



**COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
QUARTERLY MEETING REPORT  
1 JUNE 2018**

## **1. LOCAL POLICING PRIORITIES**

The local policing priorities for Kincardine and Mearns include:

- Tackling antisocial behaviour, violence and disorder
- Reducing road casualties
- Preventing acquisitive crime

The priorities also identify the need to protect communities from serious and organised crime, and people from risk of harm and terrorism.

These are the issues that our local communities tell us matter to them. Much of our success can be contributed to the support we receive from the community, as well as the strong partnership links we have. Working closely with partners to provide a holistic response to issues ensures that Kincardine and Mearns remains one of the safest places in Scotland.

## **2. WHAT WE HAVE DONE**

In Kincardine and Mearns, as well as just responding to crimes, we believe strongly in taking proactive action to prevent crime and keep our communities safe. Some of the operations and initiatives we have been involved in over this report period are as follows:

On 12 and 13 March 2018, local Officers carried out Road Safety patrols in the Kincardine and Mearns area under Operation Cedar, which stands for (Challenge, Educate, Detect And Reduce), North East Division's road safety campaign designed to encourage drivers to take more responsibility on the roads. Over forty drivers were stopped and educated in respect of their driving behaviour and two persons were issued with conditional offers in respect of Road Traffic offences.

From 19 to 21 March, in response to concerns raised by local residents about speeding, parking issues and general road crime around the area of several local schools, our Community Liaison Officer PC Camus led a further successful road safety initiative under the banner of Operation Cedar. Parking around Primary Schools was monitored and officers spoke to drivers in relation to parking outside schools and within restricted areas. A number of vehicles were stopped in relation to speeding offences and drivers were spoken to and educated. Eight conditional offers and sixty warnings were issued to drivers across the Stonehaven, Fettercairn and Portlethen areas.

Preventing Acquisitive Crime from happening is at the forefront of our activity and between 12 and 15 April, local Officers spent time engaging with the public, visiting local shops to offer crime prevention advice, carrying out directed patrols, and collating intelligence regarding offending behaviour. One male was charged with two Thefts by Shoplifting.

On 23- 25 May, under the long-running Operation Magpie which targets those committing Acquisitive Crime, local Officers executed a number of warrants and stopped numerous vehicles during high visibility patrols. Nightly high-visibility patrols were carried out in rural parts of the Kincardine and Mearns area off along the A90 and A92. Two local men

were arrested and charged in connection with offences, and reported to the Procurator Fiscal, to appear in court at a later date.

In April, we carried out a drugs initiative in K&M over six days, involving plain-clothed patrols. Intelligence-gathering led to two Drug Search Warrants being executed at addresses in Stonehaven, and a male was charged with two offences relating to possession of Cannabis at one address, and a male and a female were charged with offences in relation to supply of Cannabis and possession of Diamorphine at the second address.

A further 6 persons were charged with possession of drugs offences in the Kincardine and Mearns area over this report period, including the possession of cannabis and Etizolam.

On 17 April, along with staff from the Forestry Commission, local Officers carried out an operation and media campaign to address illegal activities involving motorcyclists in local forestry areas in a clamp-down targeting anti-social behaviour, in response to concerns identified regarding illegal access and public safety.

On 24 and 25 April, and 1 and 2 May, working alongside the Dee District Salmon Fishery Board and led by Wildlife Liaison Officer, PC Doug Darling, we participated in an operation targeting salmon poaching along the banks of the River Dee across the South Aberdeenshire area, focussing in particular in the Park, Durris and Crathes area, seeking to disrupt, detect and deter criminal activity linked with river poaching crime.

On 22 May, we carried out further speeding checks in the Drumoak area and a number of drivers were educated.

On 29 May, Officers from the Special Constables Task Force met with the Laurencekirk Beavers to speak to the children there and offer basic safety advice.

We have also either policed, attended, or given passing attention to a number of community-based events, including but not limited to:

- International Mother Language Day event in Aberdeen
- Deeside Way Ultra Race
- A number of events at Stonehaven Town Hall, including a darts Competition and 'Shout to the Top' music event
- Pillar's Charity Cycle Event
- A 'white collar' boxing event at Ardoe House
- Stonehaven's Mason's Parade
- Cycle Sportive's Cairn O'Mount Challenge
- Classic Motorcycle Road Race

### 3. CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE

#### KEEP SAFE FROM DOORSTEP CRIME AND BOGUS CALLERS

##### What is doorstep crime?

From bogus callers to rogue traders, doorstep criminals are cunning, creative, and often very convincing. Anyone can be fooled as these people are professional con artists. However, the over 60s are often specifically targeted.

##### What types of doorstep criminals are there?

There are two main types:

**Bogus callers** try to get into your home or obtain personal details by pretending to be someone they're not, including council staff, charity collectors, meter readers and police officers. In reality, they are criminals trying to steal money and valuables.

**Rogue traders** usually cold-call, claiming to be workers offering to sell services, make repairs or carry out work on your house, garden or driveway. In reality they charge inflated prices for shoddy or unnecessary work.

We **DO NOT** recommend dealing with cold-callers for property maintenance and home repairs.

##### How can I spot a Rogue Trader?

- They may tell you the work is urgent and needs to be carried out immediately.
- They will normally ask for payment there and then and may offer to come to the bank with you if you don't have the cash at hand.

##### How can I protect myself from doorstep crime?

- Be on guard if someone turns up unexpectedly.
- Keep front and back doors locked.
- Use the door viewer or nearby window when answering the door.
- Fit a door chain or bar – use it and keep it on when talking to callers at the door.
- If you're not sure, don't answer the door.
- Don't feel embarrassed - genuine callers expect you to be careful.
- Only let callers in if they have an appointment and you have confirmed they are genuine.
- Always ask for identification badges of anyone you answer the door to, but don't rely on them. Identity cards can be faked – phone the company to verify their identity.
- Some companies offer a password system. Ask your utility providers if this can be used and if you have a password with a company make sure the caller uses it.
- Never let people try to persuade you to let them into your home even if they are asking for help – they may not be genuine. If someone is persistent, ask them to call at another time and arrange for a friend or family member to be with you.

- Never agree to pay for goods or give money to strangers who arrive at your door.
- Don't keep large amounts of money in your home.
- Remember, it's your home. There's no reason why anyone should ever enter your home against your wishes.
- If you're not sure, don't answer the door.

## **SECURE YOUR BICYCLE**

More than 500,000 bikes are stolen in the UK each year because they're poorly secured or not secured at all. More than half of all bikes stolen are taken from the owner's property. Help protect your bike by following these guidelines:

### **What can I do before I set off?**

- Photograph your bike, record all of your bike's details and distinguishing features, and keep in a safe place. The serial number can be found on the bottom bracket.
- Register your bicycle securely online at the National Cycle Database - [www.bikeregister.com](http://www.bikeregister.com).  
Doing this may help to recover your bike if it goes missing. On registering, you can also download a bike logbook where you can record your bike's details to keep at hand.
- Security mark your bike's frame with a UV pen or other method - the mark should include your home postcode and house number.
- Insure your bike, either on contents insurance or separately if required.

## **RETAIL CRIME PREVENTION - 'RING THE CHANGES' - DISTRACTION THEFT**

There are many types of distraction techniques but a popular one amongst criminals is Ring or Ringing the Changes.

Typically, but not always, a 'customer' gives a member of staff a quantity of notes and asks them to change them to a smaller denomination of note. When the customer receives the notes back, they then say they have changed their mind and would like the original notes back. As they request this, they surreptitiously remove a quantity of the pile they are holding and pass back less money.

Confusing? That's the idea! This type of distraction theft can be very confusing for staff and the culprits are well practised in this form of deceit.

Often, there will be other 'members of the public' behaving in a strange manner (e.g. taking selfies, talking loudly, etc.). Customers may disagree about the transaction or argue at the till. They may have, or pretend to have, difficulty understanding English. This erratic behaviour is designed to distract and confuse staff. This can be followed by a member of the group trying to directly access the till itself.

### **What to look out for:**

- Unusual transaction requests.
- Not regular customers - generally work in pairs or more.
- Asking to change large sums of money for different notes.
- Asking for items which take the staff away from the till area.
- Asking to view several expensive items at once.
- Erratic behaviour.

### **What to do:**

- Educate staff about Ring The Changes / distraction thefts.
- Instruct staff to advise customers that policy does not permit them to exchange notes and display associated signage around the point of sale.
- Advise staff that if they do feel they are becoming part of a distraction theft to STOP! Pause. Get the attention of another member of staff (keep a local sounding alarm at the point of sale). Ask the 'customers' to leave. Telephone Police Scotland.

Anyone with information concerning this type incident or any similar retail crime or want more advice should contact Police Scotland on 101. Alternatively, they can report information to Crimestoppers on 0800 111 555 should they wish to remain anonymous.

For more Crime Reduction advice and information, you can contact PC Kevin Marron, Crime Reduction Officer, Police Scotland, Stonehaven Police Office, Dunnottar Avenue, AB39 2JD, or telephone 101, or email: kevin.marron@scotland.pnn.police.uk

## **4. HOW YOU CAN HELP US**

Report insecure properties, suspicious activities, or any concerns to Police Scotland on 101, at the time of occurrence where possible.

Where vehicles are involved, vehicle registration marks and details of make, model and colour can help identify persons involved.

If you have information about crime in your area, contact Police Scotland on 101.

If you have information about crime in your area which you wish to report anonymously, contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## **5. HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL POLICING TEAM**

To report an emergency, where persons or property are at risk of harm, dial 999.

To report any other ongoing suspicious incident, crime or concern, dial 101.

Service users who are deaf or have a hearing impairment can contact Police Scotland via TextRelay in an emergency on 18000 or non-emergency on 18001 101.

For advice and guidance on any other matter, contact the Kincardine and Mearns Community Policing Team's dedicated email address:

StonehavenLowerDeesideCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk

Please note that although monitored regularly, it may take time to respond to your query so this e-mail address should not be used for pressing matters. We will attend to emails as soon as possible.



Community Policing Teams are supported by dedicated Crime Reduction Officers who assist in the work to promote crime reduction and progress prevention opportunities, which we see as key to reducing crime and antisocial behaviour in your area.

**Neighbourhood Alert** affords Police Scotland the opportunity to send e-mail messages about local crime trends and with crime prevention advice quickly and effectively to a wide audience, which can be targeted to particular streets or communities if required.

Any individual can sign-up to receive these e-mail messages, either for themselves or their community group. The sign-up process allows the recipient to specify the type of information that they are interested in and from what source.

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, who coordinate this resource, work with a range of partners in the public sector to provide information not only on crime but also on matters of community safety and resilience. These messages are intended to inform the public and to keep them abreast of information which will assist them in keeping themselves, their families and their properties safe. For this reason, they will only send out messages if they feel it is important that the public receive the information and are then able to use it effectively in their daily lives.

Please take the opportunity to sign-up for **Neighbourhood Alert** e-mail messages and encourage family, friends and neighbours to do the same. Whilst the number of subscribers is constantly growing, the more people who sign up to receive these alerts, the more effective these messages will become as they allow communities to become better informed and make better decisions. There is no requirement to join or set up a Neighbourhood Watch.

Simply follow the link below to the registration instructions. By signing up, you control your personal information, contact details, and decide what information providers you want to receive Alerts from.

<https://member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/91/Join>

## **6. YOUR NEXT POLICING REPORT**

In December 2017, a review was carried out by a Short Life Working Group established through the Aberdeenshire Communities Committee (Scrutiny Board) to review the way in which Police Scotland engage with Community Councils. This Group involved a small number of local Elected Members, Community Council representatives from across Aberdeenshire, Aberdeenshire Council, SF&RS and Police Scotland. It was chaired by Councillor Iris Walker.

The SLWG were asked to understand more fully the ways in which Community Councils can work positively with Police Scotland in order to improve services and respond to local needs and priorities.

Following the subsequent meetings, the following key findings were reached by the group: -

- Community Councils are keen to receive a short but relevant report on a frequent basis (as opposed to a long detailed report on a quarterly basis);
- There was a general acceptance that this would be an electronic report and CCs requested that this be issued before CC meetings in order that it could be circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. Due to the cost and implications for printing, the preference was for no colours or photos to be included. Key topics include: community safety information; crime patterns; good news stories; “reassurance” messages and emerging issues.
- There was general acceptance that the current model of Police attendance was not the best use of resources. However, CCs are keen to build a positive relationship with local officers and stressed the importance of an appropriate level of local contact with local officers who knew the area well.
- Focus on engagement. CCs are also interested in more engagement, as opposed to simply information sharing, and would be happy to explore what CCs can do to support Police Scotland more effectively

As from July 2018, a monthly report will be sent out in a slightly different format, to incorporate the key topics.