

# Rural Dorset

Rural policing in Dorset for residents and businesses



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Dorset Police



Autumn/Winter 2015

# Rural policing in Dorset

**Welcome to the next edition of Rural Dorset. This newsletter aims to keep those living and working in rural areas up to date with the latest ongoing police work in Dorset.**



With Dorset being one of the safest places to live in the country it is essential that we as a police force have an effective and efficient response to incidents and crimes affecting rural communities and Dorset's wildlife and heritage sites.

Over 90% of the Force area is regarded as rural including Bridport, Dorchester and Sherborne, North Dorset, Purbeck and East Dorset Sections.

It is important to remember that rural communities are at risk of the same types of crimes and anti-social behaviour as 'urban' areas. Whilst crime occurs less frequently in rural areas, when criminals do target those living and working in these areas the impact on victims and businesses can be much greater.

The most common types of crime which affects Dorset's rural communities is: non dwelling burglaries, theft from outbuildings and theft of farm related goods, machinery, tools, equipment, livestock, fuel and scrap metal.

There are some excellent rural crime initiatives running across Dorset which are helping to keep rural communities safer. The challenge is to ensure we effectively tackle the key issues that have been brought to our attention by members of the public. We aim to do this by engaging with the community and our partners, taking positive action to address their concerns, investigate crime when it does occur and relentlessly pursue those criminals who seek to commit acquisitive crime in our rural areas.

Dorset Police is committed to policing rural areas to reduce crime further and to ensure that rural communities in Dorset remain safe places for all to live and work in.

## **David Lewis - Assistant Chief Constable**



Crime in Dorset doesn't just affect the conurbation areas in Dorset, it affects our larger areas of rural towns and villages, we are always aware that roughly half of Dorset's population live in rural postcodes. Rural and wildlife crime can have a significant impact on the livelihoods of our residents.

A National Rural Crime Network survey found that rural crimes cost an estimated £800 million per year. It was also found that the average cost to a household for a rural crime is around £2,500 and for a business, it is over £4,000. It is for these reasons that Dorset Police prioritise preventing and detecting rural crime.

We know our rural communities are passionate about supporting the police to reduce crime, and schemes such as Farm Watch and Horse Watch provide a fantastic support network to share information. If you live rurally, I would encourage you to join a scheme. You can sign up to these networks by visiting [www.dorsetalert.co.uk](http://www.dorsetalert.co.uk)

Please do tell us what is going on. It is vital the rural community report crime by calling 101, or by calling 999 when a crime is in progress or there is danger to life. It is only with an accurate picture of what residents experience that appropriate police and partner resources can be allocated to prevent and detect crime.

I hope you have a safe and quiet Christmas

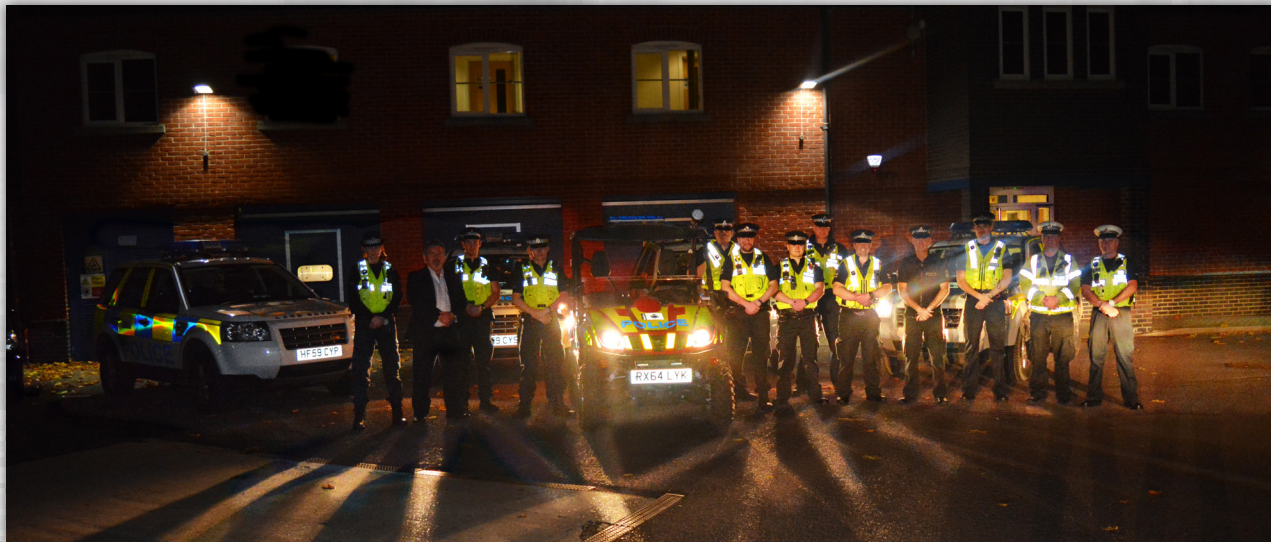
**Martyn Underhill - Police and Crime Commissioner**





# Wildlife Crime Awareness Week

**Dorset PCC and Dorset Police united with World Animal Protection and Crimestoppers for Wildlife Crime Awareness Week in October 2015.**



In October, Dorset PCC and Dorset Police joined World Animal Protection and Crimestoppers to back Wildlife Crime Awareness Week. This was to encourage members of the public to familiarise themselves with the signs of wildlife crime and to report any evidence to Crimestoppers anonymously, or to contact the Police on 101.

Crimes against domestic UK wildlife include poaching, badger baiting, hare coursing, bat persecution, poisoning a bird of prey, poaching fresh water mussels or stealing eggs.

Already this year, a number of wildlife criminals have been convicted thanks to the hard work and vigilance of police officers, local Watch schemes and members of the community.

One recent successful prosecution by the Dorset Wildlife Crime Unit included a criminal behaviour order against a man from Poole who was prosecuted for the killing of a wild bird.

Steve Marsh of Dorset Police's Wildlife Crime Unit, said: "Dorset plays host to

an abundance of wildlife, some of which, sadly, is subject to cruelty, disturbance and other human threat. The Wildlife Crime Unit aims to reduce wildlife crime and prosecute those responsible for it. The public's assistance is essential as, from their initial observations and reports, we can uncover an array of wildlife crimes taking place. Combatting wildlife crime needs effort from everyone and I urge anyone with information about it - however insignificant they feel it is - to call the police on 101.

Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner Martyn Underhill said: "I am supporting Wildlife Crime Awareness Week as I want to urge the people in Dorset to consciously watch out for signs of crime such as poaching, baiting and trapping across the country, and if you see something suspicious – report it."

If there is a wildlife crime in progress call 999 or for a non-emergency call 101.

If you want to give information regarding a crime anonymously, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.





# Dorset County Show

On 5 and 6 September 2015, the Dorset County Show took place at the Dorset County Showground in Dorchester. Members of Dorchester Neighbourhood Policing Team attended the event, maximising the opportunity to engage with the public, especially members of the rural community.



The team included police officers from the rural neighbourhood teams, special constables, police volunteers and the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) team.

We had a rural crime stand at the event and demonstrated various pieces of crime prevention kit which is all available to purchase from local retailers.



We were also busy advertising our two way messaging system, Dorset Alert. The system allows us to message communities quickly, as and when we have concerns or are appealing for information.

The PCC's team managed to survey over 250 people on the first day. These surveys help us to understand your views on policing and crime and what you would like to see from Dorset Police.



It also gave the rural Neighbourhood Policing Team the opportunity to discuss further crime prevention opportunities and discuss any concerns the public has.

The event took place with no reports of crime or disorder and was a fantastic, well run family event.





# Melplash Agricultural Show

**In August, Dorset Police officers and volunteers attended the Melplash Show. They spent the day engaging with members of the public, offering advice and support on reducing crime in rural areas.**

The Melplash Show is currently held on the fields between Bridport and West Bay.

It was originally a ploughing match where farmers challenged one another to a “plough-off” on the fields just south of Melplash Village Church.

Some of the first events were agricultural shows where livestock featured heavily. The show now caters to wider spectrum



of visitors. Events such as motor cycle stunts in the main ring, sheep dog demonstrations and Bird of Prey displays have now been introduced. The main ring also hosts the heavy horses, numerous disciplines of show jumping, including the ever popular inter-hunt relay races, and the Grand Parade.

Farm animals, from the dairy cow to the donkey, and fowls to goats are exhibited in the side rings.

The whole event extends over several fields to encompass the animals and increasingly popular marquees, including food stalls, cookery demonstrations, local crafts, fairground activities and over 300 market and trade stands.

In the Countryside Arena there is terrier racing, ferret racing, falconry and a range of other activities.

Attracting around 20,000 visitors the Melplash Show is considered one of the biggest one day shows in the South west.



## TWO WAY COMMUNITY MESSAGING SYSTEM

**Dorset Alert is a two way community messaging system operated by Dorset Police.**

The system allows us to exchange information with you by email or phone at no cost to you.

It is designed to allow people to register online, and to choose the type of information they would like to receive concerning crime, anti-social behaviour, witness appeals, crime prevention, community events and local good news.

We currently have over 10,000 people signed up to Dorset Alert.

Automated messaging improves the flow of information between the police and the community, and so enables every one of us to contribute towards the prevention and detection of crime and anti-social behaviour.

By registering to Dorset Alert for free members of the public can receive information on the following:

- Local crime and incidents where we believe that sharing information with you will help to prevent further offences occurring
- Crimes and incidents where you may be able to help by providing vital information



- Crime prevention advice
- Neighbourhood Policing activity and opportunities to meet the team

By registering, you will be able to configure how and when you would like us to communicate with you and what level of information you would like to receive. You will also be able to select which partner organisations you want to authorise to send you messages. Partners on the system include: Neighbourhood Watch, Dorset Fire & Rescue Service and Local Authority organisations.

Dorset Police is committed to working in partnership with the community and we recognise that by keeping the public informed we can all help to make Dorset safer and make Dorset feel safer.





# Our NFU Partnership

Within Dorset the NFU and NFU Mutual offices have been working closely with local police through the use of the Stop That Thief scheme.

Whilst crime is reasonably low in rural areas, when incidences do occur, however small or large, they can cause serious disruption to the rural community, their businesses and homes.

Stop That Thief has given us the opportunity to have early contact with victims and gain better knowledge of the crimes happening. The scheme ensures that, where there is a need, victims will be called or visited which gives them peace of mind through the provision of advice or deployment of security equipment to deter further crimes at affected premises.

Anyone in the rural community is able to join and access a Stop That Thief scheme.



We've found it really helps farmers and the rural community to take ownership of their security with some simple advice and the knowledge that they will have back-up if needed.

We have seen increasing interest locally in working together. Our local PCs and PCSOs are more widely recognised within the area. Many suggestions on how to grow or improve the scheme come from farmers, residents, committee members and our local officers.

It is a valuable resource to help keep the rural community safe and secure. This working relationship has made the rural and farming community feel the police are accessible and available to help them in the event of problems.



# Dorset Horse Watch

## WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT EQUINE CRIME



Dorset Horse Watch works in a similar way to Home Watch and Neighbourhood Watch. Increased vigilance and communication within the equine community helps to reduce the potential of becoming a victim of crime.

As a Horse Watch member you will receive periodic updates and be able to share information about any suspicious incidents, attempted thefts and criminal activity to other members across the county. There will be newsletters and notifications of local events together with relevant crime prevention advice and information.

The Horse Watch scheme keeps in touch with its members by informing them about equine related crime that has taken place across the county. This helps members to protect themselves against similar offences.

Events are held across Dorset to give members the opportunity to have their equine equipment security marked and receive crime prevention advice in relation to their property, out-buildings and trailers.

We understand that equine crime isn't just about a financial loss it is also emotionally painful and devastating when a treasured horse or pony is stolen or injured, or items of tack, equipment and vehicles are taken.

For more information about the scheme and to join, please visit the dedicated Horse Watch webpage under the Crime Prevention section of the Dorset Police website [www.dorset.police.uk](http://www.dorset.police.uk)





# National Rural Crime Network

A new online community network was launched in 2015 that focusses on rural communities and preventing and understanding crime trends in rural areas.

# NRCN

**National Rural Crime Network**

The National Rural Crime Network champions a better understanding of crime in rural areas as well as new and effective ways to help keep rural communities safer.

Dorset Police, together with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), is supporting the National Rural Crime Network along with the majority of other rural police forces.

The network, which was established in July 2014, is supported by 29 Police and Crime Commissioners and police forces across England and Wales. The inaugural chair is Julia Mulligan, Police and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire and Vice Chair is Tim Passmore, Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk. The Network is supported by a wide range of other bodies with a deep interest in community safety and rural affairs.

The NRCN state, "We believe that the scale, cost, social impact and other effects of crime in rural areas are underestimated, under-reported and not fully understood. We aim to shine a light on the issues, to improve understanding and enhance community safety. This is important, particularly in the face of ever-increasing competition for money and resources.

"The Network is therefore concerned with all crime and anti-social behaviour occurring in rural areas. This includes problems typically associated with the countryside such as wildlife and heritage crime, farm equipment and animal thefts. However, there have been very substantial increases in fraud and other scams, with criminals deliberately targeting isolated, vulnerable people.

"We aim to influence people who make decisions about policy and practice, so that rural communities are better understood and supported. An important element of this is evidencing the scale and cost of crime in rural areas through groundbreaking research. We hold and contribute to events around England and Wales, seeking to highlight the needs of rural communities and bringing people together to share best practice."

The website [www.NationalRuralCrimeNetwork.net](http://www.NationalRuralCrimeNetwork.net) will help the public, police, community safety practitioners and others to share information, develop policy and best practice, to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in rural areas.



# Staying in the loop



**There are many ways for members of the rural community to keep up to date with policing across the county and support Dorset Police with making Dorset safer and feel safer.**

On the Dorset Police website you will be able to find all our latest news, recruitment updates and our dedicated rural crime page.

[www.dorset.police.uk](http://www.dorset.police.uk)

Dorset Alert is a two way community messaging system operated by Dorset Police, which allows us to exchange information with you by email or phone at no cost to you.

[www.dorsetalert.co.uk](http://www.dorsetalert.co.uk)

The main Dorset Police Facebook site is regularly updated with recent crime news and crime prevention advice. The site allows us to answer your queries about policing in Dorset.

 **Dorset Police**

Our main Dorset Police Twitter site is updated everyday with news, headlines and crime prevention advice. Again it gives us the chance to answer your queries about policing in Dorset and pass on timely information.

 **@DorsetPolice**

For all non-emergency calls please dial 101. If a crime is in progress or life is in danger, please dial 999.

**Making Dorset safer,  
Making Dorset feel safer**

