

# Sidlesham, Hunston and North Mundham Neighbourhood Panel

8 May 2013 – 7 pm – North Mundham Village Hall

## Attendees

| <b>Name</b>             | <b>Representing</b>                         |
|-------------------------|---|
| Corina Hall             | Sidlesham Parish Council                    |
| PCSO Jacob McQuillan    | Manhood Peninsula Neighbourhood Police Team |
| John Owen               | North Mundham Neighbourhood Watch           |
| Roger Pagram            | Hunston Parish Council                      |
| Linda Rex               | Hunston Neighbourhood Watch                 |
| David Rozier            | North Mundham Neighbourhood Watch           |
| Tim Russell (Chairman)  | North Mundham Parish Council                |
| Scott Thomson           | North Mundham                               |
| Cllr Margaret Whitehead | West Sussex County Council                  |

## 1. Introductions

- 1.1 Those present were invited to introduce themselves.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from David Baron, Barry Coventry, Sarah Gunn, Innes Mary Quigley and Denia Turnbull.

## 2 Approve minutes of the previous meeting

- 2.1 The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the previous meeting.

## 3 Matters Arising

- 3.1 There were no items which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

## 4 Discussion of Previous Priorities

- 4.1 PCSO McQuillan updated the meeting. A copy of his notes is attached at Annex A.
- 4.2 Driving Offences, and specifically speeding.
  - 4.2.1 The police continued to operate against speeding offenders in the area. A check outside North Mundham School had identified three offenders. PCSO McQuillan explained that all recorded speeding offences were now processed centrally, so he was unable to say what might happen to any particular offender. He noted that speeding offenders could only be prosecuted when the offence was recorded using calibrated equipment such as that fitted in the 'traffic' cars.
  - 4.2.2 Cllr Whitehead noted that she was still pursuing the availability of the CASPER speed recording equipment.

### 4.3 Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour.

4.3.1 PCSO McQuillan reported that vandalism had not been much of a problem recently, with only one instance of anti-social behaviour and one case of criminal damage.

### 4.4 Wildlife Crime.

4.4.1 The incidence of wildlife crime seems to have tailed off, and this may be linked to a seasonal effect. There had been an instance where cages had been stolen, some containing water voles which were due to be re-located, but this was more likely to be an instance of metal theft rather than wildlife crime.

## 5 **Current Issues**

### 5.1 Burglaries.

5.1.1 There had been a continuing problem with burglaries, with evidence that these were carefully pre-planned attacks rather than crimes of opportunity – in some cases ditches had been filled or hedges removed to provide access. The targets seemed to be garden machinery in particular, such as garden tractors. It would be useful to receive reports of suspicious activity that indicates a raid was being planned or a target was being explored. There had also been instances of the theft of valuable specialist bicycles.

5.1.2 PCSO McQuillan drew attention to the marking scheme for property – he was able to arrange for property to be marked such that its identity was visible under ultra-violet light. Suitable marking equipment is also available commercially. For very valuable items owners could consider using ‘smart water’ which the police may be able to make available in suitable cases. Owners of valuable and attractive items should make a point of recording serial numbers

5.1.3 It was suggested that the police might consider investigating the local car boot sales as a possible venue where stolen property might be offered for sale, though the difficulty of identifying stolen pieces amongst the myriad items on sale was recognised.

5.1.4 It was noted that burglary is a specific offence distinct from theft. Theft relates to stealing property from any location, whereas burglary specifically involves the offender entering a building, or part of a building, where they do not have permission to go.

### 5.2 Travellers.

5.2.1 The latest state of traveller encampments was reported – see PCSO McQuillan’s note attached. It was noted that the recent outbreaks of illegal camping indicated a further influx of travellers into the area. Not only did this make potential sites increasingly vulnerable, but it also meant that, following any eviction, there were likely to be even more travellers looking for another site. Since the travellers appear to have children attending local schools it is likely they will be reluctant to leave the area, particularly as long as they can continue to find work in the area.

5.2.2 The difficulty of preventing illegal encampments was noted, as was the expense of obtaining an eviction order. There had been some considerable discussion of the powers available to the police, and the currently rather limited circumstances in which they might be used. The recent proliferation of illegal encampments in West Sussex had led to calls for the policy on the use of Section 61 powers to be reviewed, and this was currently a topic of discussion with the Police and Crime Commissioner.

5.2.3 It was recognised that it would be useful to have prior notice of when travellers were likely to be on the move, but once they are on the road and if they are committing no offence then the police have no powers to act. However the police could and would act against specific violations, and it was understood they have recently seized one particular vehicle as part of an ongoing investigation

## **6 Establish New Priorities**

6.1 It was agreed that the three identified priorities should be amended to recognise the low level of anti-social behaviour and vandalism, and the tailing-off of wildlife crime. The meeting agreed that burglary and theft appeared to merit further attention, and the priorities should also recognise the traveller problem even if the police had only limited action available to them.

6.2 The three priorities are therefore:

- Driving Offences, and specifically speeding
- Burglaries and theft
- Travellers

## **7 Any Other Business**

7.1 Delegates reported continuing dissatisfaction with the 101 call system, citing in particular some very long delays getting through to the system, and operators with a poor level of local knowledge.

7.2 PCSO McQuillan reminded the meeting that he is now available on a personal mobile phone – 07766 997960.

7.3 Date of Next Meeting. It was agreed to hold the next meeting at 1900 on Wednesday, 10 July 2013, in North Mundham Village Hall.

7.4 The meeting closed at approximately 2010.

Annex A: Copy of PCSO McQuillan's "Notes for meeting on 8 May 2013"

Sidlesham, Hunston, and North Mundham Neighbourhood Management Panel

Notes for Meeting on 8 May 2013

**Current Priorities:**

Driving Offences: There have been 3 Section 165 (no insurance) seizures of vehicles in the area since the last NMP meeting. There has also been a Section 59 Warning this week (Section 59 – warning for using a vehicle in a way which causes ‘alarm, distress or annoyance’).

A traffic officer recently spent some time by the North Mundham Primary School and stopped 3 drivers for excess speed. All were reported for this.

If anyone would like the SID, please contact me.

ASB (including vandalism): There has been one case of ASB reported since the last meeting, and that was today. There has also been one case of criminal damage reported. The criminal damage was in the vicinity of the Links College, but was during the Half-Term holiday, so unlikely to be the students from Links.

The ASB case is currently under investigation.

Wildlife Crime: There has been a steep drop of occurrences since the last meeting. There has been one case, unrelated to the previous series, of cages containing water voles being stolen. I do not believe that the voles themselves were the target, but the cages.

In light of these updates, I recommend keeping the driving offences as a priority, but removing ASB and Wildlife Crime. These can be re-added in the future should the problems resurface.

**Current Issues:**

There has been an increase in Burglaries/Thefts in the Sidlesham area, particularly around the Lockgate Road area. I recommend adding this as a priority.

Travellers: The eviction process for the Sidlesham Waterworks site is underway and I have been led to believe that the court date for the civil proceedings is Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May. A second group of travellers has also arrived at this site. I believe that the eviction process will cover this group also, but I am unsure and I will make further checks to confirm this.

The original group have children in schools in the local area, and they are unlikely to leave the immediate area because of this.

The second group has only recently entered the area and their intentions for the period of stay are unknown at this time.

A third group of travellers has moved onto the grounds of the Sidlesham Memorial Playing Field. As this has happened in the last few hours I have not received all the information regarding this.

**Post Meeting Update:** The travellers on the Sidlesham Memorial Field are not on the football pitch itself, but the open area behind that. Officers attending reported that they could see no damage caused by the travellers entering the site.