

REPORT TO GREAT CHART & SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL FEBRUARY 2023

The types of crimes we face are well documented and I continue to brief the community about the risks and vulnerable areas to be alert and vigilant for.

A glance at recent crime reports across the district shows the types of crimes occurring.

Crime Reference	Ward	Location	Offence	Date from	Date to	Property Stolen	Misc.
46/16089/23	Victoria	Beaver Road, Ashford	Making off without payment	25/01/2023 08:25	25/01/2023 08:25	Petrol/Diesel	no payment
46/16228/23	Wye with Hinxhill	Abbots Walk, Wye, Ashford	Theft from a motor vehicle	24/01/2023 23:20	24/01/2023 23:40	Catalytic Converter	
46/16258/23	Wye with Hinxhill	Abbots Walk, Wye, Ashford	Theft from a motor vehicle	24/01/2023 23:30	25/01/2023 09:00	Catalytic Converter	
46/16336/23	Victoria	Bridge Road, Ashford	Theft from a motor vehicle	24/01/2023 21:00	25/01/2023 09:00	School uniforms	€24k worth
46/16510/23	Weald Central	Hopes Grove, High Halden	Burglary - Business And Community	25/01/2023 00:00		Copper piping & Batteries	
46/16549/23	Bybrook	Faversham Road, Kennington, Ashford	Theft if not classified elsewhere	25/01/2023 16:39	25/01/2023 16:39	Lead	from roof
46/17210/23	Victoria	High Street, Ashford	Theft of a motor vehicle	25/01/2023 21:12	25/01/2023 23:05	Honda, white	KR22 LGG (pizza delivery bike)
46/17219/23	Isle of Oxney	Woodlands View, Wittersham, Tenterden	Theft from a motor vehicle	08/01/2023 00:01	08/01/2023 23:59	Catalytic Converter	
46/17229/23	Isle of Oxney	Woodlands View, Wittersham, Tenterden	Theft from a motor vehicle	08/01/2023 00:01	08/01/2023 23:59	Catalytic Converter	
46/17243/23	Weald Central	Bethersden, Ashford	Burglary - Residential - Dwelling	26/01/2023 00:01	27/01/2023 07:00	Items taken unknown	
46/17625/23	Victoria	Beaver Road, Ashford	Theft from a motor vehicle	26/01/2023 06:15	26/01/2023 17:15	Rear number plate	MJ59 XDT
46/17689/23	Upper Weald	Pluckley, Ashford	Burglary - Residential - Non-Dwelling	26/01/2023 07:00	26/01/2023 19:00	Tools & equipment	from outhouse
46/17707/23	Biddenden	Chulkhurst, Biddenden, Ashford	Theft from a motor vehicle	26/01/2023 23:00	26/01/2023 23:00	Catalytic Converter	

Importantly we are not reading your parish, but what can we learn from the above?

Crime prevention advice

Sheds will remain a high target especially in rural areas along with **Vehicles, garages, barns, stables, allotment sheds, village halls, sports pavilions and any form of outbuildings and external storage**

Catalytic Convert

These thefts have swept across East Kent and have appear to be spreading now into rural areas

Number Plates

We continue to see these stolen to facilitate fuelling a vehicle and leaving a garage without payment and the CCTV picks up the stolen plate number.

How to secure a shed or outbuilding?

Outbuildings should be treated in the same manner as your main premises when it comes to security. To prevent theft, you must think like a thief. Identify weak spots that could be targeted. How and where would a criminal enter your premises, and how could they break into your outbuilding? Answering these questions thoroughly will help you to discover which areas in your premises need additional security.

There's a rise in sports clubs using steel shipping containers for machinery storage. Providing they have closed shackle padlocks; this can be a great way to secure equipment and prevent theft. Steel shipping containers don't rot or mould as wood would and can hold plenty of heavy equipment – making them strong, weatherproof storage containers.

Your insurer will require you to have minimum security provisions as part of your policy. Make sure you check your Policy Wording document and comply with their stipulations as a minimum. For example, your insurer may require you to have a professional security system or specific locks. A security firm will be able to provide advice on the most effective alarm systems for your club and offer other security recommendations.

Top tips for securing an outbuilding include:

Always lock the outbuilding. You should also consider locking the outbuilding even when you're using it. Install an alarm system. Consider security marking, which will prevent thieves from taking property that could later be identified as stolen. If you do mark your property, make sure you advertise that they are marked – this will act as a strong deterrent! Install external security lighting, which should be automatically operated, if possible. Consider installing CCTV. If your outbuilding has windows, make sure the window frames are in good conditions and use window locks. You could also replace outbuilding windows with Perspex / reinforced glass or fit window grills. Use nature to your advantage. Keep hedges near the outbuilding low so a thief is more likely to be spotted and grow shrubbery that is harder to climb through or clamber over. Make an intruder's job harder. Keep items such as bins tucked away so they can't be used to climb over fences, hedges or walls. Use a chain or immobiliser to secure valuable items such as tools, machinery, or equipment to a ground anchor. You should also lock away all equipment and machinery immediately after use. Consider purchasing closed shackle padlocks for your shed – most insurers will require two locking points. Where possible, lock tools in a secure metal cabinet within the shed. Keep an asset register, to include anything of value. Not only will this help ensure your Sums Insured is adequate, but it will also help you to evidence items stolen in the event of a claim. An asset register should include a list of items, when they were purchased, purchase price, replacement price, serial numbers and, if possible, a photo of the item. This will help identify what has been taken during a theft and will help demonstrate to your insurer that you have stayed within the limits of your policy. Take photographs of all valuable machinery and equipment kept in your shed. This will help police identify and retrieve them if a theft occurs.

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

Keep your shed and garden secure



**Shut it,
lock it,
keep it**

Advice on
how you can
help **protect**
your property



**Kent
Police**



CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE

The other concerning trend at present is the sudden rise in **CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFTS**.



Help prevent the theft of catalytic converters



To reduce this risk:

- mark or etch it with the vehicle identification number or a unique serial number
- secure it to your vehicle with a cat clamp, cage or wire
- park in a garage or busy, well-lit area where possible

If you see something suspicious, **report it**.



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**



Picture of guards that can be fitted to assist in protecting the Catalytic Converter.

We have seen an increase in theft/removal of catalytic converters across the County. Our reports would indicate that Toyota and Honda vehicles are more likely to be targeted. Catalytic converters contain a high concentration of precious metals. All cars manufactured after 1992 contain a catalytic converter so any vehicle could be a target. The catalytic converters are being removed from vehicles that are being parked on the road (outside houses) as well as from vehicles that are being left in car parks for long periods of time, usually whilst the owner is at work.

To reduce the risk of having your catalytic converter stolen, you should:

- **Park your car in a locked garage** where possible, or gated car park but if this isn't an option **park it in a busy, well-lit area, ideally where CCTV is present.**
- Fit a catalytic converter clamp or security cage to protect your catalytic converter.
- Security mark and register the metal shell of the converter so if it is stolen and recovered, it will be easier to trace it back to your vehicle.

If you see anyone acting suspiciously around parked vehicles in suspicious circumstances please report it on 999.

I am also very pleased to confirm my very personal new crime prevention initiative named
OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL

I have implemented this across the district where elderly and vulnerable persons are added into our Neighbourhood Watch, but the contact details are added in of a relative so in the event of a crime of concern in the area especially rogue traders and bogus callers the contact is made with the family relative or indeed a friend who can speak to the person at risk on the telephone. The warnings and alerts will be delivered by a known friendly voice and more likely to be heeded, essential when dealing with cases of dementia. I have people as far away as London and Hastings in the relative contact list

This is especially important with crime prevention advice to prevent crimes in the first place.

This is my personal initiative to keep vulnerable people safe and supports independent living.

We know where a vulnerable resident lives. Criminals also work to know too!

It supports not just the elderly and our very senior pensioners but a full range of disabilities. The warning and alert may be better received from a son or daughter of an elderly person for example, rather than a more official source. Firstly by telephone but also to discuss matters on family gatherings/visits, involving the wider family in helping to keep the person safe.


Many of our elderly and vulnerable at best have only a land line exchange telephone.

Many of the police new contact methods are to report on line, live chat, Facebook, web site, twitter etc etc. Much of the crime prevention comes via methods not available to the vulnerable, especially to those who cannot read or write.



It is essential NHH does not leave these persons out on their own. NHH can also be a vital cog in calling in support from other agencies and example would be my past life in the Fire Service.

I can request a **free Home Fire Safety visit** as I am deemed a partner agency referral person. Smoke detectors and fire safety advice home visits especially to keep vulnerable persons safe.



Home fire safety visits

A Kent Fire and Rescue Service free Safe and Well home visit means you can talk with one of our friendly Safe and Well officers in the comfort of your home. You'll receive fire safety advice relevant to you and an opportunity to talk about any safety concerns you may have.

You will recall at your last meeting the concerns that were voiced on parking pressures especially in the Imperial Drive (and roads off of) area.

I did immediately after the meeting launch campaigns to raise awareness in the parish especially embracing your strategy of trying to raise awareness on the issue and bring about a community spirit of "Considerate parking". That is the support I can bring to this council.

Dear Readers

I attended the Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council last night (Monday 16th) and presented my 2023 Crime Prevention Plan.

During later discussions concerns were raised about the car parking pressures within the Parish especially in the Singleton Hill area. Having recently been in the area I saw first hand the concerns raised.

This issue is not unique to Singleton and in fact could be a standard agenda item on many of the councils across Ashford I attend.

I am on record as saying it is one of Ashford's biggest 'ticking bombs'.

There is a 'perfect storm' brewing as more homes have multiple cars. 2 would have been the norm but 3 and 4 can now be common as younger persons get cars as soon as the test is passed.

Sadly 1950s Ashford streets and roads are with us but as we construct our new build roads on the developments across Kent why in heavens name do we build new roads even narrower.

You only need to drive new developments to see we are planning and building for failure which is unforgivable with so much space to build on.

It will only be when all parties get on the same song sheet and sing the same song that matters will ease.

How can it be right ? How can our planners be so blind?

Parking causes traffic problems and neighbour disputes and community tensions. I drove Fire appliances in my previous career in the early 70s it was tight then but see appeals from the fire service of today below.

Please let's not wait to hear a Coroner give concerns if emergency vehicles cannot get through, that will be too late and too tragic!

Please try to park considerately this isn't now just about emergency vehicles this is about community functions like refuse collections, buses, shopping deliveries and worryingly a big car!!

Let us try to park considerately and pray planners open their eyes and ears

Thank you

Peter

Peter New (Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch)



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.





I draw to your attention to a new road in Chilmington. You will note my proactive NHW recruitment, and every house is in NHW already in this road

May I draw to your attention to the car on the right, it is parked on the pavement a debate which is running now about will this be illegal soon and enforced., please imagine if it was parked in the road.

I am working now to assist in the building of communities, in bring about community cohesion. I have an excellent relationship with residents.

I am working tirelessly to try to ease problems for councils not maybe today or next week but in the months, years and decade that follows.

I will be standing my ground in liaison meetings with Chilmington CMO. I will not be shunted into any other business or be told by the chairman of that group "I may grant you a few minutes if there is time", or see meetings run out of time before I can speak and flag up concerns.

Parking tensions bring neighbour disputes, community tension, work for councils on neighbour disputes, work for individual councillors on these matters too and finally tension that can result in police attendance. Now that all happens now in other areas I work in on 1950s/1960s constructed roads in Ashford. I am doing my best to try and prevent those matters in 2030s roads in Ashford.

The above road is on the BARRATTS development the picture below is on the HODSON development. Once again everyone is in NHW.



I feel it is important to finish the report to you as a council to confirm my 2023 plan

1. When crimes are committed that we immediately try to prevent further crimes in the area
2. Can we learn from the wider district to prevent crimes.
3. Can we assist with the investigations eg witnesses, information and CCTV
4. Can we issue further crime prevention from lessons learnt.
5. Can we continue to build NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH to assist in keeping our residents crime free and free from the fear of being a victim of crime.
6. Can we work on those AVOIDABLE and PREVENTABLE CRIMES

Thank you all for your continued support for our work together and as important for your personal support for me.

Thank you

Peter

Peter New Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch