# Organised crime behind spike in Edinburgh motorbike thefts funds gang violence



A surge in motorbike thefts across Edinburgh has sparked concern among local bikers, leading to the formation of a new advocacy group, Stolen Motorbikes Edinburgh. This group alleges that the current wave of thefts is not merely the work of petty criminals but rather orchestrated efforts by organised crime syndicates. These gangs are reportedly stealing motorcycles to fund ongoing drug-related violence throughout Scotland.

Members of the newly established group claim that these organised criminals are specifically targeting motorbikes, stripping them for parts or selling them to finance their drug activities. A volunteer from the group noted: “It’s not just daft wee neds pinching bikes for a laugh anymore. These are serious players, organised rings using bike theft to top up their drug money. We’ve got loads of intel, locations, names, even patterns but there’s nobody taking it seriously.”

The situation has become dire, with many stolen bikes allegedly never seen again. The volunteer further emphasised that these thefts are intricately linked to crime rings operating in England, which subsequently ship the stolen bikes overseas. The group consists not just of bikers but also concerned citizens and families affected by these crimes. They actively track down stolen vehicles and share intelligence, but have found it necessary to vet new members to prevent infiltration by potential thieves posing as volunteers.

Despite recent efforts by law enforcement, including targeted operations in cities like Glasgow, volunteers argue that Edinburgh has been neglected. “There’s no regular enforcement. No proper off-road teams. No consistent action,” lamented one member. The ongoing thefts have left many owners feeling traumatized and out of pocket, with little hope of reclaiming their property.

The rise in motorbike thefts coincides with a broader context of escalating gang violence throughout Scotland, characterised by revenge attacks and confrontations between rival groups. In light of this environment, members of Stolen Motorbikes Edinburgh are calling for a more robust response from Police Scotland, Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), and local councils, arguing that motorcycle theft must be treated as part of the larger issue of organised crime.

In response to these concerns, Police Scotland has stated that tackling motorbike thefts is a priority. Superintendent Paul Gillespie of the Edinburgh Division remarked, “We have a well-established city-wide initiative to tackle the theft of motorcycles and the anti-social and reckless behaviour of those committing these crimes.” He noted that although many thefts could be deemed opportunistic, the force remains committed to using various strategies to combat this trend.

Superintendent Gillespie reiterated the significance of motorcycle theft to its victims, assuring that law enforcement is proactive in identifying offenders and working to deter further incidents. He stated: “Road safety remains a priority and we will continue to provide community reassurance.”

The growing discontent among local bikers and the actions of groups like Stolen Motorbikes Edinburgh underscore a burgeoning issue that intertwines motorcycle theft with organised crime, presenting a complex challenge for law enforcement and community members alike.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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3. <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/crime/edinburgh-crime-balaclava-gangs-remain-at-large-despite-police-ending-operation-to-tackle-motorbike-crime-3947660> - This article details the persistence of balaclava-clad gangs in Edinburgh despite the conclusion of Operation Soteria, indicating ongoing issues with organised motorbike thefts.
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7. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/gangs-stealing-motorbikes-fund-scotlands-35171553> - Please view link - unable to able to access data