



# Safer in Kent

## News from Matthew Scott: Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner

### We hope you are keeping safe and well

#### Message from your Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Scott

Thank you to everyone who is making a big effort to follow the government's instructions to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives. This is a difficult time for us all but staying at home will make a difference to the National effort to tackle this awful virus.

I'd like to thank Kent's Police Officers, Staff and volunteers for the way they have responded to this unprecedented national emergency. I am tremendously grateful for all of the effort they are putting in to keeping the public, yourselves and victims of crime safe from harm.

I also commend them for the way in which they have all dealt with the new regulations which the government has brought in. We all know that some will look to find what they believe to be reasons to criticise policing and paint them in a negative light, based on a few isolated incidents.

In Kent, I believe the Police are upholding the founding principle of policing by consent by effectively engaging and encouraging people to adhere to the rules.

I am talking very regularly with our Chief Constable and his Chief Officer team to make sure they have all the resources, finances and kit that they need to help get through this emergency. I've been supporting them by sourcing local suppliers of PPE and sanitiser – on top of what they're procuring and finding themselves.

Together we are monitoring crime and antisocial behaviour, the COVID-19 engagement and enforcement guidance, staff welfare and absence.

This includes the disgusting attacks on emergency and key workers from lowlifes who claim they have COVID-19 in an effort to threaten and intimidate. I'm pleased that a cross party group of 16 Kent MPs has written to Kent's judiciary to express their view that anyone who does this should be imprisoned. I know emergency workers will welcome this significant support.

My team has been working with charities and others who provide support for victims of crime and ensure that they have certainty of funding during the difficult economic climate that we face. We are liaising with other agencies involved with the criminal justice system, mental health and community safety on a regular basis.

Nationally, I have been involved with regular calls with the Policing Minister, Kit Malthouse, where we have been discussing PPE, testing kits, domestic abuse and the courts, amongst other things.

And the new national procurement company I chair, BlueLight Commercial, has played a role in co-ordinating the supply of equipment. I'm pleased to report that there's more supplies for Police forces on the way thanks to national collaboration.

Thank you again to Kent residents who are observing the stay at home rules and keeping each other safe by doing so. And thank you again to emergency and key workers who are keeping us safe and vital support services going during this national emergency.

#### What does the PCC do?

- Sets Kent Police's priorities
- Holds the Chief Constable to account
- Decides the budget and council tax
- Commissions services for victims
- Runs a custody visiting scheme
- Works with councils and others to prevent crime

#### CORONAVIRUS / COVID-19:

The OPCC cannot provide guidance or clarification on how to comply with the Government's '**Stay at Home**' advice, or indicate under exactly what circumstances policing will enforce the advice.

Please refer to [Government](#) and [NHS](#) resources.

## Commissioning update

The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is working with all the Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs) commissioned and grant funded services to both support and promote their new ways of working during this unprecedented time. This is to ensure that we are doing all we can to help support the people of Kent and Medway access support where needed and to re-assure that services remain accessible. Due to current government advice support services are making adjustments to how they operate and some of the key changes are outlined below. Please be assured all service providers will continue to provide the best possible support and that referrals to these agencies can be made as normal.

### Victim Support

All VS support for victims is currently being delivered over the telephone, or remotely, rather than face-to-face.

Drop-in sessions for members of the public to speak to representatives of Victim Support in the community, known as Compass Points, are cancelled for the foreseeable future.

### Restorative Solutions RJ Service

Staff from the charity Restorative Solutions, which facilitates Restorative Justice (RJ) communications between victims and offenders in Kent, will endeavour to progress referrals by making contact with victims by telephone, email, or letter.

### Family Matters Independent Sexual Violence Advisers Service

Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) meetings with victims, and face-to-face therapy sessions, are being put on hold and this support will be provided by telephone sessions.

- Face-to-face therapy sessions with child victims will also be put on hold, but sessions will be available by telephone if agreed by the child's legal guardian.

Clients and referrers can still apply for support through [Family Matters' online application portal](#).

### St Giles Trust

The St Giles Trust, which works with vulnerable young people to divert them away from county lines exploitation, is stopping all non-essential face-to-face contact with clients.

- its community caseworkers, schools intervention staff, and custody liaison staff, will make use of telephone contact and Face Time.

Liaison with other services will continue remotely.

The PCC's office continues to engage with commissioned service providers funded by Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott. Anyone with any questions can contact Claire Gatward, Bethan Jeffreys or Caroline Filmer in the OPCC Commissioning Team.

Dads unlimited <https://www.dadsunltd.org.uk/> Dads Unlimited provides practical advice, support and guidance for dads going through emotional issues around separation, divorce and access to children. 1:1 support is being provided virtually

DAVSS <https://www.davss.org.uk/> The Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Service is still operating a telephone helpline with extended hours. All new referrals will be responded to, and any calls made out of hours will be contacted back.

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/> Support is continuing for Kent clients into the Pear Tree House Service Centre. Helpline staff have been given key worker status by the Government during the Covid-19 situation enabling the NSPCC to continue to keep the vital service running and continue to support children.

Rising Sun & Choices DA service <http://www.risingsunkent.com/> Rising Sun provides services for women, children and families who are affected by domestic violence. Out counselling service is continuing via the telephone and video support. The crisis line is open Monday to Friday 09:00 to 16:30

Rubicon Cares <https://www.rubiconcares.org/> Trauma counselling sessions are continuing over the phone or video conferencing. The service is still accepting new referrals as usual and will manage caseloads over the telephone until normal services can resume. The helpline of 07505709876 is still open Monday, Thursday & Saturdays 12:00 to 15:00 and Wednesdays 19:00 to 22:00

Forward Trust <https://www.forwardtrust.org.uk/> The PCC funds the East Kent Violence Reduction peer mentor initiative and this service is still operating with support being provided over the phone and other digital platforms. New clients can be offered expert telephone advice and consultation including harm-reduction advice during the Covid-19 situation.

## Commissioner's Sport Relief Challenge

In March, before the Government's social distancing measures were implemented, the PCC hosted a Sport Relief Volley Challenge to raise money for vulnerable children across the globe. A team of policing students were victorious in winning the coveted trophy, whilst many other teams came close.

Thank you to everyone who took part and, more important-

ly, thank you for helping to raise a grand total of £2,319.40!

To watch the different teams in action, please visit the PCC's [Youtube Channel](#)



**I'm happy to help you or answer questions—please do get in touch with me using the details below**

**Post:** Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Kent Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone, ME15 9BZ

**Phone:** 01622 677055 | **Email:** [contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk](mailto:contactyourpcc@kent.police.uk) | **Website:** [www.kent-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk)

**Twitter:** @PCCKent | **YouTube:** "Kent PCC's Office" | **Instagram:** @kent\_opcc | **Facebook:** KentPCC