

Communities play important role in terrorism fight



Police Scotland is highlighting the important role communities play in the fight against terrorism by supporting a UK-wide public information campaign.

The head of UK Counter Terrorism Policing, Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu, believes that the public are playing a crucial role in helping police and the security services disrupt terrorist activity, with more than 22% of all reports from the public producing intelligence which is helpful to police.

Today, Wednesday 23 January 2019, Counter Terrorism Policing is launching a new public information film which will be shown in UK cinemas and across police social media accounts.

The sequel to last year's 'Communities Defeat Terrorism' campaign will feature a new 60-second film based on real-life foiled plots, which will show examples of terrorist-related suspicious activity and behaviour, as well as attack planning methodology.

Airing across 120 cinemas nationwide, including 16 in Scotland, for the next eight weeks, the film will encourage people to report suspicious behaviour and activity through the

Government Action Counters Terrorism website and the confidential hotline – 0800 789 321.

Assistant Chief Constable Steve Johnson, Police Scotland's lead for specialist crime and intel, said, "Tackling terrorism and domestic extremism is a national priority for Police Scotland and we will continue to work with our partners to protect our communities.

"We should never be complacent and the UK threat level remains at severe, meaning an attack is highly likely.

"I hope this campaign reinforces how important it is for communities to act if they see anything suspicious in their area.

"The video asks people to stop and think if they see unusual behaviour and trust your instincts. The unusual behaviour could be part of a bigger picture so it's crucial people feel confident enough to report this to police. Let us decide how important it is and never think it could be a waste of our time."

Data analysed by Counter Terrorism Policing indicates that the public are consistently providing information which is relevant to police.

If you are still unsure about how or what to report to police then please visit Counter Terrorism Policing for more information on how you can help.

Assistant Commissioner of Specialist Operations (ACSO), Neil Basu, the UK's most senior counter terrorism officer, said, "Thankfully, we did not see the horrors of 2017 repeated last year, but we should not be complacent enough to think the terrorist threat has diminished.

"Counter Terrorism Policing officers are currently running more than 700 live investigations nationwide, while crucial

intelligence from the public has helped police and the security services prevent 18 terror attacks in just under two years.

“We have been emphasising for some time that communities defeat terrorism, and the fact that more and more reports from the public provide information that is useful to our officers demonstrates this.

“Despite this increasing support, I know some people are still reluctant to speak to us. To them I say, reporting your concerns to us won’t ruin lives, but it might save them.

“Like other criminals, terrorists need to plan and that creates opportunities for police and the security services to discover and stop these attacks before they happen.

“But we need your help to exploit these opportunities, so if you see or hear something unusual or suspicious trust your instincts and act by reporting it in confidence by phone or online.

“That could be someone buying or storing chemicals, fertilisers or gas cylinders for no obvious reasons, or receiving deliveries for unusual items, it could be someone embracing extremist ideology, or searching for such material online.

“This new film has been made to try and help people understand recent terrorist attack-planning methods.”