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Business Watch

Police Scotland Business Advice

May 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 Shut out Scammers

Trading Standards Scotland and Police Scotland will carry out this national campaign for 4 weeks commencing on **30th April 2021**. This launch date subsequently coincides the ability for tradespersons to undertake work in domestic homes in Scotland from 26th April 2021.

COVID related fraud/scams prevention advice has been prioritised by both Police Scotland and Trading Standards who have responded to the emerging crime profile and Covid-19 related work over the past year. With the easing of restrictions and permission being given for trade work to recommence, doorstep crime will once again start to increase.

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Doorstep crime continues to have a disproportional impact on the elderly and vulnerable and this prevention campaign seeks to provide appropriate support and advice to those at risk from such criminality. The campaign this year will continue to take a partnership approach with a view to increasing the reach of advice and reduction in doorstep crime.

Trusted Sources of Information

Approved Traders

Find local traders who have been vetted by Trading Standards
www.tsscot.co.uk/consumer-advice/approved-trader-schemes

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland

Sign up to receive localised safety alerts from partners such as Police Scotland
www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/sign-up-for-alerts

Police Scotland

Call 101 if you see someone suspicious in your local area or call 999 in an emergency

Advice Direct Scotland

Report all scams and get free consumer advice online or over the phone
www.consumeradvice.scot
0808 164 6000

www.tsscot.co.uk



Doorstep Scams



Close the Door

on uninvited callers. Don't feel obliged to answer the door to a cold caller - it is your home and you should not let anyone in unless you feel comfortable.

Take Time

to think before making a decision. Rogue traders may try to pressure you by saying that they have special deals only available today. Don't let a cold caller start work straight away.

Research

Get at least 3 quotes before having any work done. Rogue traders go to great lengths to appear legitimate - check at least 3 review sites to make sure you are getting genuine feedback. Find traders who have been vetted by Trading Standards through a local approved trader scheme.

Verify

that the person is genuine. ID cards can be faked - close the door and, rather than phoning the number on the trader's ID card, look up the company's number on their official website or in an official phone directory to check their identity. Legitimate traders will be happy to wait while you perform these checks.

Report

suspicious behaviour to Police Scotland on 101, or 999 in an emergency. Sign up to the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Alert system to receive localised alerts about crime prevention and safety issues

You may not be directly affected, however we all have family, friends and neighbours that be at risk so always look out for them.

#ShutOutScammers

Motorbike Thefts

We have seen in increase in the theft of motorbikes during the last month, to prevent being the next potential victim, consider the following:

Lock Use a disc lock to help secure the front brake disc, or a grip lock to secure the brake and throttle controls. You could also use a D lock on the front wheel to stop it being wheeled away.

Chain Thieves often steal a bike by breaking the steering lock and wheeling it away. Use a chain lock through the back wheel (the front wheel can be removed). Secure your bike, with the lock taut to an immovable object such as a ground anchor or street furniture. This will stop thieves from cutting a lock trailing on the ground using an angle grinder. If this isn't possible, thread the chain through your bike frame and back wheel.

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Cover Thieves often 'shop' for particular bike models. Using a cover instantly makes it less attractive to them. A cover also provides another time consuming obstacle for the thief.

Unfortunately security measures can't guarantee your bike won't be stolen but, by using multiple security measures, you can make it harder and less attractive for thieves. For security products for your scooter, motorcycle or moped search the 'Accredited Secured By Design' Police scheme.

Remove the keys Thieves are often opportunists and so they will look for bikes that are quick and easy to steal first. Always use the steering lock and remove the ignition keys, even if you are close by or away for a few minutes. It only takes a few seconds for a thief so don't make it easy for them. Never rely on just using your steering lock to secure your bike as thieves can break the steering lock and simply wheel the bike away.

Fitting an alarm can be a deterrent to thieves Consider fitting a Thatcham-rated 1 or 2 alarm system with tracking, immobilisation, anti-grab and movement sensors can help protect and trace your vehicle. A quality Thatcham approved, professionally fitted alarm system will not only put off thieves, but could also reduce your insurance premiums.

Property mark the parts Marking as much of your bike as possible will make it more difficult for criminals to sell parts on, and therefore less attractive to steal. It will also help police identify parts and return recovered stolen bikes. There are a range of bike marking providers that you can use.

When at home the best place to keep your motorcycle, moped or scooter is in your garage or shed Fit a garage door defender or upgrade garage door locks. Garage and shed alarms as well as low level dusk to dawn lighting will also enhance security. Fitting a ground anchor also provides extra security. Motorcycle lockers are also available to store your bike at home.

No shed or garage? Park in the safest place you can Park it in an area near to your home where it's well overlooked with good lighting. A 'Park Mark' approved car park has a higher level of security than other car parks.

Bike Security

The demand for bicycles has never been greater and as such bicycles are being targeted regularly by thieves. Whether you have just purchased your first bike or are a seasoned cyclist it is worth investing in a good quality cycle specific lock to secure your bike.

We always recommend you combine two different types of lock for additional security. This means a thief will have to carry two different sets of tools and take twice as long to remove your bicycle, significantly increasing the chances of being disturbed or seen. Today we look at some different types of locks available for securing your bicycle. Remember, look out for products that are accredited as Secured by Design and Sold

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Secure. Sold Secure are an independent, third party testing facility that test all locks against strict criteria awarding either Bronze, Silver, Gold to the strongest locks.

If you are nipping in to grab a coffee while on a long ride consider easy to carry folding locks. They are an excellent compromise between the solidity of a U-Lock, the flexibility of a chain lock and the compact portability of a cable lock – and are still easy to carry.

Look for D-Lock's that surpass Sold Secure's 'Gold' standard by using a 14mm special hardened steel shackle and body mated to a simple but powerful locking mechanism with replaceable keys. These are easy to carry and will fit to most frames and seat posts. It has a rubber body to cope outdoor life and comes in different sizes. The larger models are able to encompass the wheel, frame and some street furniture.

U-Locks' are also available with a built in 120db weatherproof alarm which will scare off any would-be bike thief and a chunky 1.2 meter looped cable, to help extend its reach.

Further guidance can be found at

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/home-and-personal-property/keep-your-bicycle-secure>

Counterfeit Currency

We are still seeing 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 and look for use of the same serial number in a batch of notes.

Security Information

How can you protect your customers and staff not just from COVID, but terrorism too this Summer?

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These simple actions could save lives:

Be security-minded when planning and providing briefings to staff and volunteers ahead of opening up venues and hosting events – they can be crucial eyes and ears in support of our 24/7 policing efforts

Whilst you ensure your spaces meet Covid public health regulations, please risk assess your existing sites and any new premises such as outdoor spaces with security in mind too; and consider both NaCTSO's protective security advice and CPNI's Personnel Security advice

Ensure your staff and volunteers are educated by signing them up to ACT e-learning training. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/act-awareness-elearning> It is free and takes just 45 minutes. Staff could benefit from See, Check and Notify training covering hostile reconnaissance, vigilance and the power of hello, and reporting suspicious activity

Promote the campaign materials in our toolkit to your staff and customers via your communication channels e.g. internal bulletins and on your external website.

Display our campaign posters in high footfall areas and at events.

Share our social media assets on your social media channels using the hashtag [#CommunitiesDefeatTerrorism](#)

Any piece of information could be a key piece of the jigsaw. This summer, it's important that people know they won't be wasting our time. As the UK continues to open up, help us make it known that sharing concerns won't ruin lives, but it might save lives. Encourage your staff and customers to trust their instincts and ACT.

Mobile phone scam

A brand new top-of-the-range phone is delivered to your door. The package has your name on it but you don't remember ordering it.

There is another knock at the door and a courier asks for the phone back explaining: "We delivered it by mistake. Would you hand it over? If you do, it could prove to be an expensive mistake.

It is a scam and yet another way that sophisticated thieves try to rip us off.

"Delivery scams are just one of the increasingly sophisticated methods fraudsters are using to leave victims out of pocket," warned Adam French, Which? consumer rights expert.

The scam involves crooks ordering and then attempting to intercept - or trick you into handing over - high-value packages.

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It usually happens when criminals somehow manage to get hold of your personal details to place the order.

What should you do?

If a courier unexpectedly comes to collect an item at your home, do not hand it over.

Check their credentials and call the company they claim to be representing. If you have any fears, contact the police.

"If you receive an unexpected high-value package such as a phone, contact the retailer immediately and arrange for it to be sent back, as the scammer may have attempted to intercept the delivery or will pose as a 'courier' to collect the item," said Mr French.

"Identity theft is also on the rise so if you spot any suspicious activity on your account report it to your bank immediately. Ensure personal documents such as bank statements are not left lying around, and are shredded before throwing away."

Android Malware

A text-message scam that infects Android phones is spreading across the UK.

The message - which pretends to be from a package delivery firm, prompts users to install a tracking app - but is actually a malicious piece of spyware.

Called Flubot, it can take over devices and spy on phones to gather sensitive data, including online banking details. Network operator Vodafone said millions of the text messages were already being sent, across all networks.

"We believe this current wave of Flubot malware SMS attacks will gain serious traction very quickly, and it's something that needs awareness to stop the spread," a spokesman said. Customers should "be especially vigilant with this particular piece of malware", he said, and be very careful about clicking on any links in a text message.

While text message scams claiming to be about a package delivery firm are common, they have mostly focused on phishing - trying to trick the user into filling in a form with bank details and other information. This newest wave differs because it tries to install malicious software on the phone itself - and because of the scale of its spread.

One version of the scam reported online pretends to be a text message from DHL, with a link to a website for parcel tracking.

If someone using an Android phone clicks on the link, they will be taken to a page "explaining" how to install the parcel tracking app using something called an APK.

APK files are a way of installing Android apps outside of the secure Google Play store. By default, such applications will be blocked for security reasons, but the scam page includes instructions on how to allow the installation.

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Apple iPhone users are not affected as those phones cannot install Android APKs.

Advice can be found online <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/flubot-guidance-for-text-message-scam>

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://us3.campaign-archive.com/?u=ea1059de662ef0803bf8f3bc1&id=ee7c011502>

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 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

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<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

**Crime Reduction Unit
North East Division**

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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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