

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH GREAT CHART with SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL
APRIL 2024**

I am briefing communities that.....

An area of growing concern is dog attacks on livestock in the countryside. Please take great care when enjoying a country stroll with your dog. Please keep your dog on a lead near animals and cattle. Remember it is not just the avoidable suffering and injury caused to innocent animals, but also the loss of livelihood of a farmer.

This advice is especially important if persons live in an urban area and visit the countryside with their dogs. At the time of writing this report the number of dog attacks on people is now also a concern.

Protecting livestock – know the law

'Worrying' livestock is a crime under the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953.

If you are on agricultural land and a dog you own or are in charge of **attacks** or **chases** livestock in a way that may cause **injury, suffering** or **loss**, you could be **prosecuted, fined** and **ordered to pay compensation**.

Under the Animals Act 1971, a person acting to **protect livestock** may be able to **kill** or **injure a dog**, without incurring any criminal or civil liability, if he or she believes it is worrying livestock.



Please keep your dog on a lead.

If you see a dog worrying livestock, please call the police on **999**.



**Kent
Police**

**Protecting and serving
the people of Kent**

Speak up to stop rural crime.

Criminal gangs exploit our local wildlife, environment and communities.

Your voice can make a difference.

Speak up to our charity. 100% anonymous. Always.

crimestoppers-uk.org



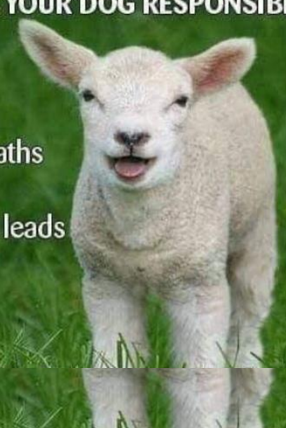

CrimeStoppers.
0800 555 111
100% anonymous. Always.

LAMBING SEASON

PLEASE WALK YOUR DOG RESPONSIBLY

Keep to footpaths

Keep dogs on leads



Just another crime prevention tip.

If you drive to a rural setting and park and go off for a long walk. Please consider what you leave in a vehicle, even if it is locked in the boot. Cars that will be left parked and unattended for long periods can be targeted.

Travelling to railway station car parks and shopping centres in other towns also require care when parking with items left inside cars.



LEAVE NOTHING ON SHOW IN A PARKED CAR ESPECIALLY LAST PARK UP FOR THE NIGHT.

OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL

To help protect vulnerable persons I can badge up their properties to try to discourage unwanted callers to their doors.

If anyone has an elderly relative in Ashford District who may need this help, please contact me. I can include your contact details into my NHW systems so you can be alerted also to any crime concerns in their area.

Sometimes advice over a cup of tea with a relative may help to get the safety message across.

I call this work **OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL**



Many of the crimes that occur in the community are **AVOIDABLE and PREVENTABLE**
Examples of those thefts are from Vehicles, you must leave nothing on show in a vehicle when parking especially last park up for the night. Care when parking in long stay car parks like railway stations and shopping centres and any items left in cars.

Sheds and Garages please keep as secure as possible, and risk assess the value of items left in sheds with a flimsy door latch.

Carports Sadly the modern carport is a criminal's paradise, great care must be taken with what is stored there.

Internet shopping parcels stolen off of doorsteps as the delivery vans are now followed by criminals.

With a few moments thought crimes from the above list can be avoided.

CRIME
Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans



Protect your property

Given the opportunity, thieves will target **sheds and garages** for items such as high-value power tools and bikes.

Take measures to protect your valuables and reduce this risk of theft.

- Keep garages or sheds locked when not in use
- Consider fitting security alarms and external lights where possible
- Security mark valuable items and keep receipts somewhere safe
- Lock away tools or equipment that could be stolen or used to break in to your property
- Dispose of packaging carefully – wrapping and boxes can advertise rich pickings for criminals

Allotment Watch area

This allotment is part of the **Kent Allotment Watch** scheme

This area is regularly patrolled by police

Members have taken extra security measures to keep their sheds safe

Report it
 Online www.kent.police.uk/report
 Talk to us on LiveChat www.kent.police.uk/contact

Contacting Kent Police
 Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
 Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
 In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
 If deaf or speech impaired, text 'police' and your message to **60066**
www.kent.police.uk

I have decided to bring this part of the report to council tonight in view of the reports in the media following the first part of the inquiry into the terrible circumstances of Sarah Everard's kidnap and brutal murder.

I would also comment on the brutal murder in 2021 of a serving off duty PCSO Julia James of the Kent Police.

These are terrible events to read about anywhere, worst still just a few minutes' drive from these meetings.

In 2022 I wrote to Kent Police and attended several online presentations about a police campaign

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS.

Straight away I felt their plan was flawed in that its first principle of the plan was,

HOLD OFFENDERS TO ACCOUNT

I challenged and asked for a rewrite of the plan which put **PREVENTION** as the first principle and platform. Sadly, that request was refused but I have persisted and continue to push for a review. The circumstances over recent days and the reports now being published are a mandate to continue the battle.

A fundamental basic principle of Neighbourhood Watch is to keep people crime free **BUT IMPORTANTLY** free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

The question naturally asked is IN ASHFORD ARE WOMEN & GIRLS SAFE ? however it should be IN ASHFORD HOW SAFE DO WOMEN & GIRLS FEEL ?

It is no comfort if all agencies, councils and the police state they are safe it is do they feel safe?

I have set out below Kent Police Plan for VAWAGs and my response and the plan I am promoting, also the requested change.



Tackling Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The term VAWG covers a range of crimes, the common theme is that they disproportionately affect women and girls. Although we use the term 'violence against women and girls', our approach refers to all victims of any of these offences.

Crimes and behaviour covered by the term Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) include:

- rape and other sexual offences
- domestic abuse
- stalking
- 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation forced marriage, and 'honour' killings)
- as well as many others, including offences committed online

We are committed to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls and have a strong approach to actively pursue violent perpetrators. We want women and girls who live, work and socialise in our communities to feel safe. To achieve this we will be focussing five key areas:

1. [holding offenders to account](#)
2. [support victims](#)
3. [keeping you safe](#)
4. [our culture](#)
5. [strengthening the system](#)

I have consistently proposed the following. My plan will be.....

- 1. PREVENTION**
- 2. KEEPING YOU SAFE**
- 3. SUPPORT VICTIMS**
- 4. OUR CULTURE**
- 5. HOLD OFFENDERS TO ACCOUNT (constant debrief to direct our prevention)**
- 6. STRENGTHEN OUR SYSTEMS. (constant review).**

Rather than labour the point I pose to council the following statement. You will recall I was Assistant Chief Officer Kent Fire Brigade, Head of Operations and Safety for all of Kent when I retired.

Does anyone think my plan for fire would have started with and have said.

“If your house is on fire, we will put it out”.

No absolutely not!, it would be PREVENTION, PREVENTION and then MORE PREVENTION FROM LESSONS LEARNT AND INCIDENT DEBRIEFS

At the same time as tackling the Kent Police for a rewrite of the plan I also look to councils

In my public engagement work women constantly tell me that darkness and poor street lighting concerns them and, in many circumstances, worries them deeply.

Why in Ashford are we continually allowing new build developments with poor or even no street lighting at all? I understand the dark sky discussions however there are more than enough methods to satisfy all viewpoints.

However, where it suits, we have lighting that can be seen from the orbiting space station with lights protecting lorries at junction 10A of the M20.

An aggravating factor also is a policy of “no garage doors only carports on many new build estates. Some carports are not even alongside a property. Criminals can stroll in at their leisure. Incidents of rough sleepers also. All matters that concern women.

Horrible alleyways and dark corners are all concerns to women.

I am regularly told “they have decided”. Or “it’s been decided”

Where does the blame lie. Importantly who are they?

We have, and we had the chance to try to build safer communities.

It is no good telling Women and Girls they are safe. It is no good having big words and statements like Safer Streets campaign.

The question remains **DO WOMEN FEEL SAFE ON OUR STREETS IN 2024.**? And can we all work towards making them feel safer.

In all my work and presentations, I stress to women how they can verify that they are dealing with a Police Officer



VAWAGs work across the District

Can we get through?

Next time you park, remember:

- Don't park too close to corners.
- Remember the 3-metre rule when parking opposite someone.
- Park as close to the kerb as you can.
- Obey road markings such as yellow lines and box junctions.
- Never park on the yellow markings outside our fire stations.



A fire engine needs a gap of at least 3.1m (10ft) to get through



Next time you park please think about whether a fire engine can get through.



Are you parking your vehicle safely?

Our firefighters need a 4-metre gap in the road to operate a fire engine at an incident.



**Look at these road widths
Will there be lampposts throughout new developments.**

From: Peter New <peternew1@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 5:17 PM
To: Tracey Kerly <tracey.kerly@ashford.gov.uk>
Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CRIME PREVENTION QUESTION

Dear Tracey

I hope this mail finds you well.

You will pardon the direct approach and we have never met albeit we have been at several functions together, but I hope you can help and advise me or point me in the right direction.

My name is Peter New, I am a fully badged up volunteer with Kent Police, but I work totally in NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH. This is a crime prevention Neighbourhood Watch issue and questions.

I work on the whole aspect of keeping residents safe and as crime free as possible, importantly free from the fear of being a victim of crime.

You will know the Kent Police along with other forces in the country did several years ago adopt a plan which was to combat VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS. In fact I was at one of the first rallies in Ashford following a planned march where you spoke on the subject in the town centre.

My background is the Fire Service and we were massive on prevention. For nearly two years i have challenged the police that their plan is flawed because its first platform is HOLD OFFENDERS TO ACCOUNT. I am still lobbying for change so the first part of the plan is PREVENTION. I truly believe that it must be prevention.

That is all background to the reason why I am writing to you directly.

Despite women saying one of the matters that makes them feel unsafe is poor lighting, you are the Chief Executive of a council that on some new build areas in the District there is very poor lighting and in some areas none at all.

On one side of town we have poor lighting which worries women and girls however on the other side of town there is a lorry park with lights that probably can be seen from the orbiting space station.

Have you a view on that. Lorry security against women's security?

Also, I am asking why your council insists on carports on new developments. On Conningbrook Lakes recently there have been several nights where criminals targeted the carports.

Someone in your council has decided no garage doors! I hear informally that it is a worry that people will use a garage for storage rather than parking. Residents tell me that those who have carports away from their property are not using them anyway,

so the parking is still under pressure. The police are weak in challenging partner agencies but in NHW I am saying that carports are a criminal's dream!

As for the width of some of the new build roads that is unbelievable but that will come home to roost in the future when communities realise roads have been built for 1950 not 2050.

Sorry to approach you directly but if you could give me the councils position so I can gauge the battle that lies ahead. I do on occasions interact with some of your officers but most just smile when asked and say "they have decided"

Can you help me with who are they?

Also can you steer me on a matter. Do the elected councillors have the ability to say Put lighting and garage doors on developments as a direct order/instruction to your council officers or do they have to say please can you with no recourse if they don't.

I really apologise again for my direct approach, but I thought asking the captain of the ship before my next steps would be the best way forward and at least you may be able to point me in the right direction. For all i know this may be all down to KCC

I am very grateful for your time.

Thank you Peter (Peter New)

Community Neighbourhood Watch

Tracey Kerly

From: tracey.kerly@ashford.gov.uk

To: 'Peter New'

Cc: Daniel Carter

Dear Peter

Thank you for your email, community safety is a high priority for the Council and we have completed a series of measures in the Town centre to improve the safety of our community. Additional lighting in the Town Centre is one of those measures to improve safety generally for the population.

The issues you have specifically raised relate to planning policy and planning approvals, so I have referred your email to our Planning policy team to respond directly.

Kind regards

Tracey

Tracey Kerly

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Ashford
TN23 1PL
Work 01233 330201

Mobile 07771943720



Daniel Carter

From:daniel.carter@ashford.gov.uk

To:Peter New,Tracey Kerly

Dear Mr New,

Thank you for your email. I hope this email provides a bit of context, happy to discuss anything.

As you probably know, planning is a complex process, and council decision makers need to balance a wide range of factors when assessing a planning application. Whilst security is an important aspect, it is one of a number of issues that planning officers need to take account of during the decision making process. Officers must balance the requirements of national and local planning policy, as well as many other considerations such as environmental impacts, highways issues and the effect on existing and proposed residential amenity.

On the subject of street lighting, this tends to be the responsibility of Kent County Council (KCC), who own and look after most of the approximately 123,000 street lights in Kent. Whilst details of street lighting are considered by Ashford Borough Council (ABC) on larger development schemes, this is always in conjunction with KCC who are consulted on the matter and provide us with their comments and guidance.

When looking at lighting within developments in general, officers also need to take account of issues such as obtrusive light pollution and the potential for negative ecological impact. In your email below you mention a lorry park (which I presume to be the Waterbrook development at Sevington, with a planning reference of 18/00098/AS). In this particular case, the case officer negotiated amendments from the original proposal to reduce the height of lighting columns, and added a condition to ensure that parking areas that are not in use to have lights extinguished at night to minimise light pollution.

On the subject of car ports and garaging, our current adopted Local Plan to 2030 (which can be viewed on our website[here](#)) includes Policy TRA3 (a), which sets out the parking standards for residential development. Design, layout and accessibility guidance on parking is separately contained within the ABC Residential Parking and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which can also be viewed on our website [here](#).

The Residential Parking and Design Guidance SPD sets out that in 'suburban' and 'rural' locations, free-standing and integral garages will not be taken into account as counting towards allocated parking spaces within new developments. In smaller scale schemes, integral and free-standing car barns are also preferred to garages as they help reduce the potential time spent blocking the street whilst access doors are negotiated. The SPD additionally notes that in new schemes the Council will usually

use planning conditions to remove permitted development rights for attachment of doors to car barns and car ports, to ensure their use as vehicle parking spaces.

The basis of this guidance was taken from research by both Government and KCC Highways, which established that garages frequently exacerbated inappropriate parking due to the propensity of them being used as non-vehicle stores. The research identified inappropriate parking as having an adverse impact in local communities with vehicles hindering use of footways by residents, persons with disabilities and parents with children and buggies.

Our local planning policy and guidance does not insist that new developments must only include car ports and barns as part of their parking provision. However, if garages are proposed as an additional resource then these should not be at the expense of an appropriate amount of private garden space. Otherwise, wider placemaking aspirations can become eroded.

The Council is now in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will include a new strategy and planning policies for the borough up to 2041.

Once adopted, the new Local Plan will replace the current Ashford Local Plan 2030. We want local people and communities to be involved and have their say, and I would greatly encourage you to sign up with our consultation portal (available [here](#)) so you can get involved and be kept informed on the progress of the emerging Local Plan. It will also provide you opportunities to comment or suggest new policy areas, as the process develops.

I hope this provides a little context.

Kind regards

Daniel Carter

Spatial Planning Manager
Planning and Development Department
Ashford Borough Council
01233 330 238
daniel.carter@ashford.gov.uk



May I respectfully remind council that my work on “new build developments” attracted a national Neighbourhood Watch award in London.

Importantly I keep the crime Commissioner Matthew Scott fully briefed on my progress with neighbourhood Watch and my work alongside local Parish and Community Councils.

I hope you find this report useful as a where are we statement going forwards into the mid 2024 year.



COMMUNITY HELP

The community can assist greatly with crime prevention and community safety by two ways.

1. **Reporting** all incidents of Crime, Attempted Crime, and Anti Social Behaviour
2. **Joining Neighbourhood Watch** (it's completely free.) to help communities you just read and stay safe and secure. NHW membership continues to grow steadily



“Crime cannot flourish in Communities that care.”

To join NHW email me at peternew1@aol.com or ring 07768437422 if not on line.
Thank you for your support.

Peter

Peter New (Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch)



Thank you,

Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)

Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch.