

Police Community Support Officer Newsletter

GREAT CHART WITH SINGLETON - MARCH 2020

As we enter this period of uncertainty, please be assured that Kent Police are working hard to keep the public safe amid the ongoing threat from the Coronavirus pandemic.

Please find following a message from our Chief Constable, Alan Pughsley:

'During what is understandably a worrying time for everyone, I want to reassure the public that Kent Police will continue to deliver the best possible service it can.

'The public can be assured that just like other large organisations we are working hard behind the scenes to adapt to the current climate, to make sure officers and staff are able to protect our communities as well as stay protected themselves.

'We've taken steps to split up departments like our Force Control Room and locate them at different sites across the county to make sure we have plenty of resilience. We've also got some support staff working from home. These arrangements have been in place for the last week and the public should not have seen a change in the service they have received.

'Kent Police is made up of outstanding officers and staff, who have a great deal of experience in working under difficult and often unprecedented circumstances. I've always been impressed with their level of innovation and ability to go the extra mile, particularly during this time of unparalleled public health emergency. However, please be assured that we will absolutely continue to deliver on our day to day priorities and relentlessly pursue criminals, in support of victims and those most vulnerable in our society.

'I also want to take this opportunity to urge the public to do their bit in tackling the spread of Covid-19 and adhere to the medical advice being issued by the Government and Public Health England.

'We have seen reports over the weekend of large groups of people intentionally gathering to socialise both in Kent and across the rest of the UK and I would ask people to consider the implications of doing so not just on themselves, but others they will come into contact with.

'Our officers have attended these incidents to reiterate the Government's advice but it is an example of unnecessary contact for everyone involved, including the officers who could be using their time more effectively.

'We want the public to be reassured we are doing all we can, but I would also like to thank those people who have shown generosity and compassion to my officers and staff in recent weeks.

'From people realising it may be more appropriate to contact us via our website, to those businesses who have set aside times for emergency services personnel to get a few items of essential shopping; it is community spirit and sincerity like this that makes us so proud to serve our communities.'



NEW RULES ON STAYING AT HOME AND AWAY FROM OTHERS

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the government is now (23 March 2020) introducing three new measures.

1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes;
2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces;
3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public.

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

These measures are effective immediately. The Government will look again at these measures in three weeks and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

1. STAYING AT HOME

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons.

- **Shopping for basic necessities**, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- **One form of exercise a day**, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
- **Any medical need**, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- **Travelling to and from work**, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.

These four reasons are exceptions - even when doing these activities, you should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

These measures must be followed by everyone. Separate advice is available for individuals or households who are isolating, and for the most vulnerable who need to be shielded.

If you work in a critical sector outlined in this guidance, or your child has been identified as vulnerable, you can continue to take your children to school. Where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can be moved between their parents' homes

2. CLOSING NON-ESSENTIAL SHOPS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Last week, the Government ordered certain businesses - including pubs, cinemas and theatres - to close.

The Government is now extending this requirement to a further set of businesses and other venues, including:

- **all non-essential retail stores** - this will include clothing and electronics stores; hair, beauty and nail salons; and outdoor and indoor markets, excluding food markets,

- **libraries, community centres, and youth centres,**
- **indoor and outdoor leisure facilities** such as bowling alleys, arcades and soft play facilities,
- **communal places within parks,** such as playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms,
- **places of worship,** except for funerals attended by immediate families,
- **hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, campsites, caravan parks, and boarding houses for commercial/leisure use** (excluding permanent residents and key workers).

More detailed information can be found on the Government website, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close> including a full list of those businesses and other venues that must close. Businesses and other venues not on this list may remain open.

3. STOPPING PUBLIC GATHERINGS

To make sure people are staying at home and apart from each other, the Government is also **stopping all public gatherings of more than two people.**

There are only two exceptions to this rule:

- **where the gathering is of a group of people who live together** - this means that a parent can, for example, take their children to the shops if there is no option to leave them at home.
- **where the gathering is essential for work purposes** - but workers should be trying to minimise all meetings and other gatherings in the workplace.

In addition, the Government is stopping social events, including weddings, baptisms and other religious ceremonies. This will exclude funerals, which can be attended by immediate family.

DELIVERING THESE NEW MEASURES

These measures will reduce our day to day contact with other people. They are a vital part of our efforts to reduce the rate of transmission of coronavirus.

Every citizen is instructed to comply with these new measures.

The Government will therefore be ensuring the police and other relevant authorities have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings where people do not comply.

They will initially last for the three weeks from 23 March, at which point the Government will look at them again and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

Please see the Government website at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> should you require further details.

Regrettably, the current situation may lead to an increase in certain types of crime. Please take this time to look at your home security. Also, if you have business premises please ensure that you have good security in place. Do not leave tools or other valuables in vehicles.

Please continue to look out for your neighbours, especially those who are elderly, vulnerable or live alone. This current situation can bring out the best in people, with many offering to help and support the vulnerable members of our communities. Whatsapp, Facebook and other networking sites are a great way to stay connected to those who are dear to us without out having to venture out. Obviously you can always pick up the phone!

Future Events

Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic the following events have been cancelled.

Pop Up Café,

Wednesday, 11th March, 2020 – 11:00am to 1:00pm

Wednesday, 8th April, 2020 – 11:00am to 1:00pm

Great Chart Village Hall, The Street, Great Chart TN23 3AX

Community Surgery

Wednesday, 22nd April, 2020 – 1:30pm, at

Singleton Village Hall, Hoxton Close, Ashford, Kent TN23 5LB

Bike Marking and Community Engagement Event

Saturday, 25th April, 2020 - 10:00am to 12:00pm

Loudon Way, Ashford, Kent

TAKE CARE AND STAY SAFE



Catherine Stevens PCSO 46059869

Community Safety Unit | Ashford Police Station | East Division