



Leicestershire  
**Police**

Protecting our communities



# Rural Policing Team Newsletter

## February 2024

Welcome to the first edition of 2024 for the rural communities of Leicestershire and Rutland. We aim to keep you updated as frequently as we can about rural crime in our area, what we've been up to and what the current crime trends look like.

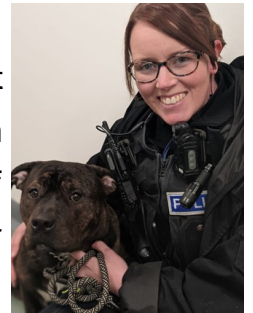
### The Team

It is important to us that you know who's on the team and towards the end of last year and into this year, there have been some changes to update you on.



In September, Inspector Neil Whittle moved on to pastures new as the Hinckley and Blaby Commander, with Inspector Shaun Wilson stepping in to take the reins of the team. Inspector Wilson has previously worked in a very fast paced role, managing a large amount of staff, but he has now thrown himself into learning the ropes and handling skills of quite a different side of Policing.

Also landing in September was PC Emma Holmes based in North West Leicestershire. Emma is no stranger to the rural community and upon returning from a period of maternity leave covered by PC Riannon Simpson, she has got herself straight back out in the community, meeting up with old acquaintances and partner agencies and engaging with many new ones along the way.



Last, but by very means not least, Police Sergeant Archer has also moved on to a new role within custody, but rather than looking at this as a loss, we are pleased to announce that rural team member Rob Cross has stepped up to lead the team in the Sergeant position and he is wished all the very best going forward.

### Team Training

We continue to train new and existing police officers and staff about the impact of rural crime and how to deal with incidents as first responders, but we also continue to develop ourselves as a team. Recently PC Chris Vickers and PC Matt Houghton attended a course with Datatag, strengthening their knowledge on plant machinery identification, the team as a whole had a week of inputs from the National Rural Crime Unit on subject matters such as livestock worrying, heritage crime and rural vulnerability and in the last week, our mounted volunteers have received training in tack marking.



Crime happening 'now'? Call 999.



Crime happened? Call 101 / [www.leicspolice/reportcrime](http://www.leicspolice/reportcrime).



Use 'What3Words' to accurately pinpoint locations.





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## What we've been working on

### **Volunteers**

Our team of 20 mounted volunteers continue to be a growing asset. In their first six weeks alone, they volunteered over 113 hours, getting involved in close pass operations mentioned previously, a road safety initiative at Mallory Park and they have become a little bit famous featuring in Your Horse and Horse & Hound magazine, multiple radio stations, The Melton Times, ITV Central News and BBC News. Alongside this they have continued patrolling their local areas and engaging with the community.



Going forward, having been recently trained in tack marking, they will be leading tack marking events at local livery yards, show venues, feed merchants, tack shops and more, so keep your eyes peeled.



If you see them out and about please do stop them for a chat and if you think there is anything they can assist with, please don't hesitate to contact us - [leicsruralcrime@leics.police.uk](mailto:leicsruralcrime@leics.police.uk)

### **Cross Border Working**

Members of the team have recently carried out joint patrols with officers from the rural teams from Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Police. The aim was to disrupt those who cause harm within our rural communities, but they weren't expecting to be issuing five Section 59 warnings, a Community Resolution for damage, or to seize a vehicle. Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 gives uniformed constables the power to act if they have reason to believe a vehicle is being driven in a manner which "is causing, or is likely to cause, alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public". Driving on closed lanes, bridleways, footpaths, doing doughnuts in fields, are all examples of actions likely to land someone with a visit from the team and a warning being issued. More importantly, if caught again in a 12 month period, their car will be seized and it could be a long walk home for those involved. Keep an eye on our social media page for our next step in targeting this reckless behaviour **#opdiff**



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## Farm Visits/Engagement

Towards the back end of 2023, the team noted a decrease in the amount of crime reported compared to the same time the previous year. This decrease gave the team the opportunity to continue drop in visits to farms and members of the rural community, finishing 2023 with just shy of 1300 visits across Leicestershire and Rutland. Alongside this, the team have held a number of community meetings where members of the rural community have been invited along to not only meet the team, but also to ask questions and find out what the team have been doing and plan to work on going forward. The meetings have all been well received and the team are grateful for the support given.



As a team, without even looking at figures, we have all noted an increase in livestock worrying incidents. We are adopting Operation Recall which is a National Police approach initiated by Cheshire Police with the aim of reducing livestock worrying and attacks. We have recently held a local working group meeting with livestock farmers, adjoining Police areas, local Councils and rural organisations, in an attempt to formulate new ideas for prevention. Working group aside, we have recently had a few positive investigation outcomes, with the most recent dog owner paying costs in full and they received a Voluntary Control Order for their dog.

## Crime Prevention Advice – Livestock Worrying

### Dog owners/walkers

1. Dogs should be kept on a lead when near livestock.
2. Remain present with the dog when out on walks, focusing on them and their surroundings to keep them safe.
3. Ensure that the dogs walking equipment is fit for purpose, that their harness is well fitted and that they are on a lead that is not damaged.
4. Keep to designated footpaths in areas where there might be farm animals.
5. Have distractions ready in case there could be livestock around.

### Land owners

1. Make sure all livestock are secured well within your fields.
2. Utilise signs to make walkers aware of livestock and to encourage them to have their dogs on leads.
3. Report any incident of livestock worrying to the Police.
4. Help to educate your local community, engaging in local groups and taking part in local events where possible.
5. Consider using trail or cctv cameras if suffering with multiple incidents.



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## Follow us

You can follow our active social media page for timely updates as to what the team are up to and any emerging crime patterns.



Leicestershire & Rutland Rural  
Policing Team

If you can't wait for our posts, but you wish to hear about things closer to the time they are happening, then maybe joining one of the rural community run WhatsApp groups is for you. The groups across Leicestershire and Rutland are for sharing information about crime, loose animals and suspicious activity. Please email us using the address below if you are interested.



WhatsApp

We are now more accessible to the rural community than we have ever been. There is a rural officer based at each main rural station—Melton/ Rutland, Loughborough, Hinckley and Blaby, Coalville and Market Harborough. We're always keen to help wherever we can, but we need you to report, report, report. If you see something, say something, either by using 999/101, or our online reporting via the QR codes below.



Report a rural crime.



Report a wildlife crime.

You can email the Rural Policing Team on the address below with any enquiries/questions  
**(please do not report a crime to us on email) — [Leicsruralcrime@leics.police.uk](mailto:Leicsruralcrime@leics.police.uk).**



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