

# COMMUNITY CALL

Edition No. 32

[www.ashleygreen.org.uk](http://www.ashleygreen.org.uk)

Spring 2021

## FROM THE CHAIR

It is lovely to see that Spring is here as we slowly approach the ending of lockdown restrictions. There is so much positively to report from the village.

The new Children's Adventure Playground and wellbeing centre with a high-quality coffee shop will undoubtedly transform this village. I personally cannot wait to bring our grandchildren to the new facility and meet fellow villagers while having a coffee and almond croissant. I urge everyone to get behind the ever-growing fundraising team.

The Covid support group, formed by the Community Association and St John's church, is still active and the village response has been admirable. I thank everyone for their offers of support, including offers to cook Christmas lunches for vulnerable residents. However It is a while since we received a request for help. Our village buildings have been closed since December, but we have been fortunate to receive government grants to keep the Community Association afloat.

We plan to partially open in April to welcome back our various children-based groups and will follow government guidance on further lifting of restrictions. It is fantastic to see so many villagers supporting the Glebe clearing, litter picking and sign/gate cleaning, my personal thanks to everyone who have given their time to help.

## THE GOLDEN EAGLE

We are delighted to welcome our new landlords at the Golden Eagle. Don and Emma took over in December, despite being in deep lockdown they have actively promoted their takeaway service, which has been well supported by the village. They still need our support as they will not be able to fully open until May/June, so please try and order from them at least once a week.

We were all sorry that Denis and Eunice decided, for family reasons, to leave the Eagle. The village has supported them through their difficult tenure, and they are very grateful for all the friends they made here. We wish them well in the future and Denis' burger van does operate at Chesham market.

The battle continues with Punch over their absurd planning application to destroy the Eagle, by building a house in the Eagle's car park. Thanks to everyone who submitted planning objections, the village response was excellent. We believe Punch withdrew their planning application to avoid having it rejected. However, they have returned with a pre application seeking guidance on how to overcome Highways and Heritage issues. This prompted the Friends of the Golden Eagle to submit a serious complaint letter to Punch Taverns Plc about the unethical behaviour of Punch Estates in their ruthless pursuit of profits. We await a response, but we are delighted that Rt Hon Dame Cheryl Gillan MP will write to Punch on our behalf.

## ANOTHER PLANNING ISSUE

There is another live planning application that will affect the village, to build 33 houses in the field behind the Eagle.

This is another application where the developer's motive is clearly focussed on profit rather than a responsible development that meets local/national housing needs and benefiting the village. I urge you to look at the planning application on the Council's planning portal.

*Rob Youngs - Chairman*

## WELCOME TO ISSUE 32

Community Call is normally issued twice a year but due to the pandemic life is a little different now, to say the least. News has been a bit thin, so we are issuing later than normal. Our halls have been closed (*except for a small "window" in the summer*) and all activities which used them, have stopped as have all events such as annual Village Fair, our Bonfire Night and the family Christmas party.

However there has been a lot going on at the Golden Eagle and the new Play area project has begun and we cover them here in this newsletter.

## Welcome to the "Golden Eagle"

### DON AND EMMA

Here are the new team at the pub.



*More about the pub on page 6*

## SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Just enjoy the Spring Flowers!



## NEWS FROM ST. JOHN'S



Well, who would have thought that a year after reporting on our Pancake Tea we would be celebrating our next one still in lockdown, or we should say, back in lockdown! This year we sent out some recipes that we hoped some of you tried out and enjoyed.

As you may know our Minister Chris Gercke is currently on furlough. We are beyond thankful to the anonymous member of our parish who hearing of his proposed 12-week furlough approached the Oxford Diocese with an offer to pay 50% of his salary and as this offer was accepted Chris is now on furlough for a reduced six weeks in two three-week blocks.

Many people may not know that running a church is not only the Services but it includes pastoral care, spiritual guidance, courses, weddings, baptisms, funerals, a lot of administration, and more. It is an enormous task and Chris' commitment and dedication to the village is greatly missed during his furlough.

We would like to give grateful thanks to Helen Stacey, our pastoral carer who has taken on much of Chris' work in addition to her usual pastoral care.

Chris' curacy comes to an end at the end of June and he will be leaving St John's permanently to take up another post. With that in mind our Team Rector is seeking a minister to take charge of St John' but it is likely that we be sharing a minister - at least for a while.

On a more cheerful note, our online services are extremely popular and various members of our congregation choose hymns, and do the Readings, and we are all getting incredibly good at recording ourselves.

We reluctantly took the decision to close our church but are hopeful that we will be able to reopen St John's once again for Easter Services.

As so many other charities the pandemic is having a devastating affect on our finances and we expect to be around £7,000 in deficit by the end of this financial year. If you would like to support the work of the church in Ashley Green details of how to do so can be found below.

To make a one-off donation, please go to our [Give A Little](https://tinyurl.com/givetosjag) page at <https://tinyurl.com/givetosjag> which includes the option to add Gift Aid.

For regular donations please consider joining the Parish Giving scheme, a direct debit facility managed on our behalf by Oxford Diocese. Our Treasurer will be glad to let you have further information and the forms to set this up.

Chris Gercke will be back from 15 March-4 April and is always available. Please feel free to contact him on either [curate@cheshamchurch.co.uk](mailto:curate@cheshamchurch.co.uk) / 01494 783498.

*Jacquie Rose and John Mayne Church Wardens, St John the Evangelist, Ashley Green.*

## VILLAGE "LUNCH AND CHAT"

The Lunch and Chat Group cannot meet in the Old School each week, but continues to meet, via zoom, each Thursday morning at 11am, and although we cannot share a meal together the chat continues to be friendly and entertaining.

Unfortunately, there are some people do not have access to Zoom and so cannot join us and we look forward to the future when we are able to meet up in person once again to enjoy the company and a good home cooked meal too.

## A BIT OF LIGHT RELIEF

You may have seen the Chesham "Masterplan" which aims to restore the town centre with shops and housing so different to "The Remote Hilltop Settlements" (*their quote*) which surround it..

That phrase alone conjures up an image of cavemen eating dinosaurs and grunting a lot.



Nothing could be further from the truth. I wonder if whoever wrote those words has ever visited one of these "*Remote Settlements*" like ours.

Here we have a thriving Community with a Community Association which manages a series of buildings, home to multiple activities on a regular basis, and which stages events and entertainments such as the annual Village Fair and Bonfire Night

It also attracts people who want to make their home in a traditional rural setting - and not in a residential town. In the other "*Remote Settlements*" like ours there are similar levels of Activities. These are not "Dead" areas but places where people choose to live preferentially and enjoy.

The Masterplan has many very commendable features, but to ignore the value of surrounding villages is backward thinking and simply the knee jerk reaction of someone who is not really fully informed. *Ed.*

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

With "Lockdown" easing, we hope to be opening our halls again soon and will be getting back to normal with activities and events starting up again.

Our **Village Fair** is provisionally booked for **Saturday July 3<sup>rd</sup>**, where we hope to be able to have out Classic Car Show and **Bonfire night** will be **Friday November 5<sup>th</sup>**. The **Budapest Café Orchestra** will be coming here on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November** so keep your fingers crossed for all these dates! *Watch out for more news as we move forward.*

# PLAYGROUND AND WELL BEING VENTURE

People in the village should now be aware of the Playground and Wellbeing Venture planned here, having previously received the detailed brochure issued via the Village News Bulletins, or the leaflet delivered to all houses as well as the various calls for funding that have been circulated.

We are so excited that the village is planning to build such a top quality large Children's Adventure Playground and Wellbeing Facility behind the Memorial Hall to include a high quality coffee shop and a large terrace, which will enable parents and grandparents to keep an eye on the children enjoying themselves.



This is envisaged as a Community Hub for all, whether you are taking the children to play, exercising yourself, taking the dog for a walk or just fancy a coffee and almond croissant in the morning.



The plan is for this to be up and running in June this year, and there is a big **BUT!** We need to raise £70,000 to add to the grant already made by the council.

To ensure a top quality product we need everyone in the village to really pull together to help raise funds!

That can be done by

- Any donation large or small  
*(Amounts over £500 will be marked with a plaque)*
- Sponsorship of a piece of equipment  
*(A plaque noting the donation will be placed on the equipment),*
- A sponsored fitness challenge. Get friends, family and colleagues to sponsor you as you walk/run miles

Although we would love people to join the fitness challenge they don't have to join in. What we need is access to people's network of family/friends/colleagues/contacts...spread the word.

Does anyone know of a business owner, local or national, who would consider sponsoring a piece of equipment or make a donation *(remember it would be a charitable donation so probably tax deductible)* with the names displayed as a thank you. *(advertising).*

Does anyone have family/friends who would visit the village and benefit from the development, as it is in their interests to support it. We have already had a generous response, but we need all the support we can get if we are to reach our target by end April.

So please go to the GoFundMe page at:-

<http://www.gofundme.com/Build-a-new-childrens-PlaygroundWellbeing-Centre>.

*If you are a tax payer you can gift aid your donation.*

## Work has already begun.

The large trees directly behind the Memorial Hall have already been removed and on Saturday March 6<sup>th</sup> a team of villagers came to the Glebe to clear the underbrush round the perimeter - all this in preparation for the foundations of the terrace and playground.



## CLEAR UP DAY

Taking advantage of the sunny day, other villagers came to pick rubbish from the verges and clean the signs and the gates. A good community effort all round!



**Thanks everyone!**

## RENE HOLLYLEE

27<sup>th</sup> September 1922 - 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Rene Hollylee was a stalwart of the village, setting up home here in 1945 when she married her husband, Jack.

She played an important role in village life well before the formation of the Community Association. She used to organise the Village Fete, Dances in the hall, Coach trips, and Canal boat trips with fish and chips lunch. She was also chair of Blind Bucks where she was active for 35 years and she organised coach trips and outings for the members.



A really dedicated villager who will be sadly missed.

## JULIE PAINTER

27<sup>th</sup> September 1967 - 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021



It is with sadness that we have to announce the passing of Julie Painter. Julie moved to the village back in 1994 with her husband Adam and she became active in village life, for many years she helped out with organising the Village Quiz and running the gate at the annual Bonfire Night celebrations. I'm sure she will be well known to many of the dog walkers in the village from her many walks in her distinctive pink coat, walking Charlie the family Black Labrador.

She was diagnosed with cancer in May 2015 and faced this with immense strength and resilience and remained positive and upbeat throughout all of her treatments and set-backs.

She was admitted to the Hospice of St Francis in early January and passed away peacefully on 17th January.

There is a muchloved page set-up in her memory where donations to the Hospice of St Francis can be made:-  
[julie-painter.muchloved.com](http://julie-painter.muchloved.com)

We send our condolences to her husband Adam and daughter Emily.

## ASHLEY GREEN W.I.

The ladies of Ashley Green W.I, have remained as busy as ever over the past few months. During the first lockdown we were busy making scrubs and scrub bags for the NHS.

2020 was to be the centenary year for the Buckinghamshire Federation of W.Is with many events planned, including sole use of the Waddesdon Manor grounds for a day, but sadly this wasn't to be although we are still hopeful this will go ahead

As part of this celebration, Bucks W.Is were asked to do something related to '100'. We decided to plant 100 daffodil bulbs in the grounds of the Old School. As it transpired, the bags held nearly 200 bulbs, so the show should be excellent in the coming months.

Bucks WI Federation asked each WI to make a pennant to be used at the centenary events, so I thought you would like to see a photo of ours.



We do love a pub lunch so it seemed appropriate to make ours a pub sign.

With May being a time that we can meet in force once again, we plan to be out on the village green at least once a week, so if you see us sat in the sun (or even under brollies in the rain, nothing is going to stop us) please come and say hello. Our numbers have recently increased to 29, which is a good number for a small village but sadly only 5 of our members live in the village, so come on ladies what are you waiting for?

We welcome anyone from 18 to infinity. Our current youngest member is 24, and I won't say how old our oldest member is, she may not forgive me for telling you

We have been holding weekly phone catch up conference calls and our monthly meetings are being held on Zoom. The Christmas lunch was cancelled but our Christmas party went ahead. I delivered 'party packs' to each member's home with song sheets, party poppers, Christmas cards and a craft pack.

In February we had a local artist teach us to paint floral watercolour designs using felt-tip pens and in March our speaker talked about UK train stations and associated anecdotes. Our speaker next month will talk about John Betjeman's London. We moved last year's planned canal trip to June this year. Afternoon tea on the canal and hopefully lots of sunshine (we've ordered that specially). If either of these appeal to you, drop me an email.

The W.I. is a great place to meet ladies of all ages, some retired, some working part time, some working full time. If you have young children, it's nice to have some adult company (even if you're working it's great to have non-work conversations) and get the opportunity to learn something new.

And finally, on the subject of learning, if lifetime learning appeals to you, then the W.I. has its own online college called Denman. All courses are extremely well priced at around £5. [www.denman.org.uk](http://www.denman.org.uk) and maybe if these do appeal, you might just want to join us sometime. All ladies welcome (sorry chaps). *Debbie Nixon - Chair.* [deborah.nixon@icloud.com](mailto:deborah.nixon@icloud.com)

## NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T



Way back in 2013 BT canvassed the opinion of the villagers about whether they should remove the phone box on the corner of Hog Lane and Chesham Road.

BT were called and asked what the call frequency had been.

At first they could not identify the position of the box but after a bit of a search they located it and said that in the previous year just ONE call had been made.

No wonder they wanted to remove the box. Not exactly profitable??

After that there was silence until one day in June 2020 a truck appeared and workmen (should that be work "humans" now?) started work and in a jiffy, the box was gone.

We all have a mobile now so times change.

What will be next to go?

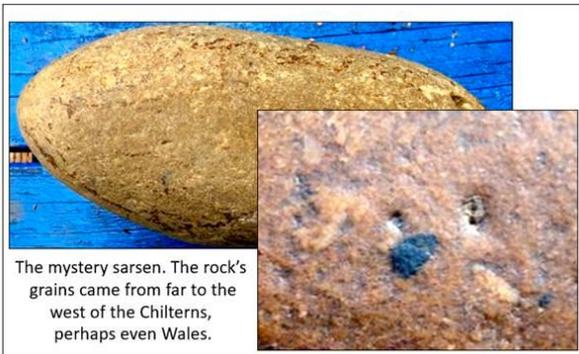


## MYSTERY STONES IN THE VILLAGE

A villager has contributed an article to the Geologists' Association magazine on the landscape and geology within a ¼ mile of his house about a discovery he made locally

He had found a 9" long Sarsen cobble earlier in 2020 and, on examination, had been able to confirm that it had probably come from the west of the Chilterns and, possibly, even from as far as Wales.

You can see this in this in the accompanying photo.



The mystery sarsen. The rock's grains came from far to the west of the Chilterns, perhaps even Wales.

Its geological history, however, remains uncertain. Since then he has found two even larger specimens and asks if anyone else may have found similar looking stones like these in, or around Ashley Green.

He would like to plot any further discoveries on a map to see if together they will yield additional clues to the Sarsen's history and how they arrived in our locality.

Have you come across anything like this locally?

## INFORMATION IN ASHLEY GREEN

Here in the village we have several channels for information.

**Our Newsletter - "Community Call"** - normally issued twice a year to every house - Free of charge. This has been in operation for sixteen years in its current format.

**Our News Bulletins.** Issued by Email as and when there is an item of direct interest or impact to villagers such as Road closed, Upcoming event. Lost and found, Volunteers wanted etc. This goes out to a large circulation list **BUT** not every villager has yet applied to be included. There is no charge for this service/ If you do NOT receive the bulletins simply mail to [davedharmer@aol.com](mailto:davedharmer@aol.com) to be included on the list.

**Ashley Green FREEBAY.** This service allows people who have something to give away, Free of Charge, to advertise it to the same email list as the Bulletins. It is a "first come, first served" service and all transactions are between the donor and "taker". Ashley Green Community Association accepts no responsibility for anything advertised or offered.

**The Village Website.** Found at [www.ashleygreen.org.uk](http://www.ashleygreen.org.uk). This site carries all the newsletters, films, photos of many of the events we stage, details of our halls and what activities use them and so much more.

*Note that during the Pandemic some information on the website has been put on hold until things ease, but will be reinstated as soon as we are able to.*

## CATS IN THE VILLAGE

*A villager writes:-* "During lockdown we have turned our annex, where we were doing AIR BNB, into a cat fostering centre for a local cat rescue centre -The Marjorie Nash Cat Rescue, based in High Wycombe. In the 6 months since we started we have rehomed 24 cats, including 5 who have gone to Ashley Green homes.

It's given meaning to this difficult year, and been rewarding and uplifting. [Ashleygreen.foster\\_cats](https://www.instagram.com/ashleygreen.foster_cats) is where the kids talk about it in Instagram.

The mother and daughter pair we advertised in a Bulletin recently were housed quickly and another has been found for another villager, so we are doing well".

Here are a selection of the cats already in new homes



## EGGS AND CHICKENS IN LOCKDOWN

A young man in the village, while doing home schooling during LockDown, bought some chickens to keep him occupied.



Their eggs are much appreciated by his neighbours up at the far end of Two Dells Lane and some have even taken a chicken too!

He now has 26 birds and sells these as well as the eggs.

When Lockdown ends and his schooling finishes it is likely that he will sell the flock as he goes out to work.

Eggs are £1.50 for half a dozen.

If interested in same - or even a chicken - call Zach on 07385 362 628

## MORE FROM THE GOLDEN EAGLE

As Lockdown eases, the Golden Eagle will be re-opening on the 12th April at 12pm. Customers will need to book an outside tables to avoid disappointment and only outside seating will be available.

During Lockdown the outdoor refurbishment of outdoor gazebos with lighting and heating, has been completed.



These will be for hire at £30 per group of six people up to 6 hours - from 12 - 6pm and then 6pm - Midnight.

We will be serving takeaway meals only during this period until 17th May, with a full range of lagers and real ales to choose from.

*All customers are required to adhere to the Covid-19 guidelines, to wear a mask on the premises except whilst seated.*

## TRACK CITY HALLOWEEN FUNDRAISER for the NEW PLAYGROUND FACILITY



During the breaks between lockdowns over the last year one of few indoor activities that have been able to run were Children's activities.

Track City adapted to adhere to all the new Covid restrictions and were thrilled to be able to run four session for a Halloween Fundraising day on the 31st October and all sold out.



Children were able to play with the trains and toys while also tracking down the spooky letters hidden around the hall to work out the fun phrase, earning them a Halloween treat.

This day brought in £350 of which 100% went towards the first donation on the Playground project's Go Fund Me page and it is hoped to run another fundraising day when the restrictions allow.

Would you like to bring your children along to Track City when they get back to normal?

Contact Nicky - Email:- [nickybuckle@gmail.com](mailto:nickybuckle@gmail.com)

## NEW FAMILY AT FLAMSTEDS

When you are out walking, come and see the new family up at Flamsted Yard - The Equestrian Centre.

We have "Meze", "Feta" and "Haloumi".



## MEMBERSHIP

In April renewal of the annual membership of AGCA is due. Most members now pay by standing order which is a great help to me as renewal happens automatically.

For those people who do this, many thanks, as it makes my workload much easier. For those who choose not to have a standing order I have to deliver letters which is quite time consuming. I will send out an email letter to everyone nearer the time.

The current membership of the Association stands at 124. The number of households in this village is about 350. It therefore does not take a maths degree to work out there are a relatively large number of households who do not belong to the Association. This is of course not mandatory.

However, I think everyone should be aware that the Community Association is providing a considerable number of benefits to ALL residents in Ashley Green.

The News Bulletin is sent out free to 300 people and our newsletter "Community Call" is delivered free to EVERY house twice a year but the actual cost of this is just over £1 per copy per household.

Most people are now aware that the Association is embarking on a large and expensive project, the new Children's Playground and Adult exercise facility and the provision of a Coffee Shop, which will benefit the whole village.

We have had no fund raising events, such as the Summer Fair, Bonfire Night, Dances, Quizzes etc. so our income has dropped considerably.

We all therefore need to pull together to ensure this village becomes a dynamic and friendly place to live.

So please support the Community Association and become a member. It only costs £5 per adult or £15 per family. That's not much to ask!

To join the Association please contact the Membership Secretary: Mary Axon at:-

[mary.axon1@gmail.com](mailto:mary.axon1@gmail.com). Phone : 01442 866549

## CREATIVE IN LOCKDOWN

With a bit of time on your hands in Lockdown, you can turn your hand to many things. One villager has turned to crochet!



Two Ponchos, Two scarves, a blanket and Two baby blankets and Two blankets for a new puppy.

*"The devil makes work for idle hands"* she said..

## FIELDS OF BIRDLIFE

Over the last year the village has been full of walkers enjoying the beautiful countryside that we are privileged to have on our doorstep. Many people have remarked on some very unusual crops growing in several fields round here. No longer just grain crops, but some other species that are hard to identify. You may also have seen figures peering through long range camera lenses and binoculars. That would be Chris and John Wyatt who have been monitoring the birds. So what's been going on?

These fields have been planted with winter food for the birds to help them get through the cold season, a time when their food supplies often run short. Richard Birch from Brickies Farm has planted up 135 acres of crops including fodder radish, lucerne, plantains, chicory, kale and millet.

By early December mixed flocks of around 40 Redwings and Fieldfares, rising to about 100 by Christmas, were regularly feeding on ivy berries in the hedge while the field itself had attracted a mixed flock of at least 400 Linnets, 50 Goldfinches and smaller number of Chaffinches, Bramblings, Greenfinches and Yellowhammers.

But this was only the beginning as numbers continued to grow, with the highest count of linnets chorusing in the trees in Hog Lane reaching 1000 in early March.

The seeds also brought in a variety of small mammals which, with the birds, has attracted birds of prey in the highest quantity for years. We have seen Red Kites, Buzzards, a male Kestrel, a Sparrowhawk, a Peregrine and a probable Merlin.

So we now have the joy of seeing flocks of birds feeding that would often have had to migrate to warmer parts and bird watchers have arrived in numbers.

*Contributed by Mary Axon and Chris and John Wyatt*

## YOUTH THEATRE

For the past year Di Burnett's Youth Theatre, which meets in Ashley Green, has been operating on Zoom. Here they are!



Di spent a great deal of time re thinking and rewriting her unique drama formula and is often asked to advise other groups on good drama practice on Zoom. She admits that the past few months have been the most challenging and can't wait for the Youth Theatre to meet up again in The Old School, in person, after Easter, strictly adhering to new safety guidelines! Classes run for 5 to 7 yrs : 7 to 12 yrs : 12 to 18 yrs and Adults 18 to 180 yrs! For information on the Youth Theatre please call Di on:- 07977 147273 or email [teenactors@msn.com](mailto:teenactors@msn.com)

## WE HAD SNOW

It is Spring now, but in late January things were a bit different with a heavy snowfall. The Green was a picture in the when the sun came out later, with Snowmen - one masked up - and children having a good time in the snow.



Roll  
on Summer!!



## ADVERTS

Why not advertise your enterprise/activity here? Contact us with details. Email:- [davedharmer@aol.com](mailto:davedharmer@aol.com). Tel 01442 874931

### REFLEXOLOGY Wendy Waterman



Wendy is a member of the AOR (Association of Reflexologists) She is fully insured and offers both mobile and treatment room service in the daytime or evenings Please call to arrange a convenient time for an appointment

**Make time for yourself, invest in your health**  
For appointments please call Wendy Waterman on **07786 411418** or email: [wend.w@sky.com](mailto:wend.w@sky.com)



SPOT ON" is now back to supplying its regular catering customers but can still supply orders to villagers in Ashley Green. There are over 1000 products available on the website now with a high proportion retail friendly as opposed to catering size packs.

See us at:- [www.spotonwholesalefoods.co.uk](http://www.spotonwholesalefoods.co.uk)



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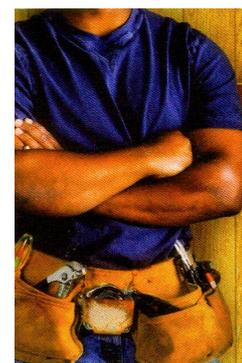
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