

NEW ASH GREEN FOCUS GROUP

Notes of a meeting of the New Ash Green Focus Group held via Teams on Monday 12 January 2026 commencing at 2.00pm.

Present: Cllr S Fishenden – Chairman, Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council
Mr C Clark – Chapel Wood Residents Society
PC T Darling – Kent Police
PC C Harrison – Kent Police
Sgt K Savill – Kent Police
K Webb - Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit (CSU)
J West – KCC Community Warden

In Attendance: A de Jager – Parish Clerk,

1. **Apologies for Absence and Introductions**

S Brine – New Ash Green Village Association, P Kirtley- Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council,
E Smith - KMP, L Smith – Ayelands Residents Society

2. **Notes of Previous Meeting**

The notes of the meeting of 13 October 2025 were received and noted.

3. **Agency Updates**

3.1 Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit (CSU) – Kelly Webb advised that the 2026-27 Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan has been discussed with partner agencies, the draft will go through the usual cabinet process and be implemented from 01 April 2026. There were no changes to the seven priorities. Daily meetings continue with relevant agencies. A two year Health Plan has been produced and will be looking to hold more events in the New Ash Green area. Cllr Manston had asked why no Christmas events were held in New Ash Green, this was due to mix up around hall availability. SDC has been able to continue the funding for digital inclusion which is carried out as part of Jackie West's community hub groups. CSU will be attending the Police vs Young People football match.

3.2 Kent Police – Sgt Savill gave apologies for PC E Collins and J Wetherall's absence. There has been a task in place for New Ash Green for a few months and the number of antisocial behaviour reports have dropped significantly and the task has been closed down. With regard to calls received, Ash sits at about number 15 out of 27 wards. Shoplifting reports are down. There has been an increase in car crime with indications that it could be gang related with a lot of Ford cars stolen. The central licencing team have been out with Joe and visited a local pub with regard to events going onto the road and causing obstruction and hindrance to the public.

3.3 Kent Police – PC C Harrison confirmed that six young people have registered for the football match on 17 January.

3.4 Community Warden – J West advised that PC Joe attended the recent Community Hub session, which was positive to see. The Christmas party was very successful, with attendance reaching close to the hall's maximum capacity of 120. The Community Hub at New Ash Green continues to run successfully on Tuesday mornings. Digital support sessions are now funded and take place on the first and second Tuesday of each month from 10am to 12pm.

Partnership working continues with Sevenoaks District Council, with James attending monthly to support private sector housing matters. The HERO service also attends monthly for drop-in support. Compaid and Imago provide support for carers, with Carol from Imago attending once a month. Planned visits to the Hub are arranged from Kent Fire and Rescue and Kent and Medway Talking Therapies. These are not regular sessions but provide additional agency presence. Ongoing one-to-one support continues for residents facing challenges, with close working relationships maintained with the Community Cupboard and the GP surgery. A multi-agency meeting is scheduled for 9 February at the New Ash Green Village Association. This is not a public event and will bring together various agencies to share information about the services they offer to better support the community. No recent reports have been received regarding nuisance youth or bike activity. A large group of young people was present at the shopping centre last week, behaviour was respectful and no issues were reported.

4. **Local Issues and Concerns**

4.1 Youth Provision – Cllr S Fishenden advised that there will be a slight delay to the start date of the youth provision, looking at 01 April 2026, due to ongoing discussions between the Youth Centre Trustees and Young Lives Foundation. It was confirmed that £1,000 grant funding has been secured from SDC to purchase youth club equipment.

4.2 Shopping Centre– it was noted that there are currently no major issues to report in relation to the shopping centre or car parks, but that from time to time, there is evidence of nitrous oxide misuse, with cannisters being left in the car parks.

4.3. Flags – Some people want the flags removed, but others want them retained.

5. **Other Matters for Discussion**

Another Coffee with a Cop will be held on 17 February 2026

6. **Communications from Local Stakeholders**

Members were requested to publicise, Coffee with a Cop event.

7. **Dates of Next Meetings**

Dates for the next year were set as:

13 April 2026

13 July 2026

12 October 2026

The meeting closed at 2.17pm