



## **East Division Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter**

**Issue 7:** February 2017

### **News, Updates and Crime Prevention**

Welcome to this edition which covers news and various aspects of Crime Reduction relevant to the East Kent area. I hope you will find the contents useful in making Kent a safer place to live work and visit.

I have been in post since the beginning of December and have now got to grips with the Messaging Service and I hope you have received many relevant and informative messages as well as the daily update of crime for your own particular areas. In respect to this I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of my Neighbourhood Watch volunteers based in the Police Stations in East Kent who give up their time to research and send out the daily messages, I really appreciate their help. I am very keen to increase their numbers so if anyone wishes to join the team as a Kent Police volunteer please contact me; more details about this later.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Kent Police has now recruited another Volunteer and Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator for East Kent who will cover the areas of Canterbury and Thanet. I will continue to cover the areas of Ashford, Folkestone, Romney Marsh and Dover. His name is Michael Laidlow and he will be starting in approximately a months' time. Michael is a retired Police Officer who worked within the Rural Task Force prior to his retirement so has a vast amount of experience and local knowledge which I am sure he will put to good use.

Andrew Judd

NHW Liaison Officer for East Kent

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### **Become a Kent Police Volunteer**

Help make your community safer by becoming a volunteer for Kent Police. Use your skill, knowledge and enthusiasm to help provide a first class service protecting and serving the people of Kent. Take on exciting roles alongside Police professionals that fit around you and the time you can spare.

Opportunities include:

- Supporting officers and staff in a range of roles
- Taking part in Community Safety and Crime Reduction initiatives
- Assisting with CCTV monitoring
- General maintenance, including vehicle fleet care, gardening and assisting with our facilities.

Training will be provided for whatever role you are most suited for.

If you are interested in applying, please contact me and I will send you an application pack or simply call me if you just want to talk about the possibility of becoming a volunteer.

The criteria to be met are relatively simple - you need to be 18 years or over and resident in the UK for the preceding 3 years. An interview and Police vetting is conducted and once recruited the opportunities are varied and rewarding.

## **Crime Prevention**

### **1. Latest on-line scam (February 2017)**

You may have received a message from Microsoft stating that "*you are no longer allowed to access your email account*". This is a common Phishing scam.

The email is not from Microsoft and access to your email account has not been disabled. Instead, the email is a phishing scam designed to steal your Microsoft Account login credentials.

Example message sent:

*Subject: Request 352*

*You are no longer allowed to access your e-mail account. We had to disable your online access for your security. This can be because of a recent change in your address or submitting incorrect information during the initial registration process. Please verify your Hotmail account within the next 48 hours in order to avoid full online suspension. After an effective account verification you will be able to use your login as usual. Follow our secure verification page to proceed to an effective online authentication. We respect your privacy and will not provide your personal information to other parties without your consent.*

*Sincerely,  
Ariane Hsia  
Vice President Customer E-mail Service*

*Microsoft Department 2017  
Please do not reply this e-mail as it not monitored.*

According to this email, which claims to be from "Microsoft Department", you are no longer able to access your email account. Supposedly, Microsoft had to disable your online account for your own security. It suggests that the security problem might be because you either changed your address or submitted incorrect information during the initial registration process. It warns that you must click a link to verify your account within 48 hours in order to avoid "full online suspension".

The link opens a fraudulent website that mirrors the appearance of a genuine Microsoft Account login page.

If you log in on the fake page as instructed, online criminals can use the login details to hijack your Microsoft Account. Your Microsoft Account login may provide access to a number of linked services including, email, Skype, and OneDrive. Thus, once they have gained

access, the criminals can use these services to launch spam and scam campaigns in your name and conduct other fraudulent activities.

They may also be able to steal personal information that you may have stored in the account.

Microsoft will never contact you in this manner so please be aware and do not open any attachments to such e-mails.

Stay safe on line.

## **2. Car crime**

Throughout the East of the county there has been an increase in the number of thefts from motor vehicles. There are a number of simple ways to avoid becoming a victim of car crime:

- Always ensure you lock and secure your vehicle. Many crimes occur when owners leave their vehicle insecure making it a very easy target for an opportunist thief.
- Remove any valuable items from your vehicle when you leave it or place articles out of view in the boot or glove box. Thieves will look for items on view which are easy to steal; it's like a shop window for them, so prevent your vehicle becoming a statistic.
- Remove items such as Satellite Navigation systems and wipe off the mark they may leave on the windscreen which indicates you may have one in your vehicle.
- Park your vehicle in a secure or well-lit area whenever possible.
- Most modern cars have an alarm system but if your does not have either install an alarm or use an immobilizer.
- Don't leave loose change on view even a small amount is tempting for the thief.
- Van owners – don't leave your tools in your vehicle overnight – protect your livelihood, remove your tools.

## **3. Make your shed and garden more secure**

It will soon be spring and traditionally at that time of year we see a sharp rise in the number of thefts from sheds and gardens, usually ride on/push lawn mowers, other valuable tools and items such as expensive fishing tackle.

There are some easy tips to follow to ensure your sheds and gardens stay secure:

- Garages and sheds are often full of expensive tools to steal or used to break into the house. Do not leave a garage or garden shed unlocked, especially if it has a connecting door to the house.
- Fit strong padlocks and hardware to shed and garage doors.
- Make sure that the doors are solid enough not to be kicked in.
- Fit locks or bars to windows of sheds and outbuilding.
- Lock ladders inside your garage or shed.
- Consider lockable steel boxes or anchor posts fitted to the floor to secure tools and equipment.
- Garden tools and machinery should be permanently marked with your postcode.

- Install a battery or mains-powered shed alarm, available from all good DIY stores at a reasonable price.
- For extra security, replace the screws in external hinges of your shed or garage side-door with 'clutch-head' screws (also known as 'anti-tamper' or 'coffin' screws).
- Secure your wheelie bin to stop an intruder using it to climb on.
- Ensure any garden gates are secure with a lock or padlock, do not rely on a simple bolt.
- If building a shed, put it where it is most visible to you and neighbours.
- Install security lighting as a deterrent, and plants such as thorny shrubs to act as a barrier at potential access points.

#### 4. Planning a Winter break?

With the winter weather still with us you may be considering some winter sun abroad, if you do consider the following:

- Make your home looks occupied.
- If you're out or going away, ask a trusted neighbour to open and close your curtains for you.
- Ask a neighbour if they don't mind ad-hoc parking on your driveway.
- Cut the front and back lawns before you go away and trim any plants that burglars could hide behind.
- Cancel milk and newspaper deliveries.
- Before your holiday, don't advertise that you are going away on Facebook, Twitter etc.
- Register for the Royal Mail "keep safe" service.
- Leave important documents and valuable personal items with other family members or a bank.
- Double-check that you've locked all outside windows and doors.
- Set your burglar alarm.

#### 5. Distraction Crimes

As I write this newsletter, I am aware that there have been a number of recent distraction burglaries in our area where unscrupulous individuals prey upon the vulnerable in our society. Whenever and wherever you can please ensure the following advice is passed on and adopted:

Most people who call at your home will be genuine but sometimes someone may turn up unannounced, with the intention of tricking their way into your home.

If someone calls at your door:

- **LOCK** – Keep your front and back doors locked, even when you are at home.
- **STOP** – Before you answer, stop and think if you are expecting anyone. Check that you have locked the back door and taken the key out. Look through a spy hole or window to see who it is.

- **CHECK** – Even if they have a pre-arranged appointment, check their identity card carefully. Close the door while you do this. If you are still unsure, look up a phone number in the phone book and ring to verify their identity. Do not use a phone number on the identity card, as this may be fake!

Bogus callers may be smartly dressed and claim to be from the council, police or utility companies. They can also turn up as builders or gardeners and try to trick you into paying for unnecessary work. You should never agree to have work done by someone who is just passing by. If you think work needs to be done, get at least two quotes from trusted companies. If you think a bogus caller has called on you, report it to the police immediately via 101.

***If you have any doubts, keep them out!***

## **Country Eye**



### **Country Eye - Helping Keep the Rural Community in Kent Safe**

Country Eye has built a free App for people living and working in the rural community. The App allows users to record and share information on crime, suspicious behaviour and damage in their home community or whilst out and about.

The App has been built to help residents and farmers in Kent report information quickly and efficiently. This information is securely stored in a central database and accessed by the voluntary Country Eye team who are fully trained by Kent Police. The team analyse and disseminate the information and then broadcast it out to other local App users.

Country Eye has the full backing of Kent Police with information being sent securely to the relevant authorities. Kent Police is committed to responding to concerns in rural communities and to carrying out high visibility patrols. The information collated through the App gives officers a greater understanding of potential problem areas. The App has been supported by Kent Police and Crime Commissioner, Safer Kent, National Farmers Union and BTF Partnership.

The App is simple and free to download. Once you have it, it is easy to use by taking a photograph of, for example, fly tipping/graffiti or a crime in progress, it then automatically records your location which is then passed by the Country Eye team to Kent Police or the relevant agency for whatever you are reporting.

Country Eye is soon to develop Country Eye Zones which will be rural groups of users who will support and protect each other locally, as always this will be supported by Neighbourhood Watch.

The application is not intended for emergency purposes; users should report to 999 – (crime in progress) 101 – (crime committed) or report to Crimestoppers if they wish to remain anonymous – 0800 555 111.

The app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play by searching Country Eye.

## **Kent Police Website**

The Kent Police Website has been updated and is a great resource for advice and local updates. Following on from the last newsletter's focus on identity, theft there is a very useful section titled "Protect and Connect" which advises how to protect your digital identity.

A sample of the website:

### **How to protect your digital identity**



We all have some sort of online presence whether it's on social media, for retail and banking or an email account. Our reliance on digital information is increasing every day.

While it's natural to want to make our lives easier, avoid being tempted to use the same password for multiple accounts or use a password that's very easy to remember (i.e. password123).

Criminals know that sometimes we don't use secure passwords and use it against us to steal our data.

The top 10 tips can be found on the website.

[www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)

## **Contacting Kent Police as a member of Neighbourhood Watch**

Please ensure that when calling Kent Police as Neighbourhood Watch using the 101 system that you clearly identify yourself as a member of your local Neighbourhood Watch to the call handler and ask for the call to be "tagged" for the attention of Neighbourhood Watch.

This will ensure that any incidents reported by Neighbourhood Watch are brought to the attention of the East Kent Coordinator who will make a call back to the caller to ensure any follow-up actions/updates are completed.

Please pass this message as widely as possible amongst your Neighbourhood Watch contacts.

Please also note, calls to 101 (from both landlines and mobile networks) cost 15 pence per call, no matter what time of day you call, or how long you are on the phone. The 15p cost of the call goes to the telephony providers to cover the cost of carrying the calls.

## **“Be Vigilant”**

Andrew Judd - East Division Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer.

February 2017

East Division Neighbourhood Watch

