

ASHFORD

Issue 5 Summer 2019

A CURIOUS LAUNCH

Cheers to new brewery

FOR YOU

YOUR BOROUGH, YOUR MAGAZINE

WIN

- Gardening prizes
- A glamping break

SUMMER FUN

Your guide to what's hot

ASHFORD IN BLOOM

Bloomin' lovely gardens



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



revelation up close & personal

ASHFORD'S NO 1 MUSIC & ARTS VENUE

revels
COMEDY CLUB

REVELS COMEDY CLUB

FRIDAY 7 JUNE

Get Up Close and Personal with some of the best stand up comedians on the circuit with your local comedy club, hosted by Ravi Holy

EARLY BIRD £10 DOOR £12



TERRY HALL DJ SET

THURSDAY 18 JULY

The lead singer of the iconic band "The Specials" will be joining Create at Revelation for a very special DJ set.



EARLY BIRD £18 DOOR £22 18+



Welcome

Summer is here and there's a strong sense of the great outdoors in this edition of *Ashford For You*. Our What's On section has doubled in size to signpost the huge variety of things to see and do, we preview the ever-popular Create music festival – one of the biggest free events in the South East – and focus on cycling in the borough.

Even our free-to-enter competitions have an outdoors theme – we have glamping breaks and some great gardening prizes. Nearly 450 readers participated in our Travelodge competition in the last issue, more evidence of how popular your magazine has become just a year after being launched.

Elsewhere in this edition we have exciting news of ambitious plans to revitalise Victoria Park, while Ashfordians will also be fascinated to learn more about celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the arrival of our World War One tank in the town.

Enjoy reading *Ashford For You* and keep sending us your views and ideas. And enjoy your summer!

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:

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www.ashford.gov.uk/councillors

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM WWW.REVELATIONASHFORD.CO.UK

International dance company set for new home



The internationally-acclaimed Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company is set to relocate to a new state-of-the-art purpose-built home in Ashford after a planning application was granted and Arts Council England approved a grant of more than £3m towards the ground-breaking project.

It will provide The Jasmin Vardimon Company (JVC), which has been based in Ashford for seven years, with a self-financing, energy-efficient, bespoke home. The building will be designed to advanced standards of sustainability and efficiency. Its ultramodern fit-out will enable the company to develop its artistic model and content, education and outreach work. It provides the Ashford community with a valuable asset, adding to the town's health and fitness and arts offering as well as contributing to the local economy

The new space will house a creation and presentation space for JVC and dedicated training spaces for its educational wing. The scheme, put forward by Kent County Council, also includes 29 light industrial units, the proceeds of which will help to make it self-financing. The total project cost is £9.145m.

The centre will include incubator and start-up spaces for emerging local creative companies and individuals.

Community facilities will include space for additional training courses delivered in partnership with KCC, a Pilates and yoga studio to house classes, and a café.

The facilities will be available for the wider arts industry with a preview arena for visiting companies to showcase new work. Additional funding comes from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, which has agreed a £1.597m loan. The creative space will be leased from KCC by JVC.

Since 2012, JVC has been based at the Stour Centre, which it has since outgrown. A number of other companies have expressed an interest in using the space there, while small creative businesses are emerging from The Jasmin Vardimon Company who themselves need space. JVC hope to move in by Autumn next year.

JVC Artistic Director Mike Hill said: "This is a hugely-exciting step forward. Since founding the company in 1998, it has been my ambition to develop a creative hub, an environment in which to research, create, produce and educate."

www.jasminvardimon.com

The ONE YOU shop is on the move!

The One You shop opened in February 2017 and is a partnership between Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council and Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust to tackle the health and wellbeing issues within our borough.

More than 4,000 people have visited the One You shop since it opened, taking advantage of a number of activities available such as healthy weight programmes and stopping smoking support.

Due to its continued success the shop is moving to larger premises, still within Park Mall shopping centre, in early summer.

We'll be featuring the shop and the great work it's doing in our next issue, so watch this space!



Ashford launches first property market report

Connect 38, located within Ashford's Commercial Quarter, was the perfect setting for the official launch of the inaugural Ashford Property Market Report.

Produced by Ashford Borough Council in association with Caxtons Chartered Surveyors, and using updated material from the Kent Property Market Report 2018 as well as new research, the report provides an insight into current trends and future opportunities in Ashford – one of the fastest growing towns in the South East.

Visit www.ashfordfor.com/ashfordpropertymarketreport

Doors open at Danemore

A major landmark in Ashford Borough Council's multi-million pound modernisation plan for its sheltered housing schemes has seen the re-opening of Danemore in Tenterden. A short walk from the town centre, the new-look Danemore provides 34 new homes for affordable rent for older people, together with four chalet bungalows which will be sold on the open market.

Modelled on the multi-award-winning Farrow Court scheme in south Ashford, Danemore is a mix of one and two bedroom apartments, built to a high quality that are care ready. There is a large cosy communal lounge, laundry room, guest suite and buggy store, as well as the spacious homes and a real community feel already. Danemore is designed to be dementia-friendly throughout, taking into account colour schemes, light, corridor lengths, patterns and memory shelves.



The scheme has been devised in recognition of the need to make special provision for the needs of an ageing population – by 2026 it is anticipated that around 40% of the residents within the Ashford borough will be aged over 50.

The cost of the scheme is around £7.5m, paid for through the council's housing revenue account and grant funding from Homes England.

Free parking in towns

Did you know that the council has introduced free parking within the borough at certain times and days of the week?

- Edinburgh Road (TN24 8LG) – FREE after 3pm, Monday to Saturday, and all day on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- Flour Mills (TN24 8PA) – FREE all day on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- Station Road (TN23 1PP) – FREE after 3pm on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- Bridewell Lane, Tenterden – (TN30 6EY) – FREE all day on a Sunday and Bank Holidays.
- Parking bays in Ashford town centre (High Street, North Street and Bank Street) – FREE after 6pm, Monday to Saturday, and all day on a Sunday.

For more details visit www.ashford.gov.uk/free-parking

Searching for a new job?

The Job Club is a free to attend drop in service, which runs every Monday and Thursday between 1pm and 4pm (except bank holidays) in the IT suite at Ashford Gateway Plus in Church Road.

Job Club staff can assist with:

- Creating email accounts
- Completing applications forms
- Interview skills and techniques
- Online job searches and registering with online job sites
- Creating and updating your curriculum vitae (CV)
- Careers advice
- Other job search activities

The Job Club is run by Ashford Borough Council, Southern Housing Group and Ashford Gateway Plus, with the assistance of a volunteer from the Volunteer Centre.

See www.ashford.gov.uk/job-club

Job Club
Everyone welcome



Competition winner

Thanks to everyone who responded to the competition in our last edition to win a family weekend break with Travelodge, anywhere in the UK. Nearly 450 of you took the time to enter but we can only have one winner, who is Mrs Maxine Difford, Singleton, Ashford.



Success is brewing...

Curious Brewery serves up a refreshing new look to Ashford's skyline

Over the past year visitors to Ashford town centre would have been curious to discover more about the new distinctive black building coming up from the ground on the corner of Victoria Way opposite Ashford International Station.

It is home to a 1.6 acre brewery experience – The Curious Brewery from English wines expert, Chapel Down. The multi-million pound project, state-of-the-art, custom-built brewery also includes a shop, bar, restaurant and hosting area for tours.

The new Curious Brewery will enable the company to grow its domestic and international distribution, strengthen the borough's strong tourism offer, create dozens of new jobs and become a significant new focal point and attraction in the heart of the town centre. The brewery will be open to the public for guided tours and for those of you keen to sample a locally made tittle, it will feature a shop, restaurant and bar.

In addition to being available in many leading bars, restaurants, retailers and supermarkets, Curious Brewing products are served at several the UK's most iconic platforms for the arts, including The Donmar Warehouse, The London Symphony Orchestra, The Royal Opera House, The Royal Festival Hall and The National Portrait Gallery.

“ We have picked a site that's as visible as we can make it whilst staying true to our Kent roots. We want the Curious Brewery to be both a one-off experience and a much-loved and much-visited local venue.

“ I'd really recommend coming and taking part in one of our tours, finding out the full field-to-glass story behind what and how we do what we do from our Cicerone-trained team, who will also be able to explain how we bring a winemakers touch to the process. ”

Gareth Bath, Managing Director of Beer and Cider



Curious for more information?
Visit www.curiousbrewing.com



Leading wine producer

Of course Chapel Down has a long association with the borough, with their winery based in Tenterden, which is set amongst 22 acres of vineyards and includes a high quality restaurant and a shop stocking a variety of local produce.

Visitors are welcome to join a guided tour, explore the grounds and their beautiful herb garden or take a walk around the vineyards. It is open to the public every day from 10am to 5pm.



Chapel Down Winery

www.chapeldown.com / 01580 766111 Small Hythe, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 7NG

Brewery Facts



1.6

acre
brewery site



4.5m

pints produced
per year



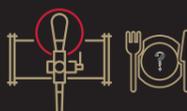
50

kegs produced
per hour



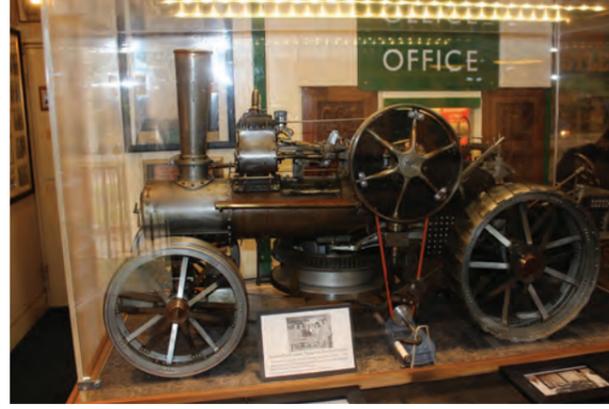
500,000

The amount of pints
the brewery can hold
at any one time



4,000sq

bar and two
dining rooms



Museum's captive audience...

Ashford Museum celebrates its 30th anniversary this year and young visitors are sure to be "captivated" by a new exhibition – a gaol cell built especially for children as part of a display telling the story of policing in the town...

A new display on policing in Ashford from the 1800s has been created to mark the 30th anniversary of Ashford Museum, a fascinating treasure trove of local history which is free to visit and can be found in the leafy Church Yard opposite St Mary's church in the heart of the town centre.

"Ashford Museum is one of the few in Kent not to charge an entry fee and it provides a unique insight into the town's past," says curator Ian Sharp, who for 10 years has led a dedicated team of 35 volunteers. A retired prison service official, Ian can trace his own family roots in Ashford back to the 1760s.

Housed in a 17th Century Grade II listed building tucked away just yards from the bustling High Street, the museum is spread over two floors and is packed with items that will inform and delight in equal measure. The building has a story to tell; it was built by Sir Norton Knatchbull in 1635 to house Ashford Grammar School. Look carefully and you will see the names of pupils carved into wooden panels in the museum's main hall. In more recent years it was home to the tourist information centre before the museum opened there in 1989.



One of the first displays to greet visitors covers Ashford's proud history as a railway town. A collection of memorabilia highlights the important role that the railway has played in the town's development. Visitors young and old are particularly fascinated by a working model railway which dominates the entrance hall, while one of the latest additions is a scale steam ploughing engine built by apprentices at Ashford Railway Works from 1968-72.

Other exhibits include a locally-unearthed dinosaur leg bone dating back 200 million years, Anglo-Saxon items, Roman artefacts, exhibits telling the story of Ashford in the both world wars, and displays covering local sports clubs, including bowls, tennis and cricket. Ashford's centuries old links with the Army is unveiled, while the story is told of smuggling gangs which roamed the Kent shores in the early 19th Century. "Descendants of the old gang still live in the Ashford area," says Ian.

Thousands of artefacts are crammed into the two floors which are open to the public, and while wheelchair users are limited to enjoying the ground floor displays there are plans to create a digital virtual tour of the upstairs displays for those unable to climb the stairs.

Ashford Museum is open from Tuesday to Saturday until 28 September, 11am to 2pm. Admission is free, with donations welcomed. The museum is at 18 Church Yard, Ashford opposite the main entrance to St Mary's Church. Call 01233 631511 or visit www.ashfordmuseum.org.uk The museum is also active on Facebook @ashfordmuseum.

Around 3,000 people visit each year and Ian is convinced that more local people would flock through the doors if they knew about the treasures that lie within. Ashford Museum is the lead partner in Wheels of Time, a badge collecting scheme encouraging the exploration of Kent museums for 5-11 years-olds. See www.wheelsofetime.uk

The museum is run by the Ashford Borough Museum Society, which is a registered charity. It is constantly seeking to refresh exhibits and to encourage repeat visits from people who have previously toured the museum.

Ian says the centrepiece of the new police exhibition is a mocked up gaol cell built with children in mind. The cell, complete with bars on the door and a large set of gaoler's keys – plus old prisoner's clothes for kiddies to wear while they are "doing time" – refers to an age in the early 1800s when a lock-up existed in Gravel Walk where "drunks and thugs" were detained before appearing in court the next day.

"The combination of off-duty soldiers and thirsty railway workers coming off shift and heading to the many pubs that existed in the town was guaranteed to keep the local bobbies busy, so our lock-up helps to give a little insight into that part of our history," adds Ian.

revelation
up close & personal

Sizzling line-up at Revelation Ashford



Nestled between the Memorial Gardens and the town centre is St Mary the Virgin Church. But there's more to this venue that meets the eye.

Revelation Ashford (which is hosted by the church and supported by the council and Loveashford) regularly transform St Mary's into a unique music and arts venue where you can experience performances from acclaimed musicians and world renowned orchestras, as well as alternative cinema, radio plays, exhibitions and more.

This summer there's a packed line-up of fantastic shows coming to

Revelation Ashford; laugh all evening at the Revels Comedy Club, or dance to music from Terry Hall, (lead singer of The Specials) and Huey Morgan, (front man of the rock and hip hop group Fun Lovin' Criminals).

The venue is also home to the Loveashford film club, sponsored by Revelation Ashford, where you can watch family-friendly movies for just 50p per person. Get in the spooky spirit this Halloween by seeing Disney's *Coco* on 26 October, followed by *The Greatest Showman* on 30 November.

What's more, Revelation Ashford support and curate an eclectic mix of

local musicians and performers for the Create music festival and the town centre bandstand to create a vibrant atmosphere in the heart of the town.

For more information on Revelation Ashford and to see the list of upcoming events visit Revelationashford.co.uk.



Children get arty at Conningbrook Lakes

A series of public arts workshops involving local schoolchildren are being held at Conningbrook Lakes to celebrate the location's unique environment.

The workshops, run by artist collective Outdoor Studios, started with artist Amanda Thesiger working with pupils from Phoenix Primary School, and this was followed in May by a workshop called Seed Journeys with Kennington Primary School pupils, led by artist Laura Thomas.

Informed by the work of commissioned artist Julia Clarke, pupils from Kennington used mini-journals to record the seed journeys, and natural soil pigments and found materials to draw or write with, before learning Hapa Zome, a printing method to make fabric images of the plants.

On 10 June, artist Andy Evans's Sculptural Planting Session continues the exploration, with pupils from The North School using clay to mix their own paint, draw foraged seed heads, building larger scale 3D

sculptural forms to be sited in the landscape to return to nature.

Also on 24 June, artist Gemma Gottelier works with the Tower School on Plant Life, teaching about plant reproduction, with pupils using clay and natural materials to create their own seed pods, which are left in the undergrowth to be spotted by visitors and to weather back into the environment.

The workshops are part of a public art strategy for Conningbrook Lakes, organised by consultants FrancisKnight on behalf of The Chartway Group Ltd, Latimer Developments Ltd and Ashford Borough Council.

Pictured: Pupils from Phoenix Primary School with artist Amanda Thesiger. Photo courtesy of Laura Thomas



What's on this summer

JUNE

Taste The Best of Produced in Kent

Biddenden Vineyards hosts its 13th annual Food and Drink Day, giving you the chance to 'Taste the Best of Produced in Kent'! In aid of Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Trust. 9 June, 11am to 4pm, Biddenden Vineyards, Gribble Bridge Lane, Biddenden TN27 8DF, Admission: Free

Cardboard Orchestra

A fantastic, imaginative performance by Ashford children, featuring hand-crafted instruments made entirely from cardboard and paper.

12 June, 2pm to 3pm (doors open 1.30pm), St Mary's Church, The Churchyard, Ashford TN23 1QG, Admission: Free (booking advised) www.revelationashford.co.uk



CAMRA Real Ale & Cider Festival

A wide range of real ales and ciders at Tenterden Town Station and on some train departures as well as live music on Saturday afternoon and into the evening. Families welcome!

14 to 15 June, Tenterden Station, Station Road, Tenterden TN30 6HE, Admission: see www.kesr.org.uk

Stour Music Festival 2019

This music festival takes place in the beautiful pilgrim church of All Saints' Boughton Aluph, situated in the heart of the Kent countryside and renowned for its superb acoustics.

21 to 30 June, All Saints' Church, Boughton Aluph, TN25 4EU, for more details visit www.stourmusic.org.uk

Charity Day at Godinton House & Gardens

Charity day, supporting the Pilgrims Hospices. Music in the walled garden, enjoy a picnic.

23 June, 1pm to 6pm, Godinton House & Gardens, Godinton Lane, Ashford TN23 3BP, Admission: Adults £5 (gardens only), £10 (house and gardens), Children under 16 free. www.godintonhouse.co.uk

For more information visit www.visitashfordandtenterden.co.uk

JULY

The Spirit of Tenterden Festival

Real ale festival, 40+ beers/cider, gin bar, wine, antiques & collectables, arts & crafts, live music, dog show, food stalls, an event for the whole family to enjoy.

5 July - 4pm to 10pm, 6 July - 10am to 10pm, 7 July - 11am to 5pm, Tenterden Recreation Ground, Tenterden TN30 6RH



Open Air Theatre, The Pantaloons at Godinton House

The critically-acclaimed Pantaloons present their hilarious performance of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

13 July, Godinton House & Gardens, Godinton Lane, Ashford TN23 3BP, Admission: ticket price to be confirmed www.godintonhouse.co.uk

England Golf's 2019 South of England Regional Qualifier

Ashford Golf Club plays host to this prestigious tournament for the first time when Kent will battle it out against 10 other counties.

13 July (play underway at 5pm) Ashford Golf Club, Sandyhurst Lane, Ashford TN25 4NT, Admission: free - visit www.ashfordgolfclub.co.uk

A Day Out With Thomas on the Kent & East Sussex Railway

Join Thomas & Friends for a day of family fun at the Kent & East Sussex Railway. Take a ride behind Thomas, meet The Fat Controller and say hello to Sodor Station Sweepers Rusty and Dusty.

20 to 22 July, for details and ticket prices visit www.kesr.org.uk



Comedy Night - Ashford International Hotel

The Comedy Club evening includes three different comedy acts per show, and a fantastic joke competition with great prizes on offer!

26 July, doors open 7pm, comedy starts 9pm, Ashford International Hotel, Simone Weil Avenue, Ashford TN24 8UX, Admission: tickets from £21-28 www.thecomedyclub.co.uk

AUGUST

Alice in Wonderland (Open-Air)

Follow Alice and the White Rabbit as they set off on a colourful, topsy-turvy adventure like no other and meet a host of outlandish characters.

7 August, 6.30pm to 8.20pm, Smallhythe Place, Smallhythe, Tenterden, TN30 7NG, Admission: Adult £15, Child £8.50



Bus Rally - Kent & East Sussex Railway

Tenterden Town Station will be the setting for a rally featuring more than a dozen vintage vehicles, offering free rides to a number of local destinations.

18 August, Tenterden Station, Station Road, Tenterden TN30 6HE, Admission: see www.kesr.org.uk



ABBA Revival at Hole Park

Put on your dancing shoes and be prepared to dance the night away to your favourite ABBA songs with the UK's No1 tribute band ABBA Revival!

25 August, 7.30pm (gates open at 5pm) Hole Park Gardens, Benenden Road, Rolvenden, Cranbrook TN17 4JA, Admission: see www.belevents.co.uk

Let's Create some noise!



Create Festival is back again this year – with another fantastic headline act set to rock one of the biggest free music festivals in the South East! The festival, which is now in its 24th year and is organised by Ashford Borough Council, will be taking place in Victoria Park on Saturday 20 July.

Headlining this year's event is none other than iconic Britpop band The Lightning Seeds. Famous for a string of hits including Pure, Sense, Life of Riley, and Lucky You, The Lightning Seeds are now probably best known for their football anthem 'Three Lions' – which has become a No.1 hit single on three separate occasions, including during last year's World Cup in Russia.

If that wasn't exciting enough, two more legendary musicians will be coming to Ashford this summer as part of the Create Festival's 'Platform' – a week-long programme of high quality events and performances. Huey Morgan, frontman of Fun Lovin' Criminals, and Terry Hall, lead singer of The Specials, will both be performing exclusive DJ sets in July at Revelation, Ashford town centre's Grade I listed church.

Huey – a DJ, broadcaster, author and producer – is familiar to millions as the frontman of New York's cult hip hop funk rock outfit, Fun Lovin' Criminals.



Pictured below: Huey Morgan
Pictured left: Get in tune with The Lightning Seeds at Create

Terry is best known for his time as the lead singer of The Specials, who's massive hit Ghost Town spent three weeks at number one in June 1981, and ten weeks in the top 40 of the UK singles chart.

Tickets for Huey Morgan DJ Set on Wednesday 17 July and Terry Hall DJ Set on Thursday 18 July are on sale now. You can book your ticket by visiting www.revelationashford.co.uk or buy in person at the Tourist Information Centre in Ashford Gateway in Church Road or The Record Store in Park Mall.

This year, Create Festival will also be embracing the Year of the Environment by teaming up with Kent-based arts company, Animate Arts, to bring the issue of plastic pollution to life. In collaboration with six schools throughout Ashford, a giant installation of the word 'CREATE' will be produced from single-use plastics.

These hand-crafted letters will be decorated with plastic flowers, leaves and rambling plants to form the perfect festival backdrop while promoting the message of reduction and recycling. This will be the focus of an exclusive environmental recycling zone at Create Festival, which will also include a head-to-head recycling bike race and leader board to get you into the competitive spirit this summer.

Come join the band...

The Ashford Concert Band takes to the Community Stage at Create – and here's your chance to be a part of the show. A local community band for adults who enjoy playing a wide repertoire of music and raising money for charity, the band is looking for new members. There are no auditions but you will need to be able to read music. If you play woodwind, brass or percussion why not come along to a rehearsal and see if it's for you? More information at www.ashfordconcertband.co.uk



5 star attraction

In March 1969, young couple Jenny and Keith Taylor bought and moved into Broadhembury Farm near Kingsnorth, Ashford. Along with their toddler daughter, they had acquired three chicken sheds housing 2,000 laying hens, an egg round, pigsties a ramshackle barn and sheds. There was also 10 acres of sheep meadows where campers put up their tents.

Payment of five shillings (25p) for one night's camping was made at the kitchen door. Water was drawn from the sheep trough and toilets emptied into a manhole. Then the idea of creating a caravan and camping park formed in Jenny's mind...

Today, Broadhembury is a 5* graded, award-winning, caravan and camping park. It offers excellent touring facilities for motorhomes, caravans and tents; customers can choose from the Family Park with games room and play parks for the children, or the quieter Adults' Meadows.



Pictured: Jenny and Sally celebrate the anniversary

There are also holiday homes offering a real 'home-from-home' experience and glamping, for a luxury break under canvas.

The Taylor's youngest daughter, Sally, and her husband Lee took over in 2012, and this year Broadhembury celebrates its 50th anniversary. Many awards have been won, including AA Camp Site of the Year 2019, South East. In 2018, Broadhembury welcomed 1,285 visitors from 21 countries, and Sally estimates 31,000 people have stayed there over the past 50 years.

See competition on P22.



On the food trail

With Kent's food and drinks industry growing rapidly and tourism numbers expected to be higher than ever, Kent food tourism initiative Kent Food Trails has pulled together the best of both and launched two new bite-sized guides - 'Hops and Beers' and 'Apples, Ciders & Juices'.

Curated by Produced in Kent, the guides are available from www.kentfoodtrails.co.uk, which is fast becoming a favourite resource for visitors and locals to create their own food and drinks trails or experience a curated readymade trail for themselves.



ASHFORD (KENT) GOLF CLUB

Make Friends for Life

Ashford Golf Club has some golf memberships available.

You don't have to be an existing member of a golf club to join!
If you enjoy your golf you'll love Ashford.
With a warm and friendly atmosphere the club welcomes all new members to one of the best courses in Kent.

Come and check us out....

Sandyhurst Lane | Ashford, Kent | TN25 4NT
Tel: 01233 622655 | Email: office@ashfordgolfclub.co.uk
www.ashfordgolfclub.co.uk

Jane Austen's Godmersham Park

Nestled on the edge of the North Downs, Godmersham Park is one of the finest country homes in Ashford and a sight we see every time we handle a £10 note, shown alongside the portrait of Jane Austen, one of the greatest writers in English history. Here we find out more about the estate and one of its most famous visitors...



Jane Austen was a regular visitor to Ashford between 1798 and 1813 and her novel *Mansfield Park* is said to be based on Godmersham Park. The house belonged to Jane's brother hence her regular visits there. It is likely these provided inspiration for her novels which are now widely regarded as the best examples of social commentary published in the Georgian era.

The Godmersham Heritage Centre is located in the grounds and displays fascinating exhibits on the estate itself and its past inhabitants, while also telling the history of Godmersham and Crundale. The diaries of Fanny Knight, Jane Austen's niece and William Harvey's book *The Discoveries of Circulation on the Blood* are part of the park's collection as digital files. The centre also has a collection of coins and artefacts dating back to Viking times, so there's something for everyone to enjoy.

The house and gardens are usually closed to the public but in August a guided tour of the house will be taking place. This is the first time that there has been a public guided tour of the house, and it will be available for one day only. More details are available at www.godmershamheritage.webs.com

The gardens of Godmersham Park will also be open to the public on Sunday 16 June between 1pm and 5pm as part of the National Garden Scheme. Visitors will be able to enjoy homemade cakes and other refreshments on sale in The Orangery.

"Every bump, every stone in that village has a history"

School girl living in the village in 1953

The Godmersham Heritage Centre is open every Monday between April and October from 2pm-4pm, and on the first Monday of every month the centre extends its opening hours to 9am-12pm and 1pm-5pm. You can also book an appointment to visit the Heritage Centre on a different day by contacting the centre directly.

Admission to the centre is £3 and there is free parking on site. You can also enjoy the beautiful surroundings in the picnic area or take a stroll on the public footpath taking in views of both the house and the folly.

Main Image: Godmersham Park House
Pictured below: Fountain in the White Garden, Temple in the Garden
Photography on this page © Miss R E Lilley BA Hons



Saddle up in 'cycle borough'

The aspiration of turning Ashford into a true 'cycle borough' has moved a step closer with the revised Cycling and Walking Strategy – and local people can have their say on Ashford Borough Council's ambitious plans...

A new outline Cycling and Walking Strategy for the borough to span the next ten years is out for public consultation after the council voted to support a plan which promises to bring in major benefits to health, transport and the local economy.

A cycling strategy was first approved in Ashford in 2010, but it has now been updated to incorporate walking into a joint plan which will be a key part of the wider aim of improving sustainable transport, particularly accessibility to the town centre.

The Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019-2029 has six main aims to:

- Provide and improve the cycling and walking network
- Increase cycle parking around the borough
- Maintain the existing cycling and walking network
- Focus on safer cycling
- Promote cycling and walking in the borough
- Increase opportunities for cycling and walking tourism

Ashford already has an excellent network of well-used cycling routes in place in the urban area, and this incorporates parts of the national cycling network that pass through the borough. The revised strategy brings together new policies and related actions with the goal of increasing the proportion of journeys made by these active travel modes.

In addition to the provision of new or improved cycling and walking infrastructure, the strategy acknowledges the need for better use of all existing cycling and walking routes. It also seeks to increase cycling and walking participation by promoting the routes and safer cycling, encouraging use and supporting cycling and walking-based tourism.

Early work has identified a number of key routes and networks where improvements can be made. These include Ashford town centre, Tenterden, Wye, Charing and Hamstreet. Building on existing routes in the Ashford urban area is also key, linking communities at Chilmington, Court Lodge, Kingsnorth, Park Farm, Cheeseman's Green, Finberry, Waterbrook, Sevington, Willesborough Lees, Conningbrook and Kennington.

Consultation with community groups, parish councils and local interest groups is taking place.

Have your say

A public consultation into the proposals is underway and is due to close on Friday 21 June. Find out more at www.???????? [URL to be added before we go to press on 6 May!!!!]

On your bike...

ReCycle is an award-winning Bicycle Recycling Programme based at Goldwyn School in Ashford. Students help to refurbish bikes donated by the local community ready for regular Affordable Refurbished Bicycle sale events held at the school.

Unwanted bicycles can be donated in return for a 20% discount at the bike sales. The basics of bicycle mechanics are taught at public workshops. Upcoming sale events – and free bike checks – are on 8 and 29 June and 20 July from 10am-1pm. Funding for the project is match funded by contributions from Active Ashford, a partnership led by Ashford Borough Council.

Visit www.CycleCommunity.org



A glorious day in Ashford circa 1950s.



THE TANK, ASHFORD

The Ashford Tank: Celebrating 100 years

On the 1 August 2019, Ashford's Mark IV tank will have called St George's Square in the town centre home for 100 years. We report on the celebrations....

Gifted to Ashford after the First World War in recognition of the town's splendid response to the National War Savings appeal, the tank has since become a much loved figure of Ashford's history and heritage, and has played host to numerous events over the years. The council is marking this momentous anniversary with a celebration in August that will tell its story and celebrate its long and important history.

So, why does such a glorious piece of history call Ashford its home?

'Tanks' were invented during the First World War to overcome improved weaponry, heavier artillery and trench warfare. After several models or 'marks' rolled off the production line, the Mark IV was the model chosen to be used in battle.

A new sight for the armed forces, tanks were also new to civilians back home. When Mark IV tanks were displayed on the home front they attracted a phenomenal crowd.

Observing this popularity, the National War Savings Committee decided that the Mark IV would act as a great symbol to encourage the purchase of war bonds by the British public. These 'tank banks', as they came to be known, toured the country, collecting money and issuing war bonds as they went, raising substantial sums, even by modern standards.



Pictured top left: The arrival of the Ashford Tank in 1919. (© Ashford Borough Museum).

Pictured middle left: The Ashford Tank in situ, circa 1920s and (bottom) circa 1970s (© Ashford Borough Museum).

Pictured bottom left: 2014 REME 'Dawn to Dusk' Guard of Honour, 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War.



| SPECIFICATION OF THE MARK IV FEMALE VARIANT: | |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Weight: 26 tons | Engine: 105 bhp Daimler-Foster 6 cylinder Sleeve Valve |
| Length: 26ft 5in | Crew: 8 (Commander, Driver, 2 Gearsman, 4 Gunners) |
| Width: 10ft 6in | Armament: 5 .303 Lewis Machine Guns |
| Height: 8ft 10in | Radius of Action: 35 Miles |
| Road Speed: 3.7 mph | |
| Fuel Capacity: 70 gallons | |

After the war, 265 of the Mark IVs were gifted to the towns that had raised the most, and Ashford was one of those towns. On 1 August 1919, the tank was delivered by rail, driven along Station Road, up the High Street and into St George's Square. It was presented to a large crowd by Captain Walter Farrar MC, a former WW1 Royal Tank Corps Commander, who thanked the people of Ashford for their generosity and support to the armed forces on the front.

Today, Ashford's tank is the sole surviving example on public display in the UK and is only one of seven original surviving examples in the world. It's had many different looks and paint jobs over the years (including blue camouflage!), but is now back to its familiar military green. It now also boasts the status of being a Grade II Listed, registered War Memorial, a mark of its significance.

Celebration time!

As Ashford is so fortunate to have this incredibly unique and rare artefact, monument and memorial, it's important to celebrate its history and continue to tell the story of why it's here, and what it represents.

Through a recreation of the events that took place 100 years ago, we'll be bringing together the people of Ashford, young and old, along with Royal Tank Regiment 'tankies' to share memories and stories of the tank, and celebrate its existence.

There will be all kinds of WW1 themed activities for the whole family, including music, military re-enactments and hands-on exhibitions and displays.

Looking ahead - the next 100 years

Having been exposed to the elements for the best part of its 100 years, the tank is beginning to show signs of wear and tear. To ensure its longevity and continued enjoyment by the people of Ashford for the next hundred years, the council has commissioned a condition assessment to understand what repair and conservation works are needed, and how to better care for it in the future.

Keep an eye out for more details of the celebration event taking place in August, where you'll be able to share your memories, find out about plans for future conservation and give your thoughts and views on our beloved tank.



Breathing new life into Victoria Park

Exciting plans for the future of Victoria Park have been revealed, which may result in the restoration and redevelopment of one of Ashford's oldest and much-loved green spaces. We explore what could be done there...

Plans to revamp the park were first unveiled in 2018, when Ashford Borough Council announced it would be seeking funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund to transform the park from its existing state to a space which would suit the changing needs of the local community.

The project aims to place Victoria Park at the heart of the community, improve local knowledge of the site and make the area around the park a better place to live, work, visit and enjoy.

An initial £167,000 development grant for Victoria Park from the HLF and Big Lottery Fund's Parks for People grant programme (which uses National Lottery funds to support the regeneration, conservation and increased enjoyment of public parks) was awarded to the council last year, to help deliver the primary stages of this exciting project.

The development grant has enabled the council to produce and submit a detailed second round bid to the HLF in order to apply for £4.4m; a sum which will allow for full delivery of the ambitious masterplan if it's successfully approved in July.

How will the park improve?

Ashford Borough Council applied to the Parks for People programme to help support the delivery of the masterplan. The main aims of the project are to

reconnect people in Ashford with their largest historic park by delivering improvements for heritage, people and communities, working with the town's growing community to make Victoria Park a high-quality, well-loved destination where people feel safe, enjoy well-managed facilities and celebrate their built, ecological and social heritage.

The project also aims to create and improve habitats along the River Stour, repair the Grade II Hubert Fountain, restore and redefine the park's historic layout and planting and improve core facilities, including a Community Hub, Park HQ, interpretation, play spaces and accessibility.

Children and young people will be integral in the delivery of the proposed activity programme, which will include large and small events, new volunteering roles and training, resources for schools and a horticultural apprenticeship.

Providing the community with a pleasant environment to visit and enjoy is a top priority for the council and this new funding, if successful, will help create a well-maintained space for much-loved local events such as the ever-growing annual Create music festival and other cultural activities, events and entertainment.

Keep an eye on our social media channels and News Hub for all future announcements regarding the plans for Victoria Park.

The Consultation

After careful consultation with the public, members and key stakeholders, Ashford Borough Council's bid was submitted to the HLF at the end of February. A final decision is due in July.

The consultation phase proved extremely popular, with more than 1,000 people giving their feedback on how they would like to see the park improved and the funding invested.

Findings from the consultation included the need to tackle perceptions of anti-social behaviour and improve safety and security; involve young people in all aspects of the project; develop a community hub including café and better toilets; create new play provision; organise a range of activities, events and interpretation and volunteering opportunities.

Find out more

- /AshfordBoroughCouncil
- @AshfordCouncil
- @ashfordbc
- ashford.gov.uk/News



KEY FACTS

WHERE EXISTING PARK USERS LIVE



PEOPLE WOULD STAY LONGER WITH

- CAFÉ BETTER PLAY AREAS
- EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES
- IMPROVEMENTS FOR WILDLIFE
- BETTER TOILETS
- IMPROVED SAFETY AND SECURITY

FOCUS FOR IMPROVEMENT



Environment update

The Year of the Environment continues to flourish throughout spring and summer with a series of campaigns and events.



Make plastic fantastic!

Earlier in the year we teamed up with the art students of Ashford College to raise awareness of our dependency on single-use plastics and the volume of plastics that can be found littering the borough. Two plastic sculptures, depicting the form of a cow and a flower meadow scene, were installed in County Square and Park Mall. The project has given residents the opportunity to reflect on our throwaway lifestyles.

Bring a bottle



We've been working with residents and volunteers to bring the 'Refill' scheme to Ashford. With 13 billion plastic bottles being used every year in the UK and 43% of these being littered, landfilled or incinerated, it's time the nation took a stand against bottled water.

Refill's aim is to prevent plastic pollution from single-use water bottles and reduce emissions by making carrying a reusable bottle the 'new normal', making sure people can easily find free tap water refills through the app and ensuring free water is more widely available. The Refill launch date is 6th July in the town centre, so come say hello and learn all about the scheme.



Garden Waste Guide

You can now register and pay for Ashford's optional garden recycling collections online. The garden recycling collection service is a yearly service, which runs from 1 June until 31 May.

The standard fee for new customers is £37.50 regardless of when you join the service. Delivery of your rented garden bin (for new customers) will take around 10 working days.

Visit <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/the-environment/recycling-and-refuse-service/garden-recycling/> to find out more.

What can I put in my garden waste bin?

Yes please!

- ✓ Grass cuttings
- ✓ Hedge trimmings
- ✓ Prunings and small branches
- ✓ Weeds and leaves
- ✓ Dead plants

No thanks!

- ✗ Building rubble
- ✗ Household or food waste
- ✗ Paints and liquids
- ✗ Logs and tree stumps
- ✗ Plant pots and polystyrene
- ✗ Turf or soil

Free compost!

In August we'll be celebrating National Allotment Week with hints and tips on how to run an efficient and environmentally-friendly allotment. We'll also be giving away free compost made from your very own garden waste so keep an eye out for future updates!



Calling all gardeners...

As part of our Year of the Environment celebrations, Ashford Borough Council has decided to re-launch our gardening competition. There are **FOUR** categories for you to choose from and we've got some great prizes up for grabs.

Best front or back garden (supported by Engie)

Are you green fingered? Is your garden your pride and joy? Do you have fantastic flowerbeds? Perhaps the design of your garden is particularly striking or maybe you've made some interesting plant choices. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder so we're not looking for one set ideal but we are looking for a garden that makes an impact - whatever that impact may be.

WIN A gas BBQ courtesy of Engie & **FREE** garden waste collection for a year 

Best use of a small space (supported by Wilko, Ashford)

Have you found a unique way of displaying plants while also saving space? Perhaps your window box is the envy of your neighbours? Have you used innovative ways to showcase your small space? Not all of us have gardens or the time to cultivate them but if you've made the best of an outdoor space, like a balcony, a window box or even a single flowerbed then we want to hear from you. We're looking for small spaces where their size is what makes them special.

WIN A selection of plants and gardening equipment from Wilko 

Best communal garden (supported by Dobbies Garden Centre, Ashford - Helping your community grow)

Have you worked on a garden as part of a group or community project? Are your gardens a hub for the community, a source of local pride? Have they spawned wider projects? Have they brought the community closer together? Perhaps your communal garden provides a space of relaxation or maybe it provides fresh fruit and veg for the community to enjoy. Or maybe it's beautiful to look at while offering a place to get together and socialise with your neighbours. We're looking for gardens that not only look beautiful but serve a beautiful purpose.

WIN A selection of plants and gardening equipment from Dobbies 

Most environmentally friendly garden

(supported by Waitrose & Partners, Ashford) 

Is your garden a haven for wildlife? Have you found a way to reduce the amount of water you use? Do you love upcycling? Then this is the category for you. The council is looking for gardens that look beautiful while helping save the planet. Perhaps you've planted wildflowers to encourage butterflies and bees, maybe you have a bug hotel for all the creepy crawlies to enjoy. Maybe you've turned trash into treasure by upcycling something that was due to be thrown away. Whatever you're doing to improve your little corner of the planet we want to know about it.

WIN A selection of plants and gardening equipment from Waitrose & **FREE** garden waste collection for a year

Happy Gardening!

All winners will receive a plaque from Canterbury Oast Trust and be invited to afternoon tea with the Mayor. The runner up from each category will receive a plaque and also be invited to attend afternoon tea with the Mayor.

For more details on how to enter our Ashford in Bloom competition please see page 22 overleaf.



Ashford in Bloom

How to enter

Via email

Send your entries to Ashfordinbloom@ashford.gov.uk with the category you're entering as the subject line. Please include pictures of your entry as well as a few words about the space.

Via post

Sent your postal entries to:
Ashford in Bloom
Civic Centre, Tannery Lane,
Ashford TN23 1PL

Please enclose pictures of your entry and let us know what category you'd like to enter as well as a few words about your space.

Please make sure you include your preferred contact details just in case we need to get in touch. Please be aware only one entry per household will be allowed.

ENTRY
30th JUNE
DEADLINE



WIN A TWO NIGHT GLAMPING BREAK!



To mark the 50th anniversary of the multi-award-winning Broadhembury Caravan & Camping Park near Ashford we have two fabulous glamping breaks to give away! Both prizes are for a two night break under canvas. The luxurious Belle tents really do offer a home-from-home experience. They are cocoon-lined with zipped in ground sheets, have full coconut matting with solid wooden floors, and full-size double and single beds!

The spacious tents are equipped with electricity for heating and lighting. The park also provides gas BBQs with side ring, pots and pans, and all the crockery and cutlery you may need. You also have access to Campers' Kitchens which are fully equipped with fridge, freezer, microwave and washing up area.

If you don't fancy BBQ-ing then you have the options of ordering in a range of take-away or visiting cosy local pubs and restaurants.

The glamping tents are located in both the Family Park and also the quieter Adults' Meadow at Broadhembury, which is in a rural site near Kingsnorth, so our winners can choose to take their glamping break in whichever section of the site suits them.

If you choose the Family Park then the prize is for two adults and two children; if you prefer to stay in the Adults' Meadow the prize is for two adults only. For more information about the five star park visit www.broadhembury.co.uk

The closing date for competition entries is Sunday 30 June 2019. The prizes need to be taken by Thursday 31 October 2019.

TO ENTER YOUR NAME IN OUR PRIZE DRAW EITHER:

- * Email the editorial team at competition@ashford.gov.uk – put Glamping Competition Entry 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 Glamping Competition Entry on the card. We will contact the winner to request consent to provide your details to Broadhembury to enable you to claim your prize.

Terms & conditions apply: 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 11.59pm on Sunday 30 June. Entries received after this time will not be included. The prize is non-transferable and non-refundable. There are no cash alternatives. The prize needs to be taken by Thursday 31 October 2019. 3. By accepting the prize you also agree to be bound by Broadhembury's standard terms and conditions.

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