Community Safety Partner Updates

October 2026

Community Safety Update and Events

National Cadets Week

The first ever National Cadets Week took place in October, supporting more than 130,000 cadets and 28,000 adult volunteers across 3,000 locations in the UK.

National Cadets Week is a UK Ministry of Defence initiative celebrating the country's cadet forces, including the Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps, Volunteer Cadet Corps, and Combined Cadet Force.



During the week, a volunteer instructor, who is one of the council's enforcement officers, was in Bouverie Place, Folkestone answering questions from young people about joining one of the cadet forces. Information was also available focusing on leadership, teamwork, resilience, first-aid training and outdoor and adventurous activities preparing for adult life.

If anyone knows of a young person interested in joining up, the 99 (Folkestone) Squadron RAF Cadets are based at Ship Street in Folkestone. There are also squadrons in New Romney, Ashford and Dover.

For further information, please contact the Officer Commanding oc.99@rafac.mod.gov.uk

Upcoming Community Safety Events

Scam Awareness – 6 November 10.30am – 3pm

Community Safety will be at Age UK, Sanford House, Stade Street, Hythe CT21 6BD with representatives from various agencies offering advice on scam awareness and keeping safe.

Community Safety Information Awareness

Bonfire Night



The RSPCA has information on its website Keeping dogs, cats and other small pets safe during fireworks - RSPCA - rspca.org.uk

The Community Safety team wants everyone to stay safe and enjoy the fireworks on 5 November, and more information can be found on Fireworks | Kent Police.

Home Fire & Rescue Fire Safety Visits

Kent Fire & Rescue offer Home fire safety visits | Kent Fire and Rescue Service visits, especially if you have a long-term health condition or have a young family, person aged 70 or over or a smoker.

Contact the fire safety advisors on 0800 923 7000 Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, voicemail outside these hours. Calls are free from most home and mobile devices but need to check with your phone provider.

Boiler Maintenance

We all enjoy being warm and cosy in our homes and now is the best time to think about the yearly boiler check ahead of the colder days and nights.

Many of the gas utility companies offer a homecare cover which would include the annual boiler checks.

Ensure any engineers are qualified to do the job rather than based on recommendations. Go on to the Gas Safe Register website Find & Check Gas Safe Engineers | Gas Safe Register It is a requirement by law for all gas engineers and businesses be listed on the register to perform gas works. This replaced the previous CORGI scheme in 2009.

October 2026

All gas registered engineers carry an ID card showing a photograph, registration number, expiry date and the types of work they are qualified to perform.

Every engineer must renew their qualifications annually and update qualifications every 5-years.

Avoid being scammed for replacement roof



There has been news coverage about rogue traders charging homeowners extortionate amounts of money for roof repairs that weren't required in the first place and not completed to a satisfactory standard.

Doorstep traders often pressure people to have repairs done to roofs, by saying loose tiles need to be replaced. Roofs are out of sight and reach for people to check the work themselves.

Some of these rogue traders become aggressive and intimidating towards the homeowner, piling pressure to pay and it has been known that scaffolding is erected the following day, leaving the homeowner no escape from having the work carried out.

A few simple checks before going ahead with any repairs:

- Always take photos and gather the necessary paperwork and receipts.
- Check the Trader Checks - Trading Standards Checked
- Obtain three quotes, take your time in deciding.

Never:

- Agree to work from an uninvited caller.
- Pay cash or large upfront deposits.
- Be rushed into a decision.
- Go to the bank with a trader.
- Seek recommendations from family and friends.

If you feel threatened, call **999**. If you suspect rogue trading activity, call Kent Police on **101**.

Walking the streets safely



The clocks went back one-hour at 2am on 25 October meaning fewer daylight hours.

- Be mindful of your surroundings, try to walk in well-lit busy areas and try to avoid walking home if you're feeling vulnerable.
- Carry a torch and ensure the batteries are charged.
- Check the pavements for fallen leaves as they are slippery if the ground is wet from rain.

October 2026

- Wearing bright or reflective clothing ensures you are visible to cyclists and drivers.
- Avoid walking with headphones over your head, anybody can approach from behind.
- Ensure all mobile devices and valuables are hidden out of sight in your bag or pocket.
- If meeting someone, notify a friend or relative about where you are going and when you are due to return home.

Cost of Living

If there is anyone seeking cost of living support, check [Help and support with the cost of living – Folkestone & Hythe District Council]

Preparing your festive finances



- Work out a budget to include all the costs for Christmas, including presents, food and decorations.
- Check out charity shops to save money.
- Supermarkets offer price reductions on toys, food and other items and there are apps which show the date of discounts.
- Avoid the financial burdens and the obligation of giving gifts, focus on who and what to buy those closest to you.
- Black Friday takes place on 27 November 2026, but discounts may start earlier. Cyber Monday is on 30 November.

Shopping online



- Always check retailer websites before entering any information URLs ‘https:\\’ should have a padlock icon in the address bar.
- Avoid entering personal information including payment details on public or unsecured wifi networks.
- Credit card payments offer additional protections against fraud.
- Avoid any bank transfers to strangers, ensure you research the company.
- Watch out for fake text messages from Royal Mail, delivery companies etc. when purchasing items.

Information / Updates - organisations





[Welcome to the Cheriton and Morehall Branch of The Royal British Legion - Cheriton and Morehall Branch –]

Cheriton and Morehall Branch Meetings are at 7:30pm on the first Tuesday of each month at Cheriton Bowls Club, Weymouth Road, Cheriton, Folkestone, Kent.

Membership is open to everyone, whether they have served in the Armed Forces or not.

October 2026

The peer support service is specifically available to adults aged 18+ living in Ashford, and they do operate in Folkestone and Hythe.

Free Peer Support Available for Adults in Ashford



Free, flexible peer support is available to residents aged 18+ in Ashford through Porchlight and Live Well Kent.

Peer support service offers a flexible approach tailored to each individual. Support can be provided online, over the phone or in person, with sessions taking place weekly, fortnightly or monthly, depending on what works best for the person.

Can support people with their mental health, as well as help with:

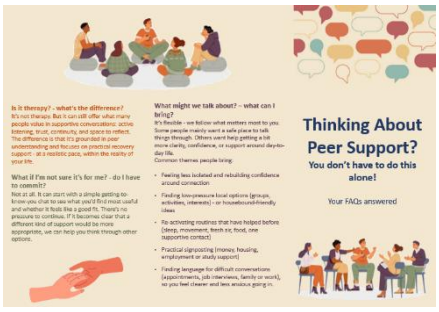
- Breaking larger goals down into manageable steps
- Building confidence and motivation
- Finding local services and support that may be beneficial
- Exploring practical ways to improve wellbeing

Referrals can be made by scanning the QR code on the attached poster contacting Porchlight directly, or emailing me at charlotte.waterman@southkentmind.org.uk

This is a free service, and we would love to help spread the word to anyone in Ashford who may benefit from some additional support.

Please note: The peer support is contracted through Porchlight/Live Well Kent and not South Kent Mind.





October 2026

National Campaigns

Anti-Bullying Week – 16 – 20 November 2026

ABA (Anti-Bullying Alliance the official organiser of the Anti-Bullying Week and Odd Socks Day, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. An annual event, held from 16 to 20 November 2026.

The theme is “Break the Silence” and the week kicks off with Odd Socks Day on 16 November with adults and children being encouraged to wear odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique.

More information can be found via the link Anti-Bullying Week 2026: Break the Silence

International Fraud Awareness week – 15 to 21 November 2026

Annual event held globally including the UK to raise awareness about various types of fraud, including identify theft and financial.

Road Safety Week - 15 to 21 November 2026

Road Safety Week is a nationwide campaign that focuses on raising awareness about road safety issues, including the prevention of accidents, injuries, and fatalities on the road. It emphasizes the importance of responsible driving, pedestrian safety, and the need for improved road infrastructure.
Road Safety Week | Brake

National Safeguarding Adults Week – 16 November to 22 November 2026

Safeguarding Adults Week is an annual campaign focusing on protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is primary concern and statutory duty of Folkestone & Hythe District Council and more information can be found on the About safeguarding | Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Fraud / Scams



FRAUD ALERT: ASOS Cyber Security Incident

On 6 October 2026, ASOS customers received an unauthorised notification through the genuine ASOS app claiming the company had been hacked. ASOS has since confirmed unauthorised activity involving a third-party customer communication platform and warned that some customer names and contact details may have been accessed. The company does not currently believe payment card details or account passwords have been compromised.

What You Should Do

- Be alert to unexpected emails, text messages or phone calls claiming to be from ASOS.
- Be cautious of messages offering compensation, refunds or asking you to verify account details.
- Do not click links contained in unsolicited messages.
- Log into your ASOS account directly through the official website or app if you wish to check your account.
- Change your password to a strong password and remember to use a different password for each of your accounts

What is a strong password

A strong password is made up of three random words, combined with numbers and special characters.

- **For example** - River!Tiger27Window

You can check your email to see if your password/account has been compromised in a data breach by going to – Have I Been Pwned: Check if your email address has been exposed in a data breach

If you find that your password has been compromised, then change it immediately.

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and reporting to Reporting cyber crime and fraud or phishing attempts - Report Fraud or call 0300 123 2040.

Find out more by visiting our website at Advice about fraud | Kent Police and from the Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams

Rogue Trader Arrests in Dover – Can you help?

Suspected rogue traders have been arrested following prompt work by neighbourhood officers in Dover.



Kent Police was alerted just before 2.30pm on Wednesday 16 September 2026 to suspicious behaviour in Castle Drive, Whitfield.

Residents approached - A group of people had arrived in the area in a van. Local residents were approached by the occupants and reportedly told that repairs were needed to their homes. It is alleged that a demand for payment was made after a roof was accessed and damage reported.

Arrests made - Officers attended and carried out enquiries at the scene. Shortly afterwards, two 18-year-old men and a 16-year-old boy were arrested in connection with the incident and taken into custody. They were later bailed with conditions while enquiries are completed.

An investigation is ongoing and anyone with relevant information to assist should contact Kent Police on 01843 222289 quoting 46/154021/26.

Remember:

- Consider using Trading Standards Checked traders.
- Get three quotes.
- Take time to decide.
- Discuss major work with somebody you trust.

Never:

- Agree to work from an uninvited caller.
- Pay cash or large upfront deposits.
- Be rushed into a decision.
- Go to the bank with a trader.
- Seek recommendations from family and friends.

If you feel threatened, call **999**. If you suspect rogue trading activity, call Kent Police on **101**.

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and reporting to Reporting cyber crime and fraud or phishing attempts - Report Fraud or call 0300 123 2040.

Find out more by visiting our website at Advice about fraud | Kent Police and from the Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams

Beware of 'Government Heating Survey' Cold Calls

Kent residents are being warned after reports of individuals receiving unsolicited telephone calls claiming to be conducting a **Government heating survey**. In a recent report, the caller asked questions about the resident, whether a **Power of Attorney (POA)** was in place, and attempted to arrange a visit to the property.

Criminals and rogue traders often use claims about heating systems, insulation, energy grants, boiler upgrades or government-backed schemes to gather personal information, identify vulnerable individuals, and gain access to homes. They may falsely claim to represent government departments, councils, energy companies or official schemes.

Warning Signs

- Unexpected calls about heating, insulation, energy efficiency or government grants.
- Questions about who lives at the property, age, health, finances, carers or Power of Attorney arrangements.
- Pressure to arrange a home visit or survey.
- Claims that urgent inspections are required or that funding is about to expire.
- Callers claiming to be from a government agency, local authority or energy organisation without providing verifiable credentials.

Protect Yourself

- Be cautious of any unsolicited call offering surveys, grants, insulation or heating upgrades.
- Never disclose personal, financial or legal information, including details of any Power of Attorney arrangements.
- Do not agree to a home visit from an unexpected caller.
- Verify any claims independently using official contact details from GOV.UK or your local authority.

Discuss unexpected calls with family members, friends or carers before taking any action.

Remember - Legitimate organisations will not object if you take time to verify who they are before engaging with them. Scammers rely on creating trust, urgency and confusion to obtain information or gain access to your home.

October 2026

If you have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159 and reporting to Reporting cyber crime and fraud or phishing attempts - Report Fraud or call 0300 123 2040.

Find out more by visiting our website at Advice about fraud | Kent Police and from the Stop! Think Fraud - How to stay safe from scams

New Published Reports

Online gaming

Source: Ofcom
Date published: 13 October 2026
Ofcom has published a report exploring UK children's online gaming behaviours and experiences. The report brings together findings from existing Ofcom research studies. Findings include: gaming is the most popular activity among 8- to 17-year-olds in their free time, with 88% of 3- to 17-year-olds playing games; more than half of children who game online play with people they have only met online; and parental concerns include contact with strangers, inappropriate content and bullying. The report encourages parents to review privacy and safety features and have conversations with their children about gaming.
Read the report: 'Stranger danger' tops parents' online gaming worries

Online child sexual abuse

Source: NSPCC
Date published: 06 October 2026
The NSPCC has published a news story about online child sexual abuse and cross-party support from MPs calling for technology companies to take immediate action to protect children. An open letter signed by 106 MPs and supported by the NSPCC, calls for Apple and Google to introduce nudity blocking technology on children's smartphones immediately and not wait for proposed legislation to come into force. The letter argues that without these comprehensive protections, perpetrators will be able to harm children across a range of platforms - including private messaging services which are not covered by the upcoming social media ban. The news story shares NSPCC estimates that 11,400 cases of child sexual abuse material have been recorded by police since June 2026 - on average 100 every day.
Read the news story: MPs demand action from Big Tech as online child sexual abuse crimes continue to rise

Coercive control

Source: Community Care
Date published: 10 September 2026
Community Care has published a news article to help professionals recognising coercive control in teenage relationships. The article outlines: the scale of teenage relationship abuse; how language can act as a barrier to recognition; the merging of

young people's online and offline worlds; and existing good practice.
Read the news article: Would you spot a teenager experiencing coercive control?
See also on NSPCC Learning
> Healthy and unhealthy relationships

Online child sexual abuse

Source: NSPCC
Date published: 08 September 2026
The NSPCC has published new Childline data on the top five platforms and apps children talked about in counselling sessions where they also spoke about online sexual abuse. Between April 2025 and March 2026, Snapchat was mentioned in 324 Childline counselling sessions where a young person also spoke about their experience of online sexual abuse. TikTok, Instagram, Discord and WhatsApp were the other top platforms mentioned in counselling sessions where online sexual abuse was the main concern. The government has recently announced proposals to bring forward legislation to build in device-level protections for children and is exploring legislation that would require apps to ensure that no one under the age of 18 can take, view or send nude images.
Read the NSPCC news story: New Childline data reveals top 5 platforms and apps linked to online child sexual abuse
Read the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport press release: UK to have world's strongest online child safety laws as government prepares legislation on nude images

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