

# Police in West Lothian welcome drop in anti-social behaviour calls

## Police have welcomed a plunge in the number of anti-social behaviour calls in an area plagued by problems in recent years

Councillors met with local police commanders following a public meeting in the Linlithgow Burgh Halls in November 2023 following a surge in reports of youth disorder in the town.

In the wake of that a number of high-profile policing strategies were rolled out including the use of special constables and joint operations with British Transport Police.

This week the Linlithgow local area committee heard that just 38 calls for ASB had been received by officers in the last three months of 2024.

Police said the drop comes on the back of proactive policing by local community teams during what is normally one of the busiest times of the year for ASB reports linked to events such as Bonfire night and the Christmas holidays.

There was also a fall across a broad range of crimes reported.

Sgt Lee Brodie told councillors: "There were just 38 calls regarding ASB incidents in the third quarter- 1 October to 31 December. That equates to one call every three days which is a

great improvement year on year.”

For the same period in 2023 there were 86. The Local Democracy Reporting Service highlighted in March last year that ASB calls dropped from 14 a week at the start of October 2023 to just 3 in the last week of that year.

For the last three months, a report by police said, the 38 calls included: “all calls with an ASB tag. This includes Public Nuisance, Noise, Drinking in Public, Neighbour Dispute, ASBO and Damage calls.”

Sgt Brodie added: “This figure will also include any youth calls, which are discussed at the weekly partnership meeting to enable capture of any youth ASB hotspots.”

The police report added: “Community Officers carried out a number of pro-active patrols in relation to other reported ASB issues. These include patrolling: High Street Linlithgow, Society Point and the North Philpstoun Bing. During these patrols officers engaged with local residents, particularly on Linlithgow High Street, providing advice.

“Officers also carried out three intervention visits, including joint visits with West Lothian council to a number of residences in Linlithgow following reports of neighbourhood issues and ASB. Appropriate advice was given by all agencies at each address, although there was no requirement for direct enforcement action.”

Crime figures presented to the local area committees now compare the quarter to the equivalent period the year before. The crime showing the biggest increase year on year in Linlithgow was housebreaking in non-dwelling premises, which was up 200%- rising from two cases to six.

There was a 6.5% increase in common assault cases- rising from 62 in October-December 2023 to 66 in the last three months of 2024. There was a 50% drop- from two to one – in serious

assaults.

Cases of vandalism dropped from 52 in the last three months of 2023 to 33 last year, down 36.5% and drug possession dropped 66.7%, down from 12 cases to four.

By Stuart Sommerville, Local Democracy Reporter