

OFFICIAL

Date: 05th April 2021



Chief Superintendent Sean Scott
Edinburgh Division
St Leonards Police Station
14 St Leonards Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9QW
Sean.Scott@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Dear Elected Members,

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge, and indeed, share your concerns in relation to the well documented instances of disorder within the Meadows, and surrounding areas, over the Easter weekend.

I think it's important to highlight that we are never complacent in relation to anti-social behaviour. All of my Community Policing Teams and I recognise the negative impact that such mindless and selfish behaviours have on community wellbeing.

As a large, open and easily accessible green space, the Meadows is routinely utilised by a range of individuals, including local residents, families, and as a meeting place for young people, and despite the challenges of the weekend, the vast majority enjoyed the good weather without issue or cause for concern.

With regards to our policing response, dedicated officers on mobile and foot patrols were deployed over the weekend. In addition to this, a suite of measures agreed at the South East's Community Improvement Partnership (CIP) were also in place including engagement with local retailers, access to the City of Edinburgh Council's (CEC) CCTV van, enhanced cover from CEC's Street Enforcement Officers, Park Rangers and Street Cleansing, third sector youth engagement provision (6VT) and increased opening hours for the on-site toilets.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

As part of the Local Area Commander's preventative communication strategy, messaging was shared with our established partnership networks including yourselves, School Link Officers, Edinburgh University and youth engagement service providers throughout the City and across other local policing divisions. This regional approach both recognised, and sought to deter, young people from out with the local area and out with Edinburgh, from meeting at the Meadows. Relatedly, British Transport Police colleagues and transport providers (buses / trams / trains) were also briefed in this regard.

Notwithstanding the significant proactive messaging, planning, consultation and resource commitment, we experienced pockets of disorder, predominantly focused during Saturday evening. Consequently, we supplemented our detail with specialist resources drawn from our regional Flexible Resource Unit, irrespective of which, we unfortunately received reports of a serious assault proximate to the Meadows, with an officer also having been assaulted.

From our enquiries to date, it would appear that there was a core group of individuals who attended at the Meadows with the express purpose of causing disorder, and whilst I can advise that a number of parties have already been identified, charged and reported, a number remain outstanding. These behaviours will not be tolerated and I have established a dedicated investigation team, formed from CID resources and community based proactive teams from across our 4 local policing areas. As a priority, officers are reviewing CCTV and social media footage to identify, trace and hold individuals to account.

Moving forward, dedicated resources will be in place throughout this week, with enhanced provision at the weekend and, having already liaised with senior colleagues from City of Edinburgh Council, their support continues.

To address legitimate community concerns around non-adherence with Coronavirus regulations, in an addition to the large acreage of the Meadows, available resource requires to flex to service our Response policing demand and other competing demands within analogous areas across the City, and whilst not exhaustive, this includes Portobello beach, Cramond and the Pentlands. Whilst recent messaging has iterated and reiterated personal, and indeed, parental responsibilities in this regard, as I am sure you will appreciate, we require to prioritise our resource to meet those incidents presenting immediate threat and risk.

In considering our policing approach, and as previously widely communicated, we will continue to engage with the public, explain the legislation and encourage compliance, reverting to enforcement under terms of the Coronavirus Regulations, or indeed, utilising Edinburgh's Alcohol Byelaw, where appropriate.

To that end, I would greatly appreciate any help you can provide in seeking compliance from your constituents around these regulations, especially encouraging parental responsibility for

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL

ensuring their children are not engaged in criminal behaviour, whether it be antisocial behaviour in open spaces or the recent prevalence of targeting our buses.

I hope the foregoing provides some context and reassurance, not only for the weekend past but for the days to come.

As ever, please do not hesitate to contact me or your Local Area Commander if you need anything further.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Scott', with a stylized, cursive script.

Sean Scott

Divisional Commander

Edinburgh Division

OFFICIAL