

Crime prevention advice for riding clubs



Whether you own your own ground or rent it from the landowner the security of your equipment is paramount or the show won't go on! Unfortunately there have been a number of incidents where show equipment has been taken, especially jumps, and unless they are marked and recorded in an inventory it will be very difficult to trace them or prove ownership once they have been stolen. This advice has been put together to help you review your security arrangements and hopefully stop this happening to your club. If unfortunately a theft does take place it will also improve the chances of your equipment being returned to you.

SHOW GROUND/FIELD

- Look closely at the perimeter of the field/show ground as if you were a criminal wanting to get in and steal equipment; look at the weak points and take action to strengthen them.
- If possible remove all gates/entrances that you no longer use.
- If possible plant thorn hedges with deep ditches and bunds (ditches without a bund should be fenced for health and safety).
- Ensure all fencing is robust and secure.
- Make regular checks around your perimeter to ensure it is secure. Offenders can make an entrance, cover it up temporarily and return later. Ensure nothing seems unusual or out of place.
- Where possible at your entrance have a second inner gate.
- Invert and cap all gate hinges so that the gates cannot be lifted off.
- Use good quality padlocks with covers so that they cannot be cut off.
- Ensure all fixing bolts cannot be removed.
- If a gateway is not being used for a lengthy period of time, i.e. during the winter, ask the owner of the field if a temporary obstruction could be placed in front of it.
- Use locking posts or temporary obstructions to large openings.
- If possible use CCTV and sensor lighting (sensor lights are available with cameras).
- Put up signs all around the perimeter stating that all property owned by the club is security marked.
- Become a member of the **Horse Watch Scheme**, put up signs stating that you are a member.
- Find out who your SNT (Safer Neighbourhood Team) Police Officers are (visit the West Mercia Police website for details) and provide them with details of the club and who to contact in an emergency.
- If there any houses near to the ground, introduce yourself and ask them to keep an eye on the field. Provide them with contact details so if they see something suspicious they can contact you so that you can either check it out or contact the Police with the details. **Do not go to the field on your own, always have someone with you and carry a mobile phone, consider carrying a personal alarm. Your security is paramount.**

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EQUIPMENT

All equipment should be marked, photographed and recorded in a log from the cheapest item to the most expensive.

- After each show put your equipment away.
- All equipment should be placed in a secure area, preferably a container or secured compound.
- Store equipment away from any road or right of way.
- Do not store equipment where it is visible from the road or a right of way.

General Items

- Jumps, including poles, fillers, wings and cups should be marked with either the initials of the riding club or a post code. Permanent marker pens or paint (use oil based paint) are cheap ways of doing this. Do a sample first to ensure it works on the relevant surface and cannot be wiped off.
- The same marking should be done on dressage boards, gymkhana equipment and showing items.

Timing Equipment & Tanoy Systems

- Expensive items e.g. timing equipment or tanoy systems should be marked with a property marking solution and visibly marked with the clubs initials or postcode. If you use a property marking system such as SmartWater put up signs around the perimeter and in the club caravan, if you have one, advertising this fact.
- Where possible do not leave expensive equipment at the show site.

Tractor & Implements

- If your club has a tractor or implements such as harrows, a roller or leveller – look at the possibility of storing them at secure premises.
- If this is not possible make a secure area and fence it off. Place an obstruction at the entrance. Store away from the road and rights of way.
- Do not store them where they are visible from the road or rights of way.
- Consider recording them on the National Plant & Equipment Register.
- Mark with a property marking solution and put a label on the equipment showing it is marked. Put visible markings on the equipment, i.e. paint the postcode or club initials on a visible area. Consider a tagging security system, immobiliser or wheel/steering lock system.

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Caravan

- If possible do not store equipment in the caravan.
- Close the curtains and do not leave any items on display.
- Fit a security alarm.
- Put the clubs initials or post code on the roof and on the side of the caravan; this can be done with paint or marking system.
- High security door locks with cylindrical keys are more effective than the standard variety.

ALWAYS REPORT INCIDENTS TO THE POLICE

Policing is determined by the National Intelligence Model which is driven by reported incidents and recorded crime.

If an incident is not reported the Police will not know there is a problem, they cannot help you or gain information on the crime. There may be a pattern of similar crimes which will not be identified or acted on if they are not reported. Ring 101 or if there is a crime in progress 999 providing as much information as possible.

HORSE WATCH SCHEME

Horse Watch schemes are a partnership between the Police and proactive horse owners. By becoming a member you are raising the profile within the Police of horse owners and the need for crime awareness and crime prevention advice being made available.

It is totally free to join.

- Benefits include alerts being sent to you by the Police, e.g. via email, of equine related crime in your area.
- Crime prevention advice specifically for horse owners.
- Free forms and documents on security and recording details of your horse and tack available to download from the website.

Advise your club members of West Mercia Horse Watch – the more people that join the more we can get the message out to protect our horses and property and show the Police that horse owners are an important consideration in the fight against crime.

Consider putting West Mercia Horse Watch details on your club website, in the schedule, put a poster up and consider having a club 'security day' for members where all the recommended crime prevention measures can be done together, both for the club and for each individual member for their horse and tack.