

PRESS RELEASE



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WELWYN HATFIELD HEAT WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD AWARDS 2009

Heat winners for Hertfordshire Police Authority's Safer Neighbourhood Awards 2009 have been selected for their outstanding contribution towards community safety in Welwyn Hatfield.

The winners will now go forward to the County Final on Tuesday 23 June 2009.

Nominations were submitted for three award categories: Neighbourhood Police Officer of the Year Award 2009, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) of the Year Award 2009 and Community Safety Award 2009.

Chair of Hertfordshire Police Authority, Stuart Nagler, said: "The Safer Neighbourhood Awards are a wonderful platform in which to reward commendable people in Hertfordshire who have made so many outstanding contributions towards improving community safety in our county. Their commitment and dedication to their work really is exemplary and they all deserve such a prestigious award for their achievements.

"Judges were faced with particularly difficult decisions in deciding upon the winners due to the tremendously high standard of nominees."

A panel of judges consisted of the local Police Authority member, Chief Inspector and Community Safety Manager. They selected the following winners:

	WELWYN HATFIELD
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2009	PC Joshua Clapham
POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER (PCSO) OF THE YEAR AWARD 2009	Rob Taylor

**COMMUNITY SAFETY
AWARD 2009**

Sue Neville

A separate Central area Special Constable of the Year Award was judged by the Central Area Commander, Julia Wortley and County Specials Commandant, Peter Mould. The winner is Special Sergeant Paul Shannon.

Heat winners from all award categories will be presented with a certificate at the Safer Neighbourhood Awards ceremony on 23 June. A county winner for each award will be selected and announced on the night and will receive a trophy.

The County winners for the Neighbourhood Police Officer of the Year Award 2009 and Police Community Support Officer of the Year Award 2009 will be put forward for the prestigious *Jane's Police Review* Gala Awards.

Neighbourhood Police Officer of the Year Award 2009 heat winner, Joshua Clapham is responsible for one of the largest and busiest areas in the town, policing Welwyn Garden City town centre and Handside. Joshua has been instrumental in proactively working with colleagues to reduce crime and disorder in Welwyn Garden City town centre.

Joshua's efforts were rewarded when he successfully apprehended teams of shoplifters targeting stores in the town centre. Joshua's motivation and drive to find the offenders was founded when he, through his own investigations, located the offenders and saw them prosecuted accordingly. It has been commented upon how this approach required "a great deal of tenacity and diligence to achieve justice."

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) of the Year Award 2009 heat winner, Rob Taylor spends much of his time in the rural location of Woolmer Green. Rob spends much of his time working alongside the Parish Council and St Michael's Woolmer Green primary school, and local youth groups.

It has been recognised the speed he got to know residents since taking on the role, as well as problem areas and the village in general. He has been described as "passionate" about reducing rural crime.

Rob took sole responsibility for establishing Rural Watch in the village, to help reduce rural crime. He achieved this by visiting over 40 farms and businesses, developing an extensive network. His close working relationship with the Community Safety Partnership proved to be an invaluable tool in launching the scheme.

"Our neighbourhood is safer because PCSO Rob Taylor knows all the potential problems and assesses the way to deal with them before they become serious. This is the way policing *should* be carried out."

Community Safety Award 2009 heat winner, Sue Neville has been involved with Neighbourhood Watch since the 1980s. Sue currently volunteers as a Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator for the Sharrards area.

Sue spends much of her time distributing crime notifications and crime prevention messages to members in her area, promoting awareness about home and personal safety.

“Sue has built a good relationship with the Neighbourhood Watch members and often they will report incidents to her. Sue therefore is aware of what is happening in the area and keeps in touch with the residents, often to offer words of reassurance.”

Changing roles of Neighbourhood Watch coordinators over the years have required them to work more closely with Neighbourhood Police Officers and PCSOs. It has been recognised how Sue welcomed this change and adapted her role to support others, organising street meetings and ‘meet and greet’ sessions for local residents.

As a result of Sue’s efforts, Sherrards now has 49 roads which are actively covered by Neighbourhood Watch with 60 coordinators.

“I do not know of any other person having such a positive and wide reaching impact on the residents of Welwyn Garden City.”

Central Area Special Constable of the Year Award 2009 heat winner, Special Sergeant Paul Shannon spends much of his time mentoring new recruits in the Special Constabulary, in addition to assisting many of his regular colleagues.

Paul’s enthusiasm both on and off duty is admirable and he has received recognition for an arrest he made whilst off duty.

He is said to “show the kind of dedication that goes above and beyond the minimum work requirement per month. The most impressive quality that this officer possesses is that there is no task too small for him.”

Ends

**For further information please contact Emily Anderson,
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Note to editors: Photographs of PC Joshua Clapham and Rob Taylor are available by contacting Emily Anderson using the contact details above.

* Safer Neighbourhoods is a partnership between police, residents, businesses and local agencies to tackle the issues that really matter to communities. It is about putting communities first and putting their needs, issues and priorities at the heart of local policing. The ultimate aim is to help make people *feel* safer and be safe in a county which already has low crime

rates, as well as to reduce crime and disorder in every neighbourhood in Hertfordshire.