



SUSSEX EQUINE RANGERS **JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST RURAL CRIME**



An exciting new scheme is being launched in August which needs our horse riding community to volunteer to help fight rural crime.

The pilot areas are Bolney, Warninglid, Twineham, Hickstead, Albourne, Pyecombe, Poynings, Fulking, Hurspierpoint, Sayers Common and Hassocks.

This unique partnership seeks to promote collaboration between Sussex Police and local riders to tackle rural crime and anti-social behavior.

The Mid Sussex Neighborhood Police Team has appointed a co-coordinator for this project, who is passionate about rural affairs and the communities we police. The project will assist in crime reduction by the volunteers working in an effective preventative capacity.

There will be a pilot scheme of 15 to 18 volunteers, aged from 18, from the local riding community who will be participating in their day to day recreational activity of riding along the country roads, bridleways and lanes of Sussex. These volunteers, whilst out riding over miles of countryside, will be eyes and ears for the Neighborhood Police Team and report back anything suspicious to the team. They will be expected to volunteer for a couple of hours a week and will receive bulletins to enable the police to keep them informed of recent crimes and illegal activities.



The project will enhance relationships and is dynamic and expandable to other areas of Sussex. Although initiated by Sussex Police, the volunteer riders will be supported and encouraged to seek out new members themselves and the rangers will be self managed.

The aims and objectives are directed towards crime prevention in an attempt to reduce and deter criminals taking advantage of remote areas. The volunteers will not be tasked to carry out anything outside of their normal day to day activities, just to be extra vigilant.

We will work alongside Farm Watch, to provide the volunteers with information around suspicious persons/vehicles/activities and what to look out for and report back. This enables the police and other agencies to target their patrols and enforcement in the right places where communities are at risk of becoming victims of crime and/or anti-social behavior. The agencies can then work together to attend to vulnerable persons and premises and provide crime prevention advice.

Sussex Equine Rangers will be a valuable resource in accessing areas difficult to reach and they will not require specialist equipment to pass on their sightings etc, as all riders carry a mobile phone, so information and intelligence can be acted upon expeditiously.

By the very nature of moving at low speed and being about 10 feet high, they will be able to see over hedges, down footpaths, into wooded areas, into farmyards and commercial premises, as well as gardens and garages. They are perhaps the best placed resource to utilize in our rural communities as on canvassing the volunteers, it has come to light that they know the areas very well, where the project will cover.

Sussex Police will initially set up this partnership, with a dedicated coordinator, ensuring that a service level agreement is met and that each volunteer is provided with branded Hi Viz clothing for themselves and the horses, highlighting the partnership between these community volunteers and Sussex Police. There will be a launch event, highlighting partnership working with the Sussex Police Crime Commissioner, Sussex Police, our rural agencies and the volunteers.

As volunteers, the riders will have no more power of arrest than any other member of the public, they will not be expected to approach suspects or intervene with any crimes in action, their role is to observe and report.

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