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Community Confidence Action Research – Letham Final Report



November 2023



OFFICIAL

Acknowledgements

The Project Team would like to thank everyone who participated in this project in Letham by providing their views and attending the various community conversations. We would also like to thank the community organisations and local partners who gave time to support the project and promoted our work in the community. Your willingness to be involved and your honesty during this work has been integral in supporting the continuous improvement of policing in Scotland and helping Police Scotland provide a better service to local communities.

Introduction and context

In 2021 the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the Deputy Chief Constable for Local Policing (Police Scotland) requested research be conducted exploring the relationship between deprivation and confidence in policing in selected areas of Scotland. This stemmed from national research that suggested areas experiencing deprivation are less likely to have confidence in policing.

Delivered by the SPA Strategy and Performance Team and Police Scotland's Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing Division (PPCW), Letham in Perth was selected using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and information from Police Scotland. The project was also keen to work in areas with local partners who were willing to engage in and support the work.

We used a wide definition of "deprivation" drawing from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. This index uses a range of data relating to income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing. Therefore, there can be many different reasons for an area to be identified as "deprived".

The project aimed to investigate confidence in policing in Letham and work with the community to develop initiatives to try to enhance it. A six-stage model was developed comprising of:



In total these stages took approximately 15 months to complete. During this time there have been increasing financial pressures on policing in Scotland, coupled with the rising cost of living and its effect on communities, as well as [decreases in confidence](#) in policing nationally. The wider picture on trust and confidence in policing will be explored as part of the final report for the whole project and not in this area report.

It is within this context that the [Community Confidence Action Research Project](#) delivered the aforementioned work in Letham. The following sections provide further detail on the activity undertaken as part of these six stages.

About Letham

Letham is classed as an 'Other Urban' area in **the North** region of Scotland.

Letham has an estimated population of 5,286 ([NRS, 2021](#)) and is classed as the fifth most vulnerable community in Perth and Kinross in the Improvement Service Community Outcomes Improvement Database.

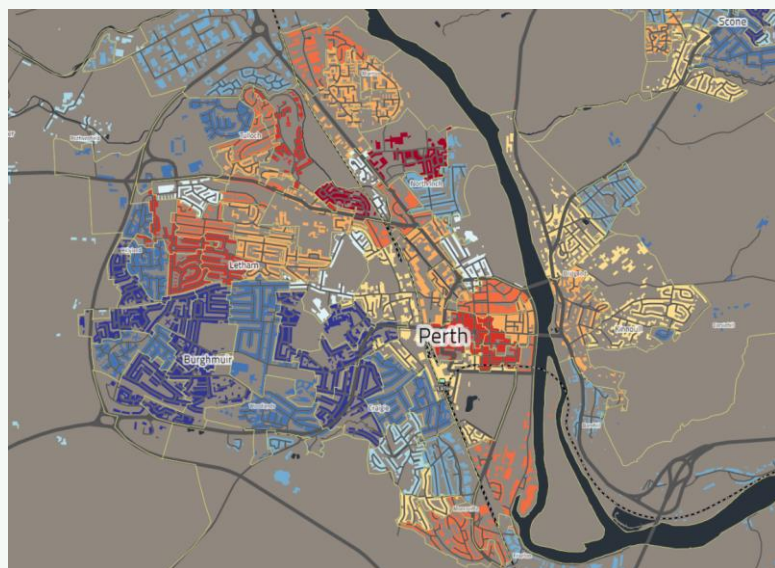
Letham is made up of eight data zones, with the following ratings on the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation \(SIMD\) 2020](#) (0 equals most deprived and 100 equals least deprived).

Data Zones in Letham	SIMD Percentile
S01011910	13
S01011913	14
S01011914	14
S01011912	26
S01011916	33
S01011915	36
S01011917	36
S01011911	59

The average percentile ranking across all the data zones in Perth and Kinross is 62. This means that Letham is classed as deprived in the SIMD when compared to Perth and Kinross.



Above – Location of Letham
- [Google Maps, 2023](#)



Above – Map of Perth - [SIMD 2020](#)

About Letham

In 2022 the majority of properties in Letham were clustered in council tax bands A, B and C (96%), with 4% in D and E and zero in F, G and H. In Perth and Kinross there is a more even spread of properties across the bands, and a higher proportion concentrated in bands F, G and H than nationally (approximately 20% compared to 14%) ([Scottish Government](#)).

Notably in relation to Perth and Kinross Council and Scotland as a whole Letham has:



Lower educational attainment ([CPOP, 2020/21](#))



A higher proportion living within 500 meters of a derelict site ([ScotPHO, 2021](#))



A higher rate per 100,000 of alcohol related hospital admissions than Perth and Kinross between 2017/18 and 2021/22 ([ScotPHO](#))



A higher rate per 100,000 of alcohol related hospital admissions than Scotland in 2017/18, 2020/21 and 2021/22 ([ScotPHO](#))



Lower life expectancy for males and females than Perth and Kinross ([ScotPHO, 2021](#))



A higher percentage of those claiming out of work benefits ([CPOP, 2020/21](#))



A higher rate of children in poverty ([CPOP, 2020/21](#))



A higher rate of early mortality than Perth and Kinross ([CPOP, 2020/21](#))

There has been an increase in identified suspected drug deaths this year in Letham. The low number of people make it improbable to draw any meaningful conclusion from the data.

The same can be said of suspected suicides as none have been identified within Letham this year. (Source: Police Scotland Management Information)

Note: Police Scotland Management Information for 2023 is for the period from January to August 2023

About Letham – Crime Data

Group 1: Non-Sexual Crimes of Violence

Although crime has increased in the past two years, this can be attributed mainly due to certain domestic abuse crimes becoming categorised as crimes of violence. There has also been an increase in threats and extortion crimes in the past year. The level of crime does continue to be higher than both the national and local authority levels.

Group 3: Acquisitive Crime

Although the acquisitive crime level for this year is higher than previous years, this can be attributed to an increase in reported fraud cases. The level of other thefts has remained relatively stable within Letham. The rate is currently on par with the local authority rate whilst below the national average for this crime type.

Group 5: Other (including drug related)

This crime group saw an increase in Letham during 2022 which can be attributed to an increase in bail offences and also an increase in possession of an offensive weapon. Although this is a higher level than Perth and Kinross, it is now at the same level as the national average for this crime type.

Source: Police Scotland Management Information

Note: Police Scotland Management Information for 2023 is for the period from January to August 2023

Group 2: Sexual Crime

Sexual crimes in Letham have continued at a lower level in the past two years. The rate of this crime type is lower in Letham than the rate for both Perth and Kinross and nationally for crimes this year.

Group 4: Damage Related Crime

The level of damage related crime has remained consistent within Letham in the past few years. The rate continues to be above both local and national levels but not by a significant margin.

Group 6: Miscellaneous Offences

This crime type is where miscellaneous offences which can be often considered as antisocial offences and include a range of offences including racial abuse, threatening behaviour and licensing offences. This crime type has seen an increase in Letham in 2022 and 2023 with the level of minor assaults and threatening behaviour charges both higher than average. This crime type is now higher than both the Perth and Kinross and national rate in Letham.

Group 7: Road Traffic

Traffic offences have seen an increase in the past two years purely down to a high number of accident offences being recorded in Letham. The levels of this crime remain lower than both the local authority and national rates for this offence type.

About Letham – Call Demand Data

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour levels have decreased in Letham in the past couple of years compared to previous levels. The rate still remains well above the local authority and national rate for this type of call.

Personal Safety

This call type remains very low within Letham with a small number of these calls recorded year on year. The rate of calls remains far lower than both Perth& Kinross and national average.

Traffic

The level of traffic related calls remain low within Letham with the rate of calls continuing to be lower than both local and national averages.

Crime

The level of crime related calls has continued to rise in the past couple of years with the level for 2023 already higher than the total for years 2018, 2020 and 2021. The level of calls continue to be at a higher rate than both Local authority and national levels.

Public Welfare

The trend of increasing public welfare calls throughout Scotland has continued particularly within Letham. The call levels for 2022 are far higher than previous years and the total calls for 2023 are showing a similar level for Letham. The level of calls in Letham continue at around double the national and local authority rate for this call type.

Source: Police Scotland Management Information

Note: Police Scotland Management Information for 2023 is for the period from January to August 2023

2. Community Confidence Survey

Community Confidence Survey

Between 20th September and 15th November 2022 a survey was conducted to gather the views of those aged 16 and over on Letham and confidence in policing. Questions were made available online via **SPA Citizen Space** page and on paper via community organisations with a freepost envelope to the SPA office for returns. There was also the option to request another format if required. In total there were 57 responses to the survey.

This was analysed alongside results for the Police Scotland [Your Police Survey](#) (there were 32 responses for Letham in 2021/22 and 41 in 2022/23).

The findings were published in [December 2022](#) and key findings included:

- Letham community cohesion appears to be strong and people in the area report a sense of safety. Nearly half of the Community Confidence survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that Letham had a sense of community, and Your Police Survey insights show that 71% of survey respondents (n=29) stated they felt safe in 2022/23.
- However, when asked to comment on views of Letham, responses were largely negative and related mainly to anti-social behaviour, and drug and alcohol use.
- High levels of confidence in policing were mostly associated with policing in general, and it is notable that the highest proportion of respondents scored 'Low' or 'Medium' in their level of confidence for all indicators. Your Police Survey data also indicates there has been an increase in those who are not confident from 19% (n=6) in 2021/22 to 41% (n=17) in 2022/23.
- Respondents in Letham generally had more neutral feelings in relation to trust and local policing, with a higher proportion scoring 'medium' across all indicators.
- Regarding performance, the highest proportion scored 'a neither good nor poor job' across all indicators. Comparatively, SPA national polling showed a higher proportion of respondents feeling negative about 'tackling anti-social behaviour' and 'bringing the community together' and a positive response for 'policing in general', 'keeping your area safe' and 'tackling crime'.
- The majority of respondents noticed no changes in local policing in the last six months, nor had their opinion of policing changed.
- The qualitative responses highlight that police presence and visibility appear to be where respondents' confidence issues lie.

2. Community Confidence Survey

Community Confidence Under 16s Survey

After permission was received from Perth and Kinross Council, between 13th and 20th January 2023 a survey was run in a local primary school to gather the views of under 16s on policing. Questions were also developed aimed at Primary 1 to Primary 3 with completion facilitated by teachers. It was at the discretion of schools on how these questions were made available to pupils and in total there were 95 responses.

The findings of these questions were published in [March 2023](#).

Key findings included:

- The majority of pupils appeared to view policing positively.
- The main suggestion across the years on what police should focus on or what would make them happier about police was more engagement in schools.
- The Primary 4 to Primary 7 answers also mentioned wanting police to focus on keeping people safe along with references to anti-social behaviour, road safety and helping with dangerous/bad people.

It should be noted that due to small sample sizes and the non-representative nature of the samples the findings of these surveys cannot be generalised to the entire Letham population.

3. Community Conversations

On February 3rd 2023, the SPA and Police Scotland held an engagement session with representatives from the community of Letham.

The day focused on the findings of the Community Confidence Survey and sought to gain insights on how people felt policing in Letham could be enhanced via table and room discussions of the following questions:

- Do you recognise Letham in these findings and in what ways?
- Is there anything you feel is missing or would want to add?
- What do you think could enhance confidence in policing in Letham?

There were approximately 30 attendees over the day including council officers, locally elected members, community group leaders and members of the public.

This was followed up with direct engagement with community groups in the area and their members asking what they felt impacted confidence in policing and how they felt it could be enhanced.

The key themes for policing that emerged from these conversations were:

- Communication and Engagement
- Education
- Partnerships
- Training
- Uniform

Those who provided feedback generally found the event useful and it was noted that it was useful to hear from Police Scotland (e.g. more information on day-to-day duties, workloads etc.). Further detail is available [here](#).

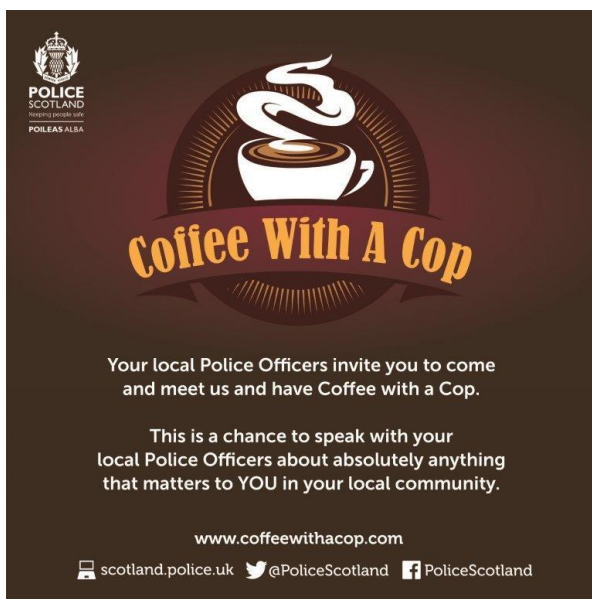
On 24th March 2023 the SPA and Police Scotland held two one-hour sessions to feedback on the initiatives developed in response to the engagement with the community. In total there were approximately 19 attendees and those who attended were enthusiastic about the initiatives that had been proposed

4. Initiative Implementation

This section outlines small-scale initiatives implemented by local policing and PPCW based on community feedback.

Communication and Engagement

- Regular Facebook/Twitter posts advertising community events.
- Officers have attended events including Coffee with a cop, LSM connections café, Letham church, Letham4all, families empowering communities and Letham primary school café.
- Three Community Police Officers named for Letham community.
- Regular cycle patrols providing high visibility patrols and engagement. Dedicated email address for public to make contact.
- New intelligence regards drug dealing and anti-social behaviour reported and number of warrants executed.



The poster features the Police Scotland logo in the top left corner. The central graphic shows a white coffee cup with steam rising from it, set against a dark brown background with a sunburst effect. Below the cup, the text "Coffee With A Cop" is written in a stylized, orange font. The bottom section of the poster contains the following text: "Your local Police Officers invite you to come and meet us and have Coffee with a Cop." followed by "This is a chance to speak with your local Police Officers about absolutely anything that matters to YOU in your local community." At the bottom, there is a website URL "www.coffeewithacop.com" and social media icons for "scotland.police.uk", "@PoliceScotland", and "PoliceScotland".



4. Initiative Implementation

Education and Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV)

- PSYV have carried out environmental visual audits, highlighting littering, vandalism and anti-social behaviour within Letham leading to local council and SEPA taking remedial actions.
- Community officers have conducted numerous school visits highlighting community anti-social behaviour, Vaping, Road Safety and alcohol.



4. Initiative Implementation

Partnerships

- Officers attended events organised by local partnerships including Letham primary café and family BBQ. Officers took a Police Vehicle and dressing up box.
- “It Will Cost You” campaign instigated with local retailers to reduce/educate the public with juveniles obtaining alcohol and its links to anti-social behaviour.
- In addition, Officers reinforced the message with regards to juveniles gaining access
- Officers regularly attended Letham housing to provide support/assistance with reports of ASB/drug dealing which has also led to useful intelligence being gleaned.



5. Evaluation

Community Confidence Evaluation Survey

Between 3rd July and 20th August 2023 an evaluation survey was conducted to gather the views of those aged 16 and over on Letham and confidence in policing. Questions were made available online via SPA Citizen Space page and on paper via community organisations with a freepost envelope to the SPA office for returns. There was also the option to request another format if required. In total there were 27 responses to the survey.

Key findings included:

- The majority of respondents were unaware of initiatives undertaken by local policing;
- Overall, rates of confidence and trust decreased between Autumn 2022 and July/August 2023. This is similar to the downward trend in confidence documented in SPA national polling between July 2022 and 2023;
- When disaggregated by awareness of initiatives, those who were aware tended to have high confidence and trust in policing and felt local police were doing a 'very good/somewhat good job'. Those who were not aware tended to have low confidence and trust in policing and felt local police were doing a 'somewhat poor/very poor job';
- While a higher proportion still feel Letham has a sense of community, there was a decrease in those who 'strongly agreed/agreed' and an increase in those who 'disagreed/strongly disagreed' between Autumn 2022 and July/August 2023. Comments largely centred around anti-social behaviour, crime and drug dealing along with some mention of fears of safety and police visibility.

5. Evaluation

Community Confidence Evaluation Under 16s Survey

- The majority of pupils who responded appeared to view policing positively with little variation from January 2023.
- It appears there has been limited awareness of initiatives that have been implemented in Letham with the main things noticed over the year groups being officers at events/the school and seeing more police cars.

Community Reflections

- The project has given a greater understanding of policing.
- Greater communication was suggested along with ideas for fostering community relationships (e.g. hot desks in community).
- The Community Police Officers were viewed positively, but concerns were raised about availability impacting benefit (e.g. pulled away for response) and nature of short-term trial.
- The PPCW outreach officer was viewed as an asset.

It should be noted that due to small sample sizes and the non-representative nature of the samples the findings of these surveys cannot be generalised to the entire Letham population and should be considered indicative only.

The full evaluation report is available [here](#) on the SPA website.

6. Project Closure and Next Steps

This publication marks the formal closure of the Community Confidence Action Research Project activity in Letham.

Regarding the future of the initiatives implemented by local policing in Letham, these will continue where possible.

At a future date, the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing Division will return to Letham to review if there are any longer-term impacts of this work in the community.