‘STOP THE PLAGUE OF TOOL THEFT ACROSS THE UK’ Westminster Rally

Monday 20 January, 2025

Trades United to Lead Second Van Rally in Westminster to Combat Tool Theft

Date: Monday, 3rd February 2025

Location: Brent Cross to Parliament Square, Westminster

Time: Starting at 11:00 AM, arriving at Parliament Square by 11:45–12:00 PM

Trades United is once again organising a van rally in Westminster (Parliament Square) to draw attention to the pervasive issue of tool theft and the resale of stolen goods. Starting from Brent Cross, tradespeople from across the UK will unite in London to demand stricter enforcement of existing theft laws, particularly concerning tool theft.

The second van rally will captivate London as tradesmen and women urge the government to address inadequate enforcement of laws that threaten the livelihoods of thousands across the UK. Following the success of the initial rally on 3rd June 2024, this demonstration aims to amplify the call for stronger deterrents against thieves and more e?ective measures to combat the sale of stolen tools.

Participants will stage a ‘go-slow' convoy in Westminster, driving through the area for two hours to raise awareness. The previous rally gained signi?cant traction within the trade community, fostering partnerships with organisations like SelectaDNA and the Metropolitan Police, which have since initiated mass tool-marking events to assist in returning stolen tools to their rightful owners and convicting o?enders.

Trades United, led by Shoaib Awan, previously launched a petition (#659019) in April 2024, calling for the government to address the escalating tool theft crisis by banning the sale of tools at car boots and markets. While the dissolution of Parliament on 30th May 2024 led to the petition's closure, it garnered over 46,000 signatures, re?ecting the widespread concern within the trade industry. Awan continues to encourage support for this critical cause, urging MPs and their parties to prioritise this issue.

Trades United seeks to hold the government accountable for protecting tradespeople and ensuring the enforcement of laws designed to safeguard the broader community. With growing industry support, this rally aims to compel policymakers to address the root causes of tool theft and deliver the urgent reforms required.

The Theft Act 1968 clearly outlines severe penalties for handling stolen goods, including up

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to 14 years of imprisonment upon conviction. However, the lack of su?cient police funding and resources has hindered e?ective enforcement, leaving tradespeople vulnerable to escalating theft.

Trades United calls on the Government to take decisive action by:

? Increasing funding for law enforcement, in particular, specialist crime personnel and frontline o?cers, prioritising motor vehicle crimes including theft from and theft of to enable police to enforce the existing laws e?ciently and e?ectively.

? Theft Act 1968 Section 27 (3) a/b, handling stolen goods, which is currently a straight charge if there is a previous conviction for theft in the last 5 years and the accused has been found to be in possession of stolen goods in the last 12 months. This should be updated to 5 years since a previous conviction and found to have been handling stolen goods in the last 5 years to facilitate with being able to charge repeat criminals for the o?ences more e?ectively.

? Revise the Equipment Theft (Prevention) Act 2023 to include all power tools or produce an alternative legislation to cover the theft of power tools.

? Tool theft - consider the crime an aggravated o?ence.

Tradespeople and supporters are encouraged to participate in this critical event and make their voices heard. Together, we can advocate for the protection of livelihoods and demand meaningful change.

Founder of campaign group Trades United, Shoaib Awan, said:

" On the 3rd February 2025, I will bring tradespeople across the country together once again at Parliament Square for the new Government to see the distress thieves have caused to their livelihoods. Tool theft numbers are rising year on year and not enough is being done by the Government to protect the trades. A crime reference number is not acceptable. We don’t want policies that don’t work, we need strict enforcement and a crackdown operation with immediate effect.

“It's distressing how widespread tool theft has become, impacting not only livelihoods but also mental well-being and family stability. The lack of effective intervention from law enforcement only exacerbates the problem. Businesses su?er not only from the loss of tools but also from the subsequent ?nancial burdens such as increased insurance costs and repairs. It's essential for communities, policymakers, and law enforcement agencies to work together to address this epidemic and provide support for those a?ected.”

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View Online

Additional Assets:
https://www.instagram.com/tradesunited/
Tool theft photos, damaged vans

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