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Inverness Area Command

Newsletter – May 2024

Introduction:

We are pleased to present the latest edition of our community newsletter, designed to keep you up to date about the activities and initiatives of our local police officers. This newsletter serves as your window into the ongoing work of officers in your area, featuring insights from the City Centre Policing Team, Community Beats team and Fort Augustus / Rural Officer.

Our goal is to provide you with a closer look at the dedicated efforts of our police officers to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your communities. We understand the importance of keeping our community members informed and appreciate your continued support as we work together to make our streets even safer and more welcoming.

Thank you for being engaged and informed members of our community. Together we can continue to create a better and safer place for all.

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Community Beats Team

Inspector Emma Wright: Senior officer in charge of Community Beats, Rural and City Centre Policing Team.

Sergeant Brian Bisset: Community Beats line manager and team leader.



PC Keith Whitelaw:
Community officer for;
**Merkinch and South
Kessock.**



PC Katie
Johnstone:
Community officer
for; **Dalneigh,
Torvean, Bught,
Scorguie &
Kinmylies**



PC Cailean Macleod:
Community officer for;
**Hilton, Holm,
Lochardil, Culduthel
and Inshes**

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From the team:

PC Keith Whitelaw: Community officer for; Merkinch and South Kessock.

Over the month of May, I have been involved in various aspects of policing both within and out with the Merkinch and South Kessock community, I have tried to break this down into sections.

- **Response policing support:** I aided response policing teams across Dingwall, Ainess, Tain, and Inverness to cover absences and low officer numbers.
- **Supporting vulnerable individuals:** I visited vulnerable members of the community, offering support and safety advice to ensure their well-being. If you know of any vulnerable adults in the community, I would like to know, so that I can visit with them and if appropriate, help where possible by bringing in our partners.
- **Assisting families with challenging individuals:** I aided families dealing with challenging teenagers, offering guidance and support where appropriate. I have spent some time with individual families, to try and understand what we can do to help. This is an ongoing process.
- **School visits:** Engaged with pupils and staff at nurseries, primary and secondary schools, answering questions and providing advice during visits. Early positive interactions with policing can have a long-lasting effect on individuals. I welcome the opportunity to do this whenever I am invited along to events. I will also try to pop in whenever I get a free moment.
- **Engagement with small businesses:** I engaged with small businesses for various reasons, fostering positive relationships and addressing concerns. These interactions allow me to be visible in the community and hopefully be approachable to members of the public. This engagement has proved worthwhile when dealing with the HB at Crazy Golf, Inverness. This incident seen a huge outpouring of community spirit. Really refreshing to see.
- **Community patrols:** Patrolled the community in marked police cars, on the bike to engage with residents and deter criminal activity. This is to deter criminality, maintain order and to be readily available within the Merkinch / South Kessock community. We know there are hotspots of activity, I try to be in these areas as much as my duties allow.
- **Addressing drug use and anti-social behaviour:** I've been working with partners to address concerns around drug use and anti-social behaviour, focussing on known hotspots and making my presence known. This is of particular concern in the area, residents all over are being affected by this. I encourage as much reporting as possible to allow Policing to build up a more accurate picture of what's happening, and where. I have developed a leaflet signposting some of our partner agencies, this will be distributed in the month of June.
- **Addressing individuals:** I've confronted individuals attempting to cause trouble in the community, especially those preying on the vulnerable. This has made me

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unpopular with some and popular with others. I have the responsibility, along with the wider policing family, to maintain order. This comes under that banner. There have been several people arrested for various offences. It is important that people continue to speak with us so that we can allocate the appropriate resources that the area needs.

- **Designing community postcard:** As mentioned above, I've collaborated with partners to design an easy-to-read postcard for community distribution, providing access to services and information. This postcard has is in the printing process and will be distributed in the coming months.
- **Policing football matches and high court:** Carried out policing duties at footballing events and in the high court as part of regular responsibilities.
- **Significant incidents:** There has been an increase in Siege activity in the Inverness area. These types of incidents involve heavy presence from Emergency services which can disturb the community, as always, we ask for patience when were on scene trying to bring events to a safe conclusion.

May has been another eventful month for the Merkinch community. I will continue to do my best daily. Let me know if you wish to speak with me or have any ideas that might help the Merkinch community.

Keith



Photo: PS Bisset and PC Whitelaw on a school visit



Photo: PC Whitelaw at a road control point for a gas leak at Inverness train station.

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PC Katie Johnstone: Community officer for; Dalneigh, Torvean, Bught, Scorguie & Kinmylies

Over the month of May, I have been involved in not only patrolling within the Dalneigh Torvean, Bught, Scorguie and Kinmylies and communities, I have also been involved in various other policing activities.

- **Response policing support:** I have been required to assist response policing teams across Orkney, Dingwall and Inverness to cover absences and low officer numbers. I have been involved in various Mountain Rescue incidents including attending the Isle of Rum for extending searching. I continue to be deployed as a local child protection officer as required.
- **Assisting families with challenging individuals:** I continue to maintain contact with Charleston Academy and have assisted by putting in referrals where a young person is needing additional support. It is our role to try and deter any offending behaviour and offer support and guidance where I can.
- **School visits:** Unfortunately I have not had the opportunity for any school visits this month. I have been in contact with the schools to ensure that I am up to date should anything arise that needs attention. It is my intention to visit the schools prior to the school holidays.
- **Engagement with small businesses:** I continue to visit the local businesses in my area when I can. This gives me a good insight into what is happening in the community.
- **Community patrols:** During the month I have been able to patrol within my area and neighbouring Merkinch/ South Kessock, these have been targeted patrols to deter criminality. I have also carried out patrols in marked police vehicles, which allows me to cover a greater area of my beat.
- **Addressing drug use and anti-social behaviour:** I have been contacted through different avenues in relation to members of the community. I would encourage to go through the '101' system or 'contact us' on the Police website. This ensures that the information is logged on our system for any follow up. I can be contacted by the community beats email address should this be for informational purposes only. I attended to any reports of drug use/ supply and noted relevant information to assist in disrupting these individuals.
- **Policing football matches and high court:** Carried out policing duties at footballing events and in the high court as part of regular responsibilities.
- **Significant incidents:** There was a siege type incident within my beat area, fortunately this was resolved with no injuries. However this type of incident requires a large amount of police resources, along with Fire Service and Ambulance Service.

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PC Cailean Macleod: Community officer for; Hilton, Holm, Lochardil, Culduthel and Inshes



Road Safety

Road safety continues to be a concern for the communities I serve and to that end I have focussed on my efforts in terms of speed checks outside schools and on streets highlighted with a specific issue for speeding. I have carried out nine speed checks on Stratherrick Road, Balnakyle Road, Old Edinburgh Road, Culduthel Road and Balloan Road this month. Several drivers have been warned and educated about the perils of driving at excessive speed. I will continue to carry out high visibility speed checks in the coming weeks and months. I have dealt with other road safety issues highlighted to me by concerned members of the community by means of speaking with the driver's involved and on occasions suggesting other measures such as bollards to the road safety team at Highland Council.

Drugs

The scourge of drug dealing continues to cause many adverse effects on the community. I continue to work closely with other departments in the Police and ensure I gather information on a confidential basis from people in the community. I continue to reach out to those with substance misuses issues so they can be offered rehab and support to tackle their addictions. County lines drug dealing is occurring in two of the beats that I cover and there is much work ongoing behind the scenes to tackle robustly these organised crime groups. I would urge the community to report any information regarding drug dealing either anonymously via Crimestoppers 0800555111 or on a confidential basis to myself directly.

Anti-social behaviour

The warmer days and longer evenings has resulted in an uptick in anti-social antics. I will continue to carry out high visibility patrols on foot, by pedal cycle and in a marked Police car to deter and disrupt those involved in anti-social antics. At times officer presence and or a word in people's ears is enough for them to see the impact of their behaviour on others and the community. For persistent offenders, I will continue to work closely with colleagues in

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housing departments to ensure tenants anti-social antics can be monitored and appropriate measures put in place to reduce the anti-social antics.

I have carried out thirty-five checks of licensed premises across my beats in May. The purpose of checking licensed premises which sell alcohol is to reduce and deter disorder and to ensure the premises are complying with the laws around selling alcohol. Furthermore, regular checks ensures the staff in the premises have confidence in the Police and feel reassured in particular during evenings when there is greater likelihood of disorder.

Community Engagement

I have continued my work with local primary schools carrying out visits to speak with school pupils and deal with specific issues occurring which have caused tensions. It is crucial to my role to have a good working relationship with school pupils, so they know their local community Police officer and likewise I know who they are should issues or anti-social behaviour occur. This is an old-fashioned concept of community Policing however it still works extremely well. I have worked closely with local businesses, organisations, and the Highland Council to gather information and aid investigations into various enquiries. I have continued to attend the Hilton community centre as and when other duties permit to speak with people attending the Hilton hot food initiative which is extremely well attended by a wide cross section of the community.

Other Duties

I have a collection of other duties and responsibilities in the Police and this past month have carried out an investigation into a beheaded deer as part of my wildlife crime officer role and as a member of the Police Mountain rescue team I have been involved in several searches across the division in Glencoe, Glen Orrin, Black Isle and the Isle of Rum.

Smithton, Culloden, Balloch, Ardersier & Croy

There is currently no community beat officer for this area. This vacancy is due to be filled in the coming months. Community beat officers from other areas will continue to try and cover this area in the meantime.

Raigmore, Drakies, Milton of Ley, Crown & Millburn

There is currently no community beat officer for this area. This vacancy is due to be filled in the coming months. Community beat officers from other areas will continue to try and cover this area in the meantime.

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City Centre Policing Team (CCPT)



The City Centre has become increasingly busy with people from far a wide, which is brilliant to see. The City Centre Police Team have had numerous positive interactions with visitors and are committed to keeping them, residents and business owners as safe as we possibly can.

Our engagement with youths is an ongoing process which has continued to provide both positive and some negative responses. Our efforts to reduce the incidents of youth disorder continue and senior Police Officers are currently involved with the process to achieve that goal. We continue to deal with various offences involving youths and deal with them as robustly and as quickly as possible with the assistance of various partner agencies.

As mentioned in previous months, shoplifting continues to be a big issue within the City Centre and the team remain committed to bringing offenders to justice. This has resulted with persons having bail conditions placed on them not to enter the City Centre and some being held in prison until court attendance. These successful results are only possible with the team working alongside our retail colleagues and our CCTV operators.

The coming month will see the City Centre welcome many visitors who will be frequenting our licensed premises to watch some massive upcoming football matches involving our national team. This alongside our regular evening economy will be challenging but extra Officers will be on duty for these events which will enable us to keep people safe.

Fort Augustus/Rural Officer Report



The past month has been exceptionally busy in the area surrounding Loch Ness. I have been progressing my enquiries; taking statements, viewing CCTV, interviewing suspects, gathering evidence and reporting offenders. This is in addition to my many other responsibilities including attending emergency calls, firearms renewals, licensed premises visits, witness citations, mountain rescue and community policing!

I carried out a joint visit to a tenant in the Foyers area with housing officers and the dog warden. The tenant was issued with an Acceptable Behaviour Contract following complaints of anti-social behaviour.

Throughout the first two weeks in May there were several incidents in Fort Augustus and Drumnadrochit consisting of abusive and threatening behaviour, theft and vandalism. I identified that the same individual was responsible and gathered sufficient evidence to arrest and charge them. A report was sent to Procurator Fiscal and following an appearance at court, they have been remanded.

On Monday 13th May I was joined by one of my colleagues in Drumnadrochit for a Street Surgery. As there had been a housebreaking at a business in the area during the night, we carried out high visibility foot patrols in the village centre and visited a number of local businesses which was particularly welcomed.

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Contact us

Police Scotland can be contacted via a variety of ways. In an emergency and/or when a crime is ongoing, please dial 999 otherwise please use the 101 phone number to report any other crimes or matters.

For non-urgent routines matters or to highlight issues or make contact with specific officers then the following email addresses can be used:

Inverness rural beats – Beauly / Cannich / Drumnadrochit / Fort Augustus / Foyers:

HighlandsandIslandsBeaulyFortAugustus@scotland.police.uk

For concerns and issues in the city of Inverness area and the rural beats of Ardersier, Daviot, Tomatin and Strathdearn:

HighlandsandIslandsCommunityBeatsInverness@scotland.police.uk

Please be aware that this e-mail address is not monitored 24/7 and is a contact email. Specific crimes should not be reported by these email addresses. Crimes should be reported via the telephone systems 999 or 101.

Any matters raised at community council meetings or specific community concerns should be emailed in and include the following details to enable your enquiry to deal with efficiently:

- Contact name
- Contact phone number
- Details of the issue – times/places/people/history of the issue

Statistics

Crime statistics for your community council area can be found using the following link –

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/crime-data/>

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