

Helensburgh & Lomond CPP Report August 2021

Covid - As we move forward with the continuing easing of Lockdown restrictions, and entry into level 0, local policing plans are in place to direct, guide and inform officers as the various different restrictions are relaxed. Officers continue to monitor the areas of retail, hospitality, travel and socialising.

Officers are generally still instructed to follow the strategic Police response which is the four-step escalation principles of engagement, explanation, encouragement and finally enforcement but as the lockdown restrictions have continued for so long now, there are more instances where officers are justified in moving straight to enforcement with the issue of fixed penalty notices.

Police Officer absence related to covid remains manageable but like all areas of society, is fluctuating on occasion which is being managed and resources moved accordingly to maintain resource levels through the division.

Future planning - Although lockdown restrictions are easing there have already been a number of cancellations or postponements to annual events normally held within the summer months. Planning is continuing on a National level regarding the upcoming COP26 Climate Change Conference being held in Glasgow in November 2021. Cowal and Bute resources may be used during this operation although planning has already been carried out to ensure that the Cowal and Bute area will be adequately resourced.

Visitor numbers continue to rise, more evident within the National Park area, resources deployed to the busy locations. Officers also now conducting additional patrols out with the National Park utilising Local Authority funding. Includes Helensburgh town centre, the Penninsula, A814, Ardmore Point. Detailed to engage with visitors and campers, advise re any by-laws and ensure environmental impact is minimised.

Fraud Prevention – Police Scotland in partnership with Argyll and Bute Council have successfully secured funding from the “Flexible Fund” to purchase more call blocker devices given the increase in telephone scams since the start of the pandemic and the success of the initial funding bid. During 2021, Police Scotland and Argyll and Bute Trading Standards have installed 66 call blocker devices onto landlines of vulnerable people who were being hassled by nuisance telephone calls. Initial analysis has shown that 33% of calls received were nuisance or scam calls and that over the 4 year lifetime of these units they will have blocked 64,833 nuisance calls. Over this same 4 year projection, these units will have prevented 105 scams, saved vulnerable households £309,736, led to a reduction of £287,702 in NHS, social care & police costs, and an increase in wellbeing & quality of life valued at £303,641 - total benefits of £901,080. In Bute and Cowal, devices have been installed in Rothesay, Dunoon, Innellan, Sandbank and Ardentinn. If you are being pestered by nuisance calls or you know a family member or friend that could benefit from having a call blocker please contact Argyll and Bute Trading Standards on 01546 605 519 or tradingstandards.office@argyll-bute.gov.uk to apply for a funded device. Priority will be given to those who are vulnerable.

Online Child Exploitation - The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), in partnership with age verification platform Yoti, have developed the Report Remove tool to support young people to remove sexual images of themselves online. Report Remove can support a young person in reporting sexual images or videos shared online and helps the young person to get the image removed if it is illegal. The NSPCC's Childline service ensures that the young person is safeguarded throughout the process. Young people aged under 18 who are worried a sexual image or video of them may have been shared online can use Childline and IWF's Report Remove tool at <https://www.childline.org.uk/Remove>. This helps children and young people to report an image or video shared online, to see if it is possible to get it removed. Once the report has been made, it keeps the young person informed at each stage and provides support and feedback where necessary.

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Crime - With the exception of fraud, area crime figures are good and generally lower than the previous year and in line or below national 5 year averages.

Recent joint town centre initiative with Royal Navy Police was well received and is being reviewed looking at making it a regular occurrence. More relevant when larger boats in at Faslane resulting in increased footfall in the town.

Metal Theft Campaign:

Local officers carried out a Catalytic Converter marking day on 23rd April in Helensburgh and our entire allocation were used to mark some of the most 'at risk' vehicle types. This was in response to a national Metal Theft Campaign and was well received.

Keep Safe in Helensburgh and Lomond:

Keep Safe is an award winning initiative developed in partnership between Police Scotland and community charity I Am Me Scotland which creates a national network of safe places across Scotland that anyone who feels vulnerable can use to seek assistance, if required, while out in the community. Thanks to funding received from the Community Justice Partnership we have more business packs available and can train more places throughout Helensburgh and Lomond if we can establish who may be interested in this. Existing Keep Safe places include ACHA, Citizens Advice Bureau and Helensburgh Police Station, however we are keen to identify local small businesses as well such as cafes, youth centres, and other shops. If you would like more information on Keep Safe please visit www.iammescotland.co.uk/about-keep-safe and if you know any businesses that would like to be trained to support this please contact PC Laura Evans, Partnership Liaison Officer laura.evans@scotland.pnn.police.uk.

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