

REPORT TO GREAT CHART with SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL APRIL 2023

Sadly, in recent weeks across the East of Kent there have been numerous incidents of rogue traders/bogus callers calling on communities especially trying to target the elderly and vulnerable. One case was referred to me by your clerk.

These criminals will work to seek out and find our vulnerable and our elderly persons in the community. They often call back if they “strike lucky”.

Rural areas are attractive to them and recently there have been incidents across East Kent and especially in nearby villages like Smeeth, Brabourne and Mersham. However, they have now started to appear in town areas. Thankfully, as yet not in **SINGLETON & GREAT CHART** but they are active in the area and it's been very close on occasions!

Importantly I intercepted a rogue trader in Kennington and saved a family £800. I have also provided considerable intelligence of CCTV and vehicle/person photographs and I am in touch with the Lead officer for East Kent on this problem.

The Electricity/fuel costs issue has presented a golden opportunity for approaches to households to reduce energy costs with upgraded roof insulation. Normally two persons call at a property and one will enter the loft. The occupier is then called upstairs to answer a few questions about existing insulation and the other criminal downstairs, filling out bogus paperwork, will look to gather up any items like cash, handbags, wallets, and phones.

I have sat with people who have been conned. It is absolutely stomach turning.

Some elderly people are so embarrassed they do not tell family or friends so we are completely unaware and cannot push out alerts, warnings, or crime prevention advice.

Sadly, some victims never ever regain their confidence!

The other great concern now is rogue traders calling looking to carry out unsolicited work.

A job quoted as £100 suddenly becomes £1000 and threats and intimidation occur to obtain the monies. Our advice must be.....

NEVER EVER AGREE TO UNSOLICITED WORK ON YOUR DOORSTEP NO MATTER HOW CHEAP AND ATTRACTIVE THE PRICE IS

You will notice the police alert I sent out however as I stated earlier this has now spread into a wider area and we must be alert and vigilant. The advice is.....

IF IN DOUBT DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR

IF PERSONS REFUSE TO WITHDRAW AND LEAVE CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY GIVING AS MUCH OF A DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSONS AS POSSIBLE AND ANY VEHICLE DETAILS.

REMEMBER YOU MAY HAVE ACTED TO STAY SAFE, FURTHER ALONG IN THE COMMUNITY A PERSON MAY NOT BE AS CAREFUL OR STRONG MINDED ENOUGH TO RESIST.

THIS IS AN AVOIDABLE AND PREVENTABLE CRIME. PLEASE BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL

Warning after rogue traders reported in Hythe

Residents are advised to be vigilant after rogue traders were reported in **Hythe** and **Dymchurch**.

On **Tuesday 28 March 2023**, Kent Police received two reports of a group of men attending addresses and beginning work jet-washing the properties' roofs.

They then attempted to charge large amounts of money for the work, but were challenged and left the area in a white van after police were called.

Enquiries to track the men are ongoing and anyone with information should call [01843 222289](tel:01843222289), quoting reference 46/56257/23.

Warning

The incidents follow similar reports in the **Edenbridge** area earlier this month and officers are looking into any possible links.

Detective Inspector James Wyles, of Folkestone's Community Safety Unit, said: 'I urge anyone who is approached by cold callers on their doorstep to seek advice before agreeing to any work or payment.'

'The residents approached in these incidents did exactly the right thing and contacted the police to report their suspicions. I ask that people also look out for elderly or vulnerable relatives or neighbours and come to us with any concerns.'

Advice

- If someone knocks at your door, always refuse on the spot repairs or maintenance.
- Don't allow anyone to pressure you into agreeing to have work carried out. If you ask them to leave and they don't, contact the police on 999.
- Don't ever go to a bank or cashpoint with a trader; legitimate traders would never do this.
- Use reputable traders who are members of the KCC Trading Standards approved trader scheme Trading Standards Checked.
- Ask for quotes in writing and check that the tradesperson is from the company they say they are from.

Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

Rogue Traders

We have seen an increase in reports of this type of criminality recently.

Opposite is our leaflet on how you can protect yourself against these types of scams.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.



Protect yourself and others against rogue traders

Most people who call at your home are genuine. But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to sell you services or items you do not want or need or carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.

If you're concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door.**

You can:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you
- Get three written quotes
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you're completely satisfied with the work.

Preventing fraud

Together, let's stop scammers.

Remember, ABC:

Never Assume

Never Believe

Always Confirm

Get the latest scam advice:

@KentPoliceECU




Pressurised selling on your doorstep is a crime and you can report it:

- kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards or call 0808 223 1133
- For advice: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/
- Follow @kent_ECU or email kfas@ecis.police.uk



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Contacting Kent Police

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Doorstep Criminals/Rogue Traders

Residents from Folkstone, Hythe and Dymchurch have been targeted by cold calling criminals saying their roof, drive or gutter needs either cleaning or repair but it is a scam and they will pester the resident until they agree to them carrying out the work. They will then carry out some extra work on a small area without asking and then demand payment and intimidate the resident into having the whole job being completed by them, even though they have not asked for this work to be carried out.

The following gives some guidance on what to do, if you get someone cold calling in this way -

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you
- Get three written quotes
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you're completely satisfied with the work.

If the person becomes aggressive and you are feeling intimidated or threatened, then call the Police.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

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DOORSTEP CRIMINALS : DON'T GET SCAMMED THIS SPRING

Spring is here, birds are singing and flowers are blooming. But please be on alert as this is also the time of year that doorstep criminals come knocking on doors.

They come with bogus offers of guttering and roofing repairs, or work on driveways and gardens.

This year, with household budgets under pressure, many are likely to be tempted by superficial bargains, which could end up costing dearly. It is all too common for doorstep criminals to promise the earth and fail to deliver. They leave a trail of unfinished or substandard work in their wake, with inflating prices as a project progresses far beyond what was originally agreed.

£18,000 lost to criminal traders

Mr M was approached by a stranger outside his home who told him that the coving on his roof needed urgent attention. What started as a friendly conversation about a relatively small issue ended with £18,000 spent on unnecessary work. When the doorstep criminal asked for even more money, Mr M called in Trading Standards.

He's had sleepless nights ever since and was worried about leaving his home for a period in case the criminals returned. And unfortunately, he has been unable to get any of his money back.

Never agree to have work carried out by cold-callers. Always keep your door firmly closed to doorstep criminals.

Everyone is vulnerable to falling for rogue and criminal traders at one time or another, regardless of age or personal circumstances. The most powerful form of defence against these doorstep criminals, for you, your family and your neighbours, is to be informed and be vigilant. And always be prepared to say no.



Good news for Kent residents

You can find reputable and safe traders via Kent County Council's **Trading Standards Checked**. It's the only scheme of its kind that thoroughly vets local traders. Each trader has passed the 50 point Safe Local Trader checks and is continually vetted throughout their membership.

The 50-point checks ensure traders adhere to consumer protection rules, are competent and capable of undertaking the work they commit to and are accountable if something goes wrong.



Find a safe local trader to carry out your work, visit:
kent.gov.uk/tschecked
Or call: **03000 41 64 38.**

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You will recall at previous meetings I reported I had launched **OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL** to help those who help care/support elderly/vulnerable family members. Several families in your area have accepted this assistance to support their loved ones

This has been received well in the community and unless you have experienced the personal concerns and worry of supporting family members to still live independently in the community, on many occasions on their own, you will not fully appreciate this campaign.




The other matter of huge concern to me is

I am very concerned to read reports of sheep worrying and even worse young lambs being attacked by dogs.

This is not just a dreadful crime against defenceless animals but strikes at a person's livelihood which I do not have to labour the point in rural areas.



Livestock worrying

Livestock worrying is a criminal offence and comes under the [Dogs \(Protection of Livestock\) Act 1953](#) .

'Worrying' is where a dog attacks or chases livestock causing injury or suffering.

This isn't just a threat to a farmer or land owner's livelihood, it's also a dangerous situation for the animals involved, and could lead to more risk if the animals get onto the road.

A farmer is allowed to kill the dog if it's worrying their livestock.

Always keep your dog under control around other animals and if you see a dog on the loose worrying animals, [report it online](#).

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**

At the time of writing this report I am aware of 2 BMW cars taken in Kennington Ashford with the same 'Mode of Operation' as last year when over 30 high end cars (BMW's AUDI's RANGE ROVERS etc) all with keyless ignitions were targeted and stolen from properties with criminals using devices to read and open the locking systems.

I am working closely with the Serious Crime Directorate who I assisted last year. That work resulted in arrests and persons put before the courts.

Dear Peter,

You may have seen this locally, but this was a result of your work and contacts supplying info and CCTV to us.

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/two-charged-following-theft-of-30-keyless-cars-278587/>

If you wish thank your contacts on my behalf then please do

Thank you for your help
Scott



DC 10255 Scott DRAKE

Address: Canterbury Police Station, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3JQ

www.kent.police.uk

That work may be needed once again but I also include it into my report to show the value and the strength that Neighbourhood Watch brings to a community and in your area especially where the solid support of the council, the clerks and individual councillors demonstrates that we can help to keep communities that we serve crime free and residents free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Thank you as always for all your support.

I am aware that this is an extremely busy time for all councillors and the clerks.

On that point I wish you all well and conclude my report.

Stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant.

Peter

Peter New

Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

