

## **APRIL 2005 - SUMMARY**

- **Gun deaths and injuries** - A number of victims have died following shooting incidents in April. Deaths were reported in Foleshill (Coventry), Kirkdale, Halifax, Rippondon, New Cross, Stowmarket and Garthamlock (Glasgow): some were apparently suicides, of which two (in Halifax and Kirkdale) followed earlier shootings. Shooting incidents which resulted in injuries were reported in Tottenham (two separate incidents), Streatham, Streatham Hill, Eggborough, Low Bradfield (Sheffield), Merseyside (four separate incidents), Throckley, Airdrie, Newport (during a hold-up).
- **Armed hold-ups** - Guns were reportedly used in a large number of hold-ups and street assaults - in Exeter, Reading, Chiswick, Muswell Hill, Tooting, South Kensington, Richmond, St Albans, Corley, Sneinton, Upton Priory, Newport. Armed attacks took place on homes in Lupton and Low Bradfield.
- **Imitation guns** - There were further instances of BB guns and imitation guns being carried and used in public places, usually by youths. Pedestrians were targeted in South Gosforth and South Shields and a bus attacked in Peterborough. Police were alerted after other incidents in Streatham, Dulwich and Cobham. BB guns were fired and hit victims in Workington (two incidents - one of the victims was a girl aged 6, the other was a pregnant woman), Telford (the victim was a pensioner), Lancaster (the victims were teenage girls), Newark (in a school classroom, the victim was a pupil) and Polesworth (the victims were two boys). After court cases a number of men were convicted for possessing imitation guns and using them to threaten (Lincoln, Stornaway, Ammanford) and for attacking a group of teenagers (Hucknall). A Bulwell man was convicted for possession of a Brocock replica gun.
- **Airgun attacks and vandalism** - Another young Scottish boy became an airgun victim when he was shot in the head in Muirhouse (Edinburgh), and another boy was injured after an airgun attack in which he was shot in the face in Sale Moor, Manchester. Members of the public were threatened with airguns in Ponders End (schoolchildren and staff), Slade Green (station security staff), Winsford (car drivers), Tiverton in Cheshire (a pub landlady) and Sittingbourne (a lorry driver on the A249). Damage was caused by airguns to a pub in Deeplish and a pellet was fired through the window of a house in Haverhill. One man was convicted for shooting a teenage girl in Auchinleck, another for shooting a 12-year-old boy in Armadale, and a third after shooting a 6-year-old boy in the head in

Clitheroe. A teenager appeared in court after attacking a girl whilst pointing an air pistol to her head (Strathaven). A Clacton man was jailed after pointing a loaded airgun at a police officer. **It is still difficult to reconcile all of these reports with the suggestion by some that no further controls over airguns are necessary.**

- **Lethal airgun** - There was a report of another incident in which an airgun caused death. An inquest heard how a man had committed suicide using a modified air weapon in a car park in Eastbourne.
- **Gun attacks on animals** - The number of reported incidents is even longer than usual for April, with a number of different species targeted (rabbits, badgers, cats, lambs, buzzard, foxes, swans). The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals reported a sharp rise in airgun attacks on birds and animals.
- **Gun incidents involving the police** - Guns were aimed at police officers in incidents in Harlesden and Rippondon (two police officers were shot and injured in the latter incident). A Clacton man was convicted after pointing an airgun at a police officer.
- **Guns at home** - A number of cases came to court which resulted in the conviction of men who kept guns illegally at home. These were stolen guns (in Coventry), deactivated guns being converted (in Redhill) and World War II memorabilia (in Johnstown).
- **Gun thefts** - There were reports of gun thefts from private property in Gloucester and Thornaby and from a parked car in Ashbourne. In the meantime a Sussex internet firearms dealer has posted a long list of deactivated guns that were stolen from its premises in August last year (<http://www.deactivated-guns.co.uk/stolen.htm>).

## APRIL 2005 – INCIDENTS

### ENGLAND

*This is Local London*, 29 April 2005

Police called to the Broadwater Farm Estate in **Tottenham** found a car with a damaged windscreen, the damage thought to have been caused by a bullet. Shots were reported to have been fired during a fight between a group of men. Ten minutes later police were called to **South Tottenham** to help a man who had been shot, and although no one was found at the scene a man with a gunshot wound to the leg checked himself into hospital an hour later.

*South London Press*, 29 April 2005

A man was shot twice on his doorstep in **Streatham Hill** when he went to answer an early morning knock on the door.

*PA News*, 29 April 2005

A man has been arrested following an alleged armed robbery at a supermarket in **Exeter**. He is reported to have held up a security guard at gunpoint.

*Hounslow Guardian*, 29 April 2005

Details have been released by police of a robbery involving a security van which took place outside a bank in **Chiswick** on 7 April. Two security staff were delivering money to the bank when they were attacked by two males. The male victim was knocked to the floor and kicked and punched whilst a gun was pointed at him.

*Manchester News*, 26 April 2005

A gang of youths, thought to be using an **airgun**, caused hundreds of pounds worth of damage by smashing windows at the front of a pub in **Deeplish**. It was the eighth attack on the pub in two years.

*Evening Chronicle (Newcastle)*, 26 April 2005

Armed police were called to **South Gosforth** after reports that passers-by had been shot at by a gunman from an attic window. Officers recovered three **ball-bearing guns** from the flat and two men were questioned on suspicion of causing fear with a firearm.

Since January, Northumbria Police have attended **40** incidents involving **imitation, blank, replica** and **BB guns** and **84 air weapon** incidents.

*Liverpool Echo*, 25 April 2005

Two men were shot in separate attacks in **Liverpool**. One was shot in the thigh in the car park of a pub in Woolton Road, the other was left with shotgun wounds after a late-night argument in Everton.

*Evening Chronicle (Newcastle)*, 25 April 2005

Cheng Lu, one of two Chinese gangsters who attacked a student for his passport, was jailed for 12 years at **Newcastle** Crown Court for a number of offences including possessing a firearm.

*BBC*, 25 April 2005

Police are hunting a man who threatened a shop assistant in **Reading** with a gun during a raid on a mobile phone shop.

*Westmorland Gazette*, 22 April 2005

Two shotgun-wielding men burst into a house in **Lupton**, near Kirkby Lonsdale, beat the owner and took a small amount of cash, jewellery and other items from the house.

*Evening Chronicle (Newcastle)*, 22 April 2005

Two teenagers were arrested after they allegedly pointed a gun at passers-by in a park in **South Shields**. It is reported that the youths had a **ball-bearing gun**. Police confirmed they had deployed a firearms unit and arrested two males.

*Eastbourne Today*, 22 April 2005

An inquest heard how an asylum seeker killed himself in the car park of Fort Fun in **Eastbourne** in June 2004. He sat inside his locked car and then shot himself in the head using a modified **air rifle**.

*Chester Chronicle*, 22 April 2005

A teenager who, with three other teenagers and a woman, appeared in court in connection with an incident in which the landlady of a pub in **Tiverton** was assaulted, was accused of possessing a **.22 air rifle** with intent to cause fear and violence.

*Telegraph*, 22 April 2005

A business man was shot and critically injured by burglars at his home outside Low Bradfield, near **Sheffield**. His attackers escaped in a car he had bought for his fiancée. The victim is in intensive care.

*West Yorkshire Police*, 21 April 2005

A woman has been arrested on suspicion of unlawful possession of a section 1 firearm after a rifle was found at an address in the **Cross Gates** area of Leeds.

*icCoventry*, 21 April 2005

Andrew Mercer has been jailed for six years after police, acting on an anonymous tip-off, found a cache of illegal weapons at an office in **Coventry** city centre. They included American bolt action rifles, a sawn off shotgun and pistols for firing CS gas. Twelve firearms in total were found. All the guns had been stolen from a Banbury gunsmith's shop in November 2004 (see [Incidents](#)). Thirteen other rifles and 24 shotguns were also stolen in that incident.

*Enfield Independent*, 21 April 2005

A gang of 30 youths, believed to be armed with an **airgun** and metal bars terrorised pupils at a **Ponders End** school. The gang gathered outside the school and staff were forced to end the school day early, lock the doors and contact parents to collect their children.

*This is the Lake District*, 20 April 2005

Four teenagers went on a **ball-bearing gun** shooting spree in the centre of **Lancaster**. Two 14-year-old girls were hit by ball bearings and a member of staff from a fast food shop was also targeted. The youths were arrested and the guns confiscated and the culprits given final warnings about their conduct. The leniency of the police response has been criticised (*This is the Lake District*, 27 April 2005).

*Muswell Hill Journal*, 20 April 2005

Two men, one armed with a silver pistol, forced the staff of a **Muswell Hill** amusement arcade into a room during an armed robbery.

*Kilburn Times*, 20 April 2005

Police are investigating an incident in which a policeman on foot patrol in **Harlesden** was threatened with a gun. The policeman and a police community safety officer had apprehended a car containing three people. The gun was pointed after passenger got out of the car and fled.

*Bexley Times*, 20 April 2005

Security staff at **Slade Green** railway station had to barricade themselves in an office after they were attacked by a group of youths armed with an **air rifle**. Four shots were fired, one of which hit a security guard in the thigh.

*PA News*, 19 April 2005

Six antique **replica guns** have been stolen during a raid on a guesthouse in **Gloucester**.

*icCoventry*, 19 April 2005

Masked men dressed in boiler suits raided a security van at gunpoint at the **Corley** services on the M6 in Warwickshire. The raiders escaped with an undisclosed quantity of money.

*Evening Standard*, 18 April 2005

Singer Mick Hucknall alerted fellow shoppers in a supermarket in **Cobham** after spotting a teenager with what he believed was a handgun. Police arrested the boy in a nearby shop on suspicion of possessing an **imitation handgun**.

*icCoventry*, 18 April 2005

A man has died in hospital two weeks after being shot five times in the body shortly after leaving a pub in **Foleshill**. Police believe that a handgun was used in the attack.

*PA News*, 18 April 2005

A man who was arrested after two police officers were shot as they investigated a murder has died in hospital. He was found with serious injuries in the **Halifax** area after going on the run from a pub in **Ripponden** where the officers were shot. A woman detective constable was shot in the thigh and her male colleague in the stomach. The body of the murder victim, who had been shot once in the head, had been found a few miles away on moorland. The man has been named as Alexander Lawton and he died from a single gunshot wound to the head (*Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 20 April 2005). A pistol has been recovered (*Leeds Today*, 20 April 2005).

*Sheffield Today*, 16 April 2005

Niall Lupton aimed an **imitation gun** at his wife's chest after becoming convinced she was having an affair. The incident took place at their home in **Lincoln**. He admitted possessing an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence and was jailed for three years. In 1994 Lupton was convicted of manslaughter and jailed for two years following the death of a baby.

*Evening Chronicle (Newcastle)*, 16 April 2005

Colin Rymer is facing a ban from his own community in **Longbenton** after brandishing a shotgun at drinkers in a pub. He was also supplying drugs in the area.

*Evening Post (Nottingham)*, 15 April 2005

Kieran Staff was convicted of possessing a **Brocock replica gun** which ended up in a sock stashed under a hedge in his garden in **Bulwell**. His DNA, transferred from the gun, was detected on the sock.

*BBC*, 15 April 2005

Two teenage schoolboys were arrested after a **ball-bearing gun** was fired towards a teacher and hit a child in a classroom at Magnus Comprehensive School in **Newark**.

*Wandsworth Guardian*, 14 April 2005

A 17-year-old boy appeared in court facing charges of raping a prostitute after sexually assaulting her with the barrel of a handgun. The incident took place at a brothel in **Tooting** during a raid by a gang of masked men. A receptionist was forced to hand over money as a gun was put to her temple and a knife to her throat.

*Liverpool Echo*, 13 April 2005

A 20-year-old man was shot in the leg outside a sports centre in **Eldonian Village, Vauxhall**. The victim and his assailant struggled and fell into a canal. The gunman swam off. An 18-year-old has now been charged in connection with shooting (*BBC*, 20 April 2005)

*Cambridge Evening News*, 13 April 2005

A mother and her 8-year-old daughter were shocked when an **airgun pellet** was fired through a window at their home in **Haverhill**.

*Peterborough Today*, 12 April 2005

Five youths armed with a crossbow, **ball-bearing guns** and catapults fired at a bus which was travelling through the Ortons in **Peterborough**. Police seized a BB gun.

*Liverpool Echo*, 12 April 2005

One man died and his friend was fighting for his life after a feud between them ended in one shooting the other before turning the gun on himself. The victim was shot three times in a shop in **Kirkdale**. Less than an hour later the man believed to have attacked him was found critically wounded in a car in Liverpool city centre. An inquest heard that he was found with a shotgun on his lap and serious head wounds (*Liverpool Echo*, 14 April 2005).

*Edinburgh Evening News*, 12 April 2005

Nicola Horlick was attacked by two men on a scooter in **South Kensington** as she was getting out of her car. One of the men threatened her with a handgun, demanding she hand over her valuables. The attacker hit her across the head with the pistol. The two men fled empty-handed.

*Evening Chronicle (Newcastle)*, 12 April 2005

A man was undergoing surgery to remove shotgun pellets after being shot in **Throckley**. The victim's car crashed when it was rammed off the road by the gunman's car. The gunman got out of the passenger seat and shot the victim.

*Evening Standard*, 11 April 2005

Armed plainclothes detectives caught two robbers as they attempted to hold up a jeweller's in **Richmond**. One of the robbers was confronting staff with a handgun inside the store.

*BBC*, 11 April 2005

Thieves stole a 7.62mm high-powered rifle from a car parked in the car park of a hotel near **Ashbourne**. The rifle was in a locked case. The car door had been forced open.

*Evening Post (Nottingham)*, 9 April 2005

Two youths attacked a group of teenagers, who were sitting chatting on their bikes in a **Hucknall** street, by opening fire from a car with a **paintball gun** and a **ball-bearing gun**. One victim was hit on the bottom, another in the stomach. One of the perpetrators has received an eight-month referral order while the second, Davie Allcock, was given a 12-month community punishment.

*East Anglian Daily Times*, 9 April 2005

A pensioner died of gunshot wounds after an armed siege at a house in **Stowmarket**. Police said that the man was already dead when officers went into the house and that the death is not being treated as suspicious.

*BBC*, 9 April 2005

A 16-year-old boy is being treated in hospital after he was shot in the face with an **airgun**. The boy was in a football pitch area in **Sale Moor**, Greater Manchester. He had a pellet removed from his face, near to his eye.

*Times & Star*, 8 April 2005

A six-year-old **Workington** girl was hit in the face by a pellet fired from a **ball-bearing gun**. A 12-year-old boy has been interviewed by police.

*icSurrey*, 7 April 2005

Jonathan Harlow, a former soldier, has been jailed for seven years after a police raid found an arsenal of gun at his flat in **Redhill**. Harlow bought **de-activated guns** and ammunition from overseas and converted them back into live weapons and then sold them online on eBay. Among the guns discovered by police were a fully-loaded pump-action shotgun, a Smith & Wesson handgun, a 9mm automatic pistol and a Second World War rifle. Harlow also kept weapons at his mother's home in Somerset.

*BBC*, 7 April 2005

A lorry driver was forced to make an emergency stop after the windscreen of his vehicle was hit by an **airgun pellet**. The lorry was on the A249 near **Sittingbourne**. A group of youths had been seen near the scene.

*Telegraph*, 7 April 2005

Tony Kimmance, 18, was ordered to complete a two-year community rehabilitation order after he shot a six-year-old boy in the head with a **.22 air rifle** as he played in his garden in **Clitheroe**. The victim suffered a wound to his skull and has nightmares about the attack.

*PA News*, 7 April 2005

Government minister David Lammy was at the scene when a 17-year-old was shot on the Broadwater Farm Estate in **Tottenham**. The victim was with a group of friends outside a community centre when he was hit by a single gunshot fired from a car. Lammy has complained that the police held back the ambulance called to attend the scene and that it was more than 20 minutes before they reached the scene. The victim underwent an operation in hospital.

*Herts Advertiser*, 7 April 2005

A gun was apparently used to threaten a man during a street robbery in **St Albans**. The thief got away with small change.

*Evening Star*, 7 April 2005

A handgun was found buried in the back garden of the former home of a convicted drug dealer at **Trimley St Mary**. The police are now in possession of the gun.

*Evening Gazette*, 7 April 2005

A man who saw a 14-year-old boy with a **ball-bearing gun** apparently attacked the youngster after telling him and his friend to put their guns down. The man put the guns in his car. Police have spoken to a man following the incident in **Billingham**.

*BBC*, 7 April 2005

Two shotguns, a rifle, an air rifle and a **replica handgun**, along with 400 rounds of ammunition have been stolen from a house in **Thornaby**. The firearms could be lethal in the wrong hands.

*Winsford Chronicle*, 6 April 2005

A councillor said he witnessed a group of youths walking down a **Winsford** street with **air rifles** which they aimed at passing cars.

*Streatham Post*, 6 April 2005

A teenage boy caused panic when he walked down **Streatham** High Road wielding a **replica M16 assault rifle**. He is alleged to have fired at a shop window. A 13-year-old was arrested in connection with the incident. In a separate incident two youths staged a pretend shoot-out in a street in **Dulwich**. The gun was found to be a **replica** and both youths were arrested and bailed.

*Macclesfield Express*, 6 April 2005

The landlord of an **Upton Priory** pub awoke to face a hooded man pointing a shotgun at his face. The attacker stole thousands of pounds for the safe before ordering the licensee to put his head in the safe and then slamming the door on his skull.

*BBC*, 6 April 2005

Two boys were shot, one in the face and one in the leg with a **ball-bearing gun** whilst they were walking along a road in **Polesworth**, Warwickshire.

*South London Press*, 5 April 2005

A man died after being found slumped in a pool of blood by the roadside in **New Cross**. He had been shot and the bullet had pierced his heart.

*BBC*, 5 April 2005

A pensioner was shot in the chest by youths outside his house in **Telford**. He was hit with pellets several times. Police believe a **BB gun** was used.

*Evening Post (Nottingham)*, 4 April 2005

Four masked men, each brandishing a handgun, ran along a street in **Sneinton**, Nottingham, after a robbery at a betting shop.

*BBC*, 4 April 2005

A shotgun was fired at a car parked at a pub in **Hengrove**, Bristol. The gun was fired by one of three men in another car.

*Times & Star*, 3 April 2005

A 10-year-old boy was arrested after a pregnant woman was shot in the face with a **ball-bearing gun** in **Workington**. Although she did not suffer serious injuries the victim was badly shaken.

*AOL News*, 3 April 2005

An 81-year-old man was arrested after an 80-year-old woman was shot in the leg in **Eggborough** near Goole.

*East Anglian Daily Times*, 2 April 2005

Matthew Falk was jailed for 12 months after he pointed a loaded **air revolver** at a policewoman during a drunken rage. Falk had called the police to say a group of youths were causing a nuisance outside his **Clacton** home but when two police officer arrived he came out and pointed the weapon at one of them.

*South London Press*, 1 April 2005

A man was fighting for his life after he was shot in the back in **Streatham** High Road. He was shot yards from a sandwich shop that he owned. The bullet caused massive internal damage but the victim is apparently recovering in hospital (*icSouth London*, 8 April 2005).

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## SCOTLAND

*BBC*, 22 April 2005

Police are investigating two shootings in the west of Scotland. A man died after being found with serious injuries in a garden in the **Garthamlock** area of Glasgow. A gangland feud was being blamed. In the second incident a man was shot and seriously injured in **Airdrie**.

*BBC*, 20 April 2005

Stephen Mackay has been jailed for three years for threatening a woman with a **replica gun** and for having a sawn-off shotgun. He threatened the woman with a realistic replica of a Smith and Wesson handgun when he called at her door in **Stornaway** and demanded cash, drink and drugs. The shotgun was found by police searching his parents' house.

*PA News*, 14 April 2005

Police investigating the murder of Alistair Wilson in November 2004 have given details of the gun used to shoot him on the doorstep of his house in **Nairn** (see [Incidents](#)). The small semi-automatic Schmeisser handgun was produced in the 1920s by a German company, Haenel Waffen, and fired a Czech .25 calibre bullet. Around 24 people contacted the police about the gun after the details were released.

*Daily Record*, 14 April 2005

Andrew Drummond shot a 17-year-old in the leg with an **air pistol** whilst she was at a bus stop in **Auchinleck**. Drummond was given 18 months' probation and 100 hours' community service.

*Daily Record*, 9 April 2005

Sean Potter, 18, admitted reckless discharge of an **air rifle** after a 12-year-old boy was shot while playing near his home in **Armada**. The victim faces surgery to have his left eye removed. Potter was ordered to serve 250 hours' community service, three years' probation to pay £750 compensation to the victim.

*BBC*, 7 April 2005

Another young Scottish child has been shot in the head by an **airgun**. Tyler Scott was injured whilst playing with friends in the **Muirhouse** area of Edinburgh. A single pellet was lodged in his head and he is to undergo surgery. A 14-year-old boy has been arrested in connection with the shooting (*Daily Record*, 9 April 2005).

*Evening Times*, 6 April 2005

A schoolboy of 15 held an **air pistol** to a nine-year-old girl's head and ordered her to undress. In court Graeme Linnen admitted dragging the girl into bushes at a park in **Strathaven** and pointing the gun to her head.

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## WALES

*BBC*, 23 April 2005

David Richards, a collector of World War II memorabilia, has been jailed for four years for possession of a prohibited firearm, a Webley Mark Four .445 revolver, which at one time he had hung on a wall. Police had also found a semi-automatic **air rifle**, which he was banned from owning owing to a previous jail sentence. The guns were found at the home of his parents in **Johnstown**, Wrexham.

*Guardian*, 22 April 2005

A barman described how a teenager whom he had asked to stop playing a gaming machine at a club in **Ammanford**, south Wales, pointed what appeared to be a Colt 45 at him. The teenager, Jay Devereux, was convicted of possessing an **imitation gun** with intent.

*BBC*, 11 April 2005

A security guard was shot and a member of the public injured during an armed robbery outside a bank in a main shopping street in **Newport**. Police say the injured guard, who was shot in the leg, could easily have been killed. The gang of three robbers stole a number of security boxes.

*Wrexham Evening Leader*, 6 April 2005

A teacher speaking at the NASUWT conference told of a past incident at a **Wrexham** school in which two pupils had fired **pistols loaded with hard plastic pellets** at each other while he was teaching.

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## INCIDENTS INVOLVING ANIMALS

*News & Star*, 27 April 2005

James McCleod has been fined £200 for taking potshots at rabbits with an **air rifle** from the window of a car at **How Mill**, Brampton.

*BBC*, 25 April 2005

Three badgers have been found shot dead on land in the **Riby** area of North Lincolnshire. Badgers are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

*Hucknall Today*, 22 April 2005

A cat was hit in the face with a **airgun** pellet only yards from her home in **Bulwell**. The pellet hit her on the bridge of the nose and lodged near her brain. The cat was lucky to survive.

*AOL News*, 21 April 2005

The bodies of ten newborn lambs and a ewe were found shot dead in a field at **Horton-cum-Studley**, Oxfordshire. The attack followed a similar incident a fortnight earlier when more than a dozen lambs were found shot on the same farm.

*Northwich Chronicle*, 20 April 2005

A cat, injured by an **air rifle**, was discovered bleeding by her owner after returning from a field in **Norley**. A pellet was found in the cat's stomach: the pellet had entered her mouth and she had swallowed it.

*BBC Newsround*, 20 April 2005

A buzzard was found wounded with an **air rifle** pellet in a field of cabbages at **Coombe Bissett** in Wiltshire, unable to move to get food. The bird was taken to animal hospital where he is making a slow recovery.

*BBC*, 12 April 2005

The number of birds and other animals being injured in **airgun** attacks in Scotland has risen sharply according to the SSPCA. Attacks on a fox and swans are among the latest airgun incidents. Airgun pellets, particularly pointed ones, can prove lethal according to the charity's inspectors.

*Evening Telegraph and Post (Dundee)*, 5 April 2005

A cat was shot twice with an **air rifle** in **Dundee**. The owner was anxiously waiting to see if the family cat will recover after it was struck by pellets, one of which lodged close to his spine.



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