



Ashton News



Ashton under Hill Guide Christmas Challenge

For the past seven years Ashton under Hill Guide members have spent evenings in November helping at the warehouse of **Operation Christmas Child** where we have been involved with checking, sorting and packing up some of the thousands of shoeboxes donated by local people for less fortunate children in Eastern Europe and beyond.

This year, we have set ourselves the challenge of packing up 150-plus boxes to take with us to the warehouse. Whilst we are well aware that many people already donate shoeboxes through school, church or work, we are hoping to reach out to a wider audience and would welcome any donations of items which we could use to pack our boxes.

Will you help please?

- We would welcome any of the following:
- Empty shoeboxes
 - Toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, flannels, combs etc. (no liquids please)
 - Sweets (but not chocolate because of customs regulations)
 - Hats, scarves and gloves
 - Small - good as new - cuddlies, games or toys (no batteries or war toys)
 - Pens, pencils, crayons, notebooks, paper, drawing books



Donations may be left at The Old Bakehouse, Bakers Lane, (preferably before **Wednesday 21 November** please) or for collection please contact **Ali Stephenson 882052**.

St Barbara's Christmas Fair 17 November

Please come to St Barbara's Christmas Fair on **Saturday 17 November** from **2.30 - 5.00 pm** at **The Old Farmhouse, Ashton**. This year we have an exciting range of original and affordable Christmas Gifts, Crafts and Decorations, as well as Plants and Produce, delicious Cakes and Preserves, Christmas Gifts Bring and Buy; Mince Pie Teas in the farmhouse kitchen. Charity Christmas Cards and calendars for sale in aid of St Richard's Hospice. Proceeds to St Barbara's Church Roof Fund and St Richard's Hospice. For further information, please contact **Alex and John Dodge 881487**.



Christingle Service 2 December

There will be a Christingle Service on **Sunday 2 December** at **3.30 pm** in St Barbara's Church to which everyone is warmly welcome, especially all families and children. *The collection will go to the Children's Society.*

Back by popular demand ...

New Year's Day Dads (and Mums!) Football Match

Kick off 11.00 am
at The Playing Fields

- Cricket Club Bar open
- Hot food available
- Supporters of all ages very welcome!



If you would like to play please contact:
Jo Brown 881860
johanna_r_brown@yahoo.co.uk

Guaranteed Hangover Cure...!

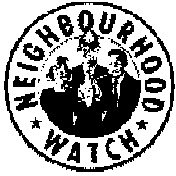
Ashton Celebration of Christmas

Tuesday 18 December at 7.00pm

All are warmly welcome at the **Ashton Celebration of Christmas** in St Barbara's Church, which will be followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. Ashton First School, the Ashton Singers and JamDram will be taking part. There is still time to get involved, so if you would like to contribute to this traditional celebration of the Christmas story in words and music please contact **John Dodge 881487**. A collection will be taken for a children's charity.



Ashton Neighbourhood Watch



At a recent Ashton Neighbourhood Watch meeting, **Stuart Toms**, our **Local Police Officer**, updated us on his work in the Pershore Rural South Local Policing Team. This team covers villages around the hill from Sedgeberrow to Defford and Strensham. In the six months to October there were twelve reported crimes in Ashton, which is about average for other similar local rural communities. Most crimes were either thefts from outbuildings, or minor damage and vandalism.

A uniformed **Community Support Officer, Simon Williams**, who is based in Bredon, now assists Stuart in the team. Simon tends to be a lot more visible, a bit like the 'old beat bobby', as he travels around the area mainly on foot or by bicycle. Simon's role is to concentrate on 'quality of life' issues such as nuisance incidents and anti-social behaviour, but he does help deal with more serious incidents. He's keen to meet as many people as possible, so do say 'hello' if you see him around the village.

You can contact the Local Policing Team by following a link on the Ashton under Hill village website at: www.ashtonunderhill.org.uk or email them on: pershoreruralsouth.lpt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk. You can telephone them on **08457 444 888** (in emergency always call **999**) or leave a voicemail on **01905 725765**.

Harvest Festival at St Barbara's

A heartfelt thank you to all who supported the celebration of Harvest Festival in St Barbara's Church, Ashton, on Sunday 16 September and gave so generously.

The Junior Church enlightened us on pasta making, and the gifts of food and produce were distributed by Guides to elderly residents in the village. The congregation contributed to a collection for the work of the charity **Concern Worldwide** in Third World countries, which came to £222, including Gift Aid.

Dog Fouling Ashton News has again been asked to remind dog owners to be considerate in the disposal of their pet's waste - throughout the village and especially in the churchyard. Remember it is an offence for a dog owner not to clean up after their dog on roads, footpaths, playgrounds and other areas open to the public.



Ashton Footpaths Volunteer Group – Brunel's Apprentices

Since 2005 our group has met on occasional Saturdays to replace a worn stile or gate or to tackle a strimming and clearing project. All materials are provided by Worcestershire County Council so there is no direct cost to our parish. This year, for the first time, we took on the job of replacing a worn-out bridge which crosses the stream on the path to Sedgeberrow. The old bridge was 4.8 metres long but the bank had eroded and a site visit confirmed that we would have to go up to 5.7 metres. The new bridge was duly ordered and delivered as a kit for assembly on site, a total of 58 pieces of timber plus assorted rods, brackets, nuts, bolts and washers.

We normally complete our projects in a morning but this one would take longer and called for advance planning. Mistakes would be costly, the job had to be finished in one day and there were real concerns about safety. The materials were heavy and there was the added risk that someone could fall and hurt themselves. We met on the Saturday before to move the materials to site and prepare a project plan, materials list and risk assessment. We are lucky to have people in the group with relevant experience. The landowners, Mr Roebuck on one side and Belfield Nursery on the other, were very helpful, giving us vehicle access, keeping the cattle away from site and providing stone for the bridge foundations.

On 15 September, blessed with a good weather forecast, we started at 8.00am with a team of 10 people. We split into two teams with a leader on each bank and moved half the materials over to the other side. Before demolishing the old bridge, we laid the heavy beams across the stream ready to move them into their final positions. The job of demolishing the old bridge was quicker and easier than we expected. After a short debate about the merits of dismantling it in situ, we cut through the support posts, roped it to a Land Rover and it was out in no time sitting neatly on round posts so we could roll it out of the way. Ancient construction methods such as use of levers and rollers are a regular feature of our projects.

Next came the digging! The beams have to be bracketed to wooden pads which sit on a foundation of compacted stones. With the beams secured, we braced the structure with wooden cross-members and steel rods, fitted side-rails and handrails and completed the bridge by nailing down the deck boards. The final job was to install a self-closing gate on the farm side to keep the cattle off. Tired but happy, we finished at 6 p.m. as the sun began to set over a job that we were all proud to have been part of. We like to think Brunel might have given us a job!

Joe Aspey Parish Paths Warden



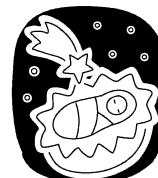
Stars and Angels!

Would you like to come along and join in the 'Angelic' fun with **Ashton Junior Church**?

On **Sunday 11 November** we will be *making* stars and angels for St Barbara's Christmas Fair and preparing for our contribution to Christmas in church.

On **Sunday 9 December** We will be rehearsing *being* angels ... or wise men ... or Mary and Joseph ... and a host of characters ... for our unmissable annual Nativity on **Sunday 16 December** in St Barbara's Church. Everyone between the ages of 3 and 12 is very welcome. We meet on the second Sunday of every month at 9.30 am. If you would like to join us, please contact **Ali 882052** or **Kate 882711**.

The 'Posada' is a travelling Nativity which goes from house to house in Ashton during Advent, starting at the **Christingle** service on **2 December**. Would your family like to take part and receive the Nativity ... *and Revd. Margie's notorious lost sheep* ... into your home for a little while this Christmas? If so, please ask **Ali** or **Kate** to put your names on the list.



Bredon Hill Middle School

Part-time vacancy: Lunch Time Supervisor

The post mainly involves supervising pupils during their lunch break and assistance in the dining room. Up to 2 hours per school day. Please ring the school, on **881426**, for further details.

Christmas Services for all the Family at St Barbara's Church

Christingle

Sunday 2 December at 3.30 pm

Family Service with Nativity led by Junior Church

Sunday 16 December at 9.30 am

Crib Service

Christmas Eve at 3.30 pm

'Midnight' Communion

Christmas Eve at 11.30 pm

Family Communion Service

Christmas Day at 10.00 am

All are warmly welcome



Local Naturalists Wanted!

If you are a nature lover, like walking on Bredon Hill and have some spare time this could be ideal for you!

The **Worcestershire Biological Records Centre** and **Worcestershire Recorders** is a voluntary organisation, linked to the **Worcestershire Wildlife Trust**, which records the plants and animals throughout the county. As well as one-off records, they run a number of surveys of the incidence of specific plants and animals.

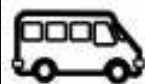
The **Kemerton Conservation Trust** is a more local organisation undertaking similar sort of work. A couple of examples of surveys run are the ancient tree register, where the sites and sizes of very old trees are recorded (there are many unrecorded ones on Bredon Hill), and a glow-worm survey. What could be better than strolling quietly at dusk on a balmy summer evening looking for glow-worms?!

If you are interested please ring Roger Umpelby 881449 and he will put you in touch with the relevant person.

Neighbourhood Watch Advice about Bogus Callers

A number of 'distraction' burglaries have taken place over South Worcestershire in recent months. Please remember the importance of making sure rear doors/windows are locked before answering the front door, putting your door chain on (if you have one) before answering the door, and asking for and checking identification. If you're in any doubt, don't let them in but contact the organisation they claim to represent. It is also worth noting that many bogus callers claim to be from the 'Water Board'; however there has not been a 'Water Board' since 1989 and therefore anybody who claims to be from the 'Water Board' or similar should be viewed with suspicion.

You can contact the police on 999 or 08457 444888



Parish Minibus Shopping Trip to Worcester

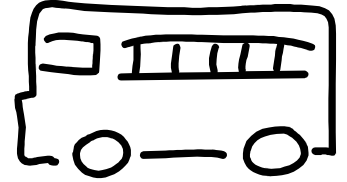
Friday 23 November

Call **Gilbert 881455** or **Ray 881441** to arrange pickup from Ashton or Beckford.



This term's Pilates class continues every **Tuesday** to 11 December from 10.45 to 11.45 in Ashton Village Hall. If you're interested and would like to know more, please telephone **Julie Farr 710868**.

Minibus Appeal Fund



The Minibus Appeal Fund has made a good start but still requires additional funds to reach our target of £22,000.

Wychavon District Council has donated £3,000, Beckford Parish Council and Overbury Parish Council have sent £500 each; Ashton Parish Council promise £1,000; Alstone & Teddington Parish Council promise £500. The Eveson Trust has donated £2,000. We are still waiting for a positive response from 'Awards for All' and one or two further applications are still in the pipeline. We have already received nearly £1,000 in private donations and are looking for the villages to run fund raising events. Gift Aid facilities are available to bolster private donations.

Our thanks go to a number of people in the Parish who have already organised fund raising events:



Alan and Victoria Ross raised nearly £800 from a Champagne and Wine Tasting Evening
Ashton WI and Community Centre raised £545 from the Harvest Supper
Philippa Rands and Rose Stubbs raised £200 from the Therapy Taster session
Graham Lockwood raised £186 at the Beckford Bingo evening
Overbury School and the Overbury Street Market have each donated £150

Other events are planned and the Ashton Lunch Club have also offered a donation.

The Minibus Appeal Fund team would be very interested to hear from anyone else who has ideas for a fund raising event, or would be willing to assist in running one. Please let us know by contacting any one of the team members:

- **Julian Alington 01386 882060**
- **Sally Tagg 07776230655**
- **Mike Sanger-Davies 01386 881910**
- **Martin Cooley 01386 725616**
- **Jean Tasker 01386 881270**
- **Ray Satchell 01386 881441**

Private donations are eligible for Gift Aid, as a simple way to increase the value of your gift. If you would like to help this very worthwhile project, please send your donation, however large or small, to:

Julian Alington, Pennfields, Elmley Road, Ashton Under Hill, Evesham, WR11 7SW.

(Cheques should be made payable to the 'Minibus Appeal Fund'.) Thank you.

Ashton News is normally published in January, March, May, September and November each year and there are often special editions for major events in the village. 2008 will be our tenth year of publication. The newsletter is prepared, printed and distributed entirely by voluntary effort and the costs are covered by the Parish Council.

If you'd like to publicise an event, make an announcement, air an opinion or ask for help please use Ashton News; it's the best way of reaching everyone in our community. Your contribution may be telephoned, delivered by hand or emailed. We try to include everything that's submitted by the published deadline, although we reserve the right to edit pieces for length in order to fit the available space.

The next regular edition of Ashton News will be published in January 2008.

If there's something you'd like included please let us have details by Friday 4 January.

JamDram

Our next workshop session will be in **Beckford Village Hall** as usual, on **Saturday 24 November** from **12.00 to 2.00pm**. We'll be preparing for our Christmas item, to be performed during the Ashton Celebration of Christmas on **Tuesday 18 December** at 7.00pm and also at the Teddington Carol Service on **Sunday 23 December** at 6.00pm.

Marion Nelson 881778.

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