



Suffolk Horse Watch

autumn 2010

Community Safety Unit, Suffolk Police

Welcome to the third edition of the Suffolk Horse Watch newsletter.

Since our launch in June 2009 our membership has swelled and our messages are now being distributed to nearly 800 people and businesses with an interest in horses across the county and beyond.

Thankfully the theft of horses and ponies in Suffolk is extremely rare, but are you prepared if this should happen to you?

Would you be able to positively identify your horse if he was recovered? Is your horse microchipped or freezemarked? We've joined up with Farmkey to offer our members £10 discount on freezemarking, so this is a perfect time to consider getting it done. Read my article on page 2 on my pony Maisie's experience on being freezemarked recently.

Julie Dennis

Horse Watch Administrator

Are we still in contact with you?

Have you moved, changed your e-mail address or telephone number? Please make sure you update us of any changes either directly online via the Police Direct website

<https://policedirect.suffolk.police.uk/registration/>

or to the Horse Watch administrator (contact details on page 2)

If the worst should happen.....

.....and your horse was lost or stolen, how would you prove he's yours?

Owning a horse is a big responsibility and just like any pet, they soon become part of the family and it would be terrible if they got lost or stolen. Without positive identification your chances of finding a missing horse or pony are slim, within a very short period of time, your horse could be hundreds of miles away from home.



Contrary to popular opinion, an equine passport is not proof of ownership, nor is a veterinary vaccination card. The diagrams used in these two documents to show the marking, whorls, scars etc on the horse can certainly assist in the positive identification of a horse as can photographs of your horse. It is a good idea to take photos of your horse in both his summer and winter coat, (replacing photos yearly as he gets older and possibly greyer!) then if the worst should happen and your horse is lost or stolen you have a picture which can be quickly circulated on the Stolen Horse Register, National Equine Database and local advertisements.

The best way of proving your horses identity is to have him permanently marked. There are various ways you do this; all methods have strengths and weaknesses and you should pick a method that best fits your situation.

What are the options?

■ Freezemarking ■ Hot branding ■ Hoof branding ■ Microchipping

An outwardly visual mark can help to help prevent theft and to assist in the search for horses that are lost or stolen

Visit the Suffolk Horse Watch website on more information on horse identification

From 1 July 2009 all horses that doesn't have a passport, will need to be microchipped as part of the passport application process

Community Safety Unit, Suffolk Police

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Helping to fight
equestrian crime
in Suffolk

Maisie's Freezing Experience

How often have you thought you should do something and never get round to it? If you're anything like me it's an almost daily occurrence! I've been meaning to get Maisie, my ride and drive pony freezemarked for the last 5 years, but have never got round to it, despite 'preaching the gospel' of every Crime Reduction practitioner 'mark it or lose it'. The thought of Maisie being stolen and the heartache of never seeing her again made me decide I really must practice what I preach and booked an appointment to get her marked.

I was a little nervous of the procedure, for two reasons, Maisie isn't great with clippers (the area to be marked needs to be clipped before applying the irons) and, like many horse owners, I thought the freezemarking may hurt her. I've had veruccas removed by freezing in the past, and found the procedure quite uncomfortable, to the point of painful and thought the freezemarking may be the same. I really shouldn't have worried. Alison, who carried out the process was superb. She understood and listened to my concerns, reassuring me that most equines don't react in any way. Four super-chilled irons were held individually on Maisie's clipped patch for around 15 seconds each, during which she didn't flinch. Immediately after the application of the irons the skin swelled, but by the following morning this had subsided and within a couple of days the mark had calmed down to near normal.

Her ID number should appear as white hair when her coat grows back in a few weeks time, and I can now rest assured that should she be lost or stolen I have a good chance of her being returned home.



Farmkey are very generously offering Suffolk Horse Watch members £10 discount off their standard prices for freezemarking and trailer marking. Contact Julie Dennis for a voucher if you would like take advantage of this offer.



Be Seen Be Safe

Where has the summer gone? Autumn can be a nicer time to ride, no flies, cooler temperatures and good excuse to wear a few extra layers. **The one extra layer you should consider above all others is a fluorescent and reflective tabard, waistcoat or jacket.** Many of us have to squeeze in exercising our horses into the ever decreasing daylight either end of our working day as the winter progresses. It is surprising how you can quickly lose daylight during that late afternoon hack and be caught out thinking you could get back to the yard before dark, and mornings can be tricky too as you join the road with half-asleep commuters; although it may be daylight, a low sun can dazzle drivers and make visibility difficult. There are lots of different products on the market that can make both rider and horse stand out in bad light, many of them inexpensive.

Suffolk Horse Watch has fluorescent / reflective waistcoats available for members to purchase at a very reasonable cost of £5 each. Available in medium — orange only. To order, please make cheques payable to Suffolk Police and send to the address at the top of this page



Please report any suspicious activity to the Police or if you prefer to remain anonymous, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

