

Police arrange Drop in sessions for the deaf

Members of the Deaf community in Edinburgh and the Lothians have been invited to tell the police about their local needs and issues in the first of a new series of drop-in sessions.

The drop-in, held at Deaf Action's Head Office, is the first of its kind in Edinburgh. Designed specifically for Deaf and hard of hearing people, a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter will be present, and attendees will have the chance to speak to a police officer in confidence about matters affecting them or their communities. The sessions will be repeated on the first Thursday of every month.

PC Dane Harrison, Safer Neighbourhoods officer based within the centre of Edinburgh and who has received training in BSL, will attend this first drop in. 60 more police officers and staff will receive introductory training in BSL from Deaf Action in February, as part of a Disability and Communication event later this month.

Sergeant Martin White Safer Communities Department, Force Headquarters said:- 'For Lothian and Borders Police, this event is a unique opportunity to engage with members of the community who can traditionally be hard to reach.

'Throughout the Force area, there are many different communities with their own specific needs, or issues which may be related purely to where they live. No matter what their circumstances, we owe it to members of each and every community to find out what their concerns are, and do our best to address them.'

Liz Scott Gibson, Director, Deaf Action added:- 'Deaf Action is delighted to be part of this original event, and to assist in

making public services more accessible and inclusive to Edinburgh and Lothians' Deaf and hard of hearing community.

[Deaf Action](#) work throughout Scotland to raise awareness of the needs of deaf people, providing access to a local police officer in a relaxed environment will strengthen links in the community and encourage greater communication between members of the Deaf BSL community, hard of hearing people and Lothian and Border Police.'