



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

North Wales Police taser suicidal Llandudno pensioner

Jan 13 2009 by Owen R Hughes, Daily Post

POLICE Tasered an 89-year-old pensioner with a 50,000 volt stun gun after he threatened to cut his own throat with broken glass.

Officers were called to Abbey Road, Llandudno at 6.30am on Saturday after reports the elderly man, believed to be suicidal, had absconded from a care home in the town. He was found on the quiet residential street where officers say he was threatening to cut his own throat. Fearing he was going to commit suicide **they fired the stun gun, knocking him to the ground.** The pensioner was taken by ambulance to Llandudno General Hospital to be treated for **minor glass injuries** before being **transferred to Ysbyty Gwynedd, Bangor.**

A North Wales Police spokeswoman said: *“Shortly before 6.30am on Saturday North Wales Police received a report expressing concern for the safety of an elderly man, who had absconded from a care home in Llandudno. He was believed to be suicidal. Officers were dispatched to search for the 89-year-old. He was later found in Abbey Road, where he was threatening to cut his own throat with a piece of glass”.*

“The specially trained officers made the judgement, in order to protect the life of the man, that the use of Taser was the safest and most appropriate option. This was successfully done and the man was taken to Llandudno hospital. He was later transferred into the care of Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor.”

Police said the matter has **not been referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission**. A relative of the man said *“her brother-in-law had told family he had been shot. She wanted to know if anyone had seen what had happened and was clearly concerned. She said he was badly bruised.”*

The PPP comment **The specially trained officers, were these an armed response sorry conflict management unit raring to go?** It was not an easy situation to deal with **BUT we never would have expected or even selected such a response. Friendly persuasion would seem more appropriate. As we have reported before and as stressed by the Taser makers, collateral damage can easily result from the unrestrained fall.** Falls are a particular day to day risk for the very elderly. We hope the poor man recovers.