

# Police and Fire Service appeal to prevent fires and anti-social behaviour



The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and Police Scotland are appealing to the public to do what they can to prevent fire and crimes of anti-social behaviour.

This time of year sees an increase in the number of deliberate fires across the country. These incidents range from rubbish and refuse fires to vehicles being set alight.

Deliberately set fires are dangerous; they waste time and money, and keep SFRS crews away from real emergencies.

Fire setting can also result in injury, property damage and environmental pollution.

Glenrothes Station Manager Graham Arnott, said: "We want everyone to enjoy a safe and pleasant Easter break. "Whilst we have seen a decrease in the total number of deliberate fires in Scotland over the past four years, there were still 2,428 deliberate fires recorded last spring. These incidents are a waste of SFRS resources and can take firefighters away from more serious fires.

"During spring our personnel will be working around the clock. Not just fighting fires, but visiting schools and youth groups to engage with young people.

"We would urge parents to ensure that their children know about and understand the potentially tragic consequences deliberate fires can have, as well as the impact for responding emergency services. Fire setting is an offence – don't accept it, report it."

SFRS work together with partner agencies Police Scotland and Crimestoppers

Scotland to prevent fires and support Police Scotland in highlighting the need to report fire offending.

Station Manager Arnott said: "We shall continue to work with our Police Scotland colleagues to ensure any deliberate fire is fully investigated.

"We ask local residents and businesses to ensure that rubbish does not accumulate outside their property and that wheelie bins are stored in a safe and secure area until collection. Bin and rubbish fires can quickly take hold and spread to buildings and vehicles, posing a major risk to life and property."

Glenrothes Community Sergeant Kenny Greig said: "Recently we have seen an increase in disorder within the town centre area of Glenrothes including crimes of assault, vandalism and deliberate fire setting. Community officers and plain clothes officers, working with assistance from Special Constables and Fife Council Community Wardens, will take part in increased patrols in attempts to address this issue and prevent future crimes.

"I'm appealing to all local parents/guardians to become more involved in their own community by knowing where your child is and asking, who are they meeting and are they in a safe environment.

"A common theme when youngsters are taken home to their parents or are put into custody is firstly shock that their child is involved and secondly, they didn't actually know where their child was going.

"One of the basic rules I would ask parents or guardians to do is speak with your child and find out where they are going to be.

"This could stop you getting an unexpected visit by the police, a call to attend a custody area or worse, a hospital. The safety of your children in the community is paramount but the first step lies with you."

## **SIX WAYS YOU CAN JOIN SCOTLAND'S FIGHT AGAINST FIRE AND ASB**

1. Being aware of strangers loitering in your street – if they do so for some time, inform Police Scotland on the non-emergency number 101.
2. Contacting Police Scotland via the non-emergency number 101 to share

information on anyone who deliberately sets fires. Alternatively, give the information anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

3. Reporting any build-up of rubbish to your local authority or community fire station. This will help ensure it can be removed and prevent fires.

4. Ensuring you are aware of where the children or young people you look after are – and what they're doing.

5. Making sure that children and young people are aware of the risks of playing with fire and the consequences of deliberately setting a fire.

6. Reporting any fly-tipping directly to your local authority or to the National Dumb Dumpers Stop line on 0845 230 40 90.