

Homemade bonfires being removed by the council

Dangerous homemade bonfires are being removed in the run up to Bonfire Night as the latest antisocial behaviour strategy for the Capital is launched.

Community safety teams from the City of Edinburgh Council have spent the week taking down the sites across the city in a bid to prevent potential injuries and antisocial behaviour.

The move comes as the Council and Lothian and Borders Police launch their Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for Edinburgh 2010 – 2013.

The aim of the strategy is to prevent antisocial behaviour before it happens by tackling the root causes and resolving any issues at an early stage.

It will build on previous successes which have seen lower antisocial behaviour and crime rates across the city.

Recent successes in Edinburgh have included:

- * Police figures show 1,250 fewer vandalism in 2009/10 – a 14% drop compared to the year before
- * a 27% reduction in calls regarding antisocial behaviour to the Council over the past five years
- * a 75% satisfaction rate from city residents on how the Council deals with antisocial behaviour (2009 Annual Neighbourhood Survey) – up 22% from two years ago

Community Safety Leader, Councillor Paul Edie, said: “We want to be smarter in how we tackle antisocial behaviour by addressing the causes and not just the symptoms and by ensuring that communities play a prominent role in this process.

“It’s important the public don’t ignore issues affecting their community like nuisance neighbours, litter, fly-tipping, noise and graffiti, all of which can really impact on the quality of their lives and weaken communities.

“Tackling antisocial behaviour is a difficult challenge but one which can be addressed by good partnership working, moving towards long term sustainable solutions.

“The work being carried out this week by our Community Safety Wardens in dismantling the bonfires is a good example of preventing the potential for problems before they happen.”

Superintendent John Hawkins, of Lothian and Borders Police, said: “The latest antisocial behaviour strategy for Edinburgh will seek to build on the progress we have made in recent years in improving the quality of life in communities across the Capital.

“By working closely with our partners, we have worked to address the underlying causes of antisocial behaviour in our communities, and this preventative approach has yielded positive results of which we can all be proud.

“It is essential that we build on our shared achievements by reaching out further into local communities to build solid, long-lasting relationships.

“The publication of this strategy gives us a clear direction in which to proceed, and I am confident that we can sustain the progress we have made in order to give the people of Edinburgh the best possible environment in which to live, and the quality of life that we all seek.”

David Lockhart, Community Safety Manager at Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service said: “Antisocial behaviour is damaging to communities and affects how people feel about the area they live in. This week work being done by Council staff to dismantle bonfires will benefit our Service as well as

local residents.

“Every year we get hundreds of calls about nuisance and unsupervised bonfires putting real pressure on our resources at our busiest time of year. Our fire crews also see firsthand the damage caused to property and the risks of serious injury from out of control fires.

“We want to continue working with other agencies and the public to tackle the kind of behaviour we all know is detrimental to good quality of life.”

A DVD has been produced for the Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for Edinburgh 2010 – 2013 and from tomorrow a different clip highlighting the various strands will be broadcast each day on the Council website www.edinburgh.gov.uk