



Welcome to ACT

from Emily Barnes, CEO of the Aylesham Community Trust

Welcome to our first Newsletter and a big thank you for your interest and support. We aim to produce a regular quarterly update for our Members to help us connect with the local community we're here to serve. As you'll see, Spring 2025 has been both a busy and exciting time!



We really need and welcome your support as we work to deliver services for the benefit of the local area. As a Registered Charity much of what we do relies on us working in partnership and securing grants and donations. By becoming a Member you will not only help to make us stronger as a charity but you'll be first to hear any new announcements! So, please do consider becoming an ACT Member.

In April 2023 our Trustees agreed a new and ambitious plan for growth and change to create:

- A place for people to relax and socialise
- A place to meet and feel supported
- A place to learn new skills
- A place to do business
- A place that helps the community

You can start to read more about what we're doing to progress these plans over the page as well as finding out about some of the exciting developments coming soon! Do pop by if you can. This is all about making YOUR place and YOUR space work for you.



A growing team!

Lisa and I were pleased to welcome Ian Blissett to the team in January, bringing our core crew back up to three. We're looking forward to welcoming the new Catering Team Leader, Deputy and other Coffee Shop and Kitchen staff very soon. Look out for more job opportunities on our social media and website!



Grants for community groups up for grabs!

We're pleased to announce that the annual grant pot we operate with our close partner, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, is now open. Community organisations from the Wards of Aylesham, Betteshanger, Chislet, Elvington, Hersden, Mill Hill and Snowdown can now apply for grants of up to £3,000 from the Kent Coalfield Community Fund. You'll find full details on our website below.



NEW! The Old School Coffee Shop & Kitchen

We're on track to launch this exciting new venture in late May 2025. As well as freshly brewed coffee, we're also planning on serving weekday snacks and Sunday lunches in the newly renovated space next to the main hall. Watch out for full details of the menu and opening times just as soon as our new Catering Team Leader is in post. In the meantime, why not pop by to say hello and take a look!



New co-working space coming soon!

Our new co-working space will be available from mid April, based in the main building with easy access to our coffee shop. You'll be able to rent a desk or room by the hour or day through our website. Keep an eye on our Facebook page or website or let us know if you'd like to be notified when the booking system goes live. Email: info@aylesham.org.uk

COMMUNITY HQ

FREE help and support for community groups

Community groups from Aylesham can get access to lots of practical support from ACT including:

- **FREE use of the Main Hall for a fundraiser (worth £200)**
- **FREE access to a meeting space with hot drinks for your meetings**
- **A group post box**
- **A website link to your group**
- **Use of a photocopier and laminator**

If you're an Aylesham-based community group, chat to us and make sure you don't miss out!

Thank you Mears!

We would like to say a huge thank you to the team from Mears who have donated their staff time and resources to help redecorate our key community spaces. The Community HQ, Common Room and Main Hall now all look and feel as good as new! They're all now attractive and comfortable spaces for our visitors to use.



A brighter future...

Thanks to a £50,000 grant from the VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme, led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, we've been able to upgrade the lighting across all the Old School buildings to make our site more energy efficient and cost-effective. The work was carried out by an Aylesham company, One Call Electrical Services, in January and February.



A new way to visit

We'll soon be re-opening a pedestrian entrance coming from the direction of the railway station. This was once the 'Boys' entrance' and has been closed since the school shut down. We also have plans to add another new pedestrian entrance at the front of the site opposite Queens Road. We'll get that done as soon as we have enough funding to pay for it.

EVENTS

REGULAR ACTIVITIES



Yoga Classes The Studio

Mondays & Wednesdays 10-11.30am |
Tuesdays 7-8.30pm

The Snowdown Colliery Welfare MVC

The Main Hall | Mondays 7-10pm

Zumba Gold The Main Hall

Wednesdays 10-11am

The Pantry

Tuesdays 9am-12pm | Thursdays 12-3pm

Karate | Wednesdays 5-10pm

NHS Health Visitor

(by appointment only)

Monday, Thursday & Friday

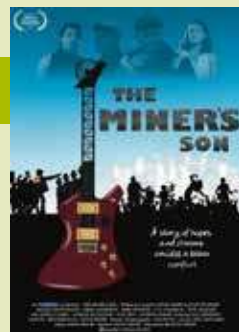
SPECIAL EVENTS

Saturday 26 April

Choir Workshop | 4-week program

Friday 9 May

The Miner's Son | Film | Doors open 6.30pm



**COMING
SOON!**

**WATCH THIS
SPACE**

- **Launch of the Old School Coffee Shop and Kitchen**

- **Our new co-working space opens**

Contact us or visit www.aylesham.org.uk to find out more

Training & Community Space Hire

Hourly and community rates available (Terms & Conditions apply)



Business lets

Modern offices and light industrial spaces set in a pleasant business park.





A welcome to EKC!

We're excited to introduce East Kent Colleges Group – otherwise just known as EKC Group – to Aylesham village. EKC have recently joined the community in the old Secondary School, and received a warm welcome!

Education for young learners

EKC understand that every student has different needs. Their *Alternative Provision for Further Education* (FE) offers flexible and personalised courses designed to help young people succeed, especially where they may not thrive in traditional college settings.

Courses for adults

The Group believes in lifelong learning. That's why EKC are offering a range of courses and training programs for adults in Aylesham. Whether you want to advance in your career, learn a new skill, or pursue a personal interest, EKC has something for everyone. All the courses are designed to be accessible and relevant, helping you achieve your personal and professional goals.

The EKC commitment to the community

EKC are looking forward to becoming a part of Aylesham, making a positive impact to the community and helping learners of all ages reach their full potential.



Creative Coffee Mornings

After the success of these sessions last year, Espression Arts returned to the Community HQ with their Creative Coffee Mornings. These sessions were for people aged 55 years and over, free of charge and with no experience needed to take part. They've also offered sessions open to all ages. These relaxed and friendly coffee mornings are a great way to try something new.

We're already looking for ways to offer more Creative Coffee Mornings as soon as possible. Become an ACT Member to get notified as soon as we do!

POTTERY, CERAMICS, CREATIVE CLAY & MORE



FREE light refreshments
& friendly chat,
with arts and crafts,
for anyone 55 years old
and over



Home to the Aylesham Business Network

We're proud to be working alongside the Aylesham Business Network both as a Member of the group but also by hosting their meetings here in our main building.

The Aylesham Business Network (ABN) is a dynamic and diverse networking group that fosters meaningful connections and professional growth.

The ABN community is made up of professionals from various industries and backgrounds, all united

by a shared passion for collaboration and learning within the Aylesham and District area.

The group meets at 8am every second Thursday at The Old School (Aylesham Community Trust).

Find out more about the group via their website at ayleshambusinessnetwork.co.uk

**COMING
SOON!**





Get in touch...

Our main office is open:
from 8am-4pm Monday to Friday
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