

Kent Community Warden Service: Annual Report

The main 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.



Community Wardens' activities are defined by the KCC Community Safety Business Plan:

Purpose

Providing a proactive and visible presence in Kent's communities to improve residents' quality of life and promote stronger and safer communities.

Vision

To be a trusted community-based service that identifies and addresses local concerns by implementing preventative and early intervention measures. Collaborating with partners to deliver solutions which will allow Kent's residents and communities to thrive.

Objective 1

Strengthen community resilience (Stronger, Safer Communities)

Wardens will equip residents to prevent and recover from being victims to scams. They will address low level crime and antisocial behaviour through deterrence, prevention and partnership working. They will support communities in challenging times, from floods to pandemics.

Objective 2

Support the elderly and vulnerable

Wardens will work with those most vulnerable in their communities with the aim of improving wellbeing, supporting independent living and reducing social isolation and loneliness by facilitating access to care and services.

Objective 3

Foster community cohesion and wellbeing

Wardens will improve community wellbeing by working in a range of environments and across all age groups (as is appropriate for the location), setting up new groups and events where needed through community development projects.

Objective 4

Assist with navigating public services

Wardens will work closely with internal and external partners, maintaining knowledge in order to support residents. Wardens are a KCC front line service and will embody the 'one council' and no wrong door approach.

Notable Community-Based Activities

I continue to support my communities in a visible and proactive fashion. The focus of my work involves extending support to those most in need, with compassion, and sensitivity.

Examples of activities include:

- I have led / supported **community-based initiatives** (e.g., Community Hub and Memory / Carers Café). These are well supported by agency representatives and other guest speakers. New amenities and vents are being e.g., Dementia Tour (May 2023) and the launch of an inclusive social group in June, partly to address specific needs, and in part to encourage social inclusion.
- Given that a number of my visits involve **vulnerable individuals with complex issues**, it has been necessary to signpost or refer to specialist service providers e.g., I responded to a distressed resident who had a medical emergency; she needed help to care for her husband whilst she was admitted to hospital. I liaised with a Community Nurse at the property, who had called the Ambulance, and later with Adult Social Care to arrange a contingency plan to cover the husband's care if the lady was kept at the hospital. Fortunately, the lady was discharged later in the day and 'Plan B' was not required.
- Share **Intel Reports** with relevant Community Safety partners e.g., in relation to numerous reports of youth-related ASB / criminal damage and threatening behaviour in certain areas of New Ash Green.



I have ensured that key Community Safety partners have been kept apprised of each incident. A number of residents have not formally reported issues owing to concerns over reprisals; I have honoured their wishes in terms of protecting their identity.

Apart from sharing the information, I have participated in Task & Finish meetings on occasion. I am aware of certain actions taken by community safety partners, and I continue to exert a strong presence in these areas for public reassurance / engagement with young people, encouraging them to make better choices regarding their behaviour.

- Assisted families facing **financial hardship** e.g., I met a parent of a young person who due to extreme anxiety was refusing to attend a Secondary school placement. Apart from concerns about how this absence from education was impacting the young person's future prospects, support was required around mental health for all concerned which was tackled through accessing specialist services.

Financial deprivation limited the family's ability to access an alternative curriculum from home. I liaised with KCC's Digital Inclusion Team to obtain a digital device for the young person to work with. This was a very straight forward process that hopefully will be life enhancing for that young person.

Overall, it has been very rewarding to see residents working together, and experience closer working with partner agencies to collectively support our residents.

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