REPAIRS: The amount paid by Notts Police to bungled raid victims has tripled in three years.

£9k payout after police botch raids

NOTTS Police paid out more than £9,500 in compensation last year to people whose homes they mistakenly raided.

The amount paid out by the force to repair doors, replace kitchen fittings and re-plaster walls damaged by officers during the raids has tripled in three years.

The force shelled out £9,567 in the 08/09 financial year.

The single largest amount was £1,591 being paid to fix a door and kitchen fittings.

It had to pay £2,841 in compensation three years earlier in 06/07.

A police spokesman said: "The public, quite rightly, expect the police to go after people who commit crime, in particular those involved in drugs, stolen property and organised crime.

"With the help of community information, our officers work very hard to develop good intelligence, which they can act upon and where possible catch people in the act.

"Despite all these efforts we will make mistakes, and sometimes damage will be caused to properties, which later requires us to compensate the owner.

"However, when you consider thousands of warrants are executed across Nottinghamshire every year and huge numbers of people are subsequently convicted, the number of properties mistakenly damaged is comparatively small."

By CLAIRE CARTER

The number of raids which resulted in compensation being paid out has also increased. Between 2007 and 2008 the force had to pay compensation after 11 raids, whereas 20 raids led to compensation being paid in the last financial year.

Notts Police said no compensation was paid out if the raid resulted in an occupant being convicted.

A 78-year-old woman from Calverton, who did not want to be named, was a victim of a bungled raid by police last summer. Officers raided the wrong house by accident. She said police apologised, sent her flowers and replaced her two doors, but she was never paid any compensation.

She said: "I think this is quite a lot of money to be spending. It is bad. The damage they cause at some people's homes is bad.

"I don't blame them if they raid the home of a person who is guilty but I know how these people feel who have their homes raided and damaged when they are not guilty. I think it's awful."

The figures for compensation in the last year included £40 for damage to a pet cage, £50 for internal fire doors and £4,222 for replacing numerous doors.

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Aiming to save £370,000 from council budget

CEMETERIES could be closed earlier each day and park patrols removed in winter in the borough of Gedling.

They are among proposals to save £370,000 at Gedling Borough Council.

The plans will now be scrutinised by a committee following a discussion by the cabinet on Thursday.

The council is also planning to delay a yearly £40,000 contribution to the Gedling Colliery development for two years.

The money was earmarked for the site's country park but could be delayed until the work is imminent.

Uni Innovation Park in demand

THE University of Nottingham's Innovation Park has reached full occupancy – a year after it first opened.

The park, which took on new tenants throughout last year, is on the 12-acre site next to the university's Jubilee Campus.

It now has 22 tenants including the Institution of Civil Engineers, Ordnance Survey, Europe Solutions Ltd, Dialogik (UK) Ltd and the film company Skeleton Productions.

There are plans to increase the size of the building.

Jo Derbyshire, the park's operations manager, said: "It's a fantastic result to reach full capacity within a year of opening the Innovation Park, particularly in the light of continued difficulties with the economic situation."

The building has a number of features which the university says inspires innovation, including high-speed IT networks.

For more information visit www.nottingham.ac.uk/unip

Turn heating up, urges MP

VULNERABLE people are being urged to keep their heating turned up during the cold snap by Amber Valley MP Judy Mallaber.

As the government gives out Cold Weather Payments, Ms Mallaber is reminding people that they can get help with their heating bills.

She said: "There are two ways we are helping this season – with Winter Fuel payments of £250 for those aged 60 and over or £400 for the over-80s, and increased Cold Weather Payments of £25 going to thousands of people in our area.

"The payments are automatic so everyone entitled will get them and people should not worry about turning up their heating."

Pilot Tom is an eye in the sky

AN RAF pilot from Nottingham is ensuring troops in Afghanistan are kept well informed about what is ahead of them.

Flight Lieutenant Tom Benson, 30, is a Tornado GR4 pilot. The aircraft is fitted with a Reconnaissance Airborne Pod Tornado (Raptor).

The system provides images from distances in excess of 25 miles, allowing intelligence to be gathered unnoticed.

Flt Lt Benson, whose parents live in Radcliffe-on-Trent, went to Greenholme School in Radford before going to Trent College in Long Eaton.

When you're just 12 "the future" seems a long way off, but it's never to soon to start looking ahead – according to motivational speaker Keith Warren. ***LYNETTE PINCHESS*** joined Nottingham pupils to watch The Motivator in action.

Mr Motivator is a top-class act

MONDAY 9am: it's dark, sleeting and cold. But motivational speaker Keith Warren blows away any early morning reveries by blasting out Taio Cruz's R&B hit Break Your Heart.

It has livened up the hall of 11 and 12-year-olds at Bluecoat School in Aspley, who are singing along.

The request "Please cheer and whistle for Keith Warren" is projected on to a wall and 150 children dutifully obey at top volume as he makes his entrance.

Keith's company, The Big Picture, encourages pupils to consider just that.

"Hands up who wants a decent job in the future," is Keith's opening line.

Every hand shoots up. By means of introduction he tells how he earned £2.50 cleaning in a convent when he was their age.

By 22 he had a degree and was a pot washer on £5 an hour.

"I have quit my job three times and travelled the world twice.

"I was married and now I'm divorced," says the father-of-three from Newark, who is on a return visit to the school after delivering a rousing speech to year 11 pupils last term.

"My last job I employed over 1,000 people and earned over £100,000 a year... but to be fair you don't care about me. What you do care about is your future."

The two-hour session begins with a question and answer session. What's fun now? Mobile phones, Facebook, friends and game consoles, say the pupils.

What's fun at 25? Money, driving, a house, children and drinking are the replies.

Keith might be 40 but he knows how to get down with the kids, his speech peppered with "that's cool" and "you guys".

But there's a row of perplexed faces when Keith quizzes a trio of year seven boys: "Were you boiling beetroot at 6am this morning?"

All becomes clear when a picture of Sir Alan Sugar is beamed on to the wall.

When he was 12, the same age as these pupils, Sir Alan was already showing entrepreneurial promise by boiling beetroot to sell to the greengrocers next door.

At 16 he was selling cars and by 21 had founded his own company Amstrad.

Sir Alan, Britain's most belligerent boss, now controls a business empire worth more than £900m.

Keith's point? Alan Sugar, the beetroot boiler from Hackney, didn't have overnight success.

Just in case the youngsters don't get it the first time, Keith proves the point again.

Up comes a photograph of a 12-year-old boy. It turns out it is Liverpool footballer Fernando Torres.

BIG PICTURE: Motivational speaker Keith Warren inspiring pupils at Bluecoat School in Aspley. *C110110MA3-1*

"He didn't become what he wanted to be overnight. He was kicking a football around the house at the age of two. At the age of 12 he was practising for three hours a day," says Keith.

"After passing your GCSEs will your life be complete overnight? No, it helps you get there over time."

The session has a TV game show feel to it, complete with the catchphrase "If I wanna be free, I gotta be me" and badges and T-shirts given out as prizes.

Keith, wearing a mic'ed up headset, selects pupils from his audience for fun games with a serious message.

One girl is called upon to wear pink fluffy earmuffs and dark glasses to emphasise the importance of listening and communication.

A boy is told to reply "dunno" to every question Keith asks such as his name and favourite sport. The exercise is repeated with the boy giving proper answers.

"I'm not being funny but can you see the difference guys? The word dunno is very powerful in a negative way," says Keith.

Successful people learn from their mistakes and failure – it took lightbulb inventor Thomas Edison 5,000 attempts to get it right, Keith informs us.

"When things don't go right in your life. it's good to say it's all my fault. It's not about blame, it's about taking responsibility.

"It puts you in charge of your life which means you will learn. Failure is only failure when you quit."

Keith doesn't preach that they've got to study harder, it's up to the pupils to work that out for themselves.

What would you dare to dream in 10 years time if failure wasn't an option? is Keith's next challenge.

Pupils have two minutes to list their ambitions and how they'd go about achieving them.

Their goals range from being a scientist to a footballer and a chef to a songwriter.

Studying, practice and training are the steps they say they must take to achieve their dream.

In a month's time, Keith will write to each pupil with a reminder of their pledges.

He sends them back to the classroom after wishing them well and telling them "today is the first day of the rest of your life".

A girl who won a T-shirt emblazoned with the slogan The Big Picture: Bigger than Obama, asked Keith to autograph it. It's not the first time – Keith was almost mobbed at another school.

Tyrell Frow, 11, certainly felt motivated afterwards.

"I thought it would be pretty boring and someone going on about something you don't care about. When he started talking it changed my thoughts and I thought it was really good," he said.

"It made me start thinking about playing less computer games and not taking things like money and family for granted."

Toni-Ann Crossman, 11, vowed to study biology and concentrate more in class to achieve her ambition of becoming a marine biologist.

"I thought it would be quite boring but it turned out fun. You can achieve your dream if you try," she said.

Rosie Stevenson, 12, said: "When they said it was about motivation I thought we were going to do PE. It was good and made you think about stuff you want to do in the future."

Chris Stack, 12, who dreams of becoming a professional pool player, enjoyed the games and music used to inspire them.

Joy Thomas, head of year seven, said: "Because they are new in the school this can really inspire and motivate them to become what they want to be and to believe in themselves."

Keith, who previously managed the school dinners' contract in Sheffield, delivers motivational talks to 120 secondary schools around the country, including Chilwell and Tuxford in Notts.

Such is the popularity that The Big Picture has more than 1,800 student members on Facebook and the number grows by the week.

"There are lots of kids out there who are present at school but not really enjoying it. They are listening but not hearing," Keith explained.

"Because they turn up at school it does not mean they want to learn.

"I never say you should work harder or you should try harder. I try and show them what life is about."

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LESSONS: Keith Warren with (left) Chris Stack, 12 and Tyrell Frow, 11. *C110110MA3-3*

I thought it would be quite boring but it turned out fun.

Toni-Ann Crossman

In brief

Powerful new ideas

AN ENERGY fair in Southwell will give people tips on greener living.

The Energy Saving Trust and the Southwell Transition eco group are offering visitors the chance to learn more about ways to better heat and power homes.

Experts will provide information.

The free event will be held at the Admiral Rodney Hotel, in King Street, today from 10am to 4pm. For more information call 01636 812292.

Songs from shows

THE Derby Gilbert & Sullivan Company is to perform a concert of musical hits.

The company will take to the stage at Chilwell Road Methodist Church, Beeston, on Saturday, January 23, at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £5 (£3 for children and students) in advance, or £6 on the door.

To book, call 0115 9431164.

Jewellery classes

JEWELLERY making classes, run by South Nottingham College, are to be held at Ellis Guilford School, Basford, on Wednesday nights from January 27.

The eight-week course will cover basic techniques including earrings, wire wrapping, knotting, and memory wire jewellery making.

For more information call the college on 0115 914 6464.