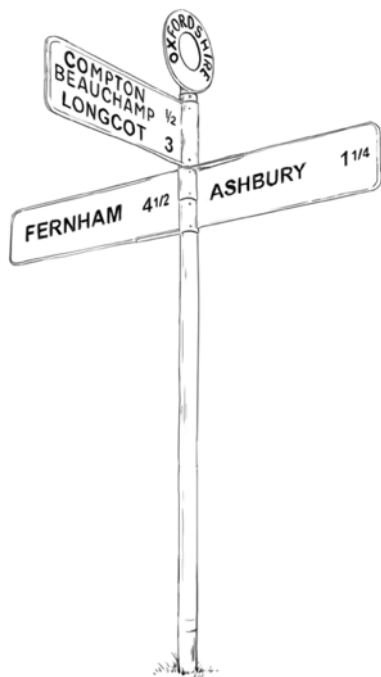


ASHBURY COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM NEWS SEPTEMBER 2026



Community Club 24th: trip to Aston pottery

Concerts, theatre and a quiz for October

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

I've been asked to write this month's "Thought" – and I confess that I find myself a bit stumped.

It's not that I don't *have* any thoughts – it's more of a feeling of too *many* thoughts. And that's when I realised that I've got the theme.

I don't think it's just me who feels that the pace of everyday life is increasing. Or perhaps it's not so much the pace as the expectations. We have expectations for ourselves, our homes, our achievements. We congratulate each other over accomplishments. It feels good, those congratulations, that sense of accomplishment. But – *is* it good?

We went to a family wedding in the US last month. It was a beautiful event, followed by music, dancing, and food galore. There was a wedding breakfast. There was a glorious evening meal, and a brunch the next day. In between meals, food and drink was always available, ready for the taking, generously laid on by the happy couple.

It was admirable, but a little part of me worried about how much all this was costing my niece (whose wedding it was) and her partner. Did they feel obliged?

Don't get me wrong, everything was beautiful. The food was great, the atmosphere was wonderful. Everyone was enjoying themselves.

But, funnily enough, at the end of the second night, a group of people were sitting around a campfire singing along while someone played guitar – and at breakfast the next day, quite a few people said that was their favourite part.

I don't have any wise words of conclusion. It was a terrific few days and the couple's joy infused everyone. The only thing I can say is that everyone present loves them and wishes them well. But I can't shake the feeling that everyone would have enjoyed it just as much even if it was half as elaborate (although I will never say that). I only hope they didn't feel pressured by expectations.

Gail Loose

Ashbury

Community Club

Thursday 24th September Afternoon trip to Aston pottery gardens in Bampton. We have arranged a personalised guided tour of the extensive flower borders followed by tea & cake in the restaurant with free time for shopping.

The tour costs **£7.95 pp** and we will organise car sharing. This event is open to all, but numbers are limited so **please book early** by:

contacting sue_reade@btinternet.com or tel. 01793 710208

Advance notices!

Badapple theatre comedy production of "Back to the Land Girls" - Comes to Ashbury Village Hall on **2nd October 2026**. Doors open 6.30pm, performance starts 7.30pm. Please organise your tickets by going on line or contacting Sandra Dagnall or Chris Millard. The early bird discount continues until 7th September so don't miss out on this price.

<https://www.badappletheatre.co.uk/product/back-to-the-land-girls-ashbury/>

Ashbury Village Quiz - On 17th October 2026 (doors open 6.30pm, starts at 7.00pm), it's time to come together with neighbours to have a great quiz night and, potentially, take away the coveted winner's shield. Entry fee is £12 to cover the quiz and a simple supper of chilli and jacket pot or veggie alternative. There will be a bar and raffle. The street co-ordinators will start to get in touch with their immediate neighbours but, as not everyone's email is known, please contact Sandra Dagnall (07773 379703 or sandrajagnall@gmail.com) if you would like to take part and haven't yet been popped in to your street's team of six players. We are limited to 100 in total in the hall so do please get in touch soonest.

The Avebury Vocal Ensemble Autumn Concert **St Mary's Church, Ashbury - October 10th 7.00pm**

We are delighted to welcome back The Avebury Vocal Ensemble (AVE)
The programme is a mix of choral pieces dating from the Baroque period to the twentieth century with highlights including the Allegri "Miserere" and excerpts from

the Mozart and Faure Requiems. A choral version of Elgar's "Nimrod" and a couple of popular operatic numbers of Verdi will also feature. The common factor for this apparent variety show is that every piece has been used as part of the soundtrack to a movie.

We are pleased that Simon Dinsdale will be their accompanist. Do join us for an evening where there will be something to please everyone.

Tickets (£12) are available from Maggie Simons (01793 710801), on the door or, a few weeks beforehand, from AVE's website at <https://www.aveburyvocal.org>



Longcot

Chamber Concert by the Torriano Wind Ensemble on Saturday 10th *October* at 6 pm in St. Mary's Church, Longcot

For this year's Longcot Autumn Concert the Torriano Wind Ensemble are delighted to be performing two wonderful works for thirteen wind instruments, namely Mozart's Serenade K. 361 and Richard Strauss's Serenade Op. 7. The former is on a larger scale than Mozart's other wind serenades, having seven movements in total, and it is considered to be one of the greatest masterpieces in the wind band repertoire.

A contemporary critic who was at the first performance described the music as 'glorious and grand, excellent and sublime' and to this day it remains one of Mozart's best loved works. Strauss's Serenade Op. 7 is much shorter but is a perfect little gem, heart-warming, melodious and beautifully crafted. Remarkably, it was written when the composer was only seventeen years old.

Also in the programme are two movements from Eugene Bozza's Horn Quartet. Admission is free with a retiring collection in aid of St. Mary's Church and the Longcot Village Trust, however all seats should be reserved in advance by contacting victorialmedcalf@gmail.com The bar will be open at 5.30 pm and at the interval.

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

The service times are correct at the time of writing (20th August). 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 6 September	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
Sunday 13 September	9.00am*	Holy Communion(BCP)Compton	
	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Longcot
	11.00am	Morning Prayer	Ashbury
Sunday 20 September	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Longcot
	11.00am	Third Sunday service	Ashbury
Sunday 27 September	9.30am	Holy Communion	Longcot
	11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury

***St. Swithun's church Compton is closed for major refurbishment. Communion services will be held in Compton Regis House. Space in the former chapel is very limited so please let Joanna Lambert know in advance if you plan to attend the service: 07990 898 175**

Ashbury prayer cycle for September- 6th September-Ashdown Estate, 13th September- High Street, 20th September-Idstone Road, 27th September-Idstone.

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)*

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.*

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

After 10 months of effort the celebration to complete this year's harvest was somewhat muted. It was over a month early finishing cereals in July with spring beans cut on August 10th. Everything was cut dry. The only respectable yield was from the oil seed rape. The last good harvest was in 2022. Farmers reeling from low yields, soft prices, the high cost of fertilizer for next year and coping with professional fees over

the inheritance “family tax” will hope for a good harvest next year to replenish their cash flows.

As we prepare for another autumn planting, with sewage sludge and our own dung being incorporated into much of our arable acres, a pessimist might conclude that hope and faith are a doubtful basis for success should a drought return again next year. Looking at long term solutions Irrigation from newly created lagoons might be possible in the Vale. Without streams irrigation is unlikely on the downs.

Grass if you can find it is now like brown sticks. Livestock seem surprisingly happy in the heat but maintaining milk yields and weight gains is another matter without expensive additional feed. Nationally, Government has yet to grasp that their policies are also driving down home food production, risking food security and an increase in imports in an unstable world. I don't think we are seeking extra funding, rather a more relevant redirection aimed at FOOD and the environment, rather than whole fields unharvested just for the pigeons, rooks and rats.

Thursday August 13th saw temperatures here reach 35 +degrees in the shade. Arising from some beef sales to Marks and Spencer we were able to obtain FOC a good selection of trees and hedging to plant last winter through the auspices of the Woodland Trust so enhancing Sainsbury's environmental messaging. They all started so well. Peering in the guards many sadly particularly oaks, have now succumbed to the heat and drought. Never say die- we are a resilient bunch. We will plant again.

Farmers are conditioned to care for animals, to nurture life and then cope with the inevitable deaths and these set- backs sometimes come with a forced smile. Planting for posterity, the paddock in front of Rectory Farm features a copper beech, a holm oak (evergreen) and a mulberry tree. Brighter spots this month have been the fruiting mulberries for the first time from a tree I planted 30 years back. Fully ripe they are like a massive blackberry and so sweet. Picking is a messy business. Spilling the red juices give every indication of serious injury or murder! I was inspired to plant a specimen after seeing others beside the church steps at Ashbury and by a pair on Eric Penser's lawn at Compton Beauchamp.

Quail were identified when harvesting on the high downs. Clouded Yellow butterflies, another migrant and darker yellow than Brimstones are also about this year. With nearly an absence of dew to date one wonders how such birds and animals like hares can manage in such a dry spell particularly on the downs with no streams.

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 Mabhun [mail to:](mailto:mail.to:)

vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk 07471 434276

or Revd 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 sandrajdagnall@gmail.com

Bookings: Laura 07766 338551 and Steve Pilkington 0773 9692076 [mail to:](mailto:mail.to:)

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 October 2026. Submit your entries by **September 22nd** to: M.

Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionlturner@me.com 01793 710302 see also

www.ashbury.org.uk and the community page on Facebook.

All views expressed are those of the contributors.