



NW NEWS

West Kent

Watchout

The Voice of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association

Issue 69

"Security through awareness"

Winter 2025

Your co-ordinator is:.....
Tel No.

WARNING: Police Impersonation Scam Across Kent

Criminals are calling residents of Kent pretending to be police officers. This is known as a Courier Fraud. They may claim to be from Kent or another police force, use any name, fake badge numbers, or claim to be from actual police stations.

Recent fake identities used:

DC Bryan Harrison EK401 – Hammersmith Station. **PC Peter Andrew DC4498** – Hammersmith Police. **DC Gregory Sharp** – Paddington Station. A **DS from Kent Police Sevenoaks Police**.

What these criminals do:

They may know your name and address and claim: Your bank account is

compromised. Someone is in custody. They need your help with a police investigation.

They will try to convince you to:

Withdraw large sums of cash. Buy gift cards, foreign currency, or high-value goods. Hand over your bank card. They may say an undercover officer will collect the items from your home.

They might even tell you to lie to bank staff, claiming they're "in on it."

THIS IS A SCAM!

Real police will NEVER:

- Ask for your bank details.
- Tell you to withdraw cash or buy goods.

- Ask you to lie to anyone.

Protect Yourself – Remember the A B C of Fraud:

A – ASSUME NOTHING

Don't assume a caller is genuine, even if they know your details.

B – BELIEVE NO ONE

Criminals can fake caller ID to look like police or bank numbers.

C – CONFIRM EVERYTHING

Hang up. Use a different phone. Call 101 to check if the call was real.

If a courier arrives at your home: Call 999 immediately. If this has happened to you: Call your bank on 159 Report it to Kent Police on 101.

New WhatsApp Gold Scam Alert

There has been new reports that criminals are circulating fake messages about a premium version of WhatsApp called "WhatsApp Gold", claiming it offers exclusive features like video calling, new emojis, enhanced security and rewards.

These messages often include a link to download WhatsApp Gold – but this is a scam!

There is NO official WhatsApp Gold

Clicking the link may install malware on your device, steal your personal data, or compromise your accounts!

There have also been reports of WhatsApp users receiving a smishing message warning about a dangerous video link called "Martinelli". The message claims that if you open this video, it will hack your phone and steal your information.

The message also falsely claims that "WhatsApp Gold" – a supposed premium version of WhatsApp – will protect you from this threat.

There is no verified evidence that a "Martinelli" video exists or poses any threat to WhatsApp users.

WhatsApp Gold is a scam – it is not an official product and may lead to malware or phishing sites.

These messages are part of a scam designed to spread fear and convince users into clicking malicious links or downloading harmful apps!

How to Protect Yourself:

Ignore and delete any message promoting WhatsApp Gold or warning you of the video "Martinelli". Never click on suspicious links, even if they come from friends – their accounts may be compromised.

Update WhatsApp through official app stores (Google Play or Apple App Store) ONLY. Enable two-step verification in WhatsApp settings for added security. Educate others – share this alert with friends and family.

Report It

If you've received or clicked on a WhatsApp Gold scam message, report it to:

Action Fraud (UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre).

Online: www.actionfraud.police.uk.

By phone: 0300 123 2040 (Monday to Friday, 8am – 8pm).

Remember ABC:

Never ASSUME – Never assume a caller is genuine.

Never BELIEVE – Never believe a caller is genuine – Scammers may 'spoof' official telephone numbers, so the call display may show your banks telephone number, but it does not mean it is a genuine call.

Always CONFIRM – Always confirm if the call is genuine – Ask for identification (Name, Branch, employee number etc). Tell the caller you will hang up and call back to confirm. Call back on the number shown on the official website using a different phone, or wait at least 10 minutes. Ask if it was a genuine call.

Banks, police, HMRC and other organisations will NEVER ask you to transfer money, send money or ask for banking details and passwords. NEVER give this information to anyone.

Stay safe!

Phone Thefts

Please take extra care when using your mobile phones when out and about. How would you feel if your phone was snatched from your hands while you were using it. All your photos of family and friends would be gone forever unless you have saved your private information on another device.

I know friends who are now getting their treasured photos of family and friends made up into photos that they can put into albums or put into picture frames . . . so they are not lost forever.

Commander Andrew Featherstone the Metropolitan Police lead for phone thefts has said "This was the largest crackdown on mobile phone theft and robberies in the U.K. in the most extraordinary series of operations of this kind the Metropolitan Police has ever undertaken. "Criminal networks were dismantled at every level, from street level thieves to International organised crime groups exporting tens of thousands of stolen devices each year".

The operation began last year when a stolen mobile was tracked to a warehouse near to Heathrow Airport using the Find My Phone iPhone function. Well worth having that fitted to your mobile phone just in case you are unlucky enough to have your phone stolen.

Police found 1,000 iPhones in a box marked batteries that was to be shipped to HongKong, some were still ringing.

Due to the scale of the thefts, specialised detectives, who would ordinarily investigate armed robberies and drug smuggling were brought in for the operation, that resulted in 46 arrests.

We have to congratulate Commander Andrew Featherstone and all his teams, on the success of this operation which resulted in such an excellent outcome.

I have printed this item as I know a lot of our members do work or travel to London, so knowing these people have been caught is reassuring. We must be extra vigilant when using our mobile phones in public and only use them in places where you feel safe to do so.

Frisbees

I was really shocked to see and hear on television how dangerous some type of frisbee can be to wild life. The dangerous ones are those with just an outer plastic ring with no centre. The programme reported how dangerous they were to both land and sea animals, such as foxes and seals. They showed examples of a fox with a frisbee around its body which it could not escape from. The frisbee had dug into the foxes body causing pain and bleeding. A seal had another frisbee round its neck and this had dug into its neck causing bleeding and obvious distress and trauma.

If you have a frisbee of this type please do not discard it so that it can cause an animal suffering. Better still put in in the waste bin and purchase the solid type of frisbee which is harmless to wildlife.

Another danger to wildlife are children's football nets, which can be really dangerous when animals get trapped in them. Please ensure they are stored away safely when not in use.



Ask Angela

In 2012 Angel Crompton was killed by her husband, so this campaign was set up to help others in the same situation.

It is a safety initiative where people can discreetly ask for help in bars, restaurants and other venues by asking for "Angela".

This code signals to trained staff that they are in an unsafe situation and need assistance, which could include being escorted to a taxi, or having a friend contacted, or getting help to remove the person making them uncomfortable. If the situation becomes serious the staff may feel the best situation would be to call the police.

If anyone reading this is in the situation where they are uncomfortable or even scared of who they are with please do ask the staff at the venue you are at to help you. In urgent cases do call the police.

You may well see the "Ask Angela" posters up in Cafes, Public houses, Clubs or Dance venues, its to reassure anyone who is worried or scared they have someone at that venue that will help them.



Chairman's Christmas Message

As we approach the festive season, I'd like to thank you all for your continued support and community spirit throughout the year. Your vigilance and care for one another help keep our neighbourhood safe and welcoming.

On behalf of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch team, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful, safe New Year. Let's continue looking out for each other over the holidays and into 2026.

Peter Rolington Chairman of West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee.

Remember to Check

It is probably a good idea to check your car is in good order before the bad weather sets in.

1. Check your tyres have the right pressure in them and the depth of tread.
2. Put your anti freeze in.
3. Fill your water washer, to help keep windows clear in bad weather.
4. A car is stolen on average every 4 minutes, make sure your car is securely locked, and no items are left on show. Would be car thieves would think nothing of breaking in to your car just to steal your favourite items. Leave in a well lit area if you can.
5. If going on a long journey, it's a good idea to have a first aid kit on board, hot drinks are always a good idea in case you break down and are miles away from the nearest shops. Having a torch and a yellow / red triangle is handy to put out if you have broken down on a badly lit road, it gives on coming traffic

a warning that there is a problem ahead of them. If you have one a Hi-Vis jacket is a good idea to wear if you are working on your broken down car, it gives you that added safety.

6. Always make sure your phone is fully charged before you leave home, if it's needed, there is no fear your battery has run out, and you can contact the emergency services.
7. Last but not least, CAR SEATS. Make sure your children are safely secured in a good quality car seat and are properly strapped in. I have seen several car's recently where a small child is not even strapped in. Accidents can happen when you least expect them, please make sure your child is safely secured in case you are involved in a collision.

It is a good idea to fit a tracker to your car if you are able too, so you maybe able to get your vehicle back hopefully quicker.

Report from the Local Community Safety Unit

On 29th August 2025, Police Officers conducted a joint visit to a shop in Snodland with a representative from Trading Standards. This visit was initiated following information from the community that the shop was illegally selling cigarettes to children and supplying drugs.

On attendance, officers and trading standards located illegal vapes as well as foreign and counterfeit tobacco. Officers arrested two males for Tax Evasion offences and a subsequent search of a home address led to a further discovery of approximately 165,000 counterfeit cigarettes with an estimated street value of £65,000. Also discovered at the address was a substantial amount of Class A drugs, namely Methamphetamine, commonly known as Crystal Meth – an incredibly dangerous and life damaging drug. Due to this additional discovery, a male was further arrested for Possession with Intent to Supply Class A drugs.

The case was taken to CPS who authorised 4 charges and one offender was remanded in custody.

The job was two solid days work for the Neighbourhood Task Force who were acting upon information from the Community – so from us, thank you and we will always encourage the community to report similar concerns.

Thanks to Phillip Burns of the Community Safety Unit, for this item.

Remembrance Day 2025

This is observed annually on 11th November. It originated as Armistice Day to mark the end of hostilities in World War 1.

It was so nice to see on the television the services to commemorate this throughout our country.

Prince William commented on the wearing of a red poppy. He emphasized the need to wear a red poppy as a gesture of thanks to fallen soldiers and a reminder that Remembrance is for everyone.

His message was aimed at young people across the U.K. "When wearing a red poppy or taking a moment of silence we are saying "thank you" we have not forgotten and we will not forget, we shall remember them".

Our thanks also goes to the poppy sellers who worked so hard to sell these poppies for us to wear with pride.



Halloween in King's Hill

On the 31st October, or Halloween for many, a troop of Special Constables and Regular Police Constables formed a team to provide a visible presence in the King's Hill area. A total of 30 officers were on patrol, providing a visible deterrent for any Halloween related crime and disorder and ensuring the trick or treaters had safe space to enjoy the festivities. Patrols were on hand to seize Fireworks, conduct stop and searches and issue dispersal notices.

The evening yielded positive results across the community, with many local leaders providing positive feedback and many of the local families reporting the increase in safety. A night that ensured disorder was kept to a minimum, the King's peace kept and plenty of treats with no tricks!

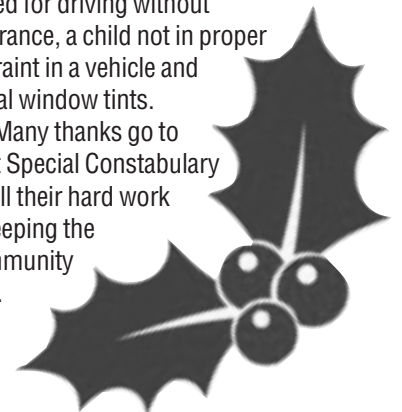


Maidstone Town Centre Safety

A team of 7 Special Constables and 3 town beat Police Constables were on hand on a busy Saturday in Maidstone town centre to continue to promote safer spaces for shoppers and pedestrians by proactively stopping vehicles contravening road signs.

There were a total of 36 offences robustly dealt with, including a vehicle seized for driving without insurance, a child not in proper restraint in a vehicle and illegal window tints.

Many thanks go to Kent Special Constabulary for all their hard work in keeping the Community safe.



Is Your Smoke Alarm Out of Date?

Having in-date working smoke alarms saves lives. They warn if there is a fire and dramatically improve your chances of escaping safely. If you don't have a smoke alarm please do install one.

If you do have a smoke alarm please check the date on the alarm today as smoke alarms have a lifespan of 10 years. This is something I was not aware of. After time their sensors become less reliable, meaning they may fail to sound or go off for no reason, either way, they may not provide protection for you and your family.

By being aware of how important it is to check your smoke alarm's expiry date and replace it every ten years, you can help to keep you family safe.

Check the expiry date whether battery powered or wired-in they should have an expiry date on the back or on the side. To check it you might need to remove it from the ceiling, depending on the type you have, here is the most common ways on how to do that.

Twist it counter clock wise to remove the base; or use a screw driver to unscrew it from the base.

For some wired Alarms, push a screwdriver into the slot to release it. If there is no expiry date shown you need to replace it, also if it is out of date you need to replace it.

Please buy a new one from a reputable hardware shop or website. Please test your smoke alarms weekly to make sure they are in working order.



Help to Stop Knife Crime

Crimestoppers runs national and local campaigns to stop knife crime, focusing on education, prevention and anonymous reporting. The primary incentive for the public to provide information is the guarantee of 100% anonymity, meaning no one will ever know the identity of the person who has reported the crime.

Crimestoppers Knife Crime Incentives.

Anonymous Reporting: The main "incentive" offered by Crimestoppers is a safe and anonymous platform to report crime information. Callers can use the phone line 0800 555 111 or fill out an online form without fear of being identified or having their details shared with police or courts.

Fearless.org: This is the charity's dedicated youth service for 11-16 year olds. The Fearless website provides non-judgmental information and advice on knife crime, its consequences, and offers a safe way for young people to speak up about what they know.

Rewards: In some specific serious cases Crimestoppers may offer a substantial Cash Reward for information that leads to a charge and conviction. The process for claiming a reward is also designed to protect anonymity, using a unique code system.

Online: Use the secure anonymous online form. Your computer's IP address is never traced.

Phone: Call 0800 555 111 anytime, 24/7. Calls are free, not recorded and your number is not displayed.

By speaking up you can help prevent future harm and make communities safer.

The logo for 'Knives Run Lives' features the words 'KNIVES', 'RUN', and 'LIVES' stacked vertically in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A large, white, three-dimensional knife is positioned diagonally across the text, with its blade pointing towards the top right corner.

The Tonbridge Town Centre Team would like to remind people that E-Scooters should not be used in a public place. If officers come across one and are able to stop the rider, they will be seized.

Who's Who On The Executive Committee?

*Peter Rolington, Chairman.
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*Secretary Stephen Robinson, Tunbridge Wells.
e-mail: stephen.srobinson@gmail.com*

*Julie Walker, Editor – Tel: 01732 771075
e-mail: julie.walker@kent.police.uk.*

Marguerite Bernard, Treasurer

*Jenny Woodgate.
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*Steve Abrahams Tonbridge.
e-mail: abrahs@yahoo.co.U.K.*

*Cllr Laura Manston Sevenoaks.
e-mail: cllr.manston@sevenoaks.gov.U.K.*

Committee members

*Pria Webster, Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, for Kent Police.
e-mail: pria.webster@kent.police.uk.*

*Samual Brookes, Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, for Kent Police.
e-mail: Samual.Brookes@kent.police.U.K.*

Other Useful Numbers

*Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Unit
– Tel: 01732 844522*

*Tunbridge Wells Crime Reduction Unit
– Tel: 01892 526121*

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@tmhc.gov.uk.*

*Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership
– Tel: 01892 526121
communitysafety@tunbridgewells.gov.uk.*

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

Text 61016 to report non-emergency incidents on trains or on the tube.

Dial 0800 405040 to give more information. A 999 call is guaranteed a quick response. For Crimestoppers dial 0800 555 111.

e-watch.co

There have been problems recently with members not receiving e-watch's twice weekly reports. If you are experiencing problems receiving e-watch updates, please remember that past issues can be found on the e-watch.co website at: <https://www.e-watch.co>.

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 to both these numbers are free.**