

Local PCSO Monthly Update July 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. I like to keep you updated on what's going on in the areas that I cover and what I have been up to. The last few weeks I have been tutoring a couple of our new PCSO's you may have seen out with me; now I have PCSO Kyle Farnfield.

With things starting to get back to a bit of normally, the towns and villages are starting get busier and with more shops and pubs opening in the next few days, please still remember the government guidelines about social distancing and staying safe.

It's been lovely seeing families and communities starting to meet back up for days out in this fabulous weather, within the guidelines.



Other information:

Fraud

Please find below the latest advice from our Fraud Office :
With the development of Track and Trace, several people have asked about advice around how this works.

Therefore, please find below the official advice from the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk) on how the system works and advice on how to avoid being the victim of any possible scams as a result of the implementation of this system.

When we contact you

If the NHS test and trace service contacts you, the service will use text messages, email or phone.

All texts or emails will ask you to sign into the [NHS test and trace contact-tracing website](#).

If NHS test and trace calls you by phone, the service will be using a single phone number: 0300 013 5000.

All information you provide to the NHS test and trace service is held in strict confidence and will only be kept and used in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Contact tracers will:

- call you from 0300 013 5000
- send you text messages from 'NHS'
- ask for your full name and date of birth to confirm your identity, and postcode to offer support while self-isolating
- ask if you are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms
- provide advice on what you must do as you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus

Contact tracers will never:

- ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to us (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- ask you to make any form of payment or purchase a product of any kind
- ask for any details about your bank account
- ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts
- ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- disclose any of your personal or medical information to your contacts
- provide medical advice on the treatment of any potential coronavirus symptoms
- ask you to download any software to your PC or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet to anyone else
- ask you to access any website that does not belong to the government or NHS

For the full guidance/information please check the GOV.UK website - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

Remember our advice

If in doubt use our own A, B, C of scam awareness:

A- Never **Assume** a caller, email or text is genuine.

B- Never **Believe** a caller, email or text is genuine.

C- Always **Confirm** by contacting a trusted number, family member, friend, your bank's fraud department or the police to check if it's genuine.

Scam 1 – Scam calls impersonating Police.

Please be aware of scammers impersonating Police.

3 people were called in the Folkestone area recently by scammers impersonating Police Officers. In one call they asked if they knew a person who had been arrested using their Barclay Card and in the other 2 calls, they stated that people had been arrested for Fraud. None of those called were taken in by this and disconnected the calls and contacted Police.

If you receive a call from someone claiming to be the Police and you are not sure if it is a genuine call. Then obtained their details and call 101. Never call a number that they supply and try to use an alternative telephone to the one that you were called on. If you cannot use an alternative telephone, then either wait 5 minutes to call using the same phone or before ringing 101, call a family member to make sure that the line has been cleared, as Fraudsters will stay on the phone and you could yourself speaking to them again.

Remember, the Police will never ask you for passwords, Pin numbers or ask you to remove cash to give to an investigator or courier as part of an investigation.

SCAM 2 – NETFLIX Phishing email

There have been instances of a new phishing email with scammers impersonating Netflix. It asks you to click on a link and takes you to a long scam email to try and obtain your personal data. Please be on the lookout for this and if received, do not click on the link.

Remember Take Five as well

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.

Report scams at www.actionfraud.police.uk



Neighbourhood Watch updates.

From Peter New – Police Volunteer and NHW Team member.

As in previous months I am delighted to write in support of my PCSO colleagues who serve the community tirelessly and as I wrote before it has been a very challenging 4 months. I have especially felt for my colleagues as they pick their way through these changes and easing of lockdown rules which and let us

be kind and say can be somewhat confusing.

Each step of the coronavirus lockdown has produced “business opportunities” for the criminal world. I am sure when a clear position for the when and where of wearing facemasks is published that will be seized on also.

Having said that we must retain many of the good things that emerged from this period and a greater awareness of where our vulnerable people in the community are and the support that they need cannot be a bad thing or an event to lose. The very good community spirit that has grown during these weeks must also be retained. Many of the crimes that have been reduced during the period must not return and blight communities again.

As life eases back to normal we must match the criminal activity with the best prevention advice, warnings and alerts plus crime reports which can be used to ensure the community is as safe and secure as possible.

My Neighbourhood Watch recruitment has progressed steadily during the coronavirus period and now recruitment in the community can be more easily carried out with a risk assessed approach and keeping within the social distancing rules and guidance.

I have been in constant touch with PCSO’s feeding in intelligence from the community where I can and although our activities have been somewhat curtailed, we look forward to working together again soon to ensure the communities get the best possible service we can provide.

For Recruitment to **Neighbourhood Watch** please contact me on peternew1@aol.com.

I recruit across the whole Ashford District and many of you are already members with me. Others among you are in other NHW Schemes and please continue to support your local coordinators as much as you can.

“The more we are the stronger we are, and Crime cannot flourish in a community that cares and is alert and vigilant at all times”

At present I am carrying out several pilot schemes with housing developments “new build” sites, to ensure as a new community is built the NHW scheme grows with the development and new residents, many of whom are not from Ashford, are NHW members from their first days in their new home. Ashford on a Friday is larger than the previous Monday and

although house building halted during the lockdown it is full steam ahead now and many new residents to meet and greet.

MAIN AREAS TO BE ALERT AND VIGILANT WITH ARE:

1 **Main property** take care to secure all the doors and windows that have been open during this lovely weather, especially if just "popping out".

2. Nothing to be left on show in **parked vehicles** and ensure they are secure. Vans with **tools and equipment** left in them, especially overnight, remain vulnerable.

3 **Sheds, garages and outbuildings** please keep secure. Consider chaining items together so removal of an item is extremely difficult

4. Care with what is left on show in **front and rear gardens** especially children's bikes and toys.

5 **Care with animals in the heat** and especially alert to recent **dog thefts** across the Ashford District.

If you drive to the countryside and woodland areas for dog walks be very careful your dog is always in sight and again be very careful what you leave in a parked vehicle. Remote rural car parks are targeted by thieves.

6 As always please be careful with **SCAMS** which come by **Mobiles, Landlines, Emails, Letters** and indeed now once again by visitors to your doorsteps in the shape of **Bogus callers**.

This is about giving yourself time when dealing with these matters. If you are not sure, **STOP and CHECK and then CHECK AGAIN**.

Finally, across social media I often read of people saying "It's not worth calling the police as they do nothing!" or ranting and raving about criminal actions but then no further clear message of whether the police have been informed.

Don't make those judgements.

Crime in progress or threat of danger call 999.

People acting suspiciously around property or vehicles call the police and use 999 you feel a crime is imminent.

To give the police information, intelligence or to report matters of a nonurgent nature call 101 or use the online reporting system.

Finally, very often criminals are known in a community, but people are too nervous or frightened to call the police and name them. In that case then use **CRIME STOPPERS ON 0800 555 111** where you can give information anonymously and in total and absolute confidence.

Stay safe, secure, alert, vigilant and thank you for your support which I really appreciate

Take Care and stay well.

Peter

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)

91725 Kent Police Volunteer and NHW TEAM member.

Safety advice for horse owners

Safety advice is being provided to horse owners following reports of equine equipment being stolen.

Across May 2020 Kent Police received 23 reports of equipment, including riding tack, carriages and trailers, being stolen. Most incidents have taken place at rural locations in West Kent, including Cranbrook, Marden, East Farleigh, Sevenoaks and Paddock Wood. Two offences have also taken place in Sittingbourne and individual reports have been received from Faversham, Charing and Biddenden.

The Chief Constable's Crime Squad is conducting ongoing enquiries into the offences and have arrested six men.

Four of these men, who are aged between 22 and 25, were arrested in Maidstone on 18 May on suspicion of burglary and they have been bailed, pending further enquiries, until 22 July.

A further two men, aged 22 and 27, were arrested in Cranbrook on 6 May on suspicion of being equipped to steal items. They have been released, pending further enquiries. Officers within the Rural Task Force are also working closely with partner agencies, including Kent Horse Watch, to share safety advice and offer to security mark saddles. Sergeant Darren Walshaw, from the Rural Task Force, said: 'We do not underestimate the impact this type of crime has on victims and are committed to preventing further instances occurring.'

'Rural crime is very seasonal, and we are at a time of the year where we know thieves target outbuildings, like stables.

'Most offenders are opportunistic and will target a site where they have identified a vulnerability. That means there are measures owners can take which can reduce their chances of being targeted.'

'I would encourage those with horses, or anyone who stores items in outbuildings, to bear in mind the following advice and take reasonable precautions to protect their property.'

Safety advice

Protecting equipment:

- Vehicles or plant kept outside should be locked with their keys stored in a safe. Also consider fitting them with wheel clamps, ground anchors or hitch locks.

- Security-mark important items, including vehicles. The mark should be unique, in a non-obvious place and include your post code and house name or number.
- Take a photograph of items, including any identifying marks, and keep them somewhere safe along with details including serial, chassis and model numbers.

Keep land, and buildings, secure:

- Check the perimeter of your land and make sure boundaries are as secure as possible.
- If possible, remove any access points that are no longer used and establish a single gated entrance and exit.
- Consider installing an entry control system, such as an intercom or keypad entry.
- Consider using natural boundaries, for example thorny hedges or deep ditches, to help restrict access by people or vehicles.
- Use good quality padlocks with covers so they cannot be cut off easily.
- Use locking posts or temporary obstructions to control wide access points to yards.
- Keep doors and windows shut and locked when not in use.

Anyone who is a victim of crime is encouraged to contact Kent Police through its website or by calling 101. If a crime is in progress, dial 999.

Officers issue 365 tickets in Kent as part of national anti-speeding campaign

A national campaign aimed at tackling speeding motorists resulted in Kent Police officers issuing 365 tickets to people caught driving over the limit.

The operation was carried out on roads across the county between Monday 25 May and Sunday 7 June 2020, with speed cameras catching an additional 4,443 drivers breaking the law.

Officers from the Roads Policing Unit, including the Commercial Vehicle Unit and Road Safety Team, carried out the enforcement activity alongside volunteers from the Kent Special Constabulary.

A number of other drivers were also prosecuted for non-speeding offences such as driving while using a mobile phone or without a seatbelt.

Chief Inspector Rhiannan Pepper, Head of Kent Police's Roads Policing Unit, said: 'With Covid-19 lockdown measures being gradually eased and traffic volumes starting to grow as a result, this national operation was an important way to remind people of the dangers of speeding – especially as many have not been out on the roads for quite some time.'

'Figures show that an average of 17 people are killed and 126 are seriously injured every month in the UK in collisions in which speeding is believed to have been a significant factor. The faster people drive, the less time they have to react to unforeseen hazards or mistakes from other drivers and the greater the impact any collision may be.

'The lifting of lockdown measures also coincides with better weather and lighter evenings, with more cyclists and joggers on the road than there might otherwise be and therefore more people at risk of serious harm by those who choose to break the speed limit.

'Please rest assured that our efforts to tackle dangerous driving happen all year round, and we will continue to prosecute speeding motorists via a range of methods including mobile and static speed cameras and in-car technology, to help keep Kent's roads as safe as possible for everyone.'

We have also been listening to our local parishes and residents who have been highlighting areas where they are having problems with vehicles speeding through there areas. We try and help where we can and have been lucky enough to have been able to tap in with some of our local officers, Traffic officers including Special Inspector Richards. Tickets have been given as well as words of advice. Residents that have seen us, have been very grateful. It has also been nice to see that our Community Speed Watch teams have started coming back out, these are valued members of our communities that make your roads safe, and without their help we couldn't do this.

I have been asked by residents about how they set up a Speed Watch team in their villages, if you are interested please speak to your local parish council. If there are any Parishes that do not have a Speed Watch set up and would like more information please contact the community speed watch team to volunteer, to start a scheme, for support or assistance, or to arrange safety awareness training or have a risk assessment carried out at a new site. To set up a group ideally you need between 3-4 willing volunteers. We also have 2 Speed Watch units at Ashford Station which we can lend out to Parishes to use if they do not have their own equipment.

Any further information please

Call: 01622 653781

Email: speedwatch@kent.police.uk



Kent residents are urged to protect their homes from opportunistic burglars

As temperatures start to rise, so do the chances of criminals targeting properties with open windows and insecure doors.

Following a number of recent burglaries, Kent Police is taking the opportunity to remind everyone of the simple steps that can be taken to keep homes safe from would-be offenders.

Insecure properties provide the ideal environment for thieves and something as simple as closing your windows and doors can prevent such an intrusive crime from taking place.

Detective Chief Inspector Lopa McDermott, who leads the Chief Constable's Crime Squad, said: 'It is only natural that people should want to open their windows and doors to keep cool when the temperatures are high but it is also important that we make people aware of the risks.

'It only takes a few minutes when you're in your garden for someone to climb through an open window and steal your belongings. Doors should never be left unlocked if you plan to spend the day outside.

'We certainly don't want to cause alarm, and no one should feel unsafe in their home, however it is important that we ask the public to take extra precautions whilst we do everything within our power to protect people and seek those responsible for such crimes.'

Detectives are investigating several reports of burglary including one incident in Beauxfield Road, Whitfield near Dover on Thursday 18 June 2020 where cash was stolen from a wallet inside the home of a victim who had been gardening at the front of the house. The suspect is thought to have entered through a patio door at the back of the property.

In Ashford on Wednesday 17 June a property was targeted in Hythe Road, Willesborough, between 1.30pm and 4.30pm. The resident was in the front garden at the time and when they returned to the house, they found drawers and cupboards had been ransacked and money and jewellery was missing.

A van has been reported stolen from outside a home in Amhurst Bank Road, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells. The keys were taken from inside the accommodation between 11pm and midnight on 7 June 2020.

In Borstal Road, Rochester a house was targeted overnight on 5 June where a designer bag, a purse containing cards and cash, a phone and an iPad were reported stolen. The suspect is thought to have entered the property through an insecure door while the victim was asleep upstairs.

DCI McDermott added: 'Burglary has a devastating effect on victims. It robs people of more than just money. Sentimental items can't be replaced and the emotional damage it causes can stay with victims for a long time.

'There will always be a minority who will break the law so, whether it's your house, business, flat or shed, always keep it secure.'

Safety advice

- Lock your doors and windows at night and during the day when you're not in the vicinity (even if you are just popping upstairs for something).
- Lock your back doors and windows when you answer the front door. Some burglars use distraction techniques.
- Consider fitting extra security measures such as spy holes, door chains, door locks and intruder alarms.
- Install your own CCTV covering the front and back of your property.
- Keep receipts and serial numbers safe.
- Photograph and insure expensive or unique items.
- Don't keep valuables on display, consider installing a safe that could be bolted to the ground or wall. Or use a safety deposit box at your bank.
- Use timer switches on lights and radios to make your home look occupied.
- Keep gates, boundaries and sheds secure.
- Lock away bikes, tools and garden items that could be taken or used to break into your home.
- Don't leave spare keys hidden outside under pots or in garages.
- Think before posting holiday pictures on social media as it can make burglars aware the house is empty.
- Keep gardens tidy and pruned to remove good hiding places for burglars and install security lights.
- Cancel milk or paper deliveries when you're away and make sure your grass is cut, these are some things that won't make your home stand out.



Kate Richards PCSO 46059656

Community Safety Unit | Ashford Police Station | East Division

Please do not use this email to report incidents. For a non-emergency please report online or contact 101 and in case of an emergency call 999.