

Police call for information about armed robberies

Lothian and Borders Police are asking Edinburgh businesses and their clientele to be vigilant for suspicious activity in and around premises following a serious of armed robberies.

Since June, a total of six robberies have taken place within off-licences and bookmakers within the capital.

On each occasion a handgun was presented to staff before the suspect made off with sums of cash from the tills and safe.

Police continue to investigate these incidents and have deployed extra patrols in the areas. Anyone with information that can assist with these enquiries should come forward immediately.

Community Officers will visit local businesses in their area and appeal to staff and customers at to share information with one another and with police to prevent any further robberies taking place.

Information sharing between businesses in busy commercial areas in particular is being promoted to encourage staff to pass details of anyone acting suspiciously to their colleagues in neighbouring stores and to police.

Customers and local residents are also asked to report any suspicious activity in or around business premises immediately. However, the public should always consider his or her own personal safety and never approach a suspect.

Chief Inspector Kevin Murray said: 'Firstly, I would like to reassure the public that crimes involving a firearm remain extremely rare in Edinburgh and across the Force area.

'Nevertheless, when such incidents occur they can have a

significant impact upon our communities and officers will always investigate thoroughly and robustly to bring anyone found to be responsible to justice.

'A key priority for the Force is crime prevention through engagement and our officers regularly visit residential and commercial properties to offer relevant advice and guidance.

'However, another excellent way for businesses to ensure they are not targeted is through communication with one another.

'Information sharing has already proven itself to be successful with Edinburgh's pubs and clubs as part of the UNIGHT scheme and has helped to reduce and deter criminal activity in these establishments.

'We now hope that staff within the city's other businesses will find similar success by passing on details of suspicious activity to their colleagues in neighbouring premises.

'Any suspected criminal activity should still always be reported to police or alternatively the charity Crimestoppers in complete anonymity on 0800 555 111.'