



Ashford Residents Association (ARA)

SUMMARY & BULLETPPOINTS

Quarterly Meeting (1/25)

Saturday 14th June 2025

St Matthews Church, Ashford

Attendees:

John Dickens, Chair - Julie Holman, Secretary - Penny Kielty, Treasurer
Residents of Ashford TW15

Invited Guests:

Lincoln Jopp, MP for Spelthorne
Cllr Joanne Sexton, Leader of Spelthorne Council
Cllr Katherine Rutherford
Cllr Michelle Arnold
Cllr Harry Boparai
Cllr Denise Turner Stewart
Simon Lowe, Surrey County Council
Louise Morton, Surrey Council Communications
Sergeant Thea Jackson, Staines Police
PCSO Ruby Pyne

Key Discussions & Updates

1. MP Lincoln Jopp's Address

- Spoke on:
 - His role and connection to Ashford.
 - Rising crime and anti-social behaviour, especially in Boots and Sainsbury's.
 - Urged residents and retailers to report all crimes.
 - Disappointment over Adult Gaming Centre approval.
 - Emphasised Ashford's importance and his commitment to the area.
- **Resident Questions:**
 - Concerns over social housing safety, misleading notices, and Ashford being overlooked.
 - Emphasis on reporting crime and using Crime Stoppers.

2. Ashford Town Placemaking Project (Surrey County Council)

- Presented by Simon Lowe:

- Aims to improve high street, traffic, green spaces, and community spirit.
- Feedback: Ashford feels disjointed, unsafe, and polluted.
- Proposals: More greenery, better crossings, event spaces, and a new town centre heart.
- Funding: No rate increases; SCC is financially stable.
- Challenges: Privately owned shops, infrastructure limits green space expansion.
- **Resident Concerns:**
 - Accessibility for vulnerable residents.
 - Parking impact from MSCP changes.
 - Illegal parking and traffic flow.
 - Enforcement and communication with planning departments.

3. Police Update – Sgt. Thea Jackson

- Acknowledged:
 - High crime rates, especially shoplifting and youth crime.
 - Ashford is a top hotspot in North Surrey.
 - Lack of police visibility and inter-agency coordination.
 - New initiative: **Clear Halt Build** (targeted arrests, drug den closures).
 - 22% crime resolution rate in Ashford (above national average).
- **Plans & Actions:**
 - Increased patrols (Thurs–Mon).
 - Youth engagement and school outreach.
 - Plainclothes operations and community reporting.
 - New app for crime tracking and arrests.
 - Focus on anti-social behaviour, shoplifting, and violence against women.
- **Resident Feedback:**
 - Need for more visible policing.
 - Concerns over judicial delays.
 - Request to reinstate monthly crime reports.
 - Youth crime prevention and community engagement praised.

Other Business

- **Meeting Frequency:** Quarterly meetings confirmed; next on **20 Sept 2025**.
- **Spelthorne Partnership Assembly:** Scheduled for **30 June 2025**.
- **Fordbridge Park:** Final inspection walk scheduled for **28 June**.
- **Ashford Classic Car Event:** Volunteers needed for **7 Sept 2025**.
- **Adult Gaming Centre:** Application still under review; not yet valid.

Closing Notes

- Thanks to attendees, presenters, and Father Stuart for venue support.
- Encouragement to pay the £5 annual membership fee to support ARA activities.
- Feedback form available online.