



# WATCHWORD

NEWSLETTER OF THE THANET NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION

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## News and Views from the Editor's desk

Unfortunately we return in this issue to the vexed question of police support for NW liaison. As most of you will know this has increasingly become a matter of considerable concern, particularly in regard to the workload in our Liaison Office. To recap, some years ago we had a full time police WLO dedicated to Thanet; this later became a shared police WLO with the Canterbury District and then was further reduced by combining the post with allround support for police volunteers. Most recently, following the decision to re-structure Kent police administration into 3 divisions, Thanet and Canterbury were effectively merged with Dover, Shepway and Ashford to form what is now know as the East Kent Division. At the same time, the number of dedicated WLOs was reduced to three with the one responsible for the East Kent Division being based in Folkestone. I will not waste time or space unnecessarily by questioning why that location was chosen rather than Canterbury which would have been more central for a very large geographical division and would therefore have made an extremely difficult post just that little bit more practical for the incumbent, as well as more accessible for the many Liaison Offices involved. The latest twist in the tale is that the new WLO (or as they are now known VWLO) based in Maidstone has resigned and our VWLO has decided to take up the offer of transfer there in order to reduce her daily commute from home near Chatham (in the circumstances, a fully understandable decision). We are therefore currently somewhat in limbo, relying on continued valuable but more remote help from our former VWLO until someone new is appointed to the post.

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

For all NW enquiries Dial Watch Liaison Office 01843 222214 or email: [thanet.nhw@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:thanet.nhw@kent.pnn.police.uk)

Dial 999 when a crime is in progress and Police presence is needed, or in an emergency (but only if there is a real emergency)

Dial 101 to report non-urgent crime, incidents of anti-social behaviour, or for general enquiries

Dial 0800 555111 (Crimestoppers) to report crime or suspicious activity in complete anonymity

Dial 01843 577000 (Thanet District Council) to report fly-tipping, noise nuisance, graffiti, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles and parking problems

Dial 08454 040506 for Kent Trading Standards to report doorstep callers, rogue tradesmen etc.

Dial 08458 247247 - 24 hour helpline for Kent County Council

Dial 0300 123 2040 to report fraud or a scam

## USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.thanetneighbourhoodwatch.org](http://www.thanetneighbourhoodwatch.org)

[www.kcnwa.org](http://www.kcnwa.org) (Kent NW Association)

[www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) (National NW)

[www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)

[www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) (national police website)

[www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent)

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

[www.hoax-slayer.com](http://www.hoax-slayer.com) (latest info on scams)

[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org) (safety on the internet)

[www.actionfraud.org.uk](http://www.actionfraud.org.uk) for info/report fraud

[www.thanet.gov.uk](http://www.thanet.gov.uk) (Thanet District Council)

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) - consumer rights and advice

## Recent news from Kent Police.

### Officers bring down drugs network

A 28-year-old man from Bexleyheath has been jailed for six years for his involvement in a large scale cannabis production network across three counties. Three others were also jailed for two years for the same offence. The sentences were a result of an investigation by the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate - one of the largest divisions in UK policing dedicated to tackling serious and organised crime.

### Local man evicted

Following concerns from local residents, a man who had been behaving anti-socially in and around the block of flats where he lived in Margate, has been evicted. He has also been sentenced to a conditional discharge which means he will be put before the courts immediately if he commits another related offence within the next six months.

### Fish bait fly-tipper prosecuted

A Margate man who fly-tipped potentially hazardous fish bait by-products into the watercourse that runs alongside Marsh Farm Road has been fined £3,000 after a joint investigation by Kent Police and Thanet District Council. He must also pay £100 costs, £225 clean-up costs and £15 victim surcharge.

### Justice Seen Justice Done

A 39-year-old man from Cliftonville, Margate, has been sentenced to 30 days in prison for driving while disqualified and driving with no insurance. The incident happened on 17 August 2012.

A 40-year-old man from Cliftonville, Margate has been sentenced to a total of 140 days in prison for assaulting a police officer and being drunk and disorderly. It follows an incident in Canterbury High Street on 7 September.

Read about others who have been brought to justice before the courts recently at [www.kent.police.uk/justice](http://www.kent.police.uk/justice). Alternatively, log onto [www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk) and sign up to receive regular email newsletters with similar information.

**[www.thanetneighbourhoodwatch.org](http://www.thanetneighbourhoodwatch.org) is the official website of Thanet Neighbourhood Watch. We try to keep the site up to date for general information, current news and forthcoming area meetings and encourage all of you to take time to log on to it and trawl its content . We would also welcome any comments you may have.**

**AGE UK – the organisation which incorporates the former Age Concern and Help The Aged.**

**This new merged organisation has available a number of useful leaflets on home and personal security as well as on a number of related topics relevant to those in later life. Two booklets, “Staying Safe” and “Avoiding Scams”, seem to us to be of particular value not only for the vulnerable and elderly but also as good, sensible, well-designed advice for the broad spectrum of the general public. Free advice is available on 0800 169 65 65 or on [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

### Trustworthy Neighbours Top for Home Security

One in four homeowners believes that trustworthy neighbours are the key to feeling secure at home, according to the latest consumer survey from the Association of British Insurers (ABI).

The result of this survey underline the objectives of Neighbourhood Watch, to empower residents to create safe, friendly and pleasant places to live.

However, the research also suggests that many are putting themselves at risk needlessly, with nearly three in ten respondents admitting to leaving doors unlocked and windows open when going out briefly, despite the fact that 42% of those questioned recognised the importance of good locks.

Over a third of all burglaries are opportunistic and the ABI points out that failing to secure doors and windows is an open invitation to thieves, particularly but not solely during the summer months. The findings also indicate that around a quarter of households have no contents insurance at all.

Clearly there is a lot which many of us need to learn in regard to our own home and personal security.

### Latest Scams (September 2012)

**(a) young men calling door to door selling goods (dusters, tea towels etc) which they claim were to help fund their college courses and that they are sponsored by the Army. It is unlikely that they are attending college much less sponsored by the Army. Do not part with your money and be generally wary of dealing with traders calling at your door. In this particular case the goods on offer were of poor quality with exorbitant prices.**

**(b) a further telephone scam connected to Payment Protection Claims (PPI), where you receive a call out of the blue to the effect that you are owed an amount of money which is ready to be sent to you. You are told that an upfront administration fee is required before the money can be released and are asked to purchase a Ukash voucher for £99. Do not under any circumstances have any truck with this sort of approach. If you believe that you may be due for compensation for a mis-sold PPI all you need to do is to contact the company involved, who will advise you of any possible claim you have and how to make it.**

**(c) Kent Trading Standards are warning consumers NOT to rely on the printed version of the new-style MoT certificates when buying cars after a 38 year old man was arrested by Cleveland Police on suspicion of forging MoT test certificates with intent to deceive.**

**There is also the possibility that unscrupulous traders, and service repair outlets, could agree to MoT a vehicle and charge accordingly without having carried out the test at all. The new-style MoT test certificates can be fraudulently reproduced and there is a lack of awareness about the fact that paper documents are no longer proof of existence of a valid MoT certificate.**

## **News of a potentially valuable project designed to protect young people aged 11 – 16**

### **STATUS - Who are we and what do we do?**

Status 'Stay Safe and Tell Us', is an online platform being developed which will complement a series of under 16s events. The platform will have a strong emphasis on safety, privacy and community.

STATUS is a partnership project between Kent Police, CXK, Kent Peoples Trust and Amelix.

The online platform will serve as a safe online community for young people aged 11-16 to communicate with one another, engage in relevant content and act as a signposting service for many issues relevant to this age group, for example; bullying, school and exam pressure, future and careers, family life etc.

Status will hold a series of events around Kent which will focus on creating an anti-drinking and anti-bullying, safe environment for young people to socialise and spend time with friends and create a community which promotes the ideals of having fun but in a safe and secure way.

The events will run across 6 areas of Kent and initially the events will run 4 times a year in each venue. The venues will be agreed with all partners in advance and will be dressed and kitted out with sound and lighting as well as a stage to give the impression to young people they are going into somewhere special. Each event will also have support from trained external security staff with the correct adult to child ratio and enhanced CRB checked Amelix staff with medical support from Red Cross. At each STATUS event there will be a DJ set from Status' own 'DJ Stable', as well as performances from special guests and up and coming music stars. There will also be large screens at the event where video messages from well known celebrities will be played to the young people to give the events even more credibility.

Each event will also give the partners a chance to interact and sign post young people attending the events to various services or distribute key messages or information to the young people. There will be an additional space for other organisations approved by the key partners to exhibit at the events.