

ASHFORD

Issue 19 | Winter 2022

FOR YOU

YOUR BOROUGH, YOUR MAGAZINE

COST OF LIVING FOCUS

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HM THE QUEEN REMEMBERED

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Welcome



Welcome to the winter edition of *Ashford For You*, an issue which is tinged with sadness as we pause to reflect on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and to recognise her enduring close ties with the borough and people of Ashford.

We focus on the tireless work of our town twinning association as they continue to foster close links with communities across the water in France, Germany and the USA – and pay tribute to association stalwart Mike Bennett who passed away during a recent visit to Fougères.

The cost of living crisis is never far from the headlines at the moment and in a four-page special report we examine how Ashfordians can get help this winter. Our wide-ranging feature includes energy saving advice, tips on making ends meet and signposting on where you can turn to for more help, guidance on safeguarding your wellbeing and more.

I had the immense pleasure to attend the Council's Platinum Jubilee Civic Awards at Chart Hills Golf Club, where we recognised and celebrated the hard work and dedication of individuals who have enriched the lives of others in their community, who have made significant achievements or who have acted as role models for our residents. I found it a humbling experience to be in the inspiring company of wonderful people who have done so much good for their communities, and we spotlight their achievements in this edition.

Finally, many thanks to the 700-plus readers who entered our competitions to win fantastic prizes in the autumn edition. If you didn't win, don't forget to enter our new competitions on page 22 – there are some terrific prizes waiting to be won by a few lucky residents!

Tracey Kerly

Tracey Kerly
Chief executive, Ashford Borough Council

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Get in touch!

To comment on this magazine, to tell us what you'd like to see more of and maybe to submit an article of your own:

Email: media@ashford.gov.uk (subject line NEWS) or

Write to: Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL

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Customer Services

Email: customer.care@ashford.gov.uk or call: 01233 331111 or write to us at the above address.

Find your borough councillor: www.ashford.gov.uk/councillors

Please note: For current information on the Civic Centre opening hours and face-to-face appointments please visit: www.ashford.gov.uk/contact-us/get-in-touch-another-way



Our Customer Services, IT and Digital Strategy 2022 has been approved, outlining how we will develop our services digitally and put customers at the heart of the services we provide. Visit www.ashford.gov.uk/digital-strategy.

Holocaust Memorial Day is 27 January 2023, the day when we remember the millions of people who were murdered in the Holocaust as a result of Nazi persecution and the genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The theme for 2023 is 'Ordinary People', symbolising the ordinary people who let genocide happen, and the ordinary people who were persecuted. Visit www.ashford.gov.uk/holocaust-memorial-day.

Our Planning department has moved to a new cloud-based system which includes a powerful search tool as well as a bespoke Consultee Portal specifically for statutory consultees to get quick and easy access to planning applications they have been consulted on. To search, view and comment on applications, see our webpage which has advice and FAQs, www.ashford.gov.uk/application-search-help.

Do you work where food is prepared, cooked or served? Are you looking to work in the industry and want to boost your qualifications? The one-day Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Foundation Food Hygiene course is for you and covers introduction to food safety, contamination, food storage, personal hygiene, food handler responsibilities and more. Delivered by the Council, each course runs from 9am-5pm and is held at the Civic Centre, costing £48 per person. Visit www.ashford.gov.uk/food-hygiene-training.

College expansion

It's an exciting time of expansion at Ashford College, with building work on its second phase now underway. Phase 2 will see the campus' extension and allow 250 extra students each year to enjoy the quality education on offer there. The new wing will provide cutting edge facilities for those looking to study Business, IT, and Engineering, particularly enhancing the teaching of the Government's T Level qualifications.



Photo ID at polling stations

Did you know that major changes are on the way to how you vote in elections?

The Elections Act 2022 requires voters to show photo ID at polling stations before a ballot paper is issued. This is expected to be in place for elections from May 2023, including the next election of members to Ashford Borough Council on 4 May next year.

If you don't have suitable photo ID then the Act requires local authority Electoral Registration Officers to issue free voter identification documents to eligible residents. This process is expected to start from December 2022.

See the next edition of *Ashford For You* for more details.



New dance and creative hub opens

A new dance studio for internationally renowned organisation Jasmin Vardimon Company has opened in Ashford. The creative hub provides facilities for the company to expand and create its touring productions and rehearsals.

It includes a café and meeting rooms, providing flexible community spaces. The building forms the centre of a major new arts hub, known as the Creative Enterprise Quarter, based on the Henwood Industrial Estate. It is also home to Kent Music, an education charity and lead partner for the Music Education Hub for Kent. Visit www.jasminvardimon.com

Keep Ashford Talking



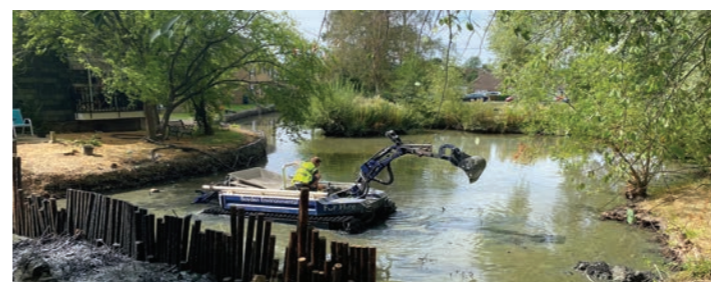
Using funds provided by the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner, the latest phase of the Keep Ashford Talking project from the Ashford Mediation Service (AMS) focuses on two specific audiences – 'disaffected' young people within a school or community setting, and families who live in the more in need neighbourhoods of Ashford.

The aim is to create awareness that AMS is freely available to all to address anti-social behaviour, noise nuisance, boundary issues and more. Visit www.ashfordmediation.co.uk.



Pond clean up

A pond enjoyed by residents of the Cotton Hill House independent living scheme in Hamstreet has been revitalised by the Council. The pond had silted up, leading to shallow water levels, and the lack of rain and high temperatures resulted in algae blooming, harming the fish.



Our Housing team de-silted the pond using a floating mini dredger. Silt was pumped into large bags laid out on the green, and brambles and overgrown banks cut back.

The hot weather and drought hampered the work but the pond is now one metre deeper, much more sunlight hits the water surface, trees are no longer shedding leaves and branches into the water. The nutrient-rich silt has been levelled over the green and reseeded so that in the spring we have a lush new grassy area.

The pond will get more fish donated by a local resident. People have been complimentary, and it's hoped a local community group will help maintain the area for all to enjoy. Next job is build a step-raised decking platform so residents can enjoy the open space and the rejuvenated pond.

Create-ing a storm

October brought music to the forefront in Ashford with the Create Music Village. Artists such as Will Varley, Liv Austin, Eddi Reader and Turin Breaks rocked venues and audiences around the town centre, including Revelation Ashford, Macknade, The Glass House and Coachworks.

Getting in touch over Christmas



If you need to contact us during the festive period, our Christmas and New Year opening schedule at the Civic Centre is:

- * 19-23 December open
- * 24 December – 2 January building closed*
- * 3 January open

For more details including opening hours and how to contact us in an emergency visit www.ashford.gov.uk/christmas-information.

*However our phone lines will be open on 29 and 30 December



Competition winners

A staggering 734 entries were received for our fabulous competitions in the last issue. The winner of the Unita 4 pasta making lesson and dinner for two is Emma Keppler, while Deanna Moran won the champagne tea and stay at the Little Silver hotel. Thanks to everyone who took part – see page 22 for our latest fantastic competitions.



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Ashford remembers

1950 HRH attending the christening of Hon. Michael-John Ulick Knatchbull, the second child of John Ulick Knatchbull and his wife, Patricia Mountbatten. The christening took place on 26 June, 1950 at St. John the Baptist Church, Mersham-le-Hatch.



1957 The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh attending morning service as guests of Lord and Lady Brabourne at St. John the Baptist Church in Mersham, 1957.



Photo courtesy of KM Media Group.

1970 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh with Princess Anne at St Mary the Virgin Church, Ashford, December 1970, to mark the 500th anniversary of the re-building of Ashford Parish Church.



1981 Her Majesty visiting the Army Intelligence Corps in March 1981 at the Templer Barracks in Ashford.



Photo: Kyle Stevenson.

2022 Stevenson Brothers, based in Bethersden, presenting Her Majesty with a special Platinum Jubilee Rocking Horse called 'BARBER SHOP' at Windsor Castle on 12 May 2022.

Over the many glorious years of her reign, Ashford was fortunate to have welcomed Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to the borough on many occasions and here we remember some of those happy Royal visits...

Members and officers of Ashford Borough Council along with residents across our borough shared the sentiments of loss and sorrow felt all over the world at the passing of such an eminent patriot.

Here are some pictures showing how Ashford paid tribute to the person whose life had been devoted to the service of her country, as well as advocating peace and the importance of nations working together.

1. Union Flag flying at half mast outside of Ashford's Civic Centre on the evening of Thursday 8 September.
2. Council Leader Cllr Gerry Clarkson and Chief Executive Tracey Kerly laying the first floral tribute at the Memorial Gardens.
3. Floral tributes left by the community in a designated area of Ashford's Memorial Gardens which was set up by Aspire Landscape Management.
4. Mayor Cllr Mrs Jenny Webb and Leader Cllr Gerry Clarkson reading Ashford's book of condolence.
5. The Mayor of Ashford Cllr Mrs Jenny Webb leading a Proclamation service at Ashford's Civic Centre on 11 September. Alongside, from l-r, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Sir George Jessel Bt DL; James Kirk, Kent Fire and Rescue Station Manager for Ashford and Maidstone; Ashford Council Chief Executive Tracey Kerly and Council Leader Cllr Gerry Clarkson.
6. Members of the public attend and follow the Proclamation service at Ashford's Civic Centre.
7. Kent & East Sussex Railway staff and volunteers prepare to mark The Queen's funeral at Tenterden Town station.



For more details on how Ashford paid tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, visit our dedicated web page at www.ashford.gov.uk/her-majesty-the-queen

Cost of Living – Help is at Hand



The impact of the cost of living crisis is increasing so on the following pages you'll find a range of information that we hope may be useful. It's not exhaustive and, as space on these pages is limited we have added this and more to our website, with links to related support services. Visit www.ashford.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help



Food banks and related services

Here we've listed a number of organisations that can provide support with food and some non-food items.

Ashford Volunteer Centre has information on community groups and can help people volunteer in a food bank: www.ashfordvc.org.uk/

Ashford Holiday Kitchen – Delivers a network of locations providing food, support and activities in the school holiday for children and families. www.reptonct.uk/ashford-holiday-kitchen

One You Shop, Park Mall - A range of free, walk-in lifestyle and health services. Distribution point for Fare Share food boxes as well as specific need boxes (please check ahead to ensure the type of box you require is available). 07747 460198

Family Food Bank, Foster Road - Their food box schemes are delivered at many sites across Ashford. Food and non-food items

Always check these times and locations to avoid disappointment. Details correct at time of print November 2022

are also supplied to the homeless, individuals and families being housed in our temporary accommodation. See the full list of food banks on their website: www.familyfoodbank.org

Stanhope Community Pantry at Sure Start, Ray Allen Centre - Single membership £3.50 a week/Family membership £7.00 a week. Runs from the Ray Allen Carpark, Stanhope. 01233 500477 or www.kentcommunitypantry.org

Pneuma Church (previously Ashford Vineyard) – FREE family food boxes and Mummies meals, Fair share boxes available to anyone. Warehouse offers non-food items, clothes, furniture etc. Renew Supermarket – food and non-food items vastly discounted for members. Café on a Saturday. Compassion@pneumachurch.uk

The Bee Hive – Pop up shop and café (part of The Ashford Vineyard), second hand clothes boutique. Women in refuge and referrals by local services.

Bright City Church Food bank – Food and non-food items. Vinnies Diner has a 2-3 course meal and a food parcel offer. 01233 334007

EC30 – Community centre in Tenterden and distribution point for Fare Share family boxes. 01580 765877

The People's Pantry at Repton Connect – Based in the Community Square - Starting at a donation of £1 for every £5 worth of items, you are able to get a maximum of £20 worth of shopping for just £4. Non-food items are also available. Community Fridge – a space where anyone who lives nearby can exchange surplus food. 01233 808023 or info@reptonct.uk

Keep warmth in and save energy

We've compiled tips for you to try at home to keep the warmth where you need it, plus ways to use less energy and save money on your bills.

1. Keep furniture away from radiators – get the maximum benefit from your heating by not blocking them.
2. Use your thermostat – set your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature, which for most is between 18 to 21 degrees.
3. Keep the heat in – closing doors and using draught excluders reduces the amount of heating moving into colder areas of your home, such as the hall. If there's a gap at the bottom of the door block it with a draught excluder – you can make one stuffed with used plastic bags or bits of spare material.
4. Careful with your washing – wash on a 30-degree cycle and try to reduce your usage by one run per week for a year. This can save around £34 a year
5. Switch off standby – almost all electrical appliances can be turned off at the plug without upsetting their programming. This can save around £65 per year.
6. Spend less time in the shower – by keeping to a four minute shower time, this can save around £95 a year – for a free timer and other water saving devices visit www.savewatersavemoney.co.uk

For more information, tips and help understanding your energy bill head to energysavingtrust.org.uk

*Savings are based for a typical three-bedroom, gas-heated home and on the Energy Price Guarantee October 2022. Water savings are based on average occupancy.



Getting help with your energy bills

Warm Home Discount: £150 annually off electricity bills for those eligible. Visit www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme

Winter fuel allowance: payments for pensioners and vulnerable. Visit www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment

Cold weather payments is a scheme run by the government from 1 Nov to 31 March every year, those eligible could receive £25/wk. Visit www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

Debt assistance: If you're struggling with debt find advice and help through Ashford Advice ashfordadvice.org



Save Safely

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) has launched a Save Safely campaign providing safe energy savings tips for anyone looking for alternative and cost effective ways to heat their home.

The fire service is concerned for the safety of residents, who may resort to increased reliance on portable heaters, electric blankets and open fires – all of which come with a fire risk if not used correctly and carefully.

KFRS Chief Executive Ann Millington said: "The rising cost of energy will impact everyone, so we want to advise people about choosing the safest ways to stay warm.

"Layering up with jumpers, socks and blankets is a safe and free way to stay warm. People may want to use central heating in more cost effective ways – like heating the rooms used most often in the home and turning off radiators in other spaces, or switching it on just in the morning and evening when outside temperatures are coldest."

Visit KFRS' Save Safely page at www.kent.fire-uk.org/savesafely for safe saving tips and information about financial support for anyone struggling to pay energy bills. For advice on home fire safety call KFRS free on 0800 923 7000.

Council tenants are reminded that they are responsible for safety checks on any gas appliances they own. Tenancy agreements do not allow the use of portable gas heaters in council homes, due to concerns about the maintenance, safety and storage of combustible gas heaters.

Keep safety in mind if you're finding ways to cut costs.



Housing advice

The council can assist if you are homeless or worried about a housing issue. Get in touch as soon as you can in order to give our dedicated teams more time to help you.

Go to <https://helpwithhomelessness.info/> and complete our online 'help with homelessness' self-assessment or call us on 01233 331111

The self-assessment website provides advice for many housing-related issues and for more urgent situations it will take you to a referral form. Do not delay, please call today!



If you are aware of someone rough sleeping contact the Porchlight Helpline on 0800 567 7699 with as much detail as possible. This will be passed to our Outreach team and they will make contact with the person and provide advice and assistance, signposting them towards the relevant agencies for further support.



Ashford Youth Hub - supporting young people and their families

Ashford Youth Hub, Mabledon Avenue provides a safe, warm space for young people aged 8-19 (up to 25 with SEND) with trained, dedicated youth workers to listen and support them. The youth hub also supports the whole family - they are able to distribute food parcels, for families with children living at home. To request a parcel, contact them on 03000 417567.

If you need advice or support around parenting, making an Early Help referral, children or young people with SEND,

Domestic Abuse – please contact them to request a 'District Conversation' by emailing AshfordEarlyHelp@kent.gov.uk.

Ashford Children's Centres work in a similar way but supporting families with children up to age 7.

Their buildings are welcoming and warm, and they are hoping to offer even more ways to support local families through the 'cost of living' crisis. Keep in touch with the Youth Hub and Children's Centres to find out more.



Chew the Fat...

"It isn't a counselling service and no advice is given, but what we do well is listen. There's no judgement, it is confidential to those in the room, it is free and no pre-booking required. There is a lot of laughter too."

That's how Pete Bailey describes Chew the Fat, a group to help men chat that he started in February.

"I started it as I have personally had anxiety for years. I never had an outlet to talk openly about it and felt embarrassed. Then from listening to workmates, in a male-dominated environment and hearing their stories, I realised that many men feel the same but felt ashamed to admit it.

"Nearly 200 men have attended, with 35 being regular members. I understand it's not for everyone, but come and check it out. You can talk about how you feel, what is happening in your life or just sit and listen. The hardest part is walking through the door but a warm welcome and cuppa awaits on the other side."

Chew the fat meets every Wednesday, 7-9pm, at Repton Connect Community Centre. Email chewthefatkent@gmail.com or Facebook Chew The Fat

Ashford Volunteer Centre is here to help

Many voluntary organisations in the borough have a shortage of volunteers so they can't help as many people as they would like to. If people want to volunteer, they can:

- Register for advertised opportunities on www.kentvolunteers.org.uk, a website that Ashford Volunteer Centre administers in partnership with the Lord Lieutenant of Kent's office
- Register on Kent Volunteers to be in a 'volunteer pool' where voluntary organisations can approach them to help their organisation
- Contact Ashford Volunteer Centre via contact@ashfordvc.org.uk

If voluntary organisations are struggling with the cost of living they should get in touch with AVC who can support them. Visit www.ashfordvc.org.uk

Heart of the community

When times are tough it's reassuring to know that there are people in our communities who go out of their way to help others. Richard Carley BEM is just such a man.

Richard runs the Jean Mealham Pop In Centre at Woodchurch, a community hub for the over 50s. Assisted by enthusiastic volunteers, Richard organises a programme of yoga, Scrabble, puzzles and more. He has just finished preparing a lawned area for bowls and croquet next summer, while there also plans to introduce a Men in Sheds club.

Concerts and proms are always well attended, with free entrance and only donations requested. Ashford Mayor, Cllr Mrs Jenny Webb, has attended concerts at the centre, said: "This is an amazing caring man who has made so many lives happier."

The centre is always on the lookout for helpers – "I couldn't run the centre without the wonderful support of the community," says Richard, who was awarded the British Empire Medal in the 2021 New Year's Honours List. Visit <http://woodchurchpopincentre.co.uk/index.html>



Please ensure bins are presented prior to 6am

Christmas recycling & refuse collections 22/23

During the festive period your refuse and recycling collection days will be altered. Check out the 2022/2023 calendar below to see the changes!

refuse
recycling

Week	Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Refuse	Mon 26 Dec	Tues 27 Dec
	Tues 27 Dec	Wed 28 Dec
	Wed 28 Dec	Thurs 29 Dec
	Thurs 29 Dec	Fri 30 Dec
	Fri 30 Dec	Sat 31 Dec
Recycling	Mon 2 Jan	Tues 3 Jan
	Tues 3 Jan	Wed 4 Jan
	Wed 4 Jan	Thurs 5 Jan
	Thurs 5 Jan	Fri 6 Jan
	Fri 6 Jan	Sat 7 Jan

Normal Service will resume Monday 9 January 2023

Bulky collections & garden waste

Bulk collections will be suspended for w/c 26 December and w/c 2 January and will resume from Monday 9 January.

Garden waste is suspended for w/c 26 December and w/c 2 January and will resume on your normal day of collection from Monday 9 January.

Clinical collections

During the Christmas period weekly clinical collections will take place on Tuesday 27 December and Tuesday 3 January.

Normal Monday collections will resume on Monday 9 January.




Missed bin collections can continue to be reported via the usual Report It channel: www.ashford.gov.uk/wastecollections/reportmissedbin/

You can also follow the Council on Facebook (@AshfordBoroughCouncil) and Twitter (@AshfordCouncil) for regular information updates over the Christmas period.

Green bin

- Christmas cards
- Tin foil & foil serving trays
- Champagne, wine & beer bottles
- Non-foil wrapping paper
- Cardboard boxes
- Sweet/chocolate tins
- Mince pie foil cases



Grey bin

- Tinsel
- Broken decorations
- Bubblewrap & soft plastic packaging like cellophane
- Foil/shiny wrapping paper
- Champagne & wine corks
- Polystyrene




Remember.... Do the scrunch test!

- Only non-foil paper is accepted for recycling, so to check, scrunch up the paper and if it doesn't spring back then it is non-foil and can be recycled.
- Please remove any ribbons and bows from your paper

and maybe keep them to use again!

- As a lot of us order Christmas presents online - which means more boxes - all extra cardboard boxes can be flattened next to your recycling bin for collection.




Sleigh festive food waste!

Use your food caddy for your leftovers, turkey carcass and all your food waste from sprout tops to carrot and potato peelings!

Better yet why not see what you can make out of your festive left-overs!

Visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com for recipes and inspiration.



Christmas Tree Recycling

This special fundraising campaign offers real Christmas tree collections from homes across the Ashford borough.

Ashford residents can register their real Christmas tree for collection in return for a donation to Pilgrims Hospices. Pilgrims volunteer elves will collect the tree from your home and take it for recycling.

Last year a record breaking 2,250 real Christmas trees were collected from homes across east Kent, raising more than £42,700 for vital end-of-life care.

The Council is proud to support our local hospice and we're hoping even more people will register and donate to have their tree collected and recycled.

Register your real tree for collection by midnight on Monday 9 January by visiting: www.pilgrimshospices.org/treerecycling and their volunteer elves will take it away Saturday 14 January - Monday 16 January.




Winter wildlife support

While some of us (maybe not all) look forward to the winter months - getting to wrap up cosy, enjoying the festivities and crisp long walks - it is a tough time for the UK's wildlife, as food sources can become scarce and the weather provides difficult conditions.

Fear not, there are lots of little things you can do in your garden to help support wildlife during this time. Here are some easy simple tips for you:

1. Keep some areas messy – As with the warmer months, as much as we may like a clean tidy garden, for wildlife it really is the messier, the better. Keep some areas of your garden untidy by gathering dead leaves, vegetation, log piles, as this will be the perfect place for hedgehogs, frogs, and toads to hibernate.
2. Provide a food source – Food is hard to come by for lots of animals this time of year. Birds in particular struggle, so putting out bird feeders in your garden or balcony is a great way to help them survive the colder months. You

can even get different bird seeds to cater for a variety of bird species

3. Provide fresh water – Water can be difficult to source during winter as ponds and lakes freeze. Try leaving out fresh water and keeping bird baths topped up and free of ice.

Hopefully you may get to enjoy seeing some of the wildlife you are helping now and again! For more tips head to www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife.



Big Green Week

We wanted to share a massive thank you to everyone who took part in our Great Big Green Week events, whether you held a stall at our roadshow in Ashford town centre, or were one of the many who helped plant Victoria Park's new sensory garden.

Planning is already underway to make next year even bigger and better. Watch this space...

Think you want to take part year-round?

Sign up to our Community Climate Action Forum to help direct our future activity, take part in questionnaires and polls, and receive information on associated topics and events. Scan the QR code to sign up today or head to the website at www.ashford.gov.uk/climate-change.



Ashford's CARNIVAL OF THE BAUBLES

On Saturday 26 November, the streets of Ashford town centre came alive as we welcomed back the spectacular Carnival of the Baubles.

Hundreds of people gathered at Elwick Place to take part in this year's procession, which was full of giant

illuminated lanterns and baubles that were decorated by children from local primary schools. Emergency Exit Art's BinBot – an enormous mechanical puppet – led the parade of light up Bank Street and through to the Lower High Street, where there was an incredible digital mapping projection that illuminated the former Odeon building with images from outer space.

With live music from Revelation Ashford, craft workshops courtesy of Made in Ashford and many other businesses offering festive treats, the town centre felt magical and really got us in the Christmas spirit.

In Tenterden this Christmas...

East Cross Christmas Market is happening on Saturday 10 December 10am-8pm. There will be festive stalls with handmade decorations, jewellery, cushions, cheese, candles and more, plus a raffle and Santa's Grotto! Proceeds raised will go to The Big Wrap to support local families.

Aladdin flies into The Sinden, Tenterden with the most magical panto of them all! Starring hilarious double-act, TV funny man Bobby Dazzler as Wishee Washee and Julius Brady as Widow Twankey, the cast will be supported by the Young Stars from DNC Academy and Brookes Dance Academy. Book now for selected dates from 17-28 December. Call 01580 763826 email boxoffice@sindentheatre.com or visit www.sindentheatre.com.



Ashford Mural Festival coming Spring 2023, more details to be released soon...

VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE RAILWAY WORK



WE ARE RECRUITING NOW!

Almost everyone you see at the Kent & East Sussex Railway is a volunteer, and behind the scenes there are many more. Our Trustees are all volunteers, as are many of the people who are restoring and maintaining the locomotives, coaches, signalling, gardens, track and stations.

Without the commitment of our volunteers we would not exist. Can you help? We would love to welcome you! There are some incredible volunteering opportunities available that will broaden your mind, your circle of friends and teach you new skills too.

If you can spare one day a week or one day a year please get in contact.

Learn about how you can help keep us steaming at www.kesr.org.uk/volunteering or scan the QR code.



KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY





Civic Awards 2022

Honouring those who serve our community and make a difference in Caring Ashford. Platinum Jubilee Civic Awards provides poignant tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.



The Ashford Borough Council Platinum Jubilee Civic Awards took place on Friday 23 September at Chart Hills Golf Club, Biddenden.

The awards provided an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the hard work and dedication of individuals who have enriched the lives of others in their community, who have made significant achievements or who have acted as role models for our residents.

Musical entertainment including a string quartet and brass band was provided by Kent Music.



Mayor of Ashford, Cllr Jenny Webb: "It was wonderful and humbling to hear more about the amazing work they have all been doing and their pride at being here tonight. They are a credit to the Borough of Ashford and deserve every accolade for what they do."

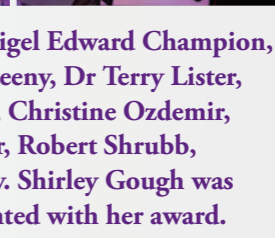
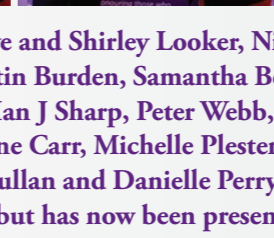
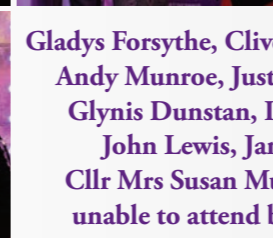
For further information about the event including more photos and videos please visit www.ashford.gov.uk/civic-awards



The award winners:



Gladys Forsythe, Clive and Shirley Looker, Nigel Edward Champion, Andy Munroe, Justin Burden, Samantha Beeny, Dr Terry Lister, Glynis Dunstan, Ian J Sharp, Peter Webb, Christine Ozdemir, John Lewis, Jane Carr, Michelle Plester, Robert Shrubb, Cllr Mrs Susan Mullan and Danielle Perry. Shirley Gough was unable to attend but has now been presented with her award.



Nigel Edward Champion:

"I wanted to thank everyone involved for such a special event; well done."

John Lewis: "I was honoured and surprised to receive the award and to have it presented."

Thanks to our sponsors: Ashford Designer Outlet, EKC Group, Gallagher, Macknade, Hibau, Hollaway Studio, Stanhope Plc and Quinn Estates.



Park life



Work is well underway on the Victoria Park and Watercress Fields project, with contractors and landscapers now on site throughout the park.



The next phase of work is the riverbank improvements, which will open out the views along the River Stour, creating new picnic spots and a viewing platform. Also starting will be the building of the new play area, which will be positioned next to the Community Building, currently under construction.

As parts of the park are finished they will be opened for you to enjoy, such as the Fountain Piazza, which has new seating, surfacing, path and lighting.

You may also see some areas which look finished but we have not removed the fencing, like the Sensory Garden. This is to allow the plants the best opportunity to grow undisturbed. If the weather is kind, we are hoping to open it early spring.

We know many of you are eager for an update on the pump track, which is why we are pleased to share that, after some unfortunate delays, we are expecting the work to begin in spring 2023. We know it'll be worth the wait.



Sensory Garden.

To keep up to date with the project and events head to Victoria Park's website at www.victoriaparkashford.co.uk

Coming soon

Ashford's Silliest Carol Concert
Friday 16 December
 Come and sing some alternative Christmas Carols led by the fantastic Emily Peasgood and meet Santa!

Wassailing in Victoria Park - Saturday 7 January
 Help us wish good luck to the trees of our community orchard through this traditional festival. With Ashford Folk and East Kent Mixed Morris providing entertainment.

Harry Potter Celebrations - Saturday 4 February
 It's back by popular demand! Come and take part in our trail and associated activities to celebrate Harry Potter Book Night 2023.

Volunteer Opportunities

Do you want to be a part of the project legacy! We are looking for anyone interested in getting involved in the care and development of our floral spaces including the sensory garden, the fountain piazza and our park-wide bulbs. We will provide tools, support and from next summer, a dedicated volunteer hub (currently the project hub) and are looking for a green fingered team who would like to take charge of our new floral spaces.

Email victoria.fannon@ashford.gov.uk for information.

Follow on Twitter @VictoriaParkABC, Facebook @VictoriaParkABC and Instagram @victoriaparkashford

Use a safe local trader

Do you really know who you are letting into your home? Doorstep criminals (also known as rogue traders, cowboy builders and scammers) turn up unexpectedly (known as cold calling) at your house and offer convincing deals to get you to agree to having work carried out.



They often befriend their victims and gain their trust before the work and bills start piling up. On average victims lose £47,000 to doorstep criminals and there will never be any receipts!

This is one of the reasons Kent County Council (KCC) created Trading Standards Checked, a fair trader scheme for traders in the home improvement sector. KCC carries out vetting checks to support only legitimate and reliable businesses and to help residents find safe, reputable traders to do work in their homes.

Each business is vetted and assessed against their scheme criteria. All complaints to the

Citizens Advice consumer service about a Trading Standards Checked member are monitored throughout the life of their membership.

With over 400 members throughout Kent, finding a safe trader is easy. Search www.kent.gov.uk/tschecked or phone the Kent Librarian service on **03000 41 64 38**.

Wherever you see the Kent Trading Standards Checked logo you can be sure that you will be dealing with a reliable, safe trader. If every resident used a Trading Standards Checked to find a safe trader, there would be no criminal or rogue traders left in Kent. It's that simple!



Article courtesy of KCC Trading Standards.

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At Montfort Manor care home being a star baker doesn't stop when you make the journey into care. Bring your life with you to a place you can call home.

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Our proud links

Did you know that our borough has strong links with mainland Europe through its twin towns of Bad Münstereifel and Fougères? **The Ashford Twinning Association (ATA)** does a fantastic job of maintaining close relations with our friends.

Devastation, desolation, despair. That was the initial sense of feeling after the widespread flooding in Bad Münstereifel in July 2021.

Once it became clear how severe the damage was, the ATA, along with the help of its supporting community, stepped forward to raise £13,844 through JustGiving and the Big Munch fundraiser event. This has provided much-needed emergency support to two nurseries and a primary school in the stricken German town.

More than a year on, it's fantastic to see how the resilient community of Bad Münstereifel has pulled together, with many areas that have now been completely rebuilt.

Cllr Matthew Forest, Twinning Champion for Ashford Borough Council, visited in July 2022. He said: "I feel privileged to have been given the opportunity by



Before Devastation from flooding in Bad Münstereifel



After Rebuilding Bad Münstereifel

the Ashford Twinning Association to share in a small piece of a time that now brings refinement, community and positivity to a place hit so hard by forces out of anyone's control.

"I'm looking forward to visiting again in the future and seeing how Bad Münstereifel continues to rebuild."

Ashford has been twinned with Bad Münstereifel since 1964. A Friendship Stone in Ashford's Lower High Street reflects the ties between the towns and has stood since 1983.

Fougères trip focusses on biodiversity

The Fougères connection with our borough began with a liaison amicale in 1978, followed by an official ceremony in 1984. The walled 11th century castle town is set in the wonderful Brittany countryside. This is a busy place with many individual shops, a regular market, beautiful buildings and typical Breton hospitality.

The latest coach trip in September 2022 was a civic exchange, so it involved Ashford's Deputy Mayor Cllr Larry Krause and Deputy Mayoress, councillors, pupils and teachers from Highworth Grammar School in Ashford.

They visited various sites that demonstrated the extensive lengths the people of Fougères have gone to in order to become more biodiverse in a world where climate change is currently a hot topic.

There was a guided visit to the botanical gardens of Parc Botaniques de Haute-Bretagne to learn about the historical benefits these substantial and beautiful gardens have contributed, and how they are continually developing with the changing environment.

The Highworth students, along with a delegation of young people from both twin towns, gave informative presentations about the ongoing work in their towns contributing to combating climate change, promoting biodiversity and reducing their carbon footprint.



Farewell to the 'grandfather' of twinning



In September, Mike Bennett, one of the founding members of the Ashford Twinning Association, sadly passed away. Known as the 'grandfather' of twinning, Mike was a very active member of the association and considered to be one of the main driving forces on raising awareness of the group since joining in 1964.

If you'd like to leave an online tribute to Mike you can do so via www.michael-bennett-1943-2022.muchloved.com.

"Mike was instrumental in forging and maintaining the relationship between Ashford, Fougères and Bad Münstereifel. He leaves behind a huge void as his knowledge of the history and events over the life of town twinning was unsurpassed."

Cllr Matthew Forest, Twinning Champion

"Mike always supported this and had a great love of France. My thoughts are with his family and friends."

Cllr Gerry Clarkson, Leader of Ashford Borough Council

Would you like to support the Ashford Twinning Association by becoming a member? Visit www.ashfordtowntowns.uk to find out more.

KEEP ASHFORD TALKING

ARE YOU a YOUNG PERSON EXPERIENCING CONFLICT within a SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY setting?

ARE YOU EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS with YOUR NEIGHBOURS over anti-social behaviour, NOISE OR BOUNDARY issues?

ARE there INTERGENERATIONAL issues in YOUR FAMILY that are CAUSING ENDLESS ARGUMENTS and STRESS?

The Ashford Mediation Service (AMS) is a **free service** available to all residents experiencing conflict. We don't 'take sides', we work with all parties in dispute to help both 'sides' reach a solution that works for everyone.

Tackling conflict at an early stage prevents the breakdown in relationships and reduces issues with mental health and wellbeing, homelessness, and crime.

Our Keep Ashford Talking project now focuses on two specific audiences - 'disaffected' young people within a school or community setting, and families who live in the more deprived neighbourhoods of Ashford.

Although programmes exist for young people, the missing link is providing them with the skills to mediate themselves. We will work with schools and youth groups to equip staff, mentors and young people with mediation and negotiation skills.

There are a disproportionate number of ASB incidents and disputes in specific areas, so we will work with community leaders to support individuals in resolving their differences.

It is with grateful thanks to the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner's Fund that we can expand our services in Ashford.

Take that first step and get in touch today



WIN a wine lunch for two



Gusbourne Estate has been producing award-winning sparkling wines from their own estate grown grapes since their first vines were planted in 2004. Nestled on the outskirts of Appledore village and with extensive views across their vineyards and the Kent countryside beyond, Gusbourne offers guests the opportunity to enjoy a range of experiences throughout the



year, including hosted tours, tutored tastings and delicious wine lunches.

You have the chance to win one of these lunches for two. You'll start your lunch with a brief introduction into two of our fine wines. Then, your host will leave you to enjoy a three-course menu, paired perfectly with delicious wines. Your ticket includes a range of still and sparkling Gusbourne classics, selected by Master Sommelier Laura Rhys. Our Head Chef Anthony Coppard's menu will showcase the best available local ingredients, with flavours chosen to complement each Gusbourne wine. This promises to be a real gastronomic treat for foodies and fine wine lovers.

Visit www.gusbourne.com

GUSBOURNE

WIN hire of 4 electric bikes for the day

UK Electric Bike Centre based at Headcorn Aerodrome, midway between Ashford and Maidstone, is offering a great prize of four e-bikes hired for the day, so you and three members of your family or friends can enjoy a self-guided tour of the Garden of England.

All routes are on quiet country lanes and they provide maps and guidance of where to go and what to do. The area is packed with fascinating places to visit, vineyards, where you can enjoy sparkling wine and wine tasting, lunch with local meats and cheeses and sharing platters, historic castles, gardens, pretty villages and more.

Their electric bicycles are comfortable so we are confident you will have a fun-filled day out without the worry of running out of battery or getting tired legs! Just choose your route and have fun...

Entrants must be at least 14 years old to ride an electric bike, must be a competent cyclist as riding on lanes and roads will be involved, and the prize must be redeemed before 31 May 2023.

The UK Electric Bike Centre is at Headcorn Aerodrome, Shenley Road, Headcorn, Kent TN27 9HX. For more information visit www.ukelectricbike.co.uk or call **01622 890 300**.



To enter your name in one of our two prize draws either:

* Email the editorial team at competition@ashford.gov.uk – put Gusbourne or Electric Bike competition in the subject heading and include your full name, postal address and email. Please include a contact phone number.

* Send a postcard or sealed envelope with your name, address, email and contact phone number to: *Ashford For You* magazine, Communications, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford TN23 1PL. Write Gusbourne or Electric Bike competition entry on the card. We will contact the winners to request consent to provide your contact details to Gusbourne or the UK Electric Bike Centre to enable you to claim your prize.

Terms & conditions: 1. The competition is open to UK residents aged 18 years or older except employees of the Promoter, their families, agents or any third party associated with the competition. 2. The closing date of the competition is **5pm on Friday 6 January 2023**. Entries received after this time will not be included. The prizes are non-transferable and non-refundable. There are no cash alternatives. 3. By accepting the prize you also agree to be bound by standard terms and conditions specified by the prize providers. Only one entry per person. Editor's decision is final.

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WHY YOU SHOULD STUDY AT ASHFORD COLLEGE

1. THE PEOPLE

At Ashford College, we're all about creating a vibrant community of people that help other thrive and succeed. Through clubs, societies, trips and events, young people find peers with similar interests and create life-long friendships.



2. THE LOCATION

Being right next to the train station, you'll struggle to find a better College for bus and rail access. Ashford town centre is less than five minutes' walk away, so if our students don't fancy staying in College for lunch then there are plenty of options nearby.



After a day of studying, they can also meet up with friends to enjoy some bowling, go to the cinema, or relax in one of the many parks surrounding the College.

3. THE STAFF

Our staff members have a wealth of experience and passion for their subjects, and are dedicated to inspiring the young people that come to Ashford College each year. Their drive to hone their students' skills creates a supportive and friendly environment in which your young person will thrive. With the College and staff enjoying ties with a wide range of industries, students benefit from site visits, guest lectures, and demonstrations.

4. THE FACILITIES

No matter which pathway they choose to study, our learners get access to industry-standard equipment, venues, and training. This is our way of making students confident when entering the workplace in the future.

Hair and Beauty students benefit from the use of the on-site commercial salon, where they can use their learned skills in a real-world setting, while Music students have access to a state-of-the-art recording studio, as well as instruments which can be borrowed. Photography students also get the opportunity to be trained in using our on-site dark room to develop pictures.

5. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our Students' Union and Student Experience Officer are dedicated to giving young people a full and fun College experience. They run trips all year round, to places like Thorpe Park and London, as well as promoting clubs and societies.

They're always there to help with anything our learners might be struggling with, inside and outside the classroom, and they'll give advice or point the student in the direction of someone who can help.

If you want to find out what we have to offer you, visit our open day on Thursday 19 January. Pre-register online: ashford.ac.uk





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 AT COUNTY SQUARE

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There is seasonal entertainment every weekend in December to enchant children and adults alike, including...

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4th + 17th December
Magical Stiltwalkers

10th December
Festive Character Trail

11th December
Elf Balloon Modeller

18th December
Giant Polar Bear



The Entertainer

PANDORA

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