

Great Ashfield Village News



ISSUE NUMBER 22

AUTUMN 2020

Parish Council 2019

Roy Barker

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Nancy Calderbank 240445

Bob Fitch Tree Officer 241727

Ian Sadler Broadband 242570

Donia Stick Community Speed Watch 245813

Carol White

Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
240780

Minutes of all Parish Council meetings can be accessed online at [One Suffolk greatashfield.onesuffolk.net/](http://OneSuffolk.greatashfield.onesuffolk.net/)

Lord Thurlow Hall Committee Members

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Hon Chairman and Treasurer pro tem 241045

Sue Howes

Hon Secretary 242983

Peggy Elms 408357

Margaret Barrett

Village Hall Draw 259113

Di Barker

Village Hall bookings
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Please send interesting items or photographs for inclusion in the newsletter to the Editor Mandie Beckley at mbeckley@dircon.co.uk

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE:

2nd November 2020

Parish Council Summary Autumn 2020



When his circumstances changed during lockdown, Arthur Peake did a very honourable thing and stood down as Parish Councillor and Chair. As Vice Chair I was asked to step up and take the responsibility in his stead.

I would like to thank Arthur very sincerely, on behalf of Great Ashfield, for all the hard work and leadership he has put into the role of Chairman. During his time in office many memorable events have happened in the village. The WW1 weekend was notable as being very special indeed, when the village hall was

heaving with people interested in all the exhibits. So thank you Arthur, we are all very grateful.

Also stepping down is Sandra Brown, our long-serving Parish Clerk. She has been an exceptional administrator with a wide knowledge of procedure and the workings of council business. We wish her well on her travels – when Covid-19 allows her to start! However, this situation is not all bad as it is fortunate that Sandra will still be around when Carol White steps up to take the position of Parish Clerk at the next meeting.

We are all grateful for Carol's offer of help and her own expertise that she brings to the job. Good too that we have someone in our village willing and able to take it on.

With the Covid-19 virus pandemic hitting this country with Furloughs, Isolations, Lockdowns, Facemasks and all the other restrictions, the world is a very different place to where we were six months ago. There has been a GREAT community spirit in our village, though, with everyone stepping up and doing that extra bit: keeping an eye on their neighbours, collecting food for them, and going to Woolpit and Elmswell to collect prescriptions. Thank you all and long may that spirit continue.

This leads me to say that we are now two people short on the Parish Council. If you feel you have the time and inclination to join our merry band, please contact me and I will run through the responsibility of the office with you. There is training available and I am sure you will enjoy gaining extra insight into our village and all we can achieve here.

Please keep well and safe in this strange time.

Roy Barker, Chair Parish Council

The Speed Project — Saturday 5th September from 12pm onwards

This ultra-relay event started in 2014 and was originally run from Los Angeles to Las Vegas. This relay, organised by James Spreull's son Edward, consists of a team of nine runners, each completing a seven kilometer loop starting and finishing at Great Ashfield House. The runners will take it in turns to run the course until a total of 550km (340 miles) has been covered. During the night, the runners are likely to have someone cycling alongside supporting them, so please take care if you come across them while out driving.

Village Hall news

We have been able to restart both our Serenity Yoga classes (Bethany 07930 199582), and Dog Training classes (Rob 07934 869970), at the Village Hall with appropriate social distancing.

However, at the moment there won't be any Pub nights or the usual Pumpkin Evening in October unless the present Covid-19 rules change. The hall is available to hire for small gatherings with social distancing, so please speak with Di Barker on 241045 to discuss your requirements.

September is the start of the new year for the Hall Draw. If you have not paid for last year, please can you contact Margaret Barrett on 259113 for Internet banking details or where to take your membership fee.



The draw is the way we keep a trickle of money coming in each month to finance ongoing costs at the Hall, which is particularly important at the moment. It only costs £12 for the year, which you give to draw organiser, Margaret Barrett. Email Di Barker — dibarker@keme.co.uk — if you or any other members of your family would like to join.

There is a draw every month. This usually takes place at a Hall event but the committee have been doing this behind closed doors recently.

The monthly prizes are £25, £15, £10 and £5.

Sue Howes

Councillor Meyer's musings

By the time this article hits the streets the hot steamy weather may be a distant memory. However, at the time of writing working from home due to Covid-19 has taken another twist as we try and stay cool in our makeshift offices. The Council will continue to work primarily from home where possible for the foreseeable future but as this doesn't suit everyone, individuals or specific teams will be returning to Endeavour House over the next few months.



The Council is currently exploring what the 'new normal' will look like and which of the many rapid adaptations implemented as a result of the pandemic should be retained. When we do return to Endeavour House the office experience will not be as we remember it: a smaller carefully controlled number of people will be allowed in the building at any one time; different desk arrangements will be in operation; no meeting rooms will be in use; and reduced catering facilities will be available. The new normal will look very different for all of us!

While a return to Endeavour house will be welcomed, the Council has made a great success of remote working and for this we owe a huge thank you to the Council Officers. They have maintained normal operations while shouldering the mountain of work generated by the national response to Covid-19. In addition, ongoing projects have not been allowed to stagnate. Notable milestones include work commencing on the Council's multi-million-pound investment in Needham Market to deliver 130 new homes and details are being published of the Council's drive to deliver the environmental measures that will allow them to achieve their ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Headline actions include:

- * Transitioning existing diesel-powered waste and fleet vehicles to a more sustainable fuel source such as waste vegetable oil, with a longer term ambition with partners to introduce electric or hydrogen fuelled vehicles
- * Increasing tree and hedgerow planting and coverage across the district
- * Ensuring new and current council housing is as efficient and environmentally friendly as possible, while also working more proactively with private housing developers to build sustainable communities
- * Working with partners to improve the infrastructure necessary to increase sustainable travel in our key towns and beyond.

Less exciting, but nevertheless essential, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have also recently approved a timetable for the Joint Local Plan. The Joint Local Plan will clarify how the councils propose to meet housing and employment targets set by Government and, following input from communities, detail how and where development should take place between now and 2037.

One last plea – don't lose your voice! Residents are urged to look out for their annual canvass letters from Mid Suffolk District Council and to make sure their electoral registration details are up to date.

Rick Meyer Richard.meyer@midsuffolk.gov.uk

Great Ashfield residents commemorate VJ Day



Owen James Boyle, Royal Army Medical Corps

My father didn't wait to be called up but enlisted early on in the war, wanting to help the wounded wherever he was sent. His first experience was on the beaches at Dunkirk during the evacuation of our troops under heavy fire. He did sustain a shrapnel injury and after recovering was then sent to India before going on to Singapore. As we are all aware, the military were expecting the Japanese to arrive from the sea and were therefore caught out when they arrived from the surrounding jungle. Our troops were wrong footed and many were killed or captured.

My father was taken prisoner and initially taken to Changi before being transported to Burma to work on the Death Railway. He never spoke of the atrocities that were inflicted on them by the Japanese but told us that they were given the husks from the rice, cooked in the water from boiled greens and if they got any maggots these were eaten for the protein. He had dysentery and malaria as did many of the men and they did find some seeds that they grew, which they watered with their own urine. On one occasion they found five cans of evaporated milk, which had to be consumed immediately because if they were caught they would be severely punished. After that he could never bring himself to have it again.

I have visited Singapore and really struggled with the humidity. In the jungle this must have been more intense, so I don't know how they managed to work under those conditions on such little food. My father was in captivity for three and a half years before the Japanese surrendered and he said they only knew that the struggle was over when a plane flew over the camp dropping leaflets, however the commandant still made them carry on working until the Allies were at the gates forcing them to surrender. One of the higher ranking officers was chased by the Australian soldiers who wanted revenge for the things that were inflicted on the Australian nurses including rape; he was never seen again.

My father had ulcerated legs, his toes were broken which meant he always had trouble walking and looked like a walking skeleton, he never did return to full health and could never forgive the Japanese for what they did, such barbarism and I hope that future generations will never forget what World Wars can do – they gave so much as quoted – “For Your Tomorrow We Gave Our Today”...

Janet de Vries

Lt Col AA Johnson, MC

In June 1940 Johnson became Commander of the 4th Battalion, Suffolk Regiment. Early in 1942 he arrived in Malaya and fought in the Malaya campaign for just 15 days until the British surrendered on Feb 15th, 1942, on which day he received a rifle shot wound to the chest.

Taken prisoner, he spent the rest of the war first in Changi Prison and then in the chain of camps along in the infamous Burma-Siam railway where, sometimes endangering his life to do so, he looked after and encouraged his men to the best of his ability.

During this time AAJ amassed a huge collection of butterflies and built a hut where he nurtured a large variety of orchids, many given to him by his men.

He returned home after hospital treatment in Rangoon.

Wendy Bird, one of his three daughters, lives in Daisy Green.



Dr Sonny Aung holding his father's Star of Burma medals for fighting against the Japanese

Great Ashfield & Badwell Ash WI

After five long months we finally managed to meet for our usual August Garden Meeting. It was obviously different to previous years with social distancing, bringing our own chairs and refreshments and no cake to share!



Many thanks to Di Barker for hosting us in her lovely garden and it was great to see 20 of our members getting together for a good chat and catch up. We won't be back in the Long Thurlow Hall for a while so plan to do the same again in September, weather permitting.

Village Hall Draw

As we are still unable to hold the Village Pub Nights, we will continue to draw the lottery numbers on a quarterly basis, and to distribute the winnings around the village — from a safe distance!

MAY:	1st	£25	David Leaver	No: 202
	2nd	£15	Paul Davies	No: 64
	3rd	£10	C Seaton	No: 233
	4th	£5	S & B Ager	No: 92
JUNE:	1st	£25	Lyn Elvin	No: 168
	2nd	£15	Mr Balaam	No: 106
	3rd	£10	Roger Orford	No: 240
	4th	£5	Mr Catchlove	No: 223
JULY:	1st	£25	J Clarke	No: 49
	2nd	£15	J Thompson	No: 125
	3rd	£10	Di Barker	No: 101
	4th	£5	Brian Barker	No: 117

All Saints' Church

At the moment the church is only open for private prayer in the chancel, on Sundays 10–4 and Wednesdays 10-12 and a service once a month. Details of this and the other services around the benefice can be found online at www.vcnews.org.uk (Benefice village and church news) or www.achurchnearyou.com which has lots more information.

Our rector, Katherine Valentine is producing a weekly reflection on Youtube — search 'Pakenham Benefice'.

Please note that it is now mandatory to wear face masks in places of worship.

Welcome to our new Parish Clerk

Carol White has taken over the role of Parish Clerk. In 2016 Carol and her husband moved to Meadow Farm, Great Ashfield from Walsham-le-Willows, where they had lived for more than 25 years.

Carol mainly spends her time looking after their two horses, their dogs and also gardening.

She says: "I hope being Parish Clerk will give me the chance to make a contribution to village life and the opportunity to get to know more people in the village."

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The answers to last issue's local history quiz

1. What names has our village had in its history before becoming Great Ashfield? **Estafelda and Ashfield Magna**
2. There are at least three wooded areas in the parish. Can you name them? **Parker's Grove, Brown's Wood, Kiln Wood and Roy's Wood**
3. Name the two former pubs in the village. **The Thurlow Arms and The Hovells – named after both sides of the family of Lord Thurlow**
4. In the 1950s, what officially notifiable disease hit the parish? **Foot & Mouth Disease was found at Kiln Farm**
5. What was the year of the final Truck Rally? **2001**
6. In 2020, how many years has the Great Ashfield & Badwell Ash Women's Institute been running? **96 years, 1924–2020**
7. In which year did Great Ashfield reach the final of the Suffolk Village of the Year Competition? **2001, we were runners up**
8. 'Miss Hollond's Meadow' at Ashfield House has an official status. What is it? **SSSI: Site of Special Scientific Interest**
9. At the last official boundary change, Great Ashfield lost a property to Badwell Ash but gained one back. Which two houses are these? **Rowan Cottage, Long Thurlow went to Badwell Ash and we gained Howards Meadow, Daisy Green from that village.**
10. Where was the castle in the village and what type was it? **South East of Hall Farm, behind the church, there was a Motte & Bailey castle.**