

Witness appeal following spate of fires in Portobello



Police Scotland is appealing for witnesses following a number of deliberate fires within stairwells in Portobello.

Between Sunday 1st December and Monday 2nd December, six incidents were reported to police.

Local officers and the fire service responded to four fires at flat blocks in Bath Street, which all occurred between 4.55pm and 6.50pm on Sunday.

Around 40 minutes later a similar report was made at an address in Kings Place resulting in emergency service attendance.

The following day a further fire was reported within a common stair in Ramsay Place at around 3pm.

On each occasion, the flats had to be evacuated and some were treated for smoke inhalation. However, no one was injured.

Police are now conducting high-visibility patrols throughout Portobello and are urging anyone who can assist with their enquiries to come forward.

Inspector Roddy Hardy said: "Miraculously no residents in any of the addresses affected suffered any injury. However, the consequences could have been far more serious if the fires had prevented people from escaping, or if they had spread further.

"Anyone who remembers seeing any suspicious activity in or around these streets on Sunday or Monday is asked to contact police immediately.

“Similarly, anyone who can help us identify those responsible is also asked to get in touch.”

Those with information can contact Police Scotland on 101 or alternatively, the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.