



Watching Brief

The Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter

Registered Charity No 1078269

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Chairman's Message – David Hayward

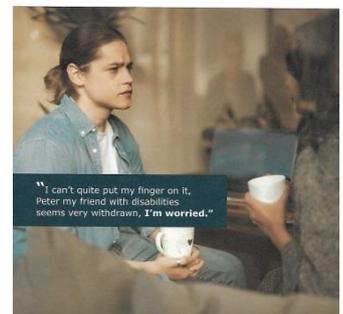
Welcome to this latest edition of our District Association newsletter – as always very kindly masterminded by our Vice Chair, Neal Fowler. We trust that you will find the content interesting and useful both for you and also your scheme members. In particular, we have been pleased to be able to include valuable information from some more of our coordinators – this time about issues relating to 'safeguarding' and also 'private' CCTV. We would always welcome further inputs from any coordinators so please do just make contact if you think that sharing your own experience(s) via "Watching Brief" would be of more general benefit around our NHW community. We continue to take as many opportunities as possible to spread the word about the benefits of NHW with a view to establishing new schemes, and our good friends and Community Safety Partners the PCSOs and KCC Wardens are especially happy to work with us on that. We are also delighted that our VWLO Adam Sackett continues to take such a proactive role in this activity. Starting new schemes is crucial so we are very pleased to welcome Yvonne Bridge and her scheme members in part of Joy Lane, Whitstable. Equally vital is finding willing souls to replace retiring coordinators of existing schemes, so welcome also to Steve Allen (Oxford Road Area, Canterbury); Peter Fisk (Hunters Forstal Central, Herne Bay), and Duarte Figueira with new Deputy Denise Bates (Invicta Road area, Whitstable).

One particular coordinator who is retiring this year is **Colin Chaston**. Colin has been involved locally with NHW for some 33 years both as the coordinator for Rough Common and also for many years as Chairman of our District Association. There is no doubt that Colin has excelled in both of these roles – indeed much of the current financial strength of the Association dates back to bids he successfully made to the Community Safety Partnership during his period as Chair – thankfully at a time when local authority budgets were better placed to assist than they are now. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Colin for so many years of really dedicated work on behalf of NHW in the District and also his extensive neighbourhood of Rough Common and to wish him well for the future. The really good news is that Colin has found a successor for his Rough Common role – so his hard work can now be continued by Matthew Trump, to whom we also extend a very warm welcome.

And finally – early notice: our 2020 Conference / AGM is on Sat 14th March (am) at the Canterbury Academy.

Safeguarding Policy's First Win For NHW

In the last edition of Watching Brief we advised our readership of the Association's new Safeguarding Policy, one aspect of which urges members to report concerns or suspicions that they may come across as a result of NHW activities. With the ink barely dry on our document we learned that it had been of assistance to one of our coordinators, who had been advised by a scheme member about a possible safeguarding issue affecting an elderly neighbour (who it was feared might be the victim of oppression by relatives allegedly trying to gain financial advantage). The concerns were reported to the KCC Safeguarding Team and the police, who forwarded the report on to their 'Vulnerable Intervention Officer' for investigation. Well done NHW! For those that may not yet have had chance to review the C&DNHWA Safeguarding Policy it can be found on our website at <http://www.ucanpreventcrime.co.uk/NHW/index.html>. Growing concerns about safeguarding issues in today's society have promoted formation of the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board, who launch a campaign between 7th - 11th October to encourage us all to recognise the different types of abuse / neglect and report any concerns we may have through established reporting channels: social.services@kent.gov.uk or on 03000 41 91 91 out of office hours. In all cases where someone is thought to be in immediate danger, the best thing to do is call 999 for the emergency services. Full information about Safeguarding Adults Week can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/safeguardingadultsweek



Worried about an adult?

For more information about adult abuse visit us: kent.gov.uk/safeguardingadultsweek

Noticing is not nosiness
#see it report it stop it



If you think someone is in imminent danger call 999 for the emergency services

CCTV In Residential Areas

CCTV has become something of a 'must have' for many security-conscious households and commercial premises these days, and of course it is also used widely by many authorities to monitor activity and trace criminals in public areas of our towns and cities, although rarely has it been used hitherto to cover purely residential streets. But that might be changing. The Association recently received a request from a Canterbury NHW coordinator asking for advice regarding provision of just such a system. Initially it was difficult to offer any information, being something that the Association hadn't encountered previously, but then we became aware of a new CCTV system covering residences in a village north of Canterbury. This primarily covers access to a private road but uses cameras, positioned on KCC lampposts, which also capture images of the adjacent public thoroughfare. A very helpful conversation with the residents' association responsible for the scheme ensued, the detail of which is given below for anyone else that might be considering CCTV for their community. It must be stressed that the inclusion of company details included in this article does not imply any form of recommendation or endorsement on the part of C&DNHWA. There is quite a lot to consider before CCTV can be installed in public areas. The first is identifying the right supplier for the equipment and finding suitable sites and power supplies for two cameras. KCC owned lampposts offer an obvious choice of position but agreed use of these incurs an initial registration fee of about £100 and an ongoing annual fee of about £30. The process of registration starts with completion of an '**Attachments to Illuminated Street Furniture on the Highway**' form obtainable from KCC Highways Department. If power from the lamppost is to be used for the cameras it obviously has to be paid for, so an account holder has to be nominated. But the supply can't be metered, so application for an '**Unmetered Supply Certificate (UMS)**' has to be made to UK Power Networks (once the cameras' power consumption has been provided from the installer). The UMS allows the applicant to get the formal go-ahead from KCC and open an account with an electricity company which can raise unmetered bills, EON Energy Ltd apparently is one of the few that do. Next a **G39 qualified electrical engineer** has to be tasked with making the connection between the lamppost supply and the camera, a firm called PSR Lighting & Signs Ltd, Ashford, Kent was used for this as they worked regularly with the suppliers of the CCTV system (Sunstone IP Systems Ltd of Herne Bay). Finally, the system had to be **registered with the Information Controller's Office** and **£1 million public liability insurance** had to be obtained to cover the cameras' use on public land. The cameras record 2/3 second video clips when movement is detected (they even pick up mice running over the road). Capacity allows for recordings to be stored for 6 to 10 days, with earliest recordings automatically overwritten when the system is full. . Images can be downloaded, in shot sections or whole days as required, to a laptop by standing under the cameras in question. It's quite easy to operate and cheap to run! Pictures are very clear, although in some lights they may need enhancing a little for police usage.



Reporting Graffiti Just Got A Bit Easier

Previous editions of Watching Brief have reported the efforts taken by Canterbury City Council (CCC) to tackle graffiti and improve the on-line reporting facilities provided on their webpage. Recent enhancements now allow use of GPS settings on mobile devices, and a facility to 'drop' a pin on their mapping tool, to identify exactly where problems exist. Photos can then be added to aid reporting. CCC will remove graffiti from your home free of charge up to four times a year. If the graffiti is on a business premise they will remove it at no charge up to twice a year. The Council are urging all of us to tell them about graffiti on play areas, public toilets and council property, but before doing so we are asked to check the map on their webpage to see if they are already aware. To check this out please go to: https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/info/20044/vandalism_and_graffiti/55/report_graffiti



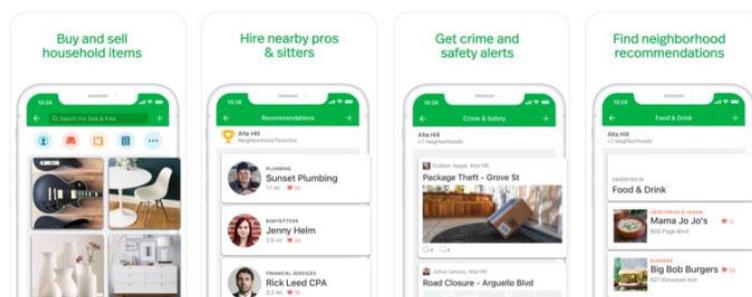
Who Can Be Trusted To Give Advice About Purchases Online?

When looking to buy a service or product online many of us will seek advice from those that have previously bought or used it. But is that still a safe thing to rely upon following recent allegations that fraudsters might be contacting social media influencers, based in the UK and abroad, offering them the opportunity to market a bogus product, service or investment opportunity in the hope that the general public will be influenced by their endorsement? The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau has received intelligence to suggest that fraudsters are presenting professional and credible pitches to the social media influencers in order to convince them to feature goods or services, for a fee, on their social media profiles in order to entice unsuspecting followers to sign up or make a purchase. Additionally, there appears to be evidence to suggest that fraudsters are using the names of well-known public figures, implying that their opportunity or product is endorsed by the figure when it is not. So shoppers and investors have been warned to be wary and not assume that an endorsement by celebrities, influencers or personalities necessarily means that an investment, product or service is genuine. The following advice has been issued to reduce the chances of being caught out by fraudsters:

- When purchasing goods from a company that is not known and trusted, carry out some simple research from independent review authorities, such as Trustpilot for example, and ask friends or family for advice before completing a purchase. The status of companies trading in the UK can be checked free of charge at Companies House: see <https://www.gov.uk/get-information-about-a-company> Companies online can, of course, though operate from anywhere in the world and checking out foreign firms can be much harder.
- Professional-looking websites, adverts or social media posts do not guarantee that an investment opportunity or product is genuine. Criminals can exploit the names of well-known brands or individuals to make them appear legitimate.
- Avoid paying for goods or services by bank transfer unless you know and trust the person or company. Payments via bank transfer offer you no protection if you become a victim of fraud. Instead, use your credit card or payment services such as PayPal as they offer you greater protection if you become a victim of fraud.

It's All Happening "Nextdoor"

NHW members (and other residents) across the district are being invited to sign up to an on-line community utility called *Nextdoor*. The idea is claimed to provide members with a local social media chat page on which they can learn about local events, trades persons and (according to their marketing material) security / crime issues / warnings. The facility is similar to one which existed some years ago called *Streetlife*, which at the time found considerable favour throughout the district. *Streetlife* was, however, sold to an American company in 2017 trading under the name of *Nextdoor*, which asked members for many more personal details than did *Streetlife*. Whereas *Streetlife* sought to protect personal identity by use of forenames coupled with a rough geographical location, *Nextdoor* publishes users' full names. The takeover attracted considerable concern in the media – for example see BBC newsfeed article dated 9 Feb 2017 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-38920906> Although registration to *Nextdoor* is free, the company's privacy statement and member agreement documentation make it clear that income is obtained through advertising, and crucially members must agree to their details being used outside of the EU, which could remove



some safeguards currently provided by Data Protection Legislation (GDPR) in UK and Europe. It is also apparent that *Nextdoor* member participation is not covered by English Law, so any dispute with the company would have to be conducted through the Irish legal system. Whilst the number of such disputes is unknown *Nextdoor* member feedback, published on the Trustpilot website, is extremely mixed with about 25% of

members claiming to be very dissatisfied, some expressing considerable concern about privacy handling procedures. **In view of the above information neither Canterbury & District NHW Association nor Kent County NW Association currently endorses Nextdoor.** The dilemma, however, is that some police forces are now starting to use the site to monitor incidence of criminal activity discussed by members, although at present Kent Police are not believed to be doing this. Whilst potentially useful, the best way to ensure that crime is correctly reported is by contacting the police personally to do it. If NHW members do sign up to *Nextdoor* we would also advise them to be very careful if commenting on issues concerning information initially imparted through the NHW system since it is not clear with whom such information might be shared.

Operation Castle Is Back In Time For Christmas

For several years now Kent Police have conducted an autumn/winter campaign to target burglars and provide advice to the public about risks of theft at this time of the year. With long winter evenings just around the corner, and increased consumer activity in the run up to Christmas, thieves will soon be on the lookout for easy pickings from homes and businesses that aren't being vigilant about security. As part of the national **Operation Castle** campaign there will be adverts and KCMS messages prompting us all to be prepared to think more carefully about the ways in which we can better protect ourselves from thieves. Simple actions such as closing the curtains when it gets dark, using timers to turn on lights when we're not in, not leaving expensive wrapped gifts on display under Christmas trees, checking the operation of security lighting and cameras, and keeping side / rear gates and sheds/garages locked when not in use all help to thwart the crooks.



Auto Thefts Still Rising

According to Office of National Statistics, latest available figures for England and Wales show a very significant increase (56%) in car thefts during 2017, compared with the previous year. In total 89,000 cases were recorded. So, why the sudden spike in thefts? Security experts seem to think that keyless theft, or "relay theft" as it's otherwise known, as well as OBD (on board diagnostic port) theft could be responsible. Worryingly it is relatively simple for tech-savvy criminals to obtain gadgets to commit this type of crime. Once a particular vehicle has been chosen, criminals use widely available signal relay devices to 'trick' the car into thinking the correct key is present and as soon as the thieves get access, all it takes is a touch of a button to start the engine and drive away. OBD theft uses technology plugged into the car's OBD port to disarm the alarm / immobiliser and allow the vehicle to be started by the push button start (keyless start). Whilst the simplicity of accessing a car can seem alarming, there are things that can be done to help prevent cars being stolen. Top tips from insurance companies include:

- **Make sure your car is locked:** You can do this by standing close to the car and pressing the "lock" button twice on your key fob. Ensuring that the lights flash should then confirm that the car is correctly deadlocked. Even if your car has keyless entry, physically locking the car this way helps to enhance its security.
- **Invest in a Faraday pouch:** A Faraday pouch is a simple but highly effective way of stopping thieves amplifying your key's signal. Once inside the pouch, its conductive fabric mesh lining stops the key fob's signal hitting the outside world. These are widely available online for under £10 and are a definite must-have in the defence against relay theft.
- **Keep your key fob stored safely:** It may seem obvious, but keeping your key fob (and the signal potential thieves want to amplify) away from doors and windows will make the process much tougher for them. This also has the added benefit that your keys or fob can't be hooked out through a letterbox. So find a suitable spot, perhaps a kitchen drawer or the like, to store your keys or fob and don't forget about security of spare keys, which are valuable to thieves even when the car is away from home.
- **Traditional car security is still a safe bet:** While perhaps seen as a bit 'old hat' in today's technology driven world, the right steering wheel lock is still a highly effective, last line of defence. Choosing a brightly-coloured, good quality lock should be enough to make thieves think twice. The *Stoplock Pro* is highly rated by many and is available from around £45 from online retailers. And if you have a gated driveway, lock the gate, especially at night.
- **Fit a tracking device:** If your prevention methods haven't been enough to stop thieves getting away with your car, the next best thing is to find out where they've taken it, so fitting an approved tracking device is something worth considering for a cost of about £150. And fitting a tracker might not just help catch vehicle thieves but also burglars, who often use stolen cars to commit further crime. A case in point was reported to the NHW community just a few weeks ago when a pair of thieves, who used stolen cars to commit more than 18 burglaries in East Kent, were jailed following use of information from a tracker in one of the cars, which led police straight to them.



Useful Contacts:

canterbury.nhw.association@gmail.com – C&DNHWA email
www.ucanpreventcrime.co.uk/NHW/ – C&DNHWA website
www.canterburycsp.org.uk/ – Community Safety Partnership
www.scambusters.org/ – Online Protection Advice
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/ – Trading-standards
[environmentalhelpdesk@canterbury.serco.com/](mailto:environmentalhelpdesk@canterbury.serco.com) – CCC Fly-Tipping
https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/info/20044/vandalism_and_graffiti/55/report_graffiti – Reporting Graffiti

www.hoax-slayer.com/ – Online Protection
www.ourwatch.org.uk/ – National NHW
www.firekills.gov.uk/ – Fire Safety
www.kent.police.uk/ – Kent Police
www.ageuk.org.uk/ – Age Concern, as was
www.actionfraud.police.uk/ – Report Fraud