

# Police welcome reduction in cost of rural crime in Scotland



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Police Scotland has welcomed the reduction in the cost of rural crime in Scotland, in contrast to the rest of the UK, and which has been attributed to the work of the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime.

Figures issued by rural insurer NFU Mutual today (Monday, August 6th) show a decrease in the cost of claims in Scotland of 3.8% whereas in the rest of the UK they increased by 13.4% or £4.3 million. In the last three years, the cost of farm vehicle theft in Scotland has fallen by 48%.

Chief Superintendent John McKenzie said, "As the Chair of SPARC I welcome the positive comments highlighted within the NFU Mutual Rural Crime Report, in particular the recognition that rural crime continues to fall in Scotland, and how it describes SPARC as a 'shining example' of the difference such an initiative can actually make.

"Across Scotland, rural partners and police have worked extremely hard to make a real difference to communities and the continued downward trend of crime figures in rural

communities is an outcome linked to this approach. The close working with partner organisations means that we can quickly respond to emerging trends and crime hot spots and target those who pursue criminal activity in rural communities.

“This is a collective approach encompassing all members of SPARC and we continue to evolve to ensure we meet emerging threats and continue to support rural communities across Scotland. We will not become complacent in our mission of preventing crime and look forward to the continued partnership approach across Scotland.”

Martin Malone, NFU Mutual Regional Manager for Scotland, said, “We are delighted that our partnership with Police Scotland for the SPARC scheme is proving so effective. As the insurer of the majority of farmers and many country people and their businesses, NFU Mutual’s staff and agents across Scotland are all too aware of the deep anxiety and distress rural crime can have on people in isolated locations. That’s why we work hard to tackle rural crime and provide financial support for initiatives which we think can effectively protect country people from the scourge of rural crime.”

Deputy Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police Craig Naylor, who is the National Police Chiefs’ Council Lead for Rural Affairs, said, “Crime in rural communities can have devastating consequences on inhabitants and businesses alike. Police forces are strengthening their response to rural crime with the launch of a new strategy, supported by all chief officers and Police and Crime Commissioners.

“We are looking to examples of best practice that can be adapted to other local areas, such as the results gained by the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC) which includes Police Scotland, Scottish Business Resilience Centre and NFU Mutual. The work done by SPARC is leading the way on reducing thefts of agricultural vehicles and the NPCC are keen to learn from this experience and bring the tactics to forces

in England and Wales.”