

NEW ASH GREEN FOCUS GROUP

Notes of a meeting of the New Ash Green Focus Group held via Teams on Monday 13 April 2026 commencing at 2.00pm.

Present: Cllr S Fishenden – Chairman, Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council
S Brine – New Ash Green Village Association
Mr C Clark – Chapel Wood Residents Society
PC E Collins – Kent Police
PC T Darling – Kent Police
Sgt J Edwards – Kent Police
K Webb - Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit (CSU)
J West – KCC Community Warden
PC J Weatherall – Kent Police

In Attendance: A de Jager – Parish Clerk,

1. Apologies for Absence and Introductions

D Patrick – New Ash Green Village Association, P Kirtley - Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council, E Smith - KMP, L Smith – Ayelands Residents Society, PC C Harrison – Kent Police

2. Notes of Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting of 12 January 2026 were received and noted.

3. Agency Updates

3.1 Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit (CSU) – Kelly Webb advised that Sgt Jamie Edwards has taken over from Sgt Kevin Savill who has retired. Last year funding was applied for the three town centres and New Ash Green from the Home Office for Safer Towns, but this was unsuccessful. The action plan from this application last year has been forwarded to Sgt Edwards. Health walks are well attended in both New Ash Green and Hartley. The new Community Safety Action Plan started on 01 April 2026, with seven priorities:

- Anti Social Behaviour,
- Environmental and Heritage Crime,
- Substance misuse including County Lines,
- Inquisitive Crime – burglary and vehicle crime.
- Business Crime
- Domestic Abuse – violence against women and girls,
- Stalking and harassment.

Supporting the Parish Council/Police event in New Ash Green on 06 June 2026. Voluntary and Community Awards will be held on 16 June. Mike Brown was nominated for an award, but subsequently passed away. A Certificate of Recognition will be read out for him on the night of the event and they hope that Mike's family will be able to attend.

SDC Family Fun Days will run again in the Summer with one being held on 18 August 2026 on The Minnis.

3.2 Kent Police – PC E Collins reported that there has been a general reduction in reports from New Ash Green. There has been some anti-social behaviour over the half term period, with young people on the roof next to the Co-op. Visits to schools will be arranged around the misuse of catapults. PC J Weatherall

reported that the Coffee with a Cop events are well received and another date will be set. Mr C Clark asked if the use of nitrous oxide and the associated littering of the cannisters are being monitored and how members of the public can dispose of the cannisters. The increased police presence is making a difference. Sharon Brine will ask the Greenlands Team to keep a log and update the Village Association. If the VA could include Kelly Webb with this information, so that she can contact Kenward Trust regarding to come out and do some work around the use and littering of nitrous oxide. Cannisters that have been collected by residents can be left at any waste bins. Sevenoaks District Council will collect cannisters from the Greenlands Depot. Kelly Webb will send out information regarding the disposal of cannisters.

- 3.3 Child Policing Team – will be attending the event in June and attending all the SDC Family Fun Days. School visits for Year 6's and transition tools will be arranged.
- 3.4 Community Warden – J West advised that welfare is a large part of her job. She has been busy in the village with the Hubs and sign posting to other agencies where necessary. Carol from Image has been moved to a new area and will be missed. Children from Milestone Academy have been attending the hub and getting involved in activities. Jackie has attended the Coffee with a Cop. School visits will be arranged with both New Ash Green Primary and Milestone Academy. Collections continue from the Community Cupboard for residents who cannot attend West Kingsdown.
On 9 February Jackie arranged a Multi-use Agencies meeting where seventeen professionals meet and discuss concerns for the community. Thanks to the VA for free use of the space. A concert was held recently where residents of two care homes attended along with a choir from the Simply Singing group and a good audience. Jackie has been liaising with Sharon Brine regarding the opportunity to provide a Reflective Garden Project where a plot can be shared in the community – perhaps for people with dementia and use of the Lodge in the alloments, where people can sit. There is an area here that could be developed into a garden. There is a volunteer who has indicated that he would like to give back to the community and he has gardening experience.

4. Local Issues and Concerns

- 4.1 Youth Provision – Cllr S Fishenden advised that the start date of the youth provision, will be in the first week of May with two groups, 8-12 year olds and 13-18 year olds. SDC have given us a £1,000 grant to purchase equipment. All Attendees will be referred or self-referred to the clubs.
- 4.2 Mr C Clark requested that Kelly pass on to the Communications Team that the delivery of InShape magazine's delivery in New Ash Green is sporadic.
- 4.3 Kelly Webb advised that SDC are looking to become an Age Friendly District. SDC feel that they have enough evidence to be accredited.
- 4.4 Jackie West is facilitating a Fish 'n Chip Friday to be held once a month at Hartley Village Hall with Ash Green Fish 'n Chip shop have offered to deliver. There is no age restriction and no area restriction as this is not being funded by a specific council.

5. Other Matters for Discussion

Sgt J Edwards introduced himself and knows the area well. He was pleased to see ASB has dropped from January 2026 to now. If this is not accurate, residents need to ensure that all ASB is reported to the Police. Theft from motor vehicles has increased

all over Kent. A stop and search on a vehicle in Punch Croft found 5 youths with nitrous oxide cannisters. New Ash Green is susceptible to shed and garage break ins.

6. **Communications from Local Stakeholders**

The community safety event on 6 June 2026 will be publicised soon.

7. **Dates of Next Meetings**

Dates for the next year were set as:

13 July 2026

12 October 2026

The meeting closed at 2.35pm