

COMMUNITY CALL

Edition No. 36

www.ashleygreen.org.uk

January 2023

FROM THE CHAIR

May I start by wishing you all a very happy New Year and express my sincere thanks to all the Committee members who have given me such great support during my first year in office. Although vaccinations have allowed us to move on from Covid, perhaps 2022 will be remembered most as the year that saw the death of our beloved Queen Elizabeth, an event almost unthinkable to most of us. Unfortunately, it was also the year that saw the commencement of war between Russia and Ukraine resulting in higher energy prices for us all and cost of living increases. Let us hope that 2023 will see the end of the war and we begin to see the cost of living and energy prices returning to their normal levels.

1 THE NEW PLAY AREA AND CAFÉ

The Children's Adventure Playground, Wellbeing Facility, Glebe Café and Terrace have now been open over a year and what a transformation it has made to the village.

The playground seems to be spoken about wherever you seem to go, and the café has seen a large increase in visitors to the village.

You will read more about the café later inside this issue.

2 THE GOLDEN EAGLE

At last our pub "The Golden Eagle" has had a year of stability with the new landlords, Gary and Karen, still with us. Gary has worked tirelessly to ensure that a good range of beers are available, and we no longer have the situation of the pub running out of supplies.

He has also introduced food at lunchtimes throughout the week and dependent on this being well supported he hopes to try and introduce food evenings in 2023. He has also opened his public house up on the first Thursday of each month for the village Lunch Club and every Wednesday morning the Pub is part of Chesham's Living Room scheme which allows villagers to go along to the pub and have Complimentary Tea, Coffee and biscuits, a warm space, newspapers to read and the opportunity to meet and converse with other villagers. I seriously recommend this to you especially those who live alone or who will welcome a warm space during the energy crisis.

There has been no further news from (Punch Taverns) regarding plans to build a house in the car park and hopefully we will not hear about it anymore, but this again requires the pub being supported by the village.

It is also good news to hear that the appeal to build 33 houses in the field behind the Eagle was rejected.

We do need you ALL to support the Golden Eagle. There is a comprehensive status report in later pages.

3 THE OLD SCHOOL OWNERSHIP STATUS.

Bucks Council had been attempting to assert ownership over the Old School for some time with the intent to impose a commercial rent on the Community Association as well as to pass responsibility for the total maintenance of the building over to us.

The Community Association has looked after and maintained the building for nearly 40 years, and were keen to negotiate with the Council had they obtained ownership, for us to continue to do so and pay a peppercorn rent.

However we managed to get this issue referred to a Tribunal hearing

December saw the end of the that hearing into the dispute with Bucks Council about the ownership issue, and the Council have issued the following note.

The referred application has now been cancelled and the file opened by this office in respect of this matter will now be closed.

Buckinghamshire Council having failed to obtain ownership it means that we are back to the status quo and will continue to maintain it, as has been the case since the school closed.

4 WORKS

We now have Wi-Fi in the Old School and the Memorial Hall, and a CCTV system has been installed for the protection of all users.

The National Lottery Community Fund award has seen us refurbish the outside of the Hall with new cladding and windows and I am sure you will agree that the Memorial Hall looks so much better. The funding also allowed us to commence work on The Green Room and additional funding from AGDCA has seen it restored to its original glory.

(You can see a full report on these works later in this issue)

Since the completion of the work the bookings have risen and I am sure will continue to do so as more and more of the visitors to the Café and Terrace see how lovely it looks and spread the word.

May I pass on my heartfelt thanks to my predecessor for all the hard work he undertook in obtaining the funding from the lottery.

The Community Association intends to continue improving facilities for the local community and to address issue with The Wykes Room and The Old School in 2023, details of which will follow in later editions.

Geoff Cullingham - Chair AGDCA
(Ashley Green and District Community Association)

REFURBISHING THE MEMORIAL HALL



The work on refurbishing the Memorial Hall, courtesy of a £30,354 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund, has been completed. This was a complete renovation.

The first phase was to replace the windows with new energy efficient PVC windows, installed by Market Square Glazing in Chesham. Once these were installed it was clear the existing cladding was in a poor state, so with the National Lottery Community Fund's approval we agreed to replace the existing cladding on 3 sides of the Hall with Cedral Lap (a type of composite looking very much like the wood) rather than repaint it, and this will provide a sustainable solution with negligible maintenance costs moving forward. There were 2 layers of existing cladding that had to be removed and a number of repairs required to the struts. The old cladding was used on the bonfire on 5th November. The Cedral laps were then installed. The Playground side was repainted along with the soffits, fascia boards, overhangs, doors etc.

The result is impressive and will future proof the building for many years. Our thanks go to the many helpers, but especially Mark Broschomb, Andrew Williams, Gary and Laura Trill for all their hard work.

Our thanks go to Craig Corbett from the National Lottery Community Fund who believed in our Playground, Terrace and Café Project and supported our grant application to ensure the Hall was upgraded to complement the Café. Craig's words are below. **Rob Youngs:**

"I wish you and all of the community in Ashley Green the best and may you all have many years of enjoyment from the whole development. All the best" Craig Corbett

WORKING ON THE GREEN ROOM

As you may have noticed, the Green Room, one of the buildings in the grounds of the Old School, was renovated in the autumn. It was erected after the World War I as a reading room for returning troops and since then has seen continual use - most recently dedicated to daily Pilates classes.

However, it had got in to a very poor state of repair. The two window sills facing the car park were rotten, as were most of the wooden fascias and gables. Here you can see some of the damage.



The exterior paintwork needed a lot of work too, so it was decided to renovate it - with the renovations being funded by the Community Association.

The extent of work was more than initially envisaged and it took a lot of work but we were able to save the windows and John Power, Mark Broschomb and Andrew Williams undertook all the wood and other repairs needed.

The paintwork was done by Gary and Laura Trill who had to remove all the paint from the galvanised metal and repaint the entire outside.

Here you can see the results of the work. A Definite improvement to the windows and the external paintwork looks great



I am sure you will agree, it looks stunning, well worth the investment.

The plan now is to work on the Wykes Room - also in the grounds - and Old School itself later in 2023.

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

This year there was quite a bit of activity in the village over the Christmas period starting with :-

FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year the annual family Christmas party went ahead as normal on December 11th with lots of food and drink supplied by the committee members.



While people socialised with their refreshments, Santa came in to say “Ho Ho Ho” and handed out presents to all the children there. Then it was time for carols!!



John Poston led the singing with Paul Bullen (*Leader - Choir on the green*) on keyboard..



All in all a good community start to the Christmas season.

CAROLS AT THE GOLDEN EAGLE



On December 15th 2022 the “Consort” returned to the Golden Eagle to lead the “Carols in our pub event” that they started in 2012.

Many of you will have come to some of these events before and know that you will hear some great Christmas pieces from the group and then get to have a jolly good sing of some traditional favourites yourselves - including “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks” to the tune of “Ilkely Moor bah tat”.

Yes - very rousing and that raised a few smiles!!

An enjoyable evening and good to see more folk in our pub!!

Do continue your support for the pub!!

NEWS FROM THE GLEBE CAFE

The Glebe Café had a great year and surpassed all expectations of providing a hub for the wider community. We have established a very loyal customer base and love to see our regulars coming in for 'the usual' coffee or sandwich.

We found it very interesting tracking the business throughout the year and it is clear that extremes of weather are not our friend and we have had some very quiet times in the summer with the excessive heat and then the rain and very cold weather through the back end of the year keeps things rather quiet too.

However, our partnerships with the regular users of the Memorial Hall - Heartbeeps, Yoga and Track City - not to mention the huge uptake in bookings for the Memorial hall really creates a busy hub and we love to see many friendly faces return so often.

We must not, of course, forget that the new play area is now very busy - especially when the weather is fine, and we get a lot of trade from the parents and guardians who come along

We had some lovely Christmas celebrations at the Café. We had the “Naughty Elves” come to visit and then on Christmas Eve we organised a dog walk followed by carols on the Terrace. A big thanks to John Poston for his conducting.



One villager had a birthday on Christmas Eve and everyone sang ← “Happy Birthday” much to his embarrassment What a jolly day!!

We're excited to see what 2023 has in store and would love for this rain to go away! Looking forward to seeing you all soon!

GOOD NEIGHBOURS “LUNCH AND CHAT”

The village Lunch Club, (Lunch and Chat), has been running for a good few years now offering a weekly opportunity for people to get out and come to a social gathering at the Old School where they can meeting others, have a good chat and enjoy a great lunch. In 2022 things went back to normal after the “Lock Down” and all was looking well.

The hot summer was a bit too hot to meet inside, so the “lunchers” met up in Jacqui Rose’s garden, bring their own choice of food and drink!



At Christmas, the Good Neighbours “Lunch and Chat” group always have a festive lunch and this time there 24 people and it was fully funded by the Community Association.

There was a full menu with a soup starter then turkey and ham as the main course all followed by a choice of puddings. Glasses of soft drinks too (*psst!! and Wine*)



Santa came as well and with a hearty “Ho Ho Ho” proceeded to hand out the present of a bottle to everyone at the lunch. Hic!

The meals through the year are provided by volunteers but sadly we have lost a few who have been with us from the beginning so we are looking for more people to help. The work simply involves cooking and serving a meal to a rota. Is this something you could do? We would love to hear from you!!+



BONFIRE NIGHT - 2022

The village laid on the Annual Bonfire Night event and - as usual - it was a great success.

The bonfire was set alight well before the gates opened at 6.00pm to ensure that it was well under control before people turned up, and marshals were in place when they came.



Quite a sight, and we used the old cladding from the Memorial Hall - no waste there!!

Only a trickle of people in the queue to start with, but things looked up and the queue quickly stretched right back into the car park. Our stalls were set up on the new terrace and sold Sausages in Rolls, and Baked Potatoes, Soft drinks and Sparklers and - of course - the wonderful Mulled Wine which is always so good and so popular. Glebe Café was also serving drinks, cakes and snacks and was well patronised by the visitors.

Food and drink was the main attraction before the fireworks. So much so that all the Sausages in Rolls, and all the Mulled Wine - around 350 drinks - had sold out before the display began, just like last year.



Then came the Fireworks at 7.00pm. What a display!!



Maybe marginally less numbers than last year - perhaps because November 5th was a Saturday and there were other events in the area. Nevertheless it was another really special evening - as always - and popular with folk from miles around.

Thanks must be given to all villagers who helped set up, man the stalls, act as marshals and welcome the capacity crowds that came to our wonderful -

Bonfire Night!

THE GOLDEN EAGLE A YEAR ON AND THE FUTURE



Gary has been at the Golden Eagle for just over a year now. He is an experienced publican who has run a number of pubs in the local area over for a number of years.

It has always been his ambition to run a true country pub serving a local village community and his hope has been to put down roots here and do what it takes in the long term to make the Golden Eagle the beating heart of our community and of course to be a viable business

2022 was a really difficult start, there were some basic things Gary needed to put right early on, for one thing removing the camera system from the car park that was fining villagers for parking their cars there!

He thought it very strange to discourage villagers from using the pub and is clear that people are always welcome to park at the golden eagle. It's an ideal place to start a walk and to fine people for using a village facility made no sense to him.

He also had to build a sensible business relationship with Punch and get away from a model where stock was being paid for hand to mouth and the pub was often in the position of having no beer in stock!

His priority has been to build a proper business working relationship with Punch and he is really pleased to say he is getting there. All the stock and choice problems are in the past and there is a shared vision that Punch will make some investment in the exterior of the building in 2023.

To make this work, of course, Gary has to show them that this is a viable and growing business and to do this he needs support from the community.

Things are moving slowly but food is now available at lunch times through to late afternoon 6 days a week (kitchen closed on Tuesdays). There is a good selection of beers, wines and spirits including a choice of real ales, free wifi and a warm welcome with a roaring fire.

In Gary's own words "We are very open to running private events as well - lunches, parties, teas, whatever it might be. Do come in and chat to me and we will do our very best to meet your requirements. I really want this to be a community pub so I am always happy to listen and be as flexible as I can .

I like to think some great progress has been made, but there is more to be done and I really do need more footfall in the pub

I wanted to get food up and running sooner and when we did launch the kitchen we needed to publicise it more. We also had some hiccups with our booking system and have had a couple of unfortunate problems with bookings being taken in error on a day the kitchen was closed which left people disappointed.

I fully apologise for these isolated situations but we now have a much more robust process in place so that won't happen again.

So my message is - **Please do come and eat here.**

Call us on 01442 874001 or email gary.hanley@live.co.uk, or simply drop in and we will gladly reserve a table for you.

Our menu now is what I would describe as honest country pub food. We are not a gastro pub, but our food is great value and we are introducing more and more home cooked items - look out for my daughter Misty's sausage rolls, which we served recently during the world cup and they went down a treat.

Don't forget our Sunday lunches too. These are great value at £12.95 and beginning to become popular.

Finally - the outside areas definitely need some TLC, and Punch have already funded the new fencing at the front. That is where the partnership with Punch is hopefully going to pay off this year. They will help as long as I can get enough trade through the door and demonstrate that we have a viable and profitable business.

You have probably already seen that the Black Horse in Chesham Vale and the Lamb in Berko have had to close their doors. The Eagle doesn't need to go the same way and it won't if the community can all just use the pub "a little and often."

Please regard the pub as "your" facility. My family and I run the business and need to make it work, but the pub is here for all of the community so do come and make use of it and if we aren't meeting your needs, talk to me about it and we will do what we can to adapt."

2023 is clearly going to be a tough year for everyone with recession, energy crisis and the war in Ukraine creating pressures but the message is clear:-

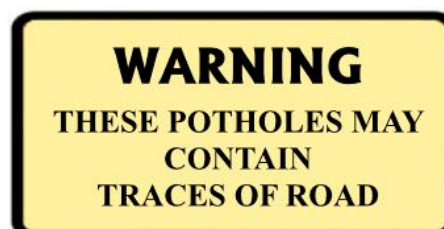
If everyone who reads this article dropped in once a week for a sandwich and a drink, that would make a huge difference.

ONLY TOO FAMILIAR?

2022 has seen our local roads suffering continual road works which do not seem to cure whatever problem has been identified. Two Dells Lane has been closed several times and Hog Lane the Chesham Road have seen closures too.



Quite often the diversion signs are designed to confuse and point in different directions. Who knows when we will see the potholes repaired and the roads back to normal?



ROYSTON (ROY) SIMMONS

25th March 1931 - 20th October 2022



After 20 years in the regular army, where he served in Germany, Egypt, Libya, Finland and Canada, Roy, with wife Jill, moved to Ashley Green in 1969. He then worked in London (for IBM) for the next 21 years.

On retirement he took up many voluntary posts here - including Neighbourhood Watch - and was part of the team to maintain the footpaths, stiles and way-marks around Ashley Green.

In his latter years, he and Jill kept Hog Lane clear of litter - right up to a couple of weeks before his death in October at the age of 91.

DEREK AND JANET BOSTON

Derek – 31 March 1933 – 7 November 2022

Janet - 29 March 1932 – 1 December 2022



Derek (Del) and Janet (Jan) lived in Hog Lane for about 50 years. They met in Aylesbury where Del worked for Bucks County Council and Jan worked for Barclays Bank.

They were a warm, friendly, generous couple who contributed to the founding of Ashley Green Community Association and they took an interest in all that was going on here.

Unfortunately they could not be together when they died within 3 weeks of each other, having collapsed at home, a sad ending to 77 years of a very happy marriage.

BILL PERIAM

10th January 1930 – 31st December 2022



Bill Periam was born and brought up in Hemel Hempstead and lived and went to school there. In 1946 he started work as an analytical chemist with Coopers in Berkhamsted and, apart from two years National Service in the Royal Army Medical Corps, stayed with them until 1984.

Bill married his wife, Doris, in September 1958 and they made their home for the rest of both their lives in Ashley Green. Their daughter Kaye was born in 1959 and their son David in 1963.

Bill became involved in village life when he started to attend church in the mid 1960s and became churchwarden in the late 1960s holding this position for most of the next 30 years

He had a very active retirement, playing lawn bowls but also organising indoor bowls in the Memorial Hall. He was a keen gardener a very good artist and enjoyed watching football, supporting Arsenal where he attended matches with David. He and Doris enjoyed many holidays and travelled much of the world including trips to Australia where Doris had relatives.

Doris passed away in 2012 and Bill continued to live an active life until late 2020 when he had a bad fall and ended up in hospital where he then acquired Covid and various other infections, all of which he managed to shake off.

Whilst he was not very mobile and became increasingly frail, he continued to live at home until he acquired a persistent chest infection, passing peacefully away in Stoke Mandeville hospital.

IN MEMORY OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II



NOTES FROM ST JOHN'S

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength... 'Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these. Mark 12.30-31

This Advent we were very happy to welcome so many of our communities, neighbours and friends into St John's for our Christmas services to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to renew relationships with God.

In the absence of our own minister, we also welcomed a variety of ministers from the parish who came to lead our services during December we hope that you were able to experience a spiritual connection through our worship, prayers and singing.

This year St John's will be commemorating the laying of our foundation stone in June, and we hope that you will join us as we celebrate at the end of the year, and into 2024, 150 years of worship in our beautiful building.



In September there was a service of thanksgiving to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain with wreath laying by the memorial afterwards. The 2204 (Chesham and Amersham) Squadron ATC were on parade.

We plan to have a sermon by the Bishop of Buckinghamshire, Bishop Alan, with Open Air Cream Teas and Hymns and Pimms one evening in Church, probably July.



At Christmas we held our annual service of Nine Lessons and Carols - cancelled during Lock Down - where a good sized congregation attended. There was a choir of villagers and other singers, led by David Harmer leading the singing and it ended with mulled wine mince pies.

We also plan a history book of St John's, the latter made possible from a legacy left to the church by Joan Newth - (if you have any stories to share with us we would love to hear them at wardens.stjohnsag@gmail.com) and we look forward to seeing you at our events throughout the next 18 months.

We are always on the search for people who may be willing to play the piano at a service in the event that one of our organists are unavailable and for people who can help out in other ways such as repairing our alter fronts, reading a lesson or helping maintain our churchyards. You will be made most welcome.

Our services are every Sunday at 11:15am. We look forward to seeing you there.

ASHLEY GREEN WI

The end of the year is always a busy time for Ashley Green WI. We hold our AGM in November where we elect our committee and President for the coming year (*I'm still in post for now*) and in December we hold our annual Christmas lunch.

This was a lovely event, attended by ex-members who have moved away, held at Chartridge Golf Club for the first time (and we will certainly be going again, in fact we're already booked for Christmas 2023). We also held our annual Christmas Party - because one Christmas bash is never enough!

Our first monthly meet of 2023 was an informal affair but for the next few months we have a real variety of speakers lined up including Two Spoons - Chesham's own tea company - a magician who I'm assured is really good, a potter we will get hands on for this evening, The Flying Doctors - Australia's Paramedics and many others, so ladies if these sound of interest, please come and join us.

We're also planning on some day trips including the lavender farm, the hearing dogs charity and the Horses Trust, plus our usual twice monthly pub lunches to a variety of local hostellers. We meet once a month in the Memorial Hall at 7:15 pm (start at 7:30 pm), first Wednesday of every month. Just rock up! You'll be most welcome.

Debbie Nixon (Chair)

REPORT FROM MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

We have had several new members join the Community Association over the last few months. I endeavour to deliver a Welcome Pack for anyone who moves into the village, so I'm usually reliant on the village network to let me know of new residents.

If you have recently moved here in the last six months and have not received a welcome pack, apologies. Let me know and I will deliver one so that you can see what goes on here and the things you can enjoy.

For existing members, your annual renewal will be in April. As most members pay by standing order this will be done automatically which saves me a lot of admin. Otherwise the bank details will be on the annual letter which you should receive by email.

Mary Axon mary.axon1@gmail.com Tel 01442 866549

THE PLAY AREA IN THE SNOW



Courtesy Adam Painter

Brrrrr!

BURNS NIGHT. JANUARY 21st 2023

Welcome to the return of the ever popular Burns Night here in Ashley Green.



The formal part of the night commenced with the Haggis being piped into a beautifully decorated Village Hall by Jim Mackay and carried around to rest on a table in the middle.

The guests then gathered round as Thomas Lloyd-Evans raged with the "Ode to the Haggis" before it was carved.

After the Haggis had been well and truly eviscerated the guests returned to their seats to receive the Selkirk Grace by Peter Barbour.

Then it was time for the meal. A superb Root Vegetable & Lentil Soup, Venison Stew wi Haggis, warm reeking, Bashed Neeps & Champit Tatties Cranachan and A Tassie o' Coffee, Tea Chocolates and of - course the - inevitable whisky.



After the revellers had had their fill of food and wine the business of the Toasts, was embarked upon. First the Loyal Toast by Roger Watts, the Immortal Memory by Gavin Rennie and a toast to the Lassies by Lewis McDonald then the Reply.



Then it was time to push back the tables and let the festivities begin to the robust tunes of the caller and the "Chameleons".

Folk danced late into the night ably abetted by a fine selection of beers and wines and of course the ever-excellent cache of rare and excellent whiskies.

Nights like this don't happen often but when they do, they must not be missed. Their memories will last for many a year.

Of course they do not happen of their own accord and our thanks must go to all of our entertainers for the evening, and to everyone who helped to make the evening so good. Especially Jan Barbour, Sheilagh Watts and Catherine Fleet who masterminded the event.

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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

PARISH LITTER PICKS 2023

Thank you to every one of our Parish #LitterHeroes for taking part in last Spring's litter picks. As we did last year, we will be participating in the Great British Spring Clean, Keep Britain Tidy's annual national clean-up campaign, which takes place between 17th March – 2nd April 2023. Do come and join us!

Ashley Green: *Saturday 18th March from 10am-12 midday*
Whelpley Hill: *Saturday 25th March from 10am-12 midday*

We don't expect you to come for the full two hours, unless you want to, but if you can spare half an hour of your time to collect just one bag of litter, that will make all the difference.

FOOT PATHS

We have some wonderful footpaths and amazing views of the Chilterns to enjoy as we walk our Parish pathways and we appreciate feedback from you, our Parishioners, when issues arise. We walk the footpaths to monitor this regularly ourselves, however, often you are the ones that spot these issues first, small or large (ie, damaged gates, blockages etc). If this is ever the case, please contact the Clerk, on ashleygreen.clerk@gmail.com so that we can report this to Buckinghamshire County Council or the relevant Landowners to resolve these problems.

The Parish Council also have recently invested in a number of tools to help us stay on top of the smaller issues, on footpaths and around the parish in general, so please get in touch. Thank you, your help will be greatly appreciated.

BROADBAND

We are still on the case for those residents in the parish who have not got Full Fibre Broadband. Whilst we persist, there is something you can do to help. You can follow this link - www.openreach.com/ to reach the Open Reach site, check what the current situation is for your postcode and register your interest..

MEETINGS

Please keep a look out for the Minutes of our meetings on the Parish Notice Boards and on our website and on social media. Our meetings are held every two months at 7.30pm in either the Old School in Ashley Green or The Coronation Hall in Whelpley Hill

- March 8th - Ashley Green
- May 10th - Whelpley Hill
- July 12th - Ashley Green
- September 13th - Whelpley Hill
- November 8th - Ashley Green

You are all welcome to attend.

All members of the Parish Council continue to work closely with the Ashley Green and District Community Association and our Bucks County Councillor, Nick Southworth. Please get touch if you want to share any concerns or problems you would like us to investigate. We will do what we can to help.

If you have any queries, do contact us via the Parish Clerk,