

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Report No</b>	<b>CIA/01/26</b>

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** **Inverness City Area Committee**

**Date:** **2 February 2026**

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

**Report By:** **Chief Inspector Craig Still - Area Commander (Inverness 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 2023–2026.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are invited to note:

- i. Progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023–2026 Year 1 attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 01 April 2024 – 31 December 2025.
- ii. The change in format necessitate by a reduction in back-office capacity to prepare additional area committee reports.

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

3.1 This document covers priorities featured in the Local Policing Plan and evidences 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: 23/01/2026

Author: Chief Inspector Craig Still

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# Performance Against Local Policing Plan 2023-2026



## Inverness Area Committee Report Monday 2nd February 2026

Reporting Period - 01 April 2025 – 31 December 2025



Report by  
Chief Inspector Craig Still  
Area Commander – Inverness Area Command

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



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## Introduction by Area Commander

Chief Inspector Craig Still

This report provides an overview of policing activity within the Inverness area from 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2024.

Our focus remains on threat, harm, and risk, with a strong emphasis on prevention, problem-solving, and proactive policing, aligned with the Chief Constable's priorities outlined in the Annual Police Plan.

I am pleased to report a significant decrease in serious violence in Inverness during this reporting period. This positive trend reflects our continued efforts to address community concerns and enhance public safety.

The report also highlights a notable increase in detections for drugs offences, particularly relating to the supply of illegal drugs. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to disrupting the supply of illegal drugs and protecting our communities from the associated harms. Our team is committed to tackling County Lines activity. This remains a significant challenge and is a priority. We are employing a multi-faceted approach, working closely with partners and communities to disrupt criminal networks and safeguard vulnerable individuals.

Road policing remains a key priority. While we continue to see an increase in drink and drug driving offences, robust enforcement action is being taken to deter this dangerous behaviour. The roll out of enhanced training in drug driving detection may account for the increased detection rate in Inverness area command.

Protecting vulnerable people in terms of Domestic Abuse is an absolute priority and our response to this type of crime is highly developed in terms of risk and victim focus, but we can never become complacent, and we recognise that we need to continue to be proactive and work very closely with our partners in the preventative space.

Unfortunately, crimes of dishonesty have increased, particularly theft by shoplifting and fraud. My team are actively looking at preventative measures we can implement to drive this number down, whilst robustly investigating any crime of dishonesty reported to the police

Over the coming Months, my team will continue to adapt our policing approach to address emerging challenges and ensure the safety and well-being of all members of our community. This will involve proactive and intelligence-led policing to prevent and disrupt crime, strengthening partnerships with community groups and other agencies to address local concerns and enhancing public trust and confidence through open and transparent communication.

We appreciate the continued support of the Inverness Area Committee in our efforts to make Inverness a safe and thriving community.

## 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

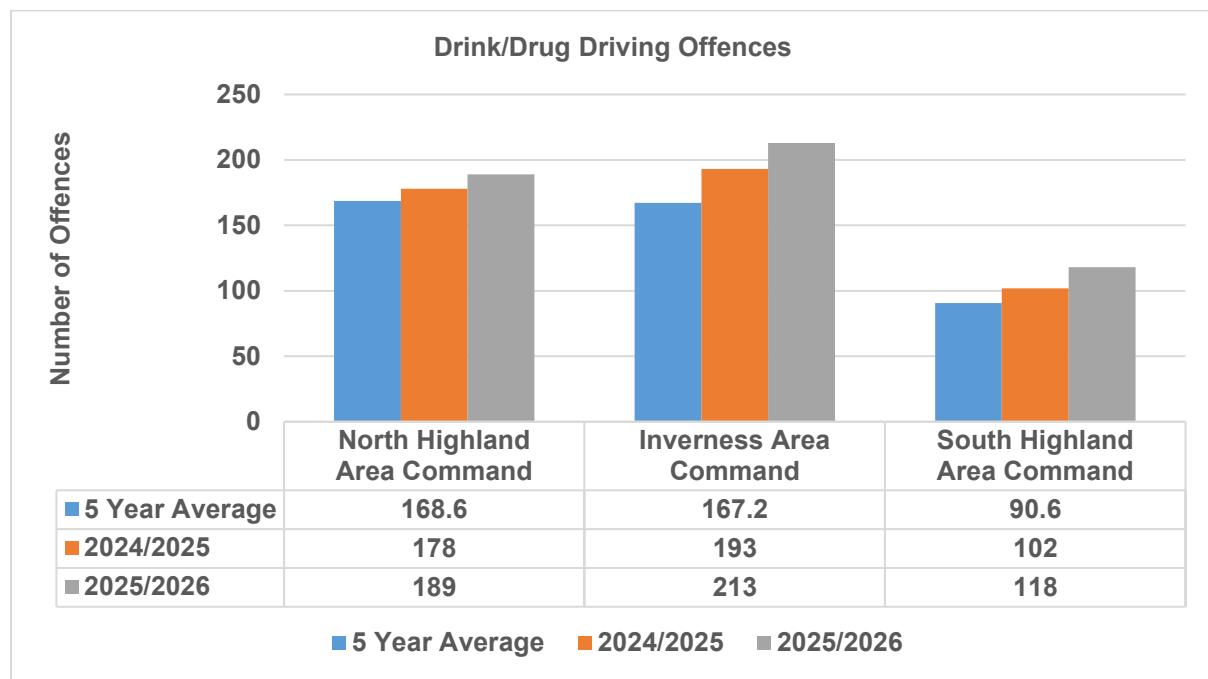
## Road Safety and Road Crime

**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 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Number of Fatalities - Road Traffic Collisions	1.8	2	1	3	2	
Drink/Drug Driving Offences	167.2	194.7	193	213	20	91.1%
Speeding Offences	193.2	72.3	87	79	-8	100%

**2025/2026 Drink/Drug Driving Offences –**



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The North Road Policing Action Plan is forward facing and focusses on:

- Road patrol
- Influencing driver and road user behaviour
- Deterring and detecting criminality on our roads
- Combat the threat of terrorism.

Priority patrol locations are identified from collision analysis, speed / traffic survey data and intelligence products. We listen carefully to public / elected member concerns and process all information to shape our deployments. We aim to patrol the areas of greatest risk at the right time and undertake robust enforcement of road traffic legislation. This is reflected in the increased drink / drug driving and speeding detections highlighted above which evidences effective targeting of those who demonstrate risk taking behaviour. We have undertaken innovative patrols utilising an unmarked police HGV to target those who drive whilst using mobile phones.

We have worked alongside road safety partners such as DVLA, SEPA and Trading Standards during specific days of action aimed at interacting with those in the haulage / works industry.

We detected several county lines related drugs offences during targeted patrols aimed at disrupting those who use the road network to engage in criminal activity.

We carry out several preventative road safety initiatives aimed at engaging with vulnerable road users.

- Close Pass (cycle safety)
- Driver Engagement North (older driver engagement)
- New Driver Early Intervention (young driver inputs)
- Rider Refinement North (motorcycle safety)

*Insp Donnie Mackinnon, Highland and Islands Road Policing.*

## 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 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Murder	0.8	1	0	2	2	100%
Assault	633.8	675.7	649	637	-12	63.4%
Serious Assault	37	31.3	28	29	1	72.4%
Drug (Possession) Offences	437	436.3	421	482	61	87.1%

**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 (NLBL) is a national capacity-building programme that supports primary prevention work related to knife carrying in Scotland. In 2009, the NLBL National Delivery Team at YouthLink Scotland and the Scottish Government began supporting partners in 11 selected Local Authority areas to implement NLBL. 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 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Housebreaking (Dwelling house)	40	35.7	44	28	-16	35.7%
Fraud	167.8	180.7	175	197	22	12.2%
Theft by Shoplifting	513.8	667	763	559	-204	69.8%
Theft of a motor vehicle	28	31.7	26	26	-	46.2%

**Fraud:** - The Highland and Islands continue to see an increase in Fraud offences with a continued increase visible across the year. We Continue to see several banking frauds, and more recently seen several frauds which have occurred due to e-mail interceptions/hacking. It would also appear that cryptocurrency related frauds are becoming more frequent. We are working nationally to review our approach to dealing with fraud type offences and continuing to engage with community groups particularly the elderly as a demographic particularly vulnerable to fraud type offences.

**Theft by Shoplifting:** - This year saw the launch of the National Retail Crime Task Force and operation LAMBIE within the Highland and Islands. This is a proactive, intelligence-led policing initiative designed to combat shoplifting across key retail areas in the Highlands. This operation deployed plain clothes police officers alongside uniform colleagues to conduct targeted patrols within identified problem premises.

**Common Theft:** The Highland and Islands has seen an increase in Common Theft in recent months, and we are also experiencing a rise in reported cooking oil thefts (Operation MITRIFORM). Another trend contributing to the increase in common thefts is Petrol Drive Offs, Scottish Crime Recording Standards are such that these are always raised as a crime until enquiry proves any genuine errors.

*Detective Inspector Andy Bilton – North Acquisitive Crime Lead.*

## 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 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Sexual Crime	176.4	204.7	213	216	3	69.4%
Domestic Crime*			498	498	-	61.24%
Hate Crime*			86	80	-6	77.5%
Missing Persons	337.2	359.7	377	183	-194	

\*Please note, due to the different sources of data being used, and the different methodology/ counting rules, comparison of recorded domestic crimes & hate crime from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 with recorded domestic & hate crimes prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 would not be advised.

### 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	2024/2025	2025/2026	Variation
Adult	91	80	-11
Cared for Adult	57	24	-33
Care Experienced Young People	127	45	-82
Child	102	33	-69
Absconder/Wanted	0	1	1
Total	377	183	-194

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.

## 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 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Drug (Supply) Offences	64.4	94.3	82	124	42	83.1%

**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 response 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/>

## Crime Statistics

Crime Bulletin Categories	Inverness Area Command					
	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	2024 /25	2025 /26
<b>TOTAL CRIME &amp; OFFENCES</b>	<b>5531</b>	<b>5200</b>	<b>5228</b>	<b>6072</b>	<b>6105</b>	<b>5831</b>
<b>Group 1 - Non Sexual Crimes of Violence</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>1024</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>867</b>
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	3	0	0	1	0	2
Culpable homicide (common law)	1	0	0	0	0	0
Culpable homicide (other)	1	1	0	0	0	0
4	4	4	7	6	3	8
Serious Assault (incl. FGM, culpable & reckless conduct - causing injury)	32	41	47	37	28	29
Common Assault (of an emergency worker)	112	116	127	149	115	108
Common Assault	553	591	635	741	649	637
Robbery (including assault with intent to rob)	18	15	21	20	42	32
Stalking	11	3	2	8	11	9
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	3	0	3	1	2	6
Threats and extortion	7	11	25	40	13	13
Other group 1 crimes	10	10	21	21	13	23
<b>Group 2 - Sexual Offences</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>216</b>
Rape	35	30	44	44	42	38
Attempted rape	2	1	4	3	1	4
Sexual assault	31	47	62	59	86	71
Crimes associated with Prostitution	0	0	0	1	1	0
Indecent photos of children	7	3	18	19	9	13
Communicating indecently	7	19	17	13	18	31
Causing to view sexual activity or images	6	8	10	12	9	8
Threatening or Disclosure of intimate image*	6	8	10	12	9	8
Other Group 2 crimes	15	18	31	16	21	20
<b>Group 3 - Crimes of Dishonesty</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>1202</b>	<b>1459</b>	<b>1564</b>	<b>1228</b>
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	43	37	41	35	44	28
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non-dwelling	15	12	12	10	5	8
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	32	17	42	35	55	12
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	10	9	10	7	18	5
Theft of a motor vehicle	21	23	27	43	26	26
Theft from a Motor Vehicle, Insecure etc	16	15	20	19	42	20
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	0	3	2	7	7	3
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	6	6	10	11	7	5
Common theft	214	525	293	307	305	273
Theft by shoplifting	388	321	418	679	763	559

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Fraud	140	166	188	170	175	197
Other Group 3 crimes	94	91	139	136	117	92
<b>Group 4 - Damage and Reckless Behaviour</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>363</b>
Fireraising	9	17	20	22	18	23
Vandalism (incl. reckless damage, etc.)	397	423	440	478	435	315
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	0	0	0	0	2	1
Culpable & reckless conduct (not firearms)	14	24	9	32	30	24
Other Group 4 crimes	0	0	1	1	0	0
<b>Group 5 - Crimes Against Society</b>	<b>1011</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>1003</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>1052</b>
Possession firearm/offensive weapon/knife in prison (not used in crime)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession offensive weapon/knife in school (not used in crime)	0	3	1	1	1	0
Possession offensive weapon/knife in a private place (not used in crime)	0	0	0	2	5	5
Other possession of offensive weapon/knife (not used in crime)	54	53	71	66	74	60
Possession firearm/offensive weapon/knife in prison (used in criminal activity)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Possession offensive weapon/knife in school (used in criminal activity)	0	0	0	0	1	0
Possession Offensive Weapon/Knife in a private place (used in criminality)	0	0	0	2	0	0
Other possession of offensive weapon/knife NEC (used in criminal activity)	24	18	54	37	22	33
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	4	6	0	6	4	11
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	57	42	64	77	82	124
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	6	4	0	6	4	11
Possession of drugs	527	471	360	406	421	482
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	0	0	1	0	0	3
Bail offences (other than absconding)	190	160	145	226	231	159
Other crimes against public justice	147	154	127	175	157	170
Other crimes against society	2	1	1	1	0	3
<b>Group 6 - Anti-Social Offences</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>476</b>
Breach of the Peace	54	36	32	31	33	37
Threatening or abusive behaviour	452	364	464	461	432	381
Hate aggravated conduct (incl. stirring up hatred)	10	4	13	15	23	23
Drunk and incapable	0	0	0	0	0	1
Consume alcohol in designated place (local bye-laws)	21	10	7	2	1	8
Other alcohol related offences	5	14	27	19	17	17
Urinating	14	14	14	7	9	9
<b>Group 7 - Miscellaneous Offences</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>129</b>
Wildlife offences	13	13	6	4	8	4
Offences involved animals (not wildlife)	3	8	6	13	12	18
Community and public order offences	72	54	72	89	72	86

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Environmental offences	8	7	4	8	3	6
Licensing offences	8	6	19	12	14	10
Other misc. offences	0	4	4	12	7	5
<b>Group 8 - Road Traffic Offences</b>	<b>1588</b>	<b>1401</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>1195</b>	<b>1338</b>	<b>1500</b>
Dangerous driving offences	20	26	27	42	42	45
Driving Carelessly	112	118	84	121	130	191
Driving under the influence	172	151	142	178	193	213
Speeding offences	436	359	33	51	87	79
Seat belt offences	36	36	14	15	10	30
Mobile phone offences	31	36	12	18	38	33
Unlawful use of motor vehicle	480	411	402	490	484	482
Vehicle defect offences	95	82	76	47	67	106
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	38	36	12	5	12	38
Road Traffic Offences (involving bicycle/tricycle)	2	1	0	2	2	5
Other Group 8 Offences	166	145	213	226	273	278

For additional detail, published crime data can also be accessed online via the following link:-  
[Crime data - Police Scotland](#)