



Foreword from Chief Inspector Jon Turton, Winchester Rural Tactical Lead

ISSUE 7 – January 2022

Welcome to the latest edition of Rural Times.

I've been the District Commander for Winchester district since June 2020. In my previous role as the District Inspector certainly helped me to understand the Winchester policing area with a wealth of key community contacts and solid working relationships with partners.

Winchester district covers an area of over 255 square miles. A designated heritage city which attracts an estimated 5.6 million visitors each year with great transport links by road and rail.

I have one Inspector, four sergeants, 24 constables and 19 PCSO's. The teams operate from three bases in Mottisfont Court, Alresford Fire station and Bishops Waltham.



Our Response and Patrol teams are based at Winnall and they are also located at Fareham. My Sergeant establishment has only recently increased to four, so together with the uplift in our police numbers I've utilised this opportunity to create a proactive team. The Proactive Team provides a flexible and agile response to spontaneous incidents, but it also takes ownership for tackling more specialist and complex crime series

The urban and rural areas on my district present very different and varied policing challenges. Trap racing on roads to the north of the district caused disruption to local resident in the summer, as well as a potential danger to road users. A significant policing response helped to prevent further activity, but I'm also keen to explore longer term, sustainable solutions in conjunction with other agencies.

The coronavirus pandemic has placed a huge pressure on our communities for families, friends and businesses and none of us could have expected that it would be so far reaching or lasting for so long. Nevertheless, when it's safe to do so I want to build on concept of our Beat surgeries and arrange some of the Barn Meets that have been popular in other areas.

Finally, I would urge you to continue to report crimes and suspicious activity to us via the Hampshire Constabulary website or calling 101. As always, if a crime is in progress dial 999.



Police and Crime Commissioner launches new awards and calls for nominations



Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones has launched new Awards to recognise the contribution volunteers and partners make to policing and the criminal justice system, and in making the local community safer.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is inviting nominations to the categories of Community Volunteer of the Year and Safer Superhero:

Community Volunteer of the Year – A member of the public who volunteers in their local community to help to keep people safer. This can be a formal volunteer role with an organisation or a person who volunteers on their own to help others e.g. helps an elderly neighbour maintain their garden and house which can help to prevent them from being identified as vulnerable by others.

Safer Superhero – A young person who has shown bravery, courage or kindness to keep someone safer. This can be a young person, up to the age of 16 years old, who has helped someone else to be safer. For example, it could be that they care for another family member, have helped someone who has been affected by crime or have shown an act of kindness.

Alongside the awards open for public nomination, there are also awards for volunteers and staff directly supporting policing and the Police and Crime Commissioner's office. These awards are nominated from within policing, commissioned services and partner organisations. For the first time, the category of Rural Crime Fighter Award recognises outstanding work to keep rural communities safe.

Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones said: "Volunteers and our partners make a huge and significant difference to policing and in helping to make communities safer. I have launched my new Police and Crime Commissioner Awards to recognise the enormous contribution they make and to say thank you.

"There are literally hundreds of thousands of local volunteers and staff supporting others and to make a difference in our local communities. I really want to receive nominations from the public for local volunteers and young people who they think deserve recognition for the positive impact they make.

"To name just a few, Police Specials, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Speedwatch, Independent Custody Visitors, Youth Commission members, Victim Care Service and business partners all support policing, criminal justice, the local community and importantly, victims when they need it most. I think that deserves recognition through my awards."

The nomination form is available at www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk/awards.



Fly tipping offences become a thorn in the side of rural communities across Hampshire

Piles of discarded litter and rubbish continue to haunt the various beauty spots across Hampshire, as well as public highways and other public land sites.

Sadly, reports of such activity have increased year-upon-year in recent times, but Hampshire Constabulary and Hampshire County Council are working closely to combat these issues and bring those responsible to justice.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recently released (8 Dec) national data on reported incidents of fly-tipping on public land; indicating that nationally there had been a 16% increase in incidents being reported to local authorities. While this increase is clearly disappointing, within Hampshire reports of such activity has only increased by just under 7% - so well below the national average.

Overall, there were 26,024 incidents reported in Hampshire during 2020/21 compared to 24,354 incidents in 2019/20.

Sadly, during the national COVID-19 lockdowns imposed by the Government, this led to a large number of local authorities suspending their recycling programmes; meaning dry recycling, garden and bulky waste were often not collected on a regular basis. This is likely to have contributed to the increase in the number of fly-tipping incidents being reported on public land, along with staff shortages within local authorities.

Despite Covid-19 limiting local authorities in Hampshire in taking enforcement action, between March 2020 and June 2021 they carried out 242 enforcement actions including:

- An 8-month custodial sentence / 17 week custodial sentence (susp 2y)
- 16 week tag/curfew and £2,000 fine / a £20,000 fine
- 300 hours community order – litter picking / 100 hours community order + £1,900 fine
- 80 hours community order + £780 fine

All local authority enforcement teams meet quarterly to discuss intelligence, sharing best practices around enforcement, while identifying key suspects and hotspot areas.

Local Authorities are supported by the Hampshire Association of Local Councils, CountryWatch officers, Environment Agency, National Farmers Union and the Country Land and Business Association representatives in these meetings to ensure all parties are supported and are able to work collaboratively in tackling fly-tipping.

Private landowners and farmers are also urged to report incidents of fly-tipping directly to the Council, as currently data is only collected for public land. They are acutely aware that there is a wider issue for landowners, that is not necessarily being reported.

Landowners are advised to ensure their land is secure via the use of locked gates and fencing; while also having CCTV cameras if appropriate. Likewise, in removing overgrown vegetation, this ensures that it is more difficult for fly-tippers to hide their actions.

If a fly-tip is being witnessed and in progress, then please call Hampshire Police directly via 101. If it has already occurred, you can find reporting details via the [HCC website](#).



Initiative launched to educate the public about issues of wildlife disturbance across UK coastlines

A brand new partnership initiative – including the RSPCA, Flamborough Head, Natural England and a number of Yorkshire police forces - has been launched in order to try and combat and limit the volume of wildlife disturbance caused by recreational activities on the vast array of UK coastline.

The project aims to engage and educate the public about the sensitivities of the coastline, and how simple changes in their behaviour could reduce pressure on the unique wildlife which call the coastline their home.

Hampshire's coast draws thousands of visitors each year; whilst tourism is important to many local economies, the rise in recreational activities in marine and coastal environments can increase pressure on important marine wildlife.

Any recreational activity has the potential to disturb wildlife if not conducted in a safe and responsible manner. For example, paddleboard users and kayakers landing in restricted areas to take a break can have a devastating impact on marine animals and birds during the breeding and weaning seasons.

Likewise, the use of motorised watercrafts, including jet ski's too close to animals on waterways can mean the excess noise and wash will disturb wildlife causing detectable changes in behaviour. It can also interfere with an animal's ability to communicate, navigate, avoid danger and find food, ultimately impacting the health and survival of many marine species.

In Hampshire, we are still in the infancy stages with this project however, there have been a number of positive discussions with local harbour masters – of which there are 13 across the two counties – and strategies are being developed to cover areas that are being impacted that are not covered by harbour masters.

We want to work in partnership with local coastal communities, following an increase in water-based recreational activities, in order to protect our wildlife and reduce the disturbance upon their natural habitat.

As unfortunately, one of the sad consequences of this increased activity has previously led to the disturbance of a seabird breeding site, resulting in the loss of last years' brood of chicks – which has a significant impact on a species already struggling.

We will update you with more information as this initiative progresses, but as always, if you see anything suspicious please report it to us by visiting the Hampshire Constabulary website or by calling 101.

If it is an emergency, please dial 999 immediately.





Have you been a victim of rural crime? Do you know the support available to you?

Unfortunately, there are many residents in rural areas and communities across Hampshire which have been a victim of crime.

However, did you know that there is support available to you as a victim?

Victim Care Service: Hampshire Victim Care – Their aim is to help victims cope and recover from the effects of crime, regardless of whether or not they have reported it to the police. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight fund the service. (www.hampshireiowvictimcare.co.uk)

Bobby Scheme: A full crime prevention and fire safety survey is carried out by one of the trained, police-vetted fitters. They will provide both general and specific crime and fire prevention advice to improve home safety. When appropriate they will fit such items as locks, spy-holes, door chains and smoke alarms, etc.

The Bobby Scheme is free to those who are vulnerable due to age (over 65), circumstance, disabled, or a victim of household crime. Anyone can make a referral including individuals, friends, family, doctors, social workers, etc. (<https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/bobby-scheme-landingpage/>)

The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (Rabi): The online and text-based service offers free, anonymous resources to adults and young people from the farming community across England and Wales. (<https://explore.kooth.com/rabi/>)

GPS systems theft prevention advice – ensuring stolen items can be recovered



Every year, we receive numerous reports that GPS systems are being stolen from plant machinery – and sadly, sometimes there is no way of identifying the rightful owners.

As such, we have produced the below guidance for local farmers across Hampshire.

- If the GPS has PIN security, activate it with a unique number
- If the GPS is not PIN enabled, mark it with your postcode
- Photograph and log serial numbers for free on the National Property Register - [Immobilise](#)
- Keep machinery with GPS fitted stored securely out of sight when possible.

Please note: we have received reports of GPS devices being removed by owners and stored away from the machinery when not in use. Unfortunately these have subsequently been stolen and the insurance companies state this voids their claim as it was not attached to the plant machinery at the time. Please check your insurance if you remove your GPS.



New UK Government legislation to crack down on cruel illegal hare coursing

Plans to strengthen the powers and penalties available to tackle the barbaric practice of hare coursing have been set out by the Government on Tuesday 4 January 2022.

It comes after the vast number of brown hares, which are historically widespread across rural and farmland throughout the UK, have been rapidly declining in recent years.



The Country Land and Business Association (CLA), along with Hampshire Constabulary, has welcomed this news. The CLA represents thousands of farmers, landowners and rural businesses across Hampshire.

Regional Director Tim Bamford said: “Hare coursing is a despicable crime that so often blights rural communities across Hampshire. We have long argued for tougher sentences and more police powers to tackle these criminal gangs and are pleased that government has listened.

“Hare coursing is a global industry, with these criminal gangs often live streaming their cruelty for the purposes of illegal betting. Their crimes go hand in hand with other acts of wanton violence and vandalism and many of our members, who so often live in isolated communities, live in fear of being targeted. This clampdown is long overdue – and we need to hold government’s feet to the fire to ensure these reforms are implemented urgently.”

Donna Jones, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and Isle of Wight said: “The Government’s proposed measures to strengthen law enforcement for the cruel practice of hare coursing are to be welcomed. This is positive news for farmers and landowners across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

“These new laws will strengthen police powers and see tougher penalties. I look forward to seeing them implemented to put a stop to Hare Coursing and the criminal damage, intimidation and theft that can go alongside it.”

The CLA published in 2020 its 5-point action plan to combat hare coursing – [read more about it here](#).



The re-emergence of the Red Kite in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

One of the positive stories about our Hampshire birdlife is the return of the Red Kite to our open countryside. But for many years it was absent. In fact, it became extinct in England by the end of the 19th century because of human persecution. The last known Hampshire nest, from which the clutch of three eggs was taken, was found near Broughton in 1864.



However, an experimental reintroduction programme was initiated in 1989.

Young Red Kites were taken mainly from nests in Spain and released at sites in the Chilterns between 1989 and 1994.

Gradually the number of birds seen in Hampshire started to grow and in the early 2000s the number of Red Kites seen in Hampshire doubled every year – and now they are an everyday sight for many of us. In fact, the population in the county is now about 500 pairs and a further 1000 young birds.

Sadly, a few birds have been shot – perhaps because they occasionally snatch young game birds. Mostly Red Kites feed on roadkill. In fact, during the 2020 lockdowns road traffic declined steeply and Red Kites went hungry as fewer squirrels and rabbits became road casualties.

In Hampshire they are found in most areas of the open countryside, but are rarely seen in the New Forest. They particularly favour areas with sheep as they like to line their nests with wool. So far, relatively few have been seen on the Isle of Wight, but at least one pair breed.

Although they are becoming quite common, Red Kites are still strictly protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. This requires that visits to the vicinity of nests must only be undertaken by individuals who are licensed to do so by Natural England – so please do not approach a nest.



Deer tracking and recovery within rural areas across Hampshire

The welfare of deer is of great importance to The British Deer Society (BDS), be it conservation, deer management, research and much more.

Sadly, on occasions when a deer is managed out in the field it can sometimes run quite a distance after it has been shot, before it falls. It can take hours for a deer manager / stalker to find the deer, sometimes without success.

This is where the UK Deer Track and Recovery group (UKDTR) show their value and importance to rural communities across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, as well as across other parts of the UK.

For a number of years, the non-profit making organisation – consisting mainly of BDS members – have had volunteers tracking down wounded deer throughout the UK.

Training is given to the dog, and their handler, to a very high standard - whereby animals will be found quickly and efficiently. The dog is trained through the use of blood trails and is required to pass a number of assignments including a 3 hour test, as well as a scenario involving finding a trail after 20 hours.

This ensures that the dog has the ability to do the job efficiently, but also serves to make sure that the handler is capable and has the relevant training and experience required.



While the welfare of deer is also taken into consideration to make sure that it does not suffer for too long after being shot.

However, there are often rules put in place when conducting deer stalking including not entering private land without the landowners permission and not to be in possession of a firearm whilst out tracking.

Did you know that it is not just Bavarian and Hanoverian scent hounds that are used during deer tracking activities, Labradors and Retrievers can also be used to great effect.

You can find out more about the work that UK Deer Tracking and Recovery do and 'find a tracker' by visiting their website – www.ukdtr.co.uk.



Rural round up

Housing developer must pay more than £100,000 for destroying rare dormice habitat



A luxury housing developer has been ordered to pay more than £100,000 for destroying land that housed rare Hazel Dormice, in a first of its kind prosecution for Hampshire.

Police were contacted by Fareham Borough Council on 14 March 2019 with reports that the site, which is situated on land south of Rookery Avenue in Swanwick, had been cleared by a large machine.

Heavy track marks were evident at the site, and hedgerows and shrubs had been ripped up.

Landowners, Knightsgate (UK) Ltd, had contracted a tree surgeon to carry out the work, even though they had received an ecology report which made clear that protected species were onsite, and there were planning conditions at the site which included dormouse mitigation.

Following an investigation by Hampshire Constabulary's Country Watch Team, supported by local ecologists, the local planning authority and the People's Trust for Endangered Species, the company was charged with damaging/destroying a breeding site/resting place of a wild animal of a European protected species.

They admitted the offence at a previous court hearing at Portsmouth Magistrates' Court on 23 October 2020.

The court found that it had been at least a reckless act on the company's part, by failing to properly give instructions to the contractor about clearing the site.

On Wednesday 1 December, at a hearing at Portsmouth Crown Court, the company was handed a £40,000 fine. The court also made a confiscation order of £69,392.80 – the sum the company would have had to pay had they followed the recommendations of the ecology report.

PC Lynn Owen, from the Country Watch Team, said: "Dormice are a rare and protected species which we are very fortunate to have breeding in Hampshire.

"Their population has been decreasing dramatically in the UK over the last century, and this destruction of their habitat by Knightsgate has caused a devastating blow to the animals.

"We are pleased that this case has now concluded, and I hope this acts as a warning to anyone that operates in a manner that puts our vulnerable wildlife at risk that they will be dealt with robustly."

The tree surgeon, 29-year-old James Rolph from the Upham area of Hampshire, was previously sentenced on 23 October 2020 after admitting a charge of damaging/destroying a breeding site/resting place of a wild animal of a European protected species.



Man prosecuted for rural crimes and driving offences in Ringwood

Officers received reports of poaching offences on Saturday 2 February 2021 at around 4.25pm on a private farm close to Lower Bisterne Farm Estate in Ringwood.

A local resident, and gamekeeper of the Lower Bisterne Farm Estates, had spotted two men with an air rifle in a nearby field on the estate. The two men fled the scene onto Dragon Lane and encountered another local resident, who attempted to confront them, before having the air rifle aimed in his direction.

They then fled the scene in a vehicle, which was subsequently involved in a road traffic collision and failed to stop at the scene of the accident along Christchurch Road.

Following police enquiries, the a man was subsequently arrested and reported for summons on suspicion of numerous driving offences and possessing a loaded air weapon in public.

Oliver James Cooper, aged 28, of Somerford Road, Christchurch in Dorset appeared at Southampton Magistrates Court on 24 November 2021.

He was convicted of driving a vehicle without due care, driving with no insurance, failing to stop after a road accident and possessing an air weapon in a public place. Cooper was given an 18-month suspended sentence, electronically tagged for four months, ordered to complete 20 days rehabilitation and fined £5,000.

Operation Mountie launched to combat speeding vehicles in the New Forest

Over the course of five operations across the New Forest in recent months, our officers have stopped a total of 72 vehicles, in a bid to attempt to stop fatal collisions with wildlife on roads in the New Forest.

14 received tickets for speeding – while the remained received educational advice from our partner agencies – including Forestry England, National Park Authority, the Verderes, Agisters, New Forest District Council amongst others.



Three vehicles have been seized during these operations for a variety of offences including no insurance and having an invalid driving licence.

While, one driver was also given a ticket for having an invalid licence.

As part of the operation – a safety camera van is also utilised, and as a result has issued a further 112 penalty notices for speeding offences on Roger Penny Way, the B0379 and on the A31 between Stoney Cross and Emery Down.

Speed limits are in place for a reason – they are a maximum, not a target. It is simply not worth the risk, to you, your loved ones, or the animals which freely roam across the New Forest.



Four men arrested on suspicion of poaching offences in Upton Grey

Officers have arrested four men following reports of poaching near Upton Grey.

We were called just after 9pm on Thursday 6 January to reports that a vehicle had been spotted acting suspiciously on Bidden Road.

Officers attended the scene and found catapults, ball bearings and head torches after conducting a search of the local area.

Officers also found a quantity of dried blood and what appeared to be pheasant feathers inside a vehicle.

Four men were arrested at the scene.

A 36-year-old man and an 18-year-old man, both from Carshalton, were arrested on suspicion of trespassing on land at night and taking/destroying game.

While a 35-year-old man from Mitcham and a 30-year-old man from Hersham, were arrested on suspicion of trespassing on land at night and taking/destroying game.

All four men were released under investigation and our enquiries are ongoing.

Liss man arrested following joint operation between Hampshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police

Police officers from Hampshire Constabulary's Country Watch team supported Thames Valley Police's Rural Crime team on Wednesday 24 November in a joint operation.

It followed an investigation into a series of stolen horsebox trailers across the two Forces.

Officers were deployed to the Liss area at around 10.30am yesterday morning to confirm the presence of the horsebox by making use of their drone capabilities from a discreet distance.

Whilst observing activity, the drone located two men with the horseboxes and the registration numbers were confirmed by the drone operators, and the horseboxes were confirmed as stolen from the Thames Valley area. A quantity of money was then seen to be exchanged, a horsebox was then hooked up and towed offsite towards the A3.

The drone continued to track the vehicle movements co-ordinating police vehicles until it was stopped. The drone then returned to the site and confirmed the man receiving the money was still present; he was monitored until he was arrested by officers on the ground.

Three horseboxes and stolen items – believed to have spanned incidents from across the Thames Valley area were recovered as a result.

A 25-year-old man from Liss was arrested on suspicion of theft, theft of a motor vehicle and handling stolen goods. He was later released under investigation.



Crown Prosecutor rewarded with WWF Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition for services to wildlife crime



The WWF Lifetime Achievement Award recognises a person's dedication and effective collaboration with relevant agencies during their service.

This prestigious award was presented to Mark Gammon of the Crown Prosecution Service during the 32nd Annual Wildlife Crime Enforcers Conference back in December 2021.

It highlighted Mark's commitment, dedication and devotion to combating wildlife crime over a career which spanned 28 years; where he always sought to use his knowledge and expertise to influence others and resolve problems where the solutions weren't always clear and obvious.

In addition, Mark often advised policing colleagues around the complex, evolving world of wildlife crime investigations and prosecution matters.

Mark has been instrumental to the success of numerous wildlife prosecutions including securing one of the first convictions for the destruction of a bat roost, while also bringing to justice a gamekeeper who had trapped a Tawney Owl using an illegal set pole trap.

He has also ensured a string of other convictions, such as a man shooting an otter – which is a protected species – in front of holidaymakers in Dorset to poaching offences across Hampshire and securing a conviction against a property developer for destroying the habitat of dormice in Fareham.

Marks' enthusiasm, dedication and willingness to go that one-step further to secure a conviction makes him a deserved recipient of this Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dog owner ordered to sign Behavioural Contract following livestock worrying incident

We were called out at 3.18pm on Sunday 22 August following reports of livestock worrying in Newtown Road, Minstead.

A dog had escaped from its owner and attacked two sheep, which both subsequently died as a result of their injuries.

A 40-year-old man from Emery Down voluntarily attended an interview under caution at a police custody suite. He was later given a community resolution order – often given to first-time offenders without needing to take the matter to court.

The man was also ordered to sign a dog behaviour contract requiring them to keep their dog on a lead at all times when in a public place.

COUNTRY WATCH

Meet the team

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 Stuart Ross
07970 145099



PC Liam Porter



PC Nick Atkins



PC Will Butcher
07775 542982



PC Lee Stanbrook
07392 289466



**Police Staff Investigator
Hannah Levy**
07469 562472



PC Amy Giraudet
07787 004801



PC Matt Thelwell
07392 314410

Stockbridge

Alresford

Tadley

Aldershot

Bordon

Bishop's Waltham

Lyndhurst

Yarmouth

**Special Sergeant
Shane Phillips**



PC Lynn Owen
07901 102344

**Special Constable
Phil Keeling**
07392 289634

**Special Constable
Alex Corbishley**

**PCSO
Cat Quinn**

**Special Constable
Simon Gallear**



PC Ian Bassett
07775 537382



PC Martin Egerton
07968 098006

**PCSO
Karen Allen**

**PCSO
Justin Keefe**

**PCSO
Kevin Cooke**



Sgt Adam Brown
07795 051050



**Police Staff Investigator
Anna Presswell**
07469 562221



PC Mark Webb



**HAMPSHIRE
ALERT**

Receive FREE crime and community
information about where you live

Register at www.hampshirecountrywatch.co.uk

