



**Kent
Police**

PS Walshaw states

With the Harvest is full swing the team are preparing for the increase reports in relation to Hare Coursing with planned days of dedicated patrol. Since the turn of the year there has been a national drive to co-ordinate work with all police forces affected by this issue. As such Kent have now adopted the National Operation name of '**OP Galileo**'. If you have cause to report any Hare Coursing activity please quote this operation name.

**OPERATION
GALILEO**

ILLEGAL HARE COURSING

I am sure you have all seen the recent media following the NFU's 2018 report released this week, highlighting the National, Regional & Local increase in the cost of rural crime. It is important that the RTF continue building trust and confidence in the local communities. The team utilise specialist technology and social media to maximise community intelligence and reduce crime. The introduction of the Farm Watch Whats App is a prime example of how the community can and are assisting in the fight against rural crime. I can assure you that Kent police and the Rural Task force are committed to providing a first class service to the community. The team are dedicated to reducing crime and recovering stolen property whenever possible.

Since January 2019 the RTF have recovered numerous pieces of stolen plant, and farm machinery with a total value of £370,000 and only on 5.8.19 (the day of the release) Kent Police colleagues based at the Longport arrested a lorry driver attempting to leave the UK and seized 2 stolen Gators contained in his lorry. The case remains under investigation.

Here is a snapshot of the work carried out by the Rural Liaison Team (RLT) over the last six weeks.

Theft

Pc Williams responded to a theft of a tractor. The tractor was fitted with a Tracker and it was located and seized from behind HOPE AND ANCHOR PUB, ASH ROAD, The pub is vacant and supposed to be secure. Locks have been removed from metal Gates's allowing access to the rear and the tractor located hidden behind fence panels estimated value £15000. Tractor was recovered and a crime report created for the theft. Investigation is on-going.



Due to the seasonal theft of fruit PC's Perry and Moody conducted patrols around the Goodnestone and Faversham areas checking Farms and making sure that no suspicious persons or vehicles were on sites. An insecure Farm was found at Goodnestone so it was locked and crime prevention advice given.

Officers responded Theft of trailer from Bull Lane Newington. Victim witnessed his trailer with ride on mower being stolen from his yard. No person or vehicle description. RTF attended and searched woods and fields in the general location but trailer not located.

PC Southern responded to a report via Farm Watch from a concerned Depot owner at Sittingbourne following a Suspicious Event involving a Ford Transit. CCTV was checked and that gave an index and enquires made by PC Southern confirmed vehicle previously involved in theft activity. Vehicle has been added to ANPR and is a target for the RTF.



PC Southern was made aware of a Tracker activation on a stolen on to a Bailey Senator Arizona Towing Caravan that had been stolen in the early hours 16/07/2019 from Tonbridge. The Caravan had a tracker on it from Tracker UK. The Tracker activated near to a location close to the A249 Stockbury. PC SOUTHERN and PC WILLIAMS attended the location a perimeter check was completed. The stolen caravan could be seen in a Barn at the rear of the site. Officers entered the site and confirmed it to be the stolen Caravan. A male suspect was located on the site and was arrested on suspicion of Handling Stolen Goods. After arrest a full search was undertaken and a number of items seized from the location including a Mitsubishi Shogun, 2 suspected stolen IFOR Williams Trailers, 2 Ford Transits, and a John Deere Gator. These were all seized either confirmed stolen or suspected stolen.





East and North Division RTF Officers Worked together to search for Peugeot Bipper Van which had been linked to 3 rural crime reports, Theft in Canterbury area, Theft in Ashford Rural, and Theft in Elham. Vehicle located on Lynsted Lane (Stanhope Estate) Ashford. Vehicle seized as used in crime. The investigating officers have been updated and enquires continue.



Officers from the Rural Task Force attended a plot of land located at MARDEN, following information that a tracker activation on a stolen static generator was activating at the site. This generator was stolen from a MORRISONS PETROL STATION in CHATHAM on 01/07/2019. In addition to the stolen Generator the team located stolen vehicles and machinery with an estimated value of £32,500.



RTF officers attended a disused pub in Ash where a suspected stolen trailer and generator were located. Both were recovered for vehicle examination, value believed to be £15,000.



PC Pennicott arranged for extra security measure to be fitted for a company in Lenham, after it was subject to 4 burglary attempts. On the 11th July the security measures in place activated, patrols attended to find two males in the area. Both males stated they were looking for their lost dog. They were both arrested for Attempt Arson, Attempt Theft and their vehicle recovered.

PC Moody received contact from a victim about a break in Westwell where garage door was ripped open and several unique bikes stolen. A suspicious white van was seen in the area, photos of bikes circulated on Farm Watch along with the suspicious vehicle.



Information received via the Farm Watch Whats App. A walker had located a dumper truck hidden up in woods off a byway In Chilham, Canterbury. After calling for assistance from nearby Farm Manager with tractor and chainsaw. A Benford White Dumper valued at 2-4 k was recovered from woods. It still had the Livery of the owner visible. The vehicle had ignition isolator damage. The owner was contacted by the team and confirmed the truck was stolen from a building site in Canterbury overnight a few days before.



Two new Pumps were located by a railway bridge near Snowdown Colliery these were suspect stolen and were seized for identification. Enquiries have revealed that the Pumps are owned by a Groundworks company in Aylesham, Canterbury.

The owner confirmed the Pumps are used at a Water Treatment Plant for purifying waste water. They were stolen on 05/07/2019 from a Building Development in Woodnesborough and were valued at £2,200 in total.



CALLAGHAN attended a property in Dover and spoke to the owner who reported that a container next to his Garage had been broken into and four KTM Motorcycles had been stolen, to the combined value of £10,000.



Images of three of the stolen KTM's.

PC's Callaghan and Sutton carried out a follow up to report of the Theft of a Land Rover Defender. This is the Second Defender in this area stolen in the past few weeks



Spoke to the victim who confirmed the circumstances of the report. Confirms the vehicle was fitted with a tracker but it appears it had been disabled at the time of the Theft. Officers carried out local enquiries and located a witness who was aware of the Theft. Investigation continues.

Rural

Officers were contacted by a Farmer in the Barham area who reported that on 25th July 2019 KFRS were called to a Hay Stack on Fire in their field. Enquiries at the scene revealed that the fire was an Arson as burnt newspaper was found stuffed between the Bales. Details obtained for a Crime Report.



Op Traverse (Fish Poaching)

PC Callaghan and Sutton dealt with a historic report of illegal fishing at RSPB Dungeness they have provide a vehicle registration from which the owner was identified. Officers' attended the owners address and he confirmed he had been fishing at the location in the past. RSPB just want suspect spoken to, he was warned about illegally fishing at the location and that if he did return he would be interviewed under caution.

PC's Perry and Moody were on patrol in Cliffs Wood area when they stopped a vehicle heading down to the Cliffe Pools RSPB reserve, the occupants were Bulgarian and had fishing equipment in the vehicle. Details obtained and advice given regarding fishing with a licence and the Environment Agency have been provided with details.

PC Moody is dealing with a report from Rother Fisheries bailiff for the Royal Military Canal that of a small white van attending the Blackwall Bridge, between Wittersham and Peasmarsch. The occupants have been seen to remove fish from the river, gut them on the bank, and place them in the vehicle. Investigation continues to identify the vehicle.

PC Goodsall attended Raspberry Hill Lane, Sittingbourne regarding illegal fishing. At the Location. The game keeper showed him around the 300 acre site which was bordered by the Stangate Creek. Over the last couple of week 2 small boats have travelled up the creek and put nets over board. It believed that they have caught around 40-50 fish BASS & MULLET. Enquires are all going.



PC Williams received a report of two dinghies poaching fish by gill netting in Stangate Creek, Iwade. Contact made with IFCA and confirmed location is not protected fishing area. Further enquiries to be made to identify fisherman and confirm the fishing legitimately.

Lullingstone Castle. Chairman of the committee has over the last few weeks had poaching offences taking place at the lakes. This is fly fishing lake for Brown trout all legal fisherman should show identification and fishing licence with a Kingfisher on. Informant believes local residents are brazen and walk past the castle and openly fish on the lakes. The RTF are working with the Environmental Agency around enforcement action.

PC's Pennicott and Smith attended a site at Paddock Wood in relation to fish poaching. A vehicle registered to the site has been fishing illegally on private stretch of River Teise, Horsmonden on two occasions. The officers spoken to a male who denied any knowledge of the vehicle but appeared to have lots of information about the incidents. The male was issued with a formal warning letter.

OP Galileo (Hare Coursing)

PC Callaghan and Sutton attended Ancient Highway, Deal to a report of a male with two lurchers Hare Coursing in a field between Sandwich and Deal. Witness spotted the male set the Dogs on a Hare and captured video evidence, which will be reviewed at a later date. A red Citroen Berlingo Panel Van was located at the scene locked and secure. The vehicle was said to be owned by the male with the Lurchers. However he did not return to scene. The male was said to be connected with a second vehicle, which was also at scene, a silver Ford Transit Panel Van. Enquiries to be carried out in slow time including the review of the Video evidence. Extensive area search carried out without success, enquires on going.



RTF Officers conducted follow up enquiries in relation to approximately £20,000 of damage to pheasant pens in Frittenden, believed to have been committed by animal rights activists. Victim reported information on Facebook by a group claiming responsibility for the damage. Investigating Team have been updated with this and RTF will be working closely with Victim to assist with investigation and provide support.

PC Moody received a call in relation to the recent disposal of five hares in the vicinity of the A20 at Charing. Parked in the carpark of a nearby Public Houser is a Honda CRV. The vehicle is untaxed and uninsured. The interior was heavily blood stained and had evidence of dog hair. Both windows were smashed.



PC Southern dealing with an arson at pheasant gaming pens on 14/07/2019. An exam paper found at the pens has a name of a student from a nearby school on it. PC Southern located the address for this student and attended his home address. The student stated that he and his friends had nothing to do with the damage to Pheasant pens. However he admitted to be part of the group with the bonfire. Stated he and some friends went to the location to burn some of their school work after finishing exams hence the Exam paper being left at scene. Liaised with the victim who was happy with words of advice to be given which was done so.

Livestock

PC Perry and Moody attended a report of a sheep killed at Bethersden. A second sheep was attacked during the same incident. The three dogs involved have been identified as has the owner. One dog is a male Akita, and the two others are the offspring, 6 month old Akita x Rottweilers. This is an ongoing investigation.

The team responded to a livestock worrying incident in Charing where a lamb was killed by two dogs. A neighbour witnessed the dogs in the field and described them as lurcher type dogs, one grey/white and one brown/white. DNA swabs have been taken from the deceased lamb, a blue Texel, valued at £300.00. Enquires are ongoing to identify the dogs.

PC SUTTON and PC SOUTHERN attended a farm in Shottenden, to speak with the owner following the killing of one of his Sheep by a Dog that had been kept at scene by the Farmer.

Photographs were been obtained, along with DNA swabs obtained from the dog and deceased sheep.

A Husky had escaped from its home address and has run across the fields. One sheep has been attacked causing injuries to the neck, front leg and lower abdomen. The sheep has had to be put to sleep. Community Resolution has been agreed between Victim and Offender, with the owner of the dog paying £250 for damages and cost of disposal.



PC Verrall dealing with a sheep worrying incident. Informant is victim three times and twice over two days one lamb with broken leg and two with bites to face, neck and cheek. No forensic availability as animals taken to vets. Awaiting photographs by the victim. Posters being sent out to fix to her fencing. No dog identified as yet.

PC's Callaghan and Sutton responded to an ANPR activation on a Romanian registered black Mercedes Sprinter Panel Van.



The vehicle had a marker on it relating to the Theft and Mutilation of Sheep in Warwickshire.

Driver and Passenger details obtained through language line, identity confirmed via Drivers Licence and ID Card and Warwickshire Police updated so that they can progress their investigation.

Wildlife

Officers attended report of possible destruction of a pond containing a Great Crested Newt habitat near a building development at Headcorn. The development borders one side of the pond and turf has been removed from this area up to the pond bank. This is only on a very small area and within the boundary line of the development. The rest of the pond is fully intact and within an already developed area. Enquiries on-going.



Report of nesting bird disturbance at Teston. RTF Officers attended address, landowner spoken to and site checked. All work has been carried out correctly and no offences disclosed.

Report of occupant at an address at Cranbrook leaving out flapjacks with aspirin in which is believed to be being eaten by a nearby Badger Sett. West Kent Badger Group have confirmed that this is unlikely to have any impact unless the animals eat significant amounts of them. Occupant of address believed connected to incident spoken to and further enquires on-going with other residents to establish who is responsible and why.

PC Southern responded to a report that birds nesting in trees in Ham Road Faversham have been cut down. He spoke to informant over the phone who confirmed the tree felling stopped yesterday after councillors become involved as an order is in place for no tree felling until 31/08/2019. Enquiries are on-going to establish the Company responsible for the cutting the trees down.

PC Southern dealt with a call in relation to damage of a potential Badger Set in Borden. Walk of the field with Farmer who owned the land and holes located at a field. Suspect these to be foxes holes rather than Badgers as quiet small. Farmer states they having big issues with foxes at the moment so staff are on site trying to shoot the foxes and categorically not badgers



PC's Pennicott and Smith attended an address at Cranbrook regarding possible badger habitat destruction. Work being carried out by local Housing Authority with the guidance of the West Kent Badgers Trust. All work appears to be being carried lawfully and no offences disclosed.



PC Sutton visited a Kent based Auction company in relation to an Online Crime Report of the sale of a taxidermy Kuhl's pipistrelle bat. It is an offence to offer for sale under the habitat and species regulations 2017. He spoke to the owner who stated he had been contacted about the bat and made a number of enquires with different organisation who advised him that the bat was not protected. Following advice from the Bat Conservation Trust the owner has been given words of advice. He has also contacted the buyer of the item and advised them that it cannot be re sold. Team details have been passed and advised if a similar situation arises to contact the team for advice. Image below from Auction house website.



Op Assist

RTF contacted regarding fly tipping in progress at Reculver. A local farmer had been alerted, and had blocked the only access route out of the location. Pc WILLIAMS, PERRY, and MOODY attended. An area search of the caravan park located the vehicle, minus the occupants. Search and Marine Unit attended and the drone was deployed for a search of the area, and an extensive search was made of the caravan park. The occupants of the vehicle had purchased drinks in the café nearby, and CCTV footage will be available to officers. The vehicle has been seized.





PC's Pennicott and Smith stopped a Ford Transit seen stationary in passing point with green waste hanging out of rear doors. Occupant identified and stated that the waste was from his mother's HA and he was taking it to a family farm to burn. Upon viewing the rear of the van a mattress and other general waste was also seen. Details passed on to MBC waste crime team.



4 Officers from the RTF joined up with Maidstone Borough Council Enforcement Officers targeting fly tipping and the illegal transfer of waste for an early evening operation. 12 vehicles were stopped, two of which were seized for fly tipping/waste carrying offences. Both drivers of these vehicles will be interviewed under Caution by Maidstone Borough Council and will receive either £300 fixed penalties or summonsed to court.



Rural Task Force carried out a Joint operation with Sevenoaks District Council targeting fly tipping and the illegal transfer of waste. Sevenoaks District Council had been approached by BBC South East to film this as part of the potential increase in fly tipping as a result of Refuse Sites charging for waste to be deposited. BBC South East were present during the Operation.



As part of this Operation Assist officers attended an address in Sevenoaks to locate a male who was wanted on warrant for fly tipping offences. Enquiries were made with his mother at the address who initially claimed he was not present and had not seen him since the previous day. Due to inconsistencies in her story and the fact that his car was on the driveway the address was entered and she admitted he was there but was not located. The neighbouring properties were checked and he was located in garden shed of neighbouring property and arrested.

A number of vehicles were stopped and fly tipping hot spot locations visited with a number of nominal active in fly tipping and other offences stopped.

RTF officers attended reports of a recent fly tipping in Bicknor and Wormshill area of Maidstone and liaised with local land owners regarding the ongoing issues. Maidstone and Swale Borough Council enforcements officers aware and enquires on going.



Community Engagement

Kent Police Open Day was held for three days from the 28th to 30th June at Kent Police Coleage. The Rural Team shared a margquee on the site with our colleagues from Citizens in Policing and we had support from the RSPCA, Maidstone Borough Council, Canterbury Archaeological Trust and the Angling Trust. The event showcased how we work in partnership to deal with Rural, Wildlife, Environmental and Heritage Crime. The 30th June was open to the public and 7,500 visitors attended the event.



Following on from the Kent Police Open Event the Rural Task Force were represented at the Kent County Show at Detling for all 3 days. The Rural Task Team supported the Police Crime Commissioner Stand at the event and there were 4 RTF Officers present each day. Not only did the Team have a lot of interest from their stand they took the opportunity to visit Partners and other Exhibitors to promote the work the RTF undertake to support the Rural Community.





Doug Robertson gave a Rural Task Force presentation at a Rural Police Forum at Tenterden Town Hall on the 11th July. The audience comprised of Parish Councillors from the 19 neighbouring parishes. FarmWatch was discussed and 3 new members registered.

Other Business

Two suspicious vehicles were witnessed being driven on A2 towards Canterbury with one of the vehicles containing a ride on lawn mower. Both stopped in Boughton-under-Blean containing Romanian nationals on their way back to Romania. Neither driver insured and one of the drivers was disqualified. Both vehicles seized and disqualified driver reported for summons.



PC Callaghan and Sutton attended a Farm in Denton regarding two suspicious vehicles seen at the Village Hall, a silver Dodge and a blue Audi. Two males from the vehicles were trying to get into the village hall and made off when challenged. Indexes of the two vehicles have been obtained and enquires are ongoing.

PC's Southern, Goodsall and Sutton were tasked to attend an address, Canterbury, Kent in relation to a Section 135 MHA Warrant in relation to a male with deteriorating mental health issues who had been assessed as posing a threat to medical staff. They attended with AMPH's and Doctors from the Mental Health Team. Due to the male walking outside of his home address the S135 Warrant did not take place inside his place of residence. He was assessed outside by the Mental Health Team and deemed not needing to be detained and best course of action is for him to receive care within the community.

Officers from our East Team responded to a report of a UXB located by workmen building an extension to a property in Lymbridge Green, Stowting. The officers attended and evacuated the neighbouring properties, and placed road closures to protect the public. EOD attended from Shornecliffe Barracks. They confirmed the item was a WW2 device, likely to be a smoke grenade which was safely disposed by EOD.

Kind regards, Darren Walshaw

07870 252185 or darren.walshaw@kent.police.uk

Follow the team on Twitter **@ Kent Police Rural**

Team Email : Rural.Task.Force@kent.police.uk