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# Vandals roaming Glen Eira's streets

NEWS > CRIME 10 JUL 09 @ 04:46 PM | BY WES HOSKING AND BELINDA FRASER



Street graffiti artist Andrew Raven in front of his commissioned work at Cheltenham. PIC: MARCELLA DAVIE N01MC300

TEENS as young as 13 are roaming the streets at 2am and vandalising property.

Glen Eira Tasking Unit police charged 16 people with property damage, including graffiti, between December 26 and June 1.

Acting Insp Nigel McGuire White said graffiti groups - typically made up of boys aged 18 and under - were the nursery school for more serious crimes.

Insp McGuire White said graffiti's group culture often led to property damage, theft and assault.

"Not only is it an eyesore, it tends to occur in areas where there are other crimes," he said.

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Most charges related to graffiti without consent, possessing graffiti implements and offensive graffiti.

Vandals charged were aged between 13 and 26, including one woman.

All charges involved crimes committed between 10pm and 2am.

Fences, public toilets, trains, railway stations and parks south of North Rd were popular targets on Friday and Saturday nights.

Insp McGuire White said graffiti artists often risked their lives to vandalise property in dangerous and poorly-lit locations.

Hot spots include Bentleigh East's Mackie Rd shops; Gardenvale station; Joyce Park, Ormond; McKinnon Reserve; Bailey Reserve, Bentleigh East and Princes Park, Caulfield South.

Chelsea street artist Andrew Raven has been commissioned to do legal murals in Melbourne's south.

Mr Raven said tagging - the spray-painted initials or nicknames of vandals - was an "aggressive" form of graffiti.

Fines were a deterrent, but vandals should have to clean up damage, he said.

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