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Issue No. 71



Summer Newsletter

Act One Scene One Co-Founder gets MBE

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"For services to community music theatre particularly through Act One Scene One". That's what the citation said when it was announced in January of this year that Syd Ralph, formerly of Knights Croft, had been awarded the MBE, and on 22 June Syd went along to the Palace to collect it from HRH Princess Anne. Syd was co-founder and Artistic Director of Act One Scene One, a group of about 50 young people aged 13 - 19, who met every term time Sunday evening to learn basic acting and musical theatre skills. Every other year they would put on an original musical theatre production, Lumpy Custard, Full Circle, Game Boy and Breaker's Yard were just some of the shows. The company played the Edinburgh

Fringe Festival (imagine taking 50 young people to Edinburgh) and the South Bank's Queen Elizabeth Hall and won numerous national awards including outright winner of the Barclay's Youth Music Theatre Award. Many of her young protégés went on to successful careers in the theatre or in music, some of them at a very high level, but for all of them Act One Scene One was a positive life changing experience, forming friendships, and gaining self confidence that lasts to this day. Syd went on to direct and act a great deal in Northern Ireland, so much so, that she and her husband eventually moved there, but she leaves a lasting legacy here in Kent. A well deserved award Syd!



By Gael Lewis

Syd Ralph receives an MBE

The Neighbourhood Plan is Coming!

The Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Ash-cum-Ridley has reached an important stage. It will be published in August for the first informal consultation with local people.

Look out for a special edition of the Parish Council's *Bulletin* which will give more information. People at the Annual Parish Meeting in May were given a preview of the Plan but now everyone can have a say in how our Parish should look in the next 20 years. We want as many as possible to respond because this is your best chance to make your views known. The more people who comment, the easier it will be to demonstrate that this Plan comes from the local community and that will help us to get it approved.

Once we have your input, the Plan

will be revised before submission to Sevenoaks District Council. The Council will carry out its own consultation and it will be examined by an independent Government inspector. If all goes well, the whole community will then be asked to approve the Plan in a local referendum. When approved, it will become one of the key policy documents against which all planning applications are assessed.

Our local area is important in many ways. New Ash Green is a unique architectural and social experiment from the 1960s. It has survived very well but new pressures are mounting and if we want to keep its distinctive qualities we must now plan ahead. Thames Gateway developments will bring more people into our corner of Kent; this area will be

important as a green buffer that provides space for recreation but only if we respect the heritage that makes it so attractive. There will have to be a major regeneration of the New Ash Green centre because that is the one part of the village which has been less successful; when that happens we must retain and develop the facilities that are essential for a vibrant community. Changes in employment patterns mean more people want to work at, or close to, home so we should plan for that as well, without letting go of the rural character that brought many of us here to live.

So please take some time to look at the draft Neighbourhood Plan and make sure your views are with us by the beginning of October to help to shape our future.

NAGFEST AND VILLAGE DAY

were both a huge success this year.

Thank you to everyone who worked tirelessly to organise these events and to all that supported them.

For more information see pages 4 and 5 inside!

New Developments Around NAG



There have been reports in the press about more housing developments around New Ash Green and nearby villages. Nothing has been decided yet but Sevenoaks District Council, along with every other council in the country, is required by the Government to identify land for new development when it updates its Local Plan – a set of key planning policies that will be used to decide planning applications – and to identify a new local housing target up to 2035.

Last year the Council asked local landowners to volunteer land and a total of 252 sites were put forward. These are the landowners' suggestions and are in no way endorsed by the Council. Their submission does not guarantee a favourable planning decision. Five of the sites are adjacent to New Ash Green: a large area between New Ash Green and Ash, three sites to the west of Chapel Wood Road and a small one on Church

Road next to Caling Croft. Several more sites have been submitted in the Fawkham and Hartley area. Like the majority of the sites throughout the District, all the local sites are in the Green Belt. Indeed, since most of the 7% of the District not in the Green Belt has already been built on it is inevitable that a large number of the sites put forward lie in the Green Belt.

In the coming months the Council's planners will carry out a detailed investigation of each site. They will recommend a shorter list of sites that may have the potential to be developed. These sites will be considered by Councillors and then local people will be asked for their views next year.

It is important to understand that Councillors are committed to ensure only the most suitable and sustainable sites are developed, for example previously built on land, sites that are concreted

over, poor quality land or Green Belt land that no longer serves its original purpose. The Council does **not** have to find sites to meet the very challenging housing target but it does have to prove that all the possibilities have been carefully examined before they are discarded.

Local people can view the sites at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/callforsites. You can comment on the accuracy of the information presented or offer further reasons why the sites may or may not be suitable by e-mailing:-

sites@sevenoaks.gov.uk

The Council will carry out two full public consultations in 2017 on the sites that will be recommended for development in the Local Plan, followed by a public examination by a Government Planning Inspector in 2018 before the Plan is formally agreed in 2019.

Village Centre Update

Potential development sites near NAG. View the sites at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/callforsites

You can comment on these sites at sites@sevenoaks.gov.uk



I have lived in New Ash Green for over 38 years and I watched the centre grow, flourish and decline. It saddens me greatly to see its current state and part of me would like to see it returned to the vibrant place we knew in the 1980s. But I realise we can't turn the clock back. One reason that many of the shops and businesses eventually closed is that local people did not support them. Even if we were able to replace them, customers would be unlikely to abandon their visits to Bluewater or online shopping and flock back to New Ash Green shops.

We need to look forwards to plan for a future when we will again be proud of our village centre. It will be different but it does not need to drag down the area as it does at present. We have to overcome the obstacle of the attitude of the landowners who do not support the businesses and only do the bare minimum of maintenance.

Sevenoaks Council is trying to bring forward regeneration proposals. The principle is established in the District Local Plan; the Council has supported the Town Team in its efforts to retain

the momentum and, where it has the legal power to do so, has continued to press the landowners to carry out repairs. The Local Plan is being renewed and we will ensure the regeneration of the centre is maintained, and strengthened if possible. More help will come in the Neighbourhood Plan being developed by the Parish Council and Village Association. These Plans are only of use if the landowners commit to make fundamental changes and that has been absent since their indicative proposals of 8 years ago. Some have said the Council should do more, such as compulsory purchase – but that would be slow, expensive and uncertain as the final outcome would probably be decided by a Government inspector, not by local people. The Council cannot afford to carry out the regeneration itself and finding a financier willing to invest in a small, run-down village centre in a relatively out-of-the-way location in rural Kent is unlikely.

The Town Team has to remain positive. We will continue to use the Portas grant to support the businesses in the centre, particu-

larly where we can attract further money to help with us. We cannot do what the landowners should be doing or take over their responsibilities. We will, with the support of Council officers, keep trying to bring the landowners to the table to discuss their long-term plans for the centre. We will look for ways to make the centre more attractive and work with others to organise events like Christmas Magic and A Village on the Hill. We hope to have another skating rink (in the village hall) on Saturday 10 December – keep the day free – and we will join in the plans to celebrate the New Ash Green 50th anniversary in 2017. We also intend to attack the ongoing litter problem which blights the centre and will try to improve the semi-derelict appearance of some shops.

But above all, everyone in New Ash Green has a part to play. We must all support the businesses in the village centre to ensure they stay and are ready for the regeneration of the centre when we can finally make that happen. So, please, use them – or lose them!

*Cameron Clark,
New Ash Green Town Team*

Afternoon Tea fit for a Queen!

Well-known Jazz and Swing singer, Shane Hampsheir and The Local Vocals, a 100+ strong Hartley-based singing choir were among two of the acts at a special celebration event in honour of the Queen's 90th Birthday organised by New Ash Green Scout Group.

Ash Green Scouts held the party for 80 plus members of the Hartley Memory Café and local elderly residents in Hartley and surrounding villages in Kent on Sunday 12th June.

The Hartley Memory Café is a support network for people with Alzheimer's and Dementia and the Scout Group worked for several months to raise the £1,000 to fund the party. They put on this completely free event as part of their work in the UK Scouts, 'A Million Hands' project - a project where young people



Members of The Hartley Memory Café enjoying afternoon tea

and supporters made the event possible.

Local taxi company, Saffire Cars generously provided free transport for many of the guests while The Vintage Barn in New Ash Green have provided

Group: "Ash Green Scout Group were delighted to put on the party to celebrate our Queen's 90th Official Birthday. This was a fantastic opportunity for our young people to show that they really do care about our growing elderly community."

"We've had fantastic local business, charity and community support - both financially and in providing services - and without that support the Scout Group alone could not have put the show on."

Adds Veronica McGannon who along with other volunteers, helps to run The Memory Café, managed by Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services: "I am so humbled by the all the support and organisation from Ash Green Scouts and the donations and help from local businesses. This will be a great event to bring our Memory Café attendees some joy and excitement and hopefully something to remember. It was a perfect way to mark the Queen's 90th birthday."



The Local Vocals

are challenged to involve themselves in supporting our local community.

The event had great support from the local community. New Ash Green Village Association gave free use of the Village Hall, Longfield Village Butchers, the New Ash Green Co-op and The Granary in New Ash Green all provided food and there were donations from Ash Tyres, Longfield Hardware, The Village Barber and Lyn's Breakfast Bar in New Ash Green, and Hartley Estates. Generous donations from the Wheatsheaf Freemasons Lodge and the Jubilee Freemasons Lodge, as well as a considerable number of personal donations from friends

balloons and Wonderland Venues assisted with the chair and table decorations.

Says Peter Lewis, the Leader-in-charge of the 170 strong Scout



Members of Ash Green Scout Group



Leader Dance

The Memory Café is held from 11am-1pm on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at St Mary Magdalene Church, Main Road, Longfield.
For more information call 01474 533990



Shane Hampsheir

RHYTHM 'N' BOOZE, SUN 'N' GAMES ... TWO

NAGFEST came back for a second year of boogie and bewies ... and it rocked!

It turned out to be an extraordinary music and beer event attended by over 500 people.

This year was bigger than ever with over 30 bands, many of them favourites from the Pavilion's Showcase Nights.

'The Ark', an acoustic group and the 'Open Mic Band' performed to their usual high



NAG.FEST

standard. If you missed them performing at this event they regularly play at the Pavilion on Friday and Sunday evenings.

NAGFEST was again blessed with the best two headliner bands in the south, *No Limit Street Band* and *Beer Pressure* drawing over 300-plus jumping and singing music lovers into the marquee on both Saturday and Sunday nights.

Other bands playing at the event included *Jimmy and the Poor Boys*, *Roos Radio*, *Jack Lewis*, *Strange Day*, *The Moths* and *The Paul Cook Band* to name but a few!

A number of performers played in the Ash Room which had been recently kitted out with special acoustic panels in time for NAGFEST. From late afternoon into the evening bands played in the marquee.

Along with inflatable zones, mini market, BBQ and beer tent, there was something for all the family (and children even entered for free).

The 2-day event was arranged and sponsored by The Pavilion, NAG Social, Shepherd Neame and Awesome Source Music. A huge thank you to all the sponsors and volunteers especially Serena Thurlow, Paul West, Sarah Hood and Denise Ashworth who worked tirelessly to bring it all together and for those who attended to support the event. **Be sure to dust off your wellies (or hopefully your flip-flops) for the next NAGFEST - you will not be disappointed!**

by Colin Garratt, Pavilion Director



Music for all the family by the Open Mic Band

Summer



Performer wows the crowd



Acoustic sounds from The Ark



Festivalgoers partied until the early hours

D FANTASTIC PARTIES IN NEW ASH GREEN



The sun shone for the girls to show their strength in the 'Tug-o-War Competition' vs the boys!

Wow! We hope you will agree, another stunning Village Day!!! Weather was a bit hit and miss, but that didn't stop Shane Hampshire's impromptu version of "Singing in the Rain" nor did it stop the Sylvera School of Dancing who were as just as fabulous as ever this year.

The event of course was opened by our May Queen Cara Hampshire and our May King Finn Docherty-Winch. Attendants included Megan Lyons, Elli Webb, Daniel Oliver and Riley Webber.

The "Tug-o-War Competition" was a pull between the Village centre Gym and a hastily convened team of rugby players and "passing volunteers".

In the end the rugby themed "all-comers" were victorious Boys vs. Girls was won again by the Boys

jolly days



All the fun of the fair for New Ash Green kids



Spectacular flypast by a Spitfire and Hurricane



Stylish...a classic car display

(mainly because the girls forgot to tie the rope to the fire engine!).

A massive highlight was a flypast by a Spitfire and Hurricane, part of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. We are grateful to Ash Church, who have been trying to organise this for many years. It was great to receive the call from Wing Commander Tony Parkinson to tell us "tally-ho, inbound toward you with a pair of kites, eta 15:20 - keep your heads down!".

There was loads to do on the day, with fairground rides, stalls, circus skills, tea-tent and a fabulous display of classic cars.

It was all made possible by the dedication of a small group of volunteers, The NAGsocial Team. Lead organiser for Village Day was Trevor from Pets Pantry, who with Ash Tyres were among our generous sponsors. If you would like to know more or fancy getting involved, please drop us a line at:

committee@nagsocial.co.uk



Another stunning Village Day!



*by John Gorton,
Chair, NAG Social*

NAG Parking Issues



Parking is now at a premium in New Ash Green. When the village was first developed in the 1960s and 70s there was adequate off-road parking for family and visitors' cars and virtually all houses have a garage as part of the property. Progress now dictates that most families now have two or three cars and the added problem is that current designs prevent some of the more popular cars from being parked in a garage as the garage is simply not big enough. Residents are also using garages for storage rather than for cars. All of this results in car parking overload.

This problem has been the subject of discussion by Council of Management, and it was agreed at the recent May meeting that Amenity Committee members would be happy to meet with Residents' Societies to see if any land within neighbourhoods could be used for extra parking. It was also agreed to review some areas of Village Association land where extra parking could alleviate parking on the highway. Any proposals, whether within neighbourhoods or on VA land, will have to be costed and budgeted. Planning permission from Sevenoaks District Council will

have to be obtained first, including approval from Kent Highways in many cases, and this will add to the cost.

There is no easy answer, however, and the co-operation of residents will be needed, whether to make better use of garages or to accept that some green space will have to be lost. The problem is not, of course, unique to NAG but here we have the VA and Residents' Societies who do, perhaps, have a better opportunity than in many places to act to improve the situation. Nevertheless, any solution is bound to involve some degree of compromise.

Drainage and Water Supply

Drainage

The maintenance responsibility for foul drains changed from 1st October 2011.

FOUL WATER is from toilets, bath, shower, kitchen sink, wash basin, washing machine dishwasher etc, **SURFACE WATER** is rainwater from roofs, driveways, paths, patios, garages, garage courts and roads.

The changes affected **FOUL WATER DRAINS ONLY**. All surface water drainage remains the responsibilities of individual residents'/Resident Societies/Village Association depending where they are located. Adopted roads fall under the responsibility of Kent County Council, Highways Department.

IF YOU HAVE A FOUL DRAIN PROBLEM you should call Thames Water in the first instance on **0800 009 3964**. They will send out their contractors (currently a company called Lanes) who will determine the location of the issue and deal with it as necessary. Please note that in NAG very few of the foul drains are private (other than the rear garden 'head of run' and properties on Redhill Wood) so in general, Thames Water have the responsibility to rectify and you should not be charged.

Drainage plans are held in the VA Office and can be viewed during office hours Monday to Thursday 9.00am-4.00pm if necessary, these have also been supplied to Thames Water and their Contractors.

After a campaign by the VA for many years, Thames Water conceded that villagers were entitled to a rebate for surface water drainage as this was dealt with via private soakaways. Therefore, please check your bill as you should not be being charged for this. If you find that you are, you should contact the company direct and ask to be reimbursed.

If you experience any difficulties in dealing with Thames Water contact the VA office who may be able to assist.

Water Supply

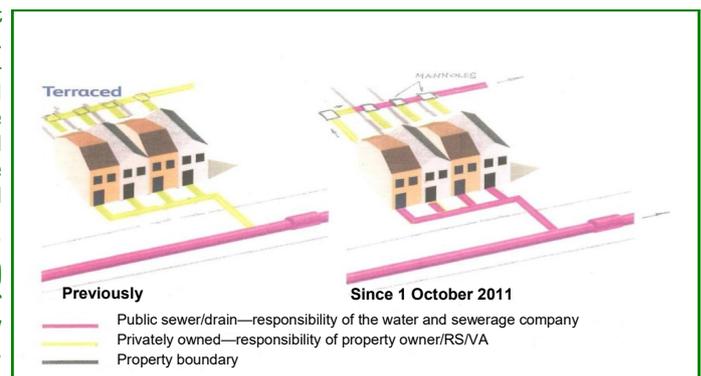
South East Water supply your fresh water. Should you have any issues relating to your fresh water please contact them on **0333 000 0002**. If you notice a leak either in your property or in NAG in general, please contact Leakline on **0333 000 3330**.

NOTE: Redhill Wood differs from the above as householders own all their gardens including the front garden. Therefore, the situation for Redhill Wood *front, side and rear gardens* will be the same as the rear gardens in the diagram, i.e. responsibility for the foul drain remains with the resident until the drain either passes to another property (neighbouring resident or RS/VA) or joins with another shared drain.

REMEMBER!

Foul Drains call Thames Water on 0800 009 3964

Surface Water Drains depends on location either Resident, RS or VA



Citizens Advice Outreach Service

Citizens Advice Sevenoaks runs a weekly outreach service at the Community Centre in NAG on Thursday mornings from 9.30am to 12.00. The service supports people who live in the Sevenoaks District area. We aim to provide the advice people need and to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

We offer free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to people, on their rights and responsibilities. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination. Our goal is to help everyone find a way forward, whatever problem they face. People come to us with all sorts of issues, you may have money, benefit, housing or

employment problems, you may be facing a crisis, or just considering your options.

If you're happy to use the internet, there is also a lot of useful information on a range of subjects at :-

www.citizensadvice.org.uk, or you can email us at info@sevenoaks.cab.org.uk with details of your enquiry. If you prefer to phone, call our local telephone line on 01732 440488. This is an answer-phone service, so you'll be asked to leave your name and number, and someone will ring you back. If you need further advice, a follow-up appointment can then be made for you to see an adviser. Tell the phone service if

you would prefer to be seen at New Ash Green.

When you drop in to our outreach on a Thursday morning, the adviser may be busy with appointments but will try and help you on the day. If necessary, the adviser can make you an appointment to come back the following week.

It is important that the adviser you speak to has as much information about your case as possible, so please bring any relevant letters and information such as wage slips or benefit letters; your national insurance number; latest bank statement; details of any debts; tenancy agreement or mortgage contract; employment contract etc.



citizens advice

Citizens Advice Sevenoaks

The Citizens Advice service provides free, confidential and impartial advice to help people solve their problems.

NEW ASH GREEN OUTREACH
at New Ash Green Youth & Community Centre
DA3 8JY
Thursdays from 9.30am until 12.00

If you would like to book an appointment, call **01732 440488** and leave a message. An assessor will then call you back. Drop-in appointments may also be available on the day at New Ash Green. Help with employment, housing, consumer, relationships, benefits, debt problems and much more.

For telephone advice ring: 01732 440488 and leave a message at any time

For email advice: info@sevenoaks.cab.org.uk

For further information please see our website www.citizensadvice.org.uk/sevenoakscab

Council of Management 'Drop-In'

New Ash Green Village Association exists to manage the village for the benefit of the people who live and work here. We can only do that if we listen to what people want. On the first Saturday of each month, you can talk to a member of the Council of Management in the Meeting Room at the VA Office, Centre Road, between 10:30 and midday.

So be sure to take up the opportunity to raise any comments relating to New Ash Green and the Village Association.

The next dates are:

6th August 2016	5th November 2016
3rd September 2016	3rd December 2016
1st October 2016	

IN NEED OF SOME HELP?

Why not pop along to your local Citizens Advice Bureau, NAG Youth & Community Centre, Thursday mornings, 9.30am to noon.

NAGARA sponsored walk

On 18th November 2015, the regular NAGARA walkers group, together with a number of enthusiastic supporters, participated in a sponsored walk around New Ash Green to raise money for Children in Need. The day was overcast and blustery but that did

not deter those (average age 74) who turned out for the event. The circular walk started at the Badger and ended with a welcome drink and a very sociable lunch.

Our thanks to Chris Broad-

Manges for coming up with the idea, to Margaret Burningham for organising the event and, of course, all those friends and members who generously sponsored the walkers to raise £1,300 for a very good cause.



NAGARA walkers group

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 **28th October 2016**.



NEW ASH GREEN ART CLUB

Why not come along and paint with us every Wednesday afternoon between 2 and 4 pm.

We are a small friendly group who meet at the Village Association Meeting Room, Centre Road, New Ash Green, DA3 8HH. We cannot offer tuition, but there is plenty of encouragement from like-minded artists.

If painting and drawing aren't your thing, but you have another craft you would like to work on for a couple of hours each week, eg cross stitch or embroidery, please feel free to bring that along - it's all art, after all!

The cost is £3 per session, with tea/coffee and biscuits at 'half time'.

Existing members, please note, we are not taking a break this summer, but will be meeting right through the school holiday period.

We look forward to seeing you!

For more information call—01474 872868

Learn Baby Signing the fun way! for ages 0-2 years



Help your baby to communicate BEFORE speech with the original award winning MUSIC programme

New babes: 0-6 months, Stage 1: 6-13 months, Stage 2: 14-28 months

FUN filled classes recommended by experts and loved by parents and babies across the UK

- Traditional & original songs
- Puppets & props - Meet Jessie Cat!
- Instruments
- Speech development
- Social development
- Emotional development
- Physical fun
- Small classes
- Weekly themes
- Singing, signing & making friends



COMING SOON TO YOUR AREA!

NEW ASH GREEN VILLAGE HALL
THURSDAYS 10-11AM

T: 07958 455699

T: 01322 522790

E: jenettehawkes@outlook.com

W: www.singandsign.com

SingAndSignBexleyAndDartford

FREE GIFT FIRST
5 REGISTERED!



What Groups do we Offer?

Baby Group

Friendly stay & play groups for parents and carers with babies aged up to 12 months. Come along to meet other new parents!

Stay & Play

Friendly groups with structured activities to support your child's learning in preparation for nursery and school (Ages 0-5).

Bounce and Rhyme (Libraries)

Musical fun and stories to support your child's speech, language and communication skills. Come along and join in! (Ages 0-5)

Small World

A stay and play group with a multi cultural and multi ethnic focus.

Child minder Drop-in

For any local registered child minders. Come and meet with other child minders, exchange ideas and get support from the local Prospect coordinator.

Active Learners (Swanley and New Ash Green)

A 6 week course encouraging physical activity and healthy lifestyles (Ages 18 months to 3 years).

Small Talk

A four week course supporting speech and language development (Ages 18 months to 3 years).

Other Services for Parents / Carers:

Freedom Programme

Run in Children's Centres by North Kent Women's Aid, this is a 12 week support group for women who have experienced domestic abuse. Call 01547 520 228 or visit www.freedomprogramme.co.uk

HERO Project

A free advice service providing information and guidance on various topics including housing, financial, benefits, employment and further education.

Child Health Clinics

Drop in clinics led by the Health Visiting Team, for advice on child health, weight and nutrition. To speak to your local Health Visiting Team call: Swanley—01322 614131, Sevenoaks—01732 470345, Edenbridge—01732 869825

Breast Feeding Peer Support Group

For any breast feeding mothers or for pregnant women wanting to find out more about breastfeeding.

NB: Groups listed in **blue** are drop-in groups. Those listed in **red** must be booked in advance. Please speak to reception to find out more.

Sure Start Children's Centres

Sevenoaks District

Sevenoaks District Children's Centres



Sevenoaks District Children's centres are local community centres which support babies, pre-school children and their families.

Each centre offers different services, including:

- early education
- training or finding a new job
- antenatal classes
- baby clinics
- support with breastfeeding,
- support with parenting and speech and language
- drop-in sessions for parents and children
- Adult Education and Family Learning Courses

For further details, visit or local centre or visit our website:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/childcare-and-pre-school/childrens-centres/swanley-and-sevenoaks-childrens-centre>



Like Us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/sevenoaksandswanleychildrenscentres>

NEW ASH GREEN CENTRE
01474 854624

