# Scots pensioner feels watched after rogue fly-tipper dumps Christmas tree



A Scots pensioner has voiced her fears of being watched after a rogue fly-tipper discarded a Christmas tree in her front garden, forcing her into a state of heightened anxiety within her own home. Judy Lothian, who resides in Clermiston, Edinburgh, described how the incident has unsettled her, making her feel increasingly paranoid about her personal safety, a sentiment that resonates deeply given her recent loss and the mobility challenges she faces.

Judy lives alone with her two dogs and is reliant on her sister for assistance with everyday tasks. The unease began on a Monday in May when, after a productive morning of gardening, she returned home with her sister only to find a dead Christmas tree marring her front yard. Having spent hours sorting through garden waste earlier that day—a task of considerable effort in light of her mobility issues—Judy was taken aback by the sight of the tree, which she is certain was dumped between the hours of 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Reflecting on the incident, Judy expressed her frustration, stating, “It has set off the paranoia… I’m now worried someone is watching the house. It is really worrying.” She lamented the fact that her sister had invested so much time in beautifying the garden, only for it to be disfigured by an act she perceives as a targeted affront. “If the person had just tapped my door to ask if I could get rid of it for them, then that would be different,” she remarked, highlighting her unwillingness to shoulder the financial burden of waste disposal alone.

Local authorities, specifically Edinburgh Council, have since been alerted in hopes of arranging for the tree's removal, bringing attention to a broader issue facing many residents who feel overlooked in the management of public spaces. Similar sentiments were echoed by other community members, as seen recently in Irvine, where a grandmother faced distress when her rubbish went uncollected for weeks, attracting vermin and risking neighbourly disputes. The reluctance of councils to effectively manage waste has become a source of ongoing frustration for residents, with many feeling the pressure of public expectations while navigating local bureaucracy.

The incident not only highlights individual concerns about cleanliness and safety but also reflects a growing unease regarding public spaces and community interactions. Judy’s experience shares parallels with other notable cases in Scotland, such as an elderly woman, Pat Drummond, who enthusiastically defied social norms by keeping her Christmas tree up for four months, illustrating a contrasting relationship with holiday decorations amid rising concerns about community wellbeing.

In light of Judy's experience, the issue of waste management during the festive season has drawn more attention than ever. While many municipalities encourage recycling real Christmas trees to prevent landfill overflow—efforts that include repurposing trees to combat coastal erosion—the persistence of fly-tipping remains a challenge. The actions of a few individuals have the potential to severely affect the peace of mind of vulnerable residents, turning festive cheer into episodes of distress.

According to various reports, communities are questioning the aesthetics of public holiday decorations. For instance, in Glasgow's Shawlands area, residents voiced disappointment at a Christmas tree caged in a metal fence, an initiative intended to deter theft yet perceived as an eyesore. Furthermore, in Montrose, a charity expressed devastation over repeated vandalism of their Christmas tree, reflecting the fragility of community spirit in the face of antisocial behaviour.

Ultimately, Judy’s troubling experience serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of community and the collective responsibility towards maintaining a respectful environment. As local councils grapple with waste management challenges and community safety concerns, the need for dialogue between residents and authorities could not be more pressing.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
2. Paragraphs 3, 4, and 5
3. Paragraph 5
4. Paragraph 5
5. Paragraph 5
6. Paragraphs 5 and 6
7. Paragraph 5

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scots-pensioner-fears-shes-being-35254056> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.inkl.com/news/ayrshire-gran-feared-being-bin-shamed-as-rubbish-left-to-rot-in-garden-for-weeks> - An Irvine grandmother, Patricia Fisher, faced a prolonged delay in waste collection, leading to concerns about her neighbors' perceptions. Despite multiple complaints to North Ayrshire Council, her rubbish remained uncollected for weeks, causing distress and attracting vermin. The council attributed the delay to winter weather conditions, and the issue was resolved after media intervention, with bins collected on January 26.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-68598941> - Pat Drummond, an 86-year-old from Edinburgh, defied tradition by keeping her Christmas tree up for four months. Every year, her sons buy and set up the tree, and she enjoys admiring it from across the street. Despite the customary removal by Twelfth Night, Pat continued to display the tree, expressing her desire to keep it up longer and highlighting her fondness for the festive decoration.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-38318917> - Residents in Glasgow's Shawlands area expressed disappointment over a community Christmas tree surrounded by a tall metal fence, which many felt resembled a 'cage.' The fence was installed by Glasgow City Council for safety reasons and to prevent theft of lights. Community members criticized the appearance, and the council considered replacing the high fence with a lower barrier to improve aesthetics.
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-67543873> - In Montrose, Scotland, a Christmas tree was vandalized for the seventh consecutive year, with lights ripped off during the early hours. The charity responsible for the tree expressed devastation over the repeated incidents. Police Scotland initiated an investigation, reviewing CCTV footage to identify the culprits. The charity warned that if the vandals were not identified, the tree might be permanently removed from Montrose.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-50957350> - In Scotland, over half a million real Christmas trees are purchased annually. Many councils offer recycling or composting services to reduce landfill waste. Some areas repurpose old trees to combat coastal erosion by reinforcing sand dunes and riverbanks. For instance, in Renfrewshire, a Scout troop collects trees for composting, while in St Andrews, old trees are used to stabilize sand dunes at West Sands.
7. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/pensioner-forced-to-chop-down-christmas-tree> - Nannette Stratton, a 78-year-old pensioner from Christchurch, Dorset, faced the dilemma of cutting down a beloved Christmas tree she had grown from a six-inch seedling 25 years ago. The tree had grown to 25 feet, overshadowing her house and blocking light to her bedroom. Nannette sought assistance to remove the tree, expressing her desire to donate it to a charity, school, or care home.