



# Operation Randall

tackling rural crime  
Newsletter

Issue 38 | October 2023

 @RuralCrimeNfk

## Introduction

Well, I think it's fair to say September has seen some glorious weather for the time of year, although as I sit here typing Storm Agnes has just passed over. It seems in Norfolk we got off quite lightly with the first named storm of the year.

As a team it's been hectic, we have attended several events including the Game and Country Fair at Sandringham, NORMAC Cultivation Event and taken part in Rural Crime Action Week on top of the daily work we are doing.

The newsletter as always covers a range of updates and information regarding rural, wildlife and heritage crime which I hope you find of interest. We always try to release as much detail as possible, but we can't always make every detail public for a variety of reasons the key ones being the case is ongoing and it could interfere with the judicial process.

## Engagement Events

At the beginning of the month, we attended the NORMAC Cultivation Event at Spooner Row upon invitation from NORMAC. It was incredibly warm day for the time of year, it was incredible to see machines old, new and even the future. Alongside some small and huge machines too it was an incredible event with future developments on show too to assist, modernise and

improve agriculture for the future.

For us as a team it was great to engage with people we very rarely see ultimately because they're always busy! We discussed many things including crime prevention especially around GPS units and also road safety/legal requirements on the roads, we were lucky enough to be joined by PC Hardingham from our Commercial Vehicle Unit for a time too.

A couple of days later we were at Sandringham Game and Country Fair again in some incredibly hot weather for the time of year. We were joined by Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Team who we regularly work closely with. Again, it was a great event with many families and individuals enjoying the tank of fish and our fluffy little sheep!

Final engagement of the month has seen us taking part in the national Rural Crime Action Week, the team have visited several farms to discuss crime prevention. We carried out cross border patrols with our Suffolk colleagues issuing a number Traffic Offence Reports (TOR's) for a number of offences including incorrectly displayed number plates, number plates not displayed at all on trailers and no insurance. We also issued words of advice on several other issues including waste carrying and insecure loads.



NEED TO TALK TO US?

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

### Heritage Crime Update

Sadly, we have seen a number of churches and historical sites continue to suffer damage, once damaged these sites/items cannot be restored to their complete original state and never will be. I encourage anyone who has information or has seen anyone acting inappropriately around these places to contact us immediately.

We have seen damage or thefts at Surlingham, Breckles and Caistor St Edmunds this past month, any information please drop us a line.

### CrimeStoppers Rural Crime Campaign

Crimestoppers have launched their 2023 Rural Crime Campaign focusing on four issues this month in addition to general rural crime;

The protection of wildlife

Environment crime

Domestic abuse

Violence against women and girls

Additionally, theft remains a major concern in the agricultural sector, affecting many farmers who have unfortunately experienced the theft of farm machinery, vehicles, GPS units, livestock, horses or fuel.

Rural thieves have evolved beyond opportunistic local individuals. Increasingly in recent years, organised and sometimes international criminal gangs are in control of criminal activities, with global events and emerging illicit markets further fuelling the demand for stolen equipment.

The issue of rural crime takes a toll on both the lives and livelihoods of farming families, with many feeling vulnerable knowing that their homes and

workplaces are under surveillance by criminals. You can read more about the campaign on the CrimeStoppers website: <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/news-campaigns/campaigns/rural-crime-2023>

Remember you can contact CrimeStoppers 100% Anonymous. Always.

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/forms/give-information-anonymously> or on 0800 555 111

### Hare Coursing Update

Thankfully our reports of hare coursing remain almost non-existent except a couple of calls in South Norfolk around the Wymondham/Attleborough area. When I am out and about people tell me it's going on yet our figures don't back this up. I would like to advise people if hare coursing is going on it is reported to us via 999, if the criminals have left or its seen later (damage) this is then reported via our online form so we have accurate records, trends and intelligence on the issue.

### Plant Machinery Thefts

We have seen a theft of high value plant machinery this month, can I again remind anyone that owns any sort of machinery, trailers or high value tools mark the property appropriately, attach trackers where possible and have the serial numbers/ photographs available should the worst happen. This can make a real difference in recovering stolen property, a little black book of your own property is an easy solution.

### 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](mailto:christopher.shelley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk)

## Home Security Advice

Burglary and thefts tend to increase during the autumn months as the afternoons get darker, making it easier to identify unoccupied homes, which are often left unlit. Residents can make their homes more secure by following some basic crime prevention advice such as:

Use timer switches on a lamp, radio or TV set so that they turn on as it gets dark in the afternoons.

Make a habit of checking that ground floor windows and doors are closed and locked when you leave the house or go to bed. Upstairs windows should be locked when the house is unoccupied.

PVC doors must be locked by lifting the handle and turning the key to ensure all the security features are in place.

Car and house keys should be kept out of sight in a safe place. Don't leave them on display.

on windowsills, in porches, hallways or kitchens.

Secure your rear garden by shutting and locking any gates. Burglars can use garden tools, like ladders to break in, so make sure you securely lock away any tools after use.

## Appeal following theft in Stow Bedon

Police are appealing for witnesses following a theft from a church in Stow Bedon.

The theft occurred between Wednesday 13 September 2023 and Saturday 23 September when two large wooden chairs and a wooden stool were stolen from St Margaret's Church on Watton Road.

Officers would like to speak to anyone who may have witnessed the thefts. Anyone with any information is asked to contact PC Peter Magee at Op Solve on 101, quoting crime reference 36/68909/23.

You can also contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111

## Conclusion

Thankyou again for taking the time to read through this month's updates. As like every month if you have any concerns or questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

The police will never  
ask you for cash or  
your bank details.

**STOP...**  
this is a scam!

THE  
**TRAP**



## In The Countryside in September

With the weather as it has been over the last couple weeks our arable farms will be rapidly getting next summer's crops in the ground. I have also seen a couple of farms harvesting sugar beet already which is our only form of home-grown sugar so when you see British sugar in the supermarket it has come from those huge dirty looking bulbs, they go on quite an incredible journey after spending all summer securing the sugar into the bulb. Wissington factory opened on 21st of September and Cantley opens on the 9th of October, currently at this time, mud on the road is not a major issue given how dry it has been but something to consider as the month goes on, please drive to the condition.

Livestock farms are in full swing getting the final winter feed crop into the silage clamps, you may have seen many tractors towing trailers of green shredded matter. This is maize very similar to sweetcorn but harvested at slightly lower moisture content and chopped up, placed into silage clamps like the summer grass to 'pickle' to preserve it as vital winter feed.

On the livestock farms many will be preparing for bringing stock in for the winter months but hoping to get as much as possible out of the grass outside. Housing livestock for their welfare during winter months is an expensive necessity. Feed and bedding do not come cheap and never more so than this year. Most sheep will remain outdoors until lambing in the spring normally, however, many will be preparing them for tupping season (mating), its essential that not only the male sheep (tup or ram) is in top condition ahead of going in with the ewes as he is likely be asked to cover 30+ ewes very quickly. The ewes themselves also need to be in top condition to

carry the lambs through the winter months. Some early lambing flocks will have already started tupping, traditionally you put the tup in next month on the 5th of November for lambs to be born on the 1st of April however with modern markets requiring lamb all year round some flocks have moved to earlier lambing making the product available for a longer period. You also tend to find pedigree pure bred sheep are lambed earlier, so they are much bigger for the show season which starts at the end of May.

As for our wildlife most, if not all, our summer visitors are long gone to warmer climates. That said, we still have some migratory birds that visit us from the North for a less harsh winter these include many Geese, one of our most prolific species that appears is the Pink-Footed Geese it arrives from Iceland and Greenland to spend winter here in better feeding grounds normally feeding on the sugar beet tops from harvested beet fields.

October is also a fantastic time to be getting out into our woodlands, as the leaves start to change colour carpeting the ground in an incredible crunchy carpet which never gets boring walking through. You will also start to see some colourful mushrooms popping up. Many of our hibernating species or ones that slow down during winter will be building reserves up and collecting the nuts up. Robins will be back in our gardens looking for that worm you turn over alongside the blackbirds as their more natural food sources run out.

October also usually signals a mad rush to the orchards to collect up all the apples and pears.

