

Community Safety

Report to Etchingam Parish Council, 17th September 2020

Updates supplied by PCSO's Daryl Holter and Emma Phillips.

A van has been stolen whilst parked in Batemans Lane, Burwash on 29/08.

A garage along Etchingam Road, has been broken into between 29/08 – 30/08.

A farm has been broken into in Spring Lane, Burwash and tools stolen between 31/08 – 01/09.

Outbuildings in Shrub Lane, Burwash have been broken into between 31/08 – 01/09.

In addition it would be worth noting the following crimes that have occurred nearby.

A farm on Beckley Road, Northiam, has been broken into, a quad bike, motocross bike and other tools have been stolen. This occurred between is believed to have occurred around 23:00 06/09.

A farm in the Sedlescombe area has been broken into between during the evening of 24/08 and a quad bike was stolen. This has since been recovered.

Two workshops on a farm were broken into in Staplecross, between 18/08 – 19/08. A motocross bike was stolen.

A quad bike and other machinery were stolen from a farm on Ticehurst Road, Ticehurst, between 16/08 – 17/08

Tractor fuel and a saw were stolen from a farm in Lower Platts, Ticehurst, between 16/08 – 17/08

A quadbike has been stolen from a farm in Etchingam between, 26/08 – 27/08.

From Emma Phillips;

In regards to quadbike thefts and farm breaks, Daryl and I have been monitoring and looking into these types of crimes for the past 2 years, working closely with Kent to target cross border crime that we have been experiencing. For the last year they have been mainly on the Rye side of Rother so have not had any cause to contact you but approximately 18 months ago we were seeing them in and around your area. Please be assured that we are looking into each of these reports that come in and follow up any lines of enquiry. We speak to our Kent counterparts on a daily basis about what is occurring on our respective areas, often join each other on patrols and have organised warrants together when appropriate. We also have also developed strong working relationship with farmers on our area. In the past 6 months Sussex Police have also established our own Rural Crime Team.

I am happy to report that last week there was a warrant conducted in the metropolitan area in regards to some of the crimes we have been seeing along with several other forces. This is a copy of our press release.

Officers from Sussex Police were involved in a significant operation led by Metropolitan Police in London.

Warrants under section 46 of the Firearms Act 1968 and under section 8 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 were executed at Star Lane, Orpington, Bromley, in the early hours of Wednesday (September 9).

The warrants followed extensive work carried out by the Met, supported by officers from the Rother prevention team in East Sussex.

This identified a series of crimes believed to have been carried out by suspects linked to this location, including a number of crimes that took place in Rother and its neighbouring rural areas.

Over the course of several months, a package of evidence was developed around the suspects at the centre of the investigation, culminating in the warrants being executed around 2.45am on Wednesday.

Hundreds of officers in more than 30 vehicles carried out a number of search warrants at the site. The operation involved highly-trained Counter Terrorism Specialist Firearms Officers, teams from the Territorial Support Group, Dog Support Unit and specialist search officers. Sussex Police's Prevention Enforcement Team has also been on site assisting with the searches, which are ongoing.

Seven people have been arrested for offences including possession with intent to supply drugs, handling stolen goods and burglary.

Inspector Jonathan Hartley of the Rother prevention team, said: "This was a significant operation following many months of hard work by the Met Police and our officers here in Sussex.

"Searches have already identified a number of items reported as stolen from Rother, and we will continue liaising with the Met to investigate all of the findings from the operation.

"This shows we will always target those we suspect of committing crimes in our district, wherever they reside, and will work with other forces to address any cross-border criminality and find those responsible for it.

"I'm very grateful to the Met for their support in tackling cross-border crime."

Another crime we have received a couple of reports of is heater oil theft. At this time we have not received any reports of this in your area, however we have on the Eastern side of Rother so there is a chance it could travel over. Sadly we see this type of crime occur each year although normally a little later in the year. I do not know if you have any form of messaging residents / groups in your area but if there are, please can the following advice be disseminated where possible to residents in your area.

Diesel theft

Diesel theft is a problem for many farms and rural properties. Fuel tanks stored in rural and isolated locations are very attractive to thieves looking for an easy target.

- Keep tanks stored close to the property where you can see them. If this isn't possible, you should consider installing CCTV to watch over isolated tanks and restrict access with walls, fences and hedges. Security lighting such as 'dusk till dawn' or motion detection lighting can also be an effective deterrent to thieves.
- Remember to check the oil level in your tank regularly. Look for any spilt fuel, marks on the locks or anything else suspicious.

- Avoid installing a storage tank in an isolated area or outlying building.
- Consider using a mobile bowser (tanker) kept in a secure place when not in use.
- Use 'diesel dye', making your diesel traceable and less attractive to thieves.

We are asked to remind residents to ensure they are securing their property as best as they can, be aware of any unusual activity and to please report it to Police at the first opportunity, they would much rather check a vehicle that is all in order than miss one that is not.

Cllr. Colin Boylett, portfolio holder for community safety.