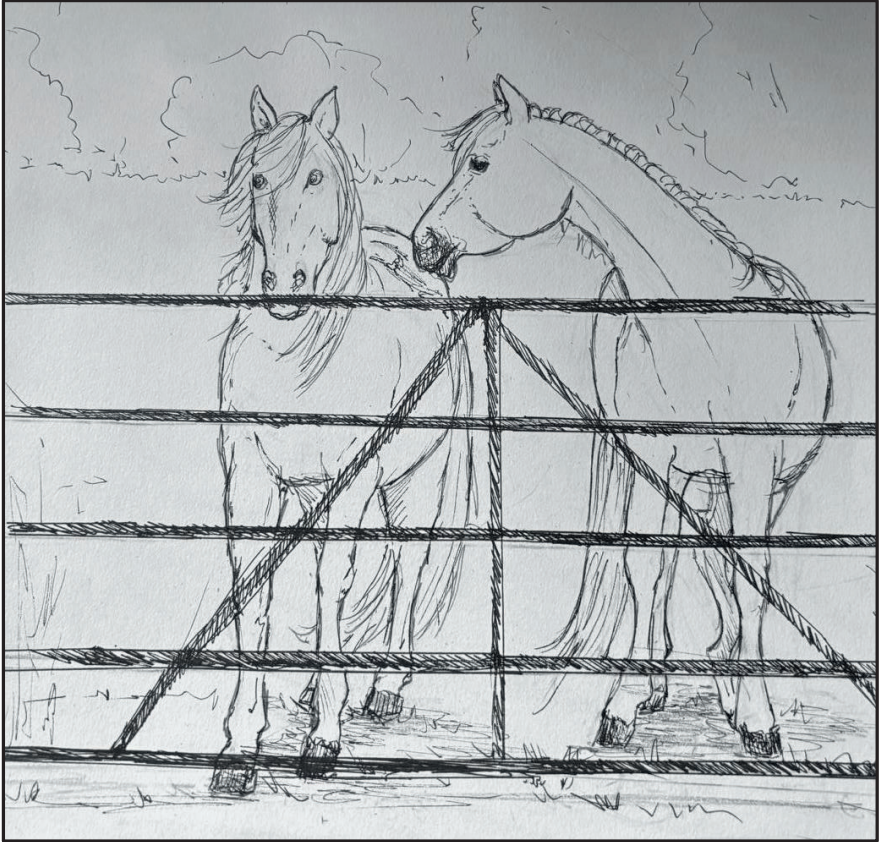


ASH WITH WESTMARSH
PARISH MAGAZINE
AUGUST 2026
£1



The Canonry Benefice of
Ash – Chillenden – Elmstone – Goodnestone
Nonington – Preston – Stourmouth

Useful Contacts

Service	Organisation/Name	Contact
<u>Emergencies</u> 999	Gas Emergency (24hrs)	0800 111 999
	UK Power Networks (24hrs)	105
	Water Leak Line (24hrs)	0800 820 999
<u>Community</u>	Non-urgent and other enquiries	101
	Ash Neighbourhood Watch	
	Josh Coombs	07546 212154
	Crime Stoppers	0800 555111
	Community Safety Dover	01304 872220
	Childline	0800 1111
	Kent County Council	08458 247247
	Dover District Council	01304 821199
	District Councillors:	
	Cllr Trevor Bartlett	07980 300084
	cllr-trevor.bartlett@dover.gov.uk	
	Cllr Martin Porter	07733 111334
	cllr-martin.porter@dover.gov.uk	
	Sir Roger Gale MP	01843 848588
	suzy@galemail.com	
	Ash Parish Council	07398 584 053
	clerk@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk	
	Citizens Advice (Dover area)	0844 8487978
	Ash Village Hall Enquiries	07947 832807
	Environmental Health	01304 872215
	Trading Standards	0845 4040506
	Ash Library	01304 812440
<u>Healthcare</u>	NHS Medical Helpline (24hrs)	111
	Out of Hours Doctor Service	0844 8001234
	Ash Surgery	01304 812227
	Hospitals - Kent and Canterbury	01227 766877
	QEQM Margate	01843 225544
	William Harvey	01233 633331
	Pharmacy - Ash (Boots)	01304 812242
<u>Education</u>	Cartwright and Kelsey School	01304 812539
	St Faith's Prep School	01304 813409
	Sandwich Technology College	01304 610000
	Sir Roger Manwood School	01304 613286

Times can be tough. There's always someone you can talk to 24/7.

The Samaritans: call 116 123 or visit [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

~ If an error is noted please inform the editors ~

Welcome to the August Magazine

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Magazine Subscription

Never miss an edition of your favourite parish magazine!
To arrange a subscription including magazine delivery to your door (within the parish) phone Rebecca on 07443 605873 or email rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com

Front cover

Olly is asking: where is the food? Woody replies: I don't know...she's late! By Pat Coles

Contacts

Clergy

Reverend Caroline Turvey
01304 812296
canonryvicar@gmail.com
Churchwarden
James Piggott
ashchurchwarden@gmail.com

Benefice Administration

Beth Barber
thecanonrybenefice@gmail.com

Share Your News

Email copy for the next magazine edition by **Thursday 20th August** to rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com or post hard copy at 69, The Street, Ash.

Advertise in the Parish Magazine

Reasonable rates and a loyal readership

Send advertising enquiries to ashpm.ads@gmail.com

Publisher's note:

This magazine is produced by St. Nicholas Parish Church. We welcome items from individuals and local organisations. All items should come with a note of the contributor's name. The editor reserves the right both to edit and not to publish anything she receives. Items on church matters do not represent the official position of the Church of England.

What's On

ASH WILDLIFE FRIENDLY VILLAGE invite everyone to join a tidy up at The Quicks in a 60-minute makeover. Saturday 1st August, 10am. See page 20 for more details.

LOCKHORNS WRESTLING return to Ash Village Hall on Saturday 1st August with Clash in Ash live pro wrestling. Doors open 6.30pm. See Facebook for details.

THE 200th ANNIVERSARY of the first recorded game of cricket between Ash and Sandwich is marked on Wednesday 5th August from noon with a game at The Butts, Sandwich. See page 10 for full story.

DROP BY St Nicholas Church for a Welcome Space Messy Church Family Playdate on Thursday 6th August. Enjoy free refreshments, crafts, activities and stories and more. See poster page 7.

HAPPY HOUR at Elmstone Church (or Church Meadow if the weather is fine) Friday 7th August from 6.30pm. For more Elmstone news, see page 27.

THEATRE comes to Goodnestone Park on Wednesday 12th August with The Wonderful Wizard of Oz from 2pm and Lady Windermere's Fan from 6.30pm. Go to dot-productions.co.uk for booking and more information.

THE CHURCHYARD BASH. Saturday 15th August. 9am-noon at St Nicholas Church, Ash. Join volunteers to maintain the church grounds.

ASH VILLAGE SAFARI takes place on Saturday 15th August from 10am-2pm.

Coming soon...

From Field to Table – Ash Through the Ages self-guided walk and exhibition created by Ash Heritage Group as part of the national Heritage Open Days from September 11th-20th. See page 22 for details.

Ash Horticultural Society Autumn Show. September 19th. See page 26 for details and more Society news.

If you're holding an event, let us know. Email
rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com

Regulars

Ash Pain Management Support Group – For anyone who suffers from long-term pain. Second Wednesday 11am-1pm at Ash Scout Hall, Molland Lea. £2 entry includes refreshments and a raffle. Contact Maureen on 07922 096932 or email maureenloveash@gmail.com with any queries.

St Nicholas Church Warm Space – Thursday 11am-1pm. There is free tea/coffee and a mug of hot homemade soup with a roll.

Ash Bowling Club Weekly Free Community Coffee Morning – from 10am-12pm every Monday at the club in Moat Lane. All residents of Ash are welcome. Free tea/coffee and biscuits.

Age Concern Sandwich Meet, Eat, Heat – two course lunch for £4.50. Mondays and Fridays.

Ash Library opening times

Monday 11:30am - 5pm (closed 1pm - 2pm)

Tuesday 9:30am - 1pm

Wednesday 9:30am - 2pm

Thursday: Closed

Friday 11:30am - 5pm

Saturday 9am - 2pm

Sunday: Closed

Bank holidays: Closed

Ash Toddler Group – meet on Mondays in Ash Village Hall from 10am-11.30am in term times.

Ash Heritage Centre – opens Saturday mornings 10am-12noon and is home to a wide range of local historical items and records. (Not August.) www.ashheritagegroup.org.uk

Walk and Talk – slow-paced walking group meeting on Fridays at Ash GP surgery. 11.30am

Guides, Brownies and Rangers

1st Ash Brownies 7-10 yrs: 1stashnextsandwichbrownies@gmail.com

1st Ash Guides 10 - 14 yrs: 1stashnxtswichguides@outlook.com

1st Ash Rangers 14 - 18 yrs: 1stashrangers@gmail.com

Church Services for August

Sunday 2nd August

Holy Communion 9am Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Holy Communion 10.30am Elmstone Church

Family Worship 10.30am St. Nicholas, Ash

Holy Communion 10.30am St. Mary's Nonington

Sunday 9th August

Holy Communion 9.00 All Saints, Chillenden

Holy Communion 10.30 St. Nicholas, Ash

Family Service with Communion 10.30 St Mildred's, Preston

Breakfast Church 9.30 St. Mary's Nonington

Sunday 16th August

Holy Communion 9.00 Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Holy Communion 10.30 Elmstone Church

Holy Communion 10.30 St. Nicholas, Ash

Sunday 23rd August

Holy Communion 9.00 All Saints, Chillenden

Holy Communion 10.30 St. Nicholas, Ash

Evensong 6.30 Stourmouth

Sunday 30th August

Fifth Sunday Benefice Service 10.30am, Goodnestone

Private Prayer

Churches are open at the following times:

St Nicholas, Ash	All week 9.30am to 3pm
Holy Cross, Goodnestone	All week in daylight hours
St Mary's Nonington	All week in daylight hours
All Saints, Chillenden	Weekends 10am-5pm
All Saints, Stourmouth	All week in daylight hours

Other churches can be unlocked on request. Please note services may be taking place during this time.

Help Needed for Parish Magazine

Could you spare an hour to help the friendly team who bundle up the parish magazine for distribution each month?

If you can help, please contact Rebecca Smith at 07443 605873 or email rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com

**St Nicholas
Church
Ash**

**WELCOME
SPACE &**

**MESSY[®]
Church**

**Family Playdate
6th August 11-2pm
for children and their families**

**You are welcome to come along any time during our
opening hours and access:**

- **A welcome Space to sit and relax with your family**
- **Crafts, activities and stories**
- **Free refreshments**
- **Wifi**
- **Signposting and information**
- **Someone to talk to**
- **Community and friendship**



Part of the Warm Spaces & Messy Church initiatives:
www.warmwelcome.uk www.messychurch.brf.org.uk



www.thecanonrybenefice.org.uk

Parish Letter

Greetings to you this August, and welcome to the summer holidays, to the so-called “silly season”!

I write this the day after England's match with Argentina in the World Cup, when all the plaudits pale a little, and comments are made in abundance. It is also the day after Keir Starmer took the Prime Minister's role at his last appearance at Wednesday's mid-day “Questions to the Prime Minister” slot in Parliament.

Both events were very emotional, overall sad, and yet this was mixed with some pride that we could do things properly albeit with strange undertones that were different than we might have expected. We have seen strong voices saying how awful everything is and yet we have been able to deal with the situations with considerable dignity amidst the sadness, and some remarkable humour as farewells and admissions of defeat were made. Parliament was perhaps seen at its best for a while and many have already voiced how wonderfully well the England team has performed over the last few weeks over many difficult terrains and thousands of miles travelled from one venue to another.

All this and so much more, especially about the very real dangers of being a politician at the present time, have been discussed. It is interesting, shall we say, to see how quickly public opinion and attitudes can change. It was good that we can still change political leaders without violence, and we can still voice how well and magnificently the England football team and their manager have held us spell-bound with remarkable achievements over many adverse conditions and won through. To reach the semi-final and therefore to be either third or fourth in the world (the match with France is still to be played as I write) is hardly failure!! We should be proud of the achievement.

So, we move on into the silly season of August, the time of holidays and time with fewer meetings and demands of regular events. Many things stop for the month, and holiday clubs and some freedom of routine takes over for a few weeks. It may be hot weather-wise; we are not at all sure how to handle the intense heat that seems to be the new summer-norm. It is a major task that has begun to try and see how houses and flats, built to keep heat in during the winter, can be transformed to keep heat out during the heatwaves of around 30 degrees plus that we have seen

across the country three times already and for considerable lengths of time.

Things move incredibly quickly at the moment and there is much to be done to cope with the technological and climate changes that are happening. It is also crucial to take some time to rest and relax, to hear the birds sing, to appreciate the flowers that are blooming despite the heat, to hear perhaps the gentle, but persistent words of God, the Creator, as we perhaps read one of the gospels or see the influential work of the creation that we need desperately to protect.

We can nurture the plant, we can plant the seed. That is our share in helping the creation. We are privileged to be able to share in the care of the creation, that we alone cannot create – that is how human beings have a share of the responsibility to be stewards of the wonder that has been created for us. We have seen the warnings only too clearly this summer so far – we must hold onto hope – the hope that our efforts will be worthwhile and the promise that we are not alone, and that the way forward of faith, hope and love is still powerful in our world, that we still see signs of it in the actions of so many people.

God bless you this August and help you to relax and enjoy the wonderful world in which we live and which, still offers so much hope even within each tiny daisy that grows in the gap in the concrete.

Barbara Way

Parish Register

Baptisms

Beatrice Capell, 5th July, Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Harry Bishop, 11th July, Elmstone Church

Wilfried Brierley, 12th July, St Nicholas, Ash

Weddings

Emelie Olsson and Will Porter, 4th July, Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Jenny Cosgrove and James Milner, 11th July, Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Scarlet Pughe and Alex Wright, 25th July, Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Funerals

Hazel Foreman, 10th July, St Mary's, Nonington

Roger Dean, 28th July, St Nicholas, Ash

A Historic Occasion

The forthcoming annual fixture between Ash Cricket Club and Sandwich Town Cricket Club at The Butts in Sandwich on Wednesday 5th August takes place, as always, in the middle of Sandwich Cricket Week. This game is always keenly anticipated by us at Ash CC, not only because it provides an opportunity to tussle with our near neighbours but also because Sandwich Town (the larger of the two clubs) and Ash have always enjoyed a wonderful friendship that overrides their rivalry on the pitch. Indeed, many of the players on both sides are closely related to each other and several have played for both clubs in their time. Ten years ago, this aspect of the link between the two clubs was marked by the inauguration of the Pat Smalley Memorial Trophy, in memory of one who played, captained, umpired and spectated at both clubs for well over 60 years. On 5th August one of the clubs will be awarded this trophy once again.

This year there is an additional historical dimension to the match. It is 200 years ago this summer that teams from Ash and Sandwich were first recorded as having played against each other. In 1826 Ash CC was already a well-established club and considered a relatively strong one locally, having competed throughout the 18th century against sides from Deal, Dover, Thanet, Bridge and elsewhere. Indeed, cricket in our village dates back at least as far as 1708 - earlier than most locations. Sandwich, too, had fielded teams several decades before 1826 and during that summer the two clubs met each other twice, once at home and once away. Firstly, on a July day at the Stonar Salts, Sandwich entertained Ash and also lent us a couple of players. Their generosity backfired when Ash proved the victorious side but revenge was gained by Sandwich when a return match followed at Each Park, near Each End on the Woodnesborough parish boundary. Honours were therefore even after that season two centuries ago and matches continued against each other throughout the 19th and subsequent centuries, when cricket gradually developed from a rural, Kentish pastime into an international sport.

Which skipper will be presented with the Smalley Cup this time? The occasion is eagerly awaited! Why not pop along to that famous, picturesque ground at The Butts on the 5th from noon and enjoy a bit of cricket in the sun and sample some Cricket Week hospitality? We'll all be there!

Peter Ewart, President, Ash CC

A257 Safety

Deadline to Sign Petition Approaches

The A257 is a road many of us use daily - to travel between Ash and surrounding towns and villages, or simply to cross it while walking, running, or riding a bike. It is also a road where too many serious incidents have occurred, including the tragic death of Ash resident Ray Hooker, whose loss was deeply felt across our community.

Ray's death is one of several serious incidents on the A257 over recent years.

Concerns about safety on this stretch of road have been raised repeatedly, including in the Ash 2025/26 Highway Improvement Plan, where the number-one issue identified by residents was the safety of the A257.

A formal petition is now live, calling on Kent County Council (KCC) to debate safety improvements on the A257. The petition has been organised by the A257 Traffic Group, a local volunteer group working to highlight safety concerns and push for meaningful change.

But KCC will only debate the issue if the petition reaches 750 signatures. The deadline is 19th August, and more signatures are still needed. To sign the petition go to KCC's website and search for the ePetition - A257 Road Safety Measures

If you are unable to sign online, please contact cllrivenny@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk to sign the paper petition.

Not everyone agrees on what the solution should be. Some residents feel that reducing the speed limit may not be necessary, or believe that accidents are primarily caused by driver error rather than road design.

These views are understandable - road safety is complex, and people's experiences differ. But what is clear is the number and severity of incidents on this road. When a road sees repeated collisions, including fatal ones, it is reasonable to ask whether additional safety measures - improved visibility, better signage, junction redesign, pedestrian protections, or targeted enforcement - could help prevent future tragedies.

The key point is this we won't know what options are available unless KCC debates it.

Continued over

A debate does not predetermine the outcome. It simply ensures that councillors, officers, and safety experts formally examine the evidence and consider what improvements could make a meaningful difference.

If you care about the safety of the A257 - whether you walk it, cycle it, drive it, or simply want to support your community - please take a moment to sign the petition. It takes less than a minute, but it could be the action that finally brings this issue to the table.

Louise Venny

Dover District Council Parking Proposals for Ash

Dover District Council (DDC) is reviewing parking arrangements across the district, including the free car parks at Queens Road (behind Ash Village Hall) and The Street (next to the public toilets), which are currently available for free parking for up to 24 hours.

For Ash, DDC is considering changes to both car parks and nearby on-street parking. Proposed Traffic Regulation Order changes include a four-hour stay limit with no return within two hours at both car parks from Monday to Saturday, 8.30am–5.30pm and changes to parking restrictions on The Street and Chequer Lane.

No dates for consultation on the proposals have been given.

See Onlooker, page 15 for more information.

Educational Grants

The Cartwright Godfrey and Kelsey Charity offer educational grants to individuals or organisations in the Parish of Ash.

Over the years grants have been given to the Cartwright and Kelsey school for a range of educational needs and to individuals for items such as book grants when they move to further education.

The charity has also helped scouts and guides attend international working groups abroad.

If you would like to apply for a grant or find out more about the grants, please email Peter Chandler peterchandler1.pc@gmail.com

New Play Area Officially Opens

Families celebrated the official opening of the new play area at Ash Recreation Ground on July 18th. Environmentally friendly goodie bags for young people and bucks fizz for the grown-ups helped to mark the successful completion of one of the council's most significant community projects in recent years.



The new play area has been designed specifically for older children, aged approximately 8 to 14 years, complementing the existing facilities for younger children.

The £105,000 project features inclusive swings, an accessible roundabout and climbing equipment.



The play area has been funded through a combination of Section 106 developer contributions, Parish Council reserves and grants from the Jack Foat Trust, Frank Kingsland Trust and the Cartwright Godfrey & Kelsey Charity.



Peter and Ian Chandler representing the charities officially opened the new area with parish council chairman, John Tanner.

The Parish Magazine welcomes articles and information from groups and individuals. Share your stories, news and views. Email rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com or post hard copy at 69 The Street, Ash.



Ash Horticultural Society

AUTUMN SHOW

Saturday 19th September

Classes Open to All

*Photography • Cookery
Flower Arranging
Size & Shape matters*

Ash Village Hall

Entries 8.30 to 10.30am

Show open for viewing from 2.30pm

Refreshments available

Prize giving at 4pm

www.ashhortsoc.org.uk

Onlooker

A report of the Ash Parish Council meeting held on July 2nd

Parish Council Vacancies: Ash Parish Council currently has three councillor vacancies. If you'd like to make a positive difference locally and help shape Ash for future generations, please email clerk@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Councillors must commit to attend one meeting per month and support projects as they arise. You must be 18+, and the council welcomes people from all backgrounds.

Recreation Ground: Play Area 2 is now open for use, marking a major milestone after more than a year of planning. Designed for 8-14 year olds, the new space includes a wide range of physical and interactive play equipment, plus seating areas for relaxing and socialising. Inclusive features ensure children with reduced mobility can join in.

The Council extends sincere thanks to The Jack Foat Trust, Frank Kingsland Trust, and the Cartwright Godfrey & Kelsey Charity, whose generous donations - alongside S106 developer contributions - made the project possible.

Annual inspections of the Recreation Ground and Allotments have been completed. Actions include refreshed safety signage and external repairs to the Pavilion.

Ash Dieback – Tree Safety Works: An Ash tree on the Recreation Ground is showing advanced Ash Dieback. Due to its condition and proximity to people, property, and allotments, it will be reduced to a standing monolith to prevent branch or stem failure.

Although losing trees is regrettable, monoliths provide valuable habitat for birds, bats, invertebrates, fungi and other species reliant on standing deadwood. There are already examples of monoliths on site, including the mature beech near the Pavilion.

Dover District Council – Rural Parking Review: DDC is reviewing funding for free car parks across the district, including Ash's Queens Road (behind the Village Hall) and The Street (next to the public toilets). Both are currently free for up to 24 hours.

Continued over

DDC have agreed to request the following changes for inclusion in DDC's Traffic Regulation Orders:

1. Single Yellow Lines (Mon–Sat, 8.30–17.30) with added blips on The Street to remove loading rights during these hours. Parking remains permitted outside these times.
2. Double Yellow Lines on The Street and Chequer Inn with double blips, removing loading rights at all times and enabling immediate Penalty Charge Notice enforcement.
3. A loading bay to support deliveries to local businesses.

The aim is to keep the Pound Corner junction clear, reduce bottlenecks, and improve safety

DDC also proposes a 4-hour stay / no return within 2 hours restriction in both car parks (Mon–Sat, 8.30–17.30) to increase daytime turnover while still allowing overnight parking. DDC will make the final decision, and any proposals will go to public consultation.

Public Rights of Way – Proposed Footpath Diversions KCC has received an application to divert Public Footpaths EE85A, EE90 and EE123. The landowner intends to grow crops to the south and undertake waste reclamation to the north, requiring realignment of EE90 and EE123 for equipment installation. EE85A would be diverted northwards to separate walkers from machinery and farm vehicle movements. This is an informal consultation to gauge public response before any legal process begins.

Kent County Council Update KCC Highways consulted on installing a bus stop clearway on Sandwich Road. The Parish Council supports the proposal but has asked to be notified of future highway changes as a courtesy.

Dover District Council Update

- **Small Grants (CPF Trust):** £1,000–£3,000 available for UK charities supporting Arts, Education, Carers, Older People, Early Intervention, Animal Welfare, and Disability. Applications close 30th September.
- **Benchworks – Dover Beacon:** A new flexible workspace for businesses and entrepreneurs will open later this year within the £21million Bench development, forming part of Dover's regeneration.
- **Deal Leisure Centre:** Construction is underway on the new multi-million-pound centre, expected to open Autumn 2027. Facilities

include a 25m pool, gym, studios, splash pad, café, and Changing Places toilet.

- **Dover Dinosaur Day:** Free family event on 5th August, Pencester Gardens, 10am–3pm — giant dinosaurs, dino-facts, crafts and more.

Next Meeting - The Parish Council does not meet in August. Next Full Council: Thursday 3rd September. Contact clerk@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk

Meet Your New Councillor



Terance Dickson

How long have you lived in the parish, and what do you value most about village life here?

My wife and I moved from Sandwich to Ash twelve years ago, looking to find a better environment and a gentler work/life balance. The relative calm we found here goes alongside the tendency for people to greet each other in the streets rather than

their hurrying past as happened in other places we have lived. The environment is pleasant and the village is compact which we like.

Tell us a little about your background and the experience you bring to the Parish Council?

I worked for twenty years in production management for live theatre in the United Kingdom and overseas, with a further twenty making decor for theme parks, museums and venues such as the O2 in Greenwich and Disney in Paris. Those activities gave me extensive experience of employing many kinds of staff, working in the construction industry here and in Europe, responsibility for staff and public safety, dealing with regulatory bodies and being a member of several committees and boards of directors

What motivated you to stand for election as a parish councillor?

Being semi-retired I found time to contribute to local matters. I became aware of the pressing need for people to come forward to serve on the Parish Council. Decisions are made by those who show up, so I realised it was time to give something back and step up.

Continued over

In your view, what are the three most important issues currently facing the parish? The parish is feeling a number of pressures, and each resident will have a view on what those are, But all know the principal matters of concern: poor transport links, too few shops, population growth putting pressure on health, education and related services. Add in the ongoing and common concerns over traffic flows, street maintenance and you have a long job list. Your Parish Council does not control all of those matters but it can sometimes influence the decisions that affect you. And you can influence your Parish Council's input. It's as simple as contacting your Councillors. We all have email addresses.

Do you have a favourite place in the parish that you like to walk or be? Having written this I am about to visit my favourite place in the parish, which is the Recreation Ground. People may recognise me, and our little dog, Bella, as we enjoy bumping into people on our walks there. You may also have seen Bella and I watering our allotment right by the fence.

Not Just for Books

The newly refreshed Ash Library was celebrated in July with tea, cakes and coffee.

New chairs, layout and brighter interior have all been part of the refresh and Kent County Council's library team would like to hear from anyone with ideas for using the space from Lego clubs, chess, games, Scrabble or crafts.



The library already hosts a regular Baby Rhyme Time on Monday midday - 12:30pm.

Ash Summer Fayre Returns

After a 24-year break, the Ash Carnival Summer Fayre made a joyful return, bringing the community together for a fantastic day of music, dance, entertainment and family fun at the Recreation Ground.

Highlights included the crowning of Ash Little Prince Lucah and Ash Little Princess Dolcie-Mai, performances by local groups including Eastry Dance Club, a lively line dance flash mob led by Pauline Marsh and Jan Anton, and a special reunion between former Miss Ash Janine Eve and Sir Roger Gale, who crowned her at the Millennium Carnival. Eastry Dance Club entertained in the central arena showcasing the talents of their young performers. Vinyl Cover provided excellent musical accompaniment throughout the afternoon.



Photo of Prince and Princess by Alun Sambrook



Ash Wildlife Friendly Village

Bird Survey Success

This summer's swift surveys have been a real delight, with some wonderful sightings across the village. On several occasions, residents were treated to the spectacular sight of more than 20 swifts in their energetic "screaming parties" - one of the true sounds of summer.

The surveys also uncovered a previously unrecorded swift nesting site, which has now been added to the national Swift Mapper. A house martin nest was also identified and recorded on the House Martin Mapper.

Recording the locations of these increasingly rare birds is an important part of helping to protect them. Across south-east England, house martin numbers have fallen by around 80% over the last 30 years - a decline mirrored by swifts. By mapping their nesting sites, we can better conserve existing colonies and support opportunities for them to expand.

Help Keep Ash Wildlife Friendly

Ash Wildlife Friendly Village has been inspired by the fantastic efforts of volunteers in Margate, who worked together to persuade Kent County Council not to spray glyphosate weedkiller in their community. Glyphosate can pose serious risks to wildlife and the wider environment, and there are safer, more nature-friendly ways to manage weeds.

Why not join us for a community weed removal morning using environmentally friendly methods?

Saturday 1st August

10-11am

The Quicks (alley between Chequer Lane and Queens Road)

Citizen Science Month Returns This August

Citizen Science Month is back from 1st August, and we're looking forward to discovering even more of the wonderful wildlife that calls Ash home.

Last year was a fantastic success, with 33 submissions, many containing multiple wildlife records. Together, you recorded bats, beetle larvae, butterflies, birds and many other fascinating species from across the village.

Every record was sent to the Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre, where the information helps support conservation, planning, education and scientific research.

This year let's make it even bigger. Every sighting counts - each observation helps build a better picture of Ash's rich biodiversity.

If you'd like to take part, now is the perfect time to download the iNaturalist app and join the Ash Wildlife Friendly Village project. It's the easiest way to record your sightings, and your observations will contribute directly to national wildlife records.

If you would like a physical record sheet email
ashwildlifevillage@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting biodiversity in Ash.



Ash Wildlife Friendly Village



Citizen Science Month!

Discover nature in Ash

**This August, help record the wildlife around us.
every observation matters.**

-  Record bird song
-  Photograph insects and butterflies
-  Spot plants and wildflowers
-  Observe birds and animals



*Take part wherever you find nature - in
gardens, parks, streets, fields, and hedgerows. ♡*

 **Ash Wildlife Friendly Village group**  **Ash WFV**

Ash Heritage Group

From Field to Table – Ash Through the Ages is a self-guided walk building on the success of last year's Hidden in Plain Sight events as part of the national Heritage Open Days from September 11th-20th.

From Field to Table is an invitation to explore the lives and trades that fed a village. Learn about some of the people, buildings and sites within the heart of Ash that formed a key part of everyday village life including bakers, butchers, grocers and publicans.

Discover how everyday life was shaped by the essential trades that kept the village running. From the rhythms of farming and harvest to the skill of baking bread, preparing meat, stocking shelves and serving in the local pub, this event traces the journey of food and community from field to table.

To bring the story to life, there is a self-guided QR trail around the village, explore a dedicated exhibition in the Heritage Centre (Saturdays only). A souvenir booklet will also be available to purchase.

Country Thoughts

How good it was to walk on the mown pathways through the hay meadows recently. It was heartwarming to see the vigorous growth of the Black Poplar sapling – grown from the churchyard tree – so sadly chopped down. It will hopefully make another magnificent tree one day.

What a well-conceived plan by David Downs to give the village access to open areas at all seasons of the year and to make a buffer zone between all the cultivated land we are surrounded by now and to make a small breathing space in which wildlife, plants, trees, birds and animals can flourish.

In a world which is just becoming so over-populated it is our good fortune to have the Jack Foat conservation area to enjoy.

*Thankful Walker,
Name and Address Supplied to the Editor*

News from the Belfry

Summer

In early May we opened the tower during the Bank Holiday Art Exhibition that took place in the church. The weather was kind but we didn't have as many visitors as in previous years. This may be because the tower seems to be requested to open more often. It may have lost its appeal.

On Ascension Day there was a short 8am service from the top of the tower and to celebrate the King's Official birthday, the tower was open during the party afternoon.

The last few weeks the hot weather has made it very hot in the belfry and very hot for ringing! Our two fans and two windows have just about made it bearable up in the ringing room. Two Fridays ago however I did cancel our practice as the temperature was in the mid 30s.

We continue to practice Fridays from 4pm until 5.30/6pm. On Sunday mornings we are blessed with around 10 ringers in the belfry. It beats the 3 maybe 4 pre our recruitment in 2023.

Our new ringers do most of the easy ringing and if there are enough of the more experienced ringers we do try to ring a nice service touch before we put the bells to bed.

Mondays we have our more advance practice. Eastry is our planned place but at the moment work continues in the church and ringing had been put on hold. In the interim we are using Preston bells and meet up at 10.30 until 12noon. Those at this practice are learning more complicated ringing than on Fridays and it's enjoyed by all that attend. Very often you can find us in Juliet's on the way home. We are now into wedding season at Preston and there may be a few Mondays that we are unable to ring there so you might hear us at Ash instead.

We have been delighted to welcome our youngest bell ringer who was one of those who took the tour in May.

The progress from climbing the tower at the beginning of May and now has already got our young person ringing a bell unaccompanied. What a delight and an achievement.

Marilyn Barden and the Ash Clang

Ash Tennis and Pickleball Club

How lucky are we to have two lovely tennis courts, also marked up for Pickleball, located in our wonderful Ash Recreation Ground.

Membership of the Club is very reasonable, starting at just £35 per year (adult), £55 (couple), £65 (family). And there's also the option to "pay and play" if that suits you better.

If you've been in the park on a Tuesday evening recently you may have noticed some energetic activity on the tennis courts!

We're extremely lucky that Steve, a Level 3 LTA Coach, has moved to our area and he's offering individual coaching, group coaching and – the noisy bit – Cardio Tennis!

Cardio Tennis is a high-energy group workout that mixes tennis with nonstop music – no matches or scoring – just continuous movement (running, shuffling, hitting). It's great fun and is open to all skill and levels as cardio tennis is about fitness, not tennis technique.

Following this session, on a Tuesday evening, Steve provides Group Tennis Coaching. These sessions are social and fun, with an emphasis on drills and variety, and are extremely cost-effective at just £5 per session for Club Members.

In addition to all this we have Tennis Club night on a Thursday evening and Pickleball Club night on a Monday evening. Pickleball is a mixture of tennis, table tennis and squash and we're lucky enough to be able to play it on our tennis courts. Guided / coached play sessions are on offer throughout the summer at various dates and times, which are free for members and £5 for non-members.

Our village Tennis and Pickleball Club is an active, friendly club with opportunities for players of all skill levels. Get in touch to find out more or join us at clubspark.lta.org.uk/AshLawnTennisClub or ashkenttennisclub@gmail.com

We look forward to welcoming you!

Julie Daly, Ash Tennis and Pickleball Club Secretary

Ash Horticultural Society

Autumn Show

The Autumn Show takes place on Saturday 19th September at Ash Village Hall.

This year's Open Classes are open to all, so whether you are a member or not, why not have a go? There are classes to suit a range of interests, including:

- Photography
- Cookery
- Flower Arranging
- Size & Shape Matters

It's a great opportunity to showcase your talents, share your creativity and enjoy some friendly village competition.

Entries should be brought to the hall between 8.30am and 10.30am, with judging starting at 10.30am. The show will open for everyone to view the exhibits from 2.30pm. Refreshments will be available, and the prize giving will take place at 4pm.

The deadline for free entries is Friday 18th September at 2pm.

For full details of the classes, rules and cups to be awarded, visit:
www.ashhortsoc.org.uk

Rose Show

Members met in the lovely garden of Val and Maggie McCulloch in Cop Street, for our Annual Rose Show. On a very warm and sunny evening, we were able to relax in the welcome shade from the very tall trees and to enjoy the beautiful flower borders.

With the recent heatwave and even a wind storm earlier in the week, very few members had any decent roses remaining! Even though the entries were somewhat diminished, we still had a very nice display; mostly of the Floribunda type.

Our President Christine Brown carried out the judging and then members were asked to rank the entries according to Smell and Appearance – using lolly sticks and Duplo blocks to indicate their choices.

The winners were as follows:

Class I – Hybrid Tea Rose

1. Helen Higginson
2. Sarah Moulden
3. Gary Bradbury

Class II – Floribunda Rose

1. Carol Harris-Deans
2. Kim Mallinson
3. Sarah Moulden

Class III – Species Rose

1. Sarah Needen

Class IV – Specimen Rose

1. Helen Higginson
2. Sarah Moulden
3. David Moulden

Class VI – Sweet Peas

1. Lyn Gambrell
2. Ray Gambrell
3. Helen Higginson

Members Choice: Best Rose for Appearance and Smell: Helen Higginson with Chandos Beauty.

The overall winners of the Rose Classes were:

1. Helen Higginson
2. Sarah Moulden
3. = Carol Harris Deans & Sarah Neden

So, the President presented the Rose Cup to Helen Higginson.

We all spent a very pleasant evening, and we gave our vote of thanks to Val and Maggie for hosting the event!

Gary Bradbury



Friends of Elmstone and Preston Churches

St Mildred's

July Family Service: At the well-attended service, we welcomed and congratulated Anne Talbert on becoming our newly ordained Priest. During the service, as well as the usual colouring and sticker activities for children, they planted mustard and cress seeds to celebrate an aspect of "growing", the theme of the service.

Elmstone Church

Happy Hours: The next two dates are Fridays 7th August and 4th September, from 6.30pm, on Church Meadow, weather permitting, otherwise in the church. Everyone is welcome.

Our Services for August

1st Sunday – 2nd August - Holy Communion, Elmstone, 10.30am

2nd Sunday – 9th August - Family Service, Preston, 10.30am (with Baptism and Communion)

3rd Sunday – 16th August - Holy Communion, Elmstone, 10.30am

Refreshments are normally served after all our morning Services.

Elizabeth Timms

The Arts Society Sandwich

Following a busy and enjoyable summer, The Arts Society Sandwich is delighted to return to the Guildhall, Sandwich, on the first Monday of each month from September to continue its popular 2026 programme of illustrated lectures.

Members have enjoyed a lively programme of summer events, including a glamorous James Bond-themed Summer Supper in July, followed by a delightful garden party and a special garden visit in August. Now the focus turns once again to an inspiring series of evening talks presented by leading experts in their fields.

Lectures are held in the Guildhall, Sandwich. Doors open at 6.30pm for refreshments, with the one-hour lecture beginning at 7.00pm.

This autumn's programme includes:

- Monday 7th September – The Women's Orchestra of Auschwitz: A Story of Survival and Music with Anne Sebba
- Monday 5th October – Vincent in Ramsgate: Van Gogh in England with Jacqui Ansell
- Monday 2nd November – Carry On Up the Khyber: Movies and the End of an Empire with Colin Shindler

Visitors are always welcome. Guest admission is £7 (cash on the door), or a bag of three guest tokens can be purchased for £18 - an ideal way to sample the Society's varied programme before becoming a member.

Vicki Bates

Sandwich History Society

Meetings are held at Sandwich Guildhall at 6.30 for 7pm. £5 for non-members at the door.

The inaugural John Drury Lecture in honour of the mayor of Sandwich slain in the great attack of 1457.

10th September: The Church under Charles II: conformity, controversy and St Clement's Sandwich – Professor Emeritus Kenneth Fincham will show how an intolerant religious settlement in the early 1660s did not confer peace and stability, with a sizeable body of protestant dissenters rejecting the newly modelled Church of England.

Vividly reported disputes in St Clement's Sandwich in the early 1680s illustrate these tensions within church and society.

8th October: The Wrong Side of Independence: Loyalists and the American Revolution - Dr. Ben Marsh addresses a much-overlooked portion of the American population who – for often very different reasons – opted to remain loyal to the Crown and suffered many consequences during the ruptures that led to the creation of the United States of America.

12th November: The Buffs at the Somme – Innocence Lost - Dr. Martin Watts talk explores the strategy and tactics behind the Allies' 1916 summer offensive, and how events across the Western Front shaped their evolution.

The battle is told through the experiences of officers and men of The Buffs (East Kent Regiment) and The Queen's Own (Royal West Kent Regiment) revealing how the tragedy of the Somme steeled Britain's determination to fight on as the era of total war began.

www.sandwichhistorysociety.org.uk

Mike Vaile

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Think You Know Age Concern Sandwich?

When people hear the name Age Concern Sandwich, they sometimes think they already know what we are. They picture somewhere quiet. Somewhere formal. Somewhere you only go if you “need help” or have reached a certain stage in life. But spend a little time here, and you will quickly realise that is only a very small part of the story.

Age Concern Sandwich is a friendly, lively and welcoming place at the heart of the community. It is somewhere to meet people, enjoy good food, try something new, have a laugh, and feel part of something. For many of our visitors, it is simply a great place to spend time.

Our regulars come for all sorts of reasons. Some pop in for coffee and a catch-up. Some come for lunch with friends. Others join in with activities, exercise classes, talks, groups and events. Some enjoy a quiet half hour with a snack, while others are very happy to settle in for a cheeky glass of wine or beer and a good chat.

And why not? Life does not suddenly become less fun because you have passed 50, 60, 70 or beyond. In fact, many people find themselves with a little more time to enjoy the things they did not always have time for before.

That is where we come in. At Age Concern Sandwich, there is no pressure to “join” anything or fit into a certain mould.

During the summer, our courtyard garden becomes one of our favourite spaces. It's the kind of place where conversations start easily, familiar faces appear, and the day feels that little bit brighter.

Of course, support is still an important part of what we do. We are here for people when they need advice, reassurance, practical help, companionship or a friendly face. That will always matter. But Age Concern Sandwich is not only about support in difficult times; it is also about making everyday life better, more connected and more enjoyable.

So, if you have ever thought, “That place isn't for me,” we would gently suggest popping in and seeing for yourself.

Suzanne Winham

Garden Jottings for August

Who knows when the rain will come. We have had such a prolonged extremely hot dry period. It is so sad to see flowers and plants which have taken so much time and effort to grow, plant and nurture and vegetables which should be at their most productive at this time shrivelling up.

Try to combat this by reusing any “grey water” that you can and use it only on special items, particularly newly planted ones. Mulch with grass clippings (if you have any!) around plants and shrubs. Lawns hopefully will soon recover, as they always do, given a shower of rain, eventually. Even if the lawn is not growing very much, keep the edges trimmed – these always seem to grow regardless and become unkempt and shaggy!

Always water late in the evening as the ground will have more time to absorb moisture before sunrise and always “double water” your pots.

Think about placing plants where they will thrive best. Some species will survive regardless of scarcity of water – Geraniums, Marigolds, Petunias, Antirrhinums and Gazanias will stand prolonged arid periods if you dead head and trim away any dead leaves, stems and plants which are becoming long and straggly. It will prolong the flowering season and improve the overall look of the garden. A few Rudbeckias, Zinnias and Nicotiana that you have grown on recently can be planted in any bare spaces. Pot grown Fuchsias and Dahlias are useful to place in the border near where Lupins and Delphiniums have been cut right back to, hopefully, encourage some later blooms.

Cut back early Summer shrubs such as Philadelphus and Deutzia, taking out all the old flowering stems from the former and remove some old branches from the base. Lilac blooms should be carefully removed, if you can access them, and any spindly, dry and dead branches can be removed to make a tidy neat shape.

Lift and divide Flag Iris plants, remove old, woody or wrinkled rhizomes and keeping one set of leaves on each section of root, cut the leaves to a short fan shape and replant incorporating some blood fish and bone meal or Growmore when you plant them on top of a narrow, raised hump, spreading the roots down the sides, leaving the rhizome on the surface as they like to be baked in the sun when growing.

Plant Lilies and Crown Imperials now, remembering to mark the place to avoid spearing them with a fork when tidying the border. Disbud Dahlias and Chrysanthemums to give larger blooms for cutting. Just remove the two smaller buds and any lower buds from around the central flower. Take cuttings of Pentstemons and Gaillardias. Place cuttings in a polythene bag when gathering to keep them fresh. Take away any leaves from the base of the stem then trim to 3-4 inches cutting underneath a leaf node. Insert these cuttings around the side of small pots of free-draining soil and label.

Cut back Lavendar as the flowers fade but not down to the old wood as it will not regrow successfully from there. Take a few stems for cuttings and from Rosemary Weigelia and Escallonia at the same time. Insert them into pots of 50/50 compost and sharp sand mix. Water all cuttings thoroughly. Keep your cuttings together in pots until Spring. This ensures they have all rooted. To be sure of this later, you should see fine roots appear around the holes underneath the pots. Keeping them in this way saves room if you only have a small greenhouse or even only a conservatory or frost-free porch to keep them over Winter. Geraniums and Fuchsia are also good subjects to take cuttings from successfully.

Cut down Summer fruiting raspberries, taking out old brown stems, saving the new green ones to grow on for next year. Tidy up strawberry beds taking off all the old leaves, take some runners (long stems sprouting from the plant) and peg these down into small pots or the ground where they will quickly take root then they can be severed from the parent plant to make new young ones. Strawberry plants should be replaced gradually over 3-4 years in this way discarding old woody ones.

Keep feeding tomatoes weekly, pinch out any side shoots and tie in the plants securely to canes as they become heavy with fruit. Water freely the same way a runner and dwarf beans. These need to be picked frequently to ensure continuing of cropping.

Onions can be harvested when the growth has turned over onto the soil and gone yellow. Loosen them from the soil, carefully ease them up and leave them to dry on the surface. Keep them somewhere warm and dry to finish the drying process. You can plait them into a rope or store them in old tights or net bags in a cool dark place.

If your perennial Geraniums have become very tall, dry and tatty, it is good practice, though it seems drastic, to cut the old growth down to the

ground. It is amazing how quickly they will recover with a new flush of fresh leaves and maybe some flowers.

As this is traditionally holiday time, try to move any pots into the shade and place them on saucers after soaking them well, if it is possible. A plastic bottle with a drip feed nozzle can be filled with water to slowly irrigate any large pots that cannot be moved. Cut back herbs and cut-and-come-again salad leaves as they will have regrown on your return. Dead head as much of the garden removing (if you can bear to) any open flowers.

Keep an eye on ponds. Keep the water level up and remove blanket weed by twiddling it round a stick or twig and removing and dead leaves. Add the weed and debris to the compost bin along with dead flowers, kitchen waste and weeds with layers of grass cuttings and newspaper, egg boxes or cardboard shredded up. Any docks or bindweed should be burnt but nettles, like comfrey, can be used to make a liquid feed by soaking either of them in a bucket of water for a few weeks, then straining out the remaining noxious smelling liquid before diluting and using to feed crops and plants.

Cut down wildflower meadow or wild lawn areas. Shake seeds from Poppies, Cornflowers and tall Dog Daisies and leave for a while to dry. Finally gather the hay and add to the compost heap. Remaining seeds will germinate in the Spring, when you can also add small wildflower plants to the area.

To pick flowers from the garden, take them with long stems in the early morning and place them in a deep bucket of water along with some foliage to enhance the blooms. A small vase of simple annuals or Sweet Peas will bring colour and perfume to the home. A small posy would make a welcome gift to a housebound person or take some soft fruit of which we always seem to have surplus in the Summer, though berries, apples and rhubarb all successfully freeze to use in the Winter.

Most of all at this time of year, enjoy your garden – take a walk round in the cool of the evening and take stock of areas you can improve next year and add notes to your calendar to remind you to plant bulbs and indeed look to buy them in the next few months.

Christine Brown, President, Ash Horticultural Society

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