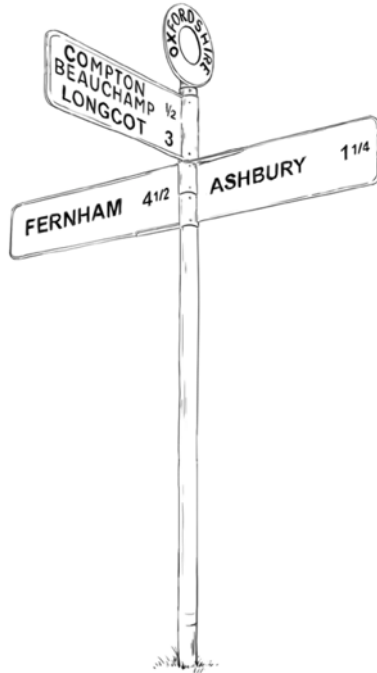


**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM
NEWS
FEBRUARY 2025**



Community club 27th

Ashbury Parish Council News

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Job Satisfaction?

Yes, some jobs are more likely to allow this than others - knowing that one has contributed to the successful completion of a task or project is very satisfying but not always guaranteed.

During a recent stay in hospital I witnessed at first hand, staff doing a very difficult and demanding job with little hope of true satisfaction due the demands of a job underfunded and understaffed with no time to chat, answer questions or hold the hand of a lonely and frightened patient.

As a teacher I certainly knew the privilege of witnessing satisfaction when that 'light bulb' moment happened, and the penny dropped as a child finally grasped whatever had been causing difficulty. Student holiday jobs in factories, a holiday camp and an office also showed me just how unsatisfying some jobs can be.

All this set me thinking – did Jesus experience job satisfaction? We can only presume that during the years preceding his ministry Jesus followed his father, Joseph's, profession of carpenter and it must be very satisfying to view the results of one's hard, skilled labour as such but what about the three years as a preacher and healer? I can't presume to know, only look in the gospels and draw my own conclusions from the stories we have.

To be able to heal, raise from the dead, change water into wine, supply a picnic for thousands and preach a good sermon must be amazingly satisfying but the frustration of constantly preaching to deaf ears and the refusal to believe -both by religious leaders and his own disciples - must be hard to take and we know that every now and then Jesus had to withdraw and talk to his heavenly Father.

God had sent his son to earth to do a particular job – save the human race by dying on a cross which must have been a terrifying prospect but it worked and thanks to God's universal and eternal love, grace and forgiveness we can all benefit from Jesus' job satisfaction. Praise the Lord!

Stella Tidmarsh

Ashbury

Councillors' Corner

At our first meeting of the year in January, your Parish Council had to decide on our budget bid for the next financial year, which will be translated into the Parish Council element in everyone's Council Tax bill for 2025-26. As this affects every household in the parish, we owe you all a full account of our decision.

This year several elements in the budget have increased.

There has been in particular a large increase in the amount we have to allocate for the contract to maintain all the grounds, for which the Council is responsible. In this last year the Grounds Maintenance budget line was significantly overspent, having been underestimated at the time of the previous budget. That was not good budgeting practice so this year we secured an accurate estimate of the annual cost in advance and have been able to reflect that in the budget for 2025-26.

There will also be higher costs in this next year, and future years, for running our website. We shall in fact from now on be running two websites, in order to meet the new accessibility standards set by central government for all official websites. We shall retain our present site, on which we host a lot of background information and history, as well as webpages for other organisations in the parish, such as the Village Hall. In addition, we shall be starting a new, second more limited website, on which all the official business of the Parish Council will be available in a form fully compliant with the new requirements.

We have also had to create a new budget line for our banking services with Lloyds and cover the general increase in most costs, reflecting wider inflation. All in all, the total budget for next year is set to increase by about 16%. This will seem a high figure to many of you, as it did to us, but we are confident that this is what is needed for us to be able to continue to support the services which the parish needs. Translated into what the average household (Band D) in the parish will be asked to contribute, this budget bid will mean an increase of £9.27 per year or 77p per month.

As in previous years, the budget includes a substantial contribution to a reserve fund to cover the future cost of maintaining the Village Green and Playground, when the fund established for this purpose by the developers runs out, as it will in only a few years' time. This is prudent planning to meet a future funding challenge.

Finally, I should share here the good news that we have finally been able to fill the vacant seat on your Council. Lynne Thomas has generously volunteered to join us in serving the Ashbury community and we were glad to co-opt her to the Council.

Christopher Prentice

HISTORIC OBJECT RETURNS TO VILLAGE

H P Duckham, Headmaster of Ashbury Primary School during the second world war, was also Officer in Charge of the Home Guard in Ashbury. A relation from Berwick on Tweed has sent us a silver cup engraved 'Ashbury Platoon Home Guard Rifle Club presented by Sir Hugh Gurney 1943'. It was won in 1944 by Lt Cpl Holcombe, in 1945 by W Smith and in 1946 by J Coyle. **If anyone knows anything about the Rifle Club, or the winners, please let me know and I will pass on the information to the local history society.**

Stewart Smith (01793 710800)

PLANTS WANTED!

We will be selling plants and cakes again this year to raise much needed funds for the **Prospect Hospice**. This month we will be starting to think about our gardens and planning what to grow. We would be grateful if you could sow a few extra seeds or divide some perennials and pot them up ready for the sale. The Plant and Cake sale will take place on Saturday 10 May - more details nearer the time.

NEW RESIDENTS to Ashbury, Idstone and Kingstone Winslow

A pack is available for new residents which contains useful information. If you have moved into the village recently and would like to receive a pack, or if you have a new neighbour, please contact Jackie Baker (710358) for Ashbury & Idstone or Anne Taylor (07491 035582) for Kingstone Winslow.

Ashbury Community Club

Thursday 27th February at 2.30pm Ashbury Village hall

This month's speaker will be Gail Loose from Kingston Winslow who has spent much of her life in America. Her talk will be A Comparison of USA with UK.

There will also be time for questions and chat over tea & biscuits.

Our meetings are open to everyone - no need to book - but if you have any questions or need transport then please contact sue_reade@btinternet.com or Jackie tel.

01793 710358 Entrance £2

Compton Beauchamp

St Swithun's carol service on 15th December was very well attended this year and it was a truly wonderful occasion. We had the Shrivenham choir & bell ringers with us too – although the latter had to dash off as they were also 'booked' to play down in Shrivenham on the same evening! Joanna Lambert had organised readers (mostly youngsters) from diverse parts of our community including local families, our church's groundsman, Ashbury school and even one of the Shrivenham bell ringers.

The church looked so beautiful with much of the light coming from candles. To round the evening off there was mulled wine, mince pies and plenty of other homemade goodies. We are a small church and an equally small PCC but it's an event that we enjoy organising, baking for and in general pushing the boat out for as we believe it's a great opportunity to encourage people to come along and be part of a magical community occasion.

And finally we would like to thank those that donated so generously - £200 was raised and is being donated to The Salvation Army.

Louise Slater

CHURCH MATTERS

FEBRUARY 2025 SERVICES IN ASHBURY, COMPTON BEAUCHAMP, LONGCOT & FERNHAM WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

The service times are correct at the time of writing (8 January). For the latest news and information, please download the weekly Newsletter from our website.

The churches in Ashbury, Longcot and Compton Beauchamp are also open daily for

Sunday 2 February	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Sunday 9 February	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Compton
	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Thursday 13 February	10.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Sunday 16 February	9.00am	Matins	Compton
	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Morning Prayer	Ashbury
Sunday 23 February	10.30am*	Benefice Holy Communion With Choir	Ashbury

**And, advance notice, Friday 7 March at 2pm in St Marys Church, Ashbury
World Day of Prayer***

This years' service has been prepared by a group of ecumenical Christian women from the Cook Islands in the Pacific, the theme is "I made you wonderful". All are welcome to the service.

**Although everyone is welcome to attend any services, those marked with an asterisk are designed as services for the whole benefice*

Covid Precautions at Services

Please do not come to Church if you think you may have Covid or flu symptoms.

All online Morning Prayer, Communion services and sermons can be watched on the Shrivenham and Ashbury Facebook page.

If you are unable to join us in person, do join online through services and study groups on the Benefice Facebook page. You do not need a Facebook account to access these events. Details of online services are also on the weekly sheet and on Facebook.

Ashbury prayer cycle for February- 2nd February Pound Piece, 9th February Station Road, 16th February Malthouse, 23rd February Walnut Trees Hill .

Thank you

As this is the first Church Matters since Christmas, Patrick and I would like to thank everyone who made our services so very special: cleaners, flower arrangers, mince pie and mulled wine makers, singers and, of course, all of you for coming. We are particularly grateful to the everyone involved with Stations of Nativity - it needs you all to make it the very special Ashbury event that it is.

Thank you to everyone who gave so generously at our services. We were able to support the following charities:

Stations of Nativity - £389.41 for the Salvation Army who bring hope to the hungry and homeless Church *Carol Service* - £146.85 for Embrace the Middle East who work with Christians in [Egypt](#), [Iraq](#), [Israel-Palestine](#), [Lebanon](#) and [Syria](#), supporting health, education and community projects. *Ashbury Crib Service* - £45 for Helen & Douglas House which helps local families cope with the challenges of looking after a terminally ill baby or child who will die prematurely. *Christmas Morning Family Service* - £93.40 for the Children's Society who work alongside young people, their families and community, providing specialist support that empowers young people to make positive changes and rediscover their hope.

Maggie Simons

(Church Warden, St Mary's Ashbury)

PASTORAL CARE If you have need for prayer or pastoral support, or wish to discuss a wedding or baptism, do not hesitate to contact Rev'd Patrick Mabhunu (vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk) on 07471 434276).

Support your local church or the Benefice as a whole with a text donation using the numbers below

For Ashbury Text STMARYS 5 to 70085 to donate £5 or Text STMARYS 10 to 70085 to donate £10

For Longcot and Fernham Text LONGCOT to 70085 to donate £4

For Compton Beauchamp Text 5CB to 70450 to donate £5 or Text 10CB to 70460 to donate £10

For the Benefice as a whole

Text GIVEfive to 70470 to donate £5 or Text GIVEten to 70470 to donate £10

Your standard text message rate applies.

'TEA & CHAT' 1st Tuesday of each month from 2.00 to 3.30pm 'Tea & Chat' will take place in 'the cabin' at **Ashbury** Ambassador Bible Church (known also as Ashbury Evangelical Free Church). Plenty of coffee and cake to be had as well as 'tea and chat'. Admission free. All welcome, including children.

The Ambassadors Bible Church meet at what was the Ashbury Evangelical Free Church at 10:00 am each Sunday morning. All are welcome and there is also a Sunday School for the Children which meets at the same time.

UPPER THAMES AND RIDGEWAY NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION (UTRNNTA)

Our next winter talk will be at 2.30 on Tuesday, 11th February in Highworth Community Centre when Stewart Smith will be talking about Coleshill. Visitors are always welcome at our talks.

UTRNNTA is just one of the many local NT groups all over the country which support their local NT properties and enjoy various activities throughout the year. Why not consider joining us? More details of our association are to be found on our website, www.utrnnta.co.uk. If you are already a member of the NT and would like to join us please contact one of our membership Secretaries, Mrs Anne Baldwin on 07455413078 or Mrs Helen Clift on 01285 810172.

Country Matters

We are blessed here with a variety of routes to walk which enhances the opportunity of possible interest. Not for me a sedentary life. Our garden is full of blackbirds, magpies and squirrels visit, recently a charm of gold finches honoured us. Get the spade out and a robin soon arrives to watch for a worm. A friend sent me a picture of long tailed tits on his bird feeder. Their families can be surprisingly large. I once saw as many as fourteen fly across the yard at Rectory farm. Sadly, song thrushes seem less common. But I have formerly found their nests in the garden and seen them cracking snails.

Further afield I have recently viewed a pair of mistle thrushes on the downs near Ashdown. These are one of the earliest visitors, laying a pink mottled egg contrasting with the song thrush's pretty blue with black spotted eggs. I have a theory that mistle thrushes nest near yew which is present in Upper Wood there because they like the red fruit of yew trees. Linnets can group up over winter into flocks as seed eaters on over wintered stubbles, sometimes alongside flocks meadow pipits, which love the downs.

One of the earliest signs of spring is the sound of woodpeckers marking their territory with drumming. Recently, I could hear the yaffle call of a green woodpecker. Put out nuts and greater spotted woodpeckers soon find them.

On the downs golden plover in groups flying round and round with the wing beats very audible are another grand sight but usually we see them here mostly in the autumn rather than the spring. Close up, they are a pretty bird. There are now far too many red kites, buzzards and carrion crows. They nest in Ashdown, and crows like a solitary thorn bush where they can see who is coming. How can the chicks and even young leverets survive with the odds are stacked in favour of these predators?

Coming away from Marral, the wood below the road between Idstone and Bishopstone, I was really surprised to see so many snipe. The collective name is a wisp. They rose steadily in groups showing the striking white of their breasts as they peeled away quickly rising and jinking. Probably there were a good fifty feeding on this wet meadow. I think this is a well used roost because there were many signs of their white droppings there.

Richard Green

ASHBURY, Berks.—FREEHOLD DWELLING HOUSE, SHOP and PREMISES, with COTTAGE adjoining.

MESSRS. HUMFREY and SLADE have received instructions from the Mortgagee to Sell by Auction, at the Rose and Crown Inn, Ashbury, Berks, on Friday, February 7, 1862, at Two o'clock, in one lot, subject to conditions then to be produced, all that valuable FREEHOLD BUSINESS PREMISES, and COTTAGE adjoining, situate at Ashbury, Berks, now in the occupation of Mr. H. Godby, saddler, harness maker, &c. The property is in good repair, and well adapted to the carrying on of an improving and profitable trade.

May be viewed on application to the tenant.
Full particulars may be had of C. J. Barnes, Esq., solicitor Lambourne; and of the Auctioneers, Upton, Wallingford, Berks'

Reading Mercury 5 Feb 1862

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD.

SIR,—An unusual phenomenon occurred here on Sunday morning, about nine o'clock. The water caught off the roofs from a storm at that time was of a dirty milky colour; the froth, too, was of a particularly tenacious character, lasting for many hours. I can only suppose that this must have been caused by volcanic dust from the eruptions in the West Indies. There would be no local dust on the roofs, as we had rain on the Saturday.

On inquiry, I find that the occurrence was noticed for several miles round. I have saved a bottle of the water if anyone would like it. The rain drops on the windows left a deposit of dirt on drying off.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
ROBERT POUND.

Ashbury, Berks, February 23.

London Evening Standard 25 Feb 1903

ASHBURY.

Mr Bunce, of Ashbury, applied for the sanction of the Council to erect a garage on a piece of waste land adjoining his garden.

The Clerk read the Act respecting such waste land which stated that the District Council had no power to let or sell such land.

Faringdon Advertiser 20 Feb 1915

Contacts

Ashbury Parish Council

Chairman: Christopher Prentice 01793 710821 chair@ashbury.org.uk
Clerk to the council: Laura Evans email clerk@ashbury.org.uk

Defibrillators: On the wall by the School entrance and outside the Rose and Crown.

St Mary's Ashbury Parochial Church Council

Church wardens: Maggie Simons 01793 710801 Richard Green 01793 791310
Vicar (Shrivenham) Revd Patrick Mabunu
<mailto:vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk> 07471 434276

Ashbury Village Hall

Chris Millard <mailto:villagehall@ashbury.org.uk>
Secretary Margaret Smith 01793 710800 mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk
Bookings: Laura 07766 338551 and Steve Pilkington 0773 9692076 [mail to: steve_pilkington@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:steve_pilkington@yahoo.co.uk)

Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp CE(A) Primary School and little Berries Preschool Headteacher

Tim Miller 01793 710259
<mailto:office@ash.faringdonlearningtrust.org>

G.P. Surgeries Shrivenham 01793 782207 Lambourn 01488 71715/72299

Post Office at the Rose & Crown Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30-11.30am

Vale of the White Horse District Council 01235 422422

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>

Recycling/Rubbish collection queries admin.vale@biffa.co.uk

Food waste is collected weekly, green/black bins alternate each week. Garden waste brown bins fortnightly. Mondays except Bank holidays.

Your Local District Councillors are: Katherine Foxhall 07916 285305

katherine.foxhall@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and Viral Patel
viral.patel@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Yvonne Constance: 01235 751475/07976934884

yvonne.constance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

M.P. for the Witney constituency: Charlie Maynard:

charlie.maynard.mp@parliament.uk

Newsletter entries for March '25. Submit your entries for **March** by **22 February** to:

M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionlturner@me.com 01793 710302 For more of "what's on" and local information see the Ashbury Village Website www.ashbury.org.uk and the community page on Facebook.