

ValeWatch



Working with Humberside Police to tackle rural crime

Rural Crime

Rural crime takes many forms

- ❖ Theft - vehicles, machinery, livestock, fuel, tools
- ❖ Arson - straw stacks, farm buildings
- ❖ Criminal damage - crop damage
- ❖ Wildlife crime & illegal poaching activity

People living in the countryside can feel very vulnerable at times



Rural crime

- ❖ Policing rural areas is challenging due to the vast geographical areas involved
- ❖ Policing costs are also higher as rural forces cannot benefit from economies of scale as they serve a more dispersed and low density population
- ❖ Farms are also usually the homes of the business owners who can be left feeling scared and vulnerable in a place where they should feel secure



Rural crime

- ❖ Organised criminal gangs are increasingly operating in rural areas and targeting vulnerable remote communities
- ❖ Thieves know they can raid farms in isolated rural areas with very low risk of being caught
- ❖ Rural crime will always be challenging but there are opportunities to make the countryside a more unattractive prospect



ValeWatch

- ❖ A volunteer group working to enhance communication between the rural community and Humberside Police
- ❖ Text messaging & e-mail communications – issuing warnings; details of crimes or suspicious activity; and promoting rural crime prevention
- ❖ £15 subscription per year for each mobile phone registered



Our aims & purpose

Sharing intelligence

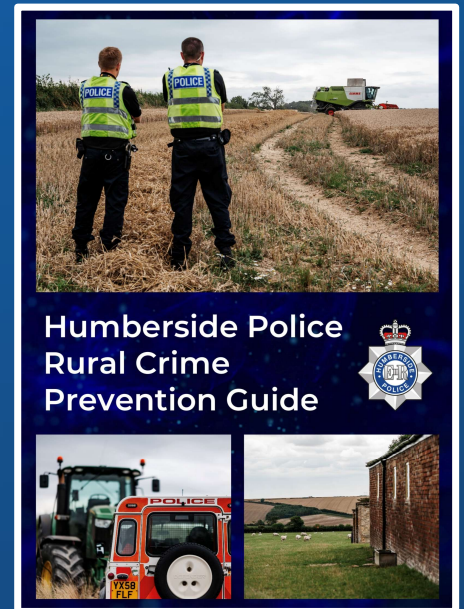
- Rapid effective communication with members & Humberside Police

Technology

- Use technology to improve the quality & timeliness of reporting

Crime Prevention

- Help members access resources available to protect their property



ValeWatch – our membership

- ❖ 229 subscribers as at February 2026
- ❖ 30 Humberside Police officers receive our messages
 - Rural Task Force
 - Pocklington & Goole Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- ❖ Co-ordinators of all farm watch groups in the East Riding and along our borders with North Yorkshire



Representing our members

We attend meetings including:

Humberside Police – Rural Advisory Group

Humberside Police – Better Together Event

HumberWatch – Conference

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

In 2025 we've also participated in:

HMIC Inspection of Humberside Police

Humberside Police – Organised Crime Gang Training

Wildlife Crime Training

Livestock Theft Training



Lobbying for resources

Bringing together the Rural Task Force and Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner to lobby for additional resources:

- officers
- vehicles
- equipment
- training

We also lobby the National Farmers Union to take forward our issues directly with Government at a national level



What have we achieved?

- ❖ Strong working relationships with:
 - Humberside Police Rural Taskforce
 - Pocklington & Goole Neighbourhood Policing Teams
 - Police & Crime Commissioner
- ❖ “Partner organisation” status – ability to submit some information direct into the Force Intelligence Bureau
- ❖ Organised crime is better tackled by organised people



Successfully achieved grant funding

- ❖ Successful application for Community Safety Grant from Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
- ❖ Purchased seven cameras which send photos direct to the ValeWatch phone
- ❖ Now able to work with landowners who are being targeted for:
 - Hare coursing
 - Poaching
 - Illegal nighthawking



Successfully achieved grant funding

- ❖ Successful grant application to the Statkraft - SOAY Solar Farm Community Fund
- ❖ Purchased a thermal imaging camera
- ❖ Now able to work with the Rural Taskforce on any night-time operations targeting poachers
- ❖ Also, has potential for use in searches for missing persons



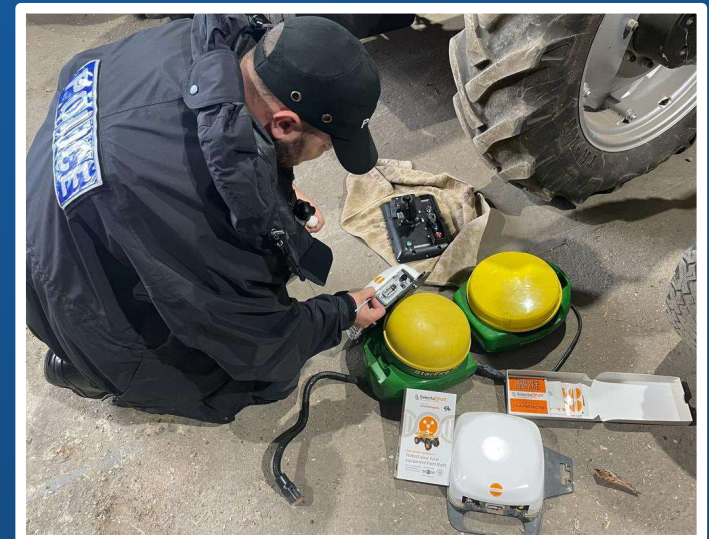
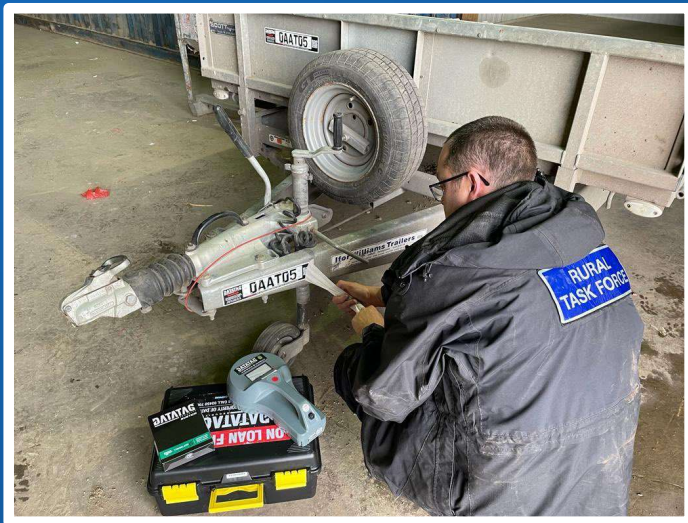
More grant funding in 2025

- ❖ A further successful application for a Community Safety Grant from Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
- ❖ Purchased over £10,000 of DataTag trailer marking kits
- ❖ Free trailer marking will be available for ValeWatch members – protecting the items which are the most attractive to rural thieves.



Property marking

- ❖ Co-ordinated details of farm businesses who wanted their valuable farm equipment marked
- ❖ £ millions of business assets are now marked



What remains a challenge?

- ❖ Recruiting new members – still some who lack confidence in police
- ❖ Reluctance to report crimes or suspicious activity – some believe reporting will have no effect
- ❖ Missed opportunities – where suspicious activity was spotted or a crime committed but only shared via social media and not with Police



How members report to us

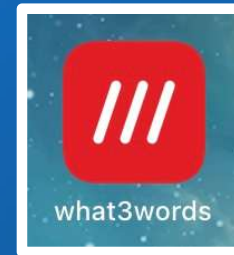
Notify details of crimes or suspicious activity to us on 07534 305909 – either by calling, texting or via WhatsApp

Key information we need is:

- ❖ **What happened?**
- ❖ **Where? Ideally a precise location**
- ❖ **Vehicle details – make/model & registration number**
- ❖ **Photo/video evidence if safe to obtain**



Use What3Words



- ❖ Accurate locations are vitally important
- ❖ What3Words is the best means of giving a location – especially in remote rural areas
- ❖ Used by Police and other emergency services



How info is passed to/from the Police

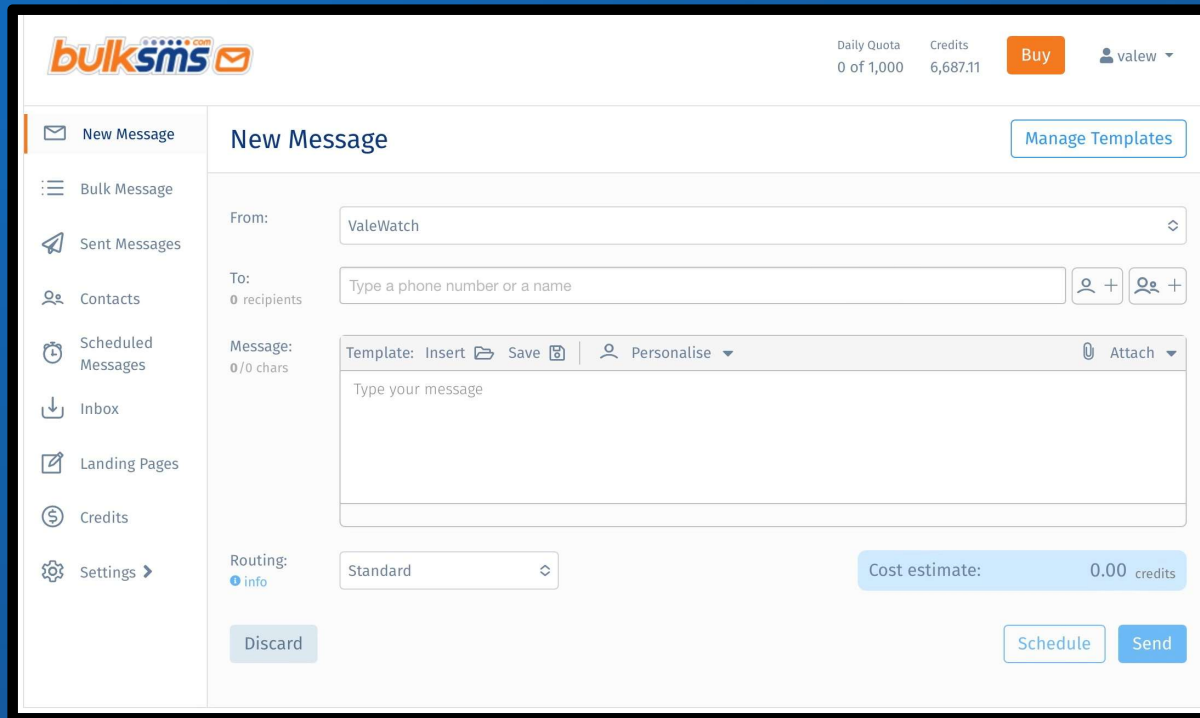
- ❖ We share the details of all reports directly with Humberside Police officers
- ❖ We ask members to report the incident to Humberside Police and obtain a log number
- ❖ Member then passes the log number across and we share with the officers dealing

@David we have a large number of patrols out tonight around the a163/a614 area between bubwith and HOSM. We are on till 2am. Let us know if any night poaching calls. As always any reports please ask them to call 999 for log number but maximise the response time please let us know asap on what's app group with What 3 words and vehicle details etc

21:17

How info is passed to members

A bulk text message and/or e-mail is sent out to all subscribers



The screenshot displays the bulkSMS.com web interface for creating a new message. The top navigation bar includes the bulkSMS.com logo, a 'Daily Quota' of 0 of 1,000, 'Credits' of 6,687.11, a 'Buy' button, and a user profile 'valew'. The left sidebar contains navigation links: New Message (selected), Bulk Message, Sent Messages, Contacts, Scheduled Messages, Inbox, Landing Pages, Credits, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'New Message' and features a 'Manage Templates' button. The 'From' field is set to 'ValeWatch'. The 'To' field is empty, showing '0 recipients' and icons to add contacts. The 'Message' field is empty, showing '0/0 chars', with a 'Template: Insert' dropdown, 'Save' and 'Personalise' buttons, and an 'Attach' button. The 'Routing' is set to 'Standard' with an 'info' link. A 'Cost estimate' of 0.00 credits is shown. At the bottom are 'Discard', 'Schedule', and 'Send' buttons.

bulkSMS.com

Daily Quota: 0 of 1,000 | Credits: 6,687.11 | Buy | valew

New Message | Manage Templates

From: ValeWatch

To: 0 recipients | Type a phone number or a name | + | +

Message: 0/0 chars | Template: Insert | Save | Personalise | Attach

Type your message

Routing: Standard | info | Cost estimate: 0.00 credits

Discard | Schedule | Send

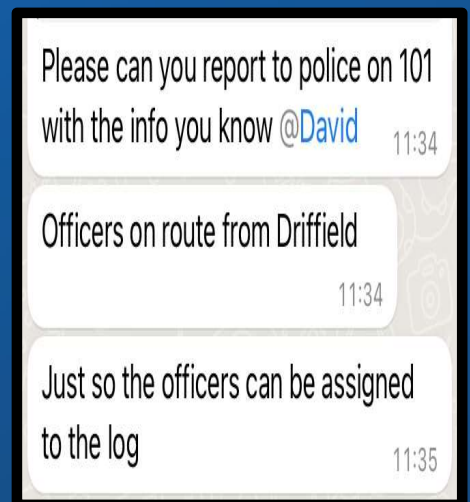
Our messages reach nearly 300 mobile phones

Members still need to report to Police

Whilst the incident is being reported on 101 or 999, officers can often get on their way to the scene

BUT

- ❖ **This isn't an alternative to reporting to the Police**
- ❖ **We need members to follow through with an official report and get a log number**
- ❖ **Some of our members are still reluctant to phone 101 or 999 to report – even when a crime is in progress**



Reporting suspicious activity

Suspicious activity is the least reported

Individuals feel unsure whether to report something which is out of place but not actually a crime

We ask our members to report anything suspicious – on 101 or the online reporting form using the ‘Report Something Else’ option



Speak up to stop rural crime.

Criminal gangs exploit our local wildlife, environment and communities.

Your voice can make a difference.

Speak up to our charity.
100% anonymous.
Always.

crimestoppers-uk.org

CrimeStoppers.
0800 555 111
100% anonymous. Always.

Keeping rural communities safer together.
Speak up. Stop Crime.

What have we achieved?

Humberside Police have made arrests based on intelligence and reports provided by our members



Harratt, who is currently on loan from West Yorkshire rivals Huddersfield Town, was fined more than £800

Bradford City player Kian Harratt fined for hare coursing

3 Nov 2022 | Leeds & West Yorkshire

Bradford City player Kian Harratt is among three men to be fined for hare coursing in East Yorkshire.

Harratt, who is currently on loan from West Yorkshire rivals Huddersfield Town, appeared at Beverley Magistrates' Court on 26 October.

He and two others were convicted after being caught on farmland in the Wressle area of the region on 3 April.



Humberside Police - Rural Task Force @Humberbe... · 14/06/2024

Officers from the [#RuralTaskForce](#) arrested a male in the Doncaster area in relation to a suspected theft of an Agricultural GPS device in Humberside.

[#RuralCrime](#) has no borders and neither do we! Enquiries are ongoing



@NCATT_UKPolice @nfum @RuralCrimeNtwk



Delivering results



Police working collaboratively with the community benefits everyone