



# Ashwell Yearbook 2023

PUBLISHED MARCH 2023 BY ASHWELL PARISH COUNCIL

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# Welcome to the 2023 edition of the Ashwell Yearbook

Compared with the previous two years it was wonderful to see village life in 2022 return almost to normal. Among a number of other events, we were able to hold Ashwell at Home, and the Ashwell Show. The sun shone on both of these major events, attracting high numbers of visitors and record levels of income and profits, which have been distributed among key Ashwell institutions. Full reports from Ashwell organisations appear inside.

The Parish Council is delighted to report that the Yearbook Working Group has continued under the safe and experienced leadership of Norton Mahy, ably supported by many others in the team. Norton has bravely taken on the challenge of learning how to use publishing software to create the design and layout of this year's issue. He is acutely aware of the high bar in terms of quality that the Yearbook has achieved in recent years, so many thanks to him for taking on that additional task. But we would also like to thank all those individuals and organisations who have provided interesting, and informative reports.

The Parish Council has, like all of us, faced rising costs during 2022, and it is only with the support of advertisers that we are able to bring every household and business in Ashwell a free copy of this Yearbook. Many thanks to all those Ashwell-based businesses, and other businesses that provide a service to Ashwell, for advertising in this issue. Without your support for the Yearbook, it would simply not be possible to maintain such a high quality and comprehensive magazine. So, to all Ashwell residents – please continue to use local services as much as possible. And after the initial reading please keep the Yearbook as a handy reference book for service providers and activity groups available in the village, all of which contribute to make Ashwell such a special community.



**Graham Lee**  
Chairman, Ashwell Parish Council

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## Yearbook working group

**Norton Mahy**, team leader, Parish Council reports, advertising and design  
**Cliff Jenkinson**, general editor  
**Wendy Browne**, editor  
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**Margaret Budgen**, photography  
**Madeleine Legg**, weddings and obituaries  
**Eileen ten Hove**, church and chapel reports  
**Kay Hoskins**, village reports

Front Page: aerial view of the Platinum Jubilee street party, 5 June. Photo: Alan Jackson.

Ashwell Parish Council would like to thank the many people who have kindly contributed articles and photographs to this Yearbook.

Disclaimer: Any views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and are not to be taken as representing the views of the publishers, Ashwell Parish Council.

**If you would like to see your organisation's report and photographs in the 2024 edition of the Yearbook, please contact the Parish Office before the end of November 2023**  
 ✉ [clerk@ashwell.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ashwell.gov.uk)  
 ☎ 743706





# PARISH, DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILS

## How 'green' is the Yearbook?

Producing printed material always has an impact on the environment. How can we mitigate adverse effects?

All paper is FSC sourced. 'FSC' is a forest management certification confirming that the forest sources are being managed in a way that preserves biological diversity and benefits the lives of local people and workers, while sustaining economic viability. Trees cut down have three planted in their place.

80% of paper in the UK is recycled and usually turned into products where a high quality finish is not essential, such as: newsprint, cardboard and cheap PC printer paper. However, using recycled paper in publications is not very environmentally friendly because it needs more bleach and other agents to make it suitable for commercial use. Our printer does not use recycled paper for this reason.

All inks are biodegradable and other materials used in the printing process are recyclable.



## Chairman's report

What a turbulent year 2022 proved to be, just when the threat from Covid was easing! Nevertheless, at a local level there is much that we can be positive about.

Thanks to the support from our county councillor, Steve Jarvis, the addition of a chicane in West End was carried out with the aim of reducing speeding. Its impact is being monitored and if necessary additional measures will be considered. There was also, after many years in the planning, a major revision to the junction of Lucas Lane and Station Road at the war memorial. This is a significant improvement and should result in much slower and better vehicle movements at this junction, which was the site of a fatality many years ago.

Looking forward, 2022 also saw significant progress on the long-standing need for a complete, continuous footpath and cycleway between the village and Ashwell and Morden Station. Thanks to everyone who completed the survey, initiated by North Herts and Herts County councils under the 'LCWIP' (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan). Although Ashwell is not being progressed in Phase 1 because it isn't a town, the station link route to Ashwell is still recognised as the only priority route in North Herts that is not in a town and will hopefully be progressed in the next phase. The high number of responses to the survey made by people with an Ashwell connection can only have helped our cause. We look forward to this being progressed so that Ashwell can have the infrastructure appropriate to becoming a truly sustainable village.

2022 also marked the 'making' of the Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan, so the specific needs of Ashwell as a community are now incorporated legally into the North Herts Council Local Plan. The NHC Local Plan has made some changes to the settlement boundary of Ashwell, which defines areas where the presumption in planning is for permitted development. But the specific needs of Ashwell's community, reinforced by the conservation area, will also play a significant role in what, if anything, gets built where.

The parish council has continued to liaise with the Ashwell and Bassingbourn Patients' Group and the Ashwell Surgery. We will provide relevant updates via the parish council website and Facebook page, with additional communication via the Ashwell Hub social media pages. I continue to represent not only Ashwell but also the other villages served

by the surgery as a member of the ABPG. Please contact Peter Chapman of ABPG or myself about any matters you would like raised with the Surgery.

We continue to encourage HCC and NHC to provide public charging points for electric vehicles. We appreciate that there are many Ashwell households who have no off-street parking to allow personal EV charging, so it is essential that public on-street charging facilities are provided in the areas of need.

It is also an objective to work towards making Ashwell a carbon neutral community, with reduced reliance on fossil fuels. Anyone who has an expertise or interest in this topic would be welcome to share their expertise with the parish council.

Finally, a reminder to anyone who is interested in the activities of the parish council but has not yet signed up on the parish council website to receive email notifications. You can do so at:

↑ [www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk).

You can opt to receive all updates or you can select only those specific items that interest you. And, if you have any questions or comments about anything that interests or concerns you about Ashwell, please phone or email any one of the councillors or Jane Porter, our friendly and knowledgeable clerk. Thank you.

**Graham Lee**

Chairman, Ashwell Parish Council



**AshwellParishCouncil**

Hertfordshire

**Annual Parish meeting, 22 March 2023, 8.00pm at the School (big hall), all welcome**

### Agenda

- 1 To approve the minutes of the 2022 Parish Meeting
- 2 Matters of report from the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting
- 3 Chairman's Report
- 4 Financial Statement
- 5 Reports from Parish Council including working groups
- 6 Reports from others
- 7 Parish affairs

Signed

**Graham Lee**

Chairman, Ashwell Parish Council

**Please remember to bring your copy of the 2023 Ashwell Yearbook with you.**



## Ashwell Parish Council members

This is an election year, see p13



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Chairman

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## Parish information

Please do sign up for regular emails containing news about the parish council and the Ashwell community. To do this, go to the foot of the webpage:

▲ [www.ashwell.gov.uk/parish-council/meetings](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk/parish-council/meetings).

If you don't wish to sign up or are unable to, you can contact the clerk, the chairman or individual councillors.

You may find the website a useful source of general information too. Among other things, you can learn a bit about parish history or sample walks around the village.

## Parish council meetings

Everyone is welcome to come to meetings of the parish council and there is an opportunity to speak in the 'Open Forum'. Meetings take place on the first Wednesday of each month in the Parish Room and start at 7pm. If you want to attend online using Zoom, sign up via the website, or send in a request to be emailed a link with login details.

Our district councillor, Tom Tyson, and county councillor, Steve Jarvis, are invited and routinely attend. Council meetings are minuted as soon as possible after they have taken place and draft minutes are put on to the website. An archive of approved past minutes can also be found there.

Every month a summary of the parish council meeting appears in the 'Parish Council Matters'

section of the *Ashwell Village News* and is emailed to those who have signed up. Copies of this summary are displayed on the main parish council notice board by the Rose & Crown and on the small parish council notice board in the bus shelter in Station Road, opposite the war memorial.

If important issues arise newsletters are published and delivered to every household.

## Parish council representatives

The parish council is either represented or has close links with other village organisations. For example: the museum, the village hall, the school, Ashwell Village Trust, Moss Cottages and the newly formed Ashwell Community Land Trust.

## Local government responsibilities

**Who does what and whom to contact?** The three tiers of local government – parish, district and county – supply most of the services provided in towns and villages.

For details of services provided by Ashwell Parish Council please see pp5-13. For North Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council please see pp14-15. Contact details for other local services can be found on pp135-138.

**Sign up for regular information about the village at:** ▲ [www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk)





Intense agriculture around Arbury Banks in WW2



Arbury Banks from Partridge Hill as it is today

## Arbury Banks

I have talked about the Chiltern Beacons Lidar Survey in previous issues of the Yearbook and how it just about covers the west of the village at its north-eastern end. The survey closed on 31 October 2022.

It has some data that might interest Ashwell residents. An informed parishioner passed on details of a website that will allow you to investigate the available information for yourself. Go to:

▲ <https://chilternsbeacons.org/wp/>

You have to sign up, but it's free. The Arbury Banks site is clearly visible in both the 'Local Relief Model' or 'Multi-Directional Hillshade' views but each provides a different perspective. The moats at Ashwell End come out very clearly too. If you are interested in the technical aspects of Lidar, there's a good explanation here:

▲ <https://www.chilternsaonb.org/flagship-projects/beacons-of-the-past/what-is-lidar/>

Historic England has aerial pictures of Arbury Banks, taken in 2008 and 2016. Slightly off-topic, it also has ones of the village taken in 1947 and 2008 that you may enjoy, especially if you manage to spot your own house:

▲ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/>

I didn't have much luck but did pick out a view of The Ruddy and Station Road, and a few of Westbury. And there was no mistaking St Mary's, of course.

**Cllr Martin G Hoffman**

## Ashwell Cemetery

The cemetery in Station Road is a significant village asset which is owned and managed on behalf of the community by the parish council. Ashwell residents, and those who have a close association with the village, may be buried here. Plots for graves and ashes are available at competitive rates and burial rights may be reserved for future interments.

The chapel is available for small services of any denomination or none through the tenant, Neville Funerals (see their advert on p119). It can seat up to about 40 people and, since its refurbishment to a very high standard a few years ago, is a lovely space for a memorable event.

The original cemetery area, laid out to a design by Edwin Lutyens, now has no space for new graves, only interments into existing family plots; but new interments of ashes continue here at the far end. The 'New Area' towards the garage has sufficient space for the foreseeable future and at some point the 'Fourth Quarter', currently in agricultural use, will be reclaimed for burials. Ashwell is favoured to have its own burial space under its own control, as many communities no longer have this advantage. Comments and suggestions on its management are welcomed so please do get in touch if you have any.

See the website or contact the parish council office for information on burials, memorials, etc:

▲ [www.ashwell.gov.uk/places/ashwell-cemetery/](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk/places/ashwell-cemetery/)

**Jane Porter**

Parish clerk

✉ [clerk@ashwell.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ashwell.gov.uk)

☎ 743706





Ashwell Cemetery in autumn. Parish Council archives

## The Springs - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



Visitors at the Springs in winter

The Springs continues to be enjoyed by visitors both from the village and further afield and achieving a good balance between managing the site as an ecological as well as an amenity asset remains a challenge. Visitor numbers have increased and the impact of this (particularly evident during the Covid lockdowns) is being addressed in several ways. Proposals were discussed, as is required, with Natural England during their regular inspection visit and they were supportive of the measures that have been planned.

Vegetation has suffered from the increased footfall and certain areas have had to be fenced off to allow them to recover. This is particularly important on the banks adjacent to the water as bare surfaces are easily eroded by rainfall resulting in the washing down of soil onto the riverbed. Our unique Ice-Age

worms (the main reason for the SSSI designation) need a clean gravel bed and will not survive without it. Letting light into the area is also important so tree work is planned to prevent too much overshadowing of the main basin. More light encourages undergrowth which stabilises the banks -brambles and nettles are good for birds and other wildlife and also discourage scrambling.

Our management plan includes the need to control the growth of sycamore trees by removing some of them. They grow large, cause deep shade and produce a dense leaf litter that discourages growth beneath them. Removal of mature trees may seem harsh but it allows other trees of more suitable species to be planted and thrive. This will be particularly important if, maybe when, we are affected by the ash die-back disease. Establishing new trees now will lessen the impact of this.

We receive the daily water flow rates from the Environment Agency, the authority responsible for the river, every month and, if they fall below an agreed level, we question what action they are taking. There is a legal requirement for the flows to be maintained because of the SSSI status.

New, larger rubbish bins of a more closed design have been installed at the entrances to the site. This is to lessen the risk of them overflowing and locate them further away from the river. Our Grounds Officer regularly empties the bins and checks the area for litter.

Volunteer working parties continue under the leadership of Greening Ashwell for which the parish council is grateful. Do get in touch with them if you would like to join their friendly team.

**Cllr Martin G. Hoffman**





Sports day on the Recreation Ground

## Recreation Ground, Pavilion, children's playground and public toilets

The Rec' sprang back into life in 2022 with the resumption of normal sporting activities including Sports Day, and a glorious summer to make the most of. Additional maintenance and grass care of the pitches has shown a definite improvement in the playing surfaces. The Queens Green Canopy initiative provided funding for additional planting of trees along the boundary with the horse paddock, plus hedging along the Station Road boundary. It is hoped that we will have the funds to add hedging along the Lucas Lane boundary too.

Consultation with the under 18s over the playground facilities showed a majority support for an improved skateboard facility. Preliminary discussions with potential suppliers have shown that the cost is likely to be significantly more than the grant provided from the Henry Colbron Trust. Discussions are taking place with North Herts Council over the total funds available for Ashwell recreational facilities as a result of levies on house building over the last several years. It may be that expenditure on the total number of recreation ground projects will need to be prioritised. But the NHC grant will remain ringfenced for playground upgrades.

During the year we employed an architect to advise us on the option of upgrading the current pavilion including toilets to bring the facility up to latest building regulations. The provisional cost of over £400,000 is very close to the alternative of (c. £450,000) replacing the whole building. A

Queen's Jubilee Pavilion Fund was launched to invite donations to help us bridge the gap between these costs and the housebuilding funds mentioned above. Unfortunately the gap remains huge and we will need to consider all funding options. It simply doesn't make sense to spend significant money on a partial 'patch up' that may only last a few years. The level of village use justifies investment in a durable structure that is fit for purpose.

**Cllr Graham Lee**  
Chairman

## War memorial

The changes brought about by the works that Hertfordshire County Highways carried out have had a big impact. They were primarily to improve safety of the Station Road junction, though the crossing point to the Recreation Ground in Lucas Lane will improve safe access to the memorial as well. Now that the Service of Remembrance is held on the Rec', this development is particularly welcome.

Judgements about aesthetics are highly personal but most people would probably agree that remodelling and paving have significantly improved the memorial's setting, giving it a much more impactful and dignified appearance.

Once again, we must recognise the contribution of a volunteer, Craig Langford, whose planting and general care has enhanced a valued landmark, our tribute to those lost in two world wars.

**Cllr Norton Mahy**





Across fields to Coldharbour Farm

## Public rights of way - footpaths

2022 saw the departure of Julia Clarke, the officer responsible for Countryside and Rights of Way and the Environment and Infrastructure at Herts County Council. Her replacement is Robert Lloyd (who reports to Andrew Burton).

Two specific projects to highlight are:

**Ashwell St / Ruddy between Woodforde Close and Station Road.** This BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic), which forms part of the ancient Icknield Way, is a rural, unmetalled, tree-lined track for the primary benefit of pedestrians. Unfortunately, in recent years it has become increasingly used by delivery vehicles and some local residents as a shortcut between Kingsland Way and Station Road. Unnecessary vehicular use is damaging the track and imposing a safety risk on pedestrians, including schoolchildren using the track to get to the school, cyclists, and horse riders. Herts County Council have undertaken the first stage in the consultation process with legitimate users and we hope this will lead to action to restrict through-access by four-wheel vehicles by installing bollards at the Woodforde Close end of the track.

**Pedestrian / cycle path to Ashwell & Morden Station.** The Parish Council has been extremely well supported by Guy Reed in his liaison with North Herts Council and the LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan) consultation process. The existing partial footpath from Ashwell to the boundary with Cambridgeshire was refurbished during the year.

**Other footpaths.** During the year there was notification from HCC of an impending decision by the inspector on a 2018 application re footpaths Ashwell 33 and Caldecote & Newnham 9 on a new right of way linking the Ash Hill footpath from near the pig farm through to Bygrave Plantation near Newnham.

**Information sources.** For details of access to public rights of way throughout Hertfordshire, use the following link and select the 'ROW' option:

▲ <https://webmaps.hertfordshire.gov.uk/>

Zoom in via your mouse to access Ashwell footpaths or those in the rest of Hertfordshire.

Any Ashwell resident with concerns re public rights of way in Ashwell can contact the parish council or HCC via its website.

**Cllr Graham Lee**  
Chairman

## The parish clock

The parish council maintains the clock on the tower of St Mary's Church and bears the cost. This includes an annual service and any works needed to the clock itself and the chimes overnight noise reduction mechanism.

As the clock is of significant age (it was manufactured by William Potts of Leeds in 1896) it requires ongoing expert care and occasionally significant expenditure.

**Jane Porter**  
Parish Clerk  
✉ [clerk@ashwell.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ashwell.gov.uk)





St Mary's Churchyard viewed from Mill Street

## Keeping Ashwell tidy and attractive

Many thanks to those who turned out for the Ashwell Spring Clean on 9 April. It was good to see the return of this event post-Covid; a chance to get out and sample some spring-fresh air, while helping to improve our village.

The parish office has litter picking equipment that you can borrow if you are looking for an incentive to get outdoors and grab some exercise. It is at 6a Back Street, almost obscured by a fence next to the junction of Bear Lane; open from 9.30am to 1.30pm, Monday to Thursday.



New, more robust, litter bin outside the Springs

Regarding litter bins, some of the more worn and well used examples have been replaced with sturdier items. You may have noticed the ones outside the Springs. Replacement will continue on a case by case basis. North Herts Council empties them for us on a four weekly cycle and the agreement is coming up for renewal. To that end, we located all bins in the village and monitored

the level of usage. There are more than NHC is prepared to empty, so we want to make sure the numbers that they will empty go in the right locations. It provided an opportunity to put our recently acquired mapping software skills to good use.

**Cllr Norton Mahy**

## St Mary's Churchyard

Because the churchyard is closed for burials the parish council must, by law, maintain the grounds. The parochial church council is responsible for the graves and lych gate.

Like other sites, such as the Springs, we check the trees regularly and keep them safe. Because they are large and old it is a costly responsibility and varies considerably from year to year. For this reason, there is an earmarked fund to accommodate occasional large bills that is kept topped up by an annual contribution.

Safety aside, keeping the trees in a good state is an important contribution to the setting of our lovely Grade I listed church. Parishioners have re-wilded part of the grounds and a contractor keeps the grass trimmed and paths clear in the rest of the churchyard.

**Cllr Martin G Hoffman**

## Ashwell Lock Up

This Grade II listed building is part of a larger network of old lock ups, cages and prisons across Hertfordshire. Have a read of the plaque next to it to get a snippet of its history.

Our Grounds Officer gives the Lock Up an occasional look-over to ensure all stays well.

**Cllr Norton Mahy**





The Lock Up in Hodwell

## Small Gains

The weather remains unpredictable, with this year being the most extreme. It was either too wet or too dry. At Small Gains plants had to be watered daily during the heatwave; the newly planted hedge and trees being a significant challenge. Fortunately they were well established so the trees and most of the hedge made it through to the first rainfall.

If that was not bad enough we had a plague of rabbits digging up the allotments and football field. They caused a lot of damage looking for food and moisture but the number of rabbits seems to have declined, and a pest control officer will be tackling the problem.

A big thank you to those who have kept the allotments tidy, especially Hamish. Our future projects are: a tap nearer the car park which should make life a bit easier, improvements to the track, and a new wire netting fence between the football field and the old orchard. It will be dug into the ground which hopefully will keep the rabbits from invading the football field and allotments.

If anyone requires an allotment there may be some available this year. Please get in touch with me, David Sims, at 742151 or the parish clerk at 743706.

The Recreation Ground last year had a hedge planted and two lime trees, they too had to be watered daily. The trees seem to have survived well but the hedge running alongside Station Road suffered badly. We will have to wait until spring to see how well they coped.

The good news is funds have been found to plant a new hedge alongside Lucas Lane. We are looking at quotes at the moment and planting should start soon.

**Cllr David Sims**

☎ 742151

## A greener Ashwell - could we get to zero carbon?

Do you care about Ashwell's carbon footprint? Should we leave it to others to reduce our CO2 output? Will our government and energy suppliers act quickly enough to prevent the global temperature rise going above +1.5°C?

**If these issues concern you please tell us at the parish council.**

So what could we do?

Driving electric vehicles could help, but alone it won't be enough of a change.

Our biggest source of carbon creation is the energy to power and heat our homes and hot water. Ashwell is a village with a majority of old, and some very old, homes that will be extremely difficult to insulate to current standards. They are inefficient. But we could provide the energy they need through 'green' energy sources. Until the UK generates enough tidal, wave or nuclear energy, the main 'green' energy sources are wind and solar. But the biggest demand for energy is in the winter when there is very little sun to generate electricity. Wind tends to blow more strongly in the winter, and wind turbines are one of the most cost effective sources of energy. There are a number of examples of community wind turbines working effectively and reducing local energy costs.

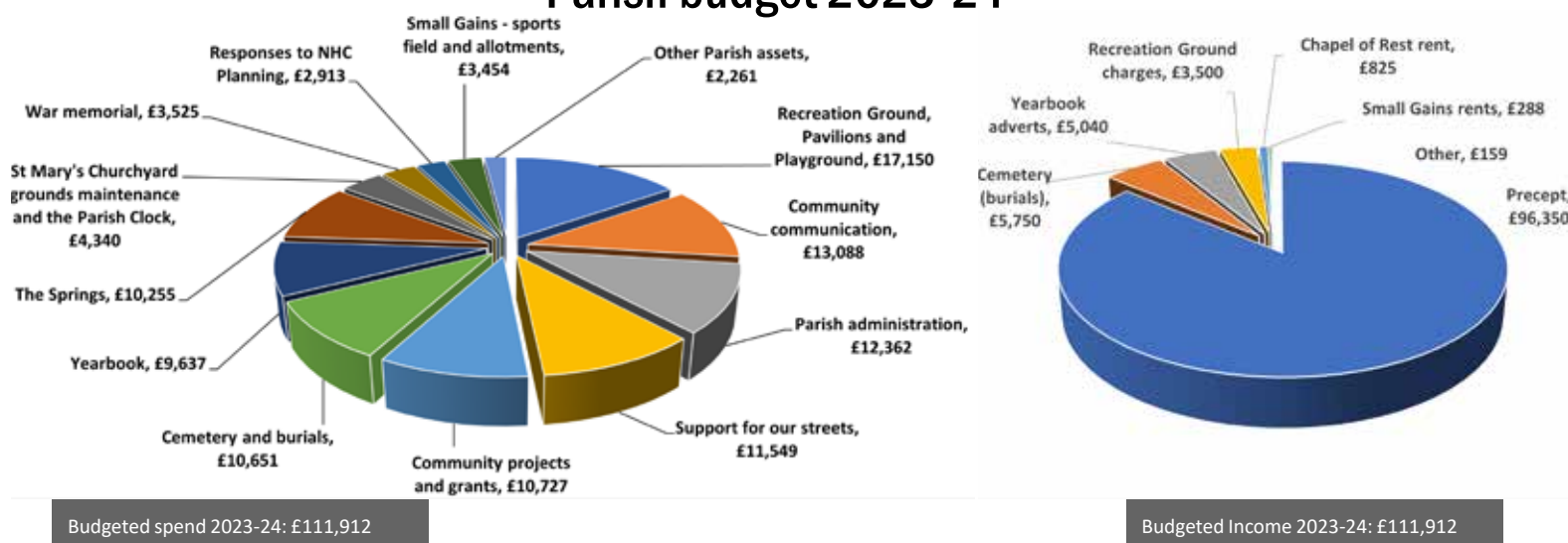
**Would you support one or more local wind turbines?**

A combination of solar and wind could also be used to create hydrogen from renewable energy sources which can be stored for when the sun or wind aren't generating power. Trials are underway in UK communities with existing gas boilers and cookers being converted to run on a hydrogen and natural





## Parish budget 2023-24



gas blend. Eventually 100% hydrogen heating could be viable. Is that an option that appeals?

Please don't leave these issues for 'big' government or industry to provide the answer - it may be one that we don't like. The more Ashwellians who care about our impact on the planet the greater our chances are of making Ashwell a pioneering 'green' village for the benefit of all of us and future generations. Please send your comments to the parish council.

**Cllr Graham Lee**  
Chairman

## Parish council finances

### How we report the cost of parish council services

Reports in previous years only showed direct spending on items like the Recreation Ground or the Springs. But the cost of time spent by the clerk and deputy clerk on them was bundled up under the heading 'Parish management'. This generic term covers a wide range of work: premises management, burials at the cemetery, and dealing with queries from parishioners are just three examples.

For the coming budget year, we have analysed the detail of Parish management costs and are reporting the intended spend on each service, including the cost of staff time. This is a more rigorous and informative approach.

### 2022-23 actual spend

The total budget for 2022-23 was expenditure of £95,859 and income of £95,860. The net spend is not expected to be significantly different.

### The background to the 2023-24 budget

The last year has seen prices rise steeply and the parish council has not been exempt from that.

In fact, many of the services it needs are subject to greater increases than the general rate of inflation would suggest, owing to suppliers shrinking their businesses and therefore reducing the amount of competition.

The cost pressure has primarily been due to: possible election costs, higher Yearbook printing costs, solving the rabbit problem at Small Gains and a very significant sum for tree surveys at the Springs. As for all of us, the price of energy has risen too.

In discussions about the 2023-24 budget the unanimous view was that the level of services available to Ashwell's residents, clubs and organisations makes a major contribution toward making it a good place to live. Given that the area is still relatively prosperous it makes sense to keep services at present levels.

After an item by item review the parish council decided to increase the precept by 17.3% (this is the amount that goes to the parish out of your Council Tax). The effect on each household is an additional 11.5% or £10.74 for a band 'D' property, which is slightly less than the precept increase as the growth in dwelling numbers has spread it over a wider base than the previous year.

Fees and charges make up only a small proportion of our income (9.3%) but putting them up has a big impact on, for example: the clubs that use the recreation ground and allotment tenants. Therefore there has only been a modest increase for these facilities, with a slightly larger one for burials in the cemetery.

### Budgeted spend in 2023-24 and how the parish will pay for it

The charts above give a breakdown of planned spend and sources of income. Aside from items like



'Cemetery and burials', whose purpose is obvious, the descriptions of some of our services would benefit from a short explanation.

**Community communication.** We deal with parishioner requests and queries and look for answers, often by consulting other bodies such as North Herts Council or the county council. The parish council also needs to keep up-to-date with developments in public services that affect people here.

**Parish administration.** This is time spent carrying out tasks required by law, such as: holding council meetings and maintaining records, keeping accounts, and audit.

**Community projects and grants.** In the past, initiatives like the Neighbourhood Plan have taken much time from staff and volunteers alike. This type of work continues now with the Community Benefit Society, the Pavilion replacement project and other smaller initiatives.

If you are interested in the fine detail of the changes then please do look on the website:

↑ [www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk)

If that doesn't answer your questions, then you can get in touch as follows:

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### 4 May election - parish councillors needed

Parish councillors are elected by the public every four years. The date for the next parish council election in this parish is Thursday 4 May.

#### Why we need a parish council

Without a fully functioning parish council decisions about investment and maintenance of the Ashwell assets currently managed by the Parish Council would be taken by North Herts Council. Standards would not necessarily be maintained.

Being a parish councillor is an unpaid position. The councillors meet monthly, on a Wednesday evening, but most other duties can be carried out to fit in with 'normal' life.

#### Why become a parish councillor?

- ☐ Meet and work with like-minded people
- ☐ Use your experience and skills for the benefit of the community
- ☐ A great way of becoming involved and more integrated in village life
- ☐ Promote/pursue your interests and/or concerns and those of other village residents
- ☐ Influence community focus on transport, environment, sustainability, services, and development

For more information contact any of the current parish councillors or our Clerk and/or visit our website [www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk)





## Hertfordshire County Council councillor's report

The last year has undoubtedly been a difficult one for many people, with the aftermath of the pandemic combined with huge rises in the costs of energy and, to a lesser extent, everything else. This year, I have had more requests than ever before from groups providing support to people for contributions from the £10,000 locality budget that is available to every county councillor.

The council itself has been impacted by these events, with an increasing number of children being looked after by the council or needing help with special educational provision. The latter in particular has been a challenge for schools, largely because there is simply not enough money to provide everything that is needed.

These issues, along with the effects of inflation, particularly in the cost of road works and the increasing cost of social care for adults, means that the council will spend more than it budgeted for this year.

Turning to local issues, things look rather less gloomy. After several lengthy delays, the traffic calming work was eventually completed at West End. Some changes had to be made to the design to deal with safety concerns, but it should still help slow traffic entering the village. At the time of writing, we are still waiting for a planned speed survey to measure the impact and some final checks on what has been done – much delayed by other road works in the area. I have also arranged for some speed measurements to be made in a couple of other locations in the village to get some objective measurements of the effect of the 20mph limit. The results should be available by the time you read this.

The changes and pavement repairs in Station Road and Lucas Lane have also been completed, which should make it safer for those coming from Station

Road, Sunnymead and Walkdens on foot and reduce the speed of traffic turning from Station Road into Lucas Lane. What I think is a rather nice paved area in front of the war memorial is a fortunate by-product of these changes.

Less positive is the ending of the commuter bus service to the station. The post-Covid use of the service had dropped to almost nothing, with an average of one person a day travelling on the service. The county council calculated that it was subsidising each passenger to the tune of more than £70, which was obviously not sustainable. For those not travelling too early or returning too late, the HertsLynx on demand bus is a possible alternative – as well as being usable for many other journeys. HertsLynx has been very successful and has recently been expanded with more vehicles. I am asking for the hours of operation (currently 7am to 7pm) to be extended so it is more useful for those commuting.

As an alternative way to the station, I am pleased that, with help from Ashwell Parish Council and some local people, we have managed to get the part of the route that is in Hertfordshire included in the council's 'Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan', as it is the only priority route in north Hertfordshire that is not in a town. That does not mean that there is money to improve the route yet, but it is a first step.

Please get in touch if you want to know more, or if there are issues that you think I might be able to help with.

### County Cllr Steve Jarvis

✉ [steve.jarvis@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.jarvis@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

☎ 07815 887375

📌 [www.stevejarvis.org.uk](http://www.stevejarvis.org.uk)





## North Herts Council councillor's report

This year, I have continued to enjoy my work in and on behalf of Ashwell. As village life gradually returns to normal, there has also been much to enjoy on a social level, with the reappearance of iconic village events in the calendar along with some welcome newcomers. I have worked closely with the parish council on a number of issues, liaising with the district to resolve problems relating to planning applications, respond to various consultations, and find solutions to concerns raised by residents to me personally or through the parish council.

The big news this year at North Herts Council was the adoption in November of the Local Plan following five years of deliberations, consultations and modifications by the government's planning inspector. Now that the district can show that it has a sufficient supply of land to meet its housing needs, developers will find it much harder to justify applications to build on new sites not allocated in the plan. In addition, the North Herts plan formally supports the policies in the Ashwell Neighbourhood Plan, also adopted this year, which have to be taken into account in any decisions on applications in the village.

Changes have been made to the local election cycle, with the council deciding to adopt a system of 'all-out' elections every four years. Currently, electors in some multi-member wards are asked to turn out to vote for councillors every year. For us, switching to the new system means that this May's district council election will have to be followed by another in 2024, as North Herts aligns all its wards to the new cycle. Plans to redraw the ward boundary have not been finalised at the time of writing.

In March, our Area Committee was pleased to award a grant to Ashwell Tennis and Sports Club to help fund the new clubhouse, which had just received planning permission at the time. And



Ashwell Preschool also picked up some funding to help support their valuable work. Do get in touch if you think we might be able to help your group or charity.

In November, I was privileged to be allowed to visit Ashwell Primary School with a colleague as part of the council's contribution to Local Democracy Week. I gave a little presentation to Year 6 and was delighted with the children's response; they were engaged and engaging, a credit to the school and their teacher. When prompted, some expressed an interest in becoming a local councillor in later life, but I will confess that a potential career as 'monarch' was embraced with somewhat greater enthusiasm. Later in the month, North Herts Council organised a day of activities for sixth formers, including a chance to quiz local MPs and council members, and take part in a debate on lowering the voting age. As a former teacher, I found both occasions extremely uplifting and hope that such events will become a regular feature in our calendar. It's great to see young people take an interest in the processes of local democracy.

### District Cllr Tom Tyson

✉ [tom.tyson@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:tom.tyson@north-herts.gov.uk)

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Sketch of the High Street in the 1840s by the vicar's daughter, Charlotte Morice. Courtesy of Ashwell Museum

## THEN... AND NOW



View from the same spot in 2023





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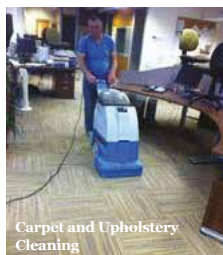
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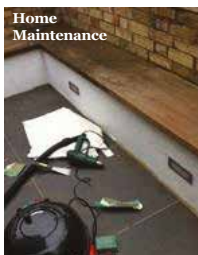
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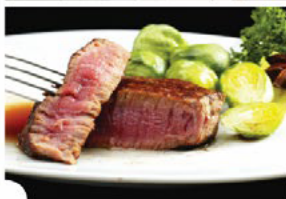
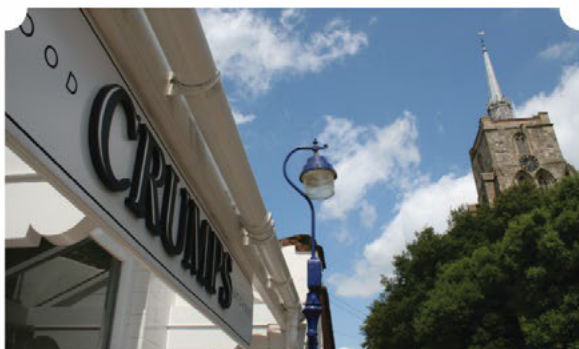


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[www.crumpsbutchers.com](http://www.crumpsbutchers.com)



A photograph of a garden bed. In the background is a brick wall. The garden bed contains several plants: large green leaves with white flowers on the left, orange daisy-like flowers in the center and right, and small blue forget-me-nots at the bottom. There are also several smooth, light-colored rocks, some of which are painted with blue and red designs. A large pile of white oyster shells is in the center. A piece of wood is visible on the left side of the garden bed.

# COMMUNITY GROUPS





Archaeology display in Ashwell Museum

## Introduction

One of the many factors which make Ashwell such a vibrant and happy place is the high level of voluntary contributions made by Ashwellians towards organising community groups and projects. You can read about the achievements of these groups and projects in the following pages. The parish council is very conscious of the value of this work and would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved.

If you would be interested in volunteering to help the community yourself, please see p29 at the end of this section of the Yearbook for a list of some of the possible ways in which you might become involved.

## Ashwell Archaeology

It has been a rather quiet year in the village for organised archaeological work, apart from the commercial firms who have been overseeing all the development work as new homes are built. However, a new display was completed in the Ashwell Museum focusing on archaeology in the village, and the replica Senuna prayer plaque was put back on the wall with more explanation and photographs.

If you have found anything interesting in your garden or out on a walk around the village, do bring it into the museum (we are open for enquiries most Tuesday afternoons from 2.30pm) or get in touch. I'm always happy to identify finds or signpost you on to experts.

**Sarah Talks**

## Historical Herb Bed

We were very pleased to be able to open the Historical Herb Bed (HHB) officially on Ashwell at Home day 2022. The growing and using of herbs is something that fitted in very well with the theme for the day, Health and Wellbeing. The HHB project began when a team of community-minded people cleared the brambles and ivy that had choked the edge of Alms Lane. A second team came together to plant up the beds with herbs and plants, some particularly associated with Ashwell. The idea was to create a community resource with links to the historical use of herbs, but also to increase plant diversity and opportunities for pollinating insects in the centre of the village.

Currently, the two information boards focus on herbs used in Roman and medieval times. Pupils at Ashwell Primary School and other members of the community contributed painted pebbles, some of which were plant labels. In the summer of 2022, many of the mediterranean herbs thrived in the heat, particularly the sage. It has also been good to see the mullein caterpillars enjoying the mullein plants.

The herbs are there for you all, so please feel free to pick a little as you go by. If anyone is tempted to do a little weeding, that would be fantastic too!

Many thanks to all who have contributed plants, time and effort to keep the HHB going.

**Sarah Talks**

☎ 742182

✉ [sarah@sarahtalks.me](mailto:sarah@sarahtalks.me)



Bear Farm: Ashwell Housing Association properties in Back Street

## Ashwell Housing Association



Ashwell Housing Association owns ten properties in Back Street which were built around 1979. We have two bungalows, four flats (one of which is a small studio flat) and four three bedroom

houses. All properties are let to local people who have very strong connections to the village.

We have a service agreement with First Garden City Homes (FGCH) who carry out routine maintenance for us, provide an excellent management service and give us advice when necessary. However, we do try to use local contractors for some of the smaller jobs that need attending to from time to time.

The communal garden area behind the flats is looked after by one of our tenants who also cuts the grass in front of the houses and this arrangement works very well. Garden maintenance costs us far less than it used to when we had contractors employed by FGCH, and the whole site looks much tidier.

There have been no changes of tenancies during the year and we are acutely aware of the scarcity of affordable rented housing in the village which guarantees priority to local people. However, our properties come up so rarely that we have decided that it is not worth keeping a list of interested parties as it tends to give them false hope. Instead, once a property becomes vacant, we will advertise as widely as possible through the *Ashwell Village News* and social media. We have found that this strategy tends to be the most effective way of communication these days.

We are always on the lookout for new committee members, so if you would like to join us, please contact Liz Fitzsimmons.

### Liz Fitzsimmons

Chair

✉ [liz\\_fitzsimmons@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:liz_fitzsimmons@yahoo.co.uk)

## Moss Cottage Homes

Moss Cottage Homes in Hodwell provide six one bedroom cottages at an affordable weekly charge. We are members of the Almshouse Association.

At the beginning of 2022, two of the cottages became vacant. We took this opportunity to improve the accommodation and upgrade the facilities using funds the trust put by for this purpose. Inevitably, there were hiccups and delays, but the result was much improved homes and we welcomed two new residents during the summer. The trustees have been looking at ways to improve the other cottages while they are still occupied, especially improvements to the water heating systems to make them more efficient. We greatly appreciate the financial support we received in 2022 from the Ashwell Show committee, which helped us to plan this work without using funds put by for major refurbishments.

Sarah Talks stepped down in March 2022, and at the AGM in May, Cliff Jenkinson took the decision not to continue his term as a parish council nominee. Cath Connolly has taken his place. Also joining the board as a St Mary's nominee is Julia Mitchell.

Having been a trustee of Moss Cottages for 15 years, Madeleine Legg decided to step down from the chairmanship and the trust in November 2022. The trustees are most grateful to Madeleine for her outstanding service to the trust and to the residents. Phillida Shaw has succeeded Madeleine as chair.

The current trustees are Rev'd Christine Campbell, Cath Connolly, Rachel Godschalk, Julia Mitchell, Jane Munns, Ann Robertshaw, Phillida Shaw and John Rhodes.

More information about Moss Cottages is available from the clerk to the trustees.

### Natalie Terry

Clerk to the trustees

☎ 742948





## Ashwell Cottage Garden

The Cottage Garden was bought with the help of local fundraising over 50 years ago; the 'Ashwell Village Trust' article tells its story. The garden remains to this day an important village amenity, not only as a visually appealing open space in the middle of the village, but as a place of peace and relaxation in an ever-changing, busy world.

Many of the garden plants have been kindly donated by local gardeners and they reflect the plants that grow well in our local conditions. Recently, we tried to update our planting to showcase the range of plants available to first time gardeners and people new to our village.

The garden is maintained by volunteers who meet once a month for an hour. We are always looking for more volunteers, so if you would like to get involved, please contact me:

**Martyn Hird**

✉ [lona1996@aol.com](mailto:lona1996@aol.com)

## Ashwell Village Trust

In 1968, the garden created by villager Albert Skerman on derelict land next to his cottage in Swan Street was threatened with development. The village raised funds to save it. In 1986 another threat to its future was averted and a charity, the Ashwell Village Trust, was set up to administer the garden. You may see its charity statement on the Ashwell charities page of the Ashwell Parish Council's website:

⬆ [www.ashwell.gov.uk](http://www.ashwell.gov.uk).

Work to keep the garden looking its best and acting as a welcome refuge for villagers, their families, as well as visitors is done by a loyal band of volunteers led by Martyn Hird. Under his able direction the garden looks magnificent. Please see his report above. Should the supply of volunteers dry up, the trust is there to support. The trust could also

intervene if any other 'lands and buildings of beauty or historic interest, ecological or scientific importance within the parish' come to light.

The trust has now caught up with various AGMs affected by Covid, and the minutes of the AGM held in person on 28 June 2022 are available.

The trustees are: Graham Lee (as chairman of the parish council), David Sims and Mark White (parish councillors), Amanda Bettany, Simon Bettany (Hon Treasurer), Gordon Hill, Claire Moynihan, Liz Moynihan, Jane Porter (trustee in her own right).

Donations to support the trust can be made via the parish council clerk: ✉ [clerk@ashwell.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ashwell.gov.uk)

**Liz Moynihan**

Trustee

✉ [docdocfergus@gmail.com](mailto:docdocfergus@gmail.com)

☎ 742363





View of the surgery from Gardiners Lane

## Ashwell and Bassingbourn Patients' Group

Founded in 2007, the group is made up of representatives of the villages covered by our two surgeries. The principal aims are to convey patients' concerns to the practice, to work together to improve services and to keep patients informed of developments. We meet every two months and publish minutes on the surgery website and in village journals.

The past year has seen us emerge from the worst of the pandemic and, with a new practice manager in post, begin to review service delivery. The whole of the NHS is under immense pressure and GP surgeries are no exception. Demand regularly exceeds capacity, often resulting in long waits for an appointment. The problem is exacerbated by recruitment difficulties. Finding doctors and nurses, even to work in such an inviting part of the world as ours, is a huge challenge. And of course, the whole service is underfunded. But all is not doom and gloom. We are fortunate in having three full-time GPs who are well established and known to patients, giving us a level of stability which general practices often lack. We also employ a permanent locum and from January 2023 will have recruited an additional GP, meaning there are now five GPs. We are fortunate that senior members of our practice team attend our meetings, enabling points to be raised directly and explanations provided. This is by no means the norm for such groups as ours.

Here are some of the topics which regularly crop up at our meetings:

- The telephone system which challenges patients and staff alike. There is talk of a new system, funded by the NHS, but it's a long time coming.
- Appointments: we are intending to carry out a survey of patients' experiences and views, which we hope will lead to improvements.

- Recruitment issues.
- A Patients' Guide, which we hope will be of use to patients in their dealings with the surgery.
- And of course, discussion about the many examples of good and less good experiences reported to us by patients.

We were very sorry to learn that Brian Deal was departing after such long and valued service. But we are delighted to welcome Dhaval Patel as his successor. We are also forging closer links with the pharmacy in Bassingbourn.

Members of our group are:  
Rachel Capay (Steeple Morden)  
Tessa Cathcart (Bassingbourn)  
Peter Chapman (Ashwell)  
Elaine Douglass (Bassingbourn)  
Dr Matthew Jarvis (Senior Partner)  
Harry King (Hinxworth)  
Wendy Kitchener (Edworth)  
Graham Lee (representing Parish Councils)  
Mike Pearch (Ashwell)  
Katie Prince (Practice Manager)  
Detlev Popp (Guilden Morden)  
Nicola Reed (Operations Manager)

### Peter Chapman

Chair

✉ [peterchapman70@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:peterchapman70@yahoo.co.uk)







The Book Swap library in the Parish Room

## The Book Swap

Since the library service ceased to function in Ashwell, the Book Swap facility has taken its place. St Mary's Church provides the Parish Room as the venue and, with a few volunteers, we are now well established and have a steady stream of borrowers. The service is free of charge and there is no signing in or out of books - bring a book or two to swap, or if you cannot bear to part with any books, we are happy for you to borrow one.

The Book Swap facility is available whenever the post office is open, and on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and noon when the Parish Office is open. Thanks to the Book Weekend, we were able to change all our stock of books in October. Teresa King does an excellent job in keeping the books in order and selling those we no longer need for a nominal fee. In addition, the Book Swap Café is open on the third Saturday of each month (but check *Ashwell Village News* for any variation) between 10.30am and noon when coffee, tea and biscuits are on offer for a mere 50p. Any money made goes to St Mary's Tower Fund.

In March, the Book Swap Café team hosted a soup and bacon roll lunch which raised a whopping total of £707 for Jimmy's homeless shelter in Cambridge. A massive 'thank you' to Jono at Crumps for generously donating the delicious bacon, and to Days for the baps and french bread. We would never have raised such an amount without the wonderful support from our village businesses. Our gratitude also goes to the soup makers, cooks, servers and people of Ashwell, who not only came but gave so generously.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Café and, of course, the Book Swap is available whenever the Parish Room is open.

**Eileen ten Hove**

on behalf of the Book Swap team

✉ eileentenhove01@john-lewis.com

## Ashwell Village Hall

The following groups are now using the hall: Cubs and Scouts, Ashwell Preschool, Theatre Club, Brownies, Pilates, AJS Fitness, Yoga, Zumba, Ashwell Dance, Circle Dance, Karate, Ashwell Big Sing, Exercise and Ballet.

There are still gaps in the schedule and regular users are welcome.

Hertfordshire Performing Arts ran a five day workshop during the summer holidays. Several parties are taking place, and the Ashwell Theatre Club put on a Christmas pantomime in January 2023.

The floor in the main hall has been sanded and re-sealed. Other downstairs floors have been deep-cleaned and sealed. Lights have been replaced with ones giving improved lighting and lower energy use. Various maintenance issues have been addressed.

Andy Dolby has now taken over as chairman. Volunteers to assist with routine tasks such as publicity, utility management, and maintenance are always welcome.

Efforts to convert the Hall, now a regulated charity, to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation continue.

### Andy Dolby

Chairman

✉ AndyD@Sigma-Office.net

☎ 742783 / 07740 309286

### Rosemary Pearch

Clerk

✉ rosypearch@live.com

☎ 742913 / 07929 972079

⬆ <http://ashwellvillagehall.org.uk>

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## Ashwell Village Museum



Throughout the year, we were open to all at our normal times, but behind the scenes, much has been going on to catch up with regular duties that may have been neglected during the unusual events of the last three years. These activities are mainly cataloguing, documenting and digitising old accessions and new arrivals, but also answering questions from people all over the world about Ashwell history, often prompted by our renewed website.

The website update, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, reached a satisfactory conclusion, despite taking longer than planned. It all seemed easy – just copy and paste everything into the new format. However, the update eventually involved many helpers in regularising the data from our catalogue and putting it into a compatible form ready to be uploaded. The website is now easier to use and will work better on tablets and phones. It should be future proof.

One major addition to the website has been the development of the 'Roll of Honour' section. Thanks mainly to Lynette Wray, you can now search, in a myriad of ways, the information we discovered about the 286 soldiers associated with Ashwell who served in the First World War. Perhaps it is now time to pursue Second World War veterans before we forget them.

In October, we restarted our regular 'Makers at the Museum' meetings, which are held on the second Tuesday of the month from 2.30-4pm. There is a short talk by an enthusiast, a practical session and of course tea and cakes. The first meeting was

on the subject of corn dollies and was ably led by our local expert, Sandra Barker. It was also an opportunity to bring out from the museum store many straw-made objects that are not normally on display, including some rare 100 year old, two-metre-long corn dollies which are fortunately still in good condition. All are welcome! You can find out about future dates on the 'Events' page of our website.

As part of our conservation plan, we have recently obtained a grant to survey and carry out conservation work on our metal archaeology items, in particular, a dagger found by metal detectorists, but also some other small finds like rings and arrowheads.

In January, the purchases we made with help from The Hertfordshire Heritage Fund (and additional funding from the Friends) were loaned for an exhibition in North Hertfordshire Museum - a Percy Sheldrick Embroidery, Peter Gilman paintings and a gold ring.

Our latest special display has been on *Ashwell Doctors of the 20th Century* including the collection of medical instruments made by the Moynihan family. The display was open during Ashwell at Home along with a book of the same theme by Dr Fergus Moynihan, which you can still purchase.

New arrivals this year have included a Peter Gilman sketch from the 1980s of the church tower when it was last in scaffold and a Stone Age flint axe dug up in a garden.

With the help of the trustees, the Friends, the cleaning team and curatorial volunteers, we will continue to care for the collection you have placed in our hands for posterity, answer any nagging historical questions and welcome you all.

**Peter Greener and Sarah Talks**

✉ enquiries@ashwellmuseum.org.uk

☎ 742956

Makers in the Museum straw plait workshop



## Friends of Ashwell Village Museum

The Friends of Ashwell Village Museum exist to support the curator and trustees in the day-to-day smooth running of the museum. We take responsibility for keeping the museum open during the year on Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays, or at any other time if a group or a special village event requires us to participate. We have a number of volunteers who share this role, as well as several who clean the museum to ensure it is welcoming and pristine.

If you are interested in helping, please contact any of us. New volunteers and new skills are always very much appreciated.

Our other activities involve arranging talks and trips throughout the year to help with fund-raising. In 2022, we had two very enjoyable trips to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire and the City of Coventry with visits to the cathedral, transport museum and other museums. For 2023, we are planning a trip to the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon. This trip will be on Wednesday 31 May, so if you are interested, please contact any of us or look in the *Ashwell Village News* for more details.

Our AGM in 2023 will take place on 15 March and we are planning two other talks and another coach trip in the autumn. If you are a Friend of the Museum, you will receive the occasional email updating you on our activities and we put a monthly article in the *Ashwell Village News* on all imminent events, as well as on the museum notice board. Our first speaker in 2022 was Peter Rawlings who, as the architect behind the museum restoration in 2019, informed us of the processes involved, which was fascinating. Later in the year, we hosted our

popular Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews from North Herts Museum Service. Keith is always a welcome speaker.

In addition to the above, we have continued to run the Sunday teas in the Parish Room during the winter from 2.30-5pm. We are grateful to St Mary's for letting us host this, but we are aware that it is a very helpful community activity so Friends and locals can enjoy a refreshing cup of tea and some homemade cakes.

The Friends committee is quite small, but we are grateful to have Jill Powell as chair, David Hall as treasurer, Karen Mills as secretary, as well as Monica Boggust, Sue Hall, Jane Buxton and Tony Francis. Hilary Masham helps us with arranging the trips and talks.

If you want to know more about the Friends please contact

**Jill Powell**

Chair

☎ 742318

**David Hall**

☎ 743799

**Karen Mills**

☎ 742155

**The Yearbook team welcomes new members.**

If you are interested in editing, design, or even a bit of journalism, we would love to hear from you:

✉ [nortonmahy@gmail.com](mailto:nortonmahy@gmail.com)

☎ 742677



Launch of Dr Moynihan's book in the Ashwell Museum



## Ashwell Village Museum lottery

**Reg Charity 271473**

**Lottery Reg No LC/LOT 9280**

### Lottery Results

At the end of the third year of operation, the museum lottery has continued to be a great success. During that time, the lottery has contributed £8,400 towards ongoing running costs of the museum. The same amount has been distributed as prizes and none of the money from ticket sales has been used for administration or expenses.

The lottery is ongoing with quarterly draws at the end of March, June, September and December, with 50% of ticket money donated to the museum.

The winners for past the year were:

	First	Second	Third
Dec 2021	L Spencer	S Jackson	V Campbell
Mar 2022	F Moynihan	W Skelding	K Mills
Jun 2022	K Mills	E Fitzsimmons	J Rhodes
Sep 2022	A Church	G McLearnon	C Godfrey

The museum lottery makes a vital contribution to the upkeep of the museum and the trustees extend their gratitude to all those who have taken part.

Join the lottery now to help ensure the future of the museum and your chance to win one of the quarterly prizes. It costs £25 per quarter - the same as a weekly National Lottery ticket - but Ashwell Village Museum Lottery odds are just 70:1. For an entry form and terms and conditions, please contact me:

**Shirley Wardrop**

✉ [ashwellvillagemuseum@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellvillagemuseum@gmail.com)

☎ 742861

## Greening Ashwell

Established in 2020 and with a new committee in 2021, Greening Ashwell is a community group which aims to ensure that the green areas in the village are maintained and enhanced, both for the enjoyment of the people of Ashwell but also to help preserve local flora and fauna. In our small way, we want to help combat the effects of climate change. Working in consultation with local authority maintenance requirements, with organisations like The Woodland Trust, the Ashwell Parish Council, local experts and residents, we make sure that any planting has the full consent of the community.



Planting out saplings

Some examples of our work to date include the planting of native hedge and wildflowers at Chalk Bank, and a wildflower border by the new chicane at West End. All the wildflowers we plant are native to our local area. In January 2022, we took part in the North Herts Council's (NHC) 10,000 tree giveaway campaign. We received 50 trees which consisted of a mixture of silver birch, rowan and





wild cherry, which we then distributed to villagers or planted in agreed locations in the village. This campaign is ensuring that, although we are losing trees due to new developments or natural causes, future generations will still enjoy living in a leafy village. We consulted with the NHC to organise the planting of new trees to replace those lost on Silver Street and Dixies Close. We applied to the 'Copse in a Box' competition run by Moor Trees and won a free kit for growing trees from seed. We were busy collecting and planting seeds in the autumn using this resource with the help of some pupils from Ashwell School.

We also organised a tree trail around the village during Ashwell at Home to highlight some of the beautiful trees in the village and plan to repeat this again this year. We are looking for a site for a community orchard, similar to those created in other local villages, and are currently in discussion about a possible site.

Last year, we took over the role of maintaining the Springs and began by planting wild daffodils and bluebells there in the autumn. We cleared pathways and cut back dead wood to enable safe access. We aim to contribute to the ongoing development and maintenance of this area, which is a site of special scientific interest and an important wildlife area, as well as being a beautiful place for local families to visit and enjoy.

Additionally, we have recently taken possession of an allotment at Foresters and have started creating a wildlife allotment for the benefit of the community, with covered pond, beehive, and wildflower borders. We intend for this to be a resource for the whole community and particularly welcome the involvement of local youth groups in this project going forward.

We are very pleased that, thanks to a donation from the Ashwell Show Distributions Committee, we now have funding for more tools and gardening

equipment, which will be extremely useful for all our projects.

If you would like to get involved, we welcome volunteers of all ages and abilities. Whether you can spare an hour here or there or are looking to make a regular commitment, please do contact our secretary, Sherran Chalkley, on the email below to be added to our mailing list, or look out for our regular updates in the *Ashwell Village News* or on Ashwell Hub. We meet monthly to work on projects in the village.



### **Fionnuala George**

Chair

✉ [f.george847@btinternet.com](mailto:f.george847@btinternet.com)

### **Clare Docking**

Chair

✉ [clarecdocking@gmail.com](mailto:clarecdocking@gmail.com)

### **Kate Blake**

Treasurer

### **Sherran Chalkley**

Secretary

✉ [sherranmandrell@hotmail.com](mailto:sherranmandrell@hotmail.com)



## Ashwell Walks



*Ashwell Walks* is a series of podcasts by Sally Fletcher and Diane Jacoutot that takes walks around the Parish and gives them an interesting twist. The running commentary is not only informative, but entertaining too. Try one!

↑ <https://ashwellwalks.weebly.com/>, or on  
↑ [www.ashwellmuseum.org.uk/category/whats-on/](http://www.ashwellmuseum.org.uk/category/whats-on/)

## Getting involved in your community

If you would like to get involved in community activities, the contact details for the organisations in this section of the Yearbook might be a good place to start. But there are many other ways in which your help would also be invaluable to the village, such as the following, for example:

Parish council working parties, eg at the Springs p7  
Youth organisations pp62-66  
Charities pp72-78  
Ashwell Quarry Nature Reserve p73  
Church fund-raising, eg: the Flea Market, Book Weekend or Christmas Fair p117  
Sunday Afternoon Teas p104  
Church Tower Restoration p97  
Ashwell Music Festival p113  
Ashwell at Home, the Village Open Day p112  
Ashwell Show p109  
Being a volunteer driver for Royston & District Community Transport p138

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# EDUCATION



# Ashwell Primary School



Ashwell Primary School continues to be extremely popular, with only a few spaces available in some of our year groups. The school currently has 218 children on roll from Nursery through to Year 6. In September 2022, we extended our Nursery

provision and it is now open for both lunch club and afternoon sessions, to cater for 30 hours of provision per week.

The school remains true to its ethos and values - 'Shaping futures: Together we learn, care and grow'. We strive to provide a happy, nurturing school where everyone is made to feel welcome. The school has seen some changes in staffing, but we are fortunate to have a fantastic team of dedicated staff who have settled into their new roles and bring a wealth of experience and fresh ideas to the classroom. It is also great to be able to work with such supportive parents, carers and governors.



Ashwell School District Sports Team, July 2022

The year 2022 will most certainly be remembered as the year we were able to return to complete normality in school and run a full programme of parent events and curriculum enrichment activities.

On 11 and 12 May 2022, Ashwell School finally had a long-awaited Section 8 Ofsted inspection. We were excited at the opportunity to share all of the hard work that the staff have put in during recent years. Ofsted confirmed that Ashwell School continues to be a good school. The report stated that:

"Pupils enjoy learning. At the same time, teachers make lessons engaging and fun. Pupils feel involved in their learning and achieve well."

"Pupils are never far from a book. They talk with enthusiasm about what they are reading. By the time they get into Key Stage 2, most pupils can read with confidence."

"Pupils feel safe and nurtured at the school. They treat each other with respect and tolerance."

"Pupils get a wide range of additional experiences through clubs and trips. There is something to meet everyone's interests, so that pupils can pursue their interests and passions fully."



Year 6 at the London Eye

In July, our Year 6 children took part in a week long residential visit to the Isle of Wight. It was action packed, with a mixture of visits to theme parks and historical sites. The trip was a real success and a lot of fun was had, creating lifelong memories for both children and staff.

In October, we took Year 5 to Burwell House, a victorian house in North Cambridgeshire. They spent three days and two nights there. During their visit, they put together their own TV production in a purpose built TV studio, and developed a range of orienteering skills in geography field work.

It continues to be our mission to provide as many enriching experiences for our children as we possibly can.

We continue to strive to improve our school environment for both children and staff. In doing so, we have now taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint. All our flat roof spaces now have solar panels installed on them. In addition to this, we have redesigned communal areas and office spaces, enabling a welcoming main entrance. Work is currently taking place to replace the entire heating system in the older part of our building, which will see us move to an air source heat pump rather than a gas boiler.





Bounce workshop, March 2022

During 2022, staff have worked hard to completely review, restructure and refine our curriculum and all subject areas. Detailed information about this can be found in the curriculum section of our school website.

Finally, at the end of the autumn term, we sadly said goodbye to Mrs Wild. She has been at Ashwell School for seven years and in that time held the role of both SENCO and, more recently, Deputy Headteacher. I want to thank her for all her hard work and dedication. Mrs Wild has made a significant contribution towards making the school the place it is today and played a huge role in supporting children achieve their potential.

## 2022 Highlights

**January** – Year 6 visit to Houses of Parliament

**February** – Feeling Good Week, Safer Internet Day, Year 3 class assembly

**March** – World Book Day, PE Bounce workshop, World Maths Day, Year 2 scooter training, Science Week, Comic Relief, Year 3/4 Production

**April** – Year 2 class assembly

**May** – Year 6 SATs, Year 1 class assembly, Diversity Week, Platinum Jubilee celebrations

**June** – Reception class assembly, Quidditch Day, International Day, Year 4 Celtic Harmony Camp, Year 5/6 production.

**July** – Year 6 Isle of Wight residential, sports day, PTA summer fete.

**September** – Harvest Festival.

**October** – Year 5 visit to Burwell House, Year 6 class assembly, whole school art day, school football team

competed in the Rural Schools Football Tournament.

**November** – Anti-Bullying Week, Children in Need, PTA fireworks event, Year 5 class assembly, Year 3 trip to Fitzwilliam Museum, Year 5 CCI workshops, Christmas bazaar.

**December** – Year 4 class assembly, Early Years Nativity, Key Stage 1 production, Widdershins Theatre production, Christmas lunch.

I would like to thank everyone in the community for their continued support. It is a real privilege to be the headteacher of this fantastic village school. I look forward to ensuring that the school continues to play a central part in the life of the village in the months and years to come.

**Simon England**

Headteacher

☎ 742297

## School Contact Details

Ashwell Primary School, Silver Street,  
Ashwell, Baldock, Herts. SG7 5QL

**Headteacher:** Mr Simon England

**School office:** Mrs Tracy Bowen

✉ admin@ashwell.herts.sch.uk

☎ 742297

**PTA:**

ashwellpta@gmail.com



School international day lunch, July 2022



## Ashwell School Parent Teacher Association

The main aim of the PTA is to bring together parents and teachers with a common goal of fundraising for much needed support to provide extra materials, equipment and facilities to enrich the education of the children of Ashwell Primary School. We provide a link between parents and the school, and an opportunity for parents to become more actively involved.

In 2022, we were back to more normal fundraising, which was amazing. We held our usual Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day shops in the school, which were a huge hit with the kids.

We put on Easter bingo, which was great fun and the children loved it. We also helped out with Ashwell at Home by providing lunches at the school. It was great to be a part of community events. We also had a disco. After a few years without them, the children thought it was brilliant fun.

The Summer Fête was also back on. We had a bouncy castle, a 20ft inflatable slide, funfair rides, fête-style stalls and BB Pizza serving food.

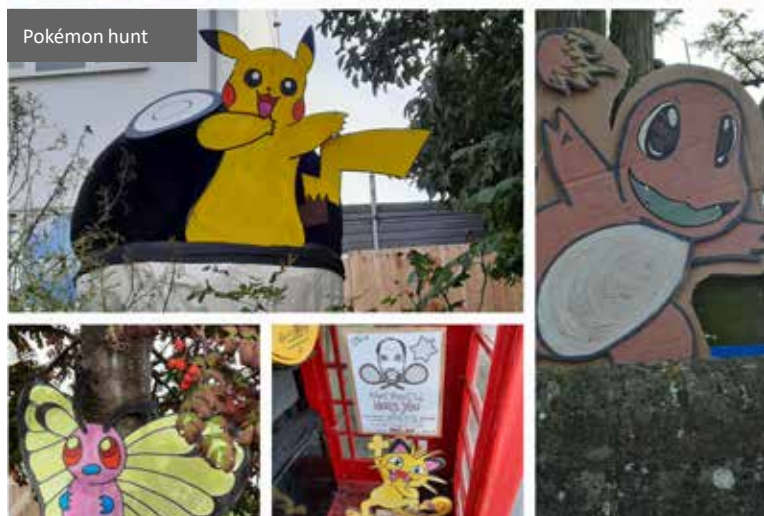
In October, we held a new event; a 'Pokémon Hunt' around Ashwell. We had a very talented dad, Rich Keam, who made all the Pokémon pictures which were displayed around the village. Families purchased maps which helped them to find the Pokémon. The kids loved it, so well done, Rich!

The fireworks display of 2022 was the biggest and best we have ever held. We had a complete sellout, with 750 tickets sold. We had a slight change this year with some funfair rides provided by C.W. Abbott. We also had food provided by the normal PTA BBQ, plus BB Pizza. Everyone enjoyed an amazing fireworks display put on by Tony Dean,

Duncan Wardrop, Paul Terry, Alistair Firth and Dave Undery. A big thank you to them for another great display! The fundraising from this event was a record high, which is fabulous.

In November, we had a team of runners, including Mr England, a few other teachers, parents, plus an ex-student at the Bass Belle Ten Miler. Many thanks to everyone involved.

Pokémon hunt



We'd like to thank all the parents and other people who volunteered their time to support our events. Without you, we wouldn't be able to raise the money the school needs. We are losing two main members of the team in 2023, so the PTA is calling for new parents to step up and join the committee, otherwise, it will not be able to plan these amazing events in the future.

We have raised a great amount for the school over this year, and we are very grateful to everyone who helped to support us.

**Yvonne Wright**

Chair

✉ ashwellpta@gmail.com



## Ashwell Primary School art day

Our annual art day, which fell on the last school day of the first half-term, Friday 21 October 2022, was a huge success. Once again, teachers planned and delivered a number of sessions all linked to the same theme, this year's being 'Faces'.

Children of all ages across the school came together to learn about the history of portraiture in its various forms and were intrigued to know that artists across the world today, and indeed in the past, have been producing 'selfies' since humans have inhabited the earth! The children enjoyed exploring various forms of portraiture, presented through various mediums: fine drawing, painting, abstract composition and impressionism.

Teachers across the school reported that children spoke with passion, interest and intrigue on the day about their reactions to the work of various artists. The children voiced their opinions, both expressively and sensitively, and used their artistic voices and subject vocabulary to convey their views articulately. It was especially fun when exploring the self portraiture of famous artists and learning how difficult it actually is to draw a self portrait too! Some very contemplative moments as well as amusing ones were shared on the day.

The photographs you see in the gallery on the pages that follow are a collection shared with our school community as a part of a pop-up art gallery prepared after half term by the school staff. As you can see, a huge variety of work and range of chosen media resulted in a fabulous gallery. You never cease to amaze us, children of Ashwell School!

**Emelie Allworth**

Art and design subject leader

## Ashwell Baby and Toddler Group

**Ashwell Baby and Toddler Group runs on Tuesdays (term time only) 9.30-11.15am in the URC Hall, £2.00 per child. Card payments are now accepted.**

This group has been running for many years and it is much loved by families in and around Ashwell. My two young children have had their first few years growing up with this group.

I took the reins over in September 2021 and have enjoyed meeting new mums in the process. I've made some slight changes to the group but feedback from my attendees has been hugely positive.

With these new changes, the group now focuses on the children interacting through various different kinds of play, while the babies still very much enjoy rolling around the soft mats with our many baby toys.

We have reintroduced snack time, which the children love. They get to sit around a table together enjoying some healthy snacks, not forgetting the adults who get to enjoy a hot cuppa and a home baked treat while they attend the sessions.

In 2023, we plan to schedule a dedicated 'messy play' session once a month. During the warmer months, the water table and outdoor play will be a regular occurrence.

These sessions are run by myself (a busy working mum) with the help of the mums, dads, nannies and grandparents who attend. It is all supported by volunteers. If anyone is interested in helping to keep the group running, please contact me.

**Abby Vallely**

Treasurer, Ashwell Baby and Toddler Group

✉ [mrsavallely@gmail.com](mailto:mrsavallely@gmail.com)

For further details please see our Facebook site:

➦ [www.facebook.com/ashwellbabytoddlergroup](https://www.facebook.com/ashwellbabytoddlergroup)





School nursery class pond dipping

## Ashwell Preschool



Ashwell Preschool (formerly known as 'Playgroup') had a busy 2022, with 16 children on the books by the spring term. From the spring of 2022,

with Covid restrictions eased, the valuable transition work resumed between the preschool and the village school, enabling the latest cohort of 14 rising-three and three year-olds due to start in the Nursery class at school in September to visit the school for a very enjoyable interactive music session, led by their prospective new teachers, Mrs Denham and Mrs Prothero.

We ran a very popular afternoon club during term times throughout 2022, catering for many of the previous year's preschool class, who were walked down to Ashwell Village Hall from the school at the end of the morning's Nursery session for some afternoon relaxation and fun.

The leavers were given an excellent end of term party in July, when we also said a very sad goodbye to our former setting manager, Andrea McGowen Wood, and to one of our key workers, Karen Hipgrave, who will be missed, not least for her enthusiasm in leading a sing along! Andrea had worked within the preschool for nearly 12 years by this time, gaining her Early Years Educator qualifications. Most recently, Andrea very capably managed the setting for three years, including throughout the pandemic, where she diligently kept up with the latest government and North Herts guidelines, developed educational material shared by WhatsApp for children whilst in lockdown. She maintained an extremely high level of safety for all concerned within the setting once we were instructed to reopen in January 2021, resulting in zero Covid cases originating from the setting. We wish both ladies every success in their new roles.

From September 2022, our experienced Level 3 EYE, Natascha Waller, took over the role of manager of the preschool and has risen to this challenge admirably. Tascha has been well supported by key workers, Sophie Stiquel and Lisa Sheridan. We are delighted that Sarah Rodway will be returning to the setting full time from January 2023 as her maternity leave ends.



A BIG thank you to everyone who has donated to the preschool in 2022, with a special mention of the Ashwell Show Committee, for their generous support.

We are also very grateful to the Henry Colbron Trust for continued support.

Early Years settings, such as our preschool, provide an invaluable first experience of independent socialisation away from home, and yet are always short of funding and always looking for more support. If you feel able to help in any shape or form, please do contact us. We'd love to hear from you!

### Merry Pertwee

Treasurer, Ashwell Preschool

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📌 [www.ashwellplaygroup.co.uk](http://www.ashwellplaygroup.co.uk)



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## Art day at Ashwell Primary School

Nursery and reception: potato printing



Year 3: self portraits and clay work



Year 4: self portraits



Year 6: free choice





Year 5: ink printing



Year 1: masks



Year 4



Year 2: faces of nature



Year 6: self portraits



A group of six women and a baby are posed in front of a building entrance. The entrance features a light-colored wall, a blue door with a glass panel, and a semi-circular window above it. Two large white columns flank the door. The women are dressed in casual attire, including a dark blue top with a patterned vest, a striped shirt, a brown top, a white embroidered blouse, and a green top with yellow pants. A baby is lying in a red stroller in the foreground. The word "FEATURES" is overlaid in large, bold, white letters with a black outline.

# FEATURES



# Memories of Queen Elizabeth II

## Michael White

I joined the RAF in 1951 aged 16 years as an aircraft apprentice. While completing the three year apprenticeship, I learned to play the cavalry trumpet and my first encounter with the Queen was as one of the RAF trumpeters playing *The Last Post* at the London Cenotaph in the first two years of her reign.

Shortly after completing the apprenticeship in 1954, I applied for a posting to HM the Queen's Flight, then based at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire. The flight consisted of three Vickers Vikings (hand polished), a de Havilland Heron and a Westland Whirlwind helicopter. The role of the Queen's Flight was to fly the Queen, members of the royal family and other VIPs and visiting dignitaries on UK internal flights, plus some internal flights when they were overseas.

I was part of the team responsible for the service, maintenance and repair of the aircraft instruments, specialising in those involved in navigation (ie compasses, autopilot and instrument landing systems etc).

I served on the Queen's Flight from 1954 to 1958 and encountered members of the royal family on many occasions. I was part of the support team which accompanied the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on their three week royal tour of Nigeria in 1956.

When I left the Queen's Flight in 1958 to work on Thor Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, I was awarded a Royal Victorian Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 1959 for personal service to the sovereign.

I was invited to Buckingham Palace with two guests, my wife Sylvia and my mother. As the Queen was away on a tour, the awards were presented by the Queen Mother.

## Susan Greenbank

My parents were presented to the Queen in November 1961, when my father was posted to the Canadian embassy in London. The photograph was taken as they left home that evening. Unfortunately, no photographs were taken at Buckingham Palace.

My mother had her dress made for the occasion. The invitation from Buckingham Palace came with strict instructions on acceptable attire for the

evening. Dresses were to be long, with modest necklines and with sleeves. Short sleeves were acceptable, provided long gloves were worn.



Susan Greenbank's parents being presented to the Queen

## Tracy Young

In the summer of 1986, I was in the final year of my physics degree and living close to our Runnymede campus near Windsor. To while away the time between revision stints, my friends and I would often go walking in the nearby countryside. I remember a particularly sunny day wandering along and seeing large crowds, cars and horses... we then realised that we were walking next to the Windsor Polo Grounds. There was a polo match going on. Security was nowhere near as tight then as it is now, and my friends and I were able to climb over a low fence and walk around the car park, eventually reaching the polo ground itself. From the signs around, we realised we were witnessing the Cartier International Polo match! We mingled in the crowd and then watched a couple of chukkas. At half time, we were privileged to rush on to the ground, and push down all the divots that the horses had lifted up. Only then did we look up to the royal box and realise that the Queen herself was looking down!

## Margie Wallace

In 1994, the London school at which I taught reached its centenary. As a newly retired deputy head, I was invited back for the royal visit, the culmination of the year's celebrations. The Queen toured the classrooms, talking to the pupils with warmth and interest; she planted a tree and listened to an opera, following the sort of programme she must have performed hundreds of times, and apparently enjoying it. How easy is it, I wondered, to accept a cup of coffee and a crumbly biscuit from a proud ten year old from the domestic science class, go round a large room being introduced to 25 or so people, shaking them by the hand and exchanging a few



words, and arrive at the other end of the room with the biscuit imperceptibly eaten and the coffee drunk without spills?

The only slight hitch in a very happy day happened when the headmistress and the Queen entered the lift to descend to the ground floor. The headmistress pressed the button and the lift didn't move. After several vain presses, the Queen said, "We'd better walk." Only later did the head realise that her gown, specially donned for the occasion, had been blocking the sensor.



## Denise Pearson

I was invited to the garden party at Buckingham Palace in July 2001, in appreciation of all the work I did for the Royal British Legion Women's Section in Collingham, near Wetherby, Yorkshire.

My grandmother and mother were founder members of the branch, which was formed in 1938, and I became a member in 1968. I was branch secretary from 1968 until I left Yorkshire in 2010. I was also minute secretary for South and West Yorkshire at their conferences and group secretary of the branches in the Wetherby area.

I had a marvellous afternoon at Buckingham Palace and was standing very close to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, when they were speaking to the Headmaster of Gordonstoun School, Scotland, and his wife.

We had a wonderful tea and a lovely walk round the grounds of the palace, listening to the bands which were playing there, one at the top near the terrace and the other at the end of the garden. It is hard to imagine when you see the front of Buckingham Palace that there are 44 acres of grounds which are all beautifully kept. I had a marvellous afternoon and will cherish the memory forever.

## Memories of King George VI



## Margie Wallace

At the small boarding school I attended, the bell rang unexpectedly in mid-morning and our teachers directed us to the big hall, where we lined up as if for morning assembly. It was clear from their expressions that they knew what we were yet to hear. The headmistress was already standing at the lectern on the platform, a dark outline against the windows.

She told us that the King had died during the night.

This was a King few of us had seen, but he was familiar to us from the newspapers and from the Gaumont or Pathé News films which were then part of every cinema programme. Most images showed him in uniform, among troops, visiting bomb damaged areas in London, or waving from the balcony at Buckingham Palace.

In peacetime, we had not long before watched the wedding of his daughter on the exciting new medium, television.

Perhaps we felt nearest to him when, as he made his Christmas broadcast, we sat by our radio sets urging him on to the next word, hoping by our efforts to improve his fluency.

As the headmistress gently broke the news, a few sobs were heard; but I remember a deep silence as we returned to our classrooms.

## Cliff Jenkinson

I was four years old when King George VI died and I remember watching his funeral procession on the television. I was totally puzzled by the coffin being on a gun carriage, which I thought must mean that someone had shot the King with a big gun. Everyone was so sad about it that I couldn't understand why they would have let that happen to



such a good man, who I felt from his portraits on the coins and stamps was almost as good as my dad. Needless to say, when I asked the grown-ups about it, they went off into complicated explanations which I didn't understand but did make me realise that I'd made a really silly mistake and perhaps he hadn't been shot after all.



## Christine Pickett

In August 1951, I was just 18 years old and had begun training as a nurse at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington when my mother died of cancer after a long illness. My father had died ten years before, so I now had to face the future without either of my parents.

I was born and brought up in Letchworth, but I had a married sister living in Bygrave and a brother in the Hertfordshire Police who was married and serving in Hatfield at that time. It was decided that I should go to live with my sister as I could no longer contemplate living and working away from home; so reluctantly, I gave up nursing and began work at Kayser Bondor Hosiery Factory in Baldock and was then sent to a London training school to be trained as a comptometer operator.

At that same time, the public were told that the King had undergone surgery, but we were not aware of the gravity of his illness. Then the following February came the announcement of his sudden death. The mood everywhere was of shock and sorrow as he had won the respect of the nation during the war years. Solemn music was played on the radio. Cinemas, theatres and sports grounds were closed. Even Parliament was adjourned as a mark of respect. People queued for hours to file past the King, lying in state in Westminster Hall.

This was long before the technology of today and very few people owned a television set. News was

conveyed by radio, newspapers and cinema newsreels. At the cinema, we were shown the haunting newsreel of the King waving farewell to his daughter a few days before his death, as she and Prince Philip began their Commonwealth tour.

On the day of the state funeral, people lined the streets to pay their respects as the procession passed and the next day there were newspaper pictures of the royal ladies all wearing black veils, as was the custom then. I remember feeling great sympathy for the two princesses, but also thinking how fortunate they were to still have a mother to support them.

It was a very different world then and we were still feeling the effects of the war. All young men had to undertake two years of National Service and several of my contemporaries were sent to fight in either Korea, Kenya or Cyprus. Food was still on ration and many things were in short supply, but we could look forward to the coronation, and the concept of a 'New Elizabethan Age' seemed to provide an antidote to all the lean years.

Looking back, so much was about to change, but we should never forget the stability and devotion to duty which Queen Elizabeth displayed throughout her seventy year reign.



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An early start: heading for the end of the queue at Bermondsey Beach

## Queueing for the Queen

As soon as I heard the news of the Queen's death, I knew that I wanted to pay my respects in person. It was something I'd wanted to do for the Queen Mother, but because of the age of my children, it just never happened. Now I wanted to pay my respects to our devoted Queen. How could it be that only two days prior to her death she'd still been at work, welcoming a new Prime Minister? Her death felt as if we'd suddenly been left rudderless. The one constant for nearly the entire population had gone.

I kept a close eye on the daily reports of the length of the queue and on Friday 16 September, I was up early and Lindsay drove me to Baldock station. I was on the train not long after 5.30am. Getting off at London Bridge station, I headed off for Tower Bridge and the queue. I saw another lady walking in the same direction and we soon struck up a conversation: yes, both making for the queue and both of us on our own. The other lady (Ann) and I joined the end of the queue which at that point was at Bermondsey Beach. Phew! At least it wasn't as far back as Southwark Park. For the first hour, the queue didn't move but it gave us an opportunity to speak to people both in front and behind. A mother and daughter from Dunstable in front and a charming young Polish man called Piotr behind. He had lived in the country for 17 years and was, "proud to be British".

When we did start moving, it was at a slow and steady pace, weaving through the streets but keeping the Thames in view for most of the journey.

Everyone was unfailingly cheerful and positive, despite the hours of queueing which we all knew lay ahead.

Special mention must be made to the police inspector from Devon and Cornwall to whom I spent some time chatting. He suggested that we play 'Police Bingo' and ask each officer we came across which area of the country they were from. Every officer was so helpful, so friendly and so delighted to be co-ordinating this huge flow of people wanting to pay their respects.

Coffee saviours arrived in the form of Daniel and Hannah who magnificently tracked me down and presented me with a caffeine boost and snacks.



... a chance to drop out for a 'comfort break'

As the queue snaked alongside Tower Bridge, yellow wrist bands were being handed out and there was an opportunity for a comfort break. Admittedly,



there was then a rather anxious moment trying to find one's walking companions, but arms were being waved and names shouted so that people could find their newly made friends.

Many venues such as the Globe Theatre were also offering 'loo stops' along the route and people outside Sea Containers House were handing out free tea and coffee.

At some point in the morning, the queue was officially closed because of the number of people trying to join it. We were so grateful to have started our journey at 7.30am - at least we were moving.



... and along the Embankment

It was something like 3pm when we reached the South Bank and were informed that there were about another five hours to go. Undaunted, we continued to walk in the brilliant September sunshine alongside the Thames and over Lambeth Bridge into gardens at Westminster Hall. Once in the gardens, we walked up and down row after row, knowing that we were very nearly at our destination. Members of the Scouting organisation were encouraging us on our journey and doing a wonderful job in collecting any rubbish and, more importantly, collecting unopened and sealed food which was then going to be shared with food banks.

As we walked through the dusk, the flag which had been lowered on Westminster Hall was raised. The new King and his siblings had arrived to stand guard by their mother's coffin. Cheers and applause went up from the queueing crowd.

We eventually moved through the security checks and up the stairs into Westminster Hall and suddenly we were there, all the hours of queueing finally over. The mood had now changed; people were quiet and tears were close to the surface. We walked past Her Majesty's coffin in stunned silence.

The coffin looked so very small. It felt overwhelming. Many bowed and nodded their respects to Her Majesty and moved away, but then turned back to look once more at the end of an era.



... then Westminster Gardens

And then we were out into the cold night air, saying farewell to people we'd met nearly 13 hours before. Hugs and photographs were exchanged and promises made to meet up.

It was truly an honour and a privilege to have been part of the queue. To have paid our respects to our remarkable Queen felt the least we could do. There was also a palpable feeling that we were queueing for others who, for whatever reason, couldn't be there.

As Kirsty Young so movingly and eloquently expressed on the day of Her Majesty's funeral, "The weight of our collective sorrow is testament to the depth of affection in which she is held. Queen Elizabeth II is gone but she will surely never be forgotten."

**Melanie Dawson-Dew**



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Inna's birthday party



Sofii, Maxim and Danko back in Ukraine

## Ashwell support for Ukraine

When the government announced the Homes for Ukraine scheme, many people in the village wanted to help in some way. Back in March 2022, a meeting was organised to co-ordinate the village efforts. Vivienne Reed, who headed up the Baldock group, came to talk and it was agreed we should all work together. It was then that Baldock and Ashwell Action Aid Ukraine (BAAAU) was formed. Fund-raising activities, with Ashwell events coordinated by Jo Rhodes, raised thousands to support the 17 families hosted locally by BAAAU.

Subsequently, three families in the village decided to host, with the rest of the village group to support them. Fionnuala George and family hosted Inna and her daughter, Zlata. Heidi Hall and family hosted Olga and Daniel. Olivia Hall and family hosted Olha, Sofii and three month old baby, Danko. Sofii and family lived independently in Rose Cottage, which was furnished and equipped entirely thanks to the generosity of the village. They were enormously grateful. For the families living in Ashwell, transport was always going to be an issue and the group came to the rescue to help with lifts to shops, language classes etc. Olga in particular appreciated this support as she needed to be out of the village most days for language classes and appointments.

After Zlata obtained a place at Highfield School in Letchworth, Inna and Zlata made the move to the town. Olga and Daniel moved to Stevenage as this gave Olga work opportunities and greater independence. Sofii and family settled well into the village and made friends at baby groups etc. They decided to return to Ukraine to stay with their family in the relative safety of Lviv, as Sofii's husband, Maxim, was being conscripted. Since returning, she has been able to see him intermittently and importantly, Danko can see his dad. We were sad to see them

go, but understood their decision and we are still in regular contact.

The village really came together to support these families through lifts, donations, fundraising events and friendship.

Thanks to everyone who provided their support.

**Kate Blake**  
**Katrina McCarthy**

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Gateway to Village Hall, proposed but never built

## Centenary of the Village Hall

**Opened 7 December 1922**

On 7 December 1922, the new Ashwell Village Hall was opened by Lord Robert Cecil. Thanks were given to Mrs Fordham of Ashwell Bury for her generosity in converting the 'shell' into a hall, a task which was masterminded by the architect, Mr Morley Horder.

Lord Cecil gave a talk on the League of Nations and then there was the presentation of Red Cross War Service medals. This was followed by tea and refreshments, which raised £30. In the evening, there was entertainment by Mr Dan Hall and his concert party.

At a public meeting the previous year, a large majority decided that a village hall would be a valuable asset to village life and that the Maltings, formerly Page's Brewery, would be suitable for conversion. The building cost £500 and the conversion would be £750, which Mrs Fordham offered to pay. There was a series of fund raising events throughout the year and the Women's Institute provided 130

chairs. It was proposed that there would be facilities for a reading room, billiard and games room, public baths, a large hall for concerts and a library.



Billiard table in the Men's Club

Initially, the Village Hall was much used by the newly formed Men's Club, a theatre club, the Women's Institute and a thriving choral society.

**Peter Greener**

Main Hall in the 1930s



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Brotherhood House in 1951. Note the five doors, the one on the right being for Day's shop and accommodation



## The Guildhouse of the Brotherhood of St John the Baptist

One of the iconic buildings of Ashwell is the Guildhouse. Please note this is one word and not two as there is a building alongside called the Guild House, even though it never was one. The full title of the building, 57, 59 and 61 High Street, is the Guildhouse of the Brotherhood of St John the Baptist.

There are, as with so much in the past, stories and assumptions about this building and the brotherhood/guild. I hope to lay some incorrect assumptions to rest.

Guilds existed in the medieval period for three reasons: firstly, there were those which were akin to the local government. Secondly, there were the craft guilds, created to protect and regulate particular occupations and trades such as goldsmiths, merchant taylors, drapers, butchers, etc. Thirdly, there were the religious guilds which were endowed by members so that a priest could be employed to say prayers and masses for the dead. They also undertook charitable works. This was the reason for the foundation of the Ashwell brotherhood/guild.

Sometime in the medieval period a group of men, and possibly women, in Ashwell formed a guild or fraternity/brotherhood dedicated to St John the Baptist. Over time the guild was endowed with land, money and valuable objects. The earliest record we have of a bequest is in the 1457 will of William Freeman in which he left 6s 8d (33p, but

worth at least £350 today) to the guild. By then the guild must have amassed sufficient resources to afford to build a guildhouse, a place for them to meet. It could also be used by the town as a meeting place. Traditionally the church was used but by the 15th century restrictions were being made and other venues were necessary. Other town activities could also take place there.

So, the Guildhouse was built. Dendrochronology shows that the oak timbers of the timber frame were felled between 1453 and 1460 and, as the timber was used when green, this means the Guildhouse was constructed between 1454 and 1461.

In 1476, to secure the future of the guild and their property, the brotherhood sought a licence from the crown to exist and own land. One was granted by King Edward IV. The formation of the guild therefore pre-dates the granting of the licence by many years.

The guildhouse that was built still stands, together with a 16th century single bay extension on the west end. The form of the building was simple. It was a six bay structure, with a front door in the north-east corner of the fifth bay, now only visible inside. The door opened into a passageway, with a wall with two doors on the left and a screen with an opening on the right. The passage led to the back door. Outside there seems to have been an external staircase, most likely covered, leading to the upper floor. The two doors on the left of the passage led into two rooms: the pantry, for keeping food, and the buttery, for keeping drinks. The opening on the right was into a room that ran for the full length of the rest of the building. Upstairs there was one large hall covering the full length of the building. There were no fireplaces in the building and so no heating.

The upstairs hall would have been the feasting room of the brotherhood but could have been used for other town events as well. We do not know how the ground floor space was used. It could, however, have been a place for storage of the resources of the guild members or as a place where homeless people could find a place to sleep.

Between 1536 and 1539 Henry VIII had the monasteries in England suppressed and in 1547 Edward VI turned his attention on the guilds, chantries, colleges, etc. When the Ashwell guild was closed it held houses in High Street, including the Guildhouse, Ashwell Head (the Springs), five properties in Mill Street and properties elsewhere in the parish and in Steeple Morden. They also had plate, jewels, ornaments, and other goods. The income from the land, etc, was sufficient to pay a priest, Thomas



Daye, who also ran a school, presumably in the Guildhouse.

Once vacated, the building was turned into a home. The major change was the insertion of the chimney stack which had four fireplaces, two downstairs, one of which can be seen in Day's shop, and two upstairs. It is most likely that the hearth in the hall, the middle, downstairs room, was the place where food was cooked. The other, ie in Day's shop, was to heat the parlour. The new owners also added the final bay on the east side.

The people who had this work done were the Bill family, some of whom played a role on the national stage. They were gentry who farmed Bluegates Farm, based at Ashwell End. They were followed by the West family and then in the 1630s by the Sells who were mercers and grocers. There is a brass plaque commemorating the death, in 1710, of John Sell, mercer, in the central aisle in St Mary's Church. In the 1720, after the Sells, a woodman and brewer lived there, followed by two generations of Christys, a butcher and a miller. In 1809 William Worboys, a farmer of 21½ acres, moved in. It is probably during his occupancy that the bay windows and sliding sash windows in the upper floor were inserted.

It is probable that during the Worboys' time that the building was divided up into smaller houses. In the 1840s, besides William Worboys, William Day, who had been a baker in Springhead, became a tenant. Sometime in the 1850s Worboys moved out but the Day family remained. Over the following years various people lived in parts of the building. Their occupations included blacksmith, brazier, carpenter, painter, thatcher and wheelwright. By 1900 there were four houses and a shop with accommodation above, as can be seen in the 1951 photo (previous page).

In 1959 the builder John Bray bought the property and converted it into the shop and two houses, the middle one which was then bought by Howard Day.

The building today has not changed much from when it was built. The east end has been extended, the chimneys inserted, and rooms created but the timber structure and the roof are largely unchanged. The frames of the original front and back doors are still in place and one can see where the original windows, which did not have glass but sliding shutters on the inside, were.

From new build to 2023 the use of the building has changed but it is still an important feature in the High Street landscape.

**David Short**



Margaret and Alan Gilliam picking olives

## A taste of Palestine

In 2022, the generosity of Ashwell people meant that our pop-up shops at Easter and Christmas, and the stall at the Christmas Fair were a great success. Through sales of desirable gift items from Palestine and donations we were able to send over £1,500 to the christian charity 'Embrace the Middle East' and the Amos Trust; two organisations tackling poverty and injustice in the area. But how did our involvement with this part of the world begin?

To celebrate Margaret's retirement, we embarked upon an adventure which would affect us more than we ever thought possible and lead us to meet some amazing people from a very different culture.

We were privileged to join an international team travelling to Palestine in October 2016 to help farmers and their families with the annual olive harvest. This was under the auspices of Embrace the Middle East. The warm welcome and very generous hospitality overwhelmed us, and we cherish many happy memories. It led us to make another trip to Palestine in autumn 2019, where we met folks from different towns and villages in the



Preparing sumac at the side of the road



The olive harvest is very much a family affair

West Bank and in Israel, this time learning from them and sharing their love of middle eastern food.

In Jerusalem we spent time with Izzeldin, from Sacred Cuisine (whose food journeys let you explore the tastes of Palestinian cuisine while introducing you to the ingredients, processes and stories behind their national foods). He took us to the street markets where we bought freshly harvested sumac from an elderly lady, preparing it at the side of the road. He also took us to a famous spice shop in East Jerusalem, referred to by the food writer and restaurateur Yotam Ottolenghi in his book *Jerusalem: A Cookbook*, where the owner and his son introduced us to a range of herbs and spices used in middle eastern cuisine, many of which are becoming more familiar in our own cooking.

In Bethlehem's Aida refugee camp we were invited into the home of Islam, with her teenage daughters Amal and Malida, where they taught us to make the famous national dish, Maqlubeh, before sharing the meal together. Aida is one of many refugee camps which were founded following the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948, when many Palestinian villages were demolished. The inhabitants today are largely the descendants of the original families who lived there. As well as learning how to make this wonderful chicken meal, it was fun engaging with the girls who enjoyed practising their English on us, testing out their skills with phrases such as, "a piece of cake". Their English was better than our Arabic, although we did learn some basic words and phrases.

We spent time with Vivien Sansour, a pioneering

agriculturalist, botanist and perhaps most impressively, founder of the Palestinian Seed Library Project. Born in Beit Jala, she moved with her family to North Carolina, but returned home to re-establish the growth of heritage fruit and vegetable seeds. We shared a meal with Vivien and her team in Battir, a village outside Bethlehem. A culinary historian and enthusiastic cook, Vivien wants to bring threatened varieties, "back to the dinner table to become part of our living culture rather than a relic of the past". As an artist and sought-after speaker, Vivien has been invited to showcase her work at venues both locally and globally, including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Both trips included time spent in the olive groves, venturing up ladders and climbing branches, chatting with our hosts and our team, as we picked the olives and packed them up ready to be taken to the olive press. We were rewarded with beautiful meals, eaten together in the shade of the olive trees. All the family were there, the children providing us with bottles of water to keep us hydrated. Each family expressed their gratitude as our international presence ensured their safety while working in their olive groves. There has been an international presence in several Palestinian towns and villages since 2002, to monitor the interaction between the Palestinians and the Israeli military.

Although we went as volunteers, helping the local people, we feel we became the beneficiaries, returning home richer for our experience.

**Margaret and Alan Gilliam**



## Home thoughts from abroad

### Thomas ten Hove's experiences with Camp America



In June 2022, I flew to Boston, USA, and travelled to my summer camp. I had no idea what I was letting myself in for. The camp was founded in 1927 in 200 acres on beautiful Lake Ossipee at the edge of New Hampshire's immense White Mountain National Forest. It is a traditional summer camp for both girls and boys, ranging in age from 7-16 years, who can come for up to seven weeks of their summer holidays.

A typical day started with us being woken up by the camp bell at 8am. Breakfast, usually a grab and go, was at 8.30am. We went straight to activities, which included horse riding, land sports, riflery and archery. There was also a complete waterfront complex, crafts and drama centres, hiking and camping trips, and inter-camp athletics - there was something for everyone. All the activities were a great way for campers to get out of their comfort zone and try something they had never done before.

I worked in the crafts workshop and, before the campers arrived, we built beds, ladders and fence posts. Once they arrived, I helped on a whole range of woodwork projects. Lunchtime included an opportunity for seniors at camp to break into spontaneous songs about the camp to create a sense of community and get everyone ready for the afternoon sessions. More activities followed a rest

hour and then shower hour before dinner at the end of the day.

I shared a cabin with 32 campers and five other staff and, in the evening, we played games to get to know our campers as individuals and wear them out so they would sleep soundly! The routine was strict and expectations of campers and staff were high, but I believe this built a strong community and gave the campers a unique experience early in their lives. Many return year after year, initially as campers and then as staff and team leaders, building on those skills they developed as children.

I have made friendships that will, I hope, last a lifetime and had the most incredible experience. It was a whole different world and, for me, a glimpse into an ideal world, so different too from what goes on in the rest of America. I am looking forward to returning in 2023 and I would recommend this experience highly.

### Joe Jenkinson reports from Geneva



This year marks my sixth year living and working in Geneva, Switzerland, having arrived here in pursuit of my wife via various non-governmental sector roles in Madagascar, Myanmar, China and Malaysia. I have learned to love my life in Geneva, which has become all the richer since our little boy, Leo, appeared on the scene three years ago.

My first real role here was acting as the UK's Health Attaché to the United Nations in a temporary role, before assuming my current position as a representative to the World Health Organisation (WHO) for the Government of Canada. The WHO was certainly a



busy place to find oneself between 2019 and 2021!

But the story began in Ashwell, somewhere that will forever be home, and where Ellie and I eventually tied the knot. There's something about growing up in the village that draws your roots deep and grounds you. As one of the fools who moved away, driven at the time by a desire to see the world, I have come to the conclusion that Ashwell has a pretty good thing going on. What it lacks in terms of grandiose mountains or picture-perfect beaches, it makes up for with something less tangible but somehow more honest, earthly and wholesome. I am not sure what that is, but it might be the fruit of a community where people connect with each other and have a place they are proud to call their home.

Over my years abroad I've toyed with how to answer the question, "Where do you come from?" with responses ranging from, "North Herts", "between London and Cambridge" and the more definitive, "Ashwell". With my current responsibilities the question is normally, "Where in Canada are you from?" to which I utter something dismissive such as, "It's a small place, you wouldn't know it" or "Oh, just a small island off the east coast of Newfoundland..." But of course, the real answer is "Ashwell..." And it doesn't normally take long for me to slip up and let the truth come tumbling out.

### Ceri de Paris (née Paton) looks across from Lille



As I look around my crowded classroom at Sirine and Sundus, Marcel and Mei, to name but a few of the students with hands held high to answer the next question, I consider the steps I have taken to

bring me here. I would never have believed it if, thirty-something years ago, someone had told me I would be teaching English literature in an International French secondary school in Lille, delving into the dark details of Gothic literature with enthusiastic 17 year olds.

I have always wanted to teach, for as long as I can remember. Ashwell School was a place of joy as well as one of learning as I was growing up. Listening to stories cross-legged on the carpet with Mrs Collins and being whisked away to another place and time. Italic handwriting with Mr Jenkinson. Book binding and tree rubbings with Mrs Bath. Playing kiss chase around the swimming pool in the meadow. Those days were so full of friends and fun, I look back at that time fondly. There must be something in the water in Ashwell, besides the Ice-Age worms at the Springs that is, something that brings people together and creates lifelong bonds that time and distance can't break. Friendships made there last a lifetime; those friendships cross borders and stand the test of time.

The next step on my journey took me, and many of those friends, to the big smoke, to Knights Templar School, Baldock. I remember racing down Station Road after staying over at my nan's house to try not to miss the coach, again... At KTS, my love for reading and for English grew. Under the watchful eyes of Mr Chapman and Miss Kennedy, I learned to explore the works of Jane Austen, Sylvia Plath and Shakespeare. As well as content, my school days also taught me the importance of support and encouragement. Without the kind words of my English literature teachers and form tutor, I would never have considered university and certainly never considered life in Europe. Growing up, I could count on the fingers of one hand the number of times I had been abroad - a school trip to France, a family holiday to Spain and not much else. How things change! As of this year, I have been living in France for 20 years; 20 years! I can hardly believe it, but what is so special about Ashwell is that every time I come back, I come... home!

On visits back to the village, I bring my French husband and my very bi-cultural children. I have always loved sharing memories of 'the village' with them. No summer visit is complete without a paddle in the Springs and an adventure round the lanes, an hour at the Rec' and a Coke in a pub garden. I tell them about the different part-time jobs I had, from collecting glasses in the Tuns to earn a pound or two, to being a Saturday girl in Day's and at the Chemist's, babysitting for many Ashwell families, as well as regular waitressing at the Tuns and the Bushel. Living in the village, I felt



part of a community. I would walk down the street and greet anyone I met. I knew them and they knew me! I'm an Ashwell girl born and bred. I can trace my family history back hundreds of years there and never really thought I'd leave. But I did.

After a year abroad in Cherbourg, France, in 2000, I decided that my future was in France. The following year, meeting a Frenchman who is now my husband confirmed my decision. We moved to France permanently in 2002. Teaching in France means becoming a civil servant and taking particularly competitive exams and interviews to get in, but it brings incomparable job security once you have proved yourself. I find myself now in a position to give back what I so fondly remember from school: stories and adventures, encouragement and support. We put on a Shakespeare play each year and do poetry readings in English alongside many anglophone schools. Some of my students take the return journey and come to the UK to do their studies and I always feel so proud to help them on this journey, despite the hurdles they have had to face in recent years. When I first started teaching, I had never really considered how far away from home I was until first Brexit hit and then Covid. I feel shocked each time I take the shuttle

or the ferry to come back to the village, that the customs officers stamp my British passport, ask to see my French identity card, that they ask the reason for my 'visit' and when I will be returning to France. Although I had little choice but to take French nationality following the UK leaving the EU, given my position as a civil servant, I still don't feel French. I feel British, I feel Ashwellian and I have no plans to change that.



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Platinum Jubilee yarn bombing



Harvesting by night. Photo:

# GALLERY



Messy church painting for the Discoverers



River Rhee by the Mill





Makers Market



Ashwell at Home, Tudor lady with honesty



Harvesting by Day. Photo: Alan Jackson



Reading at the Book Fair



A photograph of a soccer field. In the foreground, a wooden fence with a wire runs across the bottom. The field is green grass. On the left, a soccer goal is visible. In the center-right, a group of soccer players in red and white striped jerseys are standing. The background is filled with large trees, some with green leaves and others with brown autumn leaves. The sky is blue. The word "SPORT" is written in white capital letters with a black outline on the left side of the image.

# SPORT





A perennial favourite: the sack race

## Ashwell Village Sports Day



Hooray! So fantastic that our favourite local sporting event was able to take place in 2022. It was really encouraging to see so many families embracing walking, running and cycling around and about

Ashwell during the lockdowns and isolation we'd all endured. But here, we were again – on your marks, get set, go – after a two-year break.

So nice to be able to welcome some of the youngest and newest children in the village who didn't know about this decades old family event. We had new races, new medals, new celebration podiums, and all was still free and not-for-profit.

The athletes were ultra enthusiastic, the crowd tremendous, the DJs lively, the cake stall bursting with marvellous things made by many kind hands, the BBQ and beverages sold out yet again, and the weather was OK (though we saw our first gentle drizzle in years).

Thank you to so many volunteers who helped us make it happen. A special shout-out to the village Beavers who did so much, including the raffle, and delighted us all by running in uniform. And big thanks to our very generous raffle prize donors - The Rose & Crown, Amber Health, Rhubarb & Mustard and Campervan Coffee.

We hope everyone came away feeling proud and happy after a great afternoon of fun. And a loud cheer for the 2022 trophy awardees:

Ben Robinson - Junior Trophy  
Harley Shipley Wilson - Youth Trophy  
The Kemps - Family Race

Alfie Moss - Slow Bike

Henry McCutcheon - Boys' Round the Village (RTV)

Harley Shipley Wilson - Girls' RTV

Sue Kemp - Ladies' RTV

Charlie McCarthy - Men's RTV

Please come and join us at the Rec' again on **Sunday 21 May 2023**. And in the meantime:

- Follow us on Facebook for news updates as we count down to the starter's whistle for 2023, and please get in touch with feedback or if you'd like to get more involved, visit:  
[www.facebook.com/Ashwellvillagesportsday](https://www.facebook.com/Ashwellvillagesportsday)
- Get your jogging shoes on, your bicycles polished and tuned, and just go and enjoy exercise in the lovely environment all around us. Many of the committee are runners or cyclists, so message us on Facebook if you need any route guidance or top tips!
- Practise the Round the Village Race (with trophies galore) on foot or on your bike, and officially on Strava:  
[www.strava.com/segments/23986808](https://www.strava.com/segments/23986808)
- Keep enjoying all the sporting opportunities you have!
- And if you know where our usual finish line banner is, please give us a shout... as we couldn't find it anywhere.

Thank you again to everyone who came along and took part, supported, or volunteered.

**Guy Reed**

**Gregor Mitchell**

**Wendy Howard**

**Laurence Simon**

**Dawn Sanders**

**Mike Banister**

[www.facebook.com/Ashwellvillagesportsday](https://www.facebook.com/Ashwellvillagesportsday)

# Ashwell Academicals FC



During 2022, the Accies have gone from strength to strength. Numbers are flourishing in our supported age groups and we have seen the start of a new Under 6 group, which is always exciting to see.

We were able to hold our first trophy night for three years; we welcomed lots of new faces and caught up with some old friends. All the players loved receiving their trophies and a massive amount of fun was had by all. We also awarded our secretary, Vicki Prowle, the 'Accie of the Year' award for all the amazing work she does for us, including navigating us through the tricky Covid period.



Accies trophy night

Other notable moments from the year (of which there are many):

- Congratulations to our five Accies girls in the Cambridge United Girls Development Scheme. They all started with and continue to play with Accies teams and have either been retained or advanced within the scheme, great work!



Accies under 10 team

- Both our Under 10s and Under 15s made it to the semi-finals of cup competitions. Both teams put in great performances and in their semis matched their opponents from higher divisions right to the end. These were both great achievements, well done!



Accies under 15 team

Off the pitch, the effort goes on to improve facilities. With now over 160 children participating under the Accies banner, 11 teams and just four pitches in the village, resources are stretched to the maximum. These pitches are showing the strains of accommodating so much football and the organisation of the matches is becoming increasingly difficult, so if anyone has any suggestions to help us increase space or know of any kind landowners who could help, please get in touch.

This season we saw two of the committee stand down. Paul Harrison (vice-chair) and Rob Handley (treasurer) stepped down after a four-year commitment to the club. Our thanks go to both of them for their contribution and thank you to Tim Mitchell who stepped into the treasurer role. We are still on the lookout for a vice-chairman and, more generally, people who would like to help out with the committee, so if you are interested, please let us know. It's a great way to get involved in a core part of village life, with only a few hours of commitment a month.

As always, the club couldn't run without the fantastic support and help from the parents. Thank you to all who help out on match days, with training and the trophy night. Since we have cleared Covid restrictions, our match day tuck shops have come back with a vengeance, which has been great to see. Thank you to the parents who run those.

Finally, thank you to all our coaches who give up their own time every week to ensure our children have a great time meeting friends and playing football. Amazing commitment!

We look forward to seeing you in 2023. Up The Accies!

## Andy Hayes

Chairman

✉ [chairman@ashwellacademics.com](mailto:chairman@ashwellacademics.com)

📌 [www.ashwellacademics.com](http://www.ashwellacademics.com)

Twitter: @AshwellAccies

Facebook:

📌 [www.facebook.com/AshwellAccies](http://www.facebook.com/AshwellAccies)



## Cycle Club Ashwell

Cycle Club Ashwell, now over 20 years old, continues to encourage and support cycling of every kind. Its roots as a weekend road riding club have grown deeper and further to include a flourishing off road fraternity, who like to improve their skills on local cyclo-cross races and group rides on the local bridleways and gravel lanes.



Cycle Club Ashwell's Ella Friedlander commits herself while on her way to second place in her Eastern Region Cyclo-Cross League youth race in Diss, Norfolk. © RandomolblokeMTB

A community of time trial riders enjoy weekly summer solo ten mile battles in an unending quest for quickness in a 'race against yourself'. Road and closed circuit racers who want to get that 'Tour de France' feeling can 'chain gang' together in high intensity weekday burn-ups and then team up together at weekend races.

Embracing the future, a digital version of the club grows from strength to strength, with riders coming from well beyond a day's ride from Ashwell to get together virtually and race against people from all over the world, while inside their kitchens and garages.

As the club's activities diversify, there are some things that keep members together, such as special one day rides to the coast and an annual trophy

dinner in the Bushel and Strike. However, it's the Small Gains Field, shared with the Ashwell Tennis Club, that is perhaps one of the biggest factors in unifying and bolstering the club's spirit. By the kind permission of the Schwick family, the club can use the field to train, develop, exercise, and enjoy getting fitter and faster - together. Notable are the grass-track racing events held there that have national level significance, as well as the regular coaching sessions for young riders.

The now very well established weekly fun, social gatherings of all ability levels help to keep the next generation active, foster a love for bikes and health, and have helped ignite Ashwell's Sophie Lewis' journey in cycling. She became the Omnium National Track Cycling Champion in 2022. Well done, Sophie!

For more information about the club's activities, visit:

📌 [www.ccashwell.co.uk](http://www.ccashwell.co.uk)

**Martin Lawless**

✉ [martin@ccashwell.com](mailto:martin@ccashwell.com)



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## Ashwell Cricket Club

If success is measured by enjoyment, then the 2022 season was very successful. If it's about statistics on wins and losses, then less so.

But we have a cricket club and we're proud of it. Just over 200 years old and still thriving. Playing members ranged in 2022 from the age of 14 to 60 years, so we're open to anyone (almost) who wants to have a go.

A total of 34 different players played for the club in league and friendly games, and many others turned out for our ever popular Big Bashwell event – an evening of ten over games, beer and barbecue.

The stats: in the Junior League 1 (South) division of the Cambridgeshire Cricket Association League, we played 16 games and won two, we lost 12 and two were cancelled. It's painful to write those numbers when it was a season of 'what ifs'. Many of the losses were very close contests and we did not get the luck we deserved. And to that end, repeating the above, huge fun was had playing competitive cricket with friends.

Breaking down the statistics, it was a stellar season for the club captain, Reg Redfern. Reg averaged a staggering 61 with the bat, scoring a mammoth 553 runs in the season. This included a magnificent 108 against Elmdon, where we amassed 267 as a team and just held off Elmdon who were only 14 runs short at the end. But Reg held the side together through the season, and in some games things most certainly wouldn't have been so close had he not showed up. Ian Plumley had another great season with the bat (average 41, high score 77), and George Griffin similarly very strong (average 50, high score 87).

There were other solid efforts and a favourite game was our visit to Cambridge NCI (2nds) where they batted first. One opener scored 104 in spectacular style and they looked destined to make a score in the high 300s. They were at 100 (for one wicket down) in the 11th over! But we plugged away with the ball and restricted them to just 224 (in 40 overs). In reply, Andy Young and George Griffin made 20 somethings and Reg a typically handy 46. But wickets fell and Hugh Carling and Rob Reeve (45 and 55, respectively) put on an amazing stand carrying us almost to victory. Nails were bitten when late wickets fell and we won in the last over despite being eight down.

On the bowling front, Bene't Coldstream (aged 60 years and your correspondent and club chairman) showed that there's life in the old dog yet. He took most league wickets (10), courtesy of a 5-59 haul in a late season game. He pipped the ever reliable and wily Dominic Crossley (9), and Reg Redfern (9). Alex Griffin toiled and bowled his huge heart out opening the bowling and did not get the rewards he deserved. Sometimes accurate length and line gets respect but fewer scalps. His economy figures were the best of the bunch. Patrick Robinson was also a key player and, rather like Alex, didn't get the wickets his quality bowling deserved.

We had new players this season and we seek more. Special shout outs go to Sam Cunningham (not exactly new, but with us more), and newcomers Tom Foot and Tom Scott. JJ Neale was also a newcomer (although he won't mind me not bracketing him with the youths), and we hope he'll come back for more in 2023 (but with a sturdier body perhaps!), as we do for all our players. Without you all, we are nothing.

If anyone reading this wants to play in 2023, just contact the undersigned.

**Bene't Coldstream**

☎ 742288

✉ bcoldstream@yahoo.co.uk

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## Ashwell Fit Club

Fit Club in Ashwell is now approaching its fifth anniversary and, over the years, it has grown from a dedicated seven enthusiasts to a membership of over 50. Its ethos began and remains to be one of social fitness, mixed with fun, teamwork and a sense of community spirit. The sessions are held every week (even in the snow!) on the Rec' from 10-11am and attract a wide range of 'fit clubbers' young and old, female and male. Fitness sessions are designed to allow individuals to participate at their own pace as there's no kudos for coming first!

We use lots of equipment to offer a diverse range of exercises which helps develop all areas of the body, but we always welcome new ideas.



After Fit Club, we're regulars at Rhubarb & Mustard for a well-earned coffee and biscuit (or two) and, over the years, we have organised gatherings at various pubs around the village.

If you want to start a new fitness regime or complement what you already do, just turn up on Saturday at 10am on the Rec'.

**Philip Ward**

✉ philipward100@gmail.com

## Ashwell Tennis Club

This year, we had some significant news for the future of the tennis club, with the long term future of the courts assured. The courts were built about 12 years ago on land owned by Chris and Christine Schwick. They originally granted the club a 25 year lease at a minimal rent. This enabled the committee, led by Ed Humbert back in 2010, to raise the money to build the courts, and it's been a great home since; there are few more picturesque courts in Hertfordshire. The Schwicks are pleased with the participation and community at the club and have now offered to extend the lease for the long term. This is clearly the best news the club could have, and great thanks are due to Chris and Christine for this generous gift to the village.

The club membership continues to grow, with a significant increase since the pandemic. We aim to keep the fees low to encourage wide and inclusive membership. It's normally pretty easy to get a court for casual play. Coaching has been tricky to organise recently, but we aim to have a full programme this spring/summer.

Our casual Thursday evenings (organised by Guy Reed) and Friday lunchtimes (David Summer) have been well attended this year, particularly helped by Guy's encouragement to bring a beer for those long summer evenings. Will the new BBQ become a feature of these Thursday evenings next year? Friday morning ladies coaching (Rachel Williams) continues to produce high quality tennis players, not something that is often heard about the men.

The club house is now complete, thanks to Simon McCutcheon. There are some finishing touches on





the way, for which we recently received a significant grant from the Ashwell Show. We had an opening BBQ, with a one day tournament in October.

We now have four summer teams and one autumn team in the Datchworth league. This is a friendly league, with home and away fixtures against other North Herts villages. It's a great way to get a bit more competitive, and a potential path to local legend status, if not quite Wimbledon.

If you're interested in becoming a member, please get in touch or join up on the website. We aim to be a friendly and welcoming club with tennis and social attractions for all.

**Jeremy Bates**

Chair

✉ [ashwellsport@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellsport@gmail.com)

📌 <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/ashwelltennisclub>

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A group of approximately 25 young people, mostly in blue uniforms, are posing for a photo in a vibrant indoor play area. They are gathered around and sitting on large, stacked green cylindrical pillars. The background features a wall with a grid of colorful hexagonal bins in shades of green, purple, and orange. To the left, there are more green pillars and a climbing wall with red and black ropes. The floor is a mix of purple and grey. The text "YOUTH ORGANISATIONS" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# YOUTH ORGANISATIONS



## 1st Ashwell Guides



In 2022, we were able to enjoy more trips out, starting with a whirlwind visit to two supermarkets during our meeting time in February to investigate Fairtrade products as part of our World Girlguiding badge and Fairtrade Fortnight. Next, was a campfire night, toasting marshmallows and singing traditional campfire songs. This was our farewell meeting for our leader, Angela, who was moving back home to Portsmouth.

We joined Rainbows, Brownies and Guides from our district to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with activities such as re-enactments, quizzes, and hobby horse racing, marking significant events from each decade of her reign.

For our last meeting before the summer, we hiked to Baldock for fish and chips. Guides completed various challenges along the way, made up a walking song, developed map and compass reading skills and spotted evidence of wildlife.

Our last trip of the year was indoor climbing in Cambridge, which is always a favourite!

Village activities included running the Junk Boat making and race for Ashwell at Home and fund-raising for Children in Need, with a bacon roll stall at St Mary's Christmas Fair. Although the wind was slowing down the cooking of the bacon towards the end, everyone was very patient and we raised £160.

Lots of badges were earned this year, with activities including investigating a crime scene using forensic science, finding out about hydroponics and making our own biomes using plastic bottles, and inventing new useful gadgets and designing them or re-designing old ones. Each patrol also made its own free-standing flagpole and flag, learning knots and lashing techniques.

Let's not forget the cooking though! We had another online cooking session with Angela on Zoom soon after she moved to Portsmouth, and we made *s'mores* using tealights, with varying results but you can't really go wrong with marshmallows and chocolate!

There was also the sad news later in the year of the death of our Queen. She was the Patron of Girlguiding and was a Guide herself so we spent an evening finding out what Princess Elizabeth did when she

was a Guide, particularly during World War Two. We also learned about how Guides helped in the war effort by assisting in putting out fires, administering first aid and keeping spirits up in the air raid shelters by singing songs and serving tea!



Former patron and Girl Guide: our late Queen and her sister, Margaret

The Queen upheld the Girlguiding Promise that she made throughout her life and although the wording of the Promise that Guides make today is slightly different, the values are the same.

We are looking for volunteers to help with things like administration and finance that would only require a minimal contribution of time but is invaluable to us. If, however, you think you may be interested in volunteering on a weekly basis, for trips, camps etc please get in touch or, to find out more, go to: [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)

Anyone interested in finding out more about 1st Ashwell Guides, please contact me.

**Sue Long**

☎ 01223 208337

✉ [ashwellguides@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellguides@gmail.com)

Relaxing at the end of a busy day



## Ashwell Brownies



Ashwell Brownies have had an amazing 2022 thanks to the help of our new leaders, Helen Hardy and Sue Kemp, who will be helping run the unit until summer 2023!

We have enjoyed a scorching summer on the Rec', learning to play cricket, among other activities. We have had lots of fun at Grafham Water and Bassingbourn's Obstacle Training Ground, as well as making clay poppies for Remembrance Sunday and learning the art of mime, thanks to Jo Eggleton Rance. Last stop was the Christmas carol concert in December to top off an incredible year. Thank you to all the parents and helpers who supported us during the year.

Ashwell Brownies is for girls aged 7 to 10 years old. We meet on a Tuesday 6-7.30pm at the Ashwell Village Hall, term time only.

We are also looking for people over the age of 16 years to come along and help us as volunteers. Full support and training will be given. We have lots of fun at Ashwell Brownies and any support is welcome to keep our unit going.

**Natalie Terry**

✉ [ashwellbrownies@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellbrownies@gmail.com)

📌 [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)

## 1st Ashwell Scouts, Cubs and Beavers

1st Ashwell Scout Group



In 2022, our young people enjoyed a return to normal indoor and outdoor activities after several years of disruption.

**Scouts (ages 10½-14 years)** had another busy and varied year. The highlights included building hedgehog houses and selling them for donations to a local hedgehog charity. We had an enjoyable evening at the Clip and Climb in Cambridge. We played a trading game where the scouts started with one piece of rope and traded knots, lashings, tripods, billies and burners until they had enough equipment to make a cup of tea. In the heat of the summer, we built ballistae and had an inter patrol water fight using wet sponges. We have done several cooking challenges, including a Ready-Steady-Cook and a Great British Camp cook off, which the scouts always enjoy. In September, we all renewed our Scout's Promise to the new King. And we recently did our first snow hike.

We managed to get two camps this year and, using our pioneering skills, built handwashing stations,





Raft building at scout camp

rafts, and bivouacs. We also managed some wild swimming, shooting and archery.

Around the community, we helped with the tables and chairs for the Jubilee, we ran a free assault course at The Ashwell Show - and a ballista was used again to fire balls at the competitors. More recently, we supported Baldock Rotary Club in their annual Santa's visit to Ashwell.

During the year, we also focused on our badge work, with ten of our scouts earning the highest award possible, the Chief Scout Gold Award.

**Cubs (ages 8-10½ years)** held meetings at the Village Hall and on the Rec', where we practised erecting tents, tried our hand at athletics and learned how to play ultimate frisbee. We had a day of activities in Bedfordshire, including archery, pedal karts and lasso throwing, and an evening at Obstacle Training Ground assault course that ended with everyone getting very wet. Furthermore, nine of our sixers and seconders have just returned from a district camp, where they learned how to make rope, shoot air rifles and light fires. Please see separate Cubs report for further details.

**Beavers (ages 6-7 years)** have had another fun year, including a glorious camp in June. We visited Baldock Fire Station where we got to climb their long ladders and use the hoses after looking around the fire engines. We have had lots of sessions at the Rec' and the Springs, as well as hikes around the village and a bonfire where we cooked marshmallows.

All of this has been possible thanks to the fantastic enthusiasm of our Beaver, Cub and Scout leaders and the support of our executive committee. Scouting in Ashwell can only survive if we grow our team of leaders, so if you have ever thought of volunteering, now might be the time. You do not have to have a 'Scouty' background: anyone who enjoys crafts, water activities, camping, sports, the outdoors or simply helping young people enjoy being the best versions of themselves would be extremely welcome. You would be joining a great team of friendly leaders who provide excellent comradeship and support, so if you can spare an hour or two one evening most weeks during term time, please get in touch.

#### Stuart Kendrick

Group Scout Leader

✉ [gsl@1stashwellscouts.org.uk](mailto:gsl@1stashwellscouts.org.uk)

#### If you are interested in joining the team of leaders or helping out, contact:

**Sue Long** (Guides and Brownies)

✉ [ashwellguides@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellguides@gmail.com)

☎ 01223 208337

**Stuart Kendrick** (Scouts, Cubs, Beavers)

✉ [gsl@1stashwellscouts.org.uk](mailto:gsl@1stashwellscouts.org.uk)

## 1st Ashwell Cubs

Cubs (for boys and girls aged 8-10½ years) have been able to hold our meetings back at our usual venues this year, with all restrictions now lifted. We enjoyed meeting at the Rec' all through the spring and summer doing activities such as outdoor games, and erecting tents in preparation for our annual camp. In the summer we enjoyed our weekend of camping and fun activities at an outdoor activity centre in Bedford, where we took part in caving, archery, fire lighting and pioneering. We also spent one of our summer term meetings at the Obstacle Training Ground doing the very wet, rather muddy, but good fun obstacle course there. Our District Day Out this year took us to visit the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, where we enjoyed the exhibits and activities alongside our fellow Cubs from all over the district.



As the evenings drew in, we moved our meetings to the Village Hall where we enjoyed some creative indoor activities, and we had some very interesting visitors. At one meeting, we were visited by a whole host of exotic creatures that we were lucky enough to be able to hold and touch, while learning all about them and their natural habitats. At another meeting, our village Police Community Support Officer, Chris, kindly took the time to visit us and he brought his 4x4 police vehicle along for us to see. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to our upcoming outing to our local ice-skating rink and planning lots more fun for 2023.

**Ben Constable**

✉ [ben.constable@1stashwellscouts.org.uk](mailto:ben.constable@1stashwellscouts.org.uk)

## Friday@5

**St Mary's Youth Group (formerly the Asheteria Youth Club)**

After a two and a half year hiatus, the Asheteria Youth Club was reborn in a new format in September 2022. The new group meets from 5-6.30pm on Friday afternoons during term time in St Mary's Church.



Aimed at young people in school years 5 and above, the session begins with informal junior choir rehearsals from 5pm, followed by a variety of games, crafts, activities and snacks from 5.30pm. Although the group has only been running for a few weeks, it is proving popular, with regular attendance of 18 children.

The young people have been involved in choosing activities they would like to take part in and we are looking forward to implementing many of these in the coming year.

This term we have enjoyed:

Making cakes  
Popcorn  
Hot chocolate with marshmallows  
Creating paper stars  
Christmas crafts  
Jenga  
Building with kneelers  
Table tennis  
Quiz  
Decorating cakes  
Pizza  
Having fun with friends!

If you would like more information about Friday@5 please contact me.

**Jo Adams**

☎ 01763 241587

✉ [adams561j@gmail.com](mailto:adams561j@gmail.com)





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A photograph of a street in Ashwell. On the left, there is a two-story brick building housing a pharmacy with a green cross sign and a sign that reads 'PHARMACY' and 'ASHWELL PHARMACY'. A dark blue car is parked on the street in front of the pharmacy. In the background, there is a half-timbered house with a brown tiled roof. The street is paved with asphalt and has white dashed lines. Other cars are parked further down the street. The sky is clear and blue.

# ASHWELL LIFE



Brian and Jenny on their last day in the pharmacy



## Ashwell Pharmacy

**Brian Deal, 6 April 2001-1 September 2022**

As I write this article it's approaching two months since I handed over the reins to the new owners of Ashwell Pharmacy, Dhaval and his wife. I hope you will continue to support them as you did me.

I departed somewhat quietly, predominantly for legal business transaction reasons, and never really had the chance to thank and say goodbye to many of the patients and customers I had the pleasure to serve for more than 21 years. I have encountered a few in different circumstances and have been flooded with lovely cards, gifts and touching emails, which I have tried to answer. Thank you.

In the September 2022 *Ashwell Village News* I wrote a small farewell article which I have now elaborated for the Yearbook.

Having discovered Ashwell and the pharmacy by chance in April 2000, I finally carried myself over the threshold on 6 April 2001 as owner. My original pharmacy, and indeed my upbringing, was based in East London and so you can imagine my surprise when one of my first over-the-counter sales requests was for sheep dip. I obviously had a lot to learn about village life! I moved home a few times to be closer to the pharmacy, having laboured the journey from Essex for many years.

Shortly after commencing my new working home, it became clear to me that a refit was desperately needed if I were to progress in business and keep up with the changing face of community pharmacy.

It was a stressful time as my team and I moved the entire stock from the pharmacy to a barn in Ashwell just before a long Easter weekend, in preparation for the refurbishment, which took place between Good Friday and 8am on the Tuesday morning after Easter Monday. Many contractors worked through the night. The work was carried out in this manner as we were required under our NHS contract to provide continuous pharmaceutical services to the public. The refit was a success and in fact won an innovative award in the industry for its 'Before and After' transformation.

The day-to-day running of a community pharmacy over 21 years changed drastically as the NHS required pharmacists to provide more clinical and diagnostic services (blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetic monitoring). This was soon followed by flu, travel and other vaccinations and the pleasure (and exhaustion!) of Ashwell Pharmacy and me being approved and accredited to undertake Covid-19 booster vaccinations.

Throughout all this transformation I must take a moment to thank all my loyal staff over the years - each and every one of them added to our success. A special mention to Jenny, who was not only ever-present through my stay at the helm but had been ever present for many years before.

The ability of my team to run the show allowed me to pursue my other roles as a local magistrate and as a visiting lecturer at Herts University School of Pharmacy. For 16 years The pharmacy has been a student placement site for undergraduate pharmacy students in years 1-4. Many of you will remember the postgraduate pre-reg students who did their





Dhaval and Arpita outside the pharmacy

pre-registration (similar to an apprenticeship year) at the pharmacy. Many of these students have gone into managerial roles and they still keep in touch with their weary tutor.

Another role that I established over the years, which started via various media roles I performed within the pharmacy industry, was to give presentations to various schools, colleges, and other groups - particularly Women's Institutes (WI) and British Legion Groups. In fact, the WI presentations totalled 36 (often guests from neighbouring WIs would persuade me to chat at their next meeting). I should add that, as a result of these meetings, I sadly consumed my last Nice biscuit - often served with far too weak tea. Joking aside, it was always a pleasure especially during the Q&A session where those members still awake would fire their anecdotal stories at me.

I have far too many memories and stories to tell through these pages, but the 21 years spent serving the Ashwell community were a pleasure. In total I had practised (almost entirely owning my own pharmacies) for some 37 years. It took considerable thought and consideration for me to move on but, "The time was right", as they say.

My intention is to relocate and eventually fully retire in the North of England - a journey that has already started. In the interim, I continue with doing locum work to keep my brain cells active. Ashwell holds fantastic memories for me, and I intend to attend some of the many village events, so it's not 'bye but *au revoir* and, "Thanks for the memories."

**Brian Deal**

## A chat with Dhaval Patel, our new pharmacist

Having said goodbye to Brian Deal, we now have the pleasure of greeting Ashwell's new pharmacist, Dhaval Patel.

Dhaval is 36 years old, married to Arpita and has a two-year-old daughter, Vani. The family currently lives in West Drayton, which means over an hour's commute each way for Dhaval. At present, moving to the village isn't an option; Arpita is studying in London and buying the pharmacy has consumed all their available finance for the moment!

Having looked at more than 20 pharmacies, Dhaval decided on us because he was looking for a sense of belonging rather than just being a dispensing chemist handing out pills. He also got on well with Brian and felt comfortable taking over from him. The wish to be part of a community will no doubt grow when Arpita joins him in the business after qualifying professionally in her own right.

Dhaval has made quite a life journey to get here. He was born in Gujarat, North India, to a father and mother with degrees in commerce, and the arts. Dhaval, however, showed an early interest in maths and medicine. In 2003, he and two friends decided to enrol on the Bachelor of Pharmacy (BPharma) course at the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences near Bangalore. This move from north to south was a big cultural change. A bit like someone from here going to study in, say, Berlin.

After getting his first degree and then a masters with an industry focus, Dhaval wanted to travel



and experience study and work in another country. Considering both Canada and the United Kingdom, the fact that his sister lived in the UK tipped the balance in our favour.

Dhaval came here in 2008 under a sponsorship scheme and in 2016 obtained leave to remain, becoming a UK citizen. During that time, he studied at the University of Greenwich, while living in Wimbledon. A commuting feat (yet another) made more impressive when you consider that he was going daily to the Medway campus. Pharmacy manager jobs then followed, fortunately based nearer home.

Once he had obtained citizenship, Dhaval took the opportunity to harmonise his Indian qualifications with UK standards, doing pre-registration training and the exam to become a practising pharmacist in 2018.

And so to Ashwell. Looking forward, there are many challenges for him, both in terms of running a successful business and in serving our community. Dhaval wants to be involved in the patient treatment process with an emphasis on prevention (vaccinations, blood pressure checks, etc) and monitoring reactions to prescription drugs. One thing is for sure, he is

bound to be busy. Even during our short chat on a Tuesday afternoon, he had to pop out to attend to three visitors who needed his help.

I asked Dhaval what he thought he could offer the village. He said,

“I will try my level best to serve the community wholeheartedly and am eager to support local patient groups. The pharmacy will participate in each and every NHS service offered both now and in the future, and offer a range of private services too. They will include: blood pressure checks for the over 40s, private health checks, flu vaccines, travel vaccines, ear piercing, the new medicine service and private prescribing for ear, throat and urinary tract infections. I will also offer home deliveries to housebound or vulnerable individuals.

I was touched by the very warm welcome from people in Ashwell and the surrounding area and am grateful for their ongoing support. I am looking forward to serving them all in the years to come.”

And we wish Dhaval the very best for the future. Welcome to Ashwell.

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A wide-angle photograph of a grassy field under a blue sky with scattered clouds. In the background, a line of green trees and bushes is visible. A small, dark-colored vehicle is parked on a path in the distance, kicking up a small amount of dust. The foreground is filled with tall, dry grass and some purple wildflowers.

# **CHARITY GROUPS**





Green team taking a well earned break at Ashwell Quarry, September 2022

## Ashwell Quarry Nature Reserve



**Herts &  
Middlesex  
Wildlife Trust**

Once again, the nature reserve had a variable year. Fortunately, high winds in February caused only a small amount of damage inside the reserve. The most dramatic casualty was a large branch of ash that

appeared to have come from the reserve, but had been blown quite a way down Loves Lane.

The flowery areas looked beautiful through spring and summer, but then turned into golden 'prairie' as the drought kicked in. The central flat area was cut by a tractor and mower at the beginning of August which made it look even 'droughtier', but by the beginning of September after the first rain came, the reserve was turning greener again. Such is the recovery power of nature (up to a point). There were still plants in flower in November, including some clustered bellflowers and devil's-bit scabious. But the drought caused a crash in many insect species, especially the usually more noticeable butterflies.

Thanks again to our small but experienced band of volunteers who scythe and rake the 'hay' on the areas the tractor cannot reach, and who selectively cut down shrubs to rejuvenate them. The Wildlife Trust's 'Green Team' also comes to help with this from time to time and, this year, I enlisted their help with path mowing.

Our work parties take place on the third Sunday of the month from 10am until about lunch time, generally from September through to April. New (younger!) helpers are always welcome, so if you

would like to be included in my work party circulation, please send me an email.

Don't forget that, although the nature reserve is private land, visitors are welcome. A free permit lasts a year and allows you to go for a walk around at any time.

**Chris James**

56 Back Street, Ashwell

☎ 742684

✉ [chrisjames56@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisjames56@btinternet.com)

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## Royal British Legion



After a number of years when our activities had been severely limited, 2022 was a really pleasant change as we were able to organise events again.

Our main fundraising is

always for the Poppy Appeal, ably led by our Poppy Appeal organiser, Jo Huggins. We have collected door-to-door traditionally over the years, but this was lost in lockdown and as a result, we decided to concentrate on a main collection point at Carters Pond. Although we were just able to start doing this in 2021, lockdowns prevented us from collecting on all three Saturdays. But in 2022, we were able to collect as we wished and had use of a contactless point here, as well as one at the pharmacy. We believe that this payment method proved to be very helpful, especially for contributors who only use cards. It seems that people are more generous when using a card machine and the total collected for Ashwell, Hinxworth and Newnham was close to £4,000.

The remembrance service was held at Ashwell URC, followed by the Act of Remembrance at the war memorial at 11am. Once again, we had no police presence, so we asked all attending to safely make their own way from the URC to stand on the Rec'. It was a huge tribute that so many attended, including our village uniformed groups and the church choir, along with many others from the village. Holding the service on the Rec' rather than the road seemed to be appreciated and although we are delighted with the changes at the junction, with the numbers attending the service it is unlikely that we will change where the service takes place, although access for all will be easier.

It was our branch centenary in 2022 and we celebrated with a sausage and mash lunch in the Bushel and Strike on Saturday 23 April, the actual date of the centenary being 24 April. Our branch chairman, Rev'd Canon Lindsay Dew, was able to read out an extract of the minutes of the very first meeting of the branch and it was made all the more memorable because the centenary lunch was held in the same room of the Bushel and Strike that was the setting for the first meeting in 1922.

It was lovely to have a celebration cake which was cut by Mr Fred Bryant, one of our branch senior members.

We welcomed the county membership officer to our committee meeting in May, where we held a small but very pleasant games night at The Rose & Crown in June, a coffee morning in the Parish Room in July, and the branch chairman and vice-chairman attended the county get together on 16 July. This was particularly memorable as the branch was awarded two certificates, one marking our centenary and the other (totally unexpected) a certificate from the Southeast Midlands Membership Council representative: an award for, "showing initiative and being innovative in ensuring the branch is visible, active and involved in the local community". It was the first award of this nature: copies of both awards are on display in the Royal British Legion (RBL) village notice board and the originals are in the parish church adjacent to the old RBL standard. We are proud that, as one of the smaller village communities in Hertfordshire, we do very well when compared to branches in larger towns in the county.

This year, we especially thanked Robert Sheldrick, who for many years looked after raising the Union Flag on occasions throughout the year, and our thanks also go to Chris Pack who has volunteered to take over from Robert. Thank you too to Craig Langford who looks after the War Memorial and always makes sure that the grass is cut and plants are kept fresh and beautiful - a fitting tribute to all we remember. The committee look back on a year when we were able to go back to normal again and continue our principal task with all in the village of raising money for the Poppy Appeal.

**'In honour of those who fought,  
in memory of those who fell'**

### **A Gillborn**

Vice-chair, RBL Ashwell and District Branch

☎ 742730

✉ [andrew.gillborn@btopenworld.com](mailto:andrew.gillborn@btopenworld.com)

Membership enquiries:

✉ [secretary.trblashwell@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.trblashwell@gmail.com)



## Ashwell Mummers



Once again, Ashwell Mummers were unable to perform in 2022. Due to Covid restrictions and safety concerns, we weren't able to perform our famous Christmas play (starring THE DRAGON) and there was no opportunity to perform any of our other plays. This also means that our contribution to Helping Herts Homeless, the charity we have supported over the last 20 years, wasn't forthcoming. We wish them well, and hope that our collection for the 2022 Christmas play (in January 2023) will raise substantially more than previously so that we can contribute as usual via our performance.

This report is to confirm that we are still active and, unless something really untoward happens, we will perform our Christmas play on 20 January 2023. We hope to have a good crowd at all the usual venues (all three Ashwell pubs, Wolverley House and the Waggon & Horses in Steeple Morden).

In 2021, we made a video to help raise funds for Helping Herts Homeless and this is still available to view on YouTube. The link is:

↑ <https://youtu.be/L99xI2VHZNM>

For up to date information, follow us on our Facebook group page:

↑ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AshwellMummers/>

If you'd like to know more about Ashwell Mummers or the various Mummers plays we perform, or if you would like us to perform at an event you are organising, please get in touch.

**Ian Chandler**

☎ 743091

## Jimmy's Cambridge

I think we all understand the importance of having a home, particularly during the recent lockdown. Those of you reading this who haven't been homeless may wonder what it must be like to suddenly have no place to sleep, no money, and no friends or family to offer you a bed or a sofa. What would you do? Where would you go? For some people, sleeping on the street is the only option they are left with.

Jimmy's Cambridge was set up over 25 years ago when some people from a church in Cambridge met a man called Jim who was sleeping under a motorway bridge on the edge of the city. They turned their church crypt into a night shelter with small dormitories: one for men and one for women. And so Jimmy's began. Today, the charity has evolved to include a hostel for 20 people, a smaller nine-bed hostel for people with the most complex needs, plus some shared houses and modular homes to help people slowly recover.



Royal visitors to Jimmy's

People end up sleeping on the street for various reasons: sometimes because their relationships have broken down or their mental health has taken a bad turn. Others have struggled throughout life. Their childhood may have had no love and they may have been badly neglected or mistreated. These experiences can carry on into the teenage years, and then the trauma may get so embedded, that



## Charity groups

their mental health deteriorates and some turn to alcohol or other substances as a means of coping. Jimmy's is there to help people turn their life around and lead a life that they feel is worth living.

When I moved to Ashwell six years ago I didn't realise the connection villagers had with Jimmy's. I got a job running Jimmy's and found out about the events to raise awareness and funds for the charity. These events have evolved from providing soup to now offering Crump's bacon sandwiches and Day's rolls!

I've always felt drawn to working with charities that help those on the fringes of society - people who are often misunderstood or mistreated. Everyone should be given the opportunity to live a life worth living.

If you would like to support us in any way, including to make a donation, please go to our website:

▲ [www.jimmyscambridge.org.uk](http://www.jimmyscambridge.org.uk)

**Mark Allan**

✉ [mark.allan@jimmyscambridge.org.uk](mailto:mark.allan@jimmyscambridge.org.uk)

## Ashwell's Fight Against Cancer



Ashwell's Fight Against Cancer (AFAC) had a quietly successful year, once again brought about by the hard work of a small team and the generosity of others.

Our efforts were targeted at raising money for research into colorectal cancer at Addenbrooke's Hospital, and I was very touched that the year was kickstarted by the Ashwell Music Festival committee. On 19 May, their evening was entitled 'Let us Entertain You' and showcased local artists. They generously donated half of the evening's proceeds to AFAC. We thank you so much.



AFAC midsummer supper

How to follow that? Chris and Jill Powell once again kindly offered their garden for a Midsummer Supper and we were ably assisted by Wendy Scott in organising this event. Marquees were provided by the 3rd Hitchin Scout Group and after a lot of hard work on 9 July, we saw the garden transformed with twinkling lights and a long marquee filled with beautifully dressed tables, all graced by floral decorations donated by Christine Schwick. There was also a subtly lit bar and super raffle. A champagne and canapé reception was followed by a two-course buffet supper and we were entertained by Ken Hollow. The evening was warm and the ambiance festive. Just over £1,300 was raised – what a great result for a lovely evening. My thanks go to all those who donated wonderful raffle prizes and especially to the person who provided all that champagne. My thanks go to Chris and Jill, without whom, none of this would have been possible.

Our final fund-raiser was the Golf Day, again organised and directed by Keith Gordon. He has a wonderful ability for being cheerful and positive, so is forgiven for his penchant for wearing extremely

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brightly coloured golf trousers! At the beginning of October, 12 teams signed up for the day, which was held at Chesfield Downs Country Club, Graveley. Despite being held much later in the year, the occasion was blessed with fine weather. Rain only caught the last team in, who arrived rather on the soggy side! A successful day culminated in dinner and prize giving and, once again, just over £1,300 was raised. This total was boosted by groups, individuals and businesses who sponsored the event. Thank you all.



It is not only fund-raisers that produce the yearly total, but all those wonderful people who present me with cheques, cash and set up monthly standing orders. These donations raise many hundreds each year.

AFAC Christmas cards were sold in the Charity Card Shop and sales from these added to our final total. My last sincere thanks go to the Ashwell Show committee for their donation, which paid for the printing of our Christmas cards.

AFAC is a community account and you all ensure its success.

**Christine Scholfield**

✉ christinescholfield@hotmail.com

 A business card for Elisa Luggeri Garden Design. The card features a stylized green sunburst logo on the left. The text on the card includes:
 

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## Diapalante

### A slow farewell to Mauritania



It all started in 2003 when Caroline Chandler, an Ashwell teenager, held a dinner at Ashwell

School to raise money towards the cost of her gap year adventure working as a project trust volunteer in Mauritania. Little did we imagine that her year with a local charity supporting the cattle, goat and camel herders living on the southern edges of the Sahara Desert would lead to such a long involvement in West Africa. The contacts she made at that time, her experience of the delivery of aid projects and the great support we have received from the people of Ashwell enabled the founding of the charity Diapalante and have allowed us to continue since then.



The growth of terrorism, particularly in neighbouring Mali, has made visits to Mauritania more difficult and though the situation is currently more stable, with some sadness and reluctance, we have accepted that Diapalante's focus has had to change, and it is time for us to leave Mauritania.

Our last project is in one of the herding villages. It gives women, who are heads of households as they are either widowed or divorced, the opportunity to start herds of goats. Each woman has been given four pregnant goats but, more importantly, Diapalante is continuing to support the women in establishing their herds for the first three years, so we will be in Mauritania for a while yet. Diallo, who represents us in Mauritania, is a veterinary technician and keen



to give these women an opportunity to support themselves and their families.



### **Meanwhile in Senegal...**

In 2010, Master P returned from Mauritania to start the Diapalante Community Education Centre in his home town of Kaolack. The centre has proved a great success, offering free learning opportunities to all, and is steadily reaching more of the many different groups within the local community. It is in the unusual position of being a place where both children and adults learn together (eg computer skills are useful to many people, the children, teachers, tradesmen etc). What the centre teaches depends on the demand, the resources and the knowledge of the staff, local volunteers and the two British volunteers provided by Project Trust. It is lovely to now see people coming back to report their progress and thank us for their opportunity.

We sincerely thank everyone in Ashwell for your continuing support through donations of money, goods, time and expertise; and not least, your friendly encouragement.

**Liz Chandler**

Trustee

☎ 743091

## **Ashwell Charity Christmas Card Shop**

The Ashwell Charity Christmas Card Shop opened once again for Christmas 2022. This year was without Covid, though we still had masks and handwash available for those who needed them. It was always going to be a difficult year for buying cards, owing to the financial situation people found themselves in, as well as the uncertainty caused by postal strikes. The weather didn't help either, as it was summery throughout October and November, and no one was feeling much as if Christmas was approaching.

This year, 14 charities were represented and the shop was well supported in Ashwell and also by customers from surrounding villages. We usually have a small 'passing trade' as well, and this year was no exception. Last year was a record year, with sales totalling over £3,400 and no-one expected anything like this for 2022. Considering the various pressures, sales held up well and we raised over £2,500. The range of cards on offer was very wide, with almost 200 designs from the 14 charities and I'm wondering if there's another shop in the country which has such a wide range of Christmas cards.

During the lifetime of the shop, now well over 20 years, it has become a part of Ashwell's village community. We are very grateful for all the support we receive from people in Ashwell and surrounding villages. The social side of the shop still hasn't bounced back to pre-Covid times, but it is beginning to be a social hub in the village again. We also did our bit to help you support good causes and, by sending the cards to your friends and family, we continue to raise awareness about the work of the various charities.

As always, we would not be able to do this without the individuals who, on behalf of the charities, supplied the cards and gave their time to staffing the shop each weekend. We are also pleased that there are now increasing numbers of volunteers, not associated with the charities, who seem to enjoy helping out.

Liz and I are always pleased to welcome people to 'The Old Post Office' at the corner of Kirby Manor as a proper shop for a couple of months of the year. If you support a charity and would like to be involved next year, phone Ian before September!

We look forward to seeing everyone again in 2023.

**Ian Chandler**

☎ 743091



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# ADVENT WINDOWS



22 December, 32 West End



10 December, Spring House





16 December, 2 Foresters (16 High Street)



19 December, 42 and 44 Silver Street



11 December, Bear House



3 December, 84 High Street



A wide-angle photograph of a vast field of yellow flowers, likely rapeseed, stretching towards a flat horizon. In the distance, a small cluster of green trees stands against a pale, overcast sky. The foreground is filled with the dense, bright yellow blooms, which are slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth.

# **WEDDINGS AND ANNIVERSARIES**



## Emily Northern and Joshua Rayner, 8 July 2022



Emily Beth Northern, daughter of Jeremy and Eleanor Northern of Redlands Farm, Ashwell, and Joshua David Rayner, son of Andrew and Jane Rayner of Shefford, were married on 8 July 2022 at Ashwell United Reformed Church.

The bridesmaids were Amy Northern, Jessica Northern, Ruth Rayner and Victoria Chapman. Their pink dresses were well complimented by the flowers, foliage and wheat in the bouquets, and in the chapel and marquee. The best man was Alexander Rayner, with Oliver Rayner and Jethro Northern as groomsmen. William Rayner played the organ for the service, accompanying the groom's brass teacher, on trumpet.

After the ceremony, the newlyweds and guests left the chapel on a red Routemaster bus, which transported them to the reception, held in the orchard at the bride's family farm. The beautiful weather was perfect for playing garden games and enjoying the delicious canapés and wedding breakfast.

In the evening, additional guests joined the reception. A brass ensemble played as the sun began to set, while everybody enjoyed toasting marshmallows over the fire pit. As a surprise for his wife, Josh sang a rendition of *I Love You Truly* in a barbershop quintet with friends. To the amusement of all, at the end of the evening the wedding photographer boarded the farm forklift bucket, driven by the bride's father, to take a group photo from above! The happy couple left in a tractor decorated by their family and friends, to honeymoon on the Llŷn peninsula in Wales.

## Helen Jones and Edward James, 17 September 2022



Edward James and Helen Jones met at the University of York in 2008. Edward grew up in Ashwell, the son of Trevor and Chris James. Helen was born in Nagold, Germany, before moving to Leyland, Lancashire, in the early 1990s. After leaving university, jobs in London and Cambridge led to them moving in together in Bishop's Stortford, although they are regular visitors to Ed's Mum in Ashwell and the village holds a special place in their hearts.

After being together for eleven years, Helen and Ed got engaged in 2019, on top of Clifford's Tower in York – the site of an early date. Covid delayed their plans for a couple of years but in September 2022 they were married at the East Anglian Railway Museum near Colchester. Luckily, the sun shone because the steam train rides (see photo) were open to the elements.

It was a fantastic day, made particularly special by their friend James who acted as celebrant, the many helpers who made the whole event run like clockwork, as well as all the wedding cakes that were baked and brought by family and friends. Helen walked herself down the aisle, asserting that no one but herself was going to 'give her away'. In the speeches, guests were treated to the surprise announcement that not only were they getting married, but they were also expecting a baby!

Ed and Helen 'minimooned' twice: once in Norfolk at a spa-pub near Holt (highly recommended), and again in the beautiful city of Amsterdam, where they enjoyed canal boat trips, a lot of cheese, and cycling about. They are now preparing for the arrival of their baby in March.



## Sophie Ivett and James Baker, 23 July 2022



On 23 July 2022, Sophie and James, both residents of the village, were married at St Mary's Church, Ashwell. The service was followed by a reception at The Barn at Alswick, Buntingford. With the event taking place at the end of a long heat wave, both Sophie and James were relieved that it wasn't too hot, as they had taken on the task of making and decorating their own wedding cake the night before the wedding! Luckily, they pulled it off in time and enjoyed a lovely service at the church surrounded by friends and family, followed by an amazing honeymoon in Italy.

Sophie and James met in 2014 when they both embarked on teacher training courses at the University of Cambridge. They ended up living in the same student house and have lived together ever since. They hope to continue enjoying living together for many years to come.

A huge thanks to Rev'd Chris Campbell for a wonderful service, and to Bene't Coldstream, John Rowlands and the choir for their excellent musical contributions. Thanks also go to the church flower team for the beautiful floral displays.

## Amina Lien and Alfie Talks, 30 July 2022



On 30 July 2022, Alfie and Amina were married at St Mary's Church, Ashwell.

It was a warm and sunny day, and lots of family and friends gathered in the church for the service, which was led by Rev'd Chris Campbell. The choir sang magnificently, with John Rowlands on the organ. The bell ringers managed to ring despite the bell frame being affected by the recent heatwave.

Diapalante provided some very welcome tea and refreshments in the churchyard, with beautiful cakes that had a sunflower and lavender theme. The bride and groom were driven to the reception in 'Woolly', thanks to Guy and Hilary MacKenzie. The party continued with an owl and hawk display, hog roast and dancing to a ceilidh band, surrounded by sunflowers and twinkly lights.

We were so grateful to Chris and the Parochial Church Council at St Mary's for their support, and for lots of help and loans of equipment. Thank you all!



## Golden Wedding Anniversary, Jill and Anthony Biddle



Jill and Anthony were married on 30 September 1972 in Christ Church, Radlett and their wedding reception was held in St Albans.

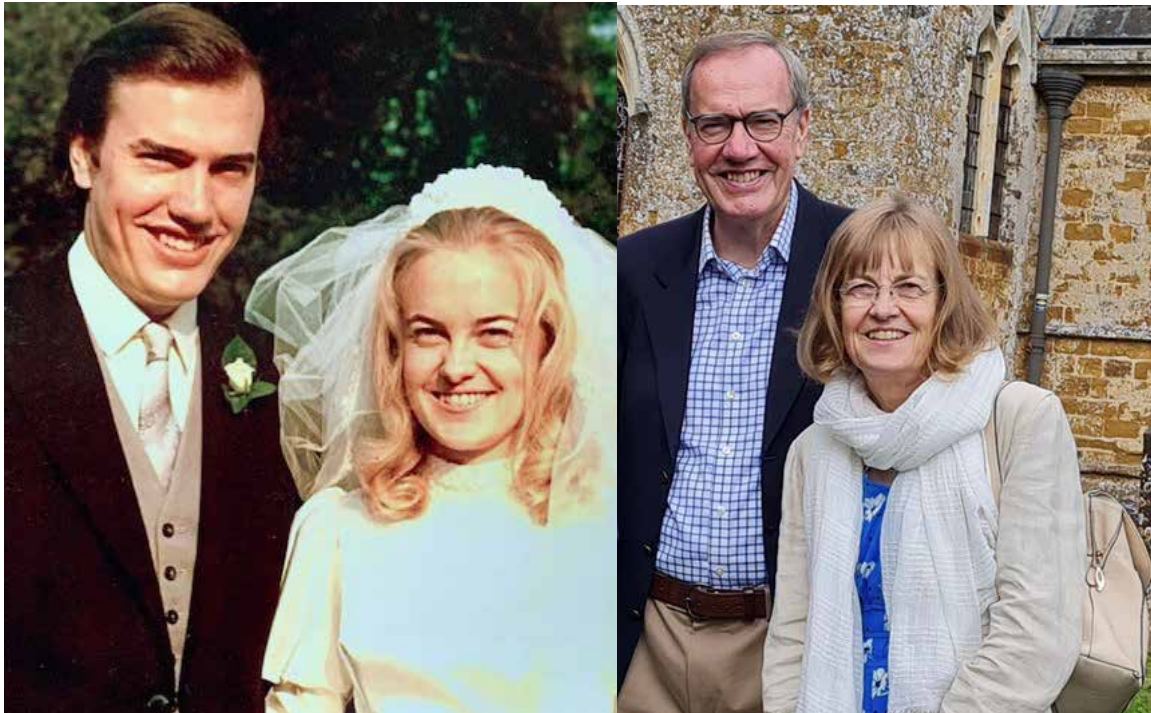
They spent the first three years of their married life in Redbourn before moving to Ashwell where their two sons, Thomas and John, were born and brought up. Anthony's business life was centred on his Hitchin office and included running his family's heating and air conditioning company.

The family moved to Cambridge in 1991, and over the following years both their sons married, Anthony's interests turned to house building and restoration, and three grandchildren were born. They are very much enjoying living in Ashwell once more.

Their golden wedding celebrations included a family holiday weekend in Warwickshire, with an anniversary cake made by the younger grandchildren – see photo!



## Golden Wedding Anniversary, Jennie and Ian Friars



Jennie and Ian met as teenagers and married some years later in 1972. They settled in Hertford from where they both commuted into London, Ian as a cargo claims examiner, Jennie as a legal secretary. Their two children were born in Hertford before the family moved to Salisbury where Ian trained as a priest. A move to Letchworth followed, for Ian to be curate at St George's Church, Norton. He regularly visited Bear House in Ashwell to choose music with the late Lindsay Colquhoun who was the organist.

Jennie and Ian's love of Ashwell then began and when the opportunity to purchase a house being built in the village offered itself in 1987, it soon became the 'family home', visited each week and for holidays over the intervening years until retirement beckoned from their last parish in Suffolk. Moving into their Ashwell home full-time was the obvious choice as they already had so many friends here. It was these friends who joined Jennie and Ian for a celebration of their Golden Wedding at the back of St Mary's Church after an evening service last September. The following weekend they took the family, including their four grandchildren, to Woburn Center Parcs for a family celebration.





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A group of students are performing on a stage. In the foreground, a girl in a white dress with a lace hem and glasses is pointing, and a girl in a blue skirt and a black shawl with a star is clapping. To their right, a boy in a white shirt and black pants is also clapping. Behind them, a boy with a yellow wig is pointing, and another boy in a black hat and blue overalls is clapping. On the far left, a girl in a red skirt and black jacket is smiling. On the far right, a boy in a black shirt is holding a green plant. The background is a painted backdrop of a village scene.

# **CLUBS AND SOCIETIES**





WI members sitting on the WI Memorial Seat at the National Arboretum

## Womens Institute



Meetings take place at the Ashwell United Reformed Church Hall on the third Wednesday of each month at 2pm. New members are

welcomed warmly. Margie Wallace has continued as president and an exciting programme of events was organised by Margaret Ashwell with committee support.

Our Christmas lunch was well supported and a delicious fare was provided by Diapalante, with profits going to their work in Senegal. Entertainment was provided by Margie and the afternoon concluded with a raffle and Christmas carols.

In January, Rev'd Chris Campbell talked about her journey that led to St Mary's Church. Arousing curiosity by use of an unexpected title, 'Pythagoras to Parables', Chris talked about her childhood interest in mathematics, her early career as a maths teacher and how this brought her into the church.

Over the following months, our pharmacist, Brian Deal, gave an amusing and informative overview of his work, which also involved mentoring trainees; Chris Frazer Smith spoke about his life in photography and gave an insight into the move from analogue to digital photography; and Keith Gordon, who used to run a jewellery shop in Ashwell, spoke about the design of Nordic jewellery and the Scandinavian influence, which showed through many of his wonderful designs.

We were entertained in May by four of our new members, Madeleine Legg, Josie Sheppard, Jan Coldstream and Corrie Swain, who each shared a fascinating glimpse into their lives. Chris Schofield, a former president of Ashwell WI, talked about a

charity, Ashwell's Fight Against Cancer, which she had set up to raise funds for research and clinical care at Addenbrooke's Hospital; and in July, Claire Williams and her husband, Brian, gave an overview of their experiences living in a motorhome full-time for three years, touring Britain and Europe.

During the second half of the year, WI members enjoyed an outing to Jordan's Mill and also operated the tea tent at the Ashwell Show. Paddy Byrne gave an interesting talk about the history of paper making; Barbara Saunders talked about her career, which started in the National Federation of Women's Institutes and developed into a vocation to raise the profile of women in our society; and Sarah Talks gave a fascinating insight into archaeology in and around Ashwell.



Learning tips from hairdresser, Susan Birch

2022 has been full of enjoyable events, often including other activities around the main attraction. We look forward to an equally exciting and interesting programme for 2023.

### Claire Williams

pp Sheila Hogan

✉ shogan\_uk@yahoo.co.uk





Autumn colour at the crest of Partridge Hill

## Border Ramblers

Being walk leaders, we started the year by asking our group members to complete a survey to find out what they wanted. Feedback suggested that the distances of past walks (about seven to eight kilometres) were about right and some did not like to venture far from the village.

The spring, summer and autumn programmes reflected this feedback, but still offered the occasional outing to places as far flung as Wrestlingworth, Sandon and Therfield. Sandon was particularly picturesque, while Therfield offered us free apples. And jolly good they were too.



The view from the bridge, Ashwell End

The longer midweek walk in late June took us nearly to Abington Pigotts. We intended to go all the way, but turned back with serious concerns about being too late for food and drink at the Three Tuns in Guilden Morden. Our party still managed to cover 15 kilometres and enjoyed a really good lunch to boot.

On one of the better attended walks to the south of the village, our party had just crested Partridge Hill

when we were rewarded with the sight of the naked ramblers. I say 'the' on the assumption that there's only one of them and I can't say there was anything more of interest to say about him. Aside from that, the route was a bit different from the norm and it was nice to see Ashwell from a different angle.

It does seem that, after Covid, quite a number of us are 'walked out'. A good proportion of our outings were attended by just a hard core of six or seven. Having said that, once word got round that we like to finish things off with tea and cake, interest grew a bit. More so when alcohol was involved!

If the idea of a fairly leisurely hike around the nearby countryside appeals, we'd love to hear from you - or just turn up on the day. Details are posted on the village noticeboard by the Rose & Crown and in the bus stop outside the Maltings.

**Gillian Duckworth**

✉ [gillianduckworth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gillianduckworth@yahoo.co.uk)

**Ian Thomas**

✉ [nextodsey@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nextodsey@yahoo.co.uk)

**Norton Mahy**

✉ [nortonmahy@gmail.com](mailto:nortonmahy@gmail.com)

## Ashwell Female Electrician

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email [gillgeorge1@outlook.com](mailto:gillgeorge1@outlook.com)





Fergus and Liz Moynihan (past and present presidents of the Horticultural Society) present a cup to Mary Gray

## Ashwell Horticultural Society

### 2022 – the year of change

Having returned to 'business as usual' in 2022, the society experienced several changes during the year.



We acquired an allotment in 2021 and began work early in 2022, preparing the plot for the coming season. A small team of volunteers worked together to weed, rotovate and plant vegetables and flowers on the site. We harvested a great crop of runner beans, onions, leeks and potatoes and were able to provide food for the food pantry in St Mary's Church. At our Annual General Meeting in November, much of the food came from the allotment, a real celebration of the success of this new venture. In 2023, we hope to develop the site to include different styles of vegetable growing and to experiment with new fruits and flowers. We planted sunflower seeds in an attempt to show solidarity with the Ukrainian families living in the village at the time.

However, a greater change was still to come. In November, Fergus Moynihan stepped down as president of the society. Fergus had held this post following his father's death in 1994. Fergus proved to be an inspiration for many of our members, always growing fruit and vegetables of a high

standard, which earned him many awards in the spring and annual shows. We are pleased that Liz Moynihan has agreed to keep the role in the family and has taken Fergus' place as head of the society.

Sue and Gordon Hill also decided it was time to retire from their posts on the committee after many years of service. Gordon has always taken a keen interest in the shows and has held the post of show secretary, latterly supporting others who followed in his footsteps. Sue held various roles during her time on the committee, including treasurer and communications secretary.



Young winners of a Horticultural Society cup

Fergus, Sue and Gordon will be missed in these key posts, but we are assured they will remain active members and available to advise and assist us whenever necessary. Altogether, they served the society in their respective roles for over 100 years; an incredible achievement. Many thanks for their commitment and dedication.

As we continue to develop projects in 2023, we welcome new members to the society. All our events are listed on the website:

▲ <https://ashwellhortics.chessck.co.uk>

**Margaret Gilliam**

Chair

☎ 742040



MLCC at the Ashwell at Home. Photo: John Wilkinson

## Mid-Life Crisis Car Club



[www.midlife-crisis.org.uk](http://www.midlife-crisis.org.uk)

For the first time in over two years, the Mid-Life Crisis Car Club (MLCCC) had a full schedule of events, uninterrupted by Covid. The season started in April with a well-supported run to the

former US Air Force base and museum at Bottisham, followed by lunch at the National Horse Racing Museum in Newmarket.

In May, club members displayed a variety of sports cars outside the Village Hall as part of Ashwell at Home, which generated much interest.

In June, the club had a presence at the annual Letchworth Classic and Vintage Car Club picnic and show in Weston. Later that month, we visited the impressive Silverstone Experience Museum at the eponymous F1 circuit.

July saw us returning to Kimbolton for the huge Kimbolton Fayre where, as usual, we had a reserved area. Mercifully, this area was close to some trees where we could shelter from the scorching sun.

In August, we attended the Pirton classic car meeting and enjoyed a scenic run to the Henry Moore Foundation studio and gardens in Perry Green, where we had lunch, followed by a private guided tour.

The highlight of the year was our highly successful September trip away to the Malvern Hills. We had a three-night stay in a lovely hotel, had a private guided tour of the Morgan car factory, and were treated to an exclusive visit to the Bugatti Owners Club at Prescott. We also visited two very interesting National Trust properties. Even the weather was kind to us, allowing top-down motoring the entire time away.

The driving season ended in October with a scenic drive to the pretty Essex village of Finchingfield, where 24 of us had Sunday lunch at the historic Fox Inn.

In November, we held our annual dinner at The Bushel and Strike. Our guest speaker was Hugh Chamberlain who spoke to us about his lifelong involvement in motorsport.

As is traditional for us, we ended the year with our 'decoke ramble' where we left the cars behind and combatted the Christmas excesses with a long walk in the countryside, followed by lunch at The Pig & Abbott in Abington Pigotts.

The MLCCC welcomes new members. The only qualification is ownership of a classic or sports car. For details, see our website:

▲ [www.midlife-crisis.org.uk](http://www.midlife-crisis.org.uk)

**Robin Lipscombe**

☎ 742584



Ashwell Theatre Club's *Strictly Sex Factor on Ice*

## Ashwell Theatre Club

### Children's workshop – March-April 2022

Ashwell Theatre Club (ATC) members Jo Eggleton Rance and David Rance ran a series of free workshops for local children who, owing to the pandemic, had little opportunity to further their interest in drama. The two hour workshops explored aspects of acting such as voice projection, facial expression, positioning on stage, singing and dance. Members of the ATC, Amanda Collinson (props), Karen Rogers (costumes) and Alan Munns (lighting), shared their expertise during the workshops as well.

The workshop culminated in the performance of two plays which were free for the families of the cast and crew to attend. *The Case of The Speckled Band* was a 1950's BBC radio play of the Sherlock Holmes story, where the cast were constantly put off by the ineptitude of the sound effects crew, who were trying to produce most of their effects live - and either getting the wrong effect or the right effect at the wrong moment!

The second play was a truncated version of *The Wizard of Oz*, containing some of the best known songs from the original show, and allowing the cast to show off their singing, dancing and acting skills. It was a joy to see the children growing in confidence and taking great pride in their performances.

### Strictly Sex Factor on Ice – June 2022

This one-act play was captained by first-time director Wendy Scott and starred David Collinson

and Christine Schofield, as well as Keith Rowland in his final performance for the ATC, and Sandra Gawthrup in her first performance as a new member, debuting not only her acting but her roller-skating skills. The play was about a village theatre group that tries to make money by running their own reality contest show. The ATC production was sold out.



Ashwell Theatre Club children's workshop

### Summer barbecue – August 2023

The members' summer barbecue took place in the Robertshaws' garden during a balmy August afternoon with an ad-hoc production, finished by torch thanks to the encroaching evening, topped off by a fine picnic where members new and old mingled.

### New members evenings at the Rose & Crown

The ATC will continue our series of new members evenings at the Rose & Crown for old, new and prospective members. It's a great way to find out





Ashwell's Big Sing

who we are, and how you might get involved - on or behind the stage. We've had several new members join through them, and we invite everyone with an interest to attend our next one. Join our mailing list to be alerted.

### Looking forward to 2023

The ATC is producing a pantomime, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, in January 2023, and we anticipate a new one-act play in May 2023. We will have at least one new members evening and another yet to be determined production in autumn 2023. There's lots to look forward to.

### Get involved

The ATC serves as a platform to enable our members to express their unique creative talents. We are always looking for new members to get involved. Would you be happy to arrange a trip to the theatre? Do you have an idea for a play you would like to direct? Are you interested in acting, making props or helping behind the scenes? We need and want many helping hands to make it all happen. Please email us and let us know how you would like to be involved.

#### Diane Jacoutot

Chairman

✉ [ashwelltheatre@gmail.com](mailto:ashwelltheatre@gmail.com)

📌 [www.ashwelltheatre.co.uk](http://www.ashwelltheatre.co.uk)

## Ashwell's Big Sing



Ashwell's Big Sing is a friendly, local community choir where adults can come together and sing to their hearts' content. No vocal training or ability to read music is required, just a willingness to learn

and a love of music. We perform a varied repertoire, from musicals to pop and rock classics. We also do exercises to help develop your singing voice.

We meet every Monday during term time at the Ashwell Village Hall from 8-9pm and fees are charged in advance. All music is provided, as well as links to backing and guide vocal tracks.

The choir enjoys participating in local events such as Ashwell at Home and our very own charity Christmas concerts.

We always welcome new members and really hope to spread the joy of singing to all in the community.

#### Liz Townsend

Choir Leader

✉ [ashwellsbigsing@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellsbigsing@gmail.com)

☎ 07753 754452



## Ashwell Jazz



In Ashwell, 2022 was another good year for jazz – we had lots of good music, convivial chatter and another splendid BBQ.

As always, it was the music that was most important for people and the draw of listening together a close second. Each month, a member chooses a topic on which they devise an hour-long programme. After a short break, the rest of us bring numbers to play on the same theme – well mostly they are on the same theme... In 2022, we had programmes on two specific years, 1942 and 1979. The programmes covered how the war affected jazz, instruments used for playing jazz, and more general themes such as 'These I have loved', 'Kind of blue. So what!', 'Love it or loathe it!', and 'But is this jazz?'. Our December meeting was, once again, with members bringing tunes they wanted to have played. There were also a few mince pies.

We hear a great variety of jazz at our meetings, from well-known favourites to new artists and sounds. Over time, it is amazing how your taste can broaden into areas previously unappreciated.

If you enjoy jazz, want to know more, and want a relaxed evening once a month, we will be pleased to welcome you. We meet at 59 High Street on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. You will need to bring your own refreshment. There is no charge.

Please give me a ring if you would like to know more.

**David Short**

✉ david@merchantflock.co.uk

☎ 742385

## Rose & Crown Folk



Ashwell's folk session is now 28 years old, having started in December 1994 with a charity 'sing-along-a-thon' to raise money for the church tower.

2022 was our first (almost) full year since 2019, and things have gone well. Sian and Sam continue to welcome us at The Rose & Crown, and we have had some particularly fun evenings. As usual, every month is different and what happens is unpredictable. To begin with, people were a bit reluctant to come out to the pub after two years of Covid and the bar was often nearly empty except for us. It's always nicer when there's a proper pub atmosphere and this is now becoming much more the case. Apart from one month (where there were three of us doing music and a dozen people listening), we have had a good turnout of musicians and singers, and the variety on offer this year has been exceptional. We regularly feature harp, ukulele, mandola, melodeon, mouth organ, concertina, tin whistle and quite a few guitars, including a 12-string, as well as singing voices.

2022 ended in style, with a beautiful session of carols and Christmas songs, and everyone wondered where the time had gone when it was closing time.

We have produced a programme for 2023, with a different theme for each month. We also publish a monthly article in *Ashwell Village News* so you can keep in touch with what's going on. You should look out for the posters on the noticeboards and inside the Rose & Crown. We also have a Facebook group at:

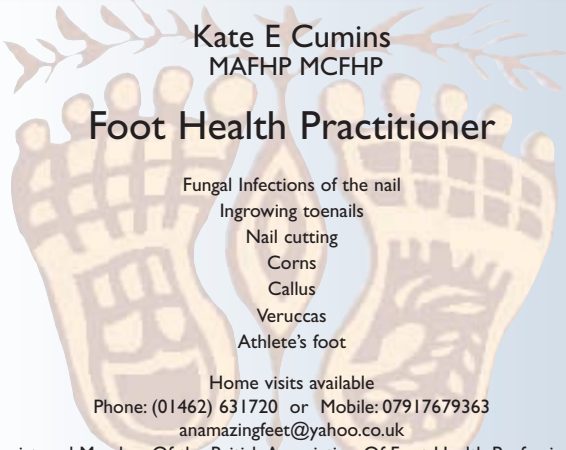
📌 [www.facebook.com/groups/RoseAndCrownFolk](https://www.facebook.com/groups/RoseAndCrownFolk)

We continue to meet on the first Monday of every month from 8.30-11pm in the bar of the Rose & Crown. The committee is (from time to time, and in no particular order): Mike Holmes, Jon Stark, Brin Siller, Sarah Talks, Ian Chandler, Ken Hollow, Julia Mitchell and the Murtons.

The session is very informal and everyone is welcome. You don't have to be musically talented or confident, though it helps if you are inclined to join in. Please contact me for details.

**Ian Chandler**

☎ 743091



**Kate E Cumins**  
MAFHP MCFHP

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# CHURCH AND CHAPEL



# Ashwell Parish Church, St Mary the Virgin

## Introduction



It has been lovely to have completed a full year here in Ashwell and to have seen so much of both the life of the church and the life of the village in that time. After all the changes during the pandemic, it feels as if 2022 was the year to regroup.

In the church, particular highlights for me included my first Holy Week in the village with all the highs and lows, such as foot washing and stripping the altar on Maundy Thursday, our Walk of Witness on Good Friday (jointly with the URC) and the dawn fire on Easter Day, the beautiful Choral Evensong in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and our confirmation service, led by Bishop Christine, when seven young people from the village were confirmed.

I've been able to experience first hand the importance of community in Ashwell and to celebrate the part that the church plays in amazing village events, such as the Music Festival and Ashwell at Home. Last year, the Book Fair, Flea Market and Christmas Fair were hugely successful events in St Mary's, where it was wonderful to welcome people into the building, while raising much needed funds for the church. We also enjoyed creating new initiatives to build up community including our new 'Fridays@5' young people's group and opening up our church room as a warm hub throughout the winter. Together, these initiatives help shape our new vision of the church, which is to be 'a welcoming community, sharing God's love'.

As well as being a place for successful village events, our beautiful medieval building is a place where we can come together to share the joys and sorrows of our ordinary lives. It has been such a privilege over the past year to marry new couples, welcome families for christenings and to say goodbye to much loved villagers at funerals. Together, through these services, we add to the history of the place and remember that we continue in the steps of so many before us.

Nothing in the church can happen without the commitment of a huge collective of volunteers who give their time, expertise and money to support both the church building and the activities within it. There are far too many people to list here, but a very big thank you to everyone who is involved in the life of the church and makes her what she is!

**Rev'd Chris Campbell**

Rector

✉ [chris@revcc.uk](mailto:chris@revcc.uk)

☎ 742277

## Refurbishment news from St Mary's

During the last year, we were disappointed but not completely surprised to find our grant application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for restoration of the tower and side aisle had not been successful; the criteria for grants changed in response to the pandemic and this worked against our application. The consequence of the decision is that we shall have to scale back our ambitions and re-order our priorities to be in line with our Mission Action Plan.

Thanks to the generosity of a substantial donation, we have excellent kitchen and toilet facilities. Being able to welcome everyone, regardless of physical ability, into our beautiful church in safety must be at the core of all we do. We are now working closely with diocesan advisors and our architect to design a level access from the street into the north porch. This plan is likely to be expensive, whichever route is selected, as we will need to cater not only for pedestrians, but also walkers, buggies and pushchairs with a surface that will stand up to all weathers.

Our fundraising will continue while we plan, and we welcome your views on how you access and value our church. Whilst full masonry repair of the tower and buttresses will not be possible now or for some years, an essential first step in our endeavours is to open safe access to the path around the tower. These holding repairs will entail stone conservators abseiling down the tower walls, inspecting the masonry, removing loose debris, and completing minor repairs such as re-pointing. We now have estimates for the work and our fundraising will continue as we look for a time to complete the work, which will not affect the breeding season of the peregrine falcons.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**David Richards**

✉ [dbr99@btinternet.com](mailto:dbr99@btinternet.com)

## Mothers' Union

St Mary's Mothers' Union (MU) met throughout 2022 for fellowship and to welcome a varied number of speakers. Our speakers included Hertfordshire Police, informing us about cyber security, and Reg Bailey, explaining the rationale behind film classification. As well as worship, we visited St Albans Abbey and viewed the beautiful textiles and vestments. A lovely sunny afternoon was spent in the grounds of St Nicholas Church, Hinxworth, for the annual garden party.



We continue to support The Lister Hospital and Baby Unit with emergency wash bags for patients admitted into hospital without any warning, knitted items for the newborns and cheer-up bags for the children's ward. Christmas stockings were also sewn, with appropriate gifts to go in them. A basket has been placed by the MU noticeboard in St Mary's of baby packs consisting of a knitted blanket, cardigan, and hat and mitts, all beautifully packaged to be given to any newborn baby in Ashwell. We have received some lovely messages of thanks.

Another new initiative has been to support the Royston Refuge for victims of domestic abuse and homeless families evicted under Section 21. We are providing starter packs consisting of the basic needs such as kettle, toaster, crockery, cutlery, saucepans and towels for victims who arrive for refuge with absolutely nothing. MU also supports the prisons in the diocese and we have sent Christmas cards to the prisoners. The prison chaplain has said how much this is appreciated by the prisoners as some do not have any correspondence whatsoever.

Everyone is welcome to come to our meetings on the second Thursday of each month at 10.30am in the Parish Church Room.

### Viv Hollow

✉ Ken\_and\_viv@yahoo.co.uk

## Ashwell Food Pantry



In the Spring of 2023, Ashwell food pantry will be three years old. It started as a response to the pandemic, but one thing after another has meant it has continued to be in demand and we're glad to say that, so far, the generosity of the village

has always managed to keep up with the need. The pantry lives in St Mary's Church and is accessible every day. It is completely anonymous to use and anyone experiencing trouble in making ends meet is welcome to come and take up to six items a day. We also display information on the larger local food banks and other sources of financial help. At times, we may also have supermarket vouchers to distribute.

A dedicated team makes sure the pantry is stocked up daily and we're very glad of the support from local people to keep it going. Donations are placed in the box in St Mary's or left at the village store and taken over by one of the team. If you are able to add something regularly to your shopping list to donate, please do! We always need tinned meals, tuna, tinned vegetables and fruit, mayonnaise, cereals, desserts, tea, coffee, long life milk, cordials, jam, biscuits and toiletries. In 2022, we also started a fresh food box for people to drop off any excess produce from their gardens, which all villagers, especially pantry users, are welcome to take.

The pantry has been described as a lifeline at difficult times in the month and is a way for people who can afford to give to make a big difference to those in need locally. It's only a small operation, but its existence means that no one in Ashwell has to go to bed hungry and we think that's worth all the effort. Thank you again to everyone who keeps it running.

### Julia Mitchell

for the Ashwell Pantry team

✉ ashwellfoodpantry@gmail.com

☎ 743091

## St Mary's flower arrangers

2022 was a very exciting and challenging year for the church flower arrangers as we made the decision to go 'foam free'! In other words, to arrange flowers in a much more sustainable way. This is because floral foam does not break down easily; it is full of nasty chemicals and a lot of the particles penetrate into the water system. Suzanne





Humbert led a very informative 'foam free' workshop in St Mary's Church earlier in the year and all our team enthusiastically embraced this new way of arranging flowers, for which we are incredibly grateful.



We had numerous weddings last year and we celebrated the Platinum Jubilee with beautiful red, white and blue arrangements, all paid for with donations from various local families in memory of their loved ones. We are always most grateful for the kind donations we receive throughout the year for the flowers and for all the kind comments we receive. If you would like to discuss the flowers for any occasion or would like to be involved with our team, please contact one of the following:

**Caroline Feast**

☎ 743233

**Suzanne Humbert**

☎ 742961

**Michelle Notley**

☎ 742556

## St Mary's Church Discoverers and children's activities

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' " Matthew 19:14

During 2022, there was a gradual move from outdoor to indoor activities for our children and young people in church.

Discoverers sessions, which are offered during the 10.45am service on three Sundays out of four, now take place in the choir vestry at the back of church. Our members range from 3-11 years old. We continue to find fun and creative ways to interpret the meaning of the Sunday Bible readings which are shared with the congregation before the end of the service.

Social distancing and restricted numbers of choir members meant a delayed return for our junior choir, but we are now pleased to include their voices in our Sunday worship.

Participation in our all age 'Thank God It's Sunday' service provides a great opportunity for our children to take a more active role by singing, reading, acting, writing prayers, making and holding props and much more. Their involvement always enriches the experience for everyone present.

Our Spring Messy Church was held in the URC churchyard: the theme was mother church, mother earth and Mothering Sunday. Activities included seed planting, nature mobiles, mother hen collage, a story and more.

The ever popular Easter egg hunt took place in the churchyard on Easter Saturday followed by an interactive



Messy Church 'mother. themed activities: Mother Earth



story in church and an opportunity to admire the wonderful Easter garden that was created by Lucy and Iona.

Last summer saw the introduction of 'Holiday drop-in' sessions on each Friday in August. Activities were provided for all ages based around the familiar Bible stories of Noah's ark, Moses in the bulrushes, the big catch of fish and the lost sheep.

Our November messy church focused on remembrance. We remembered people that we love or have loved, as well as the soldiers who gave up their lives to save others. There were prayers, stories, remembrance posies, a giant poppy collage, seed bombs, a treasure hunt and memory games. The poppy collage was displayed at the Remembrance Sunday service the following day.

December was another busy month for our young people, culminating in the much anticipated crib service on Christmas Eve and the wonderful celebration of Christ's birth on Christmas morning.

If you would like to find out more, please go to our website:

📌 [www.stmarysashwell.org.uk](http://www.stmarysashwell.org.uk)

or contact me.

**Jo Adams**

✉ [adams561j@gmail.com](mailto:adams561j@gmail.com)

☎ 01763 241587

## St Mary's Church Choir

What a joy it is to bring music to the congregation at St Mary's. 2022 saw a return to some form of normality. For choirs, the distancing protocols were truly de-motivating.

Our new rector, Rev'd Chris Campbell, is very musical, which brings many advantages, not least her regular appearance at Friday night rehearsals and her views on hymns and all that the choir does.

Lent and Easter are my favourite times of the year from a church music perspective. The reflective period of Lent lends itself to a deeply moving repertoire. A personal favourite was the singing of psalm 22 *My God, my God, look upon me, why hast thou forsaken me* (to a chant by Cammidge) on Maundy Thursday as the altar was stripped. If that didn't give you a lump in the throat, nothing would! Easter Day brought the joy of the resurrection when we sang *The Lord bless you and keep you* (Rutter), *Ubi Caritas* (Gjeilo) and *Cantate Domino* (Pitoni).

The Festal Evensong in 2022 was very special. Judy Catterick, who retired in late 2021, chose the music. Judy's vast contribution to the musical tradition at St Mary's is exemplified by the repertoire for Evensong. She chose *Magnificat in D* (Dyson), *Responses* (Smith), *Blessed City Heavenly Salem* (Bairstow), *Te Deum in C* (Stanford) and the introit was *Enrich Lord*, written by Judy's husband, Rev'd Jack Catterick, who was rector at St Mary's from the 1950s to the 1970s. There were several speeches afterwards and very few dry eyes.

John Rowlands also retired from his role as organist. We marked his leaving by singing his choice of





*The Lord hath been mindful of us* (Wesley) which John expertly accompanied. He has been playing the organ at St Mary's for about 40 years and will be missed, although he still boosts the choir with his bass voice. Speeches also followed John's last service and he highlighted what a privilege it has been for him to play in the church for so many years. Privilege for us too, John.

Pete Eaglesfield was appointed our new organist, starting in September. He lives in Buntingford and has been one of our go-to organists when we needed cover. He's a very welcome new member of the team, not just as a highly competent organist - he's also a joy to have around. Pete runs a business in music technology when he's not at St Mary's practising, and for real spare time pleasure he also makes cider!

Advent and Christmas brought some new music. The gentlemen of the choir sang the *O antiphons* at the Advent Carol Service and we sang some reflective Advent music, including *Jesu priceless treasure* (Bach) and *Ubi Caritas* (Gjeilo) at the Carol Service. Christmas Day was celebrated with the *Candlelight Carol* (Rutter) and *Lully Lulla Lullay* (Stopford).

The Junior Choir still thrives. We focused attention in the early months on working towards the Young Musicians' Concert at the Ashwell Music Festival. There we sang a special psalm to amusing lyrics (words by BC), and *Goodnight, Sweetheart*, a fun close harmony show-stopper. Rave reviews were received!

As usual, the choir at St Mary's works as a team and warm thanks go to Sheelagh Bennett for tireless librarian work, our organists John Rowlands and Pete Eaglesfield, and all those who assist with the

Junior Choir, including Charlotte Campbell, Kit and Theo Coldstream, Sheelagh Bennett and the Rev'd Chris Campbell.

We're always looking for new singers so, if you're interested, please contact me.

**Bene't Coldstream**

✉ bcoldstream@yahoo.co.uk

☎ 742288

## St Mary's Church music

### Three special occasions



The presentation to Judy Catterick (far left)

The Festival Evensong on Sunday 22 May, was the occasion at which we were able to say a big 'Thank You' to **Judy Catterick** for all that she has done for music at St Mary's over many years. Judy played the organ, has led both the Junior and Senior Choirs and together with her late husband, Father Jack Catterick, organised the Music Festival, particularly



in the early years. Judy chose some of the music for the Festival Evensong and attended with members of the Catterick family. She was presented with an engraved vase, and a sum of money which we hope will go towards a new upholstered and extendable chair.



On RSCM Music Sunday, 12 June, we also said our 'Thank You' to **John Rowlands** who after more than 40 years of organ playing in Ashwell, most recently as the Organist in Charge, is stepping back his commitment in order to spend more time with family and in places other than Ashwell! He was presented with some engraved glasses and a decanter, with some lovely looking wine to go with them.



On Sunday 14 August, we were delighted to have a special sung evensong to mark a special birthday for Peter Rose, and to mark his significant contribution to the music at St Mary's. Peter ran the Junior Choir for many years, bringing on lots of young musicians, some of whom have gone on to be professional singers and performers. He also played the organ and helped Judy Catterick run the Senior Choir. On a very hot summer Sunday, the choir sang music chosen by Peter, aided by Guy and Hilary MacKenzie.

After the service, a delightful picnic was enjoyed by all, and there were opportunities to see some photographs and memorabilia from Peter and Olive Anderson's collection.

### Sarah Talks

## Bellringers

2022 saw a full return to normal ringing, following the difficulties of the previous two years. Our beginners made steady progress over the course of the year, as did our intermediate learners who are now able to ring for services, weddings etc. Where possible, we were able to ring for Sunday services at least twice a month throughout the year.

We rang to celebrate four weddings, two of which were weekday ones. We were very grateful to those ringers who took time off work to ring for these, as well as those from other towers who helped to make up numbers.

The long, dry summer and very high temperatures created problems towards the end of July. Ashwell bells are mounted in an oak frame that dates back to the 15th century and which shrinks and expands very slightly with prolonged dry or wet weather. By the start of August, this movement meant that the heavier bells were becoming almost impossible to ring, so much so that, following the visit of the Herts County Ringing Association at the beginning of the month, the decision was made to suspend ringing until September.

In September, following the death of Queen Elizabeth, we joined with many other towers across the country to mark the death of the monarch, ringing half muffled to mark her passing, then again on the day of the funeral.

In November, we again rang half muffled to mark Remembrance Sunday, before closing the year in December ringing for the village carol concert and Christmas services, when our learners rang for their first service.

We are always happy to welcome new ringers to the tower, whether you are a beginner or a past ringer who would like to start again. We practise on Thursday evenings from 8pm. Come along to the tower and you will be made most welcome.

### Steve White

Tower captain

☎ 01763 853538

### Ian Chandler

Secretary







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## Friends of St Mary's

The Friends is a registered charity which was founded some 30 years ago. Its sole purpose is to raise money to help maintain both the fabric and the contents of Ashwell's parish church. We are very fortunate to have such a large and beautiful church at the centre of our village. The residents of Ashwell are, by default, the beneficiaries of the hard work, craftsmanship and skills of past generations, who were considerably poorer than us and who first built St Mary's and then maintained her over many centuries.

The Friends is not a part of the Church or the Church of England but is an independent charity which acts on its own initiative and which raises its own funds from its generous donors. Many of our donors are not otherwise involved in the life of the Church but are concerned that St Mary's is preserved, and indeed enhanced, for the enjoyment and use of future generations. We are very grateful to them all, particularly over the last two and a half years when their continuing support has been very important to us in the absence of many of our normal fundraising activities.

The Friends are once again profoundly grateful to Karen Rogers and her colleagues for organising and running the Book Fair which last year raised well in excess of £4,000 for the Friends - an all-time record. The Book Fair takes a great deal of careful organisation and hard work. Thank you all very much!

More work always needs to be done to the fabric of St Mary's and we anticipate being called on to assist with the costs of further repairs and maintenance in the near future.

Finally, we said goodbye last year to Mike Taffs, Andrew Gillborn and John Rowlands, who retired as trustees in 2022 after many years' hard work for the Friends - indeed, John was the last of the founding trustees of the Friends. We wish them well.

If you wish to join the Friends as a trustee, give a one-off donation to us or become a regular donor, please let me know by getting in touch. I look forward to welcoming you to our events in 2023!

### Stephen ten Hove

Chairman

✉ [stephentenhove@icloud.com](mailto:stephentenhove@icloud.com)

☎ 742262

## Ashwell Village News

The monthly magazine *Ashwell Village News* (AVN) is produced as part of the community outreach from St Mary's Church. We are glad to support other village organisations, community groups and charities and aim to provide a good mix of articles to read, advertising for local events and businesses, and information on services and activities at St Mary's and the United Reformed Church, as well as contact details for village groups and clubs. We produce a paper copy, which you can buy in local shops, and have an electronic copy available at:

▲ <https://tinyurl.com/Ashwell-Village-News>.

If you would like to know more about the workings of the parish council or learn about life in the village 100 years ago, read about folk music, Greening Ashwell or the many other groups you can join, do take a look.

We are always looking for new contributions so how can you help?

- **Artist or photographer?** Please send contributions for the front cover.
- **Writer or budding journalist?** Please send articles, poems, stories or launch a regular column!
- **Technical genius?** Please contact us if you can support our online content or publisher programme.
- **Generally creative?** Please get in touch with me if you have suggestions.

If all of the above are not a possibility, please support the AVN by buying a copy when you are out and about in the village. Thank you to everyone who currently helps with AVN, Julia and Mark for advertising and finance, Ian for useful numbers, Alfie for layout, and Richard and Tracy Young for distribution.

### Sarah Talks

✉ [ashwellvillagenews@gmail.com](mailto:ashwellvillagenews@gmail.com)

☎ 742182

## Sunday afternoon teas

Between Easter and the end of September, St Mary's Church provided afternoon tea every Sunday in the Parish Church Room. We welcomed visitors from far and wide who were only too pleased to sit and rest and enjoy a cup of tea and delicious home baked cakes and scones. We ended the season with a magnificent total of £1,467. The teas not only raise much needed funds for the church, but also



provide a valuable outreach to visitors. It is always fascinating to hear why people have come to visit our lovely village and where they have come from.

The teas were also hugely popular on the Ashwell at Home day, raising a further £728. Many thanks to all who helped on that day. Your help was so much appreciated.

We are so grateful to all our bakers, servers and visitors, whether they are local 'regulars' or occasional visitors. We are always in need of more volunteers, so if you would like to help either by baking or serving (you don't have to be a churchgoer!) or if you know a young person who is looking for a Duke of Edinburgh volunteering opportunity, then please do get in touch with the Parish Church Office.

We look forward to seeing you again in the spring!

**Caroline Leyland**

✉ office@stmarysashwell.org.uk

## United Reformed Church



United Reformed Church

The year of 2022 seemed to pass by extremely quickly! At the URC we continued to hold two services each month and enjoyed a variety of preachers, including our own Jim Dalgleish who has guided and encouraged us, despite being a retired minister.

An opportunity to join friends at St Mary's in a Good Friday Walk of Witness and to host several concerts during the Ashwell Music Festival was most

welcome and we look forward to more shared activities and special services in 2023.

Our monthly CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other) meetings on second Wednesdays have been popular and have attracted between twelve and twenty people. We have enjoyed board games, Jubilee memories, summer holiday memories and craft sessions, as well as a 'thought for the day' from Jim. We have also enjoyed some fantastic cakes baked by members and friends who come along. CAMEO will continue during 2023, so do put the dates in your diaries (there is always an advert in *Ashwell Village News*).

The use of the URC hall has been very encouraging: it is good to know that it is still a valued community facility and also reassuring that income from hiring it out pays for the cost of running it. This past year anyway! Special thanks go to our two ladies who keep the church and hall in nice condition.

We have hosted a Lent lunch and Saturday teas and we thank those village groups who helped us make the latter possible during June and July - and who helped raise funds for the church and local groups and charities. This year, however, to break with tradition we decided to book a Harvest lunch for our members at a local hostelry. This was very much enjoyed and we plan to do this again more regularly during 2023.

On a sad note, at the very beginning of the year, we said goodbye to our very old friend and devoted servant of the church, Dorothy Andrews. But Dorothy would have been delighted that the chapel hosted two weddings in 2022: Emily Northern to Josh Rayner on 8 July and then, on 8 October, Bethany Chapman to Henry Wilson. The URC was glad that it could make our larger chapel available to our friends at the Baptist church for their special days.

At the time of writing, we have no more news of when the Rev'd Dr JunSoo Park will commence his ministry with the North Herts Group of Churches. We hope it won't be too long before he moves to Hertfordshire and we get to know him better.

Finally, a reminder that our Sunday services usually start at 10.45am and that everyone is welcome.

**Chris James**

Church Secretary

☎ 742684

**San Carswell**

Hall Bookings

☎ 742757

## Zoar Baptist Chapel

Gardiners Lane

Service times:

Sunday 10.30am and 2.30pm

Tuesday 7.15pm

All are most welcome at our services.

We believe the Holy Bible is God's word, and the message it contains is central to our worship. We use the authorised (King James) version.

Our services are simple and reverent, and are conducted by visiting ministers.



30 July	Alphaeus George Wesley Talks and Amina Victoria Lien
9 September	Jason Charles Livings and Jessica Katie Patricia Cross

### Thanksgiving for marriage

4 April	Ian and Wendy Stewart
---------	-----------------------

### Wedding blessing

5 May	John and Valerie Campbell
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### Funerals

8 February	Mary Knight
17 February	Tony Bardwell
18 February	Roger Taunton (Memorial Service)
24 June	Rodney Leete (Graveside Funeral at Ashwell Cemetery)
3 July	Mark Smith (at North Herts Crematorium)
21 September	Maureen May Moore
10 November	Peter Moore
23 November	Peter Tunnard (Thanksgiving Service)

## Ashwell United Reformed Church

### Weddings

8 July	Joshua David Rayner and Emily Beth Northern
8 October	Henry Wilson and Bethany Chapman

## Ashwell Parish Council

### Interments at Ashwell Cemetery

17 February	Anthony Phillip Arthur Bardwell
4 March	Roger McKenzie Taunton
18 March	Andrew Bailey Frankland
25 May	Pauline Anne Brook
24 June	Rodney Jack Leete
20 July	Anthony Augustus Christy
20 July	Mary Vander Borgh
1 November	Maureen May Moore
10 November	Peter Moore

## From our registers for 2022

### Parish Church of St Mary's Ashwell

#### Baptisms

13 March	Anya Elizabeth Branowsky-Marsh
21 August	Matilda Margaret Elizabeth Acaster
5 November	Jasper Ireton Terry Mitchell
10 December	James Wallace Tait and Emily Rose Tait

#### Marriages

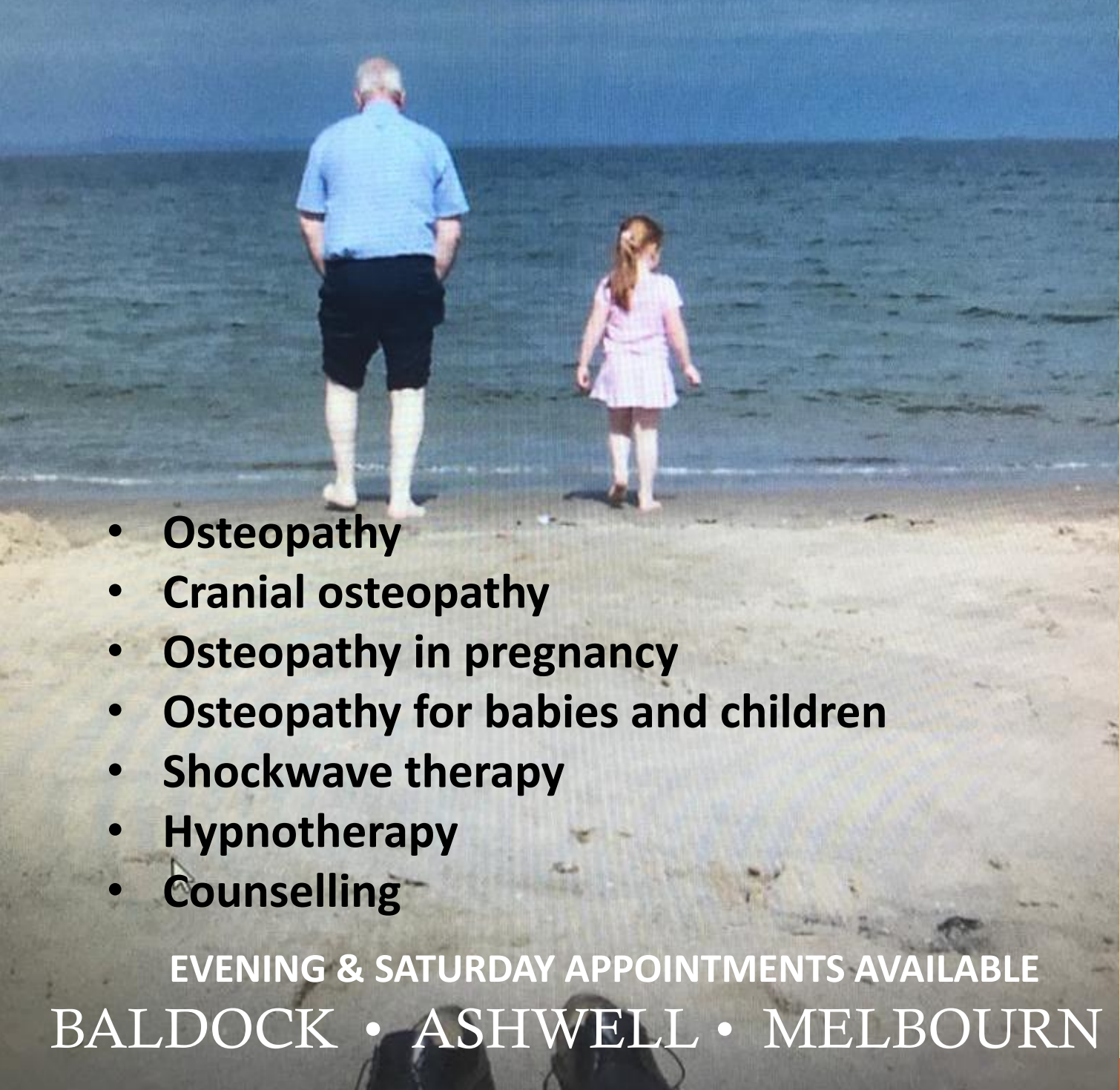
6 April	Noel Francis Paul Montague and Julie Elizabeth Darts
23 July	James Baker and Sophie Ivett





# AMBER HEALTH

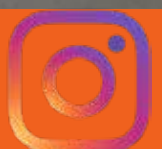
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# EVENTS







Ashwell Show best cake award

## Ashwell Show



Thank you for supporting  
100 Years of the Ashwell  
Show!

Nearly 6,000 people  
enjoyed a great day out at  
the 2022 Ashwell Show on  
August Bank Holiday  
Monday. A high-adrenalin

BMX stunt show, amazing falconry display, and the  
ever-popular horse show made it a day to  
remember. Special thanks as always goes to Sam  
Sheppard for his support over the many years by so  
generously allowing the Show to use his land.



After a two year hiatus, the Ashwell Show was  
back, and the crowds were eager to embrace the  
carnival-like atmosphere of this traditional show.  
Crowd pleasers on the day included: an assault  
course run by 1st Ashwell Scouts, tractor rides and  
the dog show, which was full in every class as  
showgoers keenly put their dogs forward as having  
the fluffiest coat or waggiest tail.

The show was packed with families making the  
most of the day out, with children taking part in  
free circus skills lessons and enjoying face painting  
and craft activities. 'Safari Stu' also offered an  
insight into the world of his more unusual animals.  
Ashwell WI hosted the hotly-contested Ashwell  
Show Bake-off competition, and made hundreds  
of cups of tea for showgoers throughout the day -  
along with some delicious cake of course!

All the Ashwell Show favourites were at the show  
once more to keep visitors entertained, including  
the vintage cars, tractors, and craft tent. And once  
again, this year's show was a treat for the taste  
buds, with more choice than ever before from the  
extensive food and drink stands.

The Sunday night pre-show event for Ashwell  
residents was highly attended, with local musicians  
entertaining the crowd, and great fun was had by all  
- thank you for your support!

### Special thanks

The Ashwell Show committee would like to take  
this opportunity to say a big posthumous thank  
you to Mark Smith who sadly passed away in 2022  
and was greatly missed at this year's Show. Mark's





hard work, and wry humour over the years for the Show is greatly valued and remembered by all who worked alongside him.

### Thank you

We would like to say a big thank you to all those clubs, societies and individuals who helped to set-up and clear up, man the gate and car parks, and provide activities on the day. The committee works hard throughout the year but we simply couldn't have put on the Show without your help. And thank you to everyone who came to the Show on the day - we appreciate your support and hope you had a great time.



### Want to Join the Ashwell Show committee?

If you have any time or expertise to lend to the Ashwell Show we would love to hear from you. We currently have vacancies in a number of committee posts, and there are plenty of things you can do to help no matter how much or little time you have to spare. Come and join in the fun!

To volunteer to help the Show or join the committee, please contact Show Secretary Gemma Allan on: ✉ [info@ashwellshow.co.uk](mailto:info@ashwellshow.co.uk).

### Ashwell Show hands out more than £30,000 to local organisations

The Ashwell Show is organised by volunteers and operates a not-for-profit policy with the proceeds raised given to local clubs, societies and organisations. In 2022 the show handed out £30,442 to local worthy causes and those organisations who sent volunteers to help with the running of the show. **In the past 15 years the Ashwell Show has given more than £150,000 to local organisations.**

2022 was an exceptional year and we are delighted to announce that thanks once again to the hard work of the committee volunteers and everyone's support on the day, we are able to contribute the following funds to local clubs, societies, and organisations:

Beneficiary	Amount (£)	Details
Ashwell Accies (football club)	2,640	Purchase of four flood-lights
Ashwell Baby and Toddler & Messy Play Group	600	Hall hire and group running costs
Ashwell Bellringers	100	Ongoing costs
Ashwell Cricket Club	1,100	Scoreboard and other equipment
Ashwell Fight Against Cancer	300	Printing of Christmas cards
Ashwell Fit Club	254	New exercise equipment
Ashwell Food Pantry	500	Contribution to ongoing supplies for local people in need
Ashwell Guides	1,050	Storage shed, sports equipment and canvas shelter
Greening Ashwell	458	Tools and equipment
Ashwell Makers in the Museum	240	To continue to be able to offer free monthly sessions
Ashwell Museum	750	Electrical work



Beneficiary	Amount (£)	Details
Ashwell Pre-School (Formerly Ashwell Playgroup)	2,000	Hall rent
Ashwell Primary School	1,937	History, computing and other general provision
Ashwell Scouts (including Beavers, Cubs and Scout groups)	1,875	Replacement of ten sleeping tents for camping trips and tug of war rope
Ashwell Tennis Club	1,790	Solar panels
	738	Water butts, benches and landscaping
Ashwell Theatre Club	3,388	Stage floor
Ashwell United Reformed Church	300	Hall maintenance
Ashwell Well Dressing	180	Clay and flowers
Ashwell Women's Institute	650	Bench and summer trip
Jane Turner Dance (Over 50s movement and dance class)	182	Hall hire and marketing
Mark Smith Memorial Tree	100	Tree dedicated to the memory of past committee member, Mark Smith
Moss Cottage Homes Trust	4,660	Replacement of two heating systems
St Mary's Church Ashwell	300	Blankets
	4,000	Contribution to works for disabled access
St Vincent's Church Newnham	150	Church repairs
Heathlands Animal Sanctuary	100	Discretionary donation
Pirton Preschool	100	Discretionary donation
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,442</b>	

Show proceeds are awarded on a discretionary basis to local good causes, societies, and organisations nominated by those who help to put on the Ashwell Show in some way. If you would like to nominate a local society or organisation you think could benefit from funds from the 2023 Ashwell Show, or you think your organisation could offer help on Show day by providing an activity, manning the car park, setting up/clearing up, or contributing in any other way, please let us know.

**Gemma Allan**

Show Secretary

✉ info@ashwellshow.co.uk

## The Great Ashwell Show Bake-off

29 August 2022, in the Women's Institute tea tent

After a three year wait, the Great Ashwell Show Bake-off was back.

Whilst we had fewer entries than we have had in the past, it was lovely to see the efforts of all the wonderful bakers with their different styles and flavours - from tiered cakes to cupcakes, and from fresh fruits to sticky toffee.

Our thanks to the judges, Geraldine Watling and Clive Day of Days, for their efforts in choosing the winners.

### 11 years and under:

Star baker - William Allan

Second place - Charlotte Wright

Third place - Nell Hoar

### 12-18 years:

Star baker - Emily Campbell

Second place - Amelie Howard

### 19 years plus:

Star baker - Hayley Fisher

Second place - Robert Lambert

Third place - Diane Jacoutot



Congratulations to the winners and all those who took part. Thanks go to Days who sponsored the prizes.

Our thanks also go to everyone else who kindly donated cakes to be sold in the WI tea tent and to the numerous people who gave their time setting up the tent, serving cakes and drinks, clearing tables, taking the money, and clearing up at the end of the day. None of it would have been possible without you.

**Sheila Hogan**

**Teresa King**

**Karen Rogers**

☎ 743338



## Ashwell at Home



Our village open day on Sunday 8 May 2022 was billed as a Day of Wellbeing. The warm and sunny weather got us off to a flying start and helped to

attract large numbers to the event, so much so that the car park quickly overflowed. Many Ashwellians and other visitors told us how wonderful it felt, after two years of lockdowns and restrictions, to be able to wander freely in public.

Children's activities included a fitness club, drawing and painting, story time, a movement and dance workshop, a tree trail, a magic show, plague games and fun (sic) and racing Junk Boats.



There was plenty to do and see. Sixteen wonderful gardens were open, encompassing both the very modest and the rather grand. Health and wellbeing were fostered by a range of therapy workshops and taster sessions in the Village Hall. All through the day, a series of musical performances and events, indoors and out, provided something for everyone, whether your tastes ran to handbell ringers, classical string quartet, Morris dancers, an acoustic band, solo Spanish guitar, choral singing, folk music, rock choir or Tudor dance music. It was all on offer.

For adults there were displays of wedding dresses, classic cars, basket making, art and pottery, spinning and weaving, well dressing, old accordions and miniature quilts. There were opportunities to take part in singing and dancing workshops and to attend the opening of the historical herb bed in Alms Lane.

The Museum hosted the official launch of Dr Fergus Moynihan's book, *A Century of Ashwell Medical Practice 1900-2000*, where there was a new display of instruments and memorabilia on the same theme. There were also talks on the pubs of Ashwell, past and present, and on the plague and other graffiti in St Mary's Church.

Good food and drink were provided at the Village Hall, the URC Hall, the Parish Room and the School, almost all of it made, donated and served by a vast team of generous Ashwell people.

The event raised more than £10,000, which has been distributed to the Village Museum, Ashwell Primary School and St Mary's Church, with a





small donation to the URC. Ashwell at Home also generates a great fund of community goodwill, which unites us all in a feeling of common purpose. That's probably far more important than the money.

Thank you.

Don't miss Ashwell at Home in 2023 on Sunday 14 May, 'A Day in the Country'. And if you can help in any way, especially by making, donating or serving lunches, we are very keen to hear from you.

**Cliff Jenkinson**

✉ cliffjenkinson47@live.co.uk

☎ 742592



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## Ashwell Music Festival



After an absence of two years, the Ashwell Music Festival was finally able to take place again in 2022, and what a success it was! Over 700 tickets were sold and the festival raised an amazing £6,000 for St Mary's restoration fund to assist with current work on our beautiful church,

and also made donations of £300 to the United Reformed Church and £440 to Ashwell's Fight Against Cancer.

The participation of youth is a central tradition of the Festival. Accordingly, the Young Musicians' Concert opened the festival. Students from The Knights Templar School, Ashwell Primary School Choir and St Mary's Junior Choir provided a lively mix of vocal, string, brass and percussion music. The standard of musicianship was as high as ever. Thanks to all the teachers involved, especially Hannah Back, Will Byers and Tim Welch. A special thanks goes to Bene't Coldstream and his family, who together smoothly co-ordinated and produced such a successful event. Many thanks also to the gentlemen of the church choir who provided a peaceful and moving end to the evening with the ancient plainsong service of Compline.



The Young Musicians' Concert was followed by a charity event, 'Let us Entertain You – a Night of Musical Extravagance', with the proceeds being split between Ashwell's Fight Against Cancer and St Mary's restoration fund. To name just a sample of the entertainment, the audience were treated to folk music, Spanish guitar, soprano vocals, rock, pop,





and harp! Performers entertained the audience for no fee. Many thanks to all those who took part.

A number of afternoon concerts also took place at the United Reformed Church. The world-renowned Laura Custodio Sabas and Lydia Hillerudh entertained with a violin and cello duet. Marco Marconi, an old friend of Ashwell Music Festival, provided an afternoon of contemporary jazz. Ashwell-based singer and songwriter, Craig Maddox, performed music straight from the heart, with songs from Joni Mitchell and music from his debut album, *Lions Den*.

We were also pleased to have Dave Rance's Rockin' Chair Band perform in the United Reformed Church Hall. Foot tapping fun was guaranteed with a performance of traditional jazz standards made famous by the likes of Louis Armstrong and King Oliver, and tunes associated with British jazzmen such as Chris Barber, Acker Bilk, and Kenny Ball. Many thanks to Judy Banham and her band of lovely helpers who provided scrumptious cakes and tea for the afternoon.

Celtic Krystal brought an evening of traditional folk songs and fiddle music to Ashwell.

Young families were not forgotten with two drumming workshops, which were a sell-out to a group of earnest musicians from the very young to the more mature.

The final Saturday of the festival saw the church full to capacity as people in the aisles and pews sung and danced to the music performed by the Back to

the 80s tribute band. With fancy dress abounding, our dancing queens (and kings) had the time of their life!

The Festal Evensong on Sunday 22 May closed the festival. Sacred music was performed by St Mary's Church Choir with conductor Bene't Coldstream and accompanied by organist John Rowlands. The Festal Evensong was also the occasion at which we were able to say a big thank you to Judy Catterick for all that she had done for music at St Mary's over so many years. Together with her late husband, John, Judy helped to organise the Ashwell Music Festival in the early years.

The festival could not take place without the army of volunteers who help with the staging, bar and front of house - many unseen tasks that enable us to enjoy a series of smoothly run events. Many thanks to them all. We are also most grateful for the continuing support from all of you who buy tickets and come to be entertained during each festival.

The 2023 Ashwell Music Festival takes place between Sunday 7 May and Saturday 13 May. We hope to see as many of you as possible at our events. For further details, please see elsewhere in this Yearbook, or look online at:

▲ <https://www.ashwellmusicfestival.org.uk>

**Tracy Young**

Chair

✉ [tracy.a.young@btinternet.com](mailto:tracy.a.young@btinternet.com)





**SUNDAY MAY 7<sup>TH</sup> – SATURDAY MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

**Tickets available from  
[ashwellmusicfestival.org.uk](http://ashwellmusicfestival.org.uk)**

**and**

**Rhubarb and Mustard, Ashwell**

**FESTAL EVENSONG**

SUNDAY MAY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 6.00PM ST MARY'S CHURCH  
RETIRING COLLECTION

**OLIVER GEARING LIVE STREAMING ROCK**

MONDAY MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>, 8.00PM ONLINE IN YOUR OWN HOME! FREE

**AN EVENING OF FLANDERS & SWAN  
(PETER CHAPMAN & MIKE O'NEILL)**

TUESDAY MAY 9<sup>TH</sup>, 7.30PM URC TICKETS: £10

**MAINLINE BIG BAND**

WEDNESDAY MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> 7.30PM ST MARY'S CHURCH TICKETS:  
ADULTS £12 U16S £5

**SKOOL ROOLZ – THE ULTIMATE SCHOOL DISCO WITH MUSIC FROM 70s, 80s, 90s**

SATURDAY MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 7.30PM ST MARY'S CHURCH TICKETS: ADULTS £20 U16S £10

**DAVE RANCE'S ROCKIN' CHAIR JAZZ BAND**

THURSDAY MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2.00PM URC HALL TICKETS £10

**YOUNG MUSICIANS' CONCERT**

THURSDAY MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>, 7.00PM ST MARY'S CHURCH  
RETIRING COLLECTION

**PURCELL AND A PINT – EBORACUM BAROQUE**

FRIDAY MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>, 7.30PM ST MARY'S CHURCH TICKETS: ADULTS  
£18 U16S £5

(ADULT TICKET PRICE INCLUDES ONE DRINK)

**UKELELE WORKSHOP**

SATURDAY MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 10.00AM & 11.15AM ST MARY'S CHURCH  
TICKETS: ADULTS £5 U16S £5

# Bradley's Hairdressers

## Redken Appointed Salon

### Opening Hours

Monday 9am – 5.30pm  
Tuesday 9am – 1.30pm  
Wednesday 9.30am – 7pm  
Thursday 9.30am – 4.30pm  
Friday 9am – 5.30pm  
Saturday 9am – 4pm

**Tuesday pm appointments  
available by prior arrangement**

Dixies Barns  
High Street, Ashwell

**01462 742043**

**Jane Nicholson**  
Proprietor

## Ashwell well dressing



With the return of Ashwell at Home, the well dressing team were keen to meet early in the New Year to think about their design for 2022. In 2019 we had depicted the nursery rhyme *Hey Diddle Diddle, the Cat and the Fiddle*, which was really enjoyed by young and old. As a result, it was decided to portray another nursery rhyme and this time we opted for *The Owl and the Pussy Cat*.

As always, there are many things to take into account when drawing the design, not least the fact that we need to avoid very sharp angles and on the whole very small areas as these are extremely difficult to petal. Two things that were inevitably going to present a challenge were the £5 note and the ring in the pig's nose. I must say that it was only when we were actually doing the well dressing that we resolved this problem. At this time of year, the flowers available presented a challenge but again, with the experience of the team, we were able to find suitable solutions.

We were very pleased that Lynda Spencer agreed to draw the design for us. Lynda did the initial draft and then kindly took on board comments and changes proposed by the team. Once finalised, it was over to Peter Greener to enlarge and print the design at full size which is needed so that we can

transfer the design from the paper to the clay. Peter also took a picture from which he made some cards for us to sell, which was much appreciated as it really helps to fund the work we do. Again, we were most grateful to Sue and Gordon Hill who kindly allowed us to use their garage for the creation of the well dressing and supplied us with numerous cups of tea and coffee to keep us going.

We are always needing more help to do the actual well dressing so if you think you might like to get involved in 2023 then please come forward and let us know. Don't worry if you have never done it before as that isn't a problem. We are always there to explain how we do it and to give all the help needed.

**Maureen Hersee**

☎ 742475

## Ashwell Flea Market

5 March 2022

It was with great delight that Ashwell saw the return of the famous Flea Market after a year's absence. Despite the grey skies and damp weather, there was a long queue outside St Mary's Church - just like the Harrods sale!

The variety of donations we receive never ceases to amaze me - everything from a kitchen island unit with stools, a metal filing cabinet, two bikes, a vintage microscope with box, brass fenders to a coal scuttle, along with the usual plethora of children's toys, paintings, china, mugs, glassware and jewellery. Thank you to all those who raided their cupboards to donate the many items for sale.

Business was brisk and we raised an amazing £1,319.20, which goes to St Mary's restoration fund. As usual, the event would not have been possible without the numerous volunteers. They worked tirelessly promoting the event beforehand, getting everything ready in the days prior, and on the day, selling and serving tea/coffee. Furthermore, there was the momentous task of putting the church back to normal at the end of the day and getting rid of any leftover items - with donations going to various charities.

The event would not have been successful without the hard work of the volunteers, so a huge thank you for their help. Thank you as well to those of you who joined us on the day and made purchases and enjoyed tea and coffee.

See you all next year.

**Karen Rogers**

☎ 743338



## 22nd Ashwell Book Weekend

1 and 2 October 2022



It was another bumper year in 2022 for books, with at least 10,000 being donated - don't worry, I didn't count them all!

St Mary's was full with an amazing collection of fiction, non-fiction, and children's books - something for everyone. At least 500 visitors attended and there was plenty of browsing and buying over the two days. Visitors also enjoyed tea, coffee and delicious homemade cakes served from the beautiful church kitchen.

A lot of hard work took place, from advertising the event to putting up posters, as well as setting up, and sorting and pricing all the books the week before the event. All efforts were time consuming but made easier by the volunteers who give their time and energy throughout the week and weekend to bake cakes, take the money, serve refreshments and clear up at the end. It goes without saying that we are very grateful to all the wonderful volunteers, without whom the whole event would not have been possible. The success of the Book Weekend is down to those many volunteers and our thanks to you all for your efforts.

The event was a great success and we raised over £4,300 for St Mary's restoration fund and our thanks go to those of you who made purchases.

Despite the magnificent sales, we had plenty of books left over and, as a result, were again able to donate books to Wimpole Hall, the Garden House Hospice and the National Horse Racing Museum, as well as to the Ashwell Book Swap in the Parish Room. We were also able to use an online marketplace to sell some of the left-over stock and raise more money - hence the magnificent total.

The company Book Rescuers collected the rest of the books, who will sell them on so that they can enjoy a new lease of life, as well as raise funds for their charity partners, The Rainbow Centre, which supports children in southwestern Sri Lanka, and Doorstep Library, which is dedicated to bringing the gift of books and the joy of reading directly into the homes of children who need support across London.

If anyone is interested in getting involved in next year's Book Weekend, please let us know, even if you can only spare a few hours here and there - we are always looking for new helpers.

The 23rd Ashwell Book Weekend will be held on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 October 2023. Please make a note in your diary and start saving those books!

**Karen Rogers**

☎ 743338

## Christmas Fair



The Christmas Fair at St Mary's Church took place a week earlier than usual, on the 26 November. While it was a scramble getting trees up and decorated, there was no shortage of festive goodwill and atmosphere on the morning.





Outside the church, the Guides and Brownies served hot bacon sandwiches and raised funds for Children in Need; and woodworking and wreaths were available before you had even gone into the church. Inside, the range of stalls and items on offer was impressive. Local crafters, small businesses and charities were all represented. The choir sang seasonal music and the smell of mulled wine and mince pies floated in the air.

We were particularly delighted to welcome so many families and younger visitors this year. Special stalls were in place including the most amazing toy tombola ever seen! The church ran a number of stalls including the gift stall, cake stall, quiz and tombola.

Significant funds were raised for supporting the restoration and work of the church, which was very gratefully received.

Thank you very much to everyone who worked hard and supported the Christmas Fair. See you next year!

**Sarah Talks**

✉ sarah@sarahtalks.me

☎ 742182

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## ASHWELL CHAPEL

Ashwell Chapel, located in Station Road, Ashwell, is leased by Ashwell Parish Council to Neville Funerals.

This charming building can seat up to forty people and is available for funeral services or related events.



Chapel enquiries can be made via our Hitchin branch or by email - [ashwell@nevillefuneralservice.com](mailto:ashwell@nevillefuneralservice.com).







## The Queen's Platinum Jubilee street party

Sunday 5 June

On 5 June the village came together to celebrate our late Queen's unprecedented 70 year reign. The grey, rather damp weather failed to lower spirits and the 1,000 plus that turned out had plenty of fun in the picturesque setting of Mill Street and Swan Street.

In true Ashwell fashion food and drink went way beyond cheese sandwiches and warm lemonade, for some the dress code was fancy, and charming flower arrangements graced the tables.

### Thanks to:

Parish Council for funding  
Bunting putter uppers  
Door droppers  
Poster putting uppers  
Finders of chairs and tables for 1,000  
Transporters of chairs and tables  
Setters up & clearers away  
Road closers  
Sign makers  
Cake bakers and co-ordinators  
Flower arrangers  
Crown makers  
Church bell-ringers  
Master of Ceremonies  
Photographers  
Musicians  
EVERYONE for coming together

**Barbara Lohoar**

**Liz Kiernan**





# WEATHER

2022	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Rainfall (mm)	11.1	30.4	33.0	9.6	27.8	21.9	8.2	18.8	39.5	82.8	83.1	29.9	396.1
Average 1976-2020 (mm)	51.9	38.8	40.7	46.7	50.2	54.3	53.2	54.2	50.0	64.0	57.7	54.6	616.2
Days with rain	8	13	10	8	14	12	5	4	14	19	22	18	147
Max temp °C	14.1	14.7	19.7	22.2	24.5	31.6	39.4	32.9	24.8	19.5	15.8	12.9	
Min temp	-1.5	1.0	0.0	-0.7	6.9	7.4	11.1	11.6	5.9	6.5	3.4	-6.2	
Month avg max °C	7.9	10.4	12.8	15.3	18.8	21.6	25.7	25.8	19.2	17.3	11.8	6.2	
Month avg min °C	2.8	4.3	4.4	5.8	10.2	11.7	15.5	15.8	11.9	10.4	7.2	1.9	
Av max °C 2014-20	7.4	8.6	11.2	15.2	18.7	21.3	23.2	21.8	18.9	14.5	10.3	8.9	
Av min °C 2014-20	2.5	2.7	4.3	5.8	9.1	12.2	14.5	13.9	11.6	8.9	5.5	4.6	
Days with min 0°C or below	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	18
Sunshine hours (Cambridge/LHR)	86.9	82.1	168.7	149.3	134.9	220.0	230.0	240.0	120.0	135.0	57.2	69.2	1693.3
Average 1996-2020 (Cambridge)	59.1	78.8	106.7	136.8	163.6	160.0	160.2	143.4	128.5	100.1	70.9	60.7	1368.8



## Ashwell weather 2022



2022 was a year of extremes: February gave us several days of unusually high winds, July provided very high temperatures, we had two autumn days with very heavy rain, and December chilled us with a prolonged cold snap.

January was fairly ordinary, with near normal temperatures but

less rain and more sun than usual. Mid-February brought stormy weather, with winds gusting up to about 110kph (70mph) on the 18th. There was significant travel disruption, and several attractions were closed, including the Imperial War Museum at Duxford and the Shepreth Wildlife Park - a pity as it was half-term for the schools. For this area, the windy weather didn't bring much rain. There was only 0.8mm on the 18th, though most of that would be almost horizontal, and for the month the total rainfall was a bit below average.

March, April and May were all drier than usual but otherwise much as normal. The only welcome exception was March, which was a little warmer and sunnier than average.

The start of summer continued the dry trend, with June having about 40% of the normal rainfall. July is normally the warmest month of the year, and in 2022 it was with a vengeance. The temperature reached 39.4°C on the 19th, and there were 13 days in the month when the high was above 25°C. On the 19th also, humidity reached a rare low of 19%. The 8.2mm of rainfall was the lowest for July since Peter Bryant started recording it in 1976. However, it was not the lowest for any month – that record was 1.8mm in April 2021.

The warm, dry and sunny weather continued into the holiday month of August, so, as in 2018, we got used to seeing the grass everywhere turning a light brown. Somehow we managed to escape a hosepipe ban, possibly because many people did not use much water on their garden or lawns.

Autumn brought some much-needed rain. In September it was about 80% of normal, and for both October and November together there was 35% more rain than usual. Much of that came in

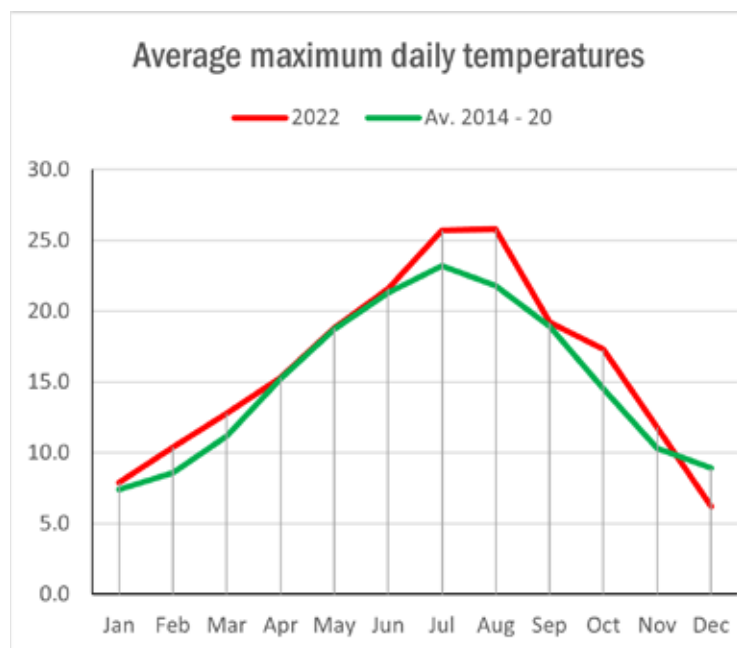
short bursts - on each of 20 and 23 October there was about an inch (25.4mm) of rain. All three months were still warmer than average.

December was different. A cold snap started on the 7th, with a string of overnight subzero temperatures lasting until the 18th, and for five of those the daytime temperature didn't manage to get above zero. The snowfall early in that period became very icy, so for almost a week we had to navigate horribly slippery pavements whenever we ventured out. Eventually the temperatures climbed quickly, to a relatively balmy 12.9°C on the 19th, so there was a welcome speedy thaw. Anybody looking forward to a white Christmas had their hopes dashed and had to make do with temperatures around 10°C and some rain.

Overall, the year 2022 was a warm and dry one, and was probably a good example of what climate change is doing. In warmth it exceeded anything which had gone before by almost any measure, and most notably the summer maximum. The total rainfall wasn't the lowest in recent years, with 1996 having only 351.8mm, but it came close with 396.1mm.

Note: regarding the table: the Cambridge University sunshine recording equipment was out of action for the months June to October, so the table gives estimates based on the figures for London Heathrow. Numbers affected are shown in *italics*.

**Bob Carswell**



The year 2022 was a warm and dry one

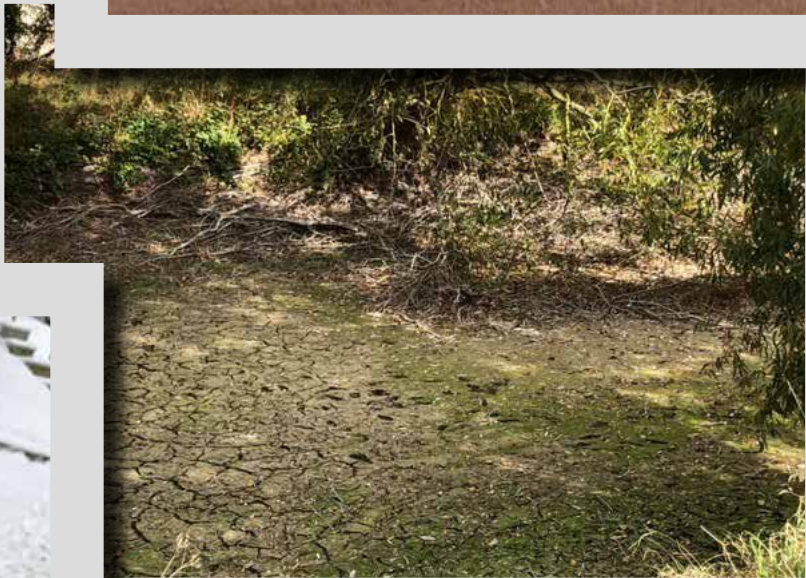




## BLOWING HOT AND COLD









# THOSE WE HAVE LOST

## Geoff Berry (1937-2022)



Geoff moved to 9 Fordham Close in 1975 with wife Jo and his young children Lisa, Maria and Richard. Later we all moved to 5 Fordham Close! And then Geoff to 7 Lucas Lane, where he lived until 2003 when, upon retiring, he moved to Winchcombe in Gloucestershire.

Geoff was born in Malta in 1937, the fourth of five children. His father, Jack, was in the RAF and met his wife, Frances, when he was stationed there. Back in England, when Geoff was only three Jack was killed in a plane crash. This was wartime so Frances had to work while Geoff's older sisters did much of the childcare.

Despite a testing upbringing, Geoff had a very successful career in mechanical engineering. In 1975 he started his own business in Royston, supplying the oil industry in the Abu Dhabi region. Moving

to Ashwell, Geoff found that the housing developer for Fordham Close had gone bust, so he and all the new neighbours had to finish their houses and even the road.

Geoff loved technology and was always ahead of the game. In the 70s his company invested in PCs when mainframes were the norm. A PC came home to us, so Maria and Richard got to play on it even before schools had them. Business trips to the Middle East meant modern Casio smart calculators, digital games and digital watches too. But he didn't back the right horse with his infamous purchase of a Video2000 recorder when everyone else had VHS.

His love of culture and technology combined with the habit of listening to classical music on his state-of-the-art HiFi very loudly! And then the first Sony CD player. He also took a keen interest in current affairs and many of our conversations as adults were around the latest political scandals.

Closing his company in 1987, Geoff decided to go to university at last. He studied in Sheffield for a conversion degree from industry to teaching, a proud moment for all. He taught special needs children and was particularly empathetic, communicating with even the most poorly behaved kids. After retirement, Geoff continued his love for ambitious DIY and gardening.

He passed away peacefully on 16 June 2022 after a short illness. He was 84.

He is up in heaven now and probably designing his next garden, improving the Wi-Fi signal and at last putting up shelves where they should have been put years before! He is sorely missed by family and friends alike.



## Tony Bardwell (1941-2022)



Tony was born on 28 March 1941 at Goff's Oak, Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. His parents were Ivy and Phillip Bardwell. He had a brother, Alan, who sadly passed away in May 2021. Tony lived in Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex and went to primary school there. His secondary school was Ilford County High School.

Tony's first job when he left school was as a van driver. He worked for Ilford Laundry, collecting and delivering customers' washing in Chigwell, Essex. He did this job for seven years and then went on a driving course to become an HGV driver. Tony then worked for Brain Haulage in Purfleet, Essex doing container work. He worked for the company for 33 years until he was made redundant when the company went into liquidation.

Tony then worked as a tanker driver for Sun Chemical, a printing ink company, delivering printing ink to the newspapers, which meant he was away from home on the road for most of the week. He stayed with this company until he retired. Tony loved gardening, going away on holidays, liked going out on his bike and cooking. He really enjoyed his holidays.

Tony met his wife, Maria, in 1987 in Ilford. They got married on 22 August 1998 and went to Canada for their honeymoon. They moved from Ilford to Bassingbourn in 2000 and then on 21 June 2021 to a bungalow in Ashwell. Tony was not in good health, so the move to a bungalow was to try and make life easier for him. Unfortunately, he only had seven months in the bungalow. He had a fall on 1 January 2022 and was taken to hospital where he sadly passed away with his wife and family by his side.

Tony was very much loved and will be greatly missed. He was a loving, caring husband, one in a million. He is missed very much by family and friends and especially by Maria, who loved him so very much and who thinks of him every single day.

## Alan Chaffey (1957-2022)



Alan was born on 1 November 1957 to Den and Dora Chaffey. He was one of seven children: five sisters, Brenda, Daphne, Linda, Susan and Diane, and one brother, Gary. He was born at Redlands Farm Cottages and brought up in one half of Redland Cottages and died in the other half of the same building, where he had lived for the rest of his life.

When Alan left school he went to work at the Ashwell lime pit as a trainee engineer. It was there at the age of 22 that he had a near tragic accident as brakes failed on the lorry he was driving. He managed to open the door and throw himself out. He could have been crushed to death but the tailgate just crushed his left leg. He was lucky to survive but he was on crutches for the rest of his life.

Alan was an exceptional darts player. After playing for various clubs, he was elevated to the super league and played for Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire county. He won loads of trophies and played top national players. In 1982 he started dating Danette and they moved to the other half of Redlands Cottages where they lived together for the next 40 years. The other love in his life was pigeon shooting, which he did nearly every day, with his first dog Phi and later with Dice. He shot for most farmers in this area and made a lot of friends.

Alan died on 5 October of a heart attack while outside in the garden sitting next to Danette. All the paramedics, ambulance staff and air ambulance could not save him. His funeral was on 2 November at Holwell crematorium. There were about 200 people at the funeral, which was a great comfort to Danette and all his family. His good friend Will made a wonderful tribute. Alan will be sorely missed.

## Dora Chaffey (1931-2022)



Dora was born in Ashwell on 29 July 1931 to Fred and Florence Brown and was the eldest of six. After leaving school Dora moved to Kentish Town, where she worked in Woolworths until she returned to Ashwell, where she worked at Fordham's Brewery until she had her family.

Dora met her future husband Den when the families lived next door to each other on Station Road. After falling in love over the garden fence they went on to get married when Dora was around 19. Over the next 15 years they went on to have seven children, raising them at Redlands Cottages.

After Den sadly passed away over 30 years ago Dora moved to Moss Cottages, where she stayed until she was moved to a care home just a few months before she sadly passed away in March 2022.

Dora enjoyed watching snooker and tennis as well as keeping up to date on all the soaps. She was also an avid reader in her later years, particularly the Woolworths Girls and War Time books.

Everyone who met Dora will remember her for her infectious smile and laughter and generally being a bit crazy, a part which she thoroughly enjoyed playing because there was nothing crazy about this amazing lady! She knew how to play the game to get what she wanted, which is a trait that can often be seen in her family...she taught them well.

Dora had 14 grandchildren, a multitude of great-grandchildren and even some great-great-grandchildren who she used to entertain by getting their names muddled or joined together, a memory of Old Nanny that will remain with them for many years to come. When leaving from a visit with Dora you would have to brace yourself when it was time to say goodbye because you knew it was time for a head brace and a sloppy kiss.

Dora had every copy ever printed of the Yearbook and will be looking down now, positively thrilled that she has her own feature in this year's edition.

## Ann (Nan) Rosemary Gerard (1932-2022)



Ann was born on 7 February 1932 in Lewisham, South London with her twin brother who sadly died at birth. Her parents, Lilian and Alphonse, and ten-year-old sister Diana lived in Petts Wood, Kent, an area recently developed for housing. Little Ann had a speech problem, unable to say her "A", so the family referred to her as Nan.

Ann's father worked as an insurance broker in the city and her mother worked part time for Liberty's as a senior seamstress.

The family lived comfortably and quietly in Petts Wood until 1939 when the London area became targeted by German bombing. Ann and her sister were sent to South Wales for safety. Ann returned home when the bombing became less intense. Unfortunately, this was just when the V2 rockets started and one landed four houses down, destroying the neighbouring properties.

Ann loved horses and helped out at a local stable with the mucking out and exercising the horses. Her interest in horses and racing stayed with her for the rest of her life. Trips to all the major racecourses and studying form were the highlights of her life. This was also the time when dogs were introduced into her life: spaniels and terriers. During this period Ann was taught by her mother how to sew, knit and do tailoring. She was a perfectionist and the family has many fine examples of her work. Ashwell church has benefited with numerous beautiful kneelers.

After matriculating, Ann was employed in the insurance industry, starting in the typing pool and ending up as the



personnel assistant to the General Manager of Manufacturers Life. Ann's father died in his later fifties leaving Ann with her mother in Petts Wood and supporting the family.

Over Ann's working life Manufacturers Life moved from London to Milton Keynes so the family moved from Petts Wood to Ashwell where she lived for over 40 years, taking in village life, walking the dog, joining in with the village fête and contributing to the social fabric of the community. She enjoyed the recognition by her many friends of her high standards of needlework.

Lilian, her mother, died aged 96 in 1980. Ann was now on her own, but the village rallied round and her work with Manufacturers Life continued until her retirement in the 1990s. After retirement Ann travelled to Canada and Poland to visit relations.

In 2015 Ann's health started to fail and in 2018 she had a fall and was rushed into a Cambridge hospital where she stayed for several weeks. Unfortunately, on leaving hospital she required a wheelchair and did not walk again unaided.

Ann moved to Charlton Kings Care Home in September 2018 where she was cherished and looked after until her death on 10 September 2022. Ann was quiet, calm, gentle, considerate, generous and much loved. We will miss her.

## Claire Glanville (1956–2022)



Claire was born in Barnet on 15 December 1956 to Olivia and Edwin Glanville. She was the middle of three girls.

Claire had a passion for horses in her youth and was lucky enough to have her own horse, a palomino named Sarb whom she enjoyed looking after and entering competitions with.

Claire got married and had four children and adored being a full-time mum and caring for her family in Preston, near Hitchin.

Claire was initially diagnosed with breast cancer in 1999 and, after treatment, went into remission. She separated from her husband and carried on living in the Hitchin area for many years.

An opportunity arose for Claire to come to Ashwell, where her daughter already lived, and she felt incredibly lucky to be able to live in one of the Hodwell Cottages (Moss Cottages) which she really made her own. She was very green fingered and loved looking after her garden, visiting garden centres, going on country walks and doing art and craft activities. She looked forward to creating beautiful window displays for the different celebrations throughout the year.

Claire adored Ashwell and all it had to offer and would keep herself busy in the village with sewing classes, meeting her friends for coffee, going for walks, visiting her grandchildren and helping her daughter on her allotment in Small Gains. She was also warmly welcomed into the Mothers Union in the village.

Unfortunately, the cancer returned and, although more treatments were given, it eventually spread to her brain in 2021. Claire really struggled with the side effects of the radiotherapy and her body had just had enough, so her support changed to palliative care. She spent several weeks in the Garden House Hospice and felt very well supported by them physically, emotionally and mentally.

Claire moved to Foxholes Care Home for her final few months and enjoyed a room with a beautiful view over the fields and a stables. She passed away peacefully on 18 April with her two daughters by her side.

Throughout all her treatment Claire remained incredibly brave and optimistic. Her family take comfort in the fact she said she always felt greatly supported by all those around her, as well as by her faith that God would protect and guide her to her loved ones who have already passed, including her younger sister and her mum and dad.

Claire was a loving and caring mother, sister and 'Nannie' to her five grandchildren and her family were truly heartbroken when she passed away. She is remembered by many for her lovely smile and her caring, positive attitude.

## John Glover (1946-2022)



John Sidney George was the only child of George and Joan Glover. He was born on 30 August 1946 in the village Morchard Bishop in Devon. The Glover family moved to Ashwell when John was a young boy, to be closer to his grandparents.

John attended junior school in Ashwell and senior school in Royston. John had a love of mending and tinkering around with things. He began a motor mechanic apprenticeship in the Ashwell Garage.

At the village youth club, John met Rosie Mander. Rosie was only 15 at the time. They were engaged when she was 16 and on a family holiday in Caister, and they were married on 20 March 1971 at St Mary's Church in Ashwell. They lived most of their married life in Station Road.

They completed their family with two sons, first Mark, born on 12 December 1974, and then Carl, born on 22 August 1978. The boys had a lovely relationship with both their parents. They had many wonderful holidays camping and caravanning with other family members too. John was the kind of dad you would go to whenever you needed something mending or making. He loved their garden and spent a lot of time tending it and he made all kinds of things including furniture for their home and garden.

John loved his visits from his grandsons, Aaron and Dean. Aaron liked to help his grandad with the fishpond, feeding the fish and hunting for frogs. Dean loved to go in grandad's shed and help him make things.

Over the years, John had many jobs, including JCB plant hire mechanic and driving HGV lorries, until he retired. After retiring, he and Rosie loved to go in their touring caravan and explore, being away for most of the summer.

John sadly passed away on 30 March 2022.

## Mary Knight (1928-2022)



Mary was born on 18 February 1928, the eldest of the four children of Kitty and John Ramsden. She grew up partly in India before returning with her parents to live in Exeter.

Mary was a beautiful 19 year old when Jack spotted her one summer evening. She was beautiful as his bride, as a mother and through all her pregnancies. She was beautiful as a grandmother and in caring for Jack till his death. Her beauty was born of sacrifice, perseverance and a deep sense of responsibility. Mary grew up with loving parents, who instilled these strong values into her heart.

Mary and Jack met shortly after the war. The times were still difficult and in 1946 Jack was deployed to Scotland so he and Mary could not see each other for quite a while. Mary went to London where she worked as a secretary. Eventually, Jack followed her there and convinced her to return to Exeter, where they were married. Mary was 23 years old.

A year later they had a daughter, Jennifer, and subsequently another daughter, Susan. Mary and Jack were adventurous, courageous and full of aspirations. They travelled to Buenos Aires, where Jack was stationed as the manager of Willis Faber Insurance and where Mary fell pregnant again. While she was pregnant the family returned to the UK but Jack was offered a new position in South Africa and they moved again, first to Port Elizabeth, where they met Michelle Alexander, who in many ways is the fourth child of the family. They then moved to Johannesburg, where the children completed their schooling.

Mary was always up for adventure, always ready to travel and try new things. She loved camping, sailing, golf



and gardening... and fashion. Wherever she went, she always looked like a million bucks.

Mary lived a beautiful and full life. She was fun loving, smart, hard working, adventurous and opinionated at times, but so very gentle, always welcoming others into her home whether in Devon, Buenos Aires, Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg or London. She was the anchor of the family. Jack was always renovating and improving the family home but just when it was finally tip-top... it was time to sell up and move on.

Mary loved her children and was proud of them all. She was ahead of her time in many ways, with modern aspirations and dreams. But traditional values also pulled, and Mary put many of her own dreams aside. She instilled in her children the same qualities her parents had instilled in her. When Jack passed away in 2012, she struggled and it was incredibly hard.

At Foxholes, the assisted living community where she lived for the last few years, everyone said how strong she was, strong, right up to 94 years old. Everyone loved Mary and her disarmingly beautiful smile.

Mary spent her life giving to others. Even in the very last week, she gave her family the gift of time with her, time to say goodbye properly as we struggled to let go. It was a hard week for everyone but it was a peaceful and a gentle goodbye.

## Rodney Jack Leete (1942-2022)



Rodney was born in Radwell Village on 13 May 1942. He was the only child of Idris and Betty Leete. He spent all his childhood life in Radwell, living with his grandparents, Reg and Florence Shepherd.

Rodney attended Ashwell Primary School before moving to Baldock Secondary School (now Knights Templar) where he left at 15. He trained in woodwork until deciding that engineering was his passion, so moved into that profession. He first started working for Ethers before he formed his own business with his wife in 1972. He remained running and working this business with his wife until his death in June 2022.

Rodney was married in 1964 to his beloved wife, Marilyn who he leaves as a widow after 58 years together. They had three children, Matthew, Peter and Maria, followed by his precious grandchildren who all loved him unconditionally and will miss him greatly.

Rodney's life very much revolved around Ashwell. He was the chairman of Ashwell PTA and spent many years as a parish councillor. He was also very involved in Ashwell Sports Day, organising the 'Round the Village Race' and bringing teas to the committee while they were all working. He was also heavily involved with the Ashwell Gymkhana (Ashwell Show), where he not only helped set up and take down (he was always known as the 'bunting' man and always loved seeing it all up and complete). Within the gymkhana with the help of his wife, family and friends, he helped run some small stalls like the coconut shy and tombola, with all money raised going back into the village.

His daughter Maria wrote his eulogy and the following piece is an extract from her words:

"Dad and I had a song *Eighteen Yellow Roses* with the words:

'cause 18 yellow roses will wilt and die one day  
But a father's love will never fade away'

And his love never will fade away. That is something that will never change. I am going to miss him so much but I believe he is now in a happy place, no more pain or discomfort and at peace. Obviously, and selfishly, I want him here back with me, with all of us. He has gone now BUT without reservation will never be forgotten."

## Peter Tunnard (1936–2022)



Peter was born on 3 August 1936 in Hendon to Gurney and Nellie Tunnard. A few years later, his sister Rosemary was born to join the family. His father ran the family's wholesale potato and vegetable business in Covent Garden, Spitalfields and Borough Markets, which many local Bedfordshire producers supplied with vegetables. Around this time, the family purchased a farm in Biggleswade to supply the London markets.

Peter boarded from the age of seven at Mill Hill School. After he finished school, he undertook two years National Service in the Navy as an Able Seaman on a minesweeper based in Harwich.

Following his time in the Navy, Peter joined the family business. During this time, he developed his love of cars. He belonged to the Harrow Car Club, which gave him the opportunity to timekeep at Le

Mans for Lotus and compete in his MG TD. In addition to this, he organised sprints at Brands Hatch. As well as his interest in cars, he also played badminton and was the secretary of his local club. This is where he met Eileen, the love of his life. Together, they continued to play well into their sixties.

Peter and Eileen married in 1963. They then moved into their new home in Elstree, Herts, where they remained for 26 years and had their two children, Simon and Claire. They also both became founding members of Elstree Lawn Tennis Club.

In 1989, the family moved to the farm in Biggleswade and Eileen and Peter became active members of Dunton Parish Church where Peter became the treasurer.

Their final move brought Peter and Eileen to Ashwell. They both quickly set about fitting into the community, becoming active members of both the church and the museum. In 2020, Eileen died unexpectedly, leaving Peter on his own. He then had to learn to cook, which was a new challenge. As it turned out, he was quite good. He regularly cooked for his grandchildren and enjoyed making cakes for the many friends who visited.

Peter died on 2 November 2022 and he will be sorely missed by his family and all who knew him.

## Peter Moore (1943-2022)



Peter was born in Sudbury in Suffolk on 27 February 1943 and grew up in Abington Pigotts, attending Bassingbourn Village College as part of the very first intake on the school's opening. He was one of seven children: five brothers and two sisters.

Peter met Carol Francis and they were married at St Mary's, Ashwell on 2 June 1962, an event celebrated 60 years later on a glorious summer day. Peter and Carol have three daughters, Sharon, Juliet and Kate, all of whom attended Ashwell Primary School. The family has grown. There are eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, all devoted to their Grandad, who adored them.

Peter and Carol have been committed members of the village community. Peter was active on Ashwell Primary School's PTA and readily became involved in events and functions. For many years

he was an active member for Ashwell Show and on the committee for the Ashwell Village Sports Day, giving generously of his time and officiating at both on the day.

At one point, Peter and his great friend Rod Leete were asked if they could assist with much-needed work on digging out the foundations of St Mary's Church. By all accounts they threw themselves into the task



with unrestrained gusto, achieving the outcome hoped for and making a saving for the parish. Peter was also an important part of the volunteer team which renovated the Parish Room, a project captured in a wonderful photo of the team, including Peter in the seat of a digger, which featured in an Ashwell village history book.

Much of Peter's working life was in manufacturing in Letchworth, including Borg Warner, where he was promoted to managerial level but, as manufacturers relocated or went offshore, he started up Ashwell Cycles, a cycle sales and repair shop in Dixies Yard. Further along in his working life, he became a painter and decorator, working in or at many of the homes of local people. In all of these work activities, he applied a loving attention to detail.

Along with others, he organised Ashwell village Labour Party, to which he was a committed member.

For a long period, Peter was a voluntary worker with the Samaritans, doubtless providing a patient, kind and non-judgemental ear.

Despite deteriorating health in recent years, Peter remained a highly visible part of village life, a keen supporter of the village shops and events. It was a particular pleasure to see him wandering around the 2022 Ashwell Show and then having a drink on that glorious late summer evening in the garden of the Bushel and Strike.

Peter passed away on 19 October 2022. We will all love and miss him forever, but are so comforted by the fact that he was loved by so many other people also.

## Rosemary White (1931-2022)



Rosemary was born on 2 July 1931 in St Ippolyts near Hitchin. Although she was christened Faith Rosemary, everyone knew her as Rosemary, Rose or Bud. She attended the village school and Hitchin Girls School, and as a young adult she joined the church choir in St Ippolyts as she loved singing the service and the hymns. It led to the development of her faith which she held dear throughout her life.

She followed a familiar path, learning to type and do shorthand and worked for the English Electric Corporation (later BAE Systems) in Letchworth and subsequently in Stevenage as a senior PA. She was organised and efficient and it was there she met Alan when he started a new role, working for her boss. They had an inauspicious start after she demoted him to a general office desk from his desk by the window while he was on business abroad. He came back to find her in his seat,

but it sparked the start of a relationship and their subsequent marriage of over 60 years.

Rosemary and Alan moved to Ashwell shortly after they married in 1959, to the house in Station Road where they remained for the rest of their lives. She gave up work when the first of their three children came along and became a busy mum and a volunteer for many things within the community, including the church, library and museum.

There were three important things in Rosemary's life: her family, her faith and her garden. Together, she and Alan developed the empty field that came with the house into a lovely garden, which they were both proud of, and where they spent many hours in later life. But it was Rosemary's faith that led her to St Mary's Church and her belief that faith could be shown through service. She never wanted to be in the limelight but could always be found helping others and the church. She was secretary for the Parish Church Council for 17 years, cleaner, sacristan, cake baker, tea server, member of the WI, Mothers Union and Horticultural Society, as well as a volunteer for the Red Cross, WRVS and village museum.

Although increasing frailty kept her from church in later years, she continued to enjoy her hymn singing and sadly passed away on Christmas Day 2022. She will be much missed by her three children, Steve, Andrew and Hilary.



# LOCAL SERVICES





# Hertfordshire County Council



## General enquiries

[↑ www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
 ✉ [contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
 ☎ 03001 234040

## Children's services

The county council has oversight of educational provision in Hertfordshire.

For enquiries about schools or child protection:  
 ☎ 03001 234043

For enquiries about free school meals  
 ✉ [freeschoolmeals@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
 ☎ 03001 234048

### School admissions

[↑ www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk), click on [school admissions](#)

### Ashwell Primary School admissions

[↑ www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk](http://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk)  
 ☎ 742297

### Early education and childcare

✉ [childcare@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:childcare@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

## Highways

Maintenance of roads, pavements and street lighting is the responsibility of Hertfordshire Highways. Faults, including any problems with grass cutting in the summer, should be reported to them online. Go to:

[↑ www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk), then click on the 'Report road or pavement problem', then on 'Report a fault' or,  
 ☎ 03001 234047

## Bus passes

Enquiries:

✉ [csc.concessionarytravel@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:csc.concessionarytravel@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
[↑ www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) then click on 'Bus passes'.

To apply for or renew a bus pass, including 11-25s Hertfordshire SaverCard (half-price bus travel):  
 ☎ 03001 234050

HertsLynx on-demand bus service. Download the HertsLynx App (Android or Apple), or:  
 ☎ 01992 555513

[↑ https://bookings.hertslynx.co.uk/login](https://bookings.hertslynx.co.uk/login) (bookings)

## Disabilities

Go to:

[↑ www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) then click on 'Adult Social Services/Disability', or 'Blue badges', or  
 ☎ 03001 234042  
 ☎ Textphone / Minicom 01992 555506

## Social care help

To apply for a social care assessment, go to:

[↑ www.hertfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk) then click on 'Adult Social Services', and then on 'Ask for social care help'.

### Emergency out of hours contacts

Children's social care emergency, 24-hour service:  
 ☎ 03001 234043

Adults' social care emergency, out of hours service:  
 ☎ 03001 234042  
 ☎ Textphone / Minicom 01992 555506

## Fire and Rescue Service

In an emergency contact:

☎ 999

Fire safety enquiries:

✉ [cpd.customerservices@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cpd.customerservices@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
 ☎ 03001 234046

For non-emergencies - Baldock & Letchworth Fire Station, Weston Way, Baldock, which also connects to the district office at Stevenage:  
 ☎ 01438 847313

# North Herts Council responsibilities



## General information and enquiries

↑ [www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk), or  
474000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)  
☎ Textphone / Minicom 474800

### Deaf or hard of hearing

☎ Use the Relay UK app: 18001 followed by 01462 474000.

### Customer service centre

NHC Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth, SG6 3JF. Please book an appointment online.

### Payments service

↑ [www.north-herts.gov.uk/pay-online](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/pay-online), or  
☎ 03004 560535 (24-hour service)

### Emergency out of hours service

Homelessness, environmental health, street cleaning, parks, public buildings, car parks:  
☎ 03007 774125

### Postal correspondence address for all services

Excluding Electoral and Legal:  
North Herts Council, PO Box 10613, Nottingham, NG6 6DW.

Electoral and Legal Services:  
Gernon Road, Letchworth, SG6 3JF.

### Follow NHC on social media

Twitter: @NorthHertsDC, Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, YouTube, LinkedIn, Flickr

For Hertfordshire County Council services please see separate entry, and for Police and other local services please see pp137-138.

## Refuse collection

At the time of writing the normal refuse collection day for Ashwell is Monday, except in Bank Holiday weeks. Bins should be left at the front of your property by 7am on collection days.

**Food waste** (small brown caddy) is collected weekly.

**Recyclable material** - glass, tin cans, cardboard, brown paper and plastic other than rigid plastic or plastic bags (large, grey bin) and paper (blue/black box) - is collected fortnightly.

**Household rubbish which cannot be recycled** (purple bin) is collected on the alternate fortnights, with a change to 3-weekly collections planned for 2025.

**Garden waste** (large brown bin) is not collected free of charge. It is collected fortnightly on the same day as recyclable waste. To register and pay for this service, £40.80 per year at the time of writing, go to: ↑ [www.northhertsgardenwaste.co.uk](http://www.northhertsgardenwaste.co.uk)

### To report a missed bin collection:

✉ northhertsenquiries@urbaser.co.uk, or  
☎ 474000, and choose the 'Waste' option

**Household waste recycling centres.** Our nearest recycling centres are at: Blackhorse Road, Letchworth, SG6 1HB (closed Tues and Wed), and Beverley Close (off York Road), Royston, SG8 5HF (closed Thurs and Fri)

## Planning

The responsibility for planning matters is held by the North Herts Council. For the full range of planning services, see:

↑ [www.north-herts.gov.uk/planning-reception](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/planning-reception)

The planning officer responsible for Ashwell at North Herts Council can be reached on:  
✉ [planning.control@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:planning.control@north-herts.gov.uk), or  
☎ 474000

**If parishioners write to the Council with comments,** either in favour of or against a planning application, Ashwell Parish Council asks them to send copies, please, to the parish council clerk (✉ [clerk@ashwell.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@ashwell.gov.uk)) so that these comments can be taken into consideration by parish councillors when they meet.

## Street cleaning

This is the responsibility of the North Herts Council. A sweeping lorry visits and public litter bins are emptied every four weeks. Additional visits are made to clear fallen leaves in the autumn, with manual sweepers where needed. If you feel that additional visits are needed, or that any work is not being done properly then please report it online at:  
↑ [www.north-herts.gov.uk](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk), or  
☎ 474000.



## Meals on Wheels...and more



The County's Meals on Wheels service is provided by Hertfordshire Independent Living Services (HILS) on behalf of the County Council. HILS operates across Hertfordshire, 365 days of the year. Meals are delivered hot and ready to eat at the subsidised cost of £5.25 for a main meal and dessert, delivered between 11.30am and 2pm. Each visit includes the cost of delivery and a welfare check.

You can choose from a wide range of meals, including Kosher, Asian, Halal, and West Indian food. HILS also provides texture-modified meals for people who may have difficulty swallowing. In addition to the hot meals, HILS provides tea and breakfast packs for £3.80 and £3.15 respectively - this service is only available to people receiving hot meals.

Please be aware that our prices are liable to change. For the latest information on any of our services, you can give us a call on the number below or visit our website.

HILS also provides a wide range of additional support services to help older and vulnerable people stay happy, healthy, and independent at home. These include:

- A Nutrition and Wellbeing service, offering free nutrition and dietetic support for our meals on wheels clients
- Medication prompts - for meals on wheels and pop-in clients
- Active Ageing - one-to-one exercise support in your home or via video call
- Home from Hospital packs - three days' worth of groceries, delivered to your home or the hospital upon discharge
- In-home eye testing, delivered by A1 opticians
- Dementia fun clubs and support
- A keysafe installation service to help you stay safe at home
- Food for lunch clubs and groups, delivered hot and ready to eat
- Advocacy to help people make decisions about their care and support.

All HILS services are delivered in a safe Covid-secure way, which includes the use of personal protective equipment, such as face masks and gloves, and contact-free delivery where appropriate. For more information about HILS services, or to sign up for our two-day free trial, please contact:

### Hertfordshire Independent Living Service

✉ [info@hertsindependentliving.org](mailto:info@hertsindependentliving.org)

☎ 03302 000103

📌 [www.hertsindependentliving.org](http://www.hertsindependentliving.org)

## Community housing

Settle (formerly North Hertfordshire Homes) is responsible for Wolverley House, some cottages in Back Street, and some of the houses and flats in Dixies Close, Ashwell Street and Station Road.

Wolverley House in Gardiners Lane provides retirement living accommodation. Facilities include 30 flats, communal kitchen and lounge/dining area, guest facilities, laundry and garden. There are regular social activities for residents. Contact:

### Settle

Blackhorse Road, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 1HA  
customer.service@settlegroup.org.uk

☎ 03303 430016

📌 [www.settlegroup.org.uk](http://www.settlegroup.org.uk)

**Ashwell Housing Association and Moss Cottage Homes:** please see p20.

## Post Office

At the time of writing the Post Office is open in the Parish Room in Alms Lane at the following times:

Monday afternoons	1pm-4.30pm
Wednesday afternoons	12.30pm-3pm
Friday mornings	9.30am-noon

It provides most of the Post Office services, including banking.

## Citizens Advice

A local charity, available to all, offering free confidential help and support:

Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9.30am-4pm  
Wednesday 9.30am-noon

49 Station Road,  
Letchworth Garden City, SG6 2SZ

☎ 01462 689801

📌 <https://northhertscab.org.uk/services/>

## Police

In an emergency, when there is a danger to life or a crime is actually taking place:

☎ 999

To contact the local Police team please email:

✉ Royston@herts.police.uk

The Royston Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team is based at Royston Police Station. The local Police Community Support Officers for Ashwell are:

### PCSO Chris Brabrook

✉ chris.brabrook@herts.police.uk

### PCSO Hannah Moss

✉ hannah.moss@herts.police.uk

The team is managed by A/Sergeant Jon Vine

✉ jonathan.vine@herts.police.uk

To speak to either A/Sergeant Jon Vine or PCSOs Brabrook or Moss, please phone:

☎ 101 and ask for them in person.

For non-emergencies where police attendance is required, to report a crime or to report any other incidents:

☎ 101

**Please do not use social media as a channel of communication in any of these circumstances.**

## Public transport from Ashwell

Information correct as at 12 December 2022.

### Buses



Hertfordshire travel information is available from Intalink at:

☎ 03001 234050

↑ [www.intalink.org.uk](http://www.intalink.org.uk)

By post:

Intalink Passenger Transport Unit,  
County Hall CHN101,  
Hertford, SG13 8TJ

The HertsLynx demand responsive bus service can be booked via an app, on the website or by telephone. Download the HertsLynx app - available on Android (Playstore) and Apple (Apple Store).

Hertslynx bookings:

☎ 01992 555513

↑ <https://bookings.hertslynx.co.uk/login>

Travel information can also be found on the

Traveline:

☎ 08712 002233.

↑ [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)

Other bus services in Ashwell are operated by Richmonds Coaches. Bus timetables are displayed opposite the village stores on the wall outside Bear House, and at the bus stop opposite the Three Tuns.

**Route 90**, Letchworth Broadway to Royston Bus Station via Bygrave, Ashwell and Ashwell & Morden Station.

**Route 91**, Letchworth Broadway to Royston Bus Station via Newnham, Ashwell and Ashwell & Morden Station.

**The rush hour bus service between the village and the station no longer operates.**

### Trains



Ashwell & Morden Station is at Odsey, just over two miles from the centre of the village. Railway timetables, maps, journey planners and tickets can be found at:

☎ 03450 264700

↑ [www.thameslinkrailway.com](http://www.thameslinkrailway.com)

↑ [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

## Royston and District Community Transport



We offer door-to-door transport for people living in Royston and the surrounding villages of north and east Hertfordshire and south Cambridgeshire who are unable to use conventional public transport or do not have the use of a car.

We can help with any kind of trip, all types of medical journeys, and, where drivers are available, social or shopping trips.

Our current charge is 55p per mile and there is a minimum charge of £5.50 for journeys of ten miles or shorter.

Volunteer drivers provide the transport, using their own cars. We also have wheelchair accessible MPVs and mini-buses.

New volunteer drivers are needed urgently.

↑ [www.roytrans.co.uk](http://www.roytrans.co.uk)

☎ 01763 245228



# Directory

Organisation name	email	Landline	Mobile
<b>Active pursuits</b>			
Ashwell pilates	katherine@ashwellpilates.com		
<b>The Pilates Corner, p57</b>	info@thepilatescorner.co.uk		07984 817 230
Yogakind	yogakindbarn@gmail.com		07973 187 189
Chesfield Downs Golf and Country Club	chesfielddowns.info@theclubcompany.com	01462 482 929	
OTG Obstacle Training Ground	info@obstacletrainingground.com		07563 857 917
LifeZone Crossfit	info@lifezonecrossfit.com		07902 733 115
Apocalypse Paintball and Airsoft	sales@apocalypsepaintball.co.uk	01763 244 855	
<b>Building services, builders</b>			
<b>Allrounduk Ltd, p24</b>	admin@allrounduk.co.uk		07792 158 921
<b>Mick Huggins Local Builder, p76</b>	mickhuggins49@btinternet.com	01462 742 454	07762 965 323
<b>S D Brown, inside back cover</b>	sdbrownb@aol.com	01462 659 884	07760 241 922
<b>Building services, carpentry joinery windows and locks</b>			
A P Specialist Doors & Joinery Ltd (stairs, doors, windows)	paul@apdoorsandjoinery.co.uk	01767 631 122	
BB Carpentry and Builders	info@bb-carpentry.co.uk		07572 532 618
Ian Simpson Carpentry & Joinery	ij_simpson@hotmail.com		07967 162 448
Newt Carpentry	nathan.ellis@hotmail.co.uk	07856 375 589	
Stephen Franks Carpentry and Building Projects	info@stephenfranks.com		07903 299 857
Kindlelight Windows Ltd (windows and doors)	info@kindlelight.com	01462 490 090	
Warrens Windows (double glazing)	Warren@warrenswindows.co.uk	01462 261 401	
Gearing Locksmiths, Baldock	matt@gearinglocksmiths.co.uk		07989 514 996
Lock and Repair Nurse	lockandrepairnurse@gmail.com		07821 406 265
<b>Building services, electrician</b>			
B D Electrical Contractor	bdelectrical@outlook.com		07850 762343
<b>Collings Electrical, p24</b>	enquiries@collingselectrical.com	0800 180 4042	
<b>Gill George Electrician, p90</b>	gillgeorge1@outlook.com		07990 977 124
<b>Building services, kitchens and bathrooms</b>			
Any Kitchen Ltd	info@anykitchenltd.co.uk	01438 230 010	
<b>The Blue Pearl Granite Company, p87</b>	sales@bluepearl-granite.com	01462 742 627	
<b>Building services, plumbing heating and tiling</b>			
BPS Gas Services	ben_stones@hotmail.com		07724 749 928
<b>Heat Street Ltd, p61</b>	info@heatstreet.co.uk		07494 389 041
<b>SJS Plumbing and Heating, p51</b>	jamie@sjsplumbingandheating.co.uk		07966 078 371
<b>Simons Tiling Services, p17</b>	simonstilingservices@ntlworld.com		
Bee'z Plumbing Supplies	beezplumbingsupplies.co.uk@outlook.com	01462 491 586	07860 950 957
<b>Building services, other</b>			
Johnstruct (agricultural and commercial buildings)	mark@johnstruct.co.uk	01462 742 740	07967 010 575
<b>Children</b>			
Ashwell Preschool			07565 528 194
Baby and Toddler Group, Messy Play	mrsavallely@gmail.com		
Gloria's Day Nursery, West End		01462 742 219	
Bury Lane Fun Barn, Melbourn		01763 260 418	
<b>Churches</b>			
Church of England, Rev'd Chris Campbell		01462 742 277	
Quakers, Mr Ian Chandler		01462 743 091	

## Directory cont'd

Organisation name	email	Landline	Mobile
Roman Catholic, Father Denis Sarsfield		01462 893 127	
United Reformed Church, Mrs Chris James	chrisjames56@btinternet.com	01462 742 684	
<b>Estate agent</b>			
<b>Country Properties, back page</b>	baldock@country-properties.co.uk	01462 742 077	
<b>Flower farmer</b>			
Ashwell Flowers	info@ashwellflowers.com		07720 429 706
<b>Funerals</b>			
<b>E H Crouch (Funeral Directors Letchworth), p13</b>		01462 893 191	
<b>Neville Funeral Service, p119</b>		01462 444 910	
<b>Garden sheds and buildings</b>			
AllSheds and More	allshedsandmore@yahoo.com	01462 682 414	07395 057 565
<b>Martin Sheds, p113</b>	martinsheds@hotmail.com		07921 163 162
Telesheds Ltd	sales@telesheds.co.uk	01704 571 215	
AD Garden Rooms	info@greatgardenideas.com	01438 313 765	07954 106 837
<b>Garden design and build</b>			
<b>Elisa Luggeri Garden Design, p77</b>	elgardendesign@gmail.com		07880 714 400
<b>Jane Buxton, garden maker, p29</b>	jane.buxton@icloud.com	01462 742 173	07713 083 408
<b>Garden care</b>			
<b>Lawn Partners, p73</b>	enquiries@lawnpartners.net	01763 244 955	07913 073 829
Meridian Lawncare	meridian.lawncare@btconnect.com	01763 242 909	
<b>Sunshine Gardens, inside front cover</b>	office@sunshinegardensbaldock.co.uk	01462 262 104	07902 638 277
<b>Garden, trees</b>			
C Methven Arboriculturalist	cmethvenarb@outlook.com		07891 476 730
<b>The Blue Tree Company, p17</b>	info@thebluetreecompany.com	01462 450 203	
<b>Garden centres</b>			
Arrington Garden Centre	manager@arringtongardencentre.com	01223 208 194	
<b>Bickerdikes, p103</b>	info@bickerdikes.co.uk	01462 673 333	
Cherry Lane Garden Centre	enquiries@cherry-lane.co.uk	01462 700 791	
Stevenage Garden Centre	stevenage@britishgardencentres.com	01438 312 660	
Sutton View Nurseries	Suttonviewnursery@gmail.com		07966 297 482
Tapps Garden Centre		01462 896 302	07793 769 075
<b>Healthcare and wellbeing</b>			
Ashwell Surgery, Gardiners Lane		01462 417 377	
Ashwell Dentist	info@ashwelldental.com	01462 742 353	
Feetcare Plus	info@feetcareplus.co.uk	01462 790 065	
<b>Kate Cumins (anamazing feet), p95</b>	anamazingfeet@yahoo.co.uk	01462 631 720	
Radley Opticians	info@radleyopticians.com	01763 273 300	
Ashwell Pharmacy		01462 742 250	
<b>Amber Health (complementary medicine), p107</b>	info@amberhealth.co.uk	01462 490 141	
Fifth Dynasty Massage	info@fifthdynastymassage.co.uk		07955 762 725
Hares Clinic (complementary medicine)		08453 038 372	
The Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living	reception@lethworthcentre.org	01462 678 804	
<b>Vanessa Jenkinson Reflexology, p51</b>	vanessajenkinsonreflexologist@gmail.com	01462 742 592	
Care Choices (personal care)		01223 207 770	
Carewell of Ashwell (personal care)		01462 743 434	07545 273 483



Organisation name	email	Landline	Mobile
Garden House Hospice		01462 679 540	
<b>Home, cleaning</b>			
<b>ACCS Ltd (window cleaning), p41</b>	rod.accs@gmail.com	01462 629 302	07970 406 926
Cooker Buddy (cooker cleaning)	steve@cookerbuddy.co.uk	01462 810 065	
<b>Edwards Cleaning &amp; Maintenance (domestic &amp; industrial), p17</b>	edsmaintenance@icloud.com	01462 742 566	07713 095 709
<b>Home, painting and decorating</b>			
Andy Leonard	andythepainter5@hotmail.com		07889 903 283
Creative Finishes	info@creativefinishes.co.uk	01763 249 075	07568 575 527
<b>Paul Norman Painter and Decorator, p44</b>	paul.norman498@googlemail.com	01462 730 125	
<b>Home, fixtures and fittings</b>			
PHE Stoves	info@phestoves.com	07772 346 678	01223 207 993
Alex Owen Brown, Valley Farm (curtains and blinds)	alex@alexowenbrown.co.uk		07792 527 768
Acoline Softeners Ltd	admin@acolinesofteners.com	01462 811 487	
<b>Aqua Sensation Water Softeners, p67</b>	info@aquasensation.co.uk	01462 835 693	07484 715 770
Ashwell Water Softeners		01462 742 472	08006 343 470
<b>Home, pest control and other</b>			
<b>Bygrave Firewood (J S Oakley Ltd), p71</b>	bygravefirewood@gmail.com		07872 137 445
Mills and Sons Chimneys (chimney sweep)		01462 417 006	
Stevenage Skip Hire	stevenageskiphire@live.co.uk	01462 681 956	
Anglia Oil Tanks Ltd	angliaoil tanks@yahoo.co.uk	01638 662 955	07801 748 314
<b>Bugs 'N' things, p24</b>	office@bugsnthings.co.uk	01462 735 999	
<b>Scorpion Pest and Vermin Control, p58</b>	info@spvc.ltd		07775 671 551
Ace Aerials	super.ace@btinternet.com	01223 208 441	07831 774 757
<b>Occasions, public houses</b>			
Bushel and Strike	info@bushelandstrike.co.uk	01462 743 984	
Rose and Crown	info@ashwellroseandcrown.co.uk	01462 239 365	
The Three Horseshoes	thethreehorseshoeshinxworth@outlook.com	01462 743 335	
The Three Tuns		01462 654 664	
<b>Occasions, café</b>			
Rhubarb and Mustard		01462 743 462	
<b>Occasions, celebrations</b>			
Beautiful Balloons	beautiful.balloons.co.uk@gmail.com	01763 244 288	
Koncept Castles	info@konceptcastles.co.uk	01462 730 895	
<b>Dunton Lodge Farm Weddings, p103</b>	info@duntonlodgefarmweddings.co.uk		07849 918 568
<b>Edworth Manor, p43</b>	charlotte@edworthmanor.com	01767 315 509	07791 300 194
Nortonbury Spa and Events	rosehilton@hotmail.co.uk		07714 661 777
<b>Occasions, caravanning and holiday lets</b>			
Ashridge Farm Caravan Club			
Loves Lane Camping and Caravanning		01462 742 382	
<b>Old Granary Cottage Ashwell, p15</b>	nickilh@hotmail.co.uk	01462 742 690	07957 285 286
<b>Personal, hair and beauty</b>			
Ashwell Beauty at Rhubarb and Mustard		01462 743 462	
<b>Bradley's Hairdressers, p115</b>		01462 742 043	
Elysium Beauty Salon	elysiumbeauty@virginmedia.com	01763 449 005	
Susan Birch		01462 742 298	

## Directory cont'd

Organisation name	email	Landline	Mobile
<b>Pets</b>			
Country Boarding for Cats and Dogs	office@cbkennels.co.uk	01462 742 658	
Stable Lodge Boarding Cattery	elainedear07@aol.com	01767 316 657	07713 725 221
<b>Professional services, accountants</b>			
<b>Berry Accounting, p47</b>	jim1berry@aol.com	01763 852 622	07850 426 325
<b>LIRIC Accountants, p60</b>	lisac@advaloremgroup.co.uk	1763 853 633	
<b>The Wright Accounts, p35</b>	yvonne@thewrightaccounts.com	01462 743 159	07872 880 107
<b>Professional services, building conservation</b>			
Priory Heritage Ltd	davidllewellyn@prioryheritage.co.uk	01767 631 293	
<b>Professional services, information technology</b>			
<b>Sigma Office, p79</b>	info@sigma-office.net	01462 742 783	
System Restore UK	info@sr-uk.com	01462 339 101	
<b>Professional services, security</b>			
OPSICA	info@opsica.com	03330 124 578	
<b>Professional services, legal</b>			
Curwens Solicitors (in Royston)	reception.enfield@curwens.co.uk	01763 241 261	
<b>Room hire</b>			
Ashwell Parish Room, Swan Street	office@stmarysashwell.org.uk	01462 743 922	
Ashwell School	admin@ashwell.herts.sch.uk	01462 742 297	
Ashwell United Reform Church Hall		01462 742 757	
Ashwell Village Hall	mjpearch@btinternet.com	01462 742 913	
<b>Shops</b>			
Days of Ashwell (baker)		01462 742 112	
ReBridal	info@rebridal.co.uk	07909 227 385	
<b>Crumps (butcher), p17</b>	jono@crumpsbutchers.com	01462 742 255	
Ashwell Gallery		01462 743 366	
Ashwell Village stores		01462 742 220	
Sarah's Farm Shop		01763 852 376	
Harriet Kelsall (jeweller)	enquiries@hkjewellery.co.uk	01462 790 565	
HC Jewellers in Royston and Biggleswade	info@hcjewellers.co.uk	01763 244 705	
Keith Gordon (jeweller)	kjgordon@sky.com		07764 475 391
<b>Transport</b>			
<b>R &amp; A Transport Services, p118</b>		01462 743 106	07951 851 501
Richmonds Coaches	postbox@richmonds-coaches.co.uk	01763 848 226	
Kerb2Coast (campervan hire)	hello@kerb2coast.co.uk	01462 640 307	
<b>Vehicles</b>			
<b>Ashwell Garage, p29</b>	ashwellgarage@outlook.com	01462 742 310	
Crash Care Centre	info@crashcarecentre.com	01462 441 686	
David Brothers Cars Ltd (sales)	sales@davidbrotherscarsales.co.uk	01763 852 695	07851 257 700
Hitchin Audi		01462 378 030	
L&L Automotive (Mercedes-Benz dealer)		01438 552 134	
Mantles (Kia dealer)		01763 244 244	
Porsche Centre Cambridge	info@porschecambridge.co.uk	01223 872 872	
Sytner Stevenage (BMW dealer)		01438 500 994	





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