

# Newsletter

## The Rural Beat

South Worcestershire Police

Rural and Business Crime Team



**John Campion**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner**  
**West Mercia**

### Summer 2020

'*The Rural Beat*' is a new publication from the Police in South Worcestershire for the benefit of the people who live, work and visit South Worcestershire. The aim is to provide information, advice and contact details to assist the community. We will welcome your feedback.

Possibly more than ever before there is a need for all of us to help each other and it would be remiss not to mention COVID-19 and the overwhelming public compliance with the restrictions in place.



**Coronavirus (Covid-19):** We're asking you please to only call 999 if it is an emergency and 101 if it is urgent. If you can, use our [online services](#). Please use this service to inform us if you feel there is a significant issue or serious breach of the 'stay at home' restrictions.

- [Our information and advice on coronavirus and policing](#)
- [NHS advice about coronavirus External Link](#)



At the time of writing this there is another incident of sheep being attacked by dogs off the lead. Ultimately, the landowner has the right to take action against dogs in the protection of their livestock.

Please, please, please walk responsibly

## Poachers

We are determined to make South Worcestershire a hostile environment for Poachers so if you are out and about taking your daily exercise in the countryside, please report any suspicious activity by people or vehicles.



Download the  
**What 3 Words** App



West Mercia police officers are using a new app to help pinpoint the location of people in need and you can use it too.

Particularly useful if you are at a location without an obvious address, the App has divided the world into 3mx3m squares. Each square has been allocated a unique three word address which anyone can refer to their exact location by using three randomly chosen words.

The app also works when there is no data connection as it will operate offline via GPS. To download visit the What3Words website, the App Store or Google Play.

Poaching has been illegal for hundreds of years. Crossbow barbs and gunshots often only wound animals, causing them to die slow, painful deaths. When dogs are used, the terrified quarry is hunted to exhaustion before being savaged. In the case of psycho-poaching, the episodes are usually captured on camera phones by people driving alongside in a van or 4x4, who then boast about their exploits on social media. Sometimes

poachers don't even retrieve the animal's carcass. In the case of hare-coursing, the perpetrators cash in by gambling on the dogs they use.

Theft of farm machinery and agricultural vehicles is also a problem and it was as a result of this sort of crime amongst other things, that the roles of **Rural & Business Officers** were introduced. The role focuses on ways to:

- Reduce the **OPPORTUNITIES** for Rural & Business Crime by providing crime prevention/reduction advice including award winning schemes like West Mercia Police's own WE DON'T BUY CRIME initiative, promoting Watch schemes and many other aspects.
- Target those who **CAUSE THE MOST HARM, by** disrupting, deterring and deflecting their criminal activities with interventions including arrests, charges, search warrants and the whole range of tools available within the criminal justice system.
- Increase the risk and reduce the reward **or PROFIT** making it harder for crooks to benefit financially from their crimes, for example by promoting security marking of property.



Trackers are available for anything from animals to machinery and vehicles. They vary in design, specification and cost, and some have advantages over others, however, a good place to start is with a Police approved company such as TRACKER at <https://www.tracker.co.uk/how-tracker-works> but there are many other companies to choose from too 😊

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## Meet the Rural & Business Crime Team

Pc Nigel Bolton, Pc Ben Trowman and Mick Simpson work across South Worcestershire, as part of a larger dedicated problem solving team and are supported by Special Constables, police volunteers and members of the public.

If you would like to help with reducing crime in your area, contact Mick Simpson on [michael.simpson@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:michael.simpson@westmercia.pnn.police.uk) or call 07773050803





## So, what are they up to?



Clockwise from the top, the team at the launch of South Worcestershire Rural Watch with support from the Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion. On patrol at local Heritage sites which are currently closed due to COVID-19. Visiting local churches which have been subject to damage and theft, PC Bolton has helped to protect the lead by coating it with SmartWater. Finally, the whole team working at Strensham Services to give HGV drivers crime prevention advice.

### Some of the team's activities so far this year

Launch of South Worcestershire Rural Watch with Local Police officers

Attended a Wildlife Officers training course

Organised/attended Crime Prevention Roadshow at Broadway with local Police officers

Great Witley Neighbourhood Watch meeting presentation on home security

Bishampton Parish Crime Prevention Day

**9** farms across South Worcestershire having been subject to crime were visited and crime prevention advice given

**15** rural businesses across South Worcestershire subject to crime were visited and provide with crime prevention advice

## Highlighted Crime

### “THEFT FROM SHEDS”



Each edition will feature a crime that occurs in our Community with Crime Prevention advice

Most people don't secure their shed or garage in the same way they do their homes, and often use a flimsy lock or padlock to protect the contents – whether it's a bike or lawnmower. A burglar may access a shed or garage first to look for tools to help them gain access to the house.



#### Think like a thief

**Take a look at your shed and consider how you would break in?** It's worth having a good padlock on the door with no exposed screws. Pay attention to hinges, as these are sometimes easily removable. If you have windows then these could be vulnerable unless they're secured with wire mesh or grills.

**Alarm it** Consider a battery-operated shed alarm. They look low key but they respond to movement or door contact with an extremely loud siren.

Don't give them the opportunity or the tools to commit a crime. Lock the door and lock everything away securely. **Tools can be locked inside a locker or box or secured with a chain.**

Secure your bike to the ground or a lockable stand within a locked shed or garage. Visit [Sold Secure](#) to search for ground anchors and other locks designed to fix to floors and walls.

**Property marking your items** is advisable and some tools can be painted with your name or postcode. Forensic marking such as SmartWater is also an option.

**WE DON'T  
BUY CRIME**



#### The top five most common items stolen from sheds



## ***A little bit of information goes a long way***

Report suspicious activity, people or vehicles. No matter how insignificant you might think it is, if it is suspicious to you, it probably is.

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

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

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



## **Online Criminality**

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

**Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto: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 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](mailto: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!**