



Bike Theft Statistics – Quarterly Update

The University of Edinburgh Transport & Parking Office

November 2024 – January 2025

Introduction

This report summarises recent bike theft incidents at the University of Edinburgh, so that staff and students can understand the risks and scale of the problem.

It is based on reported incidents submitted to the University's Security section (covering incidents on the academic estate). This report covers the period from 1st November 2024 to 31st January 2025. New reports are published quarterly.

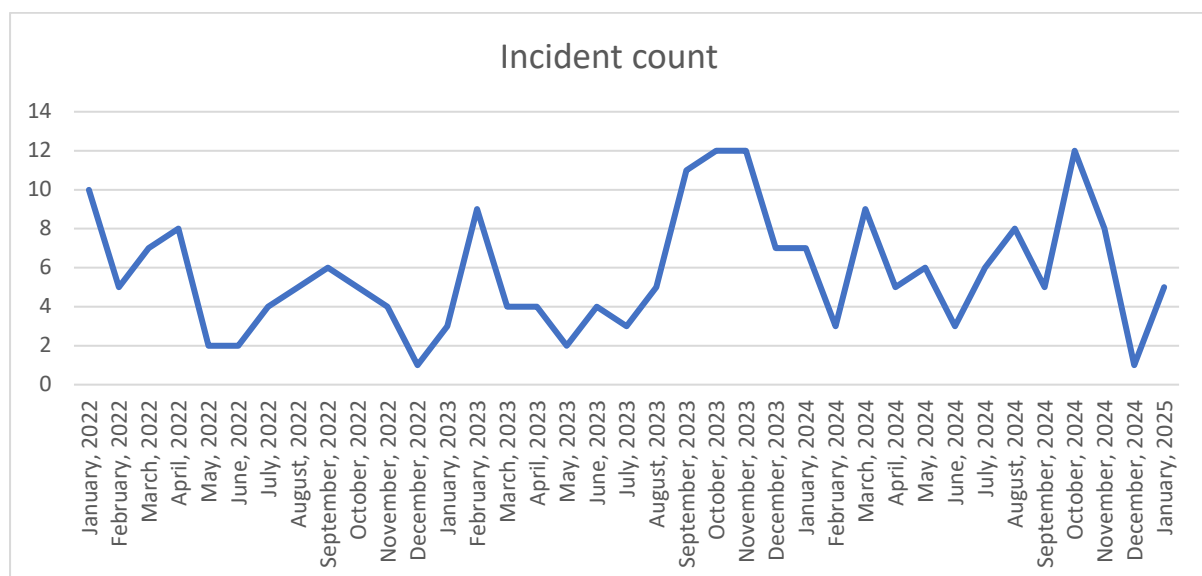
Note that these stats only cover incidents that are *reported* to the University, or those which are noticed by patrolling Security staff. It is therefore probable that there are more incidents taking place than those detailed here – this is especially the case for unsuccessful attempted thefts, which may take place without even being noticed, let alone reported.

If you ever have a bike stolen, or observe a theft in progress or other suspicious behaviour on campus, please report it to University Security on 0131 650 2257 or security@ed.ac.uk.

Number and locations of incidents

In this period there have been 14 reported incidents: 12 bike thefts, and 2 theft of parts. All incidents occurred from open access racks in the Central Area. The most common location was outside the Main Library, where 6 thefts took occurred.

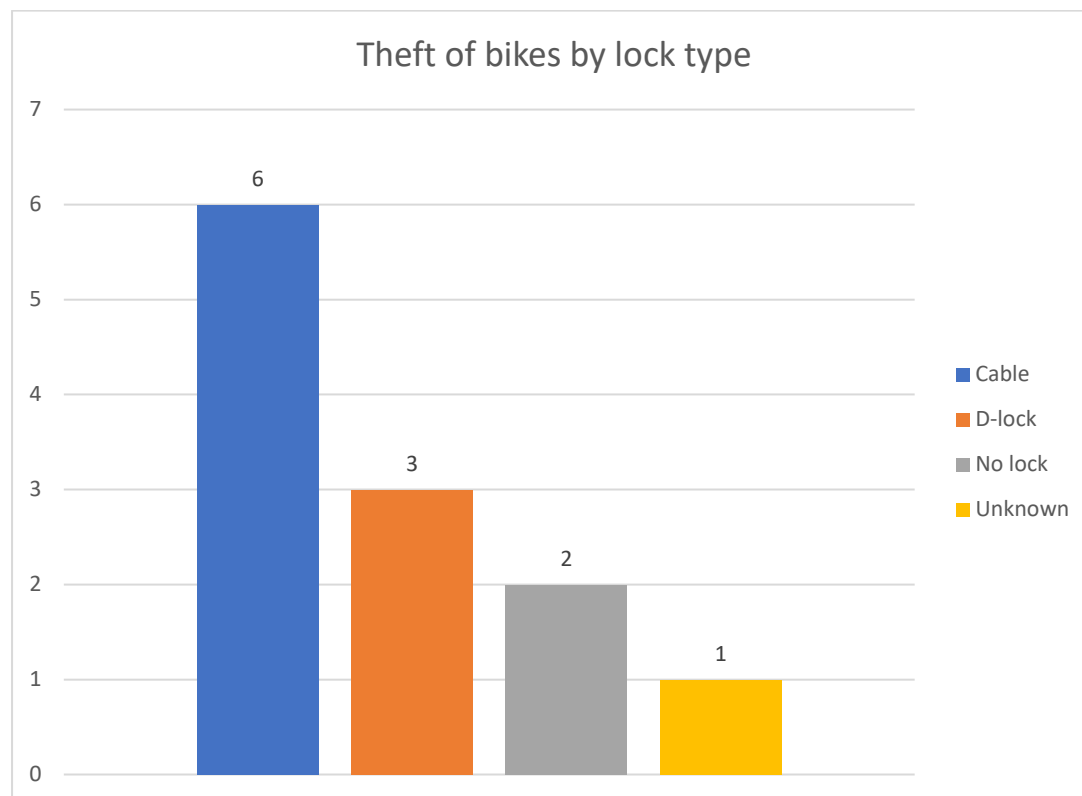
Looking at thefts over a longer time period, the number of incidents fluctuate from month to month. There does not appear to be any discernible trend or pattern to this, except perhaps that bike thefts are lower during summer months, when fewer people are commuting to the campuses.



Type of lock

Consistent with previous reports, cable locks continue to be most common target for bike thieves. These locks are easily cut in mere seconds using either a battery powered angle grinder or cable cutters, and we strongly recommend against using them.

In two incidents, no lock was used and thieves were able to simply take the bike with no effort at all.



Type and value of bikes

The vast majority (12) of the bikes stolen in this period were normal pedal bikes. 1 was an eBike, and 1 was of an unknown type. This is consistent with previous reports.

The average value of the bikes stolen (where known) was £629.

Other factors

In 85% of incidents CCTV footage of the incident was obtained. Unfortunately, thieves usually wear face coverings, making a positive identification more difficult. CCTV footage is passed to Police Scotland at their request to assist with investigations whenever possible.

57% of incidents occurred during daylight hours. This is less than in previous reports, but this time of year is notable for its lack of daylight hours. Regardless, we know that bike thieves operate with brazenness in public areas. Your vigilance in reporting suspicious activity to University Security is needed and appreciated!

The Bigger Picture

Since January 2022 we have recorded 213 incidents, of which 165 were bike thefts. Central Area continues to be the main incident hotspot.

The picture suggested by the above stats is that thieves are largely opportunistic: they are mostly targeting bikes in public places, secured by cable locks which can be cut quickly. They are brazen, and not afraid to operate during the working day when campuses are busy.

The median value of all bikes stolen since these reports started is a relatively low £700 – again suggesting that most thieves are usually opportunistically looking for whatever they can get. Occasionally individual high-value bikes are targeted, but only 20% of the bikes stolen (where values are known) have been worth more than £2000.

Protecting your bike

Edinburgh is renowned as a bike theft hotspot, and the rate of cycle theft is almost certainly an underestimate.

Bikes locked with cable locks are much more heavily targeted and easier to steal. You should invest in a good quality D-lock. Whilst these can still be cut through by a determined thief, they are more hassle and make your bike a less obvious target.

We have further advice on protecting your bike from theft on our website [here](#).