

Police Service of Scotland Community Council Report



Community Council:

Forth and Endrick, Balfron Community Council

Reporting Period:

March 2024 – Compiled by PC Matt McCammon

Ward Plan Priorities

Anti-social behaviour

A person has been arrested for entering Balfron Police Station while brandishing a knife and issuing threats. They were taken to Falkirk Police Station and Cautioned and charged with the offence. The person appeared at Court the following day.

A report has been received of a person shouting, swearing, and issuing threats of violence towards another. Efforts are still ongoing to trace the person responsible.

Vandalism

A vandalism has been recorded in relation to a vehicle being 'keyed'. This is the second time the vehicle has been targeted. Enquiries are ongoing to trace the person/s responsible.

Fraud

A bogus workman type scam has been recorded after two persons attended at an address in Balfron. They advised the occupant they had carried out work in the local area and that the occupants roof needed work done. The occupant agreed to the work and paid the cost quoted.

The suspects returned the next day and advised the occupant that further work needed to be carried out to another section of the roof. The occupant agreed to the work and paid a larger sum of money via bank transfer. The suspects thereafter left and didn't return.

One of the suspects has been identified and a warrant has been craved for his arrest.

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Where to Report Scams

Scams

In Scotland, report all scams to **Advice Direct Scotland** by calling **0808 164 6000** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or online at www.consumeradvice.scot

Fraud

If you have been the victim of fraud, report it to **Police Scotland** on **101** or **999** in an emergency.

Suspicious Emails

You can forward suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk and send links from websites which you think are trying to scam the public to the **National Cyber Security Centre's** scam website reporting service at www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/about-this-website/report-scam-website

Suspicious Text Messages

If you receive a suspicious text message you can forward it to **7726**. The free-of-charge '7726' service enables your provider to investigate and take action if malicious content is found.

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What is doorstep crime?

From bogus callers to rogue traders, doorstep criminals are cunning, creative, and convincing.

Anyone can be fooled as these people are professional con artists. The over 60s are targeted the most.

What types of doorstep criminals are there?

There are two main types:

Bogus callers try to get into your home or get personal details by pretending to be someone they're not.

This can include council staff, charity collectors, meter readers and police officers. In reality, they are criminals trying to steal money and valuables.

Rogue traders usually cold-call. They claim to be workers offering services, make repairs or carry out work on your property. In reality they charge inflated prices for shoddy or work that isn't needed.

We do not recommend dealing with cold-callers.

How can I spot a rogue trader?

They tell you the work needs to be done immediately.

They will ask to be paid there and then. They may offer to go to the bank with you if you don't have the cash at hand.

How can I protect myself from doorstep crime?

Here are some tips to follow to protect yourself.

- 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

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- Don't feel embarrassed - genuine callers expect you to be careful
- Only let callers in if they have an appointment - confirm they are genuine
- Always ask for identification badges, 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 if this can be used
- If you have a password with a company make sure the caller uses it
- Never let people persuade you to let them into your home – they may not be genuine.
- If someone is persistent, ask them to call at another time and get 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.

What else can I do to stop being defrauded by a rogue trader?

Trading Standards advice is:

- Don't feel pressurised into agreeing to immediate work or buying a product or service
- Don't agree to buy from the first person who calls
- Don't pay cash up front. Don't offer to go and get money
- Shop around if you decide you need work done
- Ask what your cancellation rights are
- Report them.

What action should I take if someone visits me and I think they're a doorstep criminal?

Here are some tips if you think someone is a doorstep criminal.

Keep the caller out of your house. Ask them to leave and call the police immediately on 101.

You might also want to try to alert a family member or attract a neighbour's attention. You should always contact the police first by dialling 101.

The police would much rather attend a false alarm than have someone fall victim to a doorstep criminal.

If the person refuses to leave your door, or you feel threatened or scared - call 999 and ask for the police.

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Note down their description and the description of any vehicle they're using, including make, model, colour and registration number.

How can I protect my family, friend and neighbours?

Discuss the advice on this page with family, friends or neighbours who are older or vulnerable.

There are also other things you can do to help protect them. Everyone has a part to play to keep the community safe.

- Keep an eye out for strange vans in your neighbour's driveway
- Make sure your relatives are not regularly taking large amounts of cash out of the bank
- Make arrangements to ensure your relative's house looks well maintained
- Make it less obvious that an older person lives alone
- Doorstep criminals will often target the same victim more than once. Be alert if someone has been a victim before
- Police Scotland has a 'Nominated Neighbour Scheme' which can assist those who prefer not to answer the door to those they don't know (read our [Nominated Neighbour information](#))
- Report any suspicious activity in your community immediately to Police Scotland on 101 or to your local authority Trading Standards
- For more information on doorstep crime or assistance regarding home security contact your local Community Policing Team on 101.

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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 Matt McCammon is the Ward Officer for the Forth and Endrick area. He is based at Balfron Police Office and can be contacted at the office, on 101, or at ForthEndrickCPT@scotland.police.uk. It is recommended that this email address is used by the local community for email contact however this should not be used to report crimes.

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;

www.facebook.com/forthvalleypolicedivision

www.facebook.com/policescotland

www.twitter.com/stirlingpol

www.twitter.com/policescotland