

# Larkfield Community Safety Group

November 2005

Information leaflet No.7



The Community Safety Group would like to say a very big welcome back to the local A.C. Still Pharmacy at Cumberland Walk. The pharmacy is a vital resource for the community of Larkfield especially for the elderly residents of the community who no longer have to go into Greenock or Gourock to collect their prescription. It is great to have them reopened and

Lyndsay Cowell who runs the Pharmacy is extremely pleased to be back serving the community. We would also like to congratulate Lyndsay and her team on being short listed for a Top Pharmacy award known as the Innovation and Investment in Independent Pharmacy Award.

## Environmental Art Project

Larkfield Housing Association is delighted to announce that it is currently planning its third Environmental Schools Project in consultation with the local primary schools who are all enthusiastic to be able to take part in this project again. The project will involve one class from each of the Primary Schools, Earnhill, Ravenscraig, Sacred Heart, St Gabriel's and Garvel School. Art specialists, Impact Arts, have been appointed to co-ordinate the environmental art workshops within the schools and organise an exhibition of the children's work. The school workshops are planned to run throughout January/February 2006 and the exhibition of work will be held in the Greenock Town Hall on 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2006. the Association would like to say a big thank you to all the funding contributions received to date from it's partners in the Larkfield Community Safety Group, including, Inverclyde Council Housing Services, Youth Connections, Community Police, Lower Clyde Green Space Youth Justice & Active Steps.



## Recycling

All Households in Inverclyde should have received their new recycling bins, the blue for recycling household rubbish and the brown bin for garden waste. If you are unsure of what rubbish goes in each bin an officer from the Environmental and Consumer Services Department can visit you at home and provide advice on what and how to recycle if you would like an officer to visit please contact the Environmental & Consumer Services Department on **01475 715901**. The recent initiative to improve recycling has proved to be very successful with almost 23% of waste now being recycled in Inverclyde. **John Arthur, Head of Environmental and Consumer Services** would like to thank the public for their continued support in this venture.

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# Problem Solving Unit

The purpose of the problem-solving unit is to gather data from various agencies including the police to hopefully identify patterns of repeat offending and

earmark these for early intervention. The unit is being piloted in one area initially but will be available throughout Inverclyde in the New Year, with a freephone service. A free phone number will be available for the public to report incidences of anti-social behaviour etc and this information will be noted and may match previous reports made by other agencies, a pattern may be identified, and this could refer to a named individual or a particular crime reoccurring in a specific area. It is still in the early stages and once it is up and running we will provide you with more up to date information.

# Fire Service Home Safety

Every household should have a smoke alarm fitted as not having one could cost you your life.

**All Larkfield Housing Association tenants** have Mains operated Carbon Monoxide & Smoke detectors which should not be opened up by tenants due to the risk of electrocution. Your smoke alarm should be tested once a week by pressing the button to check that the alarm sounds.

The Smoke Alarms outer casing should be lightly vacuumed once a year and any faults should be reported to Larkfield Housing Association immediately. **For owner occupiers** the smoke alarm that you have will be battery operated and the battery should be changed once a year and the unit lightly vacuumed at the same time. Remember 1 in 4 smoke alarms fail to operate as the battery has gone flat. So make sure it's working.

- **A smoke alarm buys you valuable time.** If your smoke alarm goes off alert everyone and if you can get out of the house, don't go looking for the fire.
- **When your out stay out and dial 999.** If you are unable to get out of the house gather in the one room preferably with a telephone, don't open any room door that feels warm to the touch, once in a safe room close the door and pack it with towels and pillows to keep smoke out, open a window and shout for help then wait for the fire brigade.
- **Never jump straight out of a window,** first of all throw pillows, cushions down to break your fall and lower yourself down before dropping to the ground.
- **Plan your escape route now and practice this as a family.** If you don't have a smoke alarm fitted or would like to discuss any of the above issues you can contact the Community Fire Officers on **722223**.

# Community Safety

There has been a high incidence of wheely bin fires in this area, the statistics show that the fire and rescue team have attended approximately 400 fires of this nature between Greenock and Gourock with Larkfield situated between the two towns. This is an area of high

concern as people don't seem to be asking for a replacement bin from the council and rubbish is being left out in the street or being burnt, making the area look very untidy and causing damage to the environment. Another concern is that when the fire brigade are attending calls they are receiving abuse from very young people throwing stones at the fire engine and in some areas there have been very violent attacks, leaving the fire service with no choice but to request a police escort whilst attending less serious incidences in particular areas in Inverclyde. The Fire service has been working with the local primary schools to educate children about the seriousness of a fire and to discourage them from making hoax calls. But there still seems to be some children who have no respect for the fire crews and are verbally and physically attacking them and their equipment when they are attending callouts. The fire service has a very important job to do and it could be the difference between **life and death**; we ask that they are given respect and space to do their job and we urge you to ask your children to do the same.

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# Community Police



Issues of anti-social behaviour within the Larkfield, Braeside and Branchton areas of Greenock are on the decline, however a recurring issue often brought up by residents is that of under age drinking and youngsters apparent ease at obtaining alcohol. There are presently a number of initiatives being undertaken in an effort to reduce the access to alcohol by under eighteen's. It is hoped that parents, who play a vital role in this issue, that find their sons or daughters under the influence of alcohol, question them as to where, when and who they got the alcohol from. It is also an offence under Section 68(1) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 1976 for any person to sell alcohol to a person under 18 years of age.

It is an offence under Section 68(3) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 1976 for any adult to purchase alcohol for persons under 18 years of age.

Any person who has information in relation to under eighteen's getting access to alcohol can report the information, anonymously if required, to **Sergeant Campbell Crawford of the Greenock South West Community Policing Unit. Tel. 492655 (24hrs answerphone)** Residents can be rest assured all information passed will be investigated and action taken if appropriate.

A new Area Community Policing Initiative is being set up from the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2005 the District is being split into five sections for policing purposes and Larkfield comes under Greenock South West and is led by Inspector Charlie Paul and included in the team are Sergeant Campbell Crawford, Constable Mark Moone, Constable Vincent Ivanski, Constable Alan Dunsmuir, Constable Graham Harron, Constable Tom Welsh, Constable Lynda McDermid, Constable Karen McCrystal, Constable Jane Perrat.

The aim of the project is to give officers ownership of their areas and bring them into closer contact with the communities. Community Participation is the key to making Inverclyde a safer place in which to live, work and play and the public should report crime in the area to their local police office.



## Noise Enforcement Service

A night noise service is now available to all households in Inverclyde which has been effective from 1st October 2005. The service is most useful for dealing with neighbor noise particularly noise from music, televisions and persistent DIY.

Officers from Environmental and Consumer Services will assess neighbor noise complaints and, if appropriate, refer them for access to the night noise service. Complainants can then call the service out of hours when they can hear the noise and the night noise team can visit. If complaints are found to be valid then officers have the power to issue fixed penalty notices for anti-social noise. The households that are causing the noise pollution will receive a warning notice in the first instance and thereafter if the noise continues and is deemed to be of an unsatisfactory level then a fixed penalty notice will be issued by the night noise service the next day with the Police. They will also be able to confiscate equipment that is the source of the problem e.g. hi-fi's TV's etc.

**All complaints regarding this problem should be made to Environmental and Consumer Services on 714200 during office hours.**

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# Community Wardens

The partnership between the agencies dedicated to improving Larkfield continues to provide an impressive return on crime figures with a significant fall recorded. A year on year comparison has shown a reduction in incidents of 40%. This is a very impressive result and more importantly, who knows how many sorry tales now won't be told. Whilst there still is crime and disorder, residents can take heart that things are going in the right direction and the trick now is not to lose impetus.

Community Wardens remain completely committed to Larkfield and Braeside and patrol the areas every day of the year, with some new faces now visible. Of course, there are mixed views on the effectiveness of the wardens and there are still some who don't understand that they are not the police; they are not a substitute for the police, nor do they have police powers. Their value lies in being a visible and approachable presence in our streets, allowing our people to feel more safe and secure. Perhaps the best indicator to date is the reduction in crimes and incidents. Wardens are contacted about all sorts of community problems every day, be it fly-tipping, graffiti, vandalism, disorder and much more.

The local press has published many letters heaping praise on the community warden service. The role of the wardens is to visit the location see the nature and extent of the problem and to action the right people to deal with it. For example, the police might be needed if there is an incident involving violence. The cleansing department will be required to remove fly-tipping. Wardens will make enquiries and if anyone responsible for illegal dumping of rubbish in your community is identified, a prosecution may well follow. As professional witnesses, wardens have saved local residents from having to appear to give evidence in many cases.

The council is well aware of concerns about under age drinking. The public needs to know that this issue is taken seriously and the Social Protection Team, in co-operation with the police, have raised this issue with local businesses.

Inverclyde Council has obtained 12 antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs). An ASBO is only one of the tools in the box. There are a number of conditions that must be satisfied before it is appropriate to apply for an ASBO, including considering other measures first. Many people forget that the council does not issue ASBOs. An application must be made to the sheriff court, and ASBOs, like any other court case, can be defended. The other measures include mediation, interdict and acceptable behaviour contracts. Striking the right balance, the Social Protection Team has taken on more than 350 cases in the last 20 months and measures its success in those cases closed without having to resort to court action.

## Smart Water

This project was delivered to all tenants in the Larkfield area and will now be extended to all Larkfield Housing Association owner occupiers in the coming months. Smart Water is a liquid forensic coding system. It is used to mark personal property. If an item which has been marked is stolen and recovered, it enables the police to directly trace protected items back to their owners.

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