



Business Watch

Police Scotland Business Advice

April 2021

Should this bulletin be sent to one of your colleagues as well as you? If you are 'moving on' please let us know a new contact within your company to send the bulletin to.

If you have any sister companies or businesses you work closely with who you think would benefit from this bulletin (check with them first) then please let us know.

If you no longer wish to receive this bulletin then please let us know at NorthEastCrimeReduction@Scotland.pnn.police.uk

URGENT MESSAGES WILL BE SENT OUT AS APPROPRIATE

Operation Pedal Protect

Pedal Protect is a national Police Scotland campaign launched on 26 March 2021 in response to a significant rise in bike thefts across the country totalling millions of pounds. Often high-end bikes are stolen and re-sold to fund serious and organised crime. The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions have seen the demand for bikes outstrip supply and with Christmas and New Year having just passed, many people are likely to have received bikes.

If your place of work has a bike store or supports the Cycle to Work scheme please consider displaying the attached posters and QR code. Scanning the QR code will take employees to the Police Scotland website where they can find advice on bike security.

Further information on Bike Marking Schemes and Bike Registration will appear in next month's Business Watch.

#PedalProtect

Property Marking

Increase the chances of having your property returned if it is stolen by using one of the services below.

Prepare an inventory of all items of value. The inventory should include descriptions of items, serial numbers and their value. Colour photographs of property are useful and invaluable for Police purposes.

www.Immobilise.com is a free property registration service, please take time to research this free service. By registering your property serial numbers and details could assist any Police investigation should your property be stolen.

AssetWatch is also a useful tool for businesses in respect of stock management/tracking and theft, more information is available at www.recipero.com/assetwatch

Gift Card Scam – reminder to retailers

Hundreds of older and vulnerable people are continuing to be conned by fraudsters who tell them to buy iTunes gift cards to pay their tax bills.

Most victims are over 65 and lose £1,150 each on average.

HMRC has said it is working with Apple and campaign groups to make sure the public know how to spot the scam and to whom they should report it.

Police Scotland would like to remind retailers to challenge any vulnerable or elderly customers if they are attempting to buy large numbers of gift cards or are seen repeatedly attending at the store for the same reason.

Here's how it works: victims are first cold-called by the fraudsters, who pose as staff from HMRC. They tell them they owe large amounts of tax.

The householders are then told to go and buy digital vouchers or gift cards, redeemable on sites such as iTunes, and read out the code.

Many of the victims agree to follow the instructions, as they don't know what an iTunes voucher is.

The conmen sell the codes on, or purchase high-value products, at the victim's expense.

Wording on the back of iTunes vouchers warns buyers not to share the code with anyone else.

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It also warns specifically about tax bills: 'The card cannot be used for any payments outside of the UK App Store or iTunes Store, including taxes.'



HMRC described the scammers as 'very confident, convincing and utterly ruthless.'

Remember - HMRC will never ask for outstanding payments using iTunes gift cards.

Counterfeit Currency

Following instances of counterfeit currency being used to make purchases, Police Scotland are reminding retailers of the importance of checking all banknotes handed over as payment.

Visual checks can be made regarding the quality of both the paper/polymer and the print. The use of detector pens and ultra violet lamps should also be considered.

Advice leaflets are readily available from the various banks detailing the security features to look out for on each banknote.

If in doubt, compare the note to one that you know is genuine.

Rural Crime Alert – Theft of Chemicals

Police are appealing to farmers and growers to be vigilant following the theft of agricultural chemicals from a farm near Inverness.

All chemicals should be stored securely inside as soon as they are delivered.

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Ensure that all external doors are of solid construction with suitable locks or a close shackle padlock and bar fitted to it

Hide the contents from view using protective grilles on windows if appropriate

Ensure property is locked away at night or when not in use

Beware of any suspicious callers – strangers may not always be what they seem. Check their identity and if in doubt, note their description and any vehicle they may be using and call the police. Your call may be important and save others from the opportunist thief.

If you are offered chemicals for sale in suspicious circumstances or at a reduced price please contact Police Scotland in Nairn on 101 quoting reference number NM/535/21.

Trading Standards Scotland Bulletin

The Trading Standards Scotland Bulletin looks at some of the most recent scams reported by consumers across Scotland. It is available by clicking on the link here

<https://mailchi.mp/b7f38f1f8fa6/trading-standards-scotland-bulletin>

The latest fortnightly Aberdeenshire Trading Standards newsletter is attached to this email.

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. The information can also be targeted to particular groups, streets, or communities as required.

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.

In these uncertain times, Neighbourhood Alert is recognized as a trusted source of information. Please consider taking a moment to sign-up for Neighbourhood Alert e-mail messages, and encourage family, friends and neighbors to do the same. Over

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23,000 people across Scotland have joined so far, with more joining every day. You can join too, without setting up a Neighbourhood Watch.

Simply visit

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

SPEAK UP. STAY SAFE - CRIMESTOPPERS are an independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime 100% anonymously.

ARE YOU READY FOR A LIFE CHANGING CAREER? -

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/recruitment/police-officers/>



As always please share the above information with your colleagues.

Regards

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North East Division**

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Website: www.scotland.police.uk

Twitter: www.twitter.com/NorthEPolice

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NorthEastPoliceDivision

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.

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