

July Ward Update

Hello everyone and welcome to your monthly Regency Ward update – brought to you this month by PCSO Kerry Keane.

We are now coming to the peak of summer, and with this comes a huge increase in anti-social behaviour across the city centre and beyond. It has been an extremely busy month for the Regency area in particular – we are lucky to have the main seafront on our doorstep, but this also brings a lot of extra footfall, both with locals and people on holiday/day trips, which in turn can lead to some additional issues for us as you would expect. We naturally expect a spike in reports during the warm weather spells, but this can be really demanding for us to manage.

One of the biggest issues in recent weeks has been youth disorder – and is something we have had to put a lot of resources into managing. With the end of year 11 for many of our local schools, this led to many arranged gatherings – several of which took place outside Shelter Hall – on the seafront lower right by the West Street underpass. These gatherings often involved 100-200 youths, many of whom were under-age drinking and generally being very difficult for us to deal with, and largely impacting the local businesses in this area. Due to the frequency of these gatherings, we responded by hugely increasing our presence with mobile and high-visibility patrols, both at the Shelter Hall location, and the nearby Hove Lawns which also became a focal point for us. It seemed that news of the school gatherings spread to out of town, with intel suggesting youths were travelling from as far as Crawley to be involved, and at times we were dealing with kids from year 8 and 9 as well.



Open drug use continues to be a huge issue city wide and it seems as fast as we deal with one area, an identical report will come in from somewhere else. We are doing our best to patrol as many areas of concerns as often as time permits – it can be difficult to be in the right place at the right time! Again, a lot of this isn't helped by the recent heatwaves – it does seem that a bit of sun sends often has a detrimental effect on some people and they lose all inhibitions and become more care-free and public in their extracurricular activities.

We are still very much aware of the issues surrounding both youths and drug use in the Clarence Square area, and PCSO Soffe is continuing to a lot of work around this. The same applies to Russell Square where we will be increasing our patrols due to the above issues.

We are very aware of the feelings of Regency Square residents about the persistent camper van that enjoys parking up on the garden space. We fully understand the frustrations – it frustrates us as well! It is a very tricky situation to deal with, and responsibility does largely sit with the council and city parks enforcement team. However, we are not diminishing responsibility and will happily engage with the owners of the van and offer some friendly words of advice when we catch them there.

As we have had a run of hot days recently, a gentle reminder to keep yourself safe if swimming in the sea, and don't forget the sunscreen! Additionally, please be mindful of walking dogs in the heat – if the pavement is too hot for the back of your hand, it is definitely too hot for your dogs' paws! We see a lot of dogs struggling out in the heat, particularly down the seafront, and it is often better to leave them in the cool of your house. It goes without saying to be extra careful and vigilant of leaving dogs in cars as well.

We really do appreciate all the reports though and each one is taken seriously and helps raise our awareness of problems and areas that we might otherwise not know about. The public play such a key role in our job as PCSOs, and the information we gain from you all is invaluable to us so a huge thank-you from all of us who work on Regency Ward.

Moving forward, our top priorities for the Ward remain the same – youth disorder and open drug dealing/usage.

Enjoy your summer and stay safe!