



NW NEWS

West Kent

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Watchout

The Voice of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Association

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"Security through awareness"

Winter 2022



Sadly on 8th September 2022 Queen Elizabeth II passed away in Balmoral Castle

The Queen ruled for longer than any other Monarch in British history, becoming a much loved and respected figure across the globe. Her extraordinary reign saw her travel more widely than any other Monarch, undertaking many historic overseas visits.

Known for her sense of duty and her devotion to a life of service, her Majesty was an important figurehead for the UK and the Commonwealth during times of enormous social change.

Until her final year, Her Majesty continued to out carry out a full programme of engagements. She carried out all her duties against the backdrop of a full personal life which saw her raise four children and welcome grandchildren, and then also great-grandchildren into the Royal Family.

Her husband the Duke of Edinburgh was in her own words, her "strength and stay" during her reign.

Her Majesty will be greatly missed but one hopes now she is with her beloved husband Philip.

Kent Police officer honoured to attend Her Majesty's funeral procession

A Kent Police officer has spoken of her pride at being among those honoured to take part in the Queen's funeral procession.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was laid to rest on Monday 19 September 2022 after an historic 70-year reign as monarch, with public servants including police officers from across the Commonwealth invited to attend.

Detective Inspector Danni Driscoll of the Chief Constable's Crime Squad was selected to represent Kent Police at the occasion.

She said: 'It was such a privilege to be asked to attend the Queen's funeral procession on behalf of the force and of course I said I would love to.'

'I don't think the experience has really sunk in yet but it was so humbling to be involved. Myself and the other police officers took part in the parade down The Mall early on the day of the funeral and it really brought everyone together. I was then stationed outside Buckingham Palace for the day and it was just great having the chance to engage with the public and other guests.'

'As police officers we are all here to serve the public but for the Queen it was her whole life. She displayed such tremendous leadership and dedication for 70 years and was a fantastic role model for us all. She will be dearly missed.'

The Chief Constable's Crime Squad is a team of detectives dedicated to bringing some of Kent's most harmful criminals including burglars and robbers to justice. Since the team was formed in 2019 it has secured a total of more than 1,000 years in prison sentences for those they have arrested and charged.

Before joining the Crime Squad, DI Driscoll served in other detective teams

in addition to being a staff officer to the force's senior leadership.

Chief Constable Alan Pughsley said: 'Her Majesty The Queen was the epitome of what public service is all about and I wanted someone with similar qualities to represent Kent Police at her funeral procession.'

'I have never heard anything less than the highest of praise for DI Danni Driscoll throughout her career. She represents everything that is great about policing and that includes being professional, dedicated and committed.'

'She is an outstanding public servant and I was very pleased to offer her the opportunity to take part in this most historic of occasions, to pay our respects to Her Majesty and say thank you on behalf of Kent Police.'



A neighbourhood watch members account of visiting London to see the Queen lying in state at Westminster Abbey.

. . . Inch by inch they edge forward with vast amounts of people wishing also to pay their respects . . .

'Inchworm'

London was dark as the train rattled into London Bridge.

I joined the stream of people, all ages, colour, gender who were hurrying towards the start of the Queue.

Across the Thames a sun-kissed Tower provided the rosy backdrop to a bevy of swans skimming the river, their wings beating a final farewell.

Rainbows. Sunrise. Swans. Later a regal golden sunset. Was Nature paying her respects to a much admired Queen?

Some people asked: Why did you queue? Some people answered: 'Cos it's a very British thing to do.

Were we Royalists, Republicans? We hadn't a clue for we were there to pay our respects to you know Who.

It took almost an hour to reach that elusive start at Bermondsey Beaches. Like children we laughed, were excited, believed we'd achieved a milestone.

Little did we imagine it would be another twelve hours or so before we had a chance to bow our heads to the Queen in her coffin.

We continued to stand, no sign of movement in the Queue, feet and hands now cold, most chatter ceased.

But a few odd snippets rang out in the silence . . .

Have you made a Will? said the man in a black suit and tie. I giggled to myself, wondered if he somehow knew the length of the Queue?

A lady, looking tired and worried, said: I shouldn't be here, I have really important things to do.

I won't make it, don't stand a chance. I'm cold and the Queue hasn't moved. That man in the red anorak, on the corner, he's still in view.

I said I may be riddled with arthritis, I may not succeed but at least I'll have tried, had a go.

The lady with worries wasn't sure what to do, looked at her watch, thought she would leave.

Someone else said: Go on, give it a go. Other Queens aren't available.

By now polite murmurs had turned to ripples of friendly laughter.

I asked the worried lady: Do you know the song 'Inchworm'? Danny Kaye sang it.

She didn't. I explained: Whenever I feel overwhelmed I go through my day an inch at a time. I intend to do that with

the Queue. It all depends on your attitude of mind.

Later that evening I received a text thanking me for encouraging her. Thank you 'Inchworm'.

There's a sudden cry: He's turned the corner, the man in the red anorak.

We're on the move. The north wind joined us, hitting us with a blast at every turn as we looked for those promised loos.

Friendships began to expand. Positivity returned with every new step.

The 'Will' man turned out to be a delightful, amusing solicitor. with a wife, full of smiles and kindness.

My early companion was supportive throughout, became our technophone; loved to check the live status of our Queue.

The lady who'd travelled from Bude: to pay my respects to our wonderful Queen.

The couple bedecked in outfits more fit for a promotion than our anonymous Queue.

The sky turned a cheery blue, to help us when it felt more like a snails' day trip to the Zoo.

At Tate Modern a choral sculpture of London's most endangered species, closed out of respect for the Queen, had the soundtrack of their songs filling the air.

We were welcomed with smiles at both the Globe and the National. Their loos so luxurious after those well-used portacabin loos.

We received our yellow wristbands, numbered at last, stuck them fast, to prove we had heart.

Tried to eat up our rations before the end of the Queue. I walked with a vegan, so struggled to hide unhealthy snacks from view.

We filed past the Covid wall, shocked to see so many red hearts drawn on its length.

Nowhere to sit. Feet and backs beginning to complain. We encouraged each other: What's a day of discomfort compared with the Queen's lifetime of hard work and duty?

Lambeth Bridge, the end in sight. Groups of cameramen lying about chatting, watching us amble on by.



Held back before we could cross then into the Gardens where a lady shouts...

Take a bottle of water. Help yourself to a snack from the table. You have another two and a half hours to go.

That was the fastest part of the Queue. We zig-zagged at almost a run, sure we must see a friend or two.

As the sun began to set with its regal golden hue we handed in any uneaten food; to be given to the homeless, hungry, anyone in need.

Through security, one last wait...

The lady in front turns, looks up says: They're here. The Royal Standard's been raised.

With care I walk down the carpeted stairs. Aware, but reluctant to stare, of the row of the Queen's family all dressed in black

Silent.
Respectful.
Grieving

I bow to Her Coffin. Curtsy to the King. for what else should I do?

Some people ask: How did you feel after thirteen hours in the Queue?

I answered: It was a privilege to show my respect to Our Own Special Queen.

It seemed to pass in a flash. I felt awe and sadness for the end of an era, the end of a second Elizabethan Age.

What a surprise when I turned on my phone, saw the texts. We saw you on the News, bowing your head to the Queen, curtsying to the King.

It was dark as the train rattled out of Waterloo.

by Jinny McD



Christmas Message

from Peter Rolington,
Chairman of the West Kent Neighbourhood
Watch Committee

With 2022 fast coming to a close I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for your interest and support of Neighbourhood Watch.

Coming out of Covid (I hope) the WKNWA Committee has been supporting members in a number of ways over the year and we look forward to getting back to some sort of normality in 2023.

During this holiday season, I would like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and to you and your love ones a peaceful and healthy New Year.

Peter Rolington



Theft of mopeds

There has been an increase in the theft of mopeds in the Tonbridge area recently. Thieves only need a matter of seconds to steal a moped or motorcycle especially if there is no security on the vehicle. You can reduce the risk of becoming a victim by some basic security measures.

In addition to a security chain, a portable disc lock can be used in the brake disc, or a grip lock to secure the brake lever and throttle controls. You can also use a D – lock on the front wheel to prevent it being wheeled away.

Thieves often steal bikes by breaking the steering lock and wheeling it away. Securing your bike to an immovable object such as a ground anchor will make it harder for a thief to take. Any security measures will make it less attractive as it will be a time-consuming obstacle for a thief.

Unfortunately, security cannot guarantee that your bike will not be stolen, but by having security measures in place, it makes it harder and less attractive to thieves. You can also fit an alarm and even property mark your bike. There are a range of marking providers that you can use.

PCSO 56784 Mary Coe

Chief Constable Alan Pughsley retires from Kent Police

After 39 years of overall service Alan Pughsley is retiring from the force to join the National Police Chief's Review Productivity of Policing.

Mr. Pughsley said "This is not a decision I have taken lightly. It has without question been the honour of my life to serve as the Chief Constable of what is widely acknowledged as the best force in the country".

"The Review will shape policing across the entire country for the next generation and for that reason it was too important an opportunity to turn down". "It affords me a real opportunity to bring many of the policing best practices developed by us here in Kent into the policing mainstream for the future".

We wish Chief Constable Alan Pughsley every success in his new role.

The West Kent Neighbourhood
Watch Committee.



Chief Constable
Alan Pughsley

Police Dog Protects His Owner

Recently on the BBC TV programme Crime Watch it showed a police dog named Blue, who had saved his owner a Kent Police Officer Alan Smith from a brutal knife attack.

Following the report of a man armed with a knife, Dog Handler PC Smith with his dog Blue were directed to the scene of the reported incident. On his arrival he noticed a seated group that were smoking. He approached them with his dog Blue and enquired if they had seen a man armed with a knife. One of the men stood up and produced a large Zombie knife. Blue immediately put himself between the man and his master to protect him. The armed man then stated his intention of stabbing Blue and slashed at him with the knife. Fortunately the knife struck Blue's collar, saving him from life threatening injuries.

The man fled the scene but was later arrested and is now serving a prison sentence he so richly deserves.

PC Smith and Blue were performing their duty in trying to protect the public and

both the dog and Police Officer could so easily have lost their lives that day. Thank you to Police dog handler Alan Smith for your bravery and for continuing to protect the public from people like this.

Our thoughts go to all other Police officers who come across frightening incidents daily but still carry on protecting us all. Thank you so much.

The editor.



Rogue Traders

During the summer months Police have received a number of reports of rogue traders in the Tonbridge and Hildenborough areas. I think as we go into Autumn and Winter it is important that residents remain vigilant.

Rogue trading incidents are those where the victims have been cold called usually regarding property repairs or building/garden maintenance. The usual type of work offered includes garden clearance, chimney stack repairs, replacing loose tiles, repairing leaking roofs and tarmac drives.

It refers to the practices of deliberately overcharging for unsatisfactory goods/and or services or charging for unnecessary work, damaging property deliberately to obtain money, leaving work unfinished or increasing the price that was originally quoted.

Rogue traders may offer to take victims to the bank to withdraw cash and can intimidate householders if they do not get their money.

It is very rare that rogue traders can provide paperwork, business names or phone numbers, so this makes it hard for them to be traced when they have left your property.

If a trader knocks at your door, do not agree to on spot house repairs/garden maintenance without taking advice, Say NO THANK YOU and close the door. Be aware of Special Offers. They will use tactics such

as " I AM ONLY IN THE AREA TODAY AND WOULD NEED TO DO THE WORK NOW".

Do not allow anyone to pressure you into agreeing to have work carried out. If you ask them to leave and they do not, contact the police straight away on 999. Don't ever go to the bank or cash point with a trader. Legitimate traders would never do this.

PCSO Linda Baker

The Tonbridge Town Centre Team would like to remind people that E-Scooter should not be used in a public place.

If officers come across and are able to stop the rider, they will be seized.

The team has seized an E-scooter today 13/10/22 which was being used in the Town Centre.

Licensed premises across Tonbridge & Malling will see a rise in visits from the Police in the coming weeks, to continue promoting the safety within the Night-Time Economy, especially as we enter seasonal events on the horizon, along with FIFA 2022 World cup starting in November.

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

Text 61016 to report non-emergency incidents on trains or on the tube.

Dial 0800 405040 to give more information.

A 999 call is guaranteed a quick response.

For Crimestoppers dial 0800 555 111.

Who's Who On The Executive Committee?

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e-mail: pria.webster@kent.police.uk

Other Useful Numbers

Tonbridge & Malling Crime Reduction Unit

– Tel: 01732 844522

Tunbridge Wells Crime Reduction Unit

– Tel: 01892 526121

Kent Trading Standards – Tel: 03454 040506

Sevenoaks Community Safety Partnership

– Tel: 01732 227000

community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Tonbridge & Malling Community Safety Partnership

– Tel: 01732 844522 csp@tmbc.gov.uk

Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership

– Tel: 01892 526121

communitysafety@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

If you wish to contact a member of the West Kent Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee, please write to them at:

**c/o: Tonbridge Police Station,
Neighbourhood Watch Office,
Floor 2, 1 Pembury Road,
Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2HS.**

e-watch.co

There have been problems recently with members not receiving e-watch's twice weekly reports. If you are experiencing problems receiving e-watch updates, please remember that past issues can be found on the e-watch.co website at: e-watch.co/updates.php.

Make a note

When contacting the Police in West Kent

Emergency only 999

Kent Police 101

Is for reporting non-urgent crime, suspicious incidents or to contact your Neighbourhood Policing Team. Calls cost just 16p from landlines or mobiles.