

Police issue 25 fixed penalty notices throughout Scotland over weekend

Police Scotland has thanked members of the public and businesses for complying with a new law designed to slow the spread of coronavirus although initial indications show that officers had to issue penalty notices on only 25 occasions across the country.

Officers were given the power on Friday, 27 March 2020, to issue fines to people who refuse to stay at home. People have been told to go outside if they have a 'reasonable excuse'.

Deputy Chief Constable Malcolm Graham said: "We've had high visibility patrols in place right across the country since we were given these enforcement powers.

"But it's clear that the vast majority of people are complying with the measures. They know the message is to stay at home, and by and large, they're doing that.

"Where our officers have encountered people outside, they've been able to engage with them or educate them on why it's so important to follow the guidance from our public health experts in order to save lives and

protect the NHS.

“There will always be people who refuse to comply, but the low number of penalty notices shows they are in the minority and in those cases we’ve had to use enforcement as a last resort. This is a big change to the way people live their lives and they need to adjust to that.

“There were issues with people driving to some outdoor spaces such as parks and we will address this, working with our partners in local authorities where appropriate.

“We have been given extraordinary powers in an extraordinary situation, powers we would not normally wish to have, but I’d like to thank the public for helping and supporting us. We police with the consent of the communities we serve, so a positive relationship with those communities is of huge importance to us.”



Police Scotland. Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com
To enforce social distancing, people in Scotland are being asked to stay at home and only go outside if they have a ‘reasonable excuse’.
These include shopping for necessary food, household and medical supplies, travelling to and from work where working from home is not an option, and daily exercise that adheres to social distancing guidance.

Police Scotland can issue penalty notices of £30, rising to £60 if not paid within 28 days, where they have reason to believe there has

been an offence under the regulations. These penalties are doubled for each repeat offence up to a £960 cap, with no reduction for early payment. Due to the exceptional nature of these powers, the regulations will be reviewed at least every 21 days to ensure they are still necessary.