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Agenda item	<b>4.</b>
Report no	<b>CC/18/23</b>

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** Caithness Committee

**Date:** 13 November 2023

**Report Title:** Police – Area Performance Report

**Report By:** Chief Inspector Stuart Fitzpatrick - Area Commander  
(North Highland Area Command)

**1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1 To provide an update to Committee Board on the progress with reference to the objectives outlined in the Highland Policing Plan 2020-2023.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are invited to note:

- i. Progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2020-2023 Year 3, attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023.

**3. Report Format – Police Area Performance Summary Report**

3.1 This document will now cover all priorities featured in the Local Policing Plan and evidence Prevention and Intervention work corresponding to each of the Policing Priorities, provide local narrative in relation to Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism.

**4. Implications**

4.1 Resource – There are no immediate resource applications arising from this noting report.

4.2 Legal – There are no immediate legal implications arising from this noting report.

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Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – There are no immediate community implications arising from this noting report.

Climate Change/Carbon Clever – There are no immediate implications arising from this noting report.

Risk – There are no immediate implications arising from this noting report.

Gaelic – There are no immediate implications arising from this noting report.

Designation: Chief Inspector

Date: 07/11/2023

Author: Chief Inspector Stuart Fitzpatrick

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**Performance Against  
Local Policing Plan 2020-2023**



**POLICE  
SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe  
**POILEAS ALBA**

**Caithness Area Committee  
Monday 13 November 2023**

**Reporting Period - 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023**



**Report by  
Chief Inspector Stuart Fitzpatrick  
Area Commander – North Highland Area Command**

**Communities, People and Partnerships... at the Heart of the  
Highlands**



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# Introduction by the Area Commander

## Chief Inspector Stuart Fitzpatrick

I present to you the Caithness Area Committee Scrutiny Report covering the reporting period 1 April 2022 until the 31 March 2023.

The interpretation of statistics continues to be a key part of what we do, identifying potential crime trends and ensuring I have the right officers in the right place to keep our communities safe. We do compare data on previous years, however it may be some years before we can accurately compare year on year data as a result of the COVID pandemic. I am always happy to discuss the data and provide some context around the statistics provided within the report.

We are now, following the COVID challenges, facing some real cost of living challenges which will impact all of our communities, including those who have not felt such hardship before. My team are continuing to work with Partners to protect the vulnerable people within our communities.

We maintain our presence on our Highland roads, enforcing road traffic legislation, improving road safety and investigating road traffic collisions. I know this has been a particular area of concern, especially with the notable increase in visitors to the Highlands. My team continue to engage with the Visitor Management Plan, working with various partners to ensure the Highlands continues to be a safe and enjoyable place to visit.

I am pleased to report a decrease in Drug Possession offences. There has been an increase in Serious Assaults which may be linked to the removal of social distancing and all previous COVID restrictions, with our licenced premises and annual events now fully returned. I am also pleased to see a reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour related incidents.

Fraud continues to cause some concern with individuals falling victim to various methods of fraud. We have attempted to increase publicity around these and worked with financial institutions to reinforce messages around keeping money safe.

You will note from the report a slight reduction in missing person enquiries from last year. A proportion of these missing persons enquiries relate to looked after children failing to return home when required to.

Missing person enquiries place significant demands on our resource.

Domestic related offences remain low with a slight decrease on the previous year. We continue to support victims of crime to engage with us and feel confident in reporting crimes to us.

Our work tackling Serious and Organised Crime continues, we continue to disrupt these individuals and working effectively with Partners is key. We use these relationships to identify individuals that are vulnerable to exploitation, making early interventions and making the Highlands inhospitable to Serious and Organised Crime Groups.

Finally the implementation of technology within Police Scotland I hope will continue, however with the recent budget announcement of cuts to the Police Service these may not progress as promptly as we would prefer. These budget cuts continue to impact negatively on our Policing footprint across the board.

# Local Policing Priorities

The Local Policing Priorities for the N Division area are decided by data from our Strategic Assessment which details Threats and Risks, and also feedback from Local Authorities, Partners and public in the Your Police survey.



**ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD CRIME**

Collaborate to reduce casualties and crime on our roads



**ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, VIOLENCE AND DISORDER**

Engage with the public and communities to reduce and prevent crime



**ACQUISITIVE CRIME**

Reduce crime through preventing offending and reducing re-offending



**PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE**

Support people considered vulnerable through working with partners



**SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME**

Reduce the harm caused by serious organised crime including cyber related crime



**TERRORISM AND PUBLIC ORDER**

Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare through collaborative preparedness

# Caithness: At a glance

## **Road Safety and Road Crime**

Overall, Road Crime offences have increased by 9.6% (48.6 more offences) against the 5 Year Average and increased by 7.4% (38 more offences) against the Last Year To Date (LYTD).

Mobile Telephone offences have increased by 14.3% (2.0 more offences) against the 5 Year Average and decreased by 5.9% (1 fewer offence) against the LYTD.

Failure to Insure Against Third Party Risk offences have increased by 3.4% (2.4 more offences) against the 5 Year Average and increased by 7.5% (5 more offences) against the LYTD.

## **Anti-Social Behaviour, Disorder and Violence (including Alcohol and Drugs Misuse)**

Overall, Anti-Social Behaviour has increased by 29.5% (37.4 more crimes) against the 5 Year Average and increased by 19.7% (27 more crimes) against the LYTD.

Offences in relation to Common Assault have decreased by 23.8% (53.2 fewer crimes) against the 5 Year Average and decreased by 28.9% (69 fewer crimes) against the LYTD.

Offences in relation to Serious Assault have decreased by 29.5% (4.6 fewer crimes) against the 5 Year Average and increased by 22.2% (2 more crimes) against the LYTD.

## **Acquisitive Crime**

Overall, Acquisitive Crime has increased by 5.3% (11.0 more crimes) against the 5 Year Average and increased by 22.3% (40 more crimes) against the LYTD.

Offences in relation to Housebreaking (Dwelling House) have decreased by 36.2% (6.8 fewer crimes) against the 5 Year Average and decreased by 47.8% (11 fewer crimes) against the LYTD.

Fraud offences have increased by 106.1% (27.8 more crimes) against the 5 Year Average and have increased by 20.0% (9 more crimes) against the LYTD.

## **Protecting Vulnerable People**

Overall, Sexual Crime has increased by 48.0% (30.8 more crimes) against the 5 Year Average and increased by 79.2% (42 more crimes) against the LYTD.

Domestic related offences have increased by 7.7% (11.4 more crimes) against the 5 Year Average and decreased by 11.9% (20 fewer crimes) against the LYTD.

Offences in relation to Hate Crime have increased by 37.0% (7.4 more crimes) against the 5 Year Average and have increased by 75.0% (15 more crimes) against the LYTD.

## **Serious and Organised Crime**

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Over the last reporting year in the Caithness area, offences in relation to Supply of Drugs have decreased by 42.3% (6.6 fewer crimes) against the 5 Year Average and have decreased by 18.2% (2 fewer crimes) against the LYTD.

### **Counter Terrorism & Domestic Extremism**

Police Constable Lisa Campbell, N Division's Local Counter Terrorism Officer stated:

***“As the Counter Terrorism Liaison Officer (CTLO) for N Division, I ensure areas have a Local Contest Liaison Officer who is kept up to date on latest developments in Contest.***

***I liaise with CT Intelligence, CT Security Advisors, the Prevent Delivery Unit as well as local Area Commanders to address any CT related matters in the area and provide support to the Area Command if required”.***



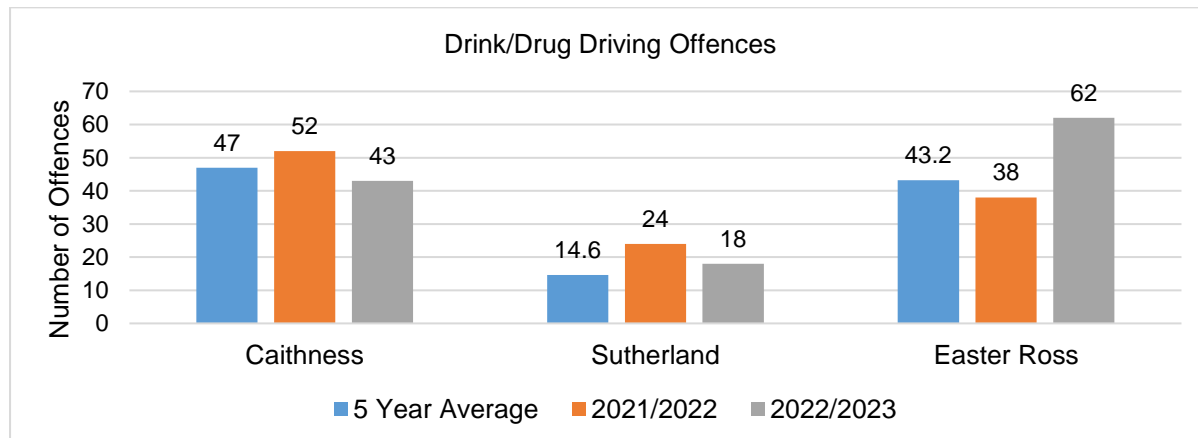
# Road Safety and Road Crime

**Intention - With Partners, enhance Road Safety across the Highland Area.**

**Objective – With Partners, deliver a Road Safety Strategy focusing on: Challenging driver behaviour; Education at the road side and elsewhere; Detection of offences linked to contributing factors of Fatal and Serious Road Traffic Collisions and collectively reducing potential harm.**

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2021/2022	YTD 2022/2023	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Number of Fatalities - Road Traffic Collisions	2.8	3.3	3	6	3	N/A
Drink/Drug Driving Offences	47.0	50.0	52	49	-3	93.9%
Speeding Offences	65.6	64.0	67	84	17	103.6%

## 2022/2023 Drink/Drug Driving Offences -



**Operation CEDAR** - (Challenge, Educate, Detect and Reduce) builds on established practices and will continue to focus on various agencies working in partnership to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in the Highland area.

Operation CEDAR involves proactive multi-agency enforcement operations on the roads, which sits alongside education activity aimed at improving driver behaviour of all ages. Partner agencies continue to work together to improve understanding of the factors which could contribute to improving road safety for everyone on the roads and together respond to these issues.

## Anti-Social Behaviour, Disorder and Violence (including Alcohol and Drug misuse)

**Intention – With Partners, better understand the causes to prevent and reduce instances of Anti-Social Behaviour, Disorder and Violence to enhance community safety across the Highland Area.**

**Objective – Work with Partners to share information, support Education, Prevention, Diversionary and Enforcement Measures linked to harmful alcohol consumption; maintain robust procedures around licensed premises; support victims of violent crime by working with partners to improve service provision and prevent repeat victimisation.**

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2021/2022	YTD 2022/2023	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Murder	0.4	0.3	0	0	-	N/A
Assault	223.2	227.0	239	170	-69	83.5%
Serious Assault	15.6	12.7	9	11	2	81.8%
Drug (Possession) Offences	190.2	207.3	196	89	-107	122.5%

**Harm Prevention Officer** – A Harm Prevention Officer (HPO) role was introduced within the N Division area in November 2020. This role is filled by a Police Constable who undertakes daily liaison between internal/external stakeholders with a view to reducing the risk posed to certain members of the public through alcohol and controlled substance misuse.

The HPO works with other partners to target Cuckooing which is a crime whereby crime groups take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to use it as a base for County Lines offences. The HPO works within the nationally recognised Serious and Organised Crime Strategy (Divert, Deter, Disrupt, Detect) targeting the Divert and Deter strands.

The HPO is fully funded by NHS Highland via the Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership (HADP).

**No Knives, Better Lives** - No Knives, Better Lives (NKBL) is a national capacity-building programme that supports primary prevention work related to knife carrying in Scotland. In 2009, the NKBL National Delivery Team at YouthLink Scotland and the Scottish Government began supporting partners in 11 selected Local Authority areas to implement NKBL. The approach to prevention is informed by the principles and values of youth work and a public health approach to violence prevention. The focus is not just on what it is we do not want young people to do and how to stop them doing it, but also what we want young people to be able to do, how we support them to understand and navigate risk and to make positive life choices.

Police Scotland's Prevention and Intervention Officers supported this initiative in the Highland area. This is further complemented by the Joint Education and Police Knives in School Protocol which has been progressed.

## Acquisitive Crime

**Intention – With Partners and Communities, prevent instances of acquisitive crime across the Highland area.**

**Objective – With Partners, share information, support education, prevention, diversionary and enforcement activity linked to acquisitive crime; develop work with targets – recidivist offenders to reduce reoffending linked to acquisitive crime e.g. Persistent Offenders programme; enhance the use of all media platforms to raise awareness of local and national preventative initiatives.**

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2021/2022	YTD 2022/2023	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Housebreaking (Total)	32.6	28.0	32	21	-11	42.9%
Fraud	26.2	33.0	45	54	9	22.2%
Theft by Shoplifting	41.0	34.7	38	30	-8	86.7%
Motor Vehicle Crime	17.8	13.0	9	22	13	95.5%

Fraud – The increase in Fraud related crimes last year and continuing to this year has not only been experienced by members of the public residing within the Caithness area, but across the wider N Division area, Scotland and the United Kingdom.

### **Fraud** –

#### **Banking Protocol**

Following a number of incidents across the N Division area in respect of Frauds and Banking Protocol, work has been ongoing with various Banks within N Division with a view to setting up learning sessions between staff members to talk through Banking Protocol. This has allowed for a better understanding of the Police response, management of vulnerabilities and referrals/support available to victims.

This has and will continue to allow Bank staff to be aware as to the point in they feel that they can/should intervene.

#### **Parcel Scam Fraud**

General awareness messaging around parcel/delivery company scams has been circulated electronically to all housing providers across the N Division area and to the University of the Highlands and Islands for sharing with their staff, clients and students.

**Rural Watch** - The Highland area is renowned for great natural beauty and the rural communities are safe places in which to live, work and visit. However, the nature of the environment and way of life means there are some crime prevention tips particularly relevant to rural life. Watch Schemes work well as a crime prevention and detection tool but are also extremely valuable in terms of enabling Highland communities to share information, allowing agencies to send out relevant crime alerts, and empower local communities to be more resilient.

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To receive local ALERTS about crime and other threats in your area, simply click the green JOIN button on the Rural Watch Website - [www.ruralwatchscotland.co.uk](http://www.ruralwatchscotland.co.uk)

# Protecting Vulnerable People

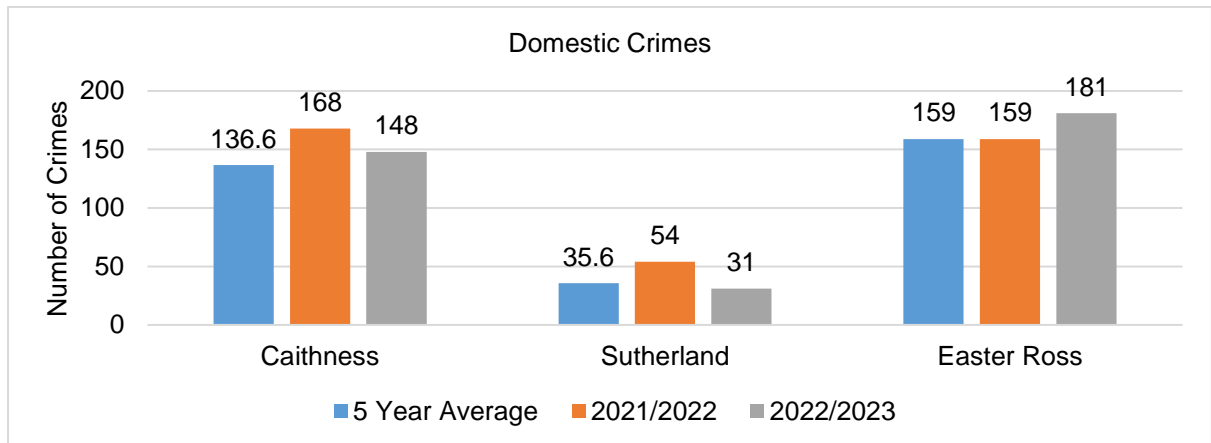
**Intention – Protect people at risk of harm.**

**Objective – With Partners and as corporate parents we will deliver the Highland CHAMPS (Highland Champion Board) strategy; with Partners we will focus on safeguarding communities; with Partners we will address emerging issues through Prevention and Intervention.**

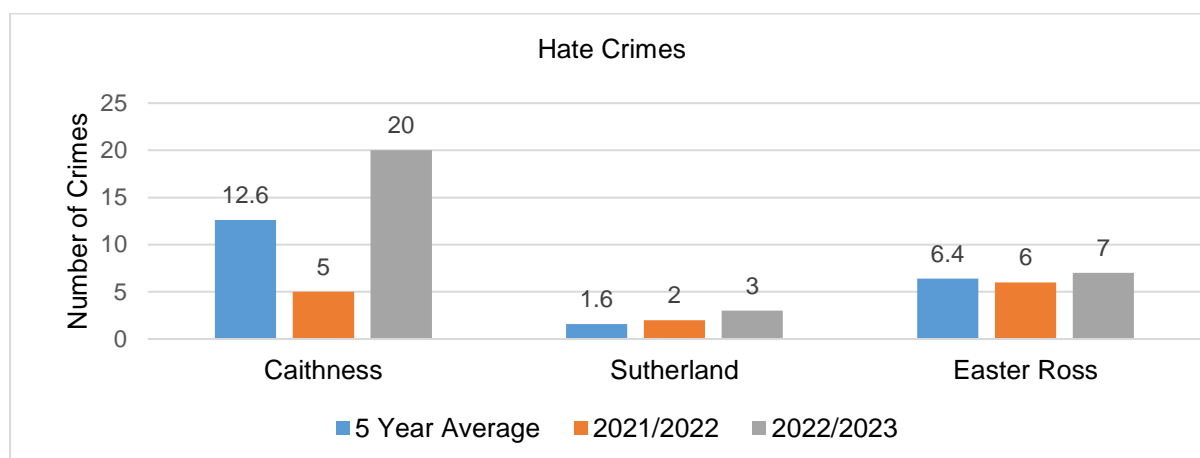
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2021/2022	YTD 2022/2023	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Sexual Crime	45.6	38.7	40	43	3	62.8%
Domestic Crime	136.6	157.7	168	148	-20	73.6%
Hate Crime	12.6	11.7	5	20	15	75.0%
Missing Persons*			283	275	-8	N/A

\* (Figures for North Highland Area Command - Due to system configurations these figures are not available at multi-member ward level).

**Domestic Crime within Caithness –**



**Hate Crime within Caithness –**



**Hate Crime –**

Police Scotland underwent a national inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) in relation to Hate Crime with N Division (Highland and Islands) being identified as one of three focussed Divisions.

**Missing Persons –**

Police Scotland takes every report of a missing person seriously and investigates appropriately with access to local, regional and national specialist resources. Missing persons investigations are a core part of local Policing and it is local officers who undertake all investigations, supported by specialist colleagues where necessary. Further, each Division including, N Division has a dedicated Missing Person Co-ordinator who advises on operational and preventative approaches.

Missing Person Category	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation
Adult	62	82	20
Cared for Adult	8	6	-2
Looked After Child	159	131	-28
Child	52	53	1
Absconder/Wanted	2	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>-8</b>

Each Area Command has appointed a local Police liaison officer who maintains contact and liaison with the residential units in their respective area. This role has developed and regular contact has built a good relationship with residential unit(s). Where required, this officer also works in conjunction with the Missing Person Co-ordinator who similarly enjoys a good working relationship with residential units.

**Highland CHAMPS** - The Highland CHAMPS (Children have Amazing Minds, Potential and Stories) are a group based in Clachnaharry, Inverness. Highland CHAMPS welcome any young person from the Highland area who identifies as care-experienced whether they are a care-leaver, looked after at home, fostered, adopted, in residential care or other. Highland CHAMPS provide a safe space for activities, opportunities, socialising and fun. Further information regarding Highland CHAMPS can be found at:- <https://www.highland.gov.uk/highlandchamps>

## Serious and Organised Crime

**Intention – With Partners, reduce the threat, risk and harm caused by Serious Organised Crime.**

**Objective – With Partners work to safeguard the Highland area by taking all opportunities to prevent crime and make the Highland area a hostile environment for Serious & Organised Crime Groups; to improve outcomes for individuals and communities and reduce offending through prevention, early intervention and diversion; in support of our Partners in the Local Authority and NHS via the Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Strategy we will direct those who are substance dependant towards recovery through prevention, treatment and support services; with Partners work to reduce the instances of substance misuse in our communities.**

	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	YTD 2021/2022	YTD 2022/2023	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Drug (Supply) Offences	15.6	16.7	11	9	-2	122.2%

**County Lines** - When Organised Crime Groups from major cities such as Birmingham, Derby, Liverpool and London are expanding their drug networks to other areas, bringing with it serious criminal behaviour such as violence, exploitation and abuse. The term County Lines refers to the use of a single telephone number to order drugs, operated from outside the local area. They often set up a base in a rural town for a short time, taking over the home of a vulnerable person by 'cuckooing' and use adults and children to act as drug runners. Preventions and Interventions delivered advisory presentations to Partner agencies including Highland Council (Housing/Social Work) and NHS Highland.

Police Scotland has relaunched an awareness-raising initiative aimed at preventing young people from falling into a life of crime. Working in partnership with the Scottish Government, Police have devised an educational pack for young people that shows the devastating effects of Serious Organised Crime.

N Division has also recently expanded its team of dedicated officers with the sole purpose of targeting County Line offenders, working in partnership with partner agencies and protecting vulnerable persons.

# Counter Terrorism

**Intention – Support the delivery of the CONTEST strategy to reduce the threat posed by terrorism and domestic extremism.**

**Objective – Strengthen PREVENT work with Partners and institutions; with Partners, support individuals who are vulnerable to terrorism and violent extremism; strengthen PREVENT work in relation to the internet and Social Media; Effective Multi-agency planning in respect of Counter Terrorism is taking place; Develop our ability to respond effectively to any terrorist attack (with a specific focus on emerging high-risk threats, and specialist capabilities).**

WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) - The workshop covers issues such as crime, normal social processes that are used to influence and manipulate, case studies that cut across the spectrum of extremism, terrorist ideologies and factors which may contribute to an individual's susceptibility to a terrorist ideology.

In particular, it seeks to support participants to recognise that using their existing expertise and professional judgement, they may be able to recognise potentially vulnerable individuals who may be susceptible to being persuaded by an extremist or terrorist ideology. Workshops delivered to partners across the Highland area.

ACT Early is a program delivered to schools across the Highland area. The ACT Early session is a vehicle for debate around the sensitive issue of violent extremism within communities. As such it is an enabler for community participants to air grievances, debate matters of interest to them and work through a group problem solving experience. The following links can provide more information regarding the program:

<https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>  
<https://actearly.uk/>

Police Constable Lisa Campbell, N Division's Local Counter Terrorism Officer stated:

***“As the Counter Terrorism Liaison Officer (CTLO) for N Division, I ensure areas have a Local Contest Liaison Officer who is kept up to date on latest developments in Contest.***

***I liaise with CT Intelligence, CT Security Advisors, the Prevent Delivery Unit as well as local Area Commanders to address any CT related matters in the area and provide support to the Area Command if required.***

***I can also provide presentations on Act now, Radicalisation awareness, threat overview and current trends. LCLO's can also assist with this within schools etc.***

***I can provide updates on the annual threat overview to local Councils.***

***Work is ongoing with the Highland Council Head of Safeguarding to have a lesson plan on radicalisation put to all Highland Schools”.***



# Crime Statistics

Group 1 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Murder	0.4	0.3	0	0	-	N/A
Culpable Homicide	0.0	0.0	0	0	-	N/A
Attempted Murder	1.4	1.0	1	1	-	100.0%
Serious Assault	15.6	12.7	9	11	2	81.8%
Robbery	1.8	1.7	1	1	-	100.0%
Cruel & Unnatural Treatment of Children	2.6	2.7	2	0	-2	N/A
Threats & Extortion	2.0	2.7	6	9	3	22.2%

Group 2 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Rape	11.6	10.3	15	17	2	47.1%
Sexual Assault (Sexual Offences Scotland Act 2009)	14.6	9.3	10	26	16	46.2%
Lewd & Libidinous Practices	5.0	2.7	7	2	-5	250.0%
Public Indecency	0.6	0.3	1	1	-	100.0%
Threatening/ Disclosure of Intimate Image(s)	3.6	3.0	5	2	-3	50.0%

Group 3 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Housebreaking (Dwelling House)	18.8	18.3	23	12	-11	25.0%
Housebreaking (Non-Dwelling House)	5.4	3.7	3	1	-2	100.0%
Housebreaking (Other)	8.4	6.0	6	8	2	62.5%

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Housebreaking (Total)	32.6	28.0	32	21	-11	42.9%
Theft of a Motor Vehicle	10.2	9.3	6	6	-	50.0%
Theft from a Motor Vehicle	5.2	2.7	2	14	12	114.3%
Opening a Lockfast Place	3.4	3.3	3	5	2	40.0%
Theft	74.4	61.3	49	70	21	32.9%
Theft by Shoplifting	41.0	34.7	38	30	-8	86.7%
Fraud	26.2	33.0	45	54	9	22.2%

Group 4 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Fireraising	6.2	7.7	3	4	1	500.0%
Vandalism	232.2	224.3	218	255	37	72.2%
Culpable & Reckless Conduct	8.0	11.7	11	11	-	63.6%

Group 5 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Offensive Weapon & Bladed/Pointed Instrument	25.6	26.3	25	25	-	100.0%
Drugs (Supply)	15.6	16.7	11	9	-2	122.2%
Drugs (Possession)	190.2	207.3	196	89	-107	122.5%
Bail Offence(s)	34.2	35.3	29	55	26	92.7%

Group 6 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Assault	223.2	227.0	239	170	-69	83.5%
Assault (Emergency Workers)	38.0	44.0	55	45	-10	100.0%
Breach of the Peace/ Threatening & Abusive Behaviour	121.2	122.4	134	161	27	96.9%
Stalking	5.4	4.0	3	3	-	66.7%

Group 7 Crimes (Recorded)						
	5 Year Average	3 Year Average	2021/2022	2022/2023	Variation	Detection Rate
Dangerous Driving	22.0	22.0	36	12	-24	108.3%

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Drink/Drug Driving	47.0	50.0	52	49	-3	93.9%
Speeding Offence(s)	65.6	64.0	67	84	17	103.6%
Disqualified Driving	3.0	2.3	3	3	-	100.0%
Drive without Licence	30.4	33.0	26	24	-2	100.0%
Fail to Insure Against Third Party Risks	69.6	75.0	67	72	5	101.4%
Seat Belt Offence(s)	23.6	22.3	21	12	-9	116.7%
Mobile Telephone Offence(s)	14.0	13.7	17	16	-1	100.0%
Careless Driving	46.0	47.3	65	79	14	97.5%