



COMMUNITIES HARDEST HIT BY VIOLENT CRIME TO BENEFIT FROM PROCEEDS OF CRIME

Around £2m of criminal's ill-gotten gains is to be reinvested in Scotland's six local authority areas hardest hit by violent crime, Justice Minister Cathy Jamieson announced today.


The money – seized from the crime world's Mr Bigs under the Proceeds of Crime Act – will be reinvested in two wards in each of the following local authorities – Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverclyde, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, and West Dunbartonshire.

This funding will support local projects which will reduce crime, improve people's quality of life and visibly repair the harm caused to communities through the impact of serious violent crime. These will be tailored towards local needs and circumstances but will be based on four key themes.

- Sports activities, such as Twilight basketball and other activities which will give disaffected youngsters something positive to do in their spare time and divert them away from antisocial behaviour and crime
- Vehicle-related initiatives such as mobile CCTV vans, graffiti clean-up vehicles, and community transport buses.
- School packages, for example after-hours clubs or youth outreach work to preventing those at risk of offending from falling into a life of crime.
- Running targeted and refreshed local 'Drug Dealers Don't Care Do You' campaigns to encourage local communities to help get more dealers off the streets.

Speaking on a visit to Govan High School, which is within one of the wards to benefit from the funding, Justice Minister Cathy Jamieson said:

"Today we are sending a clear message to criminals – in Scotland crime doesn't pay but criminals do. And we will ensure that the people living in our most vulnerable communities



see these criminals and dealers empty their pockets back into local resources.

“These so-called Mr Bigs owe a debt to those they have preyed upon. We have put the legislation in place to ensure that happens and now its payback time. Those communities hardest hit by serious, violent crime will now be helped to repair that damage and lead safer daily lives - all funded from criminals’ pockets.

“This initiative also sends a strong message to young people, who may look up to criminals living it up on their ill-gotten gains, that a life of crime simply does not pay.”

Ian Reid of Scottish Sports Futures said:

"There is something beautifully poetic about the fact that the expansion of Twilight Basketball is being funded by the proceeds of crime. At every level people understand the significance of "Pay Back".

“For us at Scottish Sports Futures the reward is that these funds will allow us to take an activity which works and has already had significant positive effects on young peoples lives, into those areas of Scotland worst affected by criminal activity.”

Mr Graeme Pearson, Director of the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency said:

“Today’s announcement represents the tangible result of what can be achieved when the powers afforded by the Proceeds of Crime Act are used to visibly strengthen and repair those communities hardest hit by drug dealing and violent crime.

“By using the full weight of the Proceeds of Crime Act to bear down on serious organised crime, the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency will continue to systematically identify and eradicate the profit from the heart of serious organised crime.”