




Operation Randall

tackling rural crime
Newsletter

Issue 26 | August 2022

 @RuralCrimeNfk

Introduction

Welcome to the mid-summer newsletter. Another month has rushed by and like many of you, no doubt, it's been another busy one.

Towards the end of last month, we had the Royal Norfolk Show at the showground in Costessey which was a fantastic event showcasing all things rural. It was very well attended by all accounts and was certainly a welcome return after the force hiatus due to Covid.

In addition, we've also attended several important meetings and events over the last month, particularly around new legislation to tackle hare coursing, and provided further training for officers and staff. It's been a busy one!

Norfolk Show

The team were at the Royal Norfolk Show for the two days showcasing Norfolk in all its finery with so many amazing displays throughout the showground. Our small corner of the showground had activities for the children, displays of our rural crime and drone work, dog unit (including a puppy!), BroadsBeat, roads policing alongside recruitment. Walking around the showground, it

was great to see so many children enjoying the show. It's absolutely vital that the younger generation is connected to and has an understanding of our rural communities and where their food comes from.

I also took part in a live Q&A with the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner. Hosted by CLA alongside the EDP, it was a great opportunity for the public and CLA to ask us questions about our response to rural crime and our plans moving forward.

Weve Joined Facebook!

As part of our on going commitment to increase engagement within our rural communities we are pleased to announce we have launched our very own Norfolk Rural Crime Facebook page to go alongside this newsletter and our Twitter account. Please give us a follow, Facebook gives us some better tools for engagement moving forward. facebook.com/NorfolkRuralCrime or search Norfolk Rural Crime in Facebook



NEED TO TALK TO US?

PC Chris Shelley | christopher.shelley@norfolk.police.uk | 07900 407106

Engagement Events

We have a further date for the diary where I will be joined by the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner as well as my Inspector and Sergeant again. This is an informal events with an opportunity to see a small presentation on the work we do and have a chat with any of us. While these are informal events and people are free to drop in and out as they please, please let us know if you're planning to attend so we have an idea of how many people to expect. Please drop us an email at OperationRandall@norfolk.police.uk so we can make sure we have enough space. That said, if the day arrives and you'd like to join us, please still do come along...you will certainly not be turned away!

So, the date and venue is:

- Wednesday 5 October 2022, 2pm to 4pm, Glebe Farm Barn, Church Lane, Gressenhall, Dereham, NR19 2QQ (near Dereham).

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the owner of this location for allowing us to use them for the day.

Don't panic if you can't make this event we will be arranging further opportunities around the county.

Hot Dry Weather Warning

As I write, in July, this is one of the hottest and driest months on record. I am sure you've all seen the devastating photos of the field fires and homes on fire. My thoughts are with those affected and, once again, we have seen fantastic community support for those who have suffered such loss. As a force we assisted the fire service with drone capabilities, road closures and

evacuation support. Communities came together to open community buildings, provide refreshments to fire service and police, voluntary groups assisted with manning evacuation stations, farmers provided machinery and manpower to help bring wildfires under control.

There are far too many people and organisations to thank so it's one massive thank you to everyone who assisted the emergency services' response in every and any way. Thankfully, there was no loss of life reported. Moving forward, the ground remains incredibly vulnerable to fire again. Please do not use naked flames anywhere, do not use disposable BBQs and dispose of cigarettes and BBQ waste appropriately. A small fire has the capability of spreading rapidly and causing serious harm in minutes.

Along the same lines, we are asking members of the public to be aware of the risk and report any early concerns. Similarly, around Unlicensed Music Events (sometimes called raves), we are asking people to report any suspicious behaviour particularly around vehicles accessing remote areas unusually.

In Force Training—Rural Crime Champions

Over the last couple of weeks, we have completed some additional training to 13 officers and staff enhancing their knowledge around all aspects of rural crime and giving them the tools to provide additional support to colleagues to make sure we are investigating rural crime effectively. Many thanks to individuals from NAVCIS, RSPCA, RSPB, Heritage England and EA Fisheries who provided their expertise which was invaluable to making the training effective.

WhatsApp Group

The Operation Randall WhatsApp group is expanding. At present the group mainly consists of partner agencies, key landowners and administrators of other social media rural groups. I am currently looking at increasing the size of this group so if you meet one or more of the above criteria – work for a partner agency, key landowner or you administer another rural group on social media - or if you think you would benefit or be able to contribute in any way, I want to hear from you. You can contact me on email at christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

OP Galileo – Hare Coursing

conference had a lot of input around the new offences which come into effect from the 1 August 2022.

They have created two new offences including being equipped for hare coursing and trespassing in pursuit/search of hares. The new legislation also increases penalties, allows us to recoup costs of dog seizures and allows us to apply for dog banning orders so people cannot own dogs if they are convicted of hare coursing. These are set to become some powerful tools moving forward.

As harvest comes to an end and when we get some rain, we traditionally start to this type of crime. Please make sure that if you see such behaviour, you tell us about it immediately so we can respond appropriately.

Fuel Thefts

With the price of fuel remaining so high, sadly it will come as no surprise to most that we are seeing an increase in fuel thefts. In particular, we have seen thefts recently from farm machinery overnight where it is parked in fields during harvest time. Please report any suspicious behaviour in such areas and if you own agricultural or farm machinery, please carefully consider where you're leaving machines overnight.

Countryside in August

Harvest is obviously well under way with Combine Harvesters working around-the-clock to bring in the crop. From what I've seen, nearly all the winter barley is now in alongside all the oil seed rape. Many farms are now working through the winter wheat and then on to the spring drilled crops. Alongside bringing in this year's harvest, there is always a rush to get next year's crop into the ground particularly the winter barley and oil seed rape – the earlier this is planted, the better the likely yield. The only issue this year is the lack of moisture in the soil to germinate the seed. So, while farmers would not normally be doing a rain dance at harvest time, I think many wouldn't mind a drop in the not too distant future!

Livestock farms are similarly suffering from the ongoing dry period with livestock running out of fresh grass and the hay/silage fields struggling with growth after the last cut, which is worrying given this is vital feed stock for the winter months' ahead.

Shepherds will be starting to think about their breeding stock for the spring, looking at which tups (male sheep) are required and which ones already on the farm need extra feed ahead of the breeding season that generally starts in November for commercial flocks, and earlier for pedigree flocks. It will also be a necessary to assess the breeding ewes as there is little point breeding ewes who are not capable of rearing two lambs in the spring. It also puts the health of the lamb at risk as well as the ewe.

As for wildlife, most birds have finished their breeding for the year although there may be a few late additions... especially this year given the hot weather. Swifts will start to leave us for the warmer winter climates of the Africa continent. Towards the end of the month, these will be followed by house martins and swallows.

During this current hot dry spell, birds would appreciate a small bath of water, even a small plate or plastic tub would provide them with enough water to drink and freshen up. Other small mammals, in particular hedgehogs, will also thank you. Hedgehogs will continue breeding well into August, you may see a few more stoats and weasels at this time of year too as the young start to move around and find their own territory.

August isn't usually a month to admire huge amounts of colour in our wildflower meadows and hedgerows as so much has gone to seed. August hedgerows have their own unique beauty too as they start to fill up with blackberries and other small fruit, which the birds will be enjoying alongside us. Orchards will be filling up with apples and pears nearly ready for harvest.

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Wells Courier Fraud—Warning

We're asking the public to look out for vulnerable neighbours, friends and family members in North Norfolk after an elderly man was targeted by fraudsters.

The Wells resident was persuaded to part with £51,000 in total last month (between 21 - 28 July 2022) after receiving phone calls from criminals pretending to be a police 'cyber-crime fraud squad'. After initial phone calls, the gentleman agreed to transfer money via both online bank transfers and in a physical cash exchange.

Courier Fraud happens when a fraudster contacts a victim by telephone claiming to be a police officer, bank or from a government department, among other agencies. A number of techniques will then be adopted in order to convince the victim to hand over their bank details or cash, which may then be passed on to a courier.

Residents are reminded that banks and the police will NEVER ask someone to withdraw money or purchase items.

Further advice includes:

- Your bank or the police will NEVER ask for your PIN, bank card or bank account details over the phone – never give these details to anybody.
- Neither the police nor the banks will send a courier to collect money from you.
- Always request Photo ID and if unsure call the police directly.
- If you're asked to telephone a bank, then always do it on a different phone to the one you were contacted on.

- Fraudsters will keep the line open and have been known to play ringtones, hold music and a recorded message down the phone so the victim believes they are making a call to a legitimate number. Ensure you can hear a dialling tone before calling police or use a friend or neighbour's telephone instead.

- Do not rush into complying to the scammers demands / requests.
- If you have already given your bank details over the phone or handed your card details to a courier, call your bank straight away to cancel the card

If anyone has received a similar type of telephone call or has any information about the Wells incident, please contact Norfolk Police on 101 quoting 'Operation Radium'.

Alternatively, contact the independent charity Crimestoppers 100% anonymously on 0800 555 111.

For further advice, head to the Action Fraud website: www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

Anyone who recognises the man or has information about the theft is asked to contact PC Jamie Hunter at Norfolk Police on 101, quoting crime number 36/55431/22. Alternatively, they can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

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Police appeal for vigilance after number of outbuilding burglaries

Police are urging residents to keep outbuildings secure and remain vigilant following a series of rural burglaries.

The appeal comes after the following burglaries:

Stonegate, Aylsham: Sometime between 6pm on 19 July and 5am on 20 July 2022, suspect/s stole keys from an unlocked key box in a farm building and stole a black Toyota Hilux.

Lower Street, Wickmere: Sometime between 5.50pm on 19 July 2022 and 7.30am on 20 July, suspect/s forced access to two barns and stole a quadbike.

Hedenham Road, Barnham Broom: Sometime between 10pm on 19 July and 6.40am on 20 July 2022, suspect/s entered an outbuilding and keys to a Dodge Challenger vehicle were stolen.

Fakenham Road, South Creak: Overnight on 18 July 2022, suspects forced access to a barn and stole a Toyota Hilux.

Hillington: Suspect/s forced access to a stable at around 11.20pm on 19 July and stole keys to a tractor.

Stoney Lane, Bittering: Overnight on 18 July 2022, 60 litres of petrol, 125 litres of red diesel and a battery charging kit were stolen from a barn.

Dunham Road, Necton: Sometime overnight on 16 July 2022, suspect/s forced access to an outbuilding, drove a vehicle over a field and flattened the crops. Nothing was stolen.

Officers are investigating whether these crimes are linked and are keen to hear from any witnesses or anyone who has seen any suspicious activity in these areas at the times stated above.

PC Chris Shelley, Norfolk's Constabulary's rural crime officer, said: "Please look-out for any suspicious behaviour and don't disregard people or vehicles that appear unusual or out of place.

"We always look to see what forensic opportunities are available but the key to catching these criminals could be provided by a member of the public who calls us about something they have seen and believe to be suspicious. We may have received other calls about the same incident and when we look at the complete picture, we can start to piece together information to find out what's happened, identify those responsible and try to prevent it from happening again."

Officers are offering farmers and landowners in rural communities the following crime prevention advice: Try to note down the car registration number of any suspicious vehicle, if it's safe to do so, and report it to us.

If possible, remove all GPS kit from machines when not in use, especially if the machinery is left out overnight.

Review security at your outbuildings, as well as any building where equipment is serviced. Always keep outbuildings locked and secure.

Record the serial numbers of your equipment and take a photo of the serial number and keep it safe. Security mark all your kit, possibly with a UV marker or permanent black marker, with the name of your location and postcode – make it as visible as possible - to make it unattractive to a potential thief.

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NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY

@RuralCrimeNfk



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
FOR JUSTICE, FOR SAFETY,
FOR NORFOLK

Operation
Randall
tackling rural crime

Rural Crime Briefing

Join us on the below dates to have an informal discussion and presentation with:



- ♦ **Chief Constable Paul Sanford**
- ♦ **Police and Crime Commissioner Giles Orpen-Smellie**
- ♦ **OP Randall PC Chris Shelley**
- ♦ **Insp Ian Cox and Sgt Matt Paine of Community Safety Operations Unit**

We will offer a small presentation on some of the work being done in the area of rural crime around the county. Then an opportunity for you to talk with key members of the force around any concerns or questions you have.

This is a informal event and whilst the presentation will be at the beginning please feel free to drop by at any point.

Whilst not essential, we kindly ask if you plan to attend to drop us an email to OperationRandall@norfolk.police.uk so we can keep track of numbers attending where possible.



Wednesday 5th of October 2022

Time: 1400hrs— 1600hrs

**Glebe Farm Barn, Church Lane,
Gressenhall, Dereham, NR19 2QQ**

 **WHAT3WORDS**

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