

Royal Wootton Bassett & Cricklade Area Board Community Safety Forum Notes – 9th June 2023

1. Welcome and Introduction

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Allison Bucknell who welcomed all present.

2. Inspector Gareth Edwards gareth.edwards@wiltshire.police.uk

Inspector Gareth Edwards covers the Neighbourhood Policing Team (including the local Response Team) for Royal Wootton Bassett, Cricklade and Malmesbury and also leads the Rural Crime Team across Wiltshire.

He has been in the police for 20 years, having previously been in the armed forces and the Fire Service.

He is still getting to know what is going on, and facing the ongoing challenge of matching resources to priorities, which are assessed using the Threat, Harm, Risk model.

The Rural Crime Team (RCT) has a Sergeant and 4 officers (with 2 vacancies). It covers the whole county and works to national priorities (eg badger sett and raptor disturbances, heritage crime, hunting) as well as local.

Currently there is a national organised crime problem with agricultural machinery theft, being stolen to order to ship to Russia. There are also "chop shops" where machinery and vehicles are broken down for onward shipping.

Police and Crime Commissioners are having a conference on Rural Crime. There is a Rural Crime Survey (to be shared). A bill is going through Parliament to ensure that equipment is marked at point of sale to enable tracking.

The RCT is holding "barn meets" and touring the county to raise awareness.

There is a number of Citizens in Policing "watch" schemes, including Horse Rider Volunteer Scheme <https://www.wiltshire.police.uk/news/wiltshire/news/2021/december-2021/wiltshire-horse-rider-volunteer-scheme-launched-by-wiltshire-police/>

A number of questions were raised by participants in the meeting:-

Flytipping -The police are part of the Rural Crime Partnership with 19 rural based organisations and councils.

Unlawful Occupation of Land – this is part of normal policing

Protected Species – PC Sam Higden in the Rural Crime Team is very knowledgeable.

Unlicensed music events – The police monitor groups, and if an event looks likely then appropriate response will be put in place. Otherwise the duty Inspector will organise a response.

In UK law, an illegal rave is when 20 or more people are "gathering on land in the open air" with music "that includes sounds wholly or predominantly characterised by the emission of a succession of repetitive beats" - at a level where it is loud enough to cause "serious distress to the inhabitants of the locality"

Countryside Code -Question was raised as to whether the police are involved in Countryside Code education for young people. Safe use of farmland is promoted.

Horse Rider related issues – Incidents of abuse and aggression are on the increase. Highway Code is best practice, not law but can be quoted in motoring offence cases. It was changed recently to change priorities for road users based on the Threat/ Harm/ Risk model, horse riders and cyclists have greater priority and should be given a minimum 1.5m passing space when possible.

If an incident occurs, and there is injury involved, phone 999 which should give the police time to look for vehicle/driver.. Otherwise report to 101 either by phone or online. If there is camera

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footage or photographs then mention this on the crime report and the allocated officer should request it and take a statement.

The RCT tries to focus their work around the farming calendar (eg sheep worrying during lambing season, hare coursing).

Tockenham has a number of riding centres and most of the lanes don't have 1.5 m passing places. Any help with driver education would be welcome. Also a problem with electric cars as they creep up on you!

Wild Animal Cruelty – specifically swans at RWB Canal. Any incidents should be reported to police 101. The police will ensure that it is allocated to the appropriate officer.

Moped Safety – Could police go to Bradon Forest School to talk about road safety on mopeds? Not currently on offer, however there is the Safe Drive Stay Alive scheme run by DWFRS
<https://www.dwfire.org.uk/education/road-safety/road-safety-education/safe-drive-stay-alive/>

Powers for PCSOs – Will the new Police Chief Constable grant any additional powers? Don't know yet. It was explained that additional powers require further training and equipment so not straightforward.

3. Future Meetings:-

Second Friday of the month 1200-1300
July 14th 2023

Possible future subjects:
Rural Crime

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Present: | | Apologies: | |
| Tockenham | Cllr Diana Kirby | Purton | Cllr Andrew Corbett |
| Lydiard Tregoze | Rose Love (Clerk) | | |
| RWB TC | Cllr Pat Farrow | Broad Hinton and W. B. | Cllr Candace Gaisford |
| | Mark Hopkins | | |
| Lyneham & Bradenstoke | Cllr Ron Glover | Wiltshire Council | Louisa Young |
| | Cllr Shendie Green | | |
| | | RWB North | Cllr Mary Champion |
| | | RWB East | Cllr Steve Bucknell |
| Wiltshire Council | | | |
| SEPM | Andrew Jack | | |
| Lyneham | Cllr Allison Bucknell | | |
| Purton | Cllr Jacqui Lay | | |

Partners

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| Police | Insp Gareth Edwards |
| NW RWB | Howard Chandler |
| NW Purton | Jim Reid |