



NW NEWS

West Kent

Watchout

The Voice of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association

Issue 48

"Security through awareness"

Winter 2018

Your co-ordinator is:
Tel No.

Advice from Border Force

Border Force is always alert to the fact that children may be trafficked to or from different countries. You may well see officers watching and observing people at airports, some with trained dogs. At airports they are practically alert to this and I have been asked to pass this information on to members of Neighbourhood Watch.

When you get to Border Control an officer will examine travel documents of all passengers. If children under 18 years old have a different surname the officer is duty bound to examine if they are being trafficked.

Please insure if you are travelling with children, especially if they are not old enough to talk, that you have a letter of consent from their parents saying that you with your passport number have their consent for their children to travel with you. A contact telephone number is also needed in case there are any issues;

the officer can then contact the parents or guardians directly.

If the parents have different surnames and the children are travelling with a parent who has a different surname to the adult they are travelling with, then again they should have a letter of consent from the parent who's surname they share or a copy of the birth certificate showing that the adult they are travelling with is their parent. It does seem very bureaucratic but is done for a very good reason. It stops child trafficking into the UK and it also stops parents taking a child to another country without the consent of their separated or ex-partner and against Court orders.

This is very useful information especially for grandparents who may be taking their grand children on holiday.

This information was kindly given to me by a member of Border Force.

Vehicles seized in crackdown

Kent Police officers seized over twenty vehicles following a national week of action to target those driving uninsured.

Between Monday, 12 November and Sunday, 18 November the Motor Insurers Bureau promoted Operation Drive Insured, an initiative supported by forces across the country clamping down on those driving illegally.

Thirty two vehicles were found to be on the road without insurance; of these a number were insured at roadside and officers seized around twenty. In addition to this three vehicles were seized for other offences, such as the driver not having a licence, and sixteen motorists were found to be using a mobile phone at the wheel.

One person was arrested for failing to stop for police, dangerous driving, failing to have a licence or insurance and possession of class B drugs.

The week encompassed a day of action on Wednesday 14 November, on the M25 where Kent teamed up with neighbouring forces to target those driving

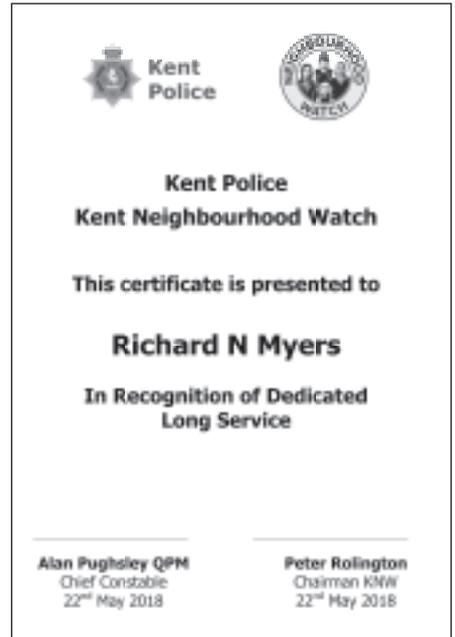
illegally. This involved the coordinated use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition and resulted in over 25,000 vehicles being checked.

Sergeant Steve Dunnett of the Roads Policing Unit, said: 'We were keen to support the awareness week, though the efforts of our Roads Policing Unit was very much business as usual.

"The consequences for motorists involved in collisions with uninsured drivers can be devastating. We would like to make the roads of Kent much safer by seizing the vehicles of those driving uninsured.

"We often find that when we stop a vehicle that is not insured that there are other offences evident. Officers do not hesitate in seizing vehicles and getting them off the road so that they no longer pose a danger to others.

"We welcome support from the public and urge anyone who is aware of someone driving illegally to contact police or the independent charity Crimestoppers."



British Transport Police

Text 61016 to report non-emergency incidents on trains or the tube. Dial 0800 405040 to give more information. A 999 call is guaranteed a quick response. For Crimestoppers dial 0800 555 111.

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 cost just 16p from landlines or mobiles.

How Simple Texts from a Partner Can Ease Office Stress

Swapping texts about the weather and what's for supper is the key to surviving office stress, scientists claim.

Women receiving mundane messages from their partners are better able to cope with high-pressure situations, a new study found.

The distraction of triviality chats with a husband or boyfriend helps keep blood pressure in check, psychologists discovered. For their experiment, they recruited 75 couples, separating the men from the women and keeping them in different rooms.

The females were fitted with a blood pressure measuring cuff and asked to

prepare for a public speaking assignment and maths test to recreate the kind of stress people face at work. As they worked, some received supportive texts from their partners. Others were sent neutral messages and the rest got none.

Those receiving mundane messages felt less extra stress. The study in a Human Behaviour said that this may suggest that the mundane texts provided a distraction from the stress, while supportive messages indicated that the partner was aware of the stressful task.

This was an interesting article, but please do not text your partners from a moving car or lorry as that is not safe as we all know.

Action to Detect Fly Tippers in Maidstone

Two vehicles have been seized as part of a crackdown on fly tipping offences in Maidstone. Officers from the Rural Task Force also issued a number of fines to motorists during a day of action to tackle the illegal movement and disposal of waste.

The operation took place on Tuesday 13th November and was assisted by enforcement officers from Maidstone Borough Council. In total ten vehicles were stopped for checks, resulting in fines totalling £900.

In King Street a Ford Transit was seized and the driver issued with a fixed penalty notice, after it was found to have no licence for carrying or transferring waste. A Renault Master van was also impounded after it was stopped in Loose Road and found to be uninsured.

Sergeant Darren Walshaw said: 'Fly tipping is a large scale issue which blights both rural areas and town centres. It is often the result of organised criminality that causes considerable distress to people.

'We are continuing to work closely with our partners, including the local authority, to ensure those engaged in fly tipping face the consequences of their actions, but we also need help from local residents. If you are paying anyone to remove waste from your home, for example as a result of building work, always ensure you check that the person is licensed to do so.

Remember to report anything suspicious by calling 101, or 999 if a crime is in progress.'

by Kent Police Press Office

Mobile Phones are Affecting Children's Sleep Patterns



Doctors are prescribing the 'sleep hormone' melatonin to children, despite safety concerns, because parents won't stop them using mobile phones or their tablets at night, a leading expert

has revealed.

Up to one in a hundred children are now being given melatonin supplements according to shocking figures obtained by a national newspaper. There were 117,085 such prescriptions to under 18 year olds in 2017-2018, even though

they are recommended only for the over 55 year olds.

A former director of sleep research at Surrey University said that most sleep problems in children could be eradicated if parents confiscated mobiles and tablets at night. Blue light from electrical devices stops melatonin levels rising naturally in the evening. Supplements can cause nausea, bed wetting, headaches and sweating.

This does give cause for concern. It may be worth checking if your child or grandchild is having sleep problems. If so, are they using their mobiles in their bedrooms?

One Hundred Years Since the Great War 1918-2018

In the Summer issue of the Watchout Newsletter 2017, the Borough Council asked if we could make as many poppies as possible for the Royal British Legion's appeal to commemorate Remembrance Day.

It was lovely to see the poppies made by so many local people who responded to that request. We saw them displayed last November and again this week in Tonbridge. A grand display was on the Big Bridge with many more displayed in the Council Offices at the Castle and the Memorial Garden, for Sunday 11th November, Remembrance Day.

It was very moving to attend the service and to remember the fallen in the Great War. We are very proud that they were remembered in such a moving way.

On television many local villages and towns were shown honouring the soldiers who had died, with many more poppies on display. Pembury had a very good service which included a fly past by a Gipsy Moth plane, which dropped hundreds of red poppies; that was very moving.

The families who had relatives that were lost in the war maybe interested to read this. I asked a young school girl of Nine years old what did this all mean to her. She said: "We have been learning all about the Great War at school and had done projects on it. It was sad that so many people had died when they were so young, but we must remember they fought in that war to give us a new peaceful future". She added: "There must never be any more wars."

This was spoken by an innocent child. Let's hope the brave men and woman who died in 1914-1918 and in wars that have happened since then, did not die in vain and that this child does indeed have a happy peaceful life. *Editor.*



Poppies on the Bridge in Tonbridge for Remembrance day 2018. Photo by L. Walker.

Day at Police Headquarters

The Control Room

The Kent police control room has a very fast-paced working environment. Within the one control room, we cover the whole of Kent. It is divided into separate areas which make up the county.

Areas include Gravesend/Dartford, Medway, Swale, Maidstone, Thanet, Canterbury/Dover etc.

Once a call operator receives a call, and they have made a decision that it is for attendance, it gets passed to the relevant area for dispatch. Each call is then reviewed again, and any further enquiries can be made.

It is at this point when the calls go onto a list, and attendance is prioritised. For example all immediate graded calls are attended straight away, and then it will be for the high priority calls to be attended.

Suspicious vehicle/persons

If there is ever a suspicious vehicle police would rather it gets called in straight away so that if there is a patrol available they can go, or we can see if there is a local PCSO that can attend. If possible, getting the vehicle registration is helpful as we are able to run this through the police national computer (PNC) and see who is linked to the vehicle; we are then able to search our intelligence system called Genesis.

We are able to see who they are, what they look like, where they live etc. We can also see if there are any previous reports on the vehicle in similar circumstances and what the outcome of that was.

In the case of anyone acting suspiciously, please try to get a brief description of them. Anything suspicious can be passed onto our intelligence department, and if it's an on-going issue this will also get passed onto the local PCSO who covers the beat where the vehicle has been seen. If this does become a regular occurrence, police would like to know if there is a pattern in the behaviour of the vehicle so that this can also be passed onto the Intel unit.

We would always advise that if there is anything suspicious happening, to ensure you speak with local residents so that everyone is aware and keep an eye out.

*Kindly given by Richard Myers.
Part two will be in next issue.*



Love Your Neighbour Volunteers Complete Garden Makeover

Volunteers in Tonbridge have been lending a hand to help spruce up the garden of a neighbour with disabilities, as part of an ongoing initiative to support vulnerable or isolated people.

Police Community Support Officer Linda Baker was recently joined by local helpers at a location close to Derwent Road. The assistance provided was part of the Love Your Neighbour project, a service which operates in the Trench Wood area and which allows residents to report concerns about people who may need help.

Love Your Neighbour is supported by The Trench Partnership, which is comprised of agencies including Kent Police and the borough council, as well as church groups and resident and housing associations.

PCSO Baker said: 'We were made aware of a resident who has a disability which prevents him from tending to his own garden and it's been fantastic to see the support from well-wishing neighbours,

who were happy to give up their own free time to help. Love Your Neighbour is about checking on those who are most vulnerable within our communities, such as an elderly person living alone and who has no one to visit them, and looking into getting them help or arranging support from other agencies.'

If you have any concerns about a neighbour, or someone else you may know email Kent Police in confidence at csu.tonbridge.and.malling@kent.pnn.police.uk.



Have a Safe and Happy Christmas

This advice has been given to me by a member of the Fire Service.

With all the excitement of Christmas it is easy to overlook potential fire hazards in the home. Many of the things we enjoy during this festive period, such as the fairy lights, candles, wrapping paper and decorations can all be fire hazards when proper care is not taken.

Christmas can be a distracting time too, with a greater risk of leaving cooking unattended and with many people enjoying a tippie (or two), so make sure this does not lead to disaster. Follow these safety tips to keep your family and home safer from the increased risk of fire.

1. Ensure you have a working smoke alarm installed on all levels of your home. Test your smoke alarms weekly and never remove the batteries.
2. Never leave cooking unattended. Stand by the pan and avoid cooking after drinking. The majority of fires start in the kitchen.
3. Never leave candles unattended. Keep decorations, cards and wrapping paper away from candles, fires, lights and heaters.
4. Ensure you switch off fairy lights and unplug them before you go to bed or leave the house. Check your Christmas tree lights conform to the British standard (BS EN60598).
5. Always use an RCD (residual current device) on outdoor electrical equipment. It is a safety device that can save lives by instantly switching off power if there is a fault.
6. Do not overload sockets. Ensure there is only one plug per socket and always turn off plugs when they are not in use.
7. Make sure cigarettes are extinguished properly and never smoke in bed.
8. Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
9. Plan and practice your fire escape route. Make sure your family and visitors staying for the festive period know what to do in an emergency.
10. Most importantly, check on older relatives and neighbours this Christmas as they are at a greater risk from fire. Check that they have timer switches that can turn lights on for them, once the darker evenings set in. If possible invite a lonely neighbour in for Christmas.
11. Finally in the event of fire, get out and stay out and call 999.

Fire and Rescue Service offers free fire safety advice if needed. Its community safety team can arrange a free home safety visit, which takes about 30 minutes and includes, if needed, the fitting of free smoke alarms.

A Message For All Our Wonderful Neighbourhood Watch Members

As you know Neighbourhood Watch is not only about crime, the threat of crime and its prevention but about community spirit. It starts with being a good neighbour.

With the cold weather approaching please keep your elderly or vulnerable neighbours in mind. Let them know you are willing to help should they need you and if necessary provide them with a contact number as a way of contacting you.

I do have a few timer switches available if anyone feels that a member in their scheme would benefit by using one. Very handy for disabled members, so that their lights can come on automatically if they find it difficult to move around.

Most house burglaries and thefts from outbuildings as well as most vehicle crimes are avoidable, if simple measures are used such as locking your car, keeping your

front door locked and securing access to the rear of your property.

There has been a large increase in fraud scams involving the vulnerable and elderly persons in Kent area as well as nationally. Unfortunately this appears to be a growing problem. In our Summer issue of Watchout we did highlight the most popular scams; hopefully that has helped members to be more aware.

The one thing I would like to ask of all our members is that if you see anything suspicious, report it by dialling 101, or 999 if a life is in danger. Do not assume someone else will do it. Please do mention you are a member of Neighbourhood Watch and this will be recorded at the time of your call.

Have a wonderful Christmas.

by Julie Walker. Ed!

Garden Bonfires

Please can we ask, if you are having a garden bonfire to be considerate to your neighbours.

Firework night, Christmas and New Year is usually a time people like to celebrate and have a bonfire in their gardens with friends to celebrate and enjoy a lovely firework display.

Sometimes when garden clearance is being carried out that also seems to be a reason to have a good bonfire and burn unwanted rubbish.

Take care when having a bonfire and keep children and animal's away. Please search for any hedgehogs before you light your bonfire as they like to hide amongst wood and leaves.

Have fun, but please have a word with your neighbours just to pre-warn them, so they can get washing in or shut their windows.



Success for the Country Eye App



Recently, a Country Eye App user took an image of a suspicious car with four occupants which had driven onto her land.

It seemed odd that this car should be where it was so she reported the sighting via the country Eye app.

The Country Eye team reported the car to the Kent Police Rural Team who alerted their colleagues. The car was stopped and items were found that had been reported stolen.

Enquiries are ongoing.

If you would like the free Country Eye App on your smartphone, go to www.countryeye.co.uk and follow the instructions.

Who's Who On The Executive Committee?

Peter Rolington, Chairman.
e-mail: peter.rolington@gmail.com

Peter Brown, Secretary
e-mail: smugglers.brown@uwclub.net

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

Marguerite Bernard, Treasurer

John Watson, The Mallings.
e-mail: johannywatson@hotmail.co.uk

Sue Mason, Tonbridge.
e-mail: racarter@blueyonder.co.uk

Richard Myers, Sevenoaks.
e-mail: richardn.myers@btinternet.com

Peter Rolington, Tunbridge Wells

Committee members

Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, for Kent Police – Tel: 01622 604395

Other Useful Numbers

Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Unit
– Tel: 01732 844522

Tunbridge Wells Crime Reduction Unit
– Tel: 01892 526121

West Kent Special Branch – Tel: 07528 989208

UK Border Agency – Tel: 08435 047198

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@tmbc.gov.uk

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

If you wish to contact a member of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee, please write to them at:

c/o: **Tonbridge Police Station,
Neighbourhood Watch Tray,
1 Pembury Road, Tonbridge,
Kent TN9 2HS.**

*WKWWA Executive
Committee expresses its thanks
to the Borough Council for
their assistance with production
of this Newsletter*

Christmas Message from the Chairman Peter Rolington

Please remember to take the necessary precautions to make sure that you and your members don't give the bad guys any excuse to commit crime in your neighbourhood. May I also take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

