

Hitchin Rural Police
Report
April 2021 – March 2022

It has been an eventful year for the Rural North Hertfordshire Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) that continues to be based at Hitchin Police Station. We have said goodbye to several members of the team and welcomed several more.

Staff Update

Chief Inspector (CI) John Roche has taken over from CI Sally Phillips as the senior officer in charge of the North Hertfordshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) area. CI Roche is responsible for overseeing all of the policing teams based in North Hertfordshire.

Inspector (Insp) James Lant continues to lead the North Hertfordshire Safer Neighbourhood Team, managing both the Urban and Rural areas.

Sergeant (Sgt) Guy Westwood is the SNT Sergeant responsible for the operational leadership of the Hitchin Rural SNT Police Constables (PCs) and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). There are currently 3 PC's and 2 PCSO's assigned to the Hitchin Rural area.

PC Clare Wallace has replaced former PC Keith Harding, who retired in December of 2020. PC Wallace has responsibility for supporting the CODICOTE and KNEBWORDH wards

PC Gary Pugsley continues in his role supporting the HITCHWOOD, CHESFIELD and KIMPTON wards.

PC Claire Ross has replaced PC Johnie Streeter, who has moved to a crime prevention role at Herts Police Headquarters. PC Ross has responsibility for supporting the OFFA, HOO and CADWELL wards.

PCSO Stuart Stone continues in his role, supporting the CODICOTE, KNEBWORDH and CHESFIELD wards, as well as the GOSMORE and ST IPPOLYTS areas of HITCHWOOD ward.

PCSO Heather Burrows continues in her role supporting the OFFA, HOO, KIMPTON and CADWELL wards, as well as part of the HITCHWOOD ward.

Community

We are continuing to see good take-up of our Online Watch Link (OWL) service, which allows residents to receive regular email updates, including crime alerts, scam warnings and crime prevention advice. Our PCs and PCSOs have been visiting homes in the area to promote the OWL service – you may have received one of our leaflets or fliers or spoken to one of your local officers. If you're not already signed up, visit www.owl.co.uk to register.

We are also seeking to promote the Community Drivesafe scheme, which seeks to make local roads safer by educating drivers through the use of roadside speed monitoring and promoting awareness. Volunteers will be provided the equipment needed to conduct roadside speed checks, and motorists noted to be exceeding the speed limit will be sent an advisory letter or visited by a police officer.

Local Priorities

Fly Tipping

Fly Tipping continues to be an issue in the Hitchin Rural area, especially on the roads near to the A505. Officers are continuing to engage with the North Herts District Council (NHDC) to have fly tips removed when identified on patrol and do seek to seize and evidence any identifying information that is present in the tipped waste. The majority of the fly tips identified consist of household waste, and where identifying information is present, appear to originate from outside the Hitchin Rural area. We are encouraging all residents to continue to report all fly tips, and to ensure that any waste carriers used are properly licensed.

Speeding

Reports of speeding continue to be frequent, especially along the main roads in villages. We have conducted several speed monitoring activities at the roadside, as well as the PCC's Speed Camera Vans attending suitable areas. We now have more Speed Monitoring Equipment trained officers on the team, who will be out and about in the identified hotspots.

Burglary

Burglary incidents have fallen recently, with a low incidence through the Hitchin Rural Area. We encourage residents to remain vigilant, and to refer to the Herts Police website, where relevant crime prevention advice can be found.

Hitchin Rural Policing Team