

Police urge public to stick with physical distancing

Deputy Chief Constable Malcolm Graham has asked people to stick with physical distancing to protect the NHS and save lives as Police Scotland released further information on use of emergency powers.

DCC Graham, strategic lead for Police Scotland's coronavirus response, said: "The people of Scotland have stepped forward during this public health emergency to do their part to protect the NHS and save lives.

"Community policing has a vital role to play in supporting the physical distancing legal requirement to stay at home, which remains the key intervention that can be made during this period.



SONY DSC

"In Scotland, we have been able to maintain a highly visible presence in our communities as our officers and staff work round the clock to engage with our fellow citizens, explain these requirements and encourage people to co-operate with them.

"The message is clear – you should only leave the house for very limited purposes, for example for basic necessities, such as food and medicine, for daily exercise, for medical needs or travelling

for work which
cannot be done at home.

“Avoid driving as much as possible. Use spaces close to home
for exercise and do not drive for leisure.

“Do not hold house parties with people from outwith your
household.

“As these restrictions persist and the warm weather sustains,
people must not be tempted to ignore that message.”



Thank You



Between Friday, 27 March, and 7am on Thursday, 23 April,
Police Scotland issued just 1,637 fixed penalty notices and
made 78 arrests
across the whole of Scotland.

Police Scotland’s structure has allowed the service to take
quick action during this period, including cancelling non-
essential training
and redeploying officers from back office functions or areas
which have seen a

decrease in demand to maximise resources for local policing divisions and other critical areas of frontline policing to keep people safe.

DCC Graham said: "In Scotland, we have been able to deploy a large number of officers into community policing and increased focused patrols in areas such as parks, beauty spots and town and city centres during this health emergency.

"This means Police Scotland is likely to be engaging with a large proportion of people who do not stay at home. The Chief Constable and I have been clear that everyone – including police officers – must take a common sense approach.

"If you are out and about, officers may ask you why. Please, explain your individual circumstances, listen to their instructions and obey the law. We will, as we have been required to do on a very infrequent basis, take enforcement action where necessary.

"On the small number of occasions where officers have taken enforcement action, this has largely been in response to house parties or public gatherings, while a small minority of irresponsible and selfish people who repeatedly and wilfully break the law, have now received multiple fixed penalty notices."

DCC Graham added: " The legislation and guidance was introduced quickly and everyone has had to make changes to their daily habits and significant sacrifices in their lifestyles.

“For generations, successful policing in Scotland has relied on the consent of the communities we serve, and I am grateful for the very high levels of support and co-operation we have seen thus far.

“These are however extraordinary emergency powers which were introduced quickly and the Chief Constable has commissioned John Scott QC to lead an independent, external, review our use of them.

“Mr Scott and his group can provide significant value to our thinking and operational practice. We will engage with them on an ongoing basis as we keep our values of integrity, fairness, respect and the upholding of human rights at the centre of all we do.”