

October/November 2006

Ashford VOICE

fireworks and frights!

Keep safe and enjoy the fun
of Halloween & bonfire night
this autumn

inside:

- Ashford's Future
- Half Term fun
- What's On
- Competition



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



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BOROUGH COUNCIL

www.ashford.gov.uk

council contacts

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Open: 9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday
9am – 4.30pm Friday

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Out of Hours/Emergency: 01233 629911

24 Hour Payment Line: 01233 330625

Benefit Fraud Hotline: 0800 0262456

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Tenterden, Kent TN30 6QX

Open: 9am – 5pm Monday to Thursday
9am – 4.30pm Friday
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14 Park Mall, Ashford, Kent TN24 8RY

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Fax: 01233 638012

Ashford Voice

Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre,
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welcome



Welcome to the October/November edition of Voice once again packed with news and information about issues that affect you plus plenty of things to do over the coming weeks.

Thank you to everyone who completed the Readers Survey in the June/July edition, especially Hilary Breakell of Bethersden the lucky winner of the £100 prize draw she receives £50 and nominated the Pilgrims Hospice to receive the £50 for a local charity.

Voice received a resounding thumbs up with readers enjoying the mix of news, community information, arts, sport and leisure information.

We will continue to include information on council and other services we think you will find helpful and interesting and to feature the work of partner organisations and the local community and voluntary sector.

Nearly everyone asked for more what's on and community news and events

which we will be happy to feature. But to do this we need your help.

We need you, the readers to tell us what is happening in your area. We are always happy to hear from groups with a story to tell. Whether you are a local charity, sports or youth group, parish council or other community group we would like to hear from you.

Tell us what you are up to and what events you may be holding and we will do our best to get them into our listings section.

Full results of the survey can be found on our website www.ashford.gov.uk



You can contact us by email at: voice@ashford.gov.uk write to us at the Civic Centre or call: **01233 330209**

Caroline Owen
Editor

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ashfordnews

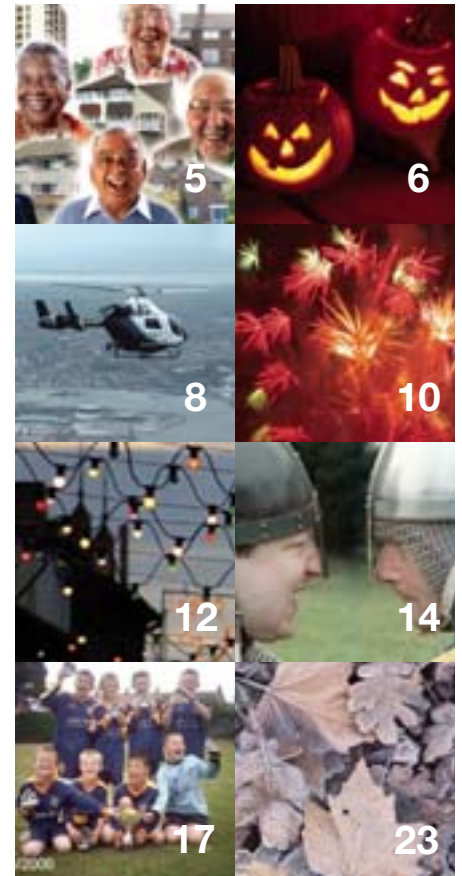
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We will remember them

At 11am on Saturday 11 November the borough will once again be paying tribute to those who have fought and died to secure the nations peace and freedom and local people will be asked to observe two minutes' silence.

In the Memorial Gardens in Ashford town centre a maroon will be set off to mark the beginning and end of the silence. At the war memorial members of the Royal British Legion will undertake an act of remembrance.

On Sunday 12 November the Royal British Legion will parade from St Mary's Parish Church, Ashford to the Memorial Gardens at 10.30am for wreaths to be laid followed by a service of remembrance at 11.30am at the church.

Around the borough similar acts of remembrance will be taking place to honour all those who have perished while serving their country.

At 11am on Thursday 2 November the Royal British Legion will also observe the annual dedication of the Garden of Crosses in the Memorial Gardens with a short service attended by the Mayor.

The Royal British Legion has been safeguarding the welfare, interests and memory of the ex-service community since 1921 and the public's generous donations to the annual Poppy Appeal make that help possible.

For more information contact the local Royal British Legion Office on 01233 620167 or visit the Legion's website www.britishlegion.org.uk

New look website for the Council

From the middle of October Ashford Borough Council's website will have a new look and feel with information organised in a new, more user friendly way.

The website will be more accessible for people with disabilities allowing users to change the way the website looks according to their visual preferences.

There will be a text only version, and an improved print function which will enable people to view information in a variety of ways.

As well as a new search facility, new A to Z listings and improved frequently asked questions there will be more forms available relating to council services allowing customers to complete them online at a time that suits them.

New information will be available, from improved Council Tax and benefits information, venues for hire, information about partner organisations and more community information, to press releases, a media centre and information for those wishing to move to the borough.

Customers will be able to subscribe to information and newsletters ensuring they receive the latest information on subjects that interest them.

The website will be under continuous review and there will be more improvements in the future including a community directory, councillor pages and ward profiles. ■

So why not go online and check it out - you can contact the council with views and opinions - via the new website!

www.ashford.gov.uk



29 Oct

Don't forget to put your clocks back

Winter's coming and the clocks go back at 1am on Sunday 29 October. So make sure you alter your clocks before you go to bed on Saturday and enjoy an extra hour in bed! ■



Christmas Lights Switch On

Christmas is on its way and the town's annual festive lights switch on and fun day takes place on Saturday 18 November.

The fun begins in the High Street at 11am with loads of entertainment for all ages from 1 to 101. Local radio station KMFM's roadshow will be broadcasting live while clowns and street performers entertain shoppers. A brass band will be on hand to provide traditional Christmas music and local charities have been invited to come along and raise funds for their good causes.

Making sure this year is a bumper event are Batchelors. Next year the company celebrates its 50 year association with Ashford and to get things started they have organised a Christmas balloon race during the day with 1000 helium balloons being released with children's wish-lists attached, they will also be giving away free soup!

With the festive lights due to be switched on at 4pm it should be a great day out for all the family.

The seasonal fun continues in the town on Saturday 2 December with a Victorian Christmas Market with stalls, arts, crafts, traditional fairground rides and a children's Victorian fancy dress competition. ■

For more information or to book a stall at the Victorian market contact the Town Centre Partnership on: 01233 64410.





Make Your Home Your Own Again

Ashford homeowners now have the opportunity to repair, improve or adapt their home through a government backed scheme called Houseproud, run in partnership with Ashford Borough Council and the Ashford Home Improvement Agency, with assistance from Kent County Council's Occupational Therapy Bureau.



Houseproud is aimed at homeowners aged 60+ and those who have a disabled person in their household, who wish to improve their living standards by, for example, installing replacement windows, a new roof, central heating, a modern kitchen or bathroom, or making adaptations to suit limited mobility such as installing a stair lift or downstairs bathroom.

David Herrick from the Private Sector Housing Section of Housing Services at the Council explained: *"Houseproud provides an opportunity for essential work to be carried out smoothly and in a straightforward manner by experienced and competent builders, utilising the most appropriate source of financial assistance available. It also enables people to retain their independence safely in their own home"*.

Dependant upon the nature of the work, a representative of either the Ashford Home Improvement Agency or the County Occupational Therapy Bureau will assess each individual home and offer solutions to improve living conditions. Various funding streams are available to pay for such works, and this is where Houseproud comes into its own, facilitating access to a variety of tailor-made loans from a reputable building society that are both affordable and risk free, being specially designed for older people and disabled people. ■

For a free video and information pack on Houseproud call 0800 7837569. Further information on the scheme is also available from Private Sector Housing, Housing Services, Ashford Borough Council on 01233 330220, the Ashford Home Improvement Agency on 01233 613783 or visit the Houseproud website at www.houseproud.org.uk

Relate Expands as Ashford Grows

Traditionally Relate is thought of as the place you go to save your marriage, but nowadays their aim is to help their clients in the most appropriate way. Many clients are not married, some may be in long-term committed relationships. Others may be struggling with the decision to separate or divorce and then having made that decision may still be finding it difficult to come to terms with the ending of the relationship. Helping to end an unhappy or fraught relationship with a minimum of bitterness is as much a success as keeping other couples together.

As Ashford grows so has the need for their services and Relate now has larger premises at the Centre for Voluntary Organisations at Berwick House in Elwick Road.

The organisation has also added further services available to local people and can now provide

- Individual and couple counselling
- Family counselling (thanks to funding from Awards for All for training) for the day to day communication problems in family life, whether it's between parents and children, adult siblings, step families, in-laws or grandparents.
- Sex Therapy, a very successful service where 93% of clients report significant improvement.
- Relateen – a service for young people aged 10-18, who are being affected by parental conflict.

Relate can see couples together or people on their own.

A charge is made for Relate services, except Relateen as they receive only a small amount of income from the public sector. ■

Anyone who would like to make an appointment in Ashford should ring the East Kent Relate appointments number 01227-766094. Initial appointments are usually offered within two weeks.

Help others and help the environment too

Would you like to help others in need?

Do you care about our environment?

Now you can do both by passing on decent items of furniture and baby equipment you no longer require thanks to the Gateway

Church Ashford's new Furniture and Baby Equipment Project.

After months of refurbishment to Ashford's historic Old Corn Store in Dover Place (near International House) the project has just 'gone live'. Now the warehouse will act as a collection and distribution centre for donated items which will then be reused by local people in need.

The church's senior leader, Graham Hall said: "I am delighted that God's love can be demonstrated in such a practical way. Not

only does the project help those in need it also benefits the environment through the re-use of household items.

"The initiative will also provide an excellent opportunity for volunteers who wish to take part with van driving or office skills, or just getting their fitness levels back and making new friends. " ■

If you have items to donate, or would like to talk about getting involved give Gateway Furniture and Baby Equipment a call on 01233 638878.

Happy Halloween!



Halloween will be celebrated in one form or another throughout the Borough on October 31 and love it or hate it Trick or Treating is on the increase.

While America gets the blame for introducing 'Trick or Treat' to the UK the idea actually has its roots in a tradition on All Souls' Day in mediaeval times where the poor would go begging.

If you do plan to include trick or treating in your celebrations please follow a few simple dos and don'ts and make sure you and your children enjoy the evening while respecting other people's privacy.

In the run up to Halloween please make sure your children are aware that spiteful tricks are unacceptable and discuss the difference between amusing tricks to play on friends and cruel and/or dangerous tricks. Children should never play a 'trick' on a stranger and should never damage property or throw things such as eggs or flour. If they do they could well find themselves falling foul of the laws on criminal damage. ■

Handy Hint for Homeowners

If you don't want to be bothered by Trick or Treaters organise with friends and family that no one will call round that night and simply don't answer the door!

Put a Halloween decoration in your window if you are happy for trick or treaters to visit you.

Keep any treats near your front door for security - and don't invite any trick or treaters into your home unless you know them.

Follow these tips and it should be a happy Halloween for everyone.

- Very young children should only go out if accompanied by a responsible adult
- Get together with other parents who live nearby and organise a safe circuit of friends' houses for slightly older kids to visit. At each house, the resident adult can make a swift head-count to make sure no child has strayed away from the group, and parents can keep in touch by phone so you know where your children are at all times
- If children are old enough to go out without supervision make sure they go in a group and stick together
- Wearing bright clothing or incorporating reflective markings or tape into the costume will make them more visible to motorists
- Don't encourage children to carry toy weapons as this could intimidate householders and passers by
- Know exactly where your children are going and when they are due back... and make sure they know it too
- Explain the importance of sticking to familiar areas and not straying into areas they don't know
- Remind your children to respect other people's property and not to cut across driveways or gardens
- Remind children never to enter a strangers' home or to accept a lift from a stranger

Remember, remember

the 5th of November...

Many families now choose to celebrate Guy Fawkes night by going along to a public display but if you are planning to celebrate at home - make sure your evening is one which is remembered for all the right reasons.

Ashford's firefighters want everyone in the Borough to have a safe and enjoyable bonfire night.

Station Manager Lee Rose explained: *"One of the important things to remember is that alcohol and fireworks don't mix, if you are responsible for letting off the firework then please don't drink until the display is over.*

"Remember to think about the size of your garden in relation to the bonfire and fireworks. If you must build a bonfire make sure it's as far away as possible from fences, hedges sheds and any other buildings. Also make sure your garden is big enough for the fireworks you are using.

"Never pour flammable liquids onto the bonfire to light it or revive it and keep a bucket of water handy. But if your bonfire begins to cause you alarm and gets out of control don't try to tackle yourself please call the fire service and move to a safe place.

"It's also important to remember not to leave items cooking in the kitchen while you're outside watching the fireworks as many fires start from unattended cooking.

"If people follow some simple rules and use their common sense everyone should have a great time this year without anyone getting hurt." ■



- Only buy fireworks marked BS 7114
- Don't drink alcohol if setting off fireworks
- Keep fireworks in a closed box
- Follow the instructions on each firework
- Light at arm's length, using a taper
- Stand well back
- Never go near a firework that has been lit - even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode
- Never put fireworks in your pocket or throw them
- Always supervise children around fireworks
- Keep pets indoors

Sparklers

Sparklers, like other fireworks, must be used with care.

They can get six times hotter than a pan of cooking oil and sparkler injuries have been on the increase. Children are particularly vulnerable so here are a few tips to keep them safe.

- Always supervise children using sparklers
- Give children gloves to wear when holding sparklers
- Show children how to hold sparklers - away from their body and at arm's length
- Teach children not to wave sparklers near anyone else or run while holding them
- Plunge finished sparklers hot end down into a bucket of water as soon as they have burnt out
- Never give sparklers to the under 5s

For further advice on fireworks and bonfires contact

Kent Fire and Rescue Service: 01233 637277 www.kfb.org.uk ■ Kent County Council Trading Standards, 01233 898825 www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent ■ Ashford Borough Council (Environmental Services), 01233 331111 www.ashford.gov.uk ■ Department for Trade & Industry www.dti.gov.uk
UK Firework Safety website www.fireworksafety.co.uk ■ Health and Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk



In his third article for Ashford Voice, Air Ambulance Chief Executive David Philpott explains the complex emergency and aviation protocols which kick in when someone makes a 999 call.



saving time- saving life

Just who exactly decides to send the Air Ambulance?

This is a question I am often asked (at least five times a day) so to try and explain I have set before you a hypothetical situation...

You have just joined the M20 at Junction 10, but before you reach Junction 9, you witness a horrific accident. Like any good citizen, you pull over onto the hard shoulder and dial 999 from your mobile phone. Once the operator has established that it is an ambulance you require, your call goes straight through to an Ambulance Call Taker at the Kent County Control room in Coxheath near Maidstone. What you tell them in the next 30 seconds may well trigger all the protocols that lead up to the deployment of our £ 3.5 million helicopter, crewed by some of the most skilled medics in the country.

So when does an Air Ambulance attend an accident or medical emergency?

Well, first of all there are the Civil Aviation rules that must be applied. The criteria for a HEMS flight (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) are that the condition of the patient requires emergency, immediate and rapid transport to hospital where an Air Ambulance is essential. Consequently, the helicopter becomes essential if, for instance, the injuries are time critical.



The location of the patient will also have a bearing, with regards to travel times to the nearest Accident and Emergency hospital. Isolated rural areas like Romney Marsh will have a high dependency on an Air Ambulance. The situation of the patient will also have a bearing with regards to the terrain he occupies. The 14th green on a golf course for example will be some distance from the road network and possibly inaccessible to land ambulances. Finally, the condition of the patient may mean that air transfer is essential so as to avoid exacerbating spinal injuries for example.

So, back to our hypothetical crash on the M20. The emergency operator establishes that there is an available land ambulance standing by at Ashford Ambulance Station just minutes away so this time the air ambulance is not required.

Within five minutes the ambulance has arrived at the scene and within another seven the patient is being admitted to A & E at the William Harvey Hospital.

It's probably just as well. With an average of four major incidents a day, the Kent helicopter is probably saving someone's life in some rural spot the other end of the county.

The Kent Air Ambulance is one of 16 independent air ambulance operators and is funded entirely by charitable donations, receiving no Government or National Lottery funding.

If you would like to know about how you can be a volunteer contact Veronica Wiseman at the Kent Air Ambulance

www.kentairambulance.com

Tel: 01622 833833

Peace of Mind for Ashford Carers

Summer saw the launch of a new scheme that will ensure carers will no longer need to worry about what would happen to the person they care for if for some reason they were prevented from returning home at the expected time.

Local charity Carers' Support has introduced the Carers' Emergency Card scheme which allows people with caring responsibilities to design a plan that would be put into action with just one phone call.

This free service gives carers the opportunity to complete a form stating what procedures they would want put into action in the event of their not being able to return home for any reason. The plan would be held on a secure database at Ashford Lifeline and the carer carries a plastic credit-style card bearing their exclusive registration number and a call centre telephone number.

Carer's Support Manager Sue Ross explains: *"It's a simple but very effective idea. If a carer has an accident or emergency or is delayed for any reason there is always the worry of what happens to the person they are caring for. Now in the event of an emergency the carer, the emergency services or even a member of the public can find the card and phone the call centre and the pre-arranged plan will be put into action with the service available around the clock 365 days a year."*

The scheme is available to all carers in both the Ashford and Shepway area and is the first and only scheme of its kind in Kent and so far 90 carers are using the scheme.

Since its inception ten years ago Carers Support has worked hard to support the needs of carers. Its primary aims are to support and promote the needs of carers of any age and whether the person they care for as a partner, child, parent or sibling. They offer support groups including groups for those caring for relatives with Alzheimer's, parents of babies and children with genetic health problems and much more. They also offer carers social activities, practical help, even counselling sessions.

They recently launched a new Tele-befriending scheme where a trained volunteer will phone a carer for a chat on a regular basis helping to reduce the isolation many carers experience.

For more information about the Emergency Card scheme or about Carers' Support contact Sue Ross on: 01233 664393, email: manager@carers-ashford.org

Or pop into their offices in Berwick House, 8 Elwick Road, Ashford.



CASE gears up for the future

Community Action South East Kent (CASE), which helps local community and voluntary organisations, is looking forward to the changes and challenges facing the sector as Ashford grows.

Following a review of their services, policies and procedures the organisation (formerly known as Mid and South East Kent CVS) has come up with a three-year plan and new initiatives which their new Chief Executive Gillian Wells is certain will equip CASE and the 1400 organisations they current help cope with the changes in the pipeline for the voluntary and community sector.

As well as its traditional services of giving advice on setting up and running a group, governance, trouble shooting and applying for funding, CASE are now able to offer:

- Practical, quality assurance systems for small organisations and taster sessions on the implications this opportunity offers.
- Social Enterprise mentoring - two of their staff have just qualified as Social Enterprise Advisers.
- Business planning, strategic reviews and feasibility studies - Rural Revival (a small grants programme designed to fund local projects that have progression towards the labour market as the ultimate aim) is offering Capacity Building Grants of up to £3,000 to enhance the existing services of an organisation or to plan a new venture.

CASE are also proud to have gained the Investors in People Award. ■

For further information telephone: 01233 610471 or email: ashford@CASEKent.org.uk



the future of Ashford

Ashford is getting a new lease of life with the town set to double in size over the next 30 years. Thousands of new homes and jobs, huge government investment, improved education facilities, new shops, restaurants, offices and community facilities are all planned for new and existing residents.



Education

Plans for a £46m learning campus providing facilities for up to 14,000 full and part time students are now being completed, with the aim of opening the doors to students in September 2009.

Transport

A £10m scheme to transform the current ring road into a series of calmer two-way streets and open up the town centre to make it more attractive to residents, businesses and newcomers is in the design stage. Construction is due to start in early 2007.

A formal planning application has been submitted to Ashford Borough

Council for a mixed use development including a 1,000 space Park & Ride facility at Warren South.

Funding has been secured to raise the Newtown Bridge and improve pedestrian/cycle access. This would otherwise limit development on the Newton Works site and become a bottleneck for the planned Smartlink public transport system. A planning application has been submitted for part demolition and redevelopment to provide a mixed use development for residential units and commercial floorspace.

Improvements works to Junction 10 have started. The Highways Agency project aims to maximise capacity of the junction. The project is due to be completed in June 2007.

Environment

Planning permission has been granted for an Environment Centre based at Singleton which will serve the local community and provide an environmental education resource centre.

Water

The Environment Agency has completed the Ashford Integrated Water Management Study which looked at all aspects of water management. It shows how the problems of water supply, waste water treatment, water quality and flood risk can all be tackled in a way that enables Ashford's planned growth.



In 2004 Ashford was identified as 'The Growth Town of Kent' when the Government highlighted Ashford as one of four key growth areas in the south-east, alongside the Thames Gateway, Milton Keynes and Stansted/M11 corridor.

Since then a lot of work has been going on 'behind the scenes' to lay the foundations for long-term sustainable growth. Government and private sector funding has been secured for key projects, detailed planning and feasibility studies have been performed to ensure the correct infrastructure is in place, and the Ashford's Future core team has been set up to drive and co-ordinate Ashford's development. This work has been fundamental to ensure they are now in a position to start delivering the growth.

So what does this mean for residents of Ashford?

The town is destined to double in size with 31,000 new homes and 28,000 new jobs by 2031, but it is simply not just a case of building houses and waiting to the rest to fall into place.

Many major developments are planned throughout the borough which is set to change the face of the Ashford and ensure the structure is in place to build a sustainable community for the future. Education, transport, the environment, water, leisure, shopping, regeneration and business are all set to see positive changes.



Why was Ashford chosen?

Ashford benefits from excellent links to Europe from Ashford International, and from 2009 domestic services on the Channel Tunnel Rail Link will take just 37 minutes from Ashford to London. The Government's growth area study indicated substantial scope for further growth through changing its employment offer, redeveloping its town centre and increasing the rate of housing provision.

What is Ashford's Future?

Ashford Future is a partnership of local councils, government agencies and others from the public and private sector. They are responsible for delivering in excess of 150 regeneration projects throughout the borough and ensuring the town develops and grows in a sustainable way.



The partners involved in Ashford's Future are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Ashford Borough Council | Learning Skills Council |
| English Partnerships | South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) |
| Environment Agency | South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) |
| Department for Communities and Local Government | The Housing Corporation |
| Government Office for the South East (GOSE) | |
| Kent County Council | |

Leisure

Progress is being made on phase 1 of the remodelling of the Stour Centre, which will feature a state of the art leisure pool with a raging river and two flumes, plus a new teaching pool and remodelled 25 metre main pool. The centre will also boast a brand new fitness suite, health suite, spa and a café as well as a remodelled entrance and reception area. The new facilities will be ready to use by spring 2007.



Shopping

Construction on the redevelopment and extension of the County Square Shopping Centre is progressing well and is due to open spring 2008. The existing 240,000 sq ft shopping centre will almost double in size with a 200,000 sq ft extension and will include re-branded and modernised facilities, more customer parking and a new Debenhams department store and Next store.

Regeneration

The Chrysalis consortium has been chosen as the preferred bidder for the £200 million project to transform Stanhope. The regeneration will see the demolition of some existing flats and the old shopping centre, the provision of new houses and flats, the creation of a new commercial centre and new and improved community facilities

Business

An outline application has been granted for a Science and Business Park development just off Junction 9 of the M20. This will offer offices, research and development facilities and light industrial space for a wide variety of businesses.



<h2>what's on</h2> <p>in & around the area in October</p>		<p>Sun 1 A Day Out with Thomas Special service. Kent & East Sussex Railway, Tenterden. 08706006074</p> <p>End of Season Get Together and Norman Cycles Club Day Willesborough Windmill. 01233 733416</p> 		
		<p>Sun 2 Ashford Music Society Primavera Chamber Ensemble, Norton Knatchbull School, 7.30pm. 01233 623700</p> 	<p>Fri 6 – Sun 8 Tenterden Folk Festival 14th annual festival. 01233 629165</p> <p>Ladies English Open Golf Championship Chart Hills Golf Club, Biddenden. 01580 292222</p> 	
<p>Sat 7 Ashford Poets Starbucks, Ashford. 7pm. 01797363828</p> <p>Double Header Day A great display of steam and diesel locomotives in action. Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, 9.30am – 5pm. 01797 362353</p>	<p>Sat 7/Sun 8 Tenterden Folk Day. Take a train ride during the town's popular folk festival. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tenterden. 08706006074</p>	<p>Sat 7- Sun 12 The Art of Glass Exquisite objects incl. stained glass, abstract pictures, sculpture and jewellery. West End House Gallery, Smarden, 10am – 6pm. 01233 770261</p>	<p>Sat 7 The Legend of Sleepy Hollow & Haunted Houses. Plays for Halloween by the Woodchurch Players, Memorial Hall, Woodchurch. 7pm. Tickets £5. 01233 860550</p>	<p>Sun 8 Quest 10k Road Race and Children's Fun Run Start and finish Julie Rose Stadium. 10am onwards.</p>
	<p>Sat 14 Chilham Castle Gardens open under the National Garden Scheme, 2pm – 5pm. 07814 758809</p>			
		<p>Sat 14 / Sun 15 Austin Counties Car Rally A fine collection of vehicles on show. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tenterden. 08706006074</p> <p>940th Anniversary of the Battle of Hastings Battle Abbey and Battlefield, East Sussex. 10am onwards.</p>		
<p>Sat 21 Autumn Jumble Brook and Hinxhill Village Hall, 2pm. 01233 813750</p> <p>Victorian Music Hall Evening Wining, dining and music in the barn. Willesborough Windmill, 7pm for 7.30pm. 01233 733416</p>	<p>Sat 21 Besom Broom Workshop, Yonseas Farm, Rare Breeds Centre, Woodchurch. 01233 820461</p>	<p>Sat 21/ Sun 22 Bilsington Art Group Exhibition and sale of paintings by weekly art class. Bilsington Village Hall, 10am – 4pm. 01233 732963</p>	<p>Mon 23 – Sun 29 Halloween Fun Exciting and fun-filled week of magic, mystery and mayhem. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tenterden. 08706006074</p>	<p>Wed 25 – Sat 28 Tenterden Operatic and Dramatic Soc. 'Bazaar and Rummage', a comedy by Sue Townsend, Tenterden Town Hall, 7.30pm. 01580 241966</p>
	<p>Fri 27 Ghost Walk Annual Ghost Walk around the town. 01233 664410</p>	<p>Sat 28 Charity Christmas Card Sale 21 charities selling a wide range of cards and small gifts. Egerton Millennium Hall, 10am – 4pm. 01233 770451</p>	<p>Sat 28 - Sun 29 Christmas Gift Market Visit the Christmas gift market for local crafts and perfect presents. Rare Breeds Centre, Woodchurch. 01233 861493</p>	<p>Sun 29 Egerton Music Club Mozart violin sonatas, Egerton Millennium Hall, 6.30pm. 01233 756254</p> <p>Halloween Spooky stories and Halloween Happenings. Smallhythe Place, Tenterden. From 6pm. 01580 762334</p>

Local Theatre Listings

Sinden Theatre, Tenterden

October 7 - YoU2. The most accurate tribute to the mighty U2. The band's attention to detail and pursuit of perfection are pivotal to recreating the sound and energy of U2

October 17 - The Sharpees in Concert. This top local band which the late lamented

John Peel called 'tight and exciting' will be performing their own original material together with covers from Dr Feelgood, The Who, The Stranglers, The Jam, The Police and The Kinks.

November 18 - Just Floyd. The premier Floyd tribute band make a welcome return to the Sinden.

For full listings, times, tickets, prices and booking call **01580 763826** or visit **www.sindentheatre.biz**

The Barn Theatre - Smallhythe Place, Tenterden

October 11

Quartet directed by Bill Marshall. On a summer's day in a home for retired musicians, three old friends once the brightest stars of the opera world are joking and reminiscing.

what's on

in & around the area in **November**

Sat 4 Ashford Poets Starbucks, Ashford. 7pm. **01797363828**

Smarden Bonfire Night Celebrations
Float parade through the village followed by bonfire and fireworks. Smarden Village Centre, 6.30 pm – 9pm, donations welcome.
01233 770621



Sat 4/Sun 5 Heritage Diesel Weekend Special service. Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tenterden.
08706006074

Wed 8 - Putting the House and Garden to Bed
Find out what goes on after the house closes. Smallhythe Place, Tenterden. 1pm – 3pm.
01580 762334

Wed 8 - Sat 11 Charing Guild of Players 'Time of My Life' by Alan Ayckbourn, The Barn, Charing, 7.30pm.
01233 631559



Sat 11 and Sun 12

Longbow Shoot England's oldest longbow company shooting in Medieval Artillery style over long distances. Charity event by The Fraternity of St. George, Godinton House, Ashford.
fraternity@longbow-archers.com



Sat 11 and Sun 12 Beginners Basketry Workshop. Yonseas Farm, Rare Breeds Centre, Woodchurch.
01233 820461

Sat 11 Quiz Night Entry for teams of up to 6. Light supper included. Bar available. Brook and Hinxhill Village Hall, 7pm.
01233 813750

Wed 15 - Sat 25 Ashford (Kent) Art Society Annual Exhibition and sale of work, Ashford Parish Church.
01233 503235



Sat 18 Christmas Family Fun Day and Christmas Lights Switch On. Town Centre, Ashford.
01233 664410

Sat 18 Nov - Sun 24 Dec Christmas Show A collection of unique gifts for Christmas, including paintings, ceramics, etchings, jewellery, glass work and more. West End House Gallery, Smarden, 10am – 6pm.
01233 770261

Sat 25 Christmas Show Park Mall Shopping Centre.

Mon 27 - Sun 3 Dec Weald of Kent Art Group Christmas Art Exhibition. Tenterden Town Hall.
01580 291227

But their tranquillity is about to be shattered by a surprise new arrival. A wicked, funny and joyous play.

For full listings, times, tickets, prices and booking call **01580 762334** or visit **www.nationaltrust.org.uk**

The Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
For what's on at the Marlowe Theatre call **01227 787787** or visit **www.marlowetheatre.com**

The Leas Cliffe Hall, Folkestone
For what's on at the Leas Cliff Hall call **01303 228600** or visit **www.leascliffhall.co.uk**

Farmers' Markets

Egerton	Fri, 2pm-4.30pm, Egerton Millennium Village Hall	01233 756286
Rolvenden	Thurs, 10am-12 noon, St Mary's Church & Village Hall	01797 252248
Tenterden	2nd Sat of every month, 9.30am -1pm Recreation Ground Road	01580 765111
Wye	1st & 3rd Sat of every month, 9am-noon, Village Green	01233 813303



Looking for some ideas to keep the kids busy? Why not try...

Local parks and playgrounds – if the weather's kind pack up a picnic and find you nearest local park or village green.

Hothfield Common – check out the 58 hectares of heathland and lowland valley bog.

The Warren, Ashford – explore a wildlife oasis on the edge of the town.

Kingswood, Challock – green footprint markers lead you on a 3.5 mile sculpture trail through woodland.

Parish Pedals – try one of six themed cycle routes around Ashford.

Weald on Wheels – if you're feeling fit enough try a 12 mile cycle ride from Ashford to Tenterden on part of National Cycle Route 18.

Visit a local museum – Ashford Borough, Tenterden and District, Woodchurch Village Life, CM Booth Historic Vehicles, Rolvenden are just four to choose from.

Cineworld Multiplex Cinema – reduced prices on bargain Tuesdays.

Don't forget your local tourist attractions – there's plenty to see and do in the Borough from steam railways, windmills, rare breeds centre to historic houses and gardens, vineyards and picture postcard villages.

For more information and ideas contact Tourist Information on 01233 629165 or 01580 763 572 or pick up leaflets from their offices in The Churchyard, Ashford and The Town Hall, Tenterden.

Alternatively check out individual parish council websites for more information on individual villages or visit Ashford Borough Council's website www.ashford.gov.uk

Fun Camps

If you have to work this half term you can always enrol your youngsters at the Half Term fun camps at the Stour Centre and Julie Rose Stadium.

There's plenty of sports, crafts and fun things to do to keep them entertained and remember the fun camps are registered with Ofsted so you have the piece of mind of leaving your children with fully trained staff. ■

For more information or to book call 01233 639933



This October don't forget THE Big Match Normandy V England

The score may be a foregone conclusion but the action on the field will set pulses racing when Saxon King Harold and William, Duke of Normandy cross swords on Saturday October 14 and Sunday October 15.

Experience the thunder of hooves, the roar of the battle cry and the clash of metal against metal at the 940th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings at Battle Abbey and Battlefield.

Kicking off at 10am each day visitors can immerse themselves in Norman and Saxon life wandering through living history encampments showing what everyday life was like during the time. With a bustling market place, period music, archery, falconry, activities for children and building up to the battle proper at 3pm.

For more information or to pre-book tickets call: **0870 333 1183** or visit **www.english-heritage.org.uk/1066**



LUXURY from only STATIC HOLIDAY HOMES £9,995

Enjoy a lifetime of wonderful holidays
in **THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND...**



A FAMILY ORIENTATED HOLIDAY PARK

Entertainment, a fully licensed bar...

Children's play area and games room

Not to mention the luxurious Gardens Development,

34 uniquely situated pitches all with gorgeous sea views, piped gas.

Private parking bays, and exclusive entrance gate.

Seacliff Holiday Park
Oak Lane, Minster, Kent



Speak to one of our representatives on

01795 877 299

seacliffholidaypark.co.uk

images for illustration purposes only

Get Your Share of £2.7 million!

The Prince's Trust has launched a new campaign calling on young people in the South East to improve their local communities. Cash awards from a £2.7m pot will be given to those who come forward with projects that make a lasting difference to their area.



The Big Boost programme can offer financial assistance, ongoing support, guidance and access to specialist advice to bring project ideas to life.

If you're aged between 14 and 25, have been underachieving at school, in care, in trouble with the law or long-term unemployed you could get up to £5000. On completion of the project the Trust will help young people back into education, training and employment.

Martina Milburn, Chief Executive of the Princes Trust explains: "Many young people feel there are not enough opportunities in their area which can lead to boredom and disconnecting with the community but many also have great ideas of what could improve their community. These cash awards will help young people bring their ideas to life resulting in a better community and a sense of achievement". ■

For find out more about the Big Boost programme call Gordon Liddiard on 01622 694338 or email gordon.liddiard@princes-trust.org.uk



The Princes Trust helps change young lives in the UK. Working with 14 to 30 year olds giving practical and financial support and developing skills such as confidence and motivation. In 30 years the Prince of Wales' charity has helped over half a million young people.

One local person who has benefited from that help is Kate Austen, 24, who turned to the Trust after finding herself long-term unemployed. She received a £2000 business loan and opened podiatry and chiropody business Podplus Trackside Shop and Clinic in May 2005.

Based at the Julie Rose Stadium, Podplus offers a chiropody service as well as giving professional advice on a range of foot problems and supplies specialist footwear to suit individual's feet and activities.'

"Thanks to the Trust I am now a business woman instead of unemployed, it's a great organisation and well finding out more about and supporting." ■

To find out how the Princes Trust can help you or how you can help the Trust by making a donation visit www.princes-trust.org.uk

Soon to launch...

a chance for local teenagers to get music industry training

On Da Roadz Productions, a social enterprise initiative which aims to support disadvantaged teenagers will soon be giving local youngsters a chance to get music industry training.

Kasablanca Vandros cut her teeth in the production industry making music videos and tv commercials and having recently moved to Ashford quickly realised that there were a lot of teenagers in the borough with little to do. After speaking and listening to local youngsters about what they would like to do the project was born.

Kasablanca explained: "The project will be offering structured programs in audio engineering and music production training, where a City & Guilds qualification can be gained. Later the project will provide a social area where teens can come and chill out, watch music documentaries and videos offering a wider and more positive insight into music and the recorded arts."

"This will also involve Industry professionals coming to visit the project offering a deeper insight and advice into entering the music industry which will include trips to established studios in London."

On Da Roadz will be looking to expand in the future to include a youth radio station and audio visual editing suites.

In order for the enterprise to be a success she is seeking local sponsorship/funding and volunteers to help support this project, as well as permanent premises. ■

For more information call **01233 660341**

British Youth Council launches new and improved website

The BYC is an independant national charity run by and for young people which sets out to empower young people in the UK to have a voice and represents their views to central and local government, political groups pressure groups and the media.

The new and improved website has a host of information from news and opportunities to campaigns, discussions forums and online questionnaires.

You can also subscribe to their recently launched BYC Bullet newsletter packed with events and information.

www.byc.org.uk for information.

there's plenty
on offer for the
musically minded

Whether it's classical, rock or folk
– the borough has something
to suit all tastes!

Tenterden Folk Festival

There's music and fun for the whole family starting on Friday 6 October when the popular festival, now regarded as one of the best in the UK, returns to dominate the town.

With a plethora of traditional and contemporary folk music, dance, arts crafts and much more is a definite must-see event.

With more venues than ever before the organisers have been able to book even more guests and include more events. This year's line up of things to do and people to see looks set to be the best ever.

The festival kicks off on Friday with a concert, sing-a-rounds and music in many local pubs. Saturday boasts around 30 events including, English barn dance, street theatres, Children's' events, Appalachian dancers and exhibitions to name just a few of the events on offer. Sunday's climax includes Morris Dancing, folk clubs, workshops and loads more.

Many of the events are free and held in the High Street with others in function rooms, church halls and public bars.

Festival tickets are available from Tenterden Folk Festival or Tourist Information in Tenterden and Ashford.

You can find out more by visiting www.tenterdenfolkfestival.org.uk

Ashford Choral Society - 150 and still going strong

The coming season sees the society's 150th anniversary to be marked with a special concert at Canterbury Cathedral next May.

The society currently has around 130 singers and gives three to four concerts a year from September to May. The present conductor Mark Deller is a professional musician who directs the annual Stour Music festival and works with choirs in Europe and South America.

Each season there is an opportunity for members to perform major works with leading soloists and professional symphony orchestra.

This winter the society will be performing Bach's Christmas Oratorio at the beginning of December followed by the annual Christmas Carol Concert later in the month. In the New Year preparations begin for Durufle's Requiem in March as well as three works to be performed at the anniversary concert in May which will include Walton's choral masterpiece Belshazzar's feast, Elgar's The Spirit of England and Vaughan Williams' Towards the Unknown Region.

There is still time for performers to join the Society and take part in this special season.

Contact Eunice Smith on 01233 624843 or visit www.ashfordchoral.org.uk



Ashford Rocks

Ashford Rocks has just celebrated its third birthday and remains Ashford's biggest rock venue for live bands at Ashford Town FC's Homelands Stadium in Kingsnorth.

October sees a special charity gig - Rock4Macmillan - in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support sparked by the fund raising efforts of 25 year old Julie Twydell who lost her father to cancer in 1998. Since then she has walked 100km across the Sahara raising £1500 and hopes to raise a further £3000 with a jungle trek in November 2007.

Set to run from 3pm till late the day looks set to deliver a wide range of music to please everyone. Bands & Artists set to take part include:

Just Floyd, Kingskin, Xavier, Equilibrium, Electric River, Awkward, My Life in the Making, Dayfall, and Sizen.

With tickets at just £5 this is an event not to be missed!

Ashford Music Society

The society opens its 64th season on 2 October with a concert by the Primavera Chamber Ensemble playing Mozart's Piano Quartet on E flat, Shostakovich's piano Quintet in G Minor and Elgar's Piano Quintet Opus 84.

Formed in 1986 by Director Paul Manley, Primavera has created an enviable reputation as one of Britain's finest ensembles.

Then concert will be held at the Norton Knatchbull School, Ashford at 7.30pm Tickets £9 (Adults) £3 (Students) and can be obtained at the door.

For more information call 01233 622971



Ashford Rocks Gig Guide

Friday 6 October
BOSSK, Symmetry, Duncan Black

Saturday 7 October
Rock4Macmillan – Charity Gig

Friday 27 October
Shibby, The Anasazi, Misguided

Friday 10 November
Shotgun Junky, Thousand Leagues Below, Heavy Mental

Friday 24 November
Electric River, The Self Tilted, Silent Minority

Doors open 7.30pm (except Rock4Macmillan). Admission £5.
For more information check out Ashford Rocks website www.ashfordrocks.com

Get the kids fit through Footy this Autumn

Why not try out Ashford Borough Football Club - formed in 1994 under the name of Bliby FC the last 12 years has seen the club go from strength to strength and today is one of the biggest and most successful clubs in the county with silverware rolling in over the past five years showing the hard work of the coaches and players has paid dividends.

The club provides coaching and competitive football for children from five to 16 and also has three men's teams for the youngsters to progress into. The club is also well on it's way to having a girl's team.

All coaches are FA qualified and have undergone police checks (an FA requirement) and the club strives to obtain the Community Charter Standard Award.

At present the club is represented in almost half a dozen Kent leagues." ■

To find our more visit their website www.ashford-boroughfc.com

Ashford's Brazilian Soccer School has sessions for all young footballers aged 5 – 18 at Courtside, Ashford Mini Soccer Centre and the Julie Rose Stadium. ■

For full details visit www.icfds.co/ashford or call **01233 330475**

And for the little ones ...

Socatots is the best start in football for pre school children. There are sessions for under 3's as well as sessions for three and four year olds working with special Socatots footballs and a variety of fun and educational equipment.

Visit www.socatots.com for more details and for details of sessions call **01233 330475**

For the grown ups...

There are plenty of classes to choose from at the Stour Centre and Julie Rose Stadium.

For more details call the **Stour Centre: 01233 639933** or the **Julie Rose Stadium: 01233 613131**

Looking for a court?

Then Courtside, a brand new multi sports facility in Stanhope Road, could be the answer.

The centre, funded by the New Opportunities Fund in partnership with Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council, will be the new home of the Ashford Netball League providing two state of the art show courts and four additional practice courts.

The centre will also be the new base for Ashford's Brazilian Soccer School which will use the courts for matches and coaching.

The courts will also be available for public hire for tennis, small sided football and basketball. The centre boasts a brand new pavilion with spacious changing rooms and a meeting room for 15 – 20 people which is also available for hire. ■



For more information about Courtside or to book the facilities call **01233 330475** or email ben.moyle@ashford.gov.uk



Quest 10k Road Race Celebrates 20 years

Whether you are a serious athlete or a fun runner hoping to raise money for your favourite good cause make sure you are part of this year's 20th anniversary race.

Starting and finishing at the Julie Rose Centre the race organised by Ashford Athletic Club and expected to attract thousands of runners promises to be a great experience.

The road race proper starts at 10am with the under 10's and the 10 to under 15's fun runs starting at 11.15.

There are prizes for the first three men and women over the finishing line, as well as for veterans and winning teams. All finishers will receive a commemorative medal.

If you haven't entered already there is still a chance to take part as entries will be accepted on the day (£17 adults, £3 children).

If you don't think you can make the distance then cheer on the brave souls taking part. Go along to the Julie Rose stadium or find yourself a vantage point along the route. ■

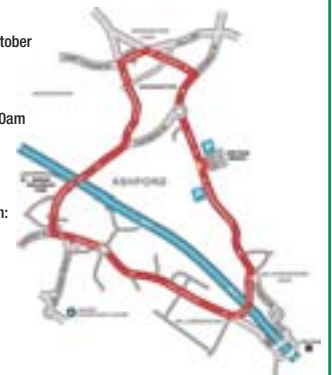
For more information visit www.ashford10k.co.uk

Sunday 8th October

Start time:
10k: 10.00am

Fun runs: 11.30am
(approx) for
under 15's.

Location:
Start and finish:
Julie Rose
Stadium,
Ashford, Kent.



Brazilian Soccer Schools

Learn to play the Brazilian way.
Coaching sessions for 5-16 year old boys and girls.

Socatots

Unique football based play programme for pre-school children. Fun and educational.
For your nearest venues and full information on BSS and Socatots call 01233 330475

Grand Design is Top Design

The innovative conversation of an old concrete water tower in Rolvenden into a spectacular state of the art home featured on Channel 4's Grand Designs programme has won the architects an award in this year's Ashford Borough Council Building Design Awards.

The Water Tower, in Hastings Road won the coveted Special Award category for architects Fountain, Flanagan, Briscoe Associates.

Architect Derek Briscoe, who came up with the groundbreaking design is delighted. *"It was a fantastic project to work on, posing real challenges and offering unique opportunities and it was great working with Ashford's planning department who were helpful and supportive."*

Home owners Bruno and Denise Del Tusso love their new home and praised Derek's vision and hard work. *"It's all about having an excellent architect who not only comes up with an amazing design but is also someone you gel with and makes sure the idea becomes a reality,"* says Denise. ■



Other winners projects were;

Public Realm

Wye Bridge. *Jacobs Babbie*

Conservation

Pluckley Church of England School.
Sogol Architects

Commercial

Kingston House, Orbital Park.
Richard Daniels Associates

Residential

Green Lane Cottage, West Brabourne.
Cyma Architects

New information required for planning applications

New planning rules came into force this summer which require people applying for planning permission to include additional documentation.

Design and Access Statements, which explain the design thinking behind the application, will now be required for almost all applications made under the Town and County Planning Acts including Listed Building applications.

The statements should include a written description and explanation of the application, demonstrate commitment to good design and accessibility and show how the designer/developer will meet the various obligations placed on them by legislation and local planning policy.

Statements need not be very long but the amount of detail they contain should reflect how complex the application is. So, a

statement for a major development is likely to be much longer than one for a single property. Planning applications which need to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement but are submitted without one will not be registered by the council's planning department until the Statement has been received. ■

If you want to know whether your application needs to include Design and Access Statements contact Ashford Borough Council's Planning Department on **01233 331111**.

For more information about Design and Access Statements download the free leaflet published by CABE from **www.cabe.org.uk/AssetLibrary/8073.pdf**

Detailed advice can also be found at the Department of Communities and Local Government website **www.communities.gov.uk**

Missing out on benefits?

Ashford Borough Council is working with other Kent councils to improve the take up of Council Tax and Housing Benefit.

Tens of thousands of people across the county are rightfully entitled to help but for one reason or another fail to apply for that help. Many are elderly and may not realise they are entitled to benefits which is why in March 2004 all the councils in Kent and Medway formed the Kent Benefit Partnership.

The partnership aims to encourage take up and help reduce poverty levels in the county.

It is estimated that around 2000 people in Ashford are missing out on benefits they are entitled to.

Groups underclaiming include

- **Elderly people**
- **People with a disability**
- **Loan parents**
- **Families on a low income**
- **Families with a carer**
- **People in hospital**
- **Ethnic minorities**

The partnership aims to reach those missing out with promotional campaigns in the media, leaflets and posters, roadshows, improved information to partner organisations, charities and welfare groups and much more.

The campaign is due to take place in Ashford during November. ■

To find out if you are entitled to Council Tax and Housing Benefit contact Ashford Borough Council on: **01233 331111**

Make sure you have the right to vote (and save the Council thousands of pounds)

By now every household in the Borough will have received a form to enable the occupiers to register to vote

Ashford Borough Council's Electoral Registration Department are asking people who have not yet returned their form to do so as soon as possible using the reply paid envelope. This will not only make sure you don't lose your right to vote but could also save the Council (and you the Council Tax payer) around £25,000.



New government regulations mean that forms that have not been sent back to the council have to be physically collected by canvassers in an attempt to obtain registration details of the people who live at the property. This is additional money the council has to find and could be as much as £25,000.

When completing the form please make sure that all sixteen and seventeen year olds are included as they can be registered even though they cannot vote until they are eighteen. Before every election many eighteen year olds are disappointed that they have missed their first chance to vote because they have not been included on the register and due to a recent change in the rules governing candidates at elections, this disappointment may now also include the inability to stand for election as the eligible age for candidates has been reduced from 21 to 18 years of age.

Credit Reference Agencies

Failure to return the registration form can also affect your credit rating as one of the basic checks undertaken by financial institutions before approving applications for credit and other services is whether the applicants are entered on the Register of Electors.

Telephone/Internet Registration Facility – withdrawn

It has not been possible for householders to register a “no change” response by telephone or internet this year as new regulations require that each individual elector must state their nationality when completing the form. ■

If you are unsure of anything the Electoral Services Office will be happy to give advice and assistance over the telephone. The help line number is **01233 330402**.

Local Democracy Week 9 to 13 October

The Local Democracy Week campaign is a national initiative aimed at promoting the role of local government to young people.

National surveys have shown that around 50% of young people believe their local council have no direct control or relevance to their lives and only 2% think councils have any power.

But reality is that your local council plays a huge role in what services and facilities are available in your area and local councillors are the people who make those decisions. People can influence what happens in their area by ensuring they vote for the candidate who best reflects their needs and interests (or perhaps even standing as a candidate).

This year the age for being able to stand as a candidate in local (and national) elections has been reduced to 18 which means more young people than ever have the right to stand as a candidate.

Earlier this year the government's Department for Constitutional Affairs awarded funds to Ashford to promote youth electoral registration.

During Local Democracy Week Ashford Borough Council's Youth and Community and Electoral Services teams will be holding a series of events designed to demonstrate to young people that what happens in local government is of relevance to them and that they can have their voice heard if they register to vote and exercise that vote.

This includes councillors visiting local schools and question and answer sessions about local democracy. ■

news in brief

Be Safe In Motorway Works

Work began last month on the £4.9m scheme to tackle congestion at junction 10 of the M20.

Extra lane space is being created for traffic joining and leaving the motorway in preparation for new development in the area.

In the coming months the layout of the roundabouts will be modified, with a speed restriction of 30mph for the duration of the works, one lane of the M20 in both directions will be closed and a 50mph speed restriction in the other lanes for the safety of drivers and the workforce.

Last year saw five workers killed and 12 seriously injured during works carried out on behalf of the Highways Agency, the worst in five years.

For the safety of all road users and road workers the Highways Agency are asking drivers approaching roadworks to

- **Keep within the speed limit**
- **Get into the correct lane in time and not to keep switching lanes**
- **Concentrate on the road ahead, not the road works**
- **Watch out for works traffic entering and leaving roadworks**
- **Keep a safe distance at all times**
- **Observe all signs**

For more information call **Highways Agency: 08457504030** or visit **www.highways.gov.uk**

For real time traffic information call the **Highways Agency: 08700660115**



Community safety unit



safe in their hands

So how violent is Ashford?

I often hear people say that we live in a more violent society nowadays.

So how violent is the borough of Ashford?

Despite the recent incident reported in the local press of a young person assaulted on the street Ashford still remains a safe place to live with very few physical assaults taking place in relation to the size of its population.

At weekends in our town centres there are still less assaults carried out than fingers on my hands.

Reports in the national media of rises in recorded violent crime naturally are a cause for concern and worry us all but it is worth remembering there are twenty offences categorised as violent crime. These range from murder through to common assault and offences such as using words that cause harassment, alarm or distress and carrying an offensive weapon in a public place but they do not always mean that someone has necessarily been physically assaulted.

The reality of being assaulted by an unknown assailant is thankfully very low. In the vast majority of cases when an assault is reported to police the offender is known to the victim with 20% of violent crime in Ashford youth on youth crime with young people being the victims and sadly 33% of violent crime is domestic violence. Violent crime is low in Ashford but this does not make us complacent. Along with the Ashford Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership I endeavour to make sure it remains low.

Try not to let events from around the country in the media influence your view of the reality of living here. I would encourage you to go out and enjoy our borough knowing that the reality of being physically assaulted is extremely low and that we still live in a safe place.

If you would like details of your local officer who will be able to deal with any issues that may concern you please contact our Community Safety Unit on **01233 660747**. ■

Stuart Kehily

District Commander



School Parking

Just a month into the new term and head teachers, the police and fire service are already concerned about safety issues because of parents parking inconsiderately near local schools.

The dangers are obvious, children need to see and been seen going into and coming out of school and bad parking can make this almost impossible. Causing an obstructing and blocking roads by parking badly is dangerous and can be an offence and is a major concern for the fire and ambulance services.

Often the sheer volume of cars causes problems especially for people who live or work in streets with a school and inconsiderate parking, blocking people's drives or using private car parks without permission can lead to tension and local people and businesses being the subject of abuse from parents who have been asked to move their cars.

Local parking attendants can and will be deployed to areas with serious, persistent problems mainly to advise parents but can issue tickets if parking offences have taken place.

Lee Rose, Ashford Fire Station Manager said: *"We all know many parents are stressed and in a hurry but a little bit of thought could make all the difference. Parents need to really understand the dangers. It takes seconds for an accident to occur, a child to be run over or a fire to get out of hand, saying I'll only be a minute is not an excuse. It would help if parents parked a little further away and were prepared to walk even a little, car pooling with other parents is also a great idea as is a walking bus scheme, why not find out if the school has one.*

"None of the emergency services wants to end up dealing with a child who has been run over or a person dying in their home because an ambulance or fire engine couldn't get through so we are asking parents to please think, take their time and be considerate." ■

Mini-Moto Menace

Thinking about buying the kids a mini-moto this Christmas – don't. That's the message from Ashford's Community Safety Unit.

Unless you are prepared to register, tax and insure the vehicle the chances are it will end up being used illegally leaving the rider/owner liable to fines, points on their licence (even if they don't have one yet) a driving ban and having the vehicle crushed.

This summer saw a national clamp down on the illegal and reckless use of these vehicles and similar machines such as quad bikes.

Roads Policing Officer PC Phil Sharp explained: *"Misuse of these vehicles will not be tolerated, they can be a menace and dangerous. They are not toys, some can reach 60mph. They should not be driven on roads unless registered taxed and insured and the rider should wear a helmet. They cannot be used on pavements in car parks, parks and open land, basically unless you have your own land, permission to use someone else's or access to a proper off road track facility there is simply no point in owning one.*

"People have a right to live without being forced to hear the screech of these machines, dodge out of their way on pavements and roads or while out and about in the borough's countryside and open spaces." ■





News from Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce is the second-fastest growing Chamber in the Country according to a survey by the British Chambers of Commerce.

The Chamber has enjoyed a membership growth rate of 23 per cent over the last 12 months with 401 new members.

Kent Invicta covers the boroughs of Ashford, Canterbury, Maidstone, and Tonbridge and Malling. Current membership is 1200, making it the largest Chamber in Kent and one of the largest and most pro-active in South East England. As well as supporting local businesses in various ways with membership services and liaison with local authorities, it is represented on the Kent & Medway Economic Board, the Kent Partnership, and the South East England Chamber of Commerce.

Director of Membership Services Mrs Jo James said *"We are delighted so many companies have joined us recently. It is especially gratifying as these figures reflect our growth as a consolidated Chamber covering all our membership areas."*

"At Kent Invicta Chamber we are especially proud of our close relationship with our members and for our reputation as a membership-driven organisation. We are of course extremely pleased that so many new members feel we can be of benefit. We welcome all of them, and look forward to many more!"

They say a problem shared is a problem halved - can your business benefit from an independent eye?

Kent Invicta Chamber Business Support Team can help you solve any problems or work with you to grow your business. The Chamber quality business support service is subsidised to make it fully cost-effective and beneficial to all companies.

The Business Support team, all experienced accredited advisers, offer a full and confidential, independent service. The advisers are happy to hold consultations either onsite or at the Chamber offices in Sevington.

Available are free pre-start and start-up consultations, together with the cost-effective on-going support packages for existing businesses. There are training courses and workshops for start-ups and existing businesses.

Advisory support packages comprise:

Package 1

Initial meeting and agreed action plan.

Package 2

Initial meeting, assessment report, agreed action plan with review after six months, plus on-going email and telephone support/mentoring available from your personal Business Adviser.

Package 3

As above with reviews after 12 months. ■



Jo's new position reflects her wider role

Jo James, probably the best known "face" of the Chamber to Members because of her pro-active role within the organisation, has a new title and position which better reflects the wider influence of the part she plays.

Jo is now Director of Membership Services. Chamber Chief Executive Chris Capron explains *"The Chamber has expanded in recent years in several ways: area of operation, membership numbers, and authority."*

"Kent Invicta Chamber has become one of the major business support organisations in the County. Jo's role is central in that wider field, and her duties have become far more Directorial than Managerial. She not only has her own team of staff in Membership Services to support, but also represents the Chamber in local, county, regional and national situations. She frequently liaises with other Chambers throughout the UK, and is involved with consultative bodies of the South East of England Chamber and the British Chambers of Commerce."

Jo commented *"It's nice that the wider implications of the part I now play are recognised, but I don't foresee a situation where I lose touch with things closer to home. If I represent the Chamber on a broad front, I do so on behalf of the membership, the local business community, and the Chamber staff. Those elements will always be my priority."* ■

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So, what exactly is enterprise?

Having helped over one hundred entrepreneurs in the past eighteen months at the Romney Enterprise Gateway and believing myself to be an enterprising sort of chap I feel that I am better qualified than most to answer this question.

Okay, so let's start with the basics - enterprise is something done by an entrepreneur. So it is fair to say that in order to understand enterprise you need to understand the entrepreneur.

When people hear the word 'entrepreneur' most will think of a self-made multi-millionaire businessperson, such as Richard Branson, Anita Roddick or Alan Sugar. They are all people who have achieved great success through being enterprising.

So what are their common characteristics? What is it that they all do and what is it that marks them out as enterprising people?

They discover and make use of opportunities.

They use their skills and their talents to make things happen.

They are passionate about what they do.

They take calculated risks.

They are creative.

They have lots of new ideas.

Most importantly, they get out there and make something happen. They set themselves goals, they work hard to achieve them and when they do, they find something else to get stuck into.

That is something that every Romney Enterprise Gateway member is doing right now. Every person that we are helping has seen an opportunity to make a change in their life and is following a dream to become their own boss.

As for success...well I see it as a symptom of adopting an enterprising approach to life. Life throws us opportunities. Life gives us skills. An entrepreneur with a positive and optimistic approach to life will grab hold of the opportunities and will make something positive happen. ■

If you have ideas or have seen an opportunity please contact us on: **01797 369336**
or visit our website at: **www.romneyenterprisegateway.net.**



Catching Fraudsters for honest Council Tax payers

Ashford Borough Council has signed up to the Fraudline Scheme which aims to deter fraudulent insurance claims.

Insurance fraud against local councils is not a victimless crime. It's not big businesses that pick up the tab, it's the honest Council tax payer. Success in fighting fraud reduces this cost and money saved directly benefits local council services and minimises the council tax burden.

Bogus, exaggerated and multiple claims defraud the system and fraudulent claimants are committing a crime against their community.

By signing up to Fraudline Ashford Borough Council will work closely with police detecting and prosecuting those committing fraud, work closely with other local authorities to carry out thorough checks to ensure every claim is genuine, invest in training staff, technology and investigation methods.

How can you help?

You can help by providing information that may assist in detecting a false claim. By calling the anonymous fraud line and giving information on someone you think is making a fraudulent claim you will be helping your community.

Ashford Borough Council takes the submission of fraudulent claims very seriously and seeks to identify and root out all such claims and those willing to commit such crimes against their own communities.

Report fraud on:

0800 328 9270



Autumn is the time for the great garden tidy-up and preparing for the coming year...

One of the benefits of the shifting seasons is that autumn is no longer a temporary blip separating summer from winter...

oct.

October is the start of a brand new season with a pattern all of its own. There is a rich tapestry of autumn colours and late flowers to look forward to when the low sun of an Indian summer is punctuated by refreshing evenings with a nip on the air.

Tidy up borders, weeding and cutting down flower stems. Compost all green rubbish making sure you shred woody materials first. Make new lawns and carry out lawn repair and make sure you clear up dead leaves and reduce mowing. Cut back shrubs, plant bare root plants once the leaves are dropped. Continue to replace summer bedding with winter and spring flowering bedding plants and lift tender perennials and tender bulbs and bring indoors. Clear out the greenhouse and prepare for cold weather reducing watering. Sow early annuals and plant tulips, narcissus and hyacinths in containers. Have a pond clear-out removing dead or dying marginal plant leave and removing excess sludge from the bottom Once the vegetable patch is cleared carry out winter digging. Watch out for first frosts.

nov.

November sees the beginning of a new gardening year and the start of the bare root planting season when deciduous shrubs and trees can be planted or dug up and moved. Evergreens come into their own once the autumn leaves have fallen and give the garden year-round backbone with some in striking shades of gold, reds, bronze or blues as well as plain greens and variegated patterns.

Carry on winter digging or forking over. Keep off the lawn as much as possible but continue cutting having raised the blades and lay turf if you didn't in October. Clear off dead leaves and compost. Look after newly planted shrubs and trees. Dig up dahlia tubers once plants die off after the first hard frost. Divide fibrous-rooted perennials. Complete planting of daffodils, narcissus, crocus, lily bulbs and tulips. Ventilate greenhouse on sunny days and reduce watering to bare minimum. Finish digging over the vegetable patch while the ground is still workable. Watch out for snails congregating on damp places, mice in sheds and greenhouses, squirrels digging up your bulbs and birds pinching your winter greens.

Ashford Borough Council Services at a Glance

Cultural Services:

Head of Service - Mark Carty

- Leisure ● Culture & Arts ● Voluntary Sector
- Heritage & Tourism ● Regeneration
- Community Development

Environmental Services:

Head of Service - Paul Jackson

- Waste Collection/Recycling ● Street Cleansing ● Parking Services/Engineering Services ● Environmental Health ● Licensing
- Health & Safety ● Parks/Open spaces
- Abandoned Vehicles ● Cemeteries
- Allotments ● Community Safety
- Monitoring Centre ● Dog Warden
- Pest Control

Financial Services:

Head of Service - Pauline Adams

- Council Tax ● Housing Benefit ● Business Rates ● Financial Management

Housing Services:

Head of Service - Tracey Kerly

- Housing Management ● Housing Advice
- Homelessness ● Affordable Housing
- Private Sector Housing Regulation

ICT/Customer Services:

Head of Service - Rob Neil

- Customer Services ● Customer Contact Centre ● Customer Call Centre
- Information Systems

Legal & Democratic Services

Head of Service - Terry Mortimer

- Committee/Member Services ● Elections Monitoring Officer ● Legal Services

Planning and Development:

Head of Service - Richard Alderton

- Strategic Planning ● Development Control
- Building Control ● Urban Design ● Land Charges ● Economic Development ● Historic Buildings

Further information about Council Services can be found on our website www.ashford.gov.uk

win £100

Prize Sudoku October/November

		9						2
2	3	5	1			7		
8	4			9	7			
	1	7				5		
5								9
		2				1	3	
			4	8			6	5
		6			5	3	4	7
9						2		

Fill in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each smaller 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9.

Once you have completed the puzzle, fill in your details on the coupon and post to Ashford Voice for a chance to win £100!

Name:

Address:

Terms & Conditions:

Please complete and return this entry form along with your completed Sudoku puzzle to:

Ashford Voice, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL.

The decision of the editor is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Closing date for entries is Monday 2 November 2006

You may have come home to more problems...

but at least you have come home

Bills, credit card debts, outstanding loans, final demands - sometimes it seems life can't get any worse. But it could. Let the problems mount up and you could end up losing your home.

It may not seem like it now, but there is help available and people who can help you find it. All it takes is one call - a call which could stop today's problems becoming tomorrow's nightmare.

It doesn't matter whether you are an owner-occupier struggling with a mortgage or a tenant finding it difficult to cope in a rented property, there are ways in which we can help - but only if you contact us. Do it now - while there is still time.

**Ring 01233 330688 or
call in to the**

**Civic Centre, Tannery
Lane, Ashford
and ask for
Housing Advice.**

**Desperate?
At risk
of losing
your home?**

Get help NOW

**01233
330688**

**- ask for
Housing Advice**



**ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL**