

Police arrest 25 during three days of action to tackle drugs crime



Police in Edinburgh have arrested 25 people and referred 31 to support services during three days of action to tackle drug crime and drug-related harm.

For over six months, extensive planning and intensive

intelligence-gathering has been ongoing as part of Operation Threshold.

Operation Threshold is a partnership initiative dedicated to disrupting the drugs trade across Edinburgh whilst directing vulnerable people to support.

Enforcement, wherever necessary, has been taking place throughout the six month operation with a total of 95 people, aged 16-58, now arrested on suspicion of drugs supply as a result.

Since the operation began, over £1.2 million worth of drugs have been recovered and over £270,000 in cash.

Detective Superintendent Martin Maclean of Edinburgh Division said: "In Scotland in 2017, two to three people died each day due to drugs.

"Almost half the people who died were men aged 35 to 54, with Edinburgh seeing the second highest number of drug-related deaths in Scotland.

"Removing illegal drugs from across Edinburgh and Scotland, and targeting criminals who seek to profit from causing others harm, continues to be a top priority for us and for our communities.

"Criminals involved in supply make money out of addiction and vulnerability. They risk people's lives for financial gain and, often, use this to fund other forms of serious and organised crime.

"Operation Threshold demonstrates the resources and extensive intelligence-gathering techniques Police Scotland is willing to use,

and the commitment of Edinburgh Division to tackling this criminality.”

Throughout Operation Threshold 96 individuals, aged 16-55, have been directed to support services within NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council or third sector organisations.

Mr Maclean continued: “Enforcement alone is not enough to confront drug-related harm and a holistic approach is required to help people make lasting, positive changes in their lives.

“It is vital that, during enforcement activity, we identify any vulnerable adults or children at risk.

“We have seen intervention like this result in people turning their lives around – change is possible. Intensive and proactive partnership work like this strives to help those with drug dependencies in the long-term.”

Graeme Mollon is a Mental Health and Substance Misuse Locality Manager for the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership. Speaking on behalf of the Edinburgh Drug and Alcohol Partnership, he said: “When a family member uses drugs, it affects the whole family. Projects like Operation Threshold involve agencies from across the city working together to do all we can to pool resources and prevent drug and alcohol related deaths. Working in partnership with Police Scotland and others ensured a whole system approach was taken, and any vulnerable people involved as part of the enforcement were taken

into consideration and provided with support.

“The Operation builds on the close work the Edinburgh Drug and Alcohol Partnership carries out with colleagues from across the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership and the City of Edinburgh Council’s community safety team. Together, we are working towards improving access to specialist treatment, education and support to help people get out of the cycle of drug misuse and where possible, prevent people from getting involved in drug crime. The results released today speak for themselves.”

To get help or advice, please visit Edinburgh Alcohol & Drug Partnership at www.edinburghadp.co.uk

Anyone with information or concerns about drug crime can contact Police Scotland via 101, or report this anonymously to the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.