

Minutes of a meeting of Bilsington Parish council held at Bilsington Village Hall on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors; S Hudson (Chair), M Bilham, L Lawson and R Thompson.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

Also present: Cllr L Harman (ABC) and P New (Neighbourhood Watch)

**1135. Apologies for absence:**

Cllr D Robey (KCC)

**1136. Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**1137. Public Participation:**

There were no public submissions.

**1138. Neighbourhood Watch:**

Report attached.

**1139. Kent County Councillor's Report:**

- On 5<sup>th</sup> February, we heard that we were not going to be allowed onto the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP), leaving us as the only County Council in the South East not on it. This is a decision that does not make sense, and which we are pursuing, but which will not change in the short term. It means that Kent residents will not get the benefits of Devolution as quickly as many other areas, which is very disappointing. As a result of this, the KCC Elections in May 2025 will go ahead and we are preparing accordingly.
- The Government is still looking for outline proposals to split Kent geographically into three or four Unitary Councils, and wants these by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025. They are hoping for a consensus on this from KCC, Medway and the 12 Kent District Councils, but I think that this will be difficult to achieve. Final proposals are required by 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The Government has made it clear that they wish to go down this route, and will mandate it if there is no agreement.
- On 13<sup>th</sup> February, we had the KCC Full Council Budget Meeting, which was a stormy affair. We have a Balanced Budget, remain solvent and under good financial control, and in a much better position than many other Councils. However, the pressures due to Social Services remain a factor, and impact all aspects of what KCC does, especially in areas like potholes, and Highways generally.
- We have been given about £10m by the Government for potholes and will be restarting the Pothole Blitz, once the weather improves.

- The Government has set up a Transport Select Committee on Roadworks and KCC has made a Submission to this Select Committee, on which I have had considerable input. The Submission makes some radical suggestions on how the current unacceptable situation can be improved, and I just hope that the Committee considers these seriously. Katie Lam is on the Committee, and I will be briefing her personally. We have also written to all the Kent MPs about it, as I believe that our proposals could command cross party support.

**1140. Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

As reported by Cllr Robey Ashford Borough Council are having discussions with neighbouring district councils regarding the Governments proposals. However it is still business as usual and work is continuing on the next iteration of the Local Plan with the first round of public consultations likely to take place later in the summer.

**1141. Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**1142. Planning:**

There were no planning applications to consider.

**1143. Highways:**

Highways have recently undertaken a site visit to ascertain if it was possible to establish a priority on Ruckinge Road where the road narrows to single file. Unfortunately the road is too narrow for the scheme to be feasible.

A resident has raised concerns about the junction of Swanton Land and Stone cross Road and the number of accidents. Kent Highways have been contacted and according to the data they receive from Kent Police there has only been one serious accident which was in 2010. Any requests for improvements should be by way of the Highways Improvement Plan.

**1144. Finance:**

Schedule of payments:

Staff costs December	£442.49
Staff costs January	£419.16
Clerk's expenses	£28.80
Bilsington Village Hall	£150.00

**Resolved:**

**To authorise the payment of the items of expenditure in the schedule and to authorise the Chairman to organise a replacement flag.**

**1145. Village Hall:**

Nothing to report.

**1146. Items for information:**

Discussion was held regarding the V E Day Celebrations on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025. Members will liaise with the Village Hall and Church.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:20pm.

DRAFT

## **REPORT TO BILSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL FEBRUARY 2025**

I am presenting my NHW Plan for 2025.

Tonight, I will speak about **AVOIDABLE & PREVENTABLE CRIMES**

We must not leave anything whatsoever inside a car when parking especially last park up for the night.

Always Park safe and secure and ensure your vehicle is locked.

Before you move away please **use “Pete’s 5 second rule “**

Park and lock the vehicle and then just stand for 5 seconds and look into the vehicle.

Can you see anything on show. If you can so can a criminal and you could become a victim of crime.

**LEAVE NOTHING WHATSOEVER ON SHOW IN A VEHICLE WHEN PARKING.**

Visits to Shopping centres, Cinema car parks, Railway Stations are all classic areas of risk.

I hope nobody must attend a funeral at a crematorium in coming months but if you do look at the sign in the car park there.

**THIEVES OPERATE IN THIS CAR PARK.**

That sign is there for the very reason that we attend funerals we are sad and not at our best. We dread a mobile phone going off in the service albeit we have checked 20 times its switched off, so we leave it last minute in the car. Ladies may not want to take handbags into the service. Criminals know this and they hide in the gardens there and strike at the cars whilst we are inside.

These low life criminals have no thought of your upset on top of an already upsetting and difficult day.

Another risk.

We load our dogs into our cars and drive to different woodland locations to give our dogs a different place to walk and run around. We park in isolated woodland car parks but leave items in cars again like handbags so as not to have to carry them around the woods. Criminals know this and know the car will be there for an hour or so whilst you enjoy your walk.

**Sometimes I need you to think like a criminal!!**

**Vans carrying tools and equipment, especially those that it is impractical to unload each night are a risk. Park as safe and secure as you can. If the van has rear doors park with them tight up against something so the doors cannot be opened even if they were forced.**



**CAR THIEVES  
ARE IN YOUR AREA**



**LEAVE IT LOCKED,  
LIT AND EMPTY.**



**WHY DID THE  
CAR THIEF  
CROSS  
YOUR  
ROAD?**

**BECAUSE  
THERE WAS AN  
IPAD ON THE SEAT**



**PROTECT YOUR CAR,  
LEAVE IT:**

- 1. LOCKED**  
LOCK YOUR CAR WHEN YOU LEAVE IT
- 2. LIT**  
PARK IN A WELL-LIT AREA
- 3. EMPTY**  
HIDE ANY ITEMS ON SHOW

**SHARE THESE 3 STEPS  
WITH 3 FRIENDS**



www.courwatch.org.uk

The other matter to warn you of tonight is the growing menace of **CATAPULTS**.

Damage to vehicles and especially property is upsetting and distressing and often causes residents costly repairs.

I am seeking permission of the Government to change the law with a petition but at the time of writing this report I have not heard back.

It is essential that every incident is reported so that the full extent of the problem can be tracked, and the police can then target areas of concern.

I am pleased to report that since my discussions with Ashford police about E-Scooters a far more proactive stance has been taken, and more scooters have been seized. I continue to work on the fire safety issue in the community. I hope my complaint of police failure to attend council meetings reaps a similar result soon.

I have asked for a meeting with the Crime Commissioner to present my 2025 personal action plan which I am presenting tonight and to discuss crime trends of concern going forwards.

Throughout the coming months I will run campaigns to cover areas of concern, please let me know if you have any.

**At the time of writing this report KEYLESS CAR THEFTS HAVE STRUCK IN ASHFORD.**

Not locally, but near enough for concern. The time is right to raise awareness for again what has been a very slick crime operation of High End Cars.

The thefts are scouted, the make, model, Reg no and exact location are known to criminals and the theft can be measured in minutes.

The use of Faraday boxes/pouches can help as well as not leaving keys on hall tables or the bottom stair in the hall.

Steering locks are another very useful item to consider.

The biggest battle I must win and indeed it covers all crimes is **MATTERS MUST BE REPORTED AT THE TIME**. Why do people write on Facebook what they saw in the night hours next morning ?

These are 999 calls then and there **“CRIMES IN PROGRESS or CRIMES ABOUT TO HAPPEN**

You will hear me say time and time again this year nobody ever wrote on Facebook during my long fire brigade career “ I looked out my window last night and the house opposite was on fire” They rang 999 immediately. I must win that battle that people call 999 for the police.

Crimes, attempted crimes, failed crimes must all be reported and just maybe if this had been an approach over the last decades just maybe the police would not be so thin on the ground in Kent.

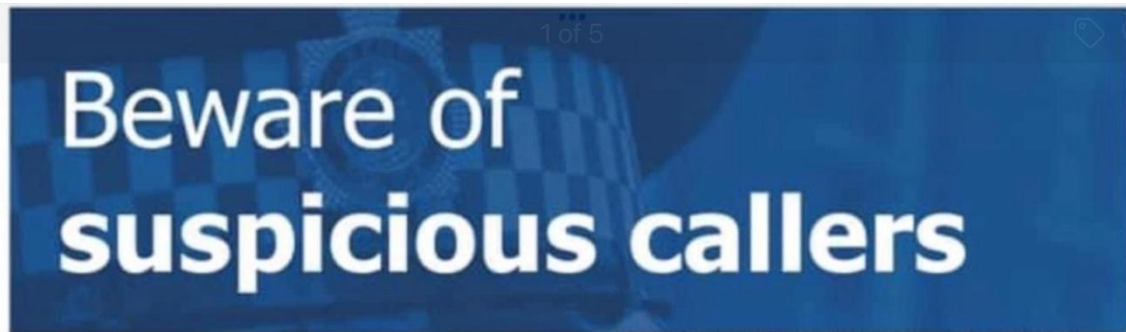


## OTHER MATTERS

I am still monitoring the attendance at police of council meetings.

I am following the debate about KCC Wardens

I am concerned Rogue Traders and Bogus callers are becoming active in Ashford District. Guidance follows.



Most people who call at your home are genuine.

But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to:

- Trick their way into your home to steal valuables or money
- Sell you services or items you do not want or need
- Carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.



If concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door.**

You can also:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Never leave your door unattended
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you.

# Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

## Rogue Traders

We have seen an increase in reports of this type of criminality recently.

Opposite is our leaflet on how you can protect yourself against these types of scams.

If you think that you may have been a victim of this 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](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.



## Protect yourself and others against rogue traders

Most people who call at your home are genuine. But sometimes people may turn up unannounced and try to sell you services or items you do not want or need or carry out unnecessary repairs to your home at inflated prices.

If you're concerned about someone calling at your home, **don't open your door.**

### You can:

- Ask for identification and call their company yourself (not on a number they provide) to check they are genuine
- Ask the visitor to return another time when someone can be with you
- Get three written quotes
- Ask family and friends for recommendations
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand, and never pay in full until you're completely satisfied with the work.

### Preventing fraud

Together, let's stop scammers.



Remember, ABC:

- **never** Assume
- **never** Believe
- **always** Confirm

Get the latest scam advice: [@KentPoliceECU](https://twitter.com/KentPoliceECU)




### Pressurised selling on your doorstep is a crime and you can report it:

- [kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards) or call 0808 223 1133
- For advice: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/)
- Follow @kent\_ECU or email [kfas@ecis.police.uk](mailto:kfas@ecis.police.uk)



**Kent  
Police**

#### Contacting Kent Police

Report a non-urgent crime online [www.kent.police.uk/report](http://www.kent.police.uk/report)  
Talk to us on LiveChat - available 24/7 [www.kent.police.uk/contact](http://www.kent.police.uk/contact)  
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call 999  
If deaf or speech impaired, text 'police' and your message to 60066  
[www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)   



# Kent Fraud Alert System



TO STOP FRAUD™

## Rogue Traders

In the last few days, we have had more reports of Rogue Traders operating across the county, in particular, Folkestone, Rochester, Snodland, Tunbridge Wells, Westgate-on-Sea and Faversham.

This is undoubtedly linked to the recent adverse weather, in particular high winds.

Criminals will continue to look to take advantage of this situation by knocking on doors and stating that there may be damaged to your property, in particular roofs, that needs immediate work.

However, **STOP** and be wary of cold callers offering to undertake work on your property as this work may not be necessary or may not be completed to a satisfactory standard or not completed at all. You may also be overcharged and out of pocket. If seeking a tradesperson to undertake some work on your property, please remember to always:

- Obtain at least three written quotes.
- Ask family and friends for recommendations.
- Agree payment arrangements and start and finish dates in writing beforehand.
- Never pay in full until you are completely satisfied with the work.
- Never accept a quote on the doorstep from an unsolicited caller.

## Preventing fraud

Together,  
let's stop  
scammers.



**Remember, ABC:**



never Assume



never Believe



always Confirm

**DOORSTEP  
CRIME ALERT!**  
SEE IT - REPORT IT

**ACTIVE IN  
KENT**

Kent  
Police

TRADING  
STANDARDS  
CHECKED

If you think that you may have been a victim of this or any other 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](http://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](#)



**Kent  
Police**

Report a non-urgent crime online [www.kent.police.uk/report](http://www.kent.police.uk/report)

Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 [www.kent.police.uk/contact](http://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](http://www.kent.police.uk)



I shall be preparing posts to prepare for animal crime and I have carried out work to help the horse community with safety on the roads.

## MY HORSE CAMPAIGNS



### What is Pass Wide and Slow?

Pass Wide And Slow is a Facebook group set up to encourage and educate drivers how to pass horses safely on the road.

## PASS WIDE & SLOW

### AWARENESS RIDE/DRIVES



In the wild a horse is a 'prey' animal, that is they are DINNER and have therefore developed a fright/flight response to anything that scares or startles them (known as spooking).

A horse's natural response to something that spooks them is to run, kick out or spin and look.

No matter how well they are trained, occasionally nature takes over. If it makes you jump, it will make a horse jump - that bird suddenly erupting from a tree could be a tiger!

A horse can spook sideways at up to 50mph.

A horse can beat many road legal vehicles at 0-30mph.

A horse's back legs can kick out a surprisingly long way.

SO...

Give 2 metres width where possible.

When passing (from front or behind) slow to 10mph. If you are approaching a horse head on at 30mph and that horse spooks, that is an impact speed of 80mph!

Cyclists - please call out if approaching from behind, a voice is less scary (especially if riding into the wind, when even the horse may not hear you).

A carriage should be classed as a LONG vehicle.

Please look at the rider. If they are asking you to stop or slow, they are doing it for a reason (they are NOT waving!).



### MYTH BUSTERS

Drivers may say:

Horses shouldn't be on the road - why not?

Should ride in the fields - Fields are privately owned, and to get to any that allow us to ride in, or bridleways, WE HAVE TO USE THE ROADS.

You don't pay road tax - neither do you! Road tax was abolished in 1937. Vehicle emission tax also doesn't apply to bicycles, classic cars, vintage cars, and electric cars.

Are you insured? - There are probably more horses insured on the road than cars!

Only toffee-nosed, rich, entitled people own and/or ride horses riders come from all walks of life - nurses, lorry drivers, police officers, shop workers - to name but a few.

THESE ARE ALL OPINIONS! - which have been often expressed to horse riders!

### PLEASE REMEMBER,

The riders are all someone's mum, dad, son, daughter, brother or sister. The horse is a member of their family.

Don't leave a ghost behind.



10mph

Slow down to a maximum of 10mph.



Be patient

I won't sound my horn or rev my engine.



Pass wide

Pass the horse wide and slow (if safe to do so), at least a 2 metres if possible



Thank you as always for your backing and support with I am so grateful for but never ever take for granted.

**Peter**

**Peter New**

**Community Neighbourhood Watch**

## Contacting Kent Police



Report a non-urgent crime or incident online at [www.kent.police/report](http://www.kent.police/report) or click the **Live Chat** button



In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger, call **999**



If you are hearing or speech impaired, use the textphone service **18000** or download the **BT Relay app**



Sign up to [www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk](http://www.MyCommunityVoiceKent.co.uk) to receive and respond to community alerts from your local officers



Email your local policing team go [www.kent.police.uk/yourarea](http://www.kent.police.uk/yourarea)



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Follow us on Instagram [@kentpoliceuk](https://www.instagram.com/kentpoliceuk)



For non-urgent issues, if you are unable to get online, call **101**



**Kent Police**

[www.kent.police.uk](http://www.kent.police.uk)



# EAT WELL, SPEND LESS & WELLBEING ROADSHOW

**Aldington Village Hall**

Roman Road,  
Aldington,  
Ashford,  
TN25 7EE

**Wednesday 26th  
February 2025**

**10am – 2pm**



Funded by  
UK Government



Expert advice on  
looking after yourself  
(and your bank balance)

Guidance on additional  
support services that  
may be available to you

