



London North Passenger Forum Newsletter December 2009

In this issue

- **Chairman's update**
Page 1
- **Policing over festive period**
Page 2
- **Passenger Forum meeting**
Page 2
- **London North salutes excellence**
Page 2
- **BTP tackles theft of cable**
Page 3
- **Questionnaire**
Page 3

Chairman's update

Dear members

One of the key priorities for BTP is engaging with passengers and rail staff, making sure they know what BTP does and how we keep the railways safe for passengers and rail staff.

This is a considerable challenge for BTP and London North (LN) in particular. LN has many stations and a vast area to patrol. In addition, traditionally, the BTP 'community' has been hard to define, compared to our Home Office colleagues.

Nonetheless, BTP and LN have made fantastic progress over the last few years to engage with passengers, rail staff and members of the general public.

One of the key tools to engage with the public has been the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs). BTP has introduced teams across the country and LN has nine fully functioning teams.

London North's NPTs operate out of the main north London hub stations, as well as on the London Overground sector. Permanent teams based at the stations have regular engagement days and are a high-visible presence acting as a deterrent to those who want to commit criminal activities.

Just last month, the Area's NPTs took part in the Home Office sponsored 'Not in My Neighbourhood Week'.

The Area's NPTs conducted high-visibility and pro-active operations to inform staff and passengers of

the work they do in addressing local problems and tackling antisocial behaviour. It also provided an opportunity for people to interact and engage with the NPT officers.

For example, one of the London Overground NPTs joined up with a Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhood Team to conduct a community engagement and bike-marking exercise at Willesden Junction. Also, the Paddington NPT conducted an engagement exercise with passengers. Their survey showed a 98% approval rating for safety at the station.

And our engagement activities are not limited to stations in London. Officers from BTP Cambridge staged a number of operations in the local area to highlight the importance of level crossing safety.

The event at the Foxton level crossing saw my officers speak to more than 400 drivers and hand out information to educate people on how to keep safe when using level crossings.

These are just a few of the many engagement activities my officers carry out on a regular basis to ensure that they are meeting the people that use railways for business or pleasure.

As reported last month, the Forum will be hosting its first passenger Forum on Thursday 21 January, so please contact Steven Fifer to book your place. To make this Forum truly worthwhile, it would be great to see all of you there.

Yours sincerely,

London North Area Commander Mark Newton

Policing over the festive period

December is that time of year when many people are gearing up for the Christmas festivities. For BTP officers, however, the festive period poses new problems with more people using the trains late at night and at times not in the right frame of mind.

Not only do officers face new challenges but our rail staff colleagues also face the same problems with high-spirited passengers.

In response, BTP has implemented a holiday campaign providing information to rail staff and passengers on how to keep safe over the festive period.

Operation Lockstock has also been organised to reduce incidents of staff assaults by making sure people that



A message to passengers to treat rail staff with respect



Warning passengers to keep their belongings safe

offend are arrested as well as educating frontline staff in conflict management. Officers will also be using Bluetooth technology to message customers to respect other passengers and staff.

Operation Holly has also been introduced, with officers handing out postcards to passengers with information about how to keep safe during the festive season.

Inspector Julian Dixon, London North's lead officer for Op Lockstock, said: "A large amount of work has been put into the Christmas campaigns and we hope that it will have a positive effect on staff and passengers' perceptions of security on the railways over the festive period."

Have you got the Forum meeting in your diary?

The first Forum meeting has been announced and will take place on Thursday 21 January 2010.

The event will be at BTP's Headquarters in Camden.

We will aim to kick the meeting off in the evening so that people can make it without rushing to finish their work.

Can you email [Steven Fifer](mailto:Steven.Fifer@btp.police.uk) and let him know if you are available to attend and let him know of any topics you want to talk about

Steven will also be sending out an email with all the details nearer the time.

London North salutes excellence at commendations

BTP London North area hosted an awards ceremony, where rail staff and members of the public were presented with commendations for their extraordinary courage and skill in the prevention of crime on the railways.

"Police commendations are the highest honour awarded by the policing service to officers and civilians," said Area Commander, Chief Superintendent Mark Newton. "The outstanding efforts of officers, rail staff and ordinary people are not something we take for granted and it is important that we recognise them in this way."

A special mention should go to Mr Gurmil Gill, of First Great Western, who was commended for putting himself in between a gang of youths and a former American Marine, after the latter had been assaulted by the gang at Paddington station.

"Mr Gill could have been seriously assaulted himself and as a result of his intervention four men were arrested and sentenced for a range of offences," added Chief Supt Newton

Questionnaire

November feedback

In the last edition of the newsletter, we asked you a number of questions, with many of you giving us some comprehensive and thought-provoking feedback.

Overall, the key issue that was raised was visibility. Respondents were concerned that BTP is visible at mainline stations and only at certain times of the day. Members also wanted to see BTP further promoting itself in the public eye via posters at stations and more reports and good news stories in the papers.

It is important to note that the concern over visibility is one of the key priorities of the senior commanders at London North.

All the suggestions that have been put forward will be passed onto senior management to consider and possibly adopt in future tactics.

A comprehensive questionnaire report has been published and if you would like to see a copy of it, please contact Steven Fifer on: steven.fifer@btp.pnn.police.uk.

BTP tackles theft of cable

A key focus for BTP and in particular London North is to deter and disrupt criminals who commit cable theft.

Over the last year, we have seen a reduction in recorded cable theft offences and this can be attributed to covert patrols, uniform patrols, helicopter patrols with Network Rail and close liaison and monitoring of scrap metal dealers.

On the London North area in the past year there have been eight individuals that have been charged and therefore received a judicial disposal in the courts in relation to metal theft. It is important to note that cable theft is often a consequence of organised crime, committed by relatively small numbers of criminals who sell the metal on for cash or for export internationally.

In addition, as you can imagine thefts/attempted thefts often take place in more remote parts of the network either late at night or early in the morning – and with 100s of miles of track to pick from, it's always going to be a significant challenge for Network Rail to monitor and for BTP to investigate post-offence.

“Cable theft is a significant problem for the rail industry and it is not only incredibly dangerous, resulting in serious injury or electrocution for offenders, it also causes misery for passengers who end up suffering delays or cancellations to services,” said Area Commander, Chief Superintendent Mark Newton.

“We work closely with our partners at Network Rail and London North now has a dedicated team of officers, under the banner of Op Drum, who are tasked with only investigating this particular type of crime.”

Chief Supt Newton added: “The public are also important in tackling the problem. Anyone with information should contact police as cable theft can cause misery to the public and costs the railway industry millions of pounds in delays.”

LN Inside News

London North produces a monthly newsletter that we send out to our industry partners, police officers and staff.

The latest edition is available and to view, click [here](#).

Questions or comments? Call Steven Fifer, Forum Secretary, on 0207 391 8279 or email him at steven.fifer@btp.pnn.police.uk