

Celebration for the anniversary of the Ashford Railway Works 1st July 2023, Save the Date

After the success of the Platinum Jubilee event, SWANCC will be organising another celebration. This Vintage Festival, will be railway themed and bring to life the music, dances, costumes and vehicles from the Victorian era through to the 1960s.

What to expect?

A vintage fun fair, Punch and Judy shows, Circus workshops, Railway themed bouncy castles and face painting ensuring there is fun for all the family. There will be nonstop entertainment showcasing local talent alongside Charleston dancers, MyCharleston from Brighton, teaching you the iconic Charleston, along with their vibrant performances from the Roaring 20s. There will be a vintage trio, The Silhouettes show, bringing the songs from the Victorian era through to the 60s.

Travelling from London to entertain you are foremost gogo dancers in the capital. Learn or refresh yourself with the dances from the decade defined a generation with the Meyer Dancers and enjoy their performances along with a fantastic live band playing Hendrix, Cream and music from Woodstock era. Lindy Hoppers take you back to the 40s and 50s with vibrant and fast moving dances.

Vintage and classic vehicles, music from local bands, a vintage and craft market, food and drink and much, much more. You won't miss a thing by hopping on board our land train that will be giving family rides around the festival site.

This Festival will once again bring the community of South

Wilkesborough and Newtown together as well as welcoming visitors to the area. The Railway theme will be very evident throughout the day culminating in a Guinness World record attempt for the "Largest Human Image of a Railway Engine".

A truly fitting tribute to the history of the Ashford Railway Works and its workers throughout that history. Honoured by the community producing the record breaking image.

The Vintage Festival is an event to look forward to. The Vintage Festival is an event that WILL be remembered!



Newtown Railway Works 1947

Message from the Chair

Dear Residents,

It is a pleasure to write to you this quarter with all the news from SWAN Community Council, and the SWAN area. Rising costs have been at the forefront of all our minds in SWAN and Quarter 4 saw the Council commit budget within the current year to support residents through this time delivering grants to the After School Club the Salvation Army Summer Holiday and Sports programme. Also, SWANCC has sought to support the area by inviting Ashford Borough Council to bring an Eat Well Spend Less roadshow on 1 February 2023 and provided £1000 of budget to support practical assistance with food, cleaning products, hygiene products and advice for residents.

Building on the success of the Jubilee event and the fantastic community spirit of this area SWANCC have decided to hold "A Vintage Festival to celebrate the Anniversary of the Railway Works on Saturday 1 July 2023."

Already fantastic entertainment is being lined up for the main stage, plus the addition of a Community Stage for local performers and musicians - if you are interested in a performing slot at this event, do get in touch with our Community Council Manager, Sarah Evans.

Here at SWANCC our primary aim is always to deliver the key

objectives for the SWAN Community Plan, with the application of the Area Enhancements budget, immense work in planting more than 10000 bulbs for Spring as detailed in Cllr Godden's article, practical litter management, a contract to clean and tidy all the alleys and footpaths in Newtown, a litter picker being hired to support the cleaning and litter management of area to name some of the key activities. This will support the best feel to the area residents have asked the Council to aim for.

The new litter picker is called Wayne; with a street cart and a SWANCC uniform you should see Wayne out and about so do say hello and make him welcome.

The Council is next looking to hire a Public Spaces and Area Enhancement Officer to support the practical tasks of the Community Council so do keep an eye on our notice boards and website for details over the Spring.

I look forward to sharing this newsletter with you all and wishing each of you the very best for 2023.

Sue Mullan
Chair SWANCC

As promised, “Be a part of Something special Platinum Jubilee Event” was logged on the interactive map run by Buckingham Palace for every event that was organised to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and with the Eden Projects Communities programme for the Big Community. Lunch.

As a consequence, I am delighted to inform you SWANCC received national recognition for the planning and delivery a real community event for the Platinum Jubilee Event held on Newtown Green. I was so pleased to send Sarah Evans Community Council Manager to Tavish House in Russell Square to meet with the key organisers of the Big Community Lunch across the nation in celebration of the Queen's jubilee. Sarah met the heads of Neighbourhood Watch, Green Peace, The Ginger bread Trust, Eden Project Communities, Ground Zero Youth London to name but a few and has invited them all to visit SWAN and support us with their expertise and experience for our community. I will let you know if and when this develops.

Sarah represented all the residents of SWAN to share our community and care of one another at this event. Following which the Society of Local Council Clerks held their national forum and shared all the details from our event and Sarah's key advice for running Community events. Added to which the National Association of Local Councils shared the event nationwide with all the Parishes both in their communications and social media including snippets from the Newsletter.

It is very unusual for a Community or Parish Council to receive such national attention and a tribute to our care community spirit and certainly put SWAN on the MAP!

Brompton Bikes

The Brompton Bikes (PA/2022/2772) proposal is an exciting prospect for Ashford, is adjacent to the SWAN area, and SWANCC has a Consultee option on the planning application.

The project offers up some significant opportunities for the SWAN area with regards to funding for resident parking and infrastructure to support walking and cycling.

For SWAN CC the priorities of the community plan, provided the main key points for SWAN CC members to consider in their response.

1. Flood mitigation
2. Protecting the rural feel
3. Cycling and connectivity
4. Traffic management
5. Parking
6. Waste management

Initial impressions are that the project has the environment and community at the heart of it's plan as an essential element, not just an afterthought. Brompton are applying for the whole 100 acre site but are only interested in building on 40% of it, with a lot of work going into the remaining 60% to upgrade it from a flood plain to a wetland, thus increasing flood mitigation, carbon sequestration and biodiversity.

The factory itself will be state of the art design with regards to looks, function and carbon neutrality.

Cllr. Andy Rogers, as Chair of Planning and Highways Committee, has advised that the riverbed was narrowed during the development of the Designer Outlet and this has impacted flooding in this area – therefore SWANCC considered the application and measures noted within it to reduce the Flooding. Not only for access to the area for Residents but also for the benefit of the whole connectivity of the area noted below.

Cycling and Connectivity

SWAN CC is keen to see linked up cycling across Ashford and believes that this proposal is an opportunity to achieve this with better access to the dykes, the outlet, ASDA and the Brompton factory itself. This will not only facilitate healthier modes of travel but will help reduce the number of cars on the road. Indeed, this is mentioned in the KCC travel strategy as a part of the application.

Traffic Management

Representatives of Brompton have assured us that, due to the nature of their business, deliveries to and from the factory will be kept to a minimum and HGVs will be using the A2070 from Junction 10, thus avoiding the town centre and the SWAN area.

Conclusion

Overall, SWAN CC is tentatively supportive of this proposal. We believe the benefits to the community and environment outweigh any drawbacks and that commitments to both are sincere, but we are also aware that we are at the “bells-and-whistles” proposal stage, so we will continue to monitor the progress of the application to make sure the bells and whistles do not fall off.

Election of a New Council - 5 May 2023

Local elections will be held in May 2023, this will elect the Parish Councillors for SWANCC and the Ward Councillors for Ashford Borough Council. The elections are managed by Ashford Borough Council. The national law on elections has changed for this year and identity will be required so please bring photo ID with you when coming to vote - more information will be distributed by Ashford Borough with your polling card.

Elections will be fair, transparent and give equal opportunities to all. Being a Councillor is a commitment in responsibility, time and preparation, but it is a rewarding role. If you are interested in being a Local Councillor, the Kent Association of Local Councils are running an event on Tuesday 21st March 2023 at 7pm for more information email kalc@kentalc.gov.uk or visit their website www.kentalc.gov.uk
Sarah Evans Community Council Manager

No increase from SWANCC to the Budget or Precept -for 2023 2024 see Article from Cllr Andy Rogers Chair FGP Vice Chair SWANCC on page 7

Gashouse Fields Allotments

Living Workshop Plot 46A

Over the years I have met a large number of new Gashouse Fields Allotment tenants, most of them completely new to allotment gardening.

The two main points most new tenants make are: _

- 1 The size of the allotment plot is far too big.
- 2 How do I start the impossible task of turning a wilderness into a cultivated area where vegetables, fruit and flowers can grow?

The first point the size of plots given to new tenants has been amended by SWAN Community Council allotment committee. Before 2021 when Gashouse Fields Allotment was owned by Ashford Borough Council the size of the plots was small 5 perch, large more than 10 perch (1 perch = 25 square metres). Now all new tenants are given a plot sized two – three perch.

The second point new tenants make, how do I turn a wilderness into a cultivated area where vegetables, fruit and flowers can grow? This is a lot more difficult, now there are so many books TV and YouTube programmes covering a lot of garden types and conditions for the new gardener to consider. Where then do we recommend new Gashouse Fields tenants go for their advice and plot knowledge information?

The idea was born to make a beginners guide for new tenants' site specific to Gashouse Fields Allotments. The only way to gain the

material for a new tenant's plot beginners guide was to start a new plot from the very beginning.

Plot 46A has not been used for over 40 years, making it the most neglected area on the site. 46A has been turned from a wilderness into a cultivated area and fully cropped all within the first 12 months.

The gardening techniques use for cultivating 46A are traditional from the 1940s and 50s, keeping spending to the very minimum (today with the cost of living, a great help). Using basic hand tools that the everyday gardener would have, or could get new/second hand at a reasonable price.

One year on plot 46A as grown crops (all given to the local food bank) and is fully cultivated. The new 40-page tenants beginners guide with pictures will be ready to give to all new tenants from this April.

Why not contact the Community Council office and take on your own allotment?

Yours

Stefan Heathfield

Gashouse Fields Allotments Tennant & Professional Gardener



46A October 2021



46A June 2022

Update on Klondyke Work

As many of you may have heard all the flats at the Klondyke Works have been sold And at this time about 50% are now occupied.

Work is in progress to finish the other half by the summer this year. Could be earlier, depending on weather conditions.

The property management is being overseen/managed by a private company.

Whose phone number is shown on the first property on the right as you enter the complex.

Some people in the community have been concerned about the flat owners parking in Wainwright Place - The flats have their own parking arrangements, but we will keep an eye on this situation

Yours, Cllr David Mullan

SWANCC Supporting Rising Costs real help in real time.

Late Spring 2022, SWANCC agreed up to £8400 of budget to support the Community of SWAN with rising costs, using the Council's power to provide Grants and Projects. Below is a summary of Grants and Initiatives this support has provided for SWAN residents.

Children's Holiday Activities and Lunches

£2,000 of this money was used to give a grant to the Salvation Army to pay for a programme over the summer holiday open to all SWAN Children.

This facilitated regular children's lunches, Sports day activities on the SWAN Playing fields, holiday club activities and crafts at the Hall as well as 3 fantastic trips out. Including Chessington World of Adventures, Chatham Dockyard and of course a day at the seaside.

SWANCC sincerely thank the Salvation Army for their commitment to SWAN, and specifically their Community Officer Lauren Corbett for her drive, dedication and commitment to ensure this programme was delivered.

After-School Club at East Stour Primary School

£1961 was given to the After-School Club at East Stour Primary School to support the impact of rising costs and ensure the facility remained open and viable for all parents in the SWAN area.



This grant was support funded with £500 from Ward Cllr Andy Rogers to cover the further increase in rent they received after this grant was raised.

Eat Well Spend Less Roadshow

£1000 was given to host and run the very well attended Eat Well Spend Less Roadshow, this pays for the recipe bags and hygiene items for SWAN residents, as well as the advertising and posters to communicate this event with you all.



This was also supported by Ward Cllr Andy Rogers to cover the cost of tea and coffee and cups provided for residents and visitors today.

Travel - Cycling

In September 2022 SWANCC agreed to arrange for 2 mechanics and all materials to be provided at East Stour School for all Year 6 Children in need of cycle repairs to be able to participate in the Cycling Proficiency Training, further work is being carried out for more initiatives to help residents with active travel.



This was also supported by Ward Cllr Andy Rogers with a grant of £350 towards the costs.

Allotments rents not increased. 200lb of fresh Vegetables grown and donated to SWAN Foodbank

In addition, the Gas House Fields Allotments living workshop dug and delivered by Sarah Evans Community Council Manager and Stefan Heathfield Site Rep grew and donated 200lb of fresh fruit and vegetables which was taken over the road to the Salvation Army foodbank to support its work. This could not have been achieved without the volunteer hours from Daniel Kingsley. For his Silver Duke of Edinburgh, Daniel gave 26.5 hours of service maintaining the Allotment. The Council would like to thank and congratulate Daniel on his hard work.

The project was subject to vandalism in the early Summer of 2022 and a resident gave £50 cash to SWANCC to allow the project to run again for the year of 2022 2023. It was a tremendous act of kindness and support of SWAN.

UPDATE FROM KCC CLLR STEVE CAMPKIN

As I write this I am (or at least should be!) reading through the planning application from Brompton Bicycles, comments on this are elsewhere in this newsletter.

I have also been looking at the development on the Newtown Railway Works which is apparently progressing at pace and is all very exciting, including a proposed memorial to workers throughout its history led by leader of ABC, Cllr. Gerry Clarkson.

But we are also in the horrible part of the year where we are scrutinising next years proposed budget, and its grim news. Firstly, it is looking like our Combined Members Grant (CMG) is going to be cut from £10,000 to £3,600, but we have had it confirmed that any unspent pennies will be rolled over until 2025. Applications for this can be made through my email below.

The rest of the budget is going to be based on 12 years of austerity measures and a further £30 billion of cuts to come announced by Rishi Sunak recently. This inevitably means further cuts to services and council tax increases. However, I am very pleased that SWAN CC voted recently to keep our share of the bill (the "Precept") unchanged this year in recognition of the crisis we are all facing.

Increasingly over the past few months members of all the parties have been commenting on the unsustainable financial situation all local authorities find themselves in and colleagues from the administering party are assuring us that lobbying Kent's MPs and other ministers is a weekly occurrence.

I am currently in discussions with my colleagues in the Green and Independent Group on KCC as to how best to resist these cuts, looking for any amendments we can make.

The budget will be voted on at the end of February and, unless substantial funding is offered by government, I will yet again be opposing yet another austerity budget.

However, if you find yourself in need of help, advice or anything else, please reach out to me, the Salvation Army, other councillors, anyone. There is no shame in having been failed by the system.

Steve Campkin, KCC member for Ashford East,
Steve.Campkin@Kent.gov.uk

Proposed Monument Memorial at Newtown Works

Dear residents,

It was a privilege to have Gerry Clarkson at the SWAN Council January 2023, to present his vision for a monument to all the workers at Newtown Railway Works and a memorial to those who lost their lives there during the Second World War.

Cllr Clarkson gave members an introduction to his own work history role as a Councillor and also his experience in working on high end memorials including a national memorial to the 997 British and Canadian Fire Services who lost their lives during the Second World War which is in London near St Pauls Cathedral.

It was an exciting well thought out and thorough presentation of the plans for the combined monument to the workers of Newtown Railway Works and the memorial to those who lost their lives through the war at the site. The presentation was in depth to explain the broad scope of the project, the rich quality, high end consideration and attention to detail on this project. Cllr Clarkson explained the timescale for this project would be over several years and he was continuing this project through his retirement. He hoped to have a visit from the King to unveil this project and celebrate the major growth in key projects across Ashford.

Cllr Clarkson listened to questions from members and heard suggestions for planting soft landscaping and the inclusion of key families who formed the area of South Willesborough through their earnings in the Newtown Works.

Also, Members put to Cllr Clarkson the input of local Historian tales from the tracks and her recent project as part of the AIMREC event in November.

Cllr Clarkson confirmed that the development company Ashford International Development and Ashford Borough Council would bear the full costs of the creation of this project, its maintenance and its insurance. Should in the future the business arm of Newtown Railway Works be sold off, it would be with the responsibility to preserve and insure this project.

It is an immensely significant proposal that is worthy of the rich history Newtown holds and its major contribution to development and History of Ashford as a Town.

Rob Woods Retirement

At the council meeting held on 6 February 2023, Members gave a toast to Rob Woods, Clerk of SWANCC. 'SWANCC employed Rob as their first Clerk in July 2019, and continuously provided strong guidance and his in-depth knowledge to Members. He has been an absolute pleasure to work with, and truly will be missed. SWANCC wish Rob a very Happy Retirement!



UPDATE FROM ABC CLLR ANDY ROGERS

Dear Residents

A Happy New Year as we are already moving quickly through the first quarter of 2023.

New Town Works is progressing very quickly, and the detail is starting to become very exciting with Ashford College taking space for great career opportunities, other employment and regeneration, which will be a very positive change for the area. I have been attending the monthly board meetings and have highlighted residents' concerns regarding traffic and road infrastructure but also the provision of community space at the site. One of the first phases will be changes to the roads to allow the works to continue with minimal disruption. Board members will be attending SWANCC April at the latest so the residents can hear more details about the plans. The other exciting news that will be incorporated at the site is a memorial to Railway Workers. When I have more detail on this topic, I will update you all.

Other development that is in planning stages is Brompton Bikes which will neighbour our area but of course again provide more employment opportunities but also create wetlands, walkways and cycle routes to further enhance the area for our residents.

Policing and crime are always high on the agenda, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Peter New for all his hard work within the SWANCC catchment area. On Policing it is worth reporting that Kent Police are conducting a review which

is due to conclude around June time. This will determine the impact of the number of PCSO's and additional warranted officers. Over the years, PCSO's have been invaluable in recognising and reporting crime but it is hoped that with this review the addition of more warranted officers who can make arrest will be both positive and a deterrent. At a recent Kent Association of Local Councils, Kent Police did confirm the ongoing rollout of CCTV to the Ashford area in conjunction with ABC which included CCTV in the area of the Duck Alley underpass that many of our residents use to access the town centre and railway stations.

Other Ashford related news also includes the forthcoming new waste collection service that will come into force next year with a new operator. One of the more difficult situations facing residents is poor parking which sometimes makes collections impossible and so a huge frustration. The new contract will include new collection vehicles that hopefully will be narrower to navigate our congested streets but please all be considerate when parking as it is not just refuse vehicles that face difficulties. It is also emergency vehicles.

Once again Happy New Year and remember most things are reportable using the ABC app if you have access but if not please contact me directly or SWANCC.

Andy Rogers
Ward member for Aylesford and East Stour
Ashford Independents

G – Line Bus Route

We urge all residents in the SWAN area to continue using the G-line bus as statistics shows that fewer people have been using the bus over the past several months. There will be a review of this later in the year therefore, in order for us to continue having a bus service in the SWAN area, we would need to show that residents are continuously making use of it otherwise, there are chances that this could be stopped.

SWANCC wish to offer their sincere condolences to all the family and friends of Cllr. George Kowaree on his death in 2022.

George came to England in 1957 from his birthplace in Mauritius and worked as a nurse until his retirement and served Ashford Borough Council and the Ashford East area from 1987 until he stepped down in 2019 and 2021 respectfully.

He also became a trustee for various charities including the Almshouse Charity, Ashford Parochial Charities and sat on the Ashford Youth Advisory Board, but he said himself: "It is being part of the Ashford Old People Welfare Committee and attending the Learning Disability Partnership Group that I most enjoy as it informs my work as Lib Dem Spokesperson for Adult Social Services."

He was awarded Honourary Alderman at KCC and Cllr. Campkin, who now represents Georges's division, had the opportunity to pay tribute but, most importantly, to look him in the eyes and say, on behalf of everyone in Ashford, "thank you, sir".

We have heard that he spent the past year travelling around saying good bye to his extensive family, and on the weekend of his death he attended his grand daughters wedding.

In honour of all his commitment, service and dedication to this area, when SWANCC were approached by the developers to name a new road on Orbital Park, it was proposed by Cllr. Campkin and then by unanimous agreement that it was requested the new avenue planned for the area be named George Koowaree Avenue.

He will be missed but let's not be sad that he is no longer among us, let's be glad that he was.

Planting and Diversity Working Group

On the 17th August a working group was formed with Sarah Evans and a small group of volunteers with a small budget to identify council owned land in the SWAN area suitable for planting bulbs, seeds and for leaving as "no mow" to create roadside nature reserves.

The group set out with maps and marked all the areas where they thought would be the most suitable and give the most amount of pleasure to the residents and the best protection for the wildlife.

All the areas were assessed, permissions sought and 11 areas were decided for bulb planting including Newtown Green and many of the small raised beds in the SWAN area. Most of the 10,000 daffodil, crocus, narcissi and bluebells have now been planted by the

volunteers. In the Spring, the wildflower seeds will be sown also by volunteers in prepared soil, the seeds have been chosen for the local soil type and approved by the RHS and the Bumblebee and Pollinator Conservation Trust. Aspire, the Council grass cutting contractors, will be advised which areas to leave as "no mow" and these will be marked with pretty little signs saying "for the bees". Our local litter pickers will be helping to keep them free of rubbish.

The planting is aimed at improving the look and feel of the area for all our residents and helping our wildlife at the same time.

Cllr Jacky Godden
Environment and Climate Change Champion



Finance Update

No increase to the Budget/Precept - January 2023 for Financial Years 2023/24

On taking over the Chairing of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the initial value decision the committee made was to aim to keep the precept at current levels with no increase to the tax payer. Keeping the agreement with the roll out of the SWAN Community plan from 2021/2022 that the precept for SWAN residents would be no more than £1.10 per week for a BAND D property and lower for bands A-C. This is alongside the Allotment Committee decision not to increase any rents on Gas House Fields Allotments.

Various factors were considered for the proposed budget/precept for the new financial year. Those being:

- The current cost of living and inflation to date
- Any cost rise to the tax payer by KCC, ABC and
- What value for money does the budget offer to the residents of SWAN
- Possible other financial contributions and grants that may be available to support the SWANCC Objectives however these are not guaranteed
- Also, all the time being mindful that this budget may have to be handed over to a new Council come the May elections

The committee is mindful its' budget will work for this financial year, but may impact when setting the next financial budget, due to lower reserves available. Therefore, it will constantly be reviewing spend and value for residents as well as options for other income from grants and initiatives.

However, the committee also considered that a number of budgeted items could be removed to lower expenditure which are:

- Allotment Officer role as this is now incorporated into the Community Council Manager role £2750

- Reduce Councillor training costs to £220
- Remove cost of expert services £250
- No formal Coronation event and concentrate on the fantastic Railway Celebration planned for July 2023

To support the zero increase, it is also worth noting the increase of properties in the SWAN area due to the completed development of the Klondike site on Newtown. This means the amount of the SWAN Council precept will increase but still show a 0% increase to the tax payer.

Any working group or committee which aspires for any project and its spend, will therefore always go to FGP with a report on how it aligns to the local community plan and how it can be successfully delivered on time and in budget (also how it may fit with it in items already set in the budget). This could also be suggestions for projects that do not necessarily need to be delivered in this financial year but could be a long-term project that can be planned over a two-to-three-year period. An example of this is the investments being considered for the Public Realm such as further lighting and toilet facilities on the Allotments site.

I am very mindful of the success of this Council to date and its achievements but still need to ensure that the books balance and that the local residents are aware of these successes and how it benefits them, such as our two new appointments pending a SWAN litter picker and an area enhancements officer. Therefore, it is my opinion SWNACC are offering a well-considered compassionate budget response with the best value for residents and the SWAN area.

Andy Rogers
Chair FGP
Vice Chair SWAN CC

KENT POLICE VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Dear Residents, we start 2023 with the same commitment as we finished 2022.

We have an Operational Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for every road in SOUTH WILLESBOROUGH and NEWTOWN.

If you are reading this and you are not a member, then contact me the details are below.

Neighbourhood Watch is completely free to join, you just read and stay safe on the crime prevention guidance and advice given based

Neighbourhood Watch is about keeping you crime free but importantly free from the fear of being a victim of crime. Swan Community Council have supported my work with Neighbourhood Watch and provided stickers and signs to help the community stay safe. Importantly they have supported me personally with this work to help keep you safe.



Pictured above left, The Vice Chair of the Council Andy Rogers, who used his Members Grant to help to provide signs for the area. Pictured above right support from Balfour Beatty who provided signs to use in the area



I have produced a plan of the crime trends we need to work together on in 2023.

AVOIDABLE & PREVENTABLE CRIMES, TO SUPPORT POLICE INVESTIGATIONS. TO ENHANCE CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE, ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIMINAL DAMAGE & FLY TIPPING, DRUG ACTIVITY which drives so much other crime, SCAMS & BOGUS CALLERS,

CONTINUE TO BUILD NHW MEMBERSHIP, TO ENSURE ALL CRIMES ARE REPORTED & CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH SWAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

THE RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE CRIMES WE FACE

Always keep property as secure as possible. Vehicles, especially when parked, leave nothing inside vans with tools and equipment left inside especially when parked at night. Number plate thefts to allow fuel theft from garage forecourts. Catalytic Converter thefts from cars. Thefts from garages and sheds especially tools from isolated allotment sheds

A worrying crime trend that continues to rise is the theft of internet shopping parcels off doorsteps. Please make safe delivery arrangements.

By far one of the most worrying crime trends is SCAMS and bogus callers.

These crimes will strike at the most vulnerable and elderly in our communities. The scams can arrive by phone, email, letter, or face to face on your doorstep.

A scam on your phone or computer can come from 3, 30, 300 or 3000 miles away. Please do nothing in a rush, which criminals hope you will, and check, check again and if you are unsure then do absolutely nothing. On your phone just hang up.

If in doubt do not even open your front door. Never agree to unsolicited work on your doorstep.

Growing our Neighbourhood Watch in the area is essential so importantly I am working to ensure new residents in areas like Newtown join NHW as soon as they move in.

An example of that work is on the Klondyke development on the Newtown Road, shown above. Enrolling new residents straight into NHW to help them settle into their new homes, keep them as crime free as possible and play a small part in helping to build a new part of the community. Good early erection of signage.

I always attend each council meeting and produce a written report of crime and crime prevention, so your elected members are aware of events and importantly the crime prevention to be undertaken. This also affords your councillors the opportunity to raise any questions on the matters discussed.

Council meetings are held each month at the Salvation Army Hall in Cudworth Road the public are welcome to attend and pictured below are the meetings in progress when I make my Neighbourhood Watch report. It would be great to see you there!

The final stage of my newsletter piece, and I am so grateful for the space granted, is to ask you to join Neighbourhood Watch

As I said earlier if you are not a member please join, its completely free.

Just email me at peternew1@aol.com and you are in.

Please don't put the newsletter down and say you will do it later just email me straight away.

Many of you are already members, please spread the word for me and encourage others to join.

'Crime cannot flourish in Communities that care and are alert and vigilant'

I know you care about the area, your council and councillors all care and finally I care deeply about keeping you and your families crime free as possible but importantly too free from the fear of being a victim of crime also.

Please report all crimes and attempted crimes to the police and do not hesitate to use 999

The police are not clairvoyant they must be called they must be told.

Take care and stay safe, secure, alert and vigilant
Thank you for all your support and backing

Peter
Peter New (peternew1@aol.com)
Kent Police Volunteer and Community Neighbourhood Watch

I will always carry my Police ID on NHW work.



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