

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE

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Greenyard for Straying Horses on a Highway

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Department Responsible	Prevention and Community Protection		
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2. Introduction

Incidents involving animals have the potential to undermine the public's confidence in effectiveness of the police, therefore all reports of stray horse need to be dealt with effectively aiming to reduce repeat incidents involving the same horse(s) at the location.

Historically there have been ad-hoc arrangements around the county in dealing with stray horses that have exposed members of the public to risk of harm and have also placed the organisation in a position of increased liability.

It may be necessary to seize loose and straying horses found on a public highway when the owner/responsible person cannot be identified or located by reasonable enquiries (sec. 155 of the Highways Act 1988).

If a horse is trespassing on land other than a highway, including public authority land, then it will be for the landowner or Local Authority to arrange the removal. The Police have no duty to remove horses in these situations but can provide advice and guidance (Control of Horses Act 2015).

3. Legislative Compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principals of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the individuals and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with Equal Opportunities legislation and policies. In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health and Safety Issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy will therefore ensure compliance with all legislation and internal policies.

4. Policy Statement

Each Stray horse incident should be subject to value based decision making at an early stage involving the Force Control Room and area supervisors where appropriate. A decision by Police to seize and remove a stray horse has the potential for owner to become upset and also for animals to become distressed. There can also be a high financial cost for livery and veterinary attention when a horse comes into Police possession. Area will be responsible for allocating an Officer in Charge to investigate and progress any incidents involving stray horses. Where applicable an Inspector should be consulted prior to any action being taken before any stray horse seizure. When available a Rural Crime Team officer can advise on the possible options available.

Owner identification and arrangements for return of seized horses and any Criminal Prosecutions must be concluded at the earliest opportunity and this will be the responsibility of the OIC, line managers must closely supervise and monitor all stray horse seizures. The Rural Crime Team will provide guidance and review the cost of any livery, veterinary bill or other expenditure on a regular basis and be a contact with the contractors to the Police.

The Removal of a stray horse should only be undertaken by a contacted Greenyard Service Provider on behalf of the Police. Untrained and inexperienced Police Officers/Staff should not attempt to control a stray horse unless there is no other option and then only when it is necessary to ensure the safety of the Public. Police attendance at the scene is required as they are seizing the horse and also to ensure the safety of the contractors by controlling traffic and members of the public at the scene. When a stray horse is deemed to be 'dangerous' and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the animal may attack, or is in the process of attacking a member of the public the FCR should be updated immediately.

The responsibility for seized stray horses will remain in the area where it occurred. Area Commanders will identify and manage the internal processes required to monitor and measure the policy and provide feedback to the public where appropriate.

5. Monitoring and review

The senior owner will review the content of this guidance annually to ensure that this is relevant and up to date. The author has agreed that this document will be reviewed within 12 months of the effective date.

6. Related Documents

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

