



Operation Randall

tackling rural crime
Newsletter

Issue 27 | September 2022

 @RuralCrimeNfk

Introduction

The days are getting ever so slightly shorter which is a clear sign the summer holidays are coming to an end for many. That all said, the weather remains exceptionally warm and dry, and we continue to see far more wildfires than we would expect.

This newsletter is being written a few days early, before the bank holiday weekend, due to myself being on leave for a few days. PC Chris Holmes will have been at the Aylsham show with the local policing team which I am sure will be another fantastic opportunity for community to come and see first-hand what we do. He is under strict instructions to get some photos ready for a 'debrief' in next month's newsletter.

Also, PC Alex Lovelock and I will be at the Sandringham Game and Country Fair on the 10th and 11th of September. We will be joined by the Special Constabulary Horse Unit on one of those days (yet to be confirmed which day, so keep an eye on our social media for confirmation).

As ever, we have been busy this month with several wildlife concerns raised alongside a handful of animal welfare jobs. We have also unfortunately seen an increase in arson reports which clearly is

unacceptable with the current risk and work is ongoing in the future with our partners in the fire service to look at some educational pieces around this. The fire service is also working really hard, not only dealing with the fires themselves but also at preventative measures in many different ways and we as a team are pleased to be welcoming them to our bi-monthly stakeholders meeting (called the CRAG). This meeting is designed to bring key stakeholders together to raise any concerns and discussions around how as a group we can work to resolve arising trends and problems.

Weve Joined Facebook!

As part of our on going commitment to increase engagement within our rural communities we are pleased to announce we have launched our very own Norfolk Rural Crime Facebook page to go alongside this newsletter and our Twitter account. Please give us a follow, Facebook gives us some better tools for engagement moving forward. facebook.com/NorfolkRuralCrime or search Norfolk Rural Crime in Facebook



NEED TO TALK TO US?

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

Engagement Events

We have a further date for the diary where I will be joined by the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner as well as my Inspector and Sergeant again. This is an informal events with an opportunity to see a small presentation on the work we do and have a chat with any of us. While these are informal events and people are free to drop in and out as they please, please let us know if you're planning to attend so we have an idea of how many people to expect. Please drop us an email at OperationRandall@norfolk.police.uk so we can make sure we have enough space. That said, if the day arrives and you'd like to join us, please still do come along...you will certainly not be turned away! So, the date and venue is:

- Wednesday 5 October 2022, 2pm to 4pm, Glebe Farm Barn, Church Lane, Gressenhall, Dereham, NR19 2QQ (near Dereham).

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the owner of this location for allowing us to use them for the day.

Don't panic if you can't make this event we will be arranging further opportunities around the county.

Heritage Crime

This month we have had reports of illegal metal detecting inside the Roman Fort at Burgh Castle. We can't know what was stolen from the ground but we hope it was just ring pulls! High visibility patrols and social media posts have been used to

highlight this issue.

There have been a few thefts from churches of late, with lead being stolen from the roof of a church in Norwich and lecterns taken from another two churches around the county - these have since been returned thankfully! Twilight patrols around churches are conducted regularly but we ask all to be vigilant.

Heating Oil Thefts/Fuel Thefts

Over the next few weeks, a lot of our focus will be on prevention of fuel thefts. The cold weather will be here soon which many may be looking forward too. However, with the looming increase in heating oil costs, we want to do all we can to educate people and businesses on the best way to protect their oil. We will be releasing small informative videos on both our Rural Crime Facebook page and in the press to increase education on this issue. We continue to see a number of cooking oil thefts. Earlier in the month two men were arrested for going equipped and were subsequently charged. Remember, reputable and genuine collectors will carry appropriate ID, always store oil waste or fresh in a secure location.

Fly Tipping

Whilst on patrol PC HOLMES came across some fly tipped rubbish on a farm hardstanding just outside Runhall. This is something we are asking locals to report to councils and if they see it happening to call police on 999.

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

Wildlife/Animal Investigations

It's a month that has ticked over with a few enquiries ongoing, and some of our larger jobs slowly but surely coming together.

This month I have visited a Larsen trap set in someone's back garden. Whilst a Larsen trap is a perfectly legal trap to catch and dispose of crows and magpies humanely, it is essential that you are doing it legally under a general licence. In short, you can only catch magpies for two reasons; to prevent a direct attack on livestock or for conservation in regard to birds that are of conservation concern. It is a stretch to consider either of these two licensable activities are applicable to a back garden. This has since been removed and dealt with locally. On a similar theme we received a report of spring/Fenn traps being set in a position which could capture stoats. Since 2020 you can no longer use Fenn traps for the capturing of stoats, as they were deemed to not be suitable in humanely dealing with stoats. You also cannot set such trap if there is a risk a stoat could be trapped by them, given in Norfolk we have a healthy stoat population. In general terms Fenn traps should no longer be set at ground level due to the risk stoats could become trapped. There are alternatives, which are approved for use at ground level, such as the DOC or Tully traps. This investigation is ongoing, but the traps have been removed.

I was also lucky enough this week to also see a Eurasian Eagle Owl up very close after some local officers had raised concerns around its environment. Upon visiting it was clear to see this was a very well looked after bird, being kept

completely legally and absolutely no concerns.

Continued High Risk of Wild Fires

As touched upon earlier we continue to see reports of wildfires alongside other fires and arson. This month has seen two people charged with arson at a country park after they decided to throw two disposable BBQ's which caused a fire. The use of disposable BBQ's should be avoided as they are a huge fire risk currently whilst the ground remains so dry. Fire has the capability of causing a huge amount of damage and put lives at risk within seconds. Thankfully we haven't seen the fires on the scale we had last month but everybody should be doing all they can to prevent such events ever occurring again.

We have seen some fires in some incredibly sensitive and important ecosystems. There is of course the obvious damage these have sadly done but time will tell how much of an impact these all have had on our wildlife.

Please do not put yourself at risk. If you are having a BBQ in the last few weeks of the summer, please do it far enough away from ignitable objects and have a bucket of water to put it out completely. Never allow children to play with fire.

If you see any sort of fire which goes beyond the normal BBQ, please phone the Fire Service immediately on 999.

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September in the Countryside

When I took a look at what I had written for this part this time last year, I saw I mentioned mud on the roads being an issue. I am not convinced this will be such an issue currently. Once we get some rain there is the possibility of significant field wash off, as with the ground being so hard, it is likely to flow off the land far quicker than ideal (I have recently seen a photo from Lincolnshire whereby heavy rain quickly washed away soil around potatoes plants leaving the bulbs exposed!). Speaking with some farmers a couple weeks back, many have not been able to drill any of next year's crops as it would be potentially a costly failure with the lack of moisture causing the seed to fail to germinate. This could have a huge impact on next year's yields as a lot of our winter barley and winter wheat tend to have higher yields than the Spring varieties which are often grown for specific reasons (brewing) rather than their yield.

Another issue that has been noted is the grazing situation in the coming months for the county's livestock. The grass simply hasn't grown meaning natural grazing is struggling but to add to the worry, there is a lack of quantity in silage and hay cuts, the quality is also a concern. Alongside this, the struggles with winter cover crops, such as stubble turnips struggling to germinate, could mean that the livestock industry is in for a really tough winter.

I am sure once we do get some rain, that doesn't just run off straight away, many farmers will be working all hours to get things caught up and back to potentially some 'normality'.

Many of our nesting birds are coming to the end of their breeding season. Obviously it has been incredible to see the European Bee Eaters have successfully fledged a number of chicks up at Trimingham. I am sure they will be heading back to the warmer climates very soon. This will be along with many of our other summer visitors

including the amazing Swifts. They are an incredible bird who spend up to 10 months on the wing and rarely touching ground. They are said to eat, sleep, and even mate on the wing. They have one of the longest migrations from East Africa in our Spring for a short breeding stay in the UK before flying back to Africa at the end of August/beginning of September.

On our own shores for our native birds there is currently a bounty of fruit, nuts and seeds for them to stock up on to put essential body condition on before the leaner winter months. One bird to look out for is the colourful Jay which has a reputation for stashing acorns for the winter months, a little like squirrels, which is quite an unusual behaviour for a bird. Another bird that is still visible in the late summer sunset is the barn owl. The vole and mouse populations are at one of their highest points and again they will be building up their winter reserves. They can often be seen perching on a gate post this time of year.

We have already seen some trees turning to their autumnal tones in what is being called a 'false autumn'. Scientists have explained that this is trees shutting themselves down to protect themselves from the excessive heat and dry conditions that we have experienced this summer. This month will see remaining trees starting to turn to their autumnal colours as they get ready to shut down for the winter period.

Another thing to be aware of is that September marks the start of the rutting season in deer. This often means we sadly see more road traffic collisions involving deer so please drive carefully in areas where deer are abundant (which is most of the county to be fair!).

Where you see one deer run across a road, please be prepared for many more as our native species like Roe (who tend to rut earlier than others) and red deer tend to stay in groups, unlike Chinese water deer or the muntjac who tend to be solitary to some degree.

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Residents urged to be vigilant following scams

Police are urging residents to be vigilant following a number of telephone scams across the county. Officers have received a number of separate reports from elderly residents, claiming to have been contacted by fraudsters purporting to be police officers. During the calls they were encouraged to withdraw large amounts of money from their bank. The incidents happened in:

Sheringham, North Norfolk sometime between Thursday 18 August and Monday 22 August. Approximately £6,000 was taken.

Roydon, South Norfolk on Friday 19 August. No money was taken.

Courier Fraud happens when a fraudster contacts a victim by telephone claiming to be a police officer, bank or from a government department, among other agencies. A number of techniques will then be adopted in order to convince the victim to hand over their bank details or cash, which may then be passed on to a courier.

Residents are reminded that your bank or the police will NEVER ask you to withdraw money or purchase items.

Further advice includes:

Your bank or the police will NEVER ask for your PIN, bank card or bank account details over the phone – never give these details to anybody.

Neither the police nor the banks will send a courier to collect money from you.

Always request Photo ID and if unsure call the police.

If you're asked to telephone a bank, then always do it on a different phone to the one you were contacted on.

Fraudsters will keep the line open and have been known to play ringtones, hold music and a recorded message down the phone so the victim believes they are making a call to a legitimate number. Ensure you can hear a dialling tone before calling police or use a friend or neighbour's telephone instead.

Do not rush into complying to the scammers demands / requests.

If you have already given your bank details over the phone or handed your card details to a courier, call your bank straight away to cancel the card

Officers are keen for residents to share these messages with members of their local community and also to ensure they contact family and friends, particularly elderly relatives to ensure they are aware of these scams and the warning signs.

If anyone has received a similar type of telephone call or has any information about these incidents. Contact Norfolk Police on 101 quoting Operation Radium.

Alternatively, Contact the independent charity Crimestoppers 100% anonymously on 0800 555 111.

For further advice, head to the Action Fraud website: www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

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Police shut down unlicensed music event – West Acre

Three people have been arrested and sound equipment seized after police shut down an unlicensed music event at the weekend (Sunday 28 August 2022).

Police discovered a suspected unlicensed music event shortly before 11:45pm on Saturday 27 August 2022 in West Acre, Kings Lynn.

Specialist teams arrived on scene and discovered approximately 150 people in a wooded area, near to River Road, in the early stages of an unlicensed music event.

Officers monitored the event throughout the early hours of the morning before numerous vehicles, generators and sound equipment were seized. The site was cleared by 2.20pm today.

Officers have launched an investigation in order to identify the organiser(s) of the event and enquiries are ongoing.

Three people were arrested in connection with the event:

One man, aged in his late teens, on suspicion of harassment and possession of a Class B drug. He has been taken to Kings Lynn Police Investigation Centre for questioning, where he remains.

One man, aged in his 30s, on suspicion of harassment and possession of a Class B drug. He has been taken to Kings Lynn Police Investigation Centre for questioning, where he remains.

One man, also aged in his 30s, on suspicion of arranging and facilitating an unlicensed music event. He has been taken to Kings Lynn Police Investigation Centre for

questioning, where he remains.

Chief Superintendent Julie Dean said: "These types of events are incredibly dangerous. They are illegal and have the potential to cause serious damage to the area and disrupt the local community.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to events of this nature and will do everything in our power to reduce the potential impact they may have by preventing, disrupting and stopping them from taking place. Our actions today act as a deterrent to any individual who may choose to plan an event like this in the future."

Appeal following alleged assault at music weekend

Police are appealing for witnesses after an alleged assault took place during an 80s music weekend in Sandringham on the August bank holiday weekend (Saturday 27 August).

The incident was reported to have happened around 10.30pm at the music weekend in the main car park area between a man and a woman.

A man in his 40s was arrested following the incident and questioned at King's Lynn Police Investigation Centre and has been released on police bail.

Anyone who may have witnessed the incident or could have dash cam footage is asked to contact DC Lucie Pinner quoting reference 36/66559/22.

Alternatively contact the independent charity Crimestoppers 100% anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
FOR JUSTICE, FOR SAFETY,
FOR NORFOLK

Operation
Randall
tackling rural crime

Rural Crime Briefing

Join us on the below dates to have an informal discussion and presentation with:



- ◆ **Chief Constable Paul Sanford**
- ◆ **Police and Crime Commissioner Giles Orpen-Smellie**
- ◆ **OP Randall PC Chris Shelley**
- ◆ **Insp Ian Cox and Sgt Matt Paine of Community Safety Operations Unit**

We will offer a small presentation on some of the work being done in the area of rural crime around the county. Then an opportunity for you to talk with key members of the force around any concerns or questions you have.

This is a informal event and whilst the presentation will be at the beginning please feel free to drop by at any point.

Whilst not essential, we kindly ask if you plan to attend to drop us an email to OperationRandall@norfolk.police.uk so we can keep track of numbers attending where possible.



Wednesday 5th of October 2022

Time: 1400hrs— 1600hrs

**Glebe Farm Barn, Church Lane,
Gressenhall, Dereham, NR19 2QQ**

WHAT3WORDS

///fallback.waxer.giants