

Ashwell Village Sports Day

The 2018 village sports day took place in front of the newly decorated pavilion, replete with its Peter Long memorial clock. It wasn't the only change this year. In an attempt to bring races and competitors closer to the pavilion, the track was moved from its usual position. This allowed spectators a much better view of proceedings while they enjoyed the lovely cakes, drinks and barbeque on offer.



Children in the potato race. Photo by Ed Strickland

To all those who won, congratulations, but a special thanks to all of you who came along, got stuck in and had fun. It's what our sports day is all about.

If anyone wishes to join the sports day committee or has ideas for next year, please get in touch.

Ed Strickland

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Keen mums in the three legged race. Photo by Ed Strickland

One thing that remained the same as last year was the weather. It was another belter of a day, which resulted in perhaps the biggest turnout ever remembered. We witnessed a wonderful mix of events: egg and spoon, sack, skipping, and potato, with the three-legged race proving more popular than ever.

This year we had a new golden boot for the winner of the welly wanging, in addition to cash prizes for victorious event winners and trophies for the slow bike, family and round-the-village races.

As ever, the music and light-hearted atmosphere helped one of Ashwell's finest days pass off brilliantly. It wouldn't have done so without the numerous volunteers who help to set up and run the event, and our sponsors – the Rose & Crown, Crumps, Amber Health and Rhubarb & Mustard, who donated such lovely raffle prizes.

Ashwell Football Club



Last season, the first on our return to the Hitchin Sunday League from the Cambridge League, proved something of a disappointment. We were placed in a division that was possibly too high a step up for us in our first season back. After a steady start to the campaign, we ended up in a lowly league position,

which meant that unfortunately we were relegated.

This season, the results seem to be heading in the right direction, with a mid-table league position at the time of writing. We are also progressing well in two cup competitions — long may it continue! Just as importantly, there is now competition for places in the starting line-up, which hasn't always been the case in previous seasons. So, we are now optimistic for a much better finish to our league season than we had last year.

If any local players are looking to play Sunday morning football then please make your way to the recreation ground for one of our Sunday morning home games (10:30 kick-off) and we will endeavour to get you playing after your registration details are completed.

Our thanks as always go to the Rose & Crown for after-match provisions – much needed and appreciated.

Ray FitzGerald



If you have never heard of the Ashwell Academicals before, let me introduce our club.

Ashwell Academicals, commonly known as the Accies, is our football club for girls and boys from Ashwell and the surrounding area. We pride ourselves on the fact that we have players registered from the surrounding villages and towns and from even further afield. We are also proud to have squads in almost every age group (from Under-6s to Under-17s) participating in the Royston Crow youth league. The club is run and managed by a dedicated committee. We maintain Football Association Chartered status, which ensures that all our coaches and helpers have attained certification in coaching, first aid and children's welfare.

The club's finances continue to be in good shape, thanks to successful fundraising throughout the year: sponsorship, the selling of bacon rolls, etc on match days, registration fees and the ever-popular trophy night at the end of the season. The club also receives regular donations from the Ashwell Show committee. Over the past few years that has enabled us to replace goalposts and run dedicated goal keeping coaching sessions for all age groups. The club also receives donations from the Henry Colbron Trust and has an ongoing commitment from the trust to help fund pitch and infrastructure improvements in the future.

This year marks my 10th as either coach or chairman of the Accies. I will be withdrawing from the executive committee, however, along with Louise Bruning (Club Secretary), Mike Baldwin (Vice Chairman), John Yianni (Treasurer) and Lorraine Perricone (Club Welfare Officer). The five of us have collectively enjoyed supporting and managing the club over the last decade or so, but the time has come for us to step aside. I would like to say a very well-earned thank you to all those mentioned above, as, without their commitment and dedication, we would not have a village youth football club.

I would like to introduce Andy Hayes, who took over as chairman in the New Year. Please give him and the new committee your full support.

I know how challenging it is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for our children to play football in. Despite the club's healthy position regarding membership and coaching, it still lacks the adequate amenities and space to enable all home matches to be played within the village boundary. My hope is that the new regime will be able to take this forward, securing the longer-term future for the club.

Finally, thank you to all those committee members, coaches and helpers whom I have worked with over the last 10 years. Thank you for your help, dedication and commitment to the children of Ashwell (and further afield); without you, the Accies would not be the success that they are.

And, for the final time, "Up the Accies!!!"

Simon McCutcheon, outgoing Chairman

☎ 07899 977688

Andy Hayes, incoming Chairman

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Cycle Club Ashwell had a very successful start to 2018, winning the Eastern Region's cyclo-cross league. This cross-country, muddy, cycling discipline has enjoyed much growth recently. Many members of the club commit to travelling around the local counties during the winter season. They have benefited from coaching sessions, led by people within the Club who have been able to become qualified British Cycling coaches through our financial support. The coaches have been able to help riders of all ages, notably on Ashwell's grass track, one of the few dedicated outdoor cycling facilities in the country. The Club organises its very own cyclo-cross event each year. In 2018, it added a women-only race at the course near Hitchin. This was a first for the Region and proved very successful.

CC Ashwell again held two National grass-track cycling events in the spring and autumn. People from all over the country visit the village for these two events, to compete in a series for the prestigious National Championship jersey. The Club will do the same in 2019. We also hold novice kids' racing events on the track twice a year, as well as a thriving series of junior and youth coaching sessions in summer and winter, developing a love of sport and physical activity, as well as boosting social confidence and self-esteem.

The Club is committed to helping more women get into the sport and recently agreed a plan of action for 2019, with a specific target and budget to help promote the coaching and ride programme.

CC Ashwell is also looking to continue its series of 'classic' rides in 2019: long distance full-day rides to places like Wells-Next-The-Sea in Norfolk and deepest Suffolk too. In 2018 we were grateful to Rhubarb & Mustard for opening especially early for pre-ride coffees, and to Crump's for their energising pork pies during the Norfolk ride. The Club also supports the local pubs with its monthly social meetings.

The Club has enjoyed success in road and track racing, with several riders climbing the divisional ranks of British Cycling; and internationally in France, Belgium and even Malta. The club once again held its own road racing event.

The Club continues to succeed in time-trialling, boosted by its weekly local ten-mile event. Several members have achieved nationally significant results in the 'race against oneself'.

We made a special touring weekend trip to Flanders in 2018. We have visited the region several times over the years and it was an especially poignant trip this time, given the centenary of Armistice Day.

2019 will mark the Club's 20th anniversary and will be a chance to reflect on what it has achieved and to identify its goals for the future.

Anyone interested in developing their cycling skills or wanting to know more about the sport in general should get in touch through our recently updated website, www.ccashwell.com

Contact us ✉ enquiries@ccashwell.com

Ashwell Cricket Club First XI



2018 was a vintage season.

As spring sprung, we gave the pavilion a much needed makeover under the guidance of Danny Covington. It soon looked as if a new

building had landed on the recreation ground. Huge thanks to Nigel Notley, whose generosity made it all possible.

The doors opened on May 13th for the Ashwell at Home, with Martin and Lucy serving up cheese soufflés to a packed house. Players and members from the last 50 years gathered to celebrate Peter Long, whose many contributions to Ashwell were honoured by the unveiling of the new pavilion clock, kindly donated by the Ashwell Show.

The 1st XI powered into joint first place in the league after six victorious opening matches, including one against Saffron Walden, where we beat a strong team with only nine players. Sadly, the top-of-the-table clash against Ely, a city with a catchment area of c. 20,000 inhabitants, proved a sobering affair: Ely racked up a mighty 350 and we were lucky to make it to 250. This proved to be a turning point in the season. By the time we had lost to the bottom of the table team at Audley End we were firmly middle of the table, where we remained.

However, there were reasons to be cheerful – George Griffin's breakthrough as a batsman was a joy to watch. Jake England was back to his terrifying best, bowling quickly and consistently. Alex Griffin bowled well throughout the season. Tom Robinson took four wickets in his first four overs. Reg Redfern gave the new playground netting a proper stress test with plenty of the aerial off-drives of old. Skipper Alec Taylor's assault on the Horseheath bowling was a definite highlight. However, the pinnacle of the season was settling a rain delayed season decider from last year with a commanding victory against Girton, thus securing a piece of hilariously oversized silverware, now proudly in the bar of club sponsors, the Bushel & Strike.



Cricket Club as it used to be. Photo by Peter John Gates

Meanwhile, the Ashwell 1814 Cricket Team (our Sunday team) also had a varied year. Tom Robinson took 3 wickets against both Luton Town and Baldock and then found himself playing Saturday cricket for the rest of the season. Tim Greenbank's batting was his strongest suit in 2018. In six games he scored 287 runs at an average of 57, including 132 not out against Rosslyn. Tim picked up two prizes at the awards night for highest batting average and highest individual score. James Dorrell, also in his early twenties, played only four times on a Sunday, but had a high score of 72 not out against Linton and a seasonal batting average of 61.

Ashwell 1814 ended up in 3rd place in our Sunday league division. Special mentions go out for Paddy Robinson and Louis Trezise, both bowling with maturity beyond their years.

Perhaps the highlight of the season was the inaugural **Big Bashwell T20** tournament. Four midweek matches were played in glorious sunshine. Regular players were joined by new faces Arran Heal, Jon Moss, Marc Howard, and Marc Beers. Thanks to Jack for organising it all - we're already looking forward to "auction night" in 2019 when the franchisees will throw everything they've got into secure the batting talents of R Parry and the bowling skills of D Crossley.

With the juniors' section going strong under the guidance of Jake England, there will be cricket for all comers in Ashwell in 2019, so, whether you've barely picked up a bat since your school days or recently retired from your county contract, if you like to play the game, do get in touch.

Hugh Carling, Chairman
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Alec Taylor, Saturday Captain
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Bene't Coldstream, Sunday Captain
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Repainted Clubhouse. Photo by Peter John Gates

Ashwell Tennis and Sports Club



The "Knock-Up Dinner" at the Bushel & Strike was the first event in the club's calendar – a fun evening with superb food and fine wine. An open day followed at the courts in March, with an afternoon of tennis run by Charlotte Gibbons, our head coach.

Tennis coaching for children was available during the summer term for tots, red ball sessions for 5 to 8-year olds, orange ball sessions for those aged 9 to 11 years, and green/yellow ball sessions for 12 to 14-year olds.

The lessons for children were subsidised by a grant from the Henry Colbron Trust. Charlotte also ran tennis camps for children during the summer holidays, which were popular and fun. Neil Roskilly, continues his coaching of adults each Friday morning, all year round for those who are hardy enough. Cardio tennis sessions were also available during the summer, and were a fun (although exhausting) way to keep fit.

The courts were refurbished in early summer, and in July they were open for a morning of fun tennis for all the family, followed by a cardio tennis session and a bacon roll.

Club sessions, open to all members, were introduced during the summer, with a member of the committee available to organise tennis games twice a week. The committee hopes to continue these sessions for members during the summer of 2019.

Once again, the club has two teams entered in the Datchworth League. New members in the teams are always welcome. The Tennis Club will also be organising a handicap tournament for 2019.

We always welcome new members — information is on the website: www.ashwelltennis.net — or please contact us.

Rachel Williams, Chair

Rachel Giles, Secretary
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