

Bellingdon & Asheridge Community Newsletter



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Winter lockdown has really been hard, so we hope this edition of the B&A Newsletter coincides with some better weather and good news about the easing of restrictions.

This quarter we have a tribute to long time B&A resident **Alan Shepherd**, who sadly passed away recently, and updates from **St John's Church** and **Hort Soc**.

There's also news of how you can get connected to **Ultrafast broadband** in Bellingdon – it's a community project and won't go ahead unless a minimum number of households pledge their government voucher. There's a separate project for Asheridge coming soon.

Funding is only available until the end of March so please do sign up as soon as you can.

Usually in the Spring newsletter we start to advertise details of the **village fete**, this year pencilled in for Saturday 26th June – restrictions permitting. As yet we're not sure what, if any, events we'll be able to put on but please put the date in your diary anyway – hopefully we'll be able to do something.

A decision will be made as soon as practicable and further information will be in our monthly e-news and the next print newsletter (due at the start of June).

To sign up to the **e-news** please visit www.bellingdon.com and there's a sign up form on the right hand column.

We're always keen on having more news from **Asheridge** so do please get in touch if you have anything you'd like to see in the newsletter.

We're going to include an occasional piece on "**villagers past and present**" and the next edition will remember a true Bellingdonian and local character, Dave Cox. We'd love to hear any anecdotes about him – do let us know: newsletter@bellingdon.com

Community News

Remembering Alan Shepherd 1928-2021



Alan, who sadly passed away from pneumonia in Stoke Mandeville hospital on January 31st, lived in Bellingdon & Asheridge for over 40 years, first at Little Orchard, Bellingdon before moving, in 2015, to Widmore Close in Asheridge.

Following Acton Technical College Alan joined the De Havilland design office at Leavesden, going on to work on the design of helicopter engines.

A keen amateur pianist, he enjoyed Jazz, both listening to and playing, although he would not admit to any great expertise in the latter!

His other interests were both numerous and wide ranging, covering such diverse subjects as model aircraft manufacture and flying, motorbikes, table tennis, darts, real ale, metal and woodworking – he bought himself a combined metal lathe and milling machine which enabled a modest addition to his income. He was also a talented watercolour artist and, having attended a course, became a skilled furniture restorer.

He will be remembered especially for his dry wit which he never lost, despite the many illnesses inflicted on him in his later years, and the stoicism with which he bore these ills, although his biggest regret was having to give up his driving licence, “after all” he would say “I don’t fall over when I’m sat down”!

A longer *in memoriam* can be found on our website www.bellingdon.com and a tribute page has been set up for Alan at <https://alanshepherd.muchloved.com>

Our thanks to his niece Jill and friend of nearly 60 years, Keith.

Are you getting enough fibre (broadband)?

Nobody could have predicted how important a decent internet connection would become over the last year – for work, school, exercise and more, its been an essential part of our lives.

Unfortunately not everyone can access the internet reliably and several schemes are underway locally to upgrade the infrastructure to enable faster speeds and better connections.

In essence this should allow simultaneous video calls and none of that “you’ve frozen” or “your internet connection is unstable” that’s plagued many households. After all who wants to drop out of the village quiz at the critical time?

Some of Bellingdon designated “urban” (by who we’re not quite sure) are already eligible to receive an upgrade but the “rural” areas have to apply for funding under the Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme.

“Rural” Bellingdon (inc Bank Green) and Asheridge are running projects to upgrade the infrastructure. The sign-up portal for the Bellingdon “Two Gates Lane” project is now live: <https://www.openreach.com/connectmycommunity>

Businesses (including sole traders/self employed) can receive a double value voucher, so please sign up as a business if you can.

The funding is disappearing very soon (end of March) so please do sign up asap.

Email contact@bellingdon.com for more info.



Horticultural Society

Subject to Covid guidelines at the time we are planning the following events:

- **AGM & Spring Flower Show** Later in the year
- **Plant Sale** 15th May 10am onwards, Chesham Town Centre
- **Plant Sale** 22nd May 10am-Noon, B&A Village Hall TBC

If we are unable to run the Plant Sale 22nd May from the Village Hall due to Covid restrictions we will be again offering plants via email, as we did in May 2020. If any members, who have not previously supplied their email address, would like to be included they should contact Mike Allenby on mikeallenby@btinternet.com.

Tracey Ryan

St John's Church

It already seems a long time since Christmas, but I'd like to thank all who helped with the online 'Huge Farm Carols' on Christmas Eve. We had over 100 views which probably means 200 or more watched it! We also had good numbers watching our other online carols (75 views) and our family craft event (45 views)! And we did manage one short service of readings and recorded carols in church before we moved into the current Lockdown but it was only possible for 10 people to be there.

Now we're starting to look forward to Spring – though the snowdrops and crocus seem to have been checked by the cold weather – and onto Easter and hopefully a time when we can resume services in church alongside the recorded ones which will continue for at least some more months.

At the Tin Tabernacle we're hoping to have some work done to improve the car park and some decorating and improvements in the kitchen and toilet/store. And then when we're able to return to regular services in the church building, we'll have a good spring clean to be ready to welcome people back!

Tim Yates, Minister for St John's Bellingdon

World Day of Prayer

On Friday 5 March we join with the women of Vanuatu who have written the material for this year's World Day of Prayer which will take place in over 170 countries across the world.

As our churches in Chesham are not fully open for worship, we have recorded our service on behalf of Churches Together for Chesham at St John's Church, Bellingdon which will be available on YouTube from 10.30am on 5 March.

The service will be on the Parish of Great Chesham YouTube channel @ St John's, Bellingdon.

Further details at www.wwdp.org.uk.

As there will be no offering at the service, donations can be made online at www.wwdp.org.uk, quoting our Chesham reference CHES0401. There is a tick box for Gift Aid.

Marjorie Davies

Heard it on The New Grapevine...

From photos of our beautiful locality to finding a recommended tradesperson or even a missing dementia patient, **The New Grapevine** offers a wide spectrum of information and advice pertinent to local needs. Whilst no longer unique I'm willing to bet that few areas were served by such a service before ours.

Developed as an adjunct to The Hilltop News – the local newsletter serving the villages of Hawridge, Cholesbury, Buckland Common and St Leonard's, the New Grapevine serves as an information and advice exchange.

New Grapevine is strictly a social service without commercial overtones. To prevent it becoming an advertisement board for local businesses and private sales, thus diluting the value of the content it was set up to provide, such postings are discouraged and gentle reminders posted following transgression of these rules. Persistent offenders have their future postings moderated to filter out unwelcome

messages. Otherwise, postings are not previewed by anybody.

Whilst active comment and discussion is allowed – a great way to engage with your community, proving especially useful during lockdowns, Grapevine allows no discussion that may lead to dispute or acrimony. Obviously content has to be moderated and to this end the anonymity of the administration is necessary. Solicitations for sale of goods and employment are not welcome. Children’s work experience and solicitations for the activities of only charities that have a relevance to the Hilltop community are welcome. For the avoidance of doubt, welcome charities are limited to the local school, the village and parish halls, local societies and preservation groups, the hilltop churches and nearby hospices.

Over more recent years, the admin have seen the benefits of widening its coverage to include slightly more outlying areas including Bellingdon with Asheridge, Hastoe, Chivery and Wiggington. Villages to the south now have their own version of Grapevine – The Lee Forum – and more widely useful postings are often reposted on each other’s site.

Postings to the broader New Grapevine community must be made to news@newgrapevine.co.uk only. Communications with its administrators can be sent to new.grapevine@gmx.com making sure to address the administrators in the body of the text, so the message does not simply get bounced back on to the broader New Grapevine because it was mistaken for a misdirected general posting. If you are not sure whether a posting would be welcome, you are encouraged to confirm it with the administrators before posting it to the full membership.

Whoever the originator and admin are, we should be grateful to them for such a foresighted and useful public service.

[To sign up for The New Grapevine please go to cholesbury.com and follow the links on the homepage – Ed]

With thanks to the New Grapevine Team

Nature notes



Spotted: Woodpecker (well a green one actually) in Bellingdon. (Credit: Paul Mathews)

USEFUL CONTACTS/INFO

Bellingdon & Asheridge Community Assoc
www.bellingdon.com
www.facebook.com/bavhall
www.twitter.com/bellandash
contact@bellingdon.com

Local Police Community Support Officer
CheshamNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

The New Grapevine:
<https://cholesbury.com/the-grapevine/>

Details of clubs, events and village news, including hall bookings: www.bellingdon.com
 Please send comments, questions and ideas for future articles to the editor at newsletter@bellingdon.com

The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity or length.

