

'Old-style' Kate quits Wanstead

By **SAM ADAMS**

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A RESPECTED police sergeant is set to leave the beat she loves after four eventful years patrolling its streets.

Sgt Kate O'Riordan has become a familiar face in Snaresbrook ward ever since taking charge of the area's first ever Safer Neighbourhood Police Team in April 2006.

The 44-year-old immediately set about targeting what she described as the 'bad boys' – persistent offenders who had made life a misery for many residents and shopkeepers for years – using anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) to bar them from the ward.

Two high-profile successes were an ASBO in 2007 for persistent graffiti artist Thomas Delves, then of Blake Hall Crescent in Wanstead, after he had covered the area in spray paint and pen – and the banning of teenage tearaway Luke Nicholson (then of Rivenhall Gardens,



Sgt Kate O'Riordan after receiving a police commendation certificate
(EL3469)

Snaresbrook) from Wanstead High Street in 2008 following complaints from traders.

A self-confessed proponent of 'old-style' community policing, Sgt O'Riordan focused her team on building close links with Neighbourhood Watch Groups to gather the information needed to identify problems and bring offenders to book.

She worked her last shift at Wanstead police station on Friday and will take up a new posting in Haringey where she started out in the force 14 years ago.

She said: "It's going to be hard to leave because I absolutely love the place.

"There's a rare community spirit in this area which you don't find in many places these days.

"The people here are unbelievable, they've been absolutely great.

"I'd like to think I've done my bit to help make the neighbourhood safer. I've made some great friends along the way.

"I love it here so much that I'd consider moving here myself one day."