

Newsletter

Spring edition 2009



Welcome

Welcome to this edition of the Tonbridge and Malling Community Safety Partnership newsletter. In this edition we give an update on the alcohol awareness campaign launched last year, explain the new powers available to tackle persistent neighbour nuisance and give information about how we are tackling graffiti, litter and dog fouling.

Further details about the work of the Partnership can be found on our website:
www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk

Update on alcohol awareness campaign

On the evening of Friday 5 December, the Tonbridge and Malling Community Safety Partnership launched its latest alcohol campaign.

On the night the key message was that you don't need to get drunk to have fun. Fresh from their success on ITV's Britain's Got Talent, Bar Wizards Neil Lowrey and Neil Garner performed their impressive 'flaring' routine live and gave away their special brand of alcohol-free 'mocktails' throughout the evening.

Despite being rained on all night, the boys put on a fantastic show and certainly grabbed the campaign some attention. The sensible drinking message behind the campaign is now out and about in the borough in full force in a series of posters carrying evocative images and messages to encourage people to make informed choices about drinking.

Also on the night members of the Community Safety Partnership worked together to promote the 'sensible drinking' campaign message. Kent Fire and Rescue Service carried out a drink-driving crash and rescue demonstration and creative arts charity, The Beat Project, performed a short play with music about the effects of excessive drinking. Health and community safety experts from the West Kent Primary Care Trust, the Borough Council, Kent Police, KCC Community Wardens and the Kenward Trust were also there to give advice throughout the evening.

Further events linked to the campaign are planned throughout the next few months and these will be advertised on the Community Safety Partnership website www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk



Picture of the 'Bar Wizards' performing on the night.

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Crime statistics

The latest crime statistics for April to November 2008 show that Tonbridge and Malling remains a safe place to live. Overall recorded crime has fallen by 14 per cent (from 4,907 in 2007 to 4,222 in the same period during 2008). There has been a reduction in burglaries of 7.9 per cent, meaning that there has been less than one burglary a day in the borough and a reduction of 31.7 per cent in theft of vehicles (from 183 in 2007 to 125 during the same period in 2008). There has been a slight increase in the number of fraud and forgery offences and shoplifting offences and the Partnership is working with businesses to increase security measures.

The Community Safety Partnership meets on a weekly basis to discuss any issues/crimes that have occurred during the past week. Over the Christmas period there were no major crimes reported and only very low level incidents discussed. These weekly meetings will continue throughout 2009 and the Partnership will continue to address issues as they arise. This will ensure that any issues identified are dealt with swiftly and effectively and will mean that the borough remains a safe place to live.

Partnership work in East Malling

The Chief Constable of Kent Police, Michael Fuller, visited East Malling on Thursday 15 January and met residents and members of the Community Safety Partnership. He was shown the 'crack house closure' in Carnation Crescent and patrolled the area with Pc Erica Hall. Mr Fuller also called at St James the Great junior school where he spoke to the children who were busy studying 'achievers'. Later, he met with staff involved in the closure of the premises in Carnation Crescent and praised the partnership work commenting on the noticeable improvements since his last visit. Speaking after Mr Fullers' visit Chief Inspector Dave Pate said "The Community Safety Partnership and the residents of East Malling were very pleased that Mr Fuller came to visit the area. A tremendous amount of work and energy has gone in to improving the quality of lives in the area and the Chief Constable's visit gave everyone a real boost. The children responded really well and asked some excellent question of the Chief." Speaking of the Crack House closure, Mr Pate added "I am very pleased to report that the property that has been closed and boarded up for three months has now been released for refurbishment and will soon see new tenants moving in which will allow the area to return to some peace, quiet and normality. I am very grateful for the CSP's support and in particular Russet Homes and Cllr Liz Simpson for their tireless efforts that have resulted in the positive result for the community of East Malling".



Photo of Chief Constable Michael Fuller and Chief Insp. Pate inspecting the Crack House Closure

Being a good neighbour

Everyone has the right to enjoy living in their own home. Nuisance neighbours can disturb a person's enjoyment of their home and inconsiderate behaviour can be detrimental to health. The Community Safety Partnership has recently produced a new leaflet advising people on how they can be a good neighbour. The leaflet was designed following new powers which have recently become available called Premises Closure Orders. The premises closure order, introduced by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act (Section 118 and Schedule 20), provides new powers for the courts to temporarily close premises associated with significant and persistent disorder or persistent serious nuisance. The orders are tenure neutral, which means that they can be given to home owners as well as tenants. The orders are only to be used as a last resort and there are many other options that can be tried first, before resorting to closing a property. The leaflet gives details about who you can contact if you are having problems with a neighbour and is available to download from the website.

Police reassurance at railway station

On Wednesday 10 December the Tonbridge neighbourhood policing team carried out a planned operation in the area around the railway station in Tonbridge. Officers in uniform and plain clothes patrolled the area together with a passive drugs dog. Some residents and local retailers had expressed their concern to officers about intimidation from groups of people who were gathering in that area. As a result of the operation a 22 year old man and a 16 year old boy were cautioned for drugs offences.

Actions to tackle litter, dog fouling and graffiti

The Community Safety Partnership works closely with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to remove litter, dog fouling and graffiti as quickly as possible. These issues can all make an area feel run down and unsafe, even if they are not, so it is important to clean up the area as soon as possible and to find those who have been committing the offences.

Litter Enforcement

In 2008 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council issued eighty fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for littering. The Borough Council will issue a £80 fine to any person over the age of fourteen seen dropping litter.

The Council have identified littering hot-spots across the borough and have carried out enforcement events in partnership with Kent Police. The area around Tonbridge Railway Station was the first area to be targeted in 2008. In 2009 the number of enforcement events will be increased to include West Malling, Snodland and Larkfield.



Graffiti - What are we doing?



The Borough Council removed around three-thousand square metres of graffiti during 2008. They work in partnership with Sevenoaks District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent Police and the Probation Service to operate the Grimebuster machine. This machine allows people doing Community Payback work to remove graffiti in West Kent. The Borough Council also use Graffiti-busters (Anti-Graffiti Services) to remove graffiti on behalf of Waste Services at the Borough Council.

The council has a policy to remove graffiti within 28 days of reporting, in cases of offensive graffiti they allow 48 hours for the removal. If graffiti is on private residential property, they ask that the resident/owner sign a disclaimer form, before removal work commences free of charge.

The council also works closely with Kent Police to detect incidents of graffiti and recently there have been a number of arrests following investigations into graffiti crimes. A cash reward is offered to anyone who reports information about an offender which then leads to a successful prosecution. To report an offender telephone 01732 876132 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Dog Fouling

In 2008 the Borough Council issued thirteen FPNs for dog fouling. The Borough Council will issue a £50 fine to any dog owner who is spotted by an enforcement officer, who fails to pick up after their dog.

In Snodland, Enforcement Officers bagged all the dog waste found in the Recreation Ground and in Nevill Park in brightly coloured yellow bags and flagged the areas which they were found. The bags and flags were left in place all day for park users to witness the amount of dog fouling present in the park and to encourage dog walkers to pick up after their dogs and avoid a fine. The bags were later collected and disposed of appropriately. These events were carried out twice in late 2008. East Peckham Parish Council have invited us to undertake a similar enforcement event on their Recreation Ground in the Spring.

Street Monitors - Do you care about your neighbourhood and want to make a difference?

This scheme was set up as an opportunity for members of the community to help improve their local area. Street Monitors are volunteers who report issues such as littering, dog fouling, flytipping and graffiti to the council for action. Monitors can benefit from regular meetings allowing them to network and discover what can be expected of the borough council and our partners.

For more information on any of the above or to report an issue, please contact Waste Services 01732 876147 or email waste.services@tmbc.gov.uk

Alternatively contact Streetline 01732 87 60 60 to report a street cleansing issue or Kent Highways Service on 08458 247800 for a street-related problem such as flytipping and flooding on the highway, damaged street lights or vegetation maintenance.

Useful contact details

Community Safety Unit	Csp@tmbc.gov.uk	01732 876132
Sarah Taylor	Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, csp@tmbc.gov.uk	01732 876149
Kent Police	To report a non 999 call	01732 771055
Kent Crimestoppers	Calls are free and anonymous	0800 555 111
Women's Support Service	Advice on domestic violence	01622 674921
Neighbourhood Watch	West Kent area	01892 502159
Streetline	To report a street related problem	01732 876060

Contacts for the Police and Community Wardens

Contact details for all local neighbourhood policing teams, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Community Wardens can be found on www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk

Newsletter produced by Tonbridge and Malling CSP

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