

## Police pay tribute to heroic Windsor optician who apprehended armed robbers in attempted jewellery heist

Vision Express optician Kerrin Walker handed bravery award for helping foil robbery

A brave dispensing optician has been recognised for his heroic efforts during a shop window raid in Windsor town centre – detaining armed robbers following an attempted heist on a jewellery store.

Kerrin Walker, the franchise director of Vision Express Windsor, was going about his usual morning routine in September 2016, when he heard a commotion outside. Four armed men on motorbikes were attacking the jewellers Robert Gatward, in King Edward Court, Windsor, opposite the Vision Express store, with sledgehammers, axes and knives - attempting to break the window of a display containing watches worth an estimated £500,000.



Vision Express's Kerrin Walker, left, being presented the silver Police Public Bravery Award, by Chief Constable Sara Thornton CBE.

Observing staff members from the jewellery store confronting the group Kerrin, 43, ran outside to help. He managed to pin down one of the attackers alongside the staff and a fellow member of the public; disarming and detaining him before the arrival of the police.

Kerrin, husband to Emma and dad to daughter Chloe, 3, and son Flynn, 1, was presented a silver Police Public Bravery Award in London this month, alongside passer-by Mark Morley, who was stabbed while trying to help, and jewellery staff Gary Reeves and Nicholas Elliott. The accolade recognises acts of bravery performed by members of the public across the UK



Kerrin Walker with his silver Police Public Bravery Award, at the ceremony in London.

“Vision Express Windsor has been in the town centre for 13 years, and it has a real community feel. I always say that it takes me twice as long to walk down the road, as I always bump into people I know and customers,” said Kerrin.

“That’s why I got involved in the incident – it’s my town and I’m protective of it. I reacted as quickly as I could when I saw what was happening, I just wanted to help.

“To be recognised for my efforts is overwhelming. I initially thought I hadn’t done enough to achieve anything, but it’s very humbling to be honoured in this way.”

Kerrin, alongside nine other members of the public and an off-duty police officer, were also awarded commendations by Thames Valley Police Chief Constable Francis Habgood, last year following the incident.

All four suspects were charged, with one receiving nine years imprisonment, two were handed an eight-year prison sentence and the fourth gang member given seven and a half years.

**-ENDS-**

**Notes for editors**

**For further information, media can contact:**

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**About Vision Express**

Vision Express is one of the largest optical retailers in the UK and part of [GrandVision](#), the global leader in optical retail operating in more than 40 countries, spanning over 6,500 stores and online.

With almost 600 stores nationwide, Vision Express first opened its doors in Newcastle in 1988. Built on a passion for the profession, it has gone from strength to strength, driven by a commitment to unparalleled customer service and providing the best individual optical care, the right product and great value. Customers can select from a vast range of genuine designer brands and the latest technology lenses, through to complete glasses from £39.

With around 6,000 employees, Vision Express makes a significant difference to the communities it operates within, and the organisations it chooses to support. As part of its commitment to [Vision. Taken Seriously](#), and as a responsible and caring retailer, Vision Express is proud to partner with a range of healthcare charities, which have touched the lives of customers and teams. These companies provide vital support to people affected by vision-related conditions. They are part of the [Vision Express Charity Project](#) and include:

1. Childhood Eye Cancer Trust (CHECT)
2. International Glaucoma Association
3. Macular Society
4. Stroke Association
5. Temple Street University Hospital
6. Brake