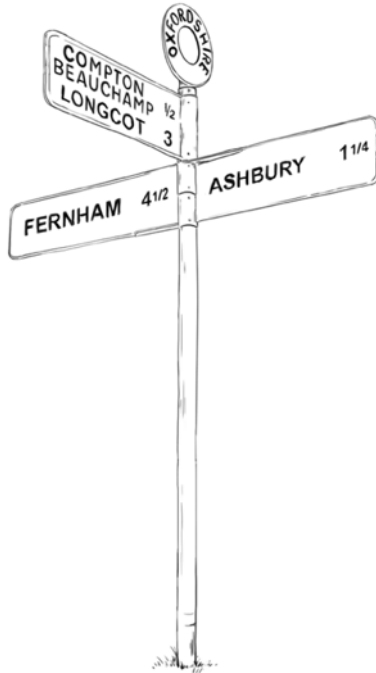


**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM
NEWS
JULY 2026**



Community Club 30th

Zimbabwe 2 *August* 1st

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

A time for every purpose under the sun.

The bible says there is a time for everything.... A time to be born and a time to die. Shortly before we went on holiday, a friend was diagnosed with terminal cancer and given two weeks to live! I visited her a couple of times before we left and she said she [would] probably die before we got back... Sadly we had a message while we were away saying she had just died.... It all happened so quickly, but she was calm and at peace because she was prepared to die as she trusted in Jesus and what He had done for her.

This sad episode reminded me of an incident when I lived in Pakistan, over 30 years ago. I was driving along the main GT road (Which goes from Peshawar to Lahore and then into India) when I came across an head on accident involving a bus and a Shogun. I went to drive past but as I did so I saw that the Shogun had British embassy registration plates (You get to recognise the diplomatic plates, particularly from your own country's embassy.) As I drove past I could see the occupants were still in the vehicle and not moving....

There were crowds of people, as in Pakistan everyone seems to stop and watch the aftermaths of accidents....so I didn't want to stop.... As I drove on, it occurred to me that perhaps nobody had informed the Embassy, so I turned around.

The accident was near a police checkpoint so there were plenty of police there.... I asked if anyone spoke English which, surprisingly, they didn't, so I had to use my very poor Urdu! (They used to say that I wouldn't starve in the bazaar!). They informed me that both occupants were dead but were unaware that it was an embassy vehicle so someone took me to the nearest phone which was a few miles away.

I told the embassy what had happened (Very badly as I was quite shaken and had never seen a dead body before). They asked me to stay with the vehicle and try to get their documents into my possession, or at least find out who has them, as they contained temporary passports and were quite sensitive as they [were] meeting a person who had been held captive in Afghanistan who was being handed over to the Red cross in Peshawar.. Very sadly, one of the deceased was a man who had twice helped Suzanne extend her visa.

I used that road regularly and from then on every time I drove that section of road I would try to imagine what the people in the vehicle were doing or thinking in the few seconds before they died so suddenly and I imagined what if that happened to me, **would I be ready to die....would you?** I am sure that I would be, not for any other reason than that I am trusting solely on what Jesus has done for me, he can give you the same assurance if you put your trust in Him. (520 words)

Andrew Bunce

Ashbury

Community Club Thursday, 30th July at 2.30pm. Village Hall

Joanna Lambert, who lives locally, will be telling us about her trip to South Africa in March.

Ashbury village and Ashbury school were both incredibly generous in donating bags of goodies for her to deliver to the Yeshua pensioners. Joanna will tell us their reactions and how we can continue to support the children of the Yeshua Children's Ministry and the elderly people living nearby.

Entrance: £2 includes tea and biscuits

Any questions? Need a lift?

Contact Jackie: 01793 710358

Zimbabwe 2 – Saturday 1st August at 7pm Ashbury Village Hall



This is the new date for the postponed January event, the second part of Patrick and his family's story as well as life and customs in Zimbabwe - with slides and time to ask questions from the floor.

Doors and bar open at 6:30pm.

Tickets available at £15 per person to include buffet and soft drinks from Maggie Simons 01793 710801 or maggiemsimons@outlook.com
BACS payment to PCC of Ashbury, Lloyds a/c: 01182960 s/c: 30-13-35
or Cash to Maggie Simons

If you booked for the January event whether you paid or not please still confirm that you will be joining us on 1st August.

CHURCH MATTERS

JULY 2026 SERVICES IN ASHBURY, COMPTON, LONGCOT & FERNHAM WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

The service times are correct at the time of writing (8 June). 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 private prayer.

Sunday 5 July	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Sunday 12 July	10.30am*	Patronal service	
		Holy Communion (BCP)	Compton
Sunday 19 July	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Longcot
	11.00am	Morning Worship	Ashbury
Sunday 26 July	9.00am	Matins (BCP)	Compton
	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury

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

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.

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 Mabunu (vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk 07471 434276) or Rev'd Janet Anderson-MacKenzie (associate.vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk on 07821 474 711)*

Support your local church or the Benefice 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**

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.

Thank you!

Ashbury prayer cycle for July- 5th July Malthouse, 12th July Walnut Trees Hill, 19th July Wixes Piece, 26th July Ashbury Hill.

TEA & CHAT' 1st Tuesday of each month from 2.00 to 3.30pm 'Tea & Chat' will take place 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 meetings will now be in the church as the cabin was rather noisy!*

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.

Country Matters

A pair of stonechats have been regularly seen at the bottom of the lynchets valley at Bishopstone These ground nesting attractive little birds with a chestnut breast should be rearing a brood.

Besides the yellow of flowering oil seed rape in the spring what other bright colours adorn our farmland fields? On our own farm our spring beans, planted on heavy ground at Zulu farm are now flowering with white pink scented flowers which I have heard described as an aphrodisiac - anyway the bees adore them. Some unproductive odd corners sown last autumn as a pollen and nectar rich sources have included the striking legume called crimson clover: a plant I have never seen in our fields before. The later flowering blue heads of phacelia, also in the mix and are now showing as the crimson clover begins to seed.



Driving along the A420 to Faringdon, the Manners family planted several fields last autumn all on the left side, to linseed for its oil content. During May these fields displayed their attractive pale blue flowers. It was a grand sight, now turning olive yellow with ripening seed heads. I hope the harvest goes well for them.

Closer to home, I expect I am not alone in having admired the pink flowering sainfoin grown by the Browning family and Dai Wilson and showing on the right of the hill road to the Starveall Dairy above Bishopstone. This is a tall legume, rarely sown these days which they are now cutting for round bale hay. This flower shows in the wild each year further up on the ridgeway. The Brownings also include the deep rooting chicory plant as a herb in their grass leys. The pretty blue flowers will be evident, I expect, later this year.

Nearly a year ago I was able to visit some leading farmers in the eastern counties. Andrew Fairs in Essex trading as FairKing has specialised in developing markets in this country to grow niche crops including the purple flowering borage which can be a tricky oil bearing crop to grow, but selling for £4,000/ tonne and used in health and cosmetic products. He grows 1,000 acres on his farms and 100 farmers are sending him seed off another 11,000 acres, all to be cleaned and processed on his farm.



Borage (RHS photo)

Other trials and small marketing opportunities are being investigated with Phacelia, Echium also known as Star Aventis as a cosmetic product, Lunaria known as honesty, also for cosmetics, Chia with a historic reputation as a stamina enhancer, Gold of Pleasure (Camelia Sativa) used as an egg replacer for vegans and Quinoa used in health foods. These crops give a rich kaleidoscope of colours, such a different joy to experience in Essex and wider afield with his contracted suppliers.

Also, look out for daffodils in Cornwall, lavender in the Surrey hills near Mayfield and tulips in Lincolnshire to make a colourful change from wall- to- wall cereals round here.

Richard Green

