



# Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council

<http://www.broomfieldandkingswood-pc.org.uk/>



## ANNUAL REPORT

### Social Media

The Clerk continues to maintain a private residents email distribution list and regularly forwards relevant emails such as road closure notifications, public consultations and useful local information to residents on that list. If you would like to receive these emails please email the clerk at [parishclerk@bandkpc.uk](mailto:parishclerk@bandkpc.uk) granting permission for the Clerk to add your email address to her list.

The clerk also posts relevant information on our Facebook page. Please search for 'Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council' on Facebook and follow or like our page.

### What else has the Parish Council been doing?

- Organisation of regular litter picks around the Parish.
- Installation and maintenance of a new defibrillator at The Sports Field and maintaining the existing defibrillator at NISA.
- Stenciling of 'pick it up' dog poo signs around the village.
- Management of repairs to the playground equipment.
- Upgrading of the CCTV equipment at The Sports Field.
- Updating and improvement of the Parish Council website.
- On-going management of the Sports Field and the noticeboards in the Parish.
- Commenting on planning applications in the Parish.
- Repair and reinstallation of the Silent Tommy Statue.
- Maintaining the village planters around the village.
- Action as a liaison between the community and other local organisations and Councils on anything related to the local community.
- Production of the Parish News three times a year.
- Purchase and placement of wreath at Broomfield Church on behalf of the Parish for Remembrance Sunday.
- Liaison with our local PC re issues within the Parish.
- Liaison with our MBC Community Warden re issues within the Parish.
- Helping to resolve residents' issues and concerns.
- Progressing of the Village Hall Project.
- Organisation of a regular Parish Council Pop Up Café.
- Organisation of a Village Fete for the community.
- Organisation of the Reverse Santa. Items collected for the Salvation Army.
- Provided assistance and support for the Parish Speedwatch group.
- The continuation of a once a week bus service with the help of local Parishes and Nu-Venture.



## **Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council's Chairman's Annual Report 2025**

I am convinced that time is going faster and faster, I really can't believe that it has been a whole year since I struggled to get my last Chairman's Statement started.

There has been quite a lot going on in the Parish this year, some good, some not so good.

Let's start with some of the good, the Pop-Up cafes held at the Village Hall during school holidays go from strength to strength, we even had to ask the Village Hall Committee for some more mugs to be provided, which they gladly did and for which we are grateful. It's always a great atmosphere and the cake is always good, so come along and meet old friends and make some new ones. The dates are always posted on the notice boards around the village or up at the Post Office.

The Village fete in September was blessed with amazingly good weather and, according to feedback, we received was a day enjoyed by many. The Kings Head pub from Sutton Valence did a great job with the bar and food. The Invicta Jazz Orchestra and Old School Samba Band provided some fantastic music and the fire eater, ate the fire with aplomb. The baking competition had some great entries and made quite a good contribution to go to the Kent Air Ambulance from their sale after the competition.

The new Defibrillator was installed at the Sports Field in July, hopefully it, together with the ones at the Village Hall and the Post Office, will never have to be used.

We have also updated the CCTV at the Sports Field to cover the whole area, as the old system was not giving us clear enough images.

We continue our ongoing battle against litter, with regular litter picks throughout the year. We are very grateful to have a band of volunteers who regularly turn out and to those of you who, I know take the time to pick up the litter around our lanes. The dates of the litter picks are also posted on the notice boards and at the Post Office, so come along and join us, the cake at the end is usually very good.

The not so good includes the new SUEZ bin contract that caused a lot of issues for several weeks, with residents not knowing when or if their bin was going to be collected. Hopefully that has all been resolved now.

Road closures are still causing problems, with delays and uncertainty around journeys. Notifications come late or not at all, and some "urgent" road closures turn out not to be "urgent" at all, with diversions obviously planned by someone who has never seen the route. The Parish Council is doing all we can to get some common sense included in the mix but .....

The Broomfield Road water leak finally got repaired after it was reported multiple times by residents of Broomfield and Kingswood and the Parish Council.

And now dog poo (you knew it was going to be mentioned somewhere!), which I am sad to say is still an ongoing issue. I know most of our dog loving owners are responsible and clear up after their dogs but there are a few who think it is OK to leave it. Our amazing Scout Troop have provided poo bag dispensers around the village so there is really no excuse for such anti-social behaviour.

Back to the good stuff, the Silent Tommy has been reinstated better than ever, with his back against a solid wooden wall that, hopefully, will protect him from further mindless vandalism. Our thanks go to Councillor Shellina Prendergast who contributed towards the cost of the repairs from her KCC members grant.

Our wonderful village crafters created a waterfall of poppies for both the Broomfield and Kingwood Village signs, which made a beautiful back drop for Tommy on Remembrance Sunday when a ceremony was held at 11.00am attended by the Scouts and residents. Hopefully, this will become something that we can hold regularly so that we never forget.

Santa paid us another visit in December for the Reverse Santa evening, and once again the people of the Parish proved how generous they can be, giving several carloads of food to the Salvation Army food bank. The atmosphere in the Village Hall afterwards was amazing and I am sure the mulled wine and mince pies contributed to the happy buzz. Santa will be coming again this year so make a note of December 14th, 2025, in your diary.

The Wednesday shopping bus is still being well used, and we are happy to report that we have funding for another year.

Speedwatch are still doing their best to make our roads safer and are always looking for volunteers to help out. New road safety signs, designed by the children of Kingswood Primary School, will be going up around the village shortly.

The Parish News is published three times a year and we welcome articles from Parishioners, so if you have a story or hobby you want to share, then get in touch with Hayley.

If you are reading this then you probably already read the Parish News, but can I ask you to encourage your neighbours to do so too. It is full of information about what goes on in the village, the various clubs and events that happen throughout the year together with contact details. I don't know how many times I get told by people that they didn't know an event was happening. We put information on the notice boards, normally up in the Post Office and Hayley sends out regular email updates and posts information on Facebook. If you are not on Hayley's list and would like to be just email her at the address in the magazine and you will always know what is going on.

Our most recent village event was the VE Day 80th Anniversary held at the Village Hall; it was a lovely afternoon with people of all ages enjoying each other's company. There was a display of memorabilia from residents and a table showing the rations allowed for an adult for one week during WW2. I think most of us were amazed at how little there was compared to what we all eat today. It was also really good to see the children playing the games from that era and thoroughly enjoying themselves. The 1940s cocktails seemed to go down quite well too.

There have been some changes at Kent County Council which means that Shellina Prendergast, who has been our councillor for as long as I have been Chair will no longer represent us. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all her years of service to the Kent people. I also need to welcome Sarah Emberson who is our new councillor.

We have had some changes in the Parish Council this year, one of our councillors, Simon Pearce, resigned due to personal reasons, he will be missed. We have however, been fortunate to enlist two new councillors, Linda Blainey and Bob Mercer, who are already proving to be valuable members of the team.

The only thing left for me is to once again thank all the volunteers who give up their time to organise and run the various clubs and all those crafters, litter pickers and cake bakers, without whom Broomfield and Kingswood would be a sadder place to live. I would also like to thank my fellow councillors for all their hard work during the past year and especially to thank Hayley, who makes the job look easy even though it really isn't.

At the moment the world can be a sad and worrying place, but I know there are more good people in the world than bad, it's just that the bad get all the publicity. So, let's remember that and be kind to one another, even a smile can make a difference to someone's day and really doesn't cost anything.

Tina Clark  
Chair  
Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council

## **Annual Ward Members Report 2025 - Gill Fort and Gary Cooke, MBC Councillors for Leeds**

In May 2024 the council elections took place and no party had an overall majority. A coalition of Lib Dems, Greens and Independent formed the leadership and administration of the council.

A further five housing development projects have been started by Maidstone Borough Council to deliver 94 affordable homes. This is part of the ambitious target to build 1,000 affordable homes in Maidstone under MBC ownership and management that formed part of the current local plan.

The five sites acquired by the Council are: Bathstore, Corben's Yard, Land at Granville Road, Britannia House and the Royal British Legion/Heather House site in Parkwood.

The Chartway Group has been appointed to deliver the Royal British Legion/ Heather House site, with Skillcrown delivering the remaining four.

The comedian, actor and presenter Hugh Dennis, officially opened the new archaeology gallery 'Lives In Our Landscape' at the Maidstone Museum on Wednesday 5 June.

Hugh hosts The Great British Dig on More 4 and has developed a strong interest in archaeology and heritage issues after filming three series and investigating nearly thirty sites. The pilot episode excavated a Roman site in Lower Fant, Maidstone in 2019. The show involves residents exploring the archaeology beneath their back gardens, often uncovering a previously forgotten past.

The exciting new family-friendly Lives In Our Landscape gallery tells the story of how people have lived in the area over a vast span of time. Objects dating back more than 600,000 years will be on show, from the earliest type of humans hunting animals with stone tools in a forested landscape, up to the medieval period, when Maidstone became a bustling market town.

Maidstone Borough Council announced that four of its parks have been presented with a Green Flag Award and have officially been recognised as some of the country's best.

Clare Park, Cobtree Manor Park, Mote Park and Whatman (Millennium River) Park have achieved the coveted Green Flag Award, the international quality mark for parks and green spaces.

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

Maidstone Borough Council Planning Committee approved plans for the redevelopment of the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site, at Maidstone East, for mixed-use development which is predominantly residential.

The development will include 180 apartments, 1,863 square metres of commercial and/or community space and around one acre of open green space town centre park which will be owned and managed by the Council.

Deputy Mayor of Maidstone Cllr Martin Round officially launched the Maidstone Borough Council 2024 Eco Hub.

Located in The Mall shopping centre, Unit 101 on the lower level, next to Timpson's and close by the exit onto Gabriel's Hill, Maidstone's Eco Hub was open to the public from Saturday 26 October to 9 November, and everyone is invited to drop in for advice to help them become more sustainable. Now in its third year, the pop-up community information centre will support people to live more sustainably, save money and reduce their carbon footprint.

The Mayor of Maidstone was amongst 250 dignitaries who attended the 40th Anniversary celebrations of the County Courts on Thursday 14 November.

Officially opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 31 October 1984, the Maidstone Combined Court Centre was relocated from County Hall to the Barker Road site in 1983.

Supported by Maidstone Borough Council, the 40 years celebrations was arranged by the Resident Judge and Honorary Recorder of Maidstone, HHJ Julian Smith and his colleagues at the Courts.

The history of law in Maidstone dates back to the first recorded trial in England being held on Penenden Heath in 1076. By the 1600s Maidstone High Street boasted a town goal, which was a cage for rogues and vagabonds with the original court initially being a wooden structure on stilts situated in what is now Jubilee Square.

The old Court House was replaced by the current Town Hall in 1763 and originally retained an open arcaded ground floor for market traders. The cell was used until 1811 and still shows today graffiti created by prisoners awaiting trial then.

The Council is in the process of creating a Development Plan Document (DPD) which will include a suitable spatial strategy, sites, and a set of policies to assess future planning applications for accommodating Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The consultation is the second stage of this process to gather views on the Council's emerging direction of travel and preferred policy approaches. This consultation is a formal stage in the planning process, known as a Regulation 18 consultation and will help to inform the next stage - the Regulation 19 proposed submission Plan, which the Council expect to consult on in Spring 2025.

Maidstone Leisure Centre won National Water Leisure Venue of the Year. The centre was refurbished following a Council investment of £2m where works to the centre has included the addition of an Aztec-themed Splash Pad, featuring a variety of interactive water elements including slides and water cannons.

A new Amazon Adventure Soft Play has also opened at the centre, a purpose-built three-storey attraction, designed for children aged 12 years and under.

A further grant of £512,000 from Sport England for environmental enhancements is also being made into the centre.

The leisure centre benefitted from the multimillion-pound upgrade project during 2024, following the contract extension with Maidstone Leisure Trust and Serco Leisure.

Maidstone Borough Council has joined forces with Kent Police to tackle nuisance bikes as part of The Safer Maidstone Partnership. By pooling resources, targeted operations are being planned where illegal bikes, quadbikes, and similar vehicles will be seized.

Kent Police, who tested the operation model in Shepway and Parkwood during the summer of 2024, had resounding success, seizing 10 nuisance bikes in one month and issuing several formal and informal warnings to known or suspected anti-social riders.

Operation Deplete is now being enhanced with more technology and collaboration with MBC to help stop irresponsible riders. Alongside the technology and resources, community support has been identified as a key part of this effort to improve safety and wellbeing across the Borough.

Things that have affected the parishes.

New waste contract. After a couple of months of poor service Suez finally overcame the teething problems and the contact seems to be working well.

Flytipping is still an issue. MBC increased their fines and can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £1,000, with a reduced amount of £520 if paid within 14 days. Fines can increase to £2,500 if the case goes to court. For hazardous waste, a £1,000 fine with no early payment discount applies. You will have to pay £250 if you are caught littering but it will be reduced to £200 if you pay within 14 days. If you do not pay within 28 days, you could be taken to court. A Maidstone resident has been threatened with jail if he does not pay £100,000 in fines and costs for turning a 14-hectare beauty spot into a landfill site.

We are still experiencing traffic chaos following local road closures. In many cases more than one road closed at the same time. Once the KKC elections are over we will seek to get the local parishes together with their councillors. KCC and utilities see if a better strategy can be adopted.



# Kent Police

## **Kent Police – PC James Phillips**

I want to start by adding a brief apology, I have done my utmost and am continuing to do my utmost to attend as many Parish Council meetings as I can when my shifts and personal commitments allow me to. I am sorry that I am not in attendance tonight for the APM, I do hope it has been a successful evening for everyone! In the following report I want to highlight some of the work which I have done in 2024 but also to mention some of my aims for 2025.

2024 was a hectic year for myself and my colleagues in the Maidstone Neighbourhood Team. There has been a huge amount of work undertaken by all of us from “whole team operations” to localised, Ward based problem solving.

Kingswood has presented me with multiple issues but I feel that we are working towards some positive outcomes. I have made my best efforts to spend as much time in the area as possible both on foot and in a car.

I have seized two vehicles in the Kingswood area as of recent, one suspected to have been stolen and the other a suspected “mission vehicle” with links to poaching and rural crime.

I am aware that off road bikes are an issue in Kingswood and there are plans to pay more attention to the area and utilise our powers to enforce the culprits who are riding and driving nuisance vehicles. I have identified some of the persons involved and have also ascertained that few are local to Kingswood and generally they are coming from different parts of Maidstone.

I and a few of my colleagues have had the great pleasure of doing a “show-and-tell” talk to the Year 1 and Year 2 group at Kingswood Primary which was brilliant. I am hoping to doing more of these in 2025.

I am also going to be making a concerted effort in 2025 to conduct more foot patrols in my wards. This is something which I currently do on a frequent basis as it is however I believe that it is the cornerstone of my role as a Beat Officer and the foot patrols I have conducted has been overwhelmingly well received.

I have quite a few projects ongoing and in mind for 2025. Towards the end of 2024 I devised a concept for my own Policing Operation revolving around community engagement and public outreach with a goal of improving Police and public relations. I have named the Operation Op Service and am running it as a trial in the Maidstone area. The Operation has had a slower start than anticipated due to other commitments requiring the whole of the Neighbourhood team however I am looking to keep this Op going and engage with as much of the public as possible.

Following a productive meeting with Police Staff member Sam Brooks here at Maidstone I will hope to work closely with him and Parish Councils to re-invigorate the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. This project is in it's early stages and with all things may take some time to "bed in" and find the best way to work but I am really keen on progressing this in 2025.

I want to give my thanks to Hayley and the Kingswood Parish Council for their continued support. My consistent message has been to report, report, report and I know that this has been echoed by them. I do feel that the residents are taking this on board and I am receiving many more reports for the area which I am grateful of. I look forward to continuing to work in the area and meeting more local residents in 2025.

PC Phillips

Police Constable 30079

Maidstone Community Safety Unit (CSU) Neighbourhood Beat Team

## **KINGSWOOD CHURCH LEP 2025**

**Our supporting churches are: Baptist, Methodist and the Church of England  
Kingwood Church meets every Sunday at Kingwood Village Hall our services  
commence at 11am.**

**For our full range of services please see the Church notice board at the Village  
Hall.**

Kingswood Church is a friendly welcoming Church which follows the traditions of 'The Church' in a slightly less formal manner. During our service the children meet in the hall's Parker Room but join the congregation at the beginning of our service for a welcome and then again at the end to 'Show & Tell' what they have been doing, they enjoy all sorts of activities including junk model making, cooking and crafting as well as their Bible studies.

As a Church we offer various activities during the week :

Tuesday: Lunch Club

Wednesday: Study Groups

Friday: Ladies Group

Friday: Crusaders (at Kingswood Primary School)

Friday: CANS Youth Club

Sunday: Church Service and Climbers (children's group)

We offer pastoral care to our members and support a local foodbank, we make regular charitable donations each month to support local and international organisations, we hold special services throughout the year to celebrate Easter, Christmas and Harvest etc. We invite everyone to come along on a Sunday and give us a try, experience our friendly style of worship, I would recommend trying our Café Service which is held on the first Sunday of each month, a free continental breakfast is offered from 10.30am with the service starting at 11am. The service is led by Peter and Sonya Roberts and the children take an active part in the service, we would particularly love to see more young persons and families come and join us.

If you need any further information, please contact Peter Roberts on 01622 843625 or myself on 01622 842274. The church email address is: [kingswoodchurch@outlook.com](mailto:kingswoodchurch@outlook.com)

Mike King Chairman Kingswood Church.

## **Kingswood Bowls Club Annual Report for Kingswood Parish Council AGM 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

During the past year Kingswood Bowls Club has thrived. We have welcomed new members and are now at capacity. We have a waiting list for prospective new members who are welcome to come along for a free trial to see if it could be for them. All that is needed is a pair of flat soled indoor shoes.

The club meets at Kingswood Village Hall on Wednesday afternoons between 2:00 and 4:00pm. We are a friendly non-league club, happy to welcome people interested in the game – beginners and experienced players alike.

We stop at 3:00pm for tea, cake and a good chat. All this for just £3.50.

If you would like more information please contact Kay Kilgallon on 01622 842080

April 2025

## Kingswood Book Klub

The Kingswood Book Klub continues to thrive, bringing together readers who share more than just a love of books. With 12 members and growing, we meet every 4th Thursday of the month – no pressure to attend every time, and no expectation to finish a book if it's not your thing! We're relaxed, friendly, and always up for a good story (and a good natter).

What starts with opening a book has led to friendship, discussion, and plenty of laughter. Through the books we've read together, we've learned a lot about each other – sharing ideas, experiences, and perspectives. That's really what a community club is all about. (Well, that and the snacks and fizz – which we always have plenty of!) In fact, some say we're the best book klub in Kent 😊 – and we think they might be onto something.

Books We've Explored Together This Year:

- \* The Unspeakable Acts of Zina Pavlou by Eleni Kyriacou
- \* Artificial Wisdom by Thomas R Weaver
- \* It started with a lie by Denise Brown
- \* The Salt Path by Raynor Winn
- \* Sankofa by Chibundu Onuzo
- \* The Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett
- \* The Bee Sting by Paul Murray
- \* Catch-22 by Joseph Heller
- \* Paper Aeroplanes by Dawn O'Porter
- \* Death in the English Countryside by Sara Rosett
- \* The House of My Mother by Rukhsana Ahmad
- \* The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom
- \* The Three of Us by Ore Agbaje-Williams
- \* Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See
- \* The Ivy by Tasmina Perry
- \* To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Each of us has found something personal in the pages – whether it's a thought-provoking plot, a laugh-out-loud moment, or a character who felt like an old friend. So we thought we'd share a few of our top recommendations with you.

Our Top Recommendations:

Lady Tan's Circle of Women

Recommended by Tina, Rachael, Ceridwen, Claire Anita and Charlotte "This book showed me a culture I knew very little about and also that women have always found a way to survive and thrive." – Tina

"Beautifully written and rich in historical detail. We all learned something new and provoked such discussion amongst the group." – Rachael

“I loved the way it was written, mirroring different times in a woman’s life as well as the historical context. Also led to really interesting discussions with differing opinions and thoughts.” – Charlotte

“Because it gave real insights into a very different culture, women’s role in the society and helped me think about our role today.” – Ceridwen

The Salt path

Recommend by Anita

“Really well written and amazing strength humans find in adversity”

The Pillars of the Earth

Recommended by Becky, Gemma, Claire and Rachael (all listened to the audiobook)

“The narration was amazing and brought it to life.” – Becky

“This book gave real insights into a very different culture, women’s role in the society and helped me think about our role today.” – Gemma

“I couldn’t put this book down. It was so well written, I just wanted to know what was happening next. Steeped in history and...” – Rachael

Whether you’re an avid reader or just curious, we’d love to see you.

Come for the books, stay for the company – new members are always welcome at the Kingswood Book Klub.

If your interested in coming along please contact Becky on 07940 726554.

It's been an exciting 12 months. Last summer the group went to camp near Borough Green. We celebrated 20 years of Leeds and Kingswood Scout Group. This was when Kingswood and Ulcombe Scout Group merged with Leeds and Hollingbourne Scout Group.

At camp we were taught how to handle an axe for chopping wood for kindling. In one tent they were practising first aid and in another area they were being taught how to light fires without matches.

This camp was a good opportunity for the children to be away from their parents for the first time.

At Christmas we all got involved with Reverse Santa. Father Christmas rode around the village collecting gifts for the Salvation Army, and the group were collecting from residents to put in his truck.

The group have helped with the litter collecting around Kingswood village, it is surprising how many bags of rubbish there were.

Scouts have been concentrating on their Chief Gold Award

The group are thriving in numbers;

We have 16 squirrels, this is the 4-6 year olds.

In the beavers we have 19, they are the 6-8 year olds

With the cubs there are 20, their ages are 8 - 10 1/2 year olds

We also have 17 scouts, these are 10 1/2 - 14 1/2.

As some of you know we have our own Scout Hut. We try to keep it in good order, but recently we had condensation in the hut. This is because we had to block the windows off owing to vandalism.

We have now had vents and extractor fans installed. This has cost us nearly £4000. This has been paid for from our reserves.

We have two quizzes a year and also run the 100 club. We need these to pay for any expenses that that are needed.

The group attended the St Georges Parade in Maidstone, we had the service in All Saint's church and the Mayor was there.

I would like to thank you all for supporting the scout group

Alan Poulton Chair





# Headcorn FC

*Established 1886*

## **Headcorn Football Club 24/25 season report for Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council**

We would like to thank Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council for the use of the Sports Field again this season.

We have used the Sports Field to host home games for our U9, U10 and U11 teams and all have had successful and enjoyable seasons.

Our popularity with the children of Kingswood continues to grow and we very much hope this trend continues, and that we become the club of choice for the young footballers from the village.

We would also like to thank the community of Kingswood who are very supportive of our use of the Sports Field and are always very positive when we speak to them.

Thank you again.

Matthew Botley  
Chairman  
Headcorn Football Club

# KINGSWOOD AND BROOMFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Reg Charity no. 264838

## SPRING REPORT 2025

We have just completed the installation of the new windows and doors at the Hall. This combined with the installation of the solar panels makes us much more energy efficient, and thanks are due to our Treasurer for his work in organising and overseeing this project. We are also grateful to the companies and user groups in the Hall working together to get the job done without having to close the Hall at any point.

We would however like to apologise for the ongoing problems with the Toilets and can assure you that we are doing all we can to rectify the situation.

We have also been working in the garden in front of the Hall and will be putting in some new butterfly and bee-friendly plants. We trust that the bulbs planted around the grounds last year are helping to improve the look of the Hall, particularly as you enter the car park. On the Chartway Street boundary the new hedge is just beginning to grow. These plants were donated to us by the Woodland Trust.

If you would like to book the Hall for a Party or Celebration please ring Val Clarke (Booking Officer) on 01622 843110 for more information and to be shown around the Hall. Similarly if you wish to put up a poster in the Hall, please speak to Val and she will do her best to help.

We look forward to welcoming everyone to the Hall for the various events due this year.

The Village Hall Committee

## CYNOPHOBIA

We had quite a few children leave at Christmas, which is good in that it means we have been successful in changing their lives and that of their families.

We had a quiet couple of months but we are now building up the numbers. Averaging 14-15 children every Monday. We have also had several new handlers with their dogs join us, together with two new helpers on the floor. Two of our adult helpers joined the group as they both were very frightened of dogs. They now help every Monday. Just recently we had a little girl who had come to us so frightened, she has sent photos of her and her new puppy. The last day of the school term we are celebrating 10 years that the group has been running helping hundreds of children to be able to walk to school, play and holiday without fear.

## LEAD THE WAY,

We continue to be busy with an average of 6 to 8 new puppies every eight weeks. We have success in our Good Citizen tests. There are 4 classes from puppy to our top class, and as the handlers gain more experience they can move up a class. We have seen a rise in out of control dogs since covid. We cannot stress the importance of getting your dog, from a puppy, trained. Average life of a dog is 12 years, which if well trained, can be such a pleasure.

## Kingswood Speedwatch Group May 2025

Our group has now been operating for over 3 years. Community Speedwatch aim is to educate road users and encourage them to be more aware of the speed limits on our roads. Ultimately the aim is to try and eradicate speeding within our village and surrounding area.

Parish Council are very supportive of our scheme, with funding for consumables etc, the schemes are also supported by Kent police, [Community Speedwatch | Kent Police](#), and the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner.

Our group consists of around 6 people, it was originally 12, but has reduced due to people mainly moving away. We are mix of people all from our local community, volunteering their time to undertake sessions around local roads. This can be from an hour a month to a couple of hours a week, there is no expectation to do sessions just as and when it suits the individual, when they have available time. Some of our volunteers are retired, others fit it around work commitments, it is whatever suits them.

We struggle sometimes to get timings of session to suit at least two members which is required to undertake a session, due to availability not coinciding. That is where would benefit from some additional help. With more volunteers we could undertake more sessions and make our presence more noticeable and with that hopefully reduce speed further.

Over the period we have been operating our volunteers have given over 900 hours of their time and have undertaken over 400 sessions in 12 different locations. We have recorded over 1200 vehicles speeding through our village, with fastest speed recorded of **55mph**, which is over 80% over the speed limit.

This unfortunately isn't an isolated case with **three others over 50mph** and over **100 vehicles doing over 40mph**, and **over 1000 over 35mph**. We continue to see situations where pedestrians or other vehicles have been lucky to not be hit by other cars.

This is on our roads within the village where we all drive regularly, the maximum limit on these roads is 30mph, its not a target it's a limit.

Everyone we speak to all say, its not **ME**, but over 40% of those recorded as being over the limit come from within our village or from our surrounding area.

Since starting Speedwatch we have seen the number of people recorded reducing, between 2022 and 2024, but with fewer volunteers and sessions, there has been a slight increase this year, but it is still lower than in 2022

More volunteers mean a greater roadside presence and in other parishes this has been shown to reduce the % of people over the limit.

If you would like to help and could spare an hour a week or a month, we would like more people to join us. It will ensure the drivers in our village respect our speed limits and we can help to keep everyone safer whether in a car or walking. It is not a big commitment and you will be made to feel welcome. Full training is provided, and you get to meet new people from the village.

**If you are interested in considering joining us or would like to discuss what is involved please email [kingswoodspeedwatch@outlook.co.uk](mailto:kingswoodspeedwatch@outlook.co.uk) or you can email or speak to the Parish clerk, we would really welcome your support.**