




# Operation Randall

tackling rural crime  
Newsletter

Issue 4 | 15th of December 2020

 @RuralCrimeNfk

## Introduction



The festive edition! This will be the last newsletter of 2020 and last before Christmas. So firstly I would like wish everybody and their families a very happy Christmas and new year! Obviously we continue to battle one of the toughest years in recent times for the rural community with Covid 19, pending EU exit and now the added pressure of Avian Flu confirmed at time of writing in two locations in Norfolk.

We will see some relaxing of restrictions around Christmas but please stick to the health regulations.

We must remain vigilant to protect our families and loved ones. There is no doubt that the celebrations this Christmas and New Year are going to be very different, but there is hope on the horizon of a better 2021 on this front.



Moving on to the pending EU exit, this as we know could affect rural communities in so many ways without even thinking about the effects on agriculture on its own. It is still not clear what sort of trade deal is likely to

follow Brexit which is obviously a big concern for farmers and businesses as a whole.

Avian Flu couldn't have hit the poultry industry at a worse time, in the run up to Christmas, I will cover this in a little more detail in the newsletter so those not involved in the poultry industry have a little understanding of what is going on.

## Rural Engagement



Although engagement announcements remain suspended, please do get in touch with me to discuss anything you feel is important. I am still here to help.

Until such a time I can meet you in person, my mobile number is 07900 407106. I may not be able to answer all the time so please leave a message or text and I will get back to you. Alternatively, you can contact me via email: at [christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk)



NEED TO TALK TO US?

PC Chris Shelley | [christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk) | 07900 407106



### Heating Oil/Red Diesel Thefts



Unfortunately, we have hit what is generally peak time of year when these offences occur. This year has proved no different with reports increasing steadily, we have seen a

mix of red diesel and heating oil stolen in recent weeks with 6 incidents since the beginning of the month.

Can I just remind everyone to have a look at the security around your tanks, keep accurate records of what amount of oil/diesel you have so you can effectively see when a theft has occurred.

Please consider the following steps when looking at your tank security;

- If your tank is in an open public area make sure it is well lit, if it is in a secluded location do not light the tank as this may make it easier for the thief.
- Fencing, trellis and plants can be placed around the tank to help hide from view. Make sure to leave a gap around the tank to avoid fire risk.
- Consider a padlock on the cap. However, this can add to the risk of the tank being drilled and damaged.
- Tank alarms can be easily fitted and will alert the home owner when the tank sees a sharp drop in oil in a short space of time.
- Keeping perimeter fences in good condition and secured by gates.
- CCTV systems can act as a great visual deterrent and systems are much more affordable than they have been previously with further development alongside smartphone apps.
- If looking to install a new tank consider enclosing it in a building as long as suitable ventilation can be installed.



### Hare Coursing



Whilst we remain in the season I will continue to update you with what is currently happening.

The current trend has seen a decrease as a whole in incidents

however it would be fair to say calls have increased. Many of the calls we are now receiving are 'duplicates' so different people reporting the same incident—this is great news for me and my team! It shows we are getting the message out there: REPORT IT! We know this crime is under reported but the more calls we get the more information we have to try to catch those responsible and stop this illegal activity. I am pleased to say since the last newsletter we have received only two reports of hare coursing in the county, I have no doubt more have occurred. I have also been made aware by a local farmer in the South Norfolk area that he has found evidence that would suggest unknown persons have been coursing overnight.

There are fewer members of public around overnight so the coursers are aware they have less chance of being caught. We know it goes on and we have also seized a number of thermal scopes and large dragoon torches, which are all tools for night time coursing. We are building a bigger picture on this side of the issue so if you see anything at night that doesn't look right or you suspect coursing has occurred due to evidence found in the morning please drop me an email so we are aware of where and when this happened. If a crime is in progress at night always call 999.

This vehicle was seized by us on Friday 11th of December after it was found stuck in a field in the county having been believed to have been involved in coursing overnight.

### 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 think you would benefit and be able to contribute in any way, I would be interested in hearing from you. You can contact me via email at [christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk)



### Cold Callers



We continue to receive reports of people claiming to be police officers and requesting bank details/money.

Can I please ask you consider discussing this issue with your family/friends especially anyone who could be considered vulnerable to this sort of scam. They can appear very convincing on the phone, it may be appropriate to print off one of the below images and place on phones/next to phones for anyone you consider at risk from this scam.

Should you require these in larger formats or easier to print styles, please do get in touch via email and I can send them across.



### Wildlife Crimes



I am pleased to report there have been no repeats of the incident reported two weeks ago in relation to the otter in Norwich.

Last couple of weeks I have been asked to review an incident involving slow worms, common toads and Viviparous lizard in relation to their habitat being disturbed. Based on the current legislation and evidence available, no criminal offence has been committed.

Just today I have been made aware of something that is quite a common report; bat roost disturbance. Bats are afforded much greater protection and any dealings around bats must be carefully proceeded with and work completed under the correct licences. Should you ever need any information on this topic, please do ask rather than just go ahead do the work and then potentially find yourself in court. We are always happy to help and if we don't know ourselves can point you in the right direction for further guidance (there is also a lot available online).

The current bat investigation is in very early stages and it is not clear yet whether any offence has been committed.



### 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](http://www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk) .





### Bird Flu

Unfortunately the country, and now specifically Norfolk, has seen two outbreaks on poultry farms in Norfolk of the highly pathogenic strain H5N8.

This led to repeated requests for poultry farmers and keepers to increase bio security measures, which at time of writing (13th) does appear to be working as there have been no other confirmed cases since the Kings Lynn case on the 5th of December and Attleborough on the 4th of December.

Further to increased bio security measures all bird keepers from the 14th of December must house their birds in order to limit the spread and eradicate the disease. This will include free range poultry, small holdings and backyard keepers. This requirement will be under constant review by the Government and Chief Veterinary Officers for England, Scotland and Wales. This is being done as many wild birds are carriers of the disease which then infects the domesticated flocks. It goes without saying this is yet another pressure placed on rural businesses at a time when it has already been badly affected by Covid19 and with the uncertainty of Brexit looming every step must be taken to try to contain this threat to the industry quickly.

**It should be noted Public Health have stated that the risk to human health from the virus is very low, and does not affect the consumption of poultry products including eggs. The most likely risk to humans comes from being in contact with infected birds. It must also be noted Avian Flu is in no way connected to Covid19 they are to completely different viruses.**

Avian influenza (bird flu) is a notifiable animal disease. If you suspect any type of avian influenza in poultry or captive birds you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. If you find dead wild waterfowl (swans, geese or ducks) or

other dead wild birds, such as gulls or birds of prey, you should report them to the Defra helpline (03459 33 55 77 - please select option 7).

### Bio Security Advice:

- housing or netting all poultry and captive birds
- cleansing and disinfecting clothing, footwear, equipment and vehicles before and after contact with poultry and captive birds – if practical, use disposable protective clothing
- reducing the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry and captive birds are kept, to minimise contamination from manure, slurry and other products, and using effective vermin control
- thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting housing at the end of a production cycle
- keeping fresh disinfectant at the right concentration at all points where people should use it, such as farm entrances and before entering poultry and captive bird housing or enclosures
- minimising direct and indirect contact between poultry and captive birds and wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds



### Tack Thefts

We continue to see a rise in thefts from stables with tack being targeted. Can I ask you please review your security around your stabling blocks and areas you keep tack. On the next page you will see some additional advice and tips on security around stables.



### Final Thoughts

Thank you for taking the time to read again. The next issue of the newsletter will be on/around 15th of January 2021. I will still be about so please do get in touch with any concerns. Just leaves me to wish you a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. As always, keep safe!  
Chris

### Next Month

If anyone has any feedback on the newsletter, please get in touch. I appreciate any feedback. You can contact me at: christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

I'd also like to hear from anyone who has any useful ideas about rural crime prevention or anything that you've implemented that has been particularly successful in deterring criminal activity in our rural communities.

## Crime Prevention Stables/Tack Thefts

### Tack

- All tack should be security marked, this can be done with engraver or metal punch it should be your postcode that is put in
- Avoid stamping on reins and thin bits of leather or bits as horses could end up with sore mouths!
- Engrave stirrup bar of saddle
- Photograph all tack, including any unique marks/serial numbers/makes and models
- A record of all tack should be kept with details as above
- Where possible keep tack within dwellings/hallways etc. These tend to be more secure and less attractive to overnight thefts attempts
- If that is not possible consider installing a door alarm on tack rooms which is not only audible but also linked to your mobile phone (see also Stables/Paddocks below)
- Secure tack room windows on the inside with solid iron bars (not tubular steel)
- Tack room doors should be substantial and use bolts not screws on hinges
- Consider using forensic marking (SelectaDNA is the most commonly used, google 'SelectaDNA Equestrian Kit')

For those that are not sure how SelectaDNA works I will keep this brief; it's a small bottle of UV florescent glue like substance which contains microscopic individual beads to that bottle, when looked at under a microscope the beads can then be linked back to that individual pack. That individual package is registered centrally so if property is recovered with SelectDNA on it, it can be reunited. An individual kit should mark around 50 items so it could be used for all tack, tools, electronics and valuables within an individual property making it reasonably cost effective.

### Trailers

- Always keep in a well lit area preferably covered by CCTV
- Make the trailer individual with wraps etc. makes it less attractive to thieves
- Keep behind locked gates, fit the with trailer lock or wheel locks
- Keep records of serial numbers and photographs

### Stables/Paddocks

- Consider installing alarms and CCTV
- Security lights can be a great deterrent
- Do not make it obvious which building/room is a tack room
- Display signs such as 'CCTV in use' 'Premise Alarmed' and 'Property Security Marked'
- Use substantial doors/padlocks on doors (Do NOT padlock a horse in)
- Gates should be padlocked and hinged (so not easy to remove)
- Keep fencing and hedges in a good state of repair to make entry more difficult

### Horses

- Make sure your passport is up to date
- All horses must be microchipped and registered on Central Equine Database <https://www.equineregister.co.uk> is a good place to do this (legal requirement since October 2020)
- Have recent photos available with markings
- Avoid leaving headcollars on or lying around where possible
- Keep gates locked and secure

Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111

## Witness Appeals

### Burglary—Emneth

Police are appealing for information after a car was stolen during a burglary in Emneth.

A property in The Wroe was broken into between 6.30am and 4.20pm on Monday 7 December. A set of keys were stolen which were then used to take a grey BMW 300 parked outside.

Officers would like to hear from anyone who may have seen any suspicious activity in the area between the times stated, or anyone who may have dashcam footage or CCTV.

Anyone with information should contact DC Vicki Homer at King's Lynn CID on 101 quoting reference number 36/86096/20.

### Burglary—Bracon Ash

Police are appealing for information following a burglary in Bracon Ash.

A ride-on lawnmower and a motorcycle were stolen from a property in Long Lane between 5pm on Saturday 5 December and 11am on Sunday 6 December 2020.

The motorcycle has since been recovered in Cringleford.

Anyone who may have witnessed any suspicious activity in the area between the times stated, or anyone with information, should contact PC Dave Johnson in the Op Solve Team on 101 quoting reference number

36/85778/20

### Robbery—West Harling Woods

Detectives are appealing for witnesses after a man was robbed in West Harling woods yesterday (6 December 2020).

It happened at about 3.30pm when the victim, a 70-year-old man, was out walking his dog in the woods, near to West Harling Road towards Gasthorpe.

The victim was hit from behind and was knocked unconscious falling to the floor. He regained

consciousness about 10 minutes later to find his wallet, containing cash and cards and his mobile phone had been stolen.

He suffered facial and head injuries but did not require hospital treatment.

Officers will be increasing patrols in the area and police are keen to hear from anyone who may have witnessed the incident or may have seen anyone acting suspiciously in the area yesterday.

Anyone with information should contact Detective Constable Clare Gardner at Thetford CID on 101 quoting crime reference 36/85896/20.

### Attempted Lead Theft

Police are appealing for information after the attempted theft of lead from a summer house roof.

The incident happened sometime between 11:30pm on Friday (27 November 2020), and 11am on Saturday (28 November).

An unknown suspect(s) forced entry into a secure, enclosed rear garden, at a property on Fox Road, Framingham Pigot.

It is believed that an unsuccessful attempt was made to remove lead from the summer house roof, after a chain and lock were cut to gain entry to the garden.

Anyone who may have seen suspicious activity in the area at the time, or anyone with information is encouraged to contact PC Mandy Shreeve at Norfolk Constabulary on 101, quoting crime number 36/83878/20.



Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111