

Kent County Council

Community warden service

consultation document



29 September - 9 November 2014
kent.gov.uk/communitywardenconsultation



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This publication is available in other formats and
can be explained in a range of languages

24 hour helpline: 03000 41 41 41

Text Relay: 18001 03000 41 41 41

Foreword

Since 2002 our Community Warden service has been making Kent's communities safer places in which to live, work and play.

Accredited by Kent Police, our wardens work with residents and partner agencies to tackle a wide range of risks including bogus callers, fly tipping, graffiti and vandalism. They are the eyes, ears and instigators for local communities, working with young people, older community members and vulnerable individuals to increase confidence, reassurance and cohesion on the streets of Kent.

Originally, wardens operated in local parish districts, spending much of their time in specific geographic areas. In the past three years we have adapted the service to make it more flexible and cost effective. We have the freedom to better deploy wardens where they are needed most. This approach has increased the overall coverage of the Community Warden service across Kent.

However, the financial landscape continues to be challenging and there are still communities in Kent that do not benefit from the service. As a result we have the responsibility to look again at how we deliver our Community Warden service, to ensure it:

- best meets the needs of as many people in Kent as possible
- delivers financial savings.

We believe that the proposal outlined in this document is the best way to achieve this, and we want to know what you think. We are consulting on the proposal from 29th September to 9th November 2014. No formal decisions have been taken and your views will be instrumental in the final decision taken by council members.

You can register your views online: kent.gov.uk/communitywardenconsultation, or complete the questionnaire at the end of this booklet. If you have any queries, want further information or have alternative suggestions, we want to hear from you.



What community wardens do in Kent

There are currently 79 uniformed supervisors and community wardens on the ground in Kent, working with residents, local groups and partner agencies to help keep communities safe and connected. They:

- tackle low-level crime and antisocial behaviour
- can control traffic
- are a reassuring uniformed presence
- promote community solidarity and encourage communities and neighbourhoods to work together to identify and solve problems
- work closely with Kent Police, local authorities and other professional agencies
- talk with local residents, offering information and advice
- take part in local community activities.

Authoritative and approachable

Every warden is accredited by Kent Police under the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) in accordance with Home Office & Association of Chief Police Officers guidance. They are required to pass high level police vetting and a Disclosure Barring Service.

Allied to this is an open, approachable ethos. Our wardens care deeply about the communities they serve and are on-hand every day, 7.30am-10pm, to listen to residents and resolve issues.

Mission

Our mission is very simple and clear. We will:

- ensure that every community in Kent can benefit from the services outlined above
- be flexible enough to quickly focus resources on communities that need it the most
- make savings by changing the way the service is delivered, so it is as efficient as possible.

Why we need to change

Despite the improvements made since 2011, there are still communities in Kent that do not benefit from our Community Warden service. We also need to make considerable savings. Every council in England is responding to reduced funding from central government and in the case of our Community Warden service, we must save £1.28m from April 2015.

What we are consulting on

We have explored a number of ways to both save money and address the geographic reach of the service. These have included:

- the creation of a centralised service, with no distinct district responsibilities, that responds to community needs as and when they occur across the county. This would provide an opportunity to focus resources in high priority areas but would deny many communities access to the service.
- a reduction in the number of staff, without changing how the service is delivered. This would mean that some parishes would receive no service, flexible deployment would not be possible and the opportunity to broaden the geographic coverage of wardens would also be reduced.

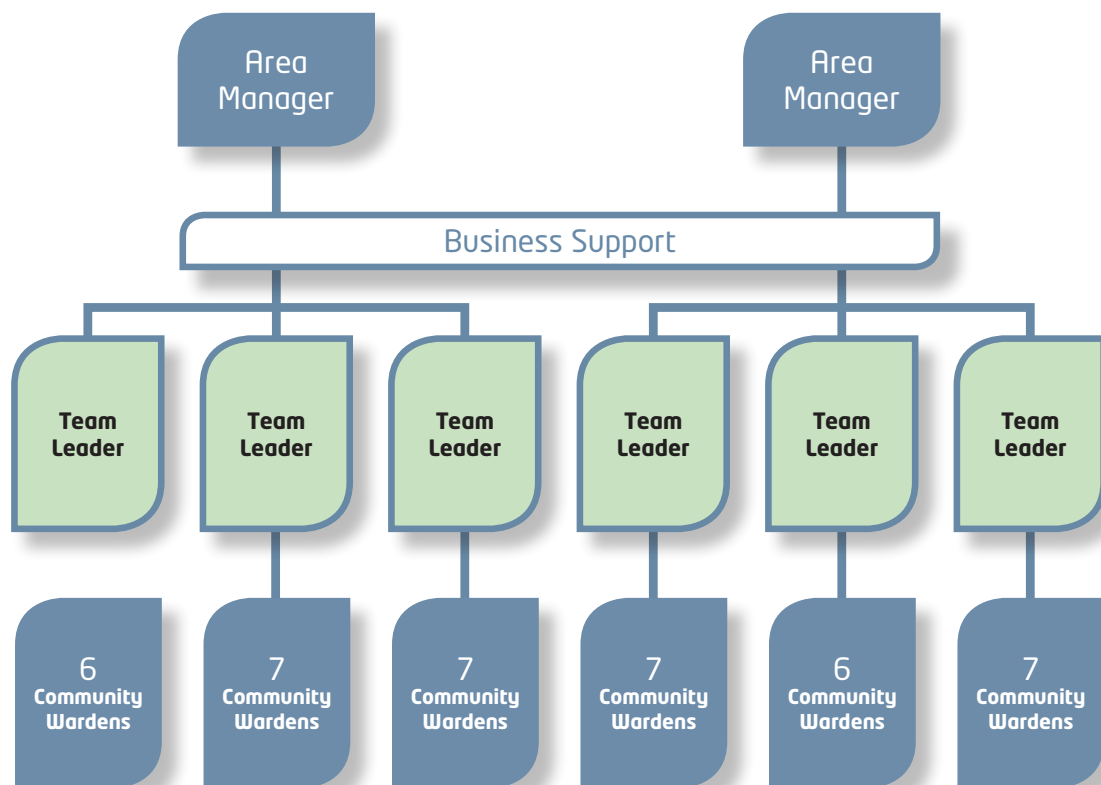
We are also exploring the possibility of external funding for community warden posts in some areas and looking at ways to support the work of wardens through volunteers. This would mean more resources to support the proposed team of 46 uniformed officers.

Our preferred model, which is described in detail over the following pages, delivers the following:

- warden services will still be delivered in existing parishes
- partnership working with Neighbourhood Policing Teams and district Community Safety Units will be maintained and enhanced
- the flexibility to better identify and respond to issues in specific communities.

The proposal at a glance

Warden Service Plan 2015/16



The new proposal does mean a reduction in posts:

- area manager posts: from three to two
- administration posts: from four to one
- supervisor posts: from 12 to six
- wardens: from 79 to 40

- more flexibility so that wardens spend time with the communities who need their help the most
- easier to cover urban and extreme rural locations that do not currently receive a regular warden service
- greater partnership working with external agencies to best identify communities and individuals that need help the most
- a more cost-effective way to run the service.

Key benefits

- far more Kent residents will have access to our Community Warden service
- less time working on process and administrative work, which means more focus on delivering local and Kent-wide priorities

Proposed roles and responsibilities in detail

Area managers

We have already reduced the area manager roles from three to two, who will each be responsible for six districts in Kent. They will set the strategy for the service and have overall operational management. The area managers will work with external partners, senior council managers and elected members to ensure the service resources are deployed effectively and that the highest quality service is delivered to Kent residents.

Savings: this change will save approximately £37,000.

Team leaders

We propose that six team leaders will each be responsible for two districts; replacing the 12 current supervisory roles. Each team leader will manage six or seven community wardens, deploying them across the two districts.

These new roles have been designed to benefit the service in a number of ways:

- reduced admin responsibilities means more time to get hands on and identify community priorities
- a greater focus on delivering frontline activities; this includes working with Kent Police on its predictive policing programme, which is helping officers and partners to prevent crime before it happens
- team leaders will have day-to-day responsibility for their community wardens, making sure that they are in the right place at the right time
- in the case of a county emergency, team leaders will report to the Kent Resilience Team and be a key point of contact on the ground.

Savings: this change will save approximately £168,000

Community wardens

We propose that we reduce to 40 the number of community wardens. As they do now, wardens will continue to work with communities in Kent to make them safe places

in which to live, work and play. Key responsibilities will remain as they are (see page 04).

Although there will no longer be permanent wardens for specific parishes, parishes will still be served by wardens on a regular basis. The key benefit of this proposed new model is the way in which wardens are managed and deployed. The structure is more efficient and flexible, which means:

- it's easier to identify community issues and quicker to deploy wardens to where they are needed most
- because wardens are not constricted by geographical boundaries, more residents in Kent will have the opportunity to access community wardens.

It is proposed that wardens will still provide core cover between 7.30am and 10pm and they will continue to help with the Troubled Families agenda; Trading Standards serious scam project, Restorative Justice and other priority projects.

Savings: this change will save approximately £1,014,000

Business support

It is proposed that the business support function is reduced from four posts to one. Less wardens means less administration and the one officer will be responsible for the whole team. Key responsibilities will include: completing trading standards reports; collating team diary sheets and all admin support work.

Savings: this change will save approximately £72,000

In summary



What we do

Our Community Warden service makes Kent's communities safer places in which to live, work and play.

Why we need to change

As it stands our community warden service cannot meet the needs of some of Kent's communities. The service also needs to save more than £1.2m, as part of extensive savings across the whole council.

The proposal and key benefits

We propose changing the way the service is delivered, so that less staff can better meet the needs of more of Kent's communities:

- less focus on geographic boundaries, so that wardens can be quickly and easily deployed to where they're needed most
- less processes and admin, so that team leaders and area managers can get more hands on, working closely with districts and professional agencies to better understand and respond to the community safety needs of specific communities.

What this means for your local community

If this proposal is agreed then in the future you may not see as many community wardens on the streets of Kent. However, the proposed new structure means we will be able to serve more communities than we do currently. On top of this we will be better placed to respond quickly and easily to issues as they arise.

How to get involved and have your say

No decisions have been taken and we want to hear what you think of this proposal. Please let us know by visiting www.kent.gov.uk/communitywardenconsultation and completing the online consultation questionnaire. Alternatively, complete the consultation questionnaire on page 08 and return to: **FREEPOST RTKS-UABE-USGJ, Community Warden Service, Invicta House, Maidstone, ME141XX**

What happens next?

We will be consulting on this proposal from 29th September to 9th November 2014. Your responses, along with the Equality Impact Assessment, will be presented to Kent County Council's Transport and Environment Cabinet Committee on the 5th December 2014. We will then consider all of the responses and update people on the results. If the proposal is agreed it will be implemented on 1 April 2015.



Community warden service

Consultation questionnaire

If you require more space to respond please continue your answers on an additional piece of A4 paper.

You can either fill in this form and return by freepost:
FREEPOST RTKS-UABE-USGJ, Community Warden Service, Invicta House, Maidstone, ME141XX
Or alternatively, fill in the questionnaire online:
kent.gov.uk/communitywardenconsultation

Q1. Are you completing this questionnaire on behalf of :

Yourself (as an individual) A District/Town/Parish Council An organisation (as the official representative)

If you are responding as an individual please go to Q2. If you are responding on behalf of a District/Town/Parish Council or an organisation please answer Q1a, Q1b and if appropriate Q1c.

Q1a. Please tell us the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of :

.....

Q1b. Is your organisation actively involved with the Community Warden Service :

Yes No

Q1c. If you answered Yes, please give details :

.....

.....

Q2. Do you / have you received a service from Kent County Council Community Wardens :

Yes No

Q2a. If you answered Yes, was this a single occurrence or more often?

A single occurrence More often

Please give details :

Q3. Do you support the proposal as set out in the Consultation Document :

Yes No

Q3a. If you answered 'No', please tell us why :

Q4. Do you support the proposal for less focus on geographic boundaries, so that Wardens can be quickly and easily deployed to where they're needed most?

Yes No

Q4a. If you answered 'No', please tell us why :

Q5. If there are any other options that you would like to be considered, please provide details below :

Q6. If these proposals were implemented what could be the impact upon you / your organisation ?

A major impact A minor impact No impact Don't know

Q6a. If you have answered **Major** or **Minor** impact please specify what the impact may be :

Q7. If you would like to make any other comments regarding this proposal please use the box below :

Q8. We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment to see if this service change could affect anyone unfairly. We welcome your views on the assumptions we have made and the conclusions we have drawn.

The Equality Impact Assessment can be downloaded from www.kent.gov.uk/communitywardenconsultation or copies can be requested by email CommunityWardens-CCCS@kent.gov.uk or telephone: **03000 41 41 41**

Q9. In the future, do you think volunteers could be used to supplement the Community Warden Service (a service similar to Special Constables)?

Yes No

Only respond to Q10 if you are answering on behalf of a District/Town/Parish Council or organisation. If you are responding as an individual please go to Q11.

Q10. Would your organisation, either individually or collectively with others, consider the option of funding a dedicated Community Warden for your area ?

Yes No

If you have answered 'Yes' and would be like to discuss this further please supply your contact details (this does not commit you to anything):

name

email

telephone

About you

Only answer these questions if you have responded as an individual. It is not necessary to answer these questions if you are responding on behalf of a District/Town/Parish Council or an organisation.

About You... We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out. That's why we are asking you these questions. We won't share the information you give us with anyone else. We'll use it only to help us make decisions, and improve our services. **If you would rather not answer any of these questions, you don't have to.**

Q11. Are you...? Male Female I prefer not to say

Q12 How old are you ?

Q13. What is your postcode ?

Q14. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong ? (Source: 2011 census)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> British | <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Roma | <input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> Other* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irish Traveller | <input type="checkbox"/> Other* | <input type="checkbox"/> Other* | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other* | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |

*Other Ethnic Group - if your ethnic group is not specified in the list, please describe it here:

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example), are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Q15. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010 ?

Yes No I prefer not to say

Q15a. If you answered Yes to Q15, please tell us which type of impairment applies to you.

You may have more than one type of impairment, so please select all the impairments that apply to you. If none of these applies to you, please select Other, and write in the type of impairment you have.

Physical impairment Mental health condition Sensory impairment (hearing, sight or both)

Learning disability

Long standing illness or health condition, such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, heart disease, diabetes or epilepsy

Other, please specify: I prefer not to say

.....

Q16. Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion or belief ?

Yes No I prefer not to say

Q16a. If you answered Yes to Q16, which of the following applies to you ?

Christian Hindu Muslim Any other religion, please specify:

Buddhist Jewish Sikh

Q17. Are you...?

Bi/Bisexual Gay woman/Lesbian Other

Heterosexual/Straight Gay man I prefer not to say

Kent County Council (KCC) collects and processes personal information in order to provide a range of public services. KCC respects the privacy of individuals and endeavours to ensure personal information is collected fairly, lawfully, and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Thank you for taking part
in this consultation.**

The results will be published on www.kent.gov.uk/communitywardensconsultation