



HERTFORDSHIRE

CONSTABULARY

Royston Rural
Watch, April 2022

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***Our Non -
Emergency
Number 101***

On the Beat -

Local Crime Information

Hare coursing falls by almost a third after borderless success

The crackdown on rural crime comes after Hertfordshire Constabulary teamed up with six other police forces in September.

Borders between the forces - Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent - were removed when using certain tactics, which has made apprehending and prosecuting offenders easier.

The agreement, completed with the support of the Crown Prosecution Service, means the forces become one when using certain powers.

Over the past six months this has helped with the use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), the seizure of dogs and the sharing of all interactions and movements of people suspected to be involved.

The move also supports the ongoing national initiative against hare coursing - Operation Galileo.

As a result, incidents across the seven force areas fell from 2044 in 2020-2021 to 1415 in 2021-2022, a drop of 31%.

Sergeant Ryan Hemmings, from Hertfordshire's Rural Operational Support Team (ROST), said: "All the above tactics, together with the issuing of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs), Community Protection Notices (CPNs) and the granting of Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) has seen a region-wide reduction of coursing incidents.

"This is a great achievement by all seven forces and the CPS. Our collaboration shows how determined we are to tackle the barbaric actions of a few that cause significant physical and mental harm to those in our rural communities.

"We will continue with the collaboration and continue to work together to further reduce illegal coursing, lamping and poaching."

Hare coursing traditionally begins in September when the fields have been harvested and ploughed, making them the perfect ground for the illegal blood sport. Hare coursing causes damage to crops, harms animal welfare and threatens the rural community. It can result in intimidation and even violence.

Landowners are urged to consider blocking entrances to their fields with ditches, fencing or trees or even barriers like barrels filled with concrete.

Hertfordshire's Deputy Chief Constable Bill Jephson said: "The forces across the eastern region have tackled an issue which we know causes a lot of concern to those that live and work in the rural areas of our counties.

"This successful collaboration, together with new legislation hopefully being introduced by the government (opens in a new window) to tackle hare coursing, will hopefully reduce further incidents of this nature and allow our rural crime teams to concentrate on other issues that affect our rural communities, using a preventative approach."

Sally Robinson, a District Crown Prosecutor for the CPS, said: "Those who commit hare coursing have historically exploited the borders of neighbouring forces to continue their illegal activities, causing the extreme suffering and unlawful killing of hares, whilst also having a harmful effect on our rural communities.

"By using the legal expertise of the CPS and the operational knowledge of seven police forces in an innovative and collaborative way to effectively remove those borders, we have collectively built stronger cases for prosecution and made it harder for the perpetrators to offend in the future.

"The CPS takes wildlife crime seriously and we will continue to work closely with the police and other partners to bring offenders to justice whenever our legal test is met."

Anyone who sees hare coursing taking place is asked to contact police immediately on 999 and provide officers with a description of the people involved, any registration numbers, vehicle descriptions and the location and direction of travel. Its important people don't confront hare coursers or put themselves at risk.

If you have information about hare coursing and it's not currently happening, or have been a victim of the crime, you can report this online, speak to an operator in our Force Communications Room via our online web chat or call the non-emergency number 101.

Bike safety campaign launches across Hertfordshire

With a focus on reducing casualties involving bikers across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, Road Policing officers will be out on patrol across the three counties during a national 2 Wheels campaign next week (11-17 April).

As the weather improves, we see an increase in motorbikes and bicycles on our roads. Police are encouraging riders to ensure their bikes are roadworthy before heading out. This includes:

- Checking tyres are pumped up and not worn
- Ensuring lights and reflectors are working
- Safety equipment such as helmets fit correctly

Police also want to educate other road users on the rules when it comes to bikes and motorbikes, including changes to the Highway Code about positioning of cyclists and the hierarchy of road users. For more details about these changes, visit the [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website (opens in new window)

Last year, 71 cyclists and 66 motorcyclists were killed or seriously injured on Hertfordshire's roads. Officers want to ensure people are taking all precautions to ensure the safety of those on two wheels.

Chief Inspector Simon Tabert, who co-ordinates local activity in support of road policing campaigns, said: "Everyone who uses our roads should be looking out for one another; whether that's drivers taking more care when overtaking, or cyclists and motorcyclists ensuring their bikes and safety equipment are roadworthy.

"Your bicycles and motorbikes may have been in storage over the winter months and therefore we are advising everyone to check them over or get a professional to do so."

As part of this campaign, officers are also keen to remind people about the law when it comes to e-scooters, giving advice wherever possible but taking action if necessary.

E-Scooters that are not subject to an authorised trial can only be used on private land to which the public does not have access, with the permission of the landowner. It is against the law to use a privately owned e-scooter in public.

The 2 Wheels campaign from the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) runs between 11 and 17 April. As well as officer patrols, safety advice will be shared across our social media channels from 4 April.

Operation Gnome helping to keep gardens, sheds and homes secure

Spring is here and Hertfordshire Constabulary is launching its annual crime prevention campaign, Operation Gnome, to provide advice to help residents make their homes, gardens and outbuildings more secure.

As the weather starts improving people spend more time outside, using gardening and leisure equipment. Burglars are also on the look-out for valuable things to steal, like tools, bicycles etc left out or stored in outbuildings that have little or no security.

Inspector Nicola Dean, from Hertfordshire Constabulary's Crime Reduction Team, said: "Burglaries and thefts from gardens tend to increase at this time of year, as the temperatures rise. People tend to buy new garden equipment, start diy projects or splash out on barbecues etc, meaning there's a lot of valuable stuff in gardens and sheds. We are recommending that everyone takes some basic security measures to make sure their gardens and outbuildings are secure. Leaving tools and gardening equipment lying around in your garden can attract thieves, as they are valuable and could also be used to break into your home.

"Make sure any tools that could assist a burglar, like ladders, trowels, hammers etc, are locked away and make sure outbuildings are as secure as possible, with strong locks or even an alarmed padlock. Dusk till dawn security lights and planting defensive plants like roses along your borders and keeping fences in good condition will make your home even safer. Remember to close windows and lock doors when you are finished outside and before going to bed, even when the weather gets warmer."

These are some of the ways you can make your garden and outbuildings more secure:

Always lock your shed, preferably with two 'hasp and staple' locks (one near the top and one near the bottom of the door) or use or an alarmed padlock

Secure your rear garden by locking entry gates with a padlock

Burglars can use garden tools to break in, so make sure you securely lock away any tools after use

Ensure boundary fences are secure and in good condition. Spiky plants along garden boundaries are good additional deterrents.

Tools and gardening equipment should be visibly marked with your postcode and house number - this can deter thieves and help police identify the rightful owner.

Remember to lock your garage door securely. Metal 'up and over' doors can be secured with extra locks fitted either side and/or a floor-mounted locking 'T' bar with a closed shackle padlock. Wooden garage doors can be secured with two substantial 'hasps and staple' locks and closed shackle padlocks (your local DIY store can advise on the most secure options)

Join Neighbourhood Watch or Allotment Watch to help reduce crime in your local area

Make access to the rear of your property difficult, keep rear/side gates closed and locked ensure boundary walls/fences are in good repair

Wheelie bins secured so they cannot be moved or used as climbing aid
Plant defensive spiky plants under windows such as berberis, roses and pyracantha.

Most bicycles are stolen from home so ensure your sheds, outbuildings and garages are secure. Consider installing ground anchors if you have a concrete floor. If not, look for security rated products specifically for wooden and metal sheds.

Take extra security precautions for storing expensive bikes, it is recommended that they are security marked and registered with Bike Register For more detailed security advice, please visit our crime prevention pages or contact us on 101.

G4E - Ashwell, Hinxworth, Bygrave, Newnham and Caldecote

On the 4th March between the hours of 1600 and 1200 on the 5th March a property in Station Road, Ashwell was burgled. Offenders have gained access to the rear of the property and broken a panel in the rear door. They have entered the property but nothing was stolen. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/17922/22.

Overnight from 8th March – 9th March, a property in High Street, Hinxworth was subject to an attempt theft of copper piping. It is believed offenders have approached via fields at the back of the property. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/19304/22

G4D – Barley, Barkway, Reed, Therfield, Kelshall and Nuthampstead

Between the 4th of March and 6th of March a Landrover Discovery was criminally damaged on Church End, Barley. Offenders have used a sharp implement across the bonnet of the vehicle. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/19198/22

G3C - Sandon, Wallington, Rushden, Clothall and Weston

Overnight from 3rd March to 4th March an oil tank containing heating oil was targeted in the front garden of a property in Redhill, Rushden. A large amount of oil was siphoned. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/17598/22

On the 4th of March a property in Southern Green Rushden was targeted and heating oil was taken, the lock on the tank was smashed off and the oil siphoned. This happened in the morning of the 4th March. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/17624/22

Overnight from the 1st March to 2nd March a property in Southern Green was targeted, offenders have entered the garden and heating oil was siphoned from the tank. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/17698/22

Between the hours of 1130 and 1800 on the 3rd March. The Post Office in Payne End, Sandon suffered an attempt burglary. Offenders have used an unknown implement to force open the front door, offenders have entered the premises but nothing was taken. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/18677/22

Overnight from the 12th March to 13th March a catalytic convertor was stolen from a vehicle in Damask Close, Weston. If you have any information please call 101 and quote crime reference 41/20743/22

Your local Neighbourhood Police Teams website

<http://snt.herts.police.uk/Teams.aspx?TeamID=G01>

Useful Links

<http://www.herts.police.uk/>

<http://www.doglost.co.uk/>

<http://www.stolenhorseregister.com/>

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