

In Formartine local policing is informed by understanding what communities need through consulting, listening, responding and providing feedback. We asked you what our local priorities should be, and, In general terms, you told us the following were important to you.

1. Anti Social Behaviour

You told us that antisocial behaviour in general but particularly around alcohol, underage drinking, youth annoyance, vandalism and antisocial driving were of concern.

2. Road Collisions and Speeding

You told us that you were concerned about collisions and speeding within your communities. This was reflected across a great many of the communities and not local to one or two areas.

3. Community Focus

You told us that a visible police presence was important within communities to enhance community safety, well being and provide reassurance.

In the coming months I will provide you with specific examples relating to your communities but for now.....

What we have done so far

- I recognise that locally elected members play a crucial role across Formartine and over the years I have built up a very strong working relationship with the Councillors. Many of them have been 'out on patrol' with me on a Friday or Saturday evening to see at first hand the manner in which policing is carried out in Formartine. In order to further enhance the collaborative approach the Councillors and I meet every six months, with the last meeting being on 6 November. At that meeting I updated the Councillors on vandalism in the area and was pleased to inform them that reported vandalism is down some 35% on this time last year and our detection rate currently stands at over 30%. What does this mean in real terms, well, the reality is that on average 5 crimes of vandalism take place in Formartine every week, which, when you take into account the fact that the population is nearly 40,000 is a figure that reflects well on the area. I have also looked at the figures over the last 10 years which show a downward trend, for example, in the year 2000 there were 82 crimes of vandalism in Ellon compared to 49 for the same period in 2010. The figures for Balmedie show a decrease in the same period from 13 to 7 while Fyvie decreased from 15 to 3 and Turriff from 72 to 42. The only Community to reflect an increase is Oldmeldrum which increased from 9 to 17. In an effort to tackle that issue I increased the police staff in Oldmeldrum from 2 officers to 4 officers and I have seen an immediate impact with November being a 'vandalism free month' in the town.
- Speed enforcement and education has taken place in Methlick where a concern was raised over the speed of vehicles travelling past the school.
- The Community Planning process has been running for many years now in Formartine and involves a great deal of partnership working. Part of the public consultation process was to hold an annual forum in order to gauge public opinion on what matters most to local communities. The partnership benefited from this but felt that a change was needed to engage a wider selection of the public and so we decided to split the forum into a ward basis, holding one in each of the three Formartine Wards. The first ward forum was held in November in Turriff to cover the Turriff and District Ward. Sergeant Gordon Forsyth represented the police and the following areas were discussed; *Community Wellbeing, Jobs And The Economy, Lifelong Learning, Sustainable Environment and Developing Our Partnership*. The top priorities under each heading were voted on and I am pleased to report that no priorities relate to the policing of the area which, in my view, reflects the current low crime levels that we have. There was one comment passed which related to '*Concern that Turriff Police Station is not manned 24 hours and the consequences of response times*', in relation to this subject I was previously concerned over the potential lack of contact with the public at Turriff Police Office and about 12 months ago we had an intercom facility installed to enable members of the public to communicate direct with the Grampian Police Service Centre when there were no officers or staff in the station. In the first three months of it being available, the intercom was used 50 times, which equates to 50 visits to the office where previously the public would have been met with a locked door and no means to contact the police directly. In terms of actual response times - every call to the police in Aberdeenshire which requires an emergency response is critically examined on a daily basis to ensure that we are attending within designated timescales.
- As referred to in the October 2010 update 'Police Surgeries' have been held in several of the smaller communities across Formartine, including, Rothienorman and Fyvie to raise the profile of local policing. Very few issues were raised with officers however the reassurance and preventative measure of the officers presence cannot be underestimated.
- In an effort to reaffirm my commitment to local communities and ensure community consultation takes place I have now identified individual Sergeants from my Local Policing Team to be responsible, along with me, for liaison with named Community Councils and they are as follows;

Auchterless/Inverkeithny and Fisherford - Fyvie, Rothienorman and Monquhitter - Turriff and District Community Councils

Sergeant Gordon Forsyth

Belhelvie - Foveran Community Councils

Sergeant Phil Lamb

Ellon - Meldrum Bourtie & Daviot Community Councils

Sergeant Sean Reynolds

Methlick - Tarves Community Councils

Sergeant Kerry McCombie

Slains and Collieston- Udney - Ythan Community Councils

Sergeant Alun Harries

In addition to this, you can expect to see a number of other things happening in the next few weeks and months:

- A focus on speed enforcement
- Full attendance at community council Meetings
- Continued Police surgeries in smaller communities.

Further Community Planning Ward Forums