

Bellingdon & Asheridge Community Newsletter



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I'm pleased to report that this will **not** be the final issue of our fabulous newsletter.

Jo Askew has kindly stepped up to edit the print version, so this will be my last issue. It's been an absolute privilege and I shall miss being the first to know about everything. Enormous thanks must go to all the contributors for submitting their news and photos as well as the volunteer distribution network that makes sure everyone gets their copy.

Remembering Cyril Hancock

Cyril was born on 9 November 1931 in Kingsbury in North West London to parents Lillian and Herbert, the eldest of 7 children. After school, Cyril joined Hendon Technical College. He was awarded a state scholarship for university and chose to study at Newcastle-upon-Tyne because it had a good engineering department.

Cyril would go to the local youth club in Kingsbury, and it was here that he met Helen. The pair courted for a few years, realising they had found a soulmate in one another; and were married on 9 July 1955. Helen recalls that rationing had stopped by then, so they were able to get a decent wedding cake!

After graduating, Cyril worked for Rolls Royce in Derby as a draughtsman and Helen worked in the Author's Department. By 1961 the couple had moved to Berkhamsted, and they were both delighted with the arrival of their daughter Karen and then two years later, another daughter, Ann.

They settled at Fairacre in Bellingdon, bought in 1967 for £9,000! It was in a fairly dilapidated state and Cyril and Helen set about restoring it to its former glory and lovingly tending the gardens.

In later life he would holiday abroad with Helen, particularly to show her the places where he had worked such as Washington, where they visited the White House. He also took Helen to Peru whilst fulfilling a personal ambition to climb Machu Picchu.

Cyril had a real passion for vintage cars and was President of the Vintage Sports Car Club for a time. He won prizes with his Italian OM car, his Humber and his Balila which he rebuilt from scratch. He would also love being in his garage tinkering with the cars, and later on his vintage bikes, with which he and Helen would also attend events. Cyril will be greatly missed.

DECEMBER

- 2nd:** Kids' Christmas party
- 3rd:** Seniors' Christmas lunch
- 17th:** Carol Service
- 24th:** Christmas Eve Carols at Huge Farm
- 25th:** Holy Communion

JANUARY

- 7th:** Afternoon service 4pm (Church)
- 19th:** Pub night and Quiz
- 27th:** History & Culture Club (Church)

FURTHER AHEAD

- 17th March:** Afternoon tea
- 11th May:** Plant Sale
- 7th Sept:** Autumn Show

Bellingdon Short Mat Bowls Club

The club continues to meet twice a week at Bellingdon Village Hall

- Monday evenings 7.30 pm
- Wednesday mornings 10.00 am

The club won the Bucks short mat summer league - and after a short break its full steam ahead for the winter. Everybody (any age) is welcome to come and watch or have a try, no special equipment required.

Don Baker

Hall 75th Event

A drizzly November afternoon saw the hall celebrate its 75th anniversary - it was packed with residents and former residents of our two villages, eager to reminisce and renew old friendships.

Tea & cakes (the initial 70 portions disappeared in less than an hour and reinforcements had to be sent for!) were served by members of the "Belles"; Jane Edmunds produced a fabulous exhibition of local history including an extremely popular photo montage, and music was provided by the sensational Lianna Haynes who entertained us with tunes from the '40s and '50s.

It was wonderful to hear the hum of voices and the laughter as people remembered times gone by, and many people bought pictures from their own events at the hall!

We look forward to reading everyone's historical reminiscences and suggestions for events that would be popular at the hall in the future.

Following the History exhibition at the Village Hall, as part of the 75th Anniversary celebrations we should like to follow up some of the most interesting snippets of information which people told us on the day. If anyone would like to be recorded talking about the history of our area please get in touch with us. We would love to come and visit you (obviously if you live locally) to record you for posterity! Please get in touch on contact@bellingdon.com

The Helens

St John's Church

As always, you are most welcome to join us for our morning service at 10:00 every Sunday. We recently celebrated Harvest and held a Remembrance Day service. Our Carol Service will take place on 17th December, and we shall hold a service of Holy Communion on Christmas Day, again at 10:00. We'll be helping with the carols at Huge Farm on Sunday 24th December at 16:00. Many thanks to John and Anka for holding this event every year! And we'll have one of our occasional Sunday afternoon services on 7th January 2024 at 16:00.

Other events include the recent talk by Tim Yates on the History of Bellingdon on Saturday 14th October, which was well-attended and well-received. It is always interesting to learn more about the history of our village! This was the first event in our History and Culture Club, which will take place every three

months. The next meeting will be on Saturday 27th January at 11:30. The theme will again be a historical one, and we are hoping that some members of our community will talk for a short time about artefacts / buildings etc which are linked to their lives within our community.

Please let us know on j.edmunds@sky.com or rev.tim@cheshamparish.org if you would like to contribute to this meeting. The meeting after that will have a travel / culture theme – date to be confirmed.

Our knit and natter group continues – our next dates are Wednesdays 20th December and 17th January from 14:30 to 16:00 in the church. You do not have to knit – just bring any (non-messy) craft / art activity and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat!

Meeting Point – a group where we again have a cuppa and a chat – takes place at 14:30 on the first Wednesday of every month. Sometimes we have a short talk – recent talks have included 'My family's life in this area' and 'A trip to Ethiopia' – and sometimes we just chat.

We would love to see you at any (or all!) of these events and activities!

Jane Edmunds

Parish Council

We are glad to say that the vacancy for an Asheridge councillor has been filled and we have welcomed Annie Fuller onto the Parish Council where we know she will take an active role. Many Asheridge residents will already know Annie from her prompt and useful contributions to the Asheridge Neighbourhood Watch WhatsApp Group, which continues to grow and develop. Without a doubt it increases security and reassures us too when a seemingly suspicious vehicle or incident is shown to be "legit" as happened recently when various relevant details from different members were added together and we all relaxed. Discussions develop and all sorts of information is exchanged, it has given a stronger feel of community to our village. Many thanks to Kim in her role as administrator!

Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE)

The Parish Council is aware of the issues that DofE operations can cause in the area (littering, noise, antisocial behaviour etc), which have been particularly prevalent over the last year. We have been discussing the concerns of the Parish with the DofE, which has led to the following action:

- The DofE are visiting the south Bucks Schools to re-enforce the Countryside Code with the children and asked the North London district to do the same
- The DofE are looking to reduce the number of children onto Braid Wood as it has been too many over the last two years.
- The DofE have suggested if residents have any particular areas of concern, they could look to station staff to report the

issues directly. (However, station staff may be hard to spot as they tend to be at various points along route)

Members of the public are also able to contact DofE Operations Manager Kate Aldersley: kate.Aldersley@DofE.org

Moveable Vehicle Activated Sign

The Parish Council has commissioned a new Movable Vehicle Activated Sign (MVAS) which will be installed near Bloomfield Cottages in Bellingdon on 12 December. The sign will be set up to warn vehicles on approach to Chesham only. This type of sign is a proven traffic calming measure and acts as a reminder of what the limit is, along with the speed a vehicle is travelling at, as they drive towards the sign. For further information, please contact Clerk@ChartridgeParishCouncil.org.uk

New Gate

The Parish Council is seeking landowners permission to install a new gate at the bottom of Two Gates Lane as the current stile is known to be difficult to traverse

Nursery Signage

The Parish Council is working with the Bellingdon Nursery to ask Highways to install new signage, warning road users that parents and children might be present on approach to the Nursery.

Braziers End and Rays Hill Pond

Tucked away behind the road bend of Braziers End Lane and Rays Hill, is a little pond amongst the trees. In partnership with the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project, the Chiltern Society have taken the first step preparing work to improve the pond. The aims of the project are to investigate the water quality and ecology, to make an informed improvement to the area and pond. Ponds are important stepping stones for many species (such as dragonflies and many other aquatic invertebrates) which link the surrounding landscape with the River Chess. Braziers pond, it is fair to say, has been a little unloved and overlooked, litter, impenetrable woodland and a lack of marginal vegetation (water loving plants around the edge).

How can you help? If you would like to get involved look out for information on a community day, date to be confirmed in February 2024 or for more information contact steph@chilternsaonb.org

Community Speedwatch

Here we have good and bad to report. The good is our excellent results, we have "caught" 332 speeding drivers during the spring, summer and autumn, our best session was last week when our operators caught over 40 drivers in Bellingdon in just over an hour, I calculate that as one every 9 seconds! Our record is a vehicle in the 30mph zone in Asheridge at 67mph! Speed kills, we all know that and so does that driver.

All these drivers will get stern letters from Thames Valley Police. Reoffending within a few months after that is calculated by the police at only 4%, so this scheme is proven to be worthwhile. Reoffenders get a visit from a police officer and can eventually be charged.

And now we have the bad: not only the horrendous speeds we record but also the fact that we do not have as many volunteer operators as we need in order to function efficiently. We need you! We cannot carry out a session with less than 3 operators, to ensure that all the data is collected and recorded correctly. With too few operators it is often impossible to find 3 who are all available at the same time.

Quite a few of you reading this have shown an interest in joining Community Speedwatch, you were sent an email, some of you even 2 emails, setting out information on how it works and how to train online, then you fell off our radar and we don't understand why. We can only guess it is because of the training videos and the quiz. It's a serious thing to do, standing by the road with a speed gun and writing down registration numbers for the police, you couldn't just go out there with no training.

There are rules to keep you safe as well as those relevant to collecting data. The 6 videos look a little like something from children's television and the quiz is what it says, a quiz not an exam. You can watch the videos as often as you like and go back repeatedly to pass the quiz. We have an idea of running a training day at Bellingdon and Asheridge Village Hall, we would look at the videos together, discuss any problems and participants could take the quiz there and then. Please let me know if that would interest you: maryland@btopenworld.com

In case you are worried about standing or sitting at the roadside in horrible weather, that would never happen because we are not allowed to operate when road conditions are bad and we are in fact on the point of stopping for the winter months. Up until now our sessions have been 90 minutes but it has been wisely suggested that some of you busy people would find it more convenient to do shorter sessions, an hour perhaps, and we are ready to try that out. Anything to persuade you to join us!

Finally I will say that it is actually an agreeable thing to do, sitting on the verge chatting with fellow operators, sometimes residents bring out a tray of tea and biscuits. And when you get home and you say to yourself "I did something for road safety today"; well that feels good and we hope you will try it too!

Joan Lherbier

Chesham Vale Gardeners' Society (Hort Soc)

A Fantastic Autumn Show!

After an unseasonably late summer, CVGS members once more rose to the challenge, and our Autumn Show on 2nd September had a record number of exhibitors, including some new members, with over 300 entries. The increased number of children's entries was very pleasing too.

As we entered the Hall, we were met by a visual tapestry of vegetables, fruit, flowers, flower arrangements, crafts, photos, cakes, jams, and chutneys all displayed on trestles. Visitors and exhibitors hurried forward and examined everything closely to see who had won what section and which entry they themselves preferred.

After inspecting the exhibits, table and chairs were at the back of the hall, ready for us to relax in, enjoy a drink and a piece of delicious homemade cake.

Prizes were presented to the category winners at the end of the afternoon. Standards had been high, and the winners truly deserved the cups with which they were presented.

Congratulations to Lynne Magennis for winning the Geary Cup after achieving the most points at both the Summer and Autumn Shows. Thank you to everyone who made the day the success it was!

Sandra Hall

2024 diary dates

(at B&A Village Hall - other events are held elsewhere, see members' newsletters for details)

- Plant Sale – Saturday 11th May 2.30 to 4.30pm, with refreshments.
- Autumn Show – Saturday 7th September. 3.00 to 4.30pm, with refreshments.

Other events, including garden outings, will be announced in future newsletters and member email updates.

Adrian Norris, Chairman

Curvaceous Cook

Peanut and Sweet Potato Curry

This has to be the easiest and tastiest quick curry recipe, which will be useful after all the rich food of Christmas, or in the run up when you haven't got time to spend ages cooking a meal. Really delicious cold the next day too. I haven't tried freezing it as it always gets eaten, but it should be ok for a short time. It is from BBC Good Food.

- 1 tbs oil (they say coconut, I use vegetable and slightly less)
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 grated cloves of garlic
- Thumb sized piece of ginger, grated
- 3 tbs thai red curry paste. I use Mae Ploy which I buy in a big tub. It keeps for ages and has a lovely rounded flavour. If you don't cook much thai food, you can get one portion pots now
- 1 tbs smooth peanut butter
- 500g sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
- 400ml can coconut milk
- 200g bag of spinach. I grow a lot of chard and kale, and always have some spare, they go well with this
- 1 lime, juiced (I use the bottled juice)
- Cooked rice and roasted peanuts to serve

Soften the onion in the oil for 5 mins. Add the garlic and ginger, and cook gently for 1 minute or until fragrant

Stir in the red Thai curry paste, peanut butter and sweet potato, and add the coconut milk and 200ml water.

Bring to the boil, turn down and simmer, uncovered, for 25 minutes or so until the sweet potato is soft

Stir through the finely chopped spinach and juice of a lime, and season well

Sprinkle over some roasted peanuts (not salted ones ideally) and serve with rice.

Serves 4. If you are going to freeze some, take it out before adding the greens.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas.

Vintage Buses in Bellingdon

These buses were being run by the Amersham & District Motorbus Society. They organise several events during the year and Chesham Bus Running Day, which is an annual event held this year, on the 1st October 2023.

The Pic of MXX313 (photo below) is numbered GS13 which is a 1953 Guy Special.

The Pic of NLE673 is a Metro-Cammell bodied AEC Regal IV, typical of the type used for Greenline services.

The nearest route that did exist was the 709 Godstone to Chesham. More photos on bellingdon.com

Photos and text by Don Baker



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.

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