Focus on personal development

Nominations sought for BAWP Awards

Find out what it's like to work for the Civil Nuclear Constabulary
I can’t believe the Winter edition of Grapevine is here already and it is a bumper issue for anyone thinking seriously about their personal development. With articles on the benefits of coaching, how an Action Learning Set could help you decide whether to apply for the new HPDS, and information about exciting opportunities to study in the UK and internationally we have gone all out to inspire you.

We have even featured personal development of a different type; Anita Ross from Cambridgeshire Constabulary took a career break to carry out volunteer work in Belize – she shares her amazing experiences on page 14.

I must also add my voice to those reminding readers that January 31, 2009 is the deadline for next year’s BAWP award nominations. Turn to page 2 for more details about the categories and how to submit an application. There are hundreds of examples of excellence across the UK – please have a think about the colleagues you know who could be worthy of such an accolade.

Finally our health column continues in this edition with another article from Dr Peter Bowen-Simpkins from the charity Wellbeing of Women. If there is a health matter that you would like to see featured please let me know. On a health note BAWP, in conjunction with the Police Federation of England and Wales, have recently published a leaflet on women’s health issues, you can find out more on page 5.

Please remember to get in touch with your stories – if you would prefer not to write an article yourself we can do that for you if you let us have the details.

**Dates for your diary**

**2009**

**BAWP Annual Awards** – January 31 deadline for nominations


**Spring Professional Development Day** – Personal v Professional – Achieving a Balance. Stratford Holiday Inn. Wednesday April 22 (awards dinner) and Thursday April 23.


The categories are:

- Officer of the Year
- Leadership
- Community Service. This may be job-related activities or non-work volunteer or neighbourhood activities.
- Mentoring
- Excellence in Performance
- Bravery Award
- Police Staff Achievement
- Special Recognition Award. This is for an individual – male or female – who has made a significant contribution and commitment to the advancement of women in policing.
- Benenden Healthcare Award. This award will be given to an individual (male or female) who has implemented a successful staff well-being programme or who has otherwise influenced and promoted a healthy workforce within the police service.

You can find the full category details and a copy of the official application form on the BAWP website.

All categories are open to female police officers, special constables, PCSOs and police staff. It is intended that the winners of each category, where eligible, will be nominated for the BAWP awards at which the BAWP has had particular success in the last three years.

**Uniform issues are tackled**

Uniform continues to be a huge issue for women in policing but work is going on behind the BAWP scenes to address this issue as Liz Owsley explains…

It is clear many female staff, both officers and police staff, feel that their forces do not ‘value them consistently’ because they cannot get a uniform to fit them properly.

The BAWP have now set up a working party to try and focus attention on this issue. It is being led by BAWP Committee member, Sue Lampard from Surrey Police.

There are many pockets of good practice and progress around the country; one of the group’s first aims is to capture them. It is also important to get a realistic picture of what is going on in forces.

A letter has been sent to the procurement departments in all forces to initially establish a single point of contact. We are also trying to find out what, if any, work is going on around the issue of female uniform, and what ‘version’ of shirt and trousers are being issued to female officers.

Procurement departments procure items of uniform from an ACPO manual, and there are various versions of each item of clothing, with Version 5 being the most current.

Sue has already been inundated with responses and many of the replies will create further work. The work involved appears to be exceeding the limitations of the group, so if there is anyone out there who is passionate about what we are wearing and would like to be co-opted onto the group to help out please contact me, Liz Owsley, by email: coord@bawp.org
BAWP secures NSPIS changes to help women in custody

THE next version of NSPIS Custody software will prompt staff to consider the welfare of women in custody thanks to lobbying by the BAWP.

Working with Superintendent Lorraine Cussen from City of London Police the BAWP asked for a series of changes to help officers implement good practice highlighted by charity The Fawcett Society, which campaigns for gender equality.

Changes included mandatory questions about whether assistance is needed to care for dependants while the person is in custody; reminders for custody officers to offer female detainees access to an independent female member of staff (where available) to discuss their requirements whilst in custody (i.e. sanitary protection) and mandatory risk assessments prior to releasing all detainees from custody – for example considering how someone may get home if released in the middle of the night.

In a letter to President Julie Spence, Derek Cake, Programme Director, agreed the recommendations would form part of the requests for change in the next version of NSPIS.

Senior Women in Policing Conference 2009

BOOKINGS are now being taken for next year’s Senior Women in Policing Conference. It is being held at Exeter University’s Streatham Campus on March 30 to April 1.

BAWP handed over the organisational reins this year to Devon and Cornwall Constabulary.

You can find out more from their website www.swipconference.com or see the flyer inserted into this issue of Grapevine.

The conference is titled ‘Policing in the 21st Century – women’s contribution’. This theme reflects the ever changing role of women in the police service and their growing influence and contribution to its development, as it adapts to meet new needs and pressures.

The conference examines this theme from three perspectives: the individual, the organisational and the national, through a mixture of key note speakers, workshops and networking activities.

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Being a minority in a minority

Delegates at the Autumn Professional Development Day heard from seven different speakers about what it is like to be a ‘minority in a minority’.

The day opened with Marie Hyden, who shared details of her disability (she has Multiple Sclerosis) and how it hasn’t stopped her achieving her goal of becoming a life coach. Winner Shahina Ahmed followed with a very personal account of her career journey. Shahina explained how she had encountered bullying as an assistant psychologist so left her job, relocated, and became a special’s co-ordinator for Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

Alison Cunningham spoke about the experiences of transgendered staff (see boxed article) and Ruth Hunt from Stonewall shared her personal opinions on what it is like to be gay in today’s world and talked about the results of new research on lesbians in the workplace. (see boxed article below).

One delegate described Carol Campayne and Caroline Harper Jantuah’s presentation on research into the experiences of ethnic minority women in the workplace as “polished, thought provoking, useful and informative”. Their research titled: “Different Women, Different Places” revealed the women they spoke to believed that being a BME woman was more of a barrier than being a woman. They urged delegates to “be yourself with more skill...never sacrifice”.

The afternoon featured a workshop with Sanjay Shah, who in an interactive session, got delegates to look at their challenges and what would make a difference to their success. He asked them to think about what was in their power to change and what wasn’t. He told delegates to: “value yourselves….see yourself as a leader of your own life.”

Barriers falling as ‘T’ gets independence

The barriers transgendered police officers and staff are facing within the police service are falling down. That’s the opinion of Thames Valley Police IT Trainer, Alison Cunningham, who works with DCC Mike Cunningham, the ACPO lead on LGB/T issues.

Alison told delegates at the Autumn PDD: “As society develops so does its attitude towards those who are in a minority. Although there is still a long way to go the prejudice barriers are falling.”

However Alison admitted there is a huge difference between the way forces support trans staff internally and build links with members of the wider trans community externally.

“We are in the early stages for ‘T’ at the moment,” she said. “We want to take the T from LGB. It is only just being recognised as a separate diversity strand.”

A stand alone association for trans staff is set to launch in early 2009 with a remit to help forces support their own staff and members of the community.

The AGM, where the committee was elected, took place in November. Find out more at www.NTPA.co.uk

Gender the barrier not homophobia

New research from Stonewall, into the experiences of lesbians in the workplace found that gay and bisexual women often think their gender is more of a barrier to success at work than their sexual orientation. However, for those who have felt able to come out at work, the personal and professional benefits have been considerable.

The Double-Glazed Glass Ceiling, sponsored by Lloyds TSB, found that many gay and bisexual women fear gender discrimination and, as a result, are more likely to hide their sexual orientation.

The report features interviews with lesbian and bisexual women from both the private and public sectors and discusses their experiences, perceptions and expectations of the impact that their sexuality might have on them at work.

Ruth Hunt, Stonewall Head of Policy, said: “Women know that in 2008 the glass ceiling is very much still in place. What this report shows is that for lesbians, that glass ceiling is double-glazed. It’s no surprise therefore that Britain’s two million lesbians remain almost invisible at work.”

Interviewees pointed to a lack of openly gay women in the workplace, with many expressing the opinion that such role models made a crucial difference to the confidence and profile of lesbians and bisexual women in working environments.

Among the recommendations made by the report are that employers should promote career development opportunities to lesbian and bisexual women and encourage them to develop confidence and assertiveness. It also recommends that employers should support and enable lesbian and bisexual senior members of staff to be out and involved in awareness raising initiatives.
Crime victim becomes deaf awareness trainer

A deaf woman was so impressed with the service she received from officers in the Metropolitan Police Service when she was robbed in the street, that she is holding deaf awareness courses just for them.

Gina Bobin is able to understand what people are saying to her by lip-reading, but usually communicates by sign-language. The officer dealing with her robbery quickly realised that and while he couldn't provide someone who could sign his excellent understanding impressed Gina.

Gina thought he had the necessary abilities for signing and in return for the 'exceptional service' she received, offered to provide some initial free training courses for staff.

Working with PC Helen Davis from the Crime Command Unit and Dawn Romain, Deputy Training and Development Admin Manager, Gina pulled together a training package. It included Basic Sign Language level 1 and Basic Communication Tactics which were adapted for police use.

Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Alan Pughsley has supported the course, which trains staff for two hours a week for five weeks, all the way.

Lewisham has now become the first police station in the country to be registered as a centre of training for sign language with regulatory body: The Centre of Advancement for Communicating with Deaf People.

Working with Gina has also given staff other ideas of how to improve communication with the hard of hearing including:

- a Deaf-Link scheme where designated officers work from 9-5pm to deal with scheduled appointments;
- the production of key rings for deaf people which show their preferred communication style such signing, deaf/blind signing, writing things down, lip reading or a communication support worker. On the reverse is a police contact number for SMS texts and a dedicated e-mail address.

Twelve officers, PCSOs and enquiry officers are expected to be trained by Christmas. It is hoped they will be able to help not only the victims and witnesses, but offenders who are hard of hearing and end up in the borough's custody suite.

Networking to prevent terrorism

Staffordshire Police's women's network is helping the force to tackle terrorism.

Committee member PC Gai Palmer is working with Hifsa Iqbal from Staffordshire Police Authority to develop a Muslim women's group in East Staffordshire.

It is hoped the women, who have a great influence on young people in the Muslim Community, will be able to share any concerns they have about members of their community and highlight any extremist activity.

BAWP Committee member Chief Inspector Vera Bloor (pictured left) sits on the force's counter terrorism steering group and suggested that the links the Staffordshire Association for Women in Policing (SAWP) has in the community could be used to prevent terrorist activity.

She said: "The benefits of networking with a purpose, cannot be under estimated, and this is about connecting individuals who can contribute to service delivery and assist in the development of others."

In a visit to Staffordshire Police staff from the NPIA commented positively about the initiative.

Working fathers topic of new research

WORKING Families and Lancaster University Management School have been awarded a Big Lottery Fund grant to undertake a two-year study of the working lives of fathers in the UK.

The project will investigate and document the barriers that prevent working fathers’ greater engagement as parents, creating a body of evidence that will be used to influence public policy development and employer practice.

The research aims to increase awareness and understanding amongst working fathers, especially those on low incomes, of the options they have to manage their working lives differently.

Sarah Jackson, Chief Executive of Working Families, said: “Men have just as much right as women to spend time with their children, and lots of fathers would like more time at home. But we have found that fathers are less likely than mothers to request flexible hours and more likely to have their requests turned down.”

Joint approach to improve health

THE BAWP and Police Federation of England and Wales have joined forces in an initiative to raise awareness of women’s health issues.

The staff associations have created a leaflet all about health complaints specific to women such as thrush, cystitis, menstrual problems, cervical cancer, problems relating to the menopause such as osteoporosis and problems linked to pregnancy.

BAWP National Co-ordinator Liz Owsley says: “The leaflet also highlights how health and safety legislation should be used to reduce the risk of injury and ill health to all women. A healthy police service is a productive service.”

A special photoshoot

A CAMBRIDGESHIRE special constable will be appearing in the January edition of Vogue magazine.

Jessica Ablitt Sudbury, 28, was given the opportunity of a lifetime to be photographed by world famous photographer David Bailey.

The article features a selection of women who work in uniform and asks how a uniform makes them feel about themselves.
Different women have their say

British Transport Police event especially for BME women has given the force a clearer picture of how to support their staff and encourage them to take ownership of their personal development.

‘Different Women’ brought together more than 40 female police staff members from BME backgrounds to discuss their career and leadership potential in the force.

It was designed to empower them and help them develop their careers by examining their personal objectives, the qualities they bring the organisation and their shared experiences, as well as any barriers they feel stand in their way.

Before the event the delegates were asked to complete an on-line survey about their experiences. The results formed part of the day’s discussions and revealed:

- Six out of ten women were either satisfied or very satisfied with BTP as an employer.
- More than half of respondents did not agree that being black and female is a double disadvantage.
- When asked what does having a career mean to you, the majority cited accomplishment and achievement and making a difference.
- In making recommendations for making BTP a better place to work, suggestions included better career guidance, training and development opportunities including work-based learning, more opportunities to use existing skills and value and acknowledge the work of police staff.
- Barriers to progression were identified as growth and opportunities, lack of career planning and advice, lack of recognition and organisational culture and style.

Superintendent Ellie Bird, President of BTP’s Women’s Support Forum, said: “We wanted to hear from these women what the obstacles are to their success. With all of these events, it is about exploring how best the force can support its staff, but also for them to realise that they have a leading role to play in their own development and performance.

“By better understanding and supporting our people we can achieve more as a force, and hopefully give individuals the confidence to make a positive contribution.”

Carol Campayne and Caroline Harper Jantuah, directors of The Diversity Practice, also shared the results of their ‘Different Women, Different Places’ research into the careers and successes of BME women who are leaders in their fields in the UK.

Carol said: “The event was an opportunity really to capitalise on the skills and capabilities of BME women which have previously been ignored.

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Caroline added: “Different Women was about creating a space for BME women to talk about their experiences. It’s about the BME women stepping up and out and regaining control.

“Hopefully they will walk out thinking ‘I can do something more’ and go away with a greater appreciation of their own personal worth to the organisation and a commitment to positive action from themselves.”

Chair of SAME (Support Association for Minority Ethnic Staff) Baseem Akbar said the event was a great opportunity to get a very clear perspective from a very specific group within the organisation. He added: “I was so impressed with their energy to contribute and share experiences and ideas as well as propose meaningful proposals and solutions. The challenge now is to encourage them as a group and as individuals to take these ideas forward and this we will do through a further event and a specific focus group supported by the Women’s Support Forum and SAME.”

All photographs reproduced courtesy British Transport Police

Delegates at the event

Superintendent Ellie Bird

Gaining a better understanding of BME women
Honour-based violence strategy launched

The first police service strategy for honour-based violence (HBV) across England, Wales and Northern Ireland has been launched by ACPO. It sets out a commitment to ensure the safety of victims and potential victims and bring perpetrators to justice.

The strategy, which follows consultation with partner agencies and survivors, gives forces guidance in structuring and delivering their response to honour-based violence. It establishes principles for recording incidents and sets the challenge of ensuring that every member of the police service who may be the first point of contact for someone at risk has sufficient understanding of what is required to ensure their personal safety.

Steve Allen, Commander in the Metropolitan Police Service and ACPO lead on honour-based violence, said: “To the best of our knowledge, 12 people are murdered every year for transgressing someone else’s perverted notions of honour. We do not know how many commit suicide as an alternative or an escape. We know that around 500 men and women report to us every year their fear of being forced into marriage, or their experience of rape, assault, false imprisonment and much more, as the consequence of being in marriage without their consent.

“The police response to this issue has nothing to do with political correctness and nothing to do with inappropriate sensitivities. The police response is about saving life, protecting those at risk of harm and bringing perpetrators to account.

“The new strategy builds on work already done and is a clear statement of intent by the police service that we will do everything in our power, working alongside our communities, to keep people safe and end these abuses.”

Health Matters

Peter Bowen-Simpkins

Cystitis affects 1.7 million women in the UK each year with the largest group of sufferers aged between 18 and 35 years. Moreover, women are more likely to get cystitis than men. Cystitis literally means ‘inflammation of the bladder’ but is a term commonly used to describe an acute infection, irritation or damage to the bladder.

Symptoms
A burning sensation when urinating, an almost constant urge to urinate, blood in the urine and the urine has a strong smell.

Causes
Bacterial, most commonly, where the germ is often transferred from the bowel. It is also associated with sexually transmitted infections. Interstitial Cystitis (IC) carries the above symptoms but no germs are present. The cause is undiscovered and the condition does not respond to antibiotics.

Predisposing factors
During pregnancy, breastfeeding and the menopause, oestrogen levels are lower and the protection from infections that it gives may be lost. During sexual intercourse, bruising and inflammation of the vagina and urethra may lead to cystitis.

Treatments
Cystitis can be treated at home with over-the-counter medicines (e.g. cranberry juice extract tablets or sachets) and plenty of water. If symptoms persist for more than 48 hours or if you have blood in your urine, you must visit your GP. They will ask for a mid-stream sample of urine to test for bacteria and in some cases will prescribe antibiotics. If cystitis keeps recurring, especially if there is blood in the urine, a cystoscopy may be needed – a tiny telescope is placed in the bladder, under local or general anaesthetic, to look for a local cause of bleeding.

Prevention
Wipe from the front to the back after passing urine, drink plenty of fluids (at least two–three litres per day) to keep the bladder ‘flushed’, wear breathable cotton underwear and avoid tight trousers and tights. Also urinate as soon as you need to – don’t ‘hold on’ and try to empty your bladder and never ‘hover’. Finally avoid perfumed soaps, bubble baths and vaginal deodorants.

Peter Bowen-Simpkins is medical Director at the London Women’s Clinic and spokesperson for Wellbeing of Women.

Stepping stone to ACPO

Eight women passed this year’s Police National Assessment Centre, the passport to ACPO ranks.

A total of 110 officers took part in the assessments with a pass rate of 53 per cent. Of the 110 officers 13 were women. Women made up 22 per cent of the total pass rate. Of the Scottish contingent four out of the ten officers who got through were women – including the BAWP’s own committee member Angela Wilson. (pictured)
Policing the civil nuclear industry

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary is a specialist armed police service dedicated to the civil nuclear industry. It employs just short of 900 police officers and staff who are based across 15 civil nuclear sites in England, Scotland and Wales. The Constabulary headquarters is at Culham in Oxfordshire where the majority of police staff are based.

The civil nuclear industry forms part of the UK’s critical national infrastructure and the force contributes to the overall framework of national security. The force’s role is to protect licensed civil nuclear sites and to safeguard nuclear material in transit.

Fifteen per cent of officers are women and the force has set itself the target of increasing the percentage of new female recruits from nine per cent to 11 per cent during 2008 – 2009. A target the force says it is on track to meet.

Staff work in partnership with the appropriate Home Office or Scottish Government police force at each site. The majority of officers are Authorised Firearms Officers. The patrol strategy employed by the Constabulary is intended to give reassurance to the public in the vicinity of civil nuclear sites, and to deter and deal with minor crime. In these areas this constrains and disrupts the operating environment for those with terrorist intent.

PC Aileen Keith, who is based at Torness, East Lothian has agreed to share her first-hand experience of working for this specialist force with Grapevine readers.

I have been in the Civil Nuclear Constabulary for nearly 11 years. I previously worked as a doctor’s receptionist but felt that I needed a more demanding role. I was aware of what was then the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Constabulary and felt that they had an important role in policing and one that I could fulfill.

After the initial training, which at that time was 12 weeks including firearms, I was posted to Dounreay in the North of Scotland where I completed my two-year probationary period. After this time I was eligible to apply for specialist training and chose to undertake Counter Terrorist Search Training which I completed with Merseyside Police. I subsequently took up a post with the Tactical Response Group; this expanded my knowledge of both the force and the nuclear sites around the country.

I was then posted to Torness support unit as an Authorised Firearms Officer (AFO) and formed part of the team carrying out counter terrorist patrols within a five kilometre radius of the power station.

Training

At first I felt apprehensive about the training but found the best way to overcome this was to just get on with it and I soon found my confidence increased. During my service I have applied for several roles and I’m fortunate that I have never faced any serious obstacles in achieving my aims. Prior to joining the force I had no previous firearms knowledge and the aspect at first was daunting. However the training was of a very high standard and brought me up to a good level of competence with the weapons I carried on a daily basis.

Specialisms

There are various roles in the CNC and not all of them are armed. To be posted to a support unit, an officer requires to be qualified to National AFO standard. I carried out my initial firearms training...
during my probationary period and have maintained this with regular qualification shoots during my service. The role of AFO at a support unit is considered to be a specialist role within the force and one that I am happy to carry out. However all officers who now join the force have to qualify as AFOs as standard which would make this position open to them all.

A day in the life

A typical day starts with being issued with a firearm and thereafter a briefing of latest intelligence and tactical options to be used during the day. I may then carry out patrols both on foot within the immediate site area and mobile patrols within the five kilometre area. As the A1 road directly runs past the site we are frequently called to provide an immediate response to incidents occurring there until the arrival of the local force.

As a counter terrorist force the CNC do not get involved in routine policing of the area which is handled by Lothian and Borders Police.

My daily duties have to be very flexible so that no discernable pattern can be observed.

During my patrols I frequently meet members of the public and enjoy interacting with the local community. I feel that community liaison is a very important part of my duties. However I have to be aware of my specialist position and the fact that I am carrying a firearm and the effect this has on the general public.

I also work closely with British Energy Staff including the Guard Force and provide a high visibility presence to provide reassurance and support.

Day to day duties can vary but are likely to include:

- Mobile and foot patrols – this could be in armed response vehicles or as part of dog teams
- Working in the police control rooms
- Fixed point policing, access control and security searches – site entrances, inner areas
- Building, security and perimeter checks
- External site patrols
- Alarm and incident response

The future

At the Torness unit I have undertaken acting sergeant duties over the past two years and intend to sit the force sergeant exam next year. I also had further Counter Terrorism Search Unit training with Lothian and Borders Police and feel that this is good practice and provides me with some knowledge of how another force works in this field. As a tutor constable I’m involved in supervision and the local training of probationary officers on my team, I feel this is an important role in the development of those who are in training.

Civil Nuclear Constabulary’s stance on flexible working

The Police Authority is committed to encouraging flexible working arrangements where these help to secure and retain the people necessary to meet work needs and where they can be operated without adversely affecting performance. The Police Authority also believe that part-time working has an important part to play in providing flexible working arrangements for people who have commitments that mean they cannot work the full-time hours.

A range of work-life balance schemes applies to employees, however, due to the nature of the policing role within the Constabulary, it may not be possible to provide all of the flexible working practices to police officers or to shift workers and some members of police staff.
Q. What did you want to be when you were growing up?
A. A farmer. But then I was told I couldn’t just keep on adding to my farm stock and would have to use the animals for income, so, slightly horrified at this thought, I wasn’t sure what to do so drifted into a government opportunity programme working mainly with the elderly (which was such a pleasure) and then followed my sister into the Army. I haven’t had a career plan since being medically retired, but now take every opportunity that presents itself to continue to develop.

Q. Who has been your greatest inspiration or role model and why?
A. I’ve taken inspiration from many people, in many roles and it would be wrong to single out just one. I continue to be inspired by people who are individual and who are true to themselves, people who have an ability to ‘take people with them’ and people who listen and give advice honestly.

Q. What is the most memorable moment of your career to date?
A. Eventually realising I could do something else.

Q. What barriers to success have you come across and how did you deal with them?
A. The barriers were mainly my own. Being medically retired from a job which I loved and wondering what on earth I could do next really presented some challenges, both professionally and personally. Trying to assess transferable skills whilst coming to terms with an imposed change of profession (and also having very recently lost my mother) left me with quite a low self esteem and flagging levels of confidence. I did a lot of talking with friends and family and joined a temp agency who did a skills assessment (both characteristically and work skills analysis) and that’s how I came to be an event manager. I worked with a wonderful group of people who supported me, guided me and believed in me. I took their feedback (sometimes brutal, but I wanted honesty) and worked on the areas where I was lacking. I still have gaps, but I’m working again with some wonderful people whose judgement and advice I value and trust.

Q. How have you achieved a satisfactory work/life balance?
A. I’m not sure if I have. I try to work compressed hours, but do still stay late and work from home (just to make Monday’s e-mails shorter). Work/life balance is hard to achieve and I think you have to be very disciplined, and organised – again it’s work in progress.

Q. What three words describe your personality?
A. Open, friendly, honest

Q. What are your vices?
A. Red wine and pasta (great for the hips!)

Q. Where is your favourite holiday destination and why?
A. Anywhere with guaranteed sunshine and no mosquitoes. Not always easy to get both. Kenya was our honeymoon destination – memorable for many reasons, but I have never seen a night sky or stars like it anywhere else in the world and the Indian Ocean was like stepping into a warm bath. I will also never forget the poverty, so it made me very conscious of what a really privileged position I am in.

Q. Where do you see yourself in five years time?
A. I honestly don’t know. I don’t actually have a long-term plan as being a member of support staff is quite prohibitive when looking for further promotion as I don’t have a specialist qualification. I’ll see what comes along and see what opportunities arise. I do want to progress and learn new and different skills, so I remain open and wouldn’t necessarily rule anything out.

Name: Claire Parsons
Age: 43
Current posting/role: Business Development Manager Operational Support, Hertfordshire Constabulary

Brief career history: joined the Army (WRAC) in 1983 and served two tours of Northern Ireland. I left in 1990 and joined the Metropolitan Police Service and served as a PC until I was medically retired in 1999 due to a shoulder injury sustained falling off my pushbike. I then worked as an event manager and an employment consultant before in 2002 joining Hertfordshire Constabulary as a police staff investigator. A series of promotions led me to my current job.

Family: Mother, father and younger brother who all live in Devon, which is where I am from originally.
Coaching the magic back

Coaches work with people to help them identify where they could develop new skills and motivate them to achieve them. The relationship differs from mentoring as it deals with specific tasks and skills; mentoring is a longer-term relationship to help people develop in an organisation. Put simply mentoring is input, and coaching is extraction. Angela Hackett believes everyone could benefit from the one-to-one relationship a coach can offer – it is just about finding someone you connect with.

Is coaching for everyone? Well, yes in one form or another I think it is. Just think about the people you know who make you feel better, more optimistic, more energised. Well a good coach, whether in the form of a trusted and honest friend or professional coach can do that for you and in my opinion if the right connection is made coaching can weave a kind of magic in your life.

We all struggle to see what is right in front of us, whether it is getting you back in touch with the things you excel at, but had forgotten, or a timely reminder that perhaps a forceful and loud attitude might be doing you more harm than good. A good coach will be in your corner and can help you feel more robust and resilient while you build up that resilience for real.

I like to use the analogy with my own clients of walking alongside them. I will help open some doors and windows they had not seen or were too anxious to address. But in the end it will be them who does the work. I am a facilitator and a guide but I cannot do it for them. Coaching is about you taking responsibility, the coach can point things out and offer support but when changes need to be made that part will be down to you.

Working with the right person is the absolutely most important part. I am sometimes confounded by an allocation of a coach to an individual without either party having met. It is true that a good coach will be evolved enough to present a clear persona having worked through their own ‘baggage’ before even thinking of intervening in anyone else’s life.

However, I would say that there are so many different types of coaches out there now that it is becoming something of a minefield to work out which one is right for you. The first decision is what do you want to focus on, your work or you as a person?

A coach is generally stated as being a life coach or work coach – they will often follow a process of setting targets and getting you to think in bigger picture terms about your life and career. If you feel you need support in getting things done then they may be a good match for you. They will remind you to do the things you know you ought to and it can really work for some people to have someone to report to.

The next tier of coach is considered to be one who is qualified and equipped to face your inner demons with you. It is absolutely essential that you check out their qualifications and experience. They should have some psychological background and be able to ask the right questions to get you to think about your motives and behaviour. They will very rarely offer advice on work issues, except in dealing with people issues. They often know very little about your field of work and that does not matter a bit. They are there to get you to work on yourself and help you to work on removing the barriers to your success. Of course, having spent many years in training they will cost more but the outcome will be far reaching and you will invariably experience that magic I mentioned at the outset.

Whoever you choose, know that none of us is an island we all need guidance, support and instruction from time to time if we are to make the most of our talents and abilities. One thing I would say is that you are undoubtedly capable of doing more and being more than you are at the moment – a really good coach will get you to see that and help you reach your goals, whatever they are. Here’s to your success and happiness.

Angela Hackett is an Executive Coach at ’The Way Consulting’ which provides training in personal and team development and performance.

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Focus on personal development

Do you have the potential to aim high with a little help from your friends?

Two BAWP committee members have joined forces with the National Police Improvement Agency in an initiative to increase the number of women joining the newly launched High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS). Berni Cartwright and Patricia Foy have offered to set up a support group (called an Action Learning Set) for women thinking about applying for the scheme, as they report…

What is HPDS?
The HPDS, launched in April this year, is a revision of previous schemes and is for constables and sergeants of any length of service, whether or not they are graduates. The aim is to identify the very best officers and provide development and other opportunities so that they can move to senior leadership positions as soon as possible.

Officers who join the scheme will take a two-year Post Graduate Diploma level course in Police Leadership with Warwick Business School. This course incorporates elements of personal leadership, business and executive management and professional policing skills. Officers who complete this course will then consolidate their learning in the workplace to show they can apply this knowledge for up two years. Those successful in this will then study for a Masters qualification in Police Leadership.

After this five-year course, which can be flexible in timescales to meet individual needs, it is expected that officers will have the knowledge and understanding of a wide range of leadership and managerial skills to enable them to be really effective leaders. It is also anticipated that they will progress several ranks during this time.

However, not all those who start the programme will finish it. The programme is designed to be hard to get on and hard to stay on. By doing this, it is ensured that all those who complete it will have a high level of operational, strategic and leadership capability and credibility.

The selection process is tough but fair. It is intended that the next process will be launched in April 2009 and it will entail being recommended by your force, passing several ability tests and an assessment centre.

In the last selection process female officers did very well, as they have done in previous schemes, and of the 84 officers on the new scheme women make up nearly 30 per cent of the members. The women on the scheme are also from a wide variety of backgrounds with some being very young in service and others being late joiners who are mothers with previous careers. So, if you are of the highest calibre and think the scheme could be right for you, there is nothing to stop you applying. So how does an Action Learning Set (ALS) fit in?

What is an Action Learning Set?
So firstly – an ALS (to quote the experts) is: ‘an accelerated learning tool which can be applied to any number of different workplace (personal) issues and challenges.’ The benefits being:

1. It is a powerful way for managers/leaders to learn from other managers/leaders and share good practice.

2. It is a personal quest.

3. It is a powerful question to ask the office.

4. It is a way of learning from experience.

5. It promotes problem-solving and management by doing.

How can an ALS help?
An ALS can help members of the HPDS understand workplace and personal issues and challenges of the HPDS.

Members of Berni and Patricia’s ALS. Top row from left to right: Elaine Peberdy (West Mercia), Mandy Harrison (Warwick). Bottom row from left to right: Karen Metcalfe (West Mercia), Jenny Clarke (Northamptonshire), Patricia Foy (Gloucestershire).
to aim high...

“It is true to say that every member of our set has benefited and developed both professionally and personally in some way.”

2. It is a simple, cost effective, yet powerful tool for personal and professional development.
3. It is a structured networking opportunity providing an environment in which to ask questions, seek answers, gain support and expect challenge.
4. It is a process where people become mentors to each other, learning with and through each other.
5. It provides opportunities to work on real problems and implement solutions – management development which is learning by doing.

How can being part of an Action Learning Set help prospective HPDS applicants?

ALS can be applied to any number of different workplace issues and challenges and so in respect of the HPDS scheme the intention would be to set up an ALS for those people who are contemplating, thinking about or wondering whether or not the HPDS is right for them. It would be used to explore thoughts and feelings about the scheme, professional development to aid applying for and potential progress onto the scheme and personal development to ensure that you feel confident in your own ability to achieve your goal – a successful application onto the scheme. Being involved in an ALS focused on exploring the HPDS option would mean meeting together as a group (of about 10 – 12 people) three times between now and next April. It is hoped that by then (when is when the HPDS application process would commence) you will have explored your own professional and personal development and answered all your concerns and decided on whether the scheme is right for you – it is your decision after all.

We cannot speak highly enough of the benefits of being involved in an ALS can bring. We are both members of a very successful ALS which we set up having attended the Leadership Development Course for Senior Women last September. Ours has been in place for a year now and it is true to say that every member of our set has benefited and developed both professionally and personally in some way.

If you are interested in the HPDS, but would like some more information on Action Learning Sets in general then please contact either Patricia Foy at patricia.foy@gloucester.police.uk or Berni Cartwright at cartwrightb@norfolk.pnn.police.uk.

Interested?

We are currently collecting expressions of interest in relation to the HPDS ALS so if you would like to become involved then please contact Caroline Dore on 01953 423931 or DoreC@norfolk.pnn.police.uk or if you would like more information on Action Learning Sets in general then please contact either Patricia Foy at patricia.foy@gloucester.police.uk or Berni Cartwright at cartwrightb@norfolk.pnn.police.uk.

• For further information about the HPDS then please visit the NPIA website or contact the HPDS team on 020 7021 7052.

American study opportunity

APPLICATIONS are being invited for places on The Fulbright Police Research Fellowship which funds up to four serving police officers or staff each year to study in the US.

The scheme, which comes with a £10,000 grant, is designed to enable students to develop real professional expertise and experience in American policing.

Previous students have studied topics from road death incident management, to restorative justice, gang-related crime to domestic violence.

Applicants have to submit a project outline, endorsed by their line manager, showing clear reasons for going to the US and the relevance of the project to their own force. They also need to find an American university to link with which the Fulbright staff can help with.

Students will work directly with local police forces for a period of three to six months to carry out the research to complete their report.

Further information and application forms can be found on the Fulbright Commission’s website, www.fulbright.co.uk. The deadline for submissions is Friday 12 February 2009. Short-listed applicants will be invited to interview on Monday 27 April 2009 in London or Wednesday 29 April 2009 in Edinburgh (subject to change).

Or study in the UK

IF YOU would rather stay in the UK to study and are an inspector or above then a two-year part-time course at Cambridge University’s Institute of Criminology might be for you.

The Diploma and Master’s in Applied Criminology and Police Management cites past students such as Norma Graham, Gillian Parker, BAWP President Julie Spence and Cressida Dick.

The first year’s work leads to the award of a Diploma, which is a stand-alone qualification. Successful students may then proceed to the second (Master’s) year.

During the Diploma year, there are three two-week blocks of residential study and written work to be completed in between. In the Master’s year there are similar residential blocks. The Master’s course builds on work completed in the Diploma year by developing a research project and thesis, typically on a topic of current importance to the service or force from which the candidate is drawn, thus closely linking into career development.

Find out more from Course Administrator Lucinda Bowditch on 01223 335373, ljbowditch@cam.ac.uk or visit www.crim.cam.ac.uk/courses/mst/.

• See also advert on inside front.
Trip of a lifetime

A career break turned into a life changing experience for Cambridgeshire Force Control Room Operator Anita Ross when she spent three months working at a mission in Belize this summer. Anita, who had wanted to mark a ‘special’ birthday by doing something different, had applied for a career break when she heard that the mission, which had links with her local church needed help.

After getting the leave approved and organising the details of the trip through the church, she jetted off to the Central American country to be a driver for the local school inspector covering 15 schools. “Not many people can drive there, and they were in awe that this petite woman could haul a big truck around, but I really enjoyed it,” said Anita.

Not satisfied with just driving, Anita soon became a valuable member of the community; delivering teachers’ pay and teaching classes in basic hygiene. From the start, Anita made the decision to throw herself into local life, which meant eating the same basic diet, of mostly rice and beans, as the locals and living in a convent building. She said: “The people there had very little, but waste nothing and are very healthy. Seeing people living so differently has made me reassess my priorities. I came back with an empty suitcase as the people there needed my things more than I did”.

During her trip she saw first-hand how this community coped with disaster when Hurricane Arthur struck just three miles from where she was staying. Immediately she got involved in providing aid, taking the truck to give out water, food, lamps and blankets to those whose fragile homes had been washed away.

Now back at work, Anita is proud of what she achieved. She said: “The local Father, Dominic told me I was the best volunteer he’s ever worked with and that made me proud. I really learned a lot about myself there, and since I’ve been home I’ve found I’ve done things I would never have before; such as giving a talk about my trip to my local church group”.

Anita plans to return to Belize with her husband in 2009.

Career breaks

Career breaks enable you to study, to travel, to look after dependants or pursue another interest such as professional sport. They can last anything from a few months to a maximum of five years.

It is the Chief Constable’s decision whether to grant a career break – they may consider your health, attendance and conduct.

Officers must have successfully completed their probationary period before they can apply for a career break.

Officers on career breaks are not required to resign and will be expected to adhere to 10 Standards of Professional Behaviour.

Officers return to work at the same rank and on the same pay point. Police staff are not always guaranteed their original job back but may be offered another at the same grade.

Service during career breaks is not pensionable, but officers can ‘buy back’ service at the normal officer contribution rate.

Police officers who become pregnant while on a career break are entitled to the same maternity benefits as serving officers.

For detailed information on your force’s career break policy contact your HR department.
British Transport Police Constable Denise Hamilton-Harris was one of a handful of UK officers who made the long trip to Darwin for the IAWP conference. Here she follows on from last issue’s report by Jane Townsley and shares the highlights of her first conference.

In the words of my thirteen-year-old son, the whole experience was ‘wicked’ from start to finish. I was able to catch up with colleagues from around the world and establish new friendships… I look forward to visiting my new friends in the Maldives, USA, Bangladesh and many more. (Thank goodness for e-mail)

The week was split into the following themes: leading by example, strengthening partnerships, policing – a career of choice and the changing face of crime.

I was particularly interested to hear about the Yidiyu initiative, which was designed to attract indigenous people to policing. It was developed in the Northern Territories in 2007 and led to the area attracting and retaining the highest proportion of indigenous staff compared with other jurisdictions.

A trip to Tiwi Islands

One of the highlights of the week was the Remote Community Workshop, which entailed a two and a half hour catamaran journey to Nguiu on the Tiwi Islands. It was a first-hand experience of remote Australia and an opportunity to be a part of the traditional indigenous culture. We were given a warm welcome by the community’s women, with music and dance – with delegates encouraged to join in.

The day’s presentations included multi-agency approaches to reducing violence, family violence offenders program and women policing in remote areas.

Women have only been working in policing here since the 1990s and have had many diverse challenges being in such a remote area. Breaking down resistance and hostility from the small communities that were used to their own type of control, or male dominance, has taken and continues to require a new and sensitive perspective afforded by women police officers.

Self reflection

The following morning was a real turning point for me when I listened to a presentation called ‘Knowing me – enhancing and realising my value as a leader’. This certainly was thought provoking as the idea of self reflection to me would normally be looking at a bad day or occasion and identifying how not to do it again. I was left feeling empowered to undertake new challenges ‘outside my comfort zone’. Since the presentation I have begun to create ‘reflective structures’ for example giving myself space to repair, renew and recalibrate in a state of mindfulness and accept that it is ok to ‘put myself’ on the back when something good has transpired, rather than only focusing on the negative aspects.

Other notable workshops included the investigation into the murder of Peter Falconio where we heard Commander Colleen Gwyntne speak about the detailed intelligence surrounding the case, including the forensics. She highlighted the importance of establishing new methodology in compiling exhaustive amounts of information across such a vast region.

Our own West Midlands Police Inspector Shindo Barquer provided much thought provoking information in her presentation on honour killings, which in my humble opinion was delivered with great insight and professionalism.

Inspiration cascaded to my new found ‘Blue Peter’ abilities as I prepared for the penultimate evening event of the Masquerade Gala Dinner which promised sunset, fireworks and dancing. Cardboard, sticky tape, glue all utilised in the making of the very British mask which produced a paparazzi response.

This was a high impact conference from which I was sad to leave, until that is I came face to face with a live crocodile. But really the intensity of the workshops, the generosity of the Northern Territory people, the courage of female police officers seeking to protect others throughout the world whilst often facing adversity, was truly a privilege to be part of.

Finally I must say a huge thank you to the British Transport Police Women Support Forum (WSF) and London South Area Commander for giving me the opportunity to attend.
AGM
The BAWP Committee has 11 new members after they were voted in at the AGM in September. They are:

- Sally Crook – HMIC, Tamara Herath – British Transport Police, Becky Kidd-Stanton – Suffolk, Julia Inns – Norfolk, Melanie Irwin – Norfolk,

A fond farewell was also said to Bernard Divine, Suzette Davenport, Joy Lott, Jane Lam, Julia Causer and Irene Curtis who have left the committee. Ellie Bird from BTP has taken over as Vice President from Suzette.

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How to become a member of BAWP

For further information contact: CAROLYN WILLIAMSON, Secretary, BAWP, PO Box 999, Bordon, GU35 5AQ.

Tel: 0870 766 4056 • Fax: 0870 766 4056 • E-mail: sec@bawp.org • Website: www.bawp.org

• You can attend national and regional training days and social events. • We can link you to other police professionals in this country and abroad.
• We can enable you to share your expertise or specialist knowledge with others. • We have a ready-made network for work-related and social contacts. • We can keep you informed of training opportunities and conferences. • We can help your voice be heard in matters affecting women in the police service. • You will receive regular copies of this magazine.

Membership details

Full membership is open to all officers and police staff, female and male, serving in the UK, along with retired officers. Associate membership is open to anyone with a professional interest in criminal justice.

Corporate membership is now available for £350 p.a.

Please contact BAWP Secretary Carolyn Williamson for more details.

Please complete the form below and send it with your payment to: BAWP, PO Box 999, Bordon, GU35 5AQ.

Name ___________________________________________ Rank/Title ________________________________
Address ________________________________________________________________
Postcode ___________________________ Country ____________________________
Tel: ___________________________ Mobile: ____________________________
E-mail: ___________________________ Force/Organisation ____________________________
Station/Dept ___________________________ Type of work (if not police) ____________________________

• Membership type (circle one) FULL/ASSOCIATE • Membership term (circle one) £20 for one year/£50 for three years
I believe I am eligible to join, and enclose a cheque payable to ‘BAWP’. (If for any reason, your application is not accepted, the fee will, of course, be refunded in full.)

Signed: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

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