

Dumbreck Community Council Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Minute of Meeting of Thursday 20th September 2007

Present: James Armstrong, George Boyes, Jacqueline Geddes, Alastair Gilchrist, Carol Jacobsen, Kathleen Lanigan, Robert Mitchell, Sheila Smith, John Thomson, Sergeant Joseph Conway, Constable Stephen Deeley.

Apologies: Mair Crouch, Fiona McCreath, Constable Tom Wilson.

1. Minutes of last meeting were adopted

Proposed by George Boyes and seconded by James Armstrong.

2. There were no matters arising not on the agenda

3. Financial Situation

The only expenditure has been £10 for the hire of the session room. There is £144.82 in our bank account but some payments need to be reimbursed.

4. Police Report

Sergeant Conway introduced Constable Stephen Deeley who has been patrolling the district in the absence of Constable Tom Wilson. Since our last meeting Tom had returned to work after a successful knee operation and in August had taken leave and completed a sponsored cycle from Lands End to John O'Groats in aid of DiabetesUK. He has now been suffering from a frozen shoulder and has been transferred to less demanding duties. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Sergeant Conway has two sets of crime figures for the Dumbreck and Bellahouston area for the period 1st May to 31st August. "Crimes": to which the Police attend and "incidents": reports to the Police, a number of which are not crimes.

There were a total of 155 crimes reported; these included:

- 50 Road traffic offences (this included speeding offences on the M8 during the road works.)
- 17 Cars broken into
- 3 Cars stolen (car crime was mainly football related.)
- 2 Housebreakings (one in First Gardens and the other in Nithsdale Road.)
- 4 Drinking in public and 3 In possession of alcohol (Bellahouston Park.)

There were 497 incidents / calls received. The Police responded to all of them. Some were very minor and others not crimes. They are prioritised and the Police may not respond immediately. This number is not considered high compared to other areas. During the same period Cardonald received 1170 calls. Strathclyde Police receives over one million calls each year. Most of the 497 were general complaints about someone loitering or the behaviour of a neighbour. There were, however:

- 14 Disturbances (fights etc)
- 20 Suspect persons (most turned out to be false alarms or no-one found when Police arrived.)

The same group of youths are still in the area, during football matches, targeting cars. Their main target is satellite navigation systems but recently a brief case was stolen. The youths are easily recognisable but are clever. They are aware that Police patrol the area and watch their movements. They hide tools etc and, having found a target, work very quickly and then disappear through the gardens. Residents should phone the Police as soon as they see them acting suspiciously. James Armstrong mentioned his request for photographs of serial offenders. Photographs and cameras needed to be used more frequently. James would like to see the Police wearing small cameras attached to their helmets. Constable Deeley felt that would also be an advantage to the Police.

Robert Mitchell asked the Police for advice regarding an incident in Fleurs Avenue. A van had stopped beside him and the driver asked him if he was interested in buying a brand new three piece suite for £300. He gave a plausible reason for the sale and it was only later that Robert felt suspicious and wondered if he should report it. Sergeant Conway said there had been a number of similar incidents but they usually involved gent's suits or jackets.

The Police would like information of anything suspicious. They would also like the vehicles registration number and any other useful details. If in doubt, let the Police decide. Snippets of information could lead them to solving crimes.

Robert had been told that there was an off licence in Bridge Street where under-aged customers could buy alcohol by making an extra payment. Sergeant Conway said that a number of off licences were thought to be doing the same. It is very difficult to prove. At present the Police are not able to use youngsters but there is a law being considered by the Scottish Government which will allow for test purchases. Young people can be very manipulative and can also threaten vulnerable adults to make purchases for them. Off licence staff are being educated to question what is being purchased as well as checking age. Information regarding individual off licences should be reported to the Police or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111. If there are, say 50 or so calls regarding one shop they can target it. The Police need evidence to know where the problems are.

5. Incident Report

George Boyes reported a car stolen in Urrdale Road during the afternoon of 7th August. A man had left his son and car keys (in the ignition) in his car while he went into a house. A man got into the car, persuaded the boy to get out and drove off.

Sheila Smith reported four acts of vandalism – two separate incidents of a broken window in Dalkeith Avenue; a traffic cone scraped along the top of a car in Fleurs Avenue; and a car turned onto its side in Fleurs Avenue. In July an elderly resident in Dalkeith Avenue lost £50 to a bogus caller posing as a tree surgeon. On 3rd September there was a hit and run incident at the corner of Dalkeith Avenue and Fleurs Avenue when a driver in a car knocked a lady off her bike and did not stop.

6. Bellahouston Academy

George Boyes thanked Sergeant Conway for the extra attention given to Bellahouston School. Neighbours had noticed a difference.

Sheila Smith reported that there were still problems at Fleurs Avenue. Pupils were continually throwing stones and were responsible for broken windows and other damage. The elderly residents at the end of Dalkeith Avenue felt terrorised by them. Mr Anderson had been supportive and had spoken to a number of offenders but it has not stopped the problem. James Armstrong asked if we needed to have a meeting with Mr Anderson and the Police to sort this out. It was agreed that any action would come from community policing and, now that they were aware of the problem Sergeant Conway and Constable Deeley would spend more time in Fleurs Avenue.

Sheila Smith asked about pupils misbehaving on Dumbreck Station - there are incidents of stone throwing and running over the railway tracks. There are railway police and they work in conjunction with the Police. If there is a crime being committed the Police will attend.

Sergeant Conway asked that residents report all incidents by telephoning Helen Street Police Office on 532 5400. His direct line number is 532 5447 but he may be out on patrol. If the Police are told where and when incidents occur they can build up a picture of problem areas and send resources where they are required. The CCTV van may be available to monitor trouble spots. Truanting pupils will be returned to the school and dealt with there; the Police will deal with pupils when a crime has been committed.

Sergeant Conway will visit Mr Anderson and also the elderly residents who appear to be targeted by pupils.

The open ground at Daisy Lane has become very overgrown and provides cover for pupils to “disappear”. Sheila Smith has contacted the Parks Department to ask that the grass and shrubs be cut back. The group commended Sheila for all her work.

7. Roads

The Seaward Street diversion is now in operation and vehicles seem to be running more freely without hold-ups at the roundabout.

There have been some complaints about the speed bumps being “over-kill” but vehicles have been forced to slow down.

James Armstrong complained of a motorcyclist using Torridon Avenue as a rat run from Nithsdale Road to Dumbreck Road. It is a red and white motorcycle and the rider races down dangerously. James has so far failed to get the vehicle licence number.

8. A.O.C.B.

James Armstrong reported some illegal cutting of trees in Larch Road. Dumbreck is a conservation area and the trees are protected by law. Permission should be obtained before any work is carried out. Applications should be made in writing to Director of Planning, 231 George Street, Glasgow G1 1RX. Advice may be obtained by telephoning the Landscape Group at the Planning Department on 227 5830. “Cowboys” who call at your door should not be employed; work should be done by qualified tree surgeons to BS3998: 89 standard. Unauthorised tree work is a prosecutable offence and might incur fines of up to £20,000.

Dumbreck Community Council had asked for conditions, similar to those previously given, to be attached to the application for a multiple occupancy licence for Salters Croft. The committee granted a licence without conditions. Solicitors Harper McLeod for Sanctuary Housing told James Armstrong they would send a letter to DCC giving assurances that there would be no change in the type of resident. This has not yet been received. The only complaint made regarding the home has been about Country and Western music played loudly by the carers. Dumbreck Community Council should be informed if there are any other problems.

Charlotte Cavanagh has moved out of Dumbreck and has tendered her resignation. Alastair Gilchrist will also be moving out of Dumbreck before the next meeting. Thanks go to both for the time and effort given to the group.

Alastair will be sadly missed and we need a new chairman. Volunteers should contact Carol Jacobsen.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting for Dumbreck Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators will be on **Thursday 17th January 2008** at 7.30pm in Sherbrooke St. Gilbert’s Church.