



**BRITISH  
TRANSPORT  
POLICE**

# Safer station safer journey

## The Neighbourhood Policing Newsletter



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### Scottish Area

Autumn 2011



Jackton Police Training College in East Kilbride was swamped by over 100 young people who had signed up to attend the Scottish Youth Interfaith Conference, held on 21 June 2011. Supported by British Transport Police, the event looked to encourage an interfaith dialogue, encouraging a greater understanding of our diverse cultures within Scotland and beyond. The event was opened by Lothian and Borders Deputy Chief Constable who spoke of the continued importance of community engagement which is at the heart of the modern police service's role.

Those attending were able to choose from a number of interactive workshops which looked to discuss a range of theme topics, such as faith and identity, cultural and faith perspectives, the impact of faith in Scotland today, shared values across the faiths, hate crime and family violence.

One of the most popular workshops saw the young people hold a mock hate

crime trial which involved them taking on the role of Judge, Jury, Defence, Prosecution and of course the accused. This offered a unique opportunity for the group to explore and empathise with the effects a victim of a hate crime experiences.

There was also a wide variety of interesting stalls which looked to outline various faith traditions.



Some of the young people involved in an interactive game of giant snakes and ladders

The organisers of the event are extremely grateful to the many agencies which attended and led workshops or staffed stalls: West of Scotland Regional Equality Council, AMINA Muslim Women's Resource Centre, Islamic Awareness Scotland, Shakti Women's Aid, LGBT Youth Scotland, the Scottish Youth Parliament and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.



**0800 40 50 40 or visit [www.btp.police.uk](http://www.btp.police.uk)**

# New Cowglen Sports Complex

A massive sports field near Glasgow's Pollok Estate is to be the site of an exciting new sports facility.

Cowglen sports Club officially took over a 25 year sub-lease on the National Savings Bank playing fields in the city's South Side.

The community club is pressing ahead with its dream of establishing a range of football pitches on the 36-acre site plus hockey, netball and basketball facilities.

In addition, Cowglen's sports complex will host educational courses and talks for young people delivered by British Transport Police, fire crews, Network Rail and schools.

The Director of the Sports Complex, John Hendry, explained to the local press that "Young people will be welcomed to take part in sport and socialise in a safe environment learning new skills, keeping healthy and develop into positive citizens in the community".

Inspector Vincent Smith said that, "The British Transport Police is delighted to support this project and committed to providing educational inputs on railway safety in partnership with Network Rail"



BTP officers and staff at the site of the new complex

## Swearing in Ceremony

The Scotland Area proudly held its first ever Special Constables Swearing in Ceremony on Saturday 20 August 2011.



All 8 new Special Constables are pictured above

The ceremony took place at the Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow. Sheriff McKenzie attended the event which saw the Special Constables sworn in individually before being presented with the certificate by Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird. The new officers have successfully completed ten weeks intensive training which demonstrated a huge commitment to the British Transport Police, Scotland. The Special Constables have the same uniform and powers as regular officers and are instrumental to the success of the policing plan.

Ch/Supt Bird said, "This is a proud day for the Scotland Area, each of the Special Constables and their families who provide vital support should be congratulated in their achievements. I look forward to working with the new officers and hearing all about their experiences".

## Scottish Parliament Justice Committee

On Tuesday 13 September 2011, Temporary Superintendent Dave Marshall gave evidence



on the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Bill to a panel of MSPs, at the Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament.

In support of the Bill he said: "We welcome the introduction of any new legislation that supports our existing robust policing of all forms of hate crime, including sectarian related, perpetrated by so-called football supporters travelling on Scotland's rail network. We particularly welcome those provisions in the proposed legislation which captures supporters travelling on the rail network and who choose to conduct themselves in this manner during match days, whether it is their intention to attend the actual game or not. What really matters is that this type of behaviour remains unacceptable and must be challenged". "It is also important to realise that offensive sectarian behaviour is not restricted to supporters of Rangers and Celtic, or indeed the west of Scotland. Sadly it is our experience that it can be seen to some extent in supporters from other football clubs in Scotland, and we must be allowed to deal with the minority of fans in a consistent manner".

# Scottish Independent Advisory Group

British Transport Police's Scottish Independent Advisory Group (SIAG) currently comprises of nine people from a wide diversity of communities across Scotland. They are volunteers, able to provide independent advice to BTP

## Blackburn Youth Festival

**The Bathgate NPT attended Blackburn Youth Festival on Saturday 20 August held at Blackburn Community Centre to meet and spread the rail safety message to the children and young people of Blackburn.**

Officers were available during the day with a police display trailer with various police kits for the youths to try on while also providing discussion of the importance of rail safety. This was a partnership event with our Blackburn Community officers of Lothian and Borders and various emergency services and local representatives.



Colourful faces at the community event

and are able to reflect issues and concerns within the communities they represent and give feedback on the impact of any police activity.

SIAG members are there to help BTP develop genuine partnerships with communities. They can assist in policy development, examining procedures and practices which may impact on communities, as well as extending communication and consultation. They also have a role in providing practical help on "critical incidents" (those that are likely to have a particular impact within a community).

The SIAG help boost community confidence in BTP and they influence the policing response to community concerns and advise on effective ways of communicating with hard to reach groups.



Area Commander Ellie Bird pictured with the SIAG Members

The SIAG offers BTP a way in to the experience and perceptions of a vast range of communities across Scotland. Its role is as a critical friend – being both challenging and supportive.

There also exists the National equivalent, NIAG, established in July 2007 which meets around three times a year, and a London-wide Independent Advisory Network (IAN), which was established for London in 2006.

## Broughty Ferry Level Crossing



The NPT at Dundee has been dealing with ongoing level crossing offences at Broughty Ferry. Continuing level crossing misuse prompted the NPT to take a day of action to highlight and warn motorists and pedestrians at Broughty Ferry that misusing the level crossing is just not worth it.

On Thursday 25 August the NPT joined forces with colleagues from Tayside Police and Tayside Fire and Rescue to reinforce the safety message to drivers and pedestrians who continue to ignore warning lights and lowering barriers at the town's level crossing in an initiative which was supported by the Dundee Community Safety Partnership.

During the day of action motorists and pedestrians were stopped and advised on the correct procedure to adopt when approaching the crossing. Leaflets were also distributed.

The media interest generated also served as a good medium for getting the safety message out to the wider public. The day was hailed as a success and gave all agencies an opportunity to engage with the public. Since this awareness raising event offences at the level crossing have reduced significantly.

## Litter Initiative at Haymarket

Waverley and Haymarket stations see thousands of people travel into Edinburgh each day for business and tourism. Ten tonnes of litter is dropped in the city centre every week and it costs £2.4 million a year just to clean up all litter in the city centre.

The local council believed that by educating people on the possible penalties of littering they can reduce the problem. In July they organised an initiative to bring awareness to the litter campaign.

The litter campaign saw Environmental officers and officers from the British Transport Police working together with the help of First ScotRail at Haymarket station. Four awareness days were run to provide information to the public and 2000 'mini bins' were handed out.

During the campaign five fixed penalty notices and four verbal warnings were handed out for litter offences.

## MP on Patrol in Scotland



Cathy Jamieson MP with Inspector Ricky McCartney

### *What is the problem?*

Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituents had been in contact with BTP, train operator ScotRail and their MP, Cathy Jamieson, about issues of anti-social behaviour on trains travelling between Kilmarnock and Glasgow and back.

### *What did you do?*

The Labour MP agreed to come and see the problem for herself by going out on patrol with BTP. At the end of July, she travelled from Kilmarnock to Glasgow Central returning later in the evening.

### *What was the result?*

No serious incidents were reported, but officers were needed to help a ticket examiner deal with three men refusing to pay their fares. Ms Jamieson was also able to gauge the mood of regulars using the line.

"I was pleased to accompany BTP officers on patrol," said Ms Jamieson.

"This gave an opportunity to speak to passengers who are regular travellers, and hear their experience of disorder on the trains. While most passengers who travel earlier in the evening were relatively satisfied, it was clear that a number had concerns about drunkenness and disorder on the later trains.

"People should be able to travel without fear of intimidation or abuse from fellow

passengers, and it is reassuring to know that BTP is taking these concerns seriously."

As well as the train patrol, Ms Jamieson gave constituents the opportunity to raise concerns at a special rail surgery she hosted at Stewarton Area Centre the following week.

Area Commander, Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird, with Inspector Ricky McCartney and Sergeant Nicola Phillips attended, and were quizzed by residents, rail users and local community council members. ScotRail station manager Angus Tough was also on hand to answer questions.

## Kirknewton Level Crossing

On Monday 12 September officers from Bathgate NPT held an event at Kirknewton Level Crossing promoting safety awareness when using the crossing to both pedestrians and motorists. Representatives from West Lothian Council, Network Rail and Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade were also in attendance.

A considerable number of leaflets were distributed with Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade able to illustrate the catastrophic consequences of high speed collisions.

Despite the awful weather conditions the message was well received and the event will be repeated at other crossings in the Lothian's and Fife.



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