



### Panel Members

PFCC Roger Hirst  
DPFCC Jane Gardner  
ACC Rachel Nolan  
Ch/Insp Terry Balding  
ECFRS Group Manager James Taylor  
Jake Richards NFU

PFCC Hirst – welcomed the audience and panel members. Very conscious that the level of isolation in rural areas over the last few months must have been difficult. We have lost friends and acquaintances to this awful pandemic so must have been tough. Aware the wifi may not be great in some rural areas so hope we have a fair number of you that can tune in. Thanked the public for their hard work in keeping to the rules during the pandemic and also thanked the emergency services for the work they have done. WE have done a lot of work across the rural crime piece and it has started to come down including hare coursing and illegal incursions. WE need to do more around Domestic Abuse and serious violence.

Q – What are the issues across rural Essex from an NFU perspective	The issues that come up time and time again are fly tipping, theft of agricultural and farm equipment, illegal encampments on private land and hare coursing and it's really encouraging that we have a rural engagement team in Essex and it's great the NFU get to work with them and anything we can do to work together to get the issues solved then we are really open to comments and suggestions.
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<p>Q – What has the rural engagement team (RET) been up to during Covid?</p>	<p>During Covid we split up the shifts so if one person was ill it would not affect the whole team. This month we've done 150 hours of high visibility patrols in the rural community, visited 15 unauthorised encampments, loads of speed checks and business as usual. We have one of the best rural engagement teams in the country and are expanding terms of reference to look to cover more offences such as all forms of poaching, fly tipping large scale, trespass offences, and also something new is providing quality policing to the rural community. But if the PFCC wanted to get more officers then he would be up for it.</p> <p>PFCC – very much support the team and it has doubled in size so look at how that beds in and see how we can go from there.</p>
<p>Q – Can the police helicopter be used in rural pursuits?</p>	<p>ACC Nolan – the area does not impact at all on whether we have the helicopter called out. Police look at the threat, harm, risk element and that will inform the deployment. This weekend we had it deployed to illegal gatherings in rural locations in Waltham Abbey and has personally deployed it on a number of rural occasions. WE also have drone technology and the rural engagement team (RET) regularly use their drone technology and hare coursing offences really lend themselves to hare coursing.</p>
<p>Q – What has the fire service been doing in rural communities?</p>	<p>The majority of the rural area are covered by on call which is very much community lead. WE carry out safe and well visits and carry out about 8000 annually but this has been streamlined to help support the most vulnerable during the pandemic and as restrictions lift we will expand that.</p>

	<p>We are also looking to reintroduce our safe and well events that brings in partners to work with the community and discuss what's important to them.</p>
<p>Q – what are the police doing around group gatherings in Epping Forest</p>	<p>ACC Nolan this has been an issue across the county. Epping has been an issue but we are fortunate as we work closely with forest rangers and have a strong policing community.  the RET work closely with policing teams and HQ can collate all the reports made by the public, look at where hotspots are and then target our patrols. We cant be everywhere at once but the hots spot maps enable us to be where we need t be and put in the additional resources and ensure there are sufficient officers to deal with the issues.</p>
<p>Q – Does part night lighting help or hinder police in winter?</p>	<p>PFCC Hirst – it is an area where we have done a lot of work as it was controversial when put in by the county council. The reality is that street lighting does make a differences in town centres and railway stations but we did a survey and what it says is that in more rural areas it doesn't make much difference in the 1am to 5am period. The time it is on makes a difference. Whether lights are of at 2am it makes no difference. Police can ask to have it on for specific purpose.</p> <p>Ch/Insp Balding – sometimes it ca impact on the confidence of the community but stats don't reflect that crime rises when lights are off.</p>
<p>Q – Do we have evidence of horses and riders being injured by speeding drivers?</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Balding is not aware of any recent accidents and as he comes from a large horning family, he would be aware. One thing we are aware of in Covid is a significant rise in speeding so the police are out and about taking action.</p>
<p>Q – Can Speedwatch operate in rural areas.</p>	<p>Yes Speedwatch can operate in rural areas as well as urban. You can get in touch with the Speedwatch group an dset one up in your</p>

	<p>village. It does slow people down but although they can't issue tickets there are council operatives that operate the trucam that can issue tickets. The important thing is slowing people down rather than issue tickets.</p>
<p>Q – We have youths congregating freely in rural areas during Covid and use a lot of the nitrous oxide canisters.</p>	<p>ACC Nolan – please do report it so we can build intelligence and those reports will be sent through the local policing teams so they can build an approach and engage with the youths and be proportionate in their response. You can check out your local policing team twitter or face book site and see what work is being done</p>
<p>Q – How can you improve response times for the rural engagement team?</p>	<p>Ch/Insp Balding – the training is all up to date with the team and they have the right vehicles and we are also supported by local policing teams so he is confident they should be able to respond in a timely manner.</p> <p>Jake Richards – we frequently remind our communities to get them to report as police can build up as much information as possible. As the  NFU we are also keen to help with call handlers.</p> <p>What 3 Words is a brilliant app that gibes a meter square location and helps us get to you and is particularly helpful in a rural location.</p>
<p>Q – What practical advice can the fire service give to rural communities to stay safe from fire?</p>	<p>Number one recommendation is to have a smoke alarm fitted and that the battery is checked regularly. Preferably have one on each level. Just as important is to have an escape plan and get to safety to make the phone call to the fire service. Also make sure electrics in the house are maintained and when wee arrive at the property we have information around where the fire hydrant is, where the gas/electric mains are.</p>

<p>Q – How many prosecutions have taken place around fly tipping?</p>	<p>ACC Nolan – as a member of the rural community does see the issue locally. The local council and the EA are the authorities to deal with it, but the police work closely with partners and have Operation Fume where we go out proactively stopping vehicles and assessing equipment and licenses. These deployments are all intelligence led so please do report it.</p> <p>Jake Richards – this is a huge issue in Essex compared to other counties. There are two levels such as domestic and large scale and they are having a huge impact in landowners. Consider where you are taking your waste and where it may end up. Costs the farming community an awful lot of money to get it disposed of.</p> <p>It is so important to give information when you witness it and also make sure you know who is taking your waste away and ensure they have a waste carriers licence.</p>
<p>Q – Do officers have what 3 words on their phones and someone dialled 999 and the operator didn't know what it was.</p>	<p>Officers can get this on their work phones and the force control room operators should know about it as they have been trained and there are posters up in the force control room.</p>
<p>Q – a few comments have come in about the 101 system and what is being done about speeding up response times?</p>	<p>101 has been in a bad place and we have invested a lot in people and technology and the wait time has come down from 30 minutes to around 3 minutes. We also now have a report online system which is much easier to do. We also have the online chat where you live text an operator and get advice or report a crime. If you have the internet use the online system as it is so much easier. It's also easier for the police service and it frees up 101 for people who cant use a computer.</p>