



Wealden Prevention Team, Community engagement summary October 2018

“Hello” from your Wealden Policing Team:

As the Wealden Inspector responsible for neighbourhood policing I would like to update you with some of the recent activity of your local policing team.

The purpose is to provide you with a summary of where we have been and the sort of engagement we have been focussing on in the towns and villages throughout Wealden.

Hopefully what you will glean from it is a flavour of what we are doing to provide a pro-active presence across Wealden, over and above the routine deployment of officers to urgent calls and crime enquiries that happens every day across the district.

‘Being visible’ in our communities is a challenge – Wealden is a huge area with a small (but dedicated!) contingent of neighbourhood officers and PCSOs. The team has a core role in preventing crime and keeping people safe and so naturally much of their time is spent working with partner agencies and other police departments to do just that. That crucial work is not always ‘visible’ to the public.

We do however, absolutely recognise the importance of effective community engagement, and we know our Wealden communities do too. Our engagement activity is therefore one of our biggest priorities and whenever possible we are deploying the team to get out to all parts of the district.

What follows is a snapshot of where our neighbourhood patrols have taken us to in the last few months

July.

Throughout July, the Wealden Team conducted a number of foot and vehicle patrols in Heathfield, Pevensey, Westham, Hailsham, Wadhurst, Danehill and Hartfield.

Due to a recent burglary in the local area, officers conducted foot patrols in the Huggetts Lane area of Heathfield to provide reassurance to the public and to give them the opportunity to discuss any concerns they had with us.

On Friday 27 July, officers attended the Heathfield Youth Club - who were celebrating their 60th anniversary. They engaged with young people attending the event as well as staff and street pastors. The officers were approached by a local Councillor with whom they discussed policing and ‘police visibility’ in Heathfield.

Naturally the team focuses its attention on crime and anti-social behaviour ‘hotspots’. Due to reports of youth anti-social behaviour in specific areas of Hailsham the team conducted targeted patrols to address the issue.

August:

During August, the Team conducted a number of foot and vehicle patrols in Polegate, Wannock, Jevington, East Dean, Birling Gap, Willingdon, Stone Cross, Pevensey, Wartling, Westham, Hailsham, Chalvington, Hellingly, Berwick, Black Boys, Heathfield, Herstmonceux, Horam, Uckfield, Groombridge, Eridge and Wadhurst.

On Thursday 2 August the Team dedicated their morning to checking on vulnerable victims in the Hailsham, Polegate and Willingdon areas due to an increase in rogue trading scams. A number of intelligence reports were submitted as a result, as well as providing reassurance to residents and offering crime prevention advice.

Whilst out on patrol in Hailsham on Friday 3 August, officers received reports of youths on the flat roof of premises on the High Street. The youths were found and appropriate action taken.

A key issue for residents in Wealden is anti-social driving, particularly speeding. On Saturday 11 August, officers assisted with the local **Community Speed Watch** teams in Windmill Hill and Punnetts Town to tackle speeding in these areas.

The team were out on foot in Heathfield delivering leaflets advertising the Heathfield community surgery organised for Monday 10 September.

September:

In September the Team conducted multiple foot and vehicle patrols in Willingdon, Polegate, Stone Cross, Cuckmere Valley, Alfriston, Jevington, Pevensey, Westham, Berwick, Hellingly, Heathfield, Uckfield, Rotherfield, Mayfield, Groombridge and Forest Row.

During a patrol in Crowborough on Wednesday 5 September, the team visited areas including the High Street, Waitrose / Morrison's car parks and The Broadway.

Whilst patrolling around Forest Row town centre on Friday 7 September, the team visited the town council offices and liaised with the Community Warden and Clerk to the Council.

Since the schools have been back there have been a number of deployments for the team to be present before and after the school day. These have provided a good opportunity to engage with pupils and parents.

A Heathfield community surgery took place on Monday 10 September. In addition Wealden staff undertook patrols of Heathfield High Street. During the surgery the team met a number of residents including two members of Heathfield and Waldron Parish Councils, one of the local street pastors and members of the Bodle Street Green & Springwood Hill Neighbourhood Watch. The interactions and topics of conversation varied, including speeding in New Pond Hill, Five Ashes and Cade Street. Whilst this was occurring, other officers walked along the High Street and a number of blue cards advising about parking were placed on car windscreens that were illegally parked.

A similar surgery took place in Crowborough on Monday 17 September. It was another very useful opportunity to meet with the public, and on this occasion also benefited from the attendance of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Do you want to be kept 'In the Know'?

For more regular updates as to what our Constables and PCSOs are doing you can sign up to <https://www.intheknow.community/>.

There are weekly messages posted on this forum which will help you stay linked in to current police initiatives and crime prevention messages

Joint agency working

The team works closely with partner agencies in respect of a whole range of issues. This includes joint operational activity such as a recent scrap metal initiative with Wealden District Council...

We had an excellent day with your officers on 14th August stopping more waste carriers. We were able to advise a couple of van drivers in relation to the requirements for carrying waste, we found several to already have

Waste Carrier Licences, we requested waste transfer notes showing where the waste had gone from another which were subsequently produced and your officers were able to seize a transit van carrying scrap metal for no insurance.

These days are of great value as word is spread through the various channels reminding waste carriers of our existence and that we are working in partnership with you looking at those carrying waste and scrap metal.

The Street Scene Team would therefore like to pass our thanks on to everyone who makes these days possible and we look forward to more in the future.

Senior Street Scene Officer

Planning and Environmental Services

Wealden District Council

Officer numbers set to rise.

You'll have hopefully heard that we are recruiting a significant number of new constables. This is what the Chief Constable says about that in the Sussex Police Operational Delivery Plan:

'2018 is a turning point for Sussex Police. Our plans for the future have been enhanced substantially with recent decisions taken by the PCC to release an element of reserves and to increase the precept (the portion of council tax paid by Sussex residents).

As a consequence, our previous savings requirement has reduced significantly and we have embarked on an ambitious recruitment path that will see overall numbers of police officers rise for the first time in over eight years.

Our 2018-22 Transformation Strategy, published earlier this year, describes where we are prioritising our investment, where communities face the greatest challenges and where we are most stretched. This will see us strengthen local policing, improve public contact (101, 999 and online) and continue to modernise – all essential to our being accessible when communities need us.

I am committed to improving and developing our prevention and local investigations' capacity and investing in local policing resources to meet the demand which has grown over the past year. Equally, I am committed to improving how our communities contact us – again there is a national increase in demand and I know this can, at times, stretch our current capacity.

I am proud of the fact that our work to tackle 'county lines' has been hailed as 'ground-breaking' and that we have been recognised as making good use of regional and national specialist capabilities to bring organised criminals to justice. Equally, I am energised by the strength of our partnerships, bringing together resources, specialist skills and fresh thinking. Our partnerships are increasingly vital, increasingly effective and through our ambitious regional plans, increasingly transformative.

I am indebted to every individual and every single organisation, agency and group with whom we work day in and day out at all levels – local, regional, national and international – to detect and prevent crime, to support and provide services for vulnerable people and to keep Sussex a safe place.'

Giles York QPM

Chief Constable

Sussex Police

(<https://sussex.police.uk/about-us/priorities-and-direction/operational-delivery-plan/>)

New scheme to help tackle rural crime

We launched **Sussex Countrywatch** on Saturday 6 October at the Autumn Show and Game Fair at the South of England Showground, Ardingly.

Sussex Countrywatch is a partnership initiative and by working together with partner agencies we aim to help strengthen and protect our rural communities against crime by sharing information and providing practical prevention advice.

We know that people in Sussex are passionate about our county's countryside and protecting it from crime. We are reaching out to people living, working or visiting our rural areas to assist us and our partners tackle rural crime and catch those who are responsible for it.

By signing up to Sussex Countrywatch you will receive regular updates straight into your email account from police and partner agencies to keep up to date with the latest rural matters. Subscribers are encouraged to report crime and recommend others to sign up, creating a network of eyes and ears in rural communities.

ACC Nick May, Supt. Emma Brice and Sgt Tom Carter were joined by representatives from the Sussex Countrywatch partnership whom included West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, the National Farmers Union and the Angling Trust.

Superintendent Emma Brice, Force Strategic Lead for Rural, Wildlife, Heritage and Environment Crime said: "The launch of Sussex Countrywatch is key to helping those within our rural communities feel connected. By offering two way communication we aim to strengthen rural policing and increase public confidence in the services we provide.

Sussex Countrywatch isn't just about keeping our rural communities informed about crime but also to give sound crime prevention advice to help people living and working in our rural communities protect their homes and businesses.

Working in partnership with other agencies allows us to collectively respond to the needs of our rural communities to make our rural communities safer."

James Osman, NFU County Adviser for Sussex said: "The NFU are really pleased to support the Sussex Countrywatch initiative and we hope our members will value the service it will provide. Rural crime is an issue in Sussex and by working in partnerships we can improve intelligence provided to the police and inform the community of risks, so that we hopefully see a reduction in the overall amount of rural crime. Farmers can work with people who are out and about in the countryside to act as their 'eyes and ears', passing on valuable intelligence to Sussex Police."

Katy Bourne, Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner, said "One of my key priorities is to make our rural areas safer for residents, workers and visitors. I remain strongly committed to ensuring that crimes occurring in our rural communities are taken as seriously as those in urban areas around the county. I welcome the launch of this Countrywatch scheme which should bolster the confidence of people living and working in our beautiful rural communities across Sussex."

By signing up to our free Sussex Countrywatch scheme you'll receive regular updates on crime, prevention advice and become eyes and ears for our rural community.

Sign up through In the Know and select 'Country Watch' as an area of interest.

Coming Up:

In the months ahead our engagement and visibility throughout Wealden will continue to be a priority for the team.

This will include: regular deployment of a mobile police station; daily engagement patrols; continued joint agency initiatives; and, support to Neighbourhood Watch, Community Speed Watch, Paws on Watch, and our Town and Parish Councils. We are also planning further community surgeries and seeking out local events that we can attend – particularly amongst our rural communities.

It remains our intention not only to keep people safe, but help keep our communities feeling safe.

Inspector Jon Gross

Wealden Prevention Team