

Rural



Policing Strategy 2017-19



Foreword

Derbyshire is a great place to live, work and visit, and one of the safest counties in England. Nonetheless, it is not immune to the problems facing our wider society - and with millions of visitors each year, it presents a unique policing challenge.

As a police service we recognise that we need to work with local people and partner agencies to understand the issues and solve problems. I am committed to ensuring that Derbyshire Constabulary does so effectively.

A great deal of progress has already been made. For example, we continue to see significant success from our investment in Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras. Through use of this technology, and good police work, we are able to identify, stop and deal with travelling criminals that come into Derbyshire from outside of our borders. By creating a hostile environment for criminals, we are sending a clear message that we will target those people who seek to target our towns and villages.

But we want to do more, and - through this strategy - we will.

In the following pages we have identified the main issues that lead to demand for police services in rural locations, and the prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance actions we need to take to strengthen rural policing.

Tackling rural issues is core business for Derbyshire Constabulary and, as such, all parts of our service have a role to play in addressing rural concerns.

However I also believe that there is value in developing dedicated specialist expertise, where that can make a real difference to people's lives.

That is why one of our key actions is to establish a Rural Crime Team, which will be at the cutting-edge of dealing with rural issues.

By implementing this strategy over the next two years, we will demonstrate our drive and commitment to keeping Derbyshire safe.



Bill McWilliam CBE
Assistant Chief Constable
Crime and Territorial



Introduction

Derbyshire is a county police force in the heart of England and, by its very nature, has a substantial rural population.

I am determined that our rural communities will have equal access to policing services as their counterparts in urban areas.

National Rural Crime Network (NRCN), commissioned the largest rural crime survey ever undertaken.

The results confirmed the anecdotal feedback we have personally received from people living in Derbyshire.

The findings showed that many rural people have lost some of their faith in policing.

This is something the Chief Constable and I plan to address with this new Rural Policing Strategy.

For the first time there will be a Rural Crime Team – a team entirely dedicated to rural crime. A team dedicated to keeping you safe from criminals, and to make sure you feel safe. A team who are experts in their field and who understand the specific needs of rural communities and can provide practical help to solve the problems you face.

The NRCN survey also showed that rural crime is vastly under-reported. It is crucial that the police have a clear and accurate picture of the issues in rural areas. The new team will help, but we need your help too. With that in mind, I would encourage you to log any concerns with the police via the 101 number if it isn't urgent (for example, if you have seen a suspicious vehicle), or 999

in an emergency. The police can then build an accurate picture of rural crime and respond appropriately.

All in all, I hope this strategy gives you the reassurance that your concerns are being taken seriously, that we have heard your feedback, and that we are acting to make your community safer.



Hardyal Dhindsa
Police & Crime Commissioner
for Derbyshire



The context

According to the Office for National Statistics, Derbyshire is one of the safest places in the country, and we will continue to work hard to keep it that way, so that people living, working or visiting Derbyshire can feel safe and be safe. We recognise that the impact of incidents or crimes can be higher in rural communities, and that people may feel particularly vulnerable, because of their isolated location. This makes it particularly important that we meet the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan, to:

- Maintain community policing across Derbyshire – working with local community safety partnerships to find local solutions to crime and anti-social behaviour problems
- Stand up for victims, vulnerable people, and take domestic abuse seriously - working with victims to improve the service provided in the future
- Ensure that robust procedures are in place to protect families and those suffering from incidents of domestic abuse and hate crime
- Work with road safety professionals from the police, council and Highways Agency teams to improve road safety for all users
- Tackle wildlife crime and cruelty towards animals
- Ensure that local residents see value for money from the police.

The main challenges we face are:

- **Farm and agricultural crime:**
Opportunist and acquisitive crimes present a significant threat to our farmers and small holders. The loss of equipment and livestock can have a negative impact on people's livelihoods
- **Business crime:**
As with farm and agricultural crime, crimes against small rural businesses can impact greatly on people's livelihoods
- **Road safety:**
Derbyshire has a significant rural road network and ensuring our roads are safe for all users is a key priority
- **Wildlife and heritage crime:**
The illegal taking, disturbance, possession, trade or movement of animals or birds, coupled with the damage to/theft from our vast array of heritage sites across Derbyshire, can effect both the natural and overall environment
- **Tourism crime:**
Derbyshire is a popular destination for visitors. Crime committed in our national parks and rural "beauty spots" can impact on wider community confidence
- **Serious and organised crime:**
Organised crime is not just an urban phenomenon. Our remote and isolated locations can be attractive for organised crime groups.

As a significant proportion of Derbyshire is a rural area, we treat rural crime as "**core business**".

This means that our mainstream resources are responsible for addressing rural issues.

For example

- Our neighbourhood policing teams are at the forefront of delivering a policing service to their respective communities
- Within these teams there are specialists trained in combatting wildlife and rural crime
- Supporting our local teams are dedicated resources such as our road crime teams and safety camera vans, which in turn are all supported by technologies such as automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) system.

Nevertheless, we recognise that rural communities face particular issues, which is why we have enhanced our service by creating an additional dedicated Rural Crime Team.



Following its launch in March 2017, the Rural Crime Team will provide:

- Area-based officers who will focus on rural crime investigations, working alongside neighbourhood policing teams
- A dedicated intelligence hub to identify emerging issues, and support proactive policing and crime prevention
- Stronger community links to improve communication
- Bespoke rural crime prevention advice.



The strategy

Prevention

In partnership with stakeholders we will look to prevent crimes and incidents from taking place, in order to stop people becoming the victims of crime.

We will:

- Maintain a visible presence and provide an effective response in rural communities
- Provide advice and guidance to residents, businesses and visitors on staying safe, and protecting themselves and their property from opportunist criminals
- Continue to develop the specialist rural skills and knowledge of our staff
- Increase the number of special constables and volunteers working in our rural communities
- Continue to develop and support rural watch schemes
- Identify repeat victims of crime and anti-social behaviour and manage our response to their needs
- Educate road users about road safety on rural roads, and take positive action to prevent collisions through initiatives such as Community Speed Watch and the targeted use of safety camera vans.



Intelligence

It is important that we listen to what people tell us and act upon it - and that we provide relevant information to rural communities to help people to take preventative action themselves.

We need to improve the way we use and share information to identify the problems and determine the options we can use to deter and disrupt criminality.

We will:

- Identify those individuals and groups who cause the most harm to rural communities
- Improve our understanding of cross-border criminality by sharing information with other organisations
- Continue to develop our ANPR infrastructure in order to disrupt travelling criminals
- Improve the way we provide information to our communities about those committing rural crime
- Ensure we have the processes and resources to gather information and react appropriately to incidents when they occur
- Encourage people to report crimes and incidents to the police.



Enforcement

- We will enforce the law and target those areas of crime and those offenders who cause most harm.

We will:

- Ensure an effective police response to reports of rural crime and anti-social behaviour
- Ensure an effective police response to reports of rural crime and anti-social behaviour
- Work with the communities, watch schemes and partners to run joint rural crime and anti-social behaviour operations
- Develop even stronger links with neighbouring police forces to combat and deter cross-border criminality



Reassurance

We want to work with communities to ensure that people living in rural areas can feel safe and be safe. Good two-way communication, local engagement and reassurance all have a role to play in giving communities confidence in the policing service across rural areas.

We will:

- Make sure we understand the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour on rural communities and provide an excellent service at the first point of contact
- Improve the way we communicate with our rural communities by keeping people updated on current trends, activity and performance
- Make the police more visible and accessible in rural areas by letting people know when and where we will meet them in their communities
- Conduct regular meetings to listen to, and act upon, the concerns of rural communities
- Seek feedback from the people living in our rural communities on the way we are working to deliver this policing strategy

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