



NW NEWS

West Kent

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Tel No. ....

# Watchout

The Voice of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association

Issue 67

*"Security through awareness"*

Spring 2025

## Warning following cryptocurrency fraud reports across Kent

Kent residents are being warned to be vigilant against cryptocurrency fraud attempts following reports from nine victims.

The victims had a combined loss of over £1 million after their personal information was shared online following a data leak.

Personal details were taken from the data leak and used to generate fake Action Fraud reports.

Once these reports were created the victims were then contacted by someone claiming to be a police officer reassuring them that an investigation had been launched.

The officer then told them to expect a call from the crypto wallet host.

A second call was then received from someone claiming to be a security officer asking the victim for their seed phrase which is a 12 or 24-word phrase which allows users to control a cryptocurrency wallet.

With that information the fraudsters were able to rebuild the wallet, steal the funds and transfer them so that they can't be recovered.

Detective Sergeant Darryll Paulson said: "I urge anyone contacted by someone claiming to be from a crypto host, or

from the police, not to give out any personal details.

"Scammers are becoming increasingly more calculating in their methods to defraud their victims into losing a substantial amount of money and will often create urgency in the situation, such as telling them they need to act now to stop their funds from being stolen.

"Don't be embarrassed about reporting a scam, it only takes a second to be distracted and fall victim."

### Further advice:

- If you are not confident a person who calls you claiming to be a security or police officer is genuine, ask to take their details and end the call.
- Wait for at least five minutes for the call to clear and then contact 101, or 999 in an emergency. A call handler will be able to verify whether your caller was genuine.
- For more information about fraud and advice on how to avoid becoming a victim visit: [www.kent.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud](http://www.kent.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud).
- Press Officer at Kent Police.

## Mini Cadet Social project

Recently, Hildenborough Mini Cadets carried out their social project to tackle speeding vehicles outside the school on Riding Lane. The children all worked hard on posters to make drivers aware of their concerns and stood out by the road displaying them.

Fourteen drivers were stopped and spoken to by the children although no-one was speeding. The attitude of the drivers

was fantastic as was that of passers-by, who encouraged the Cadets. KCC Councillor, Mr Rayner, joined us and took a letter from the Cadets back to KCC requesting a 20 mile per hour speed limit on Riding Lane.

We are so very proud of them "Great Job Cadets".

Many thanks to PCSO Toni Matthews of Kent Police for this article.



## Don't Forget the Wildlife

With many hedgerows and also hedges in peoples gardens slowly disappearing please remember the wild life. Make sure there is plenty of water and food for the birds to eat and drink, especially when they have their young to feed.

I did not see as many butterflies or bees in my garden last year, this is very sad. Please if possible grow flowers that attract the bees and butterflies and maybe we may see some ladybirds as well. Hopefully we may see the arrival of the Swifts from abroad very soon.

Please leave food out for our hedgehogs when they emerge from hibernation to help give them a good start.

# More Consideration is Needed for Horses on Our Roads

Horses can easily be frightened by passing cars. There have been a number of reports of road rage involving cars trying to pass ridden horses.

Over 3,500 incidents involving horses and vehicles have been reported nationally from 2019 to the end of 2024.

Of the incidents more than 80% were caused by cars passing too close or driving too fast around horses.

Sadly, over 130 horses and 40 riders have lost their lives in road accidents over the past decade.

This is extremely upsetting to hear. The campaign "Pass Wide and Slow" advocates for safer practices on the road, urging drivers to pass horses at a safe distance and speed. The campaign also

encourages horse riders to report any incidents involving dangerous driving to the police. This will also help raise awareness and contribute to the statistics used in improving road safety measures.

Please be more considerate when driving on our roads, by doing so lives can certainly be saved.



# Protect yourself from Holiday fraud: don't let fraudsters trip you up this summer

People looking to snap up online holiday deals ahead of the summer are being warned to stay extra alert and do their research before booking their getaways, as new data reveals victims lost a total of over £11 million to holiday fraud last year.

Action Fraud, the national fraud and cybercrime reporting service, has launched a holiday fraud campaign, urging the public who are looking to snap up their next holiday deals online to look out for suspiciously enticing offers online, including on social media, and do their research before booking their getaways.

New data shows there were 6,066 reports of holiday fraud made to Action Fraud last year, with July recorded as the highest month of reporting with 647 reports.

Holiday makers lost a combined total of £11,183,957 in 2024, which is comparatively less than the £12.3 million lost in 2023. Despite, the drop in reported loss, the average loss per victim remains at similar levels, with £1,851 the average in 2023 and £1,844 in 2024.

## What can you do to protect yourself from holiday fraud?

*Check the travel company is legitimate:*

About to book a holiday? Do some research first to check that the company is legitimate, especially if you haven't used them before. Use consumer websites, or reviews from people (or organisations) that you trust.

*Look for the logos:* Look for the **ABTA**, **ABTOT** or **ATOL** logos on the company's

website. If you're unsure, you can use the links below to verify membership:

- ABTA – <https://www.abta.com>
- ABTOT – <https://www.abtot.com/abtot-members-directory/>
- ATOL – <https://www.atol.org>

*Use a credit card to pay:* Use a credit card for payments (if you have one). Many of these protect online purchases as part of the **Consumer Credit Act**. *Only provide required details at checkout:* When making your payment, only fill in the mandatory details (often marked with an asterisk) such as your address. Unless you think you'll become a regular customer, *don't* create an account for the store. *Keep your accounts secure:* Create a strong and unique password for your email. If 2-step verification is available, always enable it. *Watch out for suspicious links:* Whether it's in an email or social media post, be wary of promotions for unbelievably good holiday offers. If you receive a suspicious email, report it by forwarding it to: **report@phishing.gov.uk**.

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

**If you've lost money or provided your financial information to someone, notify your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, call Police Scotland on 101.**

# Single-use vapes

Single use vapes should be recycled, not be thrown into your general waste bins where they will land up going to landfill or be incinerated. Disposable vapes should be disposed of safely by taking them to recycling facilities or drop-off locations.

Do check with the shop where you bought the vapes and ask if they take back the used ones. You can also ask your local council where they can be disposed off safely.

It was recently reported on television that a dog had smelt a strawberry smelling vape which was lying on the ground, and had promptly swallowed it.

The dog became ill and when checked out by the vet, was found to have a vape in its stomach. The vet had to operate to remove the item. Thankfully in this case the dog survived.

Please be considerate if you use a vape and dispose of it in the correct manner. Thank you.

JT's vape shop in Quarry Hill Road, Tonbridge, Kent does have a container for used vapes.



# Dog Owners

I recently took a dog for a walk and was quite horrified to see 5 little black bags containing animal faeces just thrown on the ground. I turned a corner to find another one tied up on to a tree.

Please can we ask that dog owners be more responsible for their dogs faeces and take the bag home with them, or pop it into a dustbin that the local Council have distributed around for animal faeces.

# Welcome

West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee would like to welcome Samuel Brooke's on to our committee as a Watch Liaison Officer.

He will be working alongside our Watch Liaison Officer Pria Webster. He has worked for Kent Police for a good few years now and has had lots of experience. He has great enthusiasm which we are sure will bring some good ideas to help us move forward. We all look forward to working alongside him.

# Hillary Allen

It is with great sadness that we have to tell you that Hillary Allen passed away in November 2024.

Hilary was a very active member of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Committee. She was always very enthusiastic about any new ideas we were working on. Hilary ran a scheme in the Weald, near Sevenoaks.

Hilary also organised an event at the Himalayan Gardens, Riverhill Sevenoaks,

where we had Kent Police Officers and their dogs, showing their skills, it was a splendid display, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who saw those wonderful dogs in action.

Hilary later retired from the Committee, but her enthusiasm will always be remembered, she was a wonderfully kind person.

The photo below shows Hilary to the left of the photo, with Julie Walker, editor and Marguerite Bernard, treasurer at the Himalayan Gardens Event.



# When You Go Away

1. Please make sure your premises are secured every time you leave, even if for only a short time.
2. Make sure your alarm, if you have one is set properly.
3. Put lights on a timer switch to make your house look occupied. You can also buy timer switches for the radio and /or your television.
4. Ask a neighbour to push any mail through your letterbox and to take in any deliveries for you.
5. Remember to cancel your milk, newspapers and other deliveries if you can.
6. Ask a neighbour to park on your drive so that passers-by assume someone is at home.
7. Don't leave your curtains drawn during the day. Ask a family member or close friend with a key to pop in and draw them for you in the evening and open them in the morning.
8. If you have a lawn it may be a good idea to mow it before you go away.
9. It is a good idea not to display your home address on your luggage.
10. Don't publish your absence on the internet. Status updates comments and photos on social media can give away the fact that you are out of your home for an extended period.

Enjoy your holiday and by taking these extra steps will help to keep your home secure for your return.

# Victory in Europe, VE Day 8th May 1945



Victory in Europe is the day celebrating the formal acceptance by the Allies of World War II of Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces on Tuesday 8th May 1945. It marked the official surrender of all German operations.

Since it is now 80 years since the end of the war, it is hoped that everyone will be encouraged to hold street parties of celebration throughout the day, also in gardens at home, churches, villages, town halls, clubs and hotels.

At 9am hopefully raising the unique VE DAY flag where possible.

People are being encouraged to light Beacons and Lamp Lights of Peace at 9.30pm.

It is a day to remember with pride all the servicemen and women who took part during the war. This also includes the Land Army lasses who did an amazing job while our men and women were away fighting.

We must never forget and pray that we will not be involved in any more wars.



*Celebrate VE Day 80th Anniversary on 8th May 2025*



# NSPCC Helps To Keep Children Safe

We aim to prevent abuse before it happens. We know that child abuse is preventable. That's why much of our work is focused on empowering children with the knowledge they need to stop abuse before it happens.

Talking PANTS is just another way we can teach children to stay safe. The NSPCC has already helped make over 600,000 children safer through talking PANTS, but they want to reach even more children.

Teaching children important messages, like 'your body belongs to you', is a vital way to keep them safe from abuse. We know it's a conversation that some parents may find daunting, but talk PANTS has been created specifically to make it easy, age-appropriate and fun too.

There are a range of guides, videos and quizzes that help parents share these crucial messages about staying safe from sexual abuse, all with the help of their friendly dinosaur Pantosaurus. Plus they are no scary words and you don't have to mention sex.

The idea of talking about PANTS, explains:

- P.** Privates are private;
- A.** Always remember your body belongs to you;
- N.** No means No;
- T.** Talk about secrets that upset you;
- S.** Speak up, someone can help you.

If you would like more information about the talking PANTS, and to watch the video contact: [nspcc.org.U.K./pants](http://nspcc.org.U.K./pants).



## Drone To Home: Reuniting Pets with Their Families

Imagine the heartbreak of losing a beloved pet—the anxiety, the sleepless nights, and the unanswered questions. At Drone To Home, we understand how much pets mean to their families, and we're here to help. Our National charity is dedicated to finding missing dogs and animals, combining compassion with cutting-edge technology to bring them home.

We have reunited pets from Cornwall to Edinburgh and in 5 years have reunited almost 7000 dogs and animals with their owners.

With our fleet of drones and skilled volunteers, we conduct thorough searches in areas where pets have gone missing. Our drones are equipped with advanced imaging capabilities, allowing us to cover large areas quickly and efficiently. Whether it's scanning dense woods or wide-open fields, we leave no stone unturned in the quest to reunite families with their furry friends.

Every search effort is fuelled by the determination and empathy of our volunteers, who dedicate their time and energy to bringing pets back to where they belong.

Thanks to the incredible support of donors and volunteers, Drone To Home has made countless happy reunions possible. Each success story reminds us why we do what we do: because pets are family, and no one should face the pain of losing them alone.

If you'd like to get involved, whether through volunteering or donating, please reach out. Together, we can continue our mission of hope, compassion, and connection—one paw at a time.

With our dedicated phone number and amazing phone volunteers we help guide and advise at the moment you need it most. Our experience enables us to give you the benefit, of our knowledge and help quickly in almost all scenarios.

To find out more please visit:  
[www.dronetohome.org.uk](http://www.dronetohome.org.uk)  
Tel: 0330 124 2004.



**The Tonbridge Town Centre Team would like to remind people that E-Scooters should not be used in a public place**  
**If officers come across and are able to stop the rider, they will be seized.**

## Who's Who On The Executive Committee?

*Peter Rolington, Chairman.*  
e-mail: [peter.rolington@gmail.com](mailto:peter.rolington@gmail.com)

*Secretary Stephen Robinson, Tunbridge Wells.*  
e-mail: [stephen.srobinson@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.srobinson@gmail.com)

*Julie Walker, Editor – Tel: 01732 771075*  
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*Marguerite Bernard, Treasurer*

*Jenny Woodgate.*  
e-mail: [jenny.woodgate2@gmail.com](mailto:jenny.woodgate2@gmail.com)

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e-mail: [abrahms@yahoo.co.U.K](mailto:abrahms@yahoo.co.U.K)

*Cllr Laura Manston Sevenoaks.*  
e-mail: [cllr.manston@sevenoaks.gov.U.K](mailto:cllr.manston@sevenoaks.gov.U.K)

## Committee members

*Pria Webster, Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, for Kent Police.*  
e-mail: [pria.webster@kent.police.uk](mailto:pria.webster@kent.police.uk)

*Samual Brookes, Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, for Kent Police.*  
e-mail: [Samual.Brookes@kent.police.U.K](mailto:Samual.Brookes@kent.police.U.K)

## Other Useful Numbers

*Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Unit*  
– Tel: 01732 844522

*Tunbridge Wells Crime Reduction Unit*  
– Tel: 01892 526121

*Kent Trading Standards – Tel: 03454 040506*

*Sevenoaks Community Safety Partnership*  
– Tel: 01732 227000  
[community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

*Tonbridge & Malling Community Safety Partnership*  
– Tel: 01732 844522 [msp@tmhc.gov.uk](mailto:msp@tmhc.gov.uk)

*Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership*  
– Tel: 01892 526121  
[communitysafety@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

## BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

**Text 61016 to report non-emergency incidents on trains or on the tube.**

**Dial 0800 405040 to give more information. A 999 call is guaranteed a quick response. For Crimestoppers dial 0800 555 111.**

## e-watch.co

There have been problems recently with members not receiving e-watch's twice weekly reports. If you are experiencing problems receiving e-watch updates, please remember that past issues can be found on the e-watch.co website at: [e-watch.co/updates.php](http://e-watch.co/updates.php).

## Make a note

**When contacting the Police in West Kent**  
**Emergency only 999**

**Kent Police 101**

**Is for reporting non-urgent crime, suspicious incidents or to contact your Neighbourhood Policing Team.**  
**Calls to both these numbers are free.**