

Community Safety Partner Updates



April 2024

Community Safety Update and Events

Community Safety Partnership



On 18 April 2024, the annual in person Community Safety Partnership event was held at the Quarterhouse attended by over 65 partner agencies.

Scott Butler, along with various partners including Kent Police and KCC, worked on developing the annual strategic assessment to create next year's action plan.



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Prevent Gaming Bus

Over the last few weeks, members of the Prevent team have been speaking to primary school pupils about online safety whilst the children explored the Gaming Bus.

On 16 April 2024, they were at the Folkestone Academy where they were joined by colleagues from Community Safety including Kent Police. They listened to the pupils regarding situations and comments that might make them feel uncomfortable. In addition, they advised the young people on how to keep safe while gaming by only playing with friends and people they know rather than strangers.



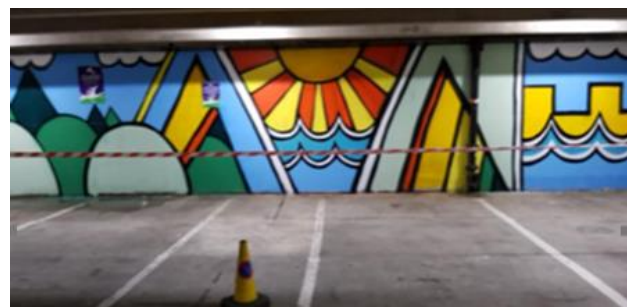
Pupils played a range of games, including FIFA, Minecraft, Spongebob, Pal World, Rayman and racing games, amongst others, as well as some arcade-style games.

This was a great engagement opportunity to talk to students about online spaces.

Sandgate Road Car Park

A mural has been painted in the Sandgate Road Car Park as a way of preventing the walls being covered in graffiti.

Community Safety worked with Sunflower House and Kent Arts Trust was commissioned to produce the mural.



Community Safety Operation

On 5 April, Community Safety had a stand located outside Folkestone Town Hall along with the Urban Pastors for the launch of the Safer Streets initiative.

The team handed out 50 safety items and highlighted all the resources available.

Later on during the evening from 9pm until 1am, Scott Butler from Community Safety along with Folkestone & Hythe District Council's

licensing officers accompanied Kent Police in the town visiting many of the local licensed establishments. The town's licensing officer PC Pringle and drugs dog Hudson with his handler were among the resources brought in.

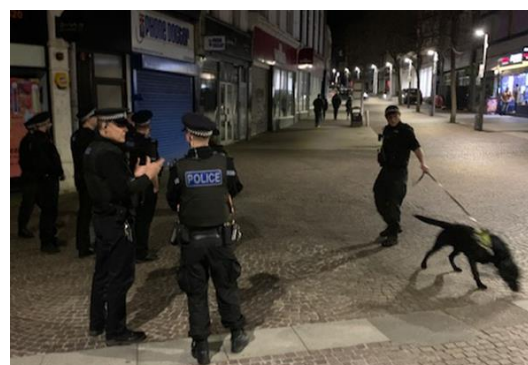


Hudson was taken into pubs and venues around the town centre, leading to the seizure of suspected illegal drugs and issued community resolutions, which is a warning letter and if individuals are caught with drugs on them, will be arrested.

Officers also engaged with bar staff, security staff and customers, explaining what they were doing and why they were there.

During the evening, officers were called to the Tontine Street area following a report of teenagers swinging on a car park barrier. The group was located, spoken to, and identified and an investigation into criminal damage is ongoing.

Concerns were also raised about the welfare of a man in The Leas area. He was located by patrols and officers made sure he was safe.



Future Skills Wellbeing Garden



Tara Liam from Community Safety visited the [FutureSkills](#) wellbeing garden based at Whitfield in Dover on 24 April 2024.

Tara met with Andrew Dennis the founder of Future Skills in 2023 along with his wife Carol Clayson. The organisation provides free training and City & Guilds qualifications to improve employment opportunities and financial prospects.

Future Skills is based in Dover and Folkestone, and anyone is welcomed to visit the garden. The

organisation has helped so many people on their journey to success and employment.



Folkestone Talks

On 25 April, the Community Safety Unit and Environmental Enforcement officers attended the Turner Free School along with Cllr Mike Blakemore and Cllr Polly Blakemore

Community Safety and Enforcement Officers engaged with around 40 pupils.



Tara Liam from Community Safety spoke about her role and handed out leaflets and safety advice. The two Enforcement Officers provided an overview about their roles and their work to reduce dog fouling, fly-tipping and littering.

Spring Well Event 23 May 2024

The Spring Well events are community events taking place in May and July for residents to come and speak directly with organisations about issues that matter to them.

The first event is on 23 May 2024 from 10am to 1pm at Harbour Church.

Representatives from KCC, the NHS, Kent Fire and Rescue, Kent Police, Rainbow Centre, Future Skills, E.On Energy, and many more will be in attendance discussing topics like mental health, welfare support, housing and safety.

The Summer Well event will be on 16 July from 10am to 1pm at Cheriton Baptist Church.

Local Engagement Meeting – 23 May 2024

The next Local Engagement will be on 23 May from 6pm, when the Community Safety team will be accompanying Kent Police at Three Hill Sports Park.

This initiative from Kent Police invites residents to attend and have their say about community safety issues where they live regarding crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Spring Well Event

Showcasing all the great community work being done throughout the district

Speak to us at:
Harbour Church
130 Canterbury Road
Folkestone
CT19 5NR



MAY 23
10am-1pm

Join us and our partner agencies along with other members of your local area to speak about issues that matter to you



Local Engagement Meeting

Join us for community safety updates from Kent Police and Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Speak to us at:
Three Hills Sports Park
Cheriton Road
Folkestone
CT19 5JU



MAY 23
6pm

Ask questions and find out more about our work to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in your area



Partner Updates

Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

The [ViolenceReductionUnit](#) also known as VRU addresses the causes of violence and aim to support those involved and impacted by violence.



Case Study: known as JT.

Background:

JT came to the attention of the police in July 2023 after being reported missing. Intelligence suggested he was at risk of exploitation and involvement in drug dealing in the Folkestone District.

Intervention:

After offending, JT was assigned a youth offending worker and a social worker. However, he failed to engage in education and refused to discuss his behaviour, which worsened over time, leading to his involvement in focus deterrence initiatives.

Further Intervention:

Additional support was allocated from various teams including the Adolescent Response Team, Violence Reduction Unit, Child-Centred Team, and the Missing Child and Exploitation Team. One of the workers, demonstrated to JT the risks he faced, leading JT to slowly engage and discuss his situation.

Progress:

JT began attending all his appointments with the workers, removing himself from risk. He started discussing the dangers he had placed himself in and identified the peers who influenced his offending behaviour.

Complicating Factor:

A complicating factor in JT's case was his inconsistent parent, who struggled with decision-making and setting boundaries, this is being addressed and additional support was offered to provide courses and help to be consistent.

Learning Points:

- Consistent attendance and showing genuine care by professionals reassured and encouraged JT.
- Early engagement is crucial for effective disruption of negative behaviours.

Outcome:

JT is now back in school and regularly attends a club funded by the VRU. He has even been selected for a regional team, showing significant positive progress in his life and a significant reduction in harm to the individual and the surrounding community.

This was the first (FD) Focus Deterrence (FD known as Focus Deterrence is where VRU pull all their resources and all agencies to rally together and focus deterrence to

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engage and divert) case for Kent and Medway and an excellent example of partnership working and engagement with an individual and a family network to make significant changes in their life pathways, improving personal safety and community safety.

Kent Police



Community Engagement drop in dates

Every ward in the district has a monthly surgery hosted by the local Beat Officer. It is about identifying problems, fostering relationships and safer communities.

The details of these events can be found on the Kent Police website in the “Your Area” ([Your area | Kent Police](#)) page.

Enter your postcode which will bring up your Ward area.

Go to Meetings and Events which will take you to when your next beat officer will be conducting. There is also some useful statistical information.



Additionally, if you want to start receiving alerts to My Community Voice, [register your details](#), tell Community Voice how you would like to be contacted and the topics and issues that matter to you.

The alerts will come to you via email, text or voice note. If you have any information about an appeal, then you can message the team back through the alert.

Comments and thoughts are welcomed. Clicking on the 'reply' link within a message will send your reply to the person that sent the message and your local policing team.



£6.7 million lost to Ticket Fraud in 2023

New data released today by Action Fraud reveals £6.7 million was lost to ticket fraud last year. <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/ticketfraud>

Action Fraud, the national fraud and cybercrime reporting service, has launched a ticket fraud awareness campaign, warning people to be alert to fraudsters trying to catch out people planning for popular and sold-out events. Last year more than 8,700 people reported they had been a victim ticket fraud, with a total of £6.7 million lost. This works out to an average loss of £772 per victim.

How to protect yourself from ticket fraud:

- Only buy tickets from the venue's box office, the promoter, an official agent or a well-known and reputable ticket exchange site.
- Avoid paying for tickets by bank transfer, especially if buying from someone unknown. Credit card or payment services such as PayPal give you a better chance of recovering the money if you become a victim of fraud.
- The password you use for your email account, as well as any other accounts you use to purchase tickets, should be different from all your other passwords. Use three random words to create a strong and memorable password, and [enable 2-step verification \(2SV\)](#).
- Be wary of unsolicited emails, texts or adverts offering unbelievably good deals on tickets.
- Is the vendor a member of Society of Ticket Agents and Retailers (STAR)? If they are, the company has signed up to their strict governing standards. STAR also offers an approved Alternative Dispute Resolution service to help customers with outstanding complaints. For more information visit star.org.uk/buy_safe.

Report ticket fraud

If you feel at all suspicious, report the email to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) at report@phishing.gov.uk. For more advice on how to stay secure online, please visit cyberaware.gov.uk.

Find out how to protect yourself from fraud: <https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk>

If you live in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and have been a victim of fraud or cybercrime, report it at www.actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, victims of fraud and cybercrime should report to Police Scotland on 101.

Thefts at cash machines warning

Officers investigating reported thefts at cash machines are advising people to be vigilant.



At around 11.00 am on Saturday 20 April 2024, a woman reported that an ATM in Ashford High Street failed to return her bank card. She was then approached by two men who advised her to put another card into the machine.

The victim then went into the bank branch, during which time money was stolen from her account. A similar incident in the same area was reported on the same day. An investigation is under way and detectives have since received reports of similar incidents in Dymchurch High Street on Sunday 21 April and in Dymchurch Road, New Romney on Monday 22 April.

Warning

While enquiries continue, officers are advising those using cash machines in the area to be vigilant to potential thieves.

Place your hand over the ATM when withdrawing cash ensuring no one can see your PIN number and that no one is standing behind or too close.



Don't use a cash machine if you feel unsafe.

Check the machine for any false fronts or devices which may be attached to it before you use it and don't put bank cards into machines which look suspicious.

Report anything unusual to the police as soon as possible.'

Anyone with information about the incidents is urged to call Kent Police on 01843 222289 quoting reference 46/64023/24.

Off road Bikes

Kent Police have received queries from Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators regarding anti-social motorbike/off-road bike use. It is important that these incidents are reported to the police to help them tackle this crime and make our streets safer, however you may be unsure what the law is or what details to report. Please read through the below information and share this with your members, friends, family and local community.

Criminal activity involving off-road bikes is an issue across the UK. There have been incidents of off-road bikes being ridden illegally on roads, in parks, on pavements

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and in other public spaces, resulting in injuries to both riders and members of the public. There has also been damage to parks, fields, green spaces and private property.

Off-road bikes and the law

Off-road vehicles include moto-cross, trial and endurance bikes, mini motos, quad bikes and some other mechanically propelled bikes.

Off-road bikes are specially designed for off-road use only, and NOT for road use. They must comply with [Construction and Use regulations 1986](#), and be built to a specific standard in order to be ridden on a public road.

If the bike is NOT built to this specific standard, you can only ride an off-road bike legally if it is on private land and you have the landowner's permission, and ride with due care and attention.

Land owned by the local council is **not** classed as private land. Council land includes beaches, promenades, car parks, playgrounds and parks.

Riders not complying with the above face having bikes seized and could be banned from driving, fined, or sent to prison.

Quad bikes

Most quad bikes do not meet road safety standards and therefore cannot be used on the road.

They need to be registered, taxed and have an MOT (if needed) to be used on the road, and the rider needs to check with the manufacturer if their quad bike has been approved for road use.

More information can be found on the government's website: [Quad Bikes: the rules](#).

E-bikes

These electric bikes are known as 'electrically assisted pedal cycles' (EAPCs).

You can ride an electric bike if you're 14 or over, as long as it meets certain requirements.

If a bike meets EAPC requirements, it's classed as a normal pedal bike. This means you can ride it on cycle paths and anywhere else pedal bikes are allowed. Meeting these requirements also means you do not need a licence to ride one and it does not need to be registered, taxed or insured.

More information can be found on the government's website: [Electric bikes: licensing, tax and insurance](#).

E-scooters

Electric scooters can only be used on private land with the landowner's permission. It is illegal to use them on public roads, on pavements, in cycle lanes and in pedestrian-only areas.

The government are trialling a rental e-scooter scheme where it's legal to use a rental e-scooter on a public road or cycle lane in the trial areas, provided you have the correct licence and follow road traffic regulations.

Further information on these trials can be found on the government's website: [e-scooter trial guidance](#).

Help keep your community safe and tell the police what you know about bikes being used:

- The exact location, date and time the bike/s were seen.
- What direction they were travelling in
- Anything distinctive about the bike - colour, make, did the bike have a number plate?
- Where are they stored?
- Who is riding them illegally, what were they wearing, what do they look like?

Remember: you can always report what you know to Crimestoppers 100% **anonymously**.

[Giving information anonymously | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](#)

Some people may regard this kind of bike use as harmless fun. However, regular antisocial vehicle use can have a wider impact on a neighbourhood or community.

The effect of dangerous or reckless use of a vehicle can lead to criminal damage of roads, other vehicles and surrounding property.

Drivers and riders also risk injuring themselves, other road users, cyclists and pedestrians as they do not have full control of their vehicle and their full attention on their surroundings.

Driving or riding in this way can also be used as a form of intimidation, either to other road users or the community. Loud noise from engines and music, and deliberately creating large amounts of exhaust or tyre smoke can also be seen as an aggressive act.

Finally, the use of motorbikes and mopeds to rob (or 'snatch') mobile phones and valuables from pedestrians on pavements is a key concern to the police. So anyone acting recklessly on this kind of vehicle is likely to draw police attention.

Call **999** if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed.
- someone is in immediate danger or harm.
- property is in danger of being damaged.
- a serious disruption to the public is likely.

For non-emergency enquiries use our Live Chat facility, found on the Kent Police website in the bottom right corner of every screen.

[Home | Kent Police](#)

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Fraud / Scams

Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

Email Account Take Over – URGENT FRAUD ALERT

Reports of people's emails have been reported compromised. The criminals will take over the victims account and then impersonate them. They will email people within their friends list stating that they are ill or injured and cannot get out of the house and need to get a gift card for a family members birthday and ask them to do this for them and to email the gift card code. However, it is a scam. If you get an email like this apply ABC and never Assume or Believe a message asking for money is genuine and Confirm by calling the person and speak to them.

Additionally, you can check to see if your email address has been compromised by checking on the below publicly available website –

[Have I Been Pwned: Check if your email has been compromised in a data breach](#)

You just need to type your email address in and the website will tell you if criminals possibly have access to your email account.

The following is advice from National Cyber Security Centre on how to create a strong password –

[Three random words - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)

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.

Preventing fraud

Together,
let's stop
scammers.



Remember, ABC:



never Assume



never Believe



always Confirm

Get the latest
scam advice:



@KentPoliceECU

New Published Reports

Child sexual abuse online

Source: IWF

Date: 23 April 2024

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has published its annual report analysing the trends and data around child sexual abuse material online in 2023. Findings from reports to the IWF show: 275,652 webpages were confirmed as containing child sexual abuse imagery; there was a 25% increase in the number of images involving children aged 7-10 years old; and of the 275,652 webpages actioned during 2023, 92% were assessed as containing 'self-generated' imagery.

Read the news story: [Under sixes manipulated into 'disturbing' sexual abuse while playing alone online as IWF says regulation can't wait](#)

Read the report: [IWF Annual Report 2023](#)

See also on NSPCC Learning

> [Protecting children from sexual abuse](#)

Online safety

Source: Ofcom

Date: 19 April 2024

Ofcom has published two reports looking at children's media habits and attitudes across the UK in 2023/24. The findings from the children and parents: media use and attitudes project are based on online surveys with children and parents. The children's media lives longitudinal study involved interviews with and observation of 21 8- to 17-year-olds. Key findings from both reports show: 5- to 7-year-olds are becoming increasingly present online; compared to boys, girls are more likely to say they have experienced 'nasty or hurtful' interactions in some online spaces; children across all age groups perform potentially risky behaviours online; children's caution about what they share publicly online has increased; and young people are finding it harder to identify what information to trust on social media compared to last year.

Read the news story: [A window into young children's online worlds](#)

Read the Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2024: [Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2024](#)

Read the Children's media lives report: [Children's media lives](#)

See also on NSPCC Learning

> [Online safety](#)

If you have any information that you would like us to include within any future updates, please email the details to community.safety@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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