

APRIL 2006 - SUMMARY

- **Gun Deaths and Injuries** - In April a number of men lost their lives as a result of gunshot wounds. Four men were killed in shootings in London (Brockley, Battersea, East Finchley (the victim was also stabbed), Hackney) and another in Castlebeck (Sheffield). A man died in hospital after being shot in Anfield (Liverpool), though the circumstances surrounding his shooting are uncertain. Four men died in Scotland (in Cumbernauld, Edinburgh, East Calder and Duntocher (Glasgow), two of whom were shot with airguns (see below). Arrests have been made in connection with a number of these deaths.
- Another man died after taking a gun to a club in Kirkintilloch but it appears that his death was not from gunshot wounds.
- Shooting incidents that resulted in injuries, a number of which were serious, occurred in Salford, Shiregreen (Sheffield), Hackney, Bracknell, Manchester (two separate shootings on the same evening), Huddersfield, Mangotsfield (Gloucestershire), Orsett (Essex), Cumbernauld and Merthyr Tydfil. A second man was injured in an incident in a pub in Edinburgh in which another was killed. A police officer received minor injuries when he was shot in Brixton.
- A 4-year-old girl was injured by shattered glass from a car window after being caught up in a drive-by shooting in Hackney, and a 2-year-old girl was hit during a shooting in Old Trafford (Manchester).
- A boy in Burnley was injured by an explosive device which police have classed as a firearm. Three men have been arrested.

- **Armed Hold-Ups and Assaults** - During armed raids on houses couples were robbed in Curbar (Derbyshire) and Ranmoor (Sheffield), and a man had a gun forced into his mouth during a robbery at his mother's flat in South Croydon. A man fired a shot after bursting into a house in Drumchapel (Glasgow) but no one was injured.
- Robberies and attempted robberies involving gunmen occurred on shops in Runcorn (a boy of 10 was made to lie down on the floor), Melton Mowbray, Long Stratton (Norfolk - the victim was also made to withdraw money from a cashpoint) and Balornock (Glasgow) (a shot was fired, but no one was injured), off-licences in Leominster and Coundon (Coventry), a restaurant in Brundall (Norfolk), bookmakers in Avenham (Preston - two arrests made) and Beaumont Leys (Leicester), a pub in Stratford-upon-Avon, a funeral parlour in Burnley and petrol stations in Marston Green (Birmingham - a gun was fired in the air) and Penge. Security guards were robbed outside a supermarket in Ashford (Kent - shots may have

been fired). Police apprehended men following raids on banks in Wotton-under-Edge (Gloucestershire) and Ashton (Preston).

- **Other Incidents** - Shots were fired at houses in Sheldon and Erdington in Birmingham, Norris Green in Liverpool, Wallington and North Cheam (Surrey - a man has appeared in court), and Germiston in Glasgow.
- A man was arrested after threatening people outside a pub in Westbury (Wiltshire). Nine arrests were made after stolen guns were found by police in Oxford. A Whitehaven man was charged with possessing a firearm (a handgun) with intent to cause another man to believe that unlawful violence would be used against him or another and a woman from Netherley (Merseyside) was arrested on suspicion of possession of a gun. A man was arrested after a sawn-off shotgun and class A drugs were found in Croxteth (Merseyside).
- Armed police swooped on a bus in Ilford and wrestled with a youth seen carrying what looked like an automatic pistol.
- Nine people have been arrested in Greater Manchester by police investigating a series of shootings.
- Two unarmed men were arrested after pretending to have a gun in the centre of Swindon.

- **Convictions** (see also **Imitation Guns** and **Airgun Incidents**) - Men were sentenced after being convicted for charges relating to a robbery and possession of a firearm in Aberkenfig (5 years), a robbery at a Kilmarnock home (sentence deferred), handling a stolen assault rifle (a soldier sentenced to 7 years, 4 months by a court martial), two raids on building societies in Nottingham (life sentence following previous convictions), manslaughter for the accidental shooting of a friend in Birmingham (8 years), grievous bodily harm with intent and a firearms-related offence after two men were shot in Upchurch (Kent) (sentencing deferred). A woman was sentenced to five years in jail for keeping an illegal handgun.
- A number of trials are on-going, including those of a man charged with the illegal possession of a number of guns, including six handguns, four men charged with offences relating to an armed robbery in Newport and a bungled raid on a security van in central London.

- **Imitation Guns** - In comparison to recent months there were few reports of new incidents involving imitation guns. Although it seems likely that some of the unidentified guns used in some of the other reported incidents may have been imitations, GCN hopes that this reduction will be sustained and is the result of people heeding the warnings about the dangers of using imitation guns in public.
- A man was detained by armed police after entering a pub in Totton (Southampton) with a blank-firing imitation handgun, and a weapon believed to be a ball-bearing gun was discharged by a motorist in Hempnall (Norfolk).

- Three men received sentences for offences which included the use of imitation guns. One had pointed an imitation gun at a police officer's head in Camborne (2 years at a young offenders' institution), another had committed a serious sexual assault on two young boys who were threatened with an imitation pistol in Spalding (at least 6 years in jail) and the third man had committed a series of attacks in Wigan while on the run after threatening the police with an imitation handgun when they came to arrest him (to serve at least 20 years).
- **Airgun Incidents (see also Incidents Involving Animals)** - In contrast to the smaller number of incidents with imitation guns in April 2006, the month was a particularly bad one for incidents with airguns, including two fatal shootings. These weapons can be lethal and should be regulated appropriately.
- The two fatal shootings both took place in Scotland, in East Calder and Duntocher. Police have made arrests in connection with both incidents.
- There were other airgun attacks which left the victims injured. In Scotland a schoolgirl was shot in the head as she queued at an ice cream van in Coatbridge and two pedestrians were attacked in Inverness. There were also three incidents in Wales: a nine-year-old boy was hit in Bridgend after an air rifle was fired from a window, a great-grandmother was shot in the arm in Porthcawl and a teenager was shot in the head in woods in Cardiff. Two clubbers were shot in Torquay and a 14-year-old boy was hit whilst camping in Freston (Suffolk). The police sealed off a street in Stockton whilst they were searching for a man said to be in possession of an air-rifle type weapon - a family member had been shot.
- A 15-year-old girl lost the sight in one eye after being hit in the face with an airgun pellet in Middlesbrough.
- Durham Police reported nine alerts involving air weapons over just one weekend.
- Two men have been charged after houses were raided by police in Workington and three air rifles recovered. A man was arrested in a hotel in St Davids after allegedly making threats on his girlfriend's life: an air pistol was found.
- The window of Whelley (Wigan) pensioner was shattered by an air rifle pellet and a number of windows of the parish rooms of a Colne church were fired at.
- A man was given an 18 month jail sentence for recklessly discharging a firearm, possibly an air pistol, in a bar in Edinburgh. Another was jailed for 12 months after threatening his girl friend and her mother with an air pistol in Accrington. A teenager pleaded guilty to shooting a female police officer with an airgun as she investigated a burglary in Carshalton. Another teenager, who fired an air rifle at two pupils in the grounds of a school in Aspatria, was given an Asbo.
- A man from Church Village in Wales had his air rifle confiscated after a domestic row.

- A Purley man was given a two-year conditional discharge for not having a licence for a gas-powered air rifle.
- **Incidents Involving Animals** - GCN heard from correspondents in Kensal Green and Ellesmere Port about airgun attacks suffered by their cats. Sadly they were not alone in having to deal with the aftermath of an airgun attack on their pets. There were media reports from Beccles, Langley (Warwickshire), Hartlepool and Hoddesdon describing other injuries sustained by cats as a result of being shot with an air weapon.
- Swans which had been shot with airguns were discovered in Doncaster and Oswestry. A rare avocet was found dead near Immingham with a likely airgun wound to its neck.
- A number of gun attacks on farm animals were reported - sheep or lambs killed in Kent, Dumfriesshire and Sutherland.

GUN INCIDENTS - APRIL 2006

ENGLAND

ic South London, 28 April 2006

A lorry driver was shot in the leg by two robbers who were fleeing a bungled raid on a security van in **Portland Square**, central London, in May 2005. Two men have now appeared in court in connection with the incident. One of them, Lanre Hameed, has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to rob. The other man denies a number of charges including carrying a firearm with criminal intent and possession of a firearm or imitation firearm.

ic South London, 28 April 2006

Two men appeared in court charged with shooting a policeman after a plain-clothes officer was shot in the leg while on patrol in **Brixton**. The victim sustained minor injuries.

Hexham Courant, 28 April 2006

A serial sex attacker who lives in **Darras Hall** spotted a gunman in his garden, prompting a response by armed police. Neighbours feel threatened by vigilantes out to attack the man, who has also received bullets and death threats in the post.

The Citizen, 28 April 2006

Two men threatened a funeral parlour worker in **Burnley** with a handgun and ordered her to hand over cash. The men ran off as soon as the till drawer was handed over. The victim was not hurt but was left traumatised by the raid.

BBC, 28 April 2006

A man is being questioned by police on suspicion of attempted murder after a man was shot at allotments in **Orsett**, Essex. The victim was airlifted to hospital with serious wounds to his hand and body.

BBC, 28 April 2006

A gang of four men were surrounded by police as they tried to flee the scene of a bank raid in **Ashton**, Preston. One shot was fired but no one was injured. The men were armed with a sledgehammer and a gun.

BBC, 28 April 2006

Neil Wood has been jailed for life (to serve at least 20 years) after shooting a man twice in the chest while on the run from police. He threatened police officers with an **imitation handgun** at his **Wigan** home when they came to arrest him for stealing bicycles in November 2005 (see [Incidents](#)). He evaded police for a few days during which time he robbed and threatened two women and shot a man in the chest after he had refused him entry to his home. The victim has made a full recovery but still has the bullets lodged in his chest. Wood pleaded guilty to a number of offences including firearm offences.

BBC, 28 April 2006

David Chapman, 19, has been sentenced to at least six years in jail after pleading guilty to charges of attempted rape, serious sexual assault and possession of an imitation firearm. Chapman threatened two young boys with an **imitation automatic pistol** before seriously sexually assaulting them in **Spalding** in December 2005 (see [Incidents](#)).

BBC, 28 April 2006

A man has been remanded in custody accused of six armed robberies at banks and building societies across England. His arrest followed a hold-up at a bank in **Wotton-under-Edge** in Gloucestershire.

Manchester Evening News, 27 April 2006

The son of a man, who died after he shot himself three times with a shotgun, claims the tragedy could have been avoided. The man suffered from dementia and had his driving licence taken off him but he was still allowed to hold a licence for three shotguns even though this was pointed out to a senior firearms officer. At an inquest the coroner said he was concerned about lack of cooperation between the DVLA and police firearms licensing authorities. The man may have accidentally shot himself after slipping on grass on his estate in **Macclesfield** in April 2005 while taking a "pot shot" at Canada geese and had then turned the gun on himself.

Ilford Recorder, 27 April 2006

Armed police with machine guns swooped on a bus in **Ilford** and wrestled with a youth after passengers saw he was carrying what looked like an automatic pistol.

Bromley Times, 27 April 2006

A petrol station in **Penge** was raided by a gunman who had attempted to rob the same petrol station three days before. He was tackled by a cashier and fled when a customer came in.

Birmingham Mail, 27 April 2006

An inquest heard that a man who died after falling over at his home in **Darlaston** in December 2004 had shot himself in the head with an **air rifle** two weeks before. A pathologist described how he had a pellet embedded in his skull but didn't feel it would have been life-threatening. The coroner concluded that the fall was the cause of his death, which was accidental.

Evening Chronicle (Newcastle), 26 April 2006

A coroner has concluded that a 17-year-old took his own life when he locked himself in a downstairs toilet in his home in **Newton Hall** with his mother's partner's shotgun. He killed himself with a single shot in November 2005 (see [Incidents](#)).

Eastern Daily Press, 26 April 2006

A weapon, believed to be a **ball-bearing gun**, was discharged by a motorist at a crossroads in **Hempnall**. Three men were arrested but have since been released pending further inquiries.

BBC, 26 April 2006

Durham Police have reported that armed officers were called to nine alerts involving **air weapons** over one weekend. A spokesman warned that people carrying airguns were potentially putting themselves in a dangerous situation and urged parents considering buying an air weapon for a child to think again.

BBC, 26 April 2006

Police arrested nine people after raids in **Middleton** and **Langley** whilst investigating a series of shootings in Greater Manchester. Those arrested are suspected of crimes ranging from attempted murder to possession of drugs.

BBC, 26 April 2006

A woman required hospital treatment for an injury to her arm after a firearm was discharged on the village green in **Mangotsfield**, Gloucestershire.

BBC, 25 April 2006

A music promoter who was handing out flyers in **Hackney** for a music event was shot dead in the street. Operation Trident is investigating.

GCN is grateful to a correspondent for alerting us to this incident

BBC, 25 April 2006

A shooting victim was found on the back seat of a car by police who had followed the car. He was seriously injured and was being taken to hospital by residents of a house in **Anfield** whom he had alerted, but died later in hospital. Four men aged between 16 and 22 have been arrested on suspicion of firearms offences. Police are considering the possibility that the man shot himself with a handgun by accident (*Daily Post*, 26 April 2006).

BBC, 25 April 2006

Gerry Connors has admitted shooting two men at a travellers' site in **Upchurch**, Kent, but denied charges of attempted murder. He pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily harm with intent and a firearms-related offence. He will be sentenced in June.

Eastern Daily Press, 24 April 2006

A hooded man held a sawn-off shotgun to the neck of a cleaner at a restaurant in **Brundall**. He confronted her when she was carrying linen in an outside building. The man fled only with some bottles of drink, tip money and the victim's handbag.

BBC, 24 April 2006

A two-year-old girl suffered a slight injury to her back after she was caught up in a shooting in **Old Trafford**, Manchester. She may have been hit when two men fired shots at youths outside the house next door. A 17-year-old was being questioned on suspicion of attempted murder.

BBC, 22 April 2006

Two men have been charged with a firearms offence after two houses were raided and three **air rifles** recovered in the Moss Bay area of **Workington**.

BBC, 22 April 2006

Eight men have been arrested after a shooting in **Huddersfield** in which one man was wounded in the head.

Pendle Today, 21 April 2006

In a number of incidents vandals fired **pellet guns** at windows of the parish rooms of a church in **Colne**.

BBC, 21 April 2006

A baker was threatened with what is thought to have been a shotgun and an axe in a bakery at **Long Stratton**, Norfolk. Robbers raided the shop till and drove the baker to a cashpoint to withdraw more money. He was treated in hospital for shock and facial injuries.

BBC, 21 April 2006

Dowaine Maye has been jailed for eight years after pleading guilty to manslaughter for accidentally shooting his best friend. The victim was shot in the head as he and Maye ran away from police after disturbances in the **Lozells** area of Birmingham in October 2005 (see [Incidents](#)). The weapon involved, a reactivated semi-automatic handgun, has not been traced.

BBC, 21 April 2006

A driver was shot by another motorist heading in the opposite direction along a road in **Crumpsall**, Manchester. A man was arrested on suspicion of firearms offences. The victim, who was hit in the buttock was in a stable condition in hospital. The same evening another man arrived at **Manchester Royal Infirmary** suffering from a gunshot wound to his leg.

BBC, 21 April 2006

Whilst serving a seven-year sentence for robbery, Gary McAlister owned up to two unsolved raids on building societies in **Nottingham** in December 2000 and September 2001. In the 2000 raid he pointed what appeared to be a gun at staff. In the mid 1990s he was given an 11-year sentence for three robberies and possession of **imitation firearms**. He has now been given a life sentence.

Melton Today, 20 April 2006

A **Melton Mowbray** shopkeeper was left terrified after an attempted armed robbery. A masked man pointed a gun at him and demanded money from the till. The shopkeeper was able to activate the panic alarm and the offender fled empty-handed.

Barnet & Potters Bar Times, 20 April 2006

Two teenagers have been charged with murder after a father-of-two was killed in **East Finchley**. A post-mortem revealed that the victim had received several stab wounds and a gunshot wound, but could not say which caused his death. Operation Trident were investigating the killing. The attack was apparently carried out in front of children.

BBC, 19 April 2006

A sawn-off shotgun was uncovered, along with class A drugs, when police raided a house in **Croxteth**, Merseyside. A man has been arrested.

BBC, 19 April 2006

A gunman was being sought after a man was shot in his upper left thigh whilst walking along a road in **Bracknell**. Detectives do not yet know what type of weapon was used.

BBC, 19 April 2006

Armed robbers stole money from security guards filling up a cash machine outside a supermarket in **Ashford**, Kent. Police said there were reports of shots being fired but no-one was injured. The face of one member of the gang has been caught on CCTV (*BBC*, 20 April 2006).

BBC, 18 April 2006

A teenager was shot dead in a street in **Battersea**. He had been killed by a single bullet. Operation Trident is investigating.

BBC, 18 April 2006

A man, aged 19, has been charged with attempted murder after shots were fired at a house in **Erdington**, Birmingham. He has also been charged with firearms offences. Two shots were reportedly fired from a handgun shortly after there had been a row between people in two cars and a motorbike.

Wigan Observer, 17 April 2006

A 92-year-old pensioner from **Whelley** contacted the police immediately after her window had been shattered by an **air rifle** pellet. She had to wait five days before being contacted by officers.

BBC, 16 April 2006

Armed police used a Taser stun gun on a man who had ignored their requests to stand still. The incident has been referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission. It followed an incident in **Newcastle-under-Lyme** in which a teenage boy was injured by a man with a samurai sword.

This is Wiltshire, 14 April 2006

A man accused of threatening people outside a **Westbury** pub with a sawn-off shotgun appeared in court charged with two firearms offences including possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life.

ic Croydon, 14 April 2006

A gun was forced into a man's mouth after three men had forced their way into his mother's flat in **South Croydon**. Two of the three men ransacked the flat for money and valuable property. The gang broke into two other flats in the block, stealing electrical equipment.

Sutton Guardian, 13 April 2006

A man appeared in court charged with gun crime offences after a gun was fired twice at homes in **Wallington** and, less than an hour later, outside a pub in **North Cheam**.

Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 13 April 2006

Members of staff at a pub in **Stratford** were forced at gunpoint to open the safe in the office. One of the managers was hit on the back of the head but the guns were not fired.

News & Star, 13 April 2006

Scott Walpole, aged 16, has been given an Asbo for a number of offences including trespassing with a firearm on land and possessing a firearm with intent to cause violence. He had fired a **.22 air rifle** at two teenagers in the grounds of a school in **Aspatria** in November 2005. The rifle was equipped with a silencer and telescopic sight.

Daily Post, 13 April 2006

A 10-year-old boy was held at gunpoint and ordered to lie down on the floor when a man armed with a pistol raided his parents' shop in **Runcorn**. The gunman fled from the shop with a quantity of cash.

Croydon Guardian, 13 April 2006

Steven Jones was given a two-year conditional discharge for not having a licence for a **gas-powered air rifle**. The weapon was found when police searched his home in **Purley**. The firearms dealer who had sold him the gun had told him that he would not require a licence.

BBC, 13 April 2006

A shotgun valued at £2000 has been stolen during a burglary from a property in **Farnham**. It was taken from a locked gun cabinet after the burglars found the keys.

BBC, 13 April 2006

A 15-year-old girl has lost the sight in one eye after being hit in the face with an **airgun** pellet in an incident at **South Bank**, Middlesbrough. A 15-year-old boy was arrested and later bailed pending further inquiries. An air weapon had been recovered by police.

BBC, 13 April 2006

An armed robber threatened staff with what is believed to be a firearm at a bookmakers in **Beaumont Leys**, Leicester. He escaped with a quantity of cash despite being chased by two community support officers.

BBC, 13 April 2006

Armed police used a stun gun to detain a man who entered a pub in **Totton**, Southampton, with a handgun. A **blank-firing imitation handgun** was removed from the man.

This is Local London, 12 April 2006

Darren Mathurin has been jailed for six and a half years after police found a Mach-10 machine gun and ammunition at the **Harlesden** home of an associate. He was found guilty of possession of a prohibited weapon and unlawful possession of ammunition.

Newsquest South-West, 12 April 2006

Ryan Avent, 18, was sentenced to two years in a young offenders' institution after he had pointed an **imitation gun** at a police officer's head and fired. He was also armed with a kitchen knife had been drinking at the time of the incident in **Camborne**. He pleaded guilty to being in possession of an imitation gun with intent to cause the officer to fear that unlawful violence would be used.

BBC, 12 April 2006

Nine people have been arrested in **Oxford** after police found stolen guns at several addresses. The suspects were being questioned regarding firearms, money laundering and burglary offences. The guns had been stolen in a burglary at a house in **Bampton**, near Witney, earlier in the month.

Sheffield Today, 11 April 2006

A couple were held at gunpoint in their house in **Ranmoor** after three armed men fired shots into their home and forced their way inside. The gang escaped in the couple's car with a haul of flat-screen TVs and a cache of jewellery. The couple had previously faced another gunpoint ordeal whilst staying at the house of friends in **Low Bradfield** a year ago (*Sheffield Today*, 13 April 2006).

ic South London, 11 April 2006

Two men have been accused of a fatal shooting that took place at a flat in **Catford** in April 2005. The victim was shot through the neck with a handgun.

Birmingham Mail, 11 April 2006

A gun was fired into the air by masked raiders who ambushed a security van at a petrol station in **Marston Green**. No one was injured, and police were uncertain what was taken in the robbery.

BBC, 11 April 2006

A woman was arrested in the **Netherley** area of Liverpool on suspicion of possessing a gun. Police had raided a house and a pub where they found a handgun and ammunition.

BBC, 11 April 2006

A four-year-old girl had to be taken to hospital when she was caught in the middle of a drive-by shooting in **Hackney**. A stray bullet hit the window of the car she was travelling in, covering her in broken glass. The intended victim had several shots fired at him but escaped with minor injuries.

Sheffield Today, 10 April 2006

A gunman fired into a house in **Shiregreen**, seriously injuring a father of three who was shot in the leg. The victim's wife and children were sleeping upstairs.

BBC, 10 April 2006

Armed police arrested two men in connection with a robbery at a bookmakers in **Avenham**, Preston. The men, who were armed with a handgun and sledgehammer, smashed a security screen and stole takings.

BBC, 10 April 2006

James Piotrowski has been jailed for seven years and four months by a court martial for handling a stolen assault rifle. He stole the SA80 rifle from **Wellington Barracks**, London, in November 2004 following which he went missing leading to a manhunt in **Birmingham** (see [Incidents](#)).

BBC, 10 April 2006

Andrew Wanoghu, who had once been accused of murder, died after being shot in the back and heart in **Brockley**. Wanoghu had stood trial for the shooting in July 2002 of Damian Cope, whose mother Lucy Cope went on to set up Mothers Against Guns.

BBC, 9 April 2006

A man has been charged with attempted murder after a man was left seriously injured in a shooting in **Salford**. The victim suffered head and neck gunshot wounds.

icCoventry, 7 April 2006

A masked man armed with a gun stole cash from an off-licence in **Coundon**.

BBC, 7 April 2006

Three men have been arrested after a teenager was injured when an explosive device went off in his hand. The incident happened on private land close to his home in **Burnley**. The device was classed by the police as a firearm and it is an offence to make them and be in possession of them. The device had discharged shotgun cartridges into the boy's hand. A second device was later discovered on a nearby allotment.

Whitehaven News, 6 April 2006

A **Whitehaven** man was charged with possessing a firearm with intent to cause another man to believe that unlawful violence would be used against him or another. Police fear that a handgun may be circulating in the area as the gun allegedly used at the scene had not been recovered. Two blank cartridges were found in the street.

Watford Observer, 6 April 2006

A teenager has pleaded guilty to shooting a female police officer with an airgun he bought from a shop. The officer was shot in the upper leg while investigating a burglary in **Carshalton** in September 2005. A police laboratory analysis showed that the gun was so powerful it could have killed her. Police recovered two **air rifles**, one of which had a silencer and a telescopic sight.

Telegraph, 6 April 2006

A French police officer who went shopping at **Waterloo** station was still carrying her gun in a breach of regulations which allow French officers to patrol the station's Eurostar terminal. The French police have apologised.

Shropshire Star, 6 April 2006

A 19-year-old shop assistant in an off-licence in **Leominster** was threatened by robbers armed with a gun. They left with £75.

Liverpool Echo, 6 April 2006

Houses in **Norris Green** were sprayed with bullets when a gang fired a machine gun in a drive-by shooting. A group of teenagers returned fire with their own weapon.

Birmingham Mail, 6 April 2006

Bullets were reported to have been fired at a house in **Sheldon**. Police believe that the incident was aimed at a particular individual.

BBC, 5 April 2006

A man, who has denied attempted murder of his wife but admits causing grievous bodily harm, stood with both barrels of a shotgun in his mouth during a stand-off with police in **Old Romney**, Kent. The case continues.

Matlock Today, 5 April 2006

A gang of masked men burst into a home in **Curbar** and robbed a couple at gunpoint. The victims were tied up while the gang ransacked the home and stole cash and valuables. The gang escaped in the victims' car.

ic Croydon, 5 April 2006

Michelle Edwards of **Thornton Heath** admitted keeping an illegal handgun, a **replica** converted to fire live ammunition, in her wardrobe "as a favour" for someone. She has been jailed for five years (*This is Hertfordshire*, 6 May 2006).

Evening Star (Ipswich), 5 April 2006

A 14-year-old boy was recovering after being shot with an **air rifle**. He was preparing to camp with three friends in **Freston** when he was hit with a pellet and received bruising to his leg.

BBC, 4 April 2006

Two men were arrested after being seen with suspected firearms in the centre of **Swindon**. Witnesses had seen a car driver being threatened with a gun. It transpired that the two men were armed with nothing more than a hand - one of them had held his hands in a gun-shape to the other man's head and joked "This is a carjacking", sparking an alert by worried passers-by (*BBC*, 5 April 2006),

Yorkshire Post, 3 April 2006

A teenager and two other men were being questioned after a man died from a single gunshot wound at a house in **Castlebeck**, Sheffield.

Lancashire Evening Telegraph, 3 April 2006

Shaun Varley of **Accrington** has been jailed for 12 months after he turned up at his girlfriend's house and threatened her and her mother with an unloaded **air pistol**. He admitted possessing a firearm when prohibited with intent to cause fear of violence in October 2005.

Sunday Sun, 2 April 2006

Armed police sealed off a street in **Stockton** whilst searching for a man who had shot a family member. The man was said to have been in possession of an **air rifle**-type weapon. The man was not traced and enquiries were on-going.

BBC, 2 April 2006

Two teenagers have been arrested after clubbers at a **Torquay** nightclub were shot by an **airgun**. Police had received two complaints of minor injuries caused by pellets. Two youths have now been charged with public order offences (*BBC*, 3 April 2006).

SCOTLAND

BBC, 24 April 2006

William Campbell admitted recklessly discharging a firearm or imitation firearm while he was out on licence after an early release from jail. He was jailed for a further 18 months for the offence. He had fired the gun, which has never been traced, at a wake in a bar in **Edinburgh**. A search uncovered a .177 ball, the sort used in **gas-powered** or **air pistols**.

Evening Times, 24 April 2006

Walter Semple died at a social club in **Kirkintilloch** where he'd reportedly gone with a shotgun to fire a warning shot at a gang rival. Other drinkers at the club spotted the gun and wrestled him to the floor. It is thought he may have then choked to death or suffered a broken neck.

ic Scotland, 23 April 2006

A double shooting at a pub in **Gracemount**, Edinburgh, resulted in the death of one man and serious injury to another. The gunman entered the bar and opened fire with a shotgun. About three hours later police were called to a separate incident in nearby Gilmerton Dykes Avenue where a man was found with serious injuries. Police have suggested that there may be a link between the two incidents (*Evening Times*, 24 April 2006). A 21-year-old man has now been arrested in connection with the shooting (*BBC*, 1 May 2006).

BBC, 19 April 2006

A gun was fired at the door of a family home in **Germiston**, north Glasgow. Police are treating the case as reckless conduct using a firearm.

BBC, 19 April 2006

Lee Reid admitted a number of charges, acting with another person, which included striking a man with a gun, firing a gun and possessing a firearm. The charges related to an incident in which Reid and another man, both wearing camouflage clothing, attempted a robbery at the home of a couple in **Kilmarnock** in October 2005 (see [Incidents](#)). He had been recognised as a friend of the couple's son and was arrested within hours. Sentence was deferred. Reid had provided another man's name, but there was insufficient evidence to link him with the attack, even though combat gear and **imitation guns** were found at his house.

BBC, 19 April 2006

A man was injured after a gunman opened fire on him in **Cumbernauld**. The police are treating the incident as attempted murder. He was shot through the glass panel of his front door (*Evening Times*, 20 April 2006).

Evening Times, 17 April 2006

A man was shot at close range with an **airgun** in **Duntocher** and died later in hospital. The incident appears to have followed an incident in a pub earlier in the evening when something the victim said may have been taken the wrong way. A 17-year-old has been held in custody (*Scotsman*, 18 April 2006). See [News Items](#).

BBC, 14 April 2006

Two pedestrians were attacked with **airguns** in **Inverness**. A man was hit by a pellet fired from a moving vehicle and another victim was hit ten minutes later .

Record, 13 April 2006

A schoolgirl was shot in the head with an **airgun** as she stood in a queue at an ice cream van in **Coatbridge**. She was left with blood pouring down her face when a pellet ricocheted off the van and hit her forehead.

BBC, 7 April 2006

A man walking with a female friend in **Cumbernauld** was shot and died later in hospital. The victim was hit twice in the chest at point-blank range (*Scotsman*, 8 April 2006). A man has been arrested in connection with the shooting (*BBC*, 19 April 2006).

BBC, 7 April 2006

A murder hunt was launched after a man was shot in **East Calder**. Ballistics experts confirmed that the victim was killed by a single pellet from an **airgun** (*Sunday Mail*, 9 April 2006). Police have arrested and charged a man in connection with the murder (*Edinburgh Evening News*, 17 April 2006). See [News Items](#).

BBC, 4 April 2006

A man entered a shop in **Balornock**, Glasgow, and discharged a firearm, reported to have been a sawn-off shotgun (*Herald*, 5 April 2006). He ran off empty-handed. No-one was injured.

Scotland Today, 2 April 2006

A masked gunman burst into a family home in **Drumchapel** and fired a shot. Three children and six adults were in the house at the time but no one was injured. The incident is being treated as attempted murder by police.

WALES

Pembrokeshire tv, 28 April 2006

A man was arrested in a hotel in **St Davids** and charged with public order and firearms offences. It is alleged that he made threats on his girlfriend's life. An **air pistol** was apparently in his luggage.

South Wales Echo, 27 April 2006

A teenager was shot in the head by an **airgun** pellet while walking through woods near Ashcroft Park in **Fairwater**, Cardiff. He had the pellet removed in hospital but still has tiny fragments in his head. He was on a camping trip with friends at the time.

BBC, 26 April 2006

Four men from Birmingham appeared in court charged with offences relating to an armed robbery in **Newport** in April 2005 in which a security guard was shot in the leg (see [Incidents](#)). One of them, Michall Sinclair, admits robbery and possessing a firearm.

South Wales Echo, 22 April 2006

Armed police surrounded the house of Steven Pratt and his wife in **Church Village**, after she had dialled 999 saying that her husband had a gun. The couple had been having a row over a dinner. Pratt appeared in court to admit affray and the possession of a firearm without a certificate and was given a conditional discharge. His **air rifle** was confiscated.

South Wales Echo, 20 April 2006

A disabled great-grandmother was shot in the arm as after she'd returned from shopping in **Porthcawl** in her motorised scooter. She was hit as she took her shopping off the scooter. She believes that youths playing the fields surrounding her bungalow were responsible. According to the article she was the third person to fall victim to **airgun** thugs in less than a week.

BBC, 9 April 2006

A businessman was shot in the leg on the doorstep of his home in **Merthyr Tydfil**. Three people have been arrested (*BBC*, 10 April 2006).

AOL News, 9 April 2006

Martin Wynn Davies, a primary school head teacher has been charged with illegally possessing six handguns and 239 hollow-point bullets. It is alleged that he kept the guns and ammunition at his parents' home in **Wrexham**. He had previously been charged with possession of a 9 mm semi-automatic pistol and a .22 semi-automatic rifle which were found at his home in **Johnstown**, Wrexham. Police had recovered 43 guns, of which just 19 were held legally. Davies is a member of a rifle and pistol club. He has been suspended by his local authority (*BBC*, 13 April 2006).

BBC, 6 April 2006

Robert Hillman pointed a gun at a shop worker in **Aberkenfig** and stole £130. He has been jailed for five years after admitting robbery and possession of a firearm.

South Wales Echo, 4 April 2006

A nine-year-old boy survived an **air rifle** shooting which could have killed him if the pellet had not struck upside down. The victim was shot from an upstairs window on the street of his home in **Brackia**, Bridgend. The pellet was lodged in his neck. A 17-year-old has been arrested in relation to the attack.

INCIDENTS INVOLVING ANIMALS

Herts 24, 27 April 2006

Two cats have been shot in the same area of **Hoddesdon** in a two-week period. Both cats had been hit by **airgun** pellets. One had a pellet removed from under the skin, the other cat had a pellet lodged in his bowel.

BBC, 24 April 2006

An avocet, a rare wading bird, was found dead near **Immingham** docks. It had a wound in its neck thought to have been caused by an **airgun** pellet. Avocets are protected by UK law and anyone convicted of the killing could face a fine of up to £5000 or up to six months imprisonment. The shooting was condemned by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Sunday Mail, 23 April 2006

The carcasses of 91 shot sheep have been found near **Port na Con**, Durness, in Sutherland. Police say they have no idea what the motive is for the killings. It was also reported that three lambs had been found shot in **Hacklett**, Benbecula, in the Outer Hebrides.

Correspondent to GCN, 23 April 2006

Another cat owner has contacted GCN this month telling us how her cat had been shot with an **air rifle** and was now seriously ill. The cat had been shot in the flank and had internal bleeding, damage to her internal organs and needs surgery though is too weak at present for that. The vet is unable to remove the pellet and can only repair the damage it made on entry. The owner, from **Ellesmere Port**, tells us she had often heard what sounded like a weapon being fired from a house at the back of their home. The police and RSPCA are both involved in trying to find the person responsible.

Hartlepool Mail, 20 April 2006

A cat suffered a shattered bone when it was shot in the leg with an **airgun** in **West Park**, Hartlepool. Its owner has warned other pet owners and parents to be on their guard.

Times, 15 April 2006

Rescuers from **Salisbury Wildlife Rescue** have described how swans and other wild birds are being shot down by people worried about bird flu. A spokesman said "It is ridiculous. People are shooting at everything flying over their land in case the birds have bird flu, but there is nothing wrong with them". He described how a swan the organisation had found had been peppered at least nine times when shot by a shotgun.

BBC, 14 April 2006

A sheep was shot in the face with a rifle on an estate about 10 miles from **Dumfries**. The sheep was left with a shattered jaw and severed tongue and had to be put down.

ic Coventry, 10 April 2006

A cat was left fighting for its life after it had been shot with a shotgun in **Langley**, near Stratford. Vets found tiny steel balls embedded in its nose, eye socket, neck, flank, abdomen, bladder and pelvis. It had also suffered nerve damage in one of its legs.

East Anglian Daily Times, 10 April 2006

Two cats have been shot in **air rifle** attacks in a small residential area of **Beccles**. Both pets were left with serious injuries.

Shropshire Star, 7 April 2006

A swan has died after being rescued from a pool near **Gobowen**, Oswestry. It had both an **airgun** and a shotgun pellet stuck in its windpipe. RSPCA officials called for changes in the law over the sale and use of airguns.

BBC, 6 April 2006

A swan has been shot dead in a park in **Doncaster**. A park warden found the young bird which had been shot in the head with an **air rifle**. Other birds, several fish and a rabbit have been killed or mutilated in the area in the last week.

Correspondent to GCN, 5 April 2006

We received a message from a cat owner in **Kensal Green**, London, who describes the appalling behaviour of her neighbour and the injuries sustained by her cat who was shot by him with an **airgun** (see [Letter](#)). Please read her letter, and if you have had similar experiences and problems with the indiscriminate use of airguns please contact GCN.

Mirror, 1 April 2006

A farmer in **Westwell**, near Ashford in Kent, discovered the bloodstained remains of nine newborn lambs which had been shot dead with a rifle. Two adult ewes also died of shock as the gunman opened fire on the flock.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivs 2.5 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.5/).