



POACHING PRIORITY DELIVERY GROUP NEWSLETTER

 **PROJECT
POACHER**

What is the Poaching Priority Delivery Group?

Welcome to the 4th edition of the Poaching Priority Delivery Group (PPDG) newsletter. The previous edition can be found here:

<http://www.nwcu.police.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/PPDG-Newsletter-July-2018-Final.pdf>

The first National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) strategies to tackle wildlife and rural crime across the UK were launched in July 2018. <https://www.nwcu.police.uk/about/npcc-rural-and-wildlife-crime-strategy/>. These strategies, agreed by all Chief Constables in the UK, also have the support of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), the Home Office and the College of Policing. The seriousness, impact and importance of tackling poaching is recognised, with it being included as a priority area in both the rural and wildlife crime strategies.

Each priority area is taken forward by a delivery group. The England and Wales Poaching Priority Delivery Group is chaired by Glynn Evans of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) and comprises representatives from the National Wildlife Crime Unit, Crown Prosecution Service, Police, The Angling Trust, British Deer Society (BDS), Countryside Alliance (CA), Country Land and Business Association Ltd (CLA), Deer Initiative (DI), Environment Agency (EA), Food Standards Agency (FSA), NGO, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and National Farmers Union (NFU). Our work is driven by our objective:-

To increase the level of awareness of poaching and hare coursing as serious wildlife crimes and build better trust and relationships between the law enforcement agencies and local communities, both leading to increased prevention activity, intelligence flows and enforcement success (England & Wales).



Project Poacher is an initiative of the PPDG and is made up of two key elements: advice and support for law enforcers and a free, easy-to-use app for reporting poaching incidents. Part of the support for law enforcers is a series of posters which police forces can use for their own anti-poaching publicity campaigns. You can download the posters here: www.nwcu.police.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Poaching-Poster.pdf

CPS Hare Coursing Advice

The Crown Prosecution Service have published new legal guidance for prosecutors when dealing with hare coursing cases. This best practice advice should help ensure the appropriate outcomes to these cases and can be found here <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/hare-coursing>

National Rural Crime Day of Action

Organised by the National Police Chiefs' Council, the first UK Rural Crime Day of Action took place on Thursday 8 November 2018. A number of public facing events and activities, intelligence led patrols and operations and activities were organised by individual police forces and partner agencies across the UK.



Hare courser sentenced for organised crime

A convicted hare courser has been imprisoned following an investigation into a £100m drug dealing ring.

Thomas Jaffray, 35, from Middlesbrough, was jailed for 13 years and 4 months after being found guilty of conspiracy to supply cocaine, amphetamine and cannabis, and conspiracy to launder the proceeds of crime.

The investigation was carried out by the North West Regional Organised Crime Unit as Mr Jaffray and eight others were jailed for a combined total of more than 100 years at Manchester Crown Court on 19 September.



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They had been caught supplying millions of pounds worth of drugs to contacts in the North East of England.

The court heard how the drugs ring was run like a business, with the men wooing clients with expensive trips where Jaffray touted for their business.

Jaffray was also convicted of a hare coursing offence in Digby Fen earlier this year, handed a fine and a Criminal Behaviour Order was imposed on him preventing him from coming to Lincolnshire with dogs that could be used for hare coursing.

Chief Inspector at Lincolnshire Police, Phil Vickers said: "For some time we have said that hare coursing can be linked to organised and serious crime and this conviction is another example of this.

"This was a major result for us as this was also the first time that we managed to rehome a dog that had been used for hare coursing. The dog found in his possession was called Lucky and a court order saw it taken away and placed in the care of loving owners.

"We will continue to tackle hare coursing and take every opportunity to share intelligence with other forces to ensure that any organised crime is fully exposed."

Surrey Police sign up to Operation TRAVERSE

Surrey Police has become the latest force to sign up to Operation TRAVERSE – the multi-agency initiative launched four years ago to tackle fish theft and illegal fishing.

The commitment creates an important link with surrounding forces and provides a wider roll-out of the operation in the East and South East of England.

Operation TRAVERSE was launched in November 2014 to provide police forces, the National Wildlife Crime Unit, Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement, the Angling Trust and other partners with a platform to work better together and share information to tackle fisheries crime and illegal fishing.

Dilip Sarkar MBE, Angling Trust National Enforcement Manager, said: "This is yet another step forward and indicates an undertaking from the police service to address anglers' issues and the wider criminality involved, in spite of its huge array of other commitments and priorities. We look forward very much to working closely with Surrey Police and our existing and future partners."

Assistant Chief Constable Nev Kemp, of Surrey Police, said: "The work we are doing with Operation TRAVERSE plays an important role in positively contributing to the fight against fisheries crime in Surrey. This multi-agency, partnership working is an excellent approach to tackling the concerns of the angling community and we are excited to commit to this joint initiative.

"We will be working closely with the Angling Trust Fisheries Enforcement Support Service and Voluntary Bailiffs and supporting Environment Agency Fisheries Enforcement Officers on planned days of action across the region. It is important we emphasise the key role all anglers



can play by reporting incidents and information, helping us to create a more detailed intelligence picture. Working with anglers, and other members of our rural communities helps us pursue criminals, protect the vulnerable and prevent crime. Through the intelligence we gather we can help make Surrey the safest county it can be."

Dave Webb, fisheries team leader with the Environment Agency, said: "The Environment Agency is pleased to be working with Surrey Police and the Angling Trust to ensure that together we combat illegal fishing in Surrey and prevent unlawful activities on our waterways.

"People who don't buy a licence are not only cheating other anglers and the future of the sport but run the risk of a criminal conviction and a fine. There is no excuse – a fishing licence costs just £30 for a whole year and you can buy it online at GOV.UK.

"We track criminals on an intelligence-led basis using information gathered by ourselves, the police and other partners and reports from the public. We urge anyone to report illegal fishing as quickly as possible by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60."

NFU launches Rural Crime Reporting Line

The NFU has partnered with the charity Crimestoppers to launch the Rural Crime Reporting Line, a service through which you can anonymously give information about four rural crimes: large-scale, industrial fly-tipping, hare coursing, machinery theft and livestock theft. NFU

Deputy President Guy Smith said: "Rural crime can be devastating for farmers and their businesses and it is something that many experience all too often. With suspected links to organised crime, these crimes often go under-reported and its true extent remains unknown.

"The NFU has teamed up with the charity Crimestoppers to provide a service for farmers and the public to give information anonymously about these crimes. With relevant information being passed to the police, this service could help to provide key leads in the pursuit of these criminals."

You can find out more here <https://www.nfuonline.com/news/bulletin/stamp-out-rural-crime-call-the-dedicated-crimestoppers-hotline/>



Criminal Behaviour Order for poaching and farm burglary offences

A man sentenced for poaching offences and a farm burglary has been given a Criminal Behaviour Order. The order was imposed when Lewis Longstaffe, aged 23 of Sandy Lane, Upton, Poole, appeared at Weymouth Magistrates' Court on Thursday 20 September 2018.



He had previously admitted offences of trespassing on land at night and taking or destroying game and using a weapon to kill or take a wild bird as well as being found guilty of a burglary following a trial.

In the early hours of Friday 22 December 2017 three men were captured on a trail camera that had been set up outside a pheasant pen on an area of private land near Wareham.

They were seen using a hand lamp and catapult to take pheasants from the pen.

One of the men was identified as the defendant.

Between Saturday 29 April 2017 and Tuesday 2 May 2017 a burglary occurred at a farm building near Dorchester. A padlock was forced and various equipment valued at around £2,700 was taken.

A discarded screwdriver was found on the floor by the door and DNA analysis linked it to the defendant.

Longstaffe denied the offence and was found guilty following a trial on Wednesday 25 July 2018.

He admitted the poaching offences on the same date and was sentenced to a community order with a requirement to carry out 50 hours of unpaid work in the community, a rehabilitation activity requirement and was ordered to pay £750 compensation for the poaching and £350 for the burglary offence.

Longstaffe has now been made the subject of a Criminal Behaviour Order, which runs until 20 September 2023 and states he must not:

- Be on any private land without prior written permission from the owner or legal representative of the land and to produce any such written permission when asked to do so by a police officer, unless it is land to which the public have access.
- Be in possession of any dog while on private land whether the public have access or not
- Be in possession of a wild animal, wild bird or part of a wild animal or wild bird living or dead in Dorset.
- Be in possession of a catapult in any place other than a dwelling in Dorset.

Police Constable Claire Dinsdale, of Dorset Police's Rural Crime Team, said: "On behalf of the rural community we very much welcome this result.

"Crimes such as poaching, criminal damage, burglary and theft are prevalent across Dorset farms.

"The cost of rural crime has risen to £44.5m nationally in 2017 and organised criminals target farms and other rural businesses, making life very hard for rural victims

Man fined and dog re-homed after hare coursing conviction

A man was fined more than £600 and forfeited his car and dog after being caught hare coursing in North Yorkshire. John Latcham, 28, was spotted allowing a lurcher dog to run loose and chase a hare on land at Well, near Bedale, in January 2018.

North Yorkshire Police officers quickly attended and issued him with a Dispersal Notice, requiring him to leave the area immediately. The two-year-old male dog was found nearby with the carcass of a hare, and was taken by police to be looked after at secure kennels.

Latcham, from Butterknowle, Durham, was charged with hunting a wild mammal with a dog. He was found guilty in his absence at Northallerton Magistrates Court last April.

He was fined £660, and ordered to pay £85 costs and a £66 victim surcharge. In addition, forfeiture orders were made for his Ford Mondeo, a slip dog lead, and the dog, which will now be re-homed.

Inspector Jon Grainger, of North Yorkshire Police's Rural Taskforce, said: "Poaching is one of six national wildlife crime priorities, and has a significant impact on the rural communities of North Yorkshire, often leaving local residents in fear of further crimes.

"Latcham travelled a considerable distance to commit this offence. The sentence imposed should send a clear message that North Yorkshire Police will not tolerate this offending in our communities, and deal with all reports robustly."



Forces join to tackle hare coursing

A group of agencies chaired by Natural England has joined forces to tackle the issue of illegal hare coursing. Operation Galileo is targeting hare coursing throughout the east of England. This is the first "season" that all six forces in the east are co-operating in relation to hare coursing operations.

Special days of action are planned, which involve wildlife crime officers carrying out proactive patrols along with other officers who will receive special local briefings and pay attention to hotspot areas within their districts, dealing robustly with offenders. coursing in the Eastern region.

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Paul Cantwell, Species Enforcement Specialist from Natural England, who chairs the group said:

“This is the first year that all six police forces in the East of England are co-operating together in relation to hare coursing operations over the course of a season. This will help ensure that the East of England will not tolerate people coursing anywhere in the region. But not only that, we are hoping all other areas of England and Wales will carry out their own operations on these dates to make the countryside a ‘no-go’ area for these criminals.

If you think you are witnessing hare coursing in progress call 999 immediately.”

Environment Agency bailiff awarded a British Empire Medal

Congratulations to Environment Agency bailiff Kevin Summerson who has been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) in the New Year Honours list. Kevin has investigated more than 500 serious poaching incidents of illegal salmon and sea trout poaching, some of it on a commercial scale, and made more than 140 arrests as well as meeting and checking the licences of thousands of anglers over a 21-year career. Kevin is also one of the representatives of the EA on the PPDG.

In response to his award Kevin said: “I am deeply honoured and humbled to even be nominated, let alone receive such an honour.

“It shows that even your average person can be recognised for doing a job they have loved passionately throughout their career. I really hope that it helps people to understand the importance of our rivers and all the fish that are in them.”

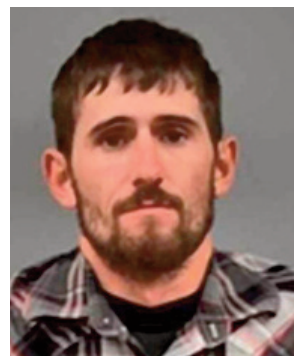


Poaching across the pond

It is interesting how penalties for poaching crime vary in different countries and an example of this is a recent case in the United States. A poacher there has been ordered to watch the Disney classic Bambi at least once a month during a year-long jail sentence after he was sentenced for illegally killing hundreds of deer.

Court records showed the defendant is "to view the Walt Disney movie Bambi, with the first viewing being on or before December 23, 2018, and at least one such viewing each month thereafter, during the defendant's incarceration in the Lawrence County Jail".

Berry, his father, two brothers and another man who helped them also had their hunting, fishing and trapping privileges revoked. The men have also had to pay \$51,000 in fines and court costs but the judge ordered the special addition to Berry's sentence for illegally taking wildlife.





If you would like further information regarding the work of the PPDG, contact Glynn Evans at [BASC glynn.evans@basc.org.uk](mailto:glynn.evans@basc.org.uk)

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