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**Ward 8
Community Council Report**

MID-FORMARTINE

BELHELVIE, TARVES, OLDMELDRUM AND UDNY

September 2021

1 September 2021 – 30 September 2021

****In the event of a Police non-attendance at the meeting, can you ensure that you provide any concerns raised at the meeting to the Police ASAP by email to ensure we**

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capture any issues early and can provide an update at the next meeting.**

This report covers progress we have made in dealing with your priorities for the Ward 8 areas during the period 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021. There will be no figures or comparison data provided in respect of the monthly overview.

The report aims to highlight emerging issues in your area, and to provide crime prevention advice and guidance to Community Council members and residents you represent. Our focus is to reduce crime and disorder, help create safer communities and respond effectively to local concerns.

Keeping people safe is at the heart of local Policing and our community based approach in Formartine continues to reduce crime and increase detection rates across the area.

The local priorities for Formartine are;

- * Protecting Vulnerable People
- * Serious and Organised Crime
- * Anti-Social Behaviour, Violence and Disorder
- * Road Safety and Road Crime
- * Acquisitive Crime

Protecting Vulnerable People

During September, there were a number of calls across the area relating to vulnerable people and 'Concern for Person' calls. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic it has become apparent that our community is dealing with the inevitable difficulties faced during recovery, whether this is financially or regarding mental and physical well-being. This is especially visible with the use and abuse of alcohol and controlled substances, as well as limited access to mental health services due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Formartine officers remain, in many instances, first responders to persons in crisis and are able to provide an opportunity to really listen and render assistance to those in need. However, it is the aim to continue to work closely with key partner agencies to ensure the best and most suitable help is offered. Incidents involving mental health and suicide have a significant impact on close connections and the wider community and as such a list of sources is detailed in the Advice and Prevention Section.

Police Scotland have a firm stance in dealing with perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and/or Sexual Offences. As such it is vitally important for all members of the community to know that our officers are dealing with any such incidents with the utmost diligence and professionalism, with the victim's interests being paramount.

Domestic abuse manifests itself in a number of ways and over the last few months we have seen an increase in the number of reports of coercive control and we received a further report this month.

Serious and Organised Crime

In September the increasing trend of cyber enabled crime, especially in terms of Fraud incidents in the local community continued to have a big impact.

Frauds and unauthorised access to computer terminals, and all other matters of E-crime will

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remain an area of high importance to local officers throughout the months to come. It is vital that the right information, support and assistance is provided to the local community to avoid further incidents and raise awareness.

There were incidents of Fraud reported to Police this Month that were done over the internet and as such we would like remind residents if they are in doubt, slow down, seek help from others or Police before giving any personal details over the internet.

As this remains an emerging crime trend across Formartine, 'Scam Advise' has been listed at the end of the report. All members of the public are urged to be vigilant and follow Online Safety and Security advice provided.

Should any resident of the area have information relating to controlled drugs please contact the Local Policing Team on 101 or provide the information anonymously through Crimestoppers.

Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder

This priority encompasses a wide range of offences from lower level nuisance and disorder to more serious crimes of Assault and Robbery.

In line with the above, there has been an incident reported involving youths and a serious assault. The perpetrators have been traced and charged with the relevant offences. Despite their young age, the matter is being assessed by the Youth Justice Management Unit and a report will be sent to the Procurator Fiscal. The community is reminded that any incident and sightings relating to violent crime should be reported to Police Scotland as soon as possible.

Officers have been out patrolling across the area and engaging with youths when possible. We are working closely with our Early Interventions Officer to work on Diversionary Projects. Should anyone in the communities wish to highlight ideas or be involved in organisations who wish to work with Police and other agencies in respect of Diversionary Programmes please get in touch via the CPT email address.

Despite the further relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions and the opening up of the hospitality sector, it can be positively noted that the number of incidents linked to licensed premises has not been adversely affected. We are continuing to carry out high visibility patrols where possible in an attempt to keep this low.

Police Scotland take the reports of antisocial behaviour, public nuisance, violence and vandalism very seriously and will deal with all complaints robustly. We continue to urge members of the public who witness acts of antisocial crime in our communities to get in touch and let us know.

Road Safety and Road Crime

Throughout the month of September 2021, road crime reports have remained low.

Even small amounts of alcohol can lead to diminished response times, affecting coordination, reaction times, judgment and ability to drive safely. Being convicted of a drink driving offence could mean a driving ban, disqualification, imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £5,000, as well as the loss of your motor vehicle.

Officers continue to carry out intelligence-led high visibility patrols and roadside checks to

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detect and identify offenders.

The main issues identified by members of the public are speeding in the local communities and parking issues mainly regarding vehicles obstructing pavements. Where speeding is concerned we are continuing to train more Officers on the utilisation of speed detection equipment to allow regular checks where possible within the local community.

With regards to the parking issues the Scottish Government have been working on legislation that will create a National ban on pavement and double parking to ensure our pavements and roads are safer and more accessible for everyone, more information on this can be found at <https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/transport-scotland-act-2019/parking-and-the-transport-scotland-bill/>

We continue to receive reports of excessive speed within the local community. We continue to train Officers on the utilization of speed detection equipment to allow for regular speed checks. Officers have continued to carry out high visibility patrols in key areas to act as a deterrent.

Acquisitive Crime

Acquisitive crime encompasses a number of crimes such as Theft by Housebreaking, Vehicle Crime, Shoplifting, Fraud and Theft.

There were several incidents reported to Police this month regarding thefts in the Oldmeldrum area including a Quad bike. Enquiry into this is still ongoing and all available lines of enquiry are being followed to identify the persons responsible.

Police Scotland have seen an increase Quad thefts over the last few Months in rural Aberdeenshire, I would ask residents not to become complacent and they should ensure the security of their property and vehicles as a preventative measure.

As such we continue to encourage members of the community to report any suspicious behaviour and activity to Police Scotland as soon as possible, even it appears to be minor. Sometimes the additional information, however minor, may actually provide the missing piece in an on-going investigation and can prevent further incident from occurring.

It is important to emphasize the importance of working and well-maintained CCTV systems in order to apprehend offenders. Police Scotland has a dedicated Crime Reduction Unit who are specialised in this matter and are able to provide support and assistance to businesses as well as private residences in order to maximise security measures.

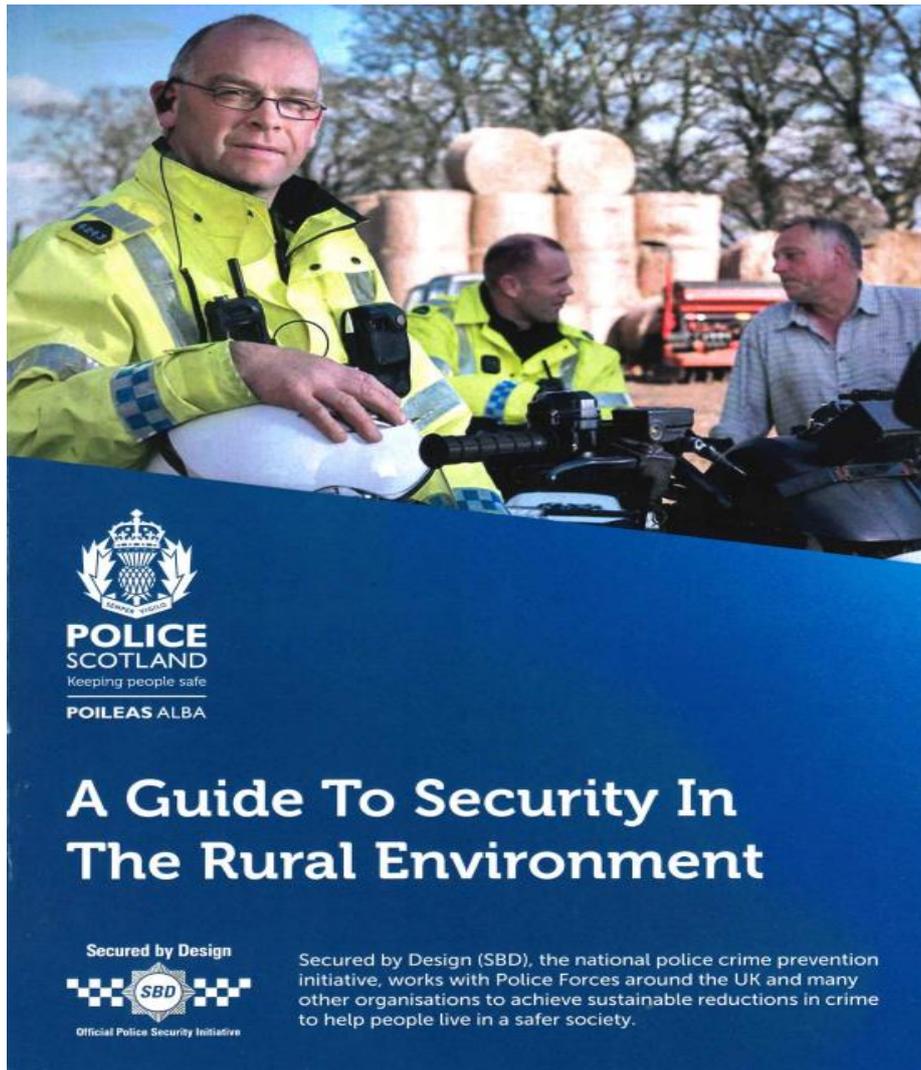
Special Constables

If you are interested in finding out more about what Police officers do in your community, have an interest in joining the regular service and would like to build some experience before hand or would just like to help keep your local community safe, then why not consider applying to be a Special Constable within Police Scotland.

For further information about becoming a Special Constable, what they do and how to apply, please visit: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/recruitment/special-constables/>

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Advice and Prevention



OUTBUILDINGS AND SHEDS

Landowners and householders too often pay little attention to garages, sheds and other outbuildings where they store expensive equipment.

- You should ensure that all external doors are of solid construction with suitable locks or a close shackle padlock and bar fitted to it.
- Consider fitting non returnable screws or coach bolts to the hinges. (When a good quality lock is fitted the hinges can become the weakest part of the door!)
- Use laminated glass for the windows and fit an internal screen or net curtain, to hide the contents from anyone outside.
- Locks should be fitted to all windows. The windows should be covered to prevent the property inside from being seen. Protective grilles should be placed on the windows if appropriate.
- All moveable property should be marked so that it can be identified as yours, whether by engraving or marking with a suitable pen.
- Never leave a garage, barn, shed or other door open as this is an open invitation to a thief. Any valuable items within may be visible and encourage the thief in.
- If you have smaller items of value, power tools etc, use secondary secure storage such as a purpose made lockable storage container securely fixed to the ground or wall.

VEHICLES

Many people in rural areas experience low levels of crime. Sometimes this can lead to a lapse in normal security precautions. Vehicles have been stolen from rural properties but by taking a few simple precautions you can make this much less likely. Vehicle owners should ensure they:

- Lock their vehicle and keep the keys secure within their home.
- Keep their homes/garages secure and lock all the doors and windows at night.
- Remove any items from within their cars and don't leave valuable items in the boot if possible.
- Ensure no items are left in view.
- Try and ensure your car or any other vehicle is parked in a well-lit area.
- Use security devices at all times (e.g. alarms, immobilisers, etc).
- If you have a garage use it every time you park your vehicle at home.
- If parking in a driveway, close any gates behind you and position your vehicle so that it is illuminated by either your own or street lighting.
- If you have a movement activated sensor on your external house light, position it, if possible, to activate when someone approaches your vehicle in the drive.

Mental Health and Suicide Awareness Contacts

Mind Infoline • 0300 123 3393 • info@mind.org.uk

Information on types of mental health problem, where to get help in your area, medication and alternative treatments, advocacy.

Mind Legal Line • 0300 466 6463 • legal@mind.org.uk

Legal advice on mental health, mental capacity, and community care human rights and discrimination/equality.

Victim Support • 0845 30 30 900 • www.victimsupport.org.uk

Free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, and anyone else affected across England and Wales.

Samaritans • 08457 90 90 90 • www.samaritans.org

Support and advice for people experiencing a crisis.

Alzheimer's Society • 020 7423 3500 • www.alzheimers.org.uk

Advice and information on supporting people affected by dementia in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Neighbourhood Return • www.ourturn.org.uk

Helps find lost people with memory problems quickly, and gets them home safely.

Self Help Services • www.selfhelpservices.org.uk

A user-led mental health charity providing primary care mental health services and self-help initiatives to people across the North.

NHS Choices • www.nhs.uk

Information on local services, including mental health services and emergency departments.

NHS24 Mental Health Hub • 111 • www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Information and advice on a wide range of health issues via telephone, email and the internet.

Local council websites • www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Will provide a directory of council services in your area.

Prevent Suicide NE App (available for free download on Android and iOS, info also available at <https://www.preventsuicideapp.com/>) – contains info on how to ask someone about their thoughts of suicide, a directory of local and national supports and an option to create a safe plan

Guidance booklets with further information are available through SAMH's website (<https://www.samh.org.uk/about-mental-health/samh-publications/suicide-publications>)

Fraud

What are scams?

SCAMS ARE FRAUD AND FRAUD IS A CRIME!

Scams make people part with their money and personal details by intimidating them or promising cash, prizes, services and fictitious high returns on investment.

Their aim is to get people to reveal their personal details, steal their information or even get them to willingly make a payment or hand over cash.

Scam facts

£5-10 BILLION A YEAR
Scams cost the UK economy £5-10 Billion a year

53% of people aged 65 or over have been targeted by a scam

5% of scam victims report the matter to law enforcement

Anyone can be a victim of a scam no matter what their background.

The people behind scams are ruthless predatory criminals.

Do you know how to spot a scam?

Not all communications that contain the items below are scams, but if you do receive something telling you to carry out one of these actions, you should be wary and get a second opinion from a trusted friend or relative:

Things to look out for

- The person contacting you is asking you for money to access your winnings.
- Too good to be true offers such as guaranteed lottery winnings.
- Pressure to respond quickly, "limited offer respond now, don't delay."
- Encouraged to keep communication secret from family or friends.
- Told to send money abroad or move your money into someone else's bank account.
- Encouraged to click on links or open attachments in emails.
- Phone calls that come from unknown or foreign phone numbers.

What are the different types of scams?

MAIL SCAMS 

Common types of postal scams include fake lotteries and prize draws, offers of investments, inheritance windfalls, health cures and clairvoyant letters.

TELEPHONE SCAMS 

Common telephone scams include investment, pension or computer support scams.

The person calling is often extremely professional and may pretend to be from a trusted organisation such as your bank, the police or another company you recognise. The caller may have some of your information to make them seem genuine.

DOORSTEP SCAMS 

Criminals pose as legitimate business people selling goods or services that are faulty, unnecessary, overpriced, poor quality or non-existent.

INTERNET SCAMS 

An email may be disguised to appear to be from your bank or other company in order to trick you into revealing personal details.

You may be asked to click on a link which takes you to a fake website where you will be prompted to enter your details.

Why do people respond to scams?

To get people hooked and responding to scams, sometimes criminals rely on loneliness, vulnerability and social isolation.

Many people are living with some form of cognitive decline, such as dementia, that may impact their ability to distinguish scams from legitimate opportunities. Others may be lonely or socially isolated so do not have anyone to turn to for a second opinion on whether an offer is genuine.

Once someone has responded to a scam, their personal details are perpetually shared and sold on to other criminals who will use this information to relentlessly target them with either scam mail, multiple phone calls, or repeat home visits in order to con, mislead, intimidate and bully the person into parting with their life savings.

How to protect yourself and others

- Say 'No' to unwanted, uninvited callers.
- If an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Don't feel pressured to make a decision, take your time and seek advice.
- Be wise to postal scams, no genuine company will ask for money to claim a prize.
- Keep your personal details safe, always make sure the person you are talking to is genuine and from a legitimate company.
- Be online savvy, criminals can replicate genuine companies, if you're unsure, don't open links or attachments in emails.
- Talk to someone you trust if you're suspicious.
- Anyone can be a scam victim. If you spot a scam, always report it.

For more information

Visit www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk

To report a fraud, contact:
Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040

To get advice, contact:
Citizen Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06

If someone is in immediate danger call the **Police** on 999

SCAMS GUIDE



Scams affect the lives of millions of people across the UK. People who are scammed often experience shame and social isolation as a result.

Friends Against Scams is a National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering people to take a stand against scams.

NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS
Scams Team

