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# **INVERNESS AREA COMMAND COMMUNITY BEATS NEWSLETTER**

**APRIL 2023**

This is a monthly general overview of the work being carried out by your local community beat officers covering Inverness and surrounding areas. We have included updates from the city centre Policing team, DAVRU (Divisional alcohol and violence reduction unit) and rural officers. Your current community beat team is, from left to right –

Sergeant Brian Bisset, PC Jo Barclay, PC Laura Kerr, PC Cailean MacLeod, Inspector Stuart Fitzpatrick, PC Keith Whitelaw (school link officer) PC Katie Johnstone and PC Stuart Connell.

Community Beat officers cover the whole of the Inverness area and as far as Ardersier, Strathnairn, Strathdearn and Beauly.

*Please see end of Newsletter for 'How to contact Police' and 'reply form' for concerns/issues within the community.*



## **School link officer update**

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The month of April meant that schools were on Easter break for two weeks. Now, into a new term, senior students are on study leave in preparation for their exams while younger students continue with their studies as before.

I continue with my break/Lunch time patrols, taking every opportunity to speak with students and staff.

I regularly carry out with 1 on 1 intervention work and am looking to join in with group sessions to target current issues/challenges being faced by young people. I am often the link between other officer and the schools.

I took part in the last of the mock interviews and provided feedback, aiming to help students build their interviewing skills, confidence and self-esteem.

I have been 'checking in' with local businesses near schools, to provide a reassuring presence during busy times and be available to answer any questions if needed.

More updates to next month.

Keith

## Community Beats

### Road safety

Road safety continues to be an ongoing priority for the community beats team, with "hotspot" areas being flagged up to us from members of the public from various areas.

One of the main complaints we have, is parking around schools. Officers have continued to attend at local schools during drop off/pick up times and have continued to find drivers parked opposite junctions, on zig zag lines outside schools and on blocking private driveways making access for local residents difficult. Officers have moved vehicles away from these areas and given drivers advice about suitable places to park. We would ask parents/carers to check with their local school about safe places to park. Several of the schools in Inverness have been given permission to use car parks for other businesses during school pick up/drop off times. Your local school can advise of the venues that have given permission for parents to use.

Again we would remind drivers of the Highway Code, specifically rule 243 –

### Rule 243

**DO NOT** stop or park:

- near a school entrance
- anywhere you would prevent access for Emergency Services
- at or near a bus or tram stop or taxi rank

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- opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space
- where the kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles
- in front of an entrance to a property
- on a bend

Except when forced to do so by stationary traffic.

Officers will continue to patrol schools at these times and will issue tickets to drivers if the parking is criminal. We have been carrying out speed checks within the city and in rural areas and have issued warnings and advice to several drivers.



**Drugs**

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Community officers continue to gather intelligence about drug activity in the communities they work in. We encourage anyone who lives in an area affected by this issue to contact us, any information such as vehicles, persons involved (descriptions or names), properties used, and local dealing 'hot spots' help us to tackle drug crime.

If you think you have an issue with drugs in any capacity in your area, please contact us on

[HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk](mailto:HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk)

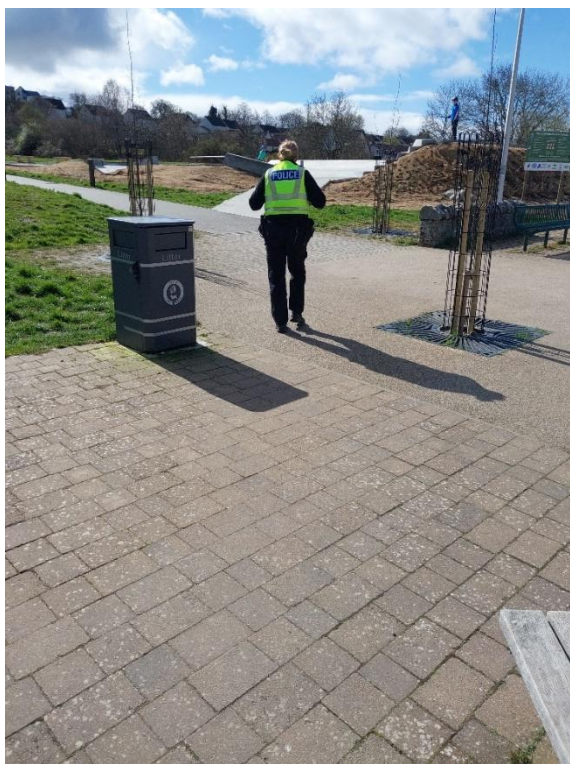
All information shared is anonymous and only shared amongst the police.

Alternatively contact:

**CrimeStoppers.**  
**0800 555 111**  
**100% anonymous. Always.**

### Community engagement

Officers continue to carry out foot and cycle patrols in and around the Inverness area, engaging with members of the public along the way and listening to any concerns they may have.



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PC Macleod was joined by the children from the crown cubs this month at the police station where the children had a tour of the station, met other officers, had some fingerprints taken and had a look round the police vehicles in the yard. As you can see from the photos it is happy faces all round and the group enjoyed their visit.

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Officers continue to be within schools carrying out talks and visits.

If you would like your community officers to attend at your school for talks or a visit then please let us know at

[HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk](mailto:HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk)

There have been several reports of vandalism, anti-social behaviour and fire-raising within the Milton of Leys, Inshes and Smithton areas of the city. Officers have been carrying out and will continue to carry out additional patrols in these areas and carrying out enquires with locals and schools to identify the people responsible. We have also been working closely with the Fire service and after identifying some of the youths responsible, they have agreed to attend a fire safety input with the Fire Service.

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Doorstep crime is a problem that continues to plague our communities' year on year. These incidents can have a devastating and lasting effect on victims from disruption to their homes, or property and financial loss that impacts heavily on their emotional wellbeing and health.

This is why we feel it is so important to run, a yearly Shut Out Scammers campaign, in our effort to raise awareness and provide guidance on the matter of doorstep crime.

Don't let scammers in to your home.

PC Cailean Macleod was on patrol in the Hilton area with preventions and interventions officers giving people advice about doorstep crime and scammers. Members of the public are reminded to check ID of door step traders and if in doubt close the door and if you have any concerns to contact the police.

### **Other Duties**

This month there was a concern raised in the Farr area whereby a member of the public reported that they had seen someone with a gun. This prompted a large police response in the area with ARV officers, response and community officers carrying out enquires with locals and patrols in the area, visiting the school to reassure them. Locals reported hearing



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what they believed to be gunfire in the area however this was found to be a backfiring land rover which was coincidentally driving through the village at the time.

After some enquiry, the incident was resolved with the outcome being a male who was traced in the local area and had been playing with a toy gun by the road side in the area. The report to police was made in good faith and members of the public, community councils and councillors are thanked for their assistance with the matter.

### **Reaching our community**

We realise that not all members of the community have access to social media, and therefore are not able to utilise the information we post there. We are therefore looking for a new initiative to reach a further audience for issues such as, door step crime, Telephone fraud, and other issues to the community. We will be liaising with the local radio station to hold a Q&A session, this will allow listeners to submit questions on a given topic to be answered by one of the community beats officers.

### **Day in the life**

Some of you will be wondering what this new section is for. Well we are looking to invite Councillors and Community Councillors the opportunity to join the community Policing team on their daily patrols. This will give us the opportunity for better partnership working and mutual understanding of the issues facing the community.

### **Significant Incidents**

Following any significant incidents we will endeavour to make direct contact with CC/ Ward managers as well as undertaking extra patrols in the area to provide reassurance to the community.

## **DAVRU Update**

The Divisional Alcohol and Violence Reduction Unit have been assisting throughout the Division this month, from Royal Visits, to Football duties. In total there were 11 days abstracted elsewhere.

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(Pic above recent Royal Visit)

Their default duties remained the same, carrying out pro-active patrols around the area of South Kessock and Merkinch. Officers also assisted with a number of mental health calls where they pulled two persons from the wrong side of the barrier from bridges in Inverness. 52 crimes were detected, primarily for drugs possession. Other detections, as a result of pro-active stop searches, included;

- 8 Drugs supply
- 5 Offensive weapons
- 2 Drug drivers

The knuckle duster (below) was seized following the stop and search of a male in Merkinch.



## CITY CENTRE

**Youth Antisocial Behaviour**

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Incidents of anti-social behaviour, vandalism and assaults caused by youths have increased in the City Centre particularly after the end of the school day. This is particularly evident on Friday afternoons when schools finish at lunch time and youths begin to congregate in the city centre.

Dedicated patrols have been allocated to Falcon Square, Farraline Park and the Innes Street underpass areas in an effort to deter youths from congregating in these areas and the Area Commander has instructed that the City Centre Policing Team are supported by our colleagues in the Community Beats and Violence Reduction Unit.

Officers are patrolling these “hotspot” areas engaging with the youths and where appropriate taking enforcement action in relation to offences / concerns for the youths. Articles seized from youths have been alcohol, cigarettes, tobacco and vapes.

Engagement with local licenced premises and newsagents are ongoing, reminding them of their legal obligations in respect of the sale of such items and their responsibility to refuse to sell should they suspect the sale is proxy.

### **Retail Crime**

Inverness Bid and the City Centre Policing Team have engaged with retailers in the quarterly Retail Security Group meeting. Retailers were given a presentation by Constable Cameron on current trends, repeat offenders and Acting Sergeant MacRae gave an update on the City Centre Shoplifting Initiative, where repeat offenders are engaged with and discouraged from re offending and signposted to the agencies that offer support in respect of drug and alcohol issues as well as the food bank services.

A High Tariff shoplifting offender has been reported by response team officer for a number of shoplifting offences whereby alcohol has been targeted at supermarkets within the Inverness area, 3 instances occurred within the city centre. This male has been remanded in custody, pending trial.

Youths committing theft by shoplifting continues to present itself within the City Centre, predominately Friday afternoons. With the youths being able to travel free, youths from out with the Inverness area are becoming to be more frequent.

### **New Shift System**

City Centre officers are now working an amended shift system that extends their working hours to provide more resilience to the night time economy within the city centre. This will create the opportunity for closer working between CCPT officers and the licensed trade and

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door stewards to prevent and deter crimes of disorder and violence at and around licensed premises.

### CCTV

The City Centre CCTV system and the operator's provide an excellent support to the CCPT officers, often directing officers to areas to prevent situations escalating. It also provides officers with the ability to review footage within the city centre in relation to a number of offences and is an invaluable tool in our efforts to keep the city centre safe.

## Rural Patrols

### Roads Policing

Local officers have been carrying out hi visibility speed checks throughout the area in particular in the vicinity of schools.

A provisional licence holder was arrested in Drumnadrochit area and charged with a number of motoring offences. A report will be sent to Procurator Fiscal.

A second motorist stopped by police after being observed driving at speed in Drumnadrochit area was found to be under the influence of alcohol. They were charged with a number of motoring offences and a report will be sent to Procurator Fiscal.

### Community Tuesdays

PC Hamilton attended Glenmoriston Millennium Hall to meet members of the community and staff from Change Mental Health who provide free and confidential suicide bereavement support throughout the Highland region. They can be contacted on 0800 471 4768 or [suicidebereavementsupport@nhs.scot](mailto:suicidebereavementsupport@nhs.scot)

### Peregrine Falcons – Inverfarigaig

Wildlife police officers and the Forestry and Land Scotland Ranger have been engaging with a group of climbers who had been setting up on a cliff face near the Corkscrew Road,

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Invergarigaig. The concern raised was that there may be some nesting Falcons in that area and they may disturb the birds (wildlife offence). The climbers have moved on and extra patrols are being conducted in the area to ensure no wildlife crimes are being committed (on purpose or by accident).

### **Suspicious persons – White bridge and Kiltarlity**

Several incidents have been reported to local officers of two separate vehicles moving around the area asking businesses for work and if private homeowners had any vehicles for sale. Nothing has been reported stolen or amiss at this time and officers would like to remain members of the public to remain vigilant for any suspicious people in and around the rural communities who may be offering gardening work or asking to buy caravans / vehicles from peoples gardens. Extra patrols have and are being conducted in these areas with suspicious vehicles being stopped and occupants being engaged with.

### **School News**

School visits have taken place at Aldourie and Glen Urquhart Primary Schools.

An incident was reported by Glen Urquhart Primary School which occurred after school on 19/04/2023. No criminality has been identified. Plain clothes and hi visibility reassurance patrols have been carried out in the area and all parents made aware via a letter taken home by pupils.

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## **Other News**

Local officers visited the newly opened Dundreggan Rewilding Centre, met with staff and learned about the facilities the centre provides.

For concerns in these areas please contact -

[HighlandsandIslandsBeaullyFortAugustus@scotland.police.uk](mailto:HighlandsandIslandsBeaullyFortAugustus@scotland.police.uk)

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# **\*\*\*\*\*Contact Info\*\*\*\*\***

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For concerns and issues in the Inverness area please let us know on

[HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk](mailto:HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk)

Please be aware that this e-mail address is not monitored 24/7 and is a contact email. Crimes should not be reported by this e-mail and should be reported via 101 or 999 in an emergency.

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## **How to contact the Police**

Calls regarding **ongoing incidents** should be made to **101** or **999** in an emergency and officers will be tasked to attend.

If you would like to pass information on to your community beats team regarding an incident that has already occurred, then this can be done via the "**Contact Us**" section on the Police Scotland website.

**Attached to the newsletter is a reply form that can be sent back to your Community Beats Team regarding any community issues that have been raised by members of your community or at Community council meetings and can be forwarded to us at**

[HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk](mailto:HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk)

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**To – Community Beats Team**

**From –**

**Concerns/Issues to raise –**

**Name of Contact for reply –**

**Contact phone number -**

**To be sent to -**

[HighlandandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.co.uk](mailto:HighlandandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.co.uk)

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# Neighbourhood Watch SCOTLAND

We aim to ALERT you to:



Local crimes and emerging trends



Information on safety, resilience and community wellbeing



Guidance on online safety and doorstep scams



Approved "Secured by Design" products and recommendations



Advice on how to secure your property and belongings



Sharing best practice to protect you, your family and community

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In Police Scotland, we recognise the importance of keeping you up-to-date regarding our activities. We also want to seek your support and make the most of the valuable local knowledge you hold to help us carry out our job in an informed manner.

A great way in which we can share information is via the Neighbourhood Alert system, which Neighbourhood Watch Scotland delivers. This enables us to send out e-mail messages relating to local crime trends and share crime prevention advice quickly and effectively to a wide audience. The information can also be targeted as required to particular groups, streets, or communities.

Anyone can sign up to receive these e-mail messages individually or as a community group. The sign-up process allows you to specify the type of information you are interested in and from what source. This is coordinated by our partners in Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, who work with a range of partners in the public sector to provide information on crime and community safety and resilience. We only send out messages which contribute to keeping you informed and safe.

Neighbourhood Alert is recognised as a trusted source of information. Please consider signing up for Neighbourhood Alert e-mail messages and encourage family, friends and neighbours to do the same. You can join without setting up a Neighbourhood Watch.

Simply visit

<https://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/>

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