

Monthly PCSO Newsletter  
February 2021.



I am your local Police Community Support Officer for your area. For those of you that don't know me, my name is PCSO Katherine Richards, but most people call me Kate.



This is my report for this month, which I put out at the beginning of the month, so you are all aware of what I have been up to in and around your areas and what crimes have been happening. My report goes out to the Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch coordinators, and any other members of the community who may be interested in receiving it. This can also be shared on your parish websites and your social media sites. **Please share.**

I would just like to let you know that I will be your point of contact for your town and parishes.



The areas that I cover are **Tenterden, St. Michaels, Rolvenden, Newenden, Weald South and Isle of Oxney areas.**

Crime statistics can be found at: <https://www.police.uk/>

This month has been another busy month, with a variety of different types of calls. One of those that I attended was a scam call, which sadly seem to be increasing during Covid and lockdown. One victim I attended has been a victim of investment scams. It is heart breaking that these fraudsters prey on the vulnerable, so I want to give you a bit more knowledge about investment scams which may have happened to yourself or a member of your family, and what to look out for.



## Investment Scams

There has been a rise in investment frauds since April 2020, resulting in victims losing hundreds and thousands of pounds.

If you're offered unusually high returns on an investment, it could be a scam.

Check the FCA warning list before investing at <https://www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart>  
Here is how you can spot the warning signs –

- Unexpected contact – Traditionally scammers cold-call but contact can also come from online sources e.g. email or social media, post, word of mouth or even in person at a seminar or exhibition.
- Time pressure – They might offer you a bonus or discount if you invest before a set date or say the opportunity is only available for a short period.
- Social proof – They may share fake reviews and claim other clients have invested or want in on the deal.
- Unrealistic returns – Fraudsters often promise tempting returns that sound too good to be true, such as much better interest rates than elsewhere. However, scammers may also offer realistic returns in order to seem more legitimate.
- False authority - Using convincing literature and websites, claiming to be regulated, speaking with authority on investment products.
- Flattery – Building a friendship with you to lull you into a false sense of security.
- Check the FCA warning list before investing at <https://www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart>

If you believe that you may have fallen victim to this type of scam, then please contact your Bank immediately and then report to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

## If it is too good to be true, then it is!!!!

The below link will take you to a 9-minute presentation on investment fraud, which is on The Fraud Safety Channel.

The presentation offers further advice to help you avoid investing your money in a scam. You can additionally subscribe to receive regular updates and inputs on other types of fraud, and this is all free.

The speaker on this video is Ashley Jones who is a fraud protect advisor with the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit.



Unfortunately, due to the format that I have to send these alerts, you will need to copy the below link and paste it into your search engine, but I promise it is worthwhile.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKv2sgzmtms&feature=youtu.be>

If you believe that you may have fallen victim to this type of scam, then please contact your Bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

Other fraud information will be shown further in my newsletter.



I have also been out and about in all my areas that I cover, either on foot patrol or in the vehicle. It has been lovely to see that most people are following the current government advice and sticking to the rules.

If unsure of the current rules, please visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)



This month we have had a variety of different weather conditions, from icy road to a lot of flooding to rivers / fields and roads.

If out on country walks please stick to the footpaths and not walking through the middle of farmers fields, especially as they are so muddy as it does damage them. Stay away from flooded rivers. Drive carefully on the roads, due to the additional surface water, and be aware that these could also be hiding potholes. Potholes should be reported to KCC at [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) – Potholes.



# Please only travel if essential.

## Tweets

Always worth following our Ashford Police Twitter page @kentpoliceash

This where I and the Ashford Team will put tweets out.



## **Speed Checks:**

One of my colleagues from the Road Policing Unit (Traffic) has also been out this month carrying out speed checks in Oaks Road, following reports of speeding in the new road layout. We are keeping an eye on all areas and will be out and about in your areas soon.

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**Please Slow Down**



## **Other Information:**

### **Appeal after three statues stolen near Tenterden**

Three bronze statues have been stolen from a property near Tenterden.

It was reported that at around 8.45pm on Sunday 3 January 2021, the large statues weighing around 200 to 300 kilos were stolen from the grounds of a property in Budds Lane, Wittersham. Damage was also caused to the gate.

Patrols attended the area where two of the statues were recovered from a ditch near the victim's property.

A vehicle was also reported damaged nearby.



Officers are appealing for witnesses to the theft, or anyone who might have seen a Land Rover Discovery in the area at the time of the incident.

Witnesses should call Kent Police on 01843 222289 quoting 46/1474/21.

You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers in Kent anonymously on 0800 555 111, or by visiting [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org).

### **People urged to stay at home as county enters third national lockdown**



On Wednesday, 6 January 2021 the country entered the third national lockdown to help control the spread of Covid-19.

People should stay at home and only leave to shop for essentials, exercise, work, seek medical assistance or escape domestic abuse. The measures, which will stay in place until at least mid-February, includes the closure of schools, whilst early year settings can remain open.

The approach to policing the lockdown in Kent has not changed and officers will continue to police in the way they have since March – using the 4E approach. Engaging, Explaining, Encouraging and Enforcing only as a last resort.

During the new year period, Kent police officers closed down house parties, dealt with people breaching self-isolation requirements and flouted travel bans between 31 December 2020 and 3 January 2021. In total 42 people were fined.

On New Year's Eve officers attended a property in Oaten Hill, Canterbury where a group of teenagers were holding a party and a man was issued with a fixed penalty notice of £200.

The same evening more fines were handed out in Medway as people held parties and met friends. Four separate incidents resulted in 15 fines being issued to people in Gillingham, Chatham and Rochester.

On New Year's Day, at 9am, two men from outside the county were fined £200 each after officers attended a property in Wickhambreaux, Canterbury. One of the men had travelled 80 miles from his home to the property, which had been booked for a birthday party.

Later the same day officers stopped a vehicle near to Medway Services. On speaking to officers, she said that she had travelled from Scotland to attend a house party. She was fined £200 and told to return home.

A stop check by officers in New Road, Chatham resulted in a £1000 fine for a man who failed to isolate after testing positive for Covid-19 and was meeting with other people.

Another £1000 fine was issued to a woman in Ramsgate on Sunday, 3 January. The woman was a passenger of a car involved in a collision and enquiries revealed that she should have been self-isolating.

Assistant Chief Constable Claire Nix, of Kent Police said: ‘The vast majority of Kent residents recognise the importance of abiding by the regulations to control the spread of Covid-19 and stayed at home with members of their household to see in the New Year.

‘In other instances, we were able to disperse people and remind them of their personal responsibility to do the right thing and follow the law.

‘However, on the occasions where people showed a blatant disregard for the regulations, putting others in danger by hosting gatherings or meeting others whilst infected with the virus, officers were left with no other option but to issue fines.

‘As we enter the third national lockdown, we will continue to police in the way we have since March – engaging with people, reminding them of their responsibilities and taking further action when necessary.

‘The restrictions are designed to reduce the infection rate – but they will only work if people comply. I would urge everyone to familiarise themselves with the latest guidance to ensure we all collectively help reduce infections. Preventing the spread of the virus is a shared effort, and police will play their part alongside the Government, businesses, hospitality owners, local authorities and the public.’

## 63 fines issued to people breaching COVID-19 regulations

A further 63 fines have been issued this week to people breaching Covid-19 regulations as the country continues to be in lockdown.

Since Monday 11 January 2021 officers fined people for holding inside and outside gatherings, being outside without reasonable excuse and for not self-isolating.

Among the fines issued included four to a group of people found riding scooters and playing music from cars at a car park in Sandling Road, Maidstone on 13 January. They were each given a £200 fine.

During the early hours of 13 January officers stopped a car in Stirling Way, Ramsgate where they found three people, all from separate households. They told officers they had driven from London to collect money that was owed to them. They were all fined £200 each.

In the early hours of 12 January, officers located a car on the A244 in Riverhead outside a car dealers. The driver told officers he had driven down from Sussex to look at the cars in the garage. He was fined £200.





A woman was fined £200 for hosting a house party in Sweyn Road, Ramsgate. Officers attended the property after reports of a disturbance outside, but when they arrived, they noticed birthday banners on the door. The homeowner claimed all those attended had received negative Covid-19 tests.

On 15 January officers were called to a disturbance in Croft Court, Tunbridge Wells where people were seen climbing out of the windows. Four people were issued £200 fines for being part of an unlawful gathering.

There were five incidents this week of people from different households found in cars together.

On 13 January in Sotherton in Ashford, officers fined two men £200 each for being inside a car with other people they do not live with.

Two people from different households were fined for being inside a car together in Sir Thomas Longley Road in Medway on 12 January. They told officers they came out to talk.

On 12 January two men, not from the same household were fined after officers found them eating in a car in Culpeper Close, Medway.

On 14 January two people who had met up in a car in Bluebell Hill were both fined £200 each.

A man from Northfleet faces a £1,000 fine for failing to self-isolate after returning to the UK from Romania and a man was fined £200 on 13 January for failing to wear a face covering in a supermarket in Charlton Green, Dover. He was asked by the store manager to wear the covering before entering, he refused and was then asked to leave and again refused before officers were called. Three men were also fined for not wearing face coverings in a takeaway shop in Strood following complaints.

Fines of £200 were also issued to people in Gillingham, Edenbridge, Rochester and Dover for allowing other people inside their homes.

Assistant Chief Constable Claire Nix said: 'It is unacceptable that people are still choosing to hold indoor and outdoor gatherings and to make un-necessary trips.

'At a time when there is so much pressure on Kent's health services it is more important than ever for people to adhere to the government regulations.

'The country is at a critical point and we must all understand the dangers of the rapid spread of this new variant of Covid-19.

'Kent residents should visit the Government website to ensure they are familiar with what is and isn't permitted and what may be exempt from the restrictions.

'Officers will continue to patrol the county, explaining, engaging and encouraging people to adhere to the regulations and will enforce the penalty notices when they feel it is necessary.'

## **More than 700 people fined for breaching Coronavirus legislation since March 2020**

People in Kent are being urged to continue to follow lockdown guidance after figures revealed that more than 700 people have been fined for breaching Covid-19 legislation.

A total of 729 people have been fined between £200 to £1,000 for having house parties, making unnecessary journeys, breaching travel regulations or going to public places whilst infected with Coronavirus.

Despite targeted government campaigns urging people to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives, people are still making unnecessary journeys and gathering in groups potentially spreading the virus and putting vulnerable people at risk.

Among those fined were three men and three women who were having a house party at an address in Havelock Drive, Dartford on Saturday, 16 January. Shortly after dispersing the group the officers were called back to the address where they found three women attempting to conceal their presence by hiding in cupboards, they were all fined. One of the women had been issued with a fixed penalty notice on the first police attendance.

A woman was stopped by a patrol in Weymouth Road, Folkestone shortly after 1am on Saturday, 16 January. She told officers she had tested positive for Covid-19 three days previously and that she had been should be self-isolating. She was issued with a fine.

Officers were called to a property in St Martin's Road, Canterbury just after 9pm on Friday, 15 January where a party involving around 20 people was taking place. Two men and a woman were fined, and the party shut down.

A man was fined for visiting a brothel in Minster, Isle of Sheppey at around 6pm on Friday, 15 January.

A woman was fined after behaving antisocially in a supermarket in Herne Bay at around 7pm on Friday 15 January. The officers were called to the store following a report of a disturbance. The patrol offered the woman a mask, she refused it and became aggressive. She was issued with a fine and moved on from the store.

Assistant Chief Constable Claire Nix said: 'We remain in critical times and whilst the NHS have been remarkable in what they have achieved, they are still dealing with an overwhelming amount of seriously ill patients.

The limitations posed by lockdown are difficult for everyone and it is testament to the people of Kent that the vast majority of residents have changed their way of life to help stop the spread of this virus and protect the most vulnerable within the community. I would like to thank these people for making such sacrifices, which will not only take the strain off the NHS, but ultimately save lives.

'Whilst it is encouraging to see that many are being vaccinated against Covid-19 and the infection rate is slowing, we must not be complacent and use that as an excuse to breach the regulations. The virus remains deadly to many and it is crucial that we all do what we can to protect others and prevent overwhelming our hospitals.

'Officers will continue to patrol the county, explaining, engaging and encouraging people to adhere to the regulations. They will take action against those who show a blatant disregard for others by holding parties or going out when they have a positive Coronavirus test.'

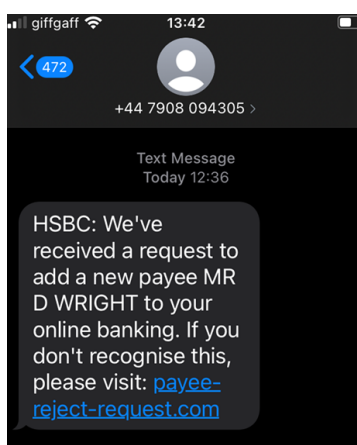
## Fraud Updates:

Each month I will give you an update on some of the different frauds that are out and about.



### HSBC Phishing emails

I have been contacted by a Kent resident who received the below text message. This is a scam aimed to get you to click on the link and then obtain your bank details. I am aware that HSBC will never send out a query like this via text. The number quoted has been linked with several other similar type scam messages. If you receive any messages like this, never click on the link. I always use the rule of scam awareness and to apply ABC and do not Assume or Believe but always Confirm.



Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge. If you believe that you may have fallen victim to this or any other type of fraud, then please contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

**Preventing fraud**

Together, let's stop scammers. 

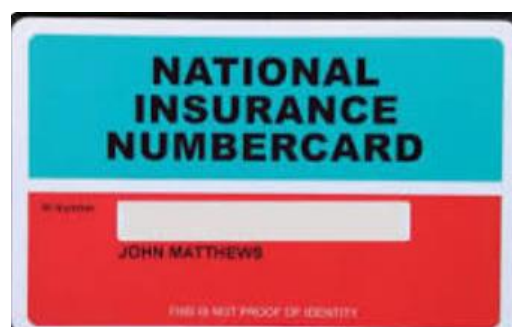
**Remember, ABC:**

-  never **A**ssume
-  never **B**elieve
-  always **C**onfirm

Get the latest scam advice:   
**@KentPoliceECU**

### National Insurance Number Scams

Earlier today a Kent Resident (my wife) received an automated call stating that their National Insurance Number had been compromised by somebody living in Wales and that they needed to press button 1 to be directed to an advisor and that failure to do so would result in a fine.



This is an obvious scam, please never press button 1 or click on any links or divulge personal or banking data etc.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk). Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) and contact your Bank.

## **Tips to help you stay more secure online**



Many people over Christmas may have either updated or were given a nice new Android device for Christmas. However, you may not have been given advice/tips on how to secure your Google account. The below link from Action Fraud that will take you to the top tips on how to secure your Google account against the latest threats.

<https://safety.google/security/security-tips/>

### **Preventing fraud**

Together,  
let's stop  
scammers.



#### **Remember, ABC:**



never **A**ssume



never **B**elieve



always **C**onfirm

Get the latest  
scam advice:



**@KentPoliceECU**

## **Fraudsters impersonating Citizens Advice**

Citizens Advice have warned that they are aware of fraudsters calling people and stating they are from Citizens Advice and requesting monies or account details in return for their advice services.



Can I remind you that Citizens Advice are a free service and that they will never ask you to pay for their services or provide proof of banking/personal data.

If you get one of these calls, then please disconnect the call immediately.

### Bitcoin Phishing Emails

FRAUD ALERT from Action Fraud, who have received over 400 reports in 2 days on investment/Bitcoin scams, involving people receiving phishing emails. These contain offers of big returns on your investments. However, the email asks you to collect on a link and the fraudsters then steal your personal and banking data.

Remember if it sounds too good to be true, then it is. Please do not click on this or any other links contained in emails and text messages, as they are scams.

If you receive any suspicious emails, then please forward to report@phishing.gov.uk who can then take action on these. Additionally, if you feel you may have fallen victim to this, then contact your Bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

### SCAM WARNING

## Over 400 reports about emails promoting Bitcoin investment scams

Action Fraud has received over 400 reports in 48 hours about emails advertising scam investments in Bitcoin platforms. Fraudsters are promising high returns and using fake celebrity endorsements and images of fake news stories to entice people into investing. The links in the emails lead to websites that are designed to steal your personal and financial information.

- Your bank, or any other official organisation, won't ask you to share personal information over email or text. If you need to check that it's a genuine message, call them directly.
- Spotted a suspicious email? Forward it to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) - [Report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:Report@phishing.gov.uk)



Kate Richards PCSO 46059656  
Community Safety Unit | Ashford Police Station | East Division

**Please do not use this email to report incidents. For a non-emergency please report online or contact 101 and in case of an emergency call 999.**