



JUNE 2007 - SUMMARY

The incidents reported in June show a worrying number of situations in which people have been prepared to use guns for a variety of crimes in a variety of situations. The most serious incidents resulted in the deaths of six people, one of whom was shot by armed police in Sevenoaks in Kent after she confronted officers whilst allegedly armed with an imitation gun.

A significant proportion of the incidents that resulted in injury this month involved the use, not of handguns and shotguns, but of airguns and imitation guns. Although some of the injuries sustained by victims were not serious there is no reason to doubt that serious injury is always a possibility when such weapons are misused. And regardless of whether a gun is real or not the fear experienced by a victim will have a lasting effect.

- **Gun Deaths and Injuries** - There were five fatal gun attacks in June, three in the Greater London area (Romford, Acton and Tottenham), one in the centre of Manchester and one in Bishopbriggs on the outskirts of Glasgow. The victim in Tottenham was a 17-year-old woman, all the other victims were males.
- Armed police shot and killed a woman in Sevenoaks (Kent) after she was seen with a gun and apparently had refused to drop it: it was widely reported that the weapon was an imitation gun (see below).
- In a second incident involving firearms officers a man was shot and critically injured in Ebbw Vale (South Wales): the police were responding to reports of a man with a gun at a house.
- A second man was injured in the fatal shooting in the centre of Manchester, and in other shootings in Greater Manchester a man was shot in the leg in Swinton and two teenagers were injured in a drive-by shooting in Moss Side (the car had been stolen at gunpoint in Hulme), though none of the injuries is believed to have been life-threatening.
- A man was shot in the driveway of a house in Walsall: his injuries were also not believed to be life-threatening. In Shrewsbury a man received an injury to his arm during a shooting in a nightclub. A man who tried to stop an armed raid on a club in Henley Green (Coventry) was shot and seriously injured with a shotgun.
- **Armed Hold-Ups and Assaults** - In addition to the raid on the social club in Henley Green in which a man was shot and injured (see above) there were reports of robberies and attempted robberies on a bank in Goring (West Sussex), a currency exchange office in Croydon (south London), post offices in Arnside (Cumbria), Ryton (Tyneside) and Denshaw (Greater Manchester), shops in Northampton and Dibden Purlieu (Hampshire) and a petrol station in Wigan.
- Three masked men armed with a shotgun threatened a family in their home in Parson Cross (Sheffield). A couple were assaulted and threatened with a handgun in their home in Orpington (Kent) by three men who stole cash and jewellery. A man was injured when he fell onto concrete whilst

escaping from an intruder armed with a handgun whom he found in his house in Woolston (Southampton).

- A car was stolen from an elderly couple at gunpoint in Wallsend (Tyneside).
- A dog was stolen from a man walking in a street in Dalston (east London) by two men, one of whom threatened him with a gun. A man, believed to have been armed with a handgun, stole a mobile phone from a woman in a street in St Albans.
- A man was kidnapped in Bolton by a gang of three men armed with a handgun and a Samurai sword: they demanded that he pay them money within three days or else they would harm him. Two men were arrested in Hull after reports that a man was being held hostage in a house at gunpoint.
- Three teenagers were arrested after a man appeared to threaten a taxi driver with a gun in East Bridgford (Nottingham) whilst the two female passengers ran off without paying their fare.
- **Other Incidents** - A man was charged with three counts of attempted murder and three offences of possessing a firearm after gunshots were fired in a street in Avenham (Lancashire).
- Police have linked two shootings in the south of Glasgow: a pedestrian walking his dog in Pollok was targeted by two men in a car (the dog was injured) and in Darnley a gun was fired through a house window.
- Shots are thought to have been fired during a fight involving 10 men in Southampton. Two shots were fired at a house in Blackburn: the shooting may be linked to a fight between two groups of youths.
- Police were called to reports that a man had been shot by two men in Bury: no-one was injured. Armed police surrounded a house in Filton (Bristol) after reports that a gun had been discharged.
- A man was arrested in Plymouth after police were called to reports that a bird had been killed and cars damaged: they seized an unregistered shotgun.
- Armed police were called to the station in Richmond (Surrey) when an off duty officer thought he saw a man with a small silver handgun.
- A stun gun was found by police in a caravan following a crash on the M5 near Avonmouth: a man was arrested.
- An armed police officer accidentally fired a weapon inside a police station in Exeter.
- **Gun Finds, Thefts and Losses** - A soldier was charged with illegal possession of ammunition after being arrested at a barracks near Chichester (West Sussex).
- A powerful air rifle was stolen from a pigeon loft in Colne (Lancashire). The theft of two shotguns and cartridges was reported from a house in Edinburgh.
- Police found CS gas and BB guns during a raid on a house in Kempston (Bedfordshire) following the interception of a package of stun guns at Heathrow Airport.
- **Convictions** (see also **Imitation Guns** and **Airgun Incidents**) - Two men were convicted after shooting police officers. One man was jailed for life (with a minimum of 15 years) for shooting and seriously injuring an unarmed officer in Wolverhampton, and a second has been jailed for at least six years after he was found guilty of wounding with intent and a firearms charge following a shooting in Leytonstone (east London) in which an undercover police officer was injured.

- An 18-year-old will serve at least six years in jail after shooting a 16-year-old in the stomach with a sawn-off shotgun in a park in Neasden (north west London). Another 18-year-old was jailed for three years for threatening a man with a shotgun in Gloucester.
- Two men received jail sentences of 15 years and six years for their part in a robbery in Horsham (Sussex) in which a man was saved from serious injury when a shot hit his mobile phone (see [May 2007 Incidents](#)).
- Members of a gang involved in the gunpoint kidnap of a man from his home in Glasgow have been given long jail sentences (see [September 2006 Incidents](#)).
- **Airguns - There is a widespread perception that virtually all reported gun injuries are caused by handguns and shotguns. But that perception is wrong. Airgun attacks account for a significant proportion of the injuries to gun victims. According to the latest data for England & Wales, in 2005-06 23% of all serious gun injuries and 30% of all slight injuries were caused by air weapons (see [News Items](#)).**
- **In June 2007 the following airgun incidents that resulted in injury were reported**
 - A taxi driver was shot in the head with an air rifle in Bearsden (East Dunbartonshire) after a row over a fare
 - An 18-year-old female driver was shot in the head in Rosyth (Fife)
 - Two 12-year-olds were questioned after a bus driver was shot in the face with an airgun in North Baddersley (Hampshire)
 - Two youths were arrested after a mother was shot with an airgun in front of her children when they were at a funfair in Kirkheaton (West Yorkshire)
 - A cyclist was struck with a pellet, probably fired from an airgun, in Prestonpans (East Lothian)
 - A man was taken to hospital after being shot in the chest in Lincolnshire: a man was later arrested
 - A woman was hit in the back and injured with a plastic pellet fired from an airgun in Chatteris (Cambridgeshire)
- Further incidents were reported that could also have resulted in injury to innocent victims
 - A man armed with an air rifle and a knife threatened members of the public in Lincoln
 - A firefighter narrowly escaped injury after air rifle shots were fired at the fire station in Alloa (Clackmannanshire)
 - Air rifle shots were fired at cars driving through an estate in Lewes (Sussex)
 - An air rifle may have been used in an attack which shattered the window of a car driving along the A473 between Llanharan and Llantrisant, South Wales
 - It is believed that an air weapon was fired at two vehicles which were damaged on the A68 between Tow Law and Butsfield in County Durham
- A man and a teenager were arrested by armed police who seized air rifles and imitation guns after reports of a group of people handling a gun in a park in Wellingborough (Northamptonshire).
- **Airguns (Convictions)** - An 18-year-old from Barry who pointed an air rifle at a family and threatened to shoot them was given an eight-month suspended jail sentence and 150 hours community work.
- Two boys, aged 13 and 14, have admitted robbing a shop in Stranraer (Wigtownshire) whilst armed with an air pistol.

- A man who fired an air rifle at a group of teenagers in Strathpeffer (Easter Ross) has admitted a number of public order and firearm offences.
- A man was given a four-month suspended jail sentence after he had dropped a loaded gas-propelled airgun in a bar in Sheffield.
- **Imitation Guns - Police repeatedly warn about the dangers of carrying imitation guns, which even a trained firearms officer may be unable to distinguish from a real firearm (see [Police Campaigns](#)). The potential tragic consequences were all too apparent in Sevenoaks (Kent) where police shot and killed a woman who was apparently carrying a realistic looking ball-bearing gun (see above). Too many are still not heeding the warnings and put themselves and others in danger by carrying and using these pointless weapons in public.**
- **The following incidents, reported in a single month, highlight yet again how often imitation guns are being misused by youngsters, with other youngsters the most frequent victims.**
 - A 12-year-old schoolgirl was shot twice with a ball-bearing gun in Hartlepool
 - A teenager was left with blurred vision after being shot with a ball-bearing gun in Peterlee (County Durham)
 - A 13-year-old received injuries after being shot with a ball-bearing gun from a passing car in Leominster (Herefordshire)
 - Three children, aged between six and eight, may have been responsible for a 15-year-old being shot in the eye with a BB gun in Dalkeith (Midlothian)
 - Also in Midlothian, a 14-year-old girl was shot in the head with a BB gun in Mayfield (a 12-year-old boy was charged with assault)
 - In another attack in Midlothian two girls had a BB gun pointed in their faces in Loanhead (a 13-year-old has been charged with breach of the peace)
 - An 8-year-old boy from Edinburgh was shot in the eye with a BB gun by a gang of youths
 - A 10-year-old was arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm after a number of children at a junior school in Laindon (Essex) were hit when he fired a BB gun at them
 - A 13-year-old pupil has permanently left a private school in Llanelli after firing plastic pellets at other pupils: one boy was taken to hospital after being shot in the eye
 - An Oldham teacher has included an incident of a child parading a ball-bearing gun in the classroom in a dossier of abusive and threatening behaviour in his school
- **And there were other examples of youths misusing imitation guns**
 - BB guns were confiscated from teenagers after they fired them inside an underpass in Hereford
 - It is thought that the rifle-style gun pointed at a pensioner by a youth fleeing a club in Wigan was a BB gun: he fired the gun as he escaped.
 - A 19-year-old was arrested in Wootton (Northamptonshire) for carrying an imitation gun bought at a car boot sale.
 - Two 15-year-olds were criticised for brandishing an imitation gun in Yate (Gloucestershire).
 - Nine BB guns were seized by police in Hook (Hampshire), six from youngsters aged between 12 and 14: the guns had been bought at a market in Yateley.
- In another incident in Hereford a man was arrested after firing pellets at vehicles on the city's ring road.

- A teenager was hit with a paintball as she walked along a street in Redditch (Worcestershire).
- **Imitation Guns (Convictions) - These convictions provide further evidence that imitation guns are being used in serious crime (also see Airgun (Convictions) above)**
- A man was jailed for four years after robbing a post office and newsagents in Henlow (Bedfordshire) whilst armed with a small imitation handgun and a knife.
- An 18-year-old from Swindon admitted a charge of possessing an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence after he had threatened a woman with the gun; he will be sentenced next month.
- A man who hit a bar manager in Peterborough with a BB gun after pointing it at his head was given a suspended 12-month jail sentence and ordered to carry out 180 hours of unpaid work and compensation.
- A man who discharged an airgun pellet towards a police officer in Hume (Scottish Borders) was jailed for five years for possession of two modified replica handguns in addition to his four year sentence for shooting towards the police (see [May 2007 Incidents](#)).
- **Incidents Involving Animals** - During June the RSPCA in two areas (Wales and the West Midlands) released reports which revealed the increasing number of airgun attacks on animals, in particular cats and wild birds. The list of incidents reported this month reflected these concerns.
- Cats were injured or killed in the West Midlands (two reports), County Durham, Midlothian, South Wales, Somerset (two reports), Bolton and Hampshire. GCN also heard from a correspondent about cats being shot with air weapons in the Lincoln area. There were two other attacks on cats involving more powerful guns, one in Hampshire (a shotgun was used) and the other in Suffolk. There is little doubt that these reported cases represent only the tip of the iceberg.
- The RSPCA mounted a successful prosecution against a number of people who played a part in the torture of a cat in Stoke-on-Trent which included shooting it with an airgun.
- A cygnet was shot and killed in Sandwell (West Midlands) and eight pigeons have been killed in a two year period in Ipswich. All involved an air weapon.

GUN INCIDENTS – June 2007

ENGLAND

BBC, 29 June 2007

A 10-year-old boy was arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm after children were hit with pellets in the grounds of a junior school in **Laindon**, Essex. Police believe the children were shot at with a **ball-bearing gun**. Four of the seven victims of the attack needed medical attention (*Sun*, 30 June 2007).

Manchester Evening News, 28 June 2007

A 15-year-old from **Sale** has been banned from possessing any **pellet gun, ball-bearing gun** or **air rifle** as well as holding an axe or a firework as part of a wide-reaching Asbo. Billy Edmunds has also been barred from an entire estate in Trafford. The teenager had a history of aggressive behaviour.

BBC, 28 June 2007

Two cars have been damaged by what are believed to have been shots from an **air weapon** as they were being driven on the A68 between **Tow Law** and **Butsfield** in County Durham.

BBC, 28 June 2007

Neville Wooley, 18, has been jailed for three years for threatening a man with a shotgun at Harpur College, **Gloucester**, in May 2007. He admitted possessing a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence.

BBC, 28 June 2007

A man was taken to hospital after being shot in the chest with an **airgun**. His injury was described as "nasty" but not life-threatening. A house in **Kirton**, Lincolnshire, was later searched and a number of firearms were recovered. A man has been arrested,

St Albans & Harpenden Review, 27 June 2007

A helicopter was scrambled after a woman had her mobile phone stolen in **Smallford**, St Albans, by a man thought to be armed with a handgun. No one was caught.

ic Coventry, 27 June 2007

A man was seriously injured when blasted with a shotgun during an armed raid at a rugby club's social club in **Henley Green**, Coventry. He was hurt when he chased after two masked robbers who had threatened staff and stolen takings from the safe.

BBC, 27 June 2007

Two men have been arrested after armed police surrounded a home in **Hull** following reports of a gunman holding another man hostage. Officers closed off the street while they controlled the situation.

BBC, 27 June 2007

Armed police raided a house in the **Filton** area of Bristol after reports that a gun had been discharged. Following an hour-long stand-off police are questioning one person. One man sustained minor injuries after jumping from a window.

Southern Daily Echo, 26 June 2007

A man fell 8ft onto concrete steps, injuring his spine, chest and ribs as he tried to escape from a masked gunman in **Woolston**, Southampton. The victim found the gunman in his house holding a handgun in the hallway when he returned home.

BBC, 26 June 2007

A car was stolen at gunpoint from a man and woman, aged in their 80s, as they parked the vehicle in **Wallsend**, Tyneside. The car was later seen being driven erratically with three men inside and was recovered in Walker. The gunman showed the couple a shotgun but did not point the weapon at them.

BBC, 24 June 2007

Five people have been arrested after a haul of weapons and chemicals were found at properties in **Kempston**, Bedfordshire, and Milton Keynes. Police discovered CS spray and **BB guns** at the Kempston property. The police had been alerted after a package of stun guns was intercepted at **Heathrow Airport**.

Shropshire Star, 23 June 2007

A gunman opened fire on the dancefloor of a **Shrewsbury** nightclub. One man was shot in the arm. Hundreds of revellers fled to safety after the shooting. A man with a gun threatened another man at a nearby takeaway shortly after and police are linking the two incidents (*Shropshire Star*, 25 June 2007).

itv.com, 23 June 2007

A teenage woman who was shot in a bar in **Tottenham**, north London, has died in hospital. The shooting occurred during a row in the bar.

BBC, 23 June 2007

A murder inquiry is under way after a man was shot dead in a street in **Acton**, west London.

ic South London, 22 June 2007

According to a **Lambeth** youth worker children as young as 10 are being arrested for firearms offences. She said that four 10-year-olds had been arrested recently, but Lambeth police said they had no record of this.

Evening Telegraph (Peterborough), 22 June 2007

Robert Koperek took a **BB gun** from his car after he had got into an argument in a bar in **Peterborough** in March 2007. He was drunk at the time and pointed the gun, which he had bought for £25 at a market stall, at the bar manager's head and then hit him over the head with the gun twice. Koperek pleaded guilty to possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear and causing actual bodily harm. He was given a suspended 12-month jail sentence, ordered to carry out 180 hours of unpaid work and to pay his victim £750 in compensation.

BBC, 22 June 2007

Police investigating a caravan crash on the M5 near **Avonmouth** have arrested the driver on suspicion of possessing a prohibited weapon. During a search of the vehicle the police found a police-style baton and a stun gun loaded with CS spray.

BBC, 21 June 2007

A man from Plymouth has been arrested after police seized an unregistered shotgun. Officers were called to the **St Judes** area to reports that a bird had been killed and cars damaged. The gun and shotgun cartridges were found at an address in the area.

Channel 4 News, 20 June 2007

An armed police officer accidentally fired a weapon inside a police station in **Exeter**, damaging a patrol car. He has been removed from firearms operations.

BBC, 20 June 2007

An armed gang threatened to shoot a sub-postmistress in her shop in **Denshaw**, Greater Manchester. The men were armed with an axe, a large knife and a gun. As one man kept guard at the door the other two took money and other items. The stolen car used by the gang was later found abandoned. Post Offices Ltd is offering a reward for information leading to the conviction and arrest of the men responsible.

BBC, 19 June 2007

Police were called to **Bury**, Greater Manchester, to investigate reports that a man who had been sitting in a car had been shot by two men. No-one was injured.

Gazette, 18 June 2007

Nine **BB guns** were seized by police after young people were seen carrying them in public in **Hook**, Hampshire. The guns looked so authentic that from several feet the police struggled to tell the difference from a real pistol. Six guns were taken from youngsters aged between 12 and 14 after they were spotted by an off duty officer. The guns were bought from a stall at a market in **Yateley** which police and trading standards are now investigating. The market manager said that they didn't let stallholders sell BB guns. Three other BB guns were handed into police by parents.

BBC, 18 June 2007

Police have mounted extra patrols in an area of **Blackburn** after two shots were fired at a house. It is believed that the shooting could be linked to a fight between two groups of youths. Three people have been arrested in connection with both incidents. One man has been detained under the Mental Health Act (*BBC*, 20 June 2007).

This is Hampshire, 16 June 2007

A convenience store in **Dibden Purlieu**, Hampshire, was raided by a masked gunman armed with a silver handgun. He demanded money and cigarettes, which were handed to him by a member of staff and placed in a carrier bag.

Evening Chronicle (Newcastle), 16 June 2007

A masked gunman burst into a family post office in **Ryton**, Gateshead, with a sawn-off shotgun. Before the man could do anything the couple behind the counter darted into their adjoining house and called the police. The man escaped empty handed.

BBC, 16 June 2007

One man has died and another has been injured following a shooting in the centre of **Manchester**. Both victims were taken to hospital but one of them died later. The other man's condition was not thought to be life-threatening.

Daily Mail, 14 June 2007

A secondary schoolteacher from **Oldham**, who has kept a record of abusive or threatening behaviour at his school, includes an incident of a child parading a **ball-bearing gun** in the classroom in the dossier.

Hereford Times, 14 June 2007

A 13-year-old girl received injuries to her arm and knee after being shot with a **ball-bearing gun** from a passing car in **Leominster**. She was walking down the street with a friend at the time of the attack which resulted in two flesh wounds to her arm and two in each knee. A youth was arrested on suspicion of assault and issued with a reprimand.

Gazette, 14 June 2007

Two 15-year-olds have been criticised after they were seen brandishing an imitation firearm in **Yate**, South Gloucestershire. Officers had received reports that a teenager was in possession of a handgun in a park. Police recovered the **BB gun** from a rubbish bin. One of the teenagers has been released on bail, the other has been given a reprimand.

Express & Star, 14 June 2007

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) have criticised Staffordshire Police's armed response unit for its tactics during an operation in **Rugeley** in August 2006 (see [Incidents](#)). A police officer misfired a bullet during a series of blunders leading to a man having two fingers shot off. The man, David Shepherd, was shot twice outside a school after he was seen leaning out of his car window holding what appeared to be a handgun. When Shepherd was arrested it was discovered that the firearm was a **ball-bearing gun**. Shepherd was given a six year jail sentence in February 2007 (see [Incidents](#)).

Bolton News, 14 June 2007

A man was kidnapped by a gang of three who jumped on him as he was walking home in **Bolton**, threatening him with a handgun and a Samurai sword. They demanded he get in the car and took him to Leverhulme Park where they told him he had three days to give them £10,000 or they would "chop his fingers off". The victim contacted the police as soon as the gang abandoned him. Officers have fitted a panic button linked to police at his home.

BBC, 14 June 2007

Shots are thought to have been fired during a fight involving 10 men in **Southampton** during which a man was chased and stabbed. According to police no-one suffered any gunshot wounds. Two people have been arrested.

BBC, 14 June 2007

A man brandishing what appeared to be a dark grey pistol attempted to rob a store in **Northampton**. The man, in his late teens, walked into the store, produced the weapon and demanded that the till be opened. The offender fled the store after the till wasn't opened.

This is Lancashire, 13 June 2007

A masked gunman robbed two women cashiers at a petrol station in **Higher Ince**, Wigan. The man, armed with a handgun, walked into the kiosk and demanded money. No one was injured but the two women were left extremely shaken and distressed.

BBC, 13 June 2007

A 14-year-old boy and a man in his twenties have been arrested by armed police officers called to a park in **Wellingborough**, Northamptonshire, after reports of a group of people handling a gun. Police seized **air rifles** and **imitation guns**. Both of those arrested were later released with a caution.

BBC, 13 June 2007

A man was shot on the driveway of a house in **Walsall**. The victim was taken to hospital, but his injuries are not believed to be life-threatening.

Redditch Advertiser, 12 June 2007

A teenager was walking along a street in **Headless Cross** when the driver of a taxi drove past and shot her with a **paintball**, covering her in green paint. She says she is now frightened of going out at night after the incident. The paintball hit her so hard that she fell over and hurt one of her toes.

Peterborough Evening Telegraph, 12 June 2007

A woman was hit in the back with a small plastic pellet fired from an **airgun** as she was standing in front of a house in **Chatteris**, Cambridgeshire. The victim received minor injuries.

Gazette & Herald, 11 June 2007

Scott Symonds, 18, of **Penhill**, Swindon, has admitted a charge of possessing an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear of violence and criminal damage to a van. He had threatened a woman with the gun, a **Skif A3000 air weapon**, by pointing the gun into the face of the victim. He denied an allegation of common assault and criminal damage to the victim's door. Symonds, who was currently in custody was remanded until July and the judge ordered a pre-sentence report.

BBC, 11 June 2007

A 19-year-old youth was arrested for carrying an **imitation gun** which he had bought for £8 at a car boot sale. An armed response unit attended a retail park and monitored the situation before arresting the man when a car was stopped by four officers in **Wootton**, Northamptonshire. Chief Constable Peter Maddison called the act of carrying the gun "extremely irresponsible because it put the man's life in danger". The man was given a conditional discharge by magistrates.

BBC, 11 June 2007

A court has heard that a man attempted to murder a police officer simply because he wanted to shoot a policeman. A plain clothes officers was shot twice in the shoulder in **Wolverhampton** in November 2006 (see [Incidents](#)) after a first shot had missed him. He underwent a four-hour operation to repair a damaged artery. Marcus Bailey denied attempted murder and two counts of possessing a firearm but was convicted and sentenced to a minimum of 15 years in jail (**BBC**, 19 June 2007).

BBC, 11 June 2007

Two teenagers were shot by a gang of five men who were driving in a car that had been stolen at gunpoint in **Hulme**, Greater Manchester. The teenagers were targeted in **Moss Side**. It is thought that two of the men in the car were holding handguns and they fired a number of shots towards the boys. The car was recovered a short time later. Both teenagers suffered minor injuries in the shooting.

BBC, 11 June 2007

A woman has been shot and killed by armed police in **Sevenoaks**, Kent. They were called after a woman with a gun was seen in the centre of the town. The woman was given first aid at the scene but pronounced dead. A firearm was recovered. The Independent Police Complaints Commission said that an investigation would be carried out. It is reported that the woman's gun, which she refused to drop, was a realistic looking **ball-bearing gun** (*Guardian*, 12 June 2007).

News Shopper, 10 June 2007

Police are hunting three men who burgled and threatened a couple with a handgun in **Orpington**, Kent. The couple were assaulted and threatened before being tied up. The suspects stole over £6000 in British and Hong Kong currency, along with several items of jewellery.

BBC, 9 June 2007

A man was recovering after a gun attack in **Swinton**, Greater Manchester. The victim was found by police in the front garden of a property and had been shot in the leg. His injury is not believed to be life-threatening.

Willesden & Brent Times, 8 June 2007

Eighteen-year-old Jerrell Gourde will serve at least six years behind bars after shooting a 16-year-old in the stomach with a sawn-off shotgun in a recreation ground in **Neasden** in November 2006. Gourde was high on cocaine at the time and acted in revenge after rowing with the younger teenager when he crashed into him on his pedal cycle at the park entrance. His victim had threatened him with a brick. Gourde was convicted of attempted murder in April.

Wigan Today, 8 June 2007

A pensioner had a rifle-style gun pointed at her after chasing a youngster who fled from **East Leigh** Labour Club when he saw her. The boy ran across the road before turning back and training the gun on her, then aimed at a window before pulling the trigger. It is believed that the weapon was probably a **BB gun**.

Richmond and Twickenham Times, 8 June 2007

Armed police were called to **Richmond** station after an off duty officer thought he saw a man with a small silver handgun in his trousers. The man was chased along the railway line towards Kew and then into Old Deer Park but was lost. Because no crime was committed as the sighting of the gun was not confirmed and no suspect or gun was found, there is no investigation according to British Transport Police.

Hackney Gazette, 8 June 2007

A man out walking his dog in **Dalston** was forced to hand over the puppy to a four-strong gang who threatened to shoot him unless he let go of the puppy. A car pulled up alongside him and two passengers leapt out and started asking questions about the dog. One of them took hold of the lead and after a struggle put his hand down the waistband of his trousers as if to get a gun and threatened to shoot the owner.

Bedford Today, 8 June 2007

Kieran Johnson carried out a raid on a post office and newsagents in **Henlow** in July 2006 (see [August 2006 Incidents](#)) to get money for heroin. He has pleaded guilty to robbery and possessing an **imitation firearm** with intent and was jailed for four years. He held up the couple who ran the post office with a small imitation handgun and a knife. He made his escape on bicycle pursued by the shopkeeper but got away by riding over the foot of another man who tried to stop him.

BBC, 8 June 2007

Mark Mawson, a psychiatric patient, took a woman hostage in a siege at a house in **Chadwell St Mary** in Essex using an **imitation gun** he had fashioned a weapon out of marker pens taped to a vacuum cleaner handle. He had absconded from a hospital while on a trip in February 2007 and entered his girlfriend's mother's home. The woman was not injured in the siege which ended when police fired a baton round and threw grenades into the building.

BBC, 8 June 2007

Three teenagers have been arrested after an incident in **East Bridgford**, Nottingham, when a man walked up to a taxi and tapped a gun on the window to distract the driver. At the same time the passengers, two teenage girls, got out without paying their fare and ran off with the man. Police arrested an 18-year-old man and two girls aged 15 and 16.

This is Local London, 7 June 2007

A man, registered with Kent Police as a firearms dealer, is on trial after he was caught allegedly selling illegal pistols from his home. Police seized a cache of around 900 firearms from the house in **Dartford** in September 2006 (see [Incidents](#)). According to the prosecution, the haul included illegal weapons including Browning semi-automatic pistols, double-barrelled shotguns, Remington double-barrelled pistols and Wild West-style Colt single-shot guns. The defendant claims all the guns are antiques. He was caught after Operation Trident officers recovered a Smith and Wesson revolver from a youth in the Old Kent Road in December 2005. The man was accused of conspiracy to possess firearms with intent to cause fear of violence, eight counts of selling or transferring a prohibited weapon, 12 counts of possessing a prohibited weapon and one count of possessing explosives. Nine of the 22 charges were dropped (*BBC*, 22 June 2007). He was found not guilty of all the remaining 13 charges (*BBC*, 29 June 2007).

Huddersfield Daily Examiner, 7 June 2007

A mother was shot in front of her two children when youths opened fire with an **airgun** from the grounds of a church in **Kirkheaton**. The family were at a popular funfair. The victim had a .22 pellet removed in hospital and has six stitches from the middle of her mouth to the back of her teeth. Two other women were injured by a volley of shots. An airgun was recovered from the church graveyard after the incident, and two youths, aged 15 and 16, were arrested and released on bail pending further inquiries. It was reported that a few days earlier a group of four teenagers had been spotted with an air rifle in the graveyard and a youth had been seen to shoot a pigeon out of the trees. After an argument with the group the witness believes he was shot at and called the police right away, but learnt later that no patrol car had been sent for three hours.

BBC, 7 June 2007

Dean Stanbury has been jailed for at least six years after he was found guilty of wounding with intent and a firearms charge. He shot a policeman and fired shots at two other officers on a busy street in **Leytonstone**, east London, when he opened fire after discovering that the officers were keeping him under surveillance in June 2006 (see [Incidents](#)). He was cleared of three counts of attempted murder by the court.

Sky News, 6 June 2007

A serving soldier has been charged with illegal possession of ammunition after being arrested at a barracks at **Thorney Island** near Chichester. It is believed that police officers from Operation Trident were acting on a tip-off over the sale of army-issue bullets.

Lewes Today, 6 June 2007

Cars were shot at with an **air rifle** as they drove through an estate in **Lewes**, Sussex. Three drivers were shocked to be targeted. None of the drivers was injured but the windscreen of one of the cars was smashed.

BBC, 6 June 2007

Armed robbers threatened staff at a bank in **Goring**, West Sussex, with a pistol before fleeing on a motorbike. The two men stole a quantity of cash. No shots were fired but staff were left shocked by the incident.

News & Star, 5 June 2007

A gunman demanded cash from a cashier at a post office in **Arnside**, Cumbria. After the incident the man was seen being driven away in a car.

Hereford Times, 5 June 2007

Police in Herefordshire have issued a warning about the use of **BB guns** in public places. The warning comes after an increasing number of incidents in which individuals - many of them teenagers - have been seen carrying and sometimes firing the weapons in **Hereford** city centre. In recent weeks BB guns were confiscated from teenagers after they were reported firing them inside an underpass. A 21-year-old man was arrested after two motorists reported having pellets fired at the vehicles on **Hereford's** ring road. One of the pellets struck a female moped rider on her helmet.

BBC, 4 June 2007

A street in **Avenham**, Preston, was cordoned off by police after locals reported hearing gunshots being fired. Officers took away a car they were examining. A 19-year-old man has been charged with three counts of attempted murder and three offences of possessing a firearm (*BBC*, 6 June 2007).

Sunday Telegraph, 3 June 2007

Philip Cottam has admitted having an **air rifle** in a public place and possessing an offensive weapon. This follows an incident in a bar in **Sheffield** in March 2007 when actress Joanna Lumley saw a weapon fall to the floor from a man's bag. She talked to the man while police, alerted by others in the bar, rushed to the scene. The weapon was a gas-propelled airgun that was loaded with 13 pellets. Cottam told police he was taking the gun to a shop to have a laser sight fitted to it but had stopped for a drink. He was given a four-month jail term suspended for 12 months and placed on a curfew until he begins a rehabilitation placement.

Observer, 3 June 2007

Two 12-year-olds were being questioned by police after a bus driver was shot in the face aboard a bus in **North Baddersley**, near Southampton. The pair demanded cash before one of them drew an **airgun** and fired shots at the driver. The victim was not badly hurt.

BBC, 3 June 2007

An armed men threatened members of the public in a street in **Lincoln** with a knife and an **air rifle**. Armed police were called out and a man was arrested on suspicion of possessing an offensive weapon. No-one was injured during the incident.

BBC, 3 June 2007

A masked gunman shot dead a man in **Romford**, Essex. The victim is believed to have driven to the scene and was shot when he walked towards a van parked there. It is thought that the gunman emerged from nearby shrubbery.

Hartlepool Mail, 2 June 2007

In a second attack reported by the newspaper, a teenager was left with blurred vision after a gang of youths fired a **ball-bearing handgun** at him in an unprovoked attack in **Peterlee**. The shot resulted in a bruised iris. The perpetrators were said to be around 18 years old.

Hartlepool Mail, 2 June 2007

A 12-year-old schoolgirl was shot twice with a **ball-bearing gun** in the **West View** area of Hartlepool by a balaclava-clad attacker. She was shot in the neck and leg in what police said could have had "horrific consequences".

Pendle Today, 1 June 2007

A powerful **air rifle** has been stolen from a pigeon loft on an allotment in **Colne**. The Deirach .22 calibre under-lever gun is a type often used for killing vermin and shooting rabbits and was taken from an unlocked wooden shed.

BBC, 1 June 2007

Three masked intruders broke into the home of a man in the **Parson Cross** area of Sheffield and threatened him with a shotgun. The man and his family were uninjured but shaken. The men had demanded cash, but police say they were unsure of the motive.

BBC, 1 June 2007

A large amount of cash has been stolen in an armed raid in **Croydon**, south London. Up to eight people entered the American Express shop and threatened staff with a gun, which was also fired. The gang ran off to two waiting cars.

SCOTLAND

Daily Record, 29 June 2007

Ryan McWilliams, who fired a .22 **air rifle** at youths and threatened them with knives, has admitted a number of public order and firearms offences. The incidents occurred in **Strathpeffer**, Wester Ross in March 2007. His defence claimed he was defending himself. Sentencing has been deferred.

BBC, 28 June 2007

A man has died after a shooting outside a pub in **Bishopbriggs**, East Dunbartonshire. The victim was taken to hospital but was dead on arrival.

Evening News (Edinburgh), 25 June 2007

An eight-year-old boy was shot in the eye with a **BB gun** by a gang of youths in **Edinburgh**. The boy was playing outside a house at the time and was very frightened after the attack. He was immediately taken to hospital for treatment. His eye has remained bloodshot with bruising to the back of the eye and swelling to the front.

Evening News (Edinburgh), 22 June 2007

Following a spate of incidents in the Lothians two young children have been charged with shooting and threatening girls with pellet guns. A 12-year-old boy was charged with assault after a 14-year-old girl was shot in the head and leg as she walked along a street in **Mayfield**, Midlothian. She was shot with a **BB gun**, and, although her injuries were not described as serious, she was left badly shaken by the attack. In another incident in Midlothian two girls aged 15 and 17 had a **BB gun** pointed in their faces in a street in **Loanhead**. A 13-year-old boy was later charged with a breach of the peace. In a third incident a man was struck with a pellet from what is thought to have been an **airgun** as he cycled through **Prestonpans**. Four youths were seen running away following the incident.

BBC, 21 June 2007

In January 2007 a pair of boys walked into a shop in **Stranraer** with their faces masked, pointed an **air pistol** at an assistant and demanded money (see [Incidents](#)). A 13-year-old and a 14-year-old have admitted assaulting the shop worker, threatening her with violence and stealing money and cigarettes. Sentence was deferred to next month.

BBC, 18 June 2007

Two shootings in the south of Glasgow were being linked by police. In the first incident two men fired a gun from a car at a man walking his dog in **Pollok**. On the following evening a gun was fired through a house window in **Darnley**. A car, similar to the one used in the first incident, was seen leaving the scene of the second shooting. An unoccupied, fire-damaged car was later found by police. No one was injured but the dog sustained a wound to its leg and was treated by a local vet.

Evening News (Edinburgh), 7 June 2007

Police are hunting children as young as six after a 15-year-old schoolboy was shot in the eye with a pellet from a **BB gun** as he walked along a lane in **Dalkeith**. Three children, aged between six and eight, were seen running from the scene. The victim was lucky to escape serious injury and could easily have been blinded.

BBC, 6 June 2007

A firefighter narrowly escaped injury after **air rifle** shots were fired at **Alloa** Fire Station, Clackmannanshire. The shots were fired from a field behind the station and hit the wall. Firefighters were clearing up after training exercise at the time.

BBC, 6 June 2007

An 18-year-old female driver has been shot in the head with an **airgun** while she was driving her car in **Rosyth**, Fife. A pellet was fired through her open car window. The pellet was removed during an operation and the victim is recovering from the incident.

BBC, 4 June 2007

A theft of two shotguns and cartridges from a house in Edinburgh is being investigated. The weapons were a Beretta Silver Pigeon and a Yildiz. They were taken from a house broken into in the **Wardie** area of the city.

Sunday Mail, 3 June 2007

A taxi driver was shot in the head with an **air rifle** after a row over a fare. After arriving at the house of two of the passengers in **Bearsden** there was a dispute over the fare and one of the men went into the house, came back with an air rifle and shot the driver in the forehead. The driver was treated in hospital and released.

WALES

BBC, 27 June 2007

A man is in a critical condition after being shot in the stomach by a police officer in **Rassau**, Ebbw Vale. Firearms officers and negotiators went to a house in the area after claims that a man with a gun was inside. The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) is investigating.

BBC, 14 June 2007

A 13-year-old boy has permanently left a private school in **Llanelli** after firing plastic pellets from a **BB gun** at other pupils. One pupil had to be taken to hospital after being shot in the eye. The incident took place in one of the back fields where the pupils play at break times. According to the *Western Mail* (15 June 2007) the boy was rugby tackled by classmates who wrestled the gun off him before alerting teachers.

South Wales Echo, 13 June 2007

South Wales Police have not ruled out that an **air rifle** was used in an attack on a car being driven on the A473 between **Llanharan** and **Llantrisant**. A roadside missile shattered the window of a car in which a woman and four children were travelling. Glass covered the back seats but luckily none of the passengers was injured. A 20-year-old, fined £80 after being caught firing an airgun at a woodland target near the scene, was not being linked to the incident.

South Wales Echo, 1 June 2007

Sam Bisgrove, 18, pointed an **air rifle** at a frightened family on their own doorstep over an alleged £10 debt. He said "I'll shoot you if you don't give me my money now". The unloaded gun was later found under Bisgrove's bed in **Barry**. He pleaded guilty to possessing an imitation firearm. He has been given an eight month jail sentence, suspended as long as he completes 150 hours community work and attends one of the probation service's "Enhanced Thinking Skills" courses.

INCIDENTS INVOLVING ANIMALS

See Also [**Personal Accounts**](#)

Express & Star, 29 June 2007

A baby swan was found shot dead after an **airgun** attack on the River Tame in **Sandwell**, West Midlands. A local campaigner has offered £500 to help catch the person responsible for the latest in a long line of attacks on birds.

Northern Echo, 28 June 2007

A family has offered a reward after the fatal shooting of their cat who was found lying in distress on the drive way of their cottage in **Newton Hall**, Co. Durham. An x-ray revealed an **airgun** pellet in his abdomen. The cat had been shot about the top of his front leg and the pellet had gone through his chest, shattered a rib, which collapsed a lung and went on into the abdomen.

Burnham & Highbridge Weekly News, 25 June 2007

A gunman using an **air rifle** to take pot shots at birds in **Burnham**, Somerset, is causing "extreme concern" for animal experts. A herring gull had to be put down after receiving serious injuries and another bird has been shot through the wing.

Evening News (Edinburgh), 23 June 2007

A cat owner from **Ratho Station**, Midlothian, says her pets are being deliberately targeted after one was shot with an **airgun** and the other badly injured in a suspected beating. A pellet was removed from a wound in the side of the shot cat by a vet. The Scottish SPCA have reported that there were 32 airgun attacks on animals in the Lothians in 2006, compared with 23 in 2005.

politics.co.uk, 20 June 2007

Following a prosecution brought by the RSPCA Richard Freeman, 18, has admitted his part in the torture of a kitten and been ordered to do unpaid work for 200 hours and to complete a 12-month supervision order. A 16-year-old girl was sentenced to a 12-month referral order. Both were disqualified from keeping animals for 10 years and ordered to pay £250 costs and £25 for vets bills. One other male youth pleaded guilty to cruelly ill-treating the kitten and another to aiding and abetting and cruelly ill-treating. They were both given a 12-month supervision order combined with a six-month surveillance programme for 90 days with a curfew. They too were banned from keeping animals for 10 years. The cat's owner, Debbie Brown, had pleaded guilty to two offences of causing unnecessary suffering by failing to exercise reasonable care and supervision and of failing to obtain veterinary attention. The kitten was shot in the face by an **airgun** close to his eye in August 2006 as well as being thrown up and down a stairway. The torture was captured on a mobile phone. The RSPCA were called to an address in **Stoke-on-Trent** the day after where two kittens, one of which had blood on his face, were found.

Birmingham Mail, 19 June 2007

A family from **Pensnett**, near Dudley, have had six cats shot in the past seven years, according to the RSPCA, and only one of the six survived. In the latest incident a female cat was found dead in a neighbour's garden with a puncture wound in her side.

BBC, 18 June 2007

The RSPCA in another region, the West Midlands, has released figures showing an increase in **airgun** attacks and has urged people to report gun incidents. In 2006 they received 90 calls to airgun incidents, 33 involving shot cat and 37 concerning injured birds. A recent victim of a fatal airgun attack was a cat who was shot in **Willenhall** in the Black Country in May. A pellet fired from a gas powered air rifle snapped her spine, leaving her paralysed (*Birmingham Mail*, 19 June 2007).

BBC, 18 June 2007

The RSPCA in Wales has condemned "mindless" **airgun** attacks on pets and wildlife, the majority of which occurred during school holidays or lighter evenings. There were 42 incidents in 2006 (22 involving wild birds and 14 involving cats), but the charity believes that this offers only a snapshot of a "serious problem" in Wales. A recent incident in **Brackia**, Bridgend, resulted in a cat being shot four times in the back garden of her home. Other incidents in recent weeks have resulted in two blackbirds, a seagull and a magpie shot dead in **Grangetown**, Cardiff. Another gull was shot in **Barry Island** and had to be put down.

Somerset County Gazette, 11 June 2007

A cat who was found under foliage in a neighbour's garden, unable to move, has had to be put down after x-rays showed he had been shot with an **air rifle**. The cat from **Comeytrowe** had a pellet lodged in his intestine causing such serious injuries that he could not be saved.

Bolton News, 11 June 2007

A cat taken in as a stray by an animal lover has died after being shot with an **air rifle**. His owner found the cat looking scared and disorientated outside her home in **Kearsley**. A vat discovered on an x-ray that a .22 calibre pellet was lodged in the cat's bladder and had caused severe internal injuries. The cat had to be put down.

Southern Daily Echo, 10 June 2007

A cat owner has offered a £2000 reward to catch the person who shot his cat in the face with a shotgun. The cat suffered horrific injuries and was lucky to survive after pellets had lodged in her neck and throat, shattered her front leg and pierced her ear. The cat was left for dead after the attack which took place in a field in **Owlesbury**, near Winchester. Although shooting is allowed on the property no one had the owner's authority to shoot on the evening of the incident.

This is Hampshire, 9 June 2007

Cat owners in **Chandler's Ford** have been warned to be on their guard after a spate of shootings involving an **air weapon**. Injures to four cats have been reported in the last month. It is believed that an air rifle or similar weapon was used to hit the animals.

Evening Star, 4 June 2007

Eight pigeons belonging to a man from west **Ipswich** have been killed in two years. All have been found with **airgun** wounds near his home or, in the latest instance, in his pigeon loft. The latest pigeon to be killed had just flown 300 miles back from Scotland.

Bury Free Press, 1 June 2007

A cat has lost his front right leg after being shot with a rifle, probably a rimfire weapon more powerful than an air rifle. When he was found by his owners in **Bury St Edmonds**, Suffolk, his leg was hanging limp and was found to be completely shattered.