



NW NEWS

West Kent

Watchout

The Voice of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association

Issue 43

"Security through awareness"

Spring 2017

Your co-ordinator is:
Tel No.

Annual General Meeting 2017

Mr Peter Rolington, Chairman of West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association chaired the 2017 AGM which was held at the St. Stephens Community Hall in Tonbridge on the 20th April 2017.

The Chairman then welcomed the guest speaker, Matthew Scott, Kent Police's Crime Commissioner who, because of other commitments, spoke first.

His talk covered a wide range of topics with a main focus of mental health

problems and how they are dealt with by Kent Police. In addition, he said he hoped to increase the number of Police Officers in Kent by 80 with additional PCSOs. In addition, a programme of Police Cadets had already been initiated in various locations in Kent including Tonbridge.

Questions were taken on a wide range of subjects and he said that any subsequent issues would be taken via email or his website.

The audience gave him a warm round of applause.

Contact:

E-mail: contactyourpcc@pcc.kent.pnn.police.uk

Telephone: 01622 677055.

Write to: Office of Kent Police & Crime Commissioner, Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME159BZ.



Aftermath of an attack

Sadly another police officer has lost his life while on duty in London, on the day of the terrorist attack at Westminster.

Many civilians were hurt and the latest figures show five people have died and approximately fifty people injured.

Our heart-felt sympathy goes out to PC Keith Palmer's wife Michelle and their little daughter and to all the friends and family of everyone involved in this tragedy. It must again make us aware of the need to be vigilant when out and about wherever that may be. If you notice anyone behaving suspiciously please call 101 and in an emergency 999. You can also call Crimestoppers on 0800555111 if you wish to remain anonymous.

Stolen Spaniels

Officers investigating the theft of two Springer Spaniels, Percy and Stan, from the Birling area on Friday 13 January 2017, located Stan later the same day and returned him to his owners.

Three days later, police officers found Percy. He has been reunited with Stan.

DS Richard Pringle said: "The owners were pleased to see their two dogs again so soon after they disappeared."

"We have also recovered two further spaniels and two spaniel puppies, and are releasing their photographs to see if anybody recognises them."

A 25-year-old man and 47-year-old woman, both from Watlington, were arrested on suspicion of theft on Friday

13 January and were bailed to return to the police station on 16 February, 2017.

Additionally, a 28-year-old Watlington man presented himself at Tonbridge police station on Monday 16 January where he was arrested on suspicion of theft. He was bailed and enquiries are continuing.

Can you help?

If you have information that can help, you are asked to contact Kent Police on 01622 604100 or west.division.media.appeals@Kent.pnn.police.uk quoting reference YY/1162/17.

Alternatively contact Kent Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

British Transport Police

Text 61016 for problems on trains or the tube. Dial 0800 405040 to give more information. A 999 call is guaranteed a quick response. For Crimestoppers dial 0800 555 111.

Make a note

When contacting the Police in West Kent

Emergency only 999

Kent Police 101

Is for reporting non-urgent crime, suspicious incidents or to contact your Neighbourhood Policing Team. Calls cost just 16p from landlines or mobiles.

Stop Using Your Mobile Phone . . .

In my last issue I wrote an article regarding the use of mobile phones being used while driving.

Sadly I still see people using their phones while driving.

I am glad to say that the government from 1st March has increased the penalty for using your mobile phone to 6 points on your licence and a £200 fine. Personally I feel they should be banned all together as using your phone while driving can cause devastating results. What do other people think? I would like to hear your views please contact me at julie.walker@kent.pnn.police.uk.

I am happy to see that Kent and Sussex police have been out in force trying to catch people using their mobile phones while driving. Between them Kent and Sussex police caught 1,822 people using their mobile phones. That is the possibility of 1,822 accidents due to mobile phone use – a shocking thought!

A headmaster at a school noticed that when his young pupils came out of school a lot of parents were using their mobile phones and not talking to their children. He has put a note on the school gates which reads.

**GREET A CHILD WITH A SMILE
NOT A MOBILE.**
What good advice.

Dog Walkers

Many of our neighbourhood watch co-ordinators own dogs and love to enjoy walks with them.

Nothing is more enjoyable if you are a dog lover than to see your animal running freely while on the walk and enjoying themselves.

Please keep dogs on leads when passing through farm land especially if there are animals in the field.

John Holt a farmer in Hailsham, East Sussex has recently lost fourteen pregnant ewes to dog attacks. This is at a cost of £5,000.

It is totally heart-breaking for him to lose his animals in such a tragic way. If you see a dog running loose in any field please call the police if it is harassing or killing the animals. Owners of these dogs can be prosecuted and the farmer has a legal right to shoot the animal if he sees it attacking his herd.

Are you aware of the danger of Candles?

The wonder of a flickering candle can be so lovely to watch, especially in the eyes of young children, but are you aware of the dangers they can impose?

Candle fires have risen by 10% at a rate of three a day while injuries caused by them increased by 9% according to latest Government figures.

Candles must always be in a fire resistant holder on a flat stable surface.

Never leave burning candles unattended. Put them out when you leave the room.

Also please be extra careful on Halloween night. If you do put pumpkins outside, please make sure they are in a safe place away from the front door, just in case young children visit and in the excitement of receiving a Halloween gift do not realise their clothing may have caught alight from the candle. This can cause a lot of pain and trauma if treatment is needed for burns afterwards.

Please do not move candles once they have been lit.

Burn candles in a well ventilated room out of draughts or air vents.

With Spring and Summer on the horizon, more parties are held in and outdoors, so please be extra vigilant.

The best candles to have and look just as pretty are the ones that have batteries inside. The flame flickers and in some cases it is hard to tell the difference from the real thing.

Always make sure you have fire alarms in your house on every level also make sure they are tested weekly. If there are young children make Sunday the "Fire Alarm Check Day." They will love to be involved and it will also teach them about fire safety. Make sure everyone knows how to evacuate the house safely if there is a fire.

According to a BBC TV programme, Dave Coss a Derbyshire Fire Officer working along side Dundee University, is trying to bring in a change in the way fire alarms work after noticing children were being killed in house fires. It had also been noticed that children did not always respond to the noise of the alarm.

A trial was carried out, where a lady spoke and said "Wake up the house is on fire, Wake up the house is on fire".

It worked and children woke up and got up to the sound of a human voice. I wish that Fire Officer good luck in his endeavours to bring about a change, if it helps to save more lives especially those of children.

Youngsters Gambling

Recently Mr Larcombe a former Army Major gave a talk regarding the impact of gambling. He admitted that he had squandered £750,000 over three years. He was at rock bottom but had managed to pick himself up after moving back to Kent to live with his mother. He now runs Rethink Gambling, a non profit research group. He believes young people are facing a 'coming catastrophe.'

Mr Larcombe is worried about our young people, as gambling is so easy; nowadays they can do it from their smartphones. Young people are very adept at smartphone technology. He recently visited a school in Tonbridge to tell his story. Out of the 150 year twelve pupils he spoke to, eighty percent were gambling already, years before they are legally allowed to!

If you are between the ages of 16-23 you are three times more likely to have a problem than someone who gambles when they are older. The blame he argues lies with the advertisers who are

bombarding young people with glamorous imagery of betting. Gambling he says is being introduced into children's games. He told of finding his seven year old son playing fruit machines on his i-Pad. The only thing at stake was virtual points within the game, which was Rollercoaster Tycoon in which the player builds fairground rides to attract more people in to earn money. One of the things you can buy in the game is a casino. So you go in put some of your coins and generally you will win. Children are learning risk and reward at a very young age. What is disturbing is the game is owned by a famous company which profits from on-line casino games.

I think after reading Mr Larcombe's story that maybe we should ask our children if they are gambling on their smartphones or on line. If they can be stopped at an early age maybe we can stop them becoming addicted as Mr Larcombe has bravely admitted too. The law states that in order to gamble you must be 18 years old or over.

Matthew Scott launches Heritage Watch in Kent

A new scheme to help prevent and detect heritage crime in Kent has been launched by the Police and Crime Commissioner at Leeds Castle in Kent.

Heritage Watch encourages the public to use their eyes and ears to help look after our cultural heritage using tools such as Country Eye, a crime prevention app supported by Kent Police. Peter Rolington, Chairman, invented the new Heritage Watch App.

Heritage crime is any offence which harms the value of heritage assets and their settings for this and future generations. It covers a wide variety of criminal activity that is responsible for damaging historic buildings and sites. These offences range from graffiti, vandalism, theft of metal and stone, arson and unlawful salvage of shipwrecks. This activity can damage historic sites beyond repair, or even mean that a prized piece of history is lost forever.

Mark Harrison, National Policing and Crime Advisor for Historic England told delegates at the launch:

"Heritage Watch provides the opportunity to identify the criminal minority that are intent on causing loss or damage to our shared cultural heritage. The Heritage Watch partnership and the Country Eye app provide the community with modern technology that helps us protect Kent's past for future generations."

Sandra Matthews-Marsh MBE, CEO of Visit Kent, added:

"Kent is a treasure trove of some of England's finest heritage assets attracting over 60 million visitors each year. Heritage Watch is a way in which

we can all be involved in ensuring these wonderful places are secured for future generations. We will be promoting Heritage Watch to all Visit Kent partners to get behind the campaign."

Mr Scott gave a closing speech to launch Heritage Watch officially and said:

"The cost of crime in rural areas is reportedly more than £800million across England and Wales, and heritage crime can represent a large proportion of that. If criminals target our heritage sites and they subsequently have to close, that can result in the loss of jobs or tourism in the local area; and then there is the cultural impact on a community which can't be measured in simple monetary terms.

"By their very nature heritage sites across Kent like churches, monuments and war memorials, and wrecks off our coasts, are vulnerable to crime so it is fantastic that the agencies here today have worked together to start up a new Heritage Watch scheme. I encourage everyone to download the free Country Eye app from the Heritage Watch website and use it to report anything suspicious in their communities to the Country Eye volunteers so that information can be passed to the relevant authority. Of course if anyone wishes to report a crime they should still dial 101, or 999 if a crime is in progress or life in danger, and speak to Kent Police directly."

In Kent and Medway (and the seas around), there are 17,944 Listed Buildings, 422 Scheduled Monuments, 62 Registered Parks and Gardens, 11 Protected Wrecks and two World Heritage Sites.

Leeds Castle is a Registered Park and Garden and there are 10 Listed Buildings within the Registered Park Boundary. The Heritage Watch launch was attended by representatives from heritage venues across Kent and key heritage crime prevention organisations who will share information to tackle crime.

"The key to Heritage Watch is raising awareness. It's up to each of us to take responsibility to help preserve our heritage," urged Heritage Watch website and launch sponsor Terry Roffer of Brook Security.

Dame Vera Lynn

We would like to congratulate Dame Vera Lynn for reaching the grand age of 100. We hope you had a very Happy Birthday on March 20th 2017.

I know some of our loyal co-ordinators remember her in WW2. I know my late father thought a lot of her as did all the troops who heard her sing. She reminded them of home and the wives and families waiting for their return. She visited many of them on their tours, but the most famous trip was her visit to the lads in Burma. She was able to boost the morale of all the men with her famous songs the "White Cliffs of Dover" and "We'll Meet again". You are an inspiration to us all Dame Vera. *Editor.*



Would you like to make a donation?

If you feel you would like to make a voluntary donation to the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association to help us cover our costs, we would be very grateful.

Please send cheques to:

Peter Rolington,
Chairman of the West Kent
Neighbourhood Watch Association.
C/o Tonbridge Police station,
1 Pembury Road,
Tonbridge,
Kent,
TN9 2HS.

We Have a New PCSO in Tonbridge

Having always had the desire to work within the Police force, I really feel like my career has begun.

I am currently being tutored by PCSO Baker in Tonbridge and I am really enjoying every minute and constantly learning new skills.

I look forward to furthering that knowledge with PCSO Baker and the other members of staff at Tonbridge in order to give me the ability to proceed with my career at Kent Police.

Also, with the nice weather at the moment, I would just like to remind residents to ensure they shut their windows and doors when going out.

by PCSO Katherine Murrell.

Tumble Dryers

Please ensure your tumble dryer is not left on overnight or if you are not in the house. There have been reports recently of some faulty tumble driers catching alight. Please ensure yours is not one of these. If it is DO NOT USE it, contact the dealer straight away.

After you have done your wash and it has been dried in the tumble drier, please do not put the clothes straight into the airing cupboard without first of all separating them and giving them chance to cool down.

There have been several cases reported where items taken straight from the tumble dryer have smouldered and then caught alight after being put in the airing cupboards. Please take extra care.

This information was given to me by a member of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Reporting scams on your mobile phone

Text messages about debt management, accident claims and mis-sold PPI are all on the rise. Follow our instructions to put a stop to spam text messages.

Report spam texts

Sending unsolicited text messages is illegal. So, if you want to stop receiving spam texts you can report this to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

You can also report unsolicited text messages to your mobile provider.

Use a dedicated text number

You can report spam texts directly to your mobile phone provider. All operators now use 7726 as the short code to report spam texts, which is free of charge.

All of the UK's mobile operators work together to deploy a tool which collates all the information from the 7726 short code in real time.

This means they can take early action to block numbers that are generating spam on their networks. They can also use this information to inform the regulators.

Vodafone users need to dial 87726.

Do you report spam?

In 2015 a whopping 90% of Which? magazine survey respondents who owned a mobile phone didn't know they could report a spam text using 7726.

When you report a spam text you may get an automated response thanking you for the report giving you further instructions if needed.

Texts from unknown numbers

Never respond to spam texts as this will

just confirm that your number is live. Simply delete the text.

Only reply 'STOP' if you know the company that's sending the message. If the company continues to send you unwanted texts you can report it to the ICO.

Join our Calling Time campaign

People are being bombarded with nuisance calls and texts, especially from PPI and Personal Injury companies. Back in December an official task force, chaired by Which? magazine, outlined 15 recommendations for action on nuisance calls and texts.

But our analysis of data from the Information Commissioner's Office shows that since the task force reported, there have been around 61,500 official complaints about nuisance calls and texts.

With just 2% of people who receive unwanted calls reporting them to the regulator, the true figure is in the millions.

Which? Magazine are campaigning for:

- The Government to make top staff legally accountable for their company's nuisance calls, and require businesses to show their number when they call.

Our new research found that eight out of ten people support greater accountability over nuisance calls, including directors being personally fined if their company breaks the rules.

- Businesses to support our campaign by making a public commitment to tackle nuisance calls.
- Regulators to give people more power by putting them in control of how their personal data is used.

Operation – Cubit

Untaxed vehicles across Tonbridge and Malling have been clamped following a joint operation by Kent Police and the DVLA.

A total of 16 vehicles were clamped across the district on Wednesday 29 March 2017 as part of an ongoing, monthly, initiative ran by the two organisations.

The enforcement action aims to crackdown on motorists leaving vehicles parked on public roads without having valid road tax.

Those who fail to pay a release fee, of £260, risk having their vehicles seized by the DVLA.

PC Colin Eade, from the Tonbridge and Malling Community Safety Unit, said: "We act upon concerns raised by members of the public, and partner agencies such as the borough council and housing associations, to penalise motorists who are breaking the law."

"It would not be fair on law-abiding motorists if those who fail to pay their tax go unnoticed and that is one reason why we regularly carry out this enforcement action."

"This is also a useful way of deterring criminals, who are known to use untaxed vehicles while committing crime."

by James Walker Media Dept.

Who's Who On The Executive Committee?

Peter Rolington, Chairman

Simon Wilshaw, Vice Chairman

e-mail: simon.wilshaw2@kent.pnn.police.uk

Peter Brown, Secretary

John Watson, The Mallings

Sue Mason, Tonbridge

Marguerite Bernard, Treasurer

Julie Walker, Editor – Tel: 01732 771075

e-mail: julie.walker@kent.pnn.police.uk

Richard Myers, Sevenoaks

Janet Ditchett, Tunbridge Wells

Committee members

Dave Spitter, Neighbourhood Watch Liaison

Officer, for Kent Police – Tel: 01622 604395

e-mail: dave.spitter@kent.pnn.police.uk

Other Useful Numbers

Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Unit

– Tel: 01732 844522

Tunbridge Wells Crime Reduction Unit

– Tel: 01892 526121

West Kent Special Branch – Tel: 07528 989208

UK Border Agency – Tel: 08435 047198

Kent Trading Standards – Tel: 03454 040506

Sevenoaks Community Safety Partnership

– Tel: 01732 227000

community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Tonbridge & Malling Community Safety Partnership

– Tel: 01732 844522 *csp@tmbc.gov.uk*

Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership

– Tel: 01892 526121

communitysafety@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

If you wish to contact a member of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee, please write to them at:
c/o: **Tonbridge Police Station,
1 Pembury Road, Tonbridge,
Kent TN9 2HS.**

Volunteers

Did you know that there are over forty volunteers working at West Kent and HQ combined?

We have four working in the Tonbridge area.

West Kent Volunteers contributed to 337 hours in February 2017, this equates over £4,000 in savings . . . keep up the good work, you are doing a great job.

*WKWVA Executive
Committee expresses its thanks
to the Borough Council for
their assistance with production
of this Newsletter*