

Crime in West Lothian remains at same level



Crime in West Lothian has remained at the same level as this time last year, according to the latest figures released by Police Scotland.

Q3 management information has been issued today on our website, which confirms that reported crime has remained almost static with only a 0.3% increase, which equates to an additional 17 victims.

As a result of public feedback, officers have been focusing on reducing the number of domestic housebreakings. This has led to a reduction in such crimes of almost a quarter, that's 44 less victims and almost half of all such crimes are being solved.

Local people have also identified tackling drug crime as a priority, and officers within West Lothian have reported 143 drugs supply offences for prosecution during the period. The majority of these charges are the result of information supplied by the public that allows officers to target those responsible and reduce their impact on our community.

There has been a rise in the number of serious assaults from 66 to 87 during the period, but minor assaults have fallen by 5%, with 77 fewer victims. Many such crimes are attributed to the consumption of alcohol and the night-time economy, although it is also noteworthy that a significant proportion of violent crime victims know their attacker prior to the incident and many of the crimes occur in private places. We will continue to conduct patrols, work with partners to address the impact of alcohol on behaviour and take action to deal the conduct of those who engage in violent acts.

Overall, our detection rates in relation to violent crime are high, with 84% of all serious violent crimes being solved, including 89% of all robberies, the highest rate for the past 5 years.

The area has seen a slight increase in sexual offences, with an increase of 5 victims overall, but has also experienced a 37% decrease in the number of reported rapes. Police Scotland and partners are keen to support those who are the victims of such crimes and continue to encourage victims to come forward in the knowledge that specialist officers will take all relevant steps to trace offenders, as is evidenced by a 9% increase in the number of such crimes that have been solved.

Overall, crimes of dishonesty have fallen by 2.3% (74 less), reports of vandalism have increased by 42 and reports of anti-social behaviour have reduced by 7.5% this year so far. Officers have been working hard to address these issues and there has been a 7% increase in the number of vandalisms that have been solved. We continue to work closely with colleagues in West Lothian Council to both prevent and pursue those who engage in such activity.

Unfortunately, West Lothian has seen an increase in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. Officers have been engaging with local communities to improve driver behaviour but also, and in response to public concerns, conducting enforcement activities, focussing on those areas where accidents have occurred, such as in the West Calder area.

Chief Inspector Stevie Dolan, Local Area Commander for West Lothian said: "Whilst it is disappointing that overall crime levels within West Lothian have not fallen, I hope that members of our community appreciate the significant reduction in domestic housebreakings, a crime which has a significant impact on families. Drug crime also remains a priority for policing locally and with the support of the public we will

continue to take enforcement action wherever possible, as has been demonstrated recently through the several large drug recoveries which have taken place within the area.

“Violent crime remains an issue within West Lothian and not only impacts on the victims but our wider community. Whilst our efforts to solve such crimes have led to particularly high solvency rates, I would rather that such crimes did not happen in the first place so will ensure that action continues to address problem areas, premises and people.

“I look forward within the next couple of weeks to the creation of two Community Action Teams within West Lothian which will focus on all of the above issues, in conjunction with communities and partners and hopefully make West Lothian a safer place to live, work or visit.”