

Sussex Police

Wealden Neighbourhood Policing Team

District Commander's Message

I'd like to kick off my first message of 2015 by talking about burglaries. The good news is that Wealden has solved more burglaries from outbuildings, such as sheds and garages, and we have also seen a significant reduction in this type of offence. Neighbourhood officers have been doing a lot of work around prevention, advising people on how they can protect their property. If you'd like to talk to someone about this, you can find the details for your officer through the 'local teams' page.

However, we are also experiencing a rise in reports of house burglaries, particularly in the north of the district. A number of these have happened when properties have been left empty for a significant period of time, perhaps when residents have been away on holiday, or they are unoccupied because of illness or in preparation to be sold.

Asking neighbours to keep an eye on your property while you are away can help – as can using timer switches to activate lights and radios to give the impression that a house or flat is occupied. We are exploring all investigative leads to assess whether any of the incidents are linked, but we also need your help.

Criminals can sometimes use the 'cold calling' method to find out if properties are occupied, knocking on doors in an area to see if someone answers. If you witness any cold calling in your neighbourhood, or see any suspicious activity, please let us know. You can email us on 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk or call 101 with any information that is not related to an emergency or actual crime in progress. No matter how small or apparently insignificant you feel it is, your information could really make a difference.

We have recently made public appeals – and offered rewards – to help find two men – Jonathon William King and Lucas Lamb. Stay up to date with progress via 'latest news' on this website or Sussex Police Wealden District on Facebook. You can also receive updates via Twitter @WealdenPolice.

Transparency is important to Sussex Police, and some of you may have seen our stop and search figures on this website. Out of 234 stops and searches that were carried out in Wealden in the six months up to December 2014, 11 involved black people. In considering the data, set against the population of Wealden, this can result in the statistic that, if you are black, you are 21.9 times more likely to be stopped than a white person in Wealden.

I have personally reviewed these particular incidents and can report that seven of the stop searches took place at the High Definition music festival held in Eridge on 5 July. The event had originated in London, then moved venues to Essex before coming to Eridge, and therefore attracted a lot of people from outside the Wealden district. A robbery was reported during the festival and witnesses described the offenders as being black – which resulted in the stop searches. A further three of the stop searches took place at one of our bonfire events, where officers were targeting underage drinking. Again, the people stopped and searched were from outside of the Wealden district.

This month Wealden begins its Lay Observation Scheme, which forms an important part of maintaining our integrity and compliance with the law around stops and searches. Members of the public will be viewing footage of body worn video and giving feedback to ensure that we treat those who are subject to stops and searches fairly and respectfully. I will report back on progress in my next message.

Finally, we've experienced some wild weather to start this year, which has made driving conditions particularly tricky on our roads. Encouraging safer driving is a priority for communities right across the district, and you can expect to see more publicity and messaging around this in the coming months. I'm proud to be a part of the Wealden Road Safety Action Group, chaired by Mani Gilbert-King, Wealden Borough Commander for East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. We are looking forward to putting some of the plans into action – so watch this space!

Gary Pike
Chief Inspector
Wealden District Commander

Not sure how to find us online, want to comment on our updates or unsubscribe from this service? Email: district.wealden@sussex.pnn.police.uk

This message was sent by Emma Fleetwood-Jones, Public Engagement Officer

Please do not reply to this email to report crimes or incidents. Contact us online <http://www.sussex.police.uk/help-centre/report-something-online> or call **101** when it's less urgent than **999**