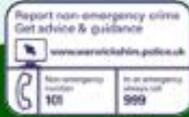




# Warwickshire Rural Crime Team Newsletter

November 2020



Only call 999 in an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger. For non-emergencies, report online at [warwickshire.police.uk](http://warwickshire.police.uk) or call 101.

Please note: all incidents must be reported through official channels and not directly to the officers.



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## Your Regional Rural Crime Team Contacts

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Our Rural Crime Team is now **12 months old** and has grown in size, experience and specialism since its launch by the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable back in October, 2019.

Initially we had a Sgt and 4 Police Constables, led by Inspector Wiggin, plus the existing Rural Crime Officer.

In August, following the success of the work undertaken, the team increased to its present size led by Inspector Wiggin, our Sgt, County Coordinator and 8 Police Constables covering the county with the teams split into 4 areas and on two shifts. The team is flexible either working independently with their local officers supporting farmers and rural communities in their designated areas or coming together as a team on an operation to deal with a specific crime or hot spot area.

We thought this month's newsletter would be a good opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved to date and update you on our work and future plans.

## Right Kit for the Job!



This week we have taken delivery of our latest vehicle for the team, with kit included specifically to assist our officers in remote rural areas, any time of the day or night and any weather.

Our vehicles, as well as drones and other specialised kit are extremely important to ensure our officers have the latest technology to identify stolen property, including vehicles, plant, agricultural equipment and tools, plus identify and deal with offenders.

## Partnership Working

As well as working with other departments within Warwickshire Police and other forces, we also work with a range of partners. These include Local Authorities, Warwickshire County Council and key agencies such as the NFU, CLA, Environment Agency, Wildlife Agencies, Historic England, British Horse Society, NAVCIS, Warwickshire Fire Service and many more. This partnership working is crucial to the work that we do and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their support and look forward to doing more together in the future.

## Team Support

We are privileged as part of our team to have around the county the support of **8 Rural Special Officers**, including an Inspector, Sgts and Constables, all warranted and proactive in their areas. These officers are volunteers who give up their time to help and support the police and their communities.

With the same powers as regular officers, the Rural Specials are passionate about dealing with offenders who target our rural communities and regularly work through the night into the early hours in support of our team, plus weekends. Using our vehicles and equipment, they are key members of the team and either work in their area, as a team together, or assist the Rural Crime Officers on operations or patrols.

In addition to our Special Officers, we also have **12 Wildlife Officers** around the county, trained in all aspects of wildlife crime. Our Wildlife Officers are Safer Neighbourhood Officers, linking in with our team when needed.





Since the team began 12 months ago, working with our partners and other departments within force, plus cross border forces, we have recovered over 40 items of plant, vehicles, agricultural equipment and tools, worth well over **£300,000**.

Unfortunately this has not always led to arrests due to the nature of the investigation, but we know it has disrupted and had a considerable impact on the criminal activities of the offenders. On a number of these cases we are still progressing potential leads and will continue to work to bring the offenders to justice.



## Livestock

We get involved in all types of livestock offences, including a variety of farm and large animals. One of the main areas we have supported farmers on is where sheep have been targeted and taken from their fields or in some cases butchered. Fortunately this has not been in the numbers previously experienced in the past.



Following an investigation by the team a male pleaded guilty and was sentenced for stealing 2 sheep from Willoughby. Livestock worrying is also a big concern and we have seen an increase in reports over the year. This offence is taken very seriously and where the dog owner is identified action will be taken.

## Equine Crime

Our team has a good working relationship with Warwickshire Horse Watch and the British Horse Society, with other agencies and thank them for their support.

The team have been involved in a range of equine crime, including horse theft, tack, trailer theft, plus fly grazing, welfare concerns and on occasion horses that have repeatedly got onto the highway.

A big positive that happened in October, 2020, was the introduction of the law that all horses must be microchipped and the Central Horse Register. The team have three scanners that they can use around the county.



To date we have recovered horse trailers, carriages, horse tack and have a number of investigations ongoing which our officers are working on.



## Wildlife Crime

The team and our Wildlife Officers around the county cover a broad range of offences and crimes against wildlife; from destruction of habitats, injuring, killing or disturbing wildlife, including protected species both in this country and CITES (Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species).

Reporting wildlife crime is really important so that it can be looked into and investigated.

We work with a large range of wildlife agencies, charities, trusts and groups who assist us in their specialised fields.

## Heritage Crime

Heritage crime is covered by the Rural Crime Team and can happen in both urban, as well as rural areas, due to the nature of the location of historic buildings, monuments and sites.



We have worked on a number of offences over the last year, including illegal metal detecting, theft and damage to protected sites, property and buildings.

Our heritage is really important with many items targeted irreplaceable due to their age and history, which is why the team do all that they can on any incidents reported to us.



## Fly Tipping/Waste Crime



As the Police we are not the lead agency on investigating incidents of fly tipping and large scale waste crime. However, we do work with and support our partners in the Environment Agency and Local Authorities.

From incidents of fly tipping in country lanes to large scale industrial waste, wherever offenders can be traced action will be taken. To date we have been involved in a number of investigations and will continue to support our communities to deal with this blight on our countryside.



Our Rural Crime Team Newsletter only provides a snapshot of some of the work we are involved with. If you want to keep up to date with our arrests, property recovery / seizures, crime prevention efforts and be alerted to crime trends across Warwickshire then make use of the following options.



Currently with over 11,000 followers our Facebook Page is the main output for our working week.

You do not need to be a Facebook user to view the page. Just visit [www.facebook.com/WarwickshireRuralCrimeTeam](http://www.facebook.com/WarwickshireRuralCrimeTeam)



**A group set up to help combat & prevent the theft of equines, tack, trailers & boxes.**

Please try to pass this onto as many horsey friends, businesses & establishments as you can - you do not have to be in Warwickshire to join.

Visit:

[www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk](http://www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk)  
or [www.facebook.com/WarksHorseWatch](http://www.facebook.com/WarksHorseWatch)



**Warwickshire Rural Watch**  
*Closing the gate on rural crime*

**FREE scheme to help combat rural crime in Warwickshire.**

Receive incident alerts and news for your area. Crime prevention advice and information.

Search for Warwickshire Rural Watch on Facebook and Twitter



For advice, information and alerts visit our websites at  
[www.warwickshireruralwatch.co.uk](http://www.warwickshireruralwatch.co.uk)  
[www.warwickshire.police.uk/ruralcrime](http://www.warwickshire.police.uk/ruralcrime)