

Rural priorities in focus of new dedicated proactive team

A new dedicated team who specialise in tackling the most important priorities facing rural communities has been launched in Staffordshire today (Monday 21 October).

Around 80 per cent of our force area is considered rural. Staffordshire is home to a number of people, businesses and livelihoods that have different demands to those in urban areas.

We're really proud of our rural footprint and we completely recognise the need for specialist resources in this area, which is why we've set up a new dedicated proactive team.

From today, the county proactive and rural team (CPART) will be working proactively to service these demands on a dedicated scale.

What does this change mean for rural communities?

- Specialist officers with local experience in tackling crime which impacts those living within rural areas will be working proactively each and every day across Staffordshire to stop offenders and prevent crime
- We'll have a better understanding on the needs of rural communities, including agriculture, equine, wildlife and heritage, meaning a better police service across Staffordshire
- Officers can spend more time engaging with rural communities and working with partners to tackle their top priorities, including neighbouring police forces
- Lots of officers outside of the dedicated team have also been given additional training in responding to rural crime, allowing us to respond to these issues more effectively

Chief Superintendent Emily Clarke, strategic lead for rural crime, said: "Delivering an outstanding police service to communities in Staffordshire will never be a one glove fits all approach. It's vital that we adapt what we do to ensure we understand the diverse needs of the people we proudly serve on a daily basis, and our rural communities are no different.

"Rural crime has increased by 8.9 per cent this year, and with it, a cost of more than £1.8-million in stolen items. We know that for many farmers and members of the rural community, their business is also their home, so these types of crimes can have a significant effect on people and families.

"We've put a lot of specialist resources and personnel into this new team because we recognise the importance of understanding people's priorities, and how we can work more effectively to deliver them."

"This week also marks the first day of the national rural wildlife crime unit's week of action. Similar enforcement and community engagement will be taking place locally

this week, giving the new team a solid base to begin building and making a real difference to rural communities in Staffordshire.”

Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime, Ben Adams said: “Staffordshire is a largely rural county, and crimes in these areas will always be a priority for me as they can have a significant impact on communities who may already feel isolated.

“Because of this, the experience for victims of rural crime can be different, and the nature of the crimes themselves may also require a different approach. That’s why I’m delighted that Staffordshire Police have introduced the new county proactive and rural team to offer that specialist level of support to victims.

“Rural crime is a core part of local policing work, and our rural communities should expect the same levels of service and engagement from officers as those in our towns and cities. I’m looking forward to seeing all of the proactive work officers are now able to do in those communities as the team develops.”

Message Sent By

Matthew Henshall

(Staffordshire Police, PCSO, Stafford Borough)