



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

North East

CRIMEALERT

Keeping Communities in the North East Safe



**Police and Trading
Standards Zone**

**YOU ARE ENTERING A
NO COLD
CALLING
ZONE**

Residents have requested that doorstep
callers do not call on homes in this area.
Please respect their wishes.

Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024



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101 IS AN
EMERGENCY
SERVICE
AVAILABLE
24/7

Want to know more about consumer rights?
Call Consumer Advice Scotland on 0808 164 6000 or visit
consumeradvice.scot

JUNE 2026



Welcome to the June 2026 edition of North East Crime Alert.

Produced by the Police Scotland North East Division Crime Reduction Team it's aim is to provide advice on how to spot the latest frauds and scams as well as how to keep your home and business safe.

In this edition of North East Crime Alert:

How one community in the North East have united to beat doorstep crime.

We explain we conflict across the world has resulted in an increase in GPS thefts in the UK.

Why fitting a tracker to your campervan or motorhome is important.

The real life story of one victims nightmare experience with rogue traders.

Cannabis cultivations and advice for landlords and lettings agents.

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



Website

www.scotland.police.uk



Twitter

www.twitter.com/NorthEPolice



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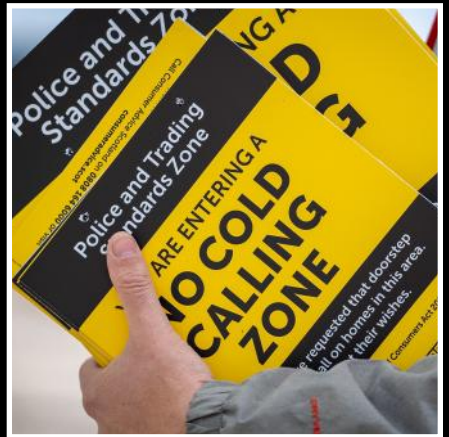
www.facebook.com/NorthEastPoliceDivision

Criminals are using ever more sophisticated methods. By staying better informed and working in partnership we can ensure our communities continue to be a safe place to live and work.



Uniting Against Rogue Traders

Drumoak launches a coordinated effort to protect residents from doorstep crime





Constable David Charnley with volunteers from Drumoak

Rogue Traders can pose a significant risk to homeowners, particularly those that are vulnerable or unsuspecting. Unscrupulous individuals will present themselves as legitimate tradespeople, offering a variety of services from roofing and gardening to general home maintenance and repair. However, their primary objective is always to exploit their victims financially.

The tactics employed by rogue traders can be manipulative and aggressive, designed to pressure homeowners into making hasty decisions that compromise their safety and finances.

A rogue trader will typically attend unannounced, pointing out alleged urgent issues like a loose roof tile or obstructed gutter and insist immediate work is 'vital' to prevent further damage. Victims are often coerced through a blend of urgency and plausible storytelling, making them feel responsible for neglecting a potential hazard.

One of the most dangerous aspects of dealing with rogue traders is their demand for cash payments. Paying in cash leaves the homeowner without a verifiable paper trail, making it difficult to recover losses if the work is substandard or incomplete. In addition, rogue traders often provide vague or false business details, making legal recourse challenging.

Poor workmanship, unfinished projects, inflated invoices and in some cases complete disappearance after payment are hallmarks of rogue trading.

Victims often experience stress and anxiety in addition to financial loss.

Constable David Charnley, Kincardine and Mearns Community Officer, with the support of the Drumoak Community Council, recently created a No Cold Calling Zone in Drumoak.

A No Cold Calling Zone is an area where residents request traders not to call uninvited and give local communities the confidence to say 'No' to uninvited salespeople and to warn rogue traders and cold callers that they are not welcome.

Zones are designed to reduce doorstep crime, deter criminals and empower residents not to engage with cold callers.

Traders who ignore No Cold Calling Zones or properties that display a NCC sticker that state they do not welcome uninvited traders may commit a criminal offence under Consumer Protection law.

The scheme in Drumoak was launched in the Bowling Club hall with tea and coffee provided by the local 'Warm Spaces' group. Officers were on hand to answer questions, explain the scheme and its benefits.

Stickers were enthusiastically distributed to every household with the assistance of the 1st Drumoak Beavers. In addition, signage was placed at the entrance to the village. Residents were encouraged to sign up to the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland 'Alert' scheme to stay up to date about crime happening in their area.

'No Cold Calling Zones give communities the confidence to say no to unwanted doorstep visits, helping to protect vulnerable residents and reduce the risk of doorstep crime.'



Remember

- You are under no obligation to open your door to anyone you don't know or aren't expecting. If you have a door chain or spyhole, use it.
- Legitimate businesses will respect your 'no.' If a caller is persistent, close the door.
- Be wary of anyone claiming a price is 'only valid for today' or stating that your property is in 'dangerous condition' and needs urgent work. These are common tactics to rush you into a bad decision.
- Always ask for ID. A genuine caller will not mind waiting outside while you call their office to verify their identity. Use a number from the phone book or internet, not a number provided by the caller.
- Always get at least three written quotes to ensure you are paying a fair price.

If You Need Work Done

Never agree to work from someone who knocks on your door uninvited.

Use the **Scotland Trusted Trader** portal
www.trustedtrader.scot

If a cold caller ignores the signage or refuses to leave your property, please report it.

Sign up to receive regular alerts about what's happening in your area by visiting
www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Non-Emergency

Call Police Scotland on 101, Consumer Advice Scotland on 0808 164 6000 or email trading.standards@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

In an Emergency

If you feel threatened, intimidated, or in danger, always dial 999.

**Retail
Crime**
TASKFORCE



Think you're
ANONYMOUS?

We're sharing information. Connecting the dots.
We're catching retail criminals.

Retailers and police now share intelligence to identify repeat offenders and organised groups.

Every piece of evidence is now connected through a national intelligence network, linking incidents and identifying offenders.



#NotAVictimlessCrime #RetailCrimeTaskforce



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Rural Crime GPS Theft

The theft of GPS units from tractors and agricultural vehicles is on the increase south of the border. 25-30 domes and screens have been stolen since January 2026. So far, there has only been one recorded theft in Scotland. However, Organised Crime Groups (OCG's), have previously travelled north of the border to target locations in Scotland.

Global conflicts contribute to increased demand for stolen agricultural GPS units with black markets responding quickly to sanctions and shortages.

Please be vigilant for unfamiliar or suspicious vehicles. If it doesn't feel right, report it. Sightings of vehicles helps the police build a picture of who is in our area and allows us to allocate resources accordingly.

Non-Emergency

Call Police Scotland on 101, or use the 'contact us' facility on the Police Scotland website www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/

In an Emergency

If a crime is in progress or you feel threatened, intimidated or in danger always dial 999.

If you would like advice regarding the security at your farm or rural business please email - NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.police.uk



Trackers Explained

The importance of fitting a tracker to your
Campervan or Motorhome

Owning a campervan or motorhome is more than just having a vehicle – it's having a home on wheels, a gateway to adventure, and often a significant financial investment.

Unfortunately, campervans and motorhomes are also attractive targets for thieves due to their high value, versatility and the personal belongings often stored inside. This is why fitting a GPS tracker isn't just a nice extra – it's a smart, proactive step to protect your pride and joy.

Why Trackers Are Important for Campervan Owners

A tracker is a discreet device fitted to your vehicle that uses GPS and other technologies to monitor its location in real time. If your campervan is stolen, a tracker can dramatically increase the chances of recovery – often within hours rather than days or weeks.

If your vehicle is stolen Police can be guided directly to its location, reducing the risk of damage or loss. Many insurers offer lower premiums or insist on trackers for high-value campervans (generally over £50,000). Whether you've left your campervan in storage or parked it at a remote campsite, you can check its location anytime. Thieves are also potentially less likely to target a vehicle with a visible tracker warning.

Given the rising theft rates for leisure vehicles, a tracker is one of the most effective security upgrades you can make.

Understanding S5 and S7 Trackers

In the UK, Thatcham Research sets recognised security standards for vehicle trackers. The two most common categories for campervans are S5 and S7. Both offer strong protection, but there are key differences.

S7 Trackers

- GPS tracking with 24/7 monitoring by a secure control centre.
- If your campervan is moved without the ignition on, the monitoring team is alerted.
- The control centre works with police to recover your vehicle quickly.
- S7 trackers offer reliable location tracking and theft alerts at a lower cost.

S5 Trackers

- S5 trackers include all S7 features plus an additional layer of driver verification.
- You carry a small fob or card that confirms you're an authorised driver. If the vehicle is moved without the tag present, it's treated as a theft in progress.
- This combats 'key theft' or 'relay attacks' where thieves steal or clone your keys.
- S5 trackers currently offer the highest level of protection and insurance compliance.

Individual specifications can vary between manufacturers. Always check and understand what a tracker offers before purchasing. Speak to your insurer before installing any tracker to make sure it complies with their requirements. Thatcham approved trackers must be fitted by an approved installer.

Which Should You Choose?

If you want strong, but affordable protection, an S7 tracker is a solid choice. If your campervan is high-value, often parked in public places, or you want the most advanced theft prevention, an S5 tracker is worth the extra investment.

A tracker won't just help recover your campervan if it's stolen – it can also lower your insurance costs, deter thieves, and give you peace of mind wherever your travels take you. Whether you choose S5 or S7, the important thing is to have an insurance approved, quality, professionally installed tracker in place before you need it.

Your campervan is your ticket to freedom – a tracker helps make sure it stays that way.

Rogue Traders

An Escalating Nightmare



This real life incident began with a simple flyer and a few loose tiles. James, a homeowner in the North East, took pride in maintaining his property and when his roof needed a minor repair, he checked with a neighbour who had recently had a similar job done. Satisfied, he hired the firm they used for a task estimated at just a few hundred pounds. James had no way of knowing he was entering a financial trap that would eventually cost him over £250,000.

The Creeping Scope of Work

Once the contractors were on the roof, the narrative shifted. James was told the ridge tiles were in 'poor condition' and a full replacement was necessary for £12,000. Trusting the expert opinion, he agreed.

The pattern of exploitation quickly escalated. Halfway through the job, the lead contractor claimed the supporting structure was failing and insisted on a full roof rebuild for an additional £43,000. When James tried to seek second opinions, other firms refused to touch a live job already stripped by another company. Feeling cornered and desperate to make his home watertight, James paid.

Exploiting Trust and Family

The rogue traders didn't stop there. When James mentioned a family member also needed minor roof work, the contractors moved in. They used the same tactics: identifying 'hidden' problems, including claims of hazardous asbestos that required urgent, expensive removal. These fees - £19,000 at a time - were paid without formal contracts or invoices, driven by the fear of leaving a family home exposed to the elements.

Deception

By winter, the works ground to a halt. James's original home was left covered only by a failing membrane, leading to massive internal leaks and thousands of pounds in water damage.

As James pushed for completion, the excuses turned from professional to personal. The contractor claimed he had alleged he had a serious medical condition. James was promised a £23,000 refund for his troubles - a goodwill gesture that never arrived. Instead, the contractors claimed the money was gone, the terminally ill director had passed away and they promptly disconnected their phones.

Reality

James later discovered that while the company was being wound up, the same individuals had already registered a brand-new roofing business under a different name.

To make his home habitable, James had to pay a legitimate firm an additional £40,000 to fix the shoddy, incomplete work left behind.



Protecting Your Home

Fraudsters often perform small, honest repairs for neighbours to build trust.

A recommendation for a minor fix isn't a guarantee for a major project.

Traders often strip a roof and then 'discover' expensive structural issues, leaving the home exposed to force additional payments.

If a price hikes mid-job, stop and call a local council building inspector or an independent surveyor to verify the alleged emergency.

Legitimate asbestos removal requires a Waste Consignment Note. If they can't produce disposal receipts and licenses, it's a scam.

Business should stay professional. If excuses replace progress, check Companies House to see if the firm is being struck off or dissolved.



The Homeowner's Checklist

- Never rely on verbal quotes. Ensure every change in scope has a written, fixed-price contract.
- Never pay upfront. Pay only when agreed milestones are met and inspected.
- You generally have a legal cooling-off period for contracts signed at home. Beware those who insist on starting immediately to bypass this.
- Ensure the firm has a physical premises, not just a mobile number or a social media page.

If a contractor becomes aggressive, refuses to leave your property, or makes you feel unsafe after you decline additional work, call the Police immediately.



Cannabis Cultivations

Advice for Landlords and Letting Agencies



Commercial cannabis cultivation can affect you as a landlord or letting agent. It can cause significant damage to your property, which your insurance may not cover, and could result in loss of rent whilst your property is repaired.

The criminals involved in commercial cannabis cultivation often have links to serious organised crime, which can include human trafficking. When these individuals establish cannabis cultivations in residential properties, the problem is brought into local communities.

<p>If organised criminals use your rented property, you could...</p>	<p>How can I spot the signs of criminal intent in a potential tenant?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find your property is damaged due to unauthorised structural changes. • Expose your property to increased risk of fire due to excessive cabling and flammable material. • Lose rent during eviction and repair periods. • Have to deal with hostile tenants. • Be held liable by the property's energy supplier for outstanding energy bills. • Incur penalties, including loss of property use, property damage resulting from police action, and in some cases asset seizures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to pay rent several months in advance, particularly in cash. • Paying in cash with no obvious income. • Requests for you not to visit the premises. • Requests to pay rent at a meeting place other than the premises. • Unusual fortification of individual rooms. • Installation of expensive exterior fortifications.
<p>How to spot the signs of commercial cannabis cultivations</p>	<p>What steps can I take to protect myself and my property?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinct sweet pungent smell. • Plant growing equipment. • Windows blacked out. • Unsociable comings and goings. • Tenant may only visit once or twice per week. • Intense lighting for 18-24 hours a day. • High levels of heat and condensation. • Lots of cables, or electrical wiring being tampered with and bypassed circuitry. • A sudden jump / fall in electricity bill. • Significant vegetable material being thrown away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always ask for official photo identification. Ensure it hasn't been altered and isn't fake. • Watch for telephone, water, gas and electricity accounts in different names. • Require more than one type of identification for joint applicants. • Check the prospective tenant's current address and rental history. • Obtain mobile phone numbers and car registrations of prospective tenants.

Due to the intense lighting, excessive wiring and amount of flammable material, cannabis farms are serious fire hazards. They are often in top floors or lofts, which mean that when a fire takes hold, it spreads rapidly. The fire may only become apparent when it is well developed.

Be aware that many criminals use a 'front couple.' They will appear to be a genuine, respectable couple seeking to rent a property for their own use. After they have been shown around the property by the landlord

and take possession of the property they will disappear without a trace. They will then be replaced by criminals who will convert the property for the purposes of cannabis cultivation.

What do I do if I suspect my property is being used for cannabis cultivation?

Contact Police Scotland on 101 or call independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

In an emergency always call 999.



Fuel Theft

Rising fuel costs and speculation about fuel shortages are leading to increased thefts across Scotland.

Police Scotland continue to see a rise in fuel thefts across all areas of the country. This can largely be attributed to recent fuel prices and speculation about fuel shortages. All types of fuel are being targeted from domestic heating oil to commercial fuels stored on farms and construction sites.

Keep the tank visible

Where possible locate the tank where it can be viewed from a habitable building such as in sight of a farmhouse or construction site office.

Tanks located away from buildings or dwellings are more vulnerable if they cannot be seen by occupants or staff, especially if vehicle access is not restricted.

Reduce access points

Keep access points to the fuel depot on sites to a minimum, keep gates closed and block exit points that are not used.

Use SBD (Secured by Design) approved standards

Consider the introduction of perimeter fencing and associated gates to LPS 1175 issue 8.1 A1 (SR1) or above standard, subject to a location security risk analysis to identify threats and vulnerabilities. Where gates are secured by a padlock or a similar locking mechanism, ensure that it meets a Secured by Design (SBD) approved standard.

Fit an alarm

Fit a fuel tank alarm to notify of an attack. Remote electronic fuel level gauges will set off an audible or monitored alarm if the fuel level in the tank suddenly drops or falls below a defined level. Where fuel tanks are in remote locations, consider a secure and alarmed steel container.

Use anti-siphoning devices

Fuel tanks should be fitted with a locking fuel cap and anti-siphoning devices. Anti-siphoning devices stop a pipe from being dipped into the fuel and fuel being pumped or syphoned out of the tank. These products also work on HGVs or construction plant, as well as on static on-site fuel tanks. Use an accredited lock that meets the Police Preferred Specification.

Consider a detection system

On high-risk exposed sites, an additional detection system should be considered such as a Perimeter Intrusion Detection System (PIDS).

Restrict access

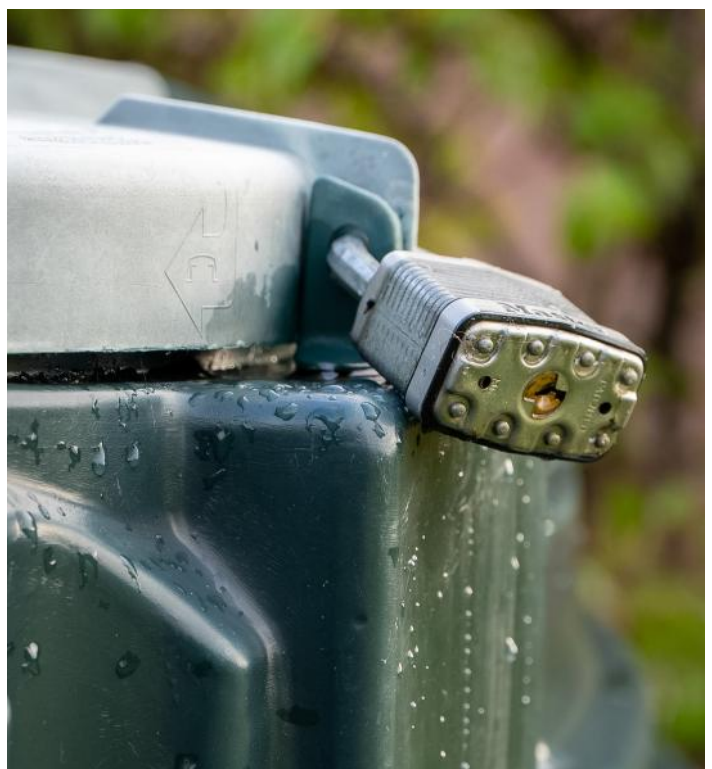
Where a perimeter treatment is not a suitable option, consider the introduction of bollards or other vehicle mitigation measures which help restrict access.

Implement management systems

A fuel Management system can be crucial to identify fuel theft, especially where there are many users or the tank is located out of sight. A good fuel management system should accurately record users, date and time of use.

Minimise the amount of fuel on site particularly on remote or rural sites.

Report sightings of suspicious persons or vehicles as soon as possible via 101 or 999





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FRAUD... THE BASICS

The North East Crime Reduction Team would like to speak to your community group about frauds and scams. If your organisation would like to learn about -

Spotting Frauds and Scams

Banking Online Safely

Strong Passwords

Wi-Fi Security

Keeping Your Device Safe

Social Media Safety

Get in touch by emailing

NorthEastCrimeReduction@scotland.police.uk

STAY SCEPTICAL - STOP AND THINK - COULD THIS BE A SCAM?

Holiday Scams



Booking your holiday online is convenient, but it can be a prime target for fraudsters looking to steal money and personal information. To ensure you enjoy a stress free trip, follow our essential tips to avoid online holiday scams.

Firstly, always use reputable booking platforms such as Expedia, Booking.com, or Airbnb. These sites provide secure payment systems, verified listings and customer support. Avoid unknown websites or social media site adverts promising too good to be true deals. Check reviews on multiple independent sites to verify the property's authenticity.

Next, scrutinise the booking process. Never pay via bank transfer or money services like Western Union as these offer little consumer protection. Credit cards are safest, offering Section 75 coverage, allowing you to reclaim funds if something goes wrong.

Confirm the site URL starts with 'https' and displays a padlock icon, indicating secure communications. Beware of impersonators. Clone websites, phishing emails and fraudulent social media accounts often mimic legitimate providers. Don't click links from emails or messages. Instead, type the official web address directly into your browser. Contact property owners through official channels and confirm their details. If a listing requests off-platform communication or urgent payment, treat this as a red flag.

Document everything. Keep records of confirmations, emails and screenshots of your booking. Check your holiday companies are ABTA or ATOL members for extra protection. Finally, trust your instincts. Pressure tactics or last minute exclusive offers are often scam tactics.

Exercising caution, verifying sources and using secure payments can significantly reduce the risk of falling victim to holiday booking scams. Your next trip can remain an exciting and safe adventure rather than a cautionary tale.

What is Section 75 Protection?

- Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 provides consumers with protection when making purchases over £100 and up to £30,000 using a credit card, making the credit provider jointly liable for any issues with the goods or services.
- The protection applies to a wide range of transactions including online purchases, mail orders and also any associated costs incurred due to issues with the purchase.
- You do not need to pay the full amount on your credit card to be covered. Even if you only pay a small deposit on your credit card you can still claim the full amount if something goes wrong.

Crime Alert

A selection of crimes affecting residents from across Grampian

Romance Fraud

An Aberdeen resident was contacted by fraudsters claiming to be a celebrity she followed on social media. Believing she was in an online relationship with the celebrity, she was persuaded to send nearly £20,000.

Banking Scam

An Aberdeen resident was contacted by scammers claiming to be from her bank regarding suspicious activity on her account. Believing she was transferring her money to a 'safe account' she lost £15,000.

Investment Fraud

An North East resident was tempted by an advert for high return investments. After passing on his personal details he discovered loans of £30,000 had been taken out in his name.

Bike Theft

Two motorbikes valued at £15,000 were stolen from an Aberdeen city centre lock-up.

Crypto Scam

An Aberdeen male was impressed by a You Tube video for investing in cryptocurrency with massive returns. He invested his savings and pension and lost £120,000.

WhatsApp Scam

A North East mother received a message from an unknown number claiming to be her daughter who had lost her phone. She transferred £900 and later discovered the message was a scam.

Vandalism

A Surrón bike was driven onto the greens of Buckpool Golf Course causing significant damage. A number of these bikes have been seized across the division and owners charged with traffic offences.

Shoplifting

A 24-year-old man has been arrested and charged in connection with shoplifting and being in possession of a weapon at a premises on Edgar Road in Elgin.

Business Break-in

A business in Duffus, near Elgin was broken into and a three figure sum of cash taken.

Theft of Copper

The continued high price of copper globally has seen an increase in thefts. A number of businesses in the North East have been targeted with scrap copper and cable stolen.

Illegal e-bike Operation

Officers have carried out a series of patrols in the Elgin area relating to illegal-e-bikes resulting in the detection of more than 25 crimes and an off-road bike and three e-scooters seized.

Farm Theft

A cattle crush worth £2,000 was stolen from a farm near Brodie and around £2,400 worth of damage was carried out to a milking cluster.

Theft of Heating Oil

Due to high fuel prices a number of heating fuel thefts have occurred across the North East. Rural properties have been targeted and fuel syphoned from tanks located in gardens.

Crypto Scam

A Moray man lost £6,000 to a crypto currency scam after responding to an online advert. He was encouraged to keep investing money and was required to pay 'fees' prior to unsuccessfully attempting to withdraw his money.

Employment Scam

A North East resident, recently made redundant, signed up for online work reviewing TikTok videos. She was asked to open a Crypto wallet to invest her wages and was scammed out of £8,000.

Wildlife Crime

A legal trap set by a gamekeeper on Deeside was deliberately interfered with. As a result of the interference a Pine Marten was able to enter the trap and was killed.

An active badger sett near to the River Deveron was deliberately filled with earth and a substance suspected to be diesel poured over the earth.

Sheep Thefts

High prices have seen a number of lamb thefts in the North East since March.

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

Twitter

www.twitter.com/NorthEPolice

Facebook

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

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