

From: Matthew Scott, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner
To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel
Subject: Citizens in Policing
Date: 21 November 2019



Introduction:

1. Citizens in policing is an umbrella term for volunteers who give up their time to support the police either directly or indirectly. The citizens' role in policing continues to be as vital today as it was in the creation of the Peelian principles on which the police service was founded.
2. Embracing and developing 'citizens in policing' provides excellent opportunities – volunteers increase the capacity of police forces, bring valuable skills and expertise to policing, and create closer and more effective relationships with communities so the service continues to police with consent.
3. Whilst providing an invaluable service to policing, it also benefits the individuals who volunteer through access to opportunities, skills and experiences like no other. In addition to joining a proud police family, they can expect to develop essential interpersonal skills; make an important, positive contribution to their local community; receive on-going training and supervision; and feel part of a supportive and appreciative team.
4. The College of Policing definition of citizens in policing includes three key types of voluntary partnerships:
 - a) Trained, managed and mentored within a force – for example Special Constables, Volunteer Police Cadets and Police Support Volunteers.
 - b) Partnered and supported by the police – for example Community Speedwatch, Neighbourhood Watch, CrimeStoppers, Victim Support, Kent Search & Rescue and South East 4x4 Response.
 - c) Holding the police to account – for example Independent Custody Visitor Scheme and Independent Police Advisory Groups.
5. The Commissioner is grateful to Kent Police for its assistance with this paper. Should Members have any questions relating to operational matters, they should be directed to their local District Commander.

Special Constabulary:

6. The Special Constabulary is a force of trained volunteers aged 18 or over from all walks of life, who work with and support their local police.
7. Special Constables wear a uniform, have the same powers as regular officers and put themselves in harm's way to protect and serve the public, like their paid colleagues – but all because they just want to give something back to their communities.
8. The [Kent Special Constabulary](#) comprises of in excess of 270 trained volunteers who routinely give up their time to support regular officers in delivering high visibility policing, including undertaking patrols, attending calls and investigating reports of crime. In addition, a number of Special Constables are embedded in functions such as the Marine Unit, Roads Policing Unit, Dog Unit and Serious Crime Directorate.
9. In 2018/19, Special Constables in Kent provided a total of 92,677 hours of policing.
10. Underway for three months, the Joint Response Unit (JRU) pilot on North Division sees a South East Coast Ambulance (SECAmb) response vehicle staffed by a paramedic and two Special Constables on Friday and Saturday evenings. This enables joint service attendance to calls such as suspected assaults, people under the influence of alcohol, road traffic collisions and concern for welfare.
11. SECAmb has provided 10 paramedics to work with 12 Special Constables to form the unit, and the intention is to help free-up any patrol already in attendance and allow an initial triage assessment to establish if offences have occurred or whether other resources are required. The Special Constables do not provide medical assistance unless requested by the paramedic under their guidance, but are present to assist in the safety of the paramedic and establish if any police action is required at the scene.

12. The JRU pilot continues to deliver good results and further opportunities to expand are being explored. For example, East Division are in consultation with SECAMB in Thanet, but discussions have been delayed whilst awaiting the outcome of Brexit.
13. To ensure the Special Constabulary is effectively managed and co-ordinated, the Force invests in a number of officers who provide personnel and operational support, as follows:
- Police Inspector
 - 3 x PC Coordinators
 - 3 x PC Divisional Training Officers
 - 1 x PC Classroom Trainer
 - 1 x PC Assessment and Verifications Officer

Volunteer Police Cadets:

14. The national [Volunteer Police Cadets](#) is the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) supported overarching framework under which police forces across the UK operate Cadet programmes, all of whom share common aims and principles.
15. The aims of the national Volunteer Police Cadets are:
- to promote a practical understanding of policing amongst all young people;
 - to encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship;
 - to support local policing priorities through volunteering and give young people a chance to be heard; and
 - to inspire young people to participate positively in their communities.
16. The [Kent Volunteer Police Cadets \(KVPC\) programme](#) is open to young people who live in Kent irrespective of background or financial circumstances, including those vulnerable to crime or social exclusion.
17. The KVPC programme provides an opportunity for those aged 13-17 to get involved in activities which support community policing and to also learn about responsible citizenship. Each Cadet is encouraged to take part in voluntary work, with activities including:
- stewarding local events;
 - crime prevention stands at community and charitable events;
 - Community Speedwatch; and
 - advising on youth issues and concerns.
18. KVPC units meet on a weekly basis and are run largely from non-police venues, such as schools. Cadets wear a uniform and are asked to pay a small 'sub' of around £10 per month which is used for equipment, activities or events that directly benefit the programme. However, to ensure no Cadet is disadvantaged, the Commissioner provides a 'hardship fund' which is managed by Kent Police.
19. Before graduating and receiving a uniform each Cadet carries out 15 weeks of training, with 3 weeks focussed on policing in Kent as well as activities to encourage communication skills and teamwork.
20. At the age of 18, individuals may be encouraged to become volunteer Cadet Leaders. They will also be signposted to full time employment with Kent Police, modern apprenticeships, the Special Constabulary or other volunteering opportunities. While the programme does not currently provide direct entry into the police, it does give an insight into policing, builds employability skills and helps the young person make informed career choices.
21. The KVPC programme has around 350 Cadets, and a waiting list in excess of 400. There are currently 10 units located across the county as follows:
- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| • Dover | • Canterbury |
| • Maidstone | • Tonbridge |
| • Medway | • Sittingbourne |
| • Swanley | • Ashford |
| • Thanet | • Gravesend |
- The remaining two units, in Folkestone and Dartford, are scheduled to open in 2020.

22. The following officers and staff ensure the KVPC programme is effectively managed and co-ordinated:

- Cadet Manager
- 2 x PC Cadet Coordinators
- 1 x PSE Cadet Coordinator
- 1 x Administrative Assistant
- 1 x PSE post advertised for Mini and Junior Cadet Coordinator (*see paragraph 93*)

23. In Kent, each KVPC unit is launched with a £2,000 'pump prime grant' from the National Volunteer Police Cadets and a £1,000 'start-up grant' from the Commissioner.

Police Support Volunteers:

24. [Police Support Volunteers](#) (PSVs) give their time freely to perform tasks which complement the duties performed by police officers and staff. This helps free up officers and staff to perform key operational duties.

25. It also allows individuals to become involved with policing and make a positive contribution to the local area, whilst learning new skills or enhancing those they already have by being part of a professional, public-focused organisation.

26. The roles performed by PSVs vary hugely within and between police forces. They can work within all departments, subject to relevant vetting, and can assist with a wide variety of tasks. Anyone over the age of 16 can apply to be a PSV.

27. Kent Police has 167 active registered PSVs, who bring significant experience to the organisation and are often placed in roles that are conducive to the skills they bring. They help the Force to improve customer service and support many areas, with roles including:

- helping with local policing;
- assisting front counters;
- Neighbourhood Watch support;
- general administration, such as updating databases and collating questionnaire results; and
- role-playing during police training.

28. PSVs are also important advocates for the police - increasing understanding and building relationships in local communities. In 2018/19, Kent PSVs provided over 19,000 hours of support and they are highly valued by the Force – being dedicated people who want to give something back to their community by assisting a public service.

29. The co-ordination of PSVs is managed by a Volunteer Coordinator and four geographically based Volunteer Liaison Officers.

Community Policing Volunteers:

30. [Community Policing Volunteers](#) (CPVs) work closely with communities and businesses to promote community safety.

31. Aged 18 or over and wearing a uniform, CPVs support their local Community Safety Unit by providing additional visibility, improving communication flow with local communities and supporting vulnerable people through local engagement and work with partner agencies.

32. CPVs support the community by:

- providing reassurance and a point of contact;
- utilising powers to deal with anti-social behaviour and traffic management;
- engaging with partners to resolve longer term community problems; and
- working closely with regular officers, Special Constables, PCSOs and partner agencies to actively seek information and intelligence around criminal activity, disorderly or anti-social behaviour and provide feedback on the outcome of police action.

33. There are currently 86 CPVs, but it is anticipated that Kent will have over 300 by the end of 2020. Maximising the opportunities for volunteers to get involved, so far there are 12 identified CPV roles, including security and equine which are proving the most popular.

34. The Force has a full time PC Trainer devoted to CPVs.

Community Speedwatch:

35. [Community Speedwatch](#) (CSW) is a national initiative where, in partnership with the police, members of communities use detection devices to monitor vehicle speeds.

36. Volunteers receive appropriate training, and local Community Policing Team officers attend locations to show support and maintain a high visibility presence. The scheme aims to cater for the problem of real or perceived speed related offending, and through a partnership with the community is intended to:

- reduce death and injury on the roads;
- improve the quality of life for local communities;
- reduce the speed of vehicles to the speed limit; and
- increase public awareness of inappropriate speed.

37. With the aim of educating drivers to slow down, the volunteers report drivers exceeding the speed limit to the police who issue a letter to the vehicle owner, advising them of the dangers of speeding, and reminding them of the law. In cases where this is blatantly ignored, or where there is evidence of repeat or excessive offences, enforcement and prosecution may follow.

38. There are 800 active CSW approved sites in Kent; the table below shows activity in the period April to June 2019:

Division	No. of sessions	1st Record Observed	Active Enforcement	Hand Delivered	Letters Sent	Un-processed	Total Observed
East	223	1615	0	6	363	502	2486
West	261	3860	12	48	1119	588	5631
North	56	439	0	3	94	73	609
Total	540	5914	12	57	1576	1163	8726

39. The Force has a full time CSW Manager who provides guidance and support to members across the county.

Neighbourhood Watch:

40. The aim of [Neighbourhood Watch](#) (NhW) is to bring neighbours together to create strong, friendly, active communities where crime and anti-social behaviour are less likely to happen.

41. The vision of NhW is that of a caring society that is focused on trust and respect in which people are safe from crime and enjoy a good quality of life. NhW is about making sure that fewer people feel afraid, vulnerable or isolated where they live.

42. Police force area NhW Associations, run by volunteers, are key in maintaining the impetus of the NhW movement at local level. Their role includes providing guidance and, where necessary, policies on the details of how NhW operates within their area. This includes things like deciding any processes new schemes need to follow and maintaining a good working relationship with the local police.

43. The Kent NhW Association represents 5,300 watches throughout the county and includes almost 330,000 households.

44. A Service Level Agreement exists between Kent Police and the Kent NhW Association. This serves as a working document to ensure Kent Police support for NhW from the Chief Constable down and in turn from NhW in understanding police needs and requirements.

45. Kent NhW Association has re-branded the logo to read 'Neighbourhood Watch Kent', reflecting the fact that their initiatives target communities throughout the whole of the county. Recent projects have included:
- Support for Force 'Safer Season' initiatives.
 - Nominated Neighbour Scheme which embraces Trading Standards and Bogus Caller crime prevention advice.
 - The rural arm of NhW, known as 'Country Eye', working with partners, including the National Farmers Union and the Country Landowners Association, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and KCC 'Cleaner Kent'.
46. NhW schemes have increased exponentially across the county, with the greatest growth seen on East Division with an additional 79 created this year alone.
47. The Force has a Watch Liaison Officer who provides support to schemes across the county.

Country Eye:

48. Country Eye is a scheme led by Kent Police and Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association and is open to any individual, organisation or business, large or small, in the rural area. Country Eye seeks to act as an umbrella organisation bringing together all elements of our rural communities.
49. There are currently 30 community groups or organisations participating and local farmers and landowners are major partners in tackling issues such as hare coursing and anti-social behaviour.
50. Its aim is to promote rural safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime by inclusion of all elements of the community. Effective interactive communication is a key element of the scheme and the prompt distribution of information and intelligence is therefore a key factor. Modern technology plays its part in Country Eye and the Kent Community Messaging service has been developed specifically to meet this requirement.
51. The local Watch Liaison Officer, who is supported by volunteers, administers Country Eye in each Kent Police area. The Watch Liaison Officer and/or the volunteers circulate daily crime information and intelligence to all participating groups or individuals.
52. The aims of Country Eye are:
- Encourage a coordinated approach for the bringing together of the many rural initiatives under one umbrella, in order to reduce crime and the fear of crime for those living in the rural areas of Kent.
 - Improve communication between all elements of the rural community of Kent.
 - Promote and encourage initiatives to deter all elements of doorstep crime, particularly offences against the elderly and the vulnerable.
 - Establish a multi-agency approach to solving local problems by bringing together Kent Police, Kent County Council, Medway Council, Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch groups, local businesses, individuals and all community support services.

CrimeStoppers:

53. Established in 1988, CrimeStoppers is an independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime, 100% anonymously, by phone and online, 24/7, 365 days a year. It aims to:
- detect, reduce and prevent crime, through the provision of information; and
 - give people the information and tools to act against crime.
54. Crime can be worrying and a proportion of the population refuse to speak to the authorities; CrimeStoppers provides an alternative and safe route to provide information to the police and other authorities. People can share information anonymously in two ways; by calling 0800 555 111 any time of day or night, or by filling in a secure '[giving information](#)' form on the [CrimeStoppers website](#).
55. When a person calls, they speak to a specially trained agent working in their contact centre in Surrey. Should the caller not speak English, or if English is not their first language, a translation service is available. The agent will record the information and ensure it doesn't contain anything that could identify the caller and pass it on to the appropriate police force or other authority. The call isn't traced or recorded, at no time are personal details asked for, and the caller will not have to give a statement or even go to court. Online reports have the same level of anonymity.

56. The charity's promise of anonymity has never been broken and nationally, around 14 people are arrested and charged every day as a result of information given to CrimeStoppers.
57. CrimeStoppers has 103 members of staff across the UK, with one third working in their Surrey contact centre. Another third based in regions across the UK, and the rest working at their central office in greater London. In addition, CrimeStoppers has volunteers of all ages, backgrounds and interests who provide support locally or at their central office.
58. Though CrimeStoppers works closely with Kent Police and other law enforcement agencies, it is independent and not attached to any particular organisation.
59. As well as National Crimestoppers, Local Crimestoppers works closely with partners in Kent to deliver local crime prevention and awareness campaigns, such as the Digital Most Wanted Campaign and the Ambassador Programme.

Victim support:

60. Funded through a Ministry of Justice grant, the independent charity [Victim Support](#) is currently commissioned to provide this service in Kent.
61. The [Kent Victim Support team](#) is based at Compass House in Ashford, and can be contacted free on 0808 168 9276 (Mon to Fri, 8am-8pm / Sat 9am-5pm), or outside of these hours on 0808 168 9111. The service provides free and confidential support, advice, information, signposting and referrals for residents who have been a victim of crime.
62. In addition to providing initial telephone support for those affected by crime, victims can obtain support on a walk-in basis or by booking an appointment, either at Compass House or via Compass Points located across the county. For those who find accessing support over the phone or in person difficult, there is also a website form and 'live chat' facility enabling contact with trained support workers online.
63. Predominantly delivered by volunteers who work throughout the county, the Kent Victim Support team is able to provide on-going emotional and practical help to support the recovery process.
64. The service focuses on providing a tailored and individual response for victims reporting to Kent Police, British Transport Police or Action Fraud, no matter how long ago the crime took place. The service is also accessible to those who do not wish to report a crime to the police.
65. The Kent Victim Support team also provides the initial triage, assessment and referral service for all domestic abuse victims either reporting to Kent Police, or self-referring directly for support. This forms part of the integrated Domestic Abuse Service commissioned by Kent County Council and provides greater co-ordination of service delivery for domestic abuse victims.
66. In 2018/19, the Kent Victim Support team:
 - received 112,782 referrals and made contact with 85,370 victims to offer support;
 - held 400 Compass Points, through which 526 people approached the service;
 - volunteers donated over 10,000 hours of their time to support victims; and
 - reported that 96% of victims were highly satisfied or satisfied with the service received and 94.5% felt it had helped them cope and recover more quickly.

Kent Search & Rescue:

67. [Kent Search and Rescue](#) (KSAR) is a charitable organisation dedicated to assisting the emergency services in the search for and rescue of vulnerable missing persons.
68. KSAR volunteers make themselves available to Kent Police, the Local Authority and other emergency services 24/7, 365 days a year to help find and rescue members of the public who go missing and are considered in danger.

69. KSAR is a member unit of the Association of Lowland Search and Rescue (Lowland Rescue); a charitable organisation dedicated to assisting the emergency services in the search for, and rescue of vulnerable missing persons.
70. Lowland Rescue's national role is to coordinate adequate arrangements for Search and Rescue services in the Lowland areas of the UK. Lowland Rescue's:
- Purpose is to continuously develop skills to save lives when 'every second counts'.
 - Vision is to set the standard of excellence for 'every inland search' and rescue organisation and provide one cohesive voice.
 - Mission is to support the emergency services through delivering the highest standard of search and rescue and building our partnership at national and local levels.
71. To date this year, KSAR volunteers have assisted with 84 searches.
72. With an excellent established relationship with Kent Police, KSAR are now also helping to manage calls. A KSAR Manager is located within the Force Control Room each Sunday and other identified days, with one or two search and rescue vehicles manned by volunteers available to assist Divisions. The volunteers are able to be deployed to incidents identified as low risk and threat, such as missing persons and concerns about vulnerable individuals who could go missing. There is a medic in each vehicle with a full medical kit, so they are also able provide medical assistance when required.

South East 4x4 Response:

73. [South East 4x4 Response](#) (SE4x4R) is a registered charity that provides 4x4 vehicle support in times of need to the emergency services, local authorities and charitable groups across Kent and Medway.
74. SE4x4R are trained specialist volunteers who utilise their own vehicles, equipment and skills to provide 24/7, 365 days a year support when other agencies are at full capacity or cannot proceed due to inclement weather conditions or extreme terrain.
75. With around 100 members (including support members), the aim of SE4x4R is 'to preserve and protect human life and property, in particular but not exclusively by providing equipment, vehicles and other resources to offer support in adverse conditions'. The services provided are:
- Four wheel drive capability - support in all weather conditions (snow, gales, heavy rain and flooding) and any other situations (off-road, marshalling etc.)
 - A co-ordinated group of trained, competent unpaid specialists - members take pride in their vehicles and have the desire to help communities in times of need by using their 4x4 vehicles to go where others cannot. They have knowledge of search and rescue, first aid, navigation and communication skills.
 - 4x4 support for Kent Search and Rescue, Kent Police, Kent County Council, Medway Council and other organisations at organised public events.
 - Active social calendar for members - whilst the principle aims of the group are serious, members also have the chance to have fun and test their vehicle capabilities during exercises and training events.
76. In 2017, Kent Police granted policing powers to SE4x4R allowing members to direct traffic on Kent's roads - the first Force in the country to grant powers to volunteers under the Policing and Crime Act 2017.
77. Volunteers can now deal with incidents such as fallen trees, broken down vehicles and vehicles trapped as a result of adverse weather without Kent Police having to attend. Not only does this benefit the public, but it also frees up police officers to attend incidents that only they can deal with.
78. Both KSAR and SE4x4R have also commenced the application process to see their members join as CPV's which would see an increase in the hours they offer, and a closer link to the Force's priorities as they engage in other areas of work.

Independent Custody Visitor Scheme:

79. Police custody is a high-pressure, high-risk environment. Every day, police officers and staff working in custody suites interact with and care for people in difficult circumstances. Detained persons might be aggressive, distressed or highly vulnerable. They may have complex needs, including drug and alcohol issues, mental illness or physical health problems.

80. Every Commissioner has a statutory duty to run an independent custody visiting scheme, in which volunteers serve as Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) making regular, unannounced visits to custody suites to check on the rights, entitlements and wellbeing of detainees as well as the conditions they are held in.
81. The 61 [Kent ICVs](#) visit suites around the county and speak to detainees, asking them about their experiences, and reviewing custody records to check they are being treated appropriately and relevant safeguards are in place. Each visit is undertaken by two volunteers and they have access to all areas of the custody suite to ensure good conditions and stocks of food, clothing and other essentials.
82. The ICVs can ask custody staff to resolve any immediate concerns or issues during the visit, but also complete visit reports for the Commissioner outlining their findings and/or raising problems or concerns. This information is monitored and shared with Kent Police to ensure important issues are dealt with swiftly.
83. In addition to visits, the ICVs attend training sessions, between two and four panel meetings a year, and an Annual General Meeting. The time commitment is around three to five hours a month and all ICVs are asked to carry out at least one night-time visit a year (between 10pm-6am).
84. The Scheme is managed by a member of the Commissioner's staff, and findings, themes and learning from visits are shared with the national [Independent Custody Visiting Association \(ICVA\)](#).
85. Through the work of the ICVs, the Commissioner is able to give an assurance to the public that those detained by Kent Police are being treated in a lawful, ethical and transparent way.

Independent Police Advisory Group:

86. The aim of the [Independent Police Advisory Group](#) (IPAG) is to advise and work with Kent Police to improve both the service provided to minority communities and the relationship with those communities.
87. Made up of volunteers chosen to represent communities and protected characteristics across Kent, the IPAG makes a difference to policing in Kent by:
- helping Kent Police to support victims of crime and anti-social behaviour;
 - providing a link between the police and the communities of Kent;
 - encouraging witnesses of crime to come forward; and
 - sharing feedback from communities with the police and other agencies to help improve services.
88. There is a County IPAG and each District also has an IPAG with selected members of the public who represent local key communities and protected characteristics. IPAG roles include County Chair, County Vice Chair and District Chairs.
89. The County Chair and Vice Chair regularly meet with the District Chairs, other volunteers, senior police officers and other agencies to help improve the services provided to communities across Kent. The District Chairs meet with their District Commander, their local Community Liaison Officer and a panel of local members.
90. The IPAG Chairs also act as Independent Critical Incident Advisors (ICIAs) who assist Kent Police during critical incidents by providing independent advice.
91. As volunteers from a range of backgrounds, cultures and professions, with knowledge of a community of place or community of interest, ICIAs provide independent advice on the impact of managing and policing incidents, during and after, on communities. They help officers and staff:
- understand a community's perspective;
 - develop sensitive and effective policing;
 - challenge assumptions and mind-sets;
 - demonstrate openness and accountability; and
 - build trust and confidence with families, individuals and communities.
92. As the advice is provided independently of the police, ICIAs carry no responsibility or liability for the outcomes of decisions based on their advice. Responsibility for delivering against any advice rests with the police.

Conclusion:

93. As outlined above, there are a range of volunteers who give up their time to support the police either directly or indirectly.

94. Of note, the Kent Police Citizens in Policing Team continues to work on the following:

- Increased recruitment to all strands of volunteering.
- Development of the CPV strands.
- Introduction of the remaining three nationally recognised strands of cadet volunteers, namely:
 - Mini Cadets – for those aged 8-10 and delivered in schools over a nine week period (due to commence from January 2020 in Thanet before being launched Force-wide);
 - Junior Cadets – for those aged 10-13 and delivered in schools over a similar time period; and
 - Cadet Leaders – encouraging cadets to become Leaders once they reach the required age, and an opportunity to also develop those about to enter employment.
- Leadership Programme for the Special Constabulary.
- Transition course for Police Cadets into regulars.
- Design and successful delivery of Citizens Academy – an initiative where Kent Police invites members of the public to undertake nine bespoke modules that provide an insight into policing and some of the departments within it. They will then have the opportunity to engage in promotion processes and other panels to assist in shaping and influencing future policing decisions.
- Introduction of the JRU into all Divisions.

95. The Commissioner would like to thank the Special Constabulary, Community Police Volunteers, Volunteer Police Cadets and all other volunteers who do not wear a police logo, such as Kent Search and Rescue and South East 4x4 Response, for their time and for all their hard work in helping keep the county safe. Without the extensive support of these, and a great number of other charities and volunteers, Kent Police would incur extra costs and require additional resources.