



Issue | 1st September 2020

 @RuralCrimeNfk

Operation Randall

tackling rural crime
Newsletter



Introduction

Autumn is now on us and the weather is beginning to turn. We are well into the harvest and with this comes an increase in straw stacks across the countryside. Unfortunately, this often brings an increase in arsons. This is not a victimless crime, and often does tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage, not to mention the physical risk to the farmers and Fire officers who attend to deal with the aftermath. Please report any suspicious activity around straw stacks.

Thetford Unlicensed music event

Five people have been arrested and fined for attending an unlicensed music event in Thetford at the weekend.

More than 100 officers were involved in a significant operation to disrupt the event which started in the forest on Saturday night (28 August).

Specialist teams moved on to the site, which had attracted in excess of 500 people, late yesterday afternoon (29 August) and closed it down around 6.30pm.

Officers seized audio equipment, generators, the rig and a large flat-bed lorry which was used to transport the equipment.



Op Randall Rural Crime WhatsApp Group

I'm still currently looking to increase numbers on the police rural crime **WhatsApp** group, so if you are interested feel free to drop me an email james.wonnacott@norfolk.pnn.police.uk providing your name, dob, address and a brief outline of what you could bring to the group by way of your job, expertise, position or anything else you think may be relevant.

People were directed to leave the area and anyone who failed to do so were arrested. Five people were arrested. Three were dealt with at the scene and issued with a £100 fine while two were taken in custody and later issued with £100 fine.

Assistant Chief Constable Nick Davison, who led the operation, said: “Our investigations are ongoing to trace the organisers and these enquiries are progressing well.

“We understand the disruption such events cause to local communities and the concern people will have, particularly as coronavirus continues to be a real threat.

“This was a well-established and planned event and we needed additional specialist resources to shut it down safely. More than 100 officers from four forces were involved in the operation, which is a significant task but one which led to the right results being achieved.

“I would like to thank local residents once again for their patience and understanding while we worked to close it down.”

CCTV appeal following a shed burglary – Norwich

Police are appealing for help to identify a man after £140 worth of tools were stolen

from a shed.



Officers were called to reports of a shed being broken into in Shorncliffe Avenue in Norwich between 3.50pm and 4.05pm on Thursday 18 June 2020.

A Spear and Jackson pole hedge trimmer and telescope in a brief case were taken and the shed door and padlock badly damaged.

Police have released a CCTV image of the man they would like to speak to in connection with the incident, who is described as wearing a two-tone blue jacket at the time.

A 24-year-old woman was arrested in Sheringham on Wednesday 24 June on suspicion of burglary following the incident and was interviewed by police at Aylsham Police Investigation Centre. She has since been released under investigation.

If you have any information please contact PC Hannah Willis quoting crime reference 36/40008/20.



Hardingham stable burglary



Police investigating the burglary of a stable in Hardingham have released images of stolen property and CCTV.

The incident happened at stables in the Hackford Road area between 10pm on Friday night and 7am on Saturday morning (21/22 August).

Suspects broke in by kicking the door and cutting locks before stealing between £15,000 to £20,000 worth of equipment including 15 saddles, saddle pads and stirrups.



Photographs showing some stolen equipment have been released, along with a CCTV image of two men seen looking around the riding school on Thursday night (20 August).

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Officers are keen to hear from anyone who may have information about the incident, or may have been offered equestrian equipment for sale.

Anyone with information should contact PC Shannon Cross at Dereham Police Station on **101** quoting crime reference 36/58349/20.

Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

Rural crime rates drop in Norfolk



Investments in technology and proactive capabilities have helped Norfolk Police tackle rural crime, with the number of

reported rural crimes down, compared with national figures.

And Norfolk is bucking the national trend.

National levels of rural crime are at their highest for eight years, in contrast to Norfolk, which has seen reported rural crime figures drop by 7.1% since 2018, according to insurer NFU Mutual's 2020 Rural Crime Report published on Tuesday (4 August).

Thieves are targeting the countryside, with organised criminal gangs identifying businesses with valuable farm equipment and livestock. Equipment stolen commonly includes expensive all-terrain vehicles, including quad bikes and Land Rover Defenders, and hi-tech computer systems for tractors and combines.

Norfolk Police's rural team works closely with the county's farming community and Farmwatch groups to gather intelligence about thefts and suspicious activity. Information is shared among farmers across social media platforms to provide quick alerts when crimes take place.

Investment in our proactive capabilities together with well-established links with farmers and gamekeepers means we can utilise Automatic Number Plate (ANPR) Recognition systems to keep track of any vehicles involved in rural crime.

Norfolk Police is also working closely with manufacturers, the NaVCIS agricultural machinery theft co-ordination unit, and

YANA Helpline: 0300 323 0400



YANA: Help for those in farming who may be affected by stress and depression.

NFU Mutual to tackle the networks behind this type of crime.

Chief Constable Simon Bailey explains: “The current drop in rural crime rates in Norfolk is very encouraging, and testament to the dedication of our rural crime team, working with our communities and partners.

“We identified a rise in theft of farm equipment and machinery back in June 2018, and responded by launching Operation Kingbird, which was aimed at disrupting an organised criminal group targeting farms in the Breckland area. Our decision to increase patrols and targeted police activity resulted in a number of arrests. We continue to relentlessly pursue organised criminals targeting rural locations.

“Delivering against the Police and Crime Plan, our Rural Crime Strategy acknowledges the unique challenges faced, the impact crimes can have, and the need for rural communities to have a police service that is responsive, innovative and vested in providing a quality service to all.

“We continue to commit resources – our engagement officers and local officers – to focus on crime prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance – on targeting rural crime. In addition, our ongoing investment in technology, in thermal imaging devices and drones, helps to tackle those crimes that impact rural communities.

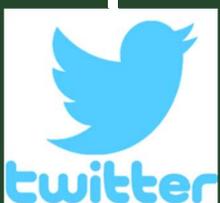
“This is all underpinned by a firm commitment to work with partners and our rural communities, allowing us to share information, identify gaps, problem-solve and ultimately provide a better service.”

Alongside the work of the police, farmers can take steps to secure and tag their own equipment. Something as simple as painting your postcode onto tools and machines can help in the identification of criminal activity, and the recovery of equipment. We would encourage residents to continue to report suspicious activity, as well as storing valuables securely. If you have to leave it – lock it, and light it (with a security light for example), to discourage criminal activity.

Norfolk’s Police and Crime Commissioner Lorne Green, said: “During my time as Norfolk’s Police and Crime Commissioner I have remained committed to supporting rural communities by listening to and responding to the needs of people in the countryside.

“Preventing and tackling rural crime has been and remains a central plank of my Police and Crime Plan.

“There are some crime types which are more prevalent in rural areas and bring unique challenges for policing – farm and agricultural crime, for example, or hunting and game sports – but for many rural residents their concerns are not that different from those of residents anywhere else in the county.



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“Through the introduction of drones, body-worn cameras and investment in automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), I have ensured our officers have been given the right technology they need to fight the crime types affecting Norfolk today in rural areas and beyond.

“I welcome the findings of the NFU report, which on the whole appear positive for Norfolk, however it is important we do not become complacent.

“While these statistics show a downward

trend, I appreciate that they will be of little comfort to those who are victim of rural crime.

“We must continue to work with local communities and partners to offer help and support and address any police and crime concerns.

“I will be ensuring I have an opportunity to raise these matters further which the Chief Constable at my next Police Accountability Forum meeting next month.”



NEED TO TALK TO US?

James Wonnacott | james.wonnacott@norfolk.pnn.police.uk