



Watching Brief

The Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter

Winter 2011 / 12

New Commander At East Division Is A Familiar Face For Canterbury Residents

Neighbourhood policing is at the heart of Kent Police according to the Commander of the new East Division, Chief Superintendent Mark Nottage. Mr Nottage will be a familiar face to many Canterbury residents – he was the East Kent Area Commander before the new Kent Police model came into force on 16 November. Now at the helm of the whole division, which covers the districts of Canterbury, Thanet, Shepway, Dover and Ashford, the father-of-three is a firm believer that he and his team can make our communities even safer places to live and work. He said: “The police service as a whole is going through a period of unprecedented change and people will be aware that Kent Police has to deliver savings of around £50 million over four years. In order to achieve these savings we have redesigned our policing model and residents will be pleased to learn that neighbourhood policing has never been more important. There are more neighbourhood officers on the streets of Kent and they now have a broader role, which includes investigating crimes and attending scheduled calls – that is non-emergency appointments. Under the new model neighbourhood officers are the single point of contact for victims. They deal with and investigate, from beginning to end, the majority of the incidents that they attend - whether it’s a crime, road traffic collision or problem with anti-

social behaviour. Under the old structure different units dealt with different aspects of an investigation. We believe the new structure will provide victims with a more seamless service. And with the increase in neighbourhood officers, there is an increased presence on the streets of Kent. Each district has a dedicated Chief Inspector and each ward has one named police community support officer and at least one PC.” Mr Nottage, who joined Kent Police 16 years ago aged 21, said he was both pleased and honoured to serve as Divisional Commander. He explained: “Having lived, worked and studied in this area for many years I know the issues and challenges we face in the years ahead. My number one priority is tackling crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour and I will be relentless in pursuing the people who bring most harm to our communities. There are determined criminals out there, but time and time again we prove that we are even more determined than they are. Residents demand high standards from their police service, and rightly so. They expect us:- to turn up when we’re needed; find, arrest and bring to justice persistent offenders; and to provide timely updates on the progress of our investigations. That won’t change but I also fully recognise that a key element of our work with partners must be to reduce the demand through prevention, and hopefully before

it ever becomes a matter for the police. This is where the support of organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch is so key. I have been bowled over at the positive impact voluntary organisations have on our communities and I’ll continue to invest my personal time and energy supporting the most effective ones. There is already so much good work being done across the division and it is my aim to build on those strong foundations.” **Editor’s note:** for more news, advice and information from Kent Police, visit www.kent.police.uk, follow ‘kent_police’ on Twitter or search ‘Kent Police’ on Facebook. We are delighted to confirm that CI Steve Barlow remains as the Canterbury District Commander. The details of all neighbourhood officers are displayed on the Kent Police website – simply enter your postcode into the “Your neighbourhood” box on the home page and click “Go”!



**Chief Superintendent
Mark Nottage**

Chairman's Message – David Hayward

Nearly one quarter of all households in the Canterbury District are now a part of an NHW scheme – and our aim is to keep increasing that number both for all the benefits that will bring to our members and also the even greater representative voice that this will give us on important matters within the Canterbury Community Safety Partnership.

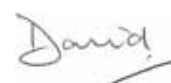
We are delighted when new schemes open, when new Co-ordinators volunteer to take over existing schemes, and when existing Co-ordinators are prepared to enlarge their schemes into new neighbouring roads. Apart from those schemes mentioned elsewhere in this issue, we are also currently working hard to support particular scheme development across the District in Whitstable, Beltinge, Sturry,

Hersden, Adisham and Woolage Green through initiatives on the part of Kent Police, Canterbury City Council, KCC Wardens and also contacts made by C&D Committee members at various public events.

However, we are always saddened when schemes have to close down – usually because there is no-one prepared to take over the central, Co-ordinator role. We are sad not just for the scheme members, who will no longer benefit from the 'strength' of NHW membership, but also for the Co-ordinators themselves, some of whom may valiantly have been running their scheme on their own for many years. Of course, we know that it can sometimes be very difficult to find people to help run a scheme but, as mentioned in a previous "WB", the best way to try to ensure the sustainability of your scheme

is ideally to be running it with others from the earliest possible time and not just when some 'crisis' situation arises. Alternatively, or in addition, getting to know nearby Co-ordinators of other schemes might be your 'life saver' – the "local groups" idea mentioned elsewhere as part of the latest Co-ordinator telephone survey.

Finally, as always, very many thanks for all your NHW efforts in 2011 and every best wish for 2012 – when I am sure that our cumulative "eyes and ears" will be at least as important as before to the continuing safety and good order of our communities. We look forward to seeing a good number of you and your guests at this year's Conference / AGM on Sat 17th March and being able to thank you again in person!



C&DNHWA Growth Since Last Newsletter

The Committee offers a warm welcome to the following new/resurrected/enlarged schemes and their Co-ordinators:

Woolage Village: new scheme – Ray Wilson

Thistle Drive, Whitstable: new scheme – Jason Gilbert

Bekesbourne Rd, Bridge: new Co-ordinator – Dr. Stuart Field

Giles Lane, Canterbury: new Co-ordinator – Jack O'Brien

Clifton Gdns & Westgate Court Ave (rest of): enlarged scheme – Julia Fullick

St Stephen's, Canterbury: enlarged scheme – Sue Langdown

St Michael's, Canterbury: enlarged scheme – Terry Westgate

St Mary's, Tankerton: enlarged scheme – David Hayward

We also thank those previous Co-ordinators from whom some of the above have now taken over for all their work on behalf of their neighbours and our Association.

CO-ORDINATORS ARTICLES:

Co-ordinator Health Check

By the time that you receive this edition of Watching Brief we will be commencing the 2012 co-ordinator telephone survey. The last one, carried out in 2010, provided the Association with vital information to both update our records and guide the work of the Committee during

the past two years. The format of this latest initiative is similar to that of its predecessor, with questions aimed at helping us to help you. One particular area that we want to explore this time is the potential to set up more local groups - you might recall that we featured an

article last winter explaining the benefits gained by Chestfield co-ordinators following the inaugural meeting of their pastoral group. The survey questions should only take a few minutes to answer, so we are hoping that, once again, we get a good response when we call.

I Don't Believe It!!

Whilst Victor Meldrew, (he of the BBC1 sitcom 'One Foot In The Grave' that is), might find it difficult to believe just how much our NHW Volunteers do for us, we're hoping that you won't! The Volunteers, just in case you didn't know, are the gentle folk that ensure that we receive timely notices on the Kent County Messaging System (KCMS) to warn us about scams and crimes in our area. The team of four ladies and one gent have collectively clocked up an amazing 34 years of unpaid dedication to the NHW Office, which was formally based at Nackington Road Police Station in Canterbury, but now resides at Herne Bay Police Station. The longest serving member, Gerta, has over 12 years experience to her credit. Each gives up at least one morning

a week gallantly sifting through 300 or more police reports to identify the incidents about which we need to know. Then, having found them, they systematically decipher the official 'police speak' to present the information in a format that we will find useful. Whilst generic warnings from Trading Standards are sent to everyone, police messages have to be sorted into one of nine geographical areas to ensure that we only receive the bits pertinent to our local neighbourhoods. This means, for the most part, formulating from scratch the text that we see in our familiar daily reports. That alone would keep them busy enough you would think, but it is only part of the job. Having put together all of the e-mail messages for us 'technophobes' they

then set about recording the same information by voice mail, for those that haven't got computers. While doing all that they also answer our phone queries and meet the demands of callers wishing to purchase home security items. In addition Brenda keeps our scheme contact details up to date on the system. It's not a job for the faint hearted, but thank goodness this mighty little band of stalwarts is willing to do it for us. For without them we Co-ordinators would simply not be able to function. Oh, and of course, in addition to all of the above they have each somehow found time and energy for other NHW roles too - as Co-ordinators, Committee Members or both!!



Gerta

Patricia

Brenda

Kathy

Ivan

Considerations When Closing a NHW Scheme – If All Else Fails . . .

Occasionally the Association becomes aware of a scheme which is inactive and about to close. In such situations we offer to work with members to ensure that all possible alternatives are fully explored before officially accepting defeat. When the options run out, however, we are on hand to assist with the practicalities of closure, particularly the removal of NHW signs and provision of advice regarding dispersal of any monies

still held by the scheme. In the case of the latter, experience has shown that it can be difficult to liberate funds deposited in bank and building society accounts once a scheme is no longer in existence. Then there is the issue of what to do with the cash. Sometimes roads within the scheme are adopted by a nearby co-ordinator, in which case the financial proceeds of the closing scheme could be transferred. Often though this is

not the case and it is not practical to return money to the individuals who might have donated it over the years. In such circumstances the Association can offer to hold the funds in trust – in readiness for any new scheme which might eventually emerge in the area. If your scheme ever reaches the sad position of contemplating closure, please feel free to seek advice on the above issues via the NHW Office or the Association website.

Don't Forget..... 2012 Conference and AGM: Sat 17th March

The Association's Annual Conference and AGM are coming up, so put a note in your diary right now to remind you to keep free the morning of 17th March – again at Christ Church University. The 2012 event promises to be every bit as good as that of

last year's, with speakers delivering presentations on themes that we think you will find highly interesting. Some of the details are still being finalised just as this edition of Watching Brief is being written so we can't 'spill the beans' with all the detail here, but rest

assured – it'll be released very soon so keep an keen eye on KCMS messages for more information. Your formal invitations should also be with you in the near future if indeed not already received.

NEWS FOR SCHEME MEMBERS:

Canterbury – A Hotspot For Winter Deaths!

The Annual Public Health Report 2010, published by Kent County Council and the NHS, suggests that excess winter deaths (defined by the Office for National Statistics as the difference between the number of deaths during December–March and the average for the remainder of the year) account for perhaps an extra 240 deaths in Kent for every one degree Celsius that the outdoor temperature falls below the winter average. Statistically most of the deaths occur as a result of cardiovascular, circulatory or respiratory disease. Older people (the over 75s) with these as underlying conditions, are, naturally, at greatest risk. What the report goes on to identify, however, is more surprising – that relative deprivation in Kent is not necessarily linked with excess winter mortality, and that areas which have the highest mortality ratios often appear to be some of the most affluent. Data at local authority level shows that:- Canterbury consistently has the highest excess winter death ratio in the County, whilst Dover has the lowest; and that the Swalecliffe area of Whitstable falls below the district average whilst its, supposedly, more affluent neighbour Chestfield has the highest excess winter death ratio in the whole County. The report suggests that a hidden poverty factor in older populations could provide one possible explanation i.e. where an individual may be “asset rich” (through having what is now a high value property) but relatively “income poor”. A single, retired person living in a larger property that is difficult and expensive to heat may be particularly vulnerable to ailments which are exacerbated by low winter temperatures simply because they cannot afford to heat their home adequately. Having acknowledged the problem the report’s authors recommend a staged, partnership approach to:- identify those at risk; assist them in understanding the problems they face; and encourage them to do something about it. It is understood that GPs would be able to identify people vulnerable to health problems caused by low temperatures and operate a system to refer patients to appropriate agencies for further support, which might include advice on:- grants to improve energy efficiency in the home; income benefit; and practical means for keeping warm and healthy in cold temperatures. So – wherever you are in the Canterbury District, please be aware of these very real winter concerns, and continue to promote and show true neighbourhood caring. For more information or to report concerns please contact Kent Community Warden Allan MacDonald on 0777 3396657

Newsletter Credits

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Other Useful Websites:

www.canterburycsp.org.uk -

www.gassaferegister.co.uk -

www.ucanpreventcrime.co.uk/NHW -

www.ageconcern.org.uk -

Community Safety Partnership

Legal gas fitter info.

C&DNHWA

Age Concern

www.doglost.co.uk -

www.firekills.gov.uk -

www.thinkuknow.co.uk -

Lost Dog Register.

Fire Safety site.

Child Internet safety.

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New Number for Police Non Emergency Calls

We used to phone 01622 690690 for non-emergency calls to the police but now it's even easier – just dial 101 to speak to the nearest police control centre – which in our case in Kent is at the Force HQ in Maidstone. Your call will then be directed to the most appropriate local Officer. Calls will cost no more than 15p, even from a mobile. Using 101 for situations which do not require an immediate police response helps keep 999 available for when there is an emergency.

