

Minutes of the Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 4th December 2023 in Aldington Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Present: Councillors; L Harman (Chair), R Boulding, L Guy, P Hannabuss, G Taylor, S Wagstaff and J Weatherall.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk.

Also present: P New (Neighbourhood Watch) and 5 residents.

1330. Apologies for absence:

Councillor H Stebbings.

1331. Declarations of interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

1332. Public participation:

A resident enquired as to when the football pitch is to be rotated. The Chair responded that discussions had taken place with the football club and the change would be made at the end of the season.

A resident asked about lines being place on the road by the dropped kerb next to the Reynolds gate as parked cars made it difficult to use. The Chair responded that there are a number of issues that will be considered when updating the Highways Improvement Plan which would be reviewed soon.

A resident reported that there was a broken manhole cover on Giggers Green Road that a pedestrian could potentially fall down. He was asked to forward details to the Clerk to enable him to report to Kent Highways.

1333. Neighbourhood Watch:

Report attached.

1334. Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:

Main item to report from a Borough point of view; the cost-saving move of the Borough Council from the Civic Centre into International House was approved at an Extraordinary Meeting last week. The savings can now be incorporated into the draft budget for 24/25 and will be put to O&S Committee for the scrutiny process to begin.

Like all Councils ABC is under pressure and will be seeking future cost savings unless government funding sees a sudden renaissance!

I am delighted to share the news that Aldington has been selected to participate in an Electricals Recycling Pilot by ABC. The pilot has already run in Wye and Ashford. The scheme provides residents with the ability to bring small electrical items to a prescribed point in a one day event. I hope that the Village Hall Association will work with us to make a Recycling event in Aldington a success. In Wye as well as taking items for recycling, a group also offered to do small onsite repairs to bring items back in to use. I look forward to liaising with the Village Hall Association to bring this event to Aldington in the New Year.

Lastly – I'd like to thank the clerk for taking me up on the invitation to apply for grant funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund for sports projects in Aldington & Bonnington and congratulate him on the successful bid for Aldington Meadows Play Area, for which £10k was awarded that enables works to start in bringing the old tennis court area back into use.

1335. Minutes:

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th November 2023 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

1336. Chairman's Report:

I was pleasantly surprised to see that there weren't too many grumbles about the recent closure of Roman Road and am delighted to report that the completed works have dramatically improved the footpath from the Calleywell junction to the Post Office, which is now beautifully levelled. There are also new lowered kerbs and tactile paving provided for a widened and improved pedestrian crossing across the Roman Road/ Calleywell Lane junction. This item was high on our Highways Improvement Plan and we thank KCC Highways for agreeing to fund the required works. I have had one report of a dropped drain cover at the junction, which I ask the clerk to note so that we investigate.

In last month's report I mentioned on-verge parking as a concern. This month I repeat this concern; both during peak traffic times at school drop-off and pick-up, but also, when the Village Hall is hired by outside organisations. Last Friday, I saw a car parked up on the grass verge next to the electric vehicle charging bays during an event that brought a large number of cars into the village. Afterwards I observed tyre marks that indicated the driver departed by driving over the grass verge onto Goldwell Lane! Vehicles legally parked between the disabled parking bay and the Forge Hill/ Roman Road junction also continue to be a hazard. I would like to suggest that we form a small task group to review the parking issues that occur in this part of Roman Road and that we should also spend some time reviewing our Highways Improvement Plan to identify the next highest priorities.

Yesterday the Village Hall Association staged the first Advent Family Fun Day, that I was delighted to support, both personally and as a Parish Council via a small amount of sponsorship. I am sure we will hear more about the event from Ray later in the meeting. Suffice to say here that it was great and the Parish Council is fully supportive of events that bring parishioners together. They build our community and I look forward to working on the calendar for 2024. This being the last PC meeting of 2023 I wish you all a very merry Christmas!

1337. Solar:

The Chair and Vice-Chair recently met with representatives of the Aldington and Mersham Support Group as a follow up to the recent community meeting.

The Support Group have submitted the following report of their activities:

1. Our new Group introduced itself at the community meeting held on 09.11.23 which was very well attended, and Jonathan Tennant made a short presentation about the group and its plans following the decision of Colleen and Sara of SSSS to step aside from the work they have been doing (which they confirmed at this meeting).
2. We explained our intention of supporting both parish communities in the challenges presented by the EPL001 solar scheme emphasising that at least 20% of the land area of the scheme lay within the parish of Mersham.
3. We explained the importance we attach to continuing to pursue the question of whether the applicant had or had not adequately consulted with the community in the way required under the Act.
4. We confirmed that the group had carried out a great deal of research in this area and were in the process of finalising a paper to go to Counsel - highly experienced in this area of work- in order to obtain guidance on strategy. Counsel is considering what we have provided, and a fee quote is awaited.
5. We emphasised that the group would not be able to do all the work that would be necessary in the weeks and months ahead to effectively oppose the scheme (as is the

ambition of the Parish Council and the mandate from those that attended the parish council meeting on 14th November 2022) without being able to engage expertise in various fields as part of an overarching strategic plan.

6. The need for volunteers from within the community was also highlighted and it was gratifying to note the number of people coming up after the meeting and introducing themselves and saying that they would be available to assist in this new endeavour – some with very relevant expertise.

7. Mr Tennant commended the idea of the village speaking as “one voice” - which has proved something of a challenge to date. He indicated that the group intended to act as a support for the Parish Council in much the same way as had been successfully achieved on various difficult infrastructure applications in Church Lane. Here there had been constructive dialogue between the Church Lane Group and the Council and he hoped this would prove a good template.

8. We expect to provide update reports for the Parish Council ahead of their monthly meetings so that members are kept abreast of progress and so that where necessary the group can seek support.

9. We expect to convene community meetings periodically at which, those like us who are concerned about many aspects relating to this scheme, can not only learn about progress being made by our group but also be kept up-to-date with the stage reached in the process and of course ask questions and make suggestions.

The Targeted Consultation from Stonestreet Green Solar was discussed and the following responses were **Resolved**:

. Proposed Change A: No comments or concerns on this amendment.

Proposed Change B: the Bank Farm driveway is a single track with one passing place (adjacent to the entrance into Broadbanks). Bank Farm is used by multiple businesses and is the home of the Bank Farm Egg Machine retail outlet used by the farmer to sell produce on a ‘from farm to plate’ basis. Produce is marketed across Ashford and Romney Marsh and as such draws in visitors from a wide area that arrive by car via this driveway. It has not been specified how the hard standing or the access tracks within Bank Farm will be utilised and should do so in order that traffic impacts and risks to other road users may be sufficiently assessed for safety.

Proposed Change C: the inclusion of this verge will not address the need for greater space for HGV vehicles to turn into Field 20, its use is unsuitable for this purpose and would likely be to be significantly damaged as well as impacting the edge of Goldwell Lane, which, as a country lane does not have formal hedging. The verge is also land that is shown to be within the red line of 20/00652/AS, allocated site S52 in the Ashford Local Plan, which, alongside S51 brings this part of Goldwell Lane within the adopted Aldington Village Confine. This traffic will impact pedestrians as this is in close proximity to Goldwell Close, the Osteopaths, the Eco Centre, the Village Hall and Aldington Primary School.

It is noted in the PEIR chapter 12 that no construction traffic will pass through Aldington Village and an internal haulage road will be used to avoid HGV’s using the local road network. Goldwell Lane is both within the village confine and part of the local road network and should therefore be removed from the proposals.

As previously stated there are huge local concerns about the impact upon public right of way AE474 which connects the Grade 1 listed Aldington Church to the Village.

Proposed Change D: Station Road is the main entrance and exit road for the majority of Aldington residents and all other traffic coming through the village from Hythe, Lympe, Bonnington, Bilsington or Ruckinge heading to Ashford, or coming from it to any of those settlements. Assumption of powers to control the highway would be contrary to Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 and should be opposed as the applicant will likely prioritise construction needs above that of other road users. Within the PEIR there is also suggestion of a traffic crossing further along Station Road as well as an exit for traffic heading into Goldwell Lane. All will entail traffic management that has yet to be seen. All will result in disruption for road users and could potentially mean multiple impact points along the same road, with few safe alternative routes available.

Proposed Change E: No comment or concerns on this amendment

1338. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

Payee	Purpose	Amount
Aldington Village Hall	Room Hire	£135.00
Freshair Fitness	Replacement Gym	£6,223.14
Harmer & Sons	Grounds maintenance	£1,758.00
S Hutchings	Neighbourhood Plan	£65.00
G Taylor	Reimbursement	£34.43
C Wimble	Bus shelter	£440.01
P Barron	Advent event	£150.00
Staff costs		£3,422.15
R Boulding	Reimbursement	£20.00

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and authorise the payment of the items of expenditure.**
- 2. To authorise the transfer of £12,000.00 from deposit account to current account.**

1339. Budget 2024 / 2025:

Report ABPC/23/011 concludes the budget making process for 2024 / 2025 and makes recommendations to enable the Parish Council to set its precept for 2024 / 2025 and to notify the tax collecting authority, Ashford Borough Council, in accordance with statutory legislation.

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report ABPC/23/011**
- 2. To determine the Parish Council's budget for 2024 / 2025 as option 2 (detailed below)**
- 3. To confirm the Precept for 2024 / 2025 in accordance with the provisions in Sections 39, 41 and 50 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
- 4. To authorise the Parish Clerk to sign the Precept demand on the Borough Council.**

The budget for 2024 / 2025 being

Audit	£610.00
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Bank Charges	£72.00
Dog waste bags	£1000.00
Donations	£600.00
Telephone	£120.00
Grounds maintenance	£12,000.00
Hire of halls	£500.00
Insurance	£1,600.00
Newsletter	£700.00
Staff costs	£30,000.00
Stationery	£400.00
Subscriptions	£1,050.00
Training	£250.00
Storage	£200.00
Website	£230.00
Total Revenue Budget	£49,332.00
Contingency	£3,666.00
IT replacement fund	£775.00
Defibrillator fund	£300.00
Trees	£800.00
Solar	£10,000.00
Play equipment repairs & renewals	£1,500.00
Total Provisions budget	£17,041.00
Total Budget	£66,373.00
Funded by	
Grounds maintenance (ABC)	£900.00
Bank interest	£200.00
Miscellaneous	£200.00
Precept	£65,073.00

1340. Planning Committee:

The committee considered one application for the drainage spur at the battery storage facility on Church Lane and commented that: **The Parish Council have considered the proposals and wish to make the following observations on the application. It is understood that the existing drainage ditch drains into the East Stour River which passes under Church Lane. This being the case any increase in flow has the potential to exacerbate the already know flooding issues on Church Lane by the railway bridge.**

Councillor Taylor arrived at the meeting.

1341. Neighbourhood Plan:

The draft plan has now been fully checked and will be submitted to Ashford Borough Council to allow the Regulation 16 Consultation to take place and for the Inspector to be appointed. The Consultation period usually lasts for 6 weeks.

1342. Events Committee:

Two events have recently taken place at the Village Hall, the first being the craft fair on 25th November. This was scaled down from previous years as the organiser of previous events had stood down, however the village hall committee at its AGM recruited 4 new members. Also the number of stalls was reduced on safety grounds, however the event still raised £780.00.

The second event was the Advent event which featured a tea room a limited number of craft stalls and a magical Father Christmas grotto it s anticipated that this event raised in excess of £1,000.

There will be a bingo evening in the new year yet to be arranged.

1343. Biodiversity Policy:

Report ABPC/23/012; Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including Parish Councils) who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report ABPC/23/012.**
- 2. To receive and adopt the Biodiversity Policy Attached.**
- 3. To review the Biodiversity Policy prior to the Annual Parish Council meeting.**

1344. Kent Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2024 – 2034 consultation:

KCC, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), has an overview role for local flood, which is flooding that arises from surface runoff, ordinary watercourses, and groundwater. As LLFA, KCC have a duty to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (Local Strategy) that sets out how local flood risks will be managed in the county.

The current Local Strategy (2017 – 2023) needs to be replaced and a new Local Strategy has been drafted which will cover a 10-year period with a review after the first 5 years.

The draft Local Strategy builds upon lessons learnt from the previous Strategy. Through it, they aim to improve the safety and wellbeing of Kent’s residents and the economy of Kent with appropriate flood risk management. This will be achieved by working with communities and partners, adapting to climate change, and utilising natural processes to provide multiple benefits, where possible.

Full details of the consultation can be found at WWW.kent.gov.uk/localfloodrisk

the consultation having a closing date of 30th January 2024.

Resolved: to review at the January Parish Council meeting.

1345. Quarry Wood:

Application has been made to the Forestry Commission for a Felling Licence to enable selective thinning of the woodland to take place to enhance the biodiversity of the area.

As an insurance requirement the Parish Council has to undertake a Tree Survey on a regular basis to ensure that the trees are in the opinion of an arboriculturist safe and to identify any works to the trees that are required. The last survey was carried out in October 2022 with the recommendation that a repeat survey be carried out in January 2024.

The Parish Council is asked to authorise the Clerk to place the request with the arboriculturist for an up to date survey together with recommendations as to the trees to be removed for effective thinning.

1346. Quarry Field and Pond:

Nothing to report.

1347. Aldington Meadows:

Two applications have been submitted to Ashford Borough Council for funding under the Rural England Prosperity Fund 2023/24 to enable the refurbishment of the Old Tennis Court and to replace the play equipment.

The Grant in respect of the old tennis court has been successful and the contractor will shortly be given the go ahead to clear the undergrowth.

With regards to the other application this has been deferred by the Borough Council until the March meeting of the Community Grants Panel due to budget pressures. As the maximum grant available under this scheme would be insufficient for the project an application has been made to the National Lottery Community Fund for further funds, the decision on this application will not be known for approximately 12 weeks.

1348. Any items for information:

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:10pm

REPORT TO ALDINGTON & BONNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL DECEMBER 2023

The areas I will focus on for our December meeting will be much the same as November in trying to anticipate where criminals will strike and use the Xmas celebrations and events to strike into the community. They will seek out our most vulnerable.

I am also very hopeful that I can give a full report of a one-to-one meeting with the Crime Commissioner on Wednesday 29th November at 1400 hrs.

Areas for discussion with him are as follows,

The poor standard of crime reports since 1st October 2023.

Role of NHW going forward into 2024 and onwards towards 2030.

Root and branch review of how Kent Police want to communicate with residents in the future.

Poor communications, the June new police model of crime reports. An example shown.

Violence against Women and Girls to get PREVENTION front and centre of the strategy.

Reports examples. Although not SAXON SHORE area it is important to brief council of the emerging standards.

Tontine Street in Folkestone	On Friday 3rd of November between 22:30 and 23:30. Somebody stole a vehicle from the road. Crime Report No. 46/196919/23
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Is that good enough?

Make? Model? Colour? Reg Number?

How can persons like me send that out into the community?

It will bring nothing other than criticism and mocking statements about the police. I have built up tremendous credibility in communities and I am respected for my level of commitment and work.

When high end vehicles are stolen, they are often parked up and the criminals watch to see any police action as the vehicles may have a "tracker device" It is while they are parked up that a decent appeal may be able to locate the car by an alert and vigilant public.

Theft of a phone.

Blean Forest	
No Road Name	On Friday 3rd of November around 14:05. Somebody stole an unattended mobile phone. Crime Report No. 46/196337/23

What road?
 What town/village?
 From a person Non-violent?
 From a person with face-to-face violence?
 From an insecure/unlocked vehicle?
 From a break into a locked vehicle?
 From a shopping basket in a shop (recent trend)
 From a commercial outlet?

**What chance does that give to get an appeal out?
 Importantly it brings huge criticism from the community, maybe some will not risk sending out a nothing appeal. Some may just give up.**

Someone thinks this is the standard not even a road name or town!!!. So the appeal is at 1405 in a road we will not name in a town we will not name a phone was taken?
 How can we appeal for witnesses, CCTV, Camera Doorbell footage, Dashcam footage?

If officers say this is acceptable, I am clearly stating it isn't. I have challenged the officers that head up the NHW function for Kent.
 The role of NHW going forwards and how do Kent police want to be able to communicate are strongly linked.

NHW has a proven track record since the early 80s.

Kent Police will naturally want to embrace all modern communication platforms.
 However, they must never ever leave only landline residents stranded and left behind many of which will be our most vulnerable.

The importance of the work of the Community Coffee/Tea mornings in Aldington to allow communication face to face with residents cannot be overstated especially to those who may only have landline telephones.
 I commend the council for the vision, planning and commitment for these events which have now been attended by other police colleagues.

Just returning to the Kent Police model for Violence against women and Girls I make the following comment.



Tackling Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The term VAWG covers a range of crimes, the common theme is that they disproportionately affect women and girls. Although we use the term 'violence against women and girls', our approach refers to all victims of any of these offences.

Crimes and behaviour covered by the term Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) include:

- rape and other sexual offences
- domestic abuse
- stalking
- 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation forced marriage, and 'honour' killings)
- as well as many others, including offences committed online

We are committed to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls and have a strong approach to actively pursue violent perpetrators. We want women and girls who live, work and socialise in our communities to feel safe. To achieve this we will be focussing five key areas:

1. [holding offenders to account](#)
2. [support victims](#)
3. [keeping you safe](#)
4. [our culture](#)
5. [strengthening the system](#)

I have proposed the following.

1. PREVENTION
2. KEEPING YOU SAFE
3. SUPPORT VICTIMS
4. OUR CULTURE
5. HOLD OFFENDERS TO ACCOUNT (constant debrief to direct our prevention)
6. STRENGTHEN OUR SYSTEMS. (constant review).

Rather than labour the point I pose to council the following statement. You will recall I was Assistant Chief Officer Kent Fire Brigade, Head of Operations and Safety for all of Kent when I retired.

Does anyone think my plan would started with and have said.

“If your house is on fire, we will put it out”. Absolutely not the word was PREVENTION.



My early crime prevention advice is when Christmas shopping. Take great care if you return presents you have purchased to a vehicle to save carrying them all around town and then go off for further shopping. **Criminals know this!**

They will tour car parks looking into vehicles and if they can see anything on show they may strike.

When shopping with trolleys do not wander off and look at items and leave the trolley unattended with your bags. Purses are often just resting on top of shopping bags. **Criminals know this!**

Great care with internet shopping parcel deliveries which get left on doorsteps. Firstly, in town areas you are vulnerable to the passing chancer and opportunist who just happened to be walking by. However, secondly the vans are now followed and that means even the most rural of isolated properties are also vulnerable. **Criminals know this!**

CRIME

Parcel thefts rise from doorsteps as gangs follow courier vans



Some of us will be travelling early on Christmas morning, to get a flying early start we load our cars with all the presents and gifts we are taking the night before we leave. **Criminals know this!**

They will just walk the streets and looking into vehicles if they see rich pickings they will strike. Just get up 30 minutes earlier and load the car then!!

Santa sometimes stores presents from prying eyes in sheds and garages. **Criminals know this.**

Now people sometimes laugh when I say this but a good Christmas morning for the police is torrential rain. If not about 0900 hours Christmas day many front doors burst open, and children pour out with every form of new toy and present. Bikes, skates, scooters, footballs toys and games and many more gifts that Santa brought **Criminals know this!** About 1400

hours children are called to Christmas lunch, they would gladly miss and continue playing, however they go indoors and leave the items laying in front gardens. That is when vans drive around and just pick up anything laying there, breaking many young hearts in the process.

Burglaries are thankfully very low across the district but Christmas trees on show with presents stacked underneath may just tempt criminals if they feel residents are out.

Sadly, criminals have a fantastic opportunity withy SCAMS as we progress from Black Friday sales, which seem to be on all days as well as Fridays!!

Christmas sales and online bargains and then straight into January sales too. The whole period is a business opportunity for 'scammers.



A crime that struck in 2022 was the thefts of High-End cars like BMWs, Mercedes, and Audi's

My NHW work was front and centre of building a case against the criminals who struck around 40 times in East Kent especially Ashford District.

Many appeals and CCTV evidence collected from NHW members resulted in the following,

Trio jailed for keyless car thefts

Policing news

✓ Published: 16:50 15/11/2023

Three men behind a spate of keyless car thefts have been jailed for a total of more than seven years.

Alminas Satas, Maksims Seluks and Olgierd Golubovski were arrested and charged following an investigation by the Kent Crime Squad.

The trio were linked to the thefts of 29 vehicles from **Ashford, Hawkinge, Tonbridge, Tenterden** and **Maidstone** in October and November 2022.

They used an electronic device to capture the signals emitted by car keys and trick vehicles into thinking keys were present to steal them.



Left to right: Alminas Satas, Olgierd Golubovski and Maksims Seluks

Thefts

An investigation was launched after the first vehicles, a BMW and a Mercedes, were stolen in **Ashford** on **12 October 2022**.

Detectives found the thieves were travelling down from east London in vehicles which had cloned number plates on them to avoid detection, and they would target BMWs, Mercedes and Range Rovers around Kent, which would then be driven back to various locations in Essex and London, where it is believed they were stripped down and sold for parts.

In the early hours of **8 December**, officers in Kent established that a BMW seen on the **M25** was travelling on cloned plates.

It was followed by officers in unmarked cars and brought to a stop after exiting the **A249** near **Sittingbourne**. Occupants Satas and Seluks were arrested and a third man ran from the scene.

Arrests

The vehicle was found to be registered under a false name at an address in **Dagenham**. Officers later attended the address and arrested Golubovski.

Evidence from his and the other men's phones linked them to the numerous thefts around the county over the preceding two months.

Satas, Seluks and Golubovski all later admitted conspiring to steal vehicles and were sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court on Monday 13 November 2023.

Satas, 26, of Bell Farm Avenue, Dagenham, was jailed for three years, four months; Golubovski, 24, of Rowdowns Road, Dagenham, was sentenced to two years, four months; and Seluks, 23, of Vincent Road, Dagenham, got two years and one month.

You may have seen this locally but this was a result of your work and contacts supplying info and CCTV to us.

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/two-charged-following-theft-of-30-keyless-cars-278587/>

If you wish to thank your contacts on my behalf then please do

Thank you for your help
Scott

DC 10255 Scott DRAKE
Telephone External: 01227 868443
Telephone Mobile: 07980683365
Telephone Internal: 062443
Email: 10255@kent.pnn.police.uk
Address: Canterbury Police Station, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3JQ
www.kent.police.uk

Charges brought in keyless car theft investigation

Two men have been charged following an investigation into keyless relay thefts of cars in Kent.

Community assistance

Detective Constable Scott Drake, Kent Police's investigating officer, said: 'These three men were relentless in their targeting of cars to steal and quickly take out of the county.'

'I would like to thank the local Neighbourhood Watch coordinators who worked tirelessly to obtain crucial CCTV footage and for the support of the local communities in providing important evidence in this case.'

'I am pleased our meticulous investigation saw these men arrested and charged, and they are now no longer at liberty to steal people's property.'

The sentences come two weeks after two other men were jailed for a total of five years for similar offences.

Advice

Following the cases, drivers of cars with keyless entry systems are advised to take steps to ensure their vehicles are secure. Motorists should:

- Check if their entry fobs can be turned off overnight and store them away from any household entry points.
- Drivers can also store their fobs in special foil-lined bags, which can be bought from retailers, to prevent any unwanted communication between the vehicle and its keys.
- Make sure you don't leave your car keys visible from the outside of your home and park in a garage, secure car park or well-lit area covered by CCTV if possible.
- Consider having windows etched with the vehicle registration number or use an invisible ink marker pen to mark these details and your postcode on the underside frame of the vehicle.

For more information, visit [the advice page on our website](#).

I am already working with officers from the Crime Squad who I worked on with the crimes above as this trend has begun again in the District and I am issuing crime prevention guidance into the community.



In closing down 2023 I look forward to working with you in 2024 how we have now for many years now.

Our Beat officer **BRAD LINDRIDGE**, should have a second officer attached to his areas soon and I look forward to introducing both officers to you.

I also look forward to developing a strong relationship with the **Rural Team officers IAN NORTON and DEBBIE BISHOP** during 2024.

Crimes will become more sophisticated in 2024 however alongside them will always be the chancers and opportunists who will look for vehicles especially vans, garages, sheds, barns, allotment sheds, stables and any form of external storage whatsoever.

There will be bogus callers and rogue traders to content with.

Scams will get better and better; our prevention must match that.

Drugs will continue to drive so much of the lower-level crime to pay for the purchase of the product, however it must be always borne in mind that just above that level of drug activity in communities is a level of violence we would not want to see in East Kent.

As always thank you for all your support and may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a Healthy Happy New Year and the same to your families who without their support this work would be very difficult indeed.

We have had an excellent year, and with success comes work. You have set a high bar and to maintain that will bring more work and expectations of our residents, but we can hit 2024 in good shape. In January I will set out my clear NHW plan for the year.

Thank you.

Peter

Peter New
Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

