



a good compliment.

'When dealers first started selling in the streets it was one guy on a corner with crack in one pocket and money in the other. But they have evolved to using look-outs on the corners and runners who will make contact with the buyer. Or they use elevators to do the deal while it's going down.'

Another trick is to throw the drugs down the storm drain, or swallow them. That's when it is

good to have the element of surprise on your side. 'The dealers keep drugs in their mouths so a lot of the time it's straight for the neck. It looks kind of violent but it's not.

It's just stopping any bag being swallowed.'

In London, problems with drugs like crack are not yet as virulent as they are in the States. But police in areas like Oxford Street, Tottenham and Balmoral (an attachment to the Royal

Family) already have some MTBs to help them patrol more efficiently. Sergeant Jack Hanson of Seattle police, who sends information around the world about their programme, has also received queries from the Isle of Dogs and Birmingham.

However, one of the reasons the Seattle programme - which has inspired a hundred other law enforcement agencies across the US to set up similar

units - has been such a success is because officers have proper riding equipment and the freedom to wage a pro-active, rather than response-oriented, campaign against crime.

Even with the best equipment enjoyed by the MTB unit, it's still cheaper than running a patrol car at \$20,000 each, which will last two years. Officers on bikes, which last four years, cost just \$1,300 to equip and keep on the streets. And they get better results by concentrating on their strong point - silence.

In one month last autumn, nine officers of the MTB unit made 193 felony and 159 misdemeanor arrests. That is four times as many arrests as beat officers and seven times as many as officers cruising in patrol cars. It's a strong argument for Britain's police chiefs to dump the old bobby-on-a-bike image and think seriously about getting up-to-date.

Further information is available from the Seattle Police Department, West Precinct, Mountain Bike Patrol, 610 Third Avenue, Public Safety Building, Seattle WA 98104-1886.
☎ 0101 206 684-8917.

JOE BREEZE BUILT THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL MOUNTAIN BIKE BECAUSE HIS IDEAS WERE WAY AHEAD OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES.



SOME THINGS DON'T CHANGE WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME.



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