Hello,

This is your March newsletter from PCSO’s Oliver Welch, Luke Jones and Samantha Sadler



As we enter this period of uncertainty, please be assured that Kent Police are working hard to keep the public safe amid the ongoing threat from the Coronavirus pandemic.

Please find following a message from our Chief Constable, Alan Pughsley:

*‘During what is understandably a worrying time for everyone, I want to reassure the public that Kent Police will continue to deliver the best possible service it can.*

*‘The public can be assured that just like other large organisations we are working hard behind the scenes to adapt to the current climate, to make sure officers and staff are able to protect our communities as well as stay protected themselves.*

*‘We’ve taken steps to split up departments like our Force Control Room and locate them at different sites across the county to make sure we have plenty of resilience. We’ve also got some support staff working from home. These arrangements have been in place for the last week and the public should not have seen a change in the service they have received.*

*‘Kent Police is made up of outstanding officers and staff, who have a great deal of experience in working under difficult and often unprecedented circumstances. I’ve always been impressed with their level of innovation and ability to go the extra mile, particularly during this time of unparalleled public health emergency. However, please be assured that we will absolutely continue to deliver on our day to day priorities and relentlessly pursue criminals, in support of victims and those most vulnerable in our society.*

*‘I also want to take this opportunity to urge the public to do their bit in tackling the spread of Covid-19 and adhere to the medical advice being issued by the Government and Public Health England.*

*‘We have seen reports over the weekend of large groups of people intentionally gathering to socialise both in Kent and across the rest of the UK and I would ask people to consider the implications of doing so not just on themselves, but others they will come into contact with.*

*‘Our officers have attended these incidents to reiterate the Government’s advice but it is an example of unnecessary contact for everyone involved, including the officers who could be using their time more effectively.*

*‘We want the public to be reassured we are doing all we can, but I would also like to thank those people who have shown generosity and compassion to my officers and staff in recent weeks.*

*‘From people realising it may be more appropriate to contact us via our website, to those businesses who have set aside times for emergency services personnel to get a few items of essential shopping; it is community spirit and sincerity like this that makes us so proud to serve our communities.’*

**NEW RULES ON STAYING AT HOME AND AWAY FROM OTHERS**

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the government is now (23 March 2020) introducing three new measures.

1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes;

2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces;

3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public.

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

These measures are effective immediately. The Government will look again at these measures in three weeks and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

**1. STAYING AT HOME**

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons.

* **Shopping for basic necessities**​, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
* **One form of exercise a day**, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
* **Any medical need**​, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
* **Travelling to and from work**​, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.

These four reasons are exceptions - even when doing these activities, you should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

These measures must be followed by everyone. Separate advice is available for individuals or households who are isolating​, and for the ​most vulnerable who need to be shielded​.

If you work in a critical sector outlined in this​guidance​, or your child has been identified as vulnerable, you can continue to take your children to school.​ Where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can be moved between their parents’ homes

**2. CLOSING NON-ESSENTIAL SHOPS AND PUBLIC SPACES**

Last week, the Government ordered certain businesses - including pubs, cinemas and theatres - to close.

The Government is now extending this requirement to a further set of businesses and other venues,

including:

* **all non-essential retail stores** - this will include clothing and electronics stores; hair, beauty and nail salons; and outdoor and indoor markets, excluding food markets,
* **libraries, community centres, and youth centres**​,
* **indoor and outdoor leisure facilities**​ such as bowling alleys, arcades and soft play facilities,
* **communal places within parks**​, such as playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms,
* **places of worship**, ​except for funerals attended by immediate families,
* **hotels, hostels, bed and breakfasts, campsites, caravan parks, and boarding houses for** commercial/leisure use (excluding permanent residents and key workers).

More detailed information can be found ​on the Government website​, [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Ffurther-businesses-and-premises-to-close&data=02%7C01%7CSamantha.Sadler%40kent.police.uk%7C6e94fedbab1f49a9c48908d7d00032ed%7Cf31b07f09cf940db964d6ff986a97e3d%7C0%7C0%7C637206571578870216&sdata=m6l7f0AhpoHx5yEljCwXMMcNVsSX1pnWDqZrC8f5Xy8%3D&reserved=0) including a full list of those businesses and other venues that must close. Businesses and other venues not on this list may remain open.

**3. STOPPING PUBLIC GATHERINGS**

To make sure people are staying at home and apart from each other, the Government is also ​**stopping all public gatherings of more than two people​.**

There are only two exceptions to this rule:

● **where the gathering is of a group of people who live togethe​r** - this means that a parent can, for example, take their children to the shops if there is no option to leave them at home.

● **where the gathering is essential for work purposes** - but workers should be trying to minimise all meetings and other gatherings in the workplace.

In addition, the Government is stopping social events, including weddings, baptisms and other religious ceremonies. This will exclude funerals, which can be attended by immediate family.

**DELIVERING THESE NEW MEASURES**

These measures will reduce our day to day contact with other people. They are a vital part of our efforts to reduce the rate of transmission of coronavirus.

**Every citizen is instructed to comply with these new measures.**

The Government will therefore be ensuring the police and other relevant authorities have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings where people do not comply.

They will initially last for the three weeks from 23 March, at which point the Government will look at them again and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

Please see the Government website at [https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fcoronavirus&data=02%7C01%7CSamantha.Sadler%40kent.police.uk%7C6e94fedbab1f49a9c48908d7d00032ed%7Cf31b07f09cf940db964d6ff986a97e3d%7C0%7C0%7C637206571578880207&sdata=m08GiRbSaJhWNT3bF2NSBhBvv98CblVSa6kUeiQPk1g%3D&reserved=0)  should you require further details.

Regrettably, the current situation may lead to an increase in certain types of crime. Please take this time to look at your home security. Also, if you have business premises please ensure that you have good security in place. Do not leave tools or other valuables in vehicles.

Please continue to look out for your neighbours, especially those who are elderly, vulnerable or live alone. This current situation can bring out the best in people, with many offering to help and support the vulnerable members of our communities. Whatsapp, Facebook and other networking sites are a great way to stay connected to those who are dear to us without out having to venture out. Obviously you can always pick up the phone!

Finally, I just want to leave you with John Apter’s, the Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales, response to the Prime Minister’s announcement with regards to the lockdown:

*“We are in unprecedented and uncertain times, with government advice frequently changing as COVID-19 affects more people.”*

*“Saving lives and protecting the public is the number one priority for us all; and at his time of national crisis it is essential that we all come together and play our part in doing so.”*

*“The practicalities of policing this lockdown will be challenging, but policing will do all it can to keep the public safe, but we need the public to support us. I ask that the public heed the advice and stay at home unless absolutely necessary. This will allow police officers to concentrate on keeping the streets safe and deal with all the regular calls we receive. This is about saving lives and supporting our NHS, I ask that the public gives us their support in this time of crisis."*

**Beware fraud and scams during Covid-19 pandemic fraud**

Criminals are using the Covid-19 pandemic to scam the public – don’t become a victim.

Law enforcement, government and private sectors partners are working together to encourage members of the public to be more vigilant against fraud, particularly about sharing their financial and personal information, as criminals seek to capitalise on the Covid-19 pandemic.

Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police.

They spend hours researching you for their scams, hoping you’ll let your guard down for just a moment.

**Stop**: Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

**Challenge**: Could it be fake? It’s ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

**Protect**: Contact your bank immediately if you think you’ve fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud\*.

Your bank or the police will NEVER ask you to transfer money or move it to a safe account.

**Once again many thanks to Peter New for his continuing support and contribution to our monthly newsletter**

Dear Readers

I am delighted to write to support the PCSO team and recently there has been some excellent work carried out in the Victoria Ward in both the new builds in Jemmett Road and in the existing quarters of the older part of Victoria Ward.

Recently however our world has changed and I am writing to you in the most strange of times and today most people are starting to work out how they will operate as individuals and as family units.

Along with my NHW colleagues we will be looking to provide as much guidance as possible to keep you and your property safe and secure.

We know the criminals will be even more desperate, we know chancers and opportunists will strike if we are off guard

I am looking to see a huge community spirit build on what we have already seen. Yes we read about the few selfish people, yes we read about those few evil people who will use coronavirus to rob the most vulnerable in our communities BUT and it is a huge BUT the good guys are in the massive majority. We can organise and prepare and we can ramp up our prevention.

At this time of year I would be out and about on the doorsteps enrolling people into Neighbourhood Watch,the more we are the stronger we are, but that style of recruitment is obviously on hold. I will be asking for people to join via email and complete the delivery of brochures and badges at a later date.

Let’s turn this confinement into a crime free time. Take the moments you now have to review all your home security, especially in parked cars,sheds, garages and outbuildings. The latter may be holding household supplies,criminals will know this.

Remember the criminals will be desperate and will up their attempts at crime. We must match those efforts to stay safe and secure to defeat them.

I have listed below the constant same reminders to be alert to, which still plague many other parts of the Ashford District.

The key areas are

1. Keep your main property as secure as possible at all times even if you are just popping out for the shopping or exercise walk.

2. Keep sheds,garages and any outbuildings as secure as possible as tools stolen from here can often be used to break into main homes. Thieves may target these types of premises even more than usual as they will hope families are holding a few extra household goods and supplies during this medical crisis.

3. Leave absolutely nothing on show in a parked vehicles especially last park up at night. Vans and commercial vehicles with tools left in them are especially vulnerable. Park those vehicles right tight up against garage doors so if the door was forced it cannot be opened wide enough for entry or removal of items.

4 Care with notes for delivery drivers. Many delivery companies have implemented ‘contactless deliveries’ and leaving parcels without signature, and hence drivers may well just leave parcels and packages outside homes. If you are expecting a delivery, be extra careful to ensure these are retrieved as quickly as possible, to minimise the risk of them being taken.

5 Care with bogus callers and distraction burglaries. Sadly these have even increased with persons using the coronavirus as an excuse to target people in their homes. They may use coronavirus as a reason to make out they are checking on the elderly or vulnerable

6 Be extra alert to scams by Landline telephones, mobiles,emails,letters and face to face on your door steps.

As with 5 above beware of any calls by phone,email or in person using the coronavirus as a reason to carry out criminal actions

7 Do not hand over any monies or bank cards etc to strangers offering to get shopping if you are in isolation due to the virus or self isolation as a precaution to protect your health.

To decent folk it is absolutely abhorrent that people could target vulnerable members of the community in these difficult times. They will!! To the criminal and selfish members of our community they will view this as a "business opportunity".

If you need the Police for anything like a crime in progress dial 999. to give the Police information or intelligence or indeed to tell the of something on a non urgent business then call 101.

Hopefully NHW can help to keep you CRIME FREE and FREE FROM THE FEAR OF BEING A VICTIM OF CRIME -Please join Neighbourhood Watch if you are not a member, it’s free and allows me to target right to you road or area with very specific advice, warnings or alerts

EMAIL ME ON [peternew1@aol.com](mailto:peternew1@aol.com)

For your support and backing I am extremely grateful. We will come through this difficult period.

Take care and stay safe, secure,alert and vigilant.

Peter

**Two people charged following murder in Ashford**

Detectives investigating the murder of a man in Ashford have charged two people.

On Saturday 14 March 2020, shortly before 12.30pm, police were called to a report of an assault in Brookfield Road where a 19-year-old man was found with injuries consistent with stab wounds and died at the scene.

A murder investigation is being carried out by officers from the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate who arrested four people in connection with the incident.

The Crown Prosecution Service has now authorised a charge of murder against a 17-year-old boy from Ashford. A second boy, aged 17, has been charged with assisting an offender.

Both teenagers have been remanded in custody and are due to appear at Medway Magistrates’ Court on Tuesday 17 March 2020.

Detectives continue to carry out a number of enquiries in the local area and have seized four knives, which they believe may be connected to the murder.

A 24-year-old man from Ashford, who was arrested on Saturday 14 March, remains on police bail until Monday 23 March. A 19-year-old man, also from Ashford, was arrested on Sunday 15 March and has been released on bail until Tuesday 7 April.

Detectives are continuing to appeal for people to come forward, who were in the area of Brookfield Road, near Clockhouse shortly before or after 12.27pm on Saturday 14 March. Motorists or cyclists are also asked to submit their dashcam footage.

Anyone with information is urged to call the appeal line on 01843 222289 quoting reference 14-651 or visit the Kent Police section of the Major Incident Public Reporting Site at [https://mipp.police.uk/](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmipp.police.uk%2F&data=02%7C01%7CSamantha.Sadler%40kent.police.uk%7C8c62e637879a40f5d97708d7cb41df49%7Cf31b07f09cf940db964d6ff986a97e3d%7C0%7C0%7C637201356087414199&sdata=xkjBaQ7BVOWBc0U5aIKB9lWQvrHMRJzQfBKdExFs1%2B0%3D&reserved=0).

You can also call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111 or complete the online form at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.crimestoppers-uk.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CSamantha.Sadler%40kent.police.uk%7C8c62e637879a40f5d97708d7cb41df49%7Cf31b07f09cf940db964d6ff986a97e3d%7C0%7C0%7C637201356087414199&sdata=S2US2lCJWPQqJGtMHxLpalOT1kwb7lPZLCqtpL%2BjkBk%3D&reserved=0)

During these uncertain times we have and will be continuing our work and patrols in the area, ensuring that we can deliver support and the best service to the community as we can.





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