

COMMUNITY CALL

Edition No. 37

www.ashleygreen.org.uk

Summer 2023

FROM THE CHAIR

Goodness me has it really been a year since I first took over the role of Chairman. I knew it would be a real challenge and express my sincere thanks to all the Committee members who have given me such great support throughout the year.

Unfortunately, the war in Ukraine rumbles on and Inflation is still at too high a level.

THE NEW PLAY AREA AND CAFÉ

The Children's Adventure Playground, Wellbeing Facility, Glebe Café and Terrace continues to be the centre of attraction in the village with parents bringing their children to it from far and wide. As a consequence, the café is trading very well which of course has its benefits for the community. A big thank you to Terriellen for all the hard work she has put in. Terri is going to be going to Miami in August but will be continuing to run the business from there with a manager in place here.

THE GOLDEN EAGLE

In my last report I probably spoke too soon as we have been informed that Gary and Karen have been given notice to leave the public house as Punch Brewery intend to bring in a new licensee who intends to turn the Golden Eagle into a "Gastro" Public House.

I wish him well but have serious doubts about the chosen persons ability to do so. He runs a business from Chesham called "The Unorthodox Kitchen" which apparently does dinner parties at persons homes. We can all put pretty pictures of food dishes on a website but the startling thing is that the company has only had one review 4 years ago and it says very little.

I wonder if this is Punch once again trying to run the place down with a view to getting their hands on it for another use. At this stage we have no information as to what the new landlords view will be about the Wednesday morning Living Room scheme or the 1st Thursday in the month Luncheon Club.

As soon as we have any information about what is happening we will publicise this via our Bulletin service.

(If you do not received the Bulletins contact us via our website).

THE VILLAGE FAIR

As most of you are aware the Fair was originally cancelled due to those who year upon year have given their time and energy to run it being unavailable either through business commitments or holidays. When I discovered that a large amount of the villagers were unhappy about there being no Fair I took the unusual step of sending out a pertinent Bulletin which had an amazing effect. Paula Harris offered to tun the Fair and a vast number of ladies from the village came forward to assist.

Consequently, we had a fantastic fair and may I express my sincere thanks to Paula for all the hard work in arranging it and likewise to all those who gave her their assistance. A great job by one and all.

WORKS

The Old School will be closed for hiring in August as it the committees intention to have the flooring in the hall repaired and the building repainted.

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH



This is now up and running. You will have seen the signs at the village boundaries I am sure.

We have had about 5 operations so far.. Our last one which was in Chesham Road for vehicles travelling towards Chesham resulted in 61 vehicles being reported to the police and a top speed of 54 miles per hour.

At present we only have a team of four, myself, Colette Hayward, Dave Cahill and Chris Woodhouse.

We only go out for an hour about once every 10 to 14 days and if we had one or two new members we could share it out even more. Could this be for you?

If you are interested please give me a call on 07768927789.

Geoff Cullingham. Community Association Chairman,



Here they are at work

NEWS FROM ST. JOHN'S

At St John's we are preparing for our 150th Anniversary celebrations. If you have any stories about the church, or photographs please could we have copy for our history book. We would love to fill it with personal memories of Ashley Green and Whelpley Hill through the decades.



We had a number of dogs, a cat and a guinea pig at our "**Pet Celebration Service**" on Father's Day this year. They were all very well behaved and Pixie, who belongs to one of our Church Wardens Lisbeth, even joined in with one of the hymns!

Terri and Will at The Glebe Café offered a free hot drink after the service to dads who attended.

This year we were very appreciative to have had the services of a Duke of Edinburgh volunteer, Herbie, who has done a great job keeping our churchyards in good order. However as tools failed and with the lovely weather the grass began to take over. We want to leave some of the grass long for wildlife but caring for God's acre was a bigger job than we could handle.

Thank you therefore to everyone who responded to our appeal sent out as one of the village Bulletins for help in cutting the grass in the churchyard and in particular to Roger Watts who had completed the job on his own going out in 30°C temperatures within 3 hrs of the bulletin. Thanks also to Rod Tucker who donated a strimmer and an electric lawn mower that he is no longer able to use but which we will put to very good use.



"GOOD NEIGHBOURS" LUNCH AND CHAT GROUP

As we head towards our summer break the Lunch Club, (known as the "Lunch and Chat Group"), which is run by the Community Association, is facing an uncertain future.

Our volunteer numbers have dwindled to just five volunteers and with the loss of Gary Hanley and Misty at **The Golden Eagle** - who provided a meal once a month to give the volunteers a break - we may not be able to continue weekly lunches.

We really do need more people who are able to make a regular commitment to cook either a main meal or a dessert, serve the food and, of course to eat and chat with the guests, then wash up and tidy up afterwards. The time commitment is the meal preparation then four hours on the day.

We have had occasional volunteers who have been willing to help out once or twice (many thanks to those) but it has proved difficult to fit them into our regular rota and often they are not able to fill in when we have gaps or if volunteers are on holiday.

If you are able to commit to volunteering with us six times a year, please get in touch with the Community Association.

This summer the group have had lunch at The Golden Eagle on the 1st Thursday of the month and a lovely alfresco lunch at The Glebe Café in June. With the change of landlords at the pub we are not sure whether we will be able to go there in the immediate future - so watch this space.

We will be planning a summer outing and over the summer months, whilst the Old School is closed for works during August. While the volunteers enjoy a summer break we hope to meet in each others gardens for a 'bring your own lunch' - something that has proved to be very successful since it was introduced.

The Lunch Club is open to all villagers of any age who might want to get out and socialise with other villagers over a nice lunch - hence "Lunch and Chat" and while are looking for new volunteers we also welcome new guests.

Do come along - every Thursday at 12.00 in the Old School.

SUMMER IS A'COMING IN

The experts tell us that June this year was the hottest on record - ever. Certainly warm and dry for sure.

The council came to the village early in the year and worked to clear the pond on the green, by the Memorial Hall, which had become weedy and overgrown and they did a good job too.



Then it got hot and dry - and what a change.



The water disappeared and the vegetation grew and grew so now our pond has become fully environmental - keeping the "bio-diversity" which is on everyone's agenda these days.

Looks very nice too!!

“REMOTE HILLTOP SETTLEMENT”

You may have seen documents supporting the “Chesham Masterplan”. In these you can read that the rejuvenation of Chesham centre will make it a vibrant, community space unlike - to quote - “**Those Remote Hilltop Settlements**” which surround it.

Those very words conjure up images of Cavemen dressed in animal skins, eating dinosaur and saying “Ug” in such “**Remote Settlements**” as Ashley Green, Cholesbury, Ley Hill, Asheridge, Hawridge, - and many more.



Nothing could be further from the truth!!

Here in Ashley Green, which is one of these “*Settlements*”, 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 throughout the year for the community.

Our annual village fair attracts crowds of people from all the surrounding areas and the Bonfire Night is certainly the best for miles around.

More recently we have managed to obtain large grants to enable us built a splendid playground, with a terrace and a café which has proved to be a tremendous success. We have also managed to obtain grants which have allowed us to refurbish the Memorial Hall and the Green Room in the grounds of the old school. (*See next article*).

Our village also attracts professional people who want to make their home in a traditional rural setting - and not in a residential town - while having full access for their business needs to the rail transport available so close, as well as quick access to the motorways and main roads. Attracting such people enriches our community as they bring the skills and experience to keep the community alive and vibrant through the community association and the projects which it initiates.

In the many other “Remote Settlements” there are similar Societies and Activities with Horticultural Societies, Bowls clubs, Bridge groups, Theatre and Music groups and teams who meet to manage the woods and commons.

These are not “Dead” areas as we know, but vibrant places where people choose to live preferentially and enjoy.

I wonder if the correspondent from the Masterplan has ever visited these “Remote Settlements” to see how much goes on and how things really are?.

NEWS BULLETINS

Do you get the Community Association Bulletins sent by Email under blind cover to all? There is no charge!

If not simply send an email to davedharmer@aol.com.

“HEART OF BUCKS” VISIT



We had the pleasure to host a delegation from Heart of Bucks at the Playground, Terrace and Café on 28th March.

The Heart of Bucks Community Foundation is a registered charity and part of a network of 47 community foundations across the UK, all committed to making a difference to the lives of local people. Working in partnership with individuals, businesses and public sector organisations, Heart of Bucks awards grant and loan funding to hundreds of not-for-profit groups that are helping to improve the lives of people in Buckinghamshire.

We were fortunate to receive a £5,000 grant for the Playground Project where they sponsored the Toddler Hill.

As part of the grant process, they organise visits to projects they have supported to show their sponsors the impact of their support.

Thanks to Terri, who opened the Café specially for their visit and she entertained them with coffee & pastries followed by lunch.



“Thank you so much for taking part in our Seeing is Believing event today. It was wonderful to see the work that has been done, benefiting not just Ashley Green but the wider Buckinghamshire community. An extra special thanks to the Café team for their hard work keeping us fed and watered.

Our guests really enjoyed hearing about the Association and were grateful for your fantastic hospitality.” Daniel Gregory
Communications Executive

Courtney James Hugh EDENBOROUGH

16th October 1930 – 26th April 2023



Courtney came to Ashley Green in the early 80s, living here until he was admitted to hospital with pneumonia a week before he died. His funeral took place at St John the Evangelist on 26th May 2023, and he is now buried (along with the ashes of his wife Margaret) in the churchyard across the road.

He was born in Wood Green, London, but was evacuated to Berkhamsted during the war, after which he went to Pangbourne Nautical College. He later became a cadet purser with the Orient Line, sailing mostly to and from Australia. In 1950 he was called up to do his National Service, joining the Buffs (Royal East Kent regiment). In 1971 he was asked to re-join the RNR, eventually leaving as a Lieutenant Commander.

He joined the business set up by his father, which consisted of The Ace Café and a service station on the North Circular Road, near Wembley which he sold after 28 years before becoming a management consultant and retiring at the end of the 1980s.

He was an active supporter of a number of charities and was instrumental in raising funds for an RNLI lifeboat named the, “Spirit of Berkhamsted” which is still in service in Norfolk.

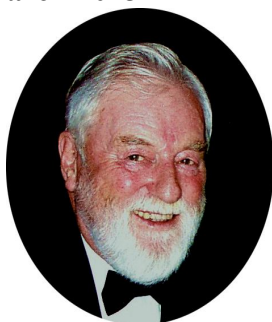
He was a regular attendee of the lunches and coffee mornings organised by the Ashley Green Community Association at The Golden Eagle and will be much missed.

JOHN HOWE

23rd March 1931 - 25th March 2023

John Howe, happily married to Sylvia for 66 years sadly passed away on 25th March at the grand age of 92.

He and Sylvia and their 3 children lived at Leylands, Two Dells Lane for 56 years from 1967. All three children went to the Village School and Sylvia and John became an integral, important part of Ashley Green life.



John was a very keen, skilful gardener and many people remember his famous Open Gardens and fundraisers where his acers, bonsai, azaleas and rhododendrons were legendary. He also had a very large Koi carp pool in the back garden which gave him a great deal of joy, these fish are now happily rehomed in a large private lake. John was also known for bringing his Indian Rock Python, Rani to village and school events.

John worked for Kodak from the age of 15 and managed to retire at 53. John's other lifelong passion was fishing and he fished all over the world. He was a member of Latimer Park Fly fishing lakes for many years and helped many people over those years, including special needs children. Sylvia and John were a much loved couple in the village and there are many happy memories of them.

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE - JULY 2023

On behalf of the Ashley Green Parish Council (incorporating Whelpley Hill, Orchard Leigh and Ashley Green) we welcome you to our Summer Parish Council update.

SUCCESSFUL PARISH LITTER PICKS

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Litter Picks at the end of March and April. This was our most successful so far and between both dates we managed to collect over 50 bags of rubbish and report other fly tip items for collection at a later date. Here is a small sample.



One of the best things that comes out of these events is getting to spend time with our Parishioners and hearing your thoughts on how we can make our villages a better place to live.

Helping our younger generations get involved in spending valuable time like this helps us all appreciate the beautiful surroundings inhabit and next year we will be aiming to run these events in the afternoons so that we can involve more children and young people so that they too can enjoy being involved in making a difference. As you may remember this was part of the Great British Spring Clean, Keep Britain Tidy's annual national clean-up campaign.

BROADBAND

There is good news on the horizon for our Ashley Green residents without FTTP (Fibre To The Premises). The arrival of the Openreach vans in Ashley Green recently caused great excitement and I'm sure many of you spoke to them while they were here, your Parish Councillors certainly did!

Rollout will happen but exact dates are not yet available but Parishioners can follow the link below to express their interest for FTTP at home. <https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/fibre-community-partnership>.

Unofficially, and following various Councillors conversations with Openreach Teams, we are looking at around 3 months for installation. A couple of road closures may slow things down a bit but we look to be making progress at last in Ashley Green. We still wait for news on Whelpley Hill.

FOOT PATHS

We need to continue to ask for your help with our footpaths. As you walk our Parish pathways, please let us know if you find any issues that need attention. If you spot any issues please contact the Clerk, on ashleygreen.clerk@gmail.com.

As we mentioned before, the PC have 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 for your help and support.

Please keep a look out for the Parish Council Minutes on the Parish Notice Boards and on the Parish Council website.

Our meetings are held every two months and here are the dates for the rest for 2023:

September 13th - Whelpley Hill
November 8th - Ashley Green

Everyone is welcome to attend. Meetings begin at 7.30pm either in the Old School House at Ashley Green or at The Coronation Hall in Whelpley Hill

Just to remind you that all members of the Parish Council continue to work closely with the AGDCA and our Bucks County Councillor, Nick Southworth. Please do get in touch if want to share any concerns or problems you would like us to investigate. We will do what we can to help.

REPORT FROM ASHLEY GREEN WI

At Ashley Green W.I. we have had a productive year replacing some of our speakers with crafts people that have taught us varied and interesting hobbies.

In April we got crafty with mosaic tiles, with everyone taking home some beautiful tiled-coasters and in May I had everyone making the red, white and blue bunting you will have seen this year inside the village hall. Any ladies that had not used a sewing machine before soon found out that you need more control than when driving a car. Primarily for the Coronation, the ladies used fabric pens to create designs associated with Ashley Green, the W.I. and The Coronation on the white flags. We have kept the bunting so it can be used again for any future events.



In June we got really hands-on (and very messy) with a local potter who gave us a wonderful demonstration of pot throwing on a wheel and instructed us all in hand building and decorating mugs which he then took away and fired for us. I'm not sure any of them would be good to drink from but we certainly have a good assortment of pen pots and vases now.

Tea and cakes at the village fair were a great success and this allowed us to give a donation to both St. John's Church and St. Francis Hospice. The remainder of the money will go into our funds to enable us to book some excellent speakers for next year.

In March we had a lovely day out starting with Brunch at The Red Lion in Bradenham, followed by a wander around West Wycombe and a tour and demonstration at the "Hearing Dogs" for the Deaf in Princes Risborough.



In May we had a trip to The Chenies Tulip Festival where we enjoyed afternoon tea in the beautiful grounds.



And then got lost in the maze (this is us at the centre of the maze before we muddled our way out again).



Aside from these fun events we have also held 2 pub lunches each month visiting as many local hostleries as possible.

(This is the WI keeping the village pubs going you know!).

Some of our members attended the Bucks W.I. Science and Discovery day where we had lectures on stop-film animation, animal robotics and marine biology.

We'd like to say a big THANK YOU to the Ashley Green Community Association for all their support, and the new shelves for our boxes are perfect.

If any of you ladies would like to come and join us, we are holding an informal meeting in August - tea, cake and chat on the green in front of the village hall (weather permitting). So drop by and say hello, there are bound to be a few faces you'll recognise.

Save the date:- Wednesday 2nd August 7:00 pm.

See you there! *Deborah Nixon - Chair WI*

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF ASHLEY GREEN

In early 1981 I returned to live in Ashley Green with three small children under 5. By then it was a very different place to that of my childhood.

I was born in Orchard Leigh at the far end of Two Dells Lane. At that time the area was quiet and rural. We were surrounded by farm land and orchards mainly owned by the Mash Family at Torrington Farm and the Harman family at Grove Farm. Most people in the area worked on the land or in agriculturally related jobs.

My older three brothers and I all worked on the farms at various times. We had our own village policeman, Constable Swallow, who lived in The Police House opposite the Golden Eagle. He knew everyone and kept us all in order. We had our own roadman, Arthur Stone, who took great pride in keeping the roads and verges in good repair and brimming with wild flowers.

There was a thriving village school, full church, Sunday School, busy pub and post office. Additionally there were many clubs within the village - a youth club, the horticultural society, allotments group, old time dancing and various regular dances and events in the hall. We cycled or walked everywhere. I could walk the length of Two Dells Lane and back and never see a car and in winter we could sledge down the hills there.

So when I came back to live here in 1981 life was different. We still had the school, playgroup, church, pub, post office and farm shop. There were various societies in the village hall - the horticultural society, flower arranging, bowls club, playgroup, Women's Institute and regular drama performances. Sadly we have now lost our post office, farm shop, our own vicar and, at times, the pub.

In 1983 the school closed down. The school buildings were consequently at risk from development into housing. A group of villagers, including my father Ernest Adlington, formed a committee and campaigned to stop this happening, with the aim of saving these buildings for use by the local community. And thus was the beginning of Ashley Green Community Association.

Within a few years the Memorial Hall came under the umbrella of the Association and gradually all the buildings were updated and rented out for various activities. The Youth Club was resurrected again successfully by a group of us here. When it started the youngsters in the village went to thirteen different schools. The Club enabled the children of the village to get to know each other and lifelong friendships were formed. Unfortunately many of the village societies did not survive as residents lives focused on activities outside of the village.

And now to the present day.

Ashley Green has changed considerably in the last few years. The huge increase in the volume of traffic has made both Two Dells Lane and Hog Lane rat runs and encouraged heavy lorries to use them and destroy the verges. Sadly it's no longer a pleasure to walk these lanes. The population of both Chesham and Berkhamsted has grown and the building of the A41 bypass in the early 90s has resulted in a large amount of through traffic on the main road.

Despite this, the village has continued to thrive. The Community Association has now developed into a small enterprise, mainly due to hard work by the committee. Thanks to various fund raising events such as the Fair, Bonfire Night, grants and a large number of lettings, we now have excellent facilities here, a revamped village hall, playground, and a new coffee shop and terrace.

In a perverse turn of events maybe it took the occurrence of lockdown to experience the benefits of local community and the beauty of our surrounding countryside. So let's not forget the original premise of setting up the Association which is "To benefit the inhabitants of Ashley Green and the neighbourhood by bringing together the people of the village in a common effort to improve life here". We still need the commitment of local villagers to keep the Association running and to encourage friendship and support to all our inhabitants. *Mary Adlington Axon*

THE GOLDEN EAGLE - GOODBYE GARY



As you will have seen in the Chairman's report, our landlord at the Golden Eagle left the pub on July 15th after being with us for 18 months. In his last week, the Wednesday Coffee Group met to say goodbye and presented him with a card from all the members with the picture of the pub (above) - *painted by local artist and resident - Elizabeth Foster* - printed on it.



We also said goodbye to Gary's daughter, Misty, who came regularly to serve the coffee and biscuits.

On his final day Gary arranged a Barbecue in the early evening followed by a disco later on.

There was a very good turn out of villagers who came to say "Goodbye" and "Good Luck". Gary was presented with a card signed by everyone and gifts too. You can see he was pleased with the T-shirt.



We are not sure where Gary is going next, but we will try to let you know when we have news.

THE VILLAGE FAIR

After a “Rocky” start, as detailed in the Chairman’s report, where the fair was initially cancelled due to key organisers were not able to be present. However, due to the enthusiasm and commitment of a group of villagers it then sprang back to life and we had our fair on Saturday June 3rd.



This year there were more stalls than in previous years.

There were large inflatables on the Glebe for the children.

Here is the slide.

We also had Candy Floss and a coconut shy - very popular with the younger children



The Tug of War was on the agenda too. As usual the girls beat the boys despite some bigger “Boys” (see below) joining the team to redress the balance - and the ladies beat the men!



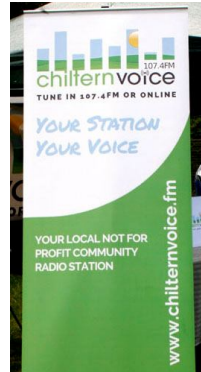
As far as refreshments were concerned the Glebe Café was open serving their usual fare, the ladies from the WI served tea and cakes in the Memorial hall and Gary from the Golden Eagle, did a roaring trade in Burgers and chips out on the green.

The Classic Car show was again a great hit. Cars of all types were there on display with some really classy ones. It was so popular that the green filled up very quickly and some later arrivals were turned away!



The “Cup and Saucer” roundabout was here again too and we also had a visit from the local radio station - “Chiltern Voice”.

The Dog show was a great hit - as ever and the performance dogs really showing their skills - like this!



The bottle tombola did a roaring trade and the raffle stall followed suit. People had been very generous with donations and the table seemed to creak under the weight. There were so many prizes that it took nearly 15 minutes to get the prizes distributed.

Finally, we were entertained by the “Choir On The Green” led by Paul Bullen. This is the community choir which meets here in the memorial hall in Ashley Green.

They gave us some great music and everyone enjoyed their performance.



The weather was sunny and bright and our fair was - as ever - a really great success enjoyed by all who came.

We certainly have to echo the chairman’s words by offering our sincere thanks to Paula Harris for all the hard work in arranging it and likewise to all those who gave her their assistance to make this a success. A great job by one and all.

Thanks!

THE CORONATION



The Coronation of King Charles III took place on Saturday May 6th. The Pub opened to show the event on the screens there and the Memorial Hall was opened for people to come and see the event on the Big Screen. As it happened, most people seemed to prefer to stay at home with family and friends and so attendance at the pub and the hall was low.

However, the next day things took off and the Memorial Hall was opened up to host another of the Community's super celebration lunches. People flocked in and the Hall was full!!



Everyone was invited to bring their own food and drink and also a pudding for the famous village "Pudding Table", where people could pick and choose (and they did!!) from the wonderful offerings laid out on the table.



Another great Community event!! Well done all.

All that is left to say is "God Save The King"

ADVERTS

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

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