



# North East CrimeAlert

Keeping Communities in the North East Safe



July-August 2022



North East

# CrimeAlert

Keeping Communities in the North East Safe

**Welcome to the July 2022 edition of North East Crime Alert.**

North East Crime Alert is a bi-monthly newsletter produced by the North East Division Crime Reduction Team. We believe that by keeping our communities informed of what is happening in their local area they are less likely to become victims of crime.

In this months newsletter we have a round-up of what's happening in your local area, look at the work being carried out to catch bike thieves in the North East as well as providing advice on how to avoid becoming a victim of fraud.

We will continue to share crime prevention advice but if you are looking for specific advice then contact us directly at

[NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.police.uk](mailto:NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.police.uk)

If you are a business looking for specific advice then consider having a look at the Scottish Business Resilience Centre. [www.sbrcentre.co.uk](http://www.sbrcentre.co.uk).

SBRC is a not-for-profit and a respected voice in business resilience, bringing together the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, and the Scottish business community. The vision of SBRC is to become the catalysts that makes Scotland one of the safest and most resilient places to live, work, and do business, both on and off-line.





# Out&About

**Police Scotland North East Division have a dedicated team of specially trained officers available to provide advice to our communities regarding security and crime reduction.**

Last month our Fraud Roadshow was launched outside Marischal College in Aberdeen. Our officers in partnership with Trading Standards are now touring the North East giving advice on how to avoid becoming a victim of fraud.

This month the team have also been out and about at Thainstone Mart and the Royal Northern Countryside Live event to answer questions on everything from frauds and scams to the increase in thefts of quad bikes and the best CCTV systems.

If you have any specific queries please get in touch with one of the officers detailed below. Look out for the team who will be attending the Turriff Show on the 31st July and 1st August.

## **Moray (Keith)**

PC Richard Russell

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

## **Aberdeenshire (Stonehaven)**

PC Mike Urquhart

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

## **Aberdeen City (Nigg)**

PC Mark Irvine

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

## **Wildlife Crime Officer (Keith)**

[Hannah.haywood@scotland.police.uk](mailto:Hannah.haywood@scotland.police.uk)



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# Operation Armour

By Sergeant Tom Spencer

Bike thefts are a priority for the North East Division all year round, however, we see an increase in this sort of crime over the summer months with more people using their bikes.

Operation Armour is an annual initiative to prevent, deter and detect bikes thefts. This year, we launched at the start of April and the campaign will run throughout the summer months across the City of Aberdeen. Throughout this period, myself and four Constables are focused entirely on this operation. We carry out plain clothes and high visibility foot and mobile patrols, and work in partnership with colleagues from specialist units such as Crime Reduction, to deter and disrupt thefts.

During April and May 2022, we recovered 47 bikes several of which were returned to their rightful owners. In total 22 people were charged in connection with thefts of push bikes, with a total of 61 charges/offences.

We have appealed on our social media for recovered bikes that are yet to be reunited with their owners. I would encourage a check of our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NorthEastPoliceDivision>) if you or anyone you know has had their bike stolen.

Another important part of the operation is the education of bike owners on simple but effective security measures.



Operation Armour officers have joined forces with Edinburgh Bicycle this year to promote bike security.

The demand for bicycles has never been greater and as such bicycles are being targeted regularly by thieves. It is worth investing in a good quality cycle specific lock to secure your bike. Buy the best quality lock you can afford. As a rough guide consider spending around 10 per cent of the value of your bike on a lock. Look out for those that have been endorsed as 'Sold Secure' or 'Secured by Design.'

It's not enough to simply lock your bicycle whenever it is left unattended for a longer period. Modern bikes are light and can be carried away quickly. Whether a bicycle stand, lamp post or metal fence: a bike must be locked to something and whatever you choose, it must be at least as secure as the lock itself.

**Ideally, use two different types of lock - a thief will need more tools to steal it.**



The best place for your bike at night is a locked room, e.g. a cellar or garage, and it should always be secured with a bicycle lock; ideally combined with a ground anchor. If bicycles cannot be locked to something, for example, in the hall or garage, simply lock several bikes together.

Photograph your bike and record all of your bike's details, including the serial number, and any distinguishing features and keep these in a safe place. The serial number can be found on the bottom bracket.

Consider using a bike registration scheme to mark your bicycle. Not only is this a deterrent to thieves but should you be unlucky enough to have your bike stolen it increases the chances of getting your bicycle back.

If you have any information in relation to bike theft you can contact us via 101 or using the 'Contact Us' form on the Police Scotland website.

Alternatively you can report anonymously through the independent charity Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**

Find out more:

<https://www.securedbydesign.com/>

<https://www.soldsecure.com/>

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/.../protecting-your-bike/>

If you need any further information, contact our Crime Reduction Officers on **NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.pnn.police.uk**





We believe that by keeping our communities informed of what is happening in their local area they are less likely to become victims of crime.



# What's happening in Aberdeenshire

## Huntly

A 35-year-old man has been arrested and charged after veterinary equipment and animal medication was stolen from a premises in Huntly.

The incident happened around 2.45am on Thursday, 16 June, at Strathbogie Veterinary Centre on Gordon Street in the town.

## Peterhead

Officers in Peterhead are appealing to the public for information following an incident of Vandalism in the newly opened Victoria Park, Peterhead. At 2000 hours on Tuesday 7 June 2022 the park was checked by a committee member and found to be all in order however on returning to the park the following day noted that there had been extensive damage caused to benches and the flowers that had been planted for the community to enjoy had been ripped up, there was also broken glass strewn around the park which causes an obvious safety hazard. Inspector Rory Campbell of Peterhead said: "It is both disheartening and frustrating to see that a green space that has been created to be inclusive for all members of the community is being abused and damaged by a small proportion of community members, this has resulted in the park being closed until further notice, there has been significant funding raised in order to create

this space and the cost for repairs is causing a significant impact on the community. We ask that anyone with information contact us so we can bring the perpetrators to justice and the park can be enjoyed by the community again. We will have patrols in the area to ensure that individuals who are there for the purpose of causing damage and disruption are dealt with appropriately."

## Drugs Action

As part of the collaborative approach towards reducing drug related harm in the Aberdeenshire area, Community Safety partners from Aberdeenshire Council Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership - AHSCP & Police Scotland were involved in 2 days of targeted action across the Banff, Turriff and Fraserburgh areas, providing support to those vulnerable through drug misuse or exploitation by those involved in the supply of drugs.

Focussing around bringing support, there were over 170 outreach visits to individuals who were offered the support of services to keep them safer & reduce the risk of drug related overdoses & deaths.



## Banchory

A number of fuel thefts from industrial vehicles have occurred during May and June in the Banchory area. **With ever increasing fuel costs we may expect this crime type to increase.**

Officers in Banchory are appealing for information in relation to a vandalism at Crathes Railway Station.

Between 5pm on Thursday 26 May 2022 and 12pm on Sunday 29 May 2022, the Old Crathes Station buildings and signal box were vandalised whereby a number of windows were smashed and graffiti was scribed over walls and windows. Further graffiti was scribed on fences and street signs within Crathes village. Constable Jack Christie, from Banchory Community Policing Team (CPT) said: "The damaged property is within close proximity of the Deeside Old Railway Line and I would appeal to anyone who regularly uses the footpath, or saw anything that could assist our investigation, to get in touch."

## Hare Coursing, Inverurie

A 37-year-old man has been charged in relation to two incidents of Hare Coursing which occurred in the Oldmeldrum and Keith Hall area, Inverurie, in April 2022. The man has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal and is expected to appear in court at a later date.

Hare coursing is the deliberate hunting of hares with dogs. It is illegal under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which creates the offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take a wild hare or attempt to do so.

Sergeant Gemma Taylor, from Stonehaven Community Policing Team (CPT) said : "Hare coursing not only causes unnecessary and prolong suffering to the hares, but the dogs are often run to exhaustion with little regard for their welfare. "I would encourage local communities, particularly those in more rural areas, to remain vigilant and report any suspicious incidents to Police. I would encourage sign up to 'Rural Watch Scotland' which is an extension of the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland. The Rural Watch Scotland scheme gives those who sign up, alerts and advice by phone, text or email abo email about crime in their area. "

## Portsoy

Police are appealing for witnesses and also reminding people to be vigilant following the recent attempted theft of diesel fuel near Portsoy, Aberdeenshire. Between 11.45 pm and just after midnight on Sunday 5 June in to Monday 6 June 2022, a local agricultural premises was broken into and an attempt made to syphon diesel fuel from a vehicle parked within the yard. However, the suspect made off empty-handed when he was disturbed by an alarm at the premises. Constable Casey Conner, Banff Police Station, said: "Although this took place late at night and in quite a remote area, we are keen to hear from anyone who may have seen anything suspicious in the area around the time of the incident. Maybe you saw a van or similar that looked out of place, especially at that time of night."

## Mintlaw

Police are appealing for information following the theft of a historical 'man trap' from the entrance wall at Deer Abbey, Mintlaw. The device would have been used to catch poachers and trespassers in the late 1700's and early 1800's. The device was removed from the wall between 14 and 15 June.

**On Saturday 23rd July 2022, Police Scotland will be hosting a Blue Light Day within the car park at Buchan House, Peterhead between 1100 and 1330 hours.**

**Peterhead Community Beat Officer, PC Mel Hislop confirmed "It's a great opportunity for families to come down and engage with the Emergency Services and their partners. They can have a look around our vehicles and find out what we do. There will be stalls and we hope to raise funds for Shirley's Space, a Mental Health Charity based at Crimond Medical Centre. They provide a free service, for people who need some support with their mental health, where they can phone and speak to a trained counsellor. This can also be a face to face meeting, if required, they aim to provide a "here and now" service as well.**

**We aim to provide a one stop shop for people to come and speak to partner agencies.**

## What's happening in Moray

### Buckie and Keith

Earlier this month, Buckie and Keith Community Police Officer PC Tom Millican and Detective Sergeant Scott Mackay, alongside Arrows - A Quarriers Service were welcomed to Keith Grammar School and Buckie High School for discussion sessions with pupils about drug and alcohol misuse and addiction. Arrows are a drug and alcohol support service in Moray, offering a single access point for people seeking support in tackling their substance misuse. The honest and eye opening inputs were well received by both pupils and teaching staff. The sessions generated a lot of useful discussions and prompted a lot of open questions.

During May 2022, Buckie and Keith Community Police Officers, PC's Millican and Barclay, along with Buckie Community High School, Elgin Academy, Youth Café, Action For Children, Moray Womens Aid and Moray Social Work, attended a two day training course at Elgin Academy in Mentors in Violence Prevention, Scotland (MVP). The MVP programme is a peer education programme which aims to challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. It also encourages an active bystander approach where individuals are not looked on as potential victims or perpetrators but as empowered and active bystanders with the ability to support and challenge their peers in a safe way. PC's Millican and Barclay are looking forward to

assisting and supporting Buckie Community High School with implementing the programme within the school and working alongside senior pupils who will be trained to deliver the programme to younger year groups after the Summer holidays.

Over the past few weeks PC's Millican and Barclay have based themselves out of Keith Grammar School and Buckie High School where they have been able to provide inputs to classes on a range of topics including drug and alcohol use. This has also provided a visible and more accessible Police Service for pupils and educational staff to interact and build positive rapport. Thursday 21st April saw the first week of the Pitchin In programme in Buckie High School. Although a slow start, the session turned out to be a great success. PC Barclay also managed a quick game of footy (albeit not for very long and rather unsuccessfully) Between Tuesday 3rd May to Friday 6th May, PC's Millican and Barclay visited the majority of the Primary 7 students in the Buckie and Keith area in regards to transitioning from Primary School to High School and addressing any fears or answering any questions they may have. Thank you to all the schools, staff and pupils for their help in making these days a success!



## Elgin

Police in Elgin received and responded to a number of reports of antisocial behaviour reported in the town centre, Alexandra Road and Cooper Park areas with dedicated patrols and activity supported by partners taking place over forthcoming weekends to target and prevent this. Such behaviour has particularly involved young people travelling from out with Elgin to the town by bus at weekends. Inspector Neil Morrison of Elgin Community Policing Team said: "The reported behaviour is causing concern for many in our community. Dedicated patrols are being carried out in the areas and these will continue. Officers present intend to provide reassurance to the community as well as engaging with young people and discouraging antisocial behaviour. "I stress that the vast majority of young people do not come to the attention of police. However, we know that a small minority do sometimes become involved in anti-social behaviour and their actions can have a negative impact on the lives of local residents and that of their peers. "I would also urge parents and guardians to meaningfully support us by making sure you know where your children are, who they are associating with and what they are doing.

Following reports of a man behaving inappropriately towards women in Cooper Park, Elgin, on Saturday, 11 June, a 37-year-old man has been arrested and charged in connection with a breach of the peace. He was due to appear at Elgin Sheriff Court at a later date. Police Constable Gemma Latter said: "I would like to thank the people who have come forward with information regarding this incident. If anyone has further information or wishes to speak with officers please call us on 101.'

Following complaints about parking in Elgin town centre officers were out and about in June 2022. Over 20 tickets were issued for parking infringements. Sgt Scott Brander said "We are very aware of parking issues throughout the town centre and actively listen to concerns raised by residents and businesses alike. Local officers will continue to be proactive in tackling the problem and I encourage motorists to take heed and adhere to parking restrictions".

**A five-figure sum of Class A drugs has been seized following a pro-active operation in the North East.**

**On Thursday, 12 May, 2022, officers executed warrants at two properties on Provost Rust Drive in Aberdeen and Findhorn Court in Elgin. Quantities of heroin and cocaine were recovered, with an estimated street value of £30,000.**

**Two men, aged 18 and 19, and a 26-year-old woman have been arrested and charged in connection with drug offences with the two men appearing at Sheriff Court.**

**Detective Constable Ross Hay, from North East Division CID Proactive, said: "We remain committed to taking appropriate action against people profiting from the sale of illegal and harmful substances. Our partnership approach means that in addition to addressing drug related criminality, we also work with communities and partners to support individuals impacted by substance misuse and deal with other issues that result from individuals and groups involved in the supply of controlled drugs.**

A 36-year old man has been arrested and charged in connection with theft by housebreaking at two properties in Dallas and Mosstowie. The first incident occurred at an address in Mosstowie on Monday, 9 May, 2022 and the second incident occurred at a property in Dallas on Tuesday, 10 May.



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## What's happening in Aberdeen

**Two people have been arrested and charged following the recovery of a five-figure sum of Class A and Class B drugs in Aberdeen.**

On Thursday, 9 June, 2022, officers executed warrants at two properties on Elphinstone Court and Grandholm Court in Aberdeen. Quantities of heroin, crack cocaine and cannabis were recovered, with an estimated street value of around £18,000.

A 37-year-old woman and a 30-year-old man have been arrested and charged in connection with drug offences.

Detective Constable Dan Connelly, from North East Division CID Proactive, said: "We remain committed to taking appropriate action against people profiting from the sale of illegal and harmful substances.

**In response to concerns raised by the local community, officers from the West End and Hazlehead Community Policing Team (CPT) carried out high-visibility and plain clothed patrols in and around the area during the three-day operation at the end of May 2022.**

Officers issued multiple antisocial driving warnings and charged numerous motorists during an operation to tackle dangerous and inappropriate driving in the West End and Hazlehead area. Four motorists were issued antisocial driving warnings and four more were charged with other offences including dangerous driving, defective tyres, failing to comply with red lights and drug offences. Thirteen other motorists were warned for minor Road Traffic Offences including defective lights. Two people were also arrested on outstanding Apprehension Warrants. Constable Paul Hay, of the West End and Hazlehead CPT, said: "We were encouraged to see and speak with so many road users during the operation who use the roads courteously and considerately. It was, however, very disappointing to find that a minority of motorists continue to ignore basic road safety like complying with red traffic lights and the speed limit, with one motorist was found to be travelling in excess of 100mph. By doing this they not only pose a serious risk to themselves but to other law abiding road users. By listening to the local community we have responded to their concerns, and we will continue to do so. The local community can be assured that we will continue to deal appropriately with anyone who does not follow the basic rules of the road."



**A 26-year-old man has been arrested and charged following the recovery of Class A drugs with a street value of £140,550 in Aberdeen.**

Officers searched a vehicle in Don Street after a man was seen acting suspiciously around 12 noon on Monday, 6 June, and drugs were recovered. As a result further searches were carried out in North Anderson Drive in the city. Overall, cocaine with a street value of £136,200 and heroin with a street value of £4,350 were recovered. The man was due to appear at Aberdeen Sheriff Court on Tuesday, 7 June, 2022. Detective Sergeant Erika Griffiths said: "Drugs causes misery in our communities and Police Scotland is committed to using all tools and tactics available to prevent the sale and distribution of illegal substances.

**Detectives in Aberdeen can confirm that two men, aged 51 years and 46 years, have been arrested and charged following a theft by housebreaking in the King Street area of Aberdeen, on 4 June 2022.**

They were due to appear at Aberdeen Sheriff Court today, Monday 6 June 2022. Various items, with a total value in excess of £5,000.00 were stolen with a significant amount of property recovered and will be returned in due course.

**Police are encouraging residents in Aberdeen to remain vigilant following reports of rogue trader activity in the area after an elderly woman lost money to workmen claiming to clean paving stones and weed her garden.**

North East Division Crime Reduction Officer Constable Irvine said "Rogue Traders usually cold-call, offering to make repairs or carry out work on your house, garden or driveway. In reality they charge inflated prices for shoddy or completely unnecessary work. We do not recommend dealing with cold-callers for property maintenance and repairs to your home and garden. Be on your guard if someone turns up unexpectedly. Ask yourself if your premises or garden really require work to be carried out and remember if it sounds too good to be true it probably is. Be vigilant for vulnerable neighbours who may fall foul of these criminals. Don't feel pressurised into agreeing immediately to work being carried out and never pay cash up front."

David (name changed) is a retired male in the West End of Aberdeen, living in a semi-detached property with a garage. David is a keen cyclist and was aware of the increase in bike thefts, having seen and read numerous articles on the subject. He always meant to move his cycling equipment indoors and do something about the garage door security, but just never got round to it.

**Unfortunately, David is now regretting this, as thieves recently forced entry into his garage and stole some of his equipment.**

David commented, 'I can't believe this has happened, I read all the warnings and even looked at some CCTV cameras as well as additional bike security, but just kept putting it off. I kept telling myself that we live in a decent area and that you never hear of any crime around here. I have now had to advise my insurance and get my garage door repaired, as well as look at not only the garage security, but the whole house and garden area. After the survey from the Police Scotland Crime Reduction Officer, I realised there were many areas of security that I had just taken for granted, it's been a real wake-up call.

**Bike theft has been on the increase since the start of Covid and with the value and popularity of bikes increasing they are becoming more attractive to thieves.**

North East Division's Cyber Enabled Crime Team, assisted by the Metropolitan Police Service, executed a search warrant at an address in London, following an investigation into a cyber-enabled fraud operating UK-wide from London and Peterhead. A number of people throughout the UK were defrauded, resulting in a five-figure intended loss.

A 17-year-old male was arrested and charged in London in connection with fraud and money laundering and will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal. A 19-year-old woman will also be reported to the Procurator Fiscal in connection.

Detective Inspector Martyn Thomson, of the Divisional Cyber Enabled Crime Team, North East Division, said: "Organised Crime Groups go to great lengths to manipulate and exploit the most vulnerable within our Communities by using any means necessary, however working with law enforcement partners across the UK we aim to disrupt such individuals to protect our communities. I would urge anyone who thinks that they may have been the victim of Fraud to contact their bank or financial provider and to report the matter to Police Scotland on 101."





# Scam Update #1

## Carphone Warehouse scam call

The scam begins with a cold call from a landline number, pretending to be a Carphone Warehouse salesperson with a too-good-to-be-true deal to upgrade to the latest iPhone. The scammer asks for your email address to send details of the so-called promotion. This is a tactic to convince you the offer is legitimate, while also stealing your email address. But along with the suspicious wording in the email, the game is given away by the odd characters in the sender's email address. Always check this as it is an easy way of detecting many scam e-mails.

The scammers, pass a number they claim is a customer helpline. They will talk about the delivery time and other details, to try to throw you off the scent. Scammers often call back if they need an authentication code to make a payment, spinning a lie to get you to give it to them over the phone.

A Carphone Warehouse spokesperson said: 'We have been alerted to this scam and in no part has this activity been undertaken by Carphone Warehouse. Unfortunately there are a large number of criminals who are constantly attempting to dupe unsuspecting shoppers. 'We encourage people to be vigilant and ensure that any communications they are receiving from outside parties are genuine before interacting with them. 'At Carphone Warehouse we only call existing customers and customers that have applied for credit checks with us. We don't call customers who have never shopped or attempted credit with us before. However it is very easy to spoof a phone number and pretend to be any number. Calls should initially be treated as unsolicited. 'We have a number of tactics that we use to help reassure customers we are who we say we are when contacting them, but we don't make these public as scammers tend to copy them.'



## How to avoid the scam

**Don't share information:** never give anyone access to your personal details or disclose financial information unless you know who you're speaking to.

**Only use official contacts:** if you're unsure, contact the company that claims to have called you, using the official contact details listed on their website.

**Protect yourself from nuisance calls:** many phone providers offer protections such as blocking anonymous calls. Contact your provider to find out your options and read our guide on how to block nuisance calls.

# Scam Update #2

## BP fuel giveaway scam

The scam Facebook advert appears as 'Discounts on 200 fuel litre cards' and is a 'sponsored' post. It uses an image of a crowded BP petrol station with a hand holding a BP fuel card. The text above the image states: 'BP is leaving Russia and redirecting leftover fuel to the UK, giving you the chance to get a 200 litre fuel card for just £1.78.' It claims that you could win this fuel by following a link to a website to complete a survey - tricking victims into handing their details over to these scammers.

Another version of the scam sees the same image under the text: 'Due to the current rise in fuel prices, BP is running a promotion for its customers, allowing them to get a 200 litre fuel card for £1.78.' Underneath the image, a button labelled 'Order Now' leads to a dodgy website designed to take your details. When the link in this particular scam ad is clicked on, you're sent to a dodgy website that uses the BP logo and says:

'Congratulations! You have been selected to participate in the BP promotion! The government in cooperation with "bp" announced the distribution of fuel cards on 200 litres at £1.78 to the British.' It then asks three questions: Are you from the United Kingdom? How much gasoline do you use per month? Do you use BP gas stations? Once these are answered, you're given three attempts to choose the 'correct box' with the fake fuel card prize in it from 12 onscreen gift boxes. If the correct box is selected, you're taken to a page that offers you the non-existent fuel card for £1.78 and asks for your personal details including name, address and email.



## How to avoid the scam

Scammers can easily impersonate genuine brands. Before clicking on any links on adverts like these ones, check the brand's official website and its Facebook page to see if the deal is mentioned.

**Official Facebook pages include an authenticated blue tick badge, which means the page has been verified as a genuine public figure or brand by Facebook. A clear giveaway that it's a scam is that this deal isn't communicated by either the UK government or BP, as the phoney website claims. Another sign that these adverts are dodgy are the random website addresses they both use - neither have any link to the real BP website.**



Included with this edition of  
Crime Alert are the latest leaflets  
from Police Scotland regarding  
Phone Scams and Cyber Advice

Please share with family, friends and colleagues

THE LITTLE BOOKLET OF  
**PHONE  
SCAMS**



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe  
POILEAS ALBA

THE LITTLE LEAFLET OF  
**CYBER  
ADVICE**

**POLICE  
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Keeping people safe  
POILEAS ALBA

# Don't turn to crime during this cost of living crisis



Inspector Bruce Buntain, Tillydrone Community Policing Team

**We are living in a time of uncertainty and I recognise that some of you reading this may be struggling with your finances, with your mental health, or possibly both.**

Mental health concerns continue to be a significant focus of our efforts locally. I know I have been affected by the rising cost of living and I've seen my spending habits changing.

Recent weeks, it feels like months, have seen a significant squeeze on our spending. I also know that the 'cost of living crisis' right at the tail end of the pandemic was the last thing we needed and that's had effects on my own wellbeing too.

I'm writing this to let you know that it's not just you that's affected and to let you know that there's help, support and advice out there if you need it to get you through.

I would like to remind you of the importance of looking out for and supporting one another other during this challenging period. There are still challenges ahead that we have to face but we are ALL part of this community and will tackle them together.

I've found great support from, and recognised the importance of, socialising with friends and family. Opening up to them about how I am feeling helps me to realise that I am not the only one who has struggled and this provides me with much-needed comfort.

**Breathing Space (0800 838587), The Samaritans (116 123) and other national charities can be reached out to also.**

A confidential and helpful conversation can be had with anyone suffering from low mood, depression or anxiety.

We're lucky too that locally we can turn to our partners at Alcohol and Drugs Action in Woodside where further support is also available for those in need.

I know there has been an increase in shopliftings reported, which we are tackling. Some of you may have considered committing crime to make ends meet.

I hope that's not in your thoughts but for those of you who are struggling, assistance, in the form of a grant, can come from the Scottish Welfare Fund via Aberdeen City Council.

The government has pledged £400 to help with our energy bills and further national schemes are also available via the Scottish government website offering financial support.

Locally our friends in Tillydrone at the Lighthouse Support Centre, together with local religious groups, do a great job running foodbanks for the hardest hit.

There are other similar schemes supporting residents throughout the city.

Those of you who are parents will be aware of the expense of the summer holiday period too. As an alternative to some of the more pricey activities, I've found that my two are just as engaged with a walk in the local forest, a trip to the park or a cycle on a trail.

All these activities and more are free and you may even enjoy them too.

For more information on any of the above support services and schemes available visit the Aberdeen City Council website.





# North East CrimeAlert

Keeping Communities in the North East Safe

## **Cooking Oil Theft**

## **Serious & Organised Acquisitive Criminals Target North East Businesses**

**Police Scotland are asking restaurants, hotels and takeaway food outlets to be vigilant following the theft and attempted theft of used cooking oil from business premises across the North East.**

North East Division Crime Reduction Officer PC Urquhart said 'I would advise restaurants, hotels and fast food outlet owners to be particularly vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the Police via 101. This appears to be a very sophisticated and organised group of criminals who have the ability to travel throughout the country committing these crimes. Used cooking oils are being stolen across the country and being taken south to be processed as 'bio diesel.' If you have any doubts call the company that normally makes your used oil collections in order to verify identities. Thieves will often present false identification.'

- **If you have a contract to have your used cooking oil collected, make sure you check to confirm that it is a legitimate company that you are dealing with.**
- **Ask for identification when drivers attend to collect from your premises. If in doubt phone to confirm.**
- **Keep rear gardens or yards securely locked and consider CCTV and security lighting.**

## Sign Up for Neighbourhood Alert for free

A great way in which Police can share information is via the Neighbourhood Alert system, which is delivered by Neighbourhood Watch Scotland. This enables us to send out e-mail messages relating to local crime trends and share crime prevention advice quickly and effectively to a wide audience.

Anyone can sign-up to receive these e-mail messages, either individually or as a community group. The sign-up process allows you to specify the type of information you are interested in and from what source. This is coordinated by our partners in Neighbourhood Watch Scotland, who work with a range of partners in the public sector to provide information not only on crime, but also about community safety and resilience. We only send out messages which contribute to keeping you informed and safe.

Simply visit

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

### **CyberScotland**

For up-to-date information on scams and cyber-related crimes visit <https://www.cyberscotland.com/>

### **Crimestoppers**

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Tel. 0800 555 111

Crimestoppers are an independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime 100% anonymously.

### **Crime Reduction Unit North East Division**

Email: [NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.police.uk](mailto:NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.police.uk)

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

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/NorthEPolice](https://twitter.com/NorthEPolice)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NorthEastPoliceDivision](https://www.facebook.com/NorthEastPoliceDivision)



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