AYLESHAM GARDEN VILLAGE NEWS
THIS IS YOUR VILLAGE NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2017

Welcome to the March issue of Aylesham Garden Village News! There’s more great news about celebrations to mark Aylesham’s 90th birthday this year and we congratulate our new Carnival Queen!

AYLESHAM 90th EVENTS ANNOUNCED

Dates for the series of events to be held in Aylesham celebrating the village’s 90th anniversary have been confirmed.

The cost is being met largely by a £10,000 grant from the Celebrate Lottery Fund and with additional financial support from Aylesham Parish Council, Aylesham Welfare & Leisure and Aylesham Heritage Centre.

The first details of the main events are:

- **Saturday 24th June**: The chance to take part in some fun activities and entertainment on the Market Square, at St Peters and in the Baptist church. Local community groups are invited to promote themselves to new members with information stands on the Market Square. This event will be hosted by the parish council, St Peter’s Church and the Baptist church.

- **Sunday 25th June**: Sports, leisure and wellbeing fun day at Aylesham Welfare & Leisure Centre. An opportunity to see your local sports teams in action and get involved with them. Teams taking part include Aylesham Walking Football Club, Snowdown & Aylesham Football Club, Betteshanger & Snowdown Colliery RFC and the Bowls Club. Or, if team sport is not your thing, you can find out more about classes available at the leisure centre with some free taster sessions. Children will be able to win medals by taking part in fun sports day activities and everyone will be able to enjoy the live entertainment and browse the information stalls.

- **Friday 30th June (evening)**: Snowdown Male Voice Choir and the Aylesham Ladies Choir will be performing a free concert at the Aylesham Community Project.

- **Saturday 1st July**: Enjoy free fun activities and entertainment at the Aylesham Community Project. There will be indoor and outdoor play activities for children, live entertainment, arts and crafts and, barring emergencies, the Aylesham fire engine and firefighters will be making a guest appearance. This event is hosted by the Aylesham Community Project, Bechange, Emporium Plus and Kent Libraries.

- **Saturday 1st July (evening)**: Public fireworks finale hosted by the Aylesham Welfare & Leisure Centre.

- **Sunday 2nd July**: A Boxing exhibition hosted by the Aylesham & District Boxing Club at the Aylesham Community Project.

Dover District Council is working with Aylesham Heritage Centre on ways to use the village history to link the planned events. A programme of events will also be produced and made available in the run up to the events.

If you have any questions about the Celebration events or would like to get involved, please contact community development officer Emily Barnes on 01304 843 844 or email Emily.Barnes@dover.gov.uk. She is especially keen to hear from any potential volunteers as well as local groups who would like to take part in these events in some way.

NINETEEN YEAR OLD BECKY IS OUR CARNIVAL QUEEN!

Nineteen year old Becky Turner Knowes was crowned Miss Aylesham carnival queen in February after rigorous judging.

Her princesses for the year are Rebecca Williams, 16, and Nicole Milton, 12.

The carnival association held its selection event, followed by a disco, at St Finbarr’s Church which centred around an interview with contestants by a panel of judges asking questions about why they wanted to be part of the carnival court, said association Chairman Alan Watson.

Junior Miss Aylesham was also chosen at the same time with nine year old Cailey Ferguson taking the title. Kira Holt, 9, and Zara Mitchell, 10, are this year’s junior princesses.

The judges were Sheila Field and Pauline Catterall, President and Vice President respectively of Aylesham Carnival Association, Nigel Hawkins of Lydd Club Day, Brook Butfield, a former Sheppey princess as well as a Team England and UK carnival princess, Overseeing adjudicator was Georgina Wadey, Chairman of the Court of Kent.

The Aylesham carnival court has already started its busy programme of engagements for the year with a visit in late February to the Isle of Sheppey to join in its court selection event.
Residents, parish councillors and a local county councillor joined forces in early February for a litter pick in Aylesham’s Spinney Woods. Between them, they collected 25 bags of rubbish from the ancient woodland set between Spinney Lane and Adisham Road.

The litter pick was organised by Aylesham Parish Council which provided all the equipment. Chairman Jo Cartledge said afterwards she was grateful to all who attended for their help and added that it was a shame the woodland area is being spoiled by some people.

It is hoped that during the summer, events celebrating Spinney Woods beauty can be held as part of Aylesham’s 90th anniversary celebrations. Dover District Council wants to hear from local people with ideas about how Spinney Wood can be better used. Ideas can be emailed to community development officer Emily Barnes via emily.barnes@dover.gov.uk.

Aylesham Heritage Centre is bidding to bag a major cash injection from supermarket Tesco’s Bags of Help initiative.

Throughout March and April, the Heritage Centre will be one of three local good causes in the region shoppers can choose to receive a grant. Each time they shop, customers are given a coloured token as they checkout to drop into a large collecting bin in Tesco’s local stores. The cause receiving the most tokens will be in line for £5,000. Second place will receive £2,000 and third gets £1,000.

The money given comes from the 5p carrier bag levy and the scheme is run by Groundwork for Tesco.

Aylesham Heritage Centre is raising funds to pay for a new memorial garden at its centre in the village to remember all those who died in the area’s former coalmines. It will be officially unveiled during a ceremony at 11am on Saturday 6 May - there is an open invitation to all residents to attend.

Funding is available to community groups and charities looking to fund local projects that bring benefits to communities. Anyone can nominate a project and organisations can apply online. To find out more visit www.tesco.com/bagsofhelp

Tesco’s Bags of Help project has already delivered over £27 million to more than 3,500 projects up and down the UK. Tesco customers get the chance to vote for three different groups every time they shop. Every other month, when votes are collected, three groups in each of Tesco’s regions will be awarded funding.

For the past few weeks Pie Factory Music has been running the youth group sessions in Aylesham. Director Steph Dickinson reports: “We’ve had a really good uptake of the junior sessions from 5pm-6.30pm on a Tuesday evening, seeing 20 young people in our second week of running the session.

“The young people who have been coming to the training and development sessions from 6.45pm on a Tuesday have come up with some great ideas of how they would like to host events for the local community - so watch this space.

“Please check out our flier for the current sessions we’re running in Aylesham and get in touch for more information. We also had a great time with the young people who attended the skate park trip during half term.

“Please spread the word about the sessions and make the most of the provision - it’s all free and we’re really keen to engage with new young people.”

Visit Pie Factory’s website www.piefactorymusic.com for details of days, times and more activities.
Aylesham based charity Bechange celebrated its 20th birthday in February with a tea party for more than 100 people at its base in the village community workshop project. Supported by the Lottery’s Celebrate Fund and the Aylesham Workshop Development Trust, the event proved a great success with music, food and activities to enjoy. The event was opened by 11 year old Clayton Westrip who has attended activities at the centre since he was a baby.

The Aylesham Community Tearoom group served tasty traditional afternoon teas which were enjoyed by all. Music was provided by Whitstable based drumming band Samba Pelo Mar.

Everyone could take part in activities which included Hook A Fish provided by members of the Beech Grove, Nonington, while Bechange’s stationery smoothie bike made a welcome return. Pedalling the bike turned fruit into smoothie drinks – usually enough to replace the energy used to power the bike!

Children also enjoyed a cup cake making workshop and craft activities to cut out or sew heart shapes for St Valentine’s Day. Bechange Chief Executive Angela Doggett said: “I’m delighted it went so well and it was great to meet families who have been in the area for a long time as well as people who have recently moved to Aylesham.

We had a memory book for people to write their memories of Bechange and also comments on the event, here are a few:

‘Thank you for a lovely, fun and busy afternoon! We have all had a great time and special events like this are wonderful. Happy 20th Birthday.’

‘Thank you for a busy, beautiful, fun afternoon. Congratulations on your 20 years.’

‘Thank you for a lovely day - staff are brilliant and helpful, great fun activities! Congratulations on your 20 years.’

Please visit www.bechange.org.uk for more information about the charity’s work.

CONSTRUCTION TASTER DAY FOR WOMEN

A women’s taster day in building repairs and maintenance is being organised by Aylesham charity Bechange at its Ackholt Road headquarters at the end of March.

Supported by Mears Group, East Kent Housing and the Construction Youth Trust, the taster day will be held from **10am to 2.30pm on Friday 31 March** and is aimed at giving women a better understanding of career opportunities in construction as well as offering practical tips on household repairs.

Mears’ community officer Louise Smith said: “Our taster day is aimed at giving women confidence and skills around repairs and maintenance. The day will consist of hands on training in carpentry, painting and decorating, giving those attending the chance to try these trades.

“They will receive a certificate of attendance and valuable experience in the hope that it will encourage them to look at careers in the industry.

“There will be opportunities of work experience and may be job opportunities. There will also be professional trades women to share their experiences of working within the industry and staff on hand to give advice on writing a CV. We are also working with Bechange who can offer support services or signpost depending on the area.

“We will be providing lunch and travel up to £10 can be reimbursed. We advise to wear clothes that they don’t mind getting dirty as it’s a hands on course.

Places are free but need to be booked by **Friday 24 March**
via louise.smith@mearsgroup.co.uk or call her on 07843 336317.
Both Barratt Homes and Persimmon Homes are making steady progress on the Aylesham Garden Village development with a total of 160 new homes being built for completion by the end of 2017. The two developers plan to finish an equal number of properties with many being bought off plan, they report.

Persimmon head of sales in the south east Martin Crick said: “We were able to start moving residents in to our latest phase in time for Christmas and we have 20 more families due to move to the village before Easter.

“Demand is increasing as awareness of the area improves. Purchasers are quite prepared to buy off plan and wait for their new home to built.

“The choice of properties Persimmon is offering in Aylesham is widening and ranges from two bedroom apartments to five bedroom family houses.

“We urge people to buy early so they can have the best choice of fittings in their new home and be able to personalise their property to their own needs.”

Barratt Homes reports it has now completed 70 properties with another 80 underway. The homes have been bought, predominantly, by a mix of young couples and families, with people moving from across Kent including Canterbury, Whitstable, Maidstone and a few as far as London.

All of Barratt’s homes are being sold off plan and the latest ones form part of a projected 234 in phase 1B to be built by the company over the next four years.

The Government’s Help to Buy scheme, which both builders are offering, is proving popular with those looking for much needed affordable housing.

Further information about each company’s new homes is available from their site offices fronting Dorman Avenue North. They are both open every day - Persimmon 11am - 6pm (01304 800791) and Barratts 12.30pm-5.30pm on Mondays and Tuesdays to Sundays, 10am-5pm (0844 662 6414). Websites are www.persimmonhomes.co.uk and www.barratthomes.co.uk

NEW ROADS NOW OPEN
Concrete blocks at the ends of both Heritage Road and off Cooting Road in Aylesham were lifted on Friday 24 February to allow permitted traffic to use the new roads.

Aylesham parish councillors were on hand as a JCB from contractors Gallagher’s lifted the blocks off the road.

They had been placed there several months ago when construction of the roads was completed. A lengthy legal process for the roads to be formally adopted by Kent County Council then had to follow before they could be used.

The roads were built as part of infrastructure agreements to enhance Aylesham and enable the nearby Garden Village housing development to go ahead.