

Newsletter

The Hub



Herefordshire Police

July 2020

Welcome to July's edition of '**The Hub**' newsletter published by the Police in Herefordshire for the benefit of the people who live, work and visit Herefordshire. Frank, informative and full of advice, we welcome your feedback, questions or any other comments you may like to make.

Again, a huge thanks to those who took the time to comment and for those that made the suggestion you will note the font is larger! So to the question of the month:-



*What are the rules on using CCTV at home now there is a new Data Protection Act?
Are they legal?*

Great question and one I get asked a lot, there are many domestic CCTV systems on the market to help you protect your home. If you're thinking of using one, you need to make sure you do so in a way that respects other people's privacy. If you set up your system so it captures only images within the boundary of your private domestic property (including your garden), then the data protection laws will not apply to you. However, for a fuller read off the Information Commissioners Office website please go to <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-for-people-using-cctv/>

As I write this newsletter Herefordshire makes the news for 70+ people testing positive for COVID-19 at a business premises which brings home the facts that it remains a threat. So the message is simply maintain social distancing as outlined within the government guidance.

Coronavirus (Covid-19): Please only call 999 if it is an emergency. If it's not an emergency, use our online services if you can. Please only contact us about a social distancing violation if you think there is a serious breach of the rules.

- [Our information and advice on coronavirus and policing](#)
- [Government coronavirus guidance on Gov.uk](#)
- [Tell us about a possible breach of coronavirus \(Covid-19\) measures](#)

URGENT ALERT



Officers are investigating a number of house burglaries and burglaries in other buildings.

We are particularly keen to alert the public to a SILVER AUDI TT hardtop motor car that appears to change its number plates frequently for those belonging to legitimate users (as per the image below which incidentally, is the actual vehicle).

If you see this vehicle and/or its occupants acting suspiciously please call 999.

Remember, the number on the vehicle in this image belongs to a legitimate user and is likely to change.

Brambles Blog



Always despicable and very sad when crime involves animals and we have had a case of the Theft of working dogs in the County. Thankfully rare, very rare but nonetheless very upsetting for the owners.

Just as a reminder all dogs over 8 weeks old must be microchipped which will assist in returning lost dogs to their owners. Also, there are some very good pet tracking devices on the market. Just Google 'Dog Tracker'. Some of them will monitor just how much exercise they (and their human!) are actually getting.

Wildlife Crime in general is a national Policing priority and we have specially trained wildlife crime officers in Herefordshire who will work with a range of organisations such as RSPB & RSPCA for example to investigate and ultimately bring to justice those who mistreat wildlife.

But before it gets to that stage, we seek to disrupt and deter those offenders. One way of doing that is our very successful anti-poaching operations with the support of landowners and assisted by the Special Constabulary, the Herefordshire Rural & Business Crime Team conduct regular (and unannounced) operations at known hotspots.

If you have any information about Wildlife Crime contact the team on the details below.



Rural & Business Crime Officer Pc Meek with one of the new Farm initiative signs that are just one aspect of a package of measures for Farms



Below is one of the signs on an access road to a Herefordshire village



We Don't Buy Crime is West Mercia Police's response to acquisitive crime – crimes such as burglary and theft – and the associated harm it causes. These crimes can have a long lasting impact on victims, it can often leave someone feeling unsafe in their own home, and where possessions that have emotional attachment are stolen it can be heart-breaking.

The initiative continues to receive funding and support from West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion.

It began in 2015 where the Police supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner and a local parish council, provided each resident with a SmartWater Forensic Property Marking kit.

Signs were put in place in key locations warning criminals the parish had taken crime prevention measures. The initiative was so successful it was implemented in other towns and villages across the counties covered by West Mercia Police and we now have hundreds of towns and villages in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire signed up to the initiative.

Today, **We Don't Buy Crime** has five key strands along with our towns and villages, we work with second hand stores and fuel stations, deploy covert tactics, and more recently look at ways our local communities can help tackle associated harm including criminal exploitation and vulnerability. But it doesn't stop there....

A brand new trial scheme for farms has recently been launched and all of these aspects are designed to aim to put criminals out of business. We really do want to help communities make sure they are best placed to look after themselves and each other.



A busy Sth Herefordshire fuel station manager recently sent this email

*Hi Paul,
Hope you and the family are all safe and well.
I think you are right, the signage has definitely worked. Our drive off quantities has drastically reduced.*

Not completely stopped but less is better than normal.

Kind regards

*S******

So, **We Don't Buy Crime** is one of a number of many practical measures that we use to help prevent crime such as bespoke crime prevention/security advice, Watch schemes, offender interventions, Policing operations, targeted patrols and much more.

The Rural & Business Crime Officer will arrange with you to visit your property and provide you with security advice.

A recent victim of a residential burglary following a security survey emailed to say,

*"Just to say that I have contacted ***** and they are coming for a site visit. Thank you for your expert advice and invaluable information which has proved to be very useful for attempting to make the house as secure as possible. I will keep in touch if that is OK, to let you know how things are progressing. Once again, Thank you
Best wishes Steve "*

A recent repeat victim of a farm burglary following a security survey and having been updated about his farm being patrolled at night by the Rural & Business Crime Team emailed to say,

"That's brilliant Officers thank you.....we will also keep an eye out for any sign of life (at night) Thank you once again. W."



Don't wait until something happens before you take some free advice. Contact your local Policing team or your Rural & Business Crime Team and get that advice.



If becoming one of the We Don't Buy Crime Smartwater Towns or villages is of interest contact the We Don't Buy Crime Team on wedontbuycrime@westmercia.pnn.police.uk or speak to your Rural & Business Crime Team



Reduce the value and increase the risk to the Thief by security marking your property. Speak to your local policing team or the Rural & Business Crime Team for further information.....in some cases we will do it and there will be no cost to you.

The Rural & Business Crime Team

Sarah Smith, John Meek & Paul Crumpton work across Herefordshire as part of a larger dedicated problem solving team and are supported, not just by Special Constables and volunteers but also by members of the public. Their message to you is,

"Please, please, please report suspicious activity, people or vehicles"

No matter how insignificant you might think it is, if it is suspicious to you, it probably is so let us know at the time

For a confidential conversation with Sarah, John or Paul direct contact them on

WDBC RBO Pc John Meek 07773 044234
WDBC RBO Pc Sarah Smith 07773 047243
RBO Paul Crumpton 07773 044781

john.meek@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
sarah.smith@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
paul.crumpton@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

Also, **REPORT CRIME!** We know not all crime is reported to us, and we know the many reasons for that which includes frustration.



You can now report non-emergency crimes on the **West Mercia Police website** as well as 999 or 101

(Click on the word 'website' and it will take you straight to it – you may need to hover and press CTRL + CLICK together)

If you have any information regarding any crime you can contact police on 101, in an emergency please dial 999.

You can also contact Crime stoppers on **0800 555 111** to report any crime or criminal activity anonymously.

So, what sort of things were they up to in June?



A regular feature is a little pictorial taster of the sort of things we have been up to in the month. Clockwise from left to right

- Providing Crime Prevention advice including the **WE DON'T BUY CRIME** signage & Smartwater to Farms
- Yes, many more of the same because it has an impact.
- With a landowner looking for reported illegal fishing having trespassed on their land
- Looking at a little Cannabis crop here.....looks like a lot of old 'weed' to me!
- Security marking bikes with Smartwater
- Night patrol in remote rural locations
- Day patrol at Heritage sites
- Returning a recovered stolen Quad to a happy owner
- Backing up the **WE DON'T BUY CRIME** scheme with some night patrols

These are just snippets of activity interspersed with numerous crime reduction surveys at people's homes, businesses, farms, stables etc... and as importantly a constant focus on the individuals (yes, we know who the suspects are) who are causing most acquisitive harm to our communities. So arrests, interviews, charges and file submissions that are ready for court all go on in the background of Policing.

The Rural Nuisance – Off road Riding/Driving

It might be a bit of fun to those that do it, but as you know the use of off-road bikes, cars and other motorised vehicles across land, fields and other areas is a nuisance causing damage to crops, the landscape and on occasions frightening stock.

So how do the Police tackle this problem?

Legislation is in place to give a driver of a vehicle a formal warning that remains in place for 12 months. This warning is based on the following criteria

- *The driving is careless or inconsiderate*

Or

- *The vehicle has been driven on common land, moorland or land that is not part of a road, footpath of bridleway*

AND

- *The manner of the driving has caused or is causing or is likely to cause alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public.*

So what is needed from you?

Best evidence is that if you see the vehicle being used, take the vehicle details - the type and colour of the vehicle and its registration - or even film/record what is happening.

Then report it to the Police – on line through www.westmercia.police.uk or by calling '101'

The Police will follow up your call – quite simply all they need is a written record of what you have seen and how it has affected you.

The Police will find the owner of the car, establish who was driving it and issue them with this written warning. A 'shot across the bows' telling them to stop or further action will be taken

The effect of this warning is two-fold.

It is recorded against the driver and also against the car on the Police National Computer.

This means if the same car – even if being driven by someone else – or the same driver driving another vehicle is found in anti-social driving circumstances within the 12 month period and the issues meet the criteria, the Police can and almost always seize that vehicle, taking it off the road costing the owner quite a bit of money to get it back.

Additionally if damage is caused by those driving/riding across your land, this will be investigated alongside the use of this process.

This process applies across England and Wales and does work.



The Cyber Crook

I need to repeat NHS test and trace - fraud awareness because PEOPLE ARE BEING SCAMMED

If NHS Test and Trace calls you by phone, the service will be using a single phone number 0300 0135 000. The only website the service will ask you to visit is <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk>.

Contact tracers will never:

- Ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to us (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- Ask you to make any form of payment
- Ask for any details about your bank account
- Ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts
- Ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- Ask you to purchase a product
- Ask you to download any software to your device or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet
- Ask you to access any website that does not belong to the Government or NHS

If you think you have been subjected to, or a victim of, a scam or attempted fraud using Track and Trace or any other fraud please call 101 or contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040. If you or someone else is in immediate danger or risk of harm dial 999 now

At last! There is now one email address you can report suspicious emails too

Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) report@phishing.gov.uk

Please be aware and remain vigilant of phishing emails. One of the many scam emails currently in circulation purports to be from the TV Licensing advising to cancel direct debits. These messages may look like the real thing but are malicious. Once clicked, you are sent to a dodgy website which could download viruses onto your computer, or steal your passwords. The criminal's goal is to convince you to click on the links within their scam email or text message, or to give away sensitive information (such as bank details).

If you receive an email which you're not quite sure about, forward it to the Suspicious Email report@phishing.gov.uk

For further information and advice please go to:

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/suspicious-email-actions>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/about-ncsc/what-is-cyber-security>

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

<https://staysafeonline.org/stay-safe-online/>

Stay Safe. Stay Connected. Stay Cyber Aware!



Treat Passwords like underwear, use once and never share!

Who uses the same password more than once? - **DON'T!**

Who uses a one word password with a capital letter at the front and a number at the end?? For example, 'Password1' - **DON'T!**

A password should be easy to remember and difficult to guess.....try this.

Think about 3 random words + 3 random numbers + 3 random symbols.

Now choose 2 words + 3 numbers + 3 symbols

I am going to choose by way of example:-

Rum Fence 248 !?!

Now I am going to insert my 3rd word which will be the name of the site I want to log on to. So my passwords could look like this

Rum WAITROSE Fence 248 !?!

Rum DOCTORS Fence 248 !?!

Rum AMAZON Fence 248 !?!

So, as long as your words are RANDOM...not a favourite auntie or pets name, your numbers & symbols are random too, you 'should' be able to remember your master random password and insert the name of the site you want to access and never use the same password twice, and have an easy to remember password that is difficult to guess!!...phew!

Note to all – Do not use the actual example above for obvious reasons ☺

Crime Prevention Tactics

This final section features one of a series of articles to help you help yourself in preventing or reducing the opportunity for crime.

It begins with a basic Routine Activity Theory which simply states:

For any crime to happen you need just 3 things

- A suitable target (something to steal, something to damage or someone to hurt)
- A motivated offender (A crook!)
- The absence of a capable guardian (someone to stop it happening, something to stop it happening)

So if you remove just one of those 3 things, you have no crime.

To understand how we can all help each other in preventing or reducing crime, we are going to use something called the 10 Principles of Crime Reduction. We have looked at Surveillance & Access Control in previous articles and this month we are going to look at **REMOVING THE MEANS TO COMMIT CRIME**

Removing the means (to commit crime) in the World of Crime Prevention is promoting good housekeeping practices to ensure that material capable of being used to help the criminal commit crime is not left lying around with easy access.

In short, don't make it easy for the crook to steal

Take a look at the picture below and what can you see?



In this example the crook can see opportunity, and it's this opportunity that we can remove...and at little or no cost!

Garden tools to use as levers to force open doors along with ladders enabling access over locked gates/fences to rear gardens or a flat roof and missing from this picture but none the less a useful thief's tool is the wheelie bin...Perfect to climb on.

Keys left in door/window locks or vehicle ignitions or shed locks or garage door locks present a low risk opportunity to the crook

Now think about your own situation.

Thinking REMOVING THE MEANS what might you consider?

My advice at a house burglary victim yesterday was to secure the garden tools away in a brick sided out house they had with a lockable door.

Wherever possible position wheelie bins out of sight from the public and where you can, on bin day, get them in off the side of the road as soon as they have been emptied.

With ladders, lay them down rather than standing up and visible over the top of fences

Well that's it!

Thank you for taking the time to read this and if you have any feedback good and bad or suggestions for articles or information you would like covered please contact me on the details below.

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Facebook: look for us at Your Rural Matters and Your Business Matt

I will respond to your email as soon as possible.

If you are contacting me in relation to an emergency please call 999 or the alternative emergency number 112; for the deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired call 18000 to use [Next Generation Text Service](#); or use [emergencySMS](#); or please visit our website to report crime and other matters online www.westmercia.police.uk.

On our website you can

- Report a non emergency incident www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/
- Find about your Safer Neighbourhood Team and what's happening in your area www.westmercia.police.uk/a/your-area/
- Find advice and information www.westmercia.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/
- Submit compliments or complaints www.westmercia.police.uk/fo/feedback/tc/thanks-and-complaints/

