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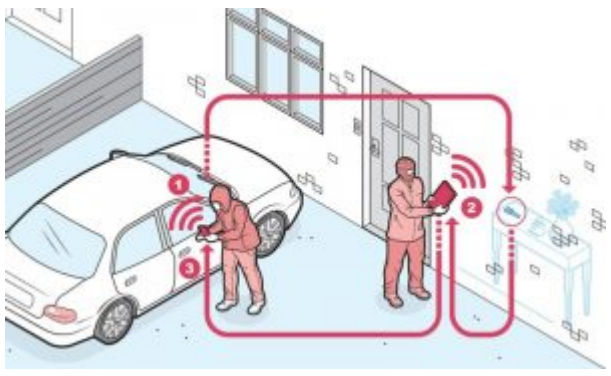
Surrey “relay” car thieves sent down

9 March 2024



Four members of an organised crime group (OCG) responsible for the theft of 53 high value vehicles in **Surrey** and the South-East have been sentenced to a total of 12.5 years behind bars at **Guildford Crown Court** on Friday 8th March.

All four men pleaded guilty to conspiracy to steal and conspiracy to acquire criminal property and were sentenced to;

- Perry Lovejoy, 29, born 01/11/1994, of Reigate Road in Horley, was sentenced to 3 years in prison
- Luke Jackson, 28, born 25/07/1995, of Shoreham Close in Croydon, was sentenced to 3.5 years in prison
- Billy Harrison, 30, born 29/10/1993, of Tollers Lane in Coulsdon, was sentenced to 3 years behind bars
- Harry Sales, 28, born 20/09/1995, of Cornwall Road in Croydon, was sentenced to 3 years in prison

The conviction of the four men was the result of a thorough and complex investigation by the Serious and Organised Crime Unit into the thefts of the 53 vehicles, with a combined value of over £3.7 million pounds.

Jackson also had additional offences taken into consideration when sentenced after admitting his guilt in stealing a further 42 cars, with a combined value of 2.1 million pounds.

The thefts took place over 12 months and across Surrey and the South-East of England. Officers arrested the suspects on the 26 April 2023, after successfully building a clear picture of their illegal activities through intelligence, forensics, ANPR, call data, witness testimony and CCTV enquiries.

During the investigation, officers discovered how the gang used the ‘**relay attack**’ technique to target keyless vehicles including Rolls Royce, Bentley, Land Rover, Range Rover and Alfa Romeo. This method involves using a master device to copy the signal of the vehicle key and transmit it to a second smaller device, which replicates the key and unlocks the car.

Tellingly a manual for a relay device was also found saved on a mobile phone seized from Lovejoy’s possession.

Jackson was also sentenced for two offences of burglary committed whilst stealing two of the cars after pleading guilty. He received 18 months in prison to be served concurrently.

Lovejoy was also sentenced to being concerned in the supply of class b drugs (cannabis) after pleading guilty to this offence when officers found messages on his phone showing supply activity. He received 9 months in prison to be served consecutively.

Investigating Officer DC **Matt Earl**, said; “This was a large-scale investigation that was made possible by the hard-work and dedication of the Serious and Organised Crime Unit, as well as the support and collaboration of other neighbouring police forces.

In Court lawyers for the four said they were the “foot soldiers” in the operation and the maximum sentence for theft being 7 years, the sentences for the defendants should be less than the masterminds “at the top of the chain”, should they ever face justice.

His Honour Judge **Banarjee** said the conspiracy was sophisticated and involved extensive planning. He took into account the guilty pleas of the defendants and the conditions they had endured in HMP Wandsworth since their arrests in April 2023.

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