

# Calls for CCTV for Telfer Underpass

✘ Scottish Labour candidate Sarah Boyack has backed a plan for the introduction of CCTV monitoring on the Telfer Underpass.

The former MSP claims that the underpass, which links Dundee Street to Caledonian Crescent has been notorious for crime in recent years.

Along with an incident of serious assault in 2009, a robbery last Friday has increased fears for pedestrians using the underpass, and Boyack claimed:-“This latest incident of violent crime will be greatly concerning to local residents who regularly use the underpass, once again raising the question of its safety.”

The busy underpass provides users with pedestrian access to Fountain Park, with the cinema, bowling and various pubs and restaurants which it offers.

Last week’s incident resulted in two men being attacked, then robbed of cash and mobile phones.

The council carried out a review of the underpass in 2010 and particularly looked at the records of the six previous months. Along with an incident of serious sexual assault, there were also four other significant incidents of robbery and assault, and several other minor crimes including, vandalism and house breaking.

✘ Councillor Eric Milligan told The Reporter:- “Underpasses and tunnels always present difficulties. Generally people are reluctant to use them, as you are out of sight for a short period of time.” When asked about introducing CCTV, Milligan replied:- “Anything that can be done to help, especially the

elderly, has to be introduced.”

Another underpass, on Calder Road, was considered for restructuring with a surface crossing planned as an alternative. However, these 2010 plans were rejected by transport bosses as they considered there would be too many pedestrian accidents on the road as a result.

Temporary CCTV and increased police patrolling has been introduced at the Calder Road location, however the local residents would still prefer the option of a surface crossing.

Sarah Boyack continued:-“At the Telfer Underpass, any time there is a serious incident here ,the police need to refer to CCTV from surrounding shops. I would like to see the Council working with police to install a dedicated camera monitoring the pathway.”

The 2010 review offered alternatives to CCTV for the Telfer Underpass which included increasing sightlines by removal of vegetation, introduction of formal surveillance and patrolling and improvements to lighting levels. Eric Milligan said:-“Other than increasing police patrolling, CCTV cameras are the best way to attempt to prevent future incidents.”

Lothian and Borders Police continue to appeal for information on last week’s incident at Telfer Underpass which occurred at around 11.45pm on Friday 15 April 2011. Contact them on 0131 311 3131