

## OFFICIAL

### Police Scotland – Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Partnership Update for meeting in August 2021

1. **Personnel Change** - Inspector John Forrest has now commenced his role as Community Inspector for the Cowal and Bute area taking over responsibilities from his predecessor Inspector Simon Shanks. Inspector Forrest has previously worked in and is familiar with the area and will look to maintain and develop working partnerships.
2. **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.

3. **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.
4. **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 Ardentinnny. 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](mailto:tradingstandards.office@argyll-bute.gov.uk) to apply for a funded device. Priority will be given to those who are vulnerable.
5. **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.

OFFICIAL

## OFFICIAL

6. **Road Policing** – Police Scotland’s Community Engagement team supported by Police Scotland's Mounted Branch, Road Policing Unit & British Horse Society Scotland were in Dunoon on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 for a road safety/crime prevention initiative. Speeding check points were set up across the area with 10 drivers warned for being just over the speed limit. We also carried out Operation Close Pass which is an operation focussed on road safety in relation to cyclists. This initiative reminds motorists to give cyclists the same space you would a car when overtaking. Lose The Blinkers, again is a road safety initiative to protect horse riders and horses whilst on the road. This was as a result of an incident in Clachaig where a driver was charged with dangerous driving for passing too quickly and closely to a young horse rider and their horse.
  
7. **Bike Marking**- Over 70 bicycles were security marked including pupils bikes from Dunoon Primary School. This event was so popular that we ran out of bike marking kits which had been the source of funding. We are looking to seek more funding for this and will be back in the near future to do more. Many other members of the community were spoken to during this event with crime prevention & Rural watch advice being provided.

**Staycation patrols.** Officers now carrying out joint patrols with the Cowal & Bute authority warden, covering the popular camping and tourist visitor areas to ensure minimal impact on the local community from an ASB and environmental perspective.

OFFICIAL