



Western Division - Dunfermline Newsletter – March 2007

Inspector Fraser Downie

Welcome to March issue of the Dunfermline Newsletter. There have been a lot of changes since the last Newsletter, and I ought to begin by explaining these and introducing myself. Christine Flynn moved on to take on the role of Patrol Inspector in May last year and I was appointed to take her place. I have been learning the ropes since then, and shamefully putting off producing this newsletter – something for which I must apologise. I have twenty years service, the bulk of which I have served as a patrol officer in Dalgety Bay and Kirkcaldy. After an interlude as an Intelligence Officer in Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline I worked a couple of spells as a Sergeant in Cowdenbeath sandwiched round a very instructive period in the Divisional Licensing and Administration Unit. Thereafter I worked in Dunfermline as a Patrol Inspector for two years, before taking on the challenge of my new role in the Community Team.

It is my hope that I can continue the excellent partnership-working arrangements that Christine has established to address the issues we are all concerned about locally. The working relationship my officers have with each of the schools and the Locality Managers in our area is vital

to that and we are fortunate in the co-operation we receive there. At the same time, though, I want to underline the need for our community officers to be police officers first-and-foremost, keen to detect criminals and prevent offences. I am fortunate in this regard because the current Community Team is made up of enthusiastic, like-minded officers. I hope that we can establish a period of continuity to allow these officers to make themselves well-known in your local area and to allow them to make the difference everyone is looking for.

There have been a lot of changes over the past months, so I will take this opportunity to introduce the individual members of the team, and explain their role.

Sergeant Tom Clague

Tom has vast experience as a community officer. He has spent all of his nineteen years service in Western Division, chiefly in Dunfermline and Oakley. He has built up an excellent working relationship with the various ethnic communities in the area and has rightly received great praise for his work in that regard. Tom has been in post as Community Sergeant since his promotion two years ago.

PC Steven Miller & PC Lorraine Ferguson

Steven and Lori are the new pairing responsible for **Townhill, Kingseat, Bellyeoman, Garvock Hill, Touch and Halbeath**. They have plenty to do as a result, but among their chief priorities at the moment are anti-social behaviour and problem tenants in Touch. They are also tackling the problem of under age drinking in the area with a strong intelligence-led plan to effectively deal with one or two of the irresponsible licensees who we know are supplying liquor to the local youngsters. This has borne fruit already and reports have been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal and the Licensing Board in relation to one licensee in particular. I hope to be able to update you with more detail next month. Steven is an experienced and highly respected officer who has been with the Community Team for eighteen months now. Lori has less service, but is a thoroughly enthusiastic and valuable addition to the team since she joined us in July.

PC Claire Christie & PC Stewart Cree

This enthusiastic pairing takes care of **Abbeyview and the Eastern Expansion**.

Claire has three years Police Service and has been with the Community Team for eighteen months. She has built up good connections in Abbeyview and is becoming a well-known figure in the area. Stewart joined the team more recently, but he has previous experience as a Community Officer in Oakley. At the moment their priority is dealing effectively with some of the drug dealing in their area. They were instrumental in helping to collate evidence to allow for one house in the area to be raided and the householder reported for dealing Class A drugs. A closure order was subsequently sought and approved and, to the relief of the residents, the house now lies dormant.

Stewart and Claire are also putting in considerable time and effort to put a stop to some of the vandalism being caused by a minority of young people in the area. I will keep you informed of their progress in future publications. Both of these officers enjoy an excellent relationship with the staff and pupils of Woodmill High School. The interaction there I believe should be a model worth copying in all the schools in our area.

PC Alan Davidson & PC Carole Bishop

I was delighted to be able to reinstate these two as the partnership taking care of **Broomhead, Parkneuk, Baldridgeburn, Wellwood, Headwell, Milesmark and Rumblingwell**. Alan has technically been covering the area for the last year, but he has been in considerable

demand as an Acting Sergeant elsewhere. He has been promised a spell of continuity now on his area. Carole is a well-known face in the area and returns after being reallocated to another area and a spell away from her work. Both officers have a real commitment to their locality. Their priorities at the moment are building their profile at Queen Anne High School, and working on the antisocial behaviour and vandalism problems at Broomhead Flats and in Wellwood. They are hoping to help both areas make progress with their newly formed, or forming, Tenants Associations, which are vital to the future well-being of these areas. They are also making progress on building up a constructive relationship with staff and clients at the James Bank Hostel to address the problems that inevitably result from siting such a hostel in a busy town centre.

PC Iain Syme & PC Sean Fitzgerald

This newly formed partnership has **Brucefield, Crossford, Hospital Hill, Charleston and Limekilns** as its remit.

Sean is our latest recruit, having been drafted in during January to replace David Morman who moved on to the Safer Neighbourhood Team the month previously. Sean is a highly respected, outgoing and thoroughly well motivated officer. He has made an excellent start and I hope he will soon make a name for himself in the community. He comes to us with eight years service as a patrol officer in Dunfermline and Dalgety Bay.

Iain is a young enthusiastic officer with an outstanding

arrest record, which I am happy to say he is maintaining now that he has joined the Community Team. Their priority at the moment is to build up our links with Dunfermline High School, to address the long-term problem of antisocial behaviour in the area around Izatt Avenue, and to try to stop a trend in Crossford towards youth-related disorder and public drinking. Iain and Sean also keep a weather eye out for goings on in Pitcorthie and take ownership of the problems there when necessary.

PC Neil Harris & PC Raymond McAloon

These two form our physically imposing and very successful retail crime unit. They operate chiefly in plain clothes and maintain a very high level of detections and arrests in the **Town Centre**. Neil recently moved to the post from his position as community officer at Abbeyview, but Raymond has extensive experience and is very well known to the local shopkeepers and security staff. The priority for these officers is to maintain the level of detection while at the same time developing a strategy to challenge and deter groups of youths intent on behaving in an antisocial way in the town centre. Working with other agencies, and with departments within our own organisation they have already had considerable success in identifying two town centre addresses known to be used for dealing drugs. With the help of one of our partner agencies, Kingdom Housing, one of the tenancies was ended. The other has been raided and two separate reports sent to the Procurator Fiscal. We are working with our partners again to effect a Closure Order for the address. Drug users are having to look further afield to source their drugs as a result and the amenity of the Town Centre seems to be improving as a result. We aim to continue with this robust approach and hope to increase the uniformed presence in the area with the creation of a new post in the very near future. More on that in the next newsletter.

PC Nicola Gimson

The latest recruit to the team, Nicola has ten years of police service and is a thoroughly committed and professional officer. Her remit since joining us last month is **Pitcorthie and Pitreavie**. Her first priority will be to get a grip of the antisocial behaviour suffered by residents round the playpark at Lilac Grove, and the Turnbull Grove/Forman Grove area. She is working on a plan to make full use of the antisocial behaviour legislation at our disposal come Springtime. She will be assisted by officers from the neighbour The perennial problem of parking in Pitreavie Industrial Estate falls to her as well, and she will be taking steps to deter some of the most irresponsible parking that has been experienced there.

ONGOING INITIATIVES

Test Purchasing Scheme

Over and above the projects and priorities I have described, the Community Officers in Dunfermline and elsewhere in West Fife have been heavily involved in the ground-breaking Test Purchasing Scheme aimed at addressing the thorny problem of irresponsible licensees selling alcohol to underage drinkers. We are coming to the end of a campaign aimed at testing each and every licensed premises in the area at least once. This has proved to be a very successful operation and some notable failures have made a number of licensees, big and small, look to their responsibilities. There is no doubt we are making it harder for youngsters to source their drink, but there is still a very long way to go and this will remain a priority issue for us.

Safer Town Centre Initiative

Dunfermline has been granted Safer Town Centre status, which gives us access to funding for locally based partnership projects. Fife Constabulary is working in collaboration with Fife Council, local businesses including the Kingsgate Centre and the West Fife Community Safety Panel. The initiative's main aims are to

- create a safe and secure Town Centre
- build a stronger community through effective partnership
- reduce crime and violence
- reduce antisocial behaviour
- reduce the fear of crime
- reduce criminal opportunity
- promote a positive image of Dunfermline Town Centre.

There have been various initiatives launched under this banner, the most recent of which is the **Taxi Marshall Scheme**. Early indications are that this scheme, funded by local businesses and Fife Council, promises to be very successful. It operates in the very busy early hours at the weekend and has already brought a much greater sense of order and safety to the previously unedifying drunken scramble for taxis at that time of the night. Quite apart from the benefit to the punters and the taxi drivers, there looks likely to be a reduction in the number of arrests and the sense of disorder in the town, which should free up valuable police resources to deal with problems elsewhere in the outlying districts. This Scheme has been introduced on a trial basis only, but the benefit looks obvious and it is to be hoped that the necessary funding can be found to make this implementation permanent. .

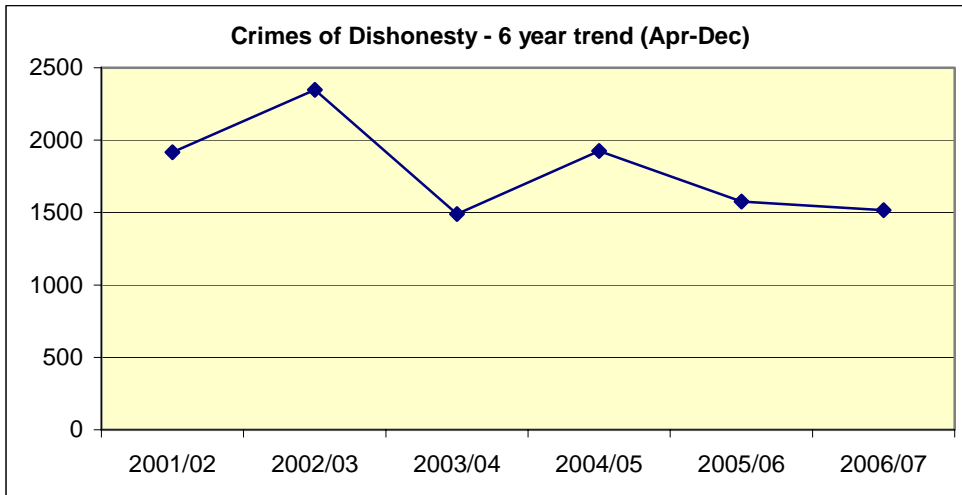
Extra resources were deployed in the town centre in the run up to Christmas, to provide a reassuring presence and to combat the seasonal shoplifting peak that every town suffers at this time of year. In addition to the extra foot patrol, a mobile unit of four officers and a sergeant has been made available to provide a robust response to antisocial behaviour anywhere in Western Division. This provision is officer intensive, but can already be seen to have great benefit.

I am hoping to be able to announce the appointment of another town centre officer next month. This will boost the presence of uniformed officers in the High Street and the surrounding area. He or she will be tasked with improving our liaison with local businesses and town centre management. I hope that this shows the commitment of Fife Constabulary to provide the reassuring presence that everyone would welcome.

Crime Figures

It is not my intention to provide screeds of figures for you – unless I hear otherwise I will limit myself to summarising the general performance of the Division and of Dunfermline within the Division. Please feel free to comment on this if you wish. Our contact details are on the foot of this newsletter, but crime figures can be easily accessed on our web site.

Once again Western Division's headline detection rate for January was a very creditable 58% for all crimes. This exceeds Force Performance targets and Western Division continue to lead the Force in this regard. An important indicator, recently released, shows that the trend in reported crimes of dishonesty in Dunfermline over the last six years is definitely downwards (see the table below), despite changes in our recording standards which mean we record a higher proportion of the minor crime reported to us. These figures do not reflect the much more dramatic fall in the number of domestic housebreakings and break-ns to cars. Times change and, now, sneak in thefts to insecure cars and houses are relatively more common. There is a message there for everyone to properly secure your property. I used to scoff at the notion that anyone would leave valuables in an insecure car, but the fact is that people do and our criminals know it. Please do what you can.



Please use the e-mail address below to contact any of the local officers – the contact will be logged and it is easier to ensure that you get a response in the time you might expect. Alternatively contact us by phone. If the officer you want is not available you can leave a message and we will get back to you.



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TIME2ACT
SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS CAMPAIGN

WE'RE ON THE WEB

www.fife.police.uk



The annual Policing Plan is the cornerstone of Fife Constabulary's business for the coming year.

The 2006/07 plan follows extensive consultation with the Force, partners and the people of Fife. This helped us to identify the local and national priorities and challenges for the Force in the year ahead.

The plan will enable us to better meet these priorities within our resources and the demands we face on a daily basis. It also allows us to work with Fife's communities and our partners to achieve our overall goal – to reinforce the quality of life for all of those who live in, work in and visit Fife.