

## **OP PAPA- Interim report on behalf of Inspector Steve Kent, Kent Police**

The Kent PCSO Problem Solving Task Force have been directed to support Maidstone CSU with addressing issues that have been identified in Brenchley Gardens in Maidstone Town Centre and have been active in the area since September 2021. The PCSO Problem Solving Task Force consists of three teams of 7 PCSOs and a team leader and have been operating in this area almost exclusively in this period and have the following findings to report.

The target area incorporates Brenchley Gardens, Maidstone East train station, parts of Week Street, St Faith's Street, Waterside and Station Road. Additionally included, are Maidstone Museum, Brenchley House, KFC, McDonalds, Tesco Express and the entrance to Fremlin Walk off St Faith's Street. With these patrols, we have been targeting and identify local youths who are caught up in County Lines, drug dealing, ASB, CSE and any other type of criminality.

Throughout the tasking we have collated our results and we have attended 44+ CAD's, gathered over 37 intelligence reports, enforced the PSPO +250 times with alcohol seizures and moving beggars on, completed 4 safeguarding referrals, issued 20 S34 dispersal notices. With the details and information that we have gained we have been able to work with the CSU to issue x7 formal warnings (CPW's) which include exclusion zones and have also provided statements to support matters being progressed to Community Protection Notice as necessary. A S59 has been issued for .

Weapon sweeps have been completed in Brenchley Gardens and 3 weapons have been located and seized for disposal. The Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), fearless and the youth hub have been out educating young people and providing crime prevention advice while utilising an AddVan.

It was arranged for gates to be shut at Trinity Park and the access gate to the train station in Brenchley Gardens at dusk which helped reduce the increase in calls to Trinity Park following the displacements of youths from Brenchley.

Licencing checks have been completed to off licences, ensuring that both parts of the licence were correct, and check carried out on the refusals book. Stickers were also issued to be placed on the alcohol containers to enable officers to learn where drinks are being purchased.

Surveys have been carried out with residents, shop keepers and park users. The concerns raised by the public are as follows. Littering, drinking, loud music, smoking drugs, ASB, not feeling safe, groups hanging around and criminal damage. Revisiting these with follow up surveys has shown that almost half those completed in Brenchley Gardens so far state that problems have improved since PSTF have been in the area. Many members of public have been grateful for the additional police presence in the area over the last 3 months and noticed a decrease in groups hanging around in the location.