



You will see from the below report the team have been working hard in relation to other areas of business such as, Theft of Machinery, Animal Welfare and Fly Tipping to name a few topics. The Rural Task Force are now working in partnership with all local authorities to address the issue of Fly Tipping and illegal waste transfer/carrying that continues to blight the countryside. I would like to remind machinery owners to please record all serial numbers, take photos consider additional markings such as DNA solutions and tracker devices. All of which will assist the police in recovering your property should it be stolen.

The team are always out on regular patrols please continue to report any suspicious vehicles or activity. We have Night Vision, Thermal imaging and of course our own drone with a pilot on each sub team.

**Here is a snapshot of the work carried out by the Rural Task Force over the last two months.**

## **Rural Theft**

There is a series of thefts where GPS are being targeted. Overnight a farm at Doddington had removed 4 GPS receivers from the roofs of agricultural vehicles and 5 computers from within the cabs, valued at £50k. CSI attended and found material at the scene linked to suspect(s). There were two further reports of GPS receivers and computer thefts, one from Longfield and another from a farm in Farningham.

Theft of Ifor Williams 511 Horse Trailer from Ickham, Canterbury. Two suspects have entered the site by cutting gate padlocks around 0200 hrs. Offenders have then pushed trailer to waiting vehicle.



Following a property search carried out in Medway by the RTF several stolen power tools were recovered. These were seized and the victim and their insurance company consulted. The victim was paid out for the loss of the items in 2019 and has purchased the recovered items back from the Insurance company.



Theft of an Eddis Crusader Typhoon Touring Caravan around 1920 hrs on 30<sup>th</sup> June in Lynsore Bottom. Offender (s) have pulled up to the location in a vehicle and towed it away after forcing security clamps. The Caravan was suspected to leave the location heading towards the village of Bridge.



3 Ifor Williams horse trailers loaded on a foreign registered HGV on the A256 Sandwich bypass. All the trailers were checked on PNC and with Data Tag and none were confirmed as stolen.



Whilst carrying out field entrance clearing ready for crop cutting at a site in Edenbridge the Contractor located an orange Kubota and Hammerhead buggy. These were recovered by the Informant. RTF attended and carried out enquiries with Kubota who sold one to nearby farm. This Farm was attended and confirmed they were a victim of burglary and both vehicles stolen overnight on the 29<sup>th</sup> June. The Kubota had also been stolen a year previously and located in Lyndens Lane Edenbridge recovered by RTF.

RTF contacted by victim who discovered that two chainsaws had been stolen. RTF viewed the CCTV and the suspect vehicle was identified and a male suspect. CCTV showed a male running with the 2 stolen chainsaws to his vehicle. Vehicle linked to two further thefts from Sainsburys in Herne Bay and M&S in Whitstable where male occupant has made off in this vehicle. RTF Officers stopped the suspect in his vehicle as it was leaving his home address and he was arrested & vehicle seized used in crime.

Team deployed to locate suspect Black LandRover Defender 90. The vehicle had carried out at Bilking of £130 pounds of fuel from BP Sevenoaks on 8<sup>th</sup> July using stolen number plates from a VW Golf from Cranbrook. Vehicle located in car park in Bluewater where a group of males seen to be walking away. 5 Occupants stopped and searched. Driver arrested wearing matching trainers as per cctv from petrol theft. He denied driving the vehicle. The LandRover has also been seen to driving antisocially in Headcorn village by residents in the last few weeks. Driving aggressively skipping red lights and racing along the road with other vehicles. Section 59 warning will also be issued to Driver.

RTF received report that two males were seen on CCTV climbing over the fence into victim's garden. They headed towards where the groundsman was working and stole Stihl petrol strimmer and Stihl petrol hedge cutter valued approximately £600. The tools were not visible from the road. The males then made off across fields. Just prior to the theft occurring the neighbour's perimeter alarm was activated. Suspected the males were in the neighbour's garden and that was how they saw the tools.

Occupants of a white Ford Transit were disturbed stealing scrap metal from a Farm in, Horton Kirby. No scrap was taken as they were made to put it all back. Victim is reporting the theft direct and vehicle nominated to be stopped.



Victim reporting his milking shed entered overnight and damage caused to several of the suction tubes and a tank containing milk has been emptied. Bleach had been poured over a desk containing paperwork, a router was stolen and damage cause to a Cattle breeding calendar all designed to cause maximum disruption to his dairy business.



Green Toyota Panel Van located at M2 Services following information it contained males Wanted for Theft of Dogs in Derbyshire. Vehicle monitored until the occupants returned to the vehicle. The passenger and was shown as Wanted Missing for the theft in Derbyshire and he was arrested and has subsequently been collected by Derbyshire Police.

## **OP GALILEO (POACHING)**

Three RTF Officers attended a 7 Force Op Galileo meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> August in Cambridgeshire. This was to develop a co-ordinated response to Hare Coursing between the 7 Eastern Police Forces, sharing working practices and tactics for the forth coming season were agreed.



Report of persons poaching in Down Court Road, Doddington. Suspects have abandoned their vehicle a blue Honda CRV in a field and left the area. This has now been seized by RTF. There was no evidence in the vehicle to suggest who was using it at the time of the incident.



A white Ford Transit Tipper has been seen in different locations across Kent hare coursing. The vehicle was sighted and stopped on Northumberland Road, Maidstone and seized for no tax.



The RCAT from Cambridgeshire Police located a blue Peugeot 308, following a Poaching incident on the Cambridge / Essex Border. The vehicle was seized, and three Dead Hares were found nearby after the driver made off. The vehicle is owned by a Kent based hare Coursers. Despite an extensive area search Driver was not located.



Game Keeper in Ashford area found fourteen Pheasant Poults had been shot with an air weapon. They were still in the pen and all together near the fence line, the pen was not damaged and the lock on the gate was un-touched.



## **Op Traverse/Fish Poaching**

Call from Public reporting that Eastern Europeans were seen to take carp from the pond in Neville Park. On arrival a vehicle was stopped leaving the location with two Bulgarian males in. It was established through google translate that the males had been fishing and had caught some carp. The carp were in the boot of their vehicle and were still alive. They were therefore returned to the water and appeared to be in order. It is thought that the males were catching the carp to eat and were not aware of the laws around fishing in the UK. The male's details have been obtained and slow time enquiries will be made with Tonbridge and Malling council as to whether they wish to prosecute the males.

## **Wildlife**

The RTF were contacted by an Ecologist who is currently monitoring an active Badger Sett within the wood which is on MOD land. RTF have liaised with the MOD who have been in contact with the Ecologist. Images have been passed of the bikes actively riding on the Sett and causing damage. The use of off-road bikes is prohibited on MOD property and RTF and Canterbury CSU have run regular operations in the location to target the off-road bike activity. Images obtained at the sett have been circulated within Kent Police as well as through a Press Release and a male has now been identified and will be interviewed for the offence.



## Animal Welfare

Pigeon being stamped on then shot by youth with air rifle, 6 youths attended the location of in Rusthall near Sainsburys. Video of the incident shown on face-book and other platforms, extensive worked conducted by RTF and all 6 youths identified and the main suspects for the stamping and shooting of the bird gained. Suspects have now been dealt with by RTF.



Joint visit with Gravesham Council planning team to a small traveller site regarding an unlawful dog training business. The proprietor of the business has been given a lawful court order to stop the business due to noise complaints and breaching planning laws. Owner was present and dealt with by Gravesham Officers with RTF assistance.

## Livestock

Report from farmer in Doddington that two of his ewes had been dragged from the field and through a gate and onto a footpath where they had been butchered. Offenders had removed all traces of meat and left behind the carcasses. Media appeal instigated to locate any witnesses and to encourage livestock owners to be extra vigilant.



A white huskey type dog chasing cows at a Farm in Samphire Hoe, Dover. Enquiries are on-going with two witnesses to identify the dog owner. Farmer left with Livestock Worrying Warning Signs to display at the field where the dog has been reported.

## Heritage

Visited Walmer Castle the home of the Lord Warden of the Cinque ports. RTF spoke to Head of Security and Estate Management and joined Farm Watch. Numerous members of the public approached Officers and the vehicle was used by the children for some photo opportunities.



## Fly Tipping (Op Assist)

Call received from landowner who blocked in a vehicle on his land fly-tipping. Vehicle was a repeat offender and was a white Ford Transit. There was an altercation between occupant of vehicle and landowner but then the driver of the vehicle made off from scene. Local patrol and Gravesham Council Environmental Enforcement Officer attended location and Vehicle seized.

Op Assist Dartford 8<sup>th</sup> July working with Dartford Council Enforcement Team. 3 Vehicles were seized for no tax, a £300 Fixed Penalty Notice was issued for a Waste carrier Offence and a Production Document issued to another driver as he was unable to provide his documents at the roadside.



Op Assist Medway 14<sup>th</sup> July working with Medway Council Enforcement Team. 1 vehicle was seized linked to fly tipping investigation and several other vehicles were stopped carrying waste but found to be in order.



Op Assist Maidstone 14<sup>th</sup> July working with Maidstone Council Enforcement Team. Maidstone Borough Council had 1 fine for Waste transfer Notes and numerous advisory's given. 7 Traffic Offence Reports were issued during the day.



Stopped a Silver Ford Transit the A249 Sittingbourne. Two male occupants. Both males and the vehicle were searched under Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act due to previous information that they had been involved in Catalytic Converter thefts and metal thefts. Nothing was found on their persons. The vehicle was full of waste in the rear, but no Catalytic converters located. The vehicle showed No MOT since January 2021 and No Tax since March 2021 so Driver was reported for those offences and vehicle was seized. Upon being informed that the vehicle was being seized both males become aggressive and refused any paperwork and walked off.

Maidstone Borough Council were informed they will be sending producer document.



Op Assist Thanet 23rd July working with Thanet Council Enforcement Team. RTF were joined by the local CPT Team. 4 vehicles were seized for insurance and tax offences 4 FPN's for Waste Offences and 2 Traffic Offence Reports. Enquires were also made at a recent fly tip that have resulted in a suspect being identified. Also 1 vehicle was stopped, and a male was arrested for being wanted on an outstanding warrant.



Op Assist Swale 23<sup>rd</sup> July working with Swale Council Enforcement Team with RSU Police colleagues. 3 vehicles were seized for no tax or insurance. 4 Traffic Offence report was completed, a male arrested on a Warrant for which he was then bailed to attend Court, 5 overweight prohibitions were issued and the Swale Council Team issued 1 FPN for no waste transfer documents and a total of 8 Waster Producers covering No Waste Transfer Notes, Waster Carrier Licence and Scrap Licences.



Call received direct to RTF from farmer reporting that a transit van or similar had just carried out a large fly tip on his farmland off Burham Road, Rochester. Amongst the rubbish were various bits of paperwork linked to a Snodland address. Enquiries were made by RTF at the address which wasn't occupied but clearly in the process of being renovated. Local enquires revealed that the occupant is an elderly lady currently in hospital. Her son has arranged for the property to be renovated and it is believed he has paid persons to clear the waste. Neighbour stated that she suspected the males who cleared the waste had dumped it locally due to how quickly they were returning. RTF have now identified the suspect and are working with Medway Environmental Team to make an arrest.



Assisted Tunbridge Wells Environment Enforcement team with seizing two vehicles at a location in Cranbrook. The vehicles had been involved in a recent fly tipping incident in Cranbrook. It was expected officers would receive a hostile reception from the family.

Both vehicles located parked on the public highway near to the address.

Enforcement officers clamped and seized both vehicles and arranged their own recovery. One of the vehicles seized was a Ford Ranger pickup, colour red. This vehicle has recently come to the attention of the RTF after we had received numerous reports of it snooping around farms in West Kent



Op Assist Gravesham on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August working with Gravesham Council Enforcement Team. Attended public car park adjacent to Traveller's Site. The car park was being used to store several untaxed Ford Transit tippers. Three of the Transits were heavily loaded with builders waste. It was suspected by the council that the Transits were being used as mobile skips. Waste was being transferred from other vehicles onto the Transits and once full the waste fly tipped. A total of 7 vehicles seized, 4 of which were sign written with a Company Name. A male came forward and claimed ownership of the company, however the details he gave at scene were suspected to be false details and checks have confirmed his correct details and he will be dealt with with multiple vehicle tax offences.



Op Assist Dartford on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August working with Dartford Council Enforcement Team. Numerous vehicles were stopped over the course of the operation with members of Dartford Council and Environmental Agency on board. This resulted in 6 Intelligence Reports, 3 Traffic Offence Reports (TOR), and 2 No Vehicle Tax Reports. One TOR for a use of a mobile phone, another TOR for no MOT, and another for not correctly displaying L Plates. One FPN issued by the council for waste carrying



Stop check of yellow Ford Transit Tipper. This vehicle was nominated as being involved in several incidents of attempt theft, harassment, and general suspicious behaviour around locations across the country of Kent all connected to scrap collecting activities. The vehicle was heavily laden with various metal items. There were 3 males with the vehicle. None of the occupants held an EA waste licence nor scrap licence. Medway Waste Team attended and seized the vehicle for having no licences in place and carrying waste



RTF were contacted by the Maidstone Council Environmental Enforcement Team when one of their officers was assaulted by a male whilst they were seizing his motor vehicle for breaching waste carrying licensing. The male was located and arrested for assault by RTF.

Op Assist Medway on the 12th August working with Medway Council Enforcement Team. The day featured an arrest attempt for a suspect wanted for 3 fly tipping offences, but these were unsuccessful on the day. Officers attended a location where an illegal waste transfer station was in operation and seized two vehicles.



Op Assist Maidstone on the 18th August working with Dartford Council Enforcement Team. Two vehicles were seized for waste related offences, 1 traffic offence report was 1 FPN for £300 for driver not having a waste transfer notice.



Green Ford Focus sighted on farmland of Raspberry Hill lane, Iwade. The Male occupant has cut of the farms padlock and chain and placed a new one on. The gateway serves a track to farms combine harvester. Further checks by informant believe the incident carried out for fly tipping purpose. New fly tipping located on their land by the sea wall. Swale waste team notified and stop marker added to vehicle and the criminal damage to the padlocks recorded.



Op Assist Swale on the 23rd August working with Swale Council Enforcement Team. 6 x £300 fines were issued by SBC, 2 vehicles were seized for no tax and insurance, 4 Traffic Offence Reports for the offences of no licence and no insurance and 3 stop searches.



Op Assist Dover on the 24th August working with Dover Council Enforcement Team. A landowner and two males caught dumping waste on land at Staple who will now be required to attend an interview in addition to 3 FPN being issued totalling £900, 1 vehicle was seized and 4 Traffic Offence Reports completed for Licence and Insurance offences.





Op Assist Sevenoaks on the 24th August working with Sevenoaks Council Enforcement Team. Off note was that a silver Ford Transit failed to stop for CPT Swanley and RTF joined pursuit as lead car. The driver has continued to make off and reverse rammed RTF vehicle 5 times in total during the pursuit. Pursuit was then terminated, however Driver of offending vehicle collided into two members of the public and a hedgerow further down the road. Air Support then assisted with area search and Driver and passenger located and arrested in a field nearby. Offending vehicle had also been an Op Assist target for Sevenoaks Council in relation to fly tipping and had a large amount of green waste in the back.

## Rogue Trading

Following a report of a vehicle driving across fields in Bishopsbourne near Canterbury on Farmwatch, RTF followed up with this and located the vehicle and occupants working at a Farmhouse in the area. The property is having driveway work done. The vehicle is linked to Rogue Trading. Driver was spoken to and provided details of his company and the work there were doing at the location. He was issued a Section 59 warning for the driving offence. His Ifor William's trailer was checked and found to be all in order.

RTF Officers then spoke to a female at the address who confirmed that the Company are carrying out the work and that she had been liaising with them directly. Property Owner stated she was aware she is paying over the price, but she wanted the work completed as soon as possible.



## Other Business

A white Transit was stopped on Ham Lane, Lenham. There were two occupants. Driver was issued with a Traffic offence report for no insurance and having an expired driving licence and the vehicle was seized under Section 165 of the Road Traffic Act.



A white Citroen belingo van was sighted M20 Jct 4. The driver was not wearing seatbelt and moving erratically between lanes. Upon sighting the driver he appeared under the influence. Driver failed roadside drug wipe and arrested and taken to North Kent custody.

Local Officers in Thanet responded to a Domestic incident in Herne Bay whereby a male suspect has been named as responsible for assaulting the Victim, locking her in a room then stealing her mobile phone and car keys and left the area in her vehicle using aforementioned keys. RTF attended the Chatham area following an ANPR activation on the Stolen Vehicle and located the vehicle and subsequently the male at a nearby address where he was arrested and conveyed to Medway Custody.

Stop check Constitution Road, Gillingham on a Vauxhall Vivaro Panel Van. Driver initially gave false details. Due to circumstances presented the vehicle and its occupants were searched. A small amount of Cannabis located in possession of a passenger in the vehicle and he was issued a PND. Vehicle seized for no insurance and Driver reported for Driving Offences.



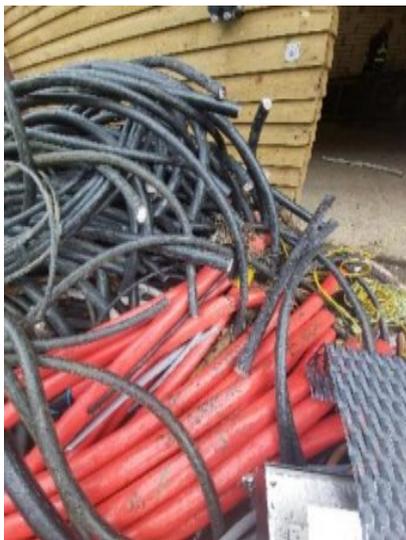
A white Toyota Hi Lux with an amber light on the roof was seen leaving a site near to Fordwich. Driver has previously been linked to theft of caravans. This vehicle was sighted again coming out of a small lane at Upstreet a short time later and it then pulled into a car park. The driver appeared to be trying to avoid RTF patrol. Driver claimed he was in car park to pick up a vehicle that had been left there the previous evening. Toyota Hilux was untaxed since 23 March 21 so was seized.

Ford Mondeo stopped following no insurance marker. Driver stated he had an insurance policy with Hastings Direct. Enquiries were made with insurance company who advised that the policy had been cancelled due to payment issues. Driver was issued a TOR for no insurance.



A black Vauxhall Astra with 3 occupants was seen parked Bluebell Hill but drove off after seeing a marked police vehicle. The Astra was stopped further along and a strong smell of cannabis detected coming from the occupants. The rear passenger immediately admitted possessing a small quantity of herbal cannabis and a further S.23 search was negative. The two other occupants and the vehicle were searched, and a small quantity of herbal cannabis was in a bag and the front seat passenger made admissions to owning this. Both males who admitted owning the cannabis were issued cannabis warnings.

RTF supported Medway Council Planning Team in executing a Warrant under the Town and County Planning Act at a scarp yard at Hempstead as their officers have had objections in the past. There were numerous persons on the site. Enquires were made with some of the items located on the site and the Council Planning Team were able to progress their investigation into the site and their breach of planning requirements.



RTF supported area patrols and attended a panic alarm activation at an address in Hollingbourne. On arrival a male was detained outside the address. This male was wanted for a domesticated sexual assault and for Controlling and Coercive behaviour and Harassment and he was arrested and conveyed to Custody.

A Ford Ranger was picked up after it activated the A249 Sheppey Crossing ANPR camera and was eventually stopped on Rowetts Way, Eastchurch. Driver was listing as an offender in relation to DA harassment/stalking of ex-partner. Driver arrested and conveyed to Maidstone custody.

A blue Ford Focus activated reported in Teynham with a marker relating to a theft in Whitstable and with No Insurance. The vehicle was located and stopped at Norton Services and the driver was identified. Due to Suspect being on Court for shoplifting with Essex Police and a large holdall being visible on the rear seats he and the vehicle were searched. 28 bottles of Champagne and other bottles of alcohol were located as well as 2 bottles of aftershave. Suspect was arrested for theft/going equipped and driving offences.



Once he was taken to custody a further search of the vehicle located a strong magnet for de-tagging items, screwdriver and small cutters were located. Suspect was also found wearing a woman's swimming costume in custody and appears to be part of his MO for concealing items. He was further arrested for going equipped. Suspect was conveyed to Custody at Canterbury Police Station. The Ford Focus was seized for No Insurance and recovered.



Direct call to RTF from DVSA Check site at Boughton Under Blean in relation to a suspected cloned lorry which was a National Target for them and Failed to Stop 2 weeks ago. Vehicle had been seen in Canterbury and Suspected to head towards DRC. Vehicle was displaying an index which was a No Trace on PNC. Vehicle stopped at Brenley Corner, Faversham by RTF officers and taken back to Check Site to be examined. True Index confirmed. Vehicle was showing as Notified Off Road since 2020 so was seized by Police for No Tax. Several offences committed by driver and company in relation to driving hours and report submitted to Traffic Commission by DVSA staff. DVSA thankful for RTF Support.



Stopped a Yellow Ford Transit Flatbed on Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone. Male Driver was only occupant. Vehicle was showing No Insurance. Driver stated he was using the vehicle to conduct his block paving business and had the vehicle on Rent from Owner. Checks were conducted with MIB which stated that this would make the vehicle uninsured. Story changed and driver then claimed to be working for registered owner. Checks were conducted again with MIB and following further research by the Insurance company this also made both parties uninsured. Driver was reported for No insurance and vehicle seized.



A Red Ford Transit was stopped on Maidstone Road Gillingham due to it being full of waste. Driver was identified and the vehicles was registered to a company at the same address as the driver. Driver was issued a Traffic Offence Report for no MOT Certificate and vehicle seized as untaxed since October 2020.



Stopped a Mercedes Sprinter seen driving near Ulcombe where illegal dumping of waste is taking place and linked to illegal waste transfer sites. It is likely driver is fly tipping waste at the site. Driver had no insurance and was dealt with for this offence.



A black Mini made off from an RTF patrol on Sutton Road, Maidstone. Area search located vehicle parked up in Owletts Close where the vehicle was seized for no insurance. There was no sign of the driver.



Rural Task Force along with officers from Specials Dog Unit stopped a Citroen Berlingo on Watling Street Strood following ANPR hit that male inside vehicle was shown wanted for Aggravated Burglary by Metropolitan Police. Male located in driver's seat and arrested for this offence. Further search of vehicle located small amount of cannabis so arrested for this offence too and conveyed to Medway Custody.

Liaised with Met Police who stated that arrested male was forensically linked to Aggravated Burglary where several occupants attended victims address with baseball bats and beat the victim up before stealing several electronic devices.

A Honda CRV stopped in Marden. Driver only had provisional licence and no Insurance; Traffic Offence Report issued for offences and vehicle seized.



RTF responded to an assistance call from the PCSO in Sandwich who was following known town drinker after a disturbance at the local Co-Op. There were 2 reports to Control Room from the public who were concerned for the welfare of the PCSO when the male attempted to attack her with a wine bottle. Male was located on Ramsgate Rd, Sandwich where he initially refused to put the bottle down and continued towards Ramsgate but on the arrival of the dog unit, he was challenged by the handler and eventually complied, arrested for Drunk and Disorderly and Assault on emergency worker.

A red Ford Transit was stopped on Chegworth Road, Maidstone. Driver was identified and claimed he had purchased the vehicle the evening before but there was evidence within the vehicle that made this very unlikely with business flyers and numerous belongings located in the vehicle. Vehicle was seized due to being untaxed.



Stopped a Grey BMW 118D on Swanstree Avenue Sittingbourne. Driver from East London. Checks with MIB show vehicle policy was cancelled by the insurance company on 02/02/2021 due to failing to supply documents. Vehicle was seized for No insurance and Driver reported.

Male seen talking on his mobile phone on Shorts Hill, Borstal whilst driving a JCB on the road. Reported for offence.

Nissan Navara Pick up stopped Maidstone Road, Maidstone, showing as no insurance and DVLA no longer keeper. Details of Driver taken and Reported for no insurance.

## Court Results

A rogue trader has been sent to prison after tricking a man into spending more than £100,000 on unnecessary repairs to his house.

The retired Teynham resident first encountered Abey Smith in April 2016 when he received a card offering home improvements through his letterbox, leading to him agreeing to pay £45 for his guttering to be cleaned.

But over the course of the next year he repeatedly lied to the man about further work he said needed to be carried out, charging ever increasing prices whilst carrying out substandard work such as painting roof tiles to give the impression they had been replaced.

Smith, 50, of Rookery Gardens, Orpington, was sentenced to four-and-a-half years' imprisonment when he appeared at Maidstone Crown Court on Tuesday 15 June 2021, having previously been found guilty of committing fraud by false representation.

RTF arrested the male for this offence following a search of his premises.



### **DRUG DRIVE:**

Lee LURKINS stopped driving a motor vehicle with a proportion of a specified drug above the specified limit attended Margate Court and was found guilty:

Result Disqualified driving 36 months

Plus £359.00 costs.

Kind regards,

PS Darren Walshaw

07870 252185 or [darren.walshaw@kent.police.uk](mailto:darren.walshaw@kent.police.uk)

Follow the team on Twitter @ **Kent Police Rural**

**Team Email :** [rural.task.force@kent.police.uk](mailto:rural.task.force@kent.police.uk)