# Six teens charged over deliberate fire that devastated Portlethen Moss peat bog



Six teenage boys have been charged following an alleged deliberate fire that devastated the historic Portlethen Moss in Aberdeenshire. The incident, reported to have occurred on Saturday afternoon, resulted in extensive damage to this important peat bog, which plays a crucial role in preserving local biodiversity. Fire crews battled the blaze for several hours, with emergency services initially alerted at approximately 4:25 PM and not extinguishing the flames until 9:30 PM. Although there were no reported injuries, this wilful act has drawn significant concern from both authorities and conservationists alike.

The response from Police Scotland noted the potential dangers associated with wildfires, particularly in the context of Scotland's dry weather conditions. Inspector James Nicholson emphasised that the incident had a substantial impact on the area, thanking the community and emergency services for their supportive efforts. With the risk of wildfires elevated during dry periods, the police are urging residents to be mindful of their actions and the consequences they might entail.

Portlethen Moss Conservation Group expressed their devastation over the destruction caused by the fire. Their social media statements highlighted gratitude towards the firefighters who worked tirelessly to manage the situation, as well as local residents who expressed concern for the wildlife. The group's appreciation for the community's involvement illustrates a shared responsibility in safeguarding natural habitats, as recent research has indicated the increasing number of damaging incidents involving youth and fire-setting behaviours.

This incident is not isolated, as it reflects a troubling trend in youth involvement with wilful fire-raising across Scotland. For instance, a 17-year-old was sentenced for causing significant damage—a reported £40,000—at Loch Leven's popular Mill Hide, showcasing the gravity of such actions which can lead to substantial financial and ecological repercussions. Authorities are particularly alarmed by the persistent occurrence of fire-raising incidents amongst young individuals. These acts not only endanger the flora and fauna of the landscape but also place communities at risk, as highlighted by the extensive damage caused in a recent case in Elgin, where two boys were charged with setting fire to caravans.

Fire chiefs stress the necessity of public vigilance and adherence to safety protocols, especially given the high-risk warnings recently issued for various regions within Scotland. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Wildfire Lead Michael Humphreys warned of the potentially devastating impacts of wildfires on livestock, farmland, wildlife, and even the health and safety of rural communities.

In light of these events, the importance of community engagement in reporting suspicious behaviours and fostering an environment of safety has never been more pronounced. As individuals and groups work together to protect these cherished landscapes, it becomes increasingly vital to educate younger generations about the importance of environmental stewardship and the grave consequences of wilful destruction. The collective efforts of authorities, conservationists, and local citizens will be essential in curbing this trend and ensuring that sites like Portlethen Moss can thrive for future generations.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/six-teens-charged-after-alleged-35211723)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/six-teens-charged-after-alleged-35211723)
* Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/six-teens-charged-after-alleged-35211723), [[3]](https://www.ross-shirejournal.co.uk/news/girl-13-charged-over-wilful-fire-in-alness-359403/)
* Paragraph 4: [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-61738020)
* Paragraph 5: [[4]](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2024/september/pair-jailed-for-causing-fire-in-fife/), [[5]](https://www.northern-scot.co.uk/news/teenagers-13-and-14-charged-after-caravans-set-alight-in-e-338209/)
* Paragraph 6: [[6]](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2025/march/two-youths-charged-in-connection-with-wilful-fire-raising-in-stromness/)
* Paragraph 7: [[4]](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2024/september/pair-jailed-for-causing-fire-in-fife/), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-61738020)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/six-teens-charged-after-alleged-35211723> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-61738020> - A 17-year-old from Glenrothes was sentenced for setting fire to the Mill Hide, a popular birdwatching spot at Loch Leven, causing approximately £40,000 in damage. The teenager dragged a wheelie bin into the hide and ignited it with a lighter. The incident was filmed and circulated on social media, leading to his identification. He received a community sentence, including 160 hours of unpaid work and two years of supervision. The original Mill Hide, built in 2011, was destroyed in the February 2021 blaze. A replacement, the Phoenix Hide, opened after a £30,000 fundraising campaign. The new hide features design changes to deter anti-social behaviour and includes a camera to monitor incidents. The case highlights the severe consequences of wilful fire-raising and the importance of community vigilance in preserving natural sites.
3. <https://www.ross-shirejournal.co.uk/news/girl-13-charged-over-wilful-fire-in-alness-359403/> - A 13-year-old girl was charged in connection with a wilful fire at Caplich Quarry near Alness. Emergency services responded to the barn fire on August 24, 2024, around 7:30 pm. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service extinguished the blaze, and no injuries were reported. A report was submitted to the Children’s Reporter and Procurator Fiscal. This incident underscores the issue of youth involvement in wilful fire-raising and the legal consequences associated with such actions.
4. <https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2024/september/pair-jailed-for-causing-fire-in-fife/> - Jamie Lee Morrison, 34, and Chloe Arnott, 31, were sentenced to prison for causing a fire in a block of flats on Francis Street, Lochgelly, in October 2023. The fire led to the building's demolition due to extensive damage. Morrison received a 64-month sentence, and Arnott was sentenced to 52 months, along with an eight-year non-harassment order. The case highlights the severe consequences of wilful fire-raising and the impact on communities.
5. <https://www.northern-scot.co.uk/news/teenagers-13-and-14-charged-after-caravans-set-alight-in-e-338209/> - Two boys, aged 13 and 14, were charged with wilful fire-raising and vandalism after setting fire to caravans at Thornhill Playing Fields in Elgin. The incident occurred on January 4, 2024, around 8 pm, causing significant damage to both caravans. Police Scotland thanked the local community for their support during the investigation and emphasized the importance of reporting anti-social behaviour to maintain community safety.
6. <https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2025/march/two-youths-charged-in-connection-with-wilful-fire-raising-in-stromness/> - Two 13-year-old male youths were charged in connection with wilful fire-raising in Stromness. On March 18, 2025, around 7:50 pm, a bench was set on fire in the Church Road area. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service extinguished the fire, and no injuries were reported. The youths will be reported to the relevant authorities. This case highlights ongoing concerns about youth involvement in wilful fire-raising and the importance of community vigilance.
7. <https://www.northern-scot.co.uk/news/teenage-pair-charged-with-13-acts-of-arson-and-vandalism-including-elgin-cemetery-fire-and-new-elgin-caravan-blaze-339831/> - Two youths, aged 13 and 14, were charged in connection with 13 acts of arson and vandalism in Elgin over a six-week period. Incidents included a fire at the pavilion in Elgin's Old Cemetery and a caravan fire at Thornhill Playing Fields. A joint report was submitted to the Procurator Fiscal and the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration. Police Scotland emphasized the importance of community support in addressing anti-social behaviour and encouraged reporting of such incidents to maintain community safety.