



NO WOMAN SHOULD FEEL UNSAFE IN HER OWN COMMUNITY

Abuse and violence does not discriminate - urban or rural it happens.

Statement from Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex



“No woman should feel unsafe in her own community, but the sad truth is that many do. No women should feel scared or be threatened going out, meeting friends or walking home, but the reality is that many do. The events of the last

few days have brought into sharp focus something that is very wrong in our society, something we need to change. We must seize this opportunity. We must make a different society.

As we reflect on the tragic death of Sarah Everard and the national outpouring of emotion that has happened since, it is clear we need to work together to make a positive change. Many people have much to be proud of and to feel joy in, but there are also things that cannot continue the way they are and must change. The sad truth is that this abuse, harassment and violence should not be happening in the first place. Women should not be scared to live their lives, to walk around their communities or simply be who they are. I want to make it very clear that we will do all we can to help women to be safe and feel safe. To be respected. To live their lives free of fear. I want women to be appreciated for the difference they make and the positive impact they have on our society.

I will not tolerate male violence against women”. To access the full article please click [here](#).

If you have been a victim of sexual violence or abuse help is available.

Please contact Synergy Essex on 0300 003 7777.

For domestic abuse support contact Compass on 0330 333 7 444.

ABOUT THE RURAL ENGAGEMENT TEAM (RET)



The Rural Engagement Team consists of two Sergeants and ten Constables and provide cover seven days a week from 0800-2200 hours. Within our team we have dedicated Wildlife and Heritage crime officers. Remember, this is in addition to your local and community policing teams, so there is a police response over the 24 hours period.

Our delivery plan sets out that we will focus on:

- Poaching offences, paying attention to hare coursing
- Fly tipping and large-scale waste
- Trespass and unauthorised encampments

- Provide quality policing to the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller and Rural Communities of Essex
- Theft of major plant and equipment

Our officers are trained in the recognition of stolen caravans and plant and in the month of March the team have recovered two stolen caravans and one stolen motorhome. As part of our rural patrols we have also recovered a stolen car and stolen Transit van.



Our road safety operation (op Proud) is all about providing a service to rural communities to keep them safe from uninsured and speeding motorists. We recently seized three uninsured vehicles and recovered one that had been abandoned. You may see the team in the villages and on rural roads so don't be shy, pop along and say hello. We don't bite!

We have been working with the Environment Agency and Local Authorities across Essex to combat fly tipping and the illegal disposal of waste. You may see us on one of our multi-agency operations. Remember, if you transport or dispose of waste as part of your business, or you buy or sell waste, you need a waste carriers licence. Don't be caught out, help us and our partner agencies to stamp out illegal fly tipping. Help us keep Essex beautiful.

The team have been working hard and have produced some excellent results recently. Through the hard work and determination of the Heritage crime officers we have presented a file to the Crown Prosecution Service resulting in two people being summoned to court accused of offences of Theft, Going Equipped to Steal and Treasure Act offences. It relates to the second largest Iron Age gold hoard found in the UK and the first one to result in a prosecution. It was found near to Chelmsford and has been described as significant.

In the fight against hare coursing we are happy to report that another criminal behaviour order has been handed out this month when the team successfully prosecuted an offender. We continue to do all that we can to deter this crime from happening in our county and ask that the public continue to report this and all other crime. We have been working with our neighbouring Police forces to bring about a regional response to dealing with the crime.

We have successfully worked with Suffolk Constabulary in relation to several offences of sheep worrying across the region. Two people have recently been prosecuted when they failed to control their dogs and sheep were attacked.

Anti-social use of the byways by motorcycles and quad bikes seems to have been on the up since lockdown. Please be vigilant and if you are aware of offenders please get in touch.

We will continue to visit the villages and rural communities to promote road safety and provide a high visibility presence to deter crime. You can find us on Twitter should you wish to follow what we are getting up to: @EP_RURAL

Sgt Paul Downes
Rural Engagement Team



NATIONAL FARMERS UNION (NFU) – Essex update from Jake Richards



March tends to signify the start of a lot of on-farm activity. As the weather dries and warms up it is a chance for the County's farmers to start to tend their crops, giving them a much needed dose of food before the warm summer days grow the food we harvest in the autumn. If you have been out in the county on dry days you may have seen that the farms have been making the most of non-rainy days to get the jobs done.

We are now starting to see trickles of detail from Defra on the future of farm support and the Sustainable Farm Incentive pilot that will start later this year. We will soon be notifying members of the next round of the Countryside Small Productivity Grants later in the year. We are in a period of great change for UK Agriculture and the NFU are maintaining the representation of the industry at all levels National, Regional and Local. NFU Colleagues have been feeding into the Essex Climate Action Commission and will soon be helping to shape the Climate Focus Area in the River Blackwater catchment and the county's carbon Net Zero Innovation Network.

Something that we, as an organisation, are watching closely is the potential legislative changes to trespass laws. Hopefully any changes will give rural communities some security when it comes to illegal encampments – an issue that is close to the heart of many rural communities.

At a regional level we are working to provide our members with comprehensive advice on BPS and Health and Safety over the next few months and we will be working with members across the region on the upcoming Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner elections in May.

Finally, as the weather starts to dry and get warmer, and the COVID restrictions are slowly relaxed we encourage you to follow the newly updated Countryside Code. We understand that there will be increased promotion of the code which will be of great importance with an influx of visitors to rural counties given the prospect of staycations being the norm for 2021.

Jake Richards

County Adviser for Essex



PROJECT GIGABIT FOR HARD TO REACH HOMES AND BUSINESSES – SURVEY - CLOSES 18TH APRIL 2021



Essex has been included in the first phase of the Government's Project Gigabit initiative that will provide next generation gigabit broadband for hard to reach homes and businesses.

As a result, Essex County Council is conducting an online Broadband Survey to identify needs.

For more details please [click here](#).

TESTING KITS AVAILABLE

Covid-19 self-test kits are now available for collection at 21 libraries across Essex, making testing even more accessible and convenient. Residents, who do NOT have Covid-19 symptoms, will be able to collect and take away two boxes of seven tests, to undertake regular twice weekly testing at home to help prevent the spread of the virus. The self-test kits are simple to use and offer quick results.

Dr Mike Gogarty, Director of Public Health, said: "I cannot emphasise enough how important it is that as lockdown eases people remain vigilant, observe hands, face and space and get tested to make sure we reduce asymptomatic infections as much as possible.

"We are particularly keen to test people who cannot work from home and are encouraging residents to take a test before seeing relatives or loved ones outside of their lockdown bubble".

To access the list of libraries where you can collect the kits please [click here](#)

GROWING COMMUNITIES – BEE GOOD PLOT COMPETITION



Habitat loss combined with climate change is having a huge impact on the UK's bee populations. Bees are essential for food production they play such an important role ensuring a healthy ecosystem.

This year Growing Communities is encouraging our primary schools to help by creating a Bee Good Plot. The children are asked to design a bee friendly plot and grow it at school, the Bee Good competition is open to all primary schools in Essex with two categories: Age 4-7 years and 8-11 years.



PRIZES

First Prize: Gardening equipment bundle, Bee book and a Bee Good House.

Runners up: Bee Good House & Bee Book.

The first 20 schools to enter will receive an Annual Bee Mix kindly donated by Kings Seeds.

Closing date: 9th July 2021 - Bee Good competition requires planting.

For more information and to enter your school please visit the RCCE website [here](#)

FUTURE MEETING DATES



Essex Rural Partnership Future Meeting Dates

Date: Tuesday 27th April 2021

Time: Start time 10:30am until 12:30pm

This meeting will be held via Zoom

Date: Thursday 21st October 2021

Time: Start time: 10:30am until 12:30pm

Venue: TBC