

FEBRUARY 2006 - SUMMARY

- **Gun Deaths and Injuries** - Arrests have been made following the deaths of men in shootings in Thornton Heath (London) and Ripon. A number of other men died as a result of gunshot injuries (at a garrison in Berkshire, at a roadside in Perthshire, in an Aberdeen gun shop, in an apparent accident near Andover and at a police operational support facility in Nottingham) but none of these deaths was being treated as suspicious.
- A woman police constable was shot and seriously injured whilst investigating a burglary in Nottingham. Injuries were sustained by other shooting victims in incidents in Croxteth, Anfield and Huyton (Merseyside), Wallsend (Tyneside), Carshalton (Surrey), Ladbroke Grove (London) (a young girl was injured by glass from a car window shattered by a shot), Glasgow, Bristol and Leeds.
- **Armed Hold-Ups and Assaults** - During a month in which Britain's largest ever robbery took place, when a gang abducted a wife and son of a manager at gunpoint and he was forced to allow members of the gang into a depot where they stole over £50 million, gunmen were also involved in robberies and attempted robberies on a pub (in Bedford), a shop (in Pontesbury, Shropshire), a betting shop (in Potters Bar), a petrol station (in Littleborough) and a building society (in Southwold), and on security vans at a petrol station (in Neasden) and a bank (in Ipswich).
- A householder in Norwich slammed the front door on a man who demanded cash at gunpoint. A man was held at gunpoint during a burglary in Waltham Cross after which his car was stolen, a couple had their car stolen after being threatened in a car park in Cottingham, and a young woman who was with her son had her car taken in Exhall (West Midlands). A motorist was robbed at gunpoint in a lay-by in Wolston (West Midlands).
- **Other Incidents** - Armed police rescued a 10-year-old boy, who had been kidnapped from his home in Walthamstow, from a flat in Westminster: three of the five people arrested were charged with firearms offences. Three people were arrested by armed police after reports of a man with a gun in Birmingham and two men were arrested in Sheffield in connection with over 20 armed robberies. In Carlisle two men were arrested after police received reports of a disturbance which may have involved a gun.
- Police were called after reports of a person wielding a gun in Norbury and a stray bullet shattered a bus window in Walworth. A major security alert

occurred when a suspected gunman was spotted at a sports centre in Crowthorne.

- Armed police protected a bride at her wedding in Bournemouth after her father had threatened to shoot her.
- Firearms and drugs were recovered in a police raid on a house in Bristol, and a man was being questioned after firearms and munitions were found at a house in Bournemouth.
- **Convictions** (see also **Imitation Guns** and **Airgun Incidents**) - Trials conducted in February resulted in the convictions of a man for the shooting dead of a policeman and another man in Clapham in 1993 (jailed for 35 years), a man for the gangland murder in Garthamlock, Glasgow (sentence deferred), a teenager for shooting his cousin in the face with a shotgun in Haverhill (sentence deferred) and a man for robbery and firearms offences in one of which a man was shot and injured in Southgate, north London.
- Two men were jailed for 15 months for importing a firearm and offensive weapons into the UK.
- **Imitation Guns** - During a month in which Lambeth police reported that the number of robberies involving imitation weapons was soaring there were more serious incidents involving these guns. A woman was shot in the eye with a ball-bearing gun by burglars at her home in Yarmouth. A chauffeur was hit by a piece of glass after being shot at with a ball-bearing gun in Dartford.
- Armed police officers stopped and arrested two teenagers in Stockport following reports that they had a gun (a BB gun was recovered).
- A man was sentenced to six and half years in jail after threatening his former partner and two police officers with a BB gun in Congleton. Another man was sentenced to two years in jail for attacking homeless people in Chester with an imitation gun. A Coventry man who pled guilty to assault and making threats to kill had previously been sentenced to a year for possessing an imitation gun. Sentencing was deferred in the cases of two men who threatened police officers with imitation guns in separate incidents in Paisley and Glasgow.
- Two men admitted affray after frightening passers-by in Carlisle with a paintball gun.
- **Airgun Incidents** - Airguns were used in a number of the incidents reported in February 2006, including a high proportion of those from Scotland and Wales.
- A mental health patient caused a scare with an air pistol at a hospital in Pembroke Dock and men were seen wielding air weapons in public in Malvern Link and Market Warsop.
- A number of people and vehicles were hit in Llandrindod Wells, a man delivering beer was shot with an air rifle in Trevor, a six-year-old boy was

taken to hospital when a bus window was smashed in South Queensferry and two boys were fired at and a man hit with an airgun pellet in Edinburgh.

- A fire engine had to be taken out of service in Basildon after damage was caused by an air rifle, and an expensive stained glass window at a community hall in Cross Houses (Shropshire) was damaged when it was hit with a pellet.
- Men appeared in court after incidents in Merthyr Tydfil (carrying a loaded air rifle in a bus station), two in Edinburgh (shooting a woman in the neck with an air rifle; firing at men working on the roof of flats - 15 months probation and 120 hours community service), in Kings Lynn (an air rifle was aimed at police - two men given 18 months in jail) and in Biddulph (a neighbour was threatened with an air rifle - 12 month supervision order). A man was convicted of murdering his landlord in Chard using a variety of weapons including an air rifle.
- **Animals** - More animals were killed or badly injured by reckless shooting in February. There were reports of attacks on cats, dogs, a raven, an owl and a swan.

FEBRUARY 2006 - INCIDENTS

ENGLAND

This is Nottingham, 28 February 2006

A firearms officer was found shot dead at an operational support facility in **Nottingham**. He had suffered a single gunshot wound. His death was not being treated as suspicious.

News & Star, 27 February 2006

Two men were arrested in **Carlisle** after armed police searched two houses. The police had been called after they received reports of a disturbance which may have involved a gun.

BBC, 27 February 2006

A man is being questioned after firearms and munitions were found at a house in **Bournemouth**.

BBC, 27 February 2006

Wayne Ellis was convicted of wounding with intent, robbery and firearms offences after a ram-raid attack on a bank in **Southgate**, north London, in August 2003. Three co-defendants were found guilty of being involved in other armed robberies across London. A man who was shot by Ellis as he chased him and another gang member said he would do it again despite the consequences (*Enfield Independent*, 1 March 2006).

24dash.com, 27 February 2006

Two men have been jailed for importing a firearm and offensive weapons into the UK. Carl Fletcher and Nicky Caswell admitted two counts of smuggling and were each sentenced to 15 months imprisonment. They were intercepted by HM Revenue and Customs at **Coquelles** at the entrance of the Channel Tunnel on return from a day trip to Calais in September 2005.

Norwich Evening News, 25 February 2006

A woman was shot in the eye with a **ball-bearing gun** after burglars burst into her bedroom at her **Yarmouth** home. The men demanded money and when she refused, one of them shot her at close range. She was taken to hospital and released later, but had to be readmitted after she suffered bleeding behind the eye.

BBC, 25 February 2006

A man has been arrested after a man was discovered dying from gunshot wounds at a house in **Ripon**.

Telegraph, 24 February 2006

A gay couple who wanted to stay at a hotel in **Overton**, Hampshire, found they were locked out when they returned after midnight. When they returned next day there was a heated exchange with the landlord during which he is alleged to have said "I'm a bloody good shot!". He appeared to be holding a handgun and frightened the men. Police were called and seized a rifle and shotgun, for which the landlord had licences, and an empty handgun box. He was acquitted of possessing a firearm or imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of unlawful violence. He had claimed his comment was simply a reference to his prowess in throwing beer taps.

National Newspapers, 24 February 2006

A mother and her son were abducted from their home in **Herne Bay** and held at gunpoint on a remote farm whilst her husband, the manager at a **Tonbridge** security depot, was forced to allow other members of the gang into the depot, where they stole over £50 million in Britain's biggest robbery. A member of staff at the depot was forced to open the gates at gunpoint. A number of arrests, some following armed police raids, have since been made.

Leeds Today, 24 February 2006

A gunman was being hunted by police after a man was shot following an argument in a lap dancing club in **Leeds**. The perpetrator went to a parked car and collected a dark handgun before shooting at a second man.

Chester Chronicle, 24 February 2006

Three homeless people sleeping rough in **Chester** city centre were pistol-whipped by Mark Battison, who had been drinking, wielding an **imitation gun**. Battison was jailed for two years after he admitted the attacks.

BBC, 24 February 2006

A sawn-off shotgun, an **air pistol** and a small quantity of what was believed to be class A drugs were recovered during a police raid on a house in **Fishponds**, Bristol. A man has been arrested.

24dash.com, 24 February 2006

Ashley Thorpe used a crossbow, **air rifle**, a home-made cosh, a hammer and a knife to murder his landlord in a 50-minute attack in July 2005. The attack took place at the victim's flat in **Chard** after he had told Thorpe to leave. Thorpe fired three shots with the air rifle into his victim's face after he'd shot him with the crossbow and used the hammer to strike blows.

South Yorkshire Police, 23 February 2006

Two men were arrested in the **Millhouses** area of Sheffield in connection with the investigation of a series of over 20 armed robberies around the county. A vehicle and a firearm were recovered in the operation.

Guardian, 23 February 2006

Michael Steele and Jack Whomes lost their appeals against conviction for the murders of three men who were shot dead in **Rettenden**, Essex, in 1995. They had been jailed for life in 1998.

Telegraph, 22 February 2006

A man was found dead after what was described as a bizarre shooting accident. He died from a shotgun wound just after leaving his house near **Andover** to go shooting.

The Sentinel, 22 February 2006

Ian Mountford threatened a neighbour in **Biddulph** with an **air rifle** in a dispute over dropped litter in May 2005. He was sentenced to a 12-month supervision order and was ordered to spend at least six months on an alcohol treatment course.

The Sentinel, 22 February 2006

Stephen Dowling was sentenced to six and half years in jail after beating his former partner and threatening her with a **BB gun** while her daughter was in the house in **Congleton**. He also threatened to kill two police officers and was involved in a three-hour stand off with police. The incidents took place in October 2005 (see [Incidents](#)). He pleaded guilty to burglary, grievous bodily harm, aggravated vehicle taking, driving while disqualified and using an imitation weapon with the intent of using unlawful violence.

Daily Mail, 22 February 2006

Armed police kept watch at a wedding in **Bournemouth** after the bride's father had allegedly threatened to shoot her because he was unhappy about the marriage. A man was arrested on suspicion of making threats to kill.

BBC, 22 February 2006

A shop worker was critically ill after he was shot outside a convenience store in **Bristol**. It is thought that the man was working in the shop alone when he was shot (*Evening Post* (Bristol), 23 February 2006).

BBC, 20 February 2006

Two gunmen raided a village shop in **Pontesbury**, near Shrewsbury. The shopkeeper was threatened and a gun was put to his head. A large amount of cash was stolen from the safe.

BBC, 19 February 2006

A man has died from a gunshot wound to his back after being discovered at an address in **Thornton Heath**, south London. One man was arrested and bailed, and a teenager was arrested in hospital.

BBC, 18 February 2006

Armed police rescued a 10-year-old boy who was kidnapped from his family home in **Walthamstow**. A ransom demand had been made after he was snatched by an armed gang. Shots were apparently fired during a police raid to free the boy from a flat in **Westminster**. Four men and a woman have been arrested and charged with kidnapping, false imprisonment and blackmail: three of the men, all from New York, were also charged with aggravated burglary and a firearms offence (*BBC*, 20 February 2006).

Times, 17 February 2006

Gary Nelson was convicted of the murder of a policeman and a nightclub bouncer in **Clapham** in October 1993. The policeman was killed by a single bullet as he went to investigate gunshots. The other victim was found shot dead in a house opposite. Nelson and two unknown accomplices were seen laughing and firing guns in the air after the murders. He was jailed for 35 years.

Rochdale Observer, 17 February 2006

A woman was told she would be shot by gunmen during a raid at a **Littleborough** garage. She was followed into an office by two men, one armed with a sawn-off shotgun. The men escaped with only cigarettes and cash from her handbag.

ic Coventry, 17 February 2006

Armed robbers abandoned their stolen car after it broke down in **Exhall** and then terrorised a young mother and her son at gunpoint before driving off in her car. Earlier the three men, armed with a shotgun and knife, burst into a business at a **Coventry** industrial estate and fled with two bags of cash.

Evening Star (Suffolk), 17 February 2006

A man, armed with what looked like a handgun, entered a building society branch in **Southwold** and demanded cash which was handed over.

Mansfield 103.2, 16 February 2006

A man was spotted on the streets of **Market Warsop** with an **airgun**. Police were unable to locate the man.

BBC, 16 February 2006

A 20-year-old man was injured in the back and arm after being shot twice in **Anfield**, Liverpool. He was taken to hospital where he underwent treatment but his injuries are not said to be life threatening. A man has been arrested.

Welwyn & Hatfield Times, 15 February 2006

A robber brandishing a handgun stole cash from a betting shop in **Potters Bar**. He took an undisclosed amount of money which he had stuffed into a carrier bag.

Shropshire Star, 15 February 2006

A community hall has been targeted by a gunman who shot a **pellet** through an expensive stained glass window just two weeks before its grand opening. The building at **Cross Houses** was in the process of being converted into a new community centre.

BBC, 15 February 2006

Three people were arrested by armed police after reports that a man had been seen with a gun at a 31-storey building in the centre of **Birmingham**.

Willesden & Brent Times, 14 February 2006

GCN is very grateful to the father whose car was hit for alerting us to this incident. He told GCN that a bullet was found in his car and was later informed that the bullet was a .38 or .44. We sincerely hope that he and his two young daughters are able to recover from the shock of such a terrifying incident.

A man driving his two daughters in slow traffic in **Ladbroke Grove** heard a loud bang when the rear window of the car shattered covering his 10-year-old daughter in shards of glass - she suffered cuts to her face and leg. His other daughter, 5, who was also in the back, was unhurt. The police have asked for help in catching "the person or persons who think taking potshots at passers-by is acceptable". Anyone with information should call the police on 020 8217 7366 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

ic South London, 14 February 2006

A stray bullet shattered a bus window and hit a seat when a man opened fire in **Walworth Road**, south east London. Two shots had been fired. The bus driver was shocked but unhurt.

ic Croydon, 14 February 2006

Two people were in hospital after a drive-by shooting in **Carshalton**. A car pulled alongside the victims' car and four shots were fired into the car. A teenager was left with a gunshot wound to the hand and a woman had cuts from glass shattered by the bullets.

BBC, 14 February 2006

David Turnbull and Steven McNeil frightened passers-by in a **Carlisle** street by firing a **paintball gun** from a car. The 18-inch weapon looked like a pump-action shotgun. After admitting affray, McNeil was given a two-year community order and put under a night time curfew. Turnbull was to be sentenced later.

National Newspapers, 14 February 2006

PC Rachael Bown was shot and seriously injured whilst investigating a burglary in **Lenton**, Nottingham. A man was arrested at Heathrow in connection with the shooting. Trevon Kyron Thomas was charged with attempted murder (*Mirror*, 21 February 2006).

ic Coventry, 13 February 2006

Richard Wilson of **Coventry** has pled guilty to assault and making threats to kill. He had got into an argument with his sister and threatened to shoot her. In 1999 he was jailed for five years for robbery and a year for possessing an **imitation gun**. He will be sentenced in March.

Evening Star (Suffolk), 13 February 2006

Police have linked a car found abandoned in **Ipswich** to an armed robbery on a security van outside a nearby bank. A courier was struck with the butt of a gun and sustained an injury to the eye. Two men had fled the scene with an undisclosed sum of cash.

BBC, 13 February 2006

A group of men demanded that a couple hand over their car keys in a car park in **Cottingham**. They were allegedly threatened with a handgun. Three men were later apprehended on the M62 motorway and have been charged with robbery, possessing a firearm and aggravated vehicle taking.

BBC, 11 February 2006

A fire engine had to be taken out of service for three hours after damage was caused when an **air rifle** was fired at it in **Basildon**. The crew were returning from dealing with a car fire at the time. A group of youths, one of whom was carrying an air rifle, was seen running away from the scene.

Knowsley Online, 10 February 2006

A man is in hospital after being shot through the window of a house in **Huyton**. He has undergone surgery for wounds to the upper body.

Kent Online, 10 February 2006

The chauffeur to the deputy mayor of Medway was hit in the face by a piece of glass after being shot at with a **ball-bearing gun** whilst having a meal. He had driven to the Mayor of **Dartford's** Ball.

BBC, 10 February 2006

A woman has criticised the police for failing to send officers to deal with a man who was wielding an **air rifle** outside her home in **Malvern Link**. She had reported the man three times and says she is now too frightened to leave her house.

Manchester Evening News, 9 February 2006

Colin Tattersdale walked free from court when he was cleared of all charges, including possessing an **imitation firearm** with intent to cause fear, after an incident in which he fired a starting pistol when two men threatened him on his doorstep in **Macclesfield**. He had been fixing the starting pistol, which he used at work, when two brothers who had been drinking all day buzzed his intercom. As one of the brothers was pushed the starting pistol was accidentally fired.

ic Berkshire, 9 February 2006

A suspected gunman was spotted at a sports centre in **Crowthorne**. A major security alert was sparked when a customer told staff that a youth had been seen carrying a firearm inside the building.

Eastern Daily Press, 9 February 2006

A man, who knocked on a couple's door in **Norwich** and demanded cash, was armed with what is believed to be a gun or an **imitation gun**. He punched the male householder in the face, who then slammed the door on him.

Life Style Extra, 8 February 2006

An armed robber fired a gunshot as he tried to wrestle a cash box from a security guard outside a petrol station in **Neasden**. The gunman sped off empty-handed in a car.

Enfield Independent, 8 February 2006

A man was held at gunpoint during a burglary in **Waltham Cross**. The burglars escaped with more than £20,000 worth of goods. During the attack he suffered a broken rib, fractured cheekbone and a wound to the leg, and was also threatened with a scorching iron held to his face. The burglars escaped in the victim's car which was found dumped in Edmonton.

Scotsman, 7 February 2006

An 18-year-old soldier was found dead at **Arborfield Garrison** in Berkshire. He had been killed by gunshot wounds. A spokesman for Thames Valley Police said no third parties were being sought but would not comment whether the death was self-inflicted.

King's Lynn Today, 7 February 2006

Graham Leonard and Peter Whitmarsh were both sentenced to 18 months jail for affray after an incident in July 2005 in which a **.22 air rifle** was aimed at police in **Parkway**. The men were drunk at the time. Whitmarsh said he had bought the air rifle at a car boot sale. Both men had a number of previous convictions. The judge commended the bravery of two police officers in coping with and defusing a dangerous situation.

ic South London, 7 February 2006

Robberies involving imitation weapons have soared by 50 per cent in the last two months, according to **Lambeth** police. A spokesman said that "Replica guns are becoming a real menace that all parents have to take seriously."

ic Coventry, 7 February 2006

A motorist was robbed at gunpoint after being flashed by a following car. Three men grabbed the victim after he pulled into a lay-by in **Wolston**. One of the men shoved a gun into his stomach while the others took a wallet from his pocket.

BBC, 4 February 2006

A man received injuries to his leg when he was shot with a shotgun whilst working on a car in **Wallsend**. Police are looking for two men who were wearing black ski masks and fled the scene down a nearby alley.

BBC, 4 February 2006

A man who was shot twice on a street in **Croxteth**, Liverpool, was taken to hospital for treatment. His injuries were not believed to be life-threatening. Police said there was no clear motive for the attack.

BBC, 3 February 2006

A former RAF serviceman is seeking £400,000 damages following a shooting accident at a firing range at **Otterburn Camp** in 2003. He was taking part in a target firing exercise when he sustained a severe injury to his right eye after a round fired by a colleague hit his rifle.

BBC, 3 February 2006

A teenager who shot his cousin in the face with a shotgun was found guilty of unlawfully and maliciously inflicting grievous bodily harm. The incident occurred in November 2004 in **Haverhill** (see [Incidents](#)). His cousin survived the shooting but there are significant concerns about his future health. The defendant claimed that he had taken the weapon from his father's gun cabinet to "scare" the other youngsters. However, he had got a live cartridge and had loaded it into the weapon. He will be sentenced in March.

ic Croydon, 2 February 2006

Police were called to a junction in **Norbury** after reports of a person wielding a gun in the street. However, no one was found with a weapon.

BBC, 2 February 2006

Armed officers stopped and arrested two teenagers in a car after they were followed from **Congleton** to **Stockport** following reports that they had a gun. A **BB gun** was recovered. Both boys were released on bail.

BBC, 1 February 2006

An armed robber threatened the landlord and bar manager of a pub in **Bedford** with a shotgun before escaping with cash. The victims were shocked but unhurt.

SCOTLAND

Evening Times, 24 February 2006

John Birnie, who threatened two police officers in **Paisley** in June 2005, admitted possession of an **imitation firearm** with intent to make two police officers and a civilian believe that violence would be used against them. He was arrested after being hunted down by airborne police. Sentencing has been deferred.

Evening Times, 24 February 2006

Alan McGrory brandished an **imitation gun** as he walked through Glasgow city centre in November 2005 (see [Incidents](#)). Armed police used a Taser gun after he made no attempt to drop his weapon. McGrory admitted possession of an imitation firearm and a breach of the peace. Sentencing has been deferred.

Scotsman, 21 February 2006

A man has died following an incident in a gun shop in **Aberdeen**. It is believed he shot himself in the head. The man's injuries were so severe that police were initially unable to make any kind of identification. It is reported that the death is formally not being treated as suspicious. The man had apparently taken ammunition to the shop and had asked to look at a shotgun that was for sale (*Scotsman*, 22 February 2006).

Sunday Mail, 19 February 2006

Peter Thomson has been found guilty of a gangland execution in **Garthamlock**, Glasgow, in April 2005 (see [Incidents](#)). The attack was said to be the result of a feud between Thomson and the victim over a stolen shotgun. Thomson had been found guilty of the culpable homicide of the victim's brother in 1998.

Evening Times, 17 February 2006

A man was gunned down as he stepped out of his car outside his house in **Pollokshields**, Glasgow. The victim was rushed to hospital where he was in a serious condition. A man has been arrested (*BBC*, 23 February 2006).

Edinburgh Evening News, 17 February 2006

Nicholas Croan pleaded guilty to culpably and recklessly firing an **air rifle** at the roof of a block of flats where men were working. The incident took place in **Edinburgh** in August 2005. He was placed on probation for 15 months and ordered to do 120 hours of community service.

BBC, 15 February 2006

A former pupil of an **Ayrshire** school told a court that he had taken a gun into a school classroom to shoot a teacher who he claimed had sexually abused him years earlier. The teacher is on trial for attacking the man and faces other charges of physical cruelty and sex abuse.

BBC, 15 February 2006

A six-year-old boy was taken to hospital and other passengers were treated for shock after a bus window was smashed in an **airgun** attack in **South Queensferry**.

BBC, 14 February 2006

A man had a pellet lodged in his head after being shot with an **airgun** while walking in **Edinburgh**. The pellet was removed at hospital and he required two stitches. Fifteen minutes after the man had been shot two teenage boys walking in the **Gilmerton** area were fired at from a vehicle.

BBC, 13 February 2006

Walter Dalglish admitting assaulting a woman whom he shot in the neck with an **air rifle** fitted with a telescopic sight. He was at the home of his girlfriend in **Edinburgh** when he aimed that gun at a group of children saying he would give them a fright. The victim was standing near the youngsters and had to have a pellet removed in hospital. Dalglish will be sentenced next month after pleading guilty to committing an offence under the Firearms Act.

Daily Record, 9 February 2006

A man found dead in a layby between **Braco** and **Crieff** in Perthshire had shot himself.

Daily Record, 3 February 2006

According to a report in the paper, gangsters are "flooding" **Scotland** with deadly machine guns dubbed "Whispering Death". The MAC-10 guns are apparently being bought by crime lords.

BBC, 3 February 2006

Not proven verdicts were returned in the case of a man accused of trying to shoot two men in a pub in **Glasgow** in February 2004. Ross Boyd had denied trying to murder the men.

WALES

Daily Post, 22 February 2006

A drive-by gunman fired at a delivery man who was unloading beer at a pub in **Trevor**, near Llangollen. The victim was hit in the leg by an **air rifle** pellet but was saved from serious injury by his overalls. The pellet narrowly missed his partner's face.

Daily Post, 8 February 2006

Seven people and three vehicles were hit with pellets apparently fired from an **airgun** in **Llandrindod Wells**.

South Wales Echo, 7 February 2006

David Alun Williams, who carried a loaded **air rifle** in **Merthyr Tydfil** bus station, has been jailed for a year. He told police he intended to shoot vermin, but admitted it was illegal for him to have the firearm because he had served a prison sentence.

Pembrokeshire tv, 1 February 2006

A mental health patient has been charged with firearms offences and making threats to kill after he held a gun to the head of a worker at Havenway Day Hospital in **Pembroke Dock**. The gun was found to be a replica .44 **air pistol**. The incident lasted for 30 minutes during which staff dealt with the situation until an armed response team arrived. Health officials are now reviewing security (*BBC*, 2 February 2006).

INCIDENTS INVOLVING ANIMALS

Shropshire Star, 18 February 2006

A cat taken to a vet by his owners from **Ashley Heath**, near Market Drayton, was found to have been shot in the abdomen with an **airgun**. The cat underwent a three-hour operation to remove his left kidney.

Mirror, 15 February 2006

Children witnessed their two dogs being shot at a beauty spot in **Bradford**. One of the Dalmatians was killed, the other was seriously injured. The dogs had been off their leads and may have strayed onto farm land.

Daily Post, 13 February 2006

A raven, shot with an **airgun** in **Ruabon**, had injuries that were so severe that it had to be put down. RSPCA bosses condemned the attack.

Liverpool Echo, 3 February 2006

A tawny owl was left in agony with a pellet in its neck after being shot with an **airgun** as it roosted in a tree in **Southport**. The bird was described as being "incredibly lucky to have survived". Wildlife officers have vowed to hunt down the attackers.

BBC, 2 February 2006

A Burmese cat was found bleeding internally after being shot by an **airgun** in **Poole**. An x-ray revealed a pellet was lodged in his stomach.

BBC, 2 February 2006

A family cat was shot with an **air rifle** in **Delabole**, Cornwall. The cat had to have its leg amputated. It is thought that youngsters were responsible.

BBC, 1 February 2006

A swan was found shot dead at a country park in **Clipstone**, Nottinghamshire. It was found floating in a lake with an **airgun** pellet in its neck.



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