



HERTFORDSHIRE

CONSTABULARY

## ***Royston Rural Watch, April 2019***

PC Mark Ellwood 371 & PCSO 6531 Penny Tomsett,  
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***Our Non -  
Emergency  
Number 101***

### **On the Beat –**

#### **Advice to dog owners during lambing season**

- Lambing season is now well under way.
- Owners must keep their dogs on a lead around livestock.
- If a dog worries sheep, the person in charge of the dog is guilty of an offence.

With lambing season now well under way, police are reminding dog walkers of their responsibilities while using rural areas.

Under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953, if a dog worries sheep on agricultural land, the person in charge of the dog is guilty of an offence.

The act considers 'sheep worrying' to include attacking sheep, chasing them in a way that may cause injury, suffering, abortion or loss of produce, or being at large (i.e. not on a lead or otherwise under close control) in a field or enclosure in which there are sheep. The act does not require livestock to be killed for this offence to be committed.

Sergeant Duncan Wallace, from the East Herts Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team, said: "We often find that people do not understand the consequences of allowing their dogs to run loose near livestock. Sheep are particularly vulnerable and can die or suffer aborted pregnancy as a result of fright or the stress of the situation, as well as from a physical attack.

“We all want to enjoy the pleasures of our rural landscape but it is crucial that you keep your dog on a lead around livestock, especially at this time of year, even if you can usually trust it to come when called. If you live in or near an agricultural area, you must make sure that your dog cannot escape from your property as it may find its way onto land containing sheep.”

In some circumstances, a farmer may shoot a dog which is attacking or chasing farm animals without being liable to compensate the dog’s owner.

Anyone who witnesses incidents of sheep worrying is asked to contact police immediately using 999 if the attack is in progress or the non-emergency number 101 if the incident has concluded, noting descriptions of the dog involved and its owner.

## Keyless Entry Cars

Over the last three months we have received two reports of BMW’s being stolen locally in the villages. In both cases the owner had two sets of keys in their possession and no smashed glass from the vehicles were left at the locations. This appears to be a relatively new trend in stealing cars which led me to looking into this further and sharing what advice I found.



In data released by the Home Office, car thefts have risen by over 48 per cent in the last five years. Even more concerning, just under 50 per cent of all vehicles stolen were never recovered. It appears to be hi-tech crime that's largely behind this spike, as thieves use increasingly sophisticated kit to steal cars with keyless entry by fooling their systems into thinking the key is nearby.

So, what is keyless entry car theft and if you own a vehicle equipped with keyless entry, what can you do to avoid it?

## **Keyless entry car theft explained**

Keyless entry car fobs or cards work by emitting a signal that the car detects when it's a few feet away, allowing you to unlock the doors and start the engine. Thieves can exploit this wireless technology by getting hold of a relay amplifier and transmitter on the black market, then finding a car parked close enough to its owner's house (where the key is).

While one criminal stands by the car with a transmitter, a second walks around the perimeter of the house with the amplifier, and if the key is close enough it will detect its signal and send it to the transmitter. At this point the transmitter effectively becomes the key, allowing the thieves to gain access to the car and even drive it away. The whole process can take just seconds and be completed in virtual silence.

The industry is taking notice, however, with Richard Billyeald of Thatcham Research saying: "Manufacturers are already working on new systems. A few new models already have setups that aren't vulnerable to relay attacks. The functionality is the same, but they cannot be fooled by relay devices."

Manufacturers such as Mercedes and BMW have developed motion sensor keys that do not emit a signal whilst the key is stationary, hung on your key hook for instance.

## **Top tips for avoiding keyless entry car theft**

Thieves may be able to take advantage of a vulnerability in car security, but owners can take steps to make it more difficult for hi-tech criminals to carry out keyless car theft. Some of these are simple security steps, while others tackle the issue head on.

### **Car security basics**

Always stick to the basics of car security first. Ensure your vehicle is parked in a well-lit or secure area, properly locked and all valuables are removed. Once in your home or office, ensure your car keys are as far away from doors and windows as possible, preferably shut inside a drawer.

### **Signal-blocking Faraday pouches**

Don't assume that wrapping your key in foil will do a good enough job. It isn't designed for this purpose. As keyless car crime has spiked, several anti-theft pouches have hit the market that are designed to block signals emitted by the key. The idea is simple - keep your key inside the Faraday pouch when not in use, and special material will prevent a relay amplifier from picking up its unique signal and transmitting it. We'd recommend only buying these from a reputable outlet, however, and looking for reviews and accreditation to ensure it will work.

### **Switch off the key**

The wireless signal from some keyless fobs can be turned off, although the feature isn't always obvious and can require a combination of button presses. Consult the manual or contact the manufacturer to find out if this is possible for the keys to your car.

Switching off the key should certainly thwart keyless car thieves, and could also be recommended when heading off on holiday. It's also worth checking with the manufacturer if any software updates are available, as it may be that a system for preventing keyless car theft has been developed since you got your car.

### **Physical security measures**

As criminals turn to technology, many owners are resorting to low-tech physical security devices like steering wheel locks and driveways with locked gates or barriers. Make life difficult for thieves in this way and even if they can unlock the car, hopefully they won't be able to drive away in it. Many criminals will also move on to an easier target when faced with extra security that's time consuming and noisy to defeat.

### **Tracking devices**

It's possible to subscribe to a security company like Tracker, which can fit a tracking device to your car and use it to trace its location if it's stolen. According to the company, 96% of cars fitted with its technology are recovered when stolen, compared with just 50% in other cases.

## **Local Crime Information**

### **G4E - Ashwell, Hinxworth, Bygrave, Newnham and Caldecote**

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March a vehicle was targeted on Caldecote Road, Newnham. A window was smashed and gardening power tools were stolen, a people carrier type vehicle was seen driving away.

Late on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March a local resident of Green Lane, Ashwell had super glue poured into the locks of her property causing damage.

At 9.37pm on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March a farm workshop was burgled in Newnham, A group of approx. 5 males forced the shutters and loaded 2 quad bike onto a trailer which was also stolen from site. The offenders made off in a people carrier type vehicle.

Between Monday 18<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> the Church in Ashwell was entered. There was an attempt to break into the Vestry which was unsuccessful and the charity boxes were damaged and money taken.

On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March vehicle batteries were stolen a farmyard in Partridge Hill, Ashwell. The offenders were seen in a white transit type vehicle and stole the property between 1.36pm and 1.49pm

Between Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March a grounds to a local business were entered by cutting a fencing. Once inside the offender cut padlocks and gained entry to an outbuilding. No property was stolen.

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March a retired male was targeted at his home address in Hodwell, Ashwell. The gentleman had a knock on the door and a male asked for a drink of water, the male the persuaded the victim to take him out for drinks and food in Letchworth. After the food and drink the offender stole the victim's mobile phone and money.

### **G4D – Barley, Barkway, Reed, Therfield, Kelshall and Nuthampstead**

Overnight on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March, outbuildings were targeted at two properties in Pedlars Lane, Therfield. At both locations no property was stolen and an alarm disturbed the offender from the second property.

Between Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March a shed was targeted in Nuthampstead, the offenders approached the shed from the rear of the property and accessed the location over farmland. The offender forced the padlock and stole a Lawnmower and a Welding Unit.

On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> at 2am Barley Village Stores was broken into. The offenders came through the roof of the store room and gained entry. Three men covering faces with hoods and scarfs broke into the tills and the cigarette counter. The offenders made off with money and cigarettes.

Between Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> and Thurs 28<sup>th</sup> March a Horsebox that was being store at a location on Smiths End Lane, Barley was stolen.

### **G3C - Sandon, Wallington, Rushden, Clothall and Weston**

Overnight on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> vehicle batteries were stolen from a tractor and a 4x4 in Mill End, Sandon.

Between Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March a shed was broken into in Rushden Road, Sandon. The offenders cut a hole in the fence from a footpath into the victims garden. The padlock was jemmied from the shed and no property was taken.

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> between 5.30am and 7pm a vehicle was driven across crops at Hyde Hall Farm causing damage. No vehicles were seen.

## **Your local Neighbourhood Police Teams website**

<http://snt.herts.police.uk/Teams.aspx?TeamID=G01>

Useful Links

<http://www.herts.police.uk/>

<http://www.doglost.co.uk/>

<http://www.stolenhorseregister.com/>

**Royston Rural Neighbourhood Team Tel – 01438 757935**