

Institution: Aberystwyth University		
Unit of Assessment: 17: Business and Management Studies		
Title of case study: Policing Farm and Rural Crime: Informing Police Strategy, resource allocation and change management in addressing farm and rural crime		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Wyn Morris	Lecturer in Management	1 August 2014- present
Dr Gareth Norris	Senior Lecturer	1 October 2010- present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2017–2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Y/N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>The research outlined in this study has had a major impact on the resourcing and policing of farms, farm businesses, rural communities and individuals within the Dyfed-Powys Police (DPP) area. Lack of police visibility, resources and limited Welsh medium provision had led to feelings of isolation and vulnerability in these communities. The research was commissioned by Dyfed-Powys Police, recommendations made on resources and strategies were implemented through the Rural Crime Strategy 2017-2021 which changed processes and services as a result. Key outcomes are seen as improved trust, communication and relationships between communities and the police.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Research undertaken by Morris and Norris since 2013 has examined the use of internet-based technologies in rural communities, and assessed the impact of these technologies on reducing criminal activity in rural environments [3.1; 3.2; 3.3]. This research found that rural crime is linked to in-group/out-group tendencies and shows an elevated concern over offenders travelling into rural areas to commit crime. Furthermore, that technologies such as social media can impact on the way in which local communities and police forces can work together to prevent and reduce criminal activity.</p> <p>Establishing accurate estimates of the amount and cost of crime perpetrated in rural areas is complex. This is primarily due to the diverse nature and geographies of rural businesses and is further confounded by limitations in police reporting systems. Nevertheless, wider classifications of rural crime estimate the cost to rural communities in the UK at GBP40,000,000 p.a. These figures, however, are skewed towards insurable losses and do not include the full and wider impact of rural and environmental crime where the impact and effect on the community is considered to be significantly more.</p> <p>In 2017, the Dyfed-Powys Police and Crime Commissioner (DPP-PCC) made a key policy commitment towards developing evidence-based policing and working with rural communities to reduce crime [5.1]. Research was subsequently commissioned by Dyfed-Powys Police (DPP) and awarded to Morris and Norris. DPP funded a community survey across the force's area which aimed to analyse the perceptions of rural communities to the way in which the Police deal with crime prevention and criminal investigations [3.7]. The</p>		

survey examined issues surrounding trust between the Police and rural communities [3.4], and how the Police resource and respond to rural crime.

The findings were disseminated to over 60 delegates at a DPP research symposium on 6 October 2017, with the final report submitted to DPP in December 2017 [3.5]. The report recommended significant changes to both the resourcing and policing strategies of DPP and included the establishment and use of specialist rural crime teams, increasing both human and technical resources in the prevention and investigation of crimes, and specifying the type and use of various technologies to deal with and prevent crime. All the recommendations from the report were incorporated into the DPP Rural Crime Strategy 2017-2021.

Following the initial survey, a second Rural Crime Survey was commissioned and funded by DPP [3.8] and completed in mid-2019. This assessed the changes in police resourcing that had taken place following the implementation of the Rural Crime Strategy in 2017. The findings of this second study were presented to the DPP and the DPP-PCC; and were subsequently presented at a DPP Rural Crime Conference on 6 March 2020 where they were also disseminated to over 100 delegates including PCCs from other Welsh Forces, farming unions and local councillors. The 2019 Rural Crime Survey and Report [3.6] is being used by DPP to inform the development of its next Rural Crime Strategy and, DPP has requested Morris and Norris to undertake a third Rural Crime Survey in 2021.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Publications

- 3.1 Morris, W. & James, P. (2017), Social Media, an Entrepreneurial Opportunity for Agricultural Based Enterprises. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 24 (4). pp.1028-1045. DOI: [10.1108/JSBED-01-2017-0018](https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-01-2017-0018)
- 3.2 Morris, W., Henley, A. & Dowell, D. (2017), Farm diversification, entrepreneurship and technology adoption: Analysis of upland farmers in Wales. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 53. pp. 132-143. DOI: [10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.05.014](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2017.05.014)
- 3.3 Norris, G. & Norris, H. (2013), Fear of crime and authoritarianism: a comparison of rural and urban attitudes: A comparison of rural and urban attitudes. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 15(2). pp.134-150. DOI: [10.1057/cpcs.2013.2](https://doi.org/10.1057/cpcs.2013.2)
- 3.4 Morris, W., Norris, G., and Dowell, D. (2019), The Business of Farm Crime: Evaluating Trust in the Police and Reporting of Offences. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety: An International Journal*, 22(1). pp.17-32. DOI: [10.1057/s41300-019-00083-5](https://doi.org/10.1057/s41300-019-00083-5)

Reports

- 3.5 Morris, W., Norris, G., and Dowell, D. (2017). Final report to Dyfed-Powys Police – Farm and Rural Crime. December 2017. Available: [https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/final-report-to-dyfedpowys-police\(54877b01-9765-4aee-9596-4cef4adb7a60\).html](https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/final-report-to-dyfedpowys-police(54877b01-9765-4aee-9596-4cef4adb7a60).html)
- 3.6 Norris, G., and Morris, W. (2020). Rural and Farm Crime in Dyfed-Powys (second report). Available: [https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/rural-and-farm-crime-in-dyfedpowys\(9864f133-7e05-4f10-87f0-0aa2b44b2dd3\).html](https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/rural-and-farm-crime-in-dyfedpowys(9864f133-7e05-4f10-87f0-0aa2b44b2dd3).html)

Funding Awarded

- 3.7 Farm and Rural Crime Survey: Dyfed-Powys Police: (September 2017): Award: GBP1,000.
- 3.8 Survey 2 Farm and Rural Crime: Dyfed-Powys Police: (July 2019): Award: GBP1,500.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Morris and Norris' research informed the Dyfed-Powys Police (DPP) Rural Crime Strategy 2017-2021, which implemented changes to the resourcing and policing strategies of DPP. The research demonstrates impact in three key ways:

Informing the policing of rural crime

The research proposed the development and implementation of specialist Rural Crime Teams (RCTs) and the need for increasing human and technical resources (including specific technologies, such as using Facebook and Twitter). Proposals which were subsequently incorporated into DPP's Rural Crime Strategy (2017-2021) [5.1]. The Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) reports: *'The results informed the development of a Rural Crime Strategy specifically tailored to our rural communities, and greatly assisted in the development of strategies to meet the unique demands of these communities'* [5.2].

Our research evidenced many of the new and revised initiatives detailed in the 2017 Strategy. Following which, the police and farming / rural communities received more supportive and targeted police activity regarding the way in which farm and rural crimes are resourced. The community response to the new policing strategy identified that 79% of those asked reported that it is now easier to contact DPP on rural crime issues [3.6].

Changing DPP processes and services

Morris and Norris recommended that rural 'flags' were attached to reports of agricultural crime for more efficient responding and reporting of rural crime. These were developed into a search algorithm by DPP force analysts to facilitate the detection of rural crime patterns, intelligence and responding. The RCT Officer reported that *'systems have been adapted for better recording of calls and that they are categorised as Rural Crime'* [5.3]. This facilitated the identification of specific farm and rural crimes which was not possible using the previous categorisations of crime.

The establishment of a RCT was identified as a key recommendation in the report and as one RCT Officer explains: *'The creation of Rural Crime Teams and the appointment of dedicated Rural Crime Officers has enabled us to begin to break down the barriers which previously existed between the police and rural/farming communities.'* Furthermore, the RCT Officer confirms that the RCT's *'also opened channels of communication with the community in the language they use in their day-to-day life'* [5.3].

Evidence that the recommendations from the research conducted for DPP are being used by other forces is evidenced by best practice and training being shared with North-Wales police through fortnightly meetings between DPP and North-Wales rural teams [5.3].

Public benefited from service improvements

Research recommended more effective resourcing by allocating Officers who understand the specific communities they support. The allocation of specific officers to communities resulted in 70% of the community respondents agreeing that dedicated rural crime officers had increased their trust in the police [3.6]. The Senedd Cymru - Welsh Parliament Member for the area explains the importance of the RCT and Welsh language: *'Welsh is their day-to-day language and when reporting a crime ... they often find it easier to express themselves in Welsh and can often do so more accurately.'* They also report that following the establishment of the RCT *'the provision of localised support by Welsh speaking officers with agricultural and rural backgrounds has increased visibility and access to officers for the agricultural community in Ceredigion'* [5.4].

Dedicated rural officers have been appointed and work with farmers' welfare organisations, identifying people who may be isolated and vulnerable and helping Agricultural Welfare Organisations, such as the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI), Tir Dewi, and the DPJ Foundation, to support people in rural communities with poor mental health,

including farmers in crisis. Tir Dewi and RABI representatives confirm that the rural officers' familiarity in communities is a positive factor in dealing with vulnerable people [5.5]. Increasing police visibility in rural areas was a key recommendation of the research and this was implemented by DPP. As such, operationally-dedicated RCT Officers now regularly attend rural and community events, including livestock markets, Young Farmers Clubs (YFC) and Women's Institute events [5.3; 5.6]. The YFC County Organiser for Ceredigion highlights the RCT's interaction with the YFC, the importance of working with young people in the community, and reports that the Ceredigion RCT Officers are a 'great asset' [5.7].

The research recommended that communication between DPP and rural communities in DP should be increased. Following the implementation of the Rural Crime Strategy, DPP increased communication with residents and expanded its use of social media using Facebook, Twitter and attending public engagement events. For example, DPP's Rural-Watch Facebook group, created in January 2018, now has 9,151 members as of 3 January 2021 with over 2,000 posts and 6,000 reactions. The Rural Crime Team Twitter account has 1,690 followers, and, as 4 January 2021, there have been 3,362 tweets posted [5.8]. The second Rural Crime report states that overall satisfaction with the police across the force area increased from 47% to 52% following the implementation of the DPP 2017 Rural Crime Strategy.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 5.1 Dyfed-Powys Police Rural Crime Strategy 2017. Available at: www.dyfed-powys.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/dyfed-powys/about-us/what-we-do/rural-policing/police-rural-crime-strategy-2017.pdf
- 5.2 Dyfed-Powys Police Crime Commissioner confirms AU informed the 2017 Rural Crime Strategy, letter 6 June 2019.
- 5.3 Dyfed-Powys Rural Crime Team Officers, confirm the benefit of the Dyfed-Powys Rural Crime Team for farmers and the rural community, letter and emails, between April and May 2019.
- 5.4 Welsh Parliament member, confirms the importance of the Rural Crime Team and Welsh language for the policing of Dyfed-Powys, letter 3 June 2019.
- 5.5 Email and letter, Agricultural Welfare Organisations, Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution and Tir Dewi, 16 April and 3 May 2019.
- 5.6 Executive Officer, Farmers Union of Wales acknowledges the benefit of the Rural Crime Team, letter 4 June 2019.
- 5.7 Email, County Organiser, Ceredigion Young Farmers Club, 12 April 2019.
- 5.8 Digital Communications Officer, Dyfed-Powys Police, confirms the Rural Crime Strategy improved communication, emails 12 April 2019 and 4 January 2021.