



**People for Proper Policing in North Wales**

## **Rise in car crime in North Wales**

Jan 20 2009 By Martin Williams for Daily Post

**MORE** than 11 cars are slashed, burned, broken into and stolen every day across North Wales.

There were 4,133 incidents across the region in 2008, a 6% rise on the previous year, new figures show. Motorists are being urged to be extra vigilant when leaving their cars unattended.

Yesterday North Wales **police Inspector Gareth Jones** confirmed the 4,133 number – which equates to around 80 crimes a week – includes stolen cars, theft from vehicles and smashed windows.

**But the true scale of the problem is much worse, as the figure doesn't include offences like bodywork damage and slashed tyres** – incidents where there was no intent to steal.

In one recent case a Vauxhall Cavalier was stolen from the Bryn Stanley estate in Denbigh in the early hours last Thursday morning. The vehicle was found hours later burnt-out near the town's Cae Dai woodland trail.

The owner of the car, who wished to remain anonymous, said: *"I can't understand why people would steal it to just razz around for an hour and then burn it. If they were pinching it to go somewhere specific then it would still be wrong but it would be more understandable. I can't understand the mentality of taking a car just to destroy it."*

*"People may say that it's okay because you'll get insurance money back. The car was only worth £500 but to us it was worth so much more. I doubt the police will ever find who did it – we're devastated."*

**Jackie Lee, project administrator for Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch Association**, added: *"We have been putting out a lot of Owl (Online Watch Link) alerts to our members lately, advising them to be extra vigilant with regards to their motor vehicle, so that would suggest there has been more of a problem. We would encourage all motorists to be extra careful, given this rise. In September, we reported how gangs were hanging around the Bryn Stanley estate, intimidating passers-by. Police increased their presence in the area as a result."*

This latest incident follows a spate of tyre slashings in Old Colwyn over the New Year. We asked Inspector Jones what North Wales Police is doing to fight vehicle crime and how they plan to garner public support given the rise in offences.

Inspector Jones said: *"The current 12 month period shows an approximate 6% increase on the previous period. North Wales Police recognises that a vehicle plays a significant part in many people's daily lives, and to be a victim of any crime, including vehicle crime, can cause distress to the victim."*

*"We use a variety of investigative techniques to solve such crimes, which include forensic analysis, CCTV footage, witness appeals and ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) to name a few. Vehicle owners can help themselves by making their vehicle less attractive to criminals by ensuring all valuables are stored safely.*

*"Either remove the items from the vehicle or keep them out of sight, including cash, CDs, sat navs, DVD players, laptops, handbags – and ensure it is locked and alarmed when left unattended. However, the offenders often live in our communities, thus we would encourage anyone with any information regarding those who are committing vehicle crime to contact either **their local police station**, or anonymously via Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111."*

**The PPP comments .... Note that this type of crime has been going on for many years and the public just put their hands in their pockets and pay higher insurance excesses and premiums or live with the damage and reduced value of their vehicle.**

**NOTE Denbigh Police Station Tel: 01745 539502 Opening Hours **Monday To Thursday 08:00-18:00**. The local Sergeant Sgt. 844 Neil Stringfellow and his mobile is 07969034732**

**North Wales police cost every household an average of **£550/annum** so ring them not crimestoppers.**

**We ask again where are all our Police Officers. A County Town without any police presence after 6'oclock (any night) on a Thursday to 0800 on a Monday. Not good enough!**