



Operation Randall

tackling rural crime

Issue 17 | 1st November 2021

[@RuralCrimeNfk](https://twitter.com/RuralCrimeNfk) 

Welcome to another newsletter, this one has come a few days later than normal as I have had a few weeks leave, which has been a good period of refresh. I am pleased to say I have not walked back into anything major and it has been a relatively quiet month.

The clocks have gone back this weekend which brings the longer, darker nights and the usual extra vulnerabilities. Now is a good time to review your home security and if you need any advice please do get in touch. We can also now offer crime prevention surveys done by a team of local officers around the county that have been specially trained to carry out such activities.

PDF Version of Newsletter

Since switching over provider of our emailing systems I have had some community organisations unable to put the new format on parish websites and similar. This month I will attempt to start creating a PDF version to send round to relevant people. Please note this will NOT replace the normal way in receiving the newsletter, this is only open to people who republish/redistribute the newsletter. If you wish to receive the Newsletter via PDF please contact me to get added to this mailing list.



YANA

Rural mental health support

Helpline: 0300 323 0400

helpline@yanahelp.org

Hare Coursing

We are now in peak season for this sort of criminality. That said, the number of incidents reported to us remain very low and down significantly on previous years. We continue to patrol particular hotspots around the county and sharing intelligence with our neighbouring forces.

It remains important that all incidents are reported to us in a timely fashion so that we can deploy resources to the correct locations.



Dont Forget To Follow Us On Twitter!

Don't forget to join us on Twitter! Our page is designed to let you know what we are up to as a team as much as possible as well as share info about crime prevention and engagement events and anything else we think might be useful. Click the logo below to visit our page.



NEED TO TALK TO US?

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

Marking of Property

We continue to see thefts of tools and other easily removable items. It remains really important to make sure your property is secure, locked away and out of sight. Another really easy deterrent is to make sure your property is marked obviously; it then becomes harder to sell on by a suspect and also when we do come across property, it is easier to return to its rightful owners. The marking can be simply done with a permanent marker or with an engraving tool. We recommend the marking is your surname and postcode. You can literally mark anything from power tools, generators, garden tools, electronics, lawn mowers, and many more. We also recommend you have photos of your valuables alongside with any serial numbers of the equipment.

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.police.uk

Scrap Metal Thefts

Scrap metal prices continue to be very high and we have seen a number of large scale and small-scale thefts of scrap metal from various settings including; from vehicles (catalytic converters – contain some high-priced precious metals), farms, building sites and businesses. Some of this has of course been disposed of and then illegally collected, other has been metal ‘products’ stolen. If you have scrap metal lying around, again consider your security and whether you can leave it in a secure place, and can it be disposed of in the correct manner.

Theft of Bluebells - Court Result

Some of you may remember the story of 8,000 native British Bluebells being dug up from a woodland estate in Thursford back in March 2021. Local officers carried out a very good investigation which led to four suspects being charged to court for theft of wild plants.

James Cross, 30, and Katie Bingham, 20, each pleaded guilty to uprooting a wild plant on March 23, 2021 at Kings Lynn Magistrates Court on Thursday 14 October. Cross and Bingham, of Anfield Road, were each fined £200 and ordered to pay £105 costs, £34 victim surcharge and £156.25 compensation. The other two involved are due to attend in a couple of weeks.

Sadly, we often see reports of thefts of bulbs and plants during the spring period and securing the evidence to bring about a successful prosecution, can be difficult. This prosecution was secured on the back of a member of public reporting suspicious circumstances to us.



Mud on the Road

** Just a reminder as the wet weather has started. Please ensure the highway & paths are kept clean and clear of all mud. ** It is also a timely reminder with wet

and muddy roads, that all road users should always be driving to the conditions. As they say...drive to arrive!

The Law

Vehicle operators, contractors and farmers who deposit mud on the road are potentially liable for a range of offences. This guidance note is not a complete statement of the law or of your responsibilities and possible liabilities.

A range of powers are available to the police and National Highways, primarily the Highways Act 1980; and the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Highways Act 1980 Section 137 states: "If a person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way wilfully obstructs the free passage along a highway he is guilty of an offence". Highways Act 1980 Section 148 "If without lawful authority or excuse a person deposits anything whatsoever on a highway to the interruption of any user of the highway he is guilty of an offence" Highways Act 1980.

Section 149 of the Highways Act states: "if anything is deposited on the highway so as to constitute a nuisance/danger the Highway Authority can require the person who put it there to remove it forthwith". Mud causes skidding and is therefore dangerous and a nuisance.

Highways Act 1980 Section 161 states: "If a person, without lawful authority or excuse, deposits anything whatsoever on a highway in consequence of which a user of the highway is injured or endangered, that person is guilty of an offence". Furthermore, the Road Traffic Act 1988 covers situations where a mechanically propelled vehicle is driven dangerously on a road. Driving dangerously can include driving a vehicle in a state that could cause danger to others.

Punishment for these offences ranges from fines to imprisonment.



Firework/Bonfire Safety - Advice

Fireworks are great fun but it is important to remember that they can also cause distress and injuries if not handled properly. Used irresponsibly, fireworks can cause damage to property and do significant harm to people and animals. Not only is there a danger from fireworks exploding, they can also pose a serious fire risk.

Members of the public should use fireworks on private property, such as their back gardens, and only licensed professionals can use them in public places. With bonfires it is always advisable to only set the bonfire up the day you plan to light it or move it. These stops hibernating animals, particularly hedgehogs being harmed. Always make sure bonfires are far enough away from buildings and other objects like hedges, trees, outbuildings etc.

If you are using fireworks at home simply follow our guidelines to ensure you have a safe but fun bonfire night. Where possible please notify your neighbours of your plans, this can allow them to make plans around pets which can be distressed by fireworks and also livestock/horses similarly.

Remember:

- Only buy fireworks from a legitimate retailer.
- It is illegal to supply fireworks to persons under the age of 18.
- Shops are not allowed to sell fireworks louder than 120 decibels.
- It is an offence for under 18's to have fireworks in a public place.
- You should never throw or set off a firework in the street, onto a road or in a public place.

- You're not allowed to set off fireworks between 11pm and 7am except on Bonfire night whereby the curfew is midnight to 7am. New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year, curfew is 1am.
- Anyone caught causing a nuisance with fireworks will receive an instant fine of £80 and any fireworks found on a person under 18 will be confiscated.
- Never use any kind of accelerant i.e. petrol to start a bonfire.
- Always inform your neighbours if you are using fireworks and be considerate.
- Ensure your fireworks comply with British Standard 7114 or the European equivalents.



What is happening in the countryside in November?

November on our farms can often be thought of as a quieter month, but I think to call any month in the farming calendar a quiet is a long shot.

There might not be as much colour in the fields this time of year, as arable farms continue to plough fields in preparation for next year's crops. Winter wheat continues to be drilled until middle of the month traditionally, and more of our sugar beet fields are turned from green to brown as they are harvested to produce our sugar for the next year. Around 50% of the UK's sugar demand is made up from British sugar beet which is nearly all now grown in the eastern region.

On livestock farms the work never stops! With most cattle now housed for winter, the daily jobs of feeding and bedding up with fresh straw and the likes, becomes a daily task. Livestock left out on grass will often need to be supplemented with extra food as the grass has stopped growing and quality is no longer sufficient.

Whilst many associates the 5 of November with Bonfire Night it is also a traditional important date in a Shepherd's calendar. That's because if you put your tup (male sheep) with your flock of ewes on the 5 November you 'should' have Spring lambs born on the 1 April. Obviously as farming has modernised, many farmers now lamb slightly earlier to feed into the traditional Easter lamb

market. That said, many do still lamb at the beginning of April with the opportunity of better grass to feed the milking ewes on.

In the countryside the colours continue to change on the trees and by the end of the month many will be left bare. Hedgehogs and other hibernating animals should be safely secured away for the colder months with the hope of not being disturbed! The deer rut is full swing so beware of deer's spending more time close to the road.

Bird Flu - Winter Guidance

At the point of writing this we have had no confirmed Avian Flu cases in the UK, however the Government have published the following article;

The UK's Chief Veterinary Officers are encouraging poultry keepers to take action now to reduce the risk of avian flu over the winter.

The UK is currently free from avian flu, but over the last year 26 outbreaks were confirmed in kept poultry and captive birds and in over 300 wild birds. As winter approaches, the risk of migratory wild birds infecting domestic poultry will rise and therefore it is vital that poultry farmers and bird keepers take action to improve biosecurity standards.

In a joint statement, the UK's four Chief Veterinary Officers said:

Avian flu is a continued threat to all poultry keepers, and as winter approaches, we need to be ready for the increased risk of disease that migrating birds pose to our flocks.

We encourage keepers across the UK to implement strong biosecurity practices now, including regular shed maintenance checks, cleaning and disinfecting footwear and signing up for our email and text alerts. Making these tasks a regular fixture of your disease control plans now will make a significant difference in the fight against avian flu this winter and for years to come.

There are several measures that can help to keep flocks disease free. All keepers – whether they run a large commercial farm or keep just a few pet chickens in their back garden – can get ahead of the game and take these steps to reduce the risk of disease before the migration of wild birds begins again this winter:

- Keep the area where birds live clean and tidy, control rats and mice and regularly clean and disinfect any hard surfaces
- Keep chickens and turkeys completely separate from ducks and geese

- Conduct regular maintenance checks on their sheds
- Clean moss off the roofs, empty gutters and remove vegetation between sheds where birds are kept
- Draw up contingency plans for storing bedding and dealing with pests
- Place birds' feed and water in fully enclosed areas that are protected from wild birds, and remove any spilled feed regularly
- Put fencing around outdoor areas where birds are allowed and limit their access to ponds or areas visited by wild waterfowl
- Clean and disinfect footwear before and after entering premises where birds are kept

Jane Howorth, founder of the British Hen Welfare Trust said:

For those of us that enjoy keeping a few pet hens in our gardens, now is the time to start gearing up to protect them during the migration season when avian flu becomes more of a threat. It's no more taxing than having to book any other family pet in for an annual health check but is so important both for the safety of your own birds as well as that of the national commercial flock. You will find lots of advice and information on how best to help your birds on our website at www.bhwt.org.uk.

When avian flu is suspected or confirmed, the Government introduces restrictions on the movement of all birds and products of animal origin around the infected premises. These restrictions also impact farms in the surrounding area. In order to minimise this impact, they can take the following steps:

- Ensure robust contingency and business continuity plans are developed and reviewed for managing your premises in the event of avian flu – including for housing birds, appropriate arrangements for bedding management, vermin and pest control
- Ensure production records – including for farm movements, water intake and egg production – are up-to-date, easily accessible and preferably electronic
- Be ready to submit licensing requests for when planning to move birds, vehicles or feed, and have plans in place in case of delays

The Government continues to monitor for incursions of avian flu and is working with the poultry and game bird industries; hen rehoming and pure and traditional poultry breeds stakeholders to help reduce the risk of disease. The Government also publishes [further guidance](#) on how to spot avian flu and what to do if you suspect it.

The police will never...

-  Contact you to ask for your PIN or bank details
-  Ask to withdraw cash to hand over to them for safe-keeping
-  Ask you transfer money out of your account for fraud reasons
-  Send someone to your home to collect cash, PINs, or cards

ActionFraud
www.actionfraud.gov.uk



Final Word

Thankyou for again taking the time to read this month. If anyone has any feedback positive or negative please do let me know we are keen to keep the newsletter aimed in the right direction for those taking the time to read it.

Have a good month and stay safe.

Recent Press Releases

Witness appeal after cash machine stolen

Police are appealing for information after a cash machine was stolen from a petrol garage in Hillington in the early hours of today (Monday 25 October 2021).

Officers were called at 1.15am today to the ESSO petrol station in Lynn Road. On arrival they found the ATM machine, which is believed to have contained several thousand pounds in cash at the time, had been stolen. A white van believed to have been used in the theft was recovered nearby by police. A man aged in his 20s was arrested in connection with the incident and remains in custody at King's Lynn Police Station.

Enquiries are ongoing and officers would like to hear from anyone who may have seen anything suspicious or have any information that could help the investigation to contact PC Ben Ward at King's Lynn Police Station on 101 quoting crime reference 36/79241/21. Alternatively, they can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Appeal following burglary in Outwell

A property in Isle Bridge Road was broken into sometime between 7am on Saturday 16 October 2021 and 4pm on Sunday 24 October. Items stolen include an electric watch display box and several wrist watches.

Anyone who witnessed any suspicious activity in the area between the times stated or has any information should contact PC Alexander Edwards at Downham Market Police Station on 101 quoting crime reference 36/79175/21. Alternatively, they can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Appeal following burglary in Mulbarton

Police are appealing for information following a burglary in Mulbarton.

A farm on Norwich Road was broken into sometime between 6pm on Tuesday 19 October and 9am on Wednesday 20 October 2021.

Unknown suspect(s) have then forced entry into several outbuildings and stole ten horse saddles, horse clippers and a chainsaw.

Officers are appealing for anyone who may have witnessed the incident or any suspicious activity in the area between the times stated to come forward.

Anyone with information should contact PC Paul Gardiner on 101 quoting crime reference 36/77903/21.

Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Appeal after boat is damaged in Hoveton

Police are appealing for information after a boat was broken into and damaged in Hoveton.

The boat, which was moored off Station Road, was broken into sometime between 8pm on Monday 18 October and 9am on Tuesday 19 October.

Three windows were smashed on the vessel and a number of items were thrown overboard, including a sofa, mattresses, a chair and a table. A television and two radios were also stolen.

Anyone who may have witnessed any suspicious behaviour in the area, or anyone with information, should contact the Broads Beat Team on 101 and quote reference number 36/77655/21.

Appeal following theft of commemorative statue

Police are appealing for information after a commemorative World War I statue was stolen from East Rudham at the weekend.

The metal statue of an army soldier was stolen from the roadside sometime between 7pm on Saturday 16 October and 8am on Sunday 17 October 2021. Officers are appealing for anyone who may have witnessed the incident or anyone with information to come forward.

Anyone with information should contact PC Keith Kenny in Op Solve on 101 quoting crime reference 36/77691/21.

Alternatively contact Crimestoppers 100% anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Jubilee House, Falconers Chase, Wymondham, Norfolk, NR18 0WW

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