



North East

# CrimeAlert

Keeping Communities in the North East Safe

December 2023



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Welcome to the December edition of North East Crime Alert.

A quarterly bulletin produced by the Police Scotland North East Division Crime Reduction Team aimed at keeping you up to date with what's happening in our community.

In this edition of North East Crime Alert:

**Criminals will often take advantage of longer nights. We look at some simple measures to keep your home safe After Dark.**

**Follow our advice to stay safe online and avoid the scammers while shopping this Christmas.**

**Charity Scottish Badgers explain the advice they can offer to everyone from planners to householders.**

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer Constable Sarah Grant explains the work she does to raise awareness of Hate Crime and how to report it.**

**As well as a regular round-up of crime in the North East.**

*From the latest frauds and scams, to general security measures, each issue will bring you advice on how to keep your property safe.*

*Crime across Scotland is increasing and criminals are using ever more sophisticated methods. By working in partnership we can make our communities a safer place to live and work.*

**Apply now.**

**Easy job.**

**Big cash pay outs.**

**No experience**

**necessary\***

**See page 8 for full details.**

A person wearing a dark hoodie is shown from the side, looking upwards. The background is dark, suggesting a night scene with some blurred lights and structures.

# AFTER DARK

Housebreaking can be a traumatic experience.

Although housebreaking can occur at any time of year criminals will often take advantage of darker nights and shorter daylight hours.



Last month the North East Crime Reduction Team took to the streets of Grampian armed with crow bars and camera to illustrate Police Scotland's 'After Dark' campaign.

### **Lock the Door**

Obvious isn't it? But some people don't do it. Lock the door even if you're only out for a short time. If you have window locks, lock those too. Keep the door locked when you are at home. This stops criminals coming in if you are in another part of the house or garden.

Don't leave your keys on the inside of locks or just inside the door. If you have a spare key, don't leave it under a mat, plant-pot or other easy to spot place at home. Never keep house keys and car keys on the same ring.

### **Safes and Security Boxes**

Don't keep large amounts of gold, jewellery and cash at home. Bedrooms and lofts are routinely searched during housebreakings, particularly if the occupants are celebrating a cultural festival.

Consider storing valuable items at your bank. Private companies offer similar services. If this option is unavailable consider an insurance rated safe. Safes should be securely attached to the solid fabric of the building not just to a plasterboard wall or left sitting on the floor. Ideally get an insurance approved installer to fit a safe in your home.

### **Lighting and CCTV**

House alarms and CCTV are a great visual deterrent. Modern Wi-Fi enabled CCTV systems can be combined with bright LED lighting. Any movement detected outside your home can trigger an alert to a number of mobile devices.

If considering CCTV look to cover every aspect of your home. Small discreet cameras can also be used inside. Use signage to advise that CCTV is in use.

When you're away use timers to turn on lights, radios, or TVs to put off unwanted visitors. Smart plugs allow times to be changed even whilst away.

### **Vehicles**

High value cars are particularly vulnerable to theft and criminals will commit a housebreaking to obtain the true key of the vehicle. Where possible park vehicles inside a garage. Secure the keys inside your property out of sight. Avoid leaving them in obvious locations such as the hallway table or kitchen. Never leave valuables in your car.

Keyless Theft or Relay Theft involves criminals using hand held technology to identify whether a parked car has keyless entry. If the car 'key' is close enough the criminals can amplify the signal and send it to a transmitter which acts as the true key and opens the car allowing it to be driven off. Keep keys and fobs well away from doors and windows and purchase a signal blocker wallet to keep them in.

### **Property Marking and Insurance**

There are a number of products you can buy which contain a unique code like DNA. This code is registered to your address. They are usually clear liquids which can be applied onto your possessions.

Check you have adequate insurance cover. Photograph and record your valuables to assist any insurance claim or Police report. This will assist police in identifying any items recovered.

## General Maintenance

Never leave anything that can be used by a thief to gain entry lying around the garden. Overgrown bushes prevent neighbours seeing into your garden and allow criminals to go unseen.

## Social Media

Consider what you are putting on social media, especially if you are going on holiday or attending weddings, functions or posting pictures with jewellery. Criminals search for this information to create a list of empty houses. Your social media accounts should be set to friends only.

## Rural Properties

**Harden your perimeter.** Consider one point of entry/exit and secure with a good quality steel gate whilst taking into account any access rights.

**Install Adequate Lighting.** Well-placed outdoor lighting can deter criminals and help you spot them if they do approach your property.

**Secure Outbuildings.** Lock barns, sheds, and other outbuildings. Ensure all external doors are well maintained and fitted with good quality locks.

**Remove keys from vehicles.** Don't make it easy for criminals, always remove the keys and where possible lock them away in secure cabinets.

**Mark your property.** Keep a record of all tools and equipment with photographs and serial numbers. Consider using a DNA marking product such as Selecta DNA.

**Secure your fuel.** All fuel tanks should be fitted with locking fuel caps. Locate tanks away from roads, so not to be seen from passing traffic.

## Unusual Activity

Report any unusual activity to Police. Criminals will often call offering to carry out work in order to identify vulnerable targets.



## Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Alerts

help you stay up to date with the latest crime, safety and resilience news for your local area. To receive free alerts and download a copy of the Safer Neighbourhoods Safer Communities booklet go to

[www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk)



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# AFTER DARK

When buying security alarms, security lighting, doors or other security products, look for items that have been endorsed by Secured by Design (SBD). The Secured by Design logo and title 'Police Preferred Specification' indicates that a company or a product meets the high standards set by Secured by Design.

Find out more at [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com)

For further advice from your local Crime Reduction Officer contact 101.

Trading Standards: 03454040506

Crime Stoppers: 0800 555111

# \* must be willing to provide bank details and break the law.

**Be wary of offers of easy cash. You may be approached by fraudsters online or in person. They may post what looks like a genuine job ad then ask for your bank details.**

If you let this happen you are involved in money laundering which is a crime.

Allowing your bank account to be used to send and receive funds for other people makes you a money mule.

The law does not accept ignorance as a defence.

## Follow this advice

- Don't give your bank account details to anyone unless you know and trust them.
- Be cautious of unsolicited offers of easy money.
- Research any company that makes you a job offer and make sure their contact details are genuine.
- Be wary of job offers from overseas. It will be harder for you to find out if they are legitimate.
- Be wary of job ads that are written in poor English with grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.

If it sounds too good to be true it probably is.

Visit [www.moneymules.co.uk](http://www.moneymules.co.uk) to find out more

Here are our basic guidelines about how to stay safe online; use them and you can shop with confidence.



Shopping online for Christmas is easy, avoids the queues, there's bargains galore and shipping is fast. Even the returns are easy. Here are our basic guidelines about how to stay safe online; use them and you can shop with confidence.

### **Start at a trusted site**

Search results can be rigged to lead you astray, especially when you drift past the first few pages of links. If you know the site, chances are it's less likely to be a rip-off. We all know Amazon.com carries everything under the sun; likewise, just about every major retail outlet has an online shop. Beware of misspellings or sites using a different top-level domain (.net instead of .com, for example) - those are the oldest tricks in the book. Yes, sales on these sites might look enticing, but that's how they trick you into giving up your info.

### **Look for the lock**

Never buy anything online using your credit card from a site that doesn't have SSL (secure sockets layer) encryption installed - at the very least. You'll know if the site has SSL because the URL for the site will start with HTTPS - instead of just HTTP. An icon of a locked padlock will appear, typically to the left of the URL in the address bar or the status bar down below; it depends on your browser. HTTPS is standard now even on non-shopping sites, enough that Google Chrome flags any page without the extra S as 'not secure.' So a site without it should stand out even more.

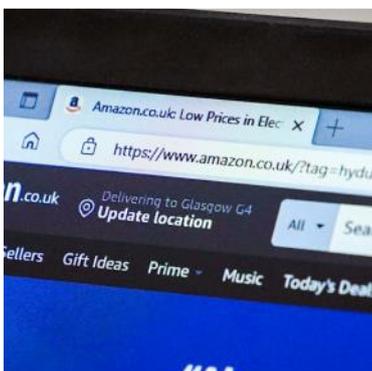
### **Don't Overshare**

No online shop needs your Social Security number or your birthday to do business. However, if crooks get them and your credit card number, they can do a lot of damage. The more scammers know, the easier it is to steal your identity. When possible, default to giving up as little personal data as possible. Major sites get breached all the time.

### **Check your statements regularly**

Don't wait for your bill to come at the end of the month. Go online regularly during the holiday season and look at electronic statements for your credit card, debit card, and checking accounts. Look for any fraudulent charges, even originating from payment sites like PayPal and Venmo. (After all, there's more than one way to get to your money.)

**You should definitely only buy online with a credit card. If your debit card is compromised, scammers have direct access to your bank funds. Any seller that wants a different kind of payment, like wired money, is a big red flag.**



HTTPS is standard now even on non-shopping sites. Google Chrome flags any page without the extra S as 'not secure.'



Eddie Palmer and Dr Ellie Stirling explain the work of charity Scottish Badgers and the advice they can offer to everyone from planners to householders.

As well as baiting, the greatest threats to badgers are roads, followed by poorly planned development, forestry, farming, and degradation of their habitat and food items.



©AileenLouden Badger in Grass 2022

Scottish Badgers is a small Scottish charity, which has been in existence since 1999, when the then Scottish Executive brought together individuals and groups to be a united Scotland-wide advocate for a protected species.

Badgers have been persecuted for centuries and still suffer cruel deaths at the hands of baiters and some to whom their presence is an inconvenience.

We are part of Scottish Environment LINK, a group of 42 environmental and wildlife charities in Scotland and are proud to be part of this community of expertise about soil, plants, bees, birds, woodlands, wildlife and farming.

Through LINK we build valuable contacts with Scottish Government and other agencies such as Nature Scot.

**So, what do we do?**

We record live sightings, field signs, setts, road casualties and incident reports from the public and

professionals in Scotland, provide information for people concerned about badgers, train our members in surveying for field signs, and help Police Scotland and others in their investigations into possible badger crimes.

As well as baiting, the greatest threats to badgers are roads, followed by poorly planned development, forestry, farming, and degradation of their habitat and food items mainly earthworms and insect larvae.

At times we act as expert witnesses in court. We have expanded activities in recent years to reach out to members of society who face challenges in accessing nature, we offer trusted support to enable people to share their interests in nature and aim to be truly inclusive.

We have partnered with organisations supporting people with disabilities, young people of employment seeking age, members of the refugee and asylum-seeking communities and the LGBTQ+ community.

We have information packs specifically to help developers, planners, the forestry industry, householders with badgers in their gardens and farmers and crofters.

©ScotlandBigPicture



### **So what is the legal protection for badgers in the UK?**

The Protection of Badgers Act, 1992, as amended in Scotland, makes it an offence to interfere with badgers or their setts, and this interference covers anything done to badgers such as harassment, any digging into any part of a sett, driving vehicles over setts, obstructing any entrance to a sett, etc. **Penalties were raised a few years ago, and serious proven offences can attract prison sentences of up to five years or an unlimited fine or both.** Fines are now reaching the £10,000 mark, all intended to prevent cruel treatment and encourage members of the public to aid in protecting this species.

We support people with information about badger ecology and biology, and the law, and signpost people to further help including when they need qualified ecologists.

We have information packs specifically to help developers, planners, the forestry industry, householders with badgers in their gardens, and farmers and crofters.

Badgers and people can be in conflict at times if they dig 'in the wrong place,' but there is a refreshing willingness of the vast majority of the public to be patient and integrate badgers into their lives.

We are always happy to discuss and work with other people about badgers, their unique role in nature and about nature friendly land management approaches for the benefit of people and badgers.

For comprehensive advice about badgers, including award-winning infographics and fact sheets visit

[www.scottishbadgers.org.uk](http://www.scottishbadgers.org.uk)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer Constable Sarah Grant explains the work she does to raise awareness of Hate Crime and how to report it.





## What is Hate Crime?

A Hate Crime is defined as 'any crime which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and/or ill-will towards a social group.'

*To put it simply, Hate Crime is a criminal act against a person or property and generally occurs as a result of an offender's hostility or prejudice against someone's:*

**Disability** (including physical and learning disabilities and mental health)

**Race** (including refugees, asylum seekers and Gypsy / Travellers)

**Religion**

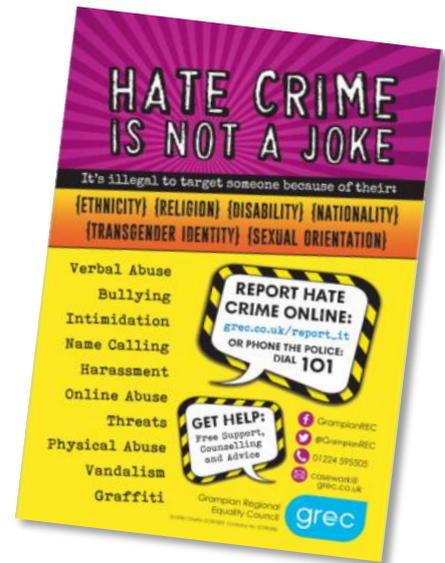
**Sexual Orientation or**

**Transgender Identity** (an umbrella term for someone whose gender identity or expression differs from their gender at birth).

A Hate Crime can be **any crime** which is motivated by hate towards someone from, or is associated with, one of these social groups.



By working together we can send a clear message that hostility and prejudice will not be tolerated in our community.



What might appear to be a minor incident can have a long lasting impact and might lead to a person feeling humiliated, isolated and intimidated, unable to go about their daily business.

Police Scotland take Hate Crime very seriously and record, investigate and monitor every hate-related crime or incident reported to us. Hate Crime will not be tolerated.

We work closely with partners who provide advice and support for minority groups and meet with them regularly, so we can work together to address issues and improve services.

We recognise that Hate Crime is under-reported and understand that there are various reasons why people may decide not to report such crimes to the Police. **Reporting Hate Crime is important.** If we know these problems exist we can seek to address them. If you have been a victim of a Hate Crime, or know someone who has, please report it to the Police or a Third Party Reporting Centre. You may prevent someone from becoming a victim in the future.

**Third Party Reporting – Support to Report Network**  
Over the past year the North East Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team have been working in collaboration with partners to develop a 'support to report network' or 'Third Party Reporting' partnership. The network provides people who do not feel comfortable reporting Hate Crimes to the Police with the opportunity to report to someone they are familiar with. Partners have been trained to assist people in submitting a report to the Police and can make a report on their behalf.

### Hate Crime Awareness Week

During Hate Crime Awareness Week which ran from 14th – 21st October 2023, our North East Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team along with members of the Third Party Reporting network were out across the North East to raise awareness of Hate Crime and how these can be reported.

From a radio takeover day and creating 'Talking Heads' video clips about Hate Crime with Station House Media Unit, Grampian Regional Equality Council and Four Pillars, to inputs about Hate Crime to S1-S3 pupils at Meldrum Academy, to travelling across the Grampian region with partners with our mobile trailer to talk to our communities.

Police Scotland will continue to work together throughout the coming year with partners and community groups, attending events and providing support to minority groups to help raise awareness to stamp out Hate Crime.

### How can I report a Hate Crime or Incident?

You can report Hate Crimes and incidents by -

Visiting 'Contact Us' on the Police Scotland website [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)  
Phoning 999 in an emergency  
Phoning 101 for all non-emergency calls.  
You can also report anonymously through CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111.

Third Party Reporting centres can be found on the Grampian Regional Equality Council website [www.grec.co.uk](http://www.grec.co.uk)

The North East Crime Reduction Team have been busy out and about over the last couple of months.

The Team have been speaking to students at Aberdeen University, giving talks at the first ever FarmingExpo at P&J Live and even recording a new advert at Original 106 to raise awareness of fraud over the Christmas period.

Listen out for the ad which started on the 1st of November.



# Scam Update #13

# AnyDesk



AnyDesk is a remote desktop software that allows users to remotely control another computer over the internet. It is a popular tool for IT professionals to provide technical support to their clients, but recently in the North East, we have seen it increasingly used for fraudulent activity.

Criminals are using AnyDesk to gain access to people's computers and steal their personal information, financial data, and even cryptocurrency.

There are a number of ways that criminals can trick victims into giving them remote access to their computers using AnyDesk. A common method is to pose as a legitimate technical support representative from a well-known company such as Microsoft or Apple. The scammer may call the victim and claim that there is a problem with their computer and that they need to download AnyDesk.

Once the victim has installed AnyDesk and given the scammer the remote access code the scammer has complete control of the victim's computer.

Once the scammer has stolen the victim's account information, they can use it to potentially access the victim's bank accounts, credit cards, and other online accounts.

## **There are a number of things that you can do to avoid becoming a victim of crime when using AnyDesk:**

Never give remote access to your computer to someone you don't know and trust.

Be wary of unsolicited phone calls and emails from people claiming to be from technical support.

If you are unsure whether a website is legitimate, check the URL carefully and make sure that it is the same as the URL of the company's official website.

Use a strong password manager to create and store unique passwords for all of your online accounts.

Enable two-factor authentication on all of your online accounts.

## **If you use or have to access AnyDesk:**

Only download AnyDesk from the official AnyDesk website.

**Keep AnyDesk up to date with the latest security patches.**

Be careful about who you give your AnyDesk remote access code to.

**If you think that you may have been scammed using AnyDesk, you should immediately disconnect your computer from the internet and change your passwords for all of your online accounts. You should also scan your computer for malware using a reputable antivirus program.**

In our regular series bringing you first hand experiences of victims of crime from across the North East we talk to one young person who fell victim to an Amazon gift card scam.



Alison was excited to start her first real job and keen to impress her new boss. Only four days in she received an email from her CEO with an unusual request...

'It was my first real job after graduating from University. I had only been at the company for four days and was still quite nervous. I received an email from my CEO asking how I was settling in. It looked completely legitimate and I had no idea it was from a scammer. I then received a second email later in the day. She said she was really busy, out of town on business and wouldn't be back for a few days. Could I do her a huge favour and go and buy some Amazon gift cards as presents for some of the staff. She said she wanted me to do it because I was new and she didn't want the others to find out as it was a surprise.

I agreed and said I would go out at lunchtime and get the gift cards. When I asked how many she needed I was a bit shocked when she asked for four £250 cards. I didn't have that amount of money in my current account. I didn't want to disappoint my new CEO so I transferred the money from my savings account. She then texted me on my personal mobile and said she really appreciated me helping her out and the company would reimburse me immediately when I got back. She also said that she'd arrange for me to get a company credit card so it wouldn't happen again. She was so convincing and as it's such a big company I thought it would be fine.

I headed out at lunchtime and continued to text her back and forth. There was something at the back of my mind that told me something wasn't quite right. I was nervous about spending that amount of my savings but at the same time didn't want to disappoint.

I texted to tell her I had bought the cards at a local supermarket. She replied immediately asking me to scratch off the panel on the back of the cards and send her the codes. That's when I realised something was very wrong.

I went back to the office and spoke to my manager. She told me it was a scam and showed me an email that had come out from our IT department the week before warning about gift card scams.

### How to avoid becoming a victim

**If you receive an email from one of your contacts asking you to buy them a gift card it's likely that a scammer is behind the message.**

**Never answer an unsolicited email without making checks even if it seems to be from a trusted source.**

**If you receive an email, asking for personal data or any form of financial help, call that friend or family member on a trusted number and let them know their account may have been hacked. They should then change their password immediately to secure the account and warn other contacts that they may have received a malicious message.**



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# What's happening in Aberdeenshire

## **Sextortion, Turriff**

In September a 22 year old male from Turriff was the victim of an extortion offence after sharing images with an unknown female online.

## **Rental Scam, Fraserburgh**

A 20 year old student from Fraserburgh fell victim to a rental fraud. The student sent a £1,000 deposit for a property she found online. After sending the money the 'seller' failed to answer any correspondence.

## **Housebreaking, Stonehaven**

On 14 September a commercial premises in Stonehaven town centre was broken into by two males who entered the property by forcing open a window. A four figure sum of money stolen.

## **Identity Theft, Kincardine O'Neil**

On 14 September a resident from Kincardine O'Neil received a letter from Audi finance advising her that someone had used her details to take out a finance deal on a new Audi motor car.

## **Paypal Fraud, Ellon**

On 20 September an Ellon resident advised Police that her online accounts had been hacked. Access was gained to her Facebook, Instagram, email, bank account and Pay Pal. The victim became aware of the incident when she received a letter from PayPal seeking payment for arrears on her account to the value of £513.38.

## **Bicycle Theft, Peterhead**

On 11 November a blue Giant Mountain Bike worth over £300 was stolen from outside a property on Kirk Street, Peterhead.

## **Facebook Market Place Fraud, Inverurie**

On 2 August 2023 an Inverurie resident saw an Ifor Williams horse trailer advertised for sale on Facebook Marketplace for £3200. The victim agreed to pay an £800 deposit with the seller. Some time passed and the victim had not received any further communication so tried to call the mobile number provided. The victim found herself blocked and realised she had been scammed. The victim has since found the same trailer advertised elsewhere with different profiles selling the item.

## **Facebook Market Place Fraud, Stonehaven**

On 22 October a Stonehaven resident came across an advert on Facebook Market Place for a mobile phone for sale. The victim responded to the advert, the sale agreed and transferred £280 via Paypal to the seller. After the funds were sent, the seller said he would send the parcel recorded delivery, however the victim never received the mobile phone.

## **Attempted Housebreaking, Fettercairn**

On 28 October an attempt was made to break into Fettercairn Primary School. Staff found extensive damage to the rear doors of the school and Police are appealing for any witnesses.

## **Fraud, Banff**

On Tuesday 10 October a resident of Banff received a notification from her banking app asking her to approve several payments for Microsoft. There were 8 amounts ranging from £44.99 - £69.99. Later on the same day she received a notification from PayPal for three amounts. The following day, the victim logged into her Microsoft account and became aware of four orders placed on her account. The victim has now changed all passwords on her accounts.



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## What's happening in Moray

### **Theft of Quad, Keith**

Police are appealing for information following the theft of a red Suzuki King Quad 400 bike. It was taken from a rural property at Grange near Keith sometime between 8pm on Wednesday 13 September and 5pm on Sunday 17 September.

### **Suspicious Fire, Lossiemouth**

Two male youths have been referred to the Youth Justice Management Team following a suspicious fire at Sunbank House in Lossiemouth.

### **Theft from vehicles, Lossiemouth**

Police in Moray have arrested and charged a 51 year old man in connection with thefts from five vehicles across Lossiemouth. The thefts took place overnight between Friday, 15 and Saturday 16 September. The man was due to appear at court at a later date.

### **Attempted Housebreaking, Elgin**

Police are investigating an attempted Housebreaking to a business on East High Street, Elgin which occurred around 3.42am on Friday 3rd November.

### **Housebreaking, Fochabers**

Police are investigating a Housebreaking at a family home on Ordiequish Road, Fochabers. The crime took place between 9am on 12 October 2023 and 8pm on 15th October. A number of items were stolen including Nintendo and PlayStation games consoles and jewellery.

### **Theft of Metal, Rothes**

Police are investigating the theft of scrap metal from a business yard on New Street, Rothes. The metal was removed from the site around 1pm on 8th October.

### **Theft of heating oil, Glenlivet**

Police are investigating the theft of around 900 litres of heating oil from a rural property in Glenlivet. The theft took place between 13th October 2023 and 9am on 3 November.

### **Online ticket sales fraud, Kinloss**

Police have received several reports from victims of fraud after trying to buy Taylor Swift tickets on Facebook Marketplace. One victim in Kinloss attempted to purchase four tickets on 2 November for £480. Once the money was sent the fraudster asked for more money to cover the Ticketmaster admin fee. On receiving the money the fraudster blocked the victim on Facebook and no tickets were sent.

### **Theft from vehicle, Forres**

Police are investigating a theft of clothing from a vehicle parked on Yellowhammer Drive, Forres between 17 and 18 October.

### **Theft of trailer, Fochabers.**

Between 2pm on 16 October 2023 and 8.30am on 17 October, a Lfor Williams silver tipping trailer, was stolen from a secure yard on Maxwell Street, Fochabers.



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## What's happening in Aberdeen

### **Online Employment Scam**

During September 2023, a 25 year old male in Aberdeen signed for online work involving carrying out online reviews of products online. In order to earn commission, he had to pay into the system by investing in cryptocurrency. The whole scheme was a scam and he went on to lose £25,000.

### **Sextortion**

In September 2023, a 19 year old Aberdeen male received a 'snapchat' friend request from an unknown female. General conversations went on to become very sexual and progressed to image sharing. The new 'friend' then requested payment to prevent the images being shared online with family and friends. Fearful of this, the male sent money before reporting the crime, he lost £750.

### **'Pig Slaughtering' Scam**

In August and September of 2023, a 26 year old male met a similarly aged female on a dating website. During initial communications the female discussed making money by investing in cryptocurrency via BitMXE. As the relationship progressed the male was persuaded to invest and was even helped to secure loans before discovering the scam, he found the female using open source checks and by using a 'catfish' checker, he lost £3500.

### **PDF (Payment Diversion Fraud)**

In September 2023 an Aberdeen offshore oil related business were contacted by a client via email requesting an invoice was late and required to be paid. The email was very similar to the original but contained all the correct information. The e-mail claimed that the business had changed banking facilities. Payments were made to the new bank account which were found to be a scam account. The company lost £75,000.

### **Garage Theft**

In October 2023, the garage at a city centre domestic property was broken into and seven bikes were stolen, four of them being electric bikes. As selection of power tools was also taken, the combined value is believed to be over £10,000.

### **Investment Fraud**

In September 2023, an Aberdeen male saw a Facebook advert promoting an investment in shares and commodities trading. He went on to receive a Whatsapp message from a UK mobile number arranging for him to deposit money into another account for conversion into a Bitcoin wallet. He went on to invest £12,000 on trying to withdraw his profits discovered it was a scam and lost all of his investment.

### **Drugs**

On 13 October 2023 two males were jailed for a combined term of 13 years having been convicted of being in possession of £300,000 of cocaine and £21,000 of heroin in Aberdeen and Glasgow in the spring of 2022.

### **Push Payment Fraud**

In October 2023 a 70 year old Aberdeen resident received a phonecall from someone at his bank claiming fraudulent activity in his account at their local branch and that they needed to attend at the branch and transfer their money into a safe account. They lost £18,000.

### **Sextortion**

Throughout the last 3 months 'Sextortion' continues to be one of the most common form of fraud. Amounts lost range from £100-£1000. The best way to protect yourself is to be careful and selective about whom you befriend online just as you would offline, especially when considering sharing intimate images.

### **Housebreaking**

In October 2023 a West End Aberdeen home was broken into and £6000 pounds of goods was stolen from within whilst the occupant were on holiday.

### **Theft from Vehicles**

In the last 3 months we have seen an increase in thefts from vehicles, most of these were from unlocked vehicles. Get into the habit of locking your vehicle and checking the door handle. If possible, do not leave your belongings in the vehicle, if not then at least lock them away out of sight.

### **Business Fraud**

In October 2023 an Aberdeen business employee received an e-mail from who they believed was a director requesting they transfer money to pay an invoice. The e-mail was fake and the business lost £35,000.

### **Bike Theft**

In November 2023 a communal bike storage shed within an Aberdeen residence, had the wooden sides forcibly removed and an e-bike stolen after the poor quality lock securing the bike was overcome. The bike cost £2000 and has not yet been recovered.

### **Employment Fraud**

In November 2023 an Aberdeen male was contacted via Whatsapp with the offer of work, he was advised to deposit funds in return for high returns. On completion of tasks he was advised to increase deposits in order to access higher rewards. This ultimately resulted in him opening a Revolut account to purchase Cryptocurrency. He invested all his savings and went on to lose £10,000.

### **Housebreaking**

In October 2023 a property in the West End of Aberdeen was broken into while the owners were on holiday. Entry was gained by forcing patio doors, an untidy search of the property was carried out and numerous valuables were taken.

### **Ticket Fraud**

A 32 year old female Aberdeen resident, purchased what she thought was four Taylor Swift concert tickets from a private seller on Facebook Marketplace. The seller was a fraudster and the female went on to lose £400.

# Keeping Our Communities in the North East Safe

Police Scotland's North East Division covers rural and urban areas in Moray, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City. The division has five territorial command areas which have their own dedicated Area Commander, who is responsible for the daily policing function. Each command area is served by a number of community policing teams whose activities are built around the needs of the local community. These teams respond to local calls and look for long term solutions to key issues. They are assisted by the division's Crime Reduction Unit who deliver against

Force and local priorities in a number of areas, including physical and social crime prevention, supporting and enhancing community engagement and creating and sustaining strong and effective partnership working.

## Website

[www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)

## Twitter

[www.twitter.com/NorthEPolice](http://www.twitter.com/NorthEPolice)

## Facebook

[www.facebook.com/  
NorthEastPoliceDivision](http://www.facebook.com/NorthEastPoliceDivision)

## North East Division Crime Reduction Team

### Moray (Keith)

PC Richard Russell  
[Richard.russell@scotland.police.uk](mailto:Richard.russell@scotland.police.uk)

### Aberdeen City (Nigg)

PC Mark Irvine  
[Mark.irvine@scotland.police.uk](mailto:Mark.irvine@scotland.police.uk)

### Aberdeenshire (Stonehaven)

PC Mike Urquhart  
[Michael.urquhart@scotland.police.uk](mailto:Michael.urquhart@scotland.police.uk)

### Wildlife Crime Officer (Keith)

PC Hannah Corbett  
[Hannah.corbett@scotland.police.uk](mailto:Hannah.corbett@scotland.police.uk)



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe  
**POILEAS ALBA**