

Police continue to deliver priorities in East Lothian



Police in East Lothian have released their third quarter management information, which again shows that the officers are continuing to deliver in priority areas key to achieving their commitment to keeping people in East Lothian safe.

Chief Inspector Matt Paden, Local Area Commander for East Lothian commented: "The ongoing commitment of my officers, our partners and the local community continues to pay dividends, as we work together to ensure East Lothian remains a pleasant and safe place to live."

The number of recorded domestic abuse incidents fell by 106, a decrease of 13.6% between April and December 2015 compared to the same period the previous year. Allied to an overall reduction of 12% in common assaults, a significant crime type associated with domestic abuse, this bears testimony to the effective multi-agency effort to address this priority issue.

Serious crimes of violence have also shown an overall reduction of 12%, which means six fewer victims are enduring the trauma of such incidents. Unfortunately, the number of robberies in the area is consistent with last year, however the solvency rate for these crimes is 100%, as local officers, supported by specialist officers, continue to target high profile offenders to disrupt their activity and bring them swiftly before the court when they do offend.

Although the number of reported rapes is down almost 30% (17 victims), overall sexual crimes show a slight increase on last year. Accordingly, East Lothian officers, again supported by specialist resources within the Public Protection Units, Divisional Rape Investigation Unit and Domestic Abuse

Investigation Unit, are working hard to improve solvency rates and to ensure appropriate support for victims and their families.

One area that shows a marked increase in recorded incidents is crimes of dishonesty, with 74 more victims of these offences than last year. This statistic can be almost entirely explained by a marked increase in the number of reported theft by shopliftings in the area, which are up 74% on last year. Local officers will continue to robustly pursue suspects of this crime and this is evident through the increased detection rate of almost 70%.

Local officers throughout East Lothian continue to work closely with staff at the targeted premises to ensure they receive effective crime prevention and target hardening advice, as well as support to encourage managers to work together to reduce the number of thefts by coordinating their activities and prevention plans.

There has also been a small increase in vehicle crime (10%), primarily related to a spate of thefts of and from Transit vans in East Lothian, and local officers are supporting officers from Operation Saddleworth in identifying and targeting suspects for these crimes. The increase in volume is countered to some extent by an increase in the detection rate (up almost 6% for related vehicle crime).

On a positive note, there has been an overall 15% (38 crimes) reduction in housebreaking crime in the area compared to last year, and the relative solvency rate remains consistent. Local officers, supported by targeted media releases, are actively engaging in crime prevention activities and providing necessary support to victims when required.

Officers from East Lothian have had significant success in targeting the priority areas of drug abuse and carrying of offensive weapons over this period. Due to their collective

pro-active efforts and effective use of their stop and search powers, 51 more offenders have been dealt with for related crimes compared with last year, with a notable 400% increase in the number of offences detected of carrying of knives, and 47 more offenders being identified in relation to drugs offences.

Tragically, three people have been killed on the roads in East Lothian compared to one fatality in the same period last year. Addressing this issue remains a top priority over the remainder of the year and local officers continue to work closely with Road Policing officers targeting known problematic routes at peak times in an effort to change driver behaviour, and make our roads safer for all East Lothian residents and visitors alike.

Chief Inspector Paden added: "I would like to thank the public in East Lothian for the ongoing support that they have shown and to the hard work and dedication shown by local and specialist officers. I would remind the public to call 101 for non-emergencies and general enquiries, in an emergency call 999. If you have information about a crime you can also contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111."