

Protect your yard or stables

Make sure your yard does not attract unwanted visitors or thieves. Try not to advertise your location with road signs or livery adverts. If you have a drive up to the stables install a gate at the road end to deter casual callers. All gates must have a heavy duty lock and chain with their hinges secured to prevent them being lifted off.



Install security lights up high and add grills to prevent them being smashed. An alarm will also need protection so it cannot be disabled or have the wiring cut. Leave your phone number with any neighbours and ask them to contact you if the lights or alarm come on. Do not label the tack room door, it makes it too easy for thieves to find. Horsecwatch can provide yard security signs to advise that property is marked as a deterrent to theft. Lock away all tools and wheel barrows. Tack is often wheeled away across fields in the barrow left on the yard and the tools simply attract unwanted interest. Never leave head collars hanging outside for thieves to lead your horse away with.



Protect yourself

Always try to ride out with someone else. Make sure you tell a friend how long you expect to be and take a mobile phone with you. Attach a tag or disc to your tack with some emergency contact details on it. If you become separated from your horse and someone finds him they need a number to call. Wear fluorescent clothing to make sure you are seen by other road users. If you cannot avoid riding in low light conditions use reflective equipment and riding lights.



Become a member of Horsecwatch

Horsecwatch members benefit from the support of their community, security advice and tack marking. We also issue e-mail messages and newsletters. You can join the text alert scheme operated by your police force to receive crime warnings and local news. Horsecwatch can provide you with copies of our Horse and Equipment Record form so all the vital information you need is at hand.

Your local force contact is PCSO John Bordiss who you can call on 07968942116 or 0845 408 7000 ext 723548. Alternatively e-mail ruralcrimeteam@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk or visit www.wiltshire.police.uk



Wiltshire Horsewatch



AN INTRODUCTION TO HORSEWATCH

Supported by Wiltshire Police

DELIVERING SAFE SATISFIED AND CONFIDENT COMMUNITIES

Welcome to Wiltshire Horsewatch

Wiltshire Horsewatch is a scheme which exists to connect all horse owners and riders with the intention of improving our security and communication. We aim to reduce rural and equine crime and much can be achieved through general awareness and a little effort from each individual. We are part of the National Horsewatch Alliance supported by most Police Forces.

The Wiltshire area is covered by a number of local groups, each run by a co-ordinator who acts as your first point of contact. To become a member of Horsewatch either complete one of our application forms or e-mail your name and address to ruralcrimeteam@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk You can find more information at www.ukhorsewatch.org.uk where application forms and other information can be downloaded. Don't worry if you live outside the Wiltshire area, we will pass your details on to the Horsewatch group nearest to you.

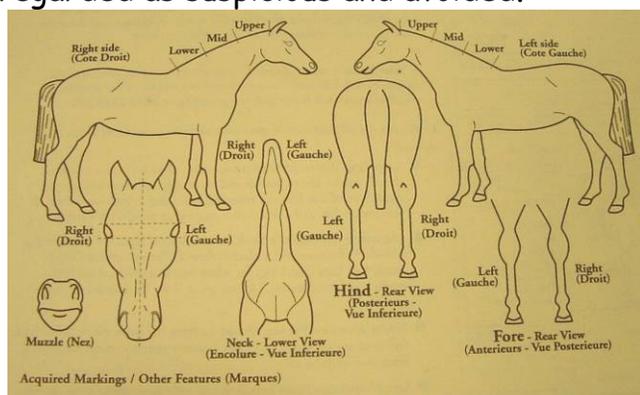
Crime prevention measures you should take yourself

Protect your horse

Unless your horse can be easily identified he will be nearly impossible to tell apart from thousands of others. Make sure you have a good selection of summer and winter photographs from all angles and a correctly completed passport drawing.

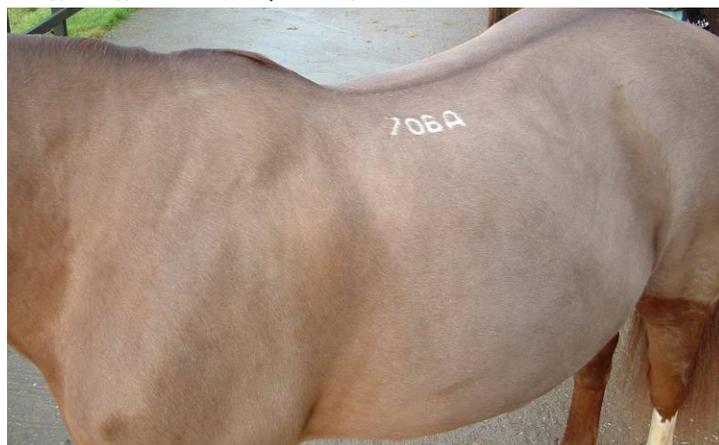
You should also ensure your horse can be positively identified by anyone. Even if he only escapes from the field there must be way to trace him back to you.

Passports are a legal requirement for all horses, ponies and donkeys. They must accompany the animal on all road journeys and be on hand for DEFRA inspection. Any equine offered for sale that does not have an accurate passport should be regarded as suspicious and avoided.



Freeze branding is a visible mark that allows easy identification and can quickly be linked to the registered owner, usually by phone.

It is a lifetime identifier that is supported by a registration pack, transferable to subsequent owners. A freeze brand can also be read from a distance, even if the horse cannot be caught. There is an excellent record of recovery for freeze branded equines, unmarked they are sometimes never found.



Microchips contain a unique number but they rely on the correct scanner being available to read the chip. This registration number then has to be checked on a database before an owner can be traced. Unfortunately they are not a visible deterrent against theft.

Hoof branding usually involves a home post code but has to be regularly repeated by your farrier. It can also be difficult to read from a distance or if hooves are muddy.

Protect your property

Saddles, tack and rugs are regularly stolen so they must be clearly identifiable. A visible mark will be a deterrent to thieves and any stolen items that are recovered can be returned to you. Even if it is recovered, unidentifiable property is either returned to the thief, auctioned or destroyed. Your home postcode is always the most recognisable mark to use.

Tack marking usually involves stamping leather saddles on the nearside, under the flap. For synthetic saddles the near side stirrup bar is engraved. This convention is simple to follow and easy to explain to anyone checking for identifying marks.



Saddles can also be micro chipped or coded with smart water. Although these are good secondary methods they are not immediately visible and need a scanner or database to check ownership. Postcode other property by either stamping or engraving it. Work on the principle that if it is stolen and not marked you will never see it again. Even just a few rugs, head collars and grooming kits can add up to a loss of hundreds of pounds.



Rug marking can protect your rugs. Identify them with either your home postcode or the horses' freeze brand number. Try to use a permanent method such as a two part epoxy paint that soaks into the fabric or iron on adhesive lettering.



Trailer and lorry marking should include adding your postcode the roof, usually with self adhesive vinyl lettering. This makes them easy to see from the air or road bridges and can be difficult to remove. Mark other parts such as breast bars, partitions and panels. The more you mark the harder job it is to remove so the deterrent is greater, as is the chance of recovery.



Make sure you always use a wheel clamp and hitch lock on a trailer. Fit the wheel clamp to a rear wheel and if possible chain the hitch to something solid. Lorries should have an immobiliser and fuel cut off fitted. Often they will be towed away to have simple security devices, such as battery switches, removed elsewhere. Fit a tracker if you can. Do not leave tack or other property in the lorry as it is easy to steal or will simply go missing with it.