



December 2014
Issue No. 68



Family Firework Spectacular

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New Ash Green fireworks display was by far the biggest the village has ever seen.

With a significant investment in this year's fireworks it made for a spectacular event. This year we had in excess of 3,500 people attend from the village and surrounding area.

John Gorton was the loveable compère for the evening and the show kicked off on time. What followed can only be described as truly magnificent.

Over the last few years the fireworks display has progressively improved and we are already planning next year's event in the hope that it will be even bigger and more spectacular.



Although NAG Social has only a small contingent, we were so grateful to all of the volunteers who assisted in marshalling this year's event. It is through people's generosity of time that we

are able to do these events. It is so amazing to see so many people gathered together for the explosive event without a hint of trouble.

Social Committee

Neighbourly Concern

It's that time of year when many who live alone are at their most vulnerable, due to many factors, but largely because of weather conditions and the cold. There is a thin line between being a nosey neighbour and being a concerned neighbour, but when you have elderly people living close to you, it's better to be overly concerned and make sure that everything is OK than it is to realise that an elderly neighbour may have been ill or injured in

their home and unable to contact anyone.

Many elderly people are very proud and don't like to ask anyone for help, so sometimes it's good to impose yourself on them slightly, pop round every now and again, get to know their habits, and allow them to start to trust you. This way, they will know that if they do need anything they can always ask you for help instead of trying to carry on when they are struggling and in need of assistance.



**Fire Station
Open Day—a
huge success!**

*For local
station news and
some winter tips,
please see page 5.*



**THE VILLAGE
ASSOCIATION
WOULD LIKE TO
TAKE THE
OPPORTUNITY TO
WISH ALL
RESIDENTS AND
BUSINESSES IN
THE VILLAGE—A
VERY HAPPY
CHRISTMAS AND
BEST WISHES FOR
THE NEW YEAR.**

Chairman's and Treasurer's Report—2014



The management structure of the VA has served the village well for over four decades, but relies upon people to make it work!

Alan W L Pett, Chairman



I take the unusual step of writing a combined Chairman's and Treasurer's report, as I have been fulfilling both roles since the last AGM. Sadly, this is a reflection on the lack of people putting themselves forward for service to the community of New Ash Green. Instead of a Council of Management with a full complement of nine, there have only been six members for the last year.

The management structure of the Village Association (VA) has served the village well for over four decades, but relies upon people to make it work! The VA changed its constitution some years ago to allow virtually everyone to have the opportunity to participate in the management of the village, to no avail. The village was founded on the basis of local democracy and accountability. Residents have the opportunity to shape their environment to suit local wishes, and not controlled by central government and local authorities, nor subject to financial *diktat* from outside.

Buying a property in New Ash Green is effectively buying a share in a large country estate, the setting for your house. Your VA contribution (and Resident Society (RS) subscription) support the maintenance or improvement of the village. Your contributions are used solely for service delivery; no member of the VA receives any remuneration.

At a time when family incomes are failing to keep up with generally increasing costs, members of Council of Management (COM) are acutely aware that any increase in contributions is

unwelcome. For a number of years, the contribution rate was frozen, with a modest increase last year. As for each household, the VA is faced with increased costs for energy, particularly electricity (street lighting and our premises) and fuel costs (greenland machinery and premises heating), which is unavoidable. COM has the invidious task of balancing residents' justifiable expectation of the village being maintained to the highest standards, yet maintaining contributions at the lowest level. A very modest increase is proposed for 2015 (3.03%). For the future, there will be further exploration of minimising the income requirement, by deferring what we can whilst seeking to maintain high standards. There is a "trade off", deferring repaints, for example, can lead to our infrastructure becoming a bit shabbier, and with the possibility of increased decay, through reduced protection.

The VA provides a number of facilities for active recreation and leisure, such as children's play areas and the sportsfield. The VA owns the sports pavilion, and supports the cost of running the changing facilities and sportsfield maintenance, whilst the social side of the building is managed by its subsidiary, New Ash Green Sports Pavilion Ltd (NAGSPL), which is charged with operating the social side without burden upon residents. It is *your* building and I would encourage residents to use it to fullest advantage.

The Shopping Centre is not in the control of the VA, and continues to blight the village, though there have been limited improvements

recently. The VA and local District Councillors, via Sevenoaks District Council, are doing everything possible to achieve a worthwhile regeneration of the Shopping Centre by pressuring the landlords. We seek an outcome which will benefit the village and its residents, enhancing amenity and adding to the value of our homes. It is proving to be a long battle!

I conclude by saying that I believe the VA continues to be in a sound financial position. Following transfer of the responsibility for sewer maintenance to Thames Water, reserves have been run down a little as it is not necessary to provide for sewer maintenance and repair. Reserves are maintained, however, to cushion the impact of large items of expenditure, such as tractor purchase.

New Ash Green remains a great place to live!!



Alan W L Pett Chairman

**NEW VA
WEBSITE
COMING SOON**

Council of Management

- Alan Pett** (Consultant Member)Chairman
- Brian Hardcastle** (Over Minnis)Amenity Committee
- Colin Garratt** (Consultant Member).....Greenland Committee
- Terry Vivian** (Consultant Member).....Hardland Committee
- Keith Wale** (Consultant Member).....Village Hall Committee
- Cameron Clark** (Chapel Wood).....Communications

Three vacancies exist



Statutory Off-Road Notifications (SORNs)

All common land in New Ash Green is known as amenity land and is owned by the Village Association (VA). Areas within neighbourhoods (such as car parking bays/driveways etc.) are also amenity areas and are owned by the VA but are the responsibility of the relevant Residents Society with the exception of Redhill Wood and The Mead (most of which have private driveways/areas).

As stated in our bylaw:-

No person shall cause or permit any motor vehicle owned or kept by him or in his charge to enter or remain on any part of the amenity land unless it complies in all respects with all legislation for the time being in force relating to the use of motor vehicles on the public highway, including in particular (but not

exclusively) the requirements that (i) there is in force in relation to the vehicle a policy of insurance satisfying the requirements of Section 143 of the Road Traffic Act 1988; (ii) the vehicle complies with all regulations made pursuant to section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 relating to the construction and use of vehicles and equipment; (iii) there is fixed to and exhibited on the vehicle a current vehicle excise licence as prescribed by section 1 of the Vehicles (Excise) Act 1971.

- **The VA cannot consent to the keeping of a vehicle with a SORN on amenity land.**
- **SORNs should not be applied to your vehicle unless you are keeping it in a private garage at all time (with the exception**

of Redhill Wood or The Mead).

- **Vehicles should comply with all current legislation for use on the road, so they should be taxed, insured and have an MOT (as necessary).**

The VA/Residents Society has the right to have a vehicle removed from amenity land if it does not comply with the above.

The Government has now introduced a new website whereby you can check whether vehicles are taxed and have a current MOT this can be found at www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax, there is also an online link to report vehicles that are untaxed. Please note that since 1st October 2014 there is no longer a requirement to display a tax disc on a vehicle.



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....The VA/RS has the right to have a vehicle removed from amenity land....

The New Ash Green Arts Community meets on the first Sunday of every month (except Easter Sunday) in the VA Meeting Room, Centre Road, 2-4 pm. £3 per person.

SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY 2015

A talk on 'The Green Man' in art and architecture by Martin Trowbridge

For more information, details of the 2015 programme, or to be added to the mailing list for newsletters

email: nagartscomm@gmail.com or telephone [01474 874273](tel:01474874273)



Your Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation meetings were held in the summer to ask people for their views on the planning policies that have been produced for our parish Neighbourhood Plan. Here is a summary of what you said. [If you want to comment, send your views to the Village Association office.](#)

In New Ash Green Shopping Centre key shops must be retained, including the pharmacy, bank, post office newsagent and supermarket; adequate car parking for all uses is essential. New housing in the Centre will only be allowed as a part of a larger project and people want smaller houses or apartments, tied into the New Ash Green management structure. The Plan will support retaining employment sites and adding more, so people can work near their homes. If a suitable care home site becomes available this will be supported.

There is strong support for protecting school sports fields, and other sports

facilities, from development for any other use and a new parish burial ground will be supported, on a suitable site.

The Village Association's enforcement of design guidelines is supported although some felt that standards have fallen and there needs to be more interaction with residents for the good of New Ash Green. Some people would support a conservation area for the Eric Lyons designed parts of New Ash Green, but the majority view is that the Village Association's controls are sufficient. Open space must be protected to preserve the character of New Ash Green but some see a need to extend residential car parking spaces whilst preserving the integrity of the landscaping. The Plan needs to set out how this balance can be maintained.

Some other issues were raised by residents which would not be accepted as part of a Neighbourhood Plan but they will provide evidence

to back up lobbying for improvements. They include 20mph speed limits in residential areas, road improvements, footpath maintenance, telephone and broadband, street lighting and cheaper, reliable and more frequent bus services to more places.

Do you run a business in the parish?

We want to hear your views to help prepare the Plan. We have designed a short survey for you. We want the opinions of all business people, in any kind of business, but especially want people who run a business from home – including, for example, child-minding or catalogue sales. To respond, go to the websites for New Ash Green Village Association or Ashcum-Ridley Parish Council and follow the links or go direct to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KRNC3LS>.

Your response will be confidential.



Do you run a business in the parish?

We want to hear your views, please fill in our short survey to help prepare the Plan.

Christmas Tree Festival

What a wonderful weekend we had last December with a church full of Christmas trees, each one so thoughtfully and individually decorated – in fact, some of them weren't trees at all. The previous year's winner, The Woodlands Group, surpassed themselves with a creation which would grace any garden, but even so, they did not retain the title, which went to The Granary for the intricately decorated tree-shaped loaf.

Well done to the children who made such lovely decorations. There was a lot

of hard work put into them.

Winning is a very small part of the idea behind the festival which certainly fulfilled our ambition to make the church look stunningly beautiful. However, it was very amusing watching adults and children alike, going back and fore between the trees, trying to choose their favourites; all in the heady aroma of Bryan's mulled wine!

It was good to see a local business win, how nice it would be if more of our businesses were involved.

How about it for this year?

It is also a good event at which to advertise our local organisations as the visitors certainly take an interest in the information which each group supplies.

If you would like to be involved, or just want more information, please contact me on **01474 872333** or email:-

jeanbentley51@gmail.com

Photographs of the 2013 Festival are on the website:- www.ash-church.org.uk

Jean Bentley and the Friends of Ash Church



Thumbs Up for Fire Station Open Day

Ash-cum-Ridley's brand new fire station got the thumbs up from local youngsters earlier this year who took part in free summer holiday fitness sessions. The events, organised by Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS), Kent Police and the Clocktower Gym, enabled about 20 young people to spend one day a week through the holidays learning what life as a firefighter is like at Ash-cum-Ridley Fire Station and taking part in gym circuits, boxing and personal safety training at the Clocktower Gym.

Ash-cum-Ridley Watch Manager, Kevin Porter said: "As Kent's newest fire station, it was a great opportunity for us to build links with local teenagers and provide them with a positive outlet during the long school summer holidays.

"It was the first time that the scheme has run and judging by the feedback from the youngsters, it was a great success. I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone involved for volunteering their own time to make it work."

14-year-old Oscar Watts said: "It was great fun, espe-

cially the obstacle course." Chris Spurgeon added: "I'd do it again if I could, I really enjoyed it."

Photo shows left to right: KFRS Community Safety Officer, Mark Stewart; PCSO Chris Mallett, Chris Spurgeon, Oscar Watts, Charlie and Ollie Hockley, Jack Nicklin, firefighter Clive Gaywood, Daniel Way, KFRS Community Safety Officer, Mike Piper, Carter Norman, KFRS Partnership Manager, Pirthipal Kang, Joseph Porter, KFRS volunteer, Liam Kent, Cameron Jones, firefighters: Marc Godfrey and Dan Franek. Kneeling front: Ash-cum-Ridley Watch Manager Kevin Porter.

Three top tips to keep your loved ones safe this winter

With winter well and truly here, Kent firefighters are asking local people to take extra care and to think about how they can help elderly relatives and neighbours. Just three breaths of fire smoke can be fatal and babies and older people are most at risk.

If you know someone who is using an old portable heater please check that it is stable

and safe. Our free home safety check can make all the difference to someone staying safe and secure in their own home. Call us on 0800 923 7000.

Enjoy your open fire or log burner safely by making sure you follow a few simple safety tips. Get your chimney swept at least once a year, use a fire guard and inspect your chimney breast, particularly in the roof space as you'd be surprised at how many chimney fires we attend.

Finally if you or your children are out for a walk please be aware of the real dangers around rivers and ponds. We also often have to rescue walkers who have got stuck in mud while out walking - often when they have gone to rescue pets. Ground around water may look safe, but you can quickly become stuck in mud and find yourself in a very dangerous position. So please stay on paths and solid ground and always carry a phone so you can call for help.

More safety advice on www.kent.fire-uk.org



Ash-cum-Ridley Fire Station Opening Day proved to be a huge success!

Let's hope this can be an annual event.



Christmas Magic at NAG



If you're looking for a cool way to spend some time before Christmas, then make your way to New Ash Green for **FREE** Festive fun including ice skating in the village centre from 10am to 3pm on Saturday 13 December for everyone to enjoy.

The artificial ice rink can accommodate up to 30 skaters at any one time so bring family and friends and embrace the festive spirit, and the ice rink will be open until 6pm! Free skate hire provided, no need to book but come early as the rink is expected to be a very popular at peak times.

In addition to the ice rink, there will also be a range of free Festive family fun activities including Santa's Grotto, bouncy Christmas Castle, magical Snow Globe

and a range of Christmassy market stalls throughout the village centre.

Come and join us for a memorable experience for both children and adults alike!!!

This event has been organised by Sevenoaks District Council, as part of the Sport England funded Community Sport project, in partnership with the New Ash Green Town Team, Richmond Lodge Management and New Ash Green Village Association.

Cllr Roddy Hogarth, the Council's Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic and Community Development says, "The Town Team of local traders has been working hard with the District council and land-owners to bring more people

into the village centre. The Festive fun is the icing on the cake to the new centre signage, Christmas lights and tree. I hope everyone will come along to support this great event".

Please note that car parking on the North Square Car Park will be limited on the day. All children must be supervised at all times by parents or carers. For further information please contact Sevenoaks District Council on 01732 227000 or email:-

communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk



Free Festive Fun

Be sure to visit the Village Centre on Saturday 13th December 10-3pm

Lots to do for all the family!

Bowling Success at Potters

.....*It's how we roll!*

NAG Indoor 'Short Mat' Bowls was founded in 1993 and now boasts over 35 members. The Club is currently run by a Committee of eleven. We are always looking to expand our club and new *bowlers* are always welcome!

Indoor Bowls is an all year round sport. It is a very sociable activity and many of our members are quite happy to attend for just a quiet roll-up and get-together. However, for the more competitive members the Club regularly plays against other groups locally and this can be an ideal way to improve skills and meet other members who share

enthusiasm for the game. NAG Indoor Bowls club recently revisited Potters Leisure Resort getting the quarter finals trophy for the second time - another resounding success!

If you are looking for a new challenge, light exercise and are up for making new friends, why not come along, join and enjoy this friendly sport.

Indoor Bowls play Tuesday lunchtimes 1pm - 4pm and Thursday evenings 7pm - 10pm in the Village Hall, Centre Road, NAG.

Please feel free to come along and check us out on any of the above days, either just to take a look or to have a go! You will be more than welcome. Please ensure that you wear **flat** shoes, Bowls woods are supplied. Tuition will be provided and the first four visits are free.

We hope to see you soon!



Bowling in Action!



Members of the Indoor Bowls Club

Wassail with the Woodlands Group

New Ash Green Woodlands Group invites you to their 10th annual Wassail at 4.00 pm on January 3rd 2015 at New Ash Green Village Hall (DA3 8HH). Bring torches or lanterns for the short flaming torch-lit procession to the village orchard, and something to make noise with!

The ancient Wassail custom involved local farm-workers visiting their orchards after dark each January for a mid-winter party. The best tree had cider poured over its roots and pieces of toast soaked in cider placed in the branches and impaled on twigs to attract beneficial wildlife. Wassail songs were sung to encourage a good crop and the tree would be toasted loudly and merrily.

Horns would be blown to awaken the tree from its winter slumber.

The volunteers of New Ash Green Woodlands Group have worked hard since 2004 to regenerate the orchard, which sits in the centre of the village. So our Wassail is partly about toasting the good health of the trees and partly to celebrate the revival of our brilliant 100 year-old community orchard. Last year more than 100 people joined us. The whole event is a lot

of fun and the flaming torches help create a fantastic atmosphere. Why not come and help us keep this new and ancient custom very much alive?

For more information, please visit

www.nagwoodlands.btck.co.uk



NAG Cinema Needs New Core Group

New Ash Green Film Society has reluctantly decided to close down unless younger volunteers can be found to create a new core group.

The Society which was originally founded in 1969 ran till 1985 and was re-started about five years ago running till July 2014.

In that time we have screened a very wide diversity of film genres from the early days of film, to films currently on general release at main cinema chains.

The only other cinema offering such a wide range is British Film Institute on the South Bank in London.

As well as showing films, the Society has functioned as a social meeting space for old friends to keep in contact and for new friendships to be formed and the social aspect

of the Society was always a principal reason for its existence.

The present core group has very much enjoyed the film evenings and the contact with other local residents, but the time has come to hand over to a much younger membership if fresh ideas are to be generated and the Society is to be sustainable into the future.

The Society already has all the equipment, five metre screen, digital projection and surround sound audio, necessary to function as a cinema so, unlike when we started, there are no up-front costs to be met.

A new core group would be given a totally free hand to operate the Society as they wish. Members of the exist-

ing group would be on hand to help if needed but all final decisions would be by the new core group.

The Society is currently run by first generation NAG residents but it is now time for second generation, local residents now in their 30s/40s/50s, to take over and provide a sustainable future for NAG's Cinema.

Anyone who is interested should contact Stuart Richardson on:-

fonagvc@hotmail.com

Alternatively if you are reading this and know of anyone who might be suitable, let me know and we will follow up the lead.

By Stuart Richardson

Wassail with the Woodlands Group
SATURDAY 3RD
JANUARY 2015 4PM
Be sure to bring a torch!



Centre Road
New Ash Green
Longfield
Kent DA3 8HH
Tel: 01474 872691 / Fax: 01474 872409
E-mail: admin@nagval.com / Website: www.nagval.com



VA OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The VA Office is open to residents
9.00am-4.00pm Monday to Thursdays —
Closed to residents on Fridays
The office is closed for all statutory holidays

If you would like to write an article for our next Newsletter, either as a member of a Club or Society or to write an article of local interest, please provide it to VA Office no later than **30th June 2015**

The Pavilion

— new ash green —



•Sports •Function Rooms •Bars •Sky TV

The Pavilion at Punch Croft, New Ash Green has catered for families in the local area for many years as a community facility which is funded by the Village for local residents.

**ALL WELCOME—
NO MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED**

We are open to everyone of all ages, you can enjoy our fantastic amenities whether you like to play sports or just watch, or maybe even book a family event? Why not come along and see what we have to offer! The Pavilion is set over two floors with adaptable facilities to cater for all events & functions.

The Sports Bar—Offering both Sky Sports & BT Sports, providing coverage of all the major sporting events. We also have FREE WI-FI.

The Ash Room— the large ground floor function room which is suitable for anything from meetings to wedding receptions. With patio door access to the lovely external grounds, so also ideal for children's parties!

'NEW' Green Room Cocktail Bar—Opening in November

Look out for our Big Opening event on Facebook, and come along for a relaxing evening every Friday with delicious cocktails and great music. It is also available to hire for meetings & smaller functions.

Live Music —Open Mic Nights are back!

On the first Friday of every month starting on [Friday 7th November](#). If you want to perform or just come along to listen to some talented local musicians, then join us from [8.30pm](#) in the [Upstairs Sports Bar](#).

Sports Clubs—Each sports club provides opportunities for skill development with teams to suit all ages and abilities. They provide first class coaching and new members are always welcome. At present we are home to several sports, run by dedicated volunteers in the fields of:

[Rugby](#); [Football](#), [Petanque](#) and [Tennis](#).

Events Packages

We can offer full events packages for weddings and parties including **planning, catering and decoration**. The Ash Room has the capacity for 100 seated or 150 standing.



Boardroom

A dedicated meeting room seating up to 12 is available daytime and evenings. Ideal for business or informal meetings.

Cost of hiring includes FREE tea/coffee/water and access to wi-fi.



For more information please contact the Manager, Serena Thurlow.

The Pavilion, Punch Croft, New Ash Green DA3 8HR Tel: 01474 874660

To find out what's on visit:-

Website: www.thepavilionnag.com

