

Crackdown on Notorious High Street Cannabis Farms

Police Crack Down on Notorious High Street Plagued by Crime

A high street known for its empty shops, street drinking, and cannabis farms is now the focus of an intensified police crackdown. Authorities aim to restore order and improve the area's reputation with increased patrols and targeted enforcement.

Dedicated Police Unit Deployed for High Street Patrols

A special team of six police officers and a sergeant has been assigned to conduct more visible patrols along Bangor's high street in Gwynedd. North Wales Police have also launched a series of raids over the past two weeks, resulting in 17 arrests.

Bangor's Strategic Location Makes It a Hub for Drug Trade

According to Supt Arwel Hughes, while Bangor is not necessarily worse than other areas in North Wales in terms of drug crime, its geographical position makes it a key transit point for drug supply routes to Gwynedd and Anglesey. This has made it a focal point for law enforcement efforts.

Expanded Police Presence in Surrounding Neighborhoods

As part of an operation named Renew Bangor, the Hirael and Maesgeirchen areas will also see an increased police presence. Officers aim to build a comprehensive understanding of the illegal drug trade and address related issues. By gathering intelligence, they hope to disrupt criminal networks and deter future crimes.

Efforts to Improve High Street's Reputation and Safety

The initiative seeks not only to curb drug-related activities but also to enhance Bangor's high street image. Previously, the area had been plagued by issues such as street drinking and antisocial behavior, contributing to its declining appeal.

Recent Cannabis Farm Raids Reveal Crime in Abandoned Shops

In the months leading up to April 2023, four cannabis farms were discovered and raided in Bangor. Notably, two of these operations were housed within abandoned shop buildings on the high street, further highlighting the area's vulnerability to organized crime.

Mayor of Bangor Welcomes Renewed Police Action

Mayor Gareth Parry acknowledged longstanding concerns regarding cannabis farms operating in plain sight. He expressed relief that the crackdown is now in motion, reassuring residents that these efforts will help restore confidence in the city's safety and security.

Crime Reduction Success in Rhyl Provides Hope for Bangor

A similar police strategy implemented in Rhyl last year resulted in a 14% decrease in crime. Authorities are hopeful that Bangor will experience comparable improvements through increased patrols and proactive community engagement.

Police Aim to Make Bangor a Safer and More Attractive City

While officers cannot directly address the issue of empty shops, they are committed to making Bangor a safer and more appealing place for businesses and residents. A heightened police presence is expected to deter crime and encourage investment in the area.

Local Business Owners Support Greater Police Visibility

Nick Antoniazzi, a café owner in the city center, has witnessed various issues on the high street over the years. He emphasized the importance of police officers engaging directly with the community, noting that their presence on foot rather than in patrol cars will have a more meaningful impact.

New Policing Approach Focuses on Community Collaboration

Supt Hughes defended the police's track record in tackling crime but acknowledged the need for a fresh approach. Historically, making numerous arrests provided short-term relief but failed to deliver lasting change. This time, the strategy involves working closely with the community, local government, and health services to identify and address problems before they escalate.

Long-Term Vision for a Safer and More Resilient Bangor

Authorities believe that by adopting a proactive and collaborative approach, they can create lasting improvements in Bangor. The Renew Bangor operation is designed to establish a foundation for sustainable crime prevention, ensuring that issues such as drug trade and antisocial behavior do not resurface.

As the initiative unfolds, residents and business owners remain hopeful that Bangor's high street will transform into a safer and more vibrant community space.

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