

WARWICKSHIRE HORSE WATCH

CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE FOR HORSE OWNERS

YOUR HORSE



Freeze mark – visible deterrent – a unique number is branded onto your horse either on his withers or shoulder which is permanent. Some companies offer discounts on a sliding scale if more than one horse is branded at the same time. Worth getting together with your friends or people on the same yard. Some insurance companies offer a discount on their policies if a horse is freeze marked.

- Microchip – your vet can arrange this for you. Some vets offer to do this when you have your annual flu injections at a discounted rate. From 1st July, 2009, EU rules require that every horse must be microchipped when you apply for a passport.
- Post code branded onto hoof – needs to be regularly re-done as the foot grows and is trimmed by the farrier.
- Take photos of your horse from every angle, especially any unusual markings or scars and keep them in a safe place. This will help the police if your horse is stolen. Download the 'Horse & Equipment Record Form' from the Warwickshire Horse Watch website at www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk.
- All owners of horses in England must have a passport issued by an authority approved by DEFRA (for a list please go to www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/horses/). Make sure you have your horse's passport with you every time you transport your horse, even if it is only for a short distance and that it is kept up to date. Keep a photocopy of your horses passport at home in a safe place in case you lose it or it is stolen so that you have all the relevant details to contact the authority that issued it to you. If the horse you own or look after does not have a passport you could face a fine of up to £5,000.



TACK



- Leather stamp – stamp your post code plus the number/first two letters (if a house name) on your saddle. Kits can be purchased to do it yourself, some saddlers also offer this service. A kit is available to borrow from Warwickshire Horse Watch. To see where to mark your tack, go to www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk and download 'Where to Mark Your Tack & Equipment'.
- Engraving – engrave your postcode onto the stirrup bar, stirrups and other metal items.
- Smartwater – Special yard kit with bottle of forensic marking liquid, gate sign, vinyl vehicle label and various stickers is £25.00, both available from Warwickshire Horse Watch and Warwickshire Police. Mark your saddles where you don't touch regularly, i.e. stitching.

Keep a log of where it is marked with the smartwater pack in case of a theft. *Smartwater can be used on all of your valuables including jewellery, vehicles and household goods.*

- Microchip – some saddlers offer this service. Datatag offer a microchip for your saddle or a special yard kit with forensic marking liquid and microchips for a number of saddles. Farmkey offer microchips for saddles plus a number of other ways for marking your other equipment. Chips for Tack also offer a microchip service.
- Keep an inventory of all your tack and keep it updated. Make a note of where it is security marked. Take photos of your tack, especially any unusual marks or differentiating features Go to www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk and download a Horse & Equipment Record Form. Keep this form up to date and in a safe place. This will help the police identify your tack if it is stolen.

TRAILER/HORSE BOX

- Paint your vehicle registration on the roof of your vehicle.
- Farmkey and offer a service where you can buy a kit that provides a unique number to put on the roof or side of your vehicle that they also register. FASTSIGNS offer a self adhesive vinyl lettering kit.
- Datatag offer a tag / transponder system.
- Record all relevant numbers, e.g. chassis, body, hitch numbers etc
- Take photographs of the vehicle from all angles, keep in a safe place to help the police identify the vehicle if it is stolen.
- Ensure the area you keep your tack in is secure at all times even if the ramp is up.

- Fit additional locks and alarms if necessary. Wheel clamps and hitchlocks should also be considered.
- Be on your guard at all times, especially if you are at a show or horse sale.
- Put notices on your windows, partitions and ramp that your horse and tack is security coded.

RUGS

- Depending on the colour and material, there are a number of ways to mark your rugs, always check on a small area first for the best method and suitability before proceeding:



- Paint (2 part epoxy), either use a stencil or put postcode on in pen then fill in with paint.
- On light coloured rugs use a permanent marker pen.
- Transfers, use an inkjet printer, check material will not be affected by the heat of the iron, be especially careful with stable rugs and cooler rugs.
- Embroidery.

GENERAL ITEMS

- Brushes, yard utensils – post code it. Visible marking is the best deterrent.
See 'How to Mark Your Tack & Equipment' on www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk
- Again take photos if the item is valuable.
- Keep an inventory.

FIELD AND YARD SECURITY

- Turn gate hinges upside down and weld if necessary.
- Lock gates at all times.
- Where possible have wide ditches and steep banks of soil around your field or paddock.
- Check hedges and fencing every day – thieves have been known to make a hole in the hedge to take the horse later and just put the branches back so that you can not see what they have done until it is too late.
- Prikka strips are available from Warwickshire Horse Watch and NHW to put on fences and gates to deter people from climbing over.



- Put signs up saying you have security systems in place – that your horse and tack is security marked.
- Look at locks, alarms and CCTV if necessary. Use sensor lights low level lighting at night.
- Visit your yard and field at different times.
- Always lock your car when visiting your yard.
- If you go to your yard or field on your own make sure you have a mobile phone with you and someone knows where you are and what time you expect to be back.
- Take down the registration of suspicious vehicles and report it to the police.
- Ask anyone you don't know who is on your yard or property who they are and what their purpose is – if you are concerned call the police.

ELECTRIC FENCE EQUIPMENT

- Take a photograph of your unit and keep a record of the make, model and serial number. This will greatly assist the Police if your unit is stolen.
- Mark your energiser in some way, waterproof paint or smartwater are just two examples.
- Attach your energiser securely to a sturdy fixed point. Most stolen units are just pulled out of the ground or hooked onto a fence or post. Make it as hard as possible for the thief to remove the energiser, if he has to damage the unit to steal it, it will not be worth taking.
- If possible hide or camouflage your energiser behind a fence or tree, in a hedge or with under growth.
- If you have a light showing the power is on cover this with tape as it makes the unit easily identifiable in the dark.
- If your energiser is battery operated the same precautions should be taken as batteries are also expensive to replace and open to theft.
- The Police believe stolen energisers are being sold on as second hand with no instructions or packaging, if you are aware of items like this being available and you do not believe the reason given for them being missing is correct, please notify the Police.



Please report all thefts to the Police.

If there is a problem in your area action cannot be taken by the Police if they do not know the details. Please report everything, whether it is a theft or a suspicious vehicle.

Ask for an incident number.

A neighbour or friend may be the next victim, please help to stop this happening!



MAKE YOURSELF A MEMBER OF WARWICKSHIRE HORSE WATCH

Receive alerts on email directly from Warwickshire Police notifying you of equine and rural crimes in your area.

Download a membership form on www.warwickshire-horsewatch.co.uk