

NEW ASH GREEN FOCUS GROUP

Minutes of a meeting of the New Ash Green Focus Group held virtually via Teams on Monday 02 September 2024 commencing at 2.00pm.

Present: Cllr S Fishenden – Chairman, Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council
C Clark –Chapel Wood Residents Society
Cllr M Lindop – Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr L Manston - Sevenoaks District Council
L Moylan – Over Minnis Residents Society
K Webb – Sevenoaks District Council Community Safety Unit

In Attendance: Mrs A de Jager – Parish Clerk,

1. **Apologies for Absence and Introductions**

Cllr A Jauch – Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council, Sgt K Saville – Kent Police, J West, Community Warden and M Richards – Spring Cross Residents Society.

2. **Minutes/Actions from of the Meeting of 13 May 2024**

The minutes were received and noted.

3. **Community Warden Update**

In the absence of Jackie West, Community Warden, the following report prepared by Jackie was read to the meeting.

My time in area has been very varied and consists of many aspects of the warden objectives.

My work has involved individual support as well as facilitating events for residents to attend and take part in.

I continue to liaise with the other key agencies including the CSU, SDC Private Sector Housing Team, Heros Team at SDC, Live Well Kent, Community Cupboard, NHS Talking Therapy Service, Community Catalyst Service, ADSS, Imago, GP Surgery and others. I have conducted numerous home visits to those needing bespoke support and guidance.

One example of support to an individual resident working alongside another agency involved visiting a resident whose boiler had been condemned and the cost of a replacement was beyond her financial means. I made numerous home visits to her and referred her to the SDC Private Sector Housing Team who were able to support her with emergency heaters and the replacement of her boiler which brought about much needed comfort.

I have referred numerous people to our Thursday CAB sessions available within the Youth and Community Centre which has been an invaluable resource to many going through difficult times or needing a steer on matters they are needing specialised guidance regarding.

I recently met with representatives from the local policing team to look at local concerns that had been raised with younger people's behaviours and have liaised with local Primary Schools to look at attending school assemblies in the new school year.

The Community Hub on a Tuesday morning continues to be vibrant and well attended and I have now secured the attendance of the Hero Team from SDC at each meeting as well as continuing with Hi Kent Hearing charity to meet the needs of those in attendance needing NHS hearing aid maintenance.

We have also had visits from Kent Fire and Rescue Service, SDC Private Sector Housing, Imago and ADSS since the last Focus Group meeting. The Carers and Memory Café has also been very well supported and the two Care Homes who attend together at the Café are now sharing a Quiz challenge between themselves visiting each other's home in order to take possession of the Winners' Cup.

Its all become very competitive!!

None of these links would have happened without their attendance at the Hubs in New Ash Green.

At the Memory and Carers Café we now have a monthly representation from ADSS our local Dementia Charity and Imago who support Care Navigation.

Their attendance allows for residents to access support and advice locally which for some is vital.

At the end of April, the Simply Singing Group who meet monthly were in a position to hold a Showcase Concert for residents to attend.

It was deemed a lovely experience for all, and we look forward to hosting another event in the Spring.

None of these activities on a Tuesday morning could take place without the amazing support from volunteers who give of their time to attend and support those residents in attendance.

Their energy and enthusiasm are amazing.

On the 16th of July in conjunction with Longfield Academy myself and a group of residents attended the school to take part in a Coffee Morning with games/singing/bingo and a quiz.

It is a twice-yearly intergenerational event that always brings about such a positive response from residents, all of whom attend the Hubs together.

On the 30th July myself and volunteers hosted a party for all of those who attend the Community Hubs which was attended by approximately eighty residents. The tea coffee and cake were flowing as was the community spirit.

Two upcoming events I am facilitating are on the 4th September I have arranged for local charities/organisations to come together as professionals and share information with each other at Redlibbets Golf Course.

I feel it is important for those of us who work together within the Sevenoaks District supporting wellbeing have a clear understanding of our roles and what each organisation provides for residents.

Lastly on the 29th of October I am alongside Imago facilitating an Older Persons Event in New Ash Green Village Hall whereby I have invited numerous organisations to attend and share information/advice with all of those who wish to attend.

Thankyou for your support to me in my Warden role.

Cllr S Fishenden gave an update on the status of the Community Warden and advised that one of the Parish Councils involved in a partnership to sponsor a Warden has withdrawn their involvement and a further meeting will be held in November/December to see if this can be taken forward.

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

Daily tasking meetings continue to be held and are found to be of value by all agencies involved. Antisocial behaviour reports were low over the summer. Calls regarding behaviour of young people in the Shopping Centre were received and warning letters have been sent out and home visits made with positive responses. Prevent training will be held in October due to the upsurge in terror/counter terror reports. This training will be arranged by the Community Safety Unit and is available

to members of the Focus Group. Funding has been confirmed to deliver classes in Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge to combat violence against women and girls. If more funding can be found, this may be able to be extended to rural areas. Funding for supporting a mental health programme, Head in the Game, has been agreed and tennis and badminton sessions will be held at Ash Green Sports Centre starting on 16 September 2024. The Family Fun Day held on The Minnis was well attended and good feedback received. Vehicle crime has been set as a priority with an increase in the theft of high end vehicles with keyless ignitions. A question regarding the monitoring of the nitrous oxide gas use and associated litter was asked as the use does not appear to be diminishing, however, these incidents are not being reported to the Police or Community safety unit.

5. **Agency & Resident Society Updates**

Chapel Wood – parking on Chapel Wood Residents Society continues to present problems.

Over Minnis – the KCC consultation on the implementation of double yellow lines is current, however, none of the houses along North Ash Road were aware of this proposal.

6. **Local Concerns & Issues**

Cllr L Manston reported that she had seen discussions on social media regarding the arrest of a resident on suspicion of paedophilia. Cllr Manston also advised that a newspaper article stated that three people had been imprisoned for drug offences and one of them was resident in New Ash Green.

7. **Other Matters for Discussion**

None

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was set for 13 January 2025 at 4pm, via Teams.

The meeting closed at 2.34pm

Signed:

Date: