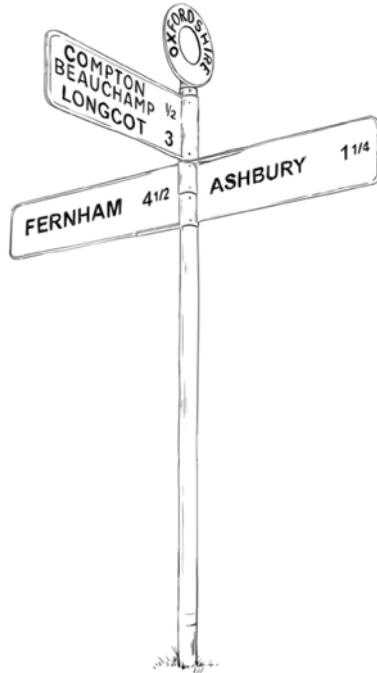


**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM
NEWS
JUNE 2026**



Community Club 25th-Search &Rescue

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Tents can be controversial things. After big music festivals, Glastonbury and Reading for example, there are the news pictures of all the left behind tents. Village fetes require the procurement of tents, and people capable of erecting gazebos and marquees, and that most difficult of tasks, folding them away again. We all got a bit more used to tents and outside spaces during the Covid pandemic. I did spend a few months meeting people in my tent in the garden, with the required open sides, whilst it was still illegal for them to come into the house.

I wonder when you last slept in a tent?

Alternately hot and cold, stifling or chilly, very light in an early summer morning, noisy in the rain, very noisy in the wind, but yet for all their disadvantages most of us have a warm affection for tents we have known. There seems to be something very basic and primeval in the erection of a tent, suddenly where there was just a space, now there is a home.

About 20 years ago we were lucky enough to go on a study trip to Jordan sponsored by all sorts of agencies.

We were driving through the desert near Wadi Rum, where those very famous shots for the film Lawrence of Arabia were filmed, one thing struck me which I thought was really interesting. The local Bedouin people had family compounds in the village where they lived; concrete houses with facilities water electricity etc. At the same time there were goats and sheep wandering about the streets. But in every compound there was a tent, the tent was their most important living space, the place for honoured guests, for special feasts. The concrete housing blocks gave them modern facilities but their front parlour was the tent.

God lived in a tent for a long time. God's tent was blue, red and crimson and had many poles, it was complicated to erect and take down. It had all sorts of God's camping equipment in it, bowls and tables, the Ark of the Covenant. God's tent was carried with the Israelites as they travelled from Sinai, through the desert with Moses and God's people until they reached Canaan and then generations later, when the people had become settled, the tent was incorporated into the temple in Jerusalem. God's tent would have been pitched in Wadi Rum for some time. Moses and the Israelites had to turn that way into the desert when they weren't allowed by the Edomite Kings to take the short cut to Jerusalem.

So why did God want the people of Israel to carry all this extra stuff with them when they were travelling on a difficult and dangerous journey in the desert? The tent was not a place to keep God away from the people, it was not a permanent barrier, it couldn't be that because it was a tent and packed up whenever they moved. The tent was there to remind them that God was there with them, living right there with them, not far away on some distant mountain or in the clouds, but right there in amongst them.

Over many summers I have helped pitch tents; for village fetes, for scout camps, for Christian festivals. In heavy rain, in uncomfortable heat, in driving winds which are at risk of breaking tent poles and ripping out guys.

This was what I was thinking when I thought about God's tent, a tent all about God being there with the people, being there in the rough and the smooth, in the rain or baking sun, or in the harsh winds of a sandstorm.

I wonder if we ever think about God travelling with us? Being there wherever we are, whatever stage of life, whether things are going badly or well? I wonder how we would feel if we woke up one day and found God camped in our garden?

Rev. Janet

Ashbury

Christian Aid Collection

Thank you to everyone who helped with the collection and for the generous donations. We raised the fantastic sum of £718.51, which will make a real difference to some of the world's poorest people.

Margaret Smith

Plant and cake sale for Prospect Hospice Saturday 9 May 2 pm

Congratulations on the success of the Plant and Cake Sale which made £678.55. Prospect Hospice are very grateful for the donation and want to thank everybody involved plus the people who donated and bought plants and cakes.

Community Club

Thursday, 25th June at 2.30pm, Village Hall

Search & Rescue in the Thames Valley

Cliff Woodward will be sharing some of the best kept secrets in UK Search and Rescue (UKSAR) with insight into what happens when someone goes missing here in Oxfordshire and the rest of the UK,

There will be a Show & Tell of some of the kit used and time for questions over tea & biscuits. Entrance fee £2 - all welcome; no need to book but if you have any questions or need a lift, just phone Jackie, 01793 710358

CHURCH MATTERS

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

The service times are correct at the time of writing (15 May). 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 7 June	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Sunday 14 June	9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Compton
	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Sunday 21 June	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Longcot
	11.00am	Morning Worship	Ashbury
Sunday 28 June	9.00am	Matins (BCP)	Compton
	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury

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

Ashbury prayer cycle for June- 7 June Malthouse Close, 14 June Odstone Farm & Cottages, 21 June Pound Piece, 28 June Station Road .

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!

'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.

From the newspaper archives: 13 June 1896

PARISH COUNCIL.—A Parish Council Meeting was held in the Ashbury School-room. on Monday, June 8th, at 7 p.m. There were present Mr H. Tucker, (Chairman), Mr Y. Youens, (Vice-Chairman), Mr A. Ball, Mr J. H. Lawrence, and Mr F. J. Matthews, (Clerk). The minutes of the last meeting were read and signed. The Council held an animated discussion upon the drainage of certain places in the village, and upon Mr A. Ball bringing forward the subject of a parish pump at "Lyde" which was proposed and carried at a meeting held last year, it was decided by the Council to defer the matter until the Parish Council meeting in November next, when the entire parish would be able to have a voice in the matter, and arrive at some decision. All meetings of this Parish Council are open to all Parishioners. Other matters were deferred until the next Council meeting on August 10th.

Plus ça change !

ASHBURY.

SAD DEATH BY DROWNING.—On Monday evening, Mr W. Clark Jotcham, deputy coroner for the district, held an inquiry at the Rose and Crown Inn, Ashbury, on the body of Henry James Greenwood, aged 36 years, under gardener at Asbdown Park. The jury, who selected Mr Asher Ball, schoolmaster, as their foreman, assembled at six o'clock to hear the facts of the case. Mr George Greenwood was called, and identified the body as his brother. It appears from the evidence given, that Charles Johnson and deceased went to bathe in Odstone Hill chalk pond, which is about 6 feet deep, at 10-15 a.m., on Sunday, and neither could swim. They waited about twenty minutes to get cool before pulling off their clothes. Three boys were in the pond bathing at the time. The deceased stripped first, walked through the pond, and rested on the opposite side for about three minutes. By this time Johnson was in the water, about up to his knees. Deceased now went into the water again, intending to re-cross the pond near the middle when he suddenly threw up his arms and sank. Johnson, was frightened to such a degree that he lost his presence of mind and could not do anything to assist the drowning person. News of the sad affair soon reached Ashbury, about a mile distant, and P.C. Styles, who was most energetic in the matter, also H. Dabney, and others were soon at the pond, and with the aid of grapplers got out the dead body, and conveyed it to Mr Carter's, of the Rose and Crown, to await the inquest. After due deliberation, the jury returned a verdict of "accidentally drowned," greatly deploring the very sad end of this young man. The funeral took place on Wednesday. Mrs Carter sending a nice wreath.

Country Matters

Historic box hedging lining our village lanes is such a feature of Hinton Parva and Bishopstone, less so in Idstone, Ashbury and Kingston Winslow. Those that were treated against the box moth caterpillar last year look good so far this year. Last year's treatment appears to have persisted. However, there is severe noticeable damage showing in places where nothing was done. Be prepared to act.

Farming is such a long game. We plant wheat in the autumn, harvest 10/11 months later and may not sell the crop until the following spring—18 months. An elephant's pregnancy is 20 months. Fortunately, cows only take 9 months like humans to have their calf but another two years at least will pass before most can be sold as beef or join the dairy as a heifer in milk—33 months. Ewes take 147 days to have a lamb once a year and sows 115 days (3 months, three weeks, three days) which will allow 2-3 litters each year.

We are used to this long game with delayed income from sales, except that currently income is not keeping up with escalating costs. Conflict in the Middle East and the Iran blockade of the Straits of Hormuz causes severe inflation to oil and gas supplies. As you know this affects diesel which is up 40%, crop chemicals escalate as oil based and fertilizer is up 25% to over £500/tonne for 34.5% N. Recalling the time when it was under £100/tonne shows my age! These input costs (and in some cases this can include rent in advance are due well before any sales incomes are banked. In past years fertilizer has been bought forward in June for cash or financed for autumn payment. Farmers will not be keen buyers in June this year. Organic farmers are allowed a smile but organic crop farming can be challenging. If these high costs persist there could be renewed interest in applications this September for the next DEFRA support schemes under the SFI – Sustainable Farm Initiative where environmental crops might be attractive as a secure return. Alternatively, some fields might be unplanted and fallowed for a year to give a clean start a year later as a viable return is uncertain. This part of the world and further east is well short of rain with similar concerns in the USA mid-west. Grain prices are moving off the floor driven by the USA situation. Let's hope and pray for a solution to the Iran war and that we get a proper rain here by early June "to keep our crops in tune". For the last 30 years the price of land has been detached from its earning capacity. Sensing the "wind of change" (Harold Macmillan 1960 over apartheid) the Farmers Weekly has many more farms for sale than usual and the Dutchy of Cornwall is selling 20% of its land portfolio.

Richard Green

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 Mabhunu [mail to:
vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk](mailto:vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk) 07471 434276

or Rev'd Dr Janet AndersonMacKenzie
(associate.vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk) on 07821 474 711

Ashbury Village Hall

Chris Millard mailto:villagehall@ashbury.org.uk
Secretary Sandra Dagnall 07773 379703 sandrajdnall@gmail.com
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 mail to: office@ash.cambrianlt.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: Emma Markham emma.markham@oxfordshire.gov.uk

M.P. for the Witney constituency: Charlie Maynard:
charlie.maynard.mp@parliament.uk

Newsletter entries for July 2026. Submit your entries by **June 22nd** to: M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionturner@me.com 01793 710302 see also www.ashbury.org.uk and the community page on Facebook.

All views expressed are those of the contributors.