

Eight police officers injured on Bonfire Night

Police Scotland report that violence during Bonfire Night reached “unprecedented” levels of disorder. In Niddrie riot police were called in.

While initial police analysis suggests there has been no rise in recorded fireworks offences, compared to last year, on Sunday, 5 November, 2023, there were a number of serious disturbances that required a specialist police response including that in Edinburgh.

Officers received reports from members of the public at around 4.40pm about a large group of adults and young people gathering in the Hay Avenue area in Niddrie.

Around 50 youths within this group were responsible for directing fireworks at vehicles and buildings with members of the public inside and escalated their behaviour when police arrived, attacking both uniformed and Public Order Officers with fireworks, petrol bombs and other projectiles.

Detectives investigating the attacks on officers within Niddrie are actively pursuing a number of individuals, who they believe were providing local youths with fireworks and petrol bombs to target police. Inquiries into this matter are continuing.

In total, eight officers sustained minor injuries during incidents in Edinburgh and Glasgow.



While only a small number of arrests were made on the evening, as a result of the significant challenges officers faced to ensure no harm came to communities, substantial pieces of evidence have already been gathered and dedicated inquiry teams have been established to progress these investigations. It is anticipated further arrests will take place in the coming days.

Assistant Chief Constable Tim Mairs, Gold Commander for Operation Moonbeam said: “The overwhelming majority of Scotland enjoyed Bonfire Night safely and responsibly, but once again, a minority of individuals have been responsible for an unacceptable and frankly, disgusting level of disorder that left communities alarmed and police officers injured.

“We took learning from last year’s operation and enhanced the level of Public Order resources available to local policing divisions to ensure we could get these assets into locations they were needed quicker, providing a more robust response to criminal incidents.

“The lower levels of disorder experienced in other parts of the country demonstrates that this approach was the correct

one. Our partnership work ensured that there was a reduction in damage to public property and that, overall, the emergency services and wider communities were better protected.

“However, the violent nature of the situation witnessed in the Niddrie area of Edinburgh is extremely concerning, not least because it is believed young people were being actively encouraged and co-ordinated by adults to target officers while they carried out their duties.

“Investigations into the offences that arose throughout Scotland on Sunday evening are continuing and we will make every effort to ensure anyone who was involved is identified and brought to justice. If any members of the public believe they have information that can assist our inquiries, then please contact us via 101, or make an anonymous report to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

“Police Scotland officers were subjected to unprecedented levels of violence, and yet they continued to demonstrate professionalism and dedication to keeping communities safe. I am both proud of, and grateful to, all of those who were on duty and put themselves in harm’s way to protect the public during this very challenging time.”