

# West Bromwich Neighbourhood Policing Team

Email: [westbromtown@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:westbromtown@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

*Entries in this publication generally relate to events that have occurred over the previous 6 days. Personal details of individuals related to our dealings are not disclosed, in compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998). If you have any further queries, please email the team, and we will get back to you.*

## COVID-19: LOCKDOWN UPDATE

After a lengthy break, the vast majority of shops, restaurants and pubs around West Bromwich have re-opened, attracting significant crowds to the town centre for the first time this year. Since 12<sup>th</sup> April, extra officers have been committed across the force, to allow for a safer return to pubs, restaurants etc., whilst still complying with the latest government guidelines in regards to social distancing, wearing PPE, mass gatherings and more.

With venues such as gyms and outdoor hospitality returning, there has been a slight uptake in demand for police response, although thankfully, such incidents have been well managed. Nonetheless, we will remain particularly vigilant over the next few months, especially as we move towards the start date of the European football championships.

## ANOTHER WEEK, ANOTHER CANNABIS FARM

As predicted last week, we have managed to find a cannabis farm for the third week in a row! Following several months of building intelligence around, officers from Force Support conducted a flyover of the premises using a drone equipped with thermal imaging cameras. This showed an unusual heat signature coming from the property, which along with the previous intelligence reports, proved to be sufficient evidence for the courts to issue a search warrant for the premises under Section 23, Misuse of Drugs Act.

At approximately 0730 on the morning of Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May, officers broke down the door and entered the property, waking up one occupant in the process! The male was detained, and promptly arrested, after confirming that three bedrooms of the property contained mature cannabis plants, days away from being ready to harvest – and a further room contained dozens of seedlings. Further enquiries showed that the electric mains in the property had been bypassed, meaning that the male is facing charges of cultivation of a class B drug, along with abstracting power. Along with this, the male will be referred to immigration, after discovering the male had entered the country illegally. All in all, not a great morning for him...



Cannabis plants such as these (picture taken from the cannabis farm searched on 11<sup>th</sup> May) are worth approximately £1000 each, meaning each one seized is a major dent in the operations of organized criminal groups.

### DEDICATED OPERATION GUARDIAN PATROLS FOLLOWING SMETHWICK MURDER

Following the murder of 17 year old Derlarno Samuels in Smethwick earlier this month, there has been a significant increase in policing presence in the local area. This has involved officers conducting foot patrols around urban areas, open spaces (including Dartmouth Park), town centres and areas around schools and colleges. Of course, with West Bromwich town centre having two sixth forms and a college, a significant amount of Project Guardian resources have been invested into the area.

In the days following the murder, the majority of the Neighbourhood team were deployed on foot patrols around the town centre. The significant police presence (and several police vehicles being parked in a visible location) proved to be a sufficient deterrent, as no weapons were recovered from stop searches on these days!

Mr. Samuels' killer was arrested the day after his murder, however, our patrols will continue for the time being whilst tensions amongst some groups within the community remain high.



### OFFICERS WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RSPCA, FOLLOWING CONCERNS FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

Over the past few days, officers from West Bromwich NHT have been working alongside an Inspector from a local branch of the RSPCA, to establish the owner of a puppy – after shocking footage was brought to our attention of the animal being treated in an abusive manner. A warrant for the animal's seizure was issued by the courts, and officers responded to the address of the male, who had been identified from the video, to seize the animal. Unfortunately for us, the dog was not present at the address, so it could not be rescued at that time – however, we have received credible information as to where the puppy does reside, following an interview of the male. As such, we will look to apply for a new warrant – and hope for a better result on our next search!

### ARREST FOLLOWING EARLY MORNING WARRANT

Tuesday proved to be a very busy morning for the team, as prior to conducting the search warrant on the cannabis factory, the team was deployed to arrest a male in West Bromwich from his home address, for a charge of wounding and a recall to prison. Officers arrived at the male's home address just after 06:40, and after surrounding all exits to the property, ordered the male to come to the door. Whilst he did not initially respond to officers, he did open the door, after we made it abundantly clear that we would break down the door if we had to! The male was arrested and remanded into custody.

