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# WATCH OUT

**the newsletter for North Kent Neighbourhood Watch members**

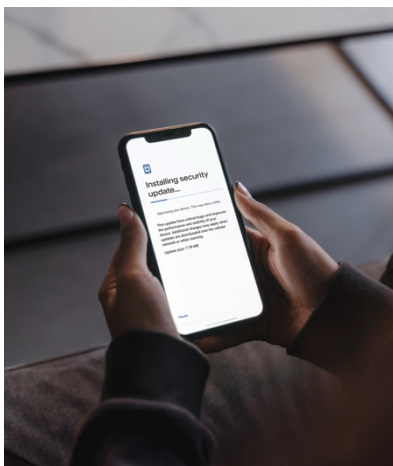
SPRING 2022 EDITION

## Keep your software updated

Many people will be getting to grips with the new phones and smart devices they received as Christmas presents, but how many will remember to enable automatic software updates on them?

Software updates are an important part of staying secure online. Whilst often these are 'advertised' as providing new features or performance improvements they also provide bug fixes and security improvements. Out-of-date software and apps contain weaknesses, which make them easier to hack. Companies fix the weaknesses by releasing updates.

Updating your devices and software helps to keep hackers out.



All devices contain a lot of personal data that is highly valuable if it fell into the hands of a fraudster (the user's full name, date of birth,

address, bank details, passwords, as well as many other forms of personal data such as private photos or videos. So keep them as safe as possible by enabling automatic updates.

There are a number of scam and phishing emails circulating at the moment (*e-watch* contains regular details and security alerts). If you receive a suspicious email please forward to: [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) and they will collate and get these removed. If you think you have been a victim of this or any other scam, contact your Bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call 0300 123 2040.

## Join our new Committee and have your say

Following the election of a new Chair and Secretary, your Committee is back in action after the seasonal break and keen to get on with the new ways of working that we promised at the AGM.

This fresh start would benefit from the addition of new faces,

bringing additional ideas to help us meet the challenges of creating more strong, friendly and active communities in North Kent.

The Committee meets once a quarter (including the AGM) so the commitment is not onerous as the main business of the Association is dealt with by

the officers, supported by a small working group.

If you would like to join our discussions or find out more, drop us a line via our new email address ([northkent.nhw.association@gmail.com](mailto:northkent.nhw.association@gmail.com)) marking the subject "Appeal for committee members". We look forward to hearing from you.

## Preventing and solving crime

Current crime trends and related crime prevention advice are reported in *e-watch*, the free electronic newsletter which brings twice a week crime information from across Kent. Gravesham and Dartford have their own dedicated sections.

All coordinators are urged to continue to forward *e-watch* to members of their watch as it replaces the former Kent Police messaging service.



In addition to *e-watch*, rural areas have *Country Eye* which has contributed to the successful prosecution of fly-tippers

### A new way to get in touch

The Association now has its own email address ([northkent.nhw.association@gmail.com](mailto:northkent.nhw.association@gmail.com)). This new facility will be an additional tool for Neighbourhood Watch members to contact the Committee and will provide our partner authorities and other organisations with an additional method of communication.

**FRAUD ISN'T JUST A SCAM IT'S A CRIME**

# The killer gas you can't see, smell or taste

Carbon monoxide (CO) can be given off by any appliance which burns a fossil fuel such as gas, coal or oil. It can enter a room if your appliance is faulty, or if the room is not properly ventilated, or the chimney or flue is blocked.

If you breathe enough of it, it can cause permanent heart, lung or brain damage, or even kill.

To make sure appliances are safe, have them properly installed and regularly maintained. Gas

appliances must be serviced by engineers who are members of the Gas Safe Register.

## Danger signs

- Gas flames that burn orange or yellow instead of blue
- Stains, soot or discolouring around a fire or water heater
- An unusual smell when an appliance is on
- Solid fuel appliances that burn slowly or go out

## How to protect yourself

- Have your appliances regularly serviced by a qualified Gas Safe Registered engineer
- Make sure your home is properly ventilated - never block vents
- Ensure all chimneys and flues are regularly swept and kept clear
- If you are buying a carbon monoxide detector make sure you buy it from a reputable outlet, such as a DIY store or supermarket.

Ideally you should put a carbon monoxide detector in or near every room with a heating or cooking appliance. They can be battery operated or mains powered by plugging direct into a mains socket.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to a cold or flu and can include the following:

- headaches, sleepiness, nausea/vomiting, short-term memory loss, chronic fatigue or exhaustion, shortness of breath and chest pain, depression or anxiety, palpitations, disorientation, unconsciousness.

A simple blood test can find out whether someone is suffering from CO exposure. If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected get the victim into fresh air quickly.



## Be the first to find out what's happening in your area

My Community Voice is a two-way engagement tool brought to you by Kent Police.

Whether you live, work or socialise in Kent or Medway, My Community Voice provides real-time messages directly from our police officers, staff and volunteers, about matters that may affect you or your community.

Your voice is important to us and we want to hear what concerns or views you may have in the area that is important to you. You can also share messages with others or reply to our alerts if you have information to share.

From crime prevention advice, to the latest updates on scams, appeals or events – you control what information you receive and how you receive it, by email, text or voice message.



Sign up today or to find out more visit [www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk](http://www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk)

## Report a crime

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)   

## Making streets safer

Dartford and Gravesend have dedicated town centre teams made up of PCs and PCSOs who patrol Town Ward and have good links with local businesses and local partners.

They target recidivist offenders who commit crime in and around the town centre. Their focus is on High Visibility Policing to prevent crime and increase public confidence. All town teams provide coverage every day including weekends.

## Local Photographer

- product/marketing
- event & exhibitions
- social & documentary
- building and architecture
- all commercial work undertaken



[www.4exposure.co.uk](http://www.4exposure.co.uk)

## Important contact information

In an Emergency: dial **999** • Non Emergency: dial **101** or online at [www.kent.police.uk/services/report-online/kent-police-online-reporting](http://www.kent.police.uk/services/report-online/kent-police-online-reporting)

To report anonymously: Kent Crimestoppers dial **0800 555111** or online at [www.kent.police.uk/services/crimestoppers](http://www.kent.police.uk/services/crimestoppers)

Neighbourhood Watch: Call Michael Laidlow our Volunteer & Watch Liaison Officer (VWLO) dial **07816 291343**

Victim Support Kent: Freephone **0808 168 9111**

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