

Policing Kent

Ashford district

Annual 2011

INSIDE

CRIME DOWN AGAIN IN KENT

CRIME has continued to drop across Kent, with big reductions in burglary and car crime. Kent Police now solves more burglaries than any other police force in the country, and there has also been a reduction in this crime type: 14.3% or 388 fewer offences between April and September 2011. So far this year all crime has fallen by another 4.5%, making Kent one of the safest places to live.

Kent Police doubled the number of neighbourhood police officers from 16 November to provide a more visible local police presence right across the county. Police community support officers (PCSOs) are getting a range of new powers* to make them even more effective, and their working hours have changed to increase their availability when the public needs them the most.

Our neighbourhood policing teams are now easier than ever to contact with the introduction of a simple new phone number 101**. This will give you direct access to our switchboard which will quickly connect you to the right officers. This will complement the existing 999 service that should continue to be used when life is in danger or crime is in progress.

Chair of the Kent Police Authority Ann Barnes said 'We have been all over Kent talking to the public about what they want from their police force. They didn't have to be asked twice, and everywhere we went the answer was the same: get more officers on the beat focused on neighbourhood policing. We have listened, and that is exactly what Kent Police is doing.'

Chief Constable Ian Learmonth said 'Working at the heart of the community we serve, being out there in neighbourhoods tackling crime and disorder, is the bedrock of the policing service in Kent. I'm very proud of this force and I know you are too given the thousands of messages of support we received about how we policed the recent disorder that gripped the country. From top to bottom we put the public first – and I intend to keep it that way.'



There are now more ways than ever to receive information from the force – for regular updates, crime prevention advice and public information follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@kent_police) or visit our website: www.kent.police.uk

For more information on: *PCSO powers and the new **non-emergency number, 101, see **page 3**.

Overseeing your policing

www.kentpoliceauthority.gov.uk



Ann Barnes, Chair of the Kent Police Authority:

'Welcome to our Policing Kent newspaper for 2011.

'Through its pages you'll see how officers have been tackling crime and listening and responding to your concerns.

'In our front page feature we highlighted how we are transforming policing in the county. We know it is important to you, so we will deliver more neighbourhood officers on the streets of Kent. We have worked hard to ensure that while having to manage a 20% cut in our funding, we are committed to delivering a more efficient, cost-effective policing service.

'And we'll take this chance to remind you of the new 101 national number that has been introduced for non-urgent calls across the county.

'On page seven you can check how the force has performed against the high targets we set, as well as our aspirations for the year ahead.'

Ian Learmonth, Chief Constable of Kent Police:

'We are in the middle of a period of major change right across the police service. Kent Police is not exempt from that and we are significantly changing how we do business.

At the heart of what we will do is to ensure the public always come first. That is why we are doubling the number of officers in neighbourhood policing teams right across the county.

Being out in the community, listening to residents and keeping them safe from crime and disorder is what our policing model is built on. Police officers and PCSOs should be available when they are needed, and we are making improvements to our response to calls for help too.

Kent is a wonderful place, with low crime rates that continue to fall. There are 44,500 fewer victims of crime this year than there were five years ago. That has taken a lot of hard work from us – but we can only do it with your continued help and support. Know that you can count on us.'

CRIMINALS TAKE NOTE, CRIME DOES NOT PAY



Drug dealer's Range Rover goes on tour

POLICE are using a black Range Rover seized from a drug dealer to get the message across that criminal assets will be confiscated.

The vehicle, branded with messages that crime doesn't pay, is being used around the county to raise public awareness. At the end of the campaign proceeds from the vehicle will go to charity.

TWO money launderers have been jailed after police carried out their largest cash seizure.

Kent officers seized the £1.4 million haul in bank notes from a van that had been stopped at the Port of Dover as part of a routine search.

A sniffer dog helped locate hundreds of bundles of cash, which were destined for Morocco and had traces of drugs on them.

Detective Sergeant David Ecuver said: 'There were cardboard boxes and plastic sacks packed into the back of the van. It was a bit like peeling an onion, but we found the notes eventually and further forensic evidence was recovered from the wrappings.'

'The driver was arrested, charged and later convicted and sentenced to three and a half

years' imprisonment on appeal.

'We worked closely with Interpol and the Dutch Police to rearrest the passenger. He was subsequently sentenced to two and half years for money laundering offences.'

The same forensic evidence also led to a man being arrested at Portsmouth International Port, attempting to leave the UK with £11,000 in the boot of his car. This case is currently still ongoing.

At any one time the police will have a dozen investigations underway into money laundering and serious and organised crime.

DS Ecuver said: 'We will not only put those who commit crime behind bars but we will stop them benefiting and take away any money or assets gained through criminal activities.'

Olympic planning on track for 2012

KENT Police is preparing for the challenge of 100,000 extra people travelling through the county each day during the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Plans are underway to ensure the Port of Dover, the Channel Tunnel and Ebbsfleet International railway station –

which will give a direct route into Stratford next summer – and Kent's roads and coastline are kept safe.

Officers are also preparing to counter the potential threat of terrorists, protestors and organised criminals.

Kent has a big part to play before and during the Games:

the Olympic Torch will travel through the county, six days of cycling events will be hosted at Brands Hatch during the Paralympic Games and up to 42 pre-Games training camps will be located in Kent.

The coastline will be a significant part of police operations, with the Kent

and Essex joint marine unit keeping the River Medway and Thames Estuary secure.

Superintendent Martin Very said: 'Kent Police is very experienced in safely minimising any disruption associated with major events at the same time as providing a normal policing service.'

Crime levels set to drop thanks to new educational scheme

HUNDREDS of people with cannabis or alcohol issues will be given the choice of participating in a new scheme that could pave the way for a significant drop in crime levels.

Over-18s caught for the first time with cannabis or acting under the influence of alcohol, causing criminal damage or harassment, will now be offered the option to attend a health awareness session rather than pay an £80 fine.

They will discuss their problems anonymously in a three-hour session with a health advisor and learn about the physical and mental damage

caused by alcohol and cannabis.

Offenders who agree to attend in the first two months will only have to pay £40 – half the cost of their fine – and the sessions are already proving a hit with other forces.

Inspector Ian Sandwell said: 'I'm positive it will contribute to reducing crime and raise awareness of alcohol and drug abuse.'

The self-funding scheme was launched in November and involves agencies such as registered charity Druglink, Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team and the Medway Community Safety Partnership.

Super IT service for Kent

KENT Police has teamed up with three other forces to create a super IT service.

Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk police forces have all collaborated with Kent to establish the second-largest IT function in the country.

The innovative new unit, East Coast IT Services, will feature 375 staff providing information technology for more than 18,000 employees serving a total population of 4.7 million.

The cross-county project will save nearly £4 million a year over a four-year period,

adding to the £6 million already saved through a similar project involving Kent and Essex's IT departments.

Andy Barker, Director of IT for Kent Police and Essex Police, said: 'Behind the scenes IT has always had a vital role in operational policing – giving officers and staff the tools to do the job effectively.'

'Longer-term, the benefits are huge, both in terms of financial savings and making our technology do more to support the demands of modern policing.'

101 launches in Kent for non-urgent calls

THE public now has a new number to dial to report non-urgent crimes to Kent Police, access services, make enquiries or contact their neighbourhood officer.

The 101 number was introduced nationally after a British Crime Survey revealed that only 54 per cent of people knew how to contact their local force.

Callers should use 101 – which launched in the county on November 14 – to report all non-urgent incidents and crimes, such as a stolen car or if property has been damaged.

Suspected drug dealing, minor traffic collisions or information about crime in your area should also be reported using 101.

The number, which can be called 24-hours a day, seven days a week, directs people through to the Kent Police control room that deals with emergency and non-urgent calls and enquiries.

Carol Drake, head of the control room in Maidstone, said: 'We used to have around 20 numbers that people could use to contact local police or to report non-urgent crimes and incidents. The 101 number has been introduced nationally to make it as easy and simple as possible for people to access non-urgent police services.'

'We want to be accessible, and we want people to be able to tell us what's going on in their area.'

'Other counties that have already introduced 101 have reported that it has led to a reduction in misuse of the emergency 999 number.'

In an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger, callers should still dial 999.

And general public nuisance like graffiti, abandoned vehicles, vandalism and fly-tipping will remain the responsibility of the local council.

All calls to 101 will cost 15p, regardless of the duration of the call, the time of day or whether it is from a mobile or a landline.

The text messaging service for people who are deaf or speech-impaired remains in



place. To use the service text 'police' and your message to 60066.

Low-level crime still a high priority

DESPITE budget cuts, a new response to calls about anti-social behaviour has been launched to help protect the most vulnerable people in the community.

Police will now identify individuals and communities most at risk of harm, making sure they receive a priority response and ensuring they do not become long-term victims of threats, bullying or abuse.

Each call to the force will be graded and a response officer will be sent to people identified as vulnerable or repeat victims to carry out risk assessments.

The new way of working draws on the lessons learned from high-profile national cases such as Fiona Pilkington, who killed herself and her disabled

daughter in October 2007 after 10 years of harassment.

All calls will be reviewed by neighbourhood policing teams and victims will be kept informed of any police action.

Kent Police Authority – the police watchdog – has set the force a target to increase the number of people satisfied with the service provided in cases of anti-social behaviour. Currently eight out of 10 people are happy with the service.

Ann Barnes, Chair of Kent Police Authority, said: 'Even though we have to lose around £50 million over the next four years, we have not lost sight of what is important to the public. We know just how important low-level crimes are to taxpayers.'

Extra powers for PCSOs

POLICE community support officers in Kent have been armed with 12 new powers to clamp down on anti-social behaviour on our streets.

The 400-strong county team, which provides support to regular police officers, now has the authority to issue on-the-spot fines to under-18s caught drinking or trying to buy alcohol.

PCSOs can now also issue fines for drinking in designated public zones, truancy, graffiti, fly-posting and improper use

of fireworks. They will also have the authority to search young people for hidden alcohol and tobacco.

Another of their new powers gives them authority to disperse groups of under-16s and ensure they return home, and they can now fine people for begging.

Ann Barnes, Chair of Kent Police Authority said: 'PCSOs will now provide an enhanced service, offering even greater value-for-money to police council tax payers.'



Police dogs are real blood hounds: Four German Shepherds have been trained to sniff out blood at crime scenes. It is the first time Kent Police dogs have been taught to find blood evidence on objects, weapons or a trail. The clever canines can detect the scent despite masking agents or cleaning materials being used to remove evidence.

COUNTY ROADS SAFEST IN 11 YEARS

THE number of people killed or injured on Kent's roads is at its lowest level for 11 years.

Deaths and serious injuries in the county have more than halved since 2000.

Teaming up with Kent County Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Medway Council and the Highways Agency, the police have been focusing on the big four issues – speeding, seatbelts, drink driving and mobile phone use while behind the wheel – to change motorists' behaviour.

Lorry drivers have also faced a raft of changes, with on-the-spot fines for offences such as having no insurance or a vehicle being unfit for road use. Those flouting the law now face roadside penalties

of up to £200 (and in some circumstances have to place a roadside deposit of £900) as well as risk having their vehicle immobilised.

Young people aged 16-18 have been educated through theatre projects that explore the consequences of road traffic collisions.

Motorbike casualties also dropped in the last year thanks to education campaigns. Covert police motorcyclists also contributed to this achievement.

Chief Inspector Andy Reeves said: 'We're confident that we can continue this downward trend. A reduction in casualty figures means more people are living safe and healthy lives.'



Clean sweep recovers £116,000 in unpaid fines

MORE than £110,000 in unpaid fines is set to be recovered from lorry drivers after a multi-agency blitz at Ashford's Orbital Park. The drivers, many from abroad, were using the area to park illegally – leading to littering and obstructions to other motorists. European bailiffs were used to find drivers who still had fines outstanding across the UK, with £56,000 identified in June and a further £60,000 in August.

Nineteen parking fines totalling £925 were issued by Ashford Borough Council.

Operation Clean Sweep also involved officials from the UK Border Agency checking documents and Customs and Excise staff searching for smuggled cigarettes.

Inspector Andrew Judd said: 'We were getting complaints about human waste left by drivers. But we were able to get offenders' details and contact their companies to reclaim fines.'

Inspector Judd said the operations had proved a great success, with more planned for the future.

He said: 'Since the operations we have noticed a decline in the number of lorries parking illegally.'

'Word is getting around that Orbital Park is not the place to park illegally. But it's important we continue to deal with the long-term problems and show we will not tolerate this behaviour.'

TOWN CENTRE BOBBY BEATS SHOPLIFTING PROBLEM



SHOPLIFTERS in Ashford have learned the hard way that crime does not pay – thanks to the police's new town centre beat officer.

PC Emma Todd has spearheaded an anti-shoplifting drive in the area since taking over the role in April and has overseen a significant 33 per cent reduction in shoplifting.

With the use of the town's radio and secure website systems that allow shop and venue staff to access images of prolific shoplifters, PC Todd, with help from PCSO Luke Sykes, shop owners, CCTV, the community safety unit and Ashford Borough Council, has no plans to let up in her efforts to keep crime down as Christmas approaches.

She said: 'Christmas is a prime time for shoplifters and bag-snatchers, so we would urge people to be vigilant and to keep their personal possessions close to them.'

'Shoplifting was a real cause for concern in the town centre. But by working together we have really clamped down on it.'

'Word is getting around that shoplifters will not be tolerated and we have shown with the number of arrests we have made they will get caught and charged.'

Shoplifters caught in Ashford's County Square, Park Mall and the Designer Outlet now receive civil banning notices, stopping them re-entering the shopping centre.

PC Todd added: 'The police, in conjunction with all the other agencies, are working hard to keep Ashford town centre one of the safest towns for locals and visitors.'

OPERATION MERCURY SHOWS ITS METTLE



Train lines and communication cabling have also suffered at the hands of criminals unaware or unconcerned of the danger that live connections cause to the public and themselves.

But Kent Police, in conjunction with a number of other agencies, has launched Operation Mercury to combat metal thieves and stop the illegal transportation and trade of stolen goods.

A number of suspects have recently been arrested thanks to vigilant members of the public, officers working with Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council, and scrap metal dealers who have helped to identify thieves.

Members of the public can play an active role to help counter the problem. Detective Sergeant Ian Cutter said: 'Metal theft is a huge problem which costs the country a lot of money. Cabling theft is also dangerous for the thieves and causes disruption to local businesses' communication lines.'

'People can help by being vigilant and reporting any suspicious activity. It is always worth checking that a group of workmen are accredited.'

'Householders and businesses could also mark any metal with forensic solution, which makes it easy for us to identify and return if it is stolen.'



KENT POLICE are calling on the public to help in the ongoing fight against metal theft in Ashford.

The rising value of scrap lead and copper, combined with lesser sentences for metal theft as opposed to domestic burglary, has led to a sharp rise in the number of offences.

Thieves have been targeting churches, schools, building sites and even houses to grab lead and copper, with one gang in Ashford disguising themselves as BT engineers to steal cabling.

What Matters is somewhere for teens

YOUNG people in Ashford have swapped car parks for coffee in their quest for a better place to hang out.

Teenagers and young adults had been gathering at the Stour Centre's underground car park to skate, chat and keep dry.

But other people were finding the large groups intimidating, so What Matters House was created by Ashford Borough Council and Kent Public Health to provide a venue they could call their own.

Based at the Stour Centre's old entrance hall, young people can go to meet friends, swap stories, listen to music and grab a hot drink.

Youth workers are also on hand to give advice about sex, drugs, careers, diets and personal issues if needed.

David Lloyd of the Community Safety Unit said: 'There is a skate park in Ashford but when it's cold and raining, the young people were going to the underground car park where it is warm and dry.'

'They are not bad kids but some people found this intimidating and we wanted to provide them with an alternative, a space for young people, run by young people. The venue will be as good as they want it to be. It's not for us to decide how they run it.'



New Chief Inspector pledges quality policing

ASHFORD'S new Chief Inspector has good reason for looking out for the people in the county, having lived in Kent most of her life.

Ch Insp Hayley Spedding has 18 years service with Kent Police and worked in Ashford from 1993 to 2005.

She said: 'Kent is very important to me. I moved here when I was four, was educated here, and am now raising my family here.'

'At a time of change for policing, I want to do as much as possible to ensure we have stability in the service we give to the public.'

'With my team, I want to build on the successes in Ashford in recent years in reducing crime and dealing with local issues. But I know there is more we can do.'

Ch Insp Spedding also wants to make sure that the good working relationship the force has with partner agencies continues.

She explained: 'It is more important than ever that we look at new ways of collaborating with local agencies to provide a better service to the public.'

'I also believe that with more officers in neighbourhood policing teams and the support of PCSOs, we can have increased police visibility in key areas at peak times to effectively deal with issues affecting people who live, work, and visit Ashford.'

Policing runs in the family for Ch Insp Spedding – her father was a police officer in Kent for 30 years, her brother is a police community support



officer and her sister works for the Force Resource Unit.

Ch Insp Spedding added: 'I'm a busy working mum so my interests outside work centre on my family and friends. As a family we enjoy a range of sports and activities, and spending time together.'

POLICE PUT BRAKES ON CYCLE THIEVES

POLICE have been putting the brakes on bicycle thieves in Ashford this year.

Officers launched an operation in the summer to cut down the dramatic rise in bike thefts across the county.

The operation has been geared towards raising awareness of bike theft, urging people to lock up their bicycles and use property-marking kits to make them easy to identify if they are stolen.

The police have been putting up posters in retail outlets in the town centre, advertising dates to attend Ashford police station for security marking.

Neighbourhood officers have been talking to cyclists and providing crime prevention advice, and response teams on patrol try to identify the owners of unattended or insecure bikes.

PC Ruth McGuinn said: 'I think perhaps people have become a bit complacent about the need to lock their bicycles up. Hopefully this operation will remind them of the threat and lead to a dramatic drop in bike thefts.'

'It's also important that people take steps to use property-marking kits on their bikes, because it gives us the ability to return it to them if it's stolen and then recovered.'

Anyone who wishes to get their bicycle marked should take it to Ashford police station between 9am-noon on December 15, 2011, at a charge of £3. Security marking kits for other property are also available at £3 each.



Your community

A snapshot of the action taken to deal with your concerns:

Residents from an elderly people's home were upset that youngsters were hanging around in Memorial Gardens, smoking, drinking, playing football and causing damage to the flower beds.

Ashford officers made the gardens a red route for regular patrols. They also spoke to the home's residents and gathered information.

A school liaison officer visited schools in Ashford with the Royal British Legion to explain to young people the significance of Memorial Gardens and that some residents may have lost loved ones. Once the teenagers understood the significance of the gardens and the distress being caused, the problems stopped almost overnight.

Complaints were made about a small group of teenage boys who were hanging around the bus stop in the village of Wittersham and behaving anti-socially. The youths, aged between 15 and 19, were committing acts of graffiti, dropping litter, kicking cans around and smoking cannabis.

PC Justin Farrow and PCSO Oliver Welch increased patrols in the area and, one evening, discovered four of the youths in the shelter.

A search revealed one of them had a bag of cannabis and a cannabis grinder. Since then, the youths have dispersed from the area and residents' complaints have fallen.

Complaints were made about speeding motorists in the Westwell area.

A Speedwatch operation was established, with volunteers from the village trained by the force in the use of hand-held speed-tracking devices to identify speeders.

PC Gary Hastings wrote to offenders reminding them of the dangers of speeding. If the same vehicle is caught again within 12 months, PC Hastings will visit them to deliver a personal warning. PC Hastings said: 'This is an effective tool working in partnership with the community to highlight the dangers of speeding and educating drivers to drive more responsibly without receiving the points or a fine.'



DRUGS GANG JAILED FOR MORE THAN 39 YEARS

A FOUR-MAN gang responsible for drug dealing in towns across Kent was jailed for a total of 39 years after a covert police operation.

The men were arrested and charged after a lengthy operation that saw undercover officers buy more than £8,000 of heroin, cocaine and ecstasy from the gang.

Police then raided a travellers' site in Hoath Woods, West Malling, where they found half a kilo of heroin, three-quarters of a kilo of amphetamines and crack cocaine.

More than 100 officers were involved in the raid and the subsequent search of the surrounding woodland, which

uncovered a loaded shotgun, two rifles and a sawn-off shotgun.

Joseph King, 48, of Lavender Road, West Malling, was sent down for 18 years in September after being found guilty of conspiracy to supply drugs and possessing firearms with intent.

His brother Samuel King, 47, of Elm Grove, Sittingbourne, and Matthew Newin, 26, of Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne, were jailed for seven and a half years and eight years respectively after pleading guilty to conspiracy to supply drugs. Craig Provan, 41, of The Paddock, Rodmersham, received a six-year prison sentence after being found

guilty of conspiracy to supply drugs.

Detective Inspector Eddie Fox, of the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate, said: 'This was a very satisfying result. These men dealt in misery and had a drug-dealing network that stretched across many Kent towns, both on the coast and further afield.

'The judge described Joseph King as a 'ruthless and cunning man', and commended us on the investigation.'

Judge Adele Williams, on sentencing, told Joseph King: 'You are merchants of misery and sometimes death. You are ruthless and cunning, without remorse.'

Cold case team are hot on the trail

CRIMES that have not been solved for two years will now be given a fresh look by a dedicated investigation team.

In the past, cases such as murders, attempted murders, sexual assaults, violent crimes and stranger rapes had to have gone cold for five years before they would be reinvestigated.

But since April 2011, any crime over 24 months old will be investigated using the latest technology.

Kent's cold case team, one of the first in the country when it launched in 2008, has already put crooks behind bars for six stranger rape attacks across the county and one murder.

The team is currently investigating a one-day-old baby buried in Ashford in 1995, two murders dating back to 1987 in Tunbridge Wells, and a stranger rape in Folkestone in 1986.

Detective Sergeant Andrea Richards said: 'We can now give old crimes the attention they deserve and bring justice to the victims and their families. Crimes in the '80s and '90s were dealt with differently. We are able to do more now thanks to improvements to forensics.'

The team is part of the Serious Crime Directorate – a joint function with Essex Police.

Sky's the limit for project pegasus

THE public is being asked to keep watch on Kent's skies for criminals using light aircraft to breach border controls.

Drug smuggling, illegal firearms trade, money laundering, counter terrorism, and human trafficking are all in Project Pegasus' sights – especially with increased air traffic expected during the Olympics next summer.

Pegasus – launched at Rochester Airport – wants to make people aware of unusual activity or behaviour around small planes and helicopters.

It is just over two years since French national Eric Adrien Laou-Hap was jailed for four years for using a light aircraft to smuggle seven illegal immigrants into Maidstone's Laddingford Airfield.

Detective Chief Superintendent Chris Hogben warned such incidents mean we have to remain vigilant and look out for suspicious behaviour, fake pilot IDs, unusual transactions at airports, peculiar flight times and bad airmanship.

He said: 'It takes only 10 minutes to fly across the English



Channel, and Kent has about 120 public and private airfields and helipads. In addition, Kent is the gateway to both the UK and Europe.

'We want the aviation community and members of the

public to be our additional eyes and ears and report suspicious activity by calling 101, no matter how small or insignificant they feel it is. If anyone believes a crime is in progress they should call 999.'

Thumbs-up for police savings plan

THE watchdog that oversees Kent Police is confident that the force can deliver the savings it needs without affecting its service.

The Kent Police Authority, made up of elected councillors and members of the public, holds the force to account. Together the Authority and force have been planning for over 12 months to find £50 million savings over the next four years.

A report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary found that Kent is in a strong position to make the required savings while continuing to deliver a high standard of policing.

Ann Barnes, Chair of Kent Police Authority, said: 'The report reflects just how much work has gone into ensuring we can reduce the budget and continue to deliver an excellent policing service. We will now take a good look at the report and at any suggestions of what we could do better. Most importantly we will continue to work on behalf of taxpayers to ensure that they get the same level of policing service – or one that's even better.'

As of next November, police authorities will be replaced by Police and Crime Commissioners, who will be directly elected by the public.

Find out more about Kent Police Authority at www.kentpoliceauthority.gov.uk, or follow us on twitter @PoliceAuthority



TOUR'S WAKE UP CALL TO KIDS

A POLICE roadshow aimed at warning children about the dangers of anti-social behaviour is getting the message across.

The Kent Police 'Is It Worth It?' tour, last on the road in October, has been seen by more than 80,000 schoolchildren over the past two years, with multimedia interactive games entertaining and educating the 11-15 year olds.

Chief Inspector Lee Russell said: 'This method is working and we know that youth violence and anti-social behaviour has dropped.'



CRIME DROPS FOR A FIFTH STRAIGHT YEAR

CRIME in Kent is down for a fifth consecutive year – despite major changes in national and local policing.

Each year Kent Police is set targets to meet by the Kent Police Authority watchdog. In 2010/11 Kent Police achieved 18 out of 27 challenging performance targets, and for 26 of these 27 measures, performance was better than last year. In 2010/11 there were 920 fewer crimes than in 2009/10, 1,746 fewer incidents of anti-social behaviour, and victim satisfaction increased.

Across the county, violent crime, criminal damage, burglaries and car crimes were all down, and many successes were due to closer working with partner agencies to catch and convict criminals.

The performance outlook is strong despite Kent Police having to cut £50 million from its budget over the next four years.

Kent Police Authority Chair Ann Barnes said: 'I'm pleased with how the force has been performing over the last six months. However, the Authority will not be complacent and we continue to watch and monitor how the force is doing to make sure taxpayers get the best possible policing service.'

Our performance

Last year

Every year Kent Police is set targets to meet through a Policing Plan. The table below shows how the force performed in the financial year of April 2010 to March 2011.

Our aim	Our target	How we did
Cut complaint allegations per 1,000 officers	Reduce to 296 per 1,000 officers	✓ 291 per 1,000 officers
Improve overall victim satisfaction with service provided	Increase to 88%	✗ 87.8%
Increase % of those having recently seen a neighbourhood officer or police community support officer on patrol	Increase to 52%	✗ 49.6%
Increase % of urban emergency calls attended within 15 minutes	Increase to 85%	✓ 87.3%
Increase % of rural emergency calls attended within 20 minutes	Increase to 85%	✓ 87.4%
Cut crime per 1,000 population	Reduce to 59.3 per 1,000 population	✗ 63.4 per 1,000 population
Reduce high priority anti-social behaviour incidents	Reduce to 33,014 incidents	✓ 30,923 incidents
Cut violent crime per 1,000 population	Reduce to 13.2 per 1,000 population	✗ 13.4 per 1,000 population
Improve serious acquisitive crime detection rate	Increase to 22.8%	✓ 25.5%
Meet minimum national standards for serious and organised crime	100% compliance	✓ 100%
Improve or raise rape detection rate	Increase to 32.1%	✓ 34.5%
Make cashable savings	£10,200,000	✓ £10,617,000

This year

This data looks at how Kent Police is performing against its Policing Plan targets over the first six months of this financial year (from April 2011 to September 2011).

Crime is down for yet another year running and all but two of the aims are showing performance improvement on last year.

Our aim	Our 2012 target	How we're doing against our target	Is this an improvement since March 2011?
Reduce the level of crime	-2.0%	-4.5%	✓
Improve the satisfaction of those who report ASB	79.3%	76.4%	✗
Increase users' satisfaction with the actions we take	87.8%	87.3%	✓
Increase overall public satisfaction with policing in Kent	80.7%	77.5%	✗
Increase the % of crime that is detected	35.4%	35.9%	✓
Increase the % of violent crime that is detected	52.5%	47.4%	✓
Reduce the harm of organised crime groups	Reduce by 50%	-73.3%	✓
Make cashable savings (pay)	£8.5 million	£1,503,000	✓
Make cashable savings (non-pay)	£4.6 million	£3,638,000	✓
Increase the % of police officers and staff in frontline roles	65.5%	64.6%	✓

For a full list of targets set for the force, contact Kent Police Authority on **01622 604480** or email kayleigh.nicholson@kent.pnn.police.uk

Our priorities for 2011-2014

Delivering effective local policing

We will continue to ensure that communities are kept safe by reducing crime and dealing with anti-social behaviour. We will thoroughly investigate crimes, bring offenders to justice and, where possible, seek restorative outcomes where offenders and victims resolve issues together.

With our new way of policing the county, we will provide a visible and reassuring police presence, especially in high-priority areas, with more police in frontline roles.

Protecting the public from serious harm

Working closely with Essex Police, we continue to deal with serious and organised crime, protecting the public from high-risk offenders.

We were the first force to achieve a national standard set by the Association of Chief Police Officers and will continue to uphold this into 2012.

Making best use of our resources

While training our workforce to deliver high-quality skills and continuing to be responsive and flexible, we will remove unnecessary bureaucracy.

Working in partnership with Essex Police and other forces in the South East region, we will look for different ways to save money.

Give your feedback for a chance to travel in style



Do you fancy a romantic break for two in Paris, the city of love? Or perhaps you would prefer to sample the vibrancy and diversity that Brussels – the self-styled Capital of Europe – has to offer? Or maybe a trip to the shoppers' paradise of Lille would suit you best?

You can pick a location of your choice if you are the lucky winner of two Eurostar return tickets to any of the three fascinating continental destinations.

All you have to do for a chance at travelling in speed, comfort and style is to give your feedback on this newspaper.

Tell us what you liked or disliked by emailing pknewspapers@kent.pnn.police.uk



Competition rules: One entry per person. The winner will be randomly picked. Kent Police and Kent Police Authority employees and their families are exempt. Closing date: 2 April 2012. Send your entry to: FREEPOST, Kent Police Authority, Gail House, Lower Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6BR or email pknewspapers@kent.pnn.police.uk

News bites >>

>Volunteer police officers sought

KENT'S Special Constabulary is on the hunt for volunteer police officers to help protect communities.

Sign-up today and you will receive full training and police powers in exchange for giving a minimum of 16 hours a month.

To find out what's involved visit www.kent.police.uk/specials or call **01622 650400**.

>Get in touch with the police through a tweet or post a message

KENT Police Authority and Kent Police are now on Twitter, YouTube and Facebook.

Visit either www.kentpoliceauthority.gov.uk or www.kent.police.uk and follow the links to find out what's happening, tell us what you think or ask a question.

>Give your opinions on crime

If you live in Kent and would like to give your opinion on crime and policing, then join the Kent Police Citizens' Panel.

To get involved in a range of surveys and/or discussion groups email citizens.panel@kent.pnn.police.uk

>New hate crime number launched

A NEW helpline has made it easier for victims of hate crime to come forward.

After research showed some people are reluctant to contact the police directly, another number has been made available if people want to get advice and support. Specially-trained non-police staff take calls 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week, and will either deal with each call or forward it to the relevant agency. The number, **0800 138 1624**, is free to call from landlines. Hate crime can also be reported to **101**. If a crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**.

>Play your part in keeping your neighbourhood safe

HELP to keep your community safe and more protected by joining your local Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Call **01622 653212** to find out where your nearest scheme is.

VOICE YOUR OPINIONS AND BAG A PRIZE

THE first 100 callers who ring the Police Authority are in with a chance of winning some superb security items.

All you have to do is tell us what you thought of this Policing Kent newspaper and you could win a personal alarm, a purse strap to protect your cash from snatch thieves and a timer switch for your lights to help keep your home safe over Christmas.

We'd like to hear your views, so call us today on **01622 604347**.

Why you've received this newspaper

On 1 April 2006, a legal requirement was placed on all police authorities to produce a policing summary.

We have chosen what we believe is the most cost-effective way of reaching every household in a newspaper format.

Today, communication is vital; and the Authority continually hears that people are interested in what the police are doing, the changes ahead, the budget cuts, and how Kent Police is held to account.

The Authority is keen to keep you informed during these times of change.

Contact us



Chief Superintendent Mark Nottage is in charge of East Division including the Ashford district.

Call **999** in an emergency, if a crime is in progress or life is in danger.

Call **101** (our new non-emergency number) for:

- General enquiries
- Non-urgent crime reporting
- Anti-social behaviour
- Your neighbourhood officer

If deaf or speech-impaired text 'police' and your message to **60066**.

Ashford Police Station

Tufton Street, Ashford TN23 1BT

Opening times: 8am-8pm Monday-Saturday, 10am-6pm Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Tenterden Police Station

42a High Street, Tenterden TN30 6AR

Opening times: 9am-12.30pm and 1.15pm-5pm Monday-Friday, closed Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays.



Useful numbers

In an emergency dial **999** if there is a threat to life or public safety, or a crime is in progress

Call our non-emergency number **101** for enquiries, neighbourhood officers, non-urgent crime reporting and anti-social behaviour

If deaf or speech impaired text 'police' and your message to **60066**

Kent Crimestoppers – give information anonymously on **0800 555 111**

Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline **0808 2000 247**

Hate Incident Reporting Line – **0800 138 1624**

This publication is available in other formats and languages. To obtain a different version of this publication please contact Kent Police Authority on **01622 604347** or email pknewspapers@kent.pnn.police.uk