methods, in November 2000 a man was jailed for life for the murder of a 15 year old girl. The murder had taken place six years ago, but had remained unsolved. Advances in DNA profiling, however, enabled scientists to re-examine forensic evidence and recover the clues that led to the killer's conviction.

Old-fashioned crime prevention could still prove very effective, however, and in Tameside the Alley Gating scheme – closing off burglars' escape routes with lockable gates - virtually eliminated burglary from the rear of houses. In Longsight and across South Manchester an operation targeting persistent burglars saw a reduction in reported offences by 25%.

2001 In March 2001 the public joined colleagues in mourning the loss of PC Alison Armitage. The first woman officer to be killed on duty in GMP, she died after being hit by a car in Hollinwood.



GMP's Obscene Publications Unit achieved a first when, in cooperation with Thames Valley Police, they secured the conviction of a paedophile who was posting obscene images involving children on the Internet. In conjunction with the GMP Computer Examination Unit, Obscene Publications also provided a breakthrough in the National Crime Squad's investigation of the worldwide paedophile group known as the "Wonderland Club".

Rochdale became the latest area to benefit from the use of high visibility mobile video vehicles. Bright yellow, these units proved an effective deterrent to criminals. Also going "Hi-Vis" was a traditional branch of the service, the Mounted police. GMP's horses and riders received specially designed visibility outfits that included flashing strobe lights, reflective saddle rug and a tail flap, also fitted with a flashing light.

May 2001 saw outbreaks of serious public disorder at Oldham. Over 90 officers were injured and the Richie Report was commissioned to investigate the causes of the unrest and suggest practical ways to improve the quality of life for all sections of the community.

Initial steps were taken in November 2001, to introduce the remarkable new radio communications system known as Airwave. It was planned to commence the rollout of the new network on the Trafford, Salford and North Manchester as well as the Motorway. Unfortunately technical problems arose with the system and it had to be withdrawn temporarily.

More successful was the Livescan electronic fingerprint scanning system. Following successful trials, 23 custody offices across the force went on-line and were linked to the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System, which can search the national criminal fingerprint database in minutes, looking for a match with the suspect's prints.

Also in November, GMP hosted the National Black Police Association Annual Conference. Superintendent Martin Harding became Chair of GMP's Black and Asian Police Association.

In the run up to Christmas 2001, in light of the terrorist attacks in the USA which became known as 9/11, armed officers patrolled the City Centre on foot as a show of strength to confront would-be terrorists. Vehicle and building checks were also increased during this period.

On a happier note, in December GMP was awarded a Tree of Life Trust Special Award and Certificate of Appreciation by leaders of Manchester's Gay and Lesbian communities in response to the high priority given by the force to hate crimes.

2002 In April the Video Identification Parade Electronically Recorded (VIPER) system was introduced which allowed witnesses to identify suspects on video rather than in the traditional line-up.

In May GMP Mounted Branch officers contributed to the spectacular pageant known as "All The Queen's Horses", which took place at Windsor as part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations.



Between July 25th and August 4th, Manchester hosted the Commonwealth Games. It was GMP's task to ensure the event ran smoothly and making arrangements to deal with everything from a traffic jam to a terrorist attack had occupied special planning teams since 1995. It was the equivalent workload of covering three premier league football matches every day for 11 days. GMP catering provided nearly 50,000 meals to all the police officers, support staff and armed forces personnel throughout the Games.

An estimated one million visitors came to Manchester over the Games period. Over 4,000 athletes from 72 nations competed. As an example of the effort involved, GMP's 40 horses covered 5,798 miles during 3,000 hours of patrol work and needed 73 sets of horseshoes! The eyes of the world were definitely focussed on Manchester and police press officers provided a stream of up to date information to the 4,500 press, radio and television organisations that broadcast the Games to 110 countries.

Watching from the skies during the Games was the latest addition to Greater Manchester Police's "air force", a BN4000 Defender fixed wing aircraft, which had only been delivered weeks before the Games started. The Defender joined the force helicopter, an MD 902 Explorer. This aircraft was itself also a newcomer and had replaced the original helicopter a few months earlier.

In October 2002, Sir David Wilmot retired as Chief Constable and Michael Todd, from the Metropolitan Police, was appointed as successor.

Helping to highlight crime reduction measures, the Guinness Book of World Records was happy to authorise the efforts of officers who security marked 12,804 mobile phones in a single weekend. In November a permanent Major Incident Team was formed, which would specialise in the investigation of murders and very serious offences.

2003 The year started on the worst possible note with the murder of DC Stephen Oake, who was killed in the course of an anti-terrorism investigation.

160 Police Community Support Officers enlarged the police "family" between January and April. In their distinctive caps with blue bands, uniformed PCSOs work on the streets alongside their regular colleagues.

In a remarkable co-incidence, 2003 saw the appointment of the first female head of the GMP Mounted Branch and the retirement of its first ever female mounted officer. Chief Inspector Lynn Roby took charge of the Mounted Police in February and PC Karen Corcoran, who became the first female mounted officer in not just GMP but the whole of North West England back in 1975, retired in April.

Instant justice took on a new meaning in March. Records were broken when two car thieves were caught, charged and jailed in Stockport in only 12 hours!

As part of a national firearms amnesty during the spring, 2,667 real and imitation guns and 43,317 items of ammunition were handed in at GMP police stations. The following weeks



saw targeted activity aimed at disrupting and deterring firearms offences in Manchester, particularly by rival gangs.

A gang known as the Pitt Bull Crew, who had terrorised South Manchester were convicted of various serious offences and their leader, found guilty of murder, drug and firearms offences, was given prison sentences totalling 90 years. Also successful was the conviction and jailing of 5 members of the Snakehead gang, part of the Triad criminal organisation, on kidnap and torture charges.

As a reminder to be security conscious in the garden as well as the home, the force unveiled a garden with a crime prevention theme at the Royal Horticultural Society Show at Tatton Park. Entitled "Safe In The City", the garden featured a secure shed and natural shrubs that can be used as barriers – even the children's toys had been security coded.

The garden carried off a silver medal from the Society.

Combed helmets for male officers at Constable and Sergeant rank reappeared on the streets. Absent for the past 6 years, the move was part of a plan to improve the visible reassuring presence of officers on the streets.

Summer saw Greater Manchester's worst road accident yet, when seven people were killed in a minibus crash on the M56 a mile from Manchester Airport. In August, Manchester staged Europride, the international gay and lesbian festival. Members of GMP's Lesbian and Gay Staff Association joined revellers in the main parade.

In November the police off road motorcycle unit was reformed. New powers enabled officers to seize off road vehicles used illegally. In December GMP joined forces with police in Merseyside, Lancashire, Cheshire and North Wales to target successfully cash-in-transit robberies. Vehicles carrying cash were escorted by firearms officers, and monitored by CCTV and police helicopters.

The range of tools for identification of criminals widened with the establishment of a trial database of ear prints and also a footwear unit, whose task is to document for identification the myriad number of distinctive sole patterns on modern shoes and boots.

2004 The first of 17 new deployment police stations, funded by a Private Finance Initiative, was opened at Harpurhey in January. All divisions except the Airport were now live with the Airwaves radio system.

Police in South Manchester were the first to invoke new powers to shut down a house that has been used for the sale of crack cocaine. Under the new system witnesses and local residents providing police with information about such premises could remain anonymous.

Fighting crime, protecting people

Greater Manchester **POLICE**

