

Local PCSO Monthly Update April 2020

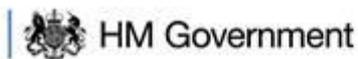
I am your local Police Community Support Officer for your area. For those of you that don't know me, my name is PCSO Katherine Richards, but most people call me Kate.



This is my report for this month, so you are all aware of what I have been up to in and around your areas and what crimes have been happening. My report goes out to the Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators, and any other members of the community who may be interested in receiving it. This can also be shared on your parish websites and your social media sites.

This month have been challenging times for everyone regarding the ongoing Coronavirus, which has many of our communities either in self-isolation or dealing with the government's rules of a country lockdown. These are important times and we must make sure we are carrying out the rules. It has shown me how amazing our local communities have been at pulling together to help those who are unable to get out for food due to being vulnerable or unwell. With a lot of people either off work or not able to go to school, please can you remember that the lockdown is very important for us to fight this illness.

Reminder of the rules:



Coronavirus
You must:

- 1 Stay at home**
- 2 Only go out for essentials like food and medicine**
- 3 Work from home if you are able to**
- 4 Not meet anyone outside your household**
- 5 Exercise daily**
- 6 Stay 2 metres apart**

Please also note that daily exercise is a walk, run or cycle in your nearby area. This is not playing football or tennis etc... and meeting up with friends down at the local parks. All the towns and parishes have put signs up and have even taped off their play park equipment, this is a no-go area. Please stay away. It is great that most people are listening to this, but with the schools being off for a longer period can you make sure that your youngsters are staying in and following the rules. As I am having reports of youngsters still meeting up with their friends in the parks.

While out walking with dogs, please make sure you have them under control, especially if you are walking on footpaths. Local farmers are in the middle of lambing season and we don't want an increase of dogs worrying sheep.

Livestock worrying

Livestock worrying is a criminal offence and comes under the [Dogs \(Protection of Livestock\) Act 1953](#)[External Link](#).

'Worrying' is where a dog attacks or chases livestock causing injury or suffering.

This isn't just a threat to a farmer or land owner's livelihood, it's also a dangerous situation for the animals involved, and could lead to more risk if the animals get onto the road.

A farmer is allowed to kill the dog if it's worrying their livestock.

Always keep your dog under control around other animals and if you see a dog on the loose worrying animals, call 101.



Lots of the local shops and Supermarkets, doctors etc. Have got various rules on how many people are allowed in at one time or how many items of one thing you can buy. They are just doing their jobs to make it safe and fair for everyone, so please give them respect as well.

Please all stay safe.

Other Information:

We have good links with our Neighbourhood watch teams, who will pass on information for me to share with you. Either from Andrew Judd, Adrian Liggett or Peter New (Kennington). I enclose one of Peters updates.



Dear Readers

I am writing to you in the most strange of times and today most people are starting to work out how they will operate as individuals and as family units. Along with my NHW colleagues we will be looking to provide as much guidance as possible to keep you and your property safe and secure.

We know the criminals will be even more desperate, we know chancers and opportunists will strike if we are off guard. I am looking to see a huge community spirit build on what we have already seen. Yes, we read about the few selfish people, yes we read about those few evil people who will use coronavirus to rob the most vulnerable in our communities BUT and it is

a huge BUT the good guys are in the massive majority. We can organise and prepare, and we can ramp up our prevention.

At this time of year, I would be out and about on the doorsteps enrolling people into Neighbourhood Watch, the more we are the stronger we are, but that style of recruitment is obviously on hold. I will be asking for people to join via email and complete the delivery of brochures and badges at a later date.

Let's turn this confinement into a crime free time. Take the moments you now have to review all your home security, especially in parked cars, sheds, garages and outbuildings. The latter may be holding household supplies, criminals will know this. Remember the criminals will be desperate and will up their attempts at crime. We must match those efforts to stay safe and secure to defeat them.

I have listed below the constant same reminders to be alert to, which still plague many other parts of the Ashford District. The key areas are:-

- 1. Keep your main property as secure as possible at all times even if you are just popping out for the shopping or exercise walk.*
 - 2. Keep sheds, garages and any outbuildings as secure as possible as tools stolen from here can often be used to break into main homes. Thieves may target these types of premises even more than usual as they will hope families are holding a few extra household goods and supplies during this medical crisis.*
 - 3. Leave absolutely nothing on show in a parked vehicles especially last park up at night. Vans and commercial vehicles with tools left in them are especially vulnerable. Park those vehicles right tight up against garage doors so if the door was forced it cannot be opened wide enough for entry or removal of items.*
 - 4 Care with notes for delivery drivers. Many delivery companies have implemented 'contactless deliveries' and leaving parcels without signature, and hence drivers may well just leave parcels and packages outside homes. If you are expecting a delivery, be extra careful to ensure these are retrieved as quickly as possible, to minimise the risk of them being taken.*
 - 5 Care with bogus callers and distraction burglaries. Sadly, these have even increased with persons using the coronavirus as an excuse to target people in their homes. They may use coronavirus as a reason to make out they are checking on the elderly or vulnerable*
 - 6 Be extra alert to scams by Landline telephones, mobiles, emails, letters and face to face on your door steps.*
- As with 5 above beware of any calls by phone, email or in person using the coronavirus as a reason to carry out criminal actions*
- 7 Do not hand over any monies or bank cards etc to strangers offering to get shopping if you are in isolation due to the virus or self-isolation as a precaution to protect your health.*

To decent folk it is absolutely abhorrent that people could target vulnerable members of the community in these difficult times. They will!! To the criminal and selfish members of our community they will view this as a "business opportunity".

If you need the Police for anything like a crime in progress dial 999. to give the Police information or intelligence or indeed to tell the of something on a non-urgent business then call 101.

Hopefully NHW can help to keep you CRIME FREE and FREE FROM THE FEAR OF BEING A VICTIM OF CRIME

For your support and backing I am extremely grateful. We will come through this difficult period. Take care and stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant.

Peter

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)

Neighbourhood Watch Team

Fraud

Sadly, currently there are also a lot of scams and frauds going around, please be careful.

Please be aware of a new Covid – 19 related scams, which has been doing its rounds. If you have a text like this DO NOT click on the link.

With more of us at home socially distancing, it means more of us are carrying out more online shopping through necessity, as well as having more time on our hands to browse the internet. The scammers are aware of this and will be looking to scam more people by advertising goods for sale, that never turn up.

Please be aware of adverts offering face masks for sale and hand sanitiser, as there is very little of these type of products for sale and the scammers know this and are using people's concerns to purchase these types of product that unfortunately may not turn up.

Please stay vigilant during these difficult times and remember ABC –

Never ASSUME

Never BELIEVE

Always CONFIRM

And if it sounds too good to be true then it probably is.





Online shopping fraud

- If you're purchasing goods and services from a company or person you don't know and trust, carry out some research first. Look up reviews of the company and ask trusted friends and family members if they have heard of it before.
- Be wary of unsolicited emails and texts offering questionably good deals, and never respond to messages that ask for your personal and financial details.
- Avoid paying for goods and services by bank transfer as that offers you little protection if you become a victim of fraud. Instead, use a credit card or payment service such as PayPal if possible.

ActionFraud
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre
0300 123 2040



Computer software service fraud

- Never install any software, or grant remote access to your computer, as a result of a cold call.
- Genuine organisations would never contact you out of the blue to ask for your financial details, such as your PIN or full banking password.
- If you need tech support, ask trusted friends or colleagues for recommendations and look for reviews online first. Don't contact companies promoting tech support services via browser pop-ups.
- If you have granted remote access to your computer seek technical support to remove unwanted software from your computer from a trusted professional. Inform your bank and monitor your bank statements for unusual activity.

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Beware fraud and scams during Covid-19 pandemic fraud

Criminals are using the Covid-19 pandemic to scam the public – don't become a victim.

Law enforcement, government and private sectors partners are working together to encourage members of the public to be more vigilant against fraud, particularly about sharing their financial and personal information, as criminals seek to capitalise on the Covid-19 pandemic.

Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police.

They spend hours researching you for their scams, hoping you'll let your guard down for just a moment.

Stop: Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

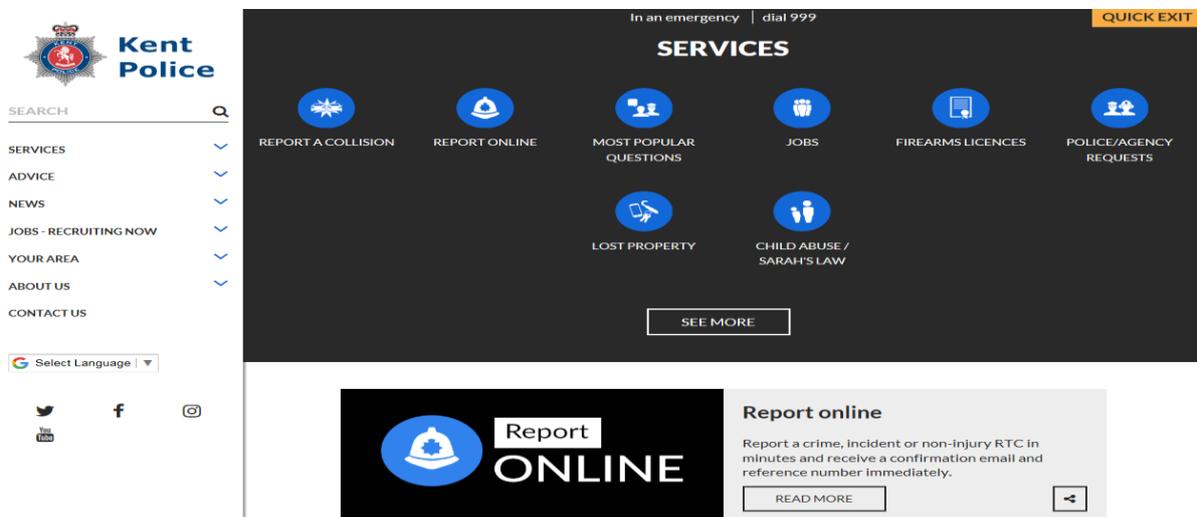
Challenge: Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

Protect: Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud*.

Your bank or the police will NEVER ask you to transfer money or move it to a safe account.

I would like to remind all residents to stay vigilant and report anything suspicious online or via the Kent Police non-emergency number 101, or if you do witness a crime in progress then please call 999.

*****Also please do not forget the online chat and crime reporting system on the Kent Police website which gives members of the public the ability to report crime online rather than by phone which some may find easier, faster and more convenient.*****



<https://www.police.uk/crime-prevention-advice/>



Kate Richards PCSO 46059656

Community Safety Unit | Ashford Police Station | East Division