

REPORT TO GREAT CHART with SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL. DECEMBER 2025

Sadly, I am having to repeat most warnings from my last report as there has been a serious spike in crime across the district. As I forecast at our last meeting criminals will become extremely active in the run up to and including Christmas and the new year.

This has occurred in both urban and rural areas.



There are a number of scenarios to work through. Yes, we have weeks until Christmas, but criminals will be planning and so must we.

1. INTERNET SHOPPING PARCELS STOLEN FROM DOORSTEPS

In the run up to Christmas one of the big risks will be parcels thefts off of doorsteps. More and more are left on doorsteps.

We are vulnerable first to theft of a parcel by a passing chancer and opportunist on foot.

However, a bigger risk is the delivery vans are followed by criminals making even remote addresses at risk. Please remember in recent years the delivery vans were stolen when a driver was out of the cab making a delivery.

CRIME

Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans



Please make the safest deliver arrangements you can.

2. THEFTS FROM GARAGES

We all know Father Christmas stores extra Christmas presents in garages so as not to overload his sleigh. **CRIMINALS KNOW THIS !** Please review your garage security especially where expensive presents are stored.

Also at risk, the extra supplies for Christmas especially drink **CRIMINALS KNOW THIS !**

3. THEFTS FROM SHEDS

Exactly the same as garages with presents, drinks and supplies sometimes with just a flimsy catch holding the door closed **CRIMINALS KNOW THIS !**

4 THEFTS FROM VEHICLES

When we go Christmas shopping and take armfuls of presents back to our cars before grabbing a well-earned lunch and then out shopping in the afternoon. Leave nothing whatsoever on show in a car. Secure everything in the boot. Be vigilant if you are followed back to your car because if it looks attractive enough criminals will smash windows to gain access to a boot if they have watched you fill it.

This is especially important if you travel to larger shopping centres for a day out.

5 CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Especially in supermarkets please be alert to distraction thefts. Where several criminals work as a team. Maybe one fainting, maybe a child thrown to the ground and as we reach to assist that is when a purse vanishes from a shopping trolley especially if it is on show in an unzipped bag by an accomplice.

6. DAY OUT TRIPS TO LONDON

I don't suppose this will win me friends with the Mayor of London or the Met Police Commissioner , but you are entering a war zone. **THINK SAFE.**

Do not walk down streets in London on your mobile phone, it will be grabbed by criminals on bikes or mopeds. If you need to make a call, go into a shop or somewhere safe.

Do not wear expensive watches or jewellery again the risk of them being snatched is there. Also, criminals can use violence to grab these items.

If you have a handbag with a across the chest strap that would be good and keep it zipped tight. Don't take wallets or purses out in open view in the street.

If you travel by car lock the car doors as you travel. At road junctions, traffic lights or in traffic jams take care your car door is not open by someone on a bike and a handbag or item like a phone is grabbed.

Always be aware of distraction thefts and pick pockets. Just think safe!



7. SELLING ITEMS ON PLATFORMS LIKE EBAY, MARKET PLACE ETC.

Please be careful if you are selling items around Christmas times and persons say they will pay you cash and come to the door to collect. In recent years items have been grabbed and in some case violence used. Someone asking to look at the item in daylight with a car with its engine running and a driver at the wheel is a clue. Just think safe. Stolen cars and or false number plates have been used for these crimes in Ashford in recent years.

8. SCAMS

These will be off the scale over Christmas and please check everything you do. Some of the online scams offering items for sale are so good it is often nearly impossible to tell. Please be so careful and do nothing in a rush.

9. BOGUS CAROL SINGERS or CHARITY COLLECTORS.

If in doubt do not even open the front door. Care with carol singers who sing two words of a carol and demand money.

10 CHRISTMAS TREE

Nothing more lovely at Christmas than a well decorated tree with presents underneath.

Whilst burglaries in Kent are extremely low a fully decked out tree with presents on show being visible through front windows could be a temptation too far for criminals.

11 TRAVELLING AT CHRISTMAS

Please do not load your car for a quick getaway Christmas morning as you head to relatives for Christmas day. Criminals know we do this but please get up 30 minutes earlier and load the car as criminals walk the streets most nights looking in cars but especially, they are active days before Christmas but more so Christmas eve.

If you break a journey at Christmas in a hotel or travel lodge always lock items in the boot and consider taking larger items or high value items inside to your room. Those car parks will attract criminal attention. **CRIMINALS KNOW THIS**

12 DRINK AND DRUGS.

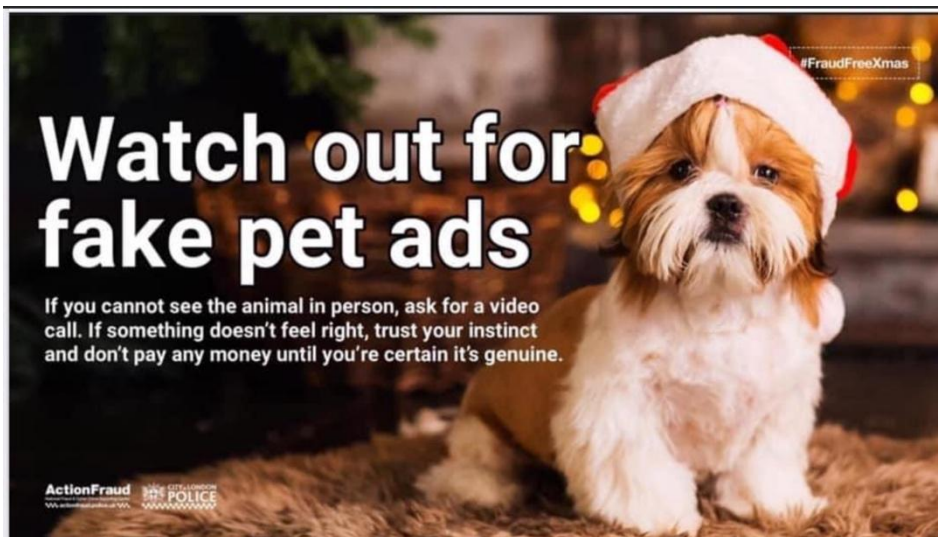
Do not drink and drive at anytime but especially over the Christmas period. Everyone knows the breathalyser and its limits, but more persons use drugs now.

So remember you could pass the breath test if stopped but maybe you might fail the drug wipe.

Everyone understands you could cause an accident, injury and death by being drunk but the number of people who fail the drug wipe where the consequences are the same is a concern.

Do not ruin lives especially your own.

13 PURCHASES OF ANIMALS FOR CHRISTMAS



Please be careful about purchasing animals for Christmas. Use proper animal breeders and collect the animal in person and do not part with money beforehand.

Of course I must add an animal is for life not just Christmas!



14 MOBILE PHONES & MOBILE DEVICES/GAMES

It is possible mobile phones will be purchased for some children especially for those preparing to go to secondary school. Parents, please start the safe training for them straight away because the world can now get to them.



Please be nosey parents!! “Ask who is that”? “what is that”?

They will be meeting children who may well have had them for several years and be very competent on use but still naïve to the risks.

15 CHRISTMAS DAY

A good crime prevention day would be monsoon rain from 0600 till 2300 but actually we all like a clear crisp day with lovely blue sky especially when travelling.

However about 0800 on a lovely clear Christmas day front doors burst open and young children flow out with every gift Father Christmas has delivered. Bikes, skates, scooters (not e-scooters I hope!!) footballs, skipping ropes, and all sorts.

About 1430 the dreaded call comes from parents “Christmas dinner come in” Children try every excuse not to but great auntie has come from up north to be there so the children reluctantly leave their toys on doorsteps and front gardens so they can rush out the moment Christmas dinner is over.

It is possible the toys will be gone! **CRIMINALS KNOW HOW CHILDREN THINK** and that is why they will tour around, especially estates, in vans and sadly the toys will be picked up and loaded in as all eyes will be fixed on Christmas dinner and children will emerge to be absolutely devastated.

CRIMINALS HAVE NO CONCIENCE OR THOUGHTS OF THE UPSET THEY WILL CAUSE. MANY WILL BE STEALING TO FUND THE PURCHASE OF DRUGS

LAISION WITH KENT POLICE

My year long battle with Ashford Police to get officers to attend council meetings has improved since Sergeant Dan Edge arrived at Ashford along with the station at last nearing full establishment of officers in The Beat Team. Albeit the standard of attendance at council meetings still falls short in some areas.

When the Neighbourhood Policing Model was launched in June 2023 Ashford was only at 50% strength in teams like Task Force and Beat Teams

The Police wrote a standard of service delivery of an officer to attend approximately one in 3 council meetings. People like me voiced strong views this was not achievable or realistic. A view I still hold but the police are a very difficult organisation to advise.

The police wrote the standards and sadly the police have failed with some councils to meet their own published standard.

I shall try to lobby for a realistic standard of service to be published but will hold the police to account if they persist with this unrealistic standard and refuse to amend it. I still have doubts that policing levels in Ashford match this growing developing town and District.

The workload has been compounded by the loss of the Community Liaison Officers posts which work closely with minority groups in the community. I have yet to hear how this work will now be carried out.

However the police loss is a certain councils good fortune.

I have regular meetings with Sergeant Dan Edge who I have found a breath of fresh air in trying to ensure Neighbourhood Policing is at the forefront of Ashford Policing in our community and I will support his work as much as I can and the officers personally.

I would hope that in 2026 a very prevention based, and intelligence led policing model working with Neighbourhood Watch and councils can be the way forward.

I have the Kent Police standard of performance and the response I had from the Police Crime Commissioner, Matthew Scott.

I have also had my meeting with MPs and have brief KCC Councillors.



THE POLICE STANDARD

I have published the PCC and ACC Kent Police position.

I will carry out a review and report at the end of 2025. This will also give Sergeant Edge the chance to also review his coverage of the area by officers now that full establishment has been reached.

PCC Correspondence Kent

From: contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk

To: peternew1@aol.com

Mon 19 May at 14:53

Dear Peter,

RE: Beat Police Officers attending council meetings

Thank you for your email.

Please be advised that the Commissioner met with KALC and the Assistant Chief Constable Nigel Brookes earlier last week and the principle of regular attendance was confirmed again.

He has raised concerns about attendance in Ashford District with the Commander for the area very recently too.

He is taking this matter seriously and hopes the situation improves.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Haleemah Muddasar
Casework officer

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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

I look forward to a strong working partnership with your new council employee Catherine Stevens who I have known for many years, and I know will be a very strong addition to your excellent team.

Catherine will by now have played her way into the new role and we will move forward in 2026 with a strong partnership.

NHW continues to grow from strength to strength and my work continues especially on several specialist subjects to like

CATAPULTS My work has continued with both National and local BBC TV and Radio Kent.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

Following on from my KCC presentation I attended a seminar Monday the 1st Dec.

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Which blights all communities, but good NHW intelligence can assist the police.

ONGOING WORK

I must be able to react to any sudden spikes in criminal activity which occurs in the weeks before we meet in January.

Between now and the New Year I will be hammering home where residents are vulnerable, and we relax at our peril.



I have written my 2026 Personal Action Plan which I shall present at the January meeting.

May I close by thanking you as I always do for your support for Neighbourhood Watch and for me personally

I wish each of you and your families a very Happy, Merry Christmas and especially a Happy Healthy New Year.

As we start the new Year of 2026 it may be that it is unclear how the landscape and shape of Kent looks going forward.

As long as our partnership of working together continues to stay strong and develop still further we can keep our residents as safe as possible, crime free and free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Peter New

Community Neighbourhood Watch