



NW NEWS

West Kent

Watchout

The Voice of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association

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Your co-ordinator is:.....
Tel No.

Walking Through History:

Police Cadets Experience Battlefield Trips First-Hand

Volunteer Police Cadets from Kent are stepping back in time to gain a powerful, personal understanding of history through immersive battlefield visits across Europe.

From the historic town of Ypres in Belgium to the beaches of Normandy and the fields of Arnhem, these trips help young people connect with the past while building skills for the future.

Bringing History to Life

Rather than learning solely from textbooks, cadets are given the opportunity to walk the ground where history unfolded.

On a recent visit to the Ypres Salient, cadets explored key First World War sites including the Paschendaele Museum, Tyne Cot Cemetery – the largest Commonwealth war grave cemetery in the world – and the Menin Gate, where the names of thousands of missing soldiers are commemorated. They also visited Poperinge, where soldiers were once imprisoned and, in some cases, executed.

Helping bring this history vividly to life, battlefield guide Peter Rolington and a member of cadet staff wore authentic First World War British Army uniforms – with Peter portraying a captain and the staff member a private. This added a powerful visual element, allowing cadets to better understand rank, roles, and the realities faced by soldiers at the time.

"The idea of bringing the cadets over here . . . is that they get a sense of the horror of the Great War so that we can impress upon them how we need to remember the soldiers that gave the ultimate sacrifice," Peter explained.

"I've taken them around various sites of the Great War battlefields around Ypres."

A Lasting Impact on Young People

For many cadets, the experience is both eye-opening and emotional.

Cadet Belle described the early start to their journey and the significance of what they encountered:

"We got up really early to get on the Eurotunnel. We went to this war memorial where prisoners were held and executed in British Headquarters."

Cadet Isaac was struck by the scale of what they saw:

"We then went to the museum, then to the biggest military graveyard in the world, which surprised me, before heading out into Belgium to explore."

For Cadet Ronnie, the emotional impact stood alongside the enjoyment of the experience:

"It's been sometimes a bit emotional because . . . it's just overwhelming. Also really fun – I've made some new friends as well."

These reflections show how the trips balance remembrance with personal growth, giving cadets space to process what they see while forming lasting friendships.

Remembering the Past, Building the Future

A central aim of the programme is to ensure that the sacrifices of past generations are not forgotten.

Peter Rolington tried to reinforce this message:

"They've got a sense of the sacrifice that these people went through, and why they have to remember what happened even though it was over 100 years ago."

Visits to cemeteries and memorials, along with moments of quiet reflection, help embed this understanding in a meaningful and lasting way.

More Than Just One Trip

While the visit to Ypres is a standout experience, it forms part of a much wider programme of opportunities.

Cadet Manager Anne-Marie Moore explained this:

"Ypres isn't the only trip we take our cadets on. We also take them on residential trips to the Lake District, Snowdonia, Normandy, and Holland, as well as

countless other day trips to expand their horizons and inform the next generation of leaders."

These experiences are designed not just to educate, but to develop confidence, communication, and teamwork.

"It's an amazing opportunity for our young people to get away from home, communicate with other young people, make friends, and to learn fantastic skills. It's a huge confidence building opportunity for them as well," she added.

Strengthening Communities Through Young People

Although these trips take place overseas, their impact is felt back home.

Cadets return with a stronger sense of identity, a deeper understanding of sacrifice and service, and the confidence to contribute positively to their communities. For Neighbourhood Watch members, this highlights the positive role young people play in building safer, more connected communities.

By walking in the footsteps of those who came before them, Kent's Volunteer Police Cadets are not only keeping history alive – they are helping to shape the future.

Many thanks to Peter Rolington Chairman of West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee for this item.

Thanks also go to PC Tom Mckie, Programme Development Lead.



Peter Rolington dresses the part and looks very smart, while on his tours with the Cadets.

Kent victims lose over £750,000 to courier fraudsters in 2025

Telephone scammers posing as police officers or bank staff tricked Kent victims out of more than three quarters of a million pounds last year.

Courier fraud typically begins with an unexpected phone call from someone claiming to be a police officer or bank employee. Victims are told their account is at risk or that they are assisting with an investigation, before being instructed to withdraw money, purchase valuable items, or disclose sensitive information.

A courier is then sent, often by taxi, to collect property that can include jewellery, cash, bank cards and PINs. Anything handed over to the courier is stolen.

Kent Police is supporting a national campaign launched by City of London Police this week to raise awareness of the crime, which caused 86 victims in Kent to lose a total of £766,544.44 in 2025.

Detective Inspector Ian Sanderson of Kent Police said: "Fraudsters frequently target people who are elderly or vulnerable and may pretend to be from a trusted organisation before persuading them to hand over their valuables. They can also make contact by WhatsApp and pretend to be a relative in need of urgent cash.

"Between 1 and 10 June this year, we received 30 reports of this type of offence of which 18 were to residents in the east of the county. The criminals were successful in only three of the incidents managing to steal more than £9,300.

"We investigate reported frauds based on the evidence that is available and will always seek to track down those

responsible and bring them to justice. We also have specialist staff who pay regular visits to banks and community groups to educate people on the warning signs. In this way, we hope victims will feel confident to stop, question and deter suspicious callers."

Crime prevention advice

Your bank or the police will never call you to ask you to verify your personal details or PIN by phone, or offer to pick up your card by courier. Hang up, wait a few minutes and call your bank on a number you know to be genuine (such as the one on the back of your card) or by calling 159.

- The police or your bank will not contact you out of the blue to participate in an investigation; or send a courier to your home to collect bank cards, cash, or other valuable items. Any requests to do so are a scam.
- Do not trust the caller ID display on your phone – it is not proof of identification.
- Remember, staying cautious and sceptical can go a long way in protecting yourself from courier fraud. Take the time to verify information, seek advice from trusted sources, and never rush into making financial decisions under pressure.

If you think you have been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and call Report Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or via the website: reportfraud.police.uk

Tribute to PC Bradley Corke

Bradley Corke sadly died 21st March 2026, after being involved in a collision while on duty, he was only 27 years old.

His brother Nathan and friends Jamie and Joe climbed the 3 Peaks, Ben Nevis, Helvellyn and Snowdonia to raise funds. At each summit they released a lantern in memory of Bradley honouring his life courage and legacy.

PC Jonathan Rogers also ran in the London Marathon to raise funds in memory of his friend.

Hannah Kitney, Bradley's partner and best friend Katie Langley did a sky-dive from 12,000ft on July 21st to raise funds for the Kent, Surrey and Essex Air Ambulance, who did all they could to keep Bradley alive so his family and friends were able to say their last goodbyes, for which they are forever grateful.

Funds at present are in excess of £13,000. Congratulations to all who have helped raise this amazing amount of money and for the donations received from the public.

Our thoughts also go to Lewis Bodkin who was in the car with Bradley when it crashed. We wish him well and a good recovery.



Community Safety Unit Tonbridge

They continue to help the members of the public who attend their events in local venues which include in churches, also outside in the local shopping areas and even the old local Fire Station Cafe.

Members of the public are free to pop in and talk to the police officers about any worries or concerns that they may have in their area.

The dates and locations are advertised on www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk. We recommend residents sign up for it to stay in touch with local issues.

This is a valuable service and gives everyone chance to voice their worries or just enjoy a cuppa with the officers.

Lots of good feedback comes from these events, keep up the good work PC Jack Bridger and PC Phil Burns.



An excited school girl enjoys a visit from the local police who visited her school. Sitting with Big Ted in a police car was a real treat.

Domestic Abuse Services for Men

Domestic abuse of any kind is not acceptable whether it's a male or a female who is suffering.

Violence and abuse can be actual or threatening behaviour and may include psychological abuse e.g. slapping, pushing kicking, punching, verbal, rape and even stabbing!

DAVSS (Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services) is a charity that offers support with a confidential helpline. Highly trained volunteers offer help and support to victims of abuse.

If you are a male who is experiencing domestic abuse please call 0808 801 0327 or you can email them on <http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk>

Don't suffer in silence, please do get some help.

Volunteers Week 2026

We saw Kent Police celebrate volunteer's week this June (1st-7th). Across the week, the Force celebrated their volunteers with a number of collaborative celebrations and material. The week concluded with the first of its kind, a day of Volunteering Action. All areas of Citizens In Policing volunteering came together in one carefully orchestrated day of operational action, tackling divisional issues and providing support across Kent.

Combined 60 volunteers (ranging from Special Constables, Community Policing Volunteers, Police Support Volunteers, Cadet Leaders and Cadets), there was a hive of activity with highlights including 30 calls responded to across the county, 32 traffic offence reports issued in identified trouble areas, 1 arrest and a high-risk missing person located.

The day would not have been possible without the support of Kent Police volunteers – a special thank you to them.

If you are interested in volunteering please take a look at the Kent Police website or alternatively make contact with the Volunteers team: cip.enquiries@kent.police.uk.



The Therapy Dog is part of the Community Policing Volunteer team. They provide welfare support to officers, staff and volunteers – they also provide support to vulnerable persons attending court.

Swifts

These wonderful birds arrive from Equatorial and South Africa in late April early May to breed.

After successfully breeding they begin their long return journey back, starting July and August, with most having left us by August.

I have had great pleasure in watching these amazing little birds fly around in the sky. They seem very high in the sky one minute then seem to be whooshing past just overhead at quite a speed the next.

There does seem to be more around this year, which is good to know. I look forward to seeing them again next year. *ed!*



I have volunteered at Kent Association for the Blind for eleven years and run two social clubs

Over the years I have had a variety of roles such as befriending people, collecting the donation tins from shops and public houses and recording the news for Talking Newspapers – even with my Yorkshire accent!

I run two clubs. The Active Social Group meet once a month and do activities such as rifle shooting, archery and tomahawk throwing but we also do less strenuous things such as dragon boating at Mote Park, pottery and walking.

The other club are less mobile. We meet every week at the head office of K.A.B. and once a month we go to places such as a museum or garden centre.

I also volunteer on "Iris" a mobile sight centre which travels around the county advising people of services and organisations that can support them and also inform them of aids and technology which are available to assist them. One of the aims of the mobile sight centre is to promote eye health too.



I was very surprised to win the Spirit of KAB Award which is awarded, in their words, to "An individual who embodies a passion for KAB regularly going above and beyond to exemplify our values".

Congratulations to Marguerite Bernard a member of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee.



Don't pay the ransom:

Warning to organisations to protect themselves from ransomware

Businesses are being warned about ransomware attacks and how to report them, as new figures reveal 323 companies were targeted last year, equating to more than 26 attacks each month.

Data from Report Fraud reveals that 323 organisations reported a ransomware attack between April 2025 and March 2026. Of the reports received, more than 50 per cent were from Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (175 reports).

Ransomware remains one of the biggest threats to businesses and organisations across the UK. As part of a campaign launching today (29 June 2026), Report Fraud is urging everyone to protect themselves and their businesses from the active threat of ransomware attacks, especially SMEs. The campaign also highlights how important it is to report when an organisation is attacked by cyber criminals.

Analysis shows that reports made where the sector of the organisation was listed, the manufacturing industry (42 reports), scientific and technical sector (21 reports) and education sector (19 reports) have all been impacted.

How does it work?

A ransomware attack happens when cyber criminals, who are part of an organised crime group, find a vulnerability in a company's network to gain access, then establish control and plant malware into

the company's encryption software. The malware planted is designed to prevent a person or business from accessing a device and the data stored on it.

Once the malware is activated, it locks devices and access to data across the company's network and the cyber criminals behind the attack will then demand a ransom via an onscreen notification in exchange to decrypt the files or data held. The cyber criminals will often use an untraceable payment method, likely using a cryptocurrency.

What to do if you're under a ransomware attack

If you are a small or medium sized enterprise currently experiencing a ransomware attack, you should report it immediately by calling Report Fraud on 0300 123 2040. Report Fraud has a 24/7 phone line dedicated for businesses, charities or organisations who are under a cyber attack. Do not pay the ransom. The National Cyber Security Centre and UK law enforcement do not encourage, endorse or condone the payment of ransom demands. There is no guarantee that access can be regained to data held and devices could still be infected.

Take the right steps to ensure your organisation is protected against ransomware by looking at the advice and guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre: nscs.gov.uk.

Care for the elderly in the Heatwave

Due to climate change this kind of weather is something I think we all need to get used too. Weather conditions are definitely more extreme.

Please do look out for your elderly or vulnerable neighbours, and make sure they keep hydrated with plenty of water nearby for them to drink and check there is food to eat, sometimes they can stop eating, as they do not always feel hungry in hot weather.

Can I also ask that you make sure that their windows, doors and gates are secure when they go to bed at night, in case they have been left open in the heat of the day.

Hopefully by the time this newsletter is delivered we will have had some much wanted rain!

Dangers of Cold Water Swimming

Sadly many children and adults are drowning while swimming in cold water. Last year 202 died in rivers or reservoirs. On hot days some adults and many children think that it is safe to jump into rivers or locks for a swim, only to find the water much colder than they expected. They soon find themselves in trouble and many struggle to get out of the water.

Please teach our children the "Float to Live" technique. If they find themselves in trouble, ask them to lay on their backs making a star shape, heads held back and wait to be rescued.

Another heatwave is on the way and saving lives is the main priority please do talk to your children and explain the dangers of cold water swimming.

Who's Who On The Executive Committee?

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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

Tonbridge & Malling Community Safety Partnership
– Tel: 01732 844522 cspt@tmbc.gov.uk

Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership
– Tel: 01892 526121
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: <https://www.e-watch.co>.

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.