



FEBRUARY 2008 - SUMMARY

There was a welcome reduction in the number of major incidents reported from London in February, but a fatal attack in Merseyside and the death of an earlier victim in Manchester indicated a worrying continuation of gun crime in the North West. The number of incidents involving airguns and imitation guns remains at a disturbing level. The use of airguns in domestic incidents was highlighted by two cases from Hull and North Wales.

- **Gun Deaths and Injuries** - There was one fatal gun attack reported in February: a man was shot in the legs and bled to death in Croxteth (Merseyside). However, a 16-year-old shot during an attack in a betting shop in Withington, (Greater Manchester) in January also died this month.
- Another fatal shooting occurred in a house in Trimdon (County Durham), but police were not treating the death as suspicious.
- Two men were seriously injured in shootings in Washbrook Heath (Birmingham) and Melling (Merseyside). In another Merseyside shooting a 16-year-old received minor injuries in an incident in Huyton. A man was hit in the stomach in his backyard in Philadelphia (County Durham): it is believed he was shot with an air rifle (see below).
- In Scotland a man was shot and injured in an attack in Larkfield (Renfrewshire). Another victim was pistol whipped whilst walking in the street in Paisley. A man was attacked with a stun gun and kicked as he walked home in Broughton (Edinburgh).
- **Armed Hold-Ups and Assaults** - There were robberies or attempted robberies involving guns at a takeaway in Rastrick (West Yorkshire), a newsagents in Hartlepool (involving an imitation gun), a jewellers in Caterham (Surrey), other shops in Chatham (Kent) and Eckington (Sheffield), banks in New Ash Green (Kent), Leatherhead (Surrey) (no weapon was seen) and Middleton (Greater Manchester), and at a travel agents in St Helens (Merseyside). A petrol station was robbed in Alfold (Surrey).
- A pizza delivery man was robbed of his takings at gunpoint in Bath and a milkman had money stolen at gunpoint near Royston (Hertfordshire).
- A woman was robbed by a gunman in a street in Ryhope (County Durham). A man was due to appear in court after two gunpoint raids in streets in Middlesbrough.
- Two men stole a rental car and cash from a man who had come to buy a car in Luton. A woman in Barnton (Cheshire) had her car and handbag stolen at gunpoint. A man who was kidnapped, apparently at gunpoint, and forced to drive through Swadlincote (Derbyshire) had his car stolen. A gang of four men attempted to hijack a woman's car at gunpoint outside a nightclub in Central London. A taxi driver was robbed of money and mobile phones after dropping off a passenger in Nottingham.
- Thieves who hijacked a beer lorry in Southall (west London) may have been armed with a gun.
- Airguns were stolen from a man in Winchmore Hill (north London): he was forced to hand over the keys of his gun cabinet at gunpoint.
- A man has terrorised two prostitutes at gunpoint after picking them up in Neepsend (Sheffield).

- A man who allegedly held his ex-partner and her daughters at gunpoint in Chesham (Buckinghamshire) was arrested.
- **Other Incidents** - Three separate shootings occurred within the space of a few hours in Moss Side, Burnage and Gorton (Greater Manchester), but no one was hurt. A number of shots were fired in a restaurant in the centre of Birmingham: two men were arrested.
- Two shots were discharged in a nightclub in Preston, and a gunman is believed to have fired his weapon towards the entrance of a nightclub in Finsbury (north London).
- A police officer was threatened by a masked gunman in Partington (Greater Manchester). Two men were arrested after a five hour stand-off in Worcester after officers were threatened with a "long barrel firearm".
- Two men were arrested after a gun was found inside a house in Hayling Island (Hampshire).
- A man was arrested after he threatened patients at a Birmingham doctors surgery with a gun.
- **Gun Finds, Thefts and Losses** - A number of people were arrested after guns and ammunition were found during police raids in Bury, Flixton and Old Trafford (Greater Manchester). A man was arrested on firearms charges following a weapons seizure in Mirfield (West Yorkshire).
- Two guns were seized during raids on properties in Nottingham in an operation aimed at cracking down on the drug trade. A Brocock ME38 revolver was found during a raid on a house in Llanrumney (South Wales) in which cannabis was also confiscated.
- A total of 43 firearms were among 117 weapons recovered during Operation Kartel in London which resulted in 780 arrests.
- A ball-bearing gun and an imitation gun were found during a police raid on a suspected brothel in Plymouth.
- Three soldiers have been arrested on suspicion of stealing machine guns, grenades and ammunition from their base and selling them to criminal gangs in Scotland.
- A handgun was among items stolen from a veterinary practice in Framlingham (Suffolk). An entire gun cabinet containing three shotguns and cartridges were stolen from a house in Kingerby (Lincolnshire). Airguns were stolen from a man in Winchmore Hill (north London) (see above).
- **Convictions** (see also **Imitation Guns** and **Airgun Incidents**) - A man is awaiting sentence after admitting attempting to kill a man at a pub in Paisley. Another offender has been jailed for eight years after shooting a man in the neck in Glasgow. A man who shot a rival in the chest at close range in Ribbleson (Lancashire) was found guilty of attempted murder and locked up for at least eleven years.
- Three people pleaded guilty to serious firearms offences after a woman was stopped by police in Preston and found to be in possession of a handgun.
- A member of a gang that shot a security guard during an attempted robbery in Kilmarnock will be sentenced in March.
- Two men who admitted possessing a submachine gun thrown from a car in Kirkby (Merseyside) will be sentenced in April. A Ramsgate (Kent) man has been jailed for five years after drugs and a semi automatic machine gun were found at his home.

- A man was given a 12 month suspended prison sentence and fined £500 after confronting builders with a loaded shotgun in Solihull (West Midlands).
- A man admitted purchase of an uncertificated air rifle, possession of live ammunition, failure to comply with the terms of a shotgun certificate, possession of an offensive weapon and having a weapon for discharge of noxious substances after police had found illegal weaponry at his home near Harrogate (North Yorkshire).
- **Airguns** - A man was shot in the stomach, probably with an air rifle in his backyard in Philadelphia (County Durham). A teenager needed treatment in hospital after being shot in the forehead with an airgun in Kirkintilloch (East Dunbartonshire).
- A 16-year-old has been charged with shooting and injuring boys in Kilwinning (Ayrshire) with an air rifle: he also faces a charge relating to petrol bombs.
- One of two cousins assaulted by a gang in Gloucester said an air rifle was fired at him from a car.
- A man was arrested after armed police responded to a woman being threatened with an air rifle in Maryport (Cumbria).
- Teenagers opened fire with air rifles whilst a councillor was touring a housing estate in Airdrie (North Lanarkshire).
- A man was arrested in Brightmet (Lancashire) after being seen with a handgun tucked into his trousers in the street: an air pistol was found and he has pleaded guilty to possessing an imitation firearm. Four teenagers were arrested in Carlisle on suspicion of possessing airguns after an air rifle barrel had been spotted pointing from a car.
- Three teenagers were arrested after a spate of catapult and airgun attacks in Platts Common (South Yorkshire). A gang of youths used an air rifle to smash a factory window in Renishaw (Derbyshire). Vandals have smashed floodlights at a football ground in Blackpool, probably using an airgun.
- A 14-year-old was arrested and an air rifle seized after an attack on a bus in Kesgrave (Suffolk). An airgun sniper was being sought after three incidents in the Huddersfield area in which the window of a moving car and a house window were shattered. A villager in Seven Sisters in the Dulais Valley (South Wales) has reported that air rifles have regularly been fired at his property.
- A woman seen with a handgun, thought to be an airgun, was arrested in Stockton Heath (Warrington). Two air rifles were seized from two men seen discharging firearms on farm land near Easington Colliery (County Durham).
- **Convictions** - A Hull man who tried to execute his former wife by shooting her with an air rifle pleaded guilty to attempted murder and will be sentenced in March. A husband from Kinmel Bay (North Wales) who pointed a loaded air rifle at his wife has been given an indeterminate sentence for public protection.
- A man who repeatedly fired air pistol pellets at teenagers in a swing park in Cumbernauld has been given a one year jail sentence. Another man who fired an air rifle from a flat in Renfrew has been jailed for 18 months. Another offender was fined £300 for discharging an air rifle across a road in Aberdeen. Two teenagers were jailed (for five years and two years) for repeatedly shooting a 17-year-old girl with an air rifle in Wolverhampton.
- A man who pointed an air rifle at a man during a burglary in Lincoln has been sent to a mental hospital for an indefinite period. A man from New Mills (Derbyshire) who terrified a neighbour by pointing an air rifle at him

has been jailed for 24 weeks after pleading guilty to a charge of harassment.

- A 17-year-old from Orkney who fired an air pistol he found in a car which he and another teenager had stolen was locked up for seven months.
- An 18-year-old caught with an airgun by armed police in Hebden Bridge (West Yorkshire) has been given a 12-month community order.
- A man who had a sawn-off bolt action air rifle which fell within the terms of the Firearm Act at his home in Barrhead (Renfrewshire) has been jailed for six months.

- **Imitation Guns** - A customer was hit and the owner threatened when a man, probably armed with an imitation gun, attempted to rob a newsagents in Hartlepool.
- Two men were arrested after armed police were called to Llangollen (Denbighshire): the men were charged with theft, public order offences and one was charged with possession of an imitation gun.
- Police seized an imitation gun from a man arrested in Bridgwater (Somerset) after reports that another man was being threatened with a handgun.
- Armed police were called to Churchdown near Gloucester after reports of youths carrying a firearm which turned out to be a water pistol. A man with a toy gun was arrested by armed police after being seen in the centre of Norwich.
- Staff at a bank in Penzance (Cornwall) staged a prank in which they kidnapped their manager at gunpoint using replica guns.
- A "13-year-old" burglar armed with a ball-bearing gun is being sought after he struck six times in Bacup and Whitworth (Lancashire).
- Two boys, aged 11 and 13, were advised about carrying an imitation weapon in public after being spotted with a ball-bearing gun in Conisbrough (South Yorkshire).
- **Convictions** - Two brothers who brandished a fake gun at a family in Hillingdon (West London) had already battered a woman to death: they were convicted of murder, aggravated burglary, wounding and possessing an imitation firearm.
- A man who threatened workers at a Worcester farm with a ball-bearing gun and cleaver has been jailed for five years. Another man who aimed an imitation gun at a teenager in Newmains (North Lanarkshire) has been jailed for two years. A man has been jailed for two months after admitting culpably and recklessly discharging a BB gun in Edinburgh.
- An offender who threatened job centre staff in Brighton with a cigarette lighter in the shape of a gun admitted possession of an imitation firearm: sentencing was deferred.
- A man who made an imitation gun from a medical crutch handle and a silver torch was jailed for four months after he was seen with it in a street in Tonypany.

- **Incidents Involving Animals** - **This month the RSPCA released figures which showed that the number of attacks with airguns, especially on cats and birds, continues to increase. This was borne out by the incidents reported in the media in February.**
- The toll of cats injured and maimed in airgun attacks continues to mount up. More were reported from Angus, County Durham, Greater Manchester, Hertfordshire, Kent, Lancashire and Nottinghamshire
- Swans were attacked with airguns in the West Midlands and Somerset. A youth caught with an airgun in South Yorkshire had shot songbirds, and a man from Margate (Kent) was fined for shooting a seagull. A duck managed to survive after being shot three times in Maryport (Cumbria).

INCIDENTS – FEBRUARY 2008

ENGLAND

Lancashire Evening Post, 29 February 2008

Karl Brown shot a rival in the chest at close range in **Ribbleton** in May 2007. He was found guilty of attempted murder and has been locked up for at least eleven years.

Fleetwood Weekly News, 29 February 2008

A gunman who tried to rob a building society in **Middleton**, Greater Manchester, left empty-handed after the cashier refused to hand over money.

Enfield Independent, 29 February 2008

A man was tied up at gunpoint by a gang of five men who stole **air weapons** from his gun cabinet at his home in **Winchmore Hill**, North London. They forced their way into the house and forced him to hand over the key to the cabinet.

Cambridge News, 29 February 2008

A milkman was robbed at gunpoint while making his deliveries in the **Meldreth** and **Kneesworth** areas near Royston in Hertfordshire. He was approached by two men on an off-road motorbike who pulled out a dark coloured rifle and demanded money. They took cash from the wallet inside the van.

BBC, 29 February 2008

A total of 43 firearms were among 117 weapons recovered during Operation Kartel, a two week police initiative to tackle youth crime in 11 **London** boroughs which resulted in 780 arrests. It led to a 50% reduction in gun crime compared with the same period in 2007. The firearms included **replicas** and CS gas canisters and five handguns capable of shooting live ammunition (*Evening Standard*, 29 February 2008).

BBC, 29 February 2008

Police officers seized two firearms during raids on properties in **Nottingham** which also resulted in the recovery of a quantity of drugs. One of the firearms was loaded. The raids, which resulted in 55 arrests, were part of Operation Glacier aimed at cracking down on Nottingham's drug trade.

The Herald (Plymouth), 28 February 2008

A **ball bearing gun** and an **air weapon** were seized from a property in **Camels Head**, Plymouth, during a raid on a suspected brothel. Four people were arrested.

Buxton Advertiser, 28 February 2008

Clive Taylor of **New Mills** in Derbyshire terrified a neighbour by pointing an **air rifle** at him during an argument in September 2007. Two air rifles were found at his home. He has been jailed for 24 weeks after pleading guilty to a charge of harassment.

BBC, 28 February 2008

A man has been arrested after patients at a doctor's surgery in **Birmingham** were threatened with a gun. A man was being questioned on suspicion of possessing a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence.

Kent Online, 27 February 2008

Gavin Charters has been jailed for five years after drugs and an MP5 semi automatic machine gun were found in his home in **Ramsgate**, Kent, in December 2008. He had pleaded guilty to the offence of possessing the firearm.

Digital Spy, 27 February 2008

A TV celebrity and her friend were threatened at gunpoint while leaving a nightclub in **Mayfair**, Central London. She was attacked by four men who tried to highjack her car.

Birmingham Mail, 27 February 2008

Matthew Oliver and Heather Rothan have been jailed for repeatedly shooting a 17-year-old girl by taking potshots at her with an **air rifle** on a towpath and then back at home in **Wolverhampton**. The victim was found to have 15 entry wounds when taken to hospital with 10 pellets still embedded in her skin. Oliver was jailed for five years, Rothan for two years.

Worcester News, 26 February 2008

Armed police were involved in a five hour stand-off after officers were threatened with a "long-barrel firearm" in **Worcester**. The officers had been responding to reports of criminal damage to a car and house window. Two men were arrested.

BBC, 26 February 2008

A man has been shot in a targeted attack in **Melling**, Merseyside. He was found with gunshot wounds to his back: his injuries are described as serious. Tests are being carried out on a gun found in a burnt out car in **Croxteth** (*BBC*, 27 February 2008).

Evening Star, 25 February 2008

A man is in custody after armed police were called to **Norwich** city centre following reports of a man seen with what appeared to be a handgun. A **plastic toy gun** was recovered by officers.

Evening Star, 25 February 2008

A total of 43 guns have been misappropriated in **Suffolk** during the period between 2003 and 2007. The figures were obtained by MP David Ruffley.

BBC, 25 February 2008

A pizza delivery man was robbed of his takings and the meal he was delivering in the Foxhill area of **Bath**. He was approached by four men, one of whom was believed to have been armed with a handgun. Another member of the gang brandished a knife.

BBC, 24 February 2008

A teenager aged 16 is in hospital after being targeted by gunmen in **Huyton**, Merseyside. He received minor injuries. Police want to speak to two males riding a small off-road motorbike seen in the area at the time of the shooting.

BBC, 24 February 2008

A 20-year-old man is in a critical condition in hospital after being shot at a video hire shop in **Washwood Heath**, Birmingham. Detectives were trying to establish a motive.

BBC, 23 February 2008

A masked gunman threatened a police officer after he had stopped a car for speeding in **Partington**, Greater Manchester. As the officer went to speak to the driver two men, one armed with a silver handgun, came up behind him. The men shouted abuse and then ran off into a nearby housing estate. They were not linked to the car which was stopped.

Sunderland Echo, 22 February 2008

Two men were arrested on farm land near **Easington Colliery** after a report that the pair had been seen discharging firearms. Two **air rifles** were seized and the men were arrested on suspicion of possession of a section one firearm without a certificate.

Hull Daily Mail, 22 February 2008

A **Hull** man who tried to execute his former wife by shooting her with a **.22 calibre air rifle** because he was unhappy with his divorce settlement has pleaded guilty to attempted murder. In September 2007 Ricky Walker turned up at his wife's home and began assaulting her. He went outside and returned with the air rifle and shot in the forehead twice. One pellet will be permanently lodged in her skull. He then shot himself under his chin. Walker will be sentenced in March.

Huddersfield Daily Examiner, 22 February 2008

A sniper with an **airgun** is being sought after three incidents in the **Fartown** area of Huddersfield. In the first incident the rear window of a moving car was shattered, then a pedestrian heard a noise and saw several pellets embedded in a tree, and in the third incident a pellet broke a window at a house in **Sheepridge**.

BBC, 22 February 2008

A man has been arrested after armed police responded to reports of a woman being threatened with an **air rifle** in **Maryport**, Cumbria. A weapon was recovered but no shots were fired.

This is Derbyshire, 21 February 2008

Two men beat another man and took him on a terrifying ride at what he believed was "gunpoint" after he saw one of the men waving his arms in the road whilst he was driving between **Burton** and **Castle Gresley**. He had stopped his car and a man opened the door and struck him on the back of the head. The victim finally escaped after he had been forced to drive through the streets of **Swadlincote**. His car was taken and has never been recovered. An 18-year-old who has appeared in court denies kidnapping and robbery.

Mansfield Chad, 21 February 2008

A taxi driver was threatened and robbed at gunpoint after he dropped off a passenger in **Nottingham**. The suspect produced a black handgun and made off with a quantity of money and two mobile phones after threatening the driver.

Liverpool Daily Post, 21 February 2008

Nathan Quigley and Richard Davies have admitted possessing a prohibited weapon, a submachine gun, which was thrown from a car in **Kirkby**. They will be sentenced in April.

Birmingham Mail, 21 February 2008

Richard Sanders confronted builders over a boundary dispute in **Earlswood**, Solihull, while holding a loaded shotgun. He had admitted possessing five bullets without a certificate and failing to keep his shotgun in a secure place but as his trial began he also admitted an offence of affray. He was sentenced to 12 months in prison suspended for two years, with six months' supervision, and was banned from possessing any shotgun rifle or pistol for two years. He was fined £500 and ordered to pay £1000 costs. Sanders had the shotgun legally and claimed he had been out shooting squirrels the morning of the incident.

Worcester News, 20 February 2008

Darren Miles was armed with a **ball-bearing gun** and a meat cleaver when he terrified agricultural workers at a **Worcester** farm in February 2007. He claimed his girlfriend was the victim of a sex attack and he was looking for the attacker. He put the gun to the head of one worker. Miles had a history of weapons possession and alcohol abuse and it emerged that the rape story had been invented. He was jailed for five years after pleading guilty to possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, affray, and possession of a cleaver.

This is Cheshire, 20 February 2008

A woman had her car stolen at gunpoint in **Barnton**. As she was starting her car a man pulled open the driver's side door and pointed a small handgun at her. He demanded her handbag and car.

The Star (Sheffield), 20 February 2008

A man has terrorised two prostitutes at gunpoint in Sheffield's red light district in **Neepsend**. One woman managed to escape but the other was subjected to a serious sexual attack.

Luton Today, 20 February 2008

A man was robbed at gunpoint at a **Luton** petrol station where he had arranged to meet another man to purchase a second-hand car. Two men persuaded the victim to drive to a lay-by where they threatened him with what appeared to be a handgun. They stole a large sum of money and the rental car the victim was driving.

Surrey Advertiser, 19 February 2008

Two petrol station workers were tied up and threatened at gunpoint during a robbery in **Alfold**. They were approached by two men, one of whom was carrying a handgun. The robbers stole a quantity of cash before driving off in a vehicle parked nearby.

Liverpool Echo, 19 February 2008

The body of a man with gunshot wounds in his legs was found in a field in **Croxteth**, Liverpool. Police believe he may have gone to meet his killer and bled to death after he'd been shot (*Liverpool Echo*, 20 February 2008)

The Gazette (Blackpool), 19 February 2008

Vandals have shot out the floodlights at the football ground of Blackpool Mechanics FC in **South Shore**. It has been assumed that the damage was done by someone with an **airgun**.

This is Lancashire, 18 February 2008

A "13-year-old" burglar is being hunted by police after striking six times in **Bacup** and **Whitworth** in December. Police have released an image of the youth created by Evofit. The offender carries a **ball-bearing gun**.

Daily Mirror, 18 February 2008

Three soldiers from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders have been arrested on suspicion of stealing machine guns, grenades and ammunition from their base and selling them to criminal gangs in Scotland. The arrests were made when police raided their barracks in **Canterbury**, Kent.

Northern Echo, 16 February 2008

A would-be robber hit a customer over the head with a gun before pointing the barrel at the owner of a newsagents in **Hartlepool**. One of her sons rushed into the shop and the assailant fled empty handed. Police later arrested a man suspected to be the getaway driver while the robber was still being hunted. Police also recovered an **imitation gun**.

Lincolnshire Echo, 16 February 2008

Jay Henderson pointed an **air rifle** at a man during a burglary at a home in **Lincoln** in June 2007. He carried out the offence while on bail for another armed burglary in Lincoln following which the air rifle belonging to the occupant of the flat was found to be missing. Henderson admitted two charges of aggravated burglary and has been sent to a mental hospital for an indefinite period.

Evening Courier (Halifax), 16 February 2008

An 18-year-old who bragged to this aunt that he would shoot his flatmate was seized by armed police in the centre of **Hebden Bridge** after his aunt saw him carrying an **airgun** and phoned his stepmother. Joseph Hartley said he found the weapon in a skip and only intended to use it to shoot tin cans. He pleaded guilty to carrying the firearm and was given a 12-month community order, had the gun destroyed and was ordered to pay £60 costs.

Bolton News, 16 February 2008

Armed police raided a house after a man was seen walking in **Brightmet** with a handgun tucked into his trousers. An **air pistol** was found which police believe was the weapon the man was carrying. Thomas Neary was arrested and has pleaded guilty to possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear (*This is Lancashire*, 28 February 2008).

BBC, 16 February 2008

A number of shots were fired at a restaurant in the centre of **Birmingham**. The incident apparently happened in a private room. No-one was hurt in the shooting which police said was not random. Two men have been arrested.

Hartlepool Mail, 14 February 2008

A man was found dead with a gunshot wound at his home in **Trimdon**, County Durham. Police were not treating his death as suspicious.

Islington Gazette, 14 February 2008

A gunman is believed to have fired his weapon towards the entrance of a nightclub in **Finsbury**. No-one was injured. Bullet casings were found in the street and police have released CCTV images of a man wanted in connection with the incident.

BBC, 14 February 2008

A man threatened to shoot staff at a bank in **Leatherhead**, Surrey. No weapon was seen, but staff handed over a large sum of cash. Surrey Police are investigating possible links with similar incidents in Ashford, Shepperton and Egham. Two other men may have been involved in the robbery.

Sunderland Echo, 13 February 2008

A woman was left shaken after a robber held her up with what police believe was a handgun in a street in **Ryhope**. The woman was forced to hand over her bag. It contained a phone and personal belongings.

News Shopper, 13 February 2008

A long-barrelled shotgun and a First World War pistol are among items handed in to police in **Bromley** during a firearms amnesty. In addition, 28 **imitation guns** have been handed in during the first two weeks of the campaign.

The Star (Sheffield), 12 February 2008

Three teenagers aged 16, 15 and 13 have been arrested after a spate of catapult and **airgun** attacks which have caused a thousand pounds of damage in the village of **Platts Common** near Barnsley. The arrests were part of Operation Maximum Impact. See also Incidents Involving Animals below

The News (Portsmouth), 12 February 2008

Police arrested two men on suspicion of possessing a firearm after finding a weapon inside a house in **Hayling Island**. They had gone to the house to investigate an allegation of someone making threats to kill.

Evening Courier (Halifax), 12 February 2008

Three masked men robbed takeaway staff at gunpoint in **Rastrick**, West Yorkshire. They threatened them before fleeing on foot with cash from the till.

Daily Mail, 12 February 2008

Armed police held a man at gunpoint when they mistook his MP3 player for a pistol. He was arrested and put in a police cell. He was listening to music on his way home from work in **Stoke-on-Trent**. The police had received a report from a member of the public who had seen a man appear to pull a handgun from a jacket pocket.

Yorkshire Evening Post, 11 February 2008

A man has appeared in court after police found illegal weaponry and £18,000 in his car after a police chase in November 2007. When his home in **Norwood** near Harrogate was searched police found a **.22 air rifle** and ammunition, an unsecured shotgun, two CS gas cannisters, a flick knife and a knuckle duster. Simon Phillips has admitted purchase of an uncertificated air rifle, possession of live ammunition, failure to comply with the terms of a shotgun certificate, possession of an offensive weapon and having a weapon for discharge of noxious substances. He has been bailed to appear in March.

The Star (Sheffield), 11 February 2008

A shop worker and a delivery driver were held at gunpoint by a gang of armed robbers who burst into a store in **Eckington** demanding cash. A handgun was pointed at the woman shop worker. The robbers were also armed with baseball bats.

The Press (York), 11 February 2008

Three shotguns and 24 cartridges and two **BB guns** are among a haul of weapons handed in to police as part of an amnesty in **York** and **Selby** aimed at getting knives and guns off the street. It runs until the end of February.

News & Star, 11 February 2008

Police stopped a car in traffic in **Carlisle** and arrested four teenagers on suspicion of possessing airguns. The suspects were acting after reports that an air rifle barrel had been spotted pointing out of a car in **Dalston**, near the city. Two **air rifles** were seized by police.

Evening Star (Suffolk), 11 February 2008

An airgun pellet was fired at a bus and shattered a window where a family were sitting. The incident happened at **Kesgrave**. A 14-year-old boy was arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm and criminal damage. An **air rifle** was seized.

Evening Gazette (Middlesbrough), 11 February 2008

A man was to appear in court charged with two separate gunpoint raids. In the first a man walking along a street in the **Grove Hill** area of Middlesbrough was allegedly threatened by a man with a handgun who demanded cash. The attacker got away with less than £15. Two days later a man was walking in Linthorpe had bank cards and a mobile phone taken at gunpoint in **Linthorpe**.

BBC, 11 February 2008

Three men armed with a handgun threatened staff and a customer at a jeweller's shop in **Caterham**, Surrey. The robbers escaped with jewellery grabbed from cabinets. The escape vehicle and gun were later found by police at **Gravelly Hill**.

BBC, 11 February 2008

A 16-year-old boy, one of two people injured at a shooting at a betting shop in **Withington**, Manchester, in January 2007 (see [Incidents](#)) has died in hospital.

East Anglian Daily Times, 10 February 2008

A veterinary practice in **Framlingham**, Suffolk, has had hundreds of pounds worth of drugs and equipment stolen following a break-in. Among the items stolen was a handgun used to put down animals.

Telegraph, 9 February 2008

Armed police were called to the village of **Churchdown** near Gloucester by a member of the public who reported seeing three youths with a firearm. The gun was found to be a **water pistol**. One 17-year-old was advised by officers in relation to his future conduct and a second 17-year-old was spoken to. A police spokesman issued another warning about the impossibility of being able to distinguish between real and replica guns and advised youngsters not to mess around with replica or toy guns in public.

BBC, 9 February 2008

Thieves who hijacked and then crashed a beer lorry in **Southall**, west London, may have been armed with a gun according to an eye witness.

Kent Online, 7 February 2008

A man brandishing a gun entered a bank in **New Ash Green**, near Gravesend, and demanded cash. Staff handed over an undisclosed amount of money from the tills.

Evening Chronicle (Newcastle), 7 February 2008

A man is recovering in hospital after being shot in the stomach in his backyard in **Philadelphia**, Houghton-le-Spring. It is believed he was shot with an **air rifle**. A man has been arrested in connection with the shooting.

Daily Mail, 7 February 2008

A bank manager was kidnapped at gunpoint as a prank for his 40th birthday. The kidnap took place at a petrol station with the knowledge of the staff there. Staff at the bank in **Penzance**, Cornwall, also cooperated in the plan for the mock kidnapping which involved **replica guns**. A spokesman for Devon & Cornwall Police said they had no record of the incident but "in general we would discourage this sort of thing. It is not a good idea to go around in public with replica or toy guns and balaclavas." What he should also have added was that it is actually an offence to have a replica gun in a public place.

The Citizen (Preston), 7 February 2008

Three people pleaded guilty to serious firearms offences at Preston Crown Court. Ivan Hue, Anthony Davis and Michelle Collins all pleaded guilty to jointly possessing a loaded Baikal 9mm handgun and silencer. Another woman, Tamara Gornall had been stopped by police in August 2007 in the **Gamull** area of Preston and was found to be in possession of the gun (see [Incidents](#)). She was later arrested and has since pleaded guilty to possessing the firearm. Sentencing will take place in April.

Telegraph & Argus (Bradford), 6 February 2008

A man has been arrested on firearms charges following a weapons seizure in **Mirfield**, West Yorkshire. Fourteen handguns, an amount of ammunition, two crossbows and an **air rifle** were recovered from an address following reports of a man brandishing a handgun.

Liverpool Echo, 6 February 2008

A woman was arrested on suspicion of being in possession of a gun in a public place after reports that she had been seen with a handgun near a medical centre in **Stockton Heath**, Warrington. The weapon is thought to have been an **airgun**. The woman was being guarded overnight in hospital.

Kent Online, 6 February 2008

A man entered a shop in **Chatham** and threatened a cashier with what appeared to be a gun. He left after being handed a quantity of cash.

The Citizen (Gloucestershire), 6 February 2008

Two cousins were assaulted by a gang in the centre of **Gloucester**. One aged 17, alleges that a car pulled up and fired at him with an **air rifle** which left a hole in his coat. The other teenager, aged 16, says the gang was assaulted with baseball bats, bottles and a golf club.

Birmingham Mail, 6 February 2008

A court has been told how a mother on her way to pick up her children from school was shot in the head by a man taking pot-shots with an **air rifle**. Part of a pellet lodged in her head and she had to have it removed by surgery. A man has denied charges of wounding and possessing an air rifle. The incident occurred in **Handsworth** in March 2007. The defendant claimed he had been showing the air rifle to a friend in his flat when he accidentally activated the trigger. The prosecution claim that three shots were fired. The case continues.

Avon & Somerset Constabulary, 6 February 2008

A man was arrested in **Bridgwater** after police received reports that a man was being threatened with a handgun. Armed officer who arrested the man seized an **imitation firearm**.

Asian News, 6 February 2008

Four people have been charged with firearms offences following police raids in Greater Manchester. Three guns were seized. A man and a woman from **Bury** have been charged with possessing a firearm and ammunition, a man from **Flixton** was charged with two counts of possessing a firearm and two of possessing ammunition and the fourth man from **Old Trafford** was charged with possessing a firearm, a firearm component and ammunition.

The Argus (Brighton), 6 February 2008

David Clarke threatened staff with a cigarette lighter in the shape of a metal gun at a job centre in **Brighton** in July 2007. A policewoman and a woman Police Community Support Officer tackled the man and took the weapon from him. Clarke admitted possession of an **imitation firearm** and will be sentenced later this month.

The Star (Sheffield), 5 February 2008

Armed police were called to **Conisbrough** after three boys were spotted by a member of the public with a silver gun with a 'laser pointer'. The weapon was found dumped in a nearby garden and identified as a **ball-bearing gun**. The youths, aged between 11 and 13, were taken home and police advised their parents about carrying an imitation weapon in the street.

BBC, 5 February 2008

An entire gun cabinet has been stolen from a house in **Kingerby** in Lincolnshire. The cabinet contained two double barrel shotguns, a single barrel shotgun and cartridges. An amount of cash was also taken.

BBC, 5 February 2008

Police were called to three separate shootings across Manchester within the space of a few hours. No one was hurt in the incidents which happened in **Moss Side**, **Burnage** and **Gorton**. The incidents are not believed to be linked.

Liverpool Echo, 4 February 2008

A gunman held up two travel agents in **St Helens**. He was armed with a handgun and escaped with a sizeable amount of cash.

Hartlepool Mail, 4 February 2008

A trial is taking place of four men charged with being involved in a conspiracy to kidnap another man in early 2004 and conspiracy to blackmail the victim's brother of £25,000. The gang had kidnapped the victim at gunpoint at **Seaton Carew**, County Durham.

The Gazette (Preston), 4 February 2008

Two shots were discharged in a nightclub in the centre of **Preston**. Nobody is believed to have been hurt.

The Gazette (Blackpool), 4 February 2008

A security guard from **North Shore** has been accused of possessing two stun guns. The guns are prohibited weapons.

Derbyshire Times, 1 February 2008

A gang of youths using an **air rifle** smashed a window of a factory in **Renishaw**. Police were called by members of the local Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Bucks Free Press, 1 February 2008

A man allegedly held his ex-partner and her daughters at gunpoint for over an hour at their home in **Chesham**. A man was later arrested while he was driving through the town.

SCOTLAND

BBC, 29 February 2008

Allan Rodger was part of a gang which planned to rob a security van outside a bank in **Kilmarnock** in May 2006 (see [Incidents](#)). A security guard was shot during the attempted robbery and still has a bullet lodged in his pelvic bone. Rodger has admitted attempted robbery and will be sentenced in March.

BBC, 27 February 2008

David Schoular was drunk when he aimed an **imitation gun** at a 15-year-old as he walked past shops in **Newmains**, North Lanarkshire, in November 2007. The boy believed he was going to be shot. Schoular admitted having in his possession a firearm or an imitation firearm with intent to cause his victim to believe violence would be used against him. He has been jailed for two years.

Kirkintilloch Herald, 26 February 2008

A 16-year-old boy was shot in the forehead in an **airgun** attack on open ground in Hillhead, **Kirkintilloch**. He was taken to hospital where doctors removed the pellet which was embedded just above his eye.

Banffshire Journal, 26 February 2008

Darren Barley has admitted discharging an **air rifle** across a road and hitting a streetlight in **King Edward**, Aberdeenshire. He also pleaded guilty to a further two separate charges of having a loaded weapon without lawful authority or reasonable excuse and being drunk in possession of a firearm. He was given a £300 fine, £100 for each offence.

ic Renfrewshire, 25 February 2008

Robert Peacock has pleaded guilty to unlawful possession of a sawn-off bolt action **air rifle** and been jailed for six months. He claimed he had bought the firearm from local youths "on the black market". The gun was found at his home in **Barrhead** in April 2007. After being tested the gun was found to fall within the terms of the Firearms Act.

ic Renfrewshire, 21 February 2008

James Campbell, 20, fired a shot from an **air rifle** at a shopkeeper whilst attempting to rob a store in **Paisley** in September 2007. He targeted the store because he "didn't like black people or Asians". The shopkeeper managed to activate the raid alarm and then threw a bottle of wine at Campbell. Campbell was sent to jail for six year and four months.

Daily Record, 21 February 2008

Stephen Crawford, 19, and Daniel McBeth, 17, were held during a police crackdown on car crime on **Orkney**. They stole a car, and McBeth had fired a loaded **airgun** he found in the car. McBeth was locked up for seven months after admitting a driving offence and possessing the air pistol.

Daily Record, 19 February 2008

Edward Humphrey fired an **air rifle** from the window of a flat in **Renfrew** and was photographed by a worker in an office opposite. He has been jailed for 18 months.

ic Renfrewshire, 18 February 2008

Gary Convery tried to murder a man in a pub shooting in **Paisley** in July 2007. The shooting occurred just minutes after a brawl in the pub. No-one was hit when Convery fired the handgun. He has admitted trying to kill the man by repeatedly pointed a handgun at him, discharging the weapon and attempting to fire it, as well as a firearms charge. Sentencing was deferred but he can expect to be handed a lengthy jail sentence.

Greenock Telegraph, 18 February 2008

A man was gunned down in a street in **Larkfield**. The victim was rushed to hospital where his condition was described as stable.

Evening Times, 18 February 2008

Selim Manjani has been jailed for eight years for shooting a man in the neck in a street in **Glasgow** in April 2007 (see [Incidents](#)). He admitted assaulting his victim to his severe injury and to the danger of his life by firing a pistol. He also admitted illegally possessing the weapon and ammunition. The judge recommended that Manjani, an Albanian, be deported.

Evening News (Edinburgh), 14 February 2008

A man was attacked with a stun gun as he walked home in **Broughton**, Edinburgh. He was also kicked in the attack and suffered a fractured eye socket and blurred vision. Steven Burns, who shot the banned weapon, was out on bail at the time of the attack. He has been convicted of assaulting his victim to his severe injury and permanent disfigurement and impairment in June 2007. The judge has deferred sentence for a background report.

Scotsman, 14 February 2008

A team, including a councillor who had come to speak to community workers about drugs and violence in the area, were taking a tour of a housing estate in **Airdrie**, Lanarkshire, when they came under fire from teenagers shooting **air rifles**. Police were analysing pellets in a bid to track down who fired the shots.

ic Renfrewshire, 13 February 2008

Police are hunting for a man who pistol-whipped a South African man in a racist attack in **Paisley**. The victim was struck with the butt of a silver handgun as he walked along a street. Racist insults were hurled at him.

Daily Record, 12 February 2008

A 16-year-old has been charged with petrol bomb attacks and shooting children with an **air rifle**. He is accused of shooting and wounding boys aged 13, 14 and 15 on a footpath in **Kilwinning**, Ayrshire. He also faces charges of illegally possessing an air rifle as well as a charge relating to the petrol bombs.

Evening News, 7 February 2008

Darren Brakes has been jailed for two months after admitting culpably and recklessly discharging a **BB gun** in **Edinburgh** in August 2007. He claimed he was messing about with the gun in a flat when the shot was fired. A pellet flew out of the window and struck a man as he stood in the street. Although he was not injured the victim reported the incident to the police.

Daily Record, 7 February 2008

Shaun Trotter repeatedly fired pellets from an **air pistol** at four teenagers in a swing park in **Cumbernauld** in May 2006 after one them "mooned" at him. None of the shots hit the boys. He admitted a firearms offence and assaulting the boys and has been given a one year jail sentence.

BBC, 5 February 2008

Two men are standing trial accused of forcing a prostitute to commit sex acts on them at gunpoint. The crime took place in **Aberdeen** in September 2007. The accused men deny sexually assaulting the woman, presenting a gun at her and placing her in a state of fear of alarm. One of them also denies a charge of robbing the woman at gunpoint.

WALES

South Wales Evening Post, 28 February 2008

A villager in **Seven Sisters** in the Dulais Valley has reported that **air rifles** have regularly been fired at his property. He believed the attacks are part of an anti-English campaign.

South Wales Echo, 26 February 2008

A man arrested at an apartment in **Cardiff** in April 2007 has denied being in possession of a BBN Bruni pistol, loaded with live ammunition, and two bulleted cartridges, although he has pleaded guilty to being the owner of a quantity of cannabis bush seized at the same time. The trial continues.

Rhondda Leader, 21 February 2008

A man seen walking down a street in **Tonypandy** waving a gun admitted displaying an **imitation gun** and has been sentenced to four months in jail. Steven Jones had made the gun out of a medical crutch handle and a silver torch.

Neath Guardian, 21 February 2008

Police who mistook a whisky bottle for a gun shot a man outside his home in **Neath** with a stun gun. The incident followed an attack by Ieuan Richards on a van with a bayonet in a dispute over street parking. He had 93 previous offences recorded against him and 12 convictions, including some for firearms possession. He admitted possession of a bladed article and criminal damage. Sentencing was adjourned.

BBC, 13 February 2008

Craig Platt from **Kinmel Bay**, Conwy, pointed a loaded **air rifle** at his wife a few days after learning of her child's paternity when he appeared on ITV's The Jeremy Kyle Show. He admitted possessing a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence and was given an indeterminate sentence for public protection.

BBC, 4 February 2008

Two men have been arrested after armed police were called to **Llangollen**, Denbighshire, where a woman thought she saw a man go into a bar carrying a gun. One was later charged with possession of an imitation firearm, public order offences and theft offences. An 18-year-old was charged with theft. The weapon has been found and is believed to be a **ball bearing gun**.

South Wales Echo, 2 February 2008

A Brocock ME38 revolver which uses compressed air to fire pellets and is now a banned firearm was found by police during Operation Maximum Impact, a crime crackdown in Cardiff. The pistol was found during a raid on a house in **Llanrumney** during which a quantity of cannabis was confiscated. Two people were arrested on suspicion of possessing cannabis and a controlled firearm.

INCIDENTS INVOLVING ANIMALS

Welwyn & Hatfield Times, 27 February 2008

The **Potters Bar** Edition of the paper revealed an attack on a cat which is now recovering after being shot three times with an **air rifle**.

Kent News, 26 February 2008

The RSPCA is appealing for information after a cat was shot with an **air rifle** in **Westerham**. A pellet was removed from close to his spinal cord.

Forfar Dispatch, 26 February 2008

A family cat has been seriously wounded by an airgun pellet in **Letham**, Angus. Vets discovered that she was the victim of an **air rifle** attack and that the pellet had penetrated through into her neck.

News & Star, 23 February 2008

A duck has managed to survive despite being shot three times with an **airgun**. The mallard drake was found by a member of the public in **Maryport**, Cumbria. An RSPCA inspector said that the animal has suffered immensely because "someone callously decided to use him as target practice".

This is Lancashire, 22 February 2008

A cat was recovering in surgery after an operation after being discovered in the back garden of a house in **Halliwell**. X-rays showed that there was an **airgun** pellet in the left thigh bone which had shattered. The pellet was removed and the leg pinned.

Sunderland Echo, 16 February 2008

An injured cat was found by a dog walker on a football field in **South Hylton**. The cat had been shot in the head with an **airgun** and left for dead. Vets removed the pellet and the cat is now in a stable condition.

Personal Communication, 15 February 2008

A correspondent in **Rushden**, Northamptonshire, has told us about an **airgun** attack which has left her cat with a pellet embedded in her leg (click [here](#))

BBC, 13 February 2008

A swan which had been shot in the eye with an **airgun** has been rescued from a lake near **Weston-super-Mare**, Somerset. The bird is being cared for at a wildlife sanctuary.

BBC, 13 February 2008

A male swan which had been shot dead with an **air rifle** was found on the canal bank in **Tipton**, West Midlands. It had suffered broken bones and internal bleeding in the attack.

The Star (Sheffield), 12 February 2008

One of three teenagers arrested after a spate of catapult and airgun attacks in **Platts Common**, South Yorkshire (see above) had two dead birds in his pocket. The robin and goldcrest had been shot with an **air rifle**. The youth said he was going to feed them to his ferret.

Kent News, 12 February 2008

A man has pleaded guilty to shooting a seagull with a **pellet gun** near his home in **Margate** in August 2007. Christopher Fraser-Nash was fined £100 and ordered to pay £600 in court costs as well as forfeiting the gun and ammunition.

Manchester Evening News, 11 February 2008

A cat has been scarred for life after he was nearly killed in an **air rifle** attack in **Wigan**. A pellet had narrowly missed his brain and had brushed past his eye before lodging in his right shoulder. It has been decided not to remove the pellet because surgery would be too dangerous.