POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe

Keeping People Safe in Argyll & Bute

Our Purpose:- To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland

Road Safety & Road Crime

DRPU activity continues to focus on the priority routes; A82, A83 and A85.

The total number of road casualties in Qtr 1 fell from 15 to 11, as compared to the same period last year. Fatal road collisions increased marginally from 0 to 1, while both serious and slight injuries decreased from 6 to 4 and 9 to 6, respectively.

Compared to Qtr 1 figures last year, road traffic offences fell by 4.3%, from 646 to 618 (-28). The current figure is also 19% below the previous 5 year avg (n=764). Insurance offences recorded the highest reduction, falling from 103 to 73 crimes (-30), followed by speeding – which fell from 230 to 210 (-20) year on year. Careless and dangerous driving offences also fell slightly on the previous year. Meanwhile, offences relating to neglect of traffic directions and driving without a test certificate increased from 15 to 38 (+23) and from 47 to 64 (+17) respectively.

Violence & Antisocial Behaviour

At the end of Qtr. 1 Group 1 crimes of violence increased by 31.8% - rising from 22 to 29 crimes. The current figure is also significantly higher than the previous 5 year average (n=19). Crimes relating to threats and extortion have risen from 2 to 6 year on year.

Approx. 77% of crimes of violence occurred in a private space and in the majority, the victim knew the offender.

130 stop searches have been carried out at the end of Qtr 1, which equates to 43 per month.

Complaints relating to disorder fell by 47.8%, from 1,629 to 850 at the end of Qtr. 1. This was largely due to a reduction in the number of public nuisance incidents recorded during the initial lockdown.

ASB related crimes increased by 5.1%, from 372 to 391. Common assaults increased from 100 to 165, which is also above the previous 5 year average (n=153). Approximately 63% of common assaults were committed by persons known to victims, with 37 being domestic related. Crimes relating to Breach of the Peace and Threatening & Abusive Behaviour reduced from 194 to 165 (-29) year on year.

The detection rate for violent crime overall is relatively unchanged at 58.6% compared to 59.1% the previous year. The detection rate for serious assault fell from 100% to 87.5%, which is marginally below the previous 5 year rate of 92.9%. The detection rate for common assault has also reduced from 80% to 73.3%, which is also 6.7 percentage points below the previous 5 year rate.

Public Protection

Group 2 sexual crimes fell by 16.7% in Qtr 1 compared to the same period in the previous year, to a total of 50 crimes (10 fewer victims). However, rape offences increased from 5 to 13 (+8). However, approximately 62% (n=8) of recorded rape crimes related to non-recent reports. 12 of the 13 crimes were committed by persons known to the victim. Crimes relating to indecent images/communications fell from 26 to 12 year on year.

79% of sexual crimes occurred in a private space, mainly residential dwellings.

83% of sexual crimes were committed by persons known to the victim.

The detection rate for Group 2 sexual crime has increased by 31% to 66%. The detection rate for rape (53.8%) has reduced by 6.2%, but remains above the previous 5 year rate of 45.2%.

34 missing person reports were recorded within Argyll & Bute in Qtr 1, which equates to around 11 per month. 84 missing persons incidents have been recorded on Storm.

Compared to figures recorded at the end of Qtr 1 last year, domestic abuse incidents in Argyll and Bute fell by 15.7%, from 166 to 140. The number of domestic crimes increased by 36.3%, rising from 80 to 109 - though remaining below the previous 5 year average of 116.

The number of incidents in which an adult concern was raised fell from 363 to 350 (-3.6%) at the end of Qtr 1. However, the number of recorded child concerns increased by 34.1%, rising from 413 to 554 year on year.

YTD 22 complaints about the police were recorded within Argyll & Bute, a reduction from 36 in the same period last year. The number of allegations about officers on duty also fell, from 50 to 19 year on year.

Argyll & Bute

Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023)

Quarterly Report (Qtr. 1 – 2021/22)

Major Crime & Terrorism

14 persons linked to serious and organised crime have been arrested across Argyll & West Dunbartonshire in the reporting period. £91,775 has been seized under POCA.

Drug possession charges decreased by 41.6% from 149 to 87. Detections for drugs supply have reduced by 67.1% from 14 at the end of Qtr 1 last year to 5 this year. Both figures are currently below the previous 5 year average.

In total, 53 cyber-crimes have been recorded within Argyll & Bute at the end of Qtr. 1 - a slight reduction from 58 in same period last year. 29 crimes related to online fraud, 12 to threatening messages sent online or via social media, 6 to indecent communication / images, 4 involved accessing computer systems without authorisation and 2 related to breach of bail conditions or court orders.

Acquisitive Crime

Vehicle crime reduced by 35.7%.

Housebreakings reduced by 34.8%.

The total number of acquisitive crimes recorded in Argyll & Bute increased by 1.8%, from 163 to 166 at the end of Qtr. 1. However, this remains 17.2% below the previous 5 year average (n=200). Fraud crimes have continued to rise with 55 crimes recorded YTD, compared to 35 last year. Social engineering and online market frauds in particular have been associated with a considerable increase, followed by bank and other monetary account takeovers. Meanwhile, housebreaking and motor vehicle crimes have both fallen, from 23 to 15 (-8) and 14 to 9 (-5) respectively. HB and MV crime both remain below the previous 5 year average.

FRAUD PREVENTION

Following the success and demand, further funding has been secured for call blocker devices. A protocol has been implemented to enable Social Work and Police Scotland to request these devices for vulnerable people. Members of the public who know of anyone vulnerable are also being encouraged to request devices. Since the beginning of 2021, Police Scotland and Argyll & Bute Trading Standards have installed 66 call blocker devices for vulnerable people who were being subjected to nuisance telephone calls. Initial analysis has shown that 33% of calls received were nuisance or scam calls. Projected benefits over the next 4 years are that the devices will have blocked 64,833 nuisance calls, 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, with total benefits in the region of £901,080.

DISABILITY HATE CRIME

Police Scotland is linking up with the Oban Disability Access Panel and Oban Youth Café to progress the identification and delivery of Keep Safe Training. Young people from the Youth Café will learn about disability hate crime and will become Hate Crime Ambassadors promoting awareness amongst their peers and in their community. The young people will then identify local businesses in Oban willing to undertake Keep Safe Training to become a nationally recognised Keep Safe premises.

ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

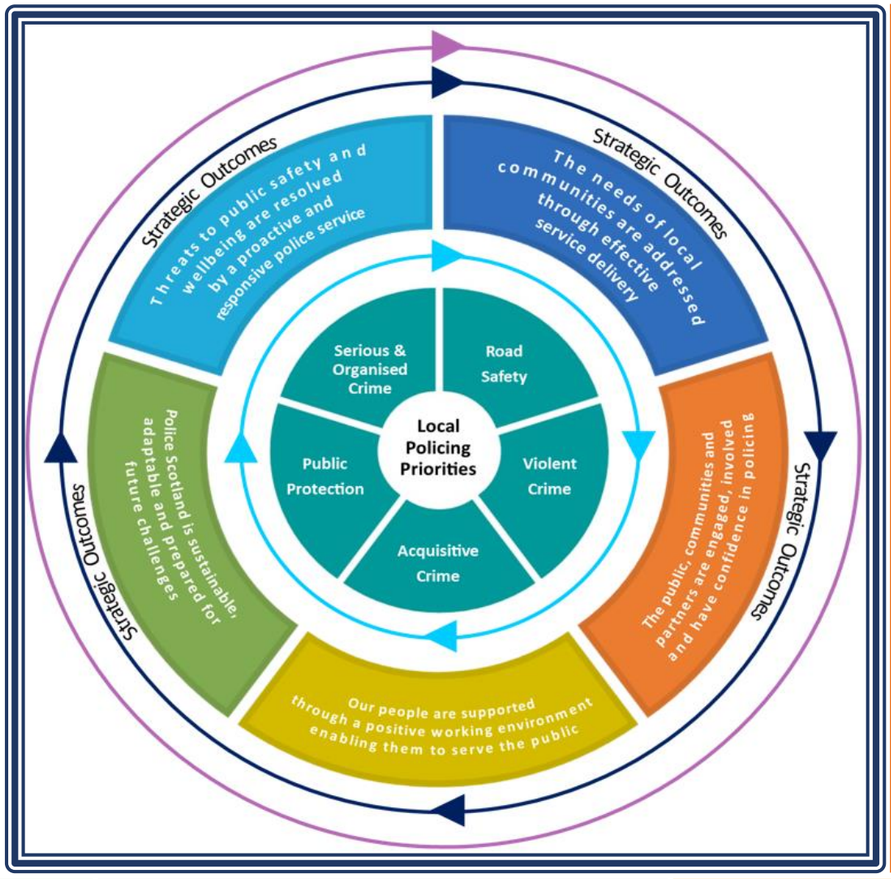
We are working with Argyll Third Sector Interface, supported by West Dunbartonshire Community Volunteering Service to deliver a virtual seminar to raise awareness of Online Child Sexual Abuse. This event will be aimed at Education staff, staff supporting children who are Looked After and Accommodated, as well as Third Sector groups who support and engage with young people.

The online event will take place in August and will be coordinated by local officers from the Community Engagement Team with support from our national Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing division. The event will be recorded so that it can be shared with others who haven't been able to attend and will be promoted through Child Protection Committee networks as well as to parents and carers through school networks.

We are also promoting the "Click CEOP" report button which enables young people and others to report incidents of Online Child Sexual Exploitation where they may not wish to directly approach statutory services. Through the Child Protection Committee and third sector groups, the details of how to download this button to their own websites will be shared and promoted to young people.

DOMESTIC ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING FOR VETS

A training input delivered by Medics against Violence and supported by Police Scotland was delivered to local Vets in Bute and Cowal. Research has demonstrated links between animal abuse and domestic abuse and this training enables vets and their staff to recognise signs of domestic abuse, be more confident in discussing it, enabling them to better signpost individuals to support agencies. Letters have been issued to other vets throughout Argyll and Bute to offer this training to them as well.



ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD CRIME

We continue to respond to community concerns about road safety and speeding, carrying out enforcement and awareness raising activities on trunk roads and at highlighted locations throughout Argyll & Bute including a day of action in Loch Awe, Taynuilt and Connel and Dunoon. Part of this activity includes Operation Close Pass which was also held in Cowal recently. This operation highlights the space that cyclists need, to be able to use our roads safely. Any drivers who pass an unmarked police cyclist too closely, are stopped and given advice using a specially designed mat which shows them how much space a person on a bicycle needs during an overtaking manoeuvre. Police Scotland's Mounted Branch, Road Policing Unit & British Horse Society Scotland also ran the 'Lose The Blinkers' initiative to protect horse riders and horses whilst on the road. This followed an incident in Clachaig where a driver was charged with dangerous driving for passing a horse too quickly.

BIKE MARKING

In Dunoon, more than 70 bicycles were security marked recently including pupils' bikes from Dunoon Primary School. A number of bicycles were also security marked at a bike register event held at Ganavan Sands. Many other members of the community were spoken to during these events with crime prevention & rural watch advice being provided.

STAYCATIONS

Through the Economic Growth Fund, joint patrols between Police Scotland and Local Authority Wardens have been taking place throughout Argyll & Bute and will continue throughout the summer to enhance patrols out with the National Park.

THE HERBERT PROTOCOL

Police Scotland and partner agencies across the Care Sector in Argyll & Bute area have launched The Herbert Protocol. This is a well-established initiative which aims to assist in tracing missing vulnerable people who have dementia. The Herbert Protocol is a document that can be populated with vital information such as a person's description, photograph, contact details, medication required and significant locations relating to them. In the event of the individual being reported missing, the information can be quickly provided to police officers to assist with the missing person enquiry.

PREPARING FOR THE AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY (Scotland) ACT 2019

The Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 is currently scheduled to be implemented in October 2021, raising the age of criminal responsibility from 8 to 12 years of age. Training has been prepared and practitioner focus groups are underway with information portals already in existence to prepare officers for this change.

LOOKING AHEAD

- **Easing of Lockdown restrictions**
- **Resumption of events / parades**
- **Summer visitors / tourism**
- **COP26**
- **Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019**

ARGYLL & BUTE SPECIAL CONSTABLES SHORTLISTED AT LOCAL AWARDS

Two Special Police Constables (SPC) from Argyll & Bute were shortlisted for local awards hosted by Argyll Third Sector Interface. One colleague was shortlisted for providing over 20 years policing service on the Isle of Jura and another colleague shortlisted for his contribution to volunteer policing during the COVID 19 pandemic where he deployed on a full time volunteering basis with his policing colleagues on Rothesay.

BODY WORN VIDEO (BWV) CONSULTATION

We are undertaking a 12 week consultation to help shape the use of Body Worn Video by our police officers, staff and special constables when interacting with the public.
The views of everyone within Argyll & Bute are extremely valuable to us, and will be used to help inform our protocols, code of practice and training to ensure that BWV is used in an appropriate and proportionate way. In so doing, we will be better equipped to protect the public, our staff and provide best evidence at court.