

# Ashton Keynes & Leigh Newsletter

February 2026



Northern Lights over the Bradstone, taken mid January 2026

*Photo credit: Stuart Harris*

**Next Pre-School collection for clothes - page 8**

**First Aid training - page 10**

**Duck Race Results - page 14**



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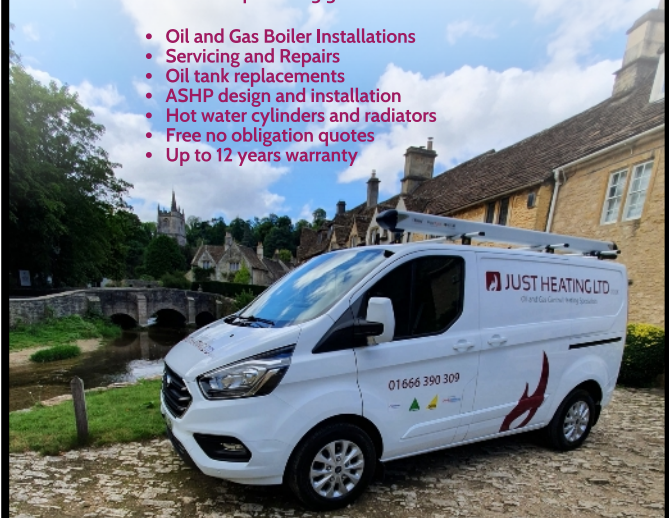
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# Dear Friends,

## A Message of Hope: Finding Green Shoots in February

As I write this, tiny green shoots are emerging in my garden. Each time this happens, I'm filled with delight to see new life pushing through the soil. During these winter months, when daylight is short and the weather is cold, the natural darkness often feels weighed down by global concerns: the economy, environmental crises and conflict.

However, the emergence of these shoots feels like an act of resilience against the grey skies. They caught me by surprise because, on the surface, it seemed nothing was happening. It reminds me that even when we feel we have reached a hiatus and stopped hoping, 'green shoots' can appear, bringing the promise of new beginnings.

I am also struck by the legacy of care left in my garden. Someone I never met took the time to plant some of these bulbs so future residents could enjoy them. This spirit of preparation mirrors the season of **Lent**,

which begins later this month. For Christians, these forty days are a period of reflection and self-examination. Whether through fasting or taking on new acts of service, it is a journey rooted in the hope of Easter and the promise of eternal life.

These buds are signs of encouragement, having stored the nutrients necessary to survive their dormant phase. They are now ready to become all they were created to be. As you journey through February, I hope you see signs of hope in nature and in the people around you—your family, friends, and colleagues. May you find you have stored up enough 'good things' to weather any current difficulties.

Where will you invest your energy this year to bring joy to others?

Every blessing,

**Revd. Sharon**

**Assistant Curate in the Upper Thames  
Benefice**

## Thank you - donations in lieu of Christmas cards

A huge **Thank You** to everyone who supported the charities in lieu of sending Christmas cards again in 2025.

The amount raised is as follows:

- Pancreatic Cancer - £1,130
- Cirencester Churn Project - £225
- Oak & Furrow - £185
- Cirencester Hospital - £215

All the charities have responded and they are all extremely grateful for your kind and very generous donations

I have organised this now for a number of years and I feel it's time to hand over the baton. It involves a couple of weeks in November to keep tabs on the donations.

If anyone is willing to kindly take over please do contact me **dafbat@aol.com**



# B GIBSON

*Carpenter & Joiner,  
General Maintenance*



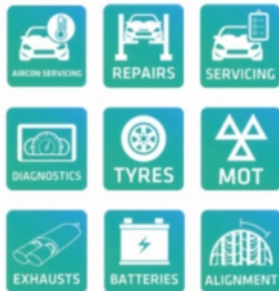
**01285 643212**



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  [garage@ellisonscoaches.co.uk](mailto:garage@ellisonscoaches.co.uk)

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# Editorial



Did anyone see 'the one and only' Ashton Keynes on Celebrity Escape to the Country in December? Seems we won't have a pop star living in AK! Along with the local reporting of the gravel extraction protests earlier in 2025 and then a *starring* role at the start of the River Thames journey for the Olympics (back in 2012) - we are big news on the BBC!

As we move into 2026 let's take the energy of a fresh start and turning it into positive action. The conversations we're having, the projects taking shape (e.g. join the Rural Cinema team, help fund raise for the Cotswold Lakes Trust), and the connections being strengthened (at WI, Craft Club, Flower Club, Probus Club, Scouts, Quiz nights) all point to a year of thoughtful growth and shared purpose.

February also invites reflection. What's working? What needs adjusting? And where can we be a little braver in how can we be kinder to one another? These questions help keep us grounded as we move forward—focused not just on outcomes, but on how we get there.

Thank you for being part of this neighbourhood and for the commitment, curiosity, and care you bring to Ashton Keynes & Leigh. Maybe you might sign up for the First Aid training (page 10), so you can help others in their hour of need.

We're excited about what lies ahead in 2026 and grateful to be building our community together.

**Sharon**

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## Deadlines and Advertising

<b>Editorial Team:</b>	Claire Sims	01285 869479
	Sharon Gater	01285 860926
	Louise Mason	07737 638724
<b>Advertising:</b>	Claire Sims	01285 869479
<b>Distribution:</b>	Richard Vernon	01285 861692

Please phone Richard Vernon if you wish to contact your distributor.

### Deadline for articles is 16 of the month.

Please submit your copy for publication in the **MARCH** newsletter to **AKLnewsletter@gmail.com** by 8pm on **16 February** or to Claire Sims, 18 Happy Land, Ashton Keynes.

When submitting articles to the newsletters please send in the original **MS Word or PowerPoint format** (not a pdf), as we do have to reformat a lot to squeeze everything in. It would also help if you used **Verdana font, size 11 with no underlining**.

If you wish your item to *also* appear in the Minety Newsletter please contact Mrs Brenda Sheppard by phone on 01666 860631 or email **minetynewsletter@gmail.com**

Thank you

## Advertising

You'll need to purchase advertising space for Minety and AKL newsletters *separately* from now on.

### AKL Advertising prices per issue

Half page £15  
Quarter page £8  
Eighth page £5

*Do talk to us if you'd like a full page or an advertorial.*

Please send the artwork and any enquiries for paid adverts to **AKLnewsad@gmail.com**

**Deadline for advertising is 14 of the month**

## STYLING 5

Hello!

We hope that everyone has had a wonderful summer and managed to make the most of the gorgeous sunshine.

As many of you know we underwent a change of ownership back in July, and renamed the salon **STYLING 5**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our clients for their continued support and to welcome the many new clients who have joined us.

From all the staff at Styling 5

SOICO the joi of healthy hair

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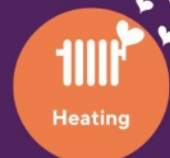
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# ASHTON KEYNES COMMUNITY SHOP

**The Village Hall Annexe, High Road, Ashton Keynes, Swindon, SN6 6NX**

**Telephone: 01285 861931, Email: [info@ashtonkeynesshop.org.uk](mailto:info@ashtonkeynesshop.org.uk)**

You can find more information on our website [ashtonkeynesshop.org.uk](http://ashtonkeynesshop.org.uk)

**Happy New Year to all our customers!**

## Eggs

The free range eggs from our new suppliers have lovely yellow yolks and it is good to support local farmers.

## Fenton Farm Eggs

Fenton Farm Eggs are laid by hens in traditional free range flocks having access throughout the day to green pasture where they roam freely and are fed specially formulated feed to enhance the yolk colour. Fenton Farm Eggs are laid by different breeds of hen including Rhode Island Red Cross which lay traditional brown eggs and White Leghorns, a more flighty bird that originates from the Leghorn region of Italy and lays white eggs.





The excellent natural conditions in which the hens are kept results in exceptional quality eggs with a strong shell, bright yolk and superior flavour.



At Fenton Farm our team grade and pack daily ensuring only the highest quality eggs are provided. We are the 3rd generation of our family on the farm in Holcombe Rogus on the Devon/Somerset border. Our beautiful permanent pasture is in a steep sided valley, which has not been sprayed in living memory and is lightly grazed by cattle to encourage wild flowers.

*Andrew Gabriel*

[eggs@fentonpoultry.co.uk](mailto:eggs@fentonpoultry.co.uk) 07779 247805 / 01823 672075  

## Shrove Tuesday

Don't forget to make your pancakes on 17 February. The three ingredients required (eggs, milk and plain flour) are all available in the shop.

What's your favourite topping? Lemon and sugar, chocolate spread, maple syrup, fruit with yogurt or do you prefer a savoury pancake? Whatever you decide upon you can find it on the shelves - enjoy!

## Ready Meals

The freezer is full of delicious ready meals which are ideal for these chilly evenings.

Lots to choose from including Dijon Beef Casserole, Fish Pie, Lasagne, Cottage Pie, Cod & Prawn Paella and Cauliflower Cheese for vegetarians.



These meals can be oven cooked or popped in the microwave for a quick supper.

You can even add a dessert!



## Normal Opening Times

Monday – Saturday: 7.30am – 7pm

Sunday: 9am – 3pm



**Ashton  
Keynes  
Pre-School**

Ashton Keynes  
Pre-School need  
your unwanted  
clothes and shoes  
to turn into cash!  
Our next collection



www.bag2school.com

is booked for:

# Monday 23rd FEBRUARY 2026 Before 9am

Items must be of a good standard and brought to the Pre-school before 9am on the day. The collection van leaves Pre-school on the dot of 9am! You are welcome to drop bags off the night before after 4pm, please leave them under the Pre-school awning as wet items are not accepted. Please use your own bags and ensure they are tied up.

### Items Accepted

- Men's / Ladies / Children's Clothing Inc.  
Lingerie / Socks
- Pairs of Shoes (tied together)
- Hats / Scarves / Ties
- Handbags / Bags / Jewellery
- Soft Toys
- Household Linen / Curtains / Towels /  
Bed Sheets / Pillowcases / Duvet  
Covers

### Items NOT Accepted

- Duvets / Blankets
- Pillows / Cushions
- Carpets / Rugs / Mats (inc. Bath, Shower,  
Toilet Mats)
- Soiled / Painted / Ripped / Wet Clothing
- School Uniforms (with or without logo)
- Corporate Clothing / Workwear
- Textile Off Cuts
- Yarns / Threaded Material

Bag2School is the UK's leading textile recycler and fundraiser and helps us raise vitally needed funds for the Pre-School. We raised £181 from our last collection which will fund new equipment and toys for the Pre-School children to enjoy. It also helps divert unwanted textiles away from landfill and raises awareness of recycling and reuse to the children.

It's a great opportunity to declutter and sort through your cupboards and wardrobes for all those things you no longer use. Don't forget to ask family, friends, neighbours, colleagues!

**Many thanks for helping us with this worthy fundraising opportunity.**

**The Ashton Keynes Pre-School & Committee Team**

Registered Charity No 1027601

# Ashton Keynes Pre-School

**Did you know Ashton Keynes Pre-school offers wrap around care??**



Our emphasis is learning through play allowing children to take the lead in the direction of play and control over their own experiences, building confidence and develop independent thinking and learning. We recognise the individual and learn and play for each child.

**Breakfast Club available Monday - Friday between 8-9am  
(term time only)**




**After School Club available Monday-Wednesday 15:00-17:45pm  
(term time only)**

If you would like to find out more information or to register, please contact us:

 [manager@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk](mailto:manager@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk)

 [info@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk](mailto:info@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk)

 01285 869433



***If a loved one needed urgent help, could you act fast?***

***Most cardiac arrests occur away from medical help, yet many of us lack CPR skills. Knowing CPR, using a defibrillator, and basic first aid can make all the difference.***

## **Basic Life Support and Other First Aid**

- **Four hours of training held in Ashton Keynes Village Hall**
- **Small groups (maximum of 12 participants)**
- **Led by Gary Owen from *Inspire First Training***
- **Open to anyone aged 18 and older**
- **Children aged 14 and over are welcome to join, working alongside a parent or carer as a pair**
- **Total cost for both sessions: £20 per person**
- **Pre-booking is essential**
- **Tickets available at Ashton Keynes Village Shop**
- **\*\*Sessions:\*\***
  - **Saturday, 28th February - Basic Life Support**
  - **Saturday, 14th March - Other First Aid**
- **\*\*Time options:\*\* 9:00 to 11:00 or 11:30 to 13:30 \*\***

### **What's included:**

***28th February*** - what to do in an emergency, primary survey, recovery position, CPR, safe use of a public automated defibrillator, choking

***14th March*** - bleeding, shock, heart attack, stroke, anaphylaxis, hypothermia

**Any questions? Email:**  
**kathryngray28@yahoo.co.uk**

***Organised for the community by Ashton Keynes WI, Ashton Keynes Village Hall, & Inspire First Training***



# Ashton Keynes Village Hall

Park Place, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire, SN6 6NT

## Booking The Village Hall

Our hall is available for you to book from as little as £7 an hour. With a modern kitchen facilities, a fresh décor, parking, alcohol licence and our new updated toilets, we have everything you need for your event!

If you are holding a party or family celebration, then we can run a bar for you. It is 'win win' situation for us both as you get to enjoy your event and the hall will profit from bar takings. We have cash and card payment facilities and can tailor the needs of your function to the stock available on the night.

## How Do I Book?

You can check availability of the hall in advance on our website: [www.akvh.org](http://www.akvh.org): click on the "Availability" box at the top

To book you can either call or email:

- Call the booking line on 0844776 0001 - Please leave a message, and we will call you back
- Email Rowena at [bookings@akvh.org.uk](mailto:bookings@akvh.org.uk) with your requirements

## How Much Does It Cost?

Check the "Downloads" section on our [www.akvh.org](http://www.akvh.org) website for the latest charges in the Scale of Charges Document. As at Sept 2025 charges are summarised below per session, sessions run from Start-1330, 1330-1800, 1830-Close.

Hourly rates or part-sessions are available from as little as £7 where there is room in the schedule, please enquire with Bookings for more details.

	Discounted Rate (1)	Activities Rate (2)	Functions Rate (3)
Main Hall	£30	£60	£90
Whole Building	350	£90	£125

(1) The **Discounted Rate** applies to regular bookings by organisations for classes for the benefit of parishioners; performance rehearsals and pre-teens children's parties between Sunday morning and Friday afternoon.

(2) The **Activities Rate** applies to pre-teen children's parties on Friday evenings or Saturday morning or Saturday afternoon sessions; school shows; meetings of non-parish organisations; morning/afternoon activities, not covered by rate (1), to which the public is admitted.

(3) The **Functions Rate** applies to all evening functions not covered by rates (1) & (2).

# Ashton Keynes

## **Precept 2025/26**

At its meeting in December, the Parish Council agreed its budget for 2026/27 and a precept request of £44,064.00.

## **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding Update**

Following on from the update in the December/January newsletter, questions have been asked of both the Parish Council and individual Councillors. Further clarification has been provided on the status of the CIL project, along with some background into the decision-making process.

In March 2024 a CIL Working Group was set up to work on proposals for expenditure of CIL funds received. In May 2024 the working group sought feedback from the village about the facilities already available, and also asked for ideas and suggestions for the CIL funds. This was facilitated via the Village Shop, the Village Newsletter, Facebook and the NextDoor app. In the three months following that, the Parish Council collated a variety of suggestions from over 40 responses received. Pros and Cons of all the ideas were debated, and the costs and overall benefits to the village as a whole were discussed, this has formed the basis for the prioritisation of the funds available.

Following structural surveys of various community assets, the CIL Working Group has recommended Bradstone as the main area of focus, it is not the intention to take away any revenues from existing community businesses. Please note there are stringent rules on what CIL funds can and cannot be spent on.

All income and expenditure (except for confidential staff costs) is published in the Parish Council meeting minutes. Minutes and agenda can be found on the Parish Council website with the latest minutes and agenda also being displayed on the noticeboard.

To move the CIL project forward, the Parish Council would like to invite interested parishioners to be part of the project going forward. If you are interested in joining this working group, please contact the Parish Council Clerk on [clerk@akpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@akpc.org.uk) in the first instance.

## **Hedges, Shrubs & Trees Overhanging Footpaths**

The Parish Council politely requests that if you should have on your property a hedge, tree or shrub which overhangs a highway or any other road or footpath to which the public has access to, that you please inspect and trim as necessary to remove any possible cause of obstruction.

As it is against the law to trim back or remove any hedges in which birds may be nesting, this time of year is the best time to carry out trimming back.

Please be aware that as Ashton Keynes is in a Tree Conservation Area planning permission may be required to carry out works to trees on your property. In general, planning permission is required for tree maintenance if the tree has a trunk diameter of 7.5cm or more, measured at 1.5 metres above ground level.

For further information please consult the Wiltshire Council website.

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning>

**More news at [www.akpc.org.uk](http://www.akpc.org.uk)**

**The next Parish Council meeting will be on 26 February, 7.30pm  
at Bradstone Pavilion**

**Please contact Fiona Ryder for more details -  
[clerk@akpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@akpc.org.uk) - 07394 856232**

# Parish Council

## Planning

### Applications considered for which there was, 'No Comment'

10 The Leaze: Demolition of existing single-storey rear extension, erection of a new single storey rear extension and PPC slimline aluminium windows.

Witts End Cottage, Rixon Gate: T1 Fir – fell due to excessive height overhanging neighbouring property and close to boundary fence and wall.

Kent End Farm, Kent End: Single storey side extension.

Cleveland Villa, High Road: Single storey rear extension.

Fox Cottage, 6 Kent End: T1 English Willow – hollow stems will be reduced back to a single sound main lateral limb.

North End House, North End: T1 Catalpa tree – pollard.

### Applications determined by Wiltshire Council 'No Objection'

The Barn, 8 A High Road: Goat Willow – Fell.

1 Birch Glade, Park Place: Cypress Hedge – remove.

Waters Edge, Derryfields: Four May Hawthorn trees and one Ash tree – fell.

7 Thames View: Mock Acacia – reduce by 50%. 2 x Conifer – fell.

Derryville, Derryfields: Birch – fell. Hazel – remove side branches overhanging roof.

1 Four Acre Close: Hazel tree – fell.

### Applications determined by Wiltshire Council 'Approved with Conditions'

Cove House, Park Place: Construction of a pergola, amendments to the garden room fenestration, installation of rooflights and internal layout alterations.

Cotswold Community: Minor amendments to approved listed building consent ref.

21/02481/LBC. The alterations are for the conversion of the existing listed buildings LB1 (The Long House), LB2 (The Meeting Room), LB3 (The Farmhouse) and LB4 (The Coach House) to include revised elevations, layouts and repairs to fabric and structure.

## Ashton Keynes Link Helpline 07512 233200

Ashton Keynes Link Helpline is your local 'Good Neighbour' scheme.

We're here to help anyone in the area who needs assistance that they are not able to get from friends, relatives and neighbours.

Prescription collections, taking to hospital appointments or just having a chat - we are here to help you.



# ASHTON KEYNES YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB DUCK RACE

ASHTON KEYNES YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB WOULD LIKE TO SAY A HUGE THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED ANOTHER FANTASTIC BOXING DAY DUCK RACE IN ASHTON KEYNES. WE'RE SURE THAT EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED THOROUGHLY ENJOYED THE SPECTACLE!

THANKS TO YOUR GENEROSITY, WE MANAGED TO RAISE A HEALTHY SUM FOR THE CLUB. THIS IS TRULY INCREDIBLE AND HIGHLIGHTS WHAT A WONDERFUL LOCAL COMMUNITY WE ARE SO PROUD TO BE PART OF.

OF COURSE, EVENTS LIKE THIS ONLY HAPPEN THANKS TO THE TIRELESS HELP AND DEDICATION OF MANY PEOPLE. PLEASE JOIN US IN GIVING A BIG CHEER TO ALL THE COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS WHO WORKED SO HARD ON THE DAY, KEEPING EVERYTHING RUNNING SMOOTHLY.

FINALLY, A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO JEAN HAYES FOR ALL HER SUPPORT WITH TICKET SALES, IT WAS VERY MUCH APPRECIATED.

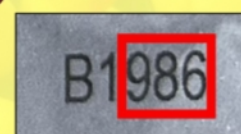
THANKS,  
ZAHN



## THE RESULTS!

**1ST PLACE £50 – DUCK 452**  
**2ND PLACE £30 – DUCK 111**  
**3RD PLACE £20 – DUCK 445**  
**4TH PLACE £15 – DUCK 493**  
**LAST PLACE £5 – DUCK 974**  
**SPOT PLACE £5 – DUCK 556**

CHECK THE LAST 3 NUMBERS ON YOUR TICKET, IF THEY MATCH WITH A WINNER, THEN YOU'RE IN THE MONEY!



SEND AN EMAIL TO [AKYFCTREASURER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:AKYFCTREASURER@GMAIL.COM) WE'LL TRANSFER YOUR WINNINGS TO YOU, OR CONTACT ZAHN JEFFERY ON 07876 030506



# Rural Cinema

In the Village Hall



**"Use it or lose it"**

**Doors and Bar 7pm – Film 7.30pm, £5**

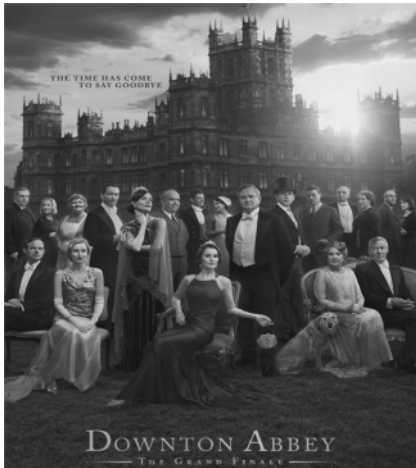


Owing to an issue with our projector and the challenge of getting an engineer out promptly, we've had to postpone the next film until March.

## Wednesday 4 March 2026 – Downton Abbey: The Grand Finale (PG)

**"The time has come to say goodbye"**

*Starring Elizabeth McGovern, Hugh Bonneville, Jim Carter, Brendon Coyle, Dominic West, Penelope Winton and many others*



When Mary finds herself in a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble, the household grapples with the threat of social disgrace. The Crawleys must embrace change with the next generation leading Downton Abbey into the future. *IMDB*

Life at Downton is as eventful as ever, with Lord G brooding on whether to accept Lady Mary's succession as the mistress of the house, and graciously retreat with his wife to the "Dower House" occupied by his late mother. A rather gruesome Hammer horror portrait of the late Maggie Smith now dominates the building.

Lady Grantham's sheepish American brother Harold (Paul Giamatti) comes to stay with his smoothie financial adviser Gus Sambrook (Alessandro Nivola); the latter gives Lady Mary the eye. And below stairs, housekeeper Elsie Hughes (Phyllis Logan)

calms the premarital nerves of Mrs Patmore (Lesley Nicol), assuring her that conjugal responsibilities are in fact "terrific fun!". *The Guardian*

With Lady Mary's now-public, very scandalous divorce, the respective heads of upstairs and downstairs handing over the reins of the house to the younger generations, and even Isobel Grey (Penelope Wilton) adding two servants to the Yorkshire Show organising committee, *The Grand Finale* covers the huge changes buffeting the Crawley family and wider society in the early 1930s. *Cautionspoilers.com*



## Wednesday 1 April 2026 – The Penguin Lessons (12)

*Starring Steve Coogan, Jonathan Pryce, Bruno Blas and many others*

A disillusioned Englishman who goes to work in a school in a divided Argentina in 1976 finds his life transformed when he rescues an orphaned penguin from the beach.

More information to follow next month.

# Ashton Keynes Primary

The new term is well underway and the children have quickly settled back in.

## **AK's Got Talent**

At the end of last term we had our annual AK's Got Talent event. The event saw a wide variety of acts (singers, dancers, gymnasts, pianists and rappers to name just a few!) perform really confidently. The whole school thoroughly enjoyed watching the different acts perform. A huge well done, and thank you, to Edie and Francesca in Class 4 for all of their help with organising and running the talent show this year.

## **Yoga Day**

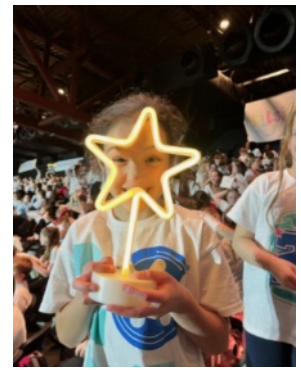
This week, the whole school enjoyed a Yoga Day with Ms Jackson. All classes took part in fun, engaging sessions. Class 6 had the opportunity to play Hungry Hippos yoga style which they found particularly enjoyable!



## **AK School Choir Goes Large!**

Our school choir have just returned from performing at the World Resorts Arena in Birmingham in the Young Voices choir. They all had a fabulous time singing and dancing in a children's choir of over 6000 to an audience of family and friends. The live band, star singers and incredible street dancers 'Urban Strides' all contributed to an amazing,

memorable experience. Our children shone brightly and made us very proud.



**Class R** have had a super start to term 3 starting with a very wintery welly wander through the village where we spotted many signs of winter. Our learning this term is all about a winter wonderland. So far we have been finding out about seasonal change and exploring ice. We loved learning about Antarctica and penguins and even made our very own ice mountain in the classroom.

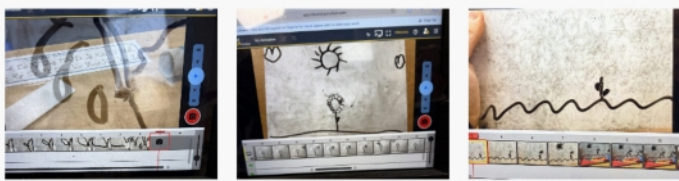
**Class 1** have enjoyed their first Forest school session of the year. The children enjoyed planting seeds (inside the classroom) and bulbs near the school pond. The children are looking forward to seeing the new shoots grow in the spring time!

**Class 2** have been working on their detective skills to begin 2026. In English, they have met an interesting looking character called 'Bob' who looks perfectly normal but various hints around his house suggest that he may be involved in something slightly more 'out of this world'. They have made some predictions, thought about questions to ask him and finally written him some letters; the class can't wait to see if and how he will reply and find out just what all the space memorabilia is suggesting. Their geography work has stayed firmly planted on this Earth, however, and the children have begun to explore the extremes of the planet - the poles and the equator. This unit will see them exploring weather and climate and why they are so different.

# School



In Computing, **Class 3** have been learning how to make effective animations. The children had a go making their own by making small changes between each image and using onion skinning to help them line up each of their images. The final animations were excellent and the children really enjoyed creating these.



**Class 4** were excited to go on their first swimming lesson on Thursday and show off their swimming skills. The children are really enjoying their new book 'Oliver and the Seawigs'. In Science, the children have been learning about sound and how sounds are made. The children enjoyed experimenting with musical instruments!



**Class 5** have been enjoying using 'microbits' this term. The children have been learning to code using forever loops and they have made name badges and a beating heart game.

Our book this term is 'Beowulf' which the children are loving! We've been describing Grendel using kenning poems and have designed our own picture of Grendel.



Before Christmas, **Class 6** enjoyed weekly fencing sessions with Neil Bromley from Cricklade Fencing Club. The children learnt different commands and how to wear the safety equipment correctly. Funded as part of our affordability project, the sessions were a brilliant opportunity for our Y6 children to experience a new sport. All of the children successfully achieved their level 1 fencing award! Well done Class 6.



This term, Class 6 had a visit from two magistrates. The children learnt about the differences between a crown court and a magistrates court and had the opportunity to ask questions. The children also worked in pairs to do some detective work involving spotting 20 crimes taking place in a street photo! The children were fascinated to meet real magistrates and their interactive session gave the children a fantastic insight into how our legal system works. The visit wasn't just inspiring; it was educational, informative and tailored perfectly to our curriculum's focus on British Values and Wellbeing.

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# The Telephone Gallery



In December, The Telephone Gallery hosted two exhibitions. The first exhibition was organised to promote the Ashton Keynes Christmas Tree Festival.

It featured a beautifully decorated Christmas tree as the centrepiece, accompanied by a series of miniature paper trees that were suspended around the sides of the gallery windows, creating a festive and inviting display illuminated by twinkling fairy lights.

The second exhibition was no. 9 on the Ashton Keynes Advent Calendar Trail and displayed the beautifully knitted nativity scene with a new tissue paper sky and mountain backdrop, together with a paper star lantern above the stable to complete the display. It was as popular as ever, with many people admiring it.



Many thanks to everyone who took part in the Advent Calendar Trail this year. There were 25 different displays dotted around the village, with many keeping their displays up till New Year's Eve.

In early January, the Telephone Gallery started the year with *Linocut Prints and Intaglio Prints*, an exhibition by Mike Grier.

His exhibition features a selection of Mike's linocuts and intaglio etchings, highlighting his distinctive and bold artistic approach.



To further engage visitors, Mike also displayed the original printing plates and several of the tools used in the creation of his prints, offering an interesting insight into his creative process and how his prints were made.

## Forthcoming exhibitions

9 February – Ashton Keynes Primary School

Please do get in touch if you'd like to have an exhibition in the Telephone Gallery or to use it as a space to promote a forthcoming event in a creative way.

**Kathryn Gray**  
**thetelephonegallery@gmail.com**  
**Instagram @thetelephonegallery**  
**www.thetelephonegallery.blogspot.com**



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## **Furniture doesn't need to be new to feel special - it just needs care and imagination**

Life brought me to the Cotswolds, and my work played a big part in that. For one reason or another, I ended up here — and it very quickly felt like where I was meant to be.

You may have seen my name around, Reloved by Jo, or spotted my van in and around Ashton Keynes. What many people don't know is that the business began entirely by accident, over ten years ago, when I took a small piece of furniture out of the garage, painted it, and shared it on Facebook. It sold almost immediately — and something clicked.

Quite simply, I am a creative, with a good eye for detail. When I see a piece of furniture, I can usually visualise how it will look once it has been restyled. I love the process — starting work on a piece, carefully bringing it to fruition, and seeing it transformed into something that brings warmth and style into a home.

I'm drawn to furniture with character — pieces that have lived a life already and still have so much to give. My approach isn't about changing things beyond recognition, but about working thoughtfully and respectfully, allowing each piece to continue its story while helping it sit beautifully in today's homes.

People are a very important part of what I do. When I collect a piece of furniture from someone's home, I love getting to know them — hearing about their lives, seeing their spaces, and understanding how I can make things just a little better by doing what I do. That connection matters. People trust me with their furniture, often with items that carry memories and meaning, and I'm always proud and humbled by that trust.

If I can make someone's home feel just a little more special — more personal, more lived-in, more them — then my job is done.

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*Teas, coffees and cakes served on Tuesdays by the WI: 10am - 12noon*

# Church matters

## Services for February 2026

Date	Church	Time	Service
Sunday 1 Feb Septuagesima : Epiphany 4	St Sampson's, Cricklade	<b>8am</b> <b>10am</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	Holy Communion Morning Worship <i>at St Sampson's school</i> with music group & children's activities Evensong
	Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes	<b>10am</b>	Holy Communion
	St John the Baptist, Latton	<b>10am</b>	Morning Worship
Sunday 8 Feb Sexagesima: 2nd Sunday before Lent	St Sampson's School, Cricklade	<b>10am</b>	Upper Thames Together Communion
	Ashton Keynes School	<b>3.30pm</b>	Messy Church
Sunday 15 Feb Sunday before Lent	St Sampson's, Cricklade	<b>8am</b> <b>6.30pm</b>	Holy Communion <i>followed by breakfast</i> Evensong
	St Sampson's School, Cricklade	<b>10am</b>	Morning Worship
	Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes	<b>10am</b>	Morning Worship
	St John the Baptist, Latton	<b>10am</b>	Morning Communion
Wednesday 18 Feb Ash Wednesday	St Sampson's, Cricklade	<b>7.30pm</b>	Ash Wednesday Communion and Ashing service
Sunday 22 Feb 1st Sunday of Lent	Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes	<b>8.30am</b>	Holy Communion BCP
	St Sampson's School, Cricklade	<b>10am</b>	Holy Communion
	St John the Baptist, Latton	<b>4pm</b>	Morning Worship

## Church opening times for private prayer

**St Sampson's, Cricklade:** every day, 9.30am – 3.30pm

**Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes:** Wednesday through to Sunday incl. 10am - 4pm  
Closed Monday and Tuesday.

*St Sampson's, Cricklade*

*Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes*

*St John the Baptist, Latton*

*All Saints, the Leigh*



## Christmas Tree Festival

Cast your minds back to the first weekend of December last year, and many of you will remember the CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL in the church. It kicked off with a Sparkling Piano Bar on the Friday evening, continued on Saturday and Sunday with a steady stream of visitors, including our MP Roz Savage, and ended with carols on the Sunday afternoon.



Congratulations to THE VILLAGE SHOP which won best tree. THE CRAFT CLUB came in second and THE VILLAGE CHOIR and THE BELL RINGERS shared joint third place.

All the trees looked really pretty and it was lovely to see the church bustling with all the festivities.

We are absolutely delighted to say that the **festival raised £5,200** - an amazing result! As you may know, our beautiful church building is in need of constant maintenance and since the boiler failed in November, it is in need of a brand new heating system.

The Friends of Holy Cross team wish to offer heartfelt thanks to EVERYONE who volunteered their time over the weekend, donated the wonderful raffle and silent auction prizes, made items to sell, collected and delivered the trees, loaned equipment, helped shift pews around, ran a stall, set up and cleaned up the church at the end. A special thanks goes to all the sponsors of the trees and to our three pianists who entertained us so beautifully on the Friday night and last but not least, everyone who came along and made it such a memorable weekend.

### Huge thanks to the Christmas Tree Sponsors

Art of Jaipur, Bewley Homes @King's Water, Powerful UK Ltd, Ashton Keynes Bellringers, Cotswold Cookery School & Events, Provenance – The Hospitality Collective, Ashton Keynes Craft Club, Cotswold Distillery, Scion Interactive Ltd, Ashton Keynes Village Shop, Cotswold Christmas Shop, Sharon McCafferty Hairdressing, Ashton Keynes Pre-School, Cotswold Sleeps Ltd, SML Paints, Ashton Keynes CofE Primary School, De Vere Cotswold Water Park, Suzy Baker – Natural Beauty Salon, Ashton Keynes Festival, Elysia Harrison Sports Therapy, The Barn Theatre, Ashton Keynes Tennis Club, Gillian & Malcolm Johnston, The Orangery @Siddington Park Rangeford Villages, Ashton Keynes Village Choir, Hannah Padley, The Kitchen Club, Ashton Keynes W.I., John Gibson, The Magnificent Aks, Ashton Keynes Youth Football Club, Kelmscott Manor, The Telephone Gallery (Kathryn Gray), Ashton Green Project, Lake 32 Outdoor Centre, Tetbury Goods Shed, Andy Rummings Beef, Leigh Harrison Window Cleaning, Trevetts Conversions, Atwell Wilson Motor Museum in Calne, Moreton Cullimore, TruffleHunter Ltd, BabyEase, Nichola Killick, Westonbirt Arboretum, Bec Buckle Fitness, Nordic & Coffee, White Hart, Chelworth Nurseries, Piers Heelis - Cirencester Polo, White Lodge Care Home - Barchester Healthcare.



St Sampson's, Cricklade  
Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes  
St John the Baptist, Latton  
All Saints, the Leigh



## Christmas thank you from Holy Cross church.

Thank you to everyone who helped to decorate Holy Cross over the Christmas period, to Nicky and the AK village choir for leading the carol service, to Heather and Jane for playing the organ and to everyone who came to our Christmas celebration services. Thank you too for your generous donations of over £418 which will support both Holy Cross church and a Christian charity called Embrace the Middle East, which produces the carol sheets which we use.

*"Violence, hunger and fear are daily realities for children and families in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and across the Middle East. Your gift can provide emergency food, healthcare, trauma counselling and disability care where peace feels far away."*

<https://embraceme.org/>



**AK Messy Church** invites everyone of all ages and stages to join us **Sunday 8 February 3.30pm - 4.30pm at AK Primary School.**

We'll be exploring faith together through creativity, hospitality and celebration

With activities, painting, story, song (usually from iSingPop) and sharing food (e.g. biscuits to decorate), it's a great (and noisy) time for children to come with parents, grandparents or carers and to explore together. Contact *Revd Shirley tel 07980 548844 or [revdshirleyd@gmail.com](mailto:revdshirleyd@gmail.com) for more info.*

Sunday mornings too early or too difficult for getting to church? We have a midweek group which meets '**around the table**' in Maureen's kitchen every 6-8 weeks for chat and communion at home.

We have a rather different **café style church** 'around a big table' with coffee/tea and biscuits/cake in Holy Cross church at 10am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month (**Feb 15**).

If you've not been to church for a while or never been before, do join us. Visitors are most welcome and there's plenty of coffee as we get to know God together and explore what the Bible has to say for our lives today.

**Do contact Revd Shirley or Pauline Loveday if you'd like to find out more.**

---

## Weekday Worship

Thursday morning prayers in St Sampson's: 8.30am for coffee & catch up, prayers from 8.45 and finish by 9.30am. *Everyone is welcome.*

Zoom Monday morning prayers – contact David Tarr

Contact Jane our Parishes' Administrator for further details – [admin@upperthames.org.uk](mailto:admin@upperthames.org.uk)

---

## Wrap Up Warm in Holy Cross

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# Cotswold Lakes Trust celebrates the launch of its new safety boat at Cleveland Lakes

Cotswold Lakes Trust is proud to announce the deployment of a new safety boat at its flagship Cleveland Lakes site near Ashton Keynes, made possible through generous funding from Sport England and the supporters who contributed to their crowd-funding appeal. The Trust was delighted to recently celebrate the official launch of the boat with donors. This boat enables the Trust to provide a range of safe, sustainable water-based activities at Cleveland Lakes, including for the first time, opportunities specifically designed for disadvantaged young people.



The safety boat is an essential part of Cotswold Lakes Trust achieving its long-term vision for Cleveland Lakes, enabling many people to enjoy low impact, inclusive water sports and nature-based activities, whilst providing the conditions for wildlife to thrive on this amazing, diverse reserve.

**Paul Hazel, Executive Chairman of Cotswold Lakes Trust, said:** *"I'd like to thank our donors who have contributed generously to our new safety boat. The boat is the key asset for us to start offering exciting, safe and inclusive water sports at Cleveland Lakes. This marks the start of our ambitious*

*plans to enable many local people and visitors from further afield to enjoy sustainable water sports in this fantastic wild setting."*

At 1600m, Waterhay Lake is the longest lake in the Cotswold Lakes and forms part of the 330-acre Cleveland Lakes site. Waterhay Lake now has basic facilities to provide a variety of non-motorised water sports which are currently available to clubs on a pre-booked basis and to individuals through Cotswold Lakes Trust's organised events. The Trust also offers nature-based activities to enjoy the wide range of birds, mammals and other species that call the Lakes home. You can visit **Cotswold Lakes Trust Events | Cotswold Lakes Trust** to view and sign up to upcoming events.

Cotswold Lakes Trust is currently seeking additional funding to enable Waterhay Lake to become a major venue for a wider variety of water and land-based activities such as paddle sports, swimming, walking and cycling, as well as creating more facilities for volunteers, and for visitors to enjoy the wildlife spectacles at Cleveland Lakes. The Trust is also looking for more funding to create and improve habitat that will provide a sanctuary for even more wildlife. To support the Trust's work please visit **Donate to Cotswold Lakes Trust | Cotswold Lakes Trust or Membership | Cotswold Lakes Trust.**

Cleveland Lakes sits within the heart of the Cotswold Lakes, an area spanning 42 square miles and home to more than 180 lakes across Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

For more information on developments at Cleveland Lakes, contact Cotswold Lakes Trust's Development Manager,  
**Will.Trippett@cotswoldlakestrust.org**





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# MP South Cotswolds

## A New Year of Connection and Community Care

The new year often arrives with a mix of emotions. For many it signals a fresh start, a moment to reset and look ahead. For others, the long nights and return to routine can feel lonely or heavy after the brightness of the festive season. This is exactly when the strength of our local community matters most.

I was delighted recently to become a Patron of The Churn Project in Cirencester, a charity that has been supporting people of all ages for many years. Whether someone is experiencing isolation, financial pressure, or a lack of confidence and wellbeing, The Churn provides practical help and, just as importantly, human connection. Last year, 1,762 people took part in its activities - an extraordinary testament to what community compassion can achieve. Walking into their building, you immediately feel the warmth and dignity that underpin their work.

The Long Table in Stroud and Cirencester is another wonderful example of that same spirit. I visited recently with my team, and it reinforced how powerful a shared meal can be. By offering dishes on a pay-as-you-can basis, The Long Table ensures that everyone - regardless of circumstances - can enjoy good food and conversation. New ideas continue to emerge. The Barn Theatre is seeking initial funding for a Barn Bus pilot, which would use school-run vehicles during the day to help older residents travel safely to the theatre and enjoy social time in town. It's a simple but creative way to tackle isolation and expand access to the arts across Tetbury, Fairford, Lechlade and nearby villages.



All these initiatives remind us that wellbeing relies not only on services but on belonging and shared experience. As Parliament progresses the Mental Health Bill, I'll keep pressing for investment in community-led support that prevents crisis before it begins.

January & February may be quiet, but it holds enormous potential when we look out for one another.

**Warm wishes, Roz**

**Roz Savage MP, South Cotswolds**  
**roz.savage.mp@parliament.uk**  
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# Caring for our world



As a nation we drink over 100 million cups of tea a day, about 36 billion a year according to the UK Tea and Infusions Association (UKTIA) with 98% of us drinking some type of tea every day.

As we know, everything we do has an impact on the planet, and our daily cuppa is no exception.

Britain's love affair with tea began in empire with many tea estates established by colonial powers to meet the demand of the British market. Despite the passage of time and changing regimes, extractive labour systems have lingered. In India most workers are the

descendants of families taken or coerced by the British East India Company in the 19th century to populate tea plantations. They are often situated in remote locations enclosed by miles and miles of tea fields trapping the workers inside. Conditions, particularly for the predominantly female workforce, are harsh to say the least.

Tea's roll in rural Indian incomes is prominent, and the sector remains overwhelmed with poverty wages, unsafe housing, gender based violence and the industry is steeped in inequality. But there is a glimmer of hope! There are brands working to shift the balance and prove that a fairer brew is possible. Ethical Consumer has produced an extensive piece of research that ranks all the UK tea brands from best to worst (in areas such as: climate/workers rights/tax conduct/company ethos) I have pulled out some familiar names and indicated where they are in the table. I hope you find this useful.

**BEST** - includes these widely available brands... **Traidcraft, Hampstead Tea, London Tea Company, Clearspring, Dragonfly, Eleven O'Clock, Tick Tock**

**NEXT BEST** - **Clipper, Taylors of Harrogate, Yorkshire Tea, Pukka, Yogi**

**BAD** - very near the bottom of the list are... **Brooke Bond, Lipton, PG Tips**

**WORST** - brands to avoid outright... **Jacksons of Piccadilly, Twinings** (owned by Associated British foods) scored extremely low in all categories.

**Good Earth, Teapigs, Tetley** (owned by Tata) scored hardly any points at all and was criticised for terrible workers conditions and its wider group is involved in the fossil fuel and arms sectors.

We can make a difference with our small actions and the pound in our pocket, spent consciously, can have a real impact for good.

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**We Are Nature**

source: [www.ethicalconsumer.org](http://www.ethicalconsumer.org)

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# Quiz Night

Hosted by Ken Skehan

Raising money for



**SATURDAY 14TH MARCH**

**ARRIVE 6.45PM FOR 7:00 PM START**

**Ashton Keynes Village Hall**

Max 6 people per team, or join a team on the night

Raffle  
Snacks

**Tickets £5**

from  
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[sharonmccafferty@icloud.com](mailto:sharonmccafferty@icloud.com)

OR  
The Village Shop

Bar  
Music

# Health matters

## Purton and Green Gable Surgery

### Happy (and a healthy) New Year everyone!

#### Appointments at the surgeries

During the often-busy winter 'flu season, if we have no appointments available at the surgeries, please remember that you can also access support by ringing 111 or at our local pharmacies. They can advise on many non-emergency conditions. The NHS website also provides information regarding self-help if you think you might have 'flu.

#### 200 Club

All profits from our 200 Club go to help purchase items for both surgeries. Our latest lucky winners are:

- First prize £100 Janet Newman (number 6)
- Second prize £15 Peter Godwin (number 184)

The numbers were drawn by one of our medical secretaries, Caren Dywer. Many congratulations! New members are always welcome.

The cost is just £15 for a year's subscription. You can join midway through the year, but you will miss being put into the missed month draws. However, you could win one of our monthly prizes of £100 and £15 and you will always be helping patients and staff at your local surgeries. Forms to join and instructions for setting up a standing order are available at both surgeries.

All members are allocated a number that is entered into the draw. This is made at the start of each month by a member of the surgery staff. If you wish to know your number, please contact our treasurer: [treasurer.pspg@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.pspg@gmail.com) to request it.

#### Come and join us!

Can you spare a few hours per month? If so, we are looking for some new committee members. The group organises the 200 Club

fundraiser alongside the tabletop and book donations which also raise funds. We also organise regular professional talks on relevant topics – recent ones about dementia, sepsis and prostate cancer were very well attended.

The committee meets once a month on a Thursday morning at Purton surgery. We meet with the Practice Manager to discuss issues that have arisen and are kept up to date on new initiatives that may affect the surgeries and patients. We then keep in touch with patients via the local newsletters/parish magazines and notice boards. It is a very worthwhile group to belong to if you are interested in helping to further improve our local surgery services. You need to be a registered patient with Purton or Green Gable surgery, but if you are interested, watch out for more information or ask at one of the receptions. We would love to meet you.

#### Next Community Talk

This will take place in early spring – the date will be 16 April at 7pm and will be entitled: 'Healthy kidneys and how to care for them' and will be given by Melanie Philips who is the Acute Kidney Lead at the GWH, Swindon. Further details re tickets to follow.

Donations of good quality books and items for the tabletop sales are always welcome at both surgeries. Please hand your items in at reception. They are very gratefully received. Items from the tables may be purchased – again please hand your money into reception.

As always, your support for our work to inform and support patients in the local community is much appreciated. We look forward to meeting you.



# Ashton Keynes Branch Surgery

01793 750645      [www.crickladesurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.crickladesurgery.nhs.uk)

## **We are open on Wednesdays from 10.30am to 1pm at the Village Hall.**

You can collect your medication anytime between 10.30am and 1pm any Wednesday and also request medication and make appointments. When ordering repeat medication, it will be ready to collect from Ashton Keynes the following Wednesday, if it is due to be issued. More urgent requests can be processed and collected from Cricklade Surgery.

## **Repeat Prescriptions**

If you need a repeat prescription, you may either request your medication by signing up for online access and ordering through this system. You can also post, or deliver your repeat prescription request to the surgery at least five working days before you intend to collect your medication.

Please note our online ordering system links directly with our clinical system, making it simpler for you and easier for us. If you don't have your log in details to access the new system, please ask at reception. Please ensure you have some form of identification with you when you collect your details.

All dispensing patients can use the automated system where patients can pick up their prescription and re-order medication for the following month at the same time, which reduces the number of visits to the surgery and ensures medication is ready for collection at the appropriate time.

Repeat prescriptions where possible should not be ordered over the telephone.

If you would like to order your prescriptions via email, please use the following address - [bswicb.cricklade@nhs.net](mailto:bswicb.cricklade@nhs.net)

If you would like to speak to a member of the Dispensary, please call 01793 750645 and select Option 1.

## **Online Registrations**

Our surgery can now offer online registration for new patients wishing to register. They can either visit our website and click on new patients' tab or use the address below to start the registration process.

<https://gp-registration.nhs.uk/J83609>

## **Carers and Young Carers**

Do you look after someone who is ill, frail, disabled or mentally ill? If so, you are a Carer. We are interested in identifying Carers, especially those people who may be caring without help or support. Do you know anyone, or are you, under the age of 18 caring for any of the above? We support Young Carers. Please contact Reception to register as a Young Carer.

## **Cancellation of Appointments**

Over the last few months, there has been a considerable increase in cancelled appointments at short notice. *In December 2025 the figure was 25.* Please make every effort to attend all appointments as we are unable to offer those to other patients. If you do need to cancel an appointment, please give 24 hours' notice.

## **Patient Participation Group**

As a surgery we appreciate any feedback, and we ask for this in so many ways. One way is in form of a group! If you were to be a part of this, you would receive this newsletter along with a small questionnaire a couple of times a year. We would like to hear from our patients in and around Cricklade! Please call Reception to sign up today! We would like to hear from our patients in and around Cricklade.



**Cricklade Surgery**

Tel: 01793 750645

# Club news

## Cricklade and District Probus Club



We are looking forward to our forthcoming group meetings when the following talk will take place:

**5 February - The Giant of Cerne Abbass, King Arthur**

**19 February - Jack in the Green**

Meetings normally take place fortnightly on a Thursday, meeting at 10am for a 10.20 start at the White Hart Hotel in Cricklade. Ours is a friendly group who enjoy keeping our minds active and socialising over a drink in the bar after the meetings. We are actively seeking to expand our numbers and look forward to welcoming new members (ladies or gents) to the Club.

For further information about our club please contact the Honorary Secretary, **Martin Chambers on 01793 751223**. If you contact Martin and advise you would like to attend, which is free for the first few visits, you will be allocated a dedicated host who will introduce you to our members. Alternatively, just turn up on the day and you will be made welcome. For further information visit our new website at <https://probus.org.uk/cricklade/>

## North Wiltshire Villages Flower Club

Hi there, this is Cathy Carroll again. I'm writing to tell you about our club the North Wiltshire Flower Club that is based in Crudwell Village Hall and meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7pm for 7.30pm start.

On 18 February we have Cathryn Brown coming to demonstrate '**A Flower Prescription for you**'. I do hope you will join us, it should be interesting as well as beautiful.

There is plenty of parking space and we have free tea/coffee and cake afterwards. Your first visit is free.



[www.facebook.com/northwiltshirevillagesflowerclub](https://www.facebook.com/northwiltshirevillagesflowerclub)

**Cathy Carroll - 07703299277**

## Ashton Keynes Women's Institute



**Birthday and Christmas Highlights** - Our 105 birthday and Christmas party wrapped up another fantastic year for Ashton Keynes WI. Magic Bob amazed everyone with his tricks, especially when he put members inside a giant bubble! We celebrated with a buffet, wine, slices of the special birthday cake, and plenty of festive singing and dancing. Gifts were donated to women and children at Swindon's women's refuge instead of the usual secret Santa.

**Christmas Tree Festival and CPR** - Thank you to everyone who voted for our tree at the Christmas Tree Festival, promoting CPR awareness for the Bystanders Can Be Lifesavers campaign. Ashton Keynes WI and the Village Hall are offering affordable Basic Life Support and First Aid sessions for adults and teens (14+) with Inspire First Training. See the newsletter for details; early booking is recommended.

**Looking Ahead to 2026** - Ready for something new in 2026? Join Ashton Keynes WI! We're a lively, welcoming group, with a packed programme of engaging speakers, crafts, games, monthly pub nights, outings, and a book club. The upcoming year features Bollywood dancing, a singing workshop, circus skills, crafts, and fascinating talks. So, if you think the WI is all about jam and baking, think again!

**Join Us** - we meet every second Wednesday at 7.30pm in Ashton Keynes Village Hall. Meetings kick off with activities, then tea and coffee, and WI news. Women 18+ can try two free taster sessions. With nearly 50 members and 105 years of history, Ashton Keynes WI is thriving—come and see why!

### Upcoming Events:

**11 Feb: *Everyone Can Sing!*** A fun workshop with Gilly Riddington

**11 Mar: *What's Your Colour Palette?*** An interactive talk by Jackie Mitchell on choosing flattering colours

**8 April: *Rowing the Oceans*** - a talk by Dr. Roz Savage MBE MP about her record-breaking solo rowing voyages and her journey to Parliament

**Contact [ashtonkeynesec@wiltshire.org.uk](mailto:ashtonkeynesec@wiltshire.org.uk) for more information.**

**Facebook: [www.facebook.com/AshtonKeynesWI](https://www.facebook.com/AshtonKeynesWI)**

**Instagram: [@ashtonkeyneswi1920](https://www.instagram.com/ashtonkeyneswi1920)**

## Ashton Keynes Badminton Club

Our club dates back to the early 1960's and the village should be proud that the club is still going - BUT it can only keep going if new people join. So why not come along on a Monday evening from 7pm at the village hall and have a game or two.

First visit is free and the yearly membership fee is well below what you will pay elsewhere.

We are a social club and do not play league matches. Due to insurance, over 18's only please. **See you there. [janeefarmer@btopenworld.com](mailto:janeefarmer@btopenworld.com)**



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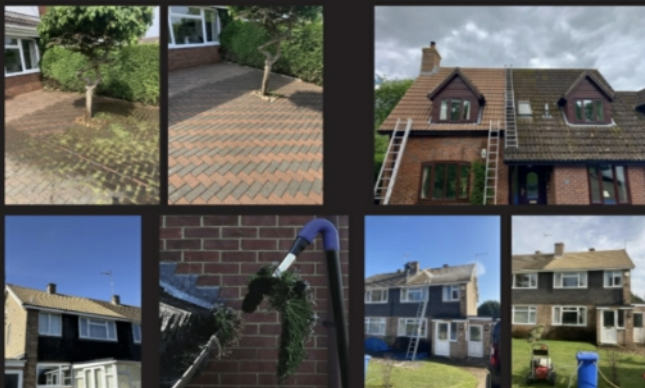


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## Group Update

The Leadership teams are working well and have all have been planing for the new year of action filled programmes.

All sections have restarted and are open for new members with places available in Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. We also have vacancies in our Group administration as Trustees or Volunteers who look after or help in the Group, for details of how to join contact David on **GSL@1AK.uk or phone on 01285 861425.**

## HNY from the Beaver Colony!

January can bring some pretty cold and dark evenings so it was great for our Beavers to hunker down and enjoy an evening of their favourite board games as we started the new year! We played some firm favourites such as Uno and Dobble as well as some less familiar but amazingly entertaining games such as Penguin Peril!

As the weather has been pretty chilly, our next session was all about snow and ice. We discussed the changing seasons, investigated solids and liquids by having a competition to see who could melt their ice cubes the quickest before some cute craft where Beavers designed and made their own snow characters. Finally, our Beavers were given some of their favourite toys trapped in blocks of ice with the task of trying to help them escape! It was great fun watching the children using different methods to melt (or break!) the ice! (You'll be glad to know that all the toys were saved!)

## Cubs

Our Cub Pack have started 2026 with a back-to-basics approach with the view of building up those all important outdoor skills, starting with ropework, moving up to tents, cooking and building camp accessories - all in preparation for the summer camping opportunities. Along with the usual games and getting outside as much as we can to exercise the body as well as the mind.

This year, 2026, is the 110th anniversary of the founding of the Cub Scouts and our district has a range of activities themed around this including a badge design competition and a number of special events, as well as several regular events being given a "110" theme. We are in for an exciting year.

## Scouts

Our Scouts have decided, during our Scout Forum - where all young people and adults come together to discuss the running of the group - that they would like to attain one classic badge and one to equip them with skills for their life in the modern world. And so we will tackle the Survival Skills Activity Badge and the Media Relations and Marketing Activity Badge. Very different skill-sets but both valuable in their own way.

The Survival Skills badge involves looking after yourself until rescue arrives, in all kinds of terrain and with none of the usual camping aids that make life outdoors more comfortable. The Media Relations and Marketing Badge will give the young poeple experience of interfacing the a variety of different kinds of media such as press releases, digital media and public speaking.

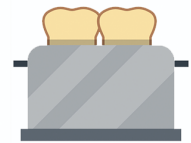
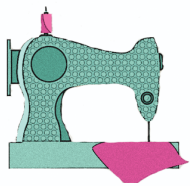
## Adventure 2026 is in full swing.

If you are **6 to 8 years old** our **Beaver** colony meets on Tuesdays at 5.30pm  
If you are **8 to 10½ years old** our **Cub** Pack meets on Thursdays at 6pm  
If you are **10½ to 14 years old** our **Scout** Troop meets on Fridays at 6.45pm

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GL7 1YE**

0752 667 6822 or [facebook.com/cirenrepaircafe](https://facebook.com/cirenrepaircafe)  
for further information



# Club news cont'd

## Musical Director Wanted – Ashton Keynes Village Choir

Ashton Keynes Village Choir is looking for an enthusiastic, energetic, and capable **Musical Director** to lead our friendly and inclusive community choir.

We are seeking someone who can:

- Inspire and motivate singers of all abilities
- Suggest engaging and varied repertoire
- Lead enjoyable, well-structured rehearsals
- Provide sectional coaching where appropriate
- Foster the musical skills and confidence of choir members
- Provide a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive atmosphere



The choir performs **one or two concerts a year** and regularly takes part in **village events**. You will be working alongside an active and capable committee, and **this is a paid role**.

**Rehearsals:** Every Tuesday evening, 7.30–9.30pm

**Venue:** Ashton Keynes Primary School

If you're passionate about community music-making and ready to help our choir grow and thrive, we'd love to hear from you. *To apply or request more information, please contact:*

**Georgie Paris, Chair, AKVC – gparis@hotmail.co.uk**

## Craft Club

At December's Craft Club, we enjoyed crafts, conversation, and celebrated our runner-up win in the Christmas Tree Festival by sharing out our prize, a box of Celebrations chocolates.



Thank you to all who voted for our tree. We had a lot of fun making creative decorations and trying new techniques, resulting in a tree full of ornaments rather than sticking to a "less is more" approach.



Craft Club meets monthly on either a Wednesday or Friday afternoon. The group is very friendly and welcoming to newcomers and the first session you come to is free. Most members bring their own project, but I always have something for everyone to do as well. In December, we used 'gold' metal from tomato puree tubes to make miniature picture frames with images from recycled cards - some became tree ornaments, others were made into Christmas cards.

The first session in 2026 is free for everyone and thereafter is £4 or £5 with a £1 donation to the local food bank. Tea and coffee are always provided. We have raised just under £60 for the local food bank to date.

February's Craft Club is on Friday 20 February and on Wednesday 18 March, from 2pm to 4pm, in the Village Hall. If you'd like to come along, pop in on the day or email me **kathryngray28@yahoo.co.uk** for more information or drop a note round to 16 Gosditch.

**Kathryn Gray**

# Local numbers

Here are some of the **local groups, organisations and clubs** available to us. Please also see the village website [www.ashtonkeynes.org.uk](http://www.ashtonkeynes.org.uk) where you will find further information. Please let us know if you would like your group to be listed or you find an error.

## Village Emergency Telephone System 01793 250211

For use when you need the defibrillator after ringing for an ambulance

**AK Link Helpline** 07512 233200

**AK Website Steering Group** via village website

**Alpha Courses** Pete Tuck 01285 861466

**Anglers** Ryan Peare

secretary@ashtonkeynesanglingclub.co.uk

**Ashton Keynes All Stars Golf** Geoff Chick

geoffchick00@aol.com

**Ashton Keynes Charities** Richard Smith 861461

**Ashton Keynes Cricket Club**

[www.pitchero.com/clubs/ashtonkeynescricketclub](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/ashtonkeynescricketclub)

**Ashton Keynes Musical Festival**

**Ashton Keynes C of E Primary School**

01285 861436

**Ashton Keynes Village Choir** Howard Foster,

07502307490, [www.akvillagechoir.co.uk](http://www.akvillagechoir.co.uk),

[ashtonkeyneschoir@gmail.com](mailto:ashtonkeyneschoir@gmail.com)

**Ashton Keynes Seniors Table Tennis Club**

Diana Wain [dw24813@gmail.com](mailto:dw24813@gmail.com)

**Baby and Toddler Group** Jemma Craven

[jemmalcraven@gmail.com](mailto:jemmalcraven@gmail.com)

**Badminton Club** Karen Carter

01285 862371 [akbc@live.co.uk](mailto:akbc@live.co.uk)

**Big Brunch Band** [jackie@davidmitchell.co.uk](mailto:jackie@davidmitchell.co.uk)

**Bradstone Pavilion Bookings** [bookings@akpc.org.uk](mailto:bookings@akpc.org.uk)

**Bridge** Gordon Coble 01285 861444

**Craft Club** Kathryn Gray 01285 869341,

[kathryngray28@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kathryngray28@yahoo.co.uk)

**Cricket** Mark Brooks (sec) 01285 862401

**Dig Deeper** Revd Shirley Danby 01793 751463

**Football Junior** Dave Affleck 07989 547898

**Friends of Holy Cross** Alison Beadle 01285 861411

**Holy Cross Church** Canon Debbie 01793 752718

Revd Shirley 07980 548844 Admin 01793 979304,

[admin@upperthames.org.uk](mailto:admin@upperthames.org.uk)

**Holy Cross Flowers**

**Jiu Jitsu Club** (Cirencester) James Slaughter,

**Keep Fit** Tim Bird 07794 614962, 01285 656986

[TimothyGBird@aol.com](mailto:TimothyGBird@aol.com)

**Messy Church** Shirley Danby 01793 751463

**Millennium Green Trustees** Doug Yarrow 01285

861427 [dougyarrow@msn.com](mailto:dougyarrow@msn.com)

**Minety Squash Club** Tim 01666 860368

[tim@lagondahire.co.uk](mailto:tim@lagondahire.co.uk)

**Mothers Union** Margaret Godfrey 01666 860536

**Neighbourhood Watch** [paul.eastham@totalise.co.uk](mailto:paul.eastham@totalise.co.uk)

**Orchestra** [www.cirencesterphil.co.uk](http://www.cirencesterphil.co.uk)

**Parish Council (AK)** Fiona Ryder 07394 856232.,

[clerk@akpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@akpc.org.uk), [www.akpc.org.uk](http://www.akpc.org.uk).

**Parish Council (Leigh)** Mandy Thomas

01285 860488

**Parochial Church Council** Andrew Sims (Sec)

07500 884188

**Pre-school** 01285 869433,

[www.ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk](http://www.ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk),

[communications@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk](mailto:communications@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk)

[secretary@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk](mailto:secretary@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk)

[fundraising@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@ashtonkeynespreschool.co.uk)

**Reading Group** [c.conlon@icloud.com](mailto:c.conlon@icloud.com)

**Rural Cinema** Dave Sheppard [dave@akvh.org.uk](mailto:dave@akvh.org.uk)

**Short Mat Bowls** [ddsak78@gmail.com](mailto:ddsak78@gmail.com)

**Siren Sisters** Val Skehan 01285 860069,

[www.sirensisters.org.uk](http://www.sirensisters.org.uk)

**Tai Chi** (Down Ampney) Tim Price

01793 752852, [tim@cotswoldwu.co.uk](mailto:tim@cotswoldwu.co.uk),

[www.cotswoldwu.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldwu.co.uk)

**The Telephone Gallery**, Kathryn Gray, 01285

869341, [thetelephonegallery@gmail.com](mailto:thetelephonegallery@gmail.com)

[www.thetelephonegallery.blogspot.com](http://www.thetelephonegallery.blogspot.com)

**Tennis** Annie Dyson [ashtonkeynestennis@gmail.com](mailto:ashtonkeynestennis@gmail.com)

**The Magnificent AKs** Stuart Harris

[stuart.harris1965@gmail.com](mailto:stuart.harris1965@gmail.com)

**Twinning Association**

[ashtonkeynestwinning@gmail.com](mailto:ashtonkeynestwinning@gmail.com)

**Village Emergency Telephone System (VETS)**

01793 250211

**Walking Group** Liz Chick 01285 861317

[lizzie\\_chick@yahoo.com](mailto:lizzie_chick@yahoo.com)

**Whitefriars Sailing Club** Patrick Green, 01285

861670, [info@whitefriars.org](mailto:info@whitefriars.org)

**Women's Book Group** Liz Chick 01285 861317

[lizzie\\_chick@yahoo.com](mailto:lizzie_chick@yahoo.com)

**Women's Institute** Sheila Ward 07920179287

[Ashtonkeynessec@wiltshirewi.org.uk](mailto:Ashtonkeynessec@wiltshirewi.org.uk)

& Sarah Owenson 07811267888

[sarah.owenson@googlemail.com](mailto:sarah.owenson@googlemail.com)

[www.facebook.com/AshtonKeynesWI](http://www.facebook.com/AshtonKeynesWI)

**Writers** [www.newbreweryarts.org.uk](http://www.newbreweryarts.org.uk)

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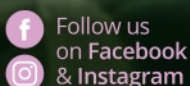
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*Genuine advice and best value from the local specialist*



- Wheelchairs, manual & powered
- Scooters and portable scooters
- Powered rise/recline armchairs
- Household, bathing & walking aids
- High quality products
- Large display in country showroom
- Private test area
- Disabled facilities, easy parking
- Part exchange, new & reconditioned

**Assessment and tuition at home**

The Old Dairy, Pinkney Park, Sherston,  
Malmesbury

**01666 840060**

[www.optimummobility.co.uk](http://www.optimummobility.co.uk)

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