



Issue 8 | 1st of March 2021

 @RuralCrimeNfk

Operation **Randall**

tackling rural crime
Newsletter

Introduction



Welcome to another newsletter. What a busy couple of weeks it has been since the last one. We have finally had a court result in relation to hare coursing alongside some other good news stories which I will cover shortly.

The national lockdown continues but we have seen some big announcements on moving out of lockdown and the removal of restrictions as long as we continue to make progress in battling the virus.

Alongside the positive news around lockdown we have started to really see the first signs of Spring. The Snowdrops and Crocuses are out in all their glory and the sun has been shining with a rise in temperatures. This of course brings many of us out of our 'winter hibernation' and makes us want to get some fresh air. That said, we must remain local and explore our local area! Sadly, as reported last weekend, several fines were again issued to people breaking the lockdown rules around staying local for visiting our costal areas

and local beauty spots.

Police will continue to patrol these areas in the weeks ahead and enforce the rules where necessary. At this moment in time and in the weeks to come, we remain in lockdown and it is important to not let our guard down.

The scientists will need to see the numbers continue to fall for the proposed ending of restrictions to happen.

This time round there are certainly signs to be more positive but we must all stick together to protect ourselves, protect our loved ones, protect each other and the NHS.

An important reminder: we will be holding an online Q+A/Rural Crime Briefing on Monday 8th of March 2021 with the Chief Constable, PCC and CPS. If you wish to join or ask a question, please email me urgently at OperationRandall@norfolk.police.uk to make sure your questions are answered and get the all important link to join the online event.



NEED TO TALK TO US?

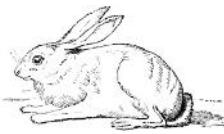
PC Chris Shelley | christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk | 07900 407106



The 'Staying Local'

As per previous newsletters the guidance remains the same: all journeys must be essential. Any recreational time spent walking or exercising should be local.

Officers continue to patrol particular hotspots including some of our local beauty spots and coastlines and are dealing with offences appropriately.



Hare Coursing

While we remain in the season, I'll continue to update you with what is happening.

Without wanting to tempt fate we have had a couple of quiet weeks with very few reports. The couple of reports we have received have been right on the border of Cambridgeshire and as always, we work as a team across the borders which has proved very successful. The most recent spell may be put down to the weather, the harder frozen ground generally stops this sort of crime. We could see an increase in the coming weeks with drier warmer weather predicted, and we continue to ask anyone to report this type of crime.

We also, finally, had a case from 2019 go through the courts this week. This case has been unfortunately delayed many times due to Covid and defence arguments.

Thomas Bull, age 29, of Queensway North, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey; Henry Lee, age 29, of Queensway North, Walton-on-Thames; Maurice Black, age 25, of Guildford Road, Woking; David Chalk, age 27, of Laleham Road, Shepperton; Nathan Smith, age 29, of Cobbett Road, Guildford were all found guilty after a trial at King's Lynn Magistrates' Court.

All five dogs that were seized have been confiscated and we will now start the process of rehoming these into loving homes. The victim was awarded £200

compensation and the four sentenced so far have been issued fines totalling £1950 and court costs of £889. The fifth defendant will be sentenced at later date. This represents a successful prosecution with local land owners essential in this prosecution, so a big thank you to them for sticking with us and the courts throughout the process as it has been a long one!



Arson

You may have seen in the press this week a 22 year old man from the Diss area has been reported by summons to court for three separate arson offences, one of which caused significant damage to machinery and buildings alongside, very sadly, the death of over 50 pigs.

The other two offences relate again to damage to buildings and the hay/straw contents destroyed.

These offences have been very carefully investigated by a local South Norfolk team and relate to incidents from September/October 2019.

Fire is incredibly dangerous, it can rapidly get out of control, causing significant losses and threat of life to occupants and those trying to fight the fires. Should you have any information in relation to any arsons across the county please report it.

The Community Fire Safety team at Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is available on 0300 123 1669 to offer further advice.

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



Engagement Event

I finally have some news on this! We have planned a new 6 monthly OP Randall/Rural Crime briefing. Given the current Coronavirus situation, this will take place online via Microsoft Teams (software similar to Zoom and free to use/download). We will be joined by Chief Constable, PCC and a Prosecutor from CPS. We are asking people to submit their questions before the meeting so we can have stats etc. prepared. Start thinking about anything you wish discuss and save the date—Monday 8th of March 2021 at 6pm!



Wildlife Crime

Pleased again to report no major developments over the past couple of weeks. I have been updated by local Badger Trust group that a sett I visited back in December, after receiving reports that some work that had been completed had caused some damage to the entrance of minor part of the sett, the group of badgers appear to have cleared those entrances and the sett is thriving which is great news. We did not look at enforcement on this occasion however offered guidance and words of advice around any further work that might have taken place around the larger and clearly active main entrances to this sett. Enforcement was not possible due to a lack of expert evidence confirming that the two smaller holes were active at the time the work was carried out. We work closely with many local experts and organisations who assist us by providing their expert knowledge around wildlife crimes.

I have also received a report of some bat roosts being destroyed by the felling of trees in a town. I will now look to try to establish, if I can, if these trees did have a

bat roost present which can be difficult but is not impossible. It is illegal to destroy any bat roost whether a bat is present or not without a licence and we would look to prosecute should there be sufficient evidence that a crime has taken place.

In the east we are lucky to have many of our native bat species and we are considered to have a reasonably stable population. However, the picture is not the same across the country or the world with nearly all bat species in rapid decline in the past few decades with many being under serious threat of extinction. Every effort must be made to protect this incredibly interesting mammal.

If you believe you have bats in your property, outbuildings or trees you must seek expert advice before doing any work. The Bat Trust has plenty of information freely available on their website: www.bats.org.uk



Final Thoughts

Thankyou for taking the time to read my latest newsletter. If you have any questions or anything

you wish to raise with me, please get in touch.

Also don't forget to email us in regards to the online Q+A session. If you want to attend, you must email in advance of the event to receive the joining link.

Till



next time, keep safe. Chris

@RuralCrimeNfk



NFU Reporting line:



The NFU crime reporting line and website is now live. This is a really useful tool to report a range of rural crimes anonymously by calling 0800 783 0137 or through the website at: www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk.



Rural Crime Briefing with Q+A 8 March 2021 at 6pm

If you are interested in joining, email us.

Would you like to join our Rural Crime Online Event?

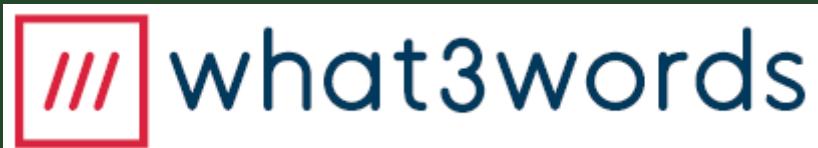
This will take place on Monday 8th of March at 6pm.

We will be joined by the Chief Constable, Police and Crime Commissioner, the District Crown Prosecutor from the CPS and the OP Randall team.

To join the meeting and submit a question please email:

OperationRandall@norfolk.police.uk

This will be hosted online through Microsoft Teams, a free to use web application or downloadable software on laptops and smartphones.



Bat Related Crime



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Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) it is a criminal offence to:

- | Disturb a bat or groups of bats in their roost – such as within buildings, tunnels, caves, trees.
- | Damage or destroy a bat roosting place, even if there are no bats present at the time.
- | Obstruct access to a bat roost.
- | Capture, injure or kill a bat or possess, advertise, sell or exchange a bat, or part of a bat dead or alive.

If you believe a wildlife offence is taking place, or has taken place against bats or their roost, please telephone the police on 101 or report anonymously via Crimestoppers.



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Should you require further advice please contact the
Bat Conservation Trust Helpline

0345 1300 228
www.bats.org.uk

Witness Appeals

Dersingham Pitch Damaged (16th of Feb)

Police are appealing for witnesses after football pitches in Dersingham were damaged yesterday (Tuesday 16 February 2021).

It is believed the incident happened around 7.30am when suspects riding mopeds tore up the pitch, causing damage.

Officers are keen to hear from anyone who may have witnessed the incident or noticed anyone on mopeds in the area around the time stated.

Anyone with information should contact PC Glen Barnes at Hunstanton Police Station on 101 quoting incident number 38 of 16 February.

Arson Wiggenhall St Germans (22nd of Feb)

Police are appealing for information after an arson attack in Wiggenhall St Germans, King's Lynn.

The incident took place on Monday 22 February 2021, between 6:30pm – 7:30pm, when a wooden shed was set alight.

The shed was housed at the bottom of the Leonard Towler playing fields on Mill Road, when it was set on fire, resulting in over £10,000 worth of damage.

A vintage tractor was destroyed in the fire, along with other agricultural machinery and tools.

Officers would like to hear from anyone who may have seen suspicious activity in the area at the time – in particular information regarding three people who were seen walking towards the location at approximately 5:50pm that evening.

Anyone with information is asked to contact PC Ryan Turner at Downham Market Police station on 101, quoting crime number 36/11682/21.

Stolen Dog Hockering (23rd of Feb)

Police are appealing for help to trace a valuable dog, taken from a property on Mattishall Lane, in Hockering.

Sometime between 4pm on Tuesday 23 February 2021, and 9am on Wednesday 24 February, a female Labrador is believed to have been taken from a secure kennel.

An unknown suspect(s) cut a hole in a fence, before damaging a number of locks to gain entry into the kennel.

Another female Labrador dog, housed in the same kennel, was found running loose nearby.

Officers are keen to trace the missing four-year-old dog, and are appealing for anyone who may have seen suspicious activity in the area around the time of the burglary to come forward.

Anyone with information should contact PC Aliysha Pearson in the Op Solve team on 101, quoting crime reference number 36/12013/21.



Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111