

News in brief

Cleveland police officers will be the first in the country to be confirmed in their posts and awarded foundation degrees in police studies.

A celebration of their achievements was due to take place this month at the University of Teesside.

The force was one of the five pilot forces to take part in the new-style of training, with students enrolling in September 2004.



Philip Marczak special recognition

A new network of expert advisors to give victims of sexual violence better care and support during the criminal justice process has been announced by the government.

Thirty-eight independent sexual violence advisors will be working across England and Wales as part of a £3 million package to provide targeted professional support to victims of sexual violent crime.

The trained specialists will work alongside victims from the point of crisis, such as initial contact with emergency services, throughout the legal process and beyond.

• Dedicated

Special Constable Philip Marczak who gives up 35 hours of his free time every week has been named Special Constable of the Year.

Mr Marczak, a Special from Greater Manchester Police, regularly gives up his time to help the Hindley Neighbourhood Team and is involved in policing Wigan town centre at the weekend.

The 21-year-old Special Constable has made 20 arrests, submitted 60 crime reports and issued 60 antisocial behaviour cards as well as conducting 39 stop and accounts since July 2004. He was presented with a silver plate this month for his overall performance in policing Wigan's communities.

• Federation vice-chairman

Alan Gordon hit out at plans to use police cells to house prisoners.

His comments followed an announcement by John Reid, Home Secretary, that Operation Safeguard would be instigated meaning police cells will be used to ease the burden on prisons.

Mr Gordon said: "The government need to tackle this - if we need more prisons then let's build them. We should never find ourselves in the situation where capacity dictates sentences."