

Kent Community Warden Service: Annual Report 2021



The over-riding objective of the Kent Community Warden Service is *'to create safer and stronger communities'*. The role of the Community Warden is ever evolving, prompted by the changing needs of our communities and other strategic requirements placed upon our Service.

Naturally, during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, our duties were re-aligned to best serve our communities during that unchartered period. We have since transitioned to a recovery / 'business as usual' footing, where it is envisaged we will remain. Current priorities are defined by our Community Safety Business Plan 2020-21:

- Delivery of core Community Warden Service Priorities - Providing a reassuring presence / support for our residents; responding to community needs; facilitating solutions to local concerns; and addressing issues of loneliness & social isolation.
- Undertake CSU tasks with / on behalf of partners to address local issues and concerns (inc. supporting community hubs during the Covid-19 response and recovery period).
- Deliver the Trading Standards scams project through support of individual scam victims; and strengthening communities' resilience to scams.
- Working with partners, inc. Adult Social Care, to safeguard and support vulnerable individuals, enabling them to live safely and independently in their own homes.
- Provide an operational and welfare response for communities in the event of an emergency e.g., surge testing in response to a variant detected in the ME15 area in February.

Notable Community-Based Activities

I have continued to support my communities in a visible and proactive fashion this past year. The focus of my work has inevitably involved extending support to those most in need. This has been a challenging time as residents have required a greater degree of specialized support, compassion and sensitivity. For example:



- Working SDC's Private Sector Housing Officer to arrange assessments of vulnerable persons' mobility needs which informed what adaptations were needed in their home to enable them to remain living there safely and independently.
- Whilst we look forward to community-based groups returning, I have stayed in touch with residents through socially-distanced home visits. Apart from checking on welfare, this helps offer companionship, reducing the sense of social isolation and loneliness.
- Supporting vulnerable residents in accessing services is a major part of my working day e.g., liaising with the GP and Mental Health Crisis Team on behalf of a gentleman living with deteriorating mental health; and signposting family members to ADSS for carer support on behalf of a loved one living with dementia.
- Assisted families newly facing financial hardship e.g., signposting to Porchlight's 'Live Well Kent' programme, West Kingsdown's Community Cupboard and SDC's HERO Team.

On a positive note, it has been very rewarding to see residents working together to support others. I hope this element of community spirit is a lasting legacy of these difficult times.

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