

Police deliver significant blow to organised crime in Scottish Borders



Police have delivered a significant blow to organised crime in the Scottish Borders following an operation to tackle the sale and supply of illegal drugs.

Around 50 specialist officers from across the East of Scotland executed search warrants at addresses in Hawick and Galashiels on Friday, March 18, as part of Operation Gatekeeper.

A total of five men aged 41, 22, 45, 49 and 22, and a 43-year-old woman were subsequently arrested for various offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act and will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal.

In addition, local officers supported by Proactive CID and the Operational Support Division, seized a quantity of cannabis with an estimated street value of £1000 as well as cannabis plants and around £400 worth of ecstasy.

Today's activity follows the arrest of a 40-year-old man in Galashiels last week who was charged with heroin supply. He was reported to the Procurator Fiscal and will appear in court at a later date.

Chief Inspector Andy McLean who is Local Area Commander for the Scottish Borders said: "Operation Gatekeeper and other similar operations have proven to be highly effective tools in combating serious and organised crime in the Scottish Borders.

"Acting on vital intelligence gathered from the local community specialist officers were today able to recover a substantial amount of illegal drugs and ensure that they were

removed from our streets.

“A total of six people have now been arrested and charged and I wish to thank the local communities for their patience and cooperation.

“Tackling drugs in the Borders remains a priority and we’re committed to doing everything in our power to ensure those involved in this potentially lethal industry are swiftly arrested.

“I would, however, stress that it’s hugely important that members of the public come forward when they become aware of criminality in their area. We will always act on any information that we receive and treat all reports with the utmost seriousness.”

Meanwhile, Community Inspector John Scott who is based in Kelso said: “Today’s activity should serve as a reminder to anyone involved in organised crime that we will do everything we can to ensure that you are arrested and brought before the courts.

“Drugs continue to blight communities up and down the country and I can reassure the public that we take a zero tolerance approach towards anyone involved in this illicit trade.

“Anyone who is aware of drug activity in their area can report this to police on 101 or anonymously through the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.”