

NHW REPORT TO GREAT CHART with SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL JULY 2025

Dear Council

I apologise I am unable to be with you tonight I am at my youngest daughter's graduation from Loughborough University who is graduating with a First Class Honours Degree in Criminology

Much of her work, specifically her dissertation homed in on Violence Against Women and Girls revealing the critical barriers that constrain survivors of sexual violence from reporting.

This will stand my future work in good stead in communities because "failure to report crimes" is a problem across the whole crime spectrum but especially this crime group including Domestic Violence.

CHILMINGTON

I have previously written about my exclusion from the CMO/Chilmington AGM, due to size of venue.

Only those of you who really know me know how bad I feel about this, and I have communicated that fact back to the CMO, which to date has not even received an acknowledgement let alone a reply.

I have not missed a single AGM to date. They should have been striving to pack a venue and unite the community with its key players and partners.

Can I clearly state to council my commitment to residents and building a strong NHW Community there has only been strengthened by the CMO action.

My work is not just about keeping residents' crime free it is assisting to build a community. Many new residents are not from Ashford, Kent or even the UK they need help and advice to address the crime trends they face in these new surrounds.

My advice to the CMO was clear, don't drop key players from an important meeting find the correct size venue for the important AGM.



POLICE UPDATE

After a long draw out sometimes acrimonious battle I am looking forward to seeing the police make the attendances to council meetings at last.

Why would not want to enjoy a close working relationship with you as a council and individual councillors is totally beyond me and I look forward to their explanations.

Both you as a council and myself with NHW will need to ask the following questions and it is not about lots of words but forging a strong partnership to help us all with measured deliverables and actions

Our questions

What do you want from us?

What do you need from us?

Are you going to brief us on your work and campaigns? Especially results.

Will they be joining us on Public Engagement days like summer fetes and coffee mornings?

How do we work together to be better? and be better we must be! As Kent goes into a very busy period with local Government Reorganisation.

An officer should be with us a minimum of one a quarter, let's wait and see.
If there is failure to meet that published standard, I will take the matter up with Force HQ.

You will have had the letter from Inspector Johnson setting out the work ahead.

Kent Police have reams of papers, documents and slides shows but sometimes the actions do not quite match up to front line actions.

Let us travel in hope but if the Council, Councillors, our Partners like ABC Councillors and KCC councillors and myself with NHW continue to work hard together and support one another as we do, we will be fine. If the police can join us fine, but our excellent relationships and working ethics have been solid, if the Police don't engage, they will be the losers, and I will continue to battle to resolve this issue.
Better Police Communications is high on the PCC list.

I will go back to Senior management and the PCC.

I am engaging with the MPs which cover the new Ashford Constituency, MPs Sojan Joseph and Katie Lam. I am engaging with the new KCC Councillors some who have been with me for years in NHW, others I have met recently.

THE POLICE PUBLISH STANDARD OF PERFORMANCE.

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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GENERAL MATTERS

I will bring a full NHW update to the next meeting, but I know council is more than aware of matters I am working on.

I will be looking at the recent fatality in South Willesborough, where I felt communications to the public were very poor in a very strong NHW Neighbourhood area that could have helped.

Reassurance to the local community was poor. KCC, ABC and the Local Community Council were completely left out of the communications loop. Recent incidents in Southport and then Liverpool demonstrated the difference between good communications or allowing the rumour mill and social media to dictate the narrative.

Key partners and NHW should not have to get critical information and crime appeal details from the local press. This will be a watch this space position as I take the matter forward.

STOP PRESS LETTER FROM ASHFORD POLICE

LETTER FROM KENT POLICE ASHFORD. NHW RESPONSE POINTS IN HIGHLIGHTED PRINT

Dear Parish Councils,

This week has been Neighbourhood Policing Week of Action. I felt it timely to update you on the work being done by your Community Safety Unit and positive developments to Neighbourhood Policing locally.

Recently, we have been conducting surveys to establish the issues that are really concerning residents. The results will be published on the Kent Police website shortly and will also feature in our newsletters. The Beat Officers supported by our Neighbourhood Task Force and Child Centred Policing Team, will be tackling these concerns within their ward clusters over the coming months. We make a commitment to update on our progress through My Community Voice, monthly newsletters, at local engagement events and at your parish council meetings.

IF BEAT OFFICERS HAD ATTENDED THE COUNCIL MEETINGS OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS BUT ESPECIALLY SINCE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING WAS ADOPTED IN JUNE 2023. THEY MAY HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH CONCERNS AND MAY NOT NEEDED TO SURVEY.

We know it is E-Scooters, Off Road Bikes, Parking and Speeding in hotspots, Anti-Social Behaviour, Criminal Damage.

In Ashford E-scooters were a fairly low priority, however in recent weeks there has been a clear improvement, and scooters have been seized and crushed. This has proved a very popular campaign with the community.

The more serious crimes and campaigns are picked up by my NHW work and my crime prevention tries to head off the vehicle thefts, vans broken into, motorbike and cycle thefts, internet shopping off doorsteps, rogue traders, bogus callers, drugs and of course scams.

You validate and Quality Assure my NHW work each month and together we can target concerns

The illegal use of e-scooters, anti-social behaviour and road safety are concerns that resonate across the district. There has been a significant increase in the number of seizures of e-scooters with several during this week of action. We have also compiled a video (available on the link below) to highlight the risks of illegal use and the work being undertaken to tackle this issue. We hope this will help raise awareness and whilst it has been circulated on our media platforms, I would be grateful for any assistance in promoting it in your communities.

In 2024 Ashford had a very poor approach to E-Scooters with “Educate, Engage and Warn” will low interception rates as against similar areas. Places like Dartford, Maidstone and Canterbury seized far more

“We don’t want to criminalise children “spectacularly failed and youths completely ignored warnings and behaviour did not change.

Siezing and crushing policy has already at last made an impact. I have issued crystal clear policy on this matter to communities.

My work with your support has continued to press for a more proactive response. At last, that work is finally underway and recent results have dramatically improved. A regular attendance at our meetings would have had earlier results. The PCC Mr Scott was crystal clear what he wanted and expected.

POLICE CHIEF HITS OUT AT ILLEGAL RIDERS



Sarah Carter broke multiple bones when she was knocked down in Canterbury



Kent Police seized 190 e-scooters in the two years up to April

Stock pic

'We can't let e-scooters ruin our summer – seize and crush them'

by Daniel Esson
desson@thekmgrou.co.uk
Local Democracy Reporter

E-scooters being ridden on public streets in Kent should be seized and crushed, say the mayor and council, responsible for overseeing policing in the county.

The electric vehicles are illegal to ride on any land not privately owned – unless in a town or city covered by a government trial.

The conclusion of Kent's only pilot scheme, in Canterbury, in November last year signalled the end of any lawful e-scooter use on public land across the county.

But Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Matthew Scott fears people will start to see the vehicles as "effectively decriminalised" as they continue to be ridden illegally.

He was challenged about the issue during a meeting of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel last Tuesday.

"The panel knows my view on e-scooters – seize them and crush them because they are not legal on any public land in Kent now that we don't have the trial down at Canterbury," Mr Scott said.

"That would be one simple solution, but my expectation is that [riders] are dealt with as well, and that will be up to [Kent Police] to deal with."

"I don't want the perception to rise that they have been effectively decriminalised when in fact they are not road safe, not road legal and should not be on our roads."

"We'll continue the messaging around that, and I will hold the force to account on all aspects of this question to make sure we don't have a summer blighted by anti-social vehicles."

Mr Scott was responding to a question from Gravesham

councillor Shane Mochrie-Cox, who says e-scooters are "perceived to have been decriminalised by lack of attendance and perceived lack of action."

The Labour member added that enforcement against riders is "a postcode lottery depending on resourcing, allocation and whatever a particular borough commander is able to allocate at the time".

He also highlighted how he and other councillors receive correspondence from residents asking for action to be taken on e-scooters, despite the responsibility lying with Kent Police, and not the local authority.

The machines are considered Personal Light Electric Vehicles, so are treated as motor vehicles and subject to the same rules as cars, mopeds and motorcycles.

Former university librarian Sarah Carter, from Canterbury, is among those who believe the "the genie is out of the bottle" for the e-scooter craze.

The 80-year-old was knocked down last summer by a man legally riding a vehicle hired from Bird – the company that oversaw the controversial two-year trial in the city.

Mrs Carter suffered a broken



Kent Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott

wrist, cracked jaw and fractured cheekbone in the collision.

Five months later, Kent County Council refused an offer from the Department for Transport to continue the pilot scheme until May 2024.

But e-scooters continue to be seen on the city's streets, and elsewhere in the county, with

Mrs Carter blaming a lack of police patrols.

"Part of me says potentially it's quite a good form of transport if the infrastructure's there, but I think there should be far more policing of infractions at the moment," she said.

"There's no police around to do anything."

"I do see [scooters] around quite often; you can imagine that my experience has left me super cautious and actually quite scared a lot of the time."

"There are more and more of them – and we mustn't forget electric bikes as well."

"Fast and silent – it's a recipe for danger I think."

Mrs Carter is not the only Canterbury resident to have been seriously injured in a collision with an e-scooter.

In June 2021, then 19-year-old Joshua Mpia pleaded guilty to dangerous driving after hitting mum-of-three Pauline Lilford, leaving her with a broken arm and leg – while riding his privately owned vehicle.

Mpia was handed a six-month prison sentence, suspended for two years, along with a two-year driving ban, and was ordered to do 100 hours of unpaid work.

Kent Police's head of prevention, Superintendent Pete Steenhuis, says, where necessary, officers take "proportionate action" to deal with e-scooter riders.

However, he says last year the force received just over one report a day about the issue.

"Police officers across the county have engaged with indi-

'I don't want the perception to rise that they have been effectively decriminalised when in fact they are not road safe, not road legal and should not be on our roads...'

viduals on the street and in schools to provide advice," he said.

"Should an officer come across an e-scooter being used incorrectly, they will first seek to educate the rider and encourage them to adhere to the legislation."

"This approach has helped to educate people, especially young people, about the dangers of their use."

"Figures show that last year we received fewer than one report a day across the county, with some areas such as Sevenoaks only receiving three reports all year. The number of reported incidents overall fell county-wide from 355 in 2021 to 205 in 2022."

Super Steenhuis urged would-be riders to familiarise themselves with the law before buying an e-scooter, adding the force seized 190 of the vehicles in the two years up to April.

"If riders refuse to follow advice, or if they are seen using an e-scooter in a dangerous or anti-social manner, we will use our powers to seize the vehicle and take further enforcement action where appropriate," he said.

What do you think? Email letters@thekmgrou.co.uk.



Pauline Lilford was seriously injured by an e-scooter



Pictures show the extent of Sarah Carter's injuries

E-scooters seized by district

Maidstone	95
Medway	83
Swale	55
Gravesham	35
Canterbury	34
Ashford	26
Thanet	24
Tonbridge & Malling	23
Dartford	16
Tunbridge Wells	4
Dover	2
Folkestone & Hythe	2
Sevenoaks	1



January 2022 to September 2024 Source: FOI request to Kent Police

The number of electric scooters to have been taken from the streets by police in Kent.

The Child Centred Policing Team have been delivering inputs covering e-scooters, catapults, and road safety to over 350 school children this week as part of the annual 'Safety in Action' event.

I have no interaction with this team at Ashford and have no knowledge whatsoever of the named officers or results to date. I hope that team has dealt with schools where children arrive on e-scooters even primary school age.

Where it is appropriate to do so we will prosecute offenders who use catapults as weapons. I'm sure you may have seen recent media coverage of a young person appearing at court after being charged with several offences including causing the death of a seagull. We utilise a variety of tools and powers to tackle anti-social behaviour, working closely with our partners. Recently, partnership work in a hotspot secured two closure orders removing occupants from properties – action which has seen an immediate positive change to the local area.

The case quoted was mainly brought about by very proactive NHW members, and good support from them allow me to provide the police with pictures, names ages and schools they attend. I understand that a youth is being out before the courts.

Once again, the police needed a survey, had they attended council meetings they would have had the information and community concerns.

As you know I helped to run a government petition which attracted 25000 signatures. Again, why did the police have to survey to act. The community spoke very clearly indeed. This problem causes upset, distress and blights communities

E-SCOOTERS & CATAPULTS. I am still running campaigns to address these crime trends that blight communities and causes upsets and distress.

Anti-social Behaviour: Electric Bicycles and Electric Scooters

[Show full question](#)

Question for Home Office

UIN 9323, tabled on 15 October 2024

Question



Sojan Joseph
Labour
Ashford

 Commons

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help tackle anti-social behaviour associated with the use of electric bikes and scooters in Ashford constituency.

Answer



Dame Diana Johnson
Labour
Kingston upon Hull North and Cottingham


 Commons

Answered on

21 October 2024
Tackling anti-social behaviour is a top priority for this Government, and a key part of our Safer Streets Mission to take back our streets. The Government will give police the powers they need to take illegal, dangerous and antisocial vehicles off the streets for good and quickly destroy the vehicles they seize from offenders. We will set out more information in due course.

Answered by

Home Office





Named day
Named day questions only occur in the House of Commons. The MP tabling the question specifies the date on which they should receive an answer. MPs may not table more than five named day questions on a single day.

Catapult offences

Recorded incidents across Kent, 2018 to 2022

AREA	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Ashford	38	41	21	48	49	21
Canterbury	7	10	3	7	11	3
Dartford	6	6	7	10	9	1
Dover	6	5	3	6	5	1
Folk & Hythe	0	3	0	1	0	1
Gravesham	5	4	4	5	6	2
Maidstone	24	26	20	31	31	13
Medway	7	8	13	15	19	9
Sevenoaks	14	14	4	11	27	14
Swale	10	10	3	15	20	16
Thanet	0	2	2	2	0	1
Ton & Mall	15	12	5	9	12	1
Tun Wells	13	12	6	9	12	5
Total	145	153	91	169	201	88

Source:
Kent Police
FOI for
January 1,
2018 to
December
31, 2022

*To June 26

With the support of the Special Constabulary, teams have recently been out in our rural areas conducting speed checks and we have also been working with your local Speedwatch schemes.

Again, if they had been here, you could have directed them to your fears and great concerns about speed through areas of concern.

Just a few routine checks at key times could have eased this problem with discussions with you the council.

The focus of our neighbourhood teams on tackling town centre issues continues. I was pleased that the survey results supported our observations that street drinking related anti-social behaviour is much reduced following months of focused work to tackle this problem. We have enhanced our town centre teams and increased our visible patrolling of the night-time economy – working closely with businesses, Ashford Partnership Against Crime, Ashford Borough Council and other invested partners to formulate strategies for real change to embedded issues in our town centre.

Monitor results and quality assure outcomes.

This is just some examples of the work we are doing, and I'm very pleased to announce that with the neighbourhood model now embedded we are able to begin expanding the number of ward clusters. This will mean the beat officers will be covering less wards, which will help us improve the quality of service to your parishes. I also expect that this will improve our ability to attend meetings more frequently.

The launch of this model was JUNE 2023. I won't labour we have not seen the police at any meetings.

The PCC launched this policing model for Kent Police with the words "Based on Peelian Principles, that is to say Neighbourhood Policing would become the base for how Kent was policed going forwards.

I personally feel Ashford Police have missed so many chances to engage with the communities and their elected representatives.

My team and I are committed to improving the safety of Ashford and we welcome your feedback and any support to continue the efforts to tackle the matters that really concern residents. Positively, the Ashford district has seen a 12% reduction in anti-social behaviour over the past 12 months (from April 2025) – one of the most significant reductions in Kent. I wanted to reassure you though that we are continuing to listen and are acting on the communities' concerns.

There must be actions to match these words. We have passed the 2nd anniversary of the launch and to date no officers have engaged at council meetings.

Many councils may not even be able to name their Beat Officer. I hope in the Ashford District, that continues to grow, we can develop a much better working relationship with our local officers

If not, it is Kent Police missing out as we try to go forward.

The new Police Sergeants have been a breath of fresh air to this policing model

Sergeant Edge and Sergeant Bushell head up the Beat Team and the Task team respectively

OTHER ISSUES

Whilst targeting e-scooters it must also be borne in mind I have run extensive campaigns on safety of fires occurring when these machines are being charged.



Please continue to contact us through the CSU email account (for non-emergency matters), which is monitored by our Beat Officer Sergeant Dan Edge and his team.

Regards

Simon Johnson.



Protecting and serving the people of Kent

DI 12614 Simon Johnson

Ashford Community Safety Unit

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It will be my intention to bring this report back to Council in September 2025 after the main summer period where we can quality assure the statements of the police and measure the delivered outcomes and results.

As always thank you all for your support and backing.

I look forward towards the summer crime prevention I will run, and then the rest of a busy 2025.

Thank you

Peter

Peter New

Community Neighbourhood Watch.

