

NEW ASH GREEN FOCUS GROUP

Minutes of a meeting of the New Ash Green Focus Group held virtually via Teams on Monday 13 January 2025 commencing at 4.00pm.

Present: Cllr S Fishenden – Chairman, Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council
S Brine – New Ash Green Village Association
C Clark –Chapel Wood Residents Society
PC E Collins – Kent Police
Cllr L Manston - Sevenoaks District Council
Sgt K Saville – Kent Police
K Webb – Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit

In Attendance: Mrs A de Jager – Parish Clerk,

1. **Apologies for Absence and Introductions**

L Moylan, Olivers Mill Residents Society, M Palmer – Resident and J West, Community Warden.

2. **Minutes/Actions from of the Meeting of 02 September 2024**

The minutes were received and noted.

3. **Police Update**

Sgt K Saville advised that PC Guest has been on long term sick leave and will resume duties through a phased return. There were no emerging trends from crimes committed. House break ins increased before Christmas and no arrests were made. Burglary other than dwelling and theft of or from vehicles and domestic harassment were all reported. The use of nitrous oxide has started again and a task will be put in place.

PC Collins reported that DNA was recovered from a balaclava used in the Morrisons robbery. People had tried to use the scratchcards that were stolen. PC Collins is forming a list of the locations where nitrous oxide is being used, please report any such locations. C Clark advised that the use of nitrous oxide has not been reducing in the car park near no 1 Capelands. They seem to move around the village, discarding the used cannisters on roadsides. It was reported that there is often use between 9pm and 10 pm in North Square car park. PC Collins will try and attend.

4. **Community Warden & Sevenoaks District Council Update and Local Concerns & Issues**

Community Warden – in the absence of the Community Warden the following report was presented to the meeting.

Life in area has brought some challenges since the last Focus meeting.

The situation re the Warden Service restructure has meant I have retained my warden role within Sevenoaks however this led to geographical changes.

I thank sincerely the support I have received during this time of uncertainty and change.

Please see some examples of my recent work in area.

On the 26th September I facilitated a meeting at Redlibbets for Professionals to introduce each other and to highlight what each organisation/charity is able to offer our local residents.

There were approximately twelve agencies attending who reported to find the event very helpful and informative.

All agencies shared with each other information relating to their service and supporting literature.

On the 29th October I organised with Imago support an Older Persons Information Event in the NAG Village Hall.

There were many agencies present, and a good footfall of community members attended to obtain information and advice from those in attendance.

I continue to work alongside numerous agencies as well as lone working.

Joint visits have taken place with Kent Police ,Imago and ADSS.

I continue to foster a good relationship with the GP Surgery, Community Cupboard and SDC supporting residents with health and welfare needs.

Signposting and offering practical support where necessary.

In recent months I have supported the Child Centred Policing Team with presentations to local schools including IT Safety and Anti Bullying Awareness.

The Community Hubs in New Ash Green Village Hall on a Tuesday morning continue to be well attended.

As well as being supported with representatives from Imago, Hi Kent Hearing, SDC Heroes Team, SDC Private Sector Housing and ADSS we now have Compaid representatives attending to offer IT Support to those in attendance.

In December, volunteers and I hosted a community party attended by 90 plus residents who had the opportunity to sing, dance and play musical bingo. It was a lovely atmosphere with lots of positive feedback from those in attendance.

Community Safety Unit

The Community Safety Unit is working well liaising with Jackie West and other community groups and agencies. A tea-dance was held in November linked in with Compaid providing digital inclusion for older residents and Citizens Advice promoting Pension Credit. Head in the Game had been successful in encouraging people with mental health to play sports, a badminton programme is held at Ash Green Sports Centre. The Strategic Action Plan had identified seven priorities to focus on:

- Safeguarding (including Mental Health, Prevent, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), Vulnerable Adults and Protecting Children
- Business Crime
- Serious and Acquisitive Crime
- Drug and County Lines
- Violence against Women & Girls
- Domestic Abuse including Stalking & Harassment
- Anti-Social Behaviour

5. **Agency & Resident Society Updates**

No reports

6. **Local Concerns & Issues**

- ASB locations and issues – no reports.
- Graffiti – no reports
- Parking - no reports.
- Youth Provision – no report.
- Neighbourhood Watch – no report.
- Other Issues – No reports

7. **Other Matters for Discussion**

1. Cllr L Manston suggested the need for a litter bin in North Square Car Park – a request will be made to the managing agents.
2. Cllr L Manston noted that an article in the newspaper stated that a drug dealer from New Ash Green had been jailed for 2 years and 3 months .

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

The dates of the next meetings were set for 14 April 2025, 14 July 2025 and 13 October 2025 at 2pm, via Teams.

The meeting closed at 4.21pm

Signed:

Date: