

Rural Task Force



The RTF have been working hard tackling Op Galileo offences, which continue to be reported in relation to all poaching offences not just Hare Coursing. It is clear that this is still very much under reported and I encourage all incidents to be reported via 999 if in progress, 101 or online. There have been reports of considerable damage to crops, gates and grassland, any information about those involved is valuable information to the team.

Theft of Machinery continues to be reported and we have seen an increase in this type of crime recently. I would like to remind machinery owners to please take all precautions to secure your property, record all serial numbers, take photos consider additional markings such as DNA solutions and tracker devices. All of which will assist the police in recovering your property should it be stolen.

The RTF continue to be proactive with our partners at the local authorities. The team now work with all 13 local authorities across the county to tackle fly tipping and illegal waste carriers.

Farm watch membership continues to grow and has proved a great asset for the team and rural community. Anyone interested in joining your local group please email the RTF at rural.task.force@kent.police.uk.

Here is a snapshot of the work carried out by the Rural Task Force over the last six weeks.

Rural Theft

Following a report on Farm Watch of a possible John Deere Gator being hidden up in woodlands at Meopham, officers attended the area. Enquiries made identified that the vehicle had been stolen from a local Scout Group overnight. The Gator was recovered and returned to the owner.



Theft of dog from Bowl Inn, Charing. Multiple sharing on Farm Watch and Social Media.



Overnight on 3rd / 4th September a John Deere Gator, was stolen from a Barn on a Farm at Bekesbourne. Offender (s) have driven a 4x4 vehicle across the field at the back of the farm and gained access to the building by forcing a Fire Exit at the back. They have then entered the building and opened the roller shutter doors from the inside and pushed the vehicle outside. It is suspected it was then pushed out the front gate and driven off.



RTF attended a small site at High Halstow after getting information that a Digger Breaker (Value £5,000) that was stolen from a Clancy Docwra Site was believed to be on the site. Attended and located the Digger Breaker on one of the Plots. The Plot appeared Vacant and had several old vans and Diggers on the plot. Details were obtained from three male occupants from the Site however none of which could be connected to the Breaker due to the location it was located.



Horse box stolen from Chilham Park, Ashford.



Joint visit with Maidstone CPT and Maidstone Council to a private site at Staplehurst to locate a fly tipping suspect. Whilst at the site a check was conducted on a white Range Rover Evoque and on further inspection was identified as being stolen. The male with the vehicle was arrested and a search was carried out on the caravan to locate the keys. A quantity of class A and B was located, and phones seized. Information is that the 3 other members of the caravan jumped fences into woods as police arrived and the 4th male was arrested.



RTF came across a Blue Hyundai Coupe outside a property off the B2046 with hazards on and parked in precarious position. Gloves and other items were in the vehicle potentially used for going equipped. SD units attended and tracked however no persons located. There was a building site near to where the vehicle was parked. Vehicle had previous Registered Keeper, No Tax or Insurance so was seized.

Burglary in progress at a new building site in Great Chart. 3 males seen on CCTV, RTF patrols attended location, vehicle in the vicinity a red Peugeot 206 failed to stop for RTF. Vehicle lost on a bridle way in Shadoxhurst. Vehicle located abandoned and seized for forensics.



A suspected cloned Ford Transit was stopped in Frognall Lane, Teyhnam. The vehicle was also been linked to suspicious circumstances and theft of metal. Initially vehicle started to reverse before coming to a stop. There were two male occupants, the passenger was showing as wanted for DA High-Risk Sexual Assault, Assault ABH and Criminal Damage and was arrested and conveyed to Canterbury Custody. Due to Driver's behaviour and smell of cannabis he was detained under Misuse of Drugs Act. No Drugs were located on the driver or within the vehicle. True Index of the vehicle was identified via the VIN. Driver was reported for Disqualified Driving, cloned vehicle and No Insurance and vehicle was seized.

Suspects spent nearly an hour attempting to steal a touring caravan from Sutton Valance ignoring motor home and farm machinery. Suspects failed attempt to remove hydraulic feet broke into the caravan to try and disable and cut battery power. Suspects stole chains and trolley jack from farm vehicle to aid their theft. Caravan left it situ. Offenders mission vehicle was a Grey BMW X3/X5 and there were 3 males involved.

GPS theft from tractor in Newchurch. In the early hours of the morning sensor alarm sounded, and this was checked by the farmer, but he didn't see anyone. The next morning, he has found that the Tractor Navigation system has been stolen. This is a national crime series as high value and are taken abroad to Lithuania. Details circulated on Farm Watch for local farms to check CCTV and alert other farmers. Spoke with victim and obtained Serial number which has been passed to John DEERE national to mark as stolen on their dealer system. Value of stolen GPS is £16,000.

RTF were made aware of a Tracker Activation on a stolen Fiat Ducato Motorhome. Officers attended where the Tracking Signal was at its strongest and using drone confirmed a Fiat motorhome matching description parked nearby. Officers went to the parked motorhome and the Vehicle was identified showing different index. Motorhome was seized for a CSI examination.



Report of £17,000 John DEERE gator below being stolen from Chartham overnight. Contact made with victim and circulated images across Farm Watch groups and nationally.



Report on Farm Watch of a burnt-out vehicle hidden on a farmer field near to cut through to Millmead Estate Thanet. Vehicle Examiners attended and vehicle confirmed stolen from a burglary at Manston.



OP GALILEO (POACHING)

A Ford Transit Flatbed was stopped with 3 occupants. The vehicles were linked to a Traveller Site near Orpington. Males claimed to have been fishing but could not provide plausible accounts of where they had done this legally. 3 fishing rods and 2 dead eels could be seen in rear, as well as several tools within a tool bag.

Persons and vehicle searched under Poaching Act. A catapult, bag of metal ball bearings, and tin of fishing tackle and ball bearings were in the cab and seized. A few tools were also located within the cab. Driver stated he had lawful permission to fish and shoot pigeons and rabbits but could not give any landowners names or locations of lakes and land. Driver was reported for the offences of no MOT and vehicle Tax and Vehicle Seized.

Burnt out vehicle at farm at Wingham, Canterbury. On inspection the vehicle was a Kia Sportage and could have been connected to a Poaching call in Wingham the night before. Vehicle examiners contacted to identify as the VIN number and engine number could not be located.



A Silver Nissan X-trail stopped at Doddington with a dark coloured Mercedes ML parked alongside it blocking the road. The Mercedes moved out of the way and when it realised that it was an unmarked Police vehicle it drove off at speed towards Norton. The X-Trail was blocked in and 3 persons detained. One of the males claimed they had run out of diesel. The vehicle smelled strongly of cannabis and was searched. Both keys for the vehicle were found as well as a small bag of herbal cannabis located in the rear. None of the occupants admitted that the cannabis belonged to them and due to the small amount, it was seized for destruction. Vehicle was seized for no tax and the males left on foot towards Norton. Further information was received that both vehicles were seen driving on farmland near to Homestall Lane, Doddington prior to being seen stopped together.



Ford Fiesta stopped after being witnessed to shine torches, search conducted on the vehicle and males, lamp, ball bearings & catapult seized. CPW issued to both male occupants reference poaching activity.



A male with a white lurcher dog was seen trespassing on land at Brookland. The male was in a white Ford Focus that is owned by a known hare courser.



Op Traverse/Fish Poaching

Report of a group fishing at Neville Park but not returning fish. They were stopped by RTF patrol and 3 Bulgarian Males had fishing equipment and fish in a net. They had no fish with them. RTF liaising with Environmental Agency to pursue offences.

2 Sites were visited in the Dartford area where 3 Community Protection Warnings (CPW) have been issued to 3 males identified as Fish Poaching at Lullingstone Lake in August 2021.

Community Protection Warning (CPW) issued to a persistent owner of a vehicle sighted in Castle Road, Lullingstone Sevenoaks. Vehicle seen early hours this morning suspected to be poaching from Lullingstone Lakes.



Person stopped fishing unlawfully at Swanley is being prosecuted for not having a Rod Licence.

RTF Specials visited Swanley Park and 2 males fishing with no rod licences. There is only 1 small sign at location stating the site was a private area and that no fishing was allowed, and advice was given to landowner reference increasing signage to make it clear that fishing is prohibited in the area. Environmental Agency contacted to prosecute no licence offences.



Wildlife

Reports of Swans been shot by youths with an air rifle on the River Stour nr Hatch Lane, Chartham. Increased patrolling of the area no further sightings or reports of injured animals.

Badger Sett Interference at Lydd. Concerns that following planning permission been issued that concrete posts have been used to block the set. Ongoing enquires to establish the ownership of the land and that sett was active.

Report of Heron being shot in Thanet. Publicised on social media platforms RTF Attended the farm and spoke with Farmer who confirmed the incident occurred. Suspect was identified and has been interviewed at Margate Police station. 7 Firearms seized and ammunition from the suspect for review of any firearms licensing offences being committed. Natural England will be consulted before prosecution decision made.

KentOnline

Heron shot in Ramsgate: Kent police launch investigation

TRAVEL NEWS

NEWS ALERTS

By Brad Harper bharper@thekmggroup.co.uk

11:21, 19 October 2021
| Updated: 11:59, 19 October 2021

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Police have launched an investigation after a heron was reportedly shot dead from the sky by a heartless poacher.

Bosses of a wildlife conservation project have told of their devastation following allegations a man fired a shotgun at the protected species as it flew across Damerata



Thanet: Fury after heron 'shot' near Pegwell Bay in Ramsgate

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, anyone killing or attempting to kill a heron could face fines or prison sentences

BY HENRY COLLIER
18 OCTOBER 2021 • 3 MIN READ

Report of Badger Sett disturbance at Beneden which has been covered over by a membrane and hard-core. The works have been carried out by Contractors working for the landowner and it appears a track laid to provide access to their land. Investigation on-going.

Animal Welfare

RTF with the RSPCA executed 4 search warrants on the 22nd September in the Gravesham area to tackle a puppy farming ring. The main suspect was located at one of the addresses and arrested and 5 other persons have been interviewed. 36 dogs and 3 cats were seized plus unborn puppies and kittens and £10,000 + cash seized.

Environmental Crime & Fly Tipping (Op Assist)

The RTF attended at site at Sevenoaks with Environment Agency (EA) to check compliance with their environmental permit. The site has been non-compliant for some time now & our attendance is needed as EA receive threatening and abusive behaviour from the company director. As RTF attended the site a black Ford Ranger left the site with two occupants. This vehicle was stopped at Dunton Green. Both males work at the location. The vehicle was seized for no tax.



A white Ford Transit stopped on A2 Rainham just next to the Asda Petrol Station. Driver gave false details but was subsequently identified. Vehicle had waste on board and Driver did not have a waste carriers' licence. Vehicle was seized due to having no tax since 2020.



Op Assist at Tunbridge Wells with Tunbridge Wells District Council and Environment Agency. 16 vehicles stopped and brought to check site to be assessed. 2 Fines issued by Council, 1 vehicle seized for no tax and 1 Traffic Offence Report issued.



Op Assist at Maidstone with Maidstone Council Environmental Enforcement Team. 3 x £300 Fixed Penalty Tickers were issued, 1 TOR for a Mobile Phone offence, 2 vehicles seized for no tax and 1 arrest made for breach of Immigration Deportation Order





Op Assist at Medway with Medway Council Environmental Enforcement Team. Numerous vehicles stopped and two vehicles seized for no tax



Rural patrol conducted around Canterbury and Dover areas to locate outstanding suspect who was wanted in connection with 3 large scale fly tips in Frogham of asbestos and other building materials. Male located in Ash and arrested and conveyed to Canterbury custody and interviewed. 1 Offence admitted and ID procedure organised on behalf of Dover District council for the others. Arrested male has previously served prison time for a previous fly tip offence.

Op Assist at Swale with Swale Council Environmental Enforcement Team. Numerous vehicles were stopped with 1 vehicle seized, 1 traffic offence report completed, and 4 Producers Documents issued by SBC.



Op Assist at Dover and Thanet Council Environmental Enforcement Team on the 6th October. During the day there were 2 arrests made, 1 vehicle seized, 1 traffic offence report completed, and 5 intelligence reports submitted.





RTF deployed along with Medway CPT and Medway Task Force to attend Waste Collection Site to assist Medway Council, Gravesend Council and Environmental Agency regarding an ongoing investigation to numerous large-scale Fly-tip in Kent totalling around £500,000 to date. Medway Council officials seized a lorry involved in the incidents and RTF seized a stolen horsebox located on site which was stolen from Orpington on 30/09/2021 .

Other Business

A White Vauxhall Corsa was stopped on Sheals Crescent, Maidstone following information that vehicle has previously Failed to Stop for Police. Driver stated he purchased the vehicle on 26th August for £800 from someone in Sheerness. He admitted that the vehicle had no insurance so was issued a Traffic Offence Report and vehicle seized.



4 Males were stopped on the industrial estate at Lodge Road, Staplehurst, after reports of anti-social riding of motorbikes and scooters. A fifth bike made off across fields upon seeing police. After speaking with witnesses and reviewing CCTV, 3 of the stopped males were issued S.59 warnings after footage showed them performing wheelies up and down the road without helmets on. All the bikes were covered in WH05 DAT stickers clearly indicating they have an interest in the large scale anti-social ride out group that posts footage on YouTube

Vehicle stopped on Mote Avenue, Maidstone which was being driven by a disqualified driver.
Driver reported for offence of driving whilst disqualified and no insurance.



Vehicle stopped Thanet Way. Driver admitted no insurance and vehicle un-taxed since June 2021. Traffic Offence Report issued, and vehicle seized.



Ford Fiesta stopped A2 Newington as vehicle showing SORN and No Mot. Vehicle in unsafe condition with rear seat being folded down and passenger sitting on seat. Driver reported for various traffic offences and vehicle seized.



A black BMW was followed driving slow in Station Road, Hever and suddenly pulled over. Driver immediately got out and started to walk off claiming he needed to go to the toilet. Due to his behaviour and the smell of cannabis he was detained. Vehicle searched and small amount of herbal cannabis located. Driver failed drug swipe and arrested.

On 13/09/21 a blue Toyota Hi-Ace was seen towing an Ifor Williams Horse/Cattle trailer on A2 between Newington and Rainham. The trailer had no number plate on it and only one working light. Attempts were made to stop the vehicle as it approached Bowaters Roundabout, Rainham but the vehicle initially failed to stop. The vehicle then stopped at Bowaters Roundabout and the driver was approached and told to remove the keys. He initially refused to do so and started to drive off with an Officers arm inside the vehicle. When threatened with being sprayed with Pava, he removed the keys and was detained. There were 2 males in the vehicle. The Driver was shown as wanted for a no bail Warrant and was arrested. Due to him smelling of alcohol and drugs paraphernalia being located on him after his arrest he was asked to provide road samples but refused and was arrested for failing to provide. Following his initial Arrest, he became aggressive and attempted to assault a Police Officer and was verbally abusive. Due to this he was also arrested for Assault on an Emergency Worker and S.4 Public Order. In the rear of the van was scrap metal and in the rear of the trailer were bags of commercial waste. Driver stated he had collected these from Swale and was taking them back to his yard in Bredhurst. He did not provide any details of where his yard is in Bredhurst. He claimed that he had a valid Waste Collectors Licence and could provide Waste Transfer Notes but did not have these with him.



A black Subaru Legacy failed to stop on New Road, Chatham on 13/9/21. Following activating ANPR cameras the vehicle was located on Lower Rainham Road and followed to a layby on Raspberry Hill Lane, Iwade where it came to a natural stop. The vehicle was blocked, and the 4 persons were detained for a Section 1 PACE search. Nothing of note was located, however, Driver was in possession of just over £200 cash. He stated he had bought the car today and admitted not having a licence or insurance. He stated that they were going to Sheerness to see some friends to celebrate his birthday. Vehicle seized and Driver issued with a Traffic Offence Report.



Old Park Barracks Canterbury. Section 59 issued to rider of a quadbike on Ministry of Defence (MOD) land. There were 3 males with the Quad. All males left the area when told and MOD updated.

A Silver Mercedes E220d was stopped on London Road, Rainham. Checks on the vehicle showed it was being used under a Traders Policy. Vehicle was shown as untaxed since May 2020 so was seized.



A Blue Mercedes A-Class, seen coming from the direction of Maidstone along the A20 and turned on seeing a marked Police Vehicle towards Ditton. The vehicle was driving erratically, with its lights off and had no front number plate. It turned into Mills Road and then conducted a u-turn at the traffic lights where it was stopped. The vehicle contained the three males. Search of the vehicle/occupants located a large amount of recently stolen property from shops. Small amount of class A drugs located on the driver and vehicle found to be a cloned stolen vehicle. All three occupants were arrested and conveyed to Custody.



A silver Vauxhall Insignia was stopped after activating an ANPR camera on the A249 for no insurance. Vehicle had not been insured since 01/08/2021. The vehicle was subsequently seized driver issued a Traffic Offence Report for no insurance.

Male wanted for Theft of Motor Vehicle and DA related Stalking/Harassment was located by RTF and arrested and conveyed to Medway Police Station.

A Silver Fiat Punto stopped on A28, Canterbury Road, Margate following ANPR marker for showing as uninsured. Driver was a female with child passengers. Checks with MIB showed vehicle was uninsured so Driver was reported for Traffic Offences at the roadside. The vehicle was not seized due to having children in the car but Driver did purchase insurance at the roadside.

A black VW Golf was stopped using a pre-emptive box on Manor Way, St Nicholas at Wade, Thanet, following information that the vehicle is used to carry weapons and drugs. There was a male driver and female front seat passenger. Both were detained under Section 23 of Misuse of drugs Act. Both persons and vehicle were searched and only a small amount of Cannabis located in passenger door pocket which female stated was hers. Driver stated if pre-emptive tactics were not implemented, he probably would have failed to stop for Police. Passenger was issued Warning for Cannabis and Driver was reported for traffic offences and vehicle was seized.



Male wanted for 2 offences related to Domestic Stalking and Throwing Prohibited Articles over Prison Boundary was located by RTF and arrested and conveyed to Custody.

A vehicle was stopped after being seen travelling at excessive speed on the A2. His behaviour raised suspicions that the male was driving under the influence of drugs, so he was drug swiped and this came back as a positive result and he was arrested. Arrested male also had no Driving Licence or Insurance.

Male located and arrested for the offence of Taking, making, or distributing indecent images of children and Disclose/Threat to Disclose private sexual photographs with intent to cause distress. Male conveyed to North Kent Custody.

Officers flagged down just by Morrisons, Northfleet to reports of theft from Charity Bins at the location. Witness works for SEOX who collect clothing from Charity bins around Kent. Informant reported that upon arriving at the location on this day they have interrupted an Eastern European male in a White Mercedes Sprinter van stealing from the Charity bins. Upon being challenged male has run off and left vehicle in situ. Vehicle has been recovered as used in crime for forensic examination.

Assisted with injury RTC at West Farleigh where driver of vehicle had suspected spinal and leg injuries.



Court Results

The RTF investigated a report of Pipistrelle Bat, Long Brown Eared Bat and Great Crested Newt habitat being destroyed at Headcorn. These are all European Protected Species. The offence took place on the 17th March 2021. The matter was recently heard at Maidstone Magistrate Court.

Defendant David Pearce was convicted of 3 offences relating to the 3 species identified being present at the scene of the offence: -

Damage/Destroy a breeding site, resting place of a wild animal of a European Protected Species.

Sentencing Details – Fine £1,600. Victim Surcharge £160 and Costs £85.

RTF stopped a vehicle on the 14th March 21 and the driver had no Driving Licence or Insurance and when searched was found in possession of Cannabis Resin Class B Drug. The defendant was Mosfique Uddin SIAM. The matter was recently heard at Court and SIAM was convicted of all three offences with the following court result:

Fine £120

Costs £85

Disqualified from Driving for 9 Months.

Kind regards, Rural Task Force

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