



# Rangers Rag



Winter 2005

## Crime on the Canal

Be vigilant this winter and keep an eye out for crime along the canal.

### Vandalism

Recently there has been a spate of criminal activity within the Country Park. Earlier this month vandals defaced the toilets in the Tiverton Basin Car Park and spread the contents of sanitary bins all over the cubicles. Wooden panels within the building were kicked in and the car parking machines were also damaged in this mindless attack.

### Wildlife

Rangers are extremely concerned this winter about the safety of wildlife along the canal. This follows a sickening attack that happened at the end of November, when it was reported that a pair of swans were the targets of a shooting incident.



Rangers were called out to Ebear Bridge and were horrified to discover a male swan lying dead near the canal bank. Another swan was injured by the attacks, but at this time, despite an extensive search by Rangers and the RSPCA, the remaining bird has eluded capture.

An RSPCA autopsy confirmed the swan's death was caused by lead shots from a shot gun. All British wildlife is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and it is an arrestable offence to harm any wildlife or unlawfully disturb their habitat. Those responsible for the attacks may face prison sentences if caught.

The Country Park is fortunate to have a number of pairs of swans who are resident breeders along the canal and it is important that their presence should be enjoyed and not destroyed in this way. If you do see any wildlife injured or in distress please contact the RSPCA directly on 0870 5555 999.

**If you do see any crime taking place along the canal then please contact:**

- **Ranger's Service**  
01884 254072
- **Devon and Cornwall Police Switchboard**  
0845 2 777 444
- **Crimestoppers**  
(Free)  
0800 555 111
- **RSPCA**  
(For wildlife related incidents)  
0870 5555 999

### Dogs

Over the last few months there have been an increase in the number of dog related attacks along the canal. These include dogs attacking other dogs and dogs attacking members of the public. It is therefore essential that **ALL DOGS MUST BE KEPT UNDER CONTROL AT ALL TIMES.**

Also we wish to remind all dog owners that within the Grand Western Canal Country Park it is an offence to allow a dog to defecates if the person in charge of a dog to fails to remove the faeces forthwith. A maximum fine of £1000 applies. The offence may be dealt with by acceptance of a £50 Fixed Penalty.

Please dispose of dog faeces properly, always take a supply of bags or other means to clear up after your dog when exercising it. Use dog bins or double wrap and place in litter bins. Otherwise take it home and use your dustbin if necessary. The Council provides dog fouling bins wherever possible along the canal. Please encourage all friends and family to do the same.

For further information and advice on dog related matters please contact Mid Devon's Operations Services on 01884 234382.