



BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE

Safer station safer journey

The Neighbourhood Policing Newsletter



In this issue

Scottish Area

January 2012 Issue 1

Page 1

Poster Competition focuses on Rail Safety

Page 2

Operation Merlin targets Vehicle related offences
Operation Algiers at Stirling Railway Station
Scottish Policing Awards
Widows Pride at North Berwick Railway Station tribute

Page 3

Bathgate Officers get on their Bikes
Local PC in Radio Interview
Level Crossings are life-savers

Page 4

Happy Hour meets Dundee NPT
LINK Annual Recognition Award
Level Crossing Safety
New Faces at Waverley

Page 5

Glasgow Festive Period
Cycle Theft
Springburn Railway Station
Glasgow Subway



Poster Competition focuses on Rail Safety

The winners and runners-up in a poster competition organised by the Bathgate Neighbourhood Policing Team, depicting the importance of rail safety, the benefits of rail travel and the local history in the Pumpherston and Uphall areas were announced recently.

The NPT organised the competition in partnership with train operator ScotRail and Livingston Rotary Club, for Primary 6 pupils of Pumpherston and Uphall Community Primary School as part of the 'Adopt a Station' initiative.

The designs were unveiled at a special ceremony at the school and all will now be

displayed at Uphall station. Each winner and runner-up was presented with a copy of their winning design and a prize.

Constable Lindsay Clarkson said: "The designs will not only brighten up the station but convey really important messages about keeping safe on the railway."

John Yellowlees, ScotRail external relations manager, said: "We are delighted to have these posters on display."

Harry MacPherson, of Livingston Rotary Club, added: "These posters will make the next generation of train travellers proud to use the station at Uphall."



0800 40 50 40 or visit www.btp.police.uk

Operation Merlin targets Vehicle related offences

On Friday 14 October 2011 officers from the Stirling NPT joined forces with a host of other agencies including Central Scotland Police, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) to check vehicles and individuals as they approached the Kincardine Bridge. The operation codenamed Merlin was successful and eighteen offences were detected and among them two individuals were charged with offences in relation to scrap metal.

Operation Algiers at Stirling Railway Station

Operation Algiers focuses on deterring acts of anti social behaviour both within the station and on the train to enhance the environment for both staff and passengers. On Friday 16 December and Saturday 17 December 2011 Stirling NPT in partnership with Central Scotland Police took part in Operation Algiers at Stirling Railway Station and due to the high level of police presence there were no reported incidents in relation to anti social behaviour. However, 20 litres of alcohol were confiscated to deter public order incidents occurring.

Scottish Policing Awards

On Monday 28 November 2011 PC O'Neill from Inverness NPT and his colleagues received an award under the category of making communities safer at the prestigious Scottish Policing Awards 2011, for



PC O'Neill & his colleagues receiving awards

partnership work undertaken with Network Rail and the head teacher of Smithton primary school. With two housing estates on either side of the railway line in the Smithton area, offences of trespass, line of route and low level anti social behaviour by local children posed a problem. PC O'Neill worked relentlessly to solve the issues by attending local partnership meetings, giving talks to all pupils at three local primary schools and a local high school and heightened awareness of the problem with local residents, as well as providing increased high visibility patrols. Network Rail also undertook work in improving boundary fencing in the area. Through education, engineering and enforcement the goal of creating a safer community was achieved.

The entries - Tackling Sectarian Related Football Violence on Scotland's Railways and Smithton Lineside Partnership Initiative – were judged as Commended Winners in the Making Communities Safer category.

Constable Stephen Hughes and Detective Inspector Davie Gray also received awards in respect of their efforts in Tackling Sectarian Related Football Violence on Scotland's Railways from Kenny MacAskill, the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Justice.

Widow's Pride at North Berwick Railway Station tribute



A special tribute was made to "the voice of Scottish rail passengers" at a poignant ceremony at North Berwick station on Monday 10 October 2011.

A plaque was unveiled in memory of James King, Scottish Board Member of Passenger Focus, the independent watchdog. Mr King died in June at the age of 60. His work for Passenger Focus goes back to 2002 when he was appointed a member of the then Rail Passenger Committee for Scotland. Previous to this he was Vice Chairman of the Rail Action Group East of Scotland. His extensive business and marketing expertise was greatly valued by both the board and staff at Passenger Focus. He was also a member of the British Transport Police Authority and a familiar voice on television and radio commenting on rail issues.

The plaque was unveiled by his widow Katie and Christine Knights, a former Passenger Focus member. Mrs Kings said "I am very proud and honoured that the railway industry, in association with North Berwick in Bloom, has paid tribute to James' memory in this way and at a location with which he was closely associated. He would be so chuffed." Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird added: "James was a real supporter of the Scotland area and was always there when we needed advice. Equally, in his role as part of the Authority, he kept us on our toes in the nicest possible way."

Bathgate Officers get on their Bikes

On Monday 21 November 2011 British Transport Police officers at Bathgate officially launched new police bicycles as a new tool to tackle railway crime in West Lothian. The increase in railway infrastructure alongside the recognised cycle paths means the

Local PC in Radio Interview

On 22 December 2011 PC Frazer Robertson took part in a radio interview with Allan Russell, presenter of Insight Radio's Afternoon Edition. The interview was part of a wider personal safety initiative called "Keep Safe Campaign" with Strathclyde Police and the Scottish Government. In the interview Frazer outlined the role of the British Transport Police and gave advice on general safety for travelling. The interview was an opportunity to raise the profile of our force and give safety tips to the radio station listeners. Further details can be found at www.insightradio.co.uk.



bicycle officers will be able to respond to instances of railway trespass and vandalism in the most efficient manner possible. The Bathgate NPT will engage in bicycle patrols to reduce instances of trespass and vandalism offences in West Lothian area.

A number of the offences have occurred in this area in recent months the most serious of which was on Sunday 10 July 2011 when a mountain bike was placed on the line at point near Camps Rigg, Livingston. The bicycle was struck at 9am by a First Scotrail service travelling to Edinburgh and resulted in delays to the service although the consequences of this reckless action could have been far more severe.



Officers showing off their bicycles

Sergeant Ross Kean of British Transport Police stated "The introduction of pedal cycles should allow the officers to increase their visibility at problem areas and allow them to pursue and detect offenders in difficult to reach locations. The area around Livingston North Station has traditionally been a hot spot for railway trespass and vandalism and I have no doubt the officers will make a positive impact in this area. Anyone who trespasses or engages in vandalism on the railway is putting not only their life but the lives of others at risk."

Level Crossings are life-savers



It can be frustrating when you have to wait at a level crossing. But they're only activated for the shortest possible time, to protect you from one of the busiest rail networks in the world. Thanks to them, Britain's rail network is one of the safest in the world. Accidents involving trains still occur and over a third of them happen at level crossings, often caused by people trying to beat the barriers or run red lights. Misuse of a level crossing is a criminal offence and for more serious offences you could go to jail.

British Transport Police is responsible for policing Britain's rail network and are actively involved in safety at level crossings. The Perth NPT covers the level crossing at Blackford.

Constable Mike Tunney said: "British Transport Police takes safety issues at level crossings seriously and there is an ongoing initiative to provide high visibility and covert patrols at level crossings throughout the area. The crossing at Blackford is especially dangerous as the line speed for trains passing through is 90 mph, which doesn't leave much room for error. I would urge all drivers from Highland Spring, especially those driving HGVs, to exercise extra care when using the crossing. It only takes a split second of tiredness or impatience for the outcome to be fatal."

Happy hour meets Dundee NPT

Officers from the Dundee NPT drew up a Problem Solving Plan (PSP) following reports from rail staff of problems with a specific train coming from Cupar to Dundee. This train's arrival coincided with a nightclub promotion on Wednesday nights which attracted students and young people from the Fife area into Dundee. Working with on train staff and barrier staff at Dundee, North Sector officers carried out an initial enforcement and education phase for the first four weeks of the plan. After this phase the situation was monitored for a further four weeks. The success of the PSP can be measured by the fact that there have been no reported instances of anti social behaviour since the first week of the PSP.

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LINK Annual Recognition Award



Chief Superintendent Bird receiving her award

LINK - British Transport Police's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Support Network presented Chief Superintendent Ellie Bird, Area Commander with its newly commissioned Annual Recognition Award at the recently held

annual conference in Manchester. The award was established in 2011 to officially acknowledge the efforts of an individual outside of LINK who has actively supported the group and the wider LGBT Community. The LINK Committee felt that Chief Superintendent Bird deserved this year's award for her consistent and ongoing support which included her marching at the head of the police contingent at PRIDE Scotia 2011.

Level Crossing Safety

On Monday 21 November and Thursday 8 December 2011 Kirkcaldy NPT held level crossing safety awareness events at Halbeath Level Crossing in Dunfermline and Hospital Mill Level Crossing at Springfield. Motorists and pedestrians were handed leaflets on level crossing safety and warned of the dangers of crossing misuse. The message appears to have been well received and since these events no instances of crossing misuse have been reported.

The events held at these crossing are part of a problem solving plan employed across the Lothians and Fife to educate pedestrians and motorists on the importance of using level crossings properly and ultimately to reduce instances of misuse which can have terrible consequences.

New Faces at Waverley

Waverley NPT welcomes PC Gary Dinwoodie, PC Gavin McKeivitt and PC Liam Cronin who will all be based within the station. Sergeant Jim Walker has also moved in taking over responsibility for both Waverley and the Edinburgh to Glasgow line via Linlithgow. New initiatives will include working to reduce the number of people who risk their lives crossing the line to change platforms and the persistent problem of smokers at the bottom of the ramps in particular.

The Edinburgh to Glasgow NPT now consists of PC Chris McDade and PC John McKechnie. John in particular will be a familiar face to many as he previously worked for East Coast trains. Chris recently completed a very successful initiative at Linlithgow to reduce the incidence of cycle thefts. The scheme has now been extended to improve the safety of bikes along the entire route.

Glasgow Festive Period

A Festive Policing Plan for Glasgow City Centre was signed up to by our Partners and the NPT teams to ensure a safe festive period for staff, passengers and stakeholders. This involved officers and staff providing a visible presence at mainline stations, on trains and on the subway network.

This proved to be a successful initiative with a significant drop in the number of anti social behaviour and violent offences across the city centre. It was pleasing to note that there were no assaults carried out against members of rail staff over the entire festive period.

The deployment of resources was carried out in conjunction with the Glasgow City Council's 'Playsafe' campaign which saw the introduction of 'safe zones' set up in the city centre to cope with revellers who had drunk too much or received injuries in falls. One such area was set up at the Gordon Street entrance to Glasgow Central station and involved officers from BTP and Strathclyde Police working closely with members of the Ambulance Service, St. Andrews Ambulance service, Glasgow City Council and Taxi Marshalls to ensure the welfare of revellers struggling to get home.

This important service allowed officers to deal with criminal activity rather than be tied up with drunk and injured persons who were dealt with by staff at the 'safe zone' instead. BTP are committed to ensuring those using and working on the rail network can do so without fear or concern for their safety and with minimal disruption.

Springburn Railway Station

PC MacKellaich assisted Scotrail revenue protection staff at Springburn railway station in November 2011. Due to the opening of a college near to the station it was reported to officers that students and other passengers were using the station more and avoiding paying their fare. PC MacKellaich helped carry out a revenue protection exercise at the station over two mornings. Over £400 of revenue was recovered through ticket sales which would otherwise have been lost without the presence of rail staff and officers.

Glasgow Subway

Community Intelligence is a key part of building pictures and setting out our neighbourhood priorities. For the two officers on Glasgow's Subway this is no different. The officers initiated enquiries after receiving a report of a lone female being followed by an unknown man on the subway. This included retrieving CCTV footage of the incident and the creation of an identity sought bulletin which yielded a positive result. A warrant has now been craved for the male and a report has been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal.

Cycle Theft



A Problem Solving Plan (PSP) was initiated following a spate of cycle thefts from the bike racks at Queen Street Station. PC Matt Costello of the City Centre NPT liaised closely with Scotrail to ensure that there was CCTV coverage of the area and offered crime prevention advice and leaflets to those using the facility.

Since the inception of the PSP 3 persons have been arrested and no cycles have been stolen which highlights the ongoing vigilance of officers and rail staff.

Passengers who travel on the rail network with cycles are reminded of the importance of using designated cycle racks and sturdy locks to secure them.