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Inverness Area Command

Newsletter – June 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**



PC Nicola Bain,
Community officer for:
**Smithton, Culloden,
Raigmore, Ardersier
& Croy**

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From the team:

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

Over the month of June, 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.
- **School visits:** Engaged with pupils and staff at nurseries, primary and secondary schools, answering questions and giving 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.
- **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. When I can, I have teamed up with members of the proactive team to try and make the Merkinch / South Kessock are unhospitable to these individuals.
- **Addressing individuals:** I've confronted individuals attempting to cause trouble in the community, especially those preying on the vulnerable. This has made me 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.

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- **Vape Initiative:** I took part in a vape initiative within the city centre lead by the city centre policing team. This was successful in acting against premises selling vapes to kids. We worked alongside trading standards to act against the offending premises.
- **Assisting when needed:** I, alongside other members of the community beats team, assist response policing when searching for missing persons. This month, I, and the team assisted finding numerous vulnerable people that were reported missing.
- **Bringing Services Together –** I was part of a planned operation on the 26th of June where were brought together representatives from partner agencies, aimed at assisting the Merkinch / South Kessock community. I, and others put a lot of work into this, however it was not very well attended. However, the plan is to run this type of event again after a period of review. The aim is simply to help people within the community, from us and our partner agencies.

Let me know if you wish to speak with me or have any ideas that might help the Merkinch / South Kessock community.

Keith



Poster created for the community event hosted in the Merkinch Community Centre. Plan is to run this again, hoping for more community buy in on the next one.

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

During the month of June I have been able to carry out cycle patrols in my beat area. I still focus on the areas highlighted to me. I would encourage reporting of any antisocial behaviour or drug related incidents to give me a clear picture of what is happening in the area.

Through the local MP, a few issues were highlighted in the area of Dalneigh, one being the smell of cannabis from a property and the other a neighbour dispute. I was able to gain information in relation to the smell of cannabis and will continue to gather any information surrounding this. I also had the opportunity to sit down with the resident who highlighted a neighbour issue and listen to any concerns they had. I will continue to work with local MPs and community councillors with any issues they highlight to me.

I received a complaint of speeding in residential areas and carried out speed checks on Dunain Road, Telford Gardens and St. Andrew's drive. I will carry out further speed checks when available to do so in the Dalneigh area.

As we have welcomed a new team member PC Nicola Bain, I accompanied her on patrol within her new beat area. We went to Raigmore Primary school and were able to visit with the nursery children. They were very inquisitive and asked lots of questions. We brought the Police car into the school yard, and they were all able to have a turn 'driving' the Police car and turning the lights on.

I was invited to attend Culloden Academy careers fire. This was a good opportunity to speak with young people looking to decide their future career. There were some young people who already had an idea of what career path they would choose. I was able to give advice to those looking in a career in Policing, and general advice to those who were not so sure.

During the month I have also being required to carry out other duties. These included child protection enquiries, mental health related incidents, missing people, mountain rescue incidents and court officer.

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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 speed checks on Stratherrick Road, Balnakyle Road and Old Edinburgh 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.

Drugs

I am pleased to report that several houses/flats were subject of drugs search warrants being carried out by Police units in the past month across Hilton. Quantities of drugs were recovered, and various person/s have been charges with various offences including drugs supply offences. I continue to support the work of other Police units and departments in their endeavours to tackle drug dealers.

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 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 15 checks of licensed premises across my beats in June. 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

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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.

I was joined by the BBC film crew for 'Highland Cops' for an afternoon out on foot patrol in the Hilton beat. They filmed several interactions with local residents and local businesses visited during the foot patrols.



Other Duties

I have a collection of other duties and responsibilities in the Police and this past month continued to be busy with Mountain Rescue callouts for searches and a technical rope rescue of a man and his dog from a gorge. I have also been involved with a wildlife crime investigation as part of my wildlife crime officer role as well.

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PC Nicola Bain, Community officer for: Smithton, Culloden, Raigmore, Ardersier & Croy

My name is Nicola Bain, and I am the newest recruit to join the Community Beats Team. I previously worked for 7 years in Inverness Response policing, but I have been keen to join Beats for some time so was delighted when this opportunity arose. I am a proud Invernesian and hope I can make a difference to the Raigmore, Culloden, Smithton, Ardersier and Croy communities where I have been tasked to work.

My first week has been very enjoyable, learning the ropes from Katie, Cailean and Keith and exploring the communities. I have enjoyed speaking to the residents, school staff and business owners in the local areas and getting a feel for the areas.

On day two I was thrown in the deep end with the film crew for Highland Cops following us around Ardersier. Hopefully it doesn't make it past the cutting room! However it was good to engage with the residents in the village.

I kindly received an invite to attend the Sports Celebration Assembly at Duncan Forbes Primary which afforded me a great opportunity to speak with pupils and staff. I have managed to touch base with all the schools in my area prior to them breaking up for the summer holidays so they can contact me if I can be of any assistance.

I was also made very welcome at the Community Garden in Culloden where I learnt about this great initiative and chatted to the locals in the garden about their concerns. I am looking forward to speaking further with the local communities and learning more in the coming weeks.

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 continues to welcome a large number of visitors from all over the world, which is tremendous for the area. The City Centre Team have had a lot a good interactions with visitors who are very complimentary about our City.

The issue with youth disorder continues to be a problem and the team along with the assistance of partner agencies continue with their efforts to engage with youths and divert them towards a more positive use of their time. The issue is being addressed by senior police officers and extra resources are currently being deployed to the City Centre to assist with this issue. One major attraction of the City Centre for the youths is the availability of vape products. The City Centre Team, Community Beats Officers, CCTV operators and Trading standards carried out an operation to combat this which resulted with one premises being reported to the Procurator Fiscal. This is an operation we are keen to develop and by working with other departments and partner agencies we are confident we will more success in the coming months.

The issue of shoplifting continues to be a major part of the city centre officers days. They have continued to have success with detecting these offences with some offenders receiving custodial sentences. This success has been obtained with the assistance of our colleagues within the retail premises and security staff.

It has been a busy month for the evening economy, especially with a lot of people being out and about drowning their sorrows after the performance by our national football team. Incidents of disorder have continued but by working alongside the security staff and bar staff several offenders have been brought into police custody.

Fort Augustus/Rural Officer Report:

June has seen a steady increase in the numbers of visitors to the area and traffic on the roads. Local officers and roads policing units will continue to carry out patrols in both marked and unmarked vehicles reporting offenders when offences are identified.

Local officers cover a huge geographical area and information received regarding vehicles speeding in Drumnadrochit helps focus patrols where needed most.

Local officers carried out a visit to the pupils at Balnain Primary. They had been learning about what organisations support the needs of the local area and how police officers help people to stay safe. A really enjoyable visit with lots of good questions and opportunities to try on police uniform!

Stolen property was recovered following the joint apprehension of a male driving under the influence by local officers and roads policing unit. Enquiries are now being carried to establish whether the property is linked to a recent housebreaking.

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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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