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October 2022 VA News

New Ash Green Village Association Newsletter

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Welcome ...

... to this newsletter from the Village Association.

We hope you will find something of interest in it but we are always ready to hear from residents about what we can do better to provide you with news and information about the village.

Remember that more up-to-date news is usually available on the website at www.nagval.com or our Facebook page.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The Village Association wanted to give residents an opportunity to pay their respects to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II so, in addition to the Books of Remembrance at the Parish Council office and Ash Church, we provided a location outside the VA office for people to lay floral tributes. We offer our condolences to the Royal Family and wish King Charles III a happy and glorious reign.



What's been going on?

Are you aware that there is a lot of information about the Village Association on its website (www.nagval.com), including minutes of the latest meetings of the Council of Management and Amenity Committee in the [Document Library](#)? And if you haven't received this newsletter directly by email, please add your name to the [mailing list](#).

Get your tickets NOW for this year's New Ash Green fireworks



There has been a necessary change, just for this year, in that the event will be on **Friday 4th November** not the 5th. Because the 5th falls on a Saturday, all the decent display companies were already booked.

Tickets can be purchased in advance from:

- The Village Association Office
- The Pavilion
- Pets Pantry

Tickets are £5 per person, when purchased in advance. Tickets are also available on the gate at £7 per person. One ticket per person, ages 2+. Please note, tickets are not refundable.

- Gates open at 6:00pm
- Bonfire lighting at 6:45pm
- Fireworks at 7:30pm

For more details: [CLICK HERE](#)

Village Day 2022



The Social Committee was also responsible for organising another successful Village Day on Saturday June 18th. Despite a little rain late in the afternoon, the sports field was full of people enjoying all the stalls and attractions on offer with some great performances from young and old in the central arena.

An event like this involves an enormous amount of preparation for months in advance and we owe a very big 'thank you' to all the people who worked beforehand and on the day to make it a success.

Action on Crime



The Village Association took part, along with a few residents' societies, in the quarterly Focus Group meeting on 10th October. The wide-ranging discussions included the recent rise in anti-social behaviour and vandalism, reports of drug dealing and concerns about dangerous parking. We were greatly disappointed that there were no Police representatives attending, a feeling shared by all the other participants. As a result, the Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit will try to arrange a further meeting, specifically with the District's Police, so that the concerns of residents can be communicated face-to-face. To keep this to manageable numbers and allow time for a full discussion, it will be restricted to one member of each Society's committee. Make sure your [neighbourhood committee](#) is aware and let them know of the issues you would like raised.

The VA and Parish Council are also pressing the Highway Authority to do more to improve pedestrian safety at road crossings.

Everyone is strongly encouraged to report all incidents, however trivial, to the Police by ringing 101 or using their [website](#). This will ensure that everything is logged and Police resources are properly targeted. It will also help the Police to build up a picture of possible links between the crimes. If an incident is still happening, use 999 to alert the Police so that they can respond as quickly as possible.

NAG Arts Community Annual Exhibition



New Ash Green Arts Community are back this October 29th and 30th with their popular annual exhibition! It will be held as usual in the Youth & Community Centre in New Ash Green. They look forward to welcoming back

old friends and new faces to enjoy our varied and affordable local art. Free entry, come and browse, maybe shop for Christmas, meet the artists, and enjoy a cuppa and cake in the arts café.

Bus Services



The Village Association was also represented at the Parish Council's biannual meeting about local bus services on 11th October. This followed soon after the latest service cuts by Arriva which now mean they do not operate any buses from New Ash Green to Darent Valley Hospital, Bluewater and Dartford and there is only a reduced service to Gravesend. Arriva were questioned about their reasons for these cuts and

we were told that the few people who used the buses, with the exception of school children once a day, meant that they were no longer a commercial proposition. It was pointed out by others that the loss of people travelling was, largely, because the services had been progressively reduced until they were no longer useful. Kent County Council explained that they had no money to subsidise the services but they had managed to secure a replacement [school bus](#) to and from Dartford and Wilmington - this is available for anyone to use and leaves New Ash Green at 7.18am, returning from Dartford Home Gardens (Stop E) at 4.04pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays; on Wednesday afternoons two buses run, at 3.04pm and 3.54pm.

Despite lengthy discussions there was little good news. Although the Sunday buses, which are paid for by Kent County Council, to Bluewater and Gravesend will continue in the short term, they too are likely to stop early in the New Year when their subsidy is cut. No alternative public transport to replace the discontinued buses has been forthcoming. Although the Kent Karrier dial-a-ride service has been reprieved, it can only be used by people whose medical condition prevents them using public transport, or live more than 500 metres from any bus stop or are aged over 84.

The current service is therefore just the [489 bus to Gravesend](#) and (for the time being) the Sunday [433 bus to Bluewater](#). The Village Association will continue to monitor the situation and lobby the authorities but realistically there is little more that can be done and our experience is, sadly, a reflection of a widespread national trend.

Can you step up to the mark?

New Ash Green depends on volunteers to provide services to residents efficiently. Several residents' societies are desperately short of people to join their committees which means they cannot function as effectively as they want, and the committee members can be overloaded. If you can help your society, please think seriously about joining the committee and [contact them](#) - you might be just the person they need.

Putting the 'green' into New Ash Green



The Village Association is working with the Parish Council in its Climate Change Working Party to identify what can be done to improve the environmental resilience of the village. Whilst the loss of public transport opportunities mentioned above does not help, we are actively looking at other effective ways to play our part in protecting the planet. Even little changes can help. Examples are the gradual replacement of energy-intensive lighting with LED lights and the introduction of public charge points for zero emission electric vehicles as well as enabling residents to install their own charging facilities where possible.

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