

Police launch 'Pedal Protect' campaign to tackle rising number of bike thefts

Police Scotland has today launched a national campaign to tackle the rising number of bike thefts taking place across the country and to raise awareness of bike security within the cycling community.

Pedal Protect will address the increasing trend in bike thefts, which has been experienced throughout Scotland in the past year. It will also be supported by colleagues from British Transport Police.

LOCK IT, DON'T LOSE IT



Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and downward trend in various acquisitive crime offences, Police Scotland's year to date figures in February 2021 showed over 4900 reports of stolen cycles were made. This is a rise of 18% from the previous year.

Often these crimes are motivated by opportunity, with those responsible taking advantage of poor or non-existent security measures in place when leaving bikes unattended, or storing them within sheds, garages and other outbuildings.

The launch of Pedal Protect took place at Fettes Police Station in Edinburgh, where officers highlighted the significant number of lost and stolen bikes that come into police possession on a weekly basis.

In order to improve bike security officers across the country will be hosting a range of bike marking events and will

publicise these on the Police Scotland social media channels.

In addition, police have been engaging with bike retailers in town and cities and many have now agreed to provide Pedal Protect and Bike Register security information leaflets to customers who purchase a new bike.

Local policing teams will also continue to gather intelligence on bike thefts taking place in their communities, and carry out appropriate enforcement action when required. The public are asked to come forward with any information relating to the theft of bikes within their communities.

Detective Superintendent Matt Paden, Police Scotland Acquisitive Crime Lead, said: "Across Scotland, cycling is a popular form of transport, as well as a recreational past-time and each year the public spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on buying bikes"

"Despite the significant sums of money people spend on a bike, the amount spent on security pales in comparison. Stealing a bike is often seen as an attractive option for those involved in acquisitive crime, as to do so is normally a quick process, with modest security measures in place, easy to overcome.

"While bike theft typically takes place to allow thieves to make a quick sale, we now believe more expensive custom bikes are being targeted by organised crime groups so they can be resold for hefty prices, which fund their criminal operations.

"We have launched Pedal Protect because we will be conducting a range of intelligence-led activity to return stolen bikes to their rightful owners, but also to encourage all of those who currently own, or who are considering buying a bike, to invest in appropriate security.

"Our Police Scotland website has a range of useful information on keeping your bike safe [available here](#).

“I would also urge anyone who has had a bike lost or stolen to regularly check in with their local policing division and provide all relevant details so we can return as many recovered bikes as possible, often cycles are recovered but no one comes forward to claim them”

Supporting the Pedal Protect campaign is record-breaking Scottish cyclist, Mark Beaumont.

Attending the launch, Mark Beaumont added: “A bike can cost anything from a couple of hundred pounds, to several thousand pounds, but no matter what you pay, the feeling you get when your bike is stolen is the same.

“It’s devastating when a valued possession is taken from you and that’s why it’s so important to make sure you take all the necessary steps to keep your own bike safe.

“I’m really happy that Police Scotland has launched Pedal Protect, because not only are they taking the investigation of any stolen bike seriously, but are working hard to educate the public on how to safeguard their bikes

“Having been the victim of a bike theft myself, I know how much distress it causes and that’s why I would urge all cyclists to consider the security they currently have in place for their bikes and ask themselves, are these measures sufficient?

“Police Scotland will be promoting their Pedal Protect campaign on a number of channels, including social media, so I’ll be sharing their messaging on my streams too. I really hope this helps raise awareness on bike security and potentially stop any of my followers having their own bikes stolen.”

Additional photographs and interviews will follow.