

Police hunt thief who stole tapestry panel from St Giles Cathedral



Police are appealing for witnesses after a piece of art was stolen in the city centre.

The incident happened around 3.30 p.m. on Sunday 7th May at St Giles Cathedral on the High Street.

A man entered the building and viewed the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry, a collection of 305 individual tapestry panels, which was on display, before removing The Kirk tapestry panel and making off via the shop onto the High Street.

Local officers were contacted and have been pursuing various lines of inquiry to trace the male responsible and return the stolen panel.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police immediately.

The suspect is described as white, 6ft tall with a slim build, a receding hairline with short cropped hair at the sides and a fair complexion. He was wearing a long-sleeved white top, light-coloured trousers and carrying a jacket.

The stolen panel is a 50cm x 50cm white linen square displaying hand stitched religious images.

Detective Constable Chris Harding from Gayfield CID said: "The Scottish Diaspora Tapestry is a priceless piece of artwork with great historical significance and this brazen act of destruction and theft has left the owners of the tapestry and the staff at St Giles Cathedral shocked.

“As part of our inquiries we are keen to hear from anyone recognises the description of the suspect, or who is approached by anyone looking to sell or pass on the stolen panel.

“In addition, anyone with any further information that can assist with our ongoing investigation should come forward.”

Sarah O’Connor Phemister, visitors centre manager at St Giles’ Cathedral said: “We’re disappointed and very sad that a panel of the Scottish Diaspora Tapestry was stolen while on display in St Giles. We are doing everything we can to assist the police in their investigation and are hopeful that the panel will be recovered.

“This beautiful artwork has been lovingly sewn, by people across the globe as a celebration of the contributions of Scottish people and their descendants. As such, its value is beyond price.

“We appeal to whoever took the panel to return it as soon as possible.”

Those with information can contact Gayfield CID via 101 and quote incident number 2639 of the 7th May. Alternatively, make an anonymous report through the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.