



Rural Policing Update 7th June 2017

The below is a precis of the work carried out by the Rural Liaison Team over the last 14 days:

High profile patrol of Swanley and surrounding locations in relation to recent moped thefts and Burglaries to properties other than dwellings. RLT attended at Pear Tree Close, Swanley regarding a vehicle that had been seen acting suspiciously on the housing estate. Vehicle was located, stopped and the driver was identified as wanted for non-payment of fines to the value of £2,052. He was unable to pay the sum and was arrested.

East team received information about a classic Ford Granada that was being stripped down in a lockup in Canterbury. RLT Officers attended the location with local officers. On looking through the gaps in the door, a Ford Granada vehicle matching the description of one stolen from Rochester overnight of the 17/05/2017 was identified. Enquires were made in relation to the person renting the lock up and attempts were made to locate and arrest this person, without any luck. The team obtained an out of hours search warrant and entry was forced to the lock up in order to search the premises and to recover the stolen vehicle. Enquires are still ongoing in relation to this investigation.

The team are currently investigating two reports of Bat habitat destruction. One report was in the Edenbridge area and this investigation is currently being reviewed by the Crown Prosecution Service for a decision to prosecute. The second report was in the Ashford area, the team have completed a site visit and enquires are still ongoing.

Operation Unripe is an Operation that was put in place last year to target and deal with organised criminality surrounding the theft of soft fruit from our Kent growers. As expected there has been activity in this area with reported Thefts being investigated in both the North and West of the county. Three persons have been arrested for Theft and other suspects have been identified and are being targeted in relation to other offences.

A further Operation Unripe report was received from Ewell Farm, Graveney, that a male had been on their site and had been abusive to staff when he was confronted in the Strawberry fields. The male was identified by the North team who promptly attended his home address to speak with him. As a result the male was subsequently arrested for other matters and taken to Canterbury Police Station.

This same company reported other offences which were again dealt with swiftly and a female received a £90 Penalty Notice for theft of Strawberries, a male from Thanet was cautioned for theft.

Officers deployed to Barnfield Park in conjunction with local officers to execute a search warrant under the Theft Act. As a result of this warrant a vehicle suspected to contain stolen property was seized and a female at the address arrested on suspicion of Theft.

Officers completed a stop check of a vehicle in New Ash Green and whilst engaged in enquiries into this vehicle, their attention was drawn to 3 Polish males working at an adjoining address. The males were living in a caravan on the driveway of the address and were completing building/clearance work for the occupant. The identity of the males were checked and one male was found to be outstanding on a European Arrest Warrant. This male was arrested and taken to Tonbridge Police custody.

A vehicle was stopped on the Maidstone Road, Nettlestead, following an ANPR camera activation. The vehicle was linked to an assault of a traffic warden on 21/4 in Tunbridge Wells. It transpired the driver had no insurance and the vehicle was seized.

Operation Dew is a joint partnership operation with the Environment Agency Fishery Enforcement Team. Over the course of a days checks - 60 people were checked and 6 were prosecuted by the EA officers for offences under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act. Each could receive a fine between £250 and £300.

A visit was made to Ham Farm, Faversham regarding suspicious activity 24/5 at 00:15 hours, where a vehicle was seen to enter the farm shining lights into the outbuildings. The elderly informant and family members were spoken to and crime advice was given. The driver and passenger of vehicle were located in the Canterbury area and were warned in relation to trespassing at the location. No criminal offences were committed.

RLT team were informed of damage to a Scheduled Ancient Monument in Dungeness as well as disturbance to a specific site of scientific interest. The matter was discovered from YouTube video footage which showed the suspects causing the damage to the protected sand mirrors probably without realising their historic value. An action plan has been developed with Historic England in relation to how the persons responsible are going to be dealt and the investigation is still on-going.

Information received from Country Eye regarding an abandoned vehicle in Bashford Barn Lane, Bredgar. The photograph on the report showed that the vehicle had sustained damage to the front. The matter was looked into and it transpired that the vehicle had not been abandoned but had been involved in an Road Traffic Collision.. Good to see that the Country Eye Application is being used by members of the public.

RLT patrols attended the Kingsnorth area of Ashford after a report from a farmer who had witnessed a drone being flown on the Elmley Nature Reserve, Isle of Sheppey. The farmer was complaining that the drone could have upset his cattle and was unhappy that the persons had also filmed on private land and wished the persons involved to be spoken to.

The complaint was investigated and it transpired that the vehicle owners son was responsible for filming with the drone, he had never been to the Isle of Sheppey before and was filming the countryside along with his rather nice father's car. Advice was given regarding civil trespass and the possible livestock worrying.

Following information that a stolen bike had been seen going onto Barnfield Park, officers attended executing a search warrant with local officers. No bike was found but 2 persons were arrested after 7 stolen saddles and numerous amounts of petrol mechanical devices suspected to be from rural burglaries were located.

A stolen trailer was also found nearby and this was believed to have been linked to the stolen bike Theft.

Quad bike made off from patrols in Swanley and made off into New Barn Park where the rider decamped, patrols did not follow as it is a very busy day with lots of people present. The bike was located and recovered. Following this incident a further two bikes made off from patrols down alleyways in Swanley. One was stopped and the rider dealt with for traffic offences.

A 4x4 vehicle was stopped by PC Lingham from the West team due to a badly cracked window screen. The vehicle was subsequently seized as the driver held no insurance.

The team responded to reports of a paraglider having crashed into a telegraph pole near to the M20. The RLT attended and a search of the area was undertaken to locate the crash site. After an extensive search, there was no sign of a downed paraglider.

The team have been investigating several incidents of Fly Tipping.

Incident at Goose farm Mansfields Nr Canterbury. Spoke with site manager who has reported a fly tipping incident. There are witnesses to this incident and vehicle index was noted. PNC checks show the vehicle belongs to a male who lives in Hersden. The vehicle is insured to the R/O along with another insured driver who lives in Broadoak Canterbury. Enquires ongoing with witnesses that will allow Canterbury City Council to take this matter forward in the courts.

A visit was made to Hartley Bottom Farm, Nr Mepham re fly tipping at Melliker Farm belonging to the same company. The owners were spoken to and evidence was passed to the RLT in relation to identifying the potential offenders. The investigation is on going and any evidence gained will be passed on to the local authority.

Valley Farm has also suffered from large scale fly tipping offences, the area was patrolled and stop checks were carried out on numerous vehicles, unfortunately these vehicles were legally carrying waste with relevant paperwork. Engagement with locals who also complained about the apparent increase in fly tipping.

Officers investigated reports of a large scale destruction of land adjacent to Monkey Farm and Sheerness Holiday Park. The land was believed to be a habitat for water voles. The site was visited and photographs were taken of the area. The team is currently liaising with Natural England, the Environment Agency, the local authority and Dr Lee Brady an ecologist in relation to the incident to identify whether there are any offences.

Pc's Lingham and Reed attended Wouldham Road, Wouldham where they located a suspected stolen Triumph 1050cc Motorcycle. The engine numbers had been ground off so the vehicle was seized for identification.

OP FARM is still ongoing and the team deployed to Thanet, numerous vehicles were stopped and checked at the location of the A299 utilising the ANPR cameras. A vehicle was stopped and the occupants were checked. One male was identified as being an illegal entrant to the UK from Egypt. He was carrying false identity documents and was arrested for illegal entry and using false documents.

Report was received from farmer at Minster, Thanet that a Ford Fiesta had been dumped on his land. The vehicle was owned by a male living in Birchington who was known to the police. The male did not hold a full UK licence and the vehicle was shown to be uninsured, The vehicle was linked to a crime report for criminal damage, attempts were made to contact the owner and the vehicle was seized.

The Rural Liaison Team will be running a stand at the Force Open Day and are putting together displays to highlight their good work in relation to Rural crime, Wildlife Crime, Heritage Crime, and Environmental crime.

The team will also be running a children's competition which is kindly sponsored by the NFU Swale Branch secretary Mr Rollo PARSONS who has donated the prizes of Wildlife Encyclopaedia's. Please come along and meet the team on Sunday 2nd July from 10:00 hours at the Kent Police College, Maidstone.

Kind regards,

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