

COMMUNITY CALL

Edition 2005/01

Newsletter

April/May 2005

The Chairman writes

I cannot believe that we have been living in Ashley Green for almost 6 years - another 20 and we may be looked on as locals! The village comprises, on the one hand, true local people, members of families who have resided in the area for generations, and on the other hand, those of us who have bought or rented a house and moved into the village as strangers.

I became involved in the Community Association in 2000, at the Annual General Meeting. At that time there were two separate charitable bodies, the Community Association managing the Old School Buildings, and the New Memorial Institute looking after the Village Hall. The two bodies acted quite separately, which did not help in uniting the village community.

The previous Chairman of the Association, Patrick White, co-ordinated and saw through the amalgamation of the two bodies into one charitable organisation, and the village now has one body looking after its public buildings. During my stint as Chairman, I wanted to carry on the good work by uniting the community spirit and I felt that the first job was to concentrate efforts on the Village Hall, which had become dilapidated over recent years. In the last 18 months the efforts of many villagers has improved the look of the Village Hall both outside and in. Hopefully we can complete the work this year by refurbishing the kitchen.

The Old School Buildings are a really valuable asset to the village community and they, too, need a continuing effort to maintain and improve them. Currently the white and the green buildings (known as the Wykes Building and the Green Room) are undergoing external redecoration, and the entrance drive from the main road has just been resurfaced.

The Community Buildings, the Village Green and the Glebe are used for village events throughout the year and the buildings are let out primarily to be used for their purpose of being enjoyed.

A list of forthcoming village events is to be found overleaf, but one event I would ask you to note is the AGM of the Community Association which is to be held in the Old School on **Tuesday 14th June at 8 p.m.**

Whether you are a relative newcomer to the village or a true local, I ask you to come along and meet other villagers over a glass of wine or ale. I look forward to meeting you.

Mark Broschomb (Chairman)

Not a Member?

Have you joined the association yet?
Join us and take an active part in your village.
Annual Fees are only £5.00 per person - Family rates too!
Contact our membership secretary. 01442-863275

Village Newsletter returns for 20th Anniversary

Yes, the Ashley Green and District Community Association is now 20 years old and we have brought **Community Call**, the village newsletter, back to life to mark the occasion

We hope to bring you news about the association itself, as well as information about all the events and activities planned by the groups within it. We also want to publicise all the other activities and groups active within the village, in order that we can help you see that there may be something for you to join in with and enjoy.

Such a newsletter relies entirely upon you the villagers, and all village users, for news, for advance notice of planned events, for success stories and for any news that you deem worthy of publication.

Please contact us with any information you would like to see printed here, and we will do our best to include it.

The next edition will be produced around the end of October, so start thinking about your contribution now. Ed.

VILLAGE FAIR

The Annual village Summer Fair will be held on the Green on **Saturday June 18th at 2.30pm.**

Stalls ● Sideshows ● Entertainment ● Tug of War
● Chiltern Dog Rescue Show ● Barbeque ● WI Teas - *And lots more.*

Everyone welcome. Should you want to run a stall, or help in any way at all please contact:-

Mary Axon on 01442 866549

Triffic Triffids

**Unusual Plants for your garden.
Garden Design and Planning**

Open days at 11, Curtis Cottages (opp. Church)
on
May 1st, June 5th, July 3rd, Sept 4th

Special Edition to mark 20 years of activities in Ashley Green * 1985-2005 *

Where are they now?

Previous Newsletters reported many activities which, sadly, have passed into History. We list them here.

Green Country Swingers - Square dance group.

Coffee Shop - Weekly social event

Ashley Green Eagles - Our football team who used to play on the ground by the layby, but which now is turned over to grazing. Don't we have any active footballers anymore?

Ebury Strollers - Cricket team.

Anyone keen to resurrect these activities?

But Still going Strong

Despite the passing of some activities there is strong support for the following:

Arts group - now into its 20th year, marked by an exhibition of work to be held on **Saturday April 30th**. Yes, still going strong with regular weekly meetings in the old school. (contact Margaret Bowllier on 01442-862294)

Women's Institute - A thriving organisation meeting in the Old School on 2nd Thursday each month at 7.45pm. Also morning walks & pub lunches. (contact Margaret Edenborough on 01442- 865545)

Montessori Nursery School - Open every day in the old school. Qualified staff. (contact Mrs Morton on 01494 - 774989)

Bridge Club - Meets Wednesdays in the Old School at 7.30pm. (Contact Marian Manning 01442-876502)

Bridge Club (duplicate) - Meets Thursdays in the Village Hall. (Contact Gill Ford on 01296-620132)

Youth Club - Several sections. Meets on Friday in the Wykes Room. Contact Tim Hayward 01442 - 862970)

Recent Events

Quiz Evening

Race Night

Valentines Dinner/Dance

These successful social events are organised for villagers and friends, and also serve to raise funds for village activities.

Please continue to support us.

St John the Evangelist.

Our Church stands at the centre of our village, offering services every Sunday at 9.30am. There is an active Sunday School, and men's and women's activities. Come and meet us and share the warmth, friendship and fellowship.

You will have seen that we have had all the fencing (some 120 years old) replaced in the past two years, and also noticed that the trees and hedges are kept neat and tidy. What about the bell and roof??

On Christmas Eve Leith Allen was ringing the bells when one ceased to pull and the rope fell at his feet. With the aid of binoculars it was discovered that one of the lead tubes through which the rope passed, had become misaligned and the rope had chafed until it had severed.

A local renowned lead worker, Simon Bowler, was called in, but inspection showed that more work was needed and that all lead work needed to be replaced.

By the time you read this, the bell ropes will have been replaced and you will be hearing the bells calling you to worship on Sundays.

This work means that other plans have had to be curtailed as a result.

Would you like to help at St Johns, or assist with cleaning and/or flowers to keep our church bright and welcoming. (contact Vivienne Withall 01442 - 862577)

Our Play Area

Our play area is *ONE YEAR* old, and it now has a clean bill of health following the first inspection from RoSPA on behalf of the Parish Council.

Just over a year ago it was just part of The Glebe, but now, thanks to the generosity of Mr Alby Russell of **Heritage Landscapes** who donated *all* the labour and materials to the village, we have a play area with swings, slide, and many other features. It is well used by the children from the Nursery school, and by families from the village and elsewhere. It is our showpiece, so keep your eyes open and make sure it is not abused.

Allotments

Did you know we had our own allotments behind the village hall?

All plots are currently being worked, but should you want to be considered for one, in case someone were to drop out, why not put your name on the waiting list. The Parish Council manages these plots, regularly maintains the site, and a super new gate and extra fencing has now been added for more security. (For information call the Parish Clerk)

Editorial

We intend to publish Community Call twice a year, in May and in the Autumn. Should there be a greater demand we might consider more issues. It is up to you to supply the news, and we want to make it of interest to all people in the village and surrounding district.

Write an article or letter and we will try to include it, or pass it on to the appropriate association member.

Contact David Harmer on 01442 - 874931 with copy, or on any matter relating to content.

Future Events

- **WI Cream tea**
Sunday 22nd May - 3pm. 11 Chesham Road.
- **Annual General Meeting**
Tuesday June 14th at 8pm. Old School
- **The Village Summer Fair**
Saturday June 18th - 2.30pm
- **WI Bar B Q (Members & Friends.)**
Saturday July 31st
- **A Caribbean Evening**
October 8th
- **Bonfire Night**
November 5th
- **Quiz Night**
November 19th
- **Family Christmas Party**
December 11th
- **Christmas Drinks & Carols**
December 18th

Put these dates in your diary
NOW!!

Village, or just Roadside Housing?

If you take your foot off the accelerator as you pass the sign for Ashley Green on the A416 between Chesham and Berkhamsted then glance to your right at the crossroads, you will have a view of the Green, the central feature of Ashley Green. Better still, park in the area provided at the far end of the Green and look around you.

Between and behind the Old Vicarage of 1875 and the Village Hall is the Glebe. At the north of the Green is the Old School built in 1875 by Col. Dorrien, a local landowner, and on the opposite corner is the Church built in 1873 at the behest of one of his relations on land given by Lord Chesham..

The replica Well Head was constructed in 1995 by village volunteers on its original site. Across the main road on the corner of the row of flint walled cottages used to be the village Post Office and Stores.

Further north along the road is the 16th Century Golden Eagle pub, formerly the village blacksmith's house and forge. At the edge of the Green bordered by Two Dells Lane lies the pond and one of the two 17th Century houses adjoining the Green.

1226 and all that

Until the mid 19th century virtually all the buildings in the Village were agricultural. Records show that the Village was founded in 1226 when landowners felled trees to pay council taxes. It was then known as Essleie. The name, derived from the ash trees that made up the greater part of the wood, had transmuted to Asssheley Grene by 1468.

In the Victorian era extensive orchards and a pheasantry for the royal table were established by the nurseryman, Mr Lane, whose farm, Ashley Green Farm, was situated on the Two Dells Lane side of the Green. The philanthropy of the local land-owning gentry endowed the Village with its School, Church and Parish and Reading room.

The latter is the green corrugated iron clad building within the premises of the Old School.

It was probably the first of the secular community centres' that have been established in the Village. Although it was administered by the Vicar and Church wardens and membership was only granted to adult parishioners for a subscription of 2d a month, all others were admitted for a small charge for readings, recitations and music during the winter months.

Did you know?

After the end of the first world war a hall was constructed on the Green primarily for the benefit of ex-servicemen of the Village. This was replaced by the current building around 1960 and named the New Memorial Institute. It is now managed by the Ashley Green Community Association which was founded to ensure that the local inhabitants might have the use of the buildings on the premises of the Village School when the Government closed it in 1983. Indeed, the ex Parish room now houses a Pilates studio, the Youth Club use the white building and the main School building is used by a Montessori school on weekdays and by various societies: W1, art, bridge and lacemaking, during the evenings. The Village Hall is also used regularly by various groups and both buildings are available for hire.

Lines of communication have always featured in the history of Ashley Green. Legend has it that three Ley lines intersect here and that underground passages ran from Berkhamsted Castle to caves beneath the Green. The Village is linked with ancient hamlets and farmsteads with a network of footpaths and bridlepaths.

The A416 links the towns lying in the valleys either side of the high ground on which Ashley Green sits and while permitting easy access to major road systems the increased traffic virtually dissects the Village in half hence the transformation of an agricultural community into a rural dormitory for people from disparate regions with different interests.

Changes

In the last thirty years the Village has lost its resident policeman, resident vicar, the school, shop, post office and support for the local football/cricket field. Combine these losses with the propensity of Englishmen to withdraw into their own TV/PC screen-equipped 'castles' at the end of the day and there is a real danger that Ashley Green could become just another stretch of tarmac lined by dwellings with their drawbridges UP.

But on the good side

However we must remember that the Village still has the Pub, a Youth Club, the Church, the Green, the Glebe, the Parish Council and the Community Association. The Golden Eagle serves meals, supports a darts team, organises weekly quizzes and other specialist events. The Church has re-established a regular Sunday school at the weekly 9.30am service and invites the Villagers to men's breakfasts and ladies' social evenings in the Old School.. The Green is the site of the annual Village Fete - 18th June this year - at which children's races and tug-of-war take place encircled by traditional attractions and stalls.

Since the purchase of the Glebe by Chiltern District Council a children's playground has been constructed in the corner next to the Village Hall and the Parish Council have created a copse from what was impenetrable scrub on the boundary. The Glebe is also the site of the renowned annual Bonfire and Fireworks Display held, whatever the day, on 5th November.

There is a lot going on in Ashley Green, made possible by the villagers who want to keep their village alive.

Make an effort and you, too, could enjoy our village.

(This article by Vivienne Withall first appeared in the Great Chesham magazine in the last few months.)

COMMENT

There is a dedicated group of people who really want to make our village a real village in every way. If everyone who lives in Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill could attend events, give a bit of time and provide support and ideas they can breathe life into the place where we live. We can all lend a hand to make it work. Ed.

WORK ON THE LAYBY

Always a thorny issue, the problem of the layby on the outskirts of the village was resolved after a long slog.

A strong push by the villagers, Parish Council, and receptive Bucks County Council and District Council, has improved the area and facilities.

No longer have we a layby that attracted regular visitors, with much accompanying mess, but instead a recycling centre open only at one end with a barrier to discourage anything larger than a car.

The recycling bins are still there, and often filled very quickly. Please use them sensibly and set an example to others to show that we try to be neat and tidy. Well done to all who helped to make this happen.

Ashley Green Women's Institute



There is a small, but flourishing, W.I. in Ashley Green, attracting members from surrounding towns and villages as well.

We meet every second Thursday of each month at 7.45pm in the Old school, when we have interesting guest speakers and other events.

We also arrange monthly walks of around 2 to 3 miles ending at a Pub for lunch (non-walkers welcome to join us at lunchtime!) and occasional trips out to places of interest.

Our fund raising events this summer are a Cream Tea open to all at Jill Lea's house, 11 Chesham Road, on Sunday May 22nd from 3 - 5pm., admission £2.00.

There is also a Sunday Lunch Barbecue for *W.I. members and their friends* at Pat Harmer's house, Ridgeford, Chesham Road, on Sunday July 31st from 12 noon. Tickets are £6.00 (including all food but bring your own drink) available from Pat, telephone no. 01442 874931 prior to the BBQ.

Further information is available from Margaret Edenborough on 01442 865545.

ALL NEWCOMERS Welcome to Ashley Green.

Sometimes we just do not always know who has moved into Ashley Green, and maybe you do not know we are here either.

We soon hope to be able to greet all new residents and tell them what we do and what is available. I hope you have settled in well, and we hope you like what you see, but do get in touch and we will be pleased to help you feel at home. Ed.

Your Parish Council

The Parish Council is for you. All the Councillors are villagers, just like you from both Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill, not just some grey "they". The Council meets about every six weeks. Last July, Mrs Helen Garthwaite, from Whelpley Hill, took over as parish Clerk. You can contact her on 01442 833 286.

Why not come to the AGM in the Old School on **Thursday May 26th at 8 p.m.** The Chairman, John Toovey, and Councillors will be pleased to meet you.. and offer a glass of wine too!

****STOP PRESS** We are reliably informed that the intrusive helicopter noise will stop when the pilot retires from competition in May, and training sessions end.**

Highways and Paths.

Work has just been completed on the footpath along the Chesham Road towards Chesham.

Did you know that if you have comments, enquiries, suggestions for improvements to Highways and Paths you can call the Council on **0845-2302882**

The Golden Eagle

A very Warm Welcome to Kim & Susan! We wish them every success as they take over the tenancy of our popular pub now that Mike & Linda have departed for pastures new.

They pledge to continue the tradition of serving good beers and wines, and also provide a full meals service for lunch and dinners.

Why not call them to arrange a meal? (01442 - 863549)

YOGA

Interested in joining a new Yoga Class on Wednesday evenings?

*Contact Elizabeth Siggers
01494-782633*

For Meetings & Parties try the Old School & Village Hall

Comfortable accommodation with flexibility

Rooms for Meetings, Activities, Events and Parties
(Old School 8-80 people. Village Hall up to 150)
Bar and Kitchen facilities - glassware, crockery, cutlery
Well heated and with Ample car parking

Information and bookings call:

01442 863275 or 01442 874834

FINALLY

We hope you have enjoyed this new venture. Please tell us if you have, and please try to make a contribution next time.

ED.

Should you want your next Community Call by Email as a MSWord document, send an email to davedharmer@aol.com with Community Call as the subject