RURAL TIMES



PROTECTING OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES

HAMPSHIRE AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT



CONTENTS





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Hampshire Alert www.hampshirecountrywatch.co.uk



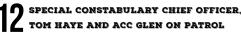


















ACC Sara Glen Local Policing Lead

irstly I would like to thank all of you who made representations to MPs and provided feedback on the consultation relating to the funding formulas for Hampshire Constabulary. I cannot tell you how much of a relief it was to hear the budget announcement that Mr Osborne's intention was to 'protect the police as we protect the public'. As many of you are aware I spent some time engaging and consulting with you at the rural road shows across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to update on our current delivery within rural policing and to update on our plans of how we would make a further £25 million savings.

I know many of you were concerned regarding the impact of cuts to policing in rural areas and I am sure you were as delighted as I was with the budget

MEET THE TEAM

announcement. We enter 2016 without this hefty saving to make although we are still ensuring we are the most efficient and effective we can be.

There have been some excellent results recently both in respect of our prevention campaigns covered in the Operation Falcon update and within our conviction results covered in the court results update. We have some exciting training developments ongoing and are utilising technology to ensure we can give our officers and staff the knowledge of rural policing issues at their fingertips with mobile data terminals. In our roadshows several of you raised concerns that you did not know who your local neighbourhood team officers were, so I have been working with our District Chief Inspectors to ensure that our PCSOs and local policing teams are making contacts within the community so that it's clear who your point of contact is.

We are working hard at getting additional dedicated Special Constables to assist with rural policing and we are getting some great feedback from our

officers who have been out on patrol with some of the local gamekeepers. The officers have viewed their patch from a very different perspective having the knowledge and insight of a gamekeeper. Read our article on page 12.

We really welcome community members to come out on patrol with officers so that we can show the transparency of our service. We find it mutually beneficial, so if you are interested please come along on the community observer scheme, details of which are available on our website.

As I look at our rural policing calendar I can see the updates to our policing teams on deer poaching, plant theft and fuel theft as well as rogue traders so we are always busy targeting those who are impacting on our communities. Wishing you all a safe spring.





Simon Hayes, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

ecognising that the vast majority of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight is rural, I made a commitment in my Police and Crime Plan to address the inequality in the number of rural crimes that are prevented and solved compared to those in urban areas, meaning that victims of

the police. As a result, policing in rural communities has greatly improved, and over 87 per cent of rural-based victims are satisfied with the service they receive from the Constabulary.

As access to high-speed broadband in rural areas improves, more residents and businesses rely on the internet to support their lives. Crime is following us to that online life and the Home Office expects online fraud and crime to exceed traditional crimes this year. Results from a survey across the south east show that as many as 84 per cent of us have experienced some form of attempt at cyber crime in the last year, with 15 per cent subsequently becoming a victim.

crime in rural areas often felt let down by However, only 28 per cent report these crimes to the police or to Action Fraud, which is masking the true scale of the problem. To address this, I've recently invested £1.5 million into Hampshire Constabulary to improve their response to the victims of online crime. In addition, the Forensic Innovation Centre and the recruitment of cyber Special volunteers will make our response to these threats even stronger.

> To see the results of the cyber crime survey visit http://bit.ly/cybercrimesvy and to report online crime visit

www.actionfraud.police.uk. You can also read more online crime prevention advice in this issue of Rural Times.



Hugh Oliver-Bellasis is chair of the Strategic Independent Advisory Group (SIAG) and acts as a critical friend to the force.



The spotlight this month is on Firearms
Licensing

HUGH'S VIEWS

here are rumours emerging of a slow renewal process and a long backlog. Whilst the delay may annoy the particular licence holder, some consideration might be given to the Department? They are responsible for managing the risk to our public safety. They are a small group who have a great deal of work to do from issues, renewals, transfers, sales, and amendments to foreign visitor permits. The process is tightly governed by Home Office guidance. This ensures an inflexible system not allowing much wriggle room. In addition we have groups which threaten us, rarely using legitimate weapons.

How can we, the holders, help? We can submit the forms well in advance (unlike me the last time around - remember a cheque!). If there are particular issues, flag them to the Department - again give lots of time. Carry a copy of your certificate when out with a gun or rifle. Make sure your local PCSO or PC knows you hold weapons.

If you feel they are not responding as you would expect and you have tried to contact them, get in touch with me giving me the details.

Please do remember the burden of public safety that they bear and support them. Not all renewals/ applications are simple. Transfers and disposals are still important to ensure accurate records. The National Firearms Licensing Management System is not the most user friendly database even invented.

They will be holding stakeholder meetings later this year. If you are interested in attending, let me know.

Let us help the Department to improve.

On the business of other rural matters, please keep reporting unusual or suspicious vehicles and people. Fly tipping is increasing, ensure that you report incidents to the Local Authority. Make contact with your local team. Good intelligence is key to success.







PROTECTING VULNERABLE VICTIMS OF FRAUD

Operation Signature is Hampshire Constabulary's response to identifying and protecting vulnerable victims of fraud.

The rural area can be a lonely place, especially if you are an elderly person, and without a close support network around you. Older people can be more susceptible to scams and cons, and the force is dedicated to identifying these people, and putting measures in place to prevent them from being a victim.

Increasingly fraud is becoming more complex and deceptive, much of which is targeted at vulnerable and elderly people.

Did you know?

1 in 5 people fall victim to scams every year

Nearly 50% of all adults have been targeted by a scam

Technology is enabling fraudsters to carry out attacks quicker and employ more complex behaviours to remain undetected.

What kinds of scams are there?

Common fraud types are:

Mail scams: con artists use fake lotteries and prize draws, get-rich-quick schemes, bogus health cures and pyramid selling to get money from their victims. These will often follow with endless harassing telephone calls for money, too

Investment scams: the victim is offered investment opportunities in land, fine wines, gems, share sales or carbon credits which have little or no value

Romance scams: the scammer meets someone on a dating site and gains their trust. They tell their victim they need money for a family emergency or flights over to see them

Courier Fraud: fraudsters call and trick the victim into handing cards and PINS to a courier on their doorstep or make them think they are helping in a police investigation by getting them to withdraw large amounts of cash

Fraud recovery scam: when fraudsters approach the victim again under a different guise,

such as Trading Standards or Court officials, demanding money up front in order to finance court action to recoup some of the losses from the original crime. Prosecutions are almost impossible with these complex scams, and are often committed by criminal gangs operating outside of the UK. Therefore prevention is key.

Once a vulnerable victim is identified we can help to put in place simple measures to protect them and offer further crime prevention advice against other crimes such as distraction burglary, rogue trading and doorstep crime in general.

If you or someone you know may be at risk of one of the above, please call 101 to report your concerns, quoting Operation Signature.

See also

www.thinkjessica.com

http://www.actionfraud.police.uk

http://www.royalmail.com/ personal/help-and-support/whatcan-l-do-about-scam-mail







JOIN OUR SPECIAL TEAM

EVERYONE HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES SAFE. PLEASE HELP US AND PLAY YOUR PART

he Hampshire Constabulary Country Watch team are delighted to be joined by specially selected Special Constables. These Special Constables work alongside their regular colleagues in a bid to identify and disrupt those intent on committing offences in Hampshire's rural areas. Special Constables are volunteer police officers with exactly the same powers as their regular colleagues, are trained, issued with police uniform but carry out their duties for free.

Hampshire Country Watch Special Constables currently consist of a Special Inspector, a Special Sergeant and five Special Constables.

Special Inspector Iain Tunstell has been a volunteer police officer for 19 years and has spent most of his service working in the rural villages of north Hampshire. Throughout his service as a Special constable, Iain has always been keen to keep his boots firmly in the rural landscape. In his full-time job Iain is a police trainer at Hampshire Constabulary's training centre at Netley near Southampton.

Special Sergeant Will Chevis works full time for the Constabulary as a Force Control Room Operator. Will has shown great enthusiasm for the team, being amongst the very first to volunteer for the role. His main, but not exclusive, role will be keeping the team informed and working together. Volunteers in any organisation always play a very important part of any team and within Hampshire Constabulary their skills and abilities are hugely valued, especially when it comes to managing other volunteers.

Special Constable Vicky Spearpoint owns five horses and has always harboured a wish to join the Country Watch team. Vicky is also a Force Control Room Operator. Vicky has been an Equine Liaison Officer for 11 years and brings a significant amount of expertise in this field.

Special Constable Kevin Saunders has been a Special for three years, working mainly in the Southampton area. Kevin works in the security equipment industry and spends a great deal of time in the rural areas of Hampshire. Kevin has a keen





interest in working dogs and is a dog handler with HANTSAR, the volunteer search and rescue team in Hampshire.

Special Constable Ross Woolgar has been a Special Constable since 2012 and is not a newcomer to Country Watch. Ross has been a member of Country Watch since he finished his probation and gained independent patrol status. Working out of Lyndhurst in the New Forest, Ross has been the trailblazer for the team. All of these officers are able to bring skills from their day job that complement the training they receive as a Special Constable. Country Watch Specials receive additional training in areas including 4x4 off road driving, wildlife crime, countryside management, firearms licensing, poaching and rural crime prevention.

Chief Specials Officer Tom Haye is working with Inspector Iain Tunstell on a rural recruitment campaign to encourage the rural community to support rural policing. Tom himself joined over 25 years ago as a rural Special Constable whilst living in rural East Hampshire. One Christmas, a large number of Christmas trees were stolen from the woods on Tom's parents land and on a bleak and cold January day he spotted the local beat officer on his motorbike.

Tom stopped the officer and complained that 'there was never enough police to be seen when you need them'. Rather than arguing the finer points, the rural beat officer invited him to join the Constabulary as a Special Constable. Seven months later Tom was sworn in as a Special Constable in the Alton sub-

division and has been a keen supporter of rural policing ever since. "The best way for the community to support the police is to be part of the solution", Tom says. "Whilst this may not be for everyone, the support that both volunteers and Special Constables gives makes the role of the police so much easier. We completely support our non-warranted police service Volunteers and Special Constables and often could not do our job this well without their support."

Hugh Oliver-Belassis, Chair of the Strategic Independent Advisory Group and an avid countryside supporter added: "Everyone has a responsibility to keep our rural communities safe. Please help us and play your part."

Inspector Iain Tunstell is in the process of working with our recruitment team to start a rural Special Constable recruitment campaign. We are actively looking for our rural community members to join the Special Constabulary to support the Country Watch activities across both Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.







LIVESTOCK WORRYING

og attacks are a perennial worry for livestock farmers, particularly sheep farmers, at this critical time in the farming year. Almost 15 million ewes (female sheep) nationwide will be giving birth to lambs this spring and so farmers want their 'mums to be' to stay healthy, happy and in prime condition.

The cost of livestock worrying – when a dog or dogs chase and/or attack livestock - is thought to be around £1.2m per year, but many losses are uninsured or unaccounted for. That is because ewes can abort their lambs when worried by a dog or dogs – they see dogs as predators. Figures from NFU Mutual, the UK's leading rural insurer, suggest that the problem of livestock worrying is increasing –certainly industry bodies are urging livestock farmers to report any incidents to police. Here in Hampshire, the NFU is thankful that the police work closely with the farming community and recognises the impact of livestock worrying on farmers' livelihoods.

Hampshire NFU Adviser Sandra Nichols says: "Dog attacks on sheep are a massive problem, causing significant financial losses and heartache for the farmer involved. We urge farmers to report every dog attack to the police as we know police treat these incidents seriously.

"We've been working with the Kennel Club to remind dog owners that these incidents often end in tragedy for them, as the law allows farmers to shoot dogs worrying livestock. We advise dog owners to dog-proof their properties to prevent dogs from wandering and keep dogs under close control on country walks."

A dog can be regarded as worrying livestock simply by not being on a lead or otherwise under close control in a field or enclosure in which there are sheep. Many people do not realise this, nor do they appreciate the extent of the problems that their pet can cause.

Farmers in Hampshire are displaying NFU warning signs beside paths that ask dog walkers to keep dogs on a lead around livestock and pick up after their pets. There is also growing evidence of the links between two specific diseases in livestock and the presence on grazing land of faeces from infected dogs. Neosporosis can cause abortions in cattle and sarcocystosiscan causes neurological disease and death in sheep.

Ms Nichols adds: "The overwhelming message to the dog owning public is please use a lead around livestock and be 100 per cent certain that your dog can't escape from your property."

Sandra Nichols, NFU County Adviser







CAUGHT AND CONVICTED

A caution was recently administered to two men for 'theft' after they were detained trespassing on private land, without the landowner's permission, with metal detectors and metal objects which they had dug up in their possession. Neither man had previously been dealt with for a theft type offence but both had been suspected of being active in illegal 'night hawking' activities.

Following another investigation, under similar circumstances, two men received a caution for 'going equipped to steal' for being found on private land without permission, in possession of metal detectors. They admitted they were there to dig up whatever they could find of value. This particular land is a protected heritage site.

A man was recently cautioned after he admitted interference with a badger sett under his garden shed. The man was of previous good character and had sought to block up the sett to prevent damage to the foundations of his shed, however he had failed to obtain the necessary licence to do so.

On Friday, February 19, two men pleaded guilty at Aldershot Magistrates Court to an offence under the Hunting Act 2004 relating to hare coursing near Cliddesden, Basingstoke. John and Edwin Gregory, both from the Surrey area, were spotted trespassing on private land south of Cliddesden village near Basingstoke in July 2015. Police quickly attended the area and stopped the two as they returned to their vehicle. This stop resulted in their vehicle and four lurcher dogs being seized. The pair were later summonsed to appear at court where they were convicted and ordered to pay compensation in excess of £2,200.

On Friday, November 13, more than 30 officers from Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset's neighbourhood and rural crime teams took part in Operation Midas.

Operation Midas is a regular collaboration between the three police forces which ensures an enhanced police presence in rural areas. On this occasion more than 30 local farmers and gamekeepers assisted police in identifying trespassers and suspicious activity.

As a result of the operation, one man was arrested for 'drink driving', another man was arrested on an outstanding court warrant and three people were arrested for possession of drugs, with one of these being further arrested for possession of a knife. Additionally the occupants of several vehicles were searched and subsequently issued with directions to leave the area based on suspicion of being present to commit poaching offences.

Local police officers remain committed to working with each other and with local landowners to provide a meaningful presence in areas which are repeatedly targeted by poachers and opportunist thieves.

Two men are currently on bail after being recently arrested during the execution of search warrants in respect of suspected offences of 'conspiracy to poach'.

Four men have been arrested in two separate poaching incidents and there are several cases currently awaiting trial over the next few months in relation to 'hunting with dogs' and 'poaching' offences. The defendant's dogs have been seized in two of these cases and if successful the court will be asked to consider a forfeiture order.

To hear these outcomes as they happen, sign up to www.hampshirecountrywatch.co.uk





hroughout 2014 and 2015, Hampshire
Constabulary embarked on an initiative to
raise awareness of rural issues amongst
officers working in rural areas and call takers
in the Control Room and Force Enquiry Centre. This
was implemented as a result of feedback from rural
communities that there appeared to be a lack of
training in rural crime throughout officer's careers.

As an organisation, Hampshire Constabulary has moved officers and PCSOs into rural areas expecting them to respond to incidents in remote locations, without actually providing any information on lawful activities or crime types that take place in such locations.

In an effort to address this, a two day bespoke rural crime training package was written and delivered to almost 700 frontline officers working in rural areas. The training was delivered in conjunction with partner organisations including the British Association of Shooting and Conservation, Hampshire County Council, and the CESAR security marking scheme.

Inputs were also provided from departments within the police including Country Watch, Special Branch, the Automatic Number Plate Recognition team, and the training department. This training was very well received, with excellent feedback being provided, and it was decided that a similar package would be prepared for call takers in the Force Enquiry Centre and the Control Room.

A one day awareness package was written and delivered to more than 400 call takers and controllers. This was key to ensuring that the first point of contact that rural communities have with the police is a positive one.

By improving the knowledge of staff around rural issues and rural crime, confidence in policing has improved and rural crimes are given the same scoring matrix as non-rural crimes.

Due to the initial wave of training to existing staff being so successful, Hampshire Constabulary was keen to ensure that new staff joining the organisation were briefed on rural issues. Throughout 2015 and 2016 new staff have been recruited into the Force Control Room and the Force Enquiry Centre.



Upon joining the organisation they receive an initial training package, and a developmental training package after six months. These courses now include a half-day input on rural crime. This covers topics including lawful activities that take place in the countryside such as pheasant shooting, pest control, deer stalking and wildfowling, an overview of how these differ from illegal activities such as poaching, firearms, theft of plant machinery, wildlife crime involving bats, badgers, birds of prey, endangered species and protected habitats, hunting, traps and snares, fly tipping, metal theft and livestock worrying.

The sessions are delivered by Inspector Lou Hubble to small groups of staff, and are very interactive ensuring that maximum learning takes place. The continuation of this training commitment ensures that Hampshire Constabulary staff are equipped to deal with information being presented to them by rural residents, workers and visitors, and further demonstrates Hampshire Constabulary's commitment to rural communities.

















INTO THE WOODS...

ACC Sara Glen joined Special Constable Chief Officer Tom Haye on patrol!

n December 2015, we hosted the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Strategic Rural Partnership meeting at Netley Police Training Headquarters. It was extremely well attended by key rural stakeholders, and a number of departments within the police. One of the messages that cropped up during the meeting was the importance of engaging with rural people.

To that end, the Special Constabulary Chief Officer, Tom Haye, and I decided to go on patrol in rural Hampshire. With much excitement, we informed the Strategic Rural Policing Inspector, Lou Hubble, of our plan, and watched the colour drain from her face as she imagined the embarrassment that would inevitably be caused by two senior officers getting lost in the wilds of Hampshire or getting the 4x4 stuck in a field.

Lou offered to accompany us on patrol, and offered to introduce us to some members of the rural community, and to arrange the day to ensure we got maximum benefit. Lou told us that we were likely to get wet and muddy and advised us to dress appropriately.

So, on the morning of Saturday December 19, I swapped my office attire for Wellington boots and a warm coat, and set out on patrol with Tom and Lou.

The first stop was the New Forest Hounds hunt meet at Abbotswell in the north of the New Forest. We met the Hunt Masters, the Huntsman, the Whippers-in, and 25 Foxhounds (or twelve and a half couple in hunt speak!). The hunt was well attended by rural community members and I took the opportunity to speak with a wide selection of people including representatives from New Forest Commoners, Forestry Commission, Commoners Defence Association, Agisters, local business owners, rural residents and even a defence lawyer!

The trail layer went off across the countryside, followed a short time later by the Huntsman and the hounds.

Lou Hubble explained how the hunt operates, and it was great to witness it first hand.

Upon leaving the hunt meet, we patrolled some of the vulnerable areas of the countryside, and I was reminded just how vast Hampshire is. Approximately 85 per cent of Hampshire is rural, and patrolling these locations highlighted some of the challenges we face in policing such large geographical areas. These patrols provided me with an opportunity to speak with local







farmers, and I was able to gather an insight into some of their concerns – once I managed to get my ears tuned in to the broad Hampshire farmer's accent!

The next stop was a visit to Bisterne Estate where we met with landowner, Hallam Mills, and his gamekeeper, Rupert. Hallam was hosting a pheasant shoot and we were lucky enough to watch one of the drives. Hallam took great delight in showing us around the estate, and I was fascinated to learn about the different protected habitats on his land. I learnt how shooting and conservation operate hand in hand, and now understand how land managed for shooting provides perfect habitat for a wide range of song birds and small mammals. Once again Lou was on hand to explain the different roles within a shoot, and I learnt all about beaters, pickers up and guns. Following the drive we met with the beaters and the guns, and Tom took the opportunity to tempt them into thinking about joining the Special Constabulary.

Our next stop was to a farm in Swanmore where a reindeer had been killed by poacher's dogs a few weeks before, and another reindeer badly injured. I was keen to speak with the farm owner to ensure that she was feeling supported, and wanted to offer some reassurance that we were investigating the incident. I was delighted to meet Candy, the surviving reindeer who was making a good recovery, though feeling a little lonely without her mate.

We spent some time at Ringwood and Lyndhurst police stations speaking to the officers and staff. They showed me the rural briefing slides and explained the current tasking of repeat locations and vulnerable people who are living in the rural community. They were all so enthusiastic and clearly understood the important role policing plays in the local community. I was updated on several successful arrests related to recent poaching. It's always great to see officers who are so enthusiastic and committed to their patch and community.

With all of the commitments that being an Assistant Chief Constable brings, I don't often have the luxury of spending a full day on patrol. On this occasion, however, I felt it was important to demonstrate my commitment, and that of the force, towards rural policing. Throughout the day, I was able to speak with people from all sectors of the rural community, experience many rural activities first hand, and was reminded of the importance of visible policing, particularly in rural areas where people often feel isolated. I am already looking forward to my next day on rural patrol!





OP FALCON

peration Falcon was launched last year as part of the force's commitment to target rural crime and criminality. Each month, a themed forcewide operation takes place with a focus on a specific type of crime. These themes are driven by research, analysis, intelligence and the seasonal issues which rural communities feed back to us.

Our over-riding aim is to create a hostile environment for criminals whilst reducing crime and increasing public confidence in our rural policing ethos.

Our operations utilise staff from all areas including Country Watch, Neighbourhoods, Response and Patrol and the Roads Policing Unit. We also incorporate our partner agencies where possible and allow our communities to become involved. We have recently completed several operations with the assistance and support of our gamekeeping communities.





During October's poaching operations there were joint patrols from Hampshire and Thames Valley Police focusing on cross border rural crime. Our operation in the New Forest area, in conjunction with local gamekeepers, led to a reduction in poaching issues. This operation also identified several suspicious vehicles with research into these being undertaken at the time of writing.

Officers in the Tadley area also completed joint police and gamekeeper patrols resulting in intelligence opportunities regarding some known active poachers.

In the north of the county, officers assisted in the arrest of a man from a traveller's site, thus removing a violent man from that community.

There were also several Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) operations running concurrently utilising the Joint Operations Unit resource and the Op Falcon ANPR vehicle.

During November, non-dwelling burglary and poaching operations continued with joint agency patrols resulting in an even more galvanised rural policing approach across the force area. Night time poaching operations focused on repeat victims at St Claire's Farm/Sailors Lane and the Hursley area where pheasant pens were damaged.

Country Watch officers delivered some training prior to operations on poaching and rural issues and further training has been instigated.

A joint Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset police operation took place resulting in the seizure of one vehicle and several other vehicles have now been highlighted as suspicious.

During December's commercial non-dwelling burglary initiative, the New Forest completed operations in Ringwood and Lymington whilst officers covered Dibden, Hythe, Blackfield and Holbury on foot patrols and cycling patrols.

In Tadley, officers completed cross border operations with the support of the Pangbourne Neighbourhood Policing Team from Thames Valley Police; gamekeepers are also utilised in continuing operations.

In Hart district, an operation was held specifically top try and reduce the gap in intelligence. A key suspect was also arrested which is believed to have had an impact on a potential Organised Crime Group.

In Winchester, two operations focused on poaching and burglars. One incident resulted in a reindeer being killed and another injured after poachers damaged private property.

This investigation is ongoing and at this time five dogs have been seized.

In East Hampshire, an operation was held to target suspects in non-dwelling burglaries.

One offender has been arrested for burglaries committed in Havant and Sussex. The suspect is due to answer bail shortly.

Operation Tornado, a nationwide metal theft and licensing campaign, includes operations to target unlicensed carriers and scrap yards that are non compliant with legislation. These operations are now included under the Falcon remit.

Operations to target theft from motor vehicles in New Forest beauty spots have continued into 2016. Since these patrols started reported crime has dropped dramatically. January 2016 saw a reduction of almost 60 per cent compared to reported vehicle crime in January 2015.

These operations are intelligence led and we rely on information from our rural communities. If you have any information about any suspicious activity in your area, please call us on 101.

COUNTRY WATCH













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www.hampshirecountrywatch.co.uk

