



Waverley Rural Newsletter

JULY 2022

Rural Crime Police Community Support Officer Dave Boxall



I am writing this on what may be the hottest day of the year, possibly ever, in the UK. We are currently receiving many reports of people potentially causing fires on public access land through the use of disposable barbecues, especially in the Frensham area. Only last week we had a fire at Frensham little Pond, and also at Hankley Common.

You do not need me to remind you that everything is tinder dry at the moment and it only takes one thing to cause devastation of a similar scale to the previous large fire at Thursley Common and Elstead.

Needless to say such fires are a very real danger to people and properties but they also decimate flora and wildlife that takes many years to recover.

With the school holidays coming up, and more people about, please be more vigilant and careful.

Regards, Dave Boxall

P.S. Since writing this we have now had a major fire at Hankley Common that I am sure you have all seen in the news so please be vigilant!

Waverley Rural Crime JUNE 2022

During the month of May there were 4 recorded reports of rural crime* in Waverley as follows :-

- 2 x abandoned or loose horses.
- 1 x Poaching and criminal damage.
- 1 x Catalytic converter theft on an agricultural business vehicle

Please continue to report crimes to Surrey Police or CrimeStoppers as we still believe rural crime is under reported. Reports help us build a picture of what is happening in the community.

*As a reminder rural crime tends to fall into one of four categories described below. It is related to the type of crime rather than simply the location. **Only Incidents that are recorded as crimes are included in this report and not all incidents reported to Surrey Police.**

Regardless of knowing these categories we encourage all crimes to be reported either directly to the police or via another charity or organization such as Crimestoppers.

- **Agricultural** - Agricultural crime covers working farms, farm machinery, farm buildings and smallholdings. Offences include theft of equipment or, damage to property and livestock worrying.
- **Equine** - Equine crime covers working stables and equestrian centres and includes offences like tack theft and livestock worrying.
- **Wildlife** - Wildlife crime includes hare coursing, poaching and interfering with protected species. You can find out more about wildlife crime here :- <https://www.surrey.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rc/rural-crime/>
- **Heritage** - Heritage crime is defined as 'any offence which harms the value of England's heritage assets and their settings to this and future generations'. That can include offences like lead theft from churches, damage to ancient monuments and illegal metal detecting.

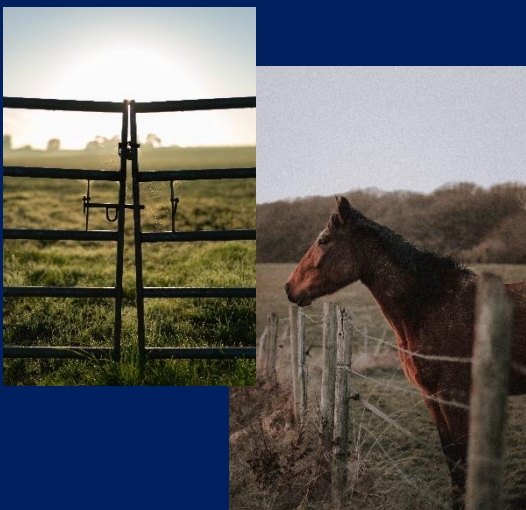
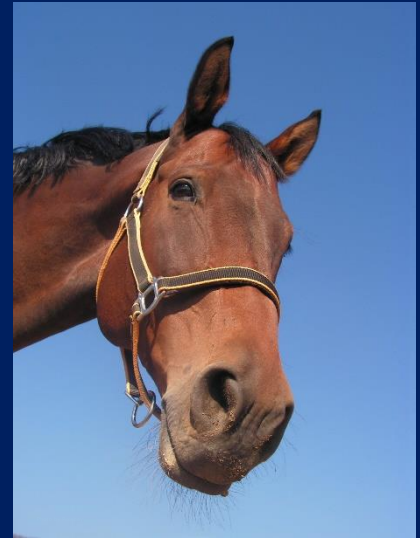
Often **environmental crime** takes place in rural locations, which covers illegal waste dumping, fly tipping, polluting watercourses and land.



Loose & Abandoned Horses

We have seen an increase in the number of loose or abandoned horses last month so here are some key points on this topic.

- It is now law that all horses have micro chips and Equine passports.
- It is a criminal offence to allow livestock (which includes horses) to stray on the highway. The reason for this is that they present a danger to themselves and other road users. If you ever witness horses loose on the highway please call 999 so we can try to contain them.
- If the horse has been abandoned or deliberately left to graze on your land, this is called 'Fly Grazing' and is a civil issue, which we will not be able to help you with. Under The Control of Horses Act 2015 you actually become responsible for the horses on your land. We understand that is difficult for people to deal with so here are some points that will help you:-
 - Please visit <https://www.bhs.org.uk/advice-and-information/the-law/abandonment-and-fly-grazing> This is a great website with good advice on how to move forward with the situation responsibly and effectively.
 - The above website explains the legislation and gives examples of the notices that the landowner has to put up and the amount of time they have to give.
 - It is a good piece of legislation that if used swiftly can be very effective.
- If Fly Grazing is happening on public land and there is no public safety issue, you should report this to Surrey County Council.



To prevent abandonment or fly grazing on your land then you should take the following steps.

- Livery yard operators should draw up proper contracts with owners.
- Control and ensure good security on gates and boundaries where access may be gained into fields or paddocks.
- Make regular checks of you fields and paddocks.

If Fly Grazing is an ongoing issue for land owners, please get in contact with your local Safer Neighbourhood Team and we can look to give you some advice on how to better secure your land.



Badgers and their setts

With the good weather with us then many people are out enjoying our Waverley countryside. This increases the likelihood of some common wildlife issues that we see at this time of year. One of which is related to Badgers and their setts.

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, it is an offence to damage, destroy or block access to a badger sett, or to disturb badgers in their setts. This can be either malicious or simply due to negligence. Malicious damage could be signs of Badger Baiting and should be reported via 999 if you see it happening or via 101 if you see signs of this during your visits to the countryside. Often negligent damage can be inquisitive youngsters playing on banks or gullies where setts are located, building of unauthorised bike tracks and jumps or uncontrolled dogs allowed onto / into setts.



Bats and their roosts



Bats and their roosts are also highly protected in the UK and across Europe. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1991 and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017 mean that it may be an offence to take, injure or kill a bat or to disturb or destroy a location used by Bats to rest or to block access to such locations even if no bats are occupying it at the time. This may include disturbing bats in lofts and roof spaces, disturbing or blocking artificial spaces such as bat boxes and bat bricks. Bat Bricks are special spaces built into newer properties often as part of the planning permission to reduce the environmental impact of the development and they must not be blocked by subsequent owners or tenants of the property.

If you believe bats are being disturbed then please report to the police. If malicious and in action then via 999 but if you see evidence then please report via 101 or online. The Bat Conservation Trust will also provide help and advice on what to look out for.



Engagement Events

On Saturday 23rd July, members of the Waverley Safer Neighbourhood Team attended Frensham Common to conduct an education day in regard to the reports that we have been receiving of anti-social driving of 4x4s and off-road motorbikes on the byway. We attended with our partners, Waverley Borough Council, the Green Lane Association, the Trail Riders Federation, Surrey County Council Rights of Way and GLASS (Green Lane Association).



We were able to deploy officers specifically trained in off-road motorbike riding skills to patrol the area of the common and its surroundings.

👥 During the day we engaged with 20 off road motorcyclists, 6 '4x4' drivers and many members of the public who were walking, cycling, or dog walking on the common.

➡ Our aim was to get the message across that we welcome off-road driving and riding, but it must be responsible and safe. We offered guidance to those using the BOATS how to do so responsibly as well as explaining to pedestrians on the common why certain areas are allowed to be ridden and driven on.



Dave and Matt were also at Notcutts Garden Center, Cranleigh and the Rural Life Centre in Tilford providing crime prevention advice and a few freebies to those that came to speak to us.

Have a query or need to report something to us? There are many ways to get in touch.

In an **emergency** only, if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

📞 Please call 999

Query or non-emergency matter to report? You can:

📞 Call 101

📱 Report online via our website:

<https://www.surrey.police.uk/> and click on 'Report'

💬 Use the **online live chat** facility on our website

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

✉ Private message us on social media - Look for Waverley Beat (Surrey Police) on Facebook or @WaverleyBeat on Twitter

Accessible methods of reporting <https://www.surrey.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us/us/contact-us/sur/accessible-contact/>

All the above contact methods are monitored by our contact centre staff 24/7.

You can also give information, 100% anonymously, to the independent charity **CrimeStoppers** on 0800 555 111; or through their anonymous online form:-

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

To contact your local team (not for reporting purposes)
email : Waverley@surrey.pnn.police.uk

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