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LOCAL POLICING UPDATE

Thursday 25 July 2019

It would not be an exaggeration to say that my feet and those of my colleagues have hardly touched the ground in the past three weeks, and I wanted to let our community know what we've been up to in numbers of words greater than allowed in Twittersphere. I am told that these updates, sent out by Neighbourhood Alert are appreciated, so it's worth spending time pulling together all that we've been doing in Daventry and the District around.

Unauthorised Traveller Encampment – Great Oxenden

After reports of an encampment in a private layby off the A508 near Great Oxenden on 8 July and preliminary checks by the rural team, a large operation was mounted on 9 July with over 30 officers and colleagues from Daventry District Council, RSPCA, and the National Vehicle Intelligence Service. This saw the seizure of eight of the ten caravans encamped there. All but one were



suspected to have been stolen in the last year from around the UK (not in Northamptonshire.) This included one caravan which was not insured when



stolen, and was still in good condition when recovered, so this will be good news for the victim. We also seized stolen plant and abandoned puppies and the site was cleared the next day. Cllr Richard Auger (DDC and NCC councillor) was invited as an observer. The site was cleared and re-secured the next day. This was a significant logistical successful operation for the District and Force.

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WARNING

Attacks on sheep and livestock have been occurring overnight in this area

Report any suspicious activity or vehicles to Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency

In an emergency call 999
For non-emergencies call 101



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Operation Stock

As is so often the case in policing, a crime trend had been developing and hit a peak during that same week, with the unpleasant and distressing slaughter of sheep in fields across the District and wider – at Holcot, Rushton, Crick, Whilton, Kelmarsh, and across the border in Lutterworth and Harborough Magna. Then last Friday, 77 live sheep were stolen from fields around Hannington. The circumstances of the slaughters were harrowing for farmers, inhumane for the poor animals and understandably attracted the attention of local and national media. Operation Stock was launched as a concerted initiative to respond to these offences happening every other

night. This was aimed at doing three things. Firstly, to raise awareness in the farming community to allow informed vigilance and protection of livestock. Secondly, to raise public awareness and increase the likelihood of suspicious circumstances (activity in fields or the offer of cheap meat) being reported, to increase information and intelligence. This included signs around rural locations. Thirdly, to have night time patrols in remote locations to respond to any calls created and to be proactive at key times and in key areas.

In the meantime, each scene was forensically examined. We worked closely with valued local contacts in the National Farmers' Union and a Barn meeting was quickly arranged, attended by 130 local farmers and landowners to discuss the problem and tactics. In turn, this led to a meeting between the NFU and the Police Crime & Fire Commissioner who could not have been more responsive in financially supporting the Operation which is led by CID and overseen at Chief Officer level and works with partner agencies like the local councils, Trading Standards and the Food Standards Agency. There are health considerations about unregulated meat entering the food chain, which is why we have been appealing for the public to report any instances of cheap meat being offered.

The topic has received extensive media attention with interviews on BBC Radio 2, BBC Northampton, BBC Leicester, BBC Look East and ITV News Anglia. Overnight rural patrols have featured every night, and I am aware that the NFU has provided farmer patrols with cameras for their protection and evidence gathering.



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And now, hot off the press, news has just been released that yesterday, a 40-year-old Hampshire man was arrested on suspicion of criminal damage and theft as part of the investigation, being led by Detective Inspector Johnny Campbell who says, *"We're taking this fast-moving investigation very seriously with a dedicated team following a number of lines of enquiry into these awful crimes. One man arrested in connection with these incidents has been released under investigation, with enquiries ongoing as our investigators and the Rural Crime Team work tirelessly to bring those responsible to justice."*

Patrols continue, and we meet with Leicestershire Rural Crime colleagues next week, given the rising incidence of this crime across the country (over 100 lambs slaughtered and stolen in Northamptonshire since March).

Drug warrants

Assisted by proactive team officers from across the county, the Daventry Neighbourhood team prepared for, and executed a number of warrants under the Misuse of Drugs Act in the past fortnight, responding to reports and information from the public. On 17 July, warrants were executed in the Daneholme area of Daventry and near to Barby. Drugs were found in both searches. Two people were arrested, with drugs, weapons and an imitation firearm seized. Please continue to tell us or Crimestoppers about any suspicions you have around drug use/supply. You might hold the final piece of the jigsaw for the next warrant.



Immigration Act warrant

Following concerns expressed in the Daventry community, a joint operation took place at first light yesterday, 24 July in Tweed Close, Daventry. Led by HM Immigration Enforcement Officers and assisted by neighbourhood officers, this operation took place with the backing of the National Crime Agency, due to concerns around modern slavery and immigration offences. This led to three men being dealt with for immigration matters and two men being safeguarded. One man was arrested for drugs offences. Our enquiries continue, and Daventry District Council officers continue to investigate how the property was being used to accommodate the number of people located there. This was an operation that was months in the planning and, as ever, as a result of community intelligence shared with different agencies who speak to one another. It was the first such operation in Daventry and I was hugely impressed with the response, firmness and compassion of our Immigration Service, with whom we will continue to work closely



Business as usual

During this exceptionally busy period, normal policing has continued. Neighbourhood officers provided the community policing response to the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, and the usual end-of-term briefings as schools broke for the summer. From my own experience, I know how normal contact and email management has slowed, so I apologise if any of us have been less communicative than usual and hope this explains why.

Part of the normality but a significant part for the team, has been the departure of PC Paige Fox for pastures new at Northampton on the Response Team. Paige has spent her two years at Daventry as part of the Police Now programme, and when I signed her off as fit for confirmation in post, she indicated she wished to spread her wings in the metropolis of Northampton!



I was delighted when two very good officers applied for the vacancy. As a result, PC Daniel Faint (pictured, right) joined the team this week, in our baptism of fire. He is a Daventry man, a former special constable and joins us from the response team. He knows the patch well and will complement our team well. We welcome Dan and bid farewell to Paige.

Disorder in Daventry Country Park

Local people will remember an incident of disorder involving young people in the Country Park on 15 May 2018, in which a 12-year old received hospital treatment and I committed that we would do what we could to bring this matter to justice. Given the numbers of suspects and witnesses involved, and the detail of evidence required, this has taken considerable time and diligence to investigate, but recently, the Crown Prosecution Service has approved the summons of four local youths to the Magistrates' Youth Court on 6 August 2019 for public order offences where the case and circumstances will be heard.

General crime & disorder – CSP report

For those who like statistics, I include this next bit. We are proud of our community safety partnership (CSP) which operates across Daventry and South Northants Districts. The CSP manager provides a regular report which I find particularly helpful as it looks at our rural districts so I can see a profile of crime which relates to our relatively rural (if huge) patch and is not distorted by the figures from the other areas of the force.

The headlines of the latest report are that violent crime is down, though still relates to 34% of our total crime – that's 3,147 offences). Stalking and harassment offences are up (and I mention this because of the inordinately disproportionate time spent dealing with neighbour disputes). Shoplifting is



decreasing thanks to the work of the sponsored PCSO, the Daventry Town Council Ranger, CCTV and the cooperation of traders, all assisted by the arrests of some of our more prolific offenders. Theft from vehicles remains an issue (particularly from HGVs overnight). ASB continues to fall and levels now stand at less than one-third of levels reported in 2007. The two CSP Action Groups concentrate on Roads matters and ASB & Hate Crime and tend to seek approaches and responses which involve more than just the police.

Recruitment

It would be remiss of me not to mention that, thanks to the opportunities opened up by the Police Commissioner in the last budget round, we are in the middle of our biggest ever recruitment campaign – for regular constables, for special constables, for PCSOs and for control room staff. Could you? Please check out our website to find out more.

Specially, and simply the best

News just in, of which I am proud, is that in extensive research by the University of Northampton to evaluate the contribution of Special Constables to UK policing. Northamptonshire Special Constabulary came out top when it comes to engagement and second for how well Specials service the local community. 232 volunteers make up our Special Constabulary, giving 44,675 hours of policing, effecting 336 arrests, recording 673 crimes, executing 62 warrants, 77 stop-searches, issuing 463 traffic offence reports and seizing 373 vehicles. This is a real achievement and something for the county to be proud of.

Regular updates in Twittersphere

Our team provides daily updates on items of interest via our Twitter accounts @daventrypolice, @sgtsamdobbs, @pcsomia, @pcsokirsten, @hutch472, @pcsosangster, @pcsocarlbarton and the force account @northantspolice.

Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Alert

In addition, we send out updates via our Neighbourhood Alert system. This is a free messaging service that allows us, NHW and other partners to keep you informed about issues in your area which are relevant to you. Once you sign up, you receive information about crime and suspicious activity where you live or work and this helps us to prevent and detect crime and ASB. You have the choices on how to receive messages and about which areas. To sign up, go to www.northamptonshireneighbourhoodalert.co.uk

And finally

Imagine the scene. The British Grand Prix. Police operation in full swing. PC Hutchings and me double-crewed for our community patrols around the local villages. Hot day and Hutch decides he wants to try 'one of those ice cold 'HappyFrappyChappyCinos' (as he called them) he saw me drink the day before. He'd just collected me from having started duty early to help PCSO colleagues respond to a Tracker activation in a field near Daventry.



(A Tracker device is fitted to valuable cars, caravans and trailers. When stolen, this brilliant device can be activated, allowing the company to track the vehicle. In addition, our police cars have detection kits fitted to guide us in to intercept an activated device. On this occasion, unusually, the device had been removed from the vehicle and dumped in a field, where it was still pinging away using its internal power supply. PC Hutchings found the device in a field of crops and popped it in the back of the car and cancelled the Tracker Alert.)

Back to McDonalds Car Park half an hour later, where we are sampling our iced coffee on visible patrol in the middle of McDonalds car park before the start of our duty, wondering what must be going on with all police cars on blue lights and sirens racing round the roundabout on two wheels in all directions.

We decide to head to Towcester Police station and switch away from our Daventry radio channel to the Silverstone event channel to be told that a Tracker device had activated near to the McDonalds roundabout and was heading towards the police station.

It appears that the device hadn't cancelled after all!

Oops – system works though!

Let's keep it our secret?

SAM DOBBS
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