



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

**POILEAS ALBA**

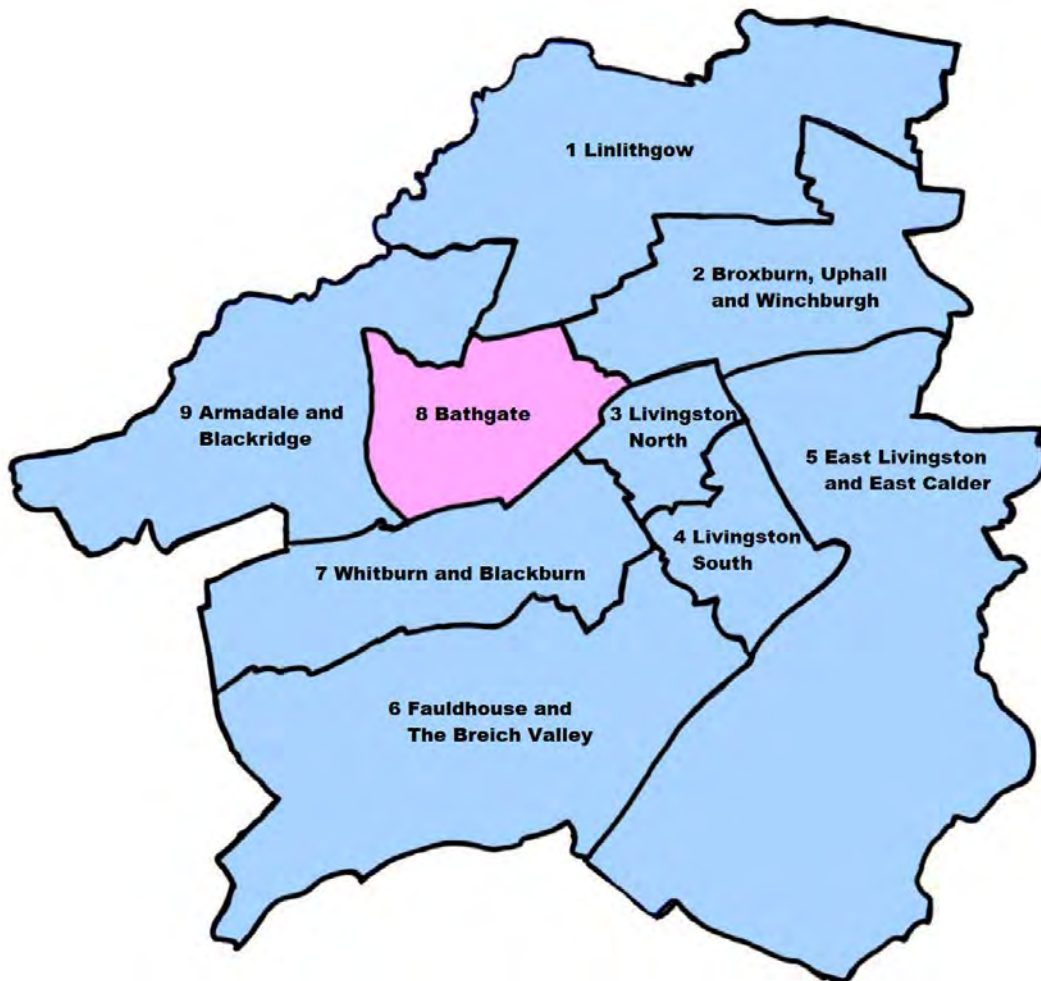
**OFFICIAL**

Item No. 5



## West Lothian Area Command

Lothian and Scottish Borders



Ward 8 Bathgate Multi Member Ward Report

Quarter 3 – 2022/2023

**OFFICIAL**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Local Area Committee with an update on performance, activities and issues across the Ward for the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Local Area Committee notes the content of the report.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	None.
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None.
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Performance relative to the same period in 2021 set out in the report.
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger; we take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society
<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	None.
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	None.
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	None.

**D. TERMS OF REPORT**

**Introduction:**

This document is intended to provide a summary of the performance of West Lothian Area Command for the reporting period of Quarter 3 2022/2023. The report references the police priorities within the Local Police Plan for West Lothian 2020-2023, namely:

- Protecting The Most Vulnerable People
- Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Reducing Acquisitive Crime
- Improving Road Safety
- Tackling Serious and Organised Crime

The data provided in this report is for information purposes to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities.

Bathgate Community Engagement Priorities:

- Violence, Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Substance Misuse
- Acquisitive Crime
- Road Safety

**Bathgate Community Officers**

PC Graeme Comrie

PC Francis Sinnet

**Executive Summary:**

Officers in West Lothian have been focused to delivering, with our key partners, our Local Policing Priorities, and meeting our commitment to Keep People Safe.

During Q3, West Lothian PSYV volunteered at a number of events throughout the county, including Linlithgow Torchlight procession, Stoneyburn Santa parade, Remembrance Sunday Events as well as helping staff at the Scottish Owl Centre with some painting work! As a result the group amassed a combined 288 volunteering hours during the quarter as well as the groups youth volunteers attending weekly Friday sessions.

Recruitment for the group also took place during Q3, with 9 new youth volunteers joining the group during Q3. The group also welcomed a new adult volunteer to the group during Q3.

- **Protecting the most vulnerable people**

Domestic abuse crimes is an area of focus in terms of providing confidence to report, undertaking professional investigations, providing victim support, pursuing perpetrators and managing offenders.

The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS) has two main approaches. The "Right to Ask" is open to anyone who has concerns about a new partner's abusive past or has concerns about another person's new partner. The "Power to Tell" is when we receive information or intelligence about the safety of a person who may be at risk, this information is thereafter disclosed to the person concerned so they are able to make informed decisions about their personal safety. During Q3, there was **48** applications in the last Quarter (**169** YTD), this is a **64%** increase on the same period last year and highlights the ongoing commitment to keeping people safe.

The ACAST mental health triage system is still widely utilised by officers when appropriate. By the end of Q3, this service was utilised 60 times providing support and advice to individuals suffering from a mental health crisis.

We again promoted the Banking protocol this quarter – a highly effective tool in the fight against fraudsters who target the most vulnerable in our communities through impersonation, courier and romance fraud. Through vigilance and in-house training, bank staff are in the ideal position to identify customers at risk and contact police with concerns. This is crucial in assisting vulnerable persons but also prevents stolen monies funding other illegal activities including drug dealing, human trafficking and terrorism.

During Q3 there has been 7 reported banking protocol related crimes, where vulnerable person/s have been targeted and circumstances have been reported to the Police. The majority of these are still under investigation.

In Q3, West Lothian PSYV volunteers were provided IAMME Peer Education training in respect of disability Hate Crime. IAMME are the charity who also provide the keep safe initiative, which is in place within West Lothian. The training provided the volunteers with a clear understanding of what disability hate crime is, albeit the principles learned are transferable to other social groups.

During October as part of Hate Crime Awareness Week and Black History Month, Police Scotland focused on the importance of reporting all incidents of physical and verbal abuse including all forms of hate, racism, homophobia, sexism and misogyny, and discrimination of any kind is utterly deplorable and unacceptable. It has no place in society.

Police Scotland officers are engaging in a rolling programme regards the carriage of Naloxone which has been used over 100 times on individuals who were at risk of death through overdose. This medication can also be carried by members of the public and is not restricted under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

- **Reducing Violence and Anti-Social behaviour**

We continue to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour in its various forms with our partners.

During Q3, we promoted “That Guy Campaign” during the annual 16 days of action in relation to violence against woman and girls. We promoted this by working with local partners, utilising Social Media, with featured videos. We worked with both Armadale and Bathgate Junior football teams to promote this initiative during matches in December.

During this campaign, Police Scotland, along with partner agencies, participated in a parade from Howden Park Centre to West Lothian Civic Centre. This was followed by a rally to mark the start of campaign in an effort to raise awareness. Throughout the 16 days, we carried out joint engagement events along with West Lothian DASAT and West Lothian Woman’s Aid. Bystander, Consent and Sextortion inputs were delivered by Officers to 200 students at both West Lothian and Oatridge Colleges.

Guy Fawkes events took place during Q3. A number of preventative activities took place in the run up to the 5<sup>th</sup> of November including numerous intervention inputs to primary, secondary and college students within West Lothian, some of which were conducted jointly with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The promotion of both Crimestoppers and Fearless campaigns were shared via Facebook, Twitter and the Neighbourhood Alert system as well as posters and letters being distributed to schools and other public buildings.

Following on from this, at the beginning of November, local community officers conducted Hi-Viz patrols in hotspot areas and joint patrols were also conducted along with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Any bonfires constructed outwith safety parameters were dismantled before the night commenced, thus resulting in less incidents as the evening progressed. There were two incidents of note during the course of the evening in Blackburn and Bathgate respectively, which resulted in one male being traced and charged with a firework related offence.

In a continuation from Q2, a further day of action was carried out along with Lothian County Buses during Q3. Known as 'Gateway Checks' officers used the bus network from outlying towns and villages that were destined for our larger town centres such as Livingston and Bathgate where regular complaints of youth ASB are being reported. Officers positively interacted with young people whilst using the bus network.

Bathgate continues to be a problematic area in regards fires and ASB within the area of Balbardie Park. Several bins appear to have been stolen from a nearby school whilst closed for the Christmas period. Taken to the park and set alight. Owing to this advice supplied to council regards bin security especially in holiday periods to prevent similar incidents.

Community officers have been conducting patrols where available engaging with youths at the Boghall drop in centre, Moorehouse School and Bathgate Academy. Patrols have also been conducted at various primary schools during drop off/pick up times owing to complaints received from parents. In the lead up to bonfire night presentations were delivered to P7 classes regarding ASB, Hate crime and Fireworks/bonfire night safety.

Joint visits with Council Safer Neighbourhood Team to address ASB reports regards specific tenants were carried out in efforts to resolve issues.

- **Reducing Acquisitive Crime**

Dealing with Acquisitive Crime to protect people by reducing the impacts of theft on individuals and communities remains a priority.

During Q3 the Police Business Resilience team at the Scottish Business Resilience Centre in Linlithgow have been involved in a large number of businesses attended and discussions about keeping their businesses safe and providing community hubs where messages can be shared, particularly with the elderly and vulnerable customers. Discussion about scammers and door to door criminals were highlighted. Additional to this, Police officers provided foot patrols and face to face positive engagement with the businesses in the community.

During the quarter, we have experienced a number of Theft Housebreakings focused on targeting unoccupied houses to steal jewellery and cars as well as businesses for their takings. During one theft housing breaking, a travelling recidivist offender known to travel the length of the country was apprehended whilst committing this crime and reports to COPFS.

Further incidents where domestic dwellings were targeted for their high value vehicles resulted in and extensive investigation where a number of these vehicles were recovered by officers a short time after the theft. A positive line of enquiry is ongoing to identify the SOCG involved. One of the accused was identified and arrested as being involved with other similar thefts in various other areas within Edinburgh and the Lothians. During another incident a further male was arrested for two domestic HB's and six businesses HB's.

Also a locus within West Lothian was identified and the recovery of a large quantity of high valued power tools, Jet Ski and associated trailer, along with 5 quad bikes having been successful secured and named suspects identified.

As a result Community Officers undertook community surgeries in Broxburn, Livingston and Bathgate, providing the community with advice on how to protect their property.

During October, our Preventions and Interventions Officer along with partner agencies, attended the 'Safe at Sky Roadshow', an initiative run by Sky to afford their staff the opportunity to receive personal safety advice along with crime prevention. Advice on securing property along with vehicle crime was provided to staff at both Livingston campus's over two days.

Within December, Police in conjunction with trading standards and Scottish Fire and Rescue attended at Dobbie's, Livingston, where crime prevention and fire safety advice, including door step crime, was provided to visitors.

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland alert scheme continues to be utilised encouraging those living in our communities to report any suspicious activity witnessed in their area. As always, all suspicious activity can be reported via 101, the 'contact us' form on the Police Scotland internet page or anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

- **Improving Road Safety**

Road safety is a priority for the police and local authority. Officers in West Lothian work in partnership with the council to address road safety issues and educate the public to prevent incidents from occurring.

Sadly Q3 we saw one fatality in West Lothian. Extensive enquiries are also still ongoing into previous fatalities from 2021/22 which is unfortunately reducing abilities to engage with the usual speeding initiatives.

We will continue to support the Roads Policing campaign calendar during 2022/23. During Q3, we supported the Tyre safety week, Fatal 4 National Speed Operation, National Get Ready for winter, Operation Drive Insured, Brake Road Safety Week and Festive Drink/Drive Campaign.

During Q3, a day of action was carried out in relation off road bikes in various locations in West Lothian. Although no offences were detected on the day, a significant officer presence resulted in disruption to those intent on using off road vehicles in a dangerous manner.

Furthermore, regular complaints of off road vehicles within public parks causing damage, resulted in local community officers along with West Lothian PSYV conducting letter drops within the respective neighbourhoods in order to raise awareness as well as encouraging local communities to report those responsible.

Training on the newly acquired speed detection equipment will commence soon whereby community officers will be in a position to address complaints of speeding within the Bathgate ward area.

- **Tackling Serious and Organised Crime**

Drugs supply has a close link to Organised Crime Groups (OCG), and is a blight on any community. We focus to those who bring harm to our communities, and particularly those who are involved in drugs supply, cultivation/production and the sale and distribution in particular, but not exclusively, of Class A drugs.

Towards the end of November, intelligence was received from a member of the public in relation to a possible large scale cultivation at an industrial unit within Livingston. Extensive enquiries were undertaken by Proactive CID resulting in a warrant being issued to be executed at the address. Within the unit a large scale cannabis cultivation was detected with an approximate street value of £1.4 million. There is a positive line of enquiry and further investigation is being conducted to trace the suspects responsible.

Whilst on high visibility mobile patrol, officers observed suspicious activity in relation to a vehicle and its occupants. Further investigation resulted in the seizure of approximately £40,000 in cash from the vehicle, both occupants reported for MDA offences.

During a welfare check on an elderly female officers received intelligence that a male within the property was in possession of various offensive weapons. On attendance it was established that the male was involved in a drug making set up within the address. A subsequent investigation resulted in a 27 year old local male being reported to COPFS for MDA. Further investigation is ongoing in relation to the offensive weapons.



During Q3 West Lothian Pro-Active Crime Team in respect to the Blackburn Initiative connected to drug supply within the Blackburn area have carried out a number of hits and they have seized 11 weapons, total value of drugs recovered £52,600 and total value of cash recovered £28,927.89.

West Lothian Pro-active Crime Team continue to develop and carry out enforcement on members of organised crime groups based in West Lothian (Operation Wingman) that are involved in the supply of controlled drugs. By the end of Q3, Op Wingman removed over £889,669.00 worth of drugs from West Lothian streets, along with nearly £136,195.00 in cash along with numerous items linked to proceeds of crime.

During Q3, the Police Scotland Counter Terrorism Liaison officer engaged with West Lothian Trading Standards requesting assistance with "Call Blockers" for the elderly residents in Linlithgow care home who have been victim of phone scam/frauds. This collaboration is currently ongoing with a view to potentially expanding the roll out of these call blockers.

In October, Police Scotland re-launched 'Fearless' in West Lothian with an event held at West Lothian College where a large number of partner agencies were in attendance. Fearless is part of the independent charity Crimestoppers and is a site where young people can visit and can access non-judgemental information and advice about crime and criminality. The site also offers young people a safe place to give information about crime 100% anonymously. In the coming months, Police Scotland will be promoting various 'Fearless' campaigns through various means as well as encouraging young people to report information using the Fearless website.

*Please note: Police Scotland have recently migrated to a new data source as its single source of truth for our reporting requirements. During the transition it was identified that significant improvements could be made to the completeness and accuracy of our geo-spatial data. Over the last eight to nine months we have been developing, deploying and quality assuring a number of processes that would improve these data. We are now in the final stages of the transition process and working on the outputs required at MMW and datazone levels. We hope to launch revised products in the next couple of months. Subsequently, MMW figures will be unavailable until validity checks have been completed.*