

Monthly PCSO Newsletter January 2021.



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, which I put out at the beginning of the 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. **Please share.**

I would just like to let you know that I will be your point of contact for your town and parishes.

The areas that I cover are **Tenterden, St. Michael's, Rolvenden, Newenden, Weald South and Isle of Oxney areas.**

Crime statistics can be found at: <https://www.police.uk/>

Alternatively, Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) send out regular updates in relation to crimes that have happened in Ashford and local areas. If you wish to receive these updates directly then please contact Andrew Judd who is the Volunteer and Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer. His contact details are as follows:

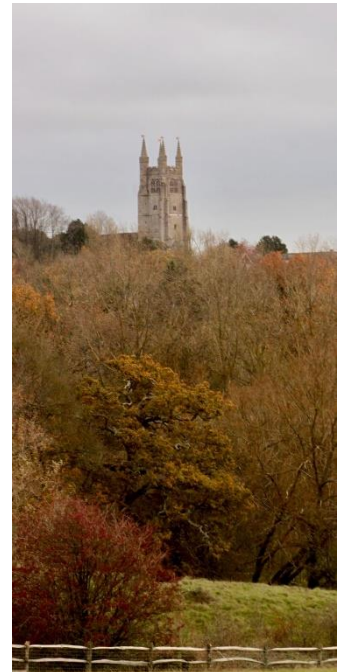
Tel: 01233 896151
Email: andrew.judd@kent.police.uk
Address: Ashford Police Station,
Tufton Street,
Ashford.
TN23 1BT



I would like to also take this opportunity to thank all the Neighbourhood watch Co-Ordinators and members for their support in our communities. It is their eyes and ears that are helping to make a difference in our towns and villages. They report and pass on information to their members by various means, including WhatsApp and Facebook



Weald Neighbourhood
Watch
Community group



**Tenterden and St
Michael's Crime and
Safety Information** >
PRIVATE GROUP · 692 MEMBERS

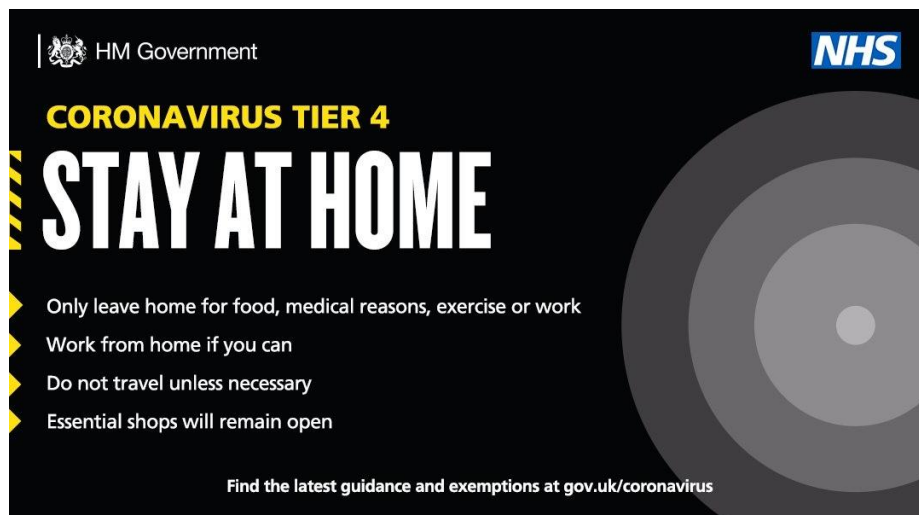
In the last few months we have had a number of vehicles found that have previously been reported stolen and have since been returned to their rightful owners. Please continue to report things through the correct channels, it doesn't matter how small it is, we will investigate.

Making it easier to get in touch

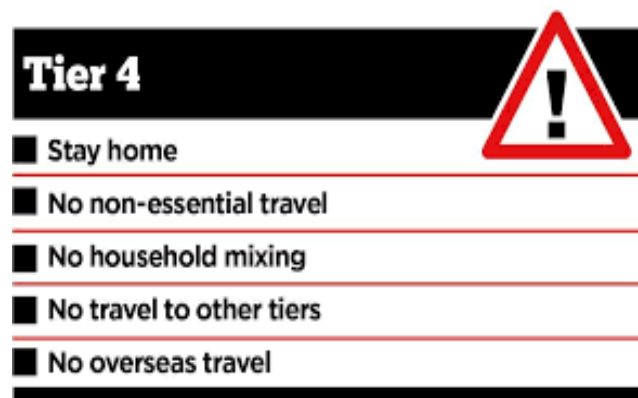
<p>In an EMERGENCY only call</p>  <p>when life is in immediate danger or when a crime is in progress</p>	<p> Report ONLINE</p> <p> A quicker way for you to report crime and incidents</p> <p> Receive your confirmation email and reference number immediately</p> <p>Go to www.kent.police.uk/report</p>	<p>Front counters</p>  <p>You can report issues to one of our front counters. To find your nearest one visit our website.</p> <p>www.kent.police.uk/contact</p>
<p>Crimestoppers</p>  <p>Call 0800 555111 100% anonymous. Always.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are not the police • Nobody will know you have helped us • They pay cash rewards of up to £1,000 <p>www.crimestoppers-uk.org</p>	<p>Hate crime reporting hubs</p> <p>Visit one of our reporting hub drop-in surgeries based in Medway.</p> <p>You don't need an appointment (in most cases) and will be given advice and support by a trained team member.</p>  <p>www.kent.police.uk/hatecrime</p>	<p>ActionFraud Report Fraud & Internet Crime</p> <p>Report online fraud or scams to ActionFraud</p>  Report 24/7 actionfraud.police.uk  0300 123 2040 Mon-Fri 8am to 9pm Sat & Sun 9am-5pm
<p>Ask the Police</p> <p>No need to phone. Get an instant answer online.</p>   <p>www.askthe.police.uk</p>	<p>True Vision</p>  <p>Visit the True Vision website to find out more about hate crime, what to do if you are a victim and to make a report online.</p> <p>www.report-it.org.uk/home</p>	<p>Country Eye – rural crime app</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Snap a photo of the suspicious behaviour, incident or concern.  Receive updates and alerts on the incident you submit.  Tell us where you are or use your phone's built in GPS location. <p>www.countryeye.co.uk</p>
<p>Nuisance and environmental issues</p> <p>Contact your local council for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Noise complaints  Abandoned vehicles  Fly tipping <p>www.gov.uk/find-your-local-council</p>	<p>101</p> <p>Call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • property damaged • suspect drug use or dealing or • give information about crime • have a general enquiry 	<p>Contact the Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write to OPCC, Kent Police HQ, Sutton Road, Maidstone, ME15 9BX • Call on 01622 677055 • Email contactyourpcc@pcc.kent.police.uk • Twitter @PCCKENT • Visit the website www.kent-pcc.gov.uk 

The last year has been very hard on so many people in our communities and we are still dealing with the Coronavirus. Please can I remind everyone of the importance to follow the rules so that we can try and get back to some normality this year.

Coronavirus – On 20th December, Kent was placed into Tier 4 restrictions. The Government announced the changes as a new variant of COVID – 19 became more prevalent in the county, spreading more quickly than previous strains.



If you live in a Tier 4 area, you must follow the rules below:



All update information can be found on the government website – www.gov.uk

Coronavirus and your mental health

If you are finding things hard emotionally right now you are not alone. There is information and support out there for you, please don't feel you can't ask for help. The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic is affecting all our lives. Many of us are struggling with how it's affecting ourselves and our loved ones. Those of you or your friends and family that are already living with mental health problems are facing extra challenges too.

Many people are experiencing lots of difficult emotions about the coronavirus pandemic. This may include feelings about getting sick, the government restrictions, or struggling to see when the pandemic might end.

If you feel this is affecting you there are many support groups that can help, with advice and support.

Contact details:

KCC - metal 0800 107 0160 for free confidential support at any time. Available for every Health concerns.

Mind. - Telephone: 0300 123 3393
Email: info@mind.org.uk

Young Minds - Parents Helpline: 0800 802 5544

Samaritans. Telephone: 116 123 for free
Email: www.Samaritans.org

Mencap. Telephone: 0808 808 1111
Email: helpline@mencap.org.uk

Beware of Covid 19 vaccination scams



With the start of the roll out of vaccines for Covid-19, we are aware that this will present opportunities for fraudsters to commit fraud by contacting people by Telephone, text, email and cold calling to offer the vaccine in return for a fee. If you do receive any contact

of this nature it is a scam. People who receive the vaccine will not be required to pay for this or supply personal data/banking details or PIN numbers.

Beware of possible phone calls to book non-existent vaccine appointments, where you are asked to confirm a booking by pressing a number on your phone which results in you being billed by their provider, with a high value call.

As always, remember never click on any links requesting personal data/banking details. Please report suspicious instances to Action Fraud. If you feel you may have fallen victim to this type of scam already, then please contact your Bank and report to Police by calling 101.

Remember our ABC message and Never Assume or Believe and always Confirm by calling the appropriate organisation on a trusted number using a different telephone that you were called on.

Other Information

I have seen a lot of our communities out and about enjoying the cold winter sunshine on lovely walks in the country in the local areas and out with their dogs. Please can you all make sure that you

stick to designated footpaths and are not walking all over farmers' fields or private land. And if you are with your dog on a footpath going through fields with livestock in ensure that dogs are kept on leads; some farmers have put up signs warning people where there is livestock. In the past few months we have had some sad reports of sheep being attacked by dogs which has led to some being killed or injured.



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

landowner’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](#).



Please can I remind you again about the following:

We have seen an increase of these around the Ashford and surrounding areas. Yes they are fun, but please know the laws around using them, before losing them.

E-Scooters – Know the law

Although e-scooters can be great fun, it's against the law to ride one on a public road, cycle lane or pavement.

What you need to know:

E-scooters are classed as Personal Light Electric Vehicles (PLEVs), which means they are treated as motor vehicles and subject to the same legal requirements, such as driving licence, insurance, number plates, lighting, road tax, crash helmets etc. **Without these, e-scooters cannot be used legally on the road.**

The Government is currently trialling the use of approved rental e-scooters as environmentally friendly modes of transport in some specific locations in the UK.

For the rest of the country, under current law, e-scooters can only be used on private land.

What should I do now?

It's our priority to keep you and other road users safe.

We are obliged to take action against anyone who is caught repeatedly using an e-scooter illegally or in a way that causes a nuisance to others. In these circumstances we have the power to seize the e-scooter under Section 59 of the Police Reform Act/165 of the Road Traffic Act – and we'd really prefer not to.

Thank you for cooperating with us today and agreeing not to use your e-scooter on a road, cycle lane or pavement.

From now on, please make sure you **only use your e-scooter on private land.**

For more information about powered transporters and the law, visit www.gov.uk



No excuse for domestic abuse this Christmas and New Year

There is no excuse for domestic abuse over Christmas and New Year and help is available for anyone affected.

Although social distancing and isolation rules apply for the county, domestic abuse can increase during the festive period.

The increased amount of time spent indoors, coupled with financial concerns, could lead to an increase in offending however these pressures do not provide an excuse for offenders.

Kent Police saw an increase of over 1,000 domestic abuse incidents across March, April and May compared to the same period the previous year. There were 14,276 such reports in 2020 and 13,260 in 2019.

The increased amount of time spent indoors might make it more difficult for a victim to make a report, but they can be assured that officers remain committed to protecting them and providing the best possible support.

Reports can be made in different ways, including by telephone, or by using the live web chat and online reporting facilities on the Kent Police website.

Victims can also call 999 and, instead of speaking, press 55 if they wish to discreetly bring an incident to the force's attention. Pushing 55 will help let a call handler know a person is in danger but unable to speak.

There are also a host of partner agencies who can provide additional care, particularly for those who may be hesitant to contact the force directly.

Detective Chief Inspector Ian Wadey said: 'Limited contact with the outside world during this pandemic may make you or someone you know feel unsafe but our specialist teams are still here 24/7.

'We really want people to know that it is business as usual for us, officers will respond to calls in the same way and it is important that people know household isolation instructions as a result of coronavirus do not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.

'There are many ways in which you can contact us. In an emergency dial 999 or 101 for non-emergencies. You can also speak to someone online at www.kent.police.uk'

DCI Wadey also urged friends and family who are concerned someone is a victim to look for the signs.

'Domestic abuse is not always physical violence. Gaslighting, economic abuse, online abuse, threatening behaviour, emotional and sexual abuse are all forms of domestic abuse so someone who is a victim won't always have visible signs. They may be withdrawn, isolated, have burns or bruises or having their finances controlled.

'We are committed to providing victims with the best possible care and service. This means their wishes are fully taken into account and there is a range of services available through partner agencies to help keep victims of domestic abuse safe.'

Free support not involving the police is also available from:

- Domestic Abuse Support Services in Kent and Medway at www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk
- Kent based Victim Support at www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247
- The Respect Phonenumber on 0808 802 4040
- Childline on 0800 1111

Birds stolen in Ashford burglary

An appeal for information has been issued after around sixty birds were stolen from a property in the Ashford area.

Between 2.20am and 2.50am on Friday 18 December 2020, an outbuilding in Little Chart was broken into and the birds, including canaries, redpolls, chaffinches and goldfinches were taken.

Anyone with information regarding the burglary or the location of the birds, should call Kent Police on 01843 222289 quoting 46/222856/20.

You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously by calling 0800 555 111 or using the anonymous online form at crimestoppers-uk.org.

Safety advice following reports of suspicious door-step callers in Ashford

Ashford residents are reminded to be vigilant of door-step callers after Kent Police received five reports of suspicious activity in one afternoon.

Door-to-door traders are said to have visited properties across Malvern Road, Heathfield Road and Brooke Road on Monday 14 December 2020, with reports received between 1.30pm and 7pm.

The callers were offering household items for sale and claimed to be participating in a rehabilitation scheme for ex-offenders, however, the Probation Service does not endorse such a scheme.

The callers are all described as being men, with their ages ranging from their early 20s through to their late 40s. At least one of them is said to have spoken with a northern accent and claimed to be from Durham.

While Kent Police has received no reports of money being exchanged, some witnesses have reported that a salesman behaved in an abusive or overbearing manner.

Kent Police is offering the following safety advice:

- If someone turns up unexpectedly always put a door chain on before opening the door and keep it on while talking to callers. If you don't have a door chain, check who is at the door from the nearest window.
- Consider fitting extra security measures such as spy holes, door locks and intruder alarms and always check the identity of cold callers. Don't be afraid to turn people away.
- Always ensure rear doors and windows are shut and locked when answering your front door.
- If you have any doubts about whether a caller is genuine, ask them to leave and come back at a time convenient to you and when you've had a chance to ask someone to be with you. Call police if you suspect cold callers may be bogus

Inspector Simon Johnson, from the Ashford Community Safety Unit, said: 'While it is not uncommon for legitimate salespeople to knock on doors, I encourage residents to be vigilant and report any concerns to us.

'Rogue traders are often excessively demanding and tend to target people who they suspect to be vulnerable, such as the elderly.

'Please be cautious of this type of activity and share our advice with friends and relatives who may be vulnerable.

'We are carrying out ongoing enquiries into these reports and would be keen to hear from anyone who has been approached, or who has privately held CCTV that captures the salesmen.'

If you have been approached by a doorstep caller who you suspect is not genuine, report it to Kent Police via the force's website or by calling 101.

If you have not been targeted, but suspect you have information that can assist with enquiries, contact Kent Police's witness appeal line on 01843 222289 quoting 14-0615. You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously by calling 0800 555 111 or using the anonymous online form at crimestoppers-uk.org

Fraud

Pet Scams

I have reported on this previously, but we are still seeing victims falling for this scam. Please be careful if you purchase a new puppy or kitten on-line without seeing the animal, as it could be a scam.

Figures from Action Fraud, the national reporting centre for fraud and cyber crime, show that criminals conned 4,751 animals lovers out of £1,935,406 between March and November this year, after they put down deposits for pets they saw advertised online. This is an increase of over 400% when compared to the same period in 2019. Best advice is -

- Always see puppy and mum together at their home and make sure to visit more than once, even if it is via video call due to coronavirus restrictions.
- Never pay a deposit up front without seeing the puppy in person.
- Ask lots of questions and make sure you see all vital paperwork, such as a puppy contract – which gives lots of information about their parents, breed, health, diet, the puppy's experiences and more.
- Carry out research into the seller and avoid paying for goods by bank transfer

For more information and advice about how to avoid being misled when buying a puppy advertised online, search 'Dogfished' or visit www.dogstrust.org.uk/dogfished.



Preventing fraud

Together,
let's stop
scammers.



Remember, ABC:



never Assume



never Believe



always Confirm

Get the latest
scam advice:



@KentPoliceECU

Over £2 million lost to criminals impersonating well-known broadband providers

2,007 reports of computer software service fraud were made to Action Fraud last month. Victims reported losing a total of £2,148,976. Action Fraud has received reports of criminals cold calling victims purporting to be calling from well-known broadband providers primarily, claiming that the victim has a problem with their computer, router or internet. The suspect persuades the victim to download and connect via a Remote Access Tool (RAT), allowing the suspect to gain access to the victim's computer or mobile phone. Some reports also state that criminals have been using browser pop up windows to initiate contact with victims. Victims are then persuaded to log into their online banking to receive a refund from the broadband provider as a form of compensation. This allows the suspect access to the victim's bank account and the ability to move funds out of the victim's account into a UK mule account. There has also been an increase in the variety of service providers being impersonated, with multiple providers being affected.

Top tips/remember -

- Genuine organisations would never contact you out of the blue to ask for personal or financial details, such as your PIN or full banking password.
- Never install any software, or grant remote access to your computer, because of a cold call.
- Don't contact companies promoting tech support services via browser pop-ups.
- Hang up on any callers that claim they can get your money back for you.
- If you have made a payment, contact your bank immediately. They can help you prevent any further losses.
- If you granted remote access to your computer, seek technical support to remove any unwanted software. If you need tech advice, look for reviews online first or ask friends for recommendations.

If you think you've been a victim of fraud, report it to Action Fraud online at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.

This is just one e.g.. I have also been to call this month where someone was called by someone claiming they are from the Met Police. Luckily this person was very switched on and gave no personal details etc... and reported it straight away.

"Safety advice after telephone fraudster poses as Kent Police officer"

Fraud investigators are reminding residents of safety advice following a report a cold caller claimed to be from Kent Police and defrauded a Medway man of money.

The victim reported receiving a call on the afternoon of Tuesday 15 December 2020 from an individual who claimed to be from the force. The fraudster then told the resident that someone had used his National Insurance number and he would need to purchase online vouchers, which they agreed to do. The cold caller then instructed them to share the voucher codes, which were passed on over the phone. Investigators are reviewing the circumstances and would like to hear from anyone that has received a similar call.

Preventing fraud

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Get the latest
scam advice:



@KentPoliceECU

Fraudsters can go to great lengths to appear genuine and this can include obtaining personal information, which they then disclose to the victim to give an appearance of legitimacy. In extreme cases, they can also spoof a telephone number to make it appear like they are calling from a genuine agency. Kent Police will never request money from an individual, nor will an officer ever direct a person to make a transaction on their bank card as part of enquiries. If you receive such a call, end it immediately, wait five minutes for the phone line to clear and contact Action Fraud or the police. If possible, call from a different number – if the call was received on a landline, for example, contact the authorities on your mobile.

Detective Sergeant Marc Cananur, from Kent Police's Economic Crime Unit, said: 'Fraudsters are organised criminals and can be very sophisticated in their offending. Their techniques are known to work on people from all walks of life so, even if you do not consider yourself to be vulnerable, it is prudent to be aware of this type of offending.'

'Remember, we will never ask you for money or instruct you to make a payment to assist with our investigations.'

'We are investigating this report and do proactively target people who we suspect are involved in this type of offending. Our expert officers have achieved a number of successful prosecutions this year and work with partner agencies to share safety messages with all groups of people. There will be no let-up in our efforts to protect the public from fraud.'

'If you have received a call of this nature, please report it to Action Fraud or us.'

Reports can be submitted to Kent Police via the force's website, or by calling 101.

To make a report to Action Fraud, 0300 123 2040 or use their online reporting tool available via: www.actionfraud.police.uk/



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.

Please follow us on Twitter @kentpoliceash or visit our website <https://www.kent.police.uk/>

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Remember, ABC:



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never Believe



always Confirm

Get the latest
scam advice:



@KentPoliceECU

Kent Cyber Crime Unit
@kentpolicecyber

Think you've fallen victim to an online shopping scam? Don't panic. Here's what you need to do...

For more info, visit: actionfraud.police.uk/shoponlinesafe...
#FraudFreeXmas @kent_police

Fallen victim to online shopping fraud? Report it.

Report Fraud
If you think you have been a victim of online shopping fraud, you should take note of the website's address and then close your internet browser. Contact your bank immediately and report the details to Action Fraud.