

PCSO Peter Johnson
Alnwick Police Station
Prudhoe Street
Alnwick
Northumberland
NE661UJ

September 2024.

Sir / Madam,

Introduction.

I would like to introduce myself as the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) responsible for your area (West of Alnwick), I am based at Alnwick Police Station on the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) and work out of the Rothbury office (inside Church House) most days I am on Duty.

I have previously worked in other roles within Northumbria Police; most recently on the Rural Crime Team (up until December 2022) where I was instrumental in the launch of the Rural Crime Team under the banner 'Operation Hawkeye' in June 2020, having evidenced a need for one to exist. In that time, I was responsible for instigating the recoveries of stolen Plant, Agricultural Equipment, vehicles and a S1 Firearm worth approximately £900,000 - alongside targeting offenders responsible for cross border Organised Acquisitive Crime from our rural community and linking crime series' in the region of £3,500,000.

During this time I also filled a secondment to Opal SOAC (ACE) which focused on Agricultural and Construction equipment thefts nationally in 2021/22, where I researched thefts of high value Agricultural GPS Equipment.

Since moving to Alnwick Neighbourhood Team in May 2023, following a secondment to the National Rural Crime Team (NCATT) in early 2023; I have visited over 160 Farms, and have instigated the recovery of a further £120,000 of stolen Plant Equipment and Vehicle's.

I would like to set out below how you could target harden your Farm, protect your Property and keep up to date with Police community updates through Northumbria Connected - which are relevant to your area.

Crime prevention advice.

Good quality motion activated CCTV / ANPR cameras / LED flood lighting and building alarms are becoming more affordable and accessible, being fitted by local professional installers. Existing CCTV should be checked to make sure it is working (with no obstructions over the lenses) and that footage can be archived / copied from the hard drive. Consideration should be given to moving towards new security measures where possible.

The rear of the farm buildings should be included in any security provision where approach over open land is often overlooked, giving easy access to offenders to buildings storing high value vehicles and equipment.

Whilst I cannot endorse / promote companies; investment in tracking technology provided by the likes of CanTrack, Tracker UK, Scorpion Automotive and Hitachi UK on the most desirable items (to steal) on the Farm such as Quad bikes, Land Rover Defenders, Telehandlers, Tractors, Trailers and Implements assist in identification of a timeline and further lines of investigation.

<https://cantrack.com> – CanTrack - <https://www.tracker.co.uk> – Tracker UK - <https://www.scorpionauto.com> – Scorpion Automotive - [Vehicle Tracking and Recovery Solutions | 99.1% Recovery Rate | AX Track \(ax-uk.com\)](#) – AX Track <https://www.hitachicm.co.uk/support-service/fleet-managament/> – Hitachi UK (based in Hebburn)

Datatag Ltd have long since provided marking systems for high value items. Datatag's Forensic marking kits alongside Transponder chips and Identification labels; including the CESAR Triangle, all make the return of stolen high value stolen equipment to rightful owners easier – and in some instances, possible. <https://www.datatag.co.uk/consumer.php>



It is vitally important Datatag is updated of new owner details.

Agricultural GPS thefts.

Up until April 2023 Agricultural GPS thefts did not feature as a trend in Northumbria, however, due to foreign influence and demand by Transnational Organised Crime Groups; Farms within Northumbria have since been victims to this very niche type of criminality.

While Researching Agricultural GPS thefts nationally in 2021/22 for Opal SOAC (ACE) I was able to locate Mantas DVARECKAS who was wanted by Cheshire at the time [Man jailed after DNA links him to tractor GPS thefts - Farmers Weekly \(fwi.co.uk\)](#). When victims in Northumbria experienced Agricultural GPS thefts I was able to locate the male responsible in May 2023, which instigated further joined up work across the North of England. This lead onto Tomas STAUKASKAS being arrested alongside his associate [Hull men jailed for role in thefts of farm GPS units | The Northern Farmer](#).

From the above it is not insurmountable for offenders to be detected and arrested, however, this is assisted hugely by;

- Documentation of serial numbers, Forensic marking of equipment and removal of equipment (if working conditions allow) should be undertaken where possible to assist in owner identification of any recovered suspected stolen property – this goes for all Equipment on the Farm.
- Enhanced security around machinery should be made with CCTV / Lighting and Alarms.
- Key reporting of suspicious incidents / Vehicles / Person's and Thefts need to be made as soon as possible.

Reporting of crimes and suspicious incidents.

I realise the impact that Organised Acquisitive Crime has on the rural community and would stress that while you do live in a very safe area, all suspicious incidents where vehicles and persons are either sighted or encountered are reported to Police as soon as possible.

The ways you can report incidents or concerns to the Police is becoming more diverse;

- 999 (always be used in an Emergency, or when you suspect an offence is taking place)
- 101 (non-emergency / general enquiries)
- Through the Northumbria Police website <https://beta.northumbria.police.uk/contact-us/> where you can report incidents online

Delays in reporting of incidents to Police limits the effectiveness of both the Police response and building of intelligence around vehicles and persons.

Reconnaissance by offenders to return at a later date to steal high value equipment maybe hidden in plain sight, cold callers asking for Scrap Metal, directions or selling Tarmac are good cover for this. Someone asking seemingly innocent questions, while taking a lot of interest in security or nearby high value items may be of concern – all of these should be reported to Police at the time should you have concerns.

Subscribing for community updates from Northumbria Police.

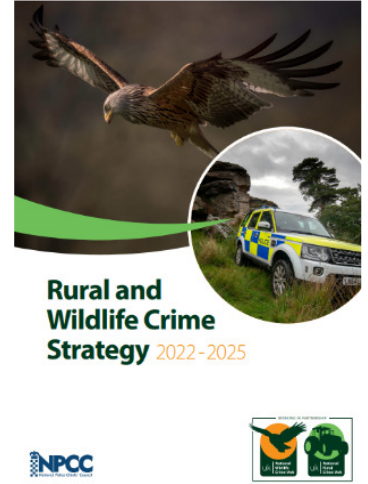
On Northumbria Connected you can register to be kept up to date with incidents that have occurred in your area, which will enable you to take further security precautions and be vigilant for suspicious persons and vehicles in your area. You can scan the QR code on your mobile phone and be taken direct to the Northumbria Connected web page.



Useful Documents

The national Rural and Wildlife Crime Strategy 2022-2025 is available to download from <https://www.nwcu.police.uk>.

NFU Mutual Rural Crime Report 2023 <https://www.nfumutual.co.uk/farming/rural-crime/>



National Rural Crime Network's 2024 Report into Rural Crime [Rural Crime Report 2024 - National Rural Crime Network](#)



Northumbria Police Crime Prevention page [Crime prevention advice | Northumbria Police](#)

Secured by Design [Secured by Design - Secured by Design](#)

Summary.

I hope the above goes some way to both inform and reassure you that I will do my best to respond to concerns and issues that may arise that effect the rural community, by working together I hope to keep momentum on Information and Intelligence coming in from the rural community and make representations on your behalf.

If you would like to speak directly with myself, my work mobile number and email address is below

Regards

PCSO 4187 Peter Johnson

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Work email - 4187@northumbria.police.uk

DO NOT USE ADJACENT CONTACT DETAILS TO REPORT CRIME OR LIVE INCIDENTS