

Aylesham Parish Council Newsletter

September 2026

Accessible edition. This version presents the newsletter in a single reading order. Dates and deadlines are reproduced as published in the September 2026 edition.

If you require this newsletter in an alternative format please contact the Parish Council Office.

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Aylesham War Memorial remembering our past and protecting our heritage

Aylesham Parish Council was extremely saddened recently to discover that the War Memorial in Market Square had been vandalised, with markings across all sides of the stonework. Given the nature of the stone, Council Officers did not attempt to clean the markings themselves, as using an inappropriate product or method could have caused permanent damage. Neil Scrivener, our local professional stonemason who regularly undertakes the cleaning and maintenance of the War Memorial, attended at very short notice to inspect the damage. From his assessment, the staining appeared most likely to have been caused by conkers being rubbed into the stonework. Thankfully, Neil and his team were able to professionally remove the staining that same afternoon and restore the War Memorial. We are extremely grateful to them for responding so quickly and ensuring that this important memorial was treated appropriately.

Enquiries continue

The incident has been reported to Kent Police and the Council also contacted Dover District Council regarding CCTV coverage within Market Square. Following a review of CCTV footage, we have been able to narrow the incident down to between 5.00am and 6.00am on Sunday 30 August. While the footage has not identified who was responsible, it has provided a much more specific timeframe for our enquiries. We are therefore asking residents and businesses in and around Market Square to check any CCTV, doorbell camera or dashcam footage they may have from this period. We would also like to hear from anyone who was in or passing through Market Square between 5.00am and 6.00am and may have seen anything which could assist. Any relevant information received will be passed to Kent Police. This is the first time the War Memorial has been vandalised since it was dedicated in 2018. The Council is taking what has happened extremely seriously and will continue its enquiries to establish who was responsible.

The story behind the War Memorial

The War Memorial we see in Market Square today was the culmination of several years of planning and work involving Aylesham Parish Council, councillors, residents, partner organisations and local businesses. Former Parish Council Chair Jo Cartledge and the late Barbara Morgan were closely involved in progressing the War Memorial project, working alongside other councillors and members of the community. In September 2017, Aylesham Parish Council formally agreed to appoint Cantuaria Stonemasons of Adisham to supply and install the War Memorial. The wording engraved on the memorial also has a strong local connection. Residents were invited to submit wording for its base, with the inscription ultimately chosen having been written by Jo Cartledge, Barbara Morgan and Josephine Cousens.

There is also a particularly fitting connection with the recent restoration. Neil Scrivener undertook the original engraving of the War Memorial when it was created in 2018 and, almost eight years later, returned at short notice to restore it following this incident. The stonework was created by Cantuaria Stonemasons of Adisham, with Neil undertaking the engraving.

Creating a place of remembrance

The War Memorial forms part of a wider area of remembrance and local heritage within Market Square. The Memorial Garden project cost approximately £54,000, with Barratt Homes, Persimmon Homes, Gallagher and Dover District Council each contributing £8,000, and Aylesham Parish Council funding the remaining amount. The project also included memorial seating and the Pit Head Memorial, ensuring that Aylesham's proud mining heritage was represented alongside remembrance of those who served and lost their lives through conflict. The original idea for the Pit Head Memorial came from former Parish Council Vice-Chair Mark Townsend. Local business Sharpak developed the concept into a three-dimensional model, with All Things Metal of Denton fabricating the finished memorial. The Pit Head Memorial was installed on 3 November 2018. The following day, 4 November 2018, the new War Memorial was formally dedicated, and the Pit Head Memorial was also blessed, ahead of the centenary of the Armistice.

More than one memorial

The War Memorial does not stand in isolation. Market Square contains a number of important features commemorating Aylesham's history, including the Pit Head Memorial, the Remembrance bench and the miners' memorial bench. Elsewhere within Market Square also stands an original wheel from Snowdown Colliery, providing another permanent connection with the industry that played such an important role in the development of Aylesham. Together, these features represent different but closely connected parts of our village's story. The War Memorial provides a place to remember those who served and those who lost their lives through conflict, while the Pit Head Memorial, miners' bench and Snowdown Colliery wheel recognise the miners and families whose lives helped shape this community. Together, they make Market Square an important place of remembrance, reflection and local heritage.

Looking after the War Memorial

Following the recent professional cleaning, Neil has advised that the War Memorial will not require its usual clean ahead of Remembrance Day this

year. He has also recommended that the lettering is repainted next year due to normal wear and tear. This is entirely unrelated to the recent vandalism and will be brought forward to the Recreational & Facilities Committee for consideration from April 2027, as part of the Council's ongoing maintenance and care of the memorial.

Please respect our memorials and heritage

What happened to the War Memorial is extremely disappointing, particularly when we consider the history behind its creation and the work undertaken over a number of years by councillors, residents, organisations, businesses and local craftspeople to establish this important place of remembrance. The War Memorial, Pit Head Memorial, memorial benches and Snowdown Colliery wheel are all important parts of Aylesham's heritage. They represent people, families, sacrifice, community and the mining history which is fundamental to Aylesham's identity. They belong to the whole community and deliberate damage to any of these important memorials or heritage features is unacceptable. Aylesham Parish Council will continue to care for and protect these important community assets so that they remain places of remembrance and pride for generations to come.

If you have any information, CCTV, doorbell camera or dashcam footage which may assist our enquiries into the incident at the War Memorial between 5.00am and 6.00am on Sunday 30 August, please contact Aylesham Parish Council.

Aylesham Aspiration Fund

Could £150 help launch your future?

Aylesham Parish Council are providing support for young people taking their first step into higher education, an apprenticeship or vocational training.

Grants of up to £150.

Who can apply

- Aylesham Parish residents aged 18–21

- You have lived in the parish for at least 12 months
- You are starting eligible post-18 education or training

What could it help pay for

- Books and study materials
- Workwear, PPE and professional clothing
- Tools and essential equipment

It may also help with interview or open-day travel, registration fees and essential items for an accommodation move.

Success story

Kaeden received the full £150 to support his Construction Management HNC and apprenticeship at MidKent College. His grant will help with books, study materials, protective boots, workwear and waterproof hi-vis clothing.

Could we help you take your next step?

Next application deadline: 1 October 2026.

Aspiration Fund guidance and application form

Need guidance? Contact the Deputy Officer. Telephone: 07830 353872.

Email the Deputy Officer

Email address: deputyofficer@ayleshamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Spinney Wood proposed woodland management works

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership (WCCP), which manages Spinney Wood on behalf of Aylesham Parish Council, has submitted an application to Dover District Council (DDC) for consent to coppice/recoppice approximately 40 trees of mixed species in two areas of Spinney Wood. The proposed works form part of a six-year woodland management plan. WCCP has advised that the works are proposed for the winter management period between October 2026 and February 2027. The trees included are subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 3 of 1976. Application reference 26/00726.

Why is an application required

The trees included in the application are protected by a TPO. This means that consent must be obtained from DDC before the proposed coppicing works can be carried out. The application is for consent to carry out the proposed works. The Tree Preservation Order itself remains in place.

Why are trees being coppiced

The application proposes to coppice approximately 40 trees across two small areas of Spinney Wood, as identified on the accompanying plan. The work will focus primarily on:

- Sweet Chestnut
- Hazel
- Hornbeam

Many of these trees have previously been coppiced as part of the woodland's historic management.



Plan description: Two small areas of Spinney Wood are marked for coppicing in 2026, at the northern and southern ends of the wood beside the B2046 Adisham Road. See application 26/00726 for the detailed plan.

What is coppicing

Coppicing is a traditional woodland management technique that has been used in Britain for centuries. It involves cutting selected trees close to

ground level, allowing them to regenerate naturally by producing new shoots from the existing stump. The trees are not being permanently removed. They will regrow from their established root systems, often becoming healthier and living significantly longer than unmanaged trees. For example, coppiced hazel can continue regenerating for hundreds of years, compared with a typical lifespan of around 70 years if left unmanaged.

Why is coppicing beneficial

Regular coppicing helps maintain a healthy and diverse woodland by:

- encouraging vigorous new tree growth;
- allowing more sunlight to reach the woodland floor, encouraging woodland flowers and plants;
- increasing biodiversity;
- creating valuable habitats for birds, insects and mammals;
- providing ideal conditions for species associated with coppiced woodland, including the nightingale; and
- improving the long-term resilience and health of the woodland.

What will happen to the cut material

The cut branches and timber will remain within the woodland where appropriate. They will be used to create dead hedges and log piles, providing additional habitat for birds, insects, amphibians and small mammals.

Will replacement trees be planted

No. Replacement planting is not required because the coppiced trees will regenerate naturally from their existing stumps and root systems. Although the managed areas may initially appear more open, new growth will regenerate over the coming seasons.

Further enquiries

Enquiries about the proposed works or the management of Spinney Wood should be directed to WCCP:

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership | Telephone: 01304 241806 | Email: wccp@dover.gov.uk Comments relating specifically to application 26/00726 should be submitted directly to Dover District Council. The application can be viewed through DDC Planning Public Access by searching for reference 26/00726. Please check the application page for the current consultation deadline. To comment on the application by email: developmentmanagement@dover.gov.uk

Email White Cliffs Countryside Partnership

Email Dover District Council about the application

Arboricultural survey and recommended works

An arboricultural condition survey of Spinney Wood was undertaken by Invicta Arboriculture on 2 September 2026. This forms part of Aylesham Parish Council's insurance requirement for professional tree surveys to be completed every 18 months. The survey assessed trees that may pose an unacceptable risk to users of the woodland, neighbouring properties, highways and public rights of way. It identified 22 trees with noteworthy features or defects, or whose structural or physiological condition may be compromised. Of these:

- 15 trees require works within three months, including the removal of dead or predominantly dead trees situated near the B2046 Adisham Road, Spinney Lane and public footpaths
- three trees require works within six months
- three trees require continued annual inspection only
- and one tree is suitable for retention, with no works recommended.

Although the report assigns different priority timescales, the Council's insurer requires all recommended works to be completed within three months of the survey date. The works must therefore be completed by 2 December 2026.

Some of the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Where required, an application will be submitted to Dover District Council before any pruning or felling takes place.

Full Council considered the survey findings at its September meeting and approved the recommended works, subject to quotations being obtained. Council also approved the submission of the necessary Tree Preservation Order application to Dover District Council. These safety works are separate from, but complementary to, the planned coppicing and together form part of the Council's ongoing management of Spinney Wood. The full Arboricultural Condition Report is available to view on the Council's website.

Aylesham Parish Council website

Route 92 have your say

Dover District Council has confirmed that the Route 92 bus service will cease operating, with the final day of service being Saturday 10 October 2026. Residents are encouraged to complete the community survey regarding Route 92 so that the impact of the withdrawal can be better understood. The Council is hopeful that it can work closely with the other affected local Parish Councils and District Councillors to consider the impact of the withdrawal, gather further information and explore whether any alternative provision or options may be available.

Bus 92 community use and impact survey

This survey is being shared by local parish councils to gather evidence about the impact of the suspension of Route 92. Your responses will help us present accurate information to Stagecoach, KCC and Dover District Council.

Complete this survey by 1 October 2026. All questions are required. For questions with choices, record your selected answers after the list.

1 Village or area where the passenger lives:

Answer:

2 Who are you answering for?

Select one

- Myself
- Another adult in my household
- A child or young person
- Someone I care for

Answer:

3 How often is the 92 bus normally used?

Select one

- 5 or more days a week
- 3–4 days a week
- 1–2 days a week
- A few times a month
- Less often
- Not currently used, but would be if the timetable met my needs

Answer:

4 When is the service usually needed?

Select all that apply

- Weekdays before 9am
- Weekdays 9am–3pm
- Weekdays 3pm–6pm
- Evenings
- Saturdays
- Sundays

Answer:

5 What is the 92 bus used for?

Select all that apply

- School or college
- Work
- Medical, hospital or healthcare appointments
- Shopping
- Connecting with another bus or train

- Visiting or caring for family or friends
- Social, leisure or community activities
- Accessing public or support services
- Other: [please specify]

Answer:

6 Usual journey – please state where your journey starts and finishes:

Answer:

7 Who particularly depends on this journey?

Select one

- A child or student
- An older person
- A disabled person or someone with limited mobility
- Someone without access to a car
- A carer
- None of these / prefer not to say

Answer:

8 When the 92 closes, what effect will this have?

Select all that apply

- No practical public-transport alternative
- Journey becomes significantly longer or more difficult
- Difficulty reaching school or college
- Difficulty reaching work
- Difficulty accessing healthcare
- Reliance on family or friends for lifts
- Need to use taxis
- Reduced independence or greater isolation
- Little or no effect
- Other: [please specify]

Answer:

9 What alternatives will be available?

Select one

- Another bus route
- Train
- Walk or cycle
- Lift from family or friends
- Taxi
- Private car
- Community transport
- No realistic alternative
- Not sure

Answer:

10 Would a replacement service be used?

Select one

- Yes, regularly
- Yes, occasionally
- Only if the timetable or connections improved
- No
- Not sure

Answer:

11 What would a replacement service most need to provide?

Please select up to 3 options

- Suitable school/college times
- Suitable work times
- Medical and hospital connections
- Connections to other buses or trains
- Evening service
- Weekend service
- Affordable fares
- Accessible vehicles and stops
- A reliable, fixed timetable

Answer:

12 Please explain briefly how the closure would affect you or your household.

Answer:

Thank you for sharing your experience.

Please return your completed form to Aylesham House, Dorman Avenue South, CT3 3AD.

Or via email to cllr-maria.mamjan@doover.gov.uk.

Email your completed Route 92 survey

Complete the Route 92 survey online

Survey completion deadline: 1 October 2026.