

# Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council



March 2026

Serving the local communities of Ash, Hodsoll Street, New Ash Green and Ridley

## Children's Centre Consultation Update

Residents received a public consultation form through their doors last month, and many will also have seen it shared online. We would like to extend a sincere thank-you to everyone who took the time to complete the consultation. The Parish Council had a higher than national average response on this consultation. Every response is important and helps the Parish Council gain a clearer understanding of what matters most to parishioners. The results of the consultation showed strong levels of support:

- 84% of respondents support the Parish Council purchasing the building for community use in principle
- 70% supported the approximate increase in the precept required to enable the purchase
- 81% felt there is a clear need for a dedicated community building in the parish
- 79% believe it is important for the community to retain this building



Following this valuable feedback, the Parish Council has now submitted an offer to the NHS for the purchase of the former Children's Centre and we are currently awaiting their response. We will continue to keep residents updated on progress through future bulletins and via our social media channels.

## Parish Precept

The Parish Council has set the precept for the coming financial year, which includes an increase of 33.58. For a band D property this represents an additional 63p per week. This increase enables us to continue delivering essential community services and to respond to priorities residents raised during our recent public consultation regarding the purchase of the Children's Centre. The Parish Council has also taken proactive steps to expand services for young people. From April 2026, we will be funding new centre-based Youth Clubs each week. The increased precept allows the Parish Council to continue providing and, in some cases, expand the following valued services:

- Sponsorship of the Community Warden
- Purchase and running of the Children's Centre
- Delivery of youth activities at Easter, Summer and Christmas
- Lunch Club sessions for local residents over 60
- Management and maintenance of Northfield Open Space (jointly with Hartley PC)
- Care and upkeep of the Parish Burial Ground and Memorial Garden
- Maintenance of the Hodsoll Street play area and surrounding green spaces
- Maintenance of Ash War Memorial and the surrounding green spaces.
- Provision of small grants to local community groups
- Operation of the Ash Green Sports Centre and Gym
- Launch of the new weekly Youth Clubs from April 2026



We fully appreciate that any rise in household costs is unwelcome. This decision was made only after careful consideration of the current needs of the community and our commitment to maintaining and improving the services we provide. With continued devolution, increasing pressure is put on the Parish Council's to maintain services previously provided by senior councils. Should you have any questions please contact the Parish Council Office.

## Local Government Reorganisation Consultation - Closes 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026

The UK Government has launched a major public consultation on how local councils across Kent and Medway should be organised in the future. This is the biggest proposed change to local government in over 50 years, and residents are being asked for their views before any decisions are made.

Several proposals have been submitted by councils across Kent, including options to replace the current county, district and borough system with new unitary councils. Five different models are included in the consultation, ranging from one single unitary authority for Kent and Medway to various options for three, four, or five unitary councils. The Government consultation is now open, and residents are encouraged to take part.

Your views will help shape how local services such as highways, social care, waste collection, planning, and community services could be organised in the years ahead. The consultation closes on 26 March 2026. Please use the above QR code or visit <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/kent-and-medway/> to fill in the consultation.



**Respond now! Have your say!**

Parish Council Website: [www.ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk)

Parish Office Contact Number: 01474 702760

Email: [enquiries@ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk)

## Obituary - Mike Brown



Michael "Mike" Brown, a long-standing and dedicated member of the Parish Council and New Ash Green Community, passed away on Friday 6 March 2026.

Mike and Pat made New Ash Green their home in 1968.

Many families will remember him from his early days at New Ash Green Primary School where his involvement in the Parent-Teacher Association grew into decades of service as a governor, including many years as Chairman. He also served on the governing bodies of Longfield Comprehensive School and Milestone Academy.

In 1975 Mike was elected to Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council, becoming Chairman in 1977. He held that role until May 2023, giving almost half a century of leadership. Mike's deep knowledge of the parish made him an invaluable presence in every discussion, with his calm manner and gentle humour.

Mike was a familiar sight cycling around the village and the wider parish, enjoying the countryside while stopping to chat with residents. His contributions played an important role in several community projects, including helping to establish Barnfield Park as a formal site for the Gypsy and Traveller community, securing Northfield as a 65-acre public open space jointly managed by Ash-cum-Ridley and Hartley Parish Councils, and supporting the addition of a gym at Ash Green Sports Centre in 1996.

After taking early retirement, Mike gained a law degree and later a master's degree. He served as a Magistrate and also sat on school admissions appeal panels.

Above all, Mike will be remembered for his dedication, knowledge and long-standing

commitment to the parish and its residents. We are grateful for everything he gave to our community. He will be greatly missed.

## Police Update - PC Weatherall & PC Collins

Your local officers continue regular patrols around the parish, focusing on anti-social behaviour hotspots. There has been a rise in catapult incidents in New Ash Green. Please keep reporting these and share any CCTV or doorbell footage to help identify those involved.

PC Weatherall recently held a Coffee with a Cop event on 17 February, and the team will be attending various community events over the summer—please do say hello. A Community Behaviour Warning was issued to a local pub following reports of ASB, and licensing checks continue across other venues and shops to prevent underage alcohol sales. Officers are also working with the Intelligence Team regarding properties potentially linked to drug supply. The team sadly dealt with a recent missing person search which resulted in the individual being found deceased. Your beat officers wish to send their sincere condolences to the family at this very difficult time; they understand the individual was held in high regard in the village and will be deeply missed by family, friends and neighbours. Residents with CCTV or doorbell cameras are encouraged to join the Kent Police CCTV Registry:

[www.cctvregistrykentandessex.co.uk](http://www.cctvregistrykentandessex.co.uk) For local policing updates, sign up to My Community Voice: [mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk](http://mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk)



## Highways Issues - An Update

You will have noticed an increase in potholes recently. Continued poor weather, heavy rain and cold temperatures, has made road surfaces worse and has prevented repairs from being carried out. As we move into spring and conditions improve, Kent Highways should be able to make permanent repairs. Residents can report potholes and other highways concerns directly to Kent County Council either online via their website, [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk), or by phone on 03000418181. Reporting issues straight to KCC ensures they are logged and inspected as quickly as possible. The Parish Council works closely with a KCC Highways Officer, our local County Member, Maxine Fothergill, and Parish Councillors through our Highways Improvement Plan (HIP). If residents feel a new highways project is needed, this can be raised with the Parish Council and discussed with KCC to see if it is necessary, feasible and affordable.

## Grant Requests to the Parish Council

Are you part of a community group, charity, or non-profit organisation that benefits residents of Ash-cum-Ridley?

Applications are reviewed twice a year in March and September at the Full Parish Council Meetings. You can view our Grants and Donations Policy and on our website [www.ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk) or please email us to request an application form at [enquiries@ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk)

## Register for Email Bulletin

In our effort to make information more accessible and eco-friendlier, we invite you to consider receiving the bulletin digitally. Simply scan the QR code below with your smartphone's camera or visit <https://forms.gle/kzBLYapfUm9bnDda9> to sign up and receive the bulletin directly to your email inbox.



**Easter Activities at Ash Green Sports Centre**



# Easter Activities

## ASH GREEN SPORTS CENTRE



Please Book to Secure a Place  
<https://app.clubright.co.uk/kidseasteractivities2026>

CHILDREN UNDER 9 YEARS MUST BE SUPERVISED

### Activity Schedule

BOOKING OPENS ON TUESDAY MARCH 24TH AT 9AM

**Monday  
13th April**

**9:30-10:30**  
 Cycle Me Tots 2-5y  
 (beginner)  
 Beaming Stars  
 Gymnastics 10y+

**10:30-11:30**  
 Cycle Me Tots 2-5y  
 (Confident)  
 Beaming Stars  
 Gymnastics 7-9y

**11:30-12:30**  
 Beaming Stars  
 Gymnastics 4-6y

**Tuesday  
14th April**

**Book your Racket sessions all week 9-5  
 Table Tennis, Badminton and Squash**

**Wednesday  
15th April**

**9:30-10:30**  
 Dancing Dots  
 18m-5y  
 Tennis 4-7y

**10:30-11:30**  
 Tennis 8-11y  
 Kids BoxFit 8-11y

**11:30-12:30**  
 Tennis 4-7y  
 Kids BoxFit 12-16y

**Thursday  
16th April**

**9:30-10:30**  
 Dancing Dots  
 18m-5y  
 The Table Tennis  
 Experience 9-11y

**10:30-11:30**  
 The Table Tennis  
 Experience 11y+  
 Football Fun Factory  
 18m-5y

**11:30-12:30**  
 Football Fun Factory  
 6-12y

**Friday  
17th April**

**Book your Racket sessions all week 9-5  
 Table Tennis, Badminton and Squash**

Come and join us this Easter break. We have our £1 activities scheduled for the week of the 13th April. **Bookings will go live on Tuesday 24th March at 9am.** These activities are very popular and enjoyed by many, so please do book early to secure your space.

We also have our popular £1-per-person racket offer, with squash, table tennis and badminton available. This offer is for under-18s, and accompanying adults also pay just £1 each to play. It's a lovely way to spend some time with the kids during the school holidays.

**The Parish Council are also running a Children's Easter Trail and Colouring Competition from the 7th-10th April.** Please come along to Ash Green Sports Centre during those dates to collect a sheet for your children to take part.

For more information and updates on all Easter activities, don't forget to follow our social media pages—we'll be sharing reminders, photos and any last-minute announcements there.

### Free Christmas Family Fun Day

It was so lovely to see so many of you come along and enjoy the Free Family Fun Day. The Parish Council would like to thank our County Councillor Maxine Fothergill for her Grant towards the family fun day.



**New Ash Green South East Ward:** Councillors Roxana Brammer, Jill Clucas, Chris Gorton, Anna Jauch, Mark Manley, Isabel MacLeod

**New Ash Green North West Ward:** Councillors Matt Aspinall (Vice Chair), Carol Clark (Vice Chair), Sarah Hobbs, Shaun Fishenden (Chairman), Pat Kirtley, Vusi Ngwenya

**Ash Ward:** Councillors Jake Scott, George Pender

**Hodsoll Street & Ridley Ward:** Councillors Frank Cottee, Steven Glover

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## Save the Date

### Upcoming Events

19<sup>th</sup> March - 7.45pm

Parish Council Meeting  
Hodsoll Street Village Hall

7<sup>th</sup> April (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday every  
Month) Hi Kent

New ash Green Village Hall

7<sup>th</sup> April - 10<sup>th</sup> April

Parish Council Children's Easter  
Trail

Collect from Ash green Sports  
Centre

13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> April

£1 Children Activities

Ash Green Sports Centre

16<sup>th</sup> April - 7.45pm

Parish Council Meeting

Youth and Community Centre

18<sup>th</sup> April - 10.30am-1.30pm

Woodlands Group Blossom  
Day

The Orchard

19<sup>th</sup> April - 10am-12.30pm

Woodlands Group Bluebell  
Walk

Meet in the Orchard

22<sup>nd</sup> April - 7.30pm

Annual Parish Meeting

Youth and Community Centre

1<sup>st</sup> May - 7.30pm-10.30pm

Woodlands Group Village Barn  
Dance

Village hall

16<sup>th</sup> May 10am-1pm

Woodlands Group Volunteer  
work day

21<sup>st</sup> May - 7.45pm

Parish Council Meeting

New Ash Green Village  
Association Meeting Room

## Mens Pop In Group

*Always here, always welcoming and always listening.*

Just a little reminder that the **Men's Pop in Group is on every Wednesday evening 19.30 - 21.30 at New Ash Green Youth Centre.**

The Men's Pop-In Group is a relaxed, friendly space for men to come together, support each other and simply have some company. You don't need to be struggling or in crisis to attend, sometimes it just helps to have a place to go for a cuppa and chat, meet new people and know there is somewhere you can go if needed. Men often carry a lot alone, and having a supportive space can make a real

difference. Groups like this help ensure no one has to face things on their own.

*Suicide remains the biggest cause of death in men under 50, and around three-quarters of suicide deaths each year are men.*



## Calling for New Trustees for the Youth & Community Centre

Since 1981, the Youth and Community Centre in New Ash Green has been a vital village venue, hosting a wide range of activities including the Scout Group, Luncheon Club, toddler groups, yoga classes, choirs, Little Leaves pre-school, Citizens Advice, Baby Clinic, Youth Clubs, community events and meetings. The Centre is run entirely by volunteers through the registered charity New Ash Green Village Trust and receives no regular external funding. Several long-serving Trustees are stepping down, and help is needed both with governance and practical tasks. The Trust would also welcome anyone with IT, website or fundraising skills. If you would like to help support this important community facility, please contact one of the volunteer Trustees for an informal chat: Dani – 07833 943512 Joe – 01474 874045 John – 07879 607130 Alternatively, call into the Centre on Thursday mornings between 9am and 12pm

## Restore Youth & Community Centre Grounds

The New Ash Green Village Association is coordinating the refurbishment of a previously unused area at the Youth and Community Centre, bringing a valuable community space back into use. NPC Tree Surgery has kindly offered its services as he has had a life long connection to the Youth Centre, and the Village Association would welcome any local tradespeople willing to assist to contact the VA on 01474 872691.

## Parish Council Office Opening Hours

Opening hours to the public:

Monday-Thursday: 9:30am-12pm

Friday - Sunday: CLOSED

## Connect with us on Social Media and visit our Website

## Useful Contact Numbers

Kent County Council	03000 414141
Sevenoaks District Council	01732 227000
Kent Police	999
Kent Police - Non Emergency	111
Community Warden	07811 271259
Village Association	01474 872691
New Ash Green Library	03000 413131
Doctors Surgery	01474 873828
Village Pharmacy	01474 873811
Citizens Advice	0808 2787810
West Kent Mediation	01732 469696
Community Cupboard	07526 823122
Kent Domestic Abuse Service	0808 2000247
Samaritans	116 123
Victim Support	0808 1689111
Childline	0800 1111

**Facebook:** facebook.com/ashcumridleyparishcouncil  
**Instagram:** instagram.com/ashcumridley.parishcouncil  
**Website:** www.ashcumridley-pc.gov.uk or Scan the QR link  
**Follow us for the latest updates and get involved in your community!**

