



Introduction



Here we are at the end of another fortnight. I hope you are keeping well. It has been an incredibly busy couple of weeks for me: we ran a really successful online event involving the Chief Constable, PCC and CPS with many other officers from the force and members of the public joining us for the evening. I will do a quick review of some of the questions that came up which may be of interest to readers. As well as this, I have completed my annual Personal Safety Training, assisted colleagues on various deployments, and we have also been able to do a few joint visits with the RSPCA.

We have many contacts in a variety of organisations. This presents a fantastic opportunity for us to share knowledge and skills, and deal with individuals/ organisations from a variety of perspectives. This means we look at problem solving issues from the beginning rather than look at the same issue time and time again.

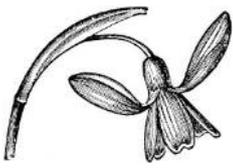
We have also started preparing for operations for the coming month. As we look to the end of the season on Op Galileo, as traditionally it comes to the end in March, we have already started work on our plans for next year with some exciting developments on the horizon. The summer bring us slightly different projects to work on including marine disturbance, nesting bird disturbance and illegal fishing to name but just a few of the projects currently in the pipeline.

Obviously we are also planning these on the back of the news that by the summer we might have most, if not all, of the restrictions on our personal lives lifted. This is likely to be more of a 'staycation' summer than we have seen in decades. This will of course bring its own challenges, particularly for our beauty spots and wildlife, but it is also a fantastic opportunity to reconnect younger generations with what is around them and welcomed news for the local economy. Until then, we must continue to follow the rules around staying home, and staying local to protect yourself and others.



NEED TO TALK TO US?

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

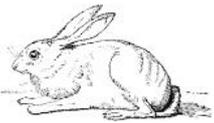


Theft Of Snowdrops

We have had several reports of the theft of snowdrops. This is something that comes up every year and can be a real problem. We can see a whole area of woods stripped. Whilst snowdrops are not a schedule listed plant within the Wildlife and Countryside Act, they are still a wild plant and therefore are offered protection from being uprooted unless authorised to do so. Another one we often see in the coming months is Bluebell theft, and these are listed under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. This makes it an offence to pick, uproot or destroy them in the wild. It is also an offence to offer them for sale.

Of course you can buy legal bluebells and snowdrops for your garden which have been propagated in 'captivity', so when looking to add these to your garden always buy from a reputable source.

Should you ever see anyone picking any of these plants, as always please remember as much detail as possible ideally using What3Words for location, record any number plates of vehicles involved and descriptions of people. If it is safe to do so, consider taking a photo too and then report to us to investigate.



Hare Coursing

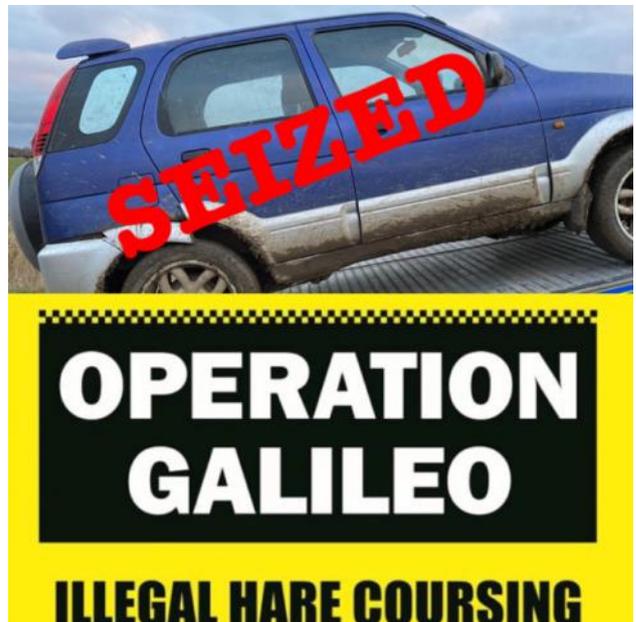
My colleague PC Alex Lovelock has spent the past couple of weeks rehoming the 5 dogs from the incident in which we got a confiscation order at court. So far we have managed to rehome 4 into loving homes and the 5th is most certainly in the pipeline.

As for other incidents of hare coursing, we remain in a really good place. Season on season we are seeing a significant downward trend which is pleasing, and I like to think this is due to some of the robust action we have taken this season.

The Op Galileo generally runs from September to March so we are drawing to an end of our proactive period in tackling the issue. That said, if we receive reports of hare coursing, we will of course still respond to them as we would any other crime and continue to deal with them robustly.

Last week PC Lovelock, King's Lynn officers, dog unit and roads policing arrested 2 males in the Wisbech area (Norfolk side), seizing their vehicle and 3 dogs. Both men have been charged with Hunting Wild Mammals with Dogs under the Hunting Act 2004.

Other than that we have had no other significant events.

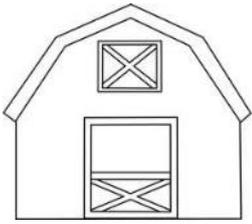


Number Plates

On my travels over the past week I have picked up on a number of issues around number plates. Due to the muddy wet roads, I've seen that some number plates are unreadable. Make sure you always check that your number plate is readable as it is a legal requirement. A quick wipe with a bit of kitchen roll could save you a 5 minute talking to by an officer!

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



Unlicensed Events/'Raves'

I have been asked to remind landowners and people living in rural areas, particularly those with large empty barns or isolated clearings, to be aware of any suspicious comings and

goings in rural areas.

If you see a number of vehicles arriving or anything out of the ordinary, please report it in to us.

Also, just as importantly, keep gates, entrances and outbuildings as secure as possible. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.



Wildlife Crime

Sadly, this week we had a report of a dead Buzzard in the King's Lynn area. The investigation is on going alongside Natural England to establish how this bird died before we start to look at whether there is any criminal activity involved.

As for other matters, we have already covered the issue of stolen snowdrops and other than that it has been a good couple weeks with very little to report!



Closed Fishing Season

As spring approaches from the 15th of March, it is the closed season for coarse fishing until the 15th of June. It becomes a criminal offence to coarse fish on any rivers, streams, drains, Norfolk Broads,

some canals or waterways.

If you believe someone is illegally fishing during this period please report this to police or the Environment Agency. The idea behind the closed season is to provide an opportunity for fish to naturally restock during the breeding season, and you will find most legitimate and keen anglers will abide by the close season for the protection of their sport. Norfolk Police will be taking part, alongside Angling Trust and Environment Agency (EA), in some joint patrols. Enforcement can be led both by police and EA, with police often dealing with the theft of fish where people are fishing without

permission or the theft of fish from enclosed water. EA will often lead on rod licences, breaches of byelaws and also the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act.



Operation Traverse is the joint operation launched by NWCU, local police forces, EA and Angling Trust to tackle fish theft and illegal fishing and we will be continuing with our patrols under this operation this Spring.

Final Word



With space at a premium in this week's newsletter, it's a brief one!

Thank you for reading this, as always, and any concerns or questions please get in touch. The next couple of pages have a very brief review of our online Q&A event that was held on Monday 8th of March for those unable to attend.

Chris

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



Engagement Event

I would like to thank firstly all those who attended the online event and also my colleagues from within the force and various leaders from around the force too. I must also thank the PCC, Chief Constable and Sally Robinson from CPS who joined us. The event was deemed a great success with people getting a small presentation from my Inspector Ian Cox who provided an update on the OP Randall side of things, the Chief provided a small update on all aspects of policing in Norfolk alongside talking specifically about rural crime. The PCC also made one of his last addresses as the PCC and expressed his thanks to the Chief and Norfolk Police for their commitment to tackling rural crime.

I will now provide a small snippet of some of the questions which came up and a brief description of the answer provided:

Are there any future plans to develop a fully integrated Rural Crime team for Norfolk? The current system is disjointed, with Op Randall and Beat Managers working independently. There is no rural beat manager post or role profile, this does not provide a consistent approach across the county or show a commitment to rural crime unlike RCAT in Cambridgeshire?

It was discussed how all forces will set up differently for a variety of reasons, sometimes because of geography but also crime trends. Norfolk's model is based around myself as operational lead for OP Randall and working closely alongside two dedicated Rural Beat Managers: PC Alex Lovelock in the west and PC Sue Matthews in the south of the county, as well as many other Beat Managers who sit within rural areas. Due to Norfolk's geographical layout, we benefit from having officers posted in various parts of the county rather than a central 'team' to be able to provide specialist advice to other officers and members of the public. It was also discussed that RCAT in Cambridge also deals with many

other aspects of rural crime such as cannabis factories and stolen plant machinery. Whereas in Norfolk, we have other specialist teams that take on those sorts of jobs such as OP Moonshot and local Neighbourhood Police Teams/pro-active teams and we provide that vital link back to the community in our roles.

What is the percentage of positive actions in relation to reported incidents of hare coursing?

Between Sept 1st 2020 up to Feb 28th 2021 we had 127 reports of coursing with around 15% of those being duplicate reports (same incident reported by different person). 13 of those incidents have resulted in people being arrested or dealt with at roadside. A total of 36 people have charged with offences this year and 34 dogs seized. It is also important to remember we will often get 3 or 4 calls in one day involving the same group which has moved on to a different area.

We were also asked how our stats compared to other forces. In comparison, Suffolk has very similar stats to us with similar success rates. Cambridgeshire stats were showed well over 800 confirmed reports of coursing. "one key fits tall"

I remember when I had a tractor fleet of John Deere's at Stradsett. "One key fitted all" Surely with so many thefts this should be stopped, I would have thought that insurance companies would have had a say?

It was explained that this was something that we very much hoped manufacturers would slowly design out of use, and work had started with many companies. From a force perspective, we will always look to lobby alongside organisations like the NFU for improvements to security around products.

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 .

Questions on Dog Thefts

Obviously given the media attention in recent weeks, there were a number of questions raised around what we are doing to tackle the issue and also what people can do to keep themselves safe?

Firstly the Chief touched on the fact he was aware of how impactful the crime is having been a victim of a dog theft himself, and expressed his relief that thankfully his dog was returned and safely sitting beside him.

This led to some stats that have recently been published showing that in 2019 we saw 32 crimes and 30 crimes in 2020. We also had a recovery rate of 31% in both years. Whilst those stats are low, we are not complacent and work is ongoing to investigate any such offences.

We also asked people to report any concerns, suspicious behaviour or any suspicious sales of dogs to police rather than taking to social media.

The idea of 'dog napping' which was described as people calling over people's dogs with whistles and treats when they are off the lead had been reported as if it was a real problem in Norfolk. This is something we have not seen happening in Norfolk: we had had only 1 similar such report that was dealt with by officers and, in actual fact, this offence had not taken place. Over the last 6 months all dogs that have been stolen have been taken from outdoor kennels, burglaries or gardens. That said, the public were reminded of the importance to report any such incidents to police so they can be fully investigated.

I have attached some of our latest guidance at the end of this newsletter in regards to keep you and your beloved pet safe.

Is there a case to give local stores a higher priority in response terms as they are increasingly important in terms of supplying vital food supplies in isolated rural community?

The forum were reassured by the Chief that all calls would be attended and that the policing model had been designed so that rural areas can expect the same sort of response as

urban areas. The Chief also explained that local store managers should be on first name terms with their local Beat Managers and if they weren't, he wanted to know more information.

I have been subject to rural crime and these have remained in the 'unsolved bucket' along with everyone else near me. What steps are you taking to tackle rural crime and give us confidence things are being taken seriously.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints this question was not answered on the night. However the Chief answered similar questions which reassured people that the policing model has been designed to give rural communities the same level of service as those living in urban areas. He also touched on the fact that crime has changed and a considerable amount of crime officers are now dealing with is now in the online world. He has made significant investment in tackling that sort of criminality alongside the increase in domestic violence. The Chief explained how around 47% of his frontline officers are based in what are geographically classed as rural areas, and 53% in urban areas and this is based on the demands on the force. It must also be reiterated that any crime should be reported to us, without this information we might not be able to deploy the correct resources if we are not aware of emerging issues. It is easier than ever to report incidents of crime through the Norfolk.Police.UK website.

This is just a small snippet of what was discussed but as always, if you ever have any concerns or issues you wish to raise with the OP Randall/Rural Crime Team please get in touch. We are always happy to discuss any concerns or queries.

YANA

RURAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Helpline

0300 323 0400

helpline@yanahelp.org

Witness Appeals

JCB Telehandler stolen from Wisbech

Police are appealing for information after a JCB Telehandler was stolen in Wisbech.

It happened sometime between 7pm on Friday 5 March and 7.30am on Saturday 6 March 2021 when suspect/s stole a JCB Telehandler from a field off Osborne Road. Officers are appealing for anyone who may have seen any suspicious activity in the area between the times stated or might have seen the Telehandler – registration number AE10 HCX – to come forward.

Any witnesses or anybody with information about this crime should contact PC Alex Edwards at Downham Market police station on 101 quoting investigation reference 36/14324/21.

Appeal after classic car stolen from King's Lynn



Police are appealing for information after a car was stolen from the grounds of a property in Stradsett, King's Lynn. The classic car is believed to have been taken from an open garage sometime between 5:10am and 6pm on Sunday 14th March 2021.

The car is described as a blue MG Midget; licence plate number TNO 318K. The car was stolen without a battery or keys, so it is believed to have been taken away on the back of another vehicle.

Officers would like to hear from anyone who may have seen the car, or anyone who holds CCTV or dashcam footage from the area during the times mentioned.

Anyone with information is asked to contact PC Daniel Brock at Downham Market Police Station on 101, quoting crime number 36/16498/21.

E-fit released in connection with rape in Great Ryburgh

Full Story: <https://www.norfolk.police.uk/news/e-fit-released-connection-rape-great-ryburgh>



Police have released an E-fit image of a man they want to trace in connection with a rape in Great Ryburgh.

It relates to an incident that happened at around 3pm on Sunday 28 February 2021 in an area of disused rail track off Mill Road in Great Ryburgh. The victim, a teenage girl, was assaulted by an unknown man.

Officers have now released an E-fit image of a man they would like to trace in connection with the incident. The man is described as white, approximately 6ft tall, aged roughly in his 50s with balding grey hair and moustache. Police are keen to speak with anyone who may recognise this man. They are also keen to speak with walkers, horse riders and drivers who were in the area around the time of the incident.

A public portal has been set-up encouraging witnesses or anyone with information to come forward. The portal enables information to be submitted directly to the Major Investigation Team.

You can access the portal here: <https://mipp.police.uk/operation/363719P01-PO1>

Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111



Operation Randall

tackling rural crime

Keep You and Your Dog Safe

The loss of your dog or theft of your dog(s) has a big impact this quick guide has been designed to give you some ideas to make sure you are keeping your beloved pet safe.

Dog Chipping

- It is a legal requirement for all dogs over the age of 8 weeks to be microchipped.
- You must always keep these details updated with new address's and contact numbers.
- Failure to keep these details update creates problems for us, vets, RSPCA and other organisation's who come across dogs in various situations.
- If the worst should happen and your dog is stolen or lost, update the microchip company so they can put a marker on the chip so the personal details cannot be changed by other people.

Security Around Outdoor Kennelling

- Make sure all kennels are secured with good quality locks, the type which cannot be easily cut off
- Consider installing good quality lights in the area
- CCTV should also be considered with many systems now able to alert you to movement in around the camera early.
- The use of 'perimeter alarms' again can give early indication of a movement within a yard.

ALWAYS report any suspicious behaviour or suspected thefts to Police appropriately

Other Consideration's

- If your dog is neutered mark the dogs tag as such as this makes them less attractive to thieves who may want to steal for breeding.

Security Around the Home

- The use of doorbell cameras have become popular
- Also make sure gardens are secure
- As always keep your windows and doors secure

When Out Walking

- Whenever your dog is off the lead, don't allow it to leave your sight at any point.
- Be aware of surroundings and people who seem to be acting suspiciously around you or your dog

Security Online

- Consider your security settings on social media and avoid giving away details that may highlight your address and the fact you have a dog which could be attractive to thieves.

For any further information and advice please contact PC 1765 Chris Shelley in the OP Randall Team on 101 or via email Christopher.Shelley@norfolk.police.uk