

# Police Service of Scotland Community Council Report



**Community Council:**

Forth and Endrick, Balforn Community Council

**Reporting Period:**

April 2021 - Compiled by PC Steven Graham

**Ward Plan Priorities**

**Antisocial Behaviour**

In the afternoon of 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021 damage was caused, which would appear to be vandalism, to a vehicle which was parked at Balforn Golf Club car park. If anyone has any information then please contact Police.

**Road Safety**

The B818 to Fintry is closed due to damage being caused to a bridge. A tree was down on the Honeyholm road which caused issues with the diversion to Fintry. A local farmer assisted in removing the tree from the road.

**Theft**

There have been no thefts in Balforn since the last meeting.

There was a report of a suspect person in the rear garden of a house. When challenged by the householder the male stated he was there to read meters. Unfortunately, Police were called well after the male had left.

All incidents in relation to suspicious persons or vehicles are welcomed and Police have and will attend to all these incidents immediately. We urge people to remain vigilant and report anything suspicious.

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## **Bogus workmen.**

With the better weather forthcoming bogus workmen can use this in order to target homes for work on the house (gutters, driveways etc) and/or gardens. Please be aware of this and see the below guidance.

### **How can I protect myself from doorstep crime?**

- Be on guard if someone turns up unexpectedly.
- Keep front and back doors locked.
- Use the door viewer or nearby window when answering the door.
- Fit a door chain or bar – use it and keep it on when talking to callers at the door.
- If you're not sure, don't answer the door.
- Don't feel embarrassed - genuine callers expect you to be careful.
- Only let callers in if they have an appointment and you have confirmed they are genuine.
- Always ask for identification badges of anyone you answer the door to, but don't rely on them. Identity cards can be faked – phone the company to verify their identity.
- Some companies offer a password system. Ask your utility providers if this can be used and if you have a password with a company make sure the caller uses it.
- Never let people try to persuade you to let them into your home even if they are asking for help – they may not be genuine. If someone is persistent, ask them to call at another time and arrange for a friend or family member to be with you.
- Never agree to pay for goods or give money to strangers who arrive at your door.
- Don't keep large amounts of money in your home.
- Remember, it's your home. There's no reason why anyone should ever enter your home against your wishes.
- If you're not sure, don't answer the door.

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/personal-safety/doorstep-crime-and-bogus-callers/>

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## **Fraud**

There were another couple of reports of fraud and attempted fraud. These involved a fraud in relation to Google Play vouchers and an attempted fraud regarding the HMRC whereby the occupier was threatened with being arrested if she didn't "press 1" on her phone. Fortunately no money was lost as the call was ignored.

Fraudsters can make contact with you by phone. The caller might pretend to be from your bank and ask for personal information such as bank details or they might be someone offering you a deal or a prize. Recently calls have been made by persons purporting to be from HMRC stating that there was a warrant out for the receiver of the call and was asked to contact the number that was given. This is clearly a false call so please heed the below advise:

- Consider making your phone number ex-directory.
- Don't give out any personal information unless you are the one who made the call and you are certain of the identity of the person you are speaking to.
- Don't give out your credit card or bank card details to strangers on the telephone.
- NEVER tell somebody your bank PIN number, even if they claim to be the bank or police. If the caller is genuine they will never ask for this information.
- Don't give out information which may infer that you live alone, are older or vulnerable.
- Never send money to anyone who claims to have a prize for you.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Contact local trading standards – they may be able to use approved 'call blocking' technology.

## **Fraud – Covid 19**

Criminals are using the Coronavirus as a cover story to trick you into parting with your money or information. Always take a moment to Stop, Challenge and Protect before making any payments.

It's important not to let the criminals rush or panic you into making a decision that you later come to regret and remain vigilant and guard against criminals using the publicity around Coronavirus as a chance to target you with fraudulent emails, phone calls, texts messages or social media posts.

With fake news articles on the internet and in the press promoting remedies, cures and false advice around coronavirus, it's also important to only share articles from trustworthy sources. If you are in any doubt, then visit [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) or [www.who.int/](http://www.who.int/) for updates and information.

Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police. They spend hours researching you for their scams, hoping you'll let your guard down for just a moment. Stop and think: it could protect you and your money.

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If you receive an email, text or WhatsApp message purporting to be from the government, HMRC, the World Health Organisation (WHO) or a coronavirus-related charity, then take a moment to think before you part with your money or information.

Never click on links or download attachments as criminals may infect your devices with malware or ask you to enter your personal or financial information into fake websites. In some cases this can lead to your identity being stolen.

## **SHEEP WORRYING**

In a neighbouring village sheep have been attacked on a few occasions recently. This was likely caused by a dog out of control in a field which contained a large number of sheep. No one has been identified as being responsible.

This time of year presents the problem of sheep worrying. It is an offence to allow a dog to worry sheep. "Worrying" includes attacking or chasing sheep and, in some circumstances, farmers are legally entitled to shoot dogs if they are endangering their sheep. It is vital that you keep your dog on the lead around livestock, even if you can usually trust it to come to call. If you live in or near a farming area, you must make sure that your dog cannot escape from your property, as it may find its way onto land containing sheep.

If a dog worries sheep on agricultural land, the person in charge of the dog is guilty of an offence. The Act considers sheep worrying to include attacking sheep, chasing them in a way that may cause injury suffering, abortion or loss of produce or being at large (not on a lead or otherwise under close control) in a field or enclosure in which there are sheep.

## **The Scottish Outdoor Access Code**

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC) offers guidance for people enjoying the countryside with their dogs and says: "In exercising access rights, you must keep your dog(s) under proper control. You must also ensure that your dog does not worry livestock."

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code says 'proper control' means different things in different situations, but when around sheep you should:-

- Not take your dog into a field where there are lambs. Go into a neighbouring field or onto adjacent land. In open country, keep your dog on a short lead (2 metres or shorter) when there are lambs around and keep away from them.
- Keep your dog on a short lead or under close control if you need to go into a field where there are sheep. The SOAC defines 'under close control' as close at heel and responsive to your commands. Stay distant from the sheep.
- Keep your dog under close control in more open country where there are sheep and stay away from them.
- The SOAC reminds dog owners that in some cases a farmer has the right to shoot a dog that is attacking their livestock.
- If you are handling a group of dogs, make sure that they do not cause alarm to livestock.

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## **Bike theft**

More than 500,000 bikes are stolen in the UK each year because they're poorly secured or not secured at all. More than half of all bikes stolen are taken from the owner's property. Due to the lockdown bikes have become more popular and thus have become more of a target for theft. Help protect your bike by following these guidelines:

### **What can I do before I set off?**

- Photograph your bike and record all of your bike's details and distinguishing features and keep in a safe place. The serial number can be found on the bottom bracket.
- Register your bicycle securely online at the National Cycle Database, [www.bikeregister.com](http://www.bikeregister.com). Doing this may help to recover your bike if it goes missing. On registering, you can also download a bike logbook where you can record your bike's details to keep at hand.
- Security mark your bike's frame with a UV pen or other method - the mark should include your home postcode and house number.
- Insure your bike, either on contents insurance or separately if required.

### **How can I secure my bike if it's kept in common close or stairwell?**

- Always keep your bike out of sight as best you can.
- Lock your bike with two locks to a secure banister or ground anchor.

### **What if I store my bicycle in a garage or a shed?**

- For tips on garage and shed security see here

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/home-and-personal-property/secure-your-garden-outbuildings/>

- Lock your bike with two locks to a ground anchor.

### **How should I secure my bike and its accessories when out and about?**

- Lock your bike up every time you leave it using secure locks (i.e. D-locks or thick cable locks).
- Ideally, use two different types of lock - a thief will need more tools to steal it.
- Locks are considered more vulnerable when close to the ground, so keep them off the floor.
- Fasten your bike through the frame and wheel to a fixed object.

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- Lock your bike in a busy, well-lit place, in view of people or CCTV cameras.
- Lock the bike closely to the object it's attached to so it is difficult to manoeuvre.
- Lock the wheels and remove small parts / accessories that cannot be readily secured, such as lights, pumps, water bottles, saddles etc.
- Vary your routine - lock up your bike in different ways & place.

### **Pedal and motorbike identification forms**

The downloadable forms at the bottom of this page are a handy guide for you to record information about your bike or motorbike. These forms can be used as your own personal record about your property for the duration of time you own it. Every bike or motorbike will be unique to its owner through the serial/chassis/VIN numbers but these are not the only ways to identify your property. Modifications, stickers, repairs, damage also can be used to help identify your bike and the more information you record about your property throughout its time with you, the greater possible chance we have of reuniting you with your property if unfortunately lost or stolen. If you keep these forms up to date and in a place you remember, if you ever have to report your bike lost or stolen, you will have the perfect reference tool for making your report.

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/d4jlfj4i/pedal-cycle-identification-form.pdf>

**We also have bike marking kits so if anyone wishes their bike marked in order to try and identify it if it gets stolen then please get in touch.**

### **Community Engagement and Reassurance**

It is important to you to have community officers who you know, who are accessible and who address local problems.

PC Steven Graham and PC Gary Martin are the Ward Officers for the Forth and Endrick area. They are based at Balfron Police Office and can be contacted at the office, on 101, or at [ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk). It is recommended that this email address is used by the local community for email contact.

Please remember that we regularly publish useful information and updates on social media, including appeals for information, updates about road closures and crime prevention advice. Our Facebook and Twitter pages can be found at

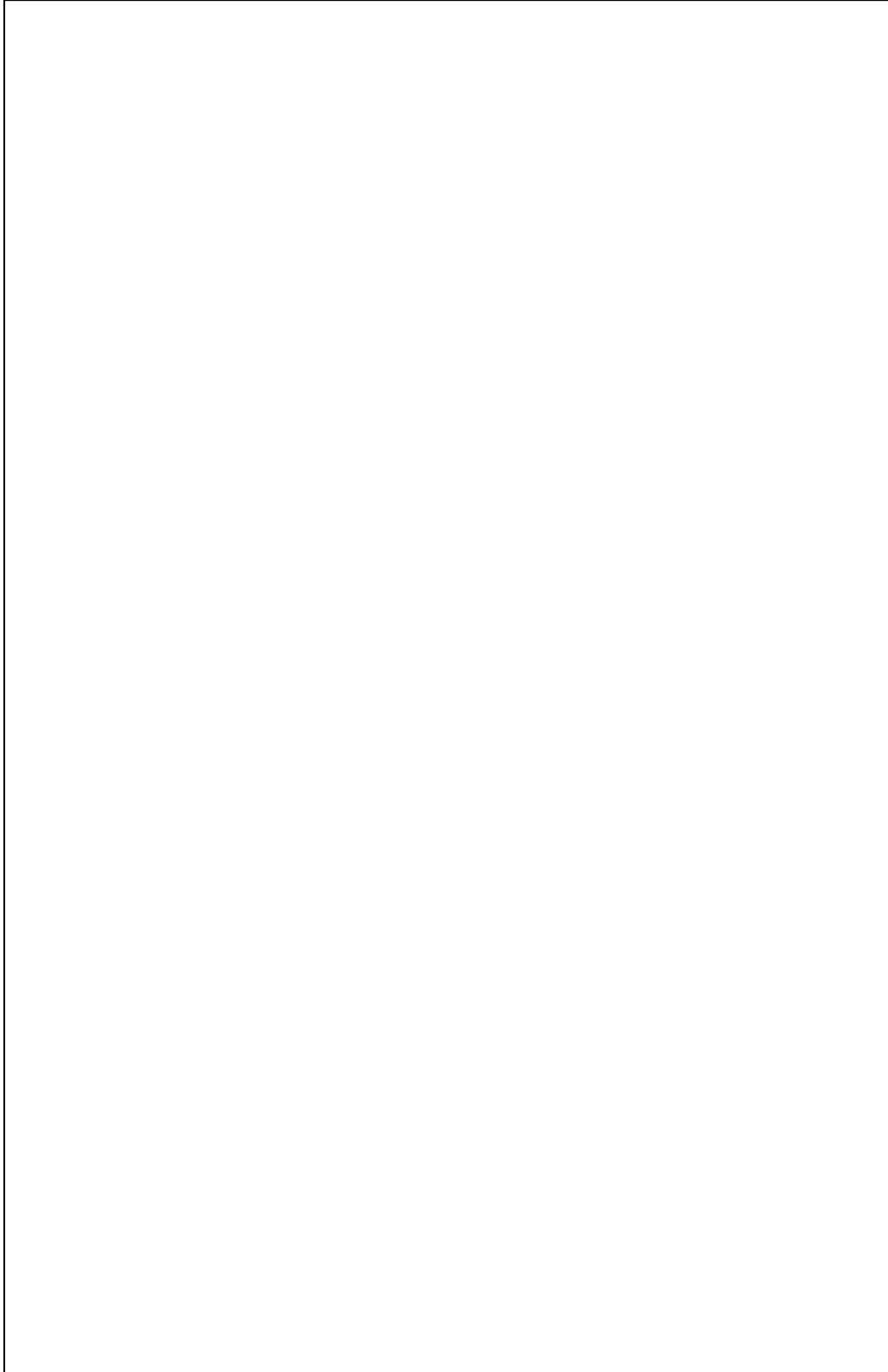
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