



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
**Fire & Rescue Service**  
*Creating Safer Communities*

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham  
Fire and Rescue Authority  
Community Safety Committee

# RURAL COMMUNITY SAFETY

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

**Date:** 22 June 2018

**Purpose of Report:**

To update Members on recent rural community safety activities that have been undertaken by the Prevention Department and wider Service Delivery.

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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 80% of Nottinghamshire is classified as being rural. In recent years, there has been an increase in rural crime in the county including incidents of arson. In the last 12 months Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has attended 93 fires at agricultural type premises.
- 1.2 Due to their isolated locations, open boundaries and readily ignitable materials (such as hay and straw stacks), agricultural premises are particularly vulnerable to crime such as deliberate fire setting. In addition, again due to their isolated locations, agricultural premises typically have some of the longest attendance times for all emergency services.
- 1.3 A serious fire on a farm can affect the financial stability of even the most well-run business. Over 40 per cent of agricultural premises that suffer a serious fire never trade successfully again. Within rural communities the wider impact of a serious fire, including the knock-on effect to the local community and the loss of a sense of community wellbeing, can be devastating.
- 1.4 As part of NFRS's wider collaboration agenda, the Prevention Department is represented on the county's Rural Crime Partnership Group (RCPG) which meets bi-monthly. This Group brings together NFRS, Nottinghamshire Police, East Midlands Ambulance Service, the National Farmers Union (NFU) and other organisations to plan, co-ordinate and deliver activities to reduce rural crime in an effective and co-ordinated way.

## **2. REPORT**

- 2.1 This year, NFRS brought in a new procedure for rural intervention which gives crews guidance about how and when they can best deliver community safety advice to their rural communities.
- 2.2 Led by NFRS and Nottinghamshire Police, the RCPG launched a new Rural Community Safety Guidance and Information Folder (RCSG&IF) at the Nottinghamshire County Show on 12 May 2018. Initially 1000 hard copies of the folder have been printed and are being distributed to owners and occupiers of rural properties that are deemed to be most at risk. A digital version is also available and can be accessed from the NFRS website.
- 2.3 A joint education campaign has also been undertaken under the title of 'Operation Bifocal'. Between 28 April and 2 May 2018 members of the Prevention Department alongside NFRS crews and Nottinghamshire Police District Neighbourhood Teams, visited farms and rural properties to highlight the dangers they face and how best they can protect themselves and their livelihoods from arson and other rural crime.
- 2.4 Over the next few weeks NFRS will continue to focus on rural communities through its 'Focus on Farms' campaign. The intention of which will be to drive

down the number of incidents the Service is called to attend in agricultural type premises this year.

- 2.5 The introduction of the Farm Fires procedure, RCSG&IF and the delivery of Operation Bifocal has resulted in direct engagement with 23 agricultural premises in Nottinghamshire up to the end of May 2018. The continuing 'Focus on Farms' campaign will aim for many more direct engagements over the coming months.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Design and production costs for the RCSG&IF were shared between NFRS and Nottinghamshire Police. This has cost each organisation £2680 (for 1000 hard copies).
- 3.2 To launch the RCSG&IF at the Nottinghamshire County Show and promote them going forward, NFRS has purchased two pop up banners at a cost of £400.

### **4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from the report.

### **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equalities implications arising from the report.

### **6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

The work of the RCPG is targeted at reducing the incidents of rural crime including deliberate fire setting.

### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

This work contributes to the Authority's statutory duties for fire prevention advice within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

### **8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The targeted approach involved in identifying and engaging with the premises and individuals at greatest risk supports the Authority's integrated risk management plan objectives and addresses risk in a clear and structured way.

## **9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS**

The report is focussed on the positive outcomes of the ongoing collaboration between NFRS and other partners under the RCPG.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Members note the contents of the report.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)**

None

John Buckley  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**