

April 2022

## GREAT RESULTS

March has been a busy month for the team with some great successes, getting justice for victims of rural crime and punishing offenders. Members of the team have recently been involved in 6 rural crime workshops listening to your views on how we can improve our service to you. We've also had some great feedback but acknowledge there's more to do. PC Raven, our wildlife and Heritage Crime officer has been liaising with our partner agencies on a whole host of different subjects and we have put a lot of effort into rural road safety from talks with school children to speed checks in our rural villages and towns. We've continued to tackle hare coursing by disrupting those that take part in this cruel sport and we continue to work with the surrounding 7 forces on ways to reduce this activity.

## GPS THEFTS



In our December newsletter we told you that we saw an increase in thefts of tractor GPS systems. In total there were 17 thefts with a total cost of over £300,000. PC Smith has previously worked in detective roles and using her previous skills along with a lot of hard work she was able to identify two offenders who were put out as wanted

nationally. PC Smith conducted hours of enquiries including detailed mobile phone interrogation, ANPR analysis as well as compiling numerous CCTV videos and images and gathering statements from victims. Three officers from the team travelled to Liverpool to interview the suspect with the assistance of Merseyside Police. With the evidence PC Smith had painstakingly gathered throughout her investigation she was able to liaise with the Crown Prosecution Service who authorised a charge of conspiracy of thefts of the GPS systems. The suspect was remanded back to prison where he awaits his court hearing. We will keep you updated on this next month. This is a real testament to PC Smith's hard work and shows how dedicated we are to get justice for our rural communities.



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Now there's a quick  
online alternative to  
calling 101 or visiting  
a police station:  
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Do it online at:  
[essex.police.uk](https://essex.police.uk)

**IN AN EMERGENCY  
ALWAYS CALL 999**

## RURAL ROAD SAFETY

This month saw an increase in the team concentrating on rural road safety. On the 1st March we attended Dedham Primary in school to give an input to 3 different year groups including those in reception, years 4 and 5. Our inputs were tailored around the children's age, so the younger ones were spoken to about how to stay safe and got to play with our police cars. The older ones had a similar talk then got to try out



the speed camera to check drivers speed through the village. One driver was stopped for excess speed and was spoken to by a couple of the children who explained the dangers of speeding. This was a fantastic day for the team and the children.



We have also carried out a number of sporadic speed checks in our rural villages and towns and we've been to the locations that you've told us about. This work is really important to us as speed is one of the main contributors to people being killed or seriously injured on our rural roads. The more education we can deliver to keep people safe, the better. There are times of course where we will enforce the law with traffic offence reports, like the driver of this red mini caught doing 15mph over the speed limit.

If you have issues with speeding in your rural town or village then please get in touch.

## JUSTICE FOR FARMER

A farmer has thanked our rural engagement officers for their support after a man was fined for damaging his crops. At Colchester Magistrates' Court on 24 February, Simon Milton, 33, of Maple Way, Burnham on Crouch, was ordered to pay a total of £3878 including fines and £1282 compensation to Mr Cowell, and had six points put on his driving licence. He had admitted criminal damage, failing to stop for police officers and driving without due care and attention following an incident on Mr Cowell's farm on 2nd October last year.

Officers from our Rural Engagement Team had received reports that a 4x4 vehicle was being driven off-road in St Lawrence and had caused damage to farmland.

They attended but Milton failed to stop. However, the vehicle was picked up on ANPR cameras later that day and Milton was arrested near Pitsea by the same rural engagement officers after a short pursuit.

Milton caused damage to a crop of Lucerne, also known as alfalfa, which is used for animal feed. Damage from vehicles driving across fields compacts the soil, causing drainage issues, and also damages crops, making them unusable.

Read more about this [here](#);



## TACKLING HARE COURSING

We have seen a reduction in hare coursing reports throughout March. Please continue to report hare coursing when it happens and after the event. Always 999 if it's happening now. Please remember the app What3Words to help direct us better to vast locations.

Two vehicles were seized this month after being used in hare coursing. The one pictured was seized in Bradwell-0-On-Sea after RET officers located a man from Hertfordshire suspected of hare coursing. The man was dealt with by way of a community protection warning.



## WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS

We continually work with our partner agencies and this month amongst others we worked with Tom Baird the Enforcement Officer from the Environment Agency. PC Raven and Tom patrolled Canvey Island fishing lake to check anglers for rod licences after reports were received of people catching and killing fish to take home which is illegal.

On 31st March PC Raven arranged for Paul Thomas from the Angling Trust and Tom Baird to give an input into illegal fishing. Community policing teams across Essex were in attendance which included



police officers and PCSO's as well as officers from other departments who have a keen interest or problem with fishing. The input included legislation around fishing in rivers and lakes. Powers to enter land and our enforcement issues. Fishing can seem like an innocent hobby but the money generated by it has organised crime groups trying to make money out of the sport.

Thank you to Jed, Paul and Tom for the presentation.



## TACKLING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

We are looking to review mobile phone apps that are dedicated to supporting women's safety in public spaces and we need your help! We are calling for volunteers to support us in testing out these apps to review their effectiveness in helping women feel safer.

Recently Essex County Council and Essex Police partnered with ARU Students at The Heart of Knowledge Exchange (SHoKE) to identify the areas of improvement and implement innovative ideas to tackle the issues faced by women in different walks of life.

One such area we wanted to review was the use of mobile apps specifically designed to support women's safety. There are plenty of apps in the market and so it was suggested to do a comparative review of these apps dedicated to women and girls safety, or safety in general and to identify and recommend apps looking at different cohorts that Essex organisations can support.

The project has been conducted through a systematic review of 35 different apps in the UK and each app has been tested and reviewed through 30 defined criteria to build consistent data for the data analysis. From the analysis, recommended apps have been identified for different user cohorts and we would now like to test out how these apps work and feel from the user point of view.

We need volunteers to really test these apps and recommend those that they felt would make them feel safe, but also support them if their own safety was a concern.

Volunteers would be asked to download one of the apps and use them as if they were going about their normal journey through public spaces. We would like to know what worked and what didn't, do they feel the app would support them in an unsafe situation and would they recommend the app to others.

We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to be filmed using and reviewing the app in order for us to create a short video showing the pros and cons of each app recommended. Or volunteers who would be happy to provide a written update of their experiences using the app.

We are particularly looking for ...

If you would like to volunteer please let us know at [community.safety@essex.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@essex.gov.uk).

Please provide their **name, email address, age, gender and location (town/village)** so we can match you to the most appropriate app to test. If we receive a large number of volunteers it may be that not all volunteers are chosen to take part due to capacity and so we apologise to any who might not be chosen.

## MEET THE TEAM

If you like to meet some of the team and have a fun day out then please attend the 999 Community Safety Day being held at Maldon Promenade Park.

The team will be there alongside other teams which include the Dog Unit, Maldon Community Policing Team, and Essex County Fire Rescue Service.

The team including our Wildlife and Heritage Crime Officer, PC Raven will be carrying out a dog engagement day. Please pop along to see us and sign up to 'Dog Watch' scheme.



## PROTECTING OUR WILDLIFE



You may remember last year PC Raven implemented Operation Seabird into Essex Police. This operation was set up during the pandemic due to more people venturing out to our coast lines. We're fortunate to have a vast coast line in Essex with wildlife visiting and living along it. The operation assists other agencies in protecting the wild birds and animals with regular patrols by our team on land and our Marine Unit on the water.

Regular patrols to ensure that roped off areas remain so and to offer advice and guidance to those who may inadvertently commit offences. The operation was a success last year and has now been rolled out nationally to all forces who have a coast line.

Essex Wildlife Trust have created helpful guidance on how everyone can have fun on the coast whilst keeping the most threatened nesting birds safe. Read more here; <https://t.co/I019eapqWR>

