

# Police response to last night's Crimewatch episode on child sexual abuse



Police Scotland have issued a statement in response to the Crimewatch episode last night which dealt with child sexual abuse.

Detective Chief Superintendent Lesley Boal, Head of Public Protection, Specialist Crime Division, Police Scotland, said:

“Police Scotland recognises that reporting child sexual abuse, and other forms of child abuse, can be incredibly difficult.

“Our specialist and highly experienced officers are trained to deal with all reports sensitively.

“When we receive a report of child sexual abuse, our first priority always is to ensure that there are no children at risk now. We will take steps immediately to remove or mitigate risk and any threat of harm.

“Our focus on perpetrators is evidence led and we will proactively pursue all leads and information.

“Child abuse investigations have become increasingly complex, they can span decades if the abuse is non recent, they can involve people from institutions or people in a position of trust.

“Enquiries therefore, require highly-trained investigators with a range of specialist skills who can lead on or support complex, large scale, protracted or cross-border investigations or inquiries. We work closely with Operation Hydrant to ensure that all leads are identified and

investigated fully, as with the recent reports of abuse in football.

“Anyone reporting child sexual abuse to Police Scotland can do so either directly or through one of our partners.

“The needs of a person reporting abuse are always at the heart of our investigations. We will ensure individuals are directly supported throughout the course of the investigation both by way of police contact and support from other support services or organisations.

“Information is vital in identifying those individuals who have sexually abused children and may be still in a position to do so. We would appeal to anyone with information or concerns to contact us through 101.”