

Agenda Item	4
Report No	CIA/32/26

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Inverness City Area Committee

Date: 17 August 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 2026 – 31 March 2026; and
- ii. the change in format necessitated 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: 23/07/2026

Author: Chief Inspector Craig Still

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Performance Against Local Policing Plan 2023-2026



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Inverness Area Committee Report Monday 17 August 2026

Reporting Period - 01 April 2025 – 31 March 2026



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

I am pleased to present this report which provides details of policing activity in the Inverness area from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026.

When I came into post in February 2026, I was clear that my focus as an Area Commander would be on People, Performance, Proactivity and Public Engagement. These thematic areas link directly with the priorities of the Chief Constable and what the public expect from us as a service. As an Area Command we have worked hard to tackle those issues which have had the most significant impact on our communities.

Unfortunately, the Area Command has seen three murders over the last 12 months. Every life lost has a profound impact on family, loved ones and the wider community. I acknowledge the recent sentencing of Waldemar Jaronski for the murder of Iain MacFarlane and would pay tribute to the hard work of the enquiry team in securing a conviction. The detection rate for Serious Assaults remains high at 78.9%. Unfortunately, we continue to see acts of violence in across the city, and we are currently discussing a campaign to raise awareness of the consequences of committing an act of assault.

The number of detections related to drug possession and supply have increased over the reporting period. This is testament to the hard work of both uniformed and plain clothes teams across the Area Command. We are committed to working as part of an effective partnership to reduce the harms created by drugs. The issues around County Lines groups have been well documented, however I can provide reassurance that we have an effective model designed to tackle groups effectively whilst liaising with partner forces nationally to maximise disruption. Enforcement is only one part of tackling the issue in line with our 4D principles and there is a significant amount of work that goes on around harm prevention, assertive outreach, and education.

I note the positive trend in the reduction of missing people reports particularly around children and those in care settings. This partly due to work conducted across the partnership space to ensure that Police time is being used correctly with regards to those absent from care settings. By engaging with partners, putting plans in place around those who are vulnerable and ensuring the correct resource is deployed we can continue to reduce demand on the service.

In terms of crimes of dishonesty there has been a significant decrease in Theft by Shoplifting offences. We have worked closely with the Retail Crime Taskforce to secure funding for Operation Lambie which allows us to deploy targeted patrols in areas most at risk from offending. We have engaged with business owners around preventative measures and continue to seek opportunities to ensure persistent offenders are dealt with robustly utilising tools such as bail conditions which prevent access to premises. We are also attempting to be proactive in this space, visiting persistent shoplifters to understand the causes behind offending and offer support from partners where appropriate.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the good work of the Community Beats team in relation to Road Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour. We have actively engaged with communities across the area and targeted resources at specific issues that are raised through various forums. This has often involved a bespoke approach to the needs of individual areas. Several initiatives have taken place including joint working days of action with local partners in the Raigmore Estate and Street Surgeries in the Fort Augustus, Drumnadrochit and Dores areas. The team have also been proactive in targeting the anti-social use of offroad motorcycles in Merkinch and speed check initiatives on the B9006 and outside primary schools in Culloden and Balloch.

It is important that we our resources are directed to deal with issues that really matter to our communities. At a time when all areas of the public sector face challenges in terms of resources and finances, it is more important than ever that we work together to keep our communities safe, strong, and thriving.

I am reassured that the Area Command continues to have relatively low volumes of serious criminality and that we continue to perform strongly, not just in the detection of crime but also in the prevention and partnership working.

We have started the reporting year from April 2026 in a particularly strong position and with your continued support, I hope to build on this over the course of the year.

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



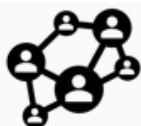
ACQUISITIVE CRIME

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

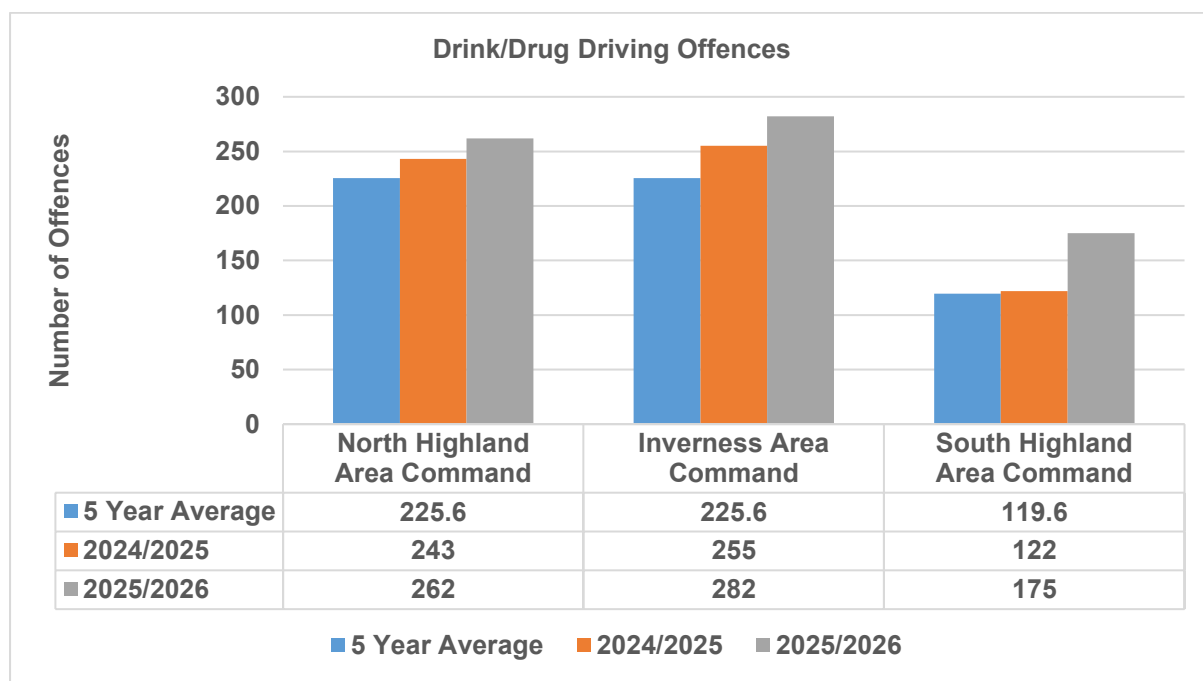
Road Safety and Road Crime

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	4.2	4	1	7	6	
Drink/Drug Driving Offences	225.6	263.7	255	282	27	85.1%
Speeding Offences	237.8	109.7	124	135	11	100%

2025/2026 Drink/Drug Driving Offences –



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	1.3	0	3	3	100%
Assault	158.2	162	810	858	48	65.3%
Serious Assault	46.6	42	39	38	-1	78.9%
Drug (Possession) Offences	579.2	570.7	543	613	70	91.2%

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 2024/2025	YTD 2025/2026	YTD Variation	Detection Rate
Housebreaking (Dwelling house)	52.2	48.4	55	41	-14	31.7%
Fraud	220.8	236	215	257	42	14%
Theft by Shoplifting	676.8	877	971	762	-209	71.1%
Theft of a motor vehicle	33.8	37	30	35	5	60%

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. 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	244.6	271.7	276	279	3	64.5%
Domestic Crime*			631	664	33	68.5%
Hate Crime*			102	99	-3	76.1%
Missing Persons	442.2	461.6	476	229	-247	

*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 1st April 2024 with recorded domestic & hate crimes prior to 1st 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	124	98	-26
Cared for Adult	68	31	-37
Care Experienced Young People	165	57	-108
Child	119	42	-77
Absconder/Wanted	0	1	1
Total	476	229	-247

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	90.2	122.7	106	162	56	87%

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
TOTAL CRIME & OFFENCES	7270	6776	7170	8067	7838	7901
Group 1 - Non Sexual Crimes of Violence	973	1009	1184	1351	1119	1146
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	3	0	0	1	0	3
Culpable homicide (common law)	1	0	0	0	0	0
Culpable homicide (other)	1	1	3	0	0	1
Attempted Murder	8	6	9	14	4	9
Serious Assault (incl. FGM, culpable & reckless conduct - causing injury)	43	50	52	49	39	38
Common Assault (of an emergency worker)	134	135	170	183	169	134
Common Assault	719	758	841	974	810	858
Robbery (including assault with intent to rob)	21	29	27	36	46	43
Stalking	13	3	7	12	14	9
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	3	1	5	3	2	8
Threats and extortion	16	15	35	49	19	16
Other group 1 crimes	11	11	35	30	16	27
Group 2 - Sexual Offences	193	184	310	260	276	279
Rape	58	48	64	59	55	47
Attempted rape	3	1	4	3	2	6
Sexual assault	46	56	91	78	107	88
Crimes associated with Prostitution	0	0	0	1	1	0
Indecent photos of children	8	4	23	26	15	17
Communicating indecently	18	19	23	22	23	37
Causing to view sexual activity or images	19	23	51	28	35	47
Threatening or Disclosure of intimate image*	1	10	12	17	12	13
Other Group 2 crimes	30	23	42	26	26	24
Group 3 - Crimes of Dishonesty	1171	1322	1581	1862	1921	1615
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	52	52	53	49	55	41
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non-dwelling	19	14	21	12	8	9
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	37	25	49	42	64	18
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	10	9	11	7	18	9
Theft of a motor vehicle	26	32	34	46	30	35
Theft from a Motor Vehicle, Insecure etc	19	18	28	24	46	25
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	0	4	2	8	7	5
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	9	9	16	12	8	8
Common theft	262	328	368	376	368	342
Theft by shoplifting	441	486	588	898	971	762
Fraud	179	229	245	236	215	257
Other Group 3 crimes	117	116	165	152	131	104

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Group 4 - Damage and Reckless Behaviour	527	617	622	687	603	501
Fireraising	11	19	24	25	26	37
Vandalism (incl. reckless damage, etc.)	495	569	588	621	541	431
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	0	0	0	0	2	1
Culpable & reckless conduct (not firearms)	21	29	9	40	34	32
Other Group 4 crimes	0	0	1	1	0	0
Group 5 - Crimes Against Society	1333	1190	1159	1342	1287	1395
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	4	6	6
Other possession of offensive weapon/knife (not used in crime)	75	62	91	80	96	87
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	1
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)	29	27	64	44	31	47
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	5	6	0	4	1	2
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	90	67	88	100	106	162
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	12	5	0	7	4	13
Possession of drugs	679	603	515	556	543	613
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	8	0	1	0	1	3
Bail offences (other than absconding)	241	215	209	306	287	227
Other crimes against public justice	190	199	189	236	210	231
Other crimes against society	2	1	1	2	0	3
Group 6 - Anti-Social Offences	677	583	739	670	679	626
Breach of the Peace	64	42	45	34	42	51
Threatening or abusive behaviour	556	477	622	575	565	494
Hate aggravated conduct (incl. stirring up hatred)	13	5	15	25	30	29
Drunk and incapable	0	0	0	0	0	1
Consume alcohol in designated place (local bye-laws)	23	15	7	2	1	10
Other alcohol related offences	6	26	35	26	27	27
Urinating	15	18	15	8	14	14
Group 7 - Miscellaneous Offences	139	135	155	182	154	169
Wildlife offences	16	19	7	4	8	4
Offences involved animals (not wildlife)	7	9	12	16	14	18
Community and public order offences	96	78	98	119	105	125
Environmental offences	10	11	8	8	4	6
Licensing offences	9	7	23	16	16	10
Other misc. offences	1	11	9	19	7	6
Group 8 - Road Traffic Offences	2257	1736	1420	1713	1799	2170

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Dangerous driving offences	30	30	41	57	53	55
Driving Carelessly	142	159	114	158	174	257
Driving under the influence	225	196	198	254	255	282
Speeding offences	554	391	50	70	124	135
Seat belt offences	55	43	19	27	21	45
Mobile phone offences	48	41	26	36	55	54
Unlawful use of motor vehicle	816	533	559	684	620	694
Vehicle defect offences	133	100	107	86	103	224
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	52	43	16	14	18	53
Road Traffic Offences (involving bicycle/tricycle)	2	2	0	3	3	7
Other Group 8 Offences	200	198	290	324	373	364

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