



Community Safety Partner Updates



December 2025

Community Safety Update and Events

Community Safety Partnership monthly newsletters can be found on the Folkestone & Hythe district website [CSP 2025 Newsletters | Folkestone & Hythe District Council](#)

Women's Winter Wellness Health event – 2 December

Kent Community Health NHS Trust and Folkestone & Hythe District Council worked in partnership coordinating a Women's Wellness event on 2 December at Folkestone Harbour Church.

Around 50 community partner agencies and volunteers were under one roof and the event focused on all categories aimed at women's health, physical, mental, welfare, housing, safety, financial assistance and much more.



The free event aimed for women to seek help and support from the council's community safety and welfare benefits teams, as well as local agencies including Rising Sun, Kent and Medway Recovery Wellbeing College and Folkestone Safe Haven, and many more.



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The free event aimed to make it easier for residents to seek help and support from the council's community safety and welfare benefit teams.



Information Awareness

Advice when using taxis

All taxis and private hire vehicles are licensed by the council and must display identity plates as detailed on the right of this page.

Drivers must carry an identification badge.

To be licensed, vehicles and drivers complete various regular safety checks to ensure their vehicles are roadworthy and that drivers are responsible.

A taxi charges tariff card should be displayed in the taxi.

Safe journeys home

Know the licence plates



Get up to speed on all things taxis
folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/taxis

Taxis for a day/evening out

- Arrange a lift or phone a taxi and ask the cab firm to contact you when they arrive. A text message is usually sent to the caller with the taxi driver's vehicle registration number, make, model and colour.

Hailing a taxi

- Hackney carriages can be hired from taxi ranks, hailed (flagged down) in the street or pre-booked.
- Hackney vehicles (licensed by Folkestone & Hythe District Council) have an orange and white identification plate with black numbers on the rear and a roof light.

Booking a private hire vehicle

- These are pre-booked through a licensed operator (cannot be flagged down or use taxi ranks)
- Private hire vehicles have a purple and/white identity plate with black numbers on the rear of the vehicle and purple/white side stickers with the council logo.

If you are in any doubt that the vehicle is not a taxi or private hire vehicle do not use it.

For more information about using taxis or private hire vehicles, or to make a complaint visit: [Taxis – Folkestone & Hythe District Council](#)

Taxi Marshalls

- The Taxi Marshalls will be out every Friday and Saturday evening between the hours of 10.30pm and 3.30am in Folkestone Town Centre.
- The marshalls can be identified by their bright orange vests and will serve not only as a visible presence in Folkestone Town Centre but they will also assist with helping members of the public to a taxi at the end of the evening.
- They are SIA (Security Industry Authority) trained similarly to the door staff on bars.

Additional resources can be found by visiting the [Suzy Lamplugh Trust website](#).

Advice on drinks

- Keep an eye on your drinks if in a crowded place or nightclub to avoid potential spiking of substances, i.e. alcohol or drugs to another person without their knowledge or consent. More information can be found on [Home - Stamp Out Spiking](#)

Partner Updates



FREE MEDIATION SERVICES IN FOLKESTONE & HYTHE – NEW FOR 2026!

Ashford Mediation Service (AMS) is delighted to announce that in 2026, it will be supported by the Roger De Haan Community Trust to explore and offer the delivery of FREE mediation services to the residents of its neighbouring district, Folkestone and Hythe.

Established in 1997, all its mediators are experienced, trained and as a minimum, hold an Enhanced DBS Check, and certificates in Safeguarding Children Levels 1 & 2 and Safeguarding Adults Level 1, from the Kent Safeguarding Children Multiagency Partnership (KSCMP).

Throughout the past year, AMS has been meeting regularly with the wonderful Community Safety Unit (CSU) team at Folkestone and Hythe District Council (F&HDC), attending health and wellbeing events and networking to raise awareness of the potential for mediation to help individuals, families and communities live more harmoniously.

Ashford Mediation Service reaches and empowers people who may be living unhappy and disrupted lives because of unresolved conflict within and between families, with neighbours and in the workplace. And perhaps most importantly it helps participants to address the root causes of disharmony, facilitating people to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions, positively impacting mental health, self-esteem, embracing the opportunity of living their lives in consideration of others.

AMS are planning to:

- Offer FREE information sessions to partner agencies on what mediation is, how our service works and how to refer, or self-refer into the Service
- Offer FREE mediation services* to residents of Folkestone and Hythe district, including on intergenerational family matters, childcare arrangements and between neighbours. * Please note we do not deal with anything legal, contractual or with divorce. Our services are voluntarily entered into, and the resulting Mediation Agreement is not legally binding.
- Continue to offer, with the support of F&HDC, mediation services to and between Council tenants and their neighbours

- Work in partnership with local agencies
- Recruit and train two new mediators
- Offer Mediation & Conflict Resolution Skills Workshop in education settings
- Offer subsidised workplace mediation to local businesses
- Create information flyers and a dedicated Mediation Services webpage for Folkestone and Hythe, on the AMS website.

Please get in touch ASAP to ask us anything about how to access the Service, to request an information session from us on how our Service works, to partner with us or for anything else; Melodie would love to hear from you.

We would especially like to hear from you if you have space to host our flyers or if you have a publication in which we could promote the FREE service.
THANK YOU.

Tel: 07704 621091

Email: info@ashfordmediation.co.uk

www.ashfordmediation.co.uk

Charity Number: 1065625





Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) are continuing to provide free energy advice and home visits to anyone who may find it more difficult to manage bills and/or stay warm enough, currently until March 2026.

People can be referred or get in touch with SEK themselves. Also have access to fuel vouchers, if anyone needs urgent fuel support and has a pre-payment meter.

The friendly, DBS-checked and National Energy Action-trained team can tailor support and offer guidance around:

- Staying warm and well
- Money saving tips
- Tariffs, bills and meters
- Energy efficiency
- Grants and emergency funds
- Fuel debt
- Scam awareness
- Priority Service Register
- Carbon Monoxide awareness
- Accessing more support

Each household will also receive a 'warm pack' as part of their home visit, including items such as blankets, draught excluders, radiator foils, and a carbon monoxide alarm if needed.

Further details can be found on the contact details in the flyer.

ENERGY ADVICE VISITS



We offer friendly, impartial energy advice

Book a FREE home visit with our DBS checked team, for tailored advice on:

- 💡 Money saving
- 💡 Energy efficiency
- 💡 Tariffs, bills and meters
- 💡 Fuel debt
- 💡 Grants
- 💡 Scam Awareness
- 💡 Accessing more support

**Includes
FREE energy
saving goody
bag!**

contact

digitalsupport@sekgroup.org.uk
01843 210005 / 01227 469970

Fraud / Scams / News



Kent Fraud Alert System

[Ever wanted to help the Police?](#)

TAKE FIVE
TO STOP FRAUD

Online Shopping Scams

As we get closer to Christmas and the New Year sales, criminals will be continually active with these types of scams.

To protect yourself from online shopping scams, consider the following tips:

- Verify the legitimacy of the retailer: Research online shops to check they are legitimate, especially if it is a store, you've not used before.
- Use a credit card for payments: Credit card payments offer more protection than debit card payments.
- Secure your email account: Use a strong password for your email to protect against phishing attacks.
- Be cautious with links in emails and texts: Avoid clicking on links in suspicious emails or texts.
- Use strong passwords: Create unique passwords for each online account to protect against breaches.



Preventing fraud

Together, let's stop scammers.

Remember, ABC:

-  never Assume
-  never Believe
-  always Confirm

By following these tips, you can significantly reduce your vulnerability to online shopping scams and enjoy a safer online shopping experience.

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

For further information about Fraud, visit our website at [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](#)

You will also find valuable information from the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams](#)



Police News updates



Local Priorities Theft - shoplifting Update

Officers from Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Unit at Folkestone Police Station took part in a planned week of action for Safer Business Week between 10 to 15 November.

Two main days of action took place with the objective of tackling retail crime under Op Odin and Project Vigilant with the aim of supporting retailers in tackling, reporting and the confidence in evidence capture whilst improving the confidence of stakeholders in the Police. Officers concentrated on our most prolific offenders, the key locations targeted and locations that offenders often retreat towards.

The focus was to utilise powers under the current Public Space Protection Order and issuing of Community Protection Warnings whilst supporting Council officers in their roles to deal with (ASB) Anti-social behaviour outcomes from retail incidents, whilst educating, disrupting and intervening in quick time response in the prevention of likely undetected offences by retailers.

Thanks to the positive work already completed by our Neighbourhood Task Force and Beat Team's, there is already some good working relationships with retailers in helping them to feel better supported, this is in addition to refining communication and evidence collation to support better outcomes.

Also, during the week, the Child Centred Policing Team provided an impressive 11 educational inputs to children relating to shoplifting, its impact on communities, respecting local businesses and how young people can contribute to safer neighbourhoods.

Despite some poor weather and our good friend 'PC RAIN' assisting with the reduction of some incidents across the week, the planned week of action generated an additional 7 x Arrests, 1 x Community Resolution, 2 x Partnership working opportunities, 4 x Drug seizures as well as person stop searches and property searches relating to linked offences.

What is 159?

Think you have been scammed and need to contact your Bank quickly, then ring 159 – See below.

What is 159?

The **159** number enables people to connect with their bank safely and securely when they receive an unexpected, suspicious or fraudulent call.

If you think that you may have been a victim of fraud, then contact your bank immediately, which you can do by calling **159**.



Stop, Hang Up,

Ensure that your phone is available for dialing, or alternatively, use another phone. Call your bank on **159**.

Call **159** if you experience the following:

- Someone contacts you claiming to be from your bank – even if they do not seem suspicious.
- You are contacted by someone claiming to be an authority figure such as the police or HMRC and told to transfer money – even if the request seems genuine.
- You receive a call about a financial matter and it appears suspicious.

Reporting a scam

If you think you or someone you know has been a victim of a scam report it immediately to Action Fraud online actionfraud.police.uk or over the phone **0300 123 2040**.

For more information and advice visit kent.police.uk/fraud or email KFAS@ecis.police.uk



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Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**.
Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.
www.kent.police.uk



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Gift Card Fraud

Watch out for unsolicited callers claiming you need to purchase gift cards to pay a fine or bill.

Additionally, criminals will contact you impersonating a family member or friend with a time sensitive bill to pay and state how they desperately need your help and could you buy a gift card and send them the number.

For more about fraud visit our website at [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](#) and also the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams](#)

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

What is gift card fraud?

Gift card scams start with a call, text, email, WhatsApp or social media message. Scammers will say almost anything to get you to purchase gift cards — like Google Play, Apple, Steam, iTunes, or Amazon cards.



Together, let's stop scammers – **Remember, ABC**



Never Assume

If you get a message from anyone claiming to be a friend or family member, or someone claiming to be from a reputable organisation such as HMRC, a bank, or the police, and you are asked to purchase any gift cards – **STOP! – it will be a scam.**



Never Believe

Scammers will often claim it is an emergency and typically invent a time-critical reason as to why they need you to help them, they need to pay an urgent bill, for example. They will often pull at the heartstrings and say you are the only person they can turn to.



Always Confirm

Protect yourself by trying to speak to the person who you think is asking for the gift card directly or in person – For example: if it is the bank, find the official contact number on your bank card, recent statement or ring 159 and speak with them.



Reporting a scam

If you think you or someone you know has been a victim of a scam report it immediately to Action Fraud online actionfraud.police.uk or over the phone **0300 123 2040**.



For more information and advice visit kent.police.uk/fraud or email KFA5@ecis.police.uk

Call 159

If you have paid money or shared bank details, contact your bank's fraud team straight away.



Call 159 for the bank hotline. This number connects you directly to your bank.



**Kent
Police**

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call **999**
If you have a hearing or speech impairment, use our textphone service **18000**.
Or text us on 999 if you've pre-registered with the emergency SMS service.
www.kent.police.uk

Charity Fraud

Thinking about giving to charity this Christmas? Do not let your money end up in a criminal's pocket.

The risk of fraud should not put you off giving to charities but you should be vigilant and make sure you are giving safely.

See – [Steps to safer giving - Donate with Confidence](#)

For more about fraud visit our website at [Advice about fraud | Kent Police](#) and also the Home Office at [Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams](#)

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](#) or call 0300 123 2040.



New Published Reports

Online safety

Source: Childnet

Date published: 01 December 2025

Childnet has published data from research into young people's use of VPNs (virtual private networks) to access online content. Surveys were conducted with 2,018 8-to-17-year-olds and 2,000 parents and carers across the UK. Findings include: 21% of children have used a VPN, with the number of children using VPNs increasing as they get older; the most popular reasons children gave for using a VPN were to stay safe online and protect their privacy; and 10% of children who used a VPN said they did so to look at content which was not age-appropriate.

Download the report: [Young people's use of VPNs](#)

See also on NSPCC Learning

> [Preventing online harm and abuse](#)

Online safety: women and girls

Source: Ofcom

Date published: 25 November 2025

Ofcom has published new guidance setting out actions for technology companies to take to improve women and girls' online safety. The guidance focuses on harms disproportionately affecting women and girls and highlights how these can inhibit their safety and participation in online spaces and normalise misogynistic attitudes and behaviours. The nine areas of action centre around taking responsibility, designing services to prevent harm and providing support to users. Actions include: ensure governance and accountability processes address online gender-based harms; conduct usability evaluations and product testing; and enable users who experience online gender-based harms to make reports.

Read the guidance: [Statement and guidance: a safer life online for women and girls](#)

See also on NSPCC Learning

> [Preventing online harm and abuse](#)

Online blackmail

Source: NSPCC Learning

Date published: 24 November 2025

NSPCC Learning has published new research on parents' and carers' knowledge of

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the online blackmail of children and young people. Based on a survey of 2,558 UK parents and carers, the report explores knowledge of online blackmail, steps taken to keep children safe, and information and support needs. Findings include: 1 in 10 parents and carers have supported their child with online blackmail; most parents and carers feel responsible for protecting their children from online blackmail but face challenges in talking to or supporting their child; and two thirds of parents and carers think the government and technology companies are ineffective in preventing online blackmail. The report calls for the development of further resources for parents and carers, and for more to be done to prevent online blackmail and support children and young people.

Read the report: [A collective concern: parent and carer views on the online blackmail of children and young people](#)

Happy New Year from the Community Safety team.



If you have any information that you would like us to include within any future updates, please email the details to community.safety@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk