

# **CONTENTS**

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#### **WEBSITE**

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We are only one of 12 forces across England and Wales to receive this important grading and it is within the context of a national assessment of being more than £47 million per year under funded. However we must always improve and stay one step ahead of those criminals that cause havoc to all of our communities.

The rural communities in Hampshire are special and deserve to be protected from crime. With increasing budget pressures and more sophistication being shown from criminals, the message I send out is for us to work together - public, police

# WELCOME TO THE LATEST ISSUE OF RURAL TIMES

Hampshire Constabulary has recently been rated Good by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services in all categories it examines.

and partners. I meet so many people in the rural villages and towns and it constantly amazes me how passionate they are about their communities.

I currently have some of our staff in policing working hard to develop greater clarity as to how the public can contribute and work alongside police. We will provide updates in the next edition of Rural Times.

The National Farmers Union (NFU) has recently reported that they have seen a rise in crime across some parts of the rural south east region. A particular crime that appears to be on the increase is plant theft. We are working hard across our neighbourhood teams to tackle this.

Although the NFU figures show a rise in crime in the south east, overall rural crime figures in Hampshire have reduced.

The partnership that Hampshire Constabulary has with its rural communities is vital to the work we do - it is important that you continue to feed us with information about what is going on in your local community and on any suspicious activity.

This communication will allow us to ensure that we are in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing.



In May I met with representatives of the Countryside Alliance, the Country Land and Business Association, and Members of both Houses of Parliament to hear national perspectives and discuss local opportunities.

Here, during my engagement with rural communities I have naturally heard a desire for better enforcement activity and closer working between police, local authorities and communities.

Residents and business owners

## SAFER RURAL COMMUNITIES

Keeping our rural communities safer remains high on my agenda.

have asked for improved sharing of local knowledge and intelligence, easier reporting mechanisms, and a joined-up response from the police and local authorities to fly-tipping - and of course ensuring that we sustain recent improvements in effective licensing of firearms. These priorities and the consultations with communities inform my work to support our rural communities.

Recent national papers drawing together strategic priorities are also valued and have included an updated Wildlife Crime Policing Strategy and the Rural Affairs Strategy (both published by the National Police Chiefs' Council). Together with the conversations I have had with members of our rural communities, these provide

a clear idea on where to focus our efforts.

I would also like to highlight that the 2018 National Rural Crime Survey is currently open, giving you another opportunity to have your say. The survey closes on 10 June and I will be reviewing the findings closely to identify added value to our local approaches.

My team and I will again be at the rural shows during the summer, including the Royal Isle of Wight County Show on 8 July and the New Forest and Hampshire County Show from 24 to 26 July. This year, we will be joined by the Victim Care Service and Restorative Solutions, important services I contract that can support those living in rural communities who have witnessed or been a victim of crime.

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

## **HUGH'S VIEWS**

As we come out of one of the most challenging springs for many years, with cold wet weather and little or no sun, the sun has graced us with a blistering May weekend. All the while I have been moving house and have rapidly discovered that nine does not go into three!!

Farmers have had a very tough time - land too wet to move, late drilling and trying to drill, fertilise and apply fungicides all at the same time. Probably a year when they regret not having more staff? However, the impact is likely to be visible with these late drilled spring crops having lower yields.

Without doubt there are more visits from unknown vans with folk clearly investigating, so we must all be wary that the threat has not gone away - it has merely become a little more canny. It becomes even more important that we all keep our eyes open and if something or someone is seen out of place or strange, report it through 101 or Self Evident. This is a really good little app - easy to use and information is passed on to your neighbourhood team.

Hampshire Constabulary continues to have significant funding challenges. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services [HMICFRS] has graded them Good in all aspects and that puts them very close to the top of the table.

We should all congratulate them especially doing the job when more than £47m short - think how effective they would be with that money and the additional officers it would inevitably enable.

I know the new Home Secretary has a big job to do, but it is crucial he gets the right briefing and that policing isn't allowed to get buried in his in tray. It appears to date that people are not grasping the severity of the situation. Rural Times readers are urged to make that point where they can.

Fly-tipping has continued unabated. Please contact Hampshire County Council at www.hants.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling/flytipping to deal with it or if you have evidence of the tipper. If the crime is in action, call the police.

Please engage with your local team, check your security and remain alert.





# **EQUINE PROPERTY**

Owning a horse means owning equipment that is a natural draw for thieves, especially given the remote locations where equipment and tack are stored. The following is advice on securing your items as well as possible, minimising the opportunities for thieves.

#### Horse rugs, tack and saddles

Mark the rug and tack with your house number and postcode – or a telephone number. It gives police a chance to return it to you should it be recovered and can prove ownership. Take a photograph of any equipment, along with the details displayed. For saddles the postcode can be engraved on a stirrup bar. Keep a detailed list of all your tack.

#### **Tack rooms**

Always lock the room, even if still nearby. The construction of tack rooms is an important aspect in keeping the contents secure – brick or concrete block are ideal, and wood can be reinforced internally with steel plate or mesh. This can also be done with wooden doors. Fit good quality mortice locks to doors where possible, or alternatively use heavy-duty closed shackle padlocks and pad bars.
Windows, no matter how small, can

provide entry for would be thieves and should be kept closed or fitted with grilles, bars or be removed completely. Saddles and bridles should be secured to their racks when not in use. Wheelbarrows and trolleys should be kept separate to tack (or secured) as they could be used to make removal of property easier. When your tack has been security marked, display signs to show that this has been done to help deter potential thieves.

#### Stables/paddocks

If you have an alarm and CCTV installed, ensure you openly display signs to advertise this, and do the same to show your items are marked. Ensure the gates are secured with padlocks and that the hinges cannot be lifted. Check all around the perimeter to see if there are vulnerable areas and what you can do to make them more secure. Thieves would probably want to transport stolen items in a vehicle, or at least

dump them somewhere to return later. You can make this more difficult by installing drop down bollards/ locking posts to prevent vehicles from gaining access and by carrying out regular checks of the perimeter.

#### Horse boxes and trailers

Park them as close as possible to your property if they are kept near your home. Wheel clamps and drop down bollards/locking posts are an excellent security layer, as well as being a visual deterrent. Other items available are brake locks (like steering wheel locks but they fit on brakes), alarms and immobilisers. As with tack and other property, take photographs of the vehicle and make a note of any unusual markings. If you are able to, you could postcode the roof with bright lettering (self-adhesive markings or bright paint), so that it can be seen from the air.



# Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service is looking for new on-call firefighters

### If volunteering for just a few hours of your time each week would make your local community safer, why wouldn't you join us?

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service is on the lookout for new on-call firefighters to join their ranks.

Generally located in rural communities, on-call firefighters are based at their homes, workplaces or out and about within a sixminute radius of their local fire station - so when alerted, they can drop whatever it is they're doing, attend their station and man the fire appliance.

On-call firefighters are a pivotal part of today's fire and rescue service that provides cover for more than 90 per cent of the United Kingdom. Equipped with the same kit, vehicles and tools as a full-time station, on-call firefighters do not just fight fires.

They are involved in a wide variety of situations ranging from community fire safety, flooding, medical coresponding, road incidents and chemical spills to performing horse rescues and tackling wildfires.

With 38 of Hampshire's 51 fire stations crewed by on-call firefighters, the fire service relies on members of rural communities prepared to be on stand-by for the good of their towns and villages.

They frequently prove to be as vital a part of the machine as their full-time colleagues. In Hampshire, the thatch fire at the historic Bere Mill in Whitchurch this year hit the headlines and saw multiple crews of



# OUR COUNTRYSIDE SAFER

on-call firefighters from various rural stations such as Overton, Droxford and Bishop's Waltham working throughout a cold February night.

Despite a recent record intake of 26 new on-call recruits on one course followed by another of 21, retained stations do urgently need fresh blood, especially when it comes to providing cover during the day.

Kingsclere is one of the stations that is actively seeking new recruits to boost their numbers. Watch Manager Adam Glasspool is keen to improve the availability of the station on the Hampshire-Berkshire border.

"It's been difficult for the team at Kingsclere who really want to maximise their availability. We just need a couple of extra people to significantly improve Kingsclere's time on the run." The crew at Kingsclere join their neighbouring station in Overton one night a week for training, briefings and to complete assessments.

Support Officers across the county have been reaching out to local communities to raise awareness for the rural fire stations' need for new crew members.

"We are getting ourselves out there, trying different approaches, speaking to new groups, running Facebook adverts and that has seen results with a couple of people coming through the door, offering vital daytime cover." "But rural areas like Kingsclere and Hartley Wintney still need more people," Glasspool added.

Retained stations across the county are always looking to add to their team and are keen to hear from anyone who works or lives in a rural location and has an interest in becoming a firefighter.

To find out more about becoming an on-call firefighter in Hampshire visit **www.hantsfire.gov.uk/oncall**.



HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



# EQUINE FRAUD

- Warning to the equestrian community about a scam involving fake adverts of horses for sale.
- Victims are told to pay an up-front fee for the horse and its shipment only to later find that it doesn't exist.
- Between 2014 and 2017, victims lost £68,717 to this fraud; an average of £3,436 per victim.

Action Fraud is warning horse buyers about fraudulent 'for sale' adverts. Fraudsters are placing fake adverts on reputable equestrian sale websites to scam victims out of large amounts of money. Fraudsters will even support their claims of the horse's existence by supplying copies of relevant ownership documents, pictures and videos of the animal.

Although the adverts claim the horses are located in the UK, victims are later told that they're located elsewhere in Europe and that the horse's shipment can be arranged via an animal transport company.

On agreeing to buy the horse, victims are then contacted by someone who claims to be an agent of the transport company, who asks them to pay the purchase price and shipping costs of the animal either by money transfer or a direct transfer of funds into a nominated bank account.

In some cases, victims are contacted about problems with the horse's delivery, such as the need for vaccinations, special insurance or costs arising from veterinary fees and requests are made to cover these additional costs.

Head of Action Fraud, Pauline Smith, said:

"With such large amounts of money involved, this type of fraud can have a significant and severe impact on the health and wellbeing of victims

"If you are looking to buy a horse online, it is vital that you thoroughly check the details of where you are making the purchase from and be sure to follow our advice below.

"We urge those who think they have been a victim of fraud to report this to Action Fraud."

## How to stay safe when purchasing a horse online:

 Be wary of horses being offered for sale below their usual market value, particularly where the seller is looking for a quick sale due to a recent family bereavement, marital breakdown or other issues. If an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.

- Be wary of purchases where the advert suggests that the horse is in the UK but the seller later informs you that it is in another country.
- Be cautious when buying a horse without seeing it, particularly when the only option of a vet check has been the seller's vet.
- Never pay by bank transfer for goods which will be subject to delivery as the payment cannot be reversed.
- Be cautious of transactions where the seller or shipping agent asks you to make payment by sending money via a money transfer company as the payment cannot be reversed.
- Check the country code of the seller's telephone number and make sure it relates to the country that they claim to be in.

Every Report Matters – If you have been a victim of equine fraud, report it to Action Fraud online **www.actionfraud.police.uk** or by calling 0300 123 2040.



informed initially that the horse was in Cambridge, only to later be informed that it was in Germany. The victim was told that the horse would be sent via a shipping company in Frankfurt and they advised a credit card payment could be taken for shipping fees. The seller claimed that the card was being declined and instead took

Case study 2: A victim was looking to purchase a horse

online, which resulted in them losing £2,600. The victim came into contact with the 'seller' through a website and had been

payment through a bank transfer. An additional amount was requested as an insurance fee/ferry boarding fee. At this point, the victim became suspicious, would not pay the additional amount and called Action Fraud.

Case study 1: The victim lost £6,800 to this type of fraud. The victim was looking to purchase a horse and was in contact with the 'seller' who advised the total amount was for the horse, shipping, transportation and documents as the animal was coming from Germany. The victim paid £6,800 in total via Western Union and was later asked to pay another £1,700 as the horse was stuck in Belgium and needed particular documents. The victim knew at this point that it was suspicious and managed to gain the seller's phone number which they traced back to Cameroon. The victim then asked for the documents to be faxed through to her, however this was not done.



# HOW HAS THIS HAPPENED BEFORE?

Case study 3: The victim saw a horse being advertised online and contacted the suspect, who asked for the victim to make an electronic bank transfer payment of £2,300. The victim made the payment and was sent links from the shipping company to a spoof web page which made it look like the horse was in transit.

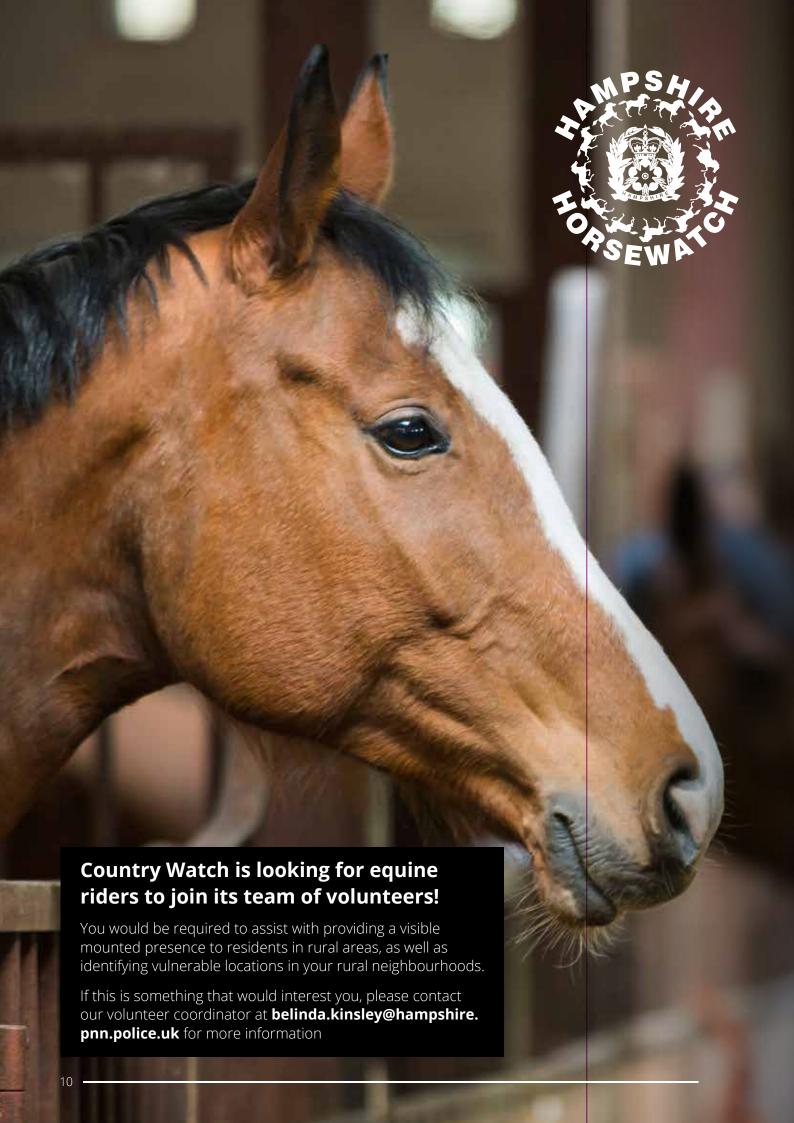
The suspect then came back and asked for another payment get suspicious and did some research to find that the payment the suspect was asking for did not exist and this is when the victim knew they had been defrauded.

Case study 4: A victim purchased a horse from Hungary through social media and it was agreed that an advance fee of over £500 would be made via Western Union to cover the transport of the horse. The payment for the horse was to be made when it arrived in the UK.

The seller then asked for more money. The victim then said he would not pay any more money, cancelled the deal and asked for the money to be refunded, at which point the seller said he had no money to refund.







# SUPPORTING THE EQUINE COMMUNITY

Hampshire Horsewatch is an independent voluntary community scheme managed by a small committee. The committee members are from various walks of life, not just from a police background, and are united in their interest in equines and a desire to make a difference to rural communities.

The scheme was created in 2000 by David Collings, who at the time was a serving Hampshire police officer. David was the victim of an equine crime in 1999 when his horse trailer was stolen in Surrey. This prompted David to research what assistance was given to horse owners in Hampshire. The result was disappointing and as a result Hampshire Horsewatch was born!

The police need support from communities to fight crime and equally communities need the help of the police when a crime is committed. This was the same in 2000 as it is in 2018.

The objective of Hampshire Horsewatch is to support both the police and equine communities in helping each other prevent and detect crime.

Hampshire Horsewatch encourages the equine community to be proactive in protecting not only their property, but extending that protective reach to fire and personal safety. The scheme works with the horse owner and/or rider, offering advice on measures and activities to prevent theft, fire and accidents - as well as making sure that if the unexpected happened, both horse and rider can be located.

In order to promote these measures and give the best advice, Hampshire Horsewatch has worked and liaised closely with organisations such as Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Hampshire Air Ambulance and The British Horse Society.

A variety of services are offered, from posting information appeals via social media to the creation of a horse location scheme. The latter assists the police with identifying an owner quickly if horses are found on the public highway and getting them to safety, as well as helping capture loose horses.

As policing requirements have changed to meet modern challenges, Hampshire Horsewatch has adapted the way it supports Hampshire Constabulary and today it liaises primarily with Country Watch.

Volunteers will attend livery yards and event days held at tack shops or other equestrian related premises. Saddles and other items of tack can be permanently marked with the owner's postcode, thereby providing a visual means of identification. This service is free of charge and is a key crime prevention measure; having a postcode as the 'serial number' on a piece of property assists the police enormously with the detection of crime. It proved beneficial to the Chairperson of Hampshire Horsewatch - when her stolen saddle was recovered, it was returned to her because her postcode was stamped into the leather.

Hampshire Horsewatch actively attends horse shows, country fairs and other events to engage with the public - horse owner or not - and promote crime prevention. Another key method it encourages is to register identifiable property with www.

## immobilise.com

Up and down the country there are similar horse watch schemes looking after equine communities in their respective counties. Some, like Hampshire, are independent while others are managed by police forces. These various schemes come together under the working title of 'The UK Horse Watch Alliance'.

Hampshire Horsewatch communicates with its membership and other members of the public through its website **www.hampshirehorsewatch.co.uk** and Facebook page.

## **RURAL ROUND-UP**



# BRONZE REINDEER STATUES FOUND

At Silchester near Tadley in March, two large, ornamental brass deer were stolen from a garden.

These were recovered by PCs Vince Lane and Will Butcher abandoned in a ditch not far from where they were stolen.

Owners of this type of large ornament should remember to secure the item, record it with pictures and perhaps security mark it (we can help with this).

## ANIMALS ON THE ROAD

Motorists are reminded to call police on 101 if they hit a deer or other animal on the road. Although it's natural to try and help the animal,

we have access to specially trained people to deal with these incidents. Call 999 if it's an emergency.

## **TRESPASSING**

A man was found guilty in March of trespassing on land in pursuit of game (Game Act 1831) in Monk Sherbourne in 2017. He was fined £250 and ordered to pay costs of £620 and a victim surcharge of £30.

## **OPERATION REBATE**

Operation Rebate is a series of burglaries and thefts in and around rural buildings and businesses in the north of the county.

Plant, quad bikes, tools and any other high value items have been targeted. The spike in reported crimes began in May 2017.

Since the beginning of March 2018 there have been 39 offences, including non-dwelling burglaries and the theft of motor vehicles. The area the criminals operate in is large and difficult to focus on and

they often use off-road vehicles to access remote premises.

The latest cross-border Operation in April with Surrey Police and Thames Valley Police was a success. We operated just across the border at Bracknell as we know travelling criminals are coming from that direction.

A total of 11 vehicles were seized, numerous fixed penalty notices were issued and three people were arrested for a variety of offences.

PC Vince Lane has been instrumental in targeting this issue and his work has allowed us to recover property worth in excess of £150,000 since November last year.







## MEET US AT EVENTS AND SHOWS THIS SUMMER

The Country Watch team will be attending Highclere Country Show on 27 and 28 May and the New Forest and Hampshire County Show from 24 to 26 July. Come and have a chat with our officers if you're visiting these events.



## MAN SENTENCED FOR WILDLIFE OFFENCES

A Fordingbridge man was sentenced on 16 May after being found guilty of:

three offences of attempting to intentionally kill, injure or take a wild bird

one offence of causing unnecessary suffering to a dog

The offences took place in Fordingbridge in July 2017.

He was ordered to carry out 260 hours' unpaid work, as well as paying £620 in court costs and a £85 victim surcharge.

The man also received a 12 month community order banning him from Fordingbridge Park and the Avon river in the town.

# ANIMAL WELFARE OFFENCES

We executed two warrants with the RSPCA at Alresford and Upham in April.

Two men were reported for separate animal welfare offences and enquiries are ongoing.

# FINE FOR BREACHING DOG CONTROL ORDER

A dog owner has been ordered to pay a £500 fine and more than £2,000 in costs for breaching a Civil Dog Control Order.

The Order was granted in September 2017 after the dog attacked three alpacas near Bartley in the New Forest in December 2016.

This has been a difficult case for the owners and we're pleased to have brought it to court despite the difficulties with legislation around alpacas.

## ON BBC Countryfile!

Rural cybercrime was the focus of a BBC Countryfile film that was broadcast on 13 May. This featured an interview with Korine Bishop, our Strategic Rural Policing Inspector.

Filming took place at a rural business in Durley, which had been the victim of a ransomware attack. The film also showed PC Matt Thelwell from Country Watch giving security advice.





Ruth Harper-Adams from Test Valley Farmwatch has provided advice for dog walkers when using farm land.

Farmers look after over 70 per cent of the UK's countryside, with many public footpaths passing through their land. They understand that owners must exercise their dogs but, according to the NFU, dog attacks on livestock, particularly sheep, have hit a seven-year high and cost the farming sector £1.3 million last year.

Livestock/sheep worrying is a very serious problem for farmers and smallholders and can have devastating consequences. Regrettably, some dog owners are ignorant of the vulnerability of livestock and when challenged have been heard to say: "The dog only wants to play" and "the sheep are in a field, they're supposed to run around". The list of excuses is endless. The most alarming quote heard was "well they all end up on your dinner plate, so what's the problem?"

The suffering inflicted on livestock after an attack or having been worried is catastrophic and completely unnecessary.

Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act of 1953, if a dog worries sheep on agricultural land, the person in charge of the dog is guilty of committing a criminal offence. The Act considers sheep worrying to include attacking sheep, chasing them in a way that may cause injury, suffering, abortion or loss of produce and, being at large – ie not on a lead or otherwise under close control in a field or enclosure in which there are livestock.

Where a dog causes damage by killing, maiming, or causing loss (including aborted foetuses) of livestock, the keeper of the dog(s) is liable for such damage under the Animals Act of 1971. This Act also provides a defence to any civil proceedings brought against a person for killing or causing injury to a dog where the defendant acted for the protection of livestock and was a person entitled to act for the protection of that livestock.

#### **PLEASE REMEMBER:**

- Keep to designated footpaths and ensure that you have full control of your dog(s)
- Clean up after your dog dog faeces carry neospora, a fatal disease to livestock which also causes spontaneous abortion

- Ensure that your property is secure and that your dog(s) is/are not able to escape
- Be responsible, be aware of the law your dog(s) may be shot or destroyed if in contravention of the above Acts.

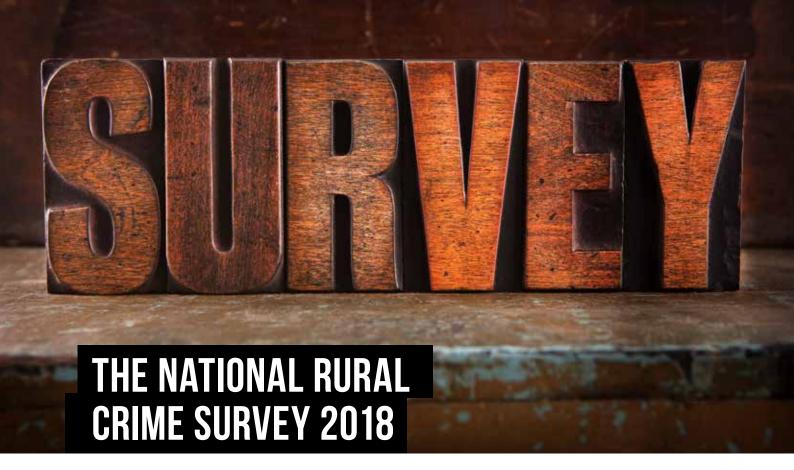




watercourse (also note the broken hind legs).



A neighbouring pet dog attacked after escaping



## Julia Mulligan, Chair of the National Rural Crime Network, is encouraging readers to complete the organisation's survey.

Three years ago, we asked rural communities about crime where they lived and worked – both their perception of crime and the reality of whether they had been a victim.

The results were shocking – both the financial cost, at £800 million per year, and human cost, with fear of crime on the rise, chronic under-reporting and frustration at the police and government.

Now we want to find out if anything has changed. Has crime gone up or down, do communities feel safer, what's the view of the police in rural communities?

We'll be asking those questions and many more in the 2018 National Rural Crime Survey which has been launched by the National Rural Crime Network.

We're encouraging anyone who lives, works or plays in the countryside to have their say and make their voice heard. We want to know the true picture of crime and anti-social behaviour.

The questions cover a range of issues – from whether you report

crimes that you or your business suffer, to the impact crime and anti-social behaviour have on you and your area, and whether you believe enough is done to catch those who carry out the offences.

The last survey, in 2015, saw 13,000 respond to give their impressions of crime and antisocial behaviour. It was – and remains – the biggest survey of its kind of rural communities.

By repeating it now we want to see if the changes the police made after our last report made any difference – and what strategies to make communities safe, and feel safer, have worked so best practice can be shared nationwide.

It's an important step and an important moment – knowing what the real situation is on the ground will be crucial in both supporting the development of the upcoming National Rural Affairs Strategy and then holding police to account to ensure its promises are delivered.

I hope that anyone living or working in a rural community

will spare a few minutes to complete the survey at **www. nationalruralcrimenetwork. net/survey** (open for submissions until Sunday 10 June).

Rural communities are resilient. They stick together, they're proud, but they deserve better. I fully expect our research will reveal some difficult truths. But we – and all those involved in trying to make things better – need to know these truths.

We need a clear picture of what has improved, what challenges remain and what more government, police forces and organisations can do to support some of the most isolated parts of our country.



Contact numbers and locations for our Country Watch officers are shown here, should you need to contact them about your concerns and issues. Please note that these phone numbers should not be used to report crimes. You should call 101 if you think an offence has been or is about to be committed, or call 999 in an emergency. Although our officers are based in the locations stated, they have a countywide responsibility and can help you with any issue.



**Insp Korine Bishop** 07880 056657



**Sgt Andy Williams** 07392 314299



**Special Inspector** lain Tunstell . Special Constable Phil McCabe

**Acting Special Sergeant** Phil Keeling



**PC Will Butcher** 07775 542982



**PSI Hannah Levy** 07469 562472





PC Steve Rogerson 07554 775468

Andover

Alresford



Special Constable **Vicky Spearpoint** 





PC Matt Thelwell 07392 314410



Lyndhurst

**Bishop's Waltham** 

Yarmouth



**Special Constable** 

Shane Phillips



**PC Lynn Owen** 07901 102344



**PC Ian Bassett** 07775 537382



**Sgt Ged Armitage** 07387 096611





**Cat Quinn PCSO Justin Keefe** 

**PC Scott Graham** 



**PSI Anna Presswell** 07469 562221





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