



# Caithness Community Update

March 2024

Police Scotland - Highlands and Islands Division

@PoliceScotland

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 Highland Islands Police Division

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**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

**POILEAS ALBA**





## Foreword from the local policing team

Welcome to our second Caithness Community Update Newsletter of 2024.

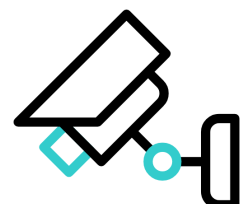
In this edition, we talk about our Rural Recruitment campaign, tell you what officers have been up to, addressing the local policing priorities, how we have been working with partners and we give you some prevention advice to avoid fuel thefts.

As always we are keen to hear how this newsletter can be improved and shaped to best inform the community on what is happening in Policing in Caithness.



What is in this edition:

- Rural Recruitment
- Policing Your Priorities
- Partnership Working
- Prevention Advice





## Rural Recruitment

**Police Scotland is recruiting police officers in rural areas of Scotland, and encouraging applications from people who share their values, and are either starting out on their career journey or considering a career change.**

If you want to live and work in Caithness then you can now specifically apply to join the local policing team based in Wick and Thurso, covering the whole of the county.

Police Scotland is looking for recruits of all ages and backgrounds, but you do have to be aged 18 or over (you can apply at 17.5), physically fit, and hold a valid driving licence.

As a police officer working in a rural community, you will often be the first responder to incidents and will quickly see how your actions can help people at their time of need.

Sign up to attend an online recruitment event for your area or apply now at [scotland.police.uk/sign-up](https://scotland.police.uk/sign-up).

# Love your community?

Become a local police officer and help to keep people safe.



**Caithness Community Update**

# Policing Your Priorities



## **Road Safety and Road Crime**

Since the 1st of February 2024 officers from the local policing team and the Divisional Roads Policing Unit have dealt with 13 drivers in relation to their fitness to drive due to either drink or drugs.



Many of these were the result of intelligence led and pro-active policing. Information about crime or criminality from members of the public, help local officers to get a better understanding of what is going on in their community.

Anyone can contact police with information about any suspected criminality in their area, by either calling 101 or contacting Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

In that same period, 12 drivers have been

reported for driving without insurance and 7 drivers have been issued with a warning under Section 126 of the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004. One driver has also had their seized, having previously been given a warning.

A warning under S126 can be given in circumstances where a vehicle is being driven in an antisocial manner and is contravening Sections 3 or 34 of the Road Traffic Act.

The warning is placed on both the driver and the vehicle and if either is found to commit the same offence in a 12 month period the vehicle can be seized by police and the driver reported.

Speeding continues to be an issue that is raised by the community and officers have reported a number of drivers for speeding offences. This included a driver to was reported for driving at 103mph in a 60mph zone in February.

***In the past year Caithness officers have been responsible for seeing more than a 20% increase in detections for road traffic offences, meaning an increase of 71 offences. This has been thanks to proactive patrols by officers and intelligence from members of the public.***



## **Caithness Community Update**



# Policing Your Priorities - cont...



## **Acquisitive Crime**

In February officers in Wick were called to reports of a ongoing housebreaking. When officers arrived a suspect was seen to flee the area and was chased on foot. They were subsequently traced in a nearby house and was arrested. They were later charged and will appear in court at a later date. Items from the property were recovered.

## **Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder**

We know that often antisocial behaviour can have a huge impact on our communities and the quality of life of many residents.

We will continue to work with relevant partner agencies to reduce the impact this type of behaviour has on the community.

In this past year we have seen nearly a 30% decrease in incidents of antisocial behaviour; this include calls relating to vandalisms, disturbances, noise and public nuisance. This was was drop from 805 to 582 incidents.

## **Protecting Vulnerable People**

In February police received a call, raising concerns for a male who was suicidal, however no location was known. Officers were able to conduct

substantial enquiries to trace the male who was found to be near to the sea edge. Officers were able to speak to the male for a considerable time and managed to talk him back from the edge and he was able to be conveyed to hospital and relevant safeguards put in place.

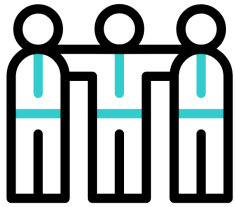
During the month of February, officers in Caithness received 24 “**Concern for Person**” type calls. These ranged from concerns for elderly or vulnerable member of the community to ongoing incidents involving a suicidal person.

Often these incidents required multiple police units or specialist officers to attend and support from partners agencies such as Scottish Ambulance Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, HM Coastguard or the RNLI. Our close working relationships with these services mean we can get the right support to the right people.

**This only showcases a very small selection of the good work being done in the area by local officers and hopefully gives you a flavour of what they do to address the local policing priorities.**



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## Partnership Working

### Planet Youth

Police Scotland has been continuing to support the Planet Youth project which has been working across the North Highland area for some time.



**PARTNER** *Highland*

Planet Youth is a project which comes from the “Icelandic Prevention Model”. It looks to address smoking, tobacco and drug use among young people and takes a primary prevention approach.

NHS Highland and Winning Scotland are the key partners, however the project also involves support from Highland Council, High Life Highland and various other third sector organisations.

Within Caithness there are a number of local groups which look to get parents involved. More information and how to get involved can be found on the Planet Youth in Highland Facebook page.

Earlier in 2023, officers from across Police Scotland were visiting off-licence premises to spread awareness about our “**It’ll Cost You**” campaign. It looks to address proxy purchase, which involves adults purchasing alcohol products

for young people. The campaign highlights the consequences of proxy purchase, both for the adult and the young person. More information about the campaign can be found at [www.itwillcostyou.com](http://www.itwillcostyou.com)

### Cyber Awareness

Police in Caithness have been working with staff within Highland Council to deliver inputs to pupils in Thurso High School about Cyber Awareness. This included looking at how to keep yourself safe & secure online and online bullying.

The inputs have been delivered across a number of classes.

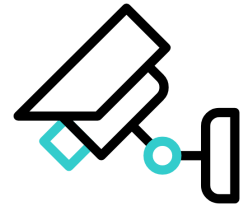
### NHS Pop Up Hubs.

This month an officer attended the first NHS Pop Up Hub in 2024, which was held in Dunbeath. This is an opportunity for the community to speak to a number of support services in Caithness. Similar to our standalone “**Coffee With a Cop**” sessions, you can come and speak to an officer with any questions or concern you might have about policing in your area.

Come along to chat to us and other partners on the following dates:

- 16th May, 12pm to 4pm (Caithness House)
- 4th July, 10am to 2pm (Reay Hall)
- 12th Sept, 11am to 3pm (Canisbay Hall)
- 23rd Nov, 10am to 2pm (British Legion Social Club, Thurso)

# Prevention Advice



**Officers are reminding the community to ensure they have appropriate measures in place to help deter and prevent heating fuel thefts, following a number of incidents across the country.**



It's important to put measures in place to protect your fuel tank and make it extremely difficult for thieves to target your fuel.

Please find below some tips to avoid becoming a victim of such a crime:

- Locate your tank in a safe location remembering that many thieves use Google Maps to find satellite images of fuel tanks.
- Consider locating your tank behind a garage or shed and away from roads. Positioning it close to your business or home will ensure it's in clear view.
- Locate inside a security gate or cage with a good quality, robust fence or cage to make life difficult for thieves.

- Install an alarm Consider fitting alarms to external gates surrounding your fuel tank or to the inside of a shed or outbuilding that is housing the tank.
- Fit a fuel theft lock, thieves often come armed with tools so it's worth investing in quality locks, locking fuel caps and anti-siphoning deterrents to slow down the criminals and reduce the likelihood of success. Locks with a CEN or BSEN 12320 Grade 6 classification indicate maximum security (Grade 1 is the least secure)
- Install outdoor security lighting positioning your tank in the bright light is an effective solution worth considering. With the majority of thieves striking at night, installing automatic security lighting will help stop criminals from targeting your fuel tank.
- Install CCTV cameras on your premises to dissuade anyone from targeting your tank as well as catch a thief in the act, providing the police with the evidence required to bring those to justice who choose to ignore the deterrent.
- Put up signage to highlight the security measures you've installed can help deter those up to no good. These could include Private property, keep out, Warning CCTV in operation, All vehicles are left with minimum fuel, Security patrols in operation, All vehicles fitted with security devices etc

Report any suspicious activity, or those involved, to Police Scotland by calling 101. If the theft is in progress and in an emergency, call 999.

More general advice about keeping your garden safe from thieves can be found at by visiting [www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/your-home/your-garden/](http://www.scotland.police.uk/advice-and-information/your-home/your-garden/)

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**We aim to ALERT you to:**



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**Information on safety, resilience  
and community wellbeing**



**Guidance on online safety  
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**Approved "Secured by Design"  
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