

# Illegal off-road bikes could be crushed to stop annoyance

by Jeni Harvey

LOCAL police officers have launched a campaign to make parents more aware of the issues surrounding controversial off-road bikes.

Officers based at Plant Hill police station, in the A3 sub-division of Greater Manchester Police, have targeted their crackdown on illegal biking at the parents who are buying their children off-road bikes without considering the need for tax, insurance, a licence and MOT.

As a result, those riding their bikes illegally could be liable to anything from a heavy fine to points on their driving licence (or future driving licence), disqualification and even imprisonment.

Police have the power to seize bikes and crush them – but even if the bikes aren't destroyed, their owners should expect a hefty release fee of more than £100.

Inspector Mark Hamilton said: "Parents are buying these bikes and what they're not appreciating is that they need to be road legal.

"They need tax, MOT and insurance and there are heavy penalties for not having these."

Just this year, Greater Manchester Police has arrested 12 people, seized 27 bikes, given 150 warnings and issued 82 fixed penalty notices.

The bikes have also proved a nuisance to local communities. Over the past few months, residents throughout Blackley and North Manchester have been frustrated by children illegally riding their quad bikes on public land, creating a great deal of noise and putting both themselves and others at risk.

Officers have therefore asked for help from affected residents to name and shame these culprits of off-road nuisance. To report illegal bikers, telephone Greater Manchester Police on 0161 872 5050 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.