

A modern Dixon of Dock Green – tribute to late police officer Iain Matthews

A tribute has been paid in The Scottish Parliament to a former community police officer who spent 25 years on the beat in Drylaw.

Iain (Stan) Matthews, a massive Hibs fan, took ill and died at Easter Road Stadium before a Premiership match against Dundee United on 14 January.

His reputation as a fair, hardworking and respected police officer who fostered excellent community relations was honoured in a motion lodged by MSP Foysof Choudhury.

The motion said: “The Parliament pays tribute to Iain Matthews, a former police constable for Lothian and Borders Police ... understands that Iain will be remembered for his dedication to the community of the Muirhouse and Pennywell area, where he served for 25 years.”

It continued: “Iain’s commitment to the community that he serviced was second to none, and that he was trusted and respected by everyone in the community, understands that Iain worked together with the community to implement changes that are evident to this day, notes that Iain was described as honest, hard-working, dedicated and caring.”



The motion records that Iain was at Easter Road with his son Daniel, and died at Easter Road “supporting his lifetime football team Hibernian FC, and hopes that the many tributes and happy memories that have been shared will provide some comfort to Iain’s family and friends at this sad time.”

Boyhood friend and police colleague, retired Chief Superintendent Jim Coupland, paid a warm tribute to Iain at his well-attended funeral at Warriston Crematorium.

The pair became friends through their fathers, both police officers who took them to matches at Easter Road as youngsters. Jim Coupland remembered: “Iain had lots of great captures (arrests) with never any fuss. He was very easy going, never judgemental and showed empathy towards people he

arrested where appropriate. He did not suffer fools, and I don't think he was ever assaulted in his 30 years' service which speaks volumes.

"His knowledge of criminals from North Edinburgh was incredible – he always wore black and white Adidas Samba training shoes and was known by the criminals as Samba.

"A model community beat cop – he really was a modern day Dixon of Dock Green. He was an old-fashioned cop in a modern, fast moving, changing world – honest, reliable, respected, compassionate, caring but above all totally professional.

"He knew his patch, he knew the good folk and he knew the villains, and knew everything that went on in Muirhouse, Pennywell and beyond. He interacted with community leaders, partner agencies and contributed significantly to community cohesion.

"Iain's personal ambition at the outset of his 30 year career was to be a great police officer. He certainly achieved this and did Lothian and Borders Police and the Scottish Police Service proud.

"It was a true privilege and honour to have known Iain, to have him as a friend and to have served alongside him as a fellow police officer. He will be sorely missed by all."

Iain is survived by his wife Hazel, son Daniel, sisters Margaret and Grace and brother Ali.