



All set for Open Gardens

**Middle school
joins weekend
(12-13 June)
for first time**

Ashton under Hill Open Gardens, which raises so much money for local causes, will this year also help focus on the protection of wildlife, and the gardening skills of pupils at Bredon Hill middle school.

From 1 to 6pm, on Saturday and Sunday 12-13 June, visitors will have access to 22 gardens, including for the first time that of the award-winning Ashbee, Wood Lane, and Ashwood, Gorse Hill.

At the middle school, an after-lessons club has created raised beds over the past 18 months – a rainbow flower border including exotics and non-F1 varieties to



Pretty as a picture: A view taken last year of Walnut Thatch. Photo: AerialCam Photography

produce seed, and vegetables already being used in the kitchen. They have improved a natural garden, where newts now swim, and their efforts, guided by Sara Bankes, have been recognised with an award from the Woodland Trust. The wildlife theme will

also run through an exhibition of paintings and photographs in St. Barbara's Church, in displays by the RSPB and Vale Wildlife Rescue, and a children's quiz. Other attractions this year include music by middle school students, a display by Cotswold footpath

wardens and a demonstration by Hereford and Worcester Master Composters. As last year, tickets cost £4, children free. Tickets for Saturday are also valid on Sunday, and with so many gardens to see, visitors may wish to come both days. Parking is free and a free shuttle runs through the village. Plants, preserves, ice cream are on sale, with sandwiches and teas in the Village Hall, and ploughman's lunches in the marquee from 12.30pm and cream teas from 2pm.

- * Left: Bredon Holt
- * Where does the money go? **Page 3.**



New homes: Now councils prepare plans

An exhibition at Beckford attended by many Ashton residents set out options for sites in the village where up to 50 homes might be built over the next 16 years.

The exercise, part of the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy, was to allow comments, which are now being considered by planners. They are due to publish their preferred options in autumn.

Ashton has been named in the second-highest category of villages, due to its facilities such as schools, a post office, church, chapel and pub.

That means it is likely to be asked to find space for 30 to 50 homes, whereas top line villages might build up to 100.

The exhibition also set out district council priorities, including the protection of green and recreation space, of buildings of local interest, to promote and protect shops, generate jobs, and to provide traveller sites of up to ten pitches close to settlements.

Councillors will eventually decide whether agreed development boundaries need changing.

Maps showing all potential sites identified by owners, councils and associations can be seen at www.swjcs.org.

A public enquiry is likely to follow publication of councils' proposals.

No go area for burglars, and these tips will help keep it so

As police reminded villagers to be on guard against opportunist thieves during the summer, the Middle School and St. Barbara's have led the way to make their property even safer.

School caretaker Kim Taylor has completed the marking of all valuables with the SmartWater coding system, details of which can be seen at its website smartwater.com.

That means that any potential burglars should know that their hot property would be more easily identified – as would they.

After an attempted break-in last year, St. Barbara's has followed suit, and the local Neighbourhood Watch is encouraging householders to do the same. For more information, call Ted Williams 881018 or Roger Umpelby 881449.

Buglary is, in fact, rare in West Mercia, and local police are working hard to

reduce its incidence even further, said Community Support Officer Simon Williams.

Most are carried out on the spur of the moment, and up to half are by thieves who enter through an unlocked door or open window. He urged:

- ✓ Ensure doors and windows remain locked, and fit sturdy British Standard BS3621 deadlocks on external doors.
- ✓ When out, user timer switches to turn on lights in the evenings, ensure newspapers, post and milk are not left on display.
- ✓ Ask someone to keep an eye on your home while you are away.
- ✓ Protect your garden and home with well-kept fences and defensive planting of hedges and bushes.

For advice, call CSO Williams or PC Gary Shephard on 0300 3333000, or visit www.westmercia.police.uk.

Don't fall for these scams

Crime prevention officers have warned about scams, at least one of which has hit Ashton.

One involves bogus premium-rate telephone numbers beginning 09, which can charge £20 a minute. A card was left recently in the village saying a parcel could not be delivered, asking the householder to telephone.

You could block 09 numbers from your home, or use them only if you know the charge rate, for example for TV votes or charitable giving.

Unsolicited calls can be a nuisance. If so, contact the Telephone Preference Service at

www.tpsonline.org.uk or call 0845 070 0707 (local rate), register, and they should stop.

Treat calls or emails, supposedly from banks or card companies with suspicion, particularly if they ask for information they should already have. Recent examples include requests for Sky TV account numbers.

Sellers of burglar alarms can be pushy, or make false claims about high crime rates and working with the police.

If considering buying one, Neighbourhood Watch members advise that you get several quotes from reputable suppliers.

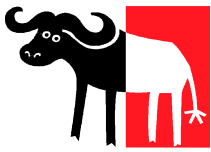
Day of wine and roses for years of work by Penny

This year's produce show at the village fete on 11 September is likely to be held in a marquee rather than the Village Hall, the Community Centre has decided.

The group will ask the first school to share the £1,200 cost of repairing the hall floor, and has set up a project team for the climbing frame on the playing fields, to cost up to £10,000.

Sarah Lane succeeded Penny Scotland as secretary, whose years of work were recognised by gifts of wine and rose bushes.

Crops looking well after sun and rain



Farm life

by Charles Archer

May is a fantastic time of the year as everything is so vibrant. Leaves and blossom appear together. It is a joy to hear the birds singing before dawn and their song continues until well after dusk.

Most of the stock has now been turned out into the fields - the cattle are always the last to be put out to pasture.

Sheep shearing will take place soon. Hopefully the weather will be much warmer as to lose a thick coat on a cold day can be quite a shock for a sheep.

Pastures are growing vigorously and those to be used for silage or hay to provide food for the stock next winter are not being grazed.

We are almost three quarters of the way through the farming year and all field operations are on schedule. The arable crops are looking well after the warmth in April and the recent rain; 40mm (1.5") fell on Sunday 2nd May.

Soon the wheat will be in ear and the beans in blossom, perfuming the air. It is time to drill forage maize to be harvested in the autumn for silage. Like all of us all the crops will benefit from warmer temperatures and the occasional shower.

How the village benefits

Every year, hundreds of visitors pour into Ashton to admire our lovely gardens, but when they go, the benefits to the village remain.

In 2009, the event raised nearly £10,000, distributed between the Community Centre, St. Barbara's Church and Ashton First School.

The donation of £4,400 to the Community Centre helped to provide storage for the playgroup, to pay for re-decoration and a new water heater in the Green Room of the Village Hall.

There's an ongoing project of improvement for the children's playground, which will be costly, and repairs are urgently



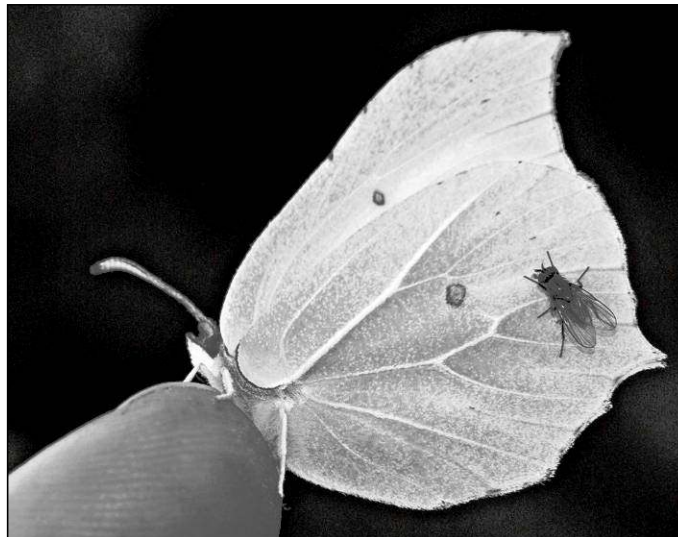
needed to the Village Hall.

At St. Barbara's, a leak had been discovered in the roof over the south side of the nave, and three large, diseased trees in the churchyard had become dangerous.

A similar donation helped toward the costs of dealing with both problems, but further expensive roof repairs will soon be inevitable.

Open Gardens also helped pay for playground improvements at the First School, which will mount a display this year on how the money was spent.

For more information on any aspect of Open Gardens, see the website, www.ashtonopengardens.co.uk



Big bugs have little bugs: A Brimstone butterfly with a fly – one of the pictures in the wildlife exhibition. Photographer Roger Umpelby is looking for more photos, paintings, fossils and sculptures. If you have anything suitable to lend, contact him on 881449 or roger@bugman.free-online.co.uk

... and how you still can help

During Open Gardens, it takes around 100 helpers to direct traffic and parking, or sell plants and programmes.

Organisers need to identify volunteers now.

So, if you can spare even an hour, contact Judy Templeton, 882661 or at jude.templeton@googlemail.com.

The WI need helpers to make cakes and/or help with serving and washing up at the Village Hall on both days. Christine Powell on 881481 or Jen Creese on 881266 would love to hear from you.

To publicise the event in your workplace, call Kathryn Perry 882316 or Alex Dodge 881487 for a poster, or download it from the website listed above.

Tea on lawn - with music

Sally Skinner will again hold her popular Tea on the Lawn from 3 to 5pm on Sunday 23 May at Rails End Nursery, Back Lane.

As well as a wide range of bedding plants and hanging baskets to buy, the afternoon will include tea and cakes, musical entertainment from Smooth Sounds, a photographic display and a raffle in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care. Shelter is available in the extremely unlikely (we hope) event that the weather is not perfect.

Ready Steady Cook for Ashton

Meet new people, explore the village, and enjoy culinary delights. What could be more enticing than the great 2010 Ashton-under-Hill Run Around Supper?



On Saturday 26 June, participants will meet at the Village Hall at 7pm for a free drink, then move to their first hosts for a starter, then on for a main course.

A draw will determine which hosts will welcome which pairs (singles welcome too), with desserts served back at the Village Hall at 10pm, with a bar open to midnight. Non-hosts will be asked to provide puds!

Proceeds will help the play-group to buy sports equipment and to run multi-sport workshops to encourage healthy lifestyles and development.

Tickets cost just £5 each if hosting, £15 if not.

They are available from Claire Kirke, Plough Cottage, Elmley Road, 07715 698 999, or via claire.vincent@hotmail.co.uk, Jeny Simpson, 8 Cornfield Way, or Rachel Evans-Cook, via First School.

Forms alongside should sent by 4th June to them with cash or cheques payable to Ashton-under-Hill Pre-School Playgroup.

I would like (tick ✓)

Pair ticket Single ticket

Name(s)

Address

Tel:

I will (tick ✓ where appropriate and state number below)

Host a starter

Host a main

Bring a pudding

For 6 8 10 12 people (ring number)

State here if you are a vegetarian, and if so whether you eat fish:

Road closure delayed

Plans to resurface Elmley Road have been delayed because of the project to bury power lines. The work will now take place after E-on have finished theirs in the summer.

Crumbs, what a result

Alex Dodge and Penny Scotland thanked all who supported the Cake Bake at The Old Farmhouse on 30 April, which raised a splendid £550 plus £50 Gift Aid for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Aviary owners beware

Canaries and finches were stolen overnight on 19 March from an aviary at the top of the village, probably by someone who knew which birds were valuable. Anyone with information should ring 0300-333-3000.

Ashton News deadline

News for the next issue please by Sunday 12 July to colin.davison@hotmail.co.uk



Renaissance masterpieces: Following the concert by the Corelli Ensemble that packed Teddington church, the Corelli Consort will give the final concert of the Parish Music season in Overbury Church on Saturday 15 May at 8pm.

The Gloucester-based choir will perform Spanish and Italian works of the 16th and 17th Century including compositions by Monteverdi and Palestrina. Tickets, £10, students free, on the door, include refreshment and a chance to meet the singers. See also Parish Music on the Ashton village website.

Shindig goes for top performers

Shindig organisers are bidding for an ambitious programme of events in Ashton for late 2010/11. If the bids are accepted, Ashton would get to see Northumberland Touring Theatre with productions of The Old Curiosity Shop

and Beauty and the Beast, followed by a rock 'n' roll night, comedian Mervyn Stutter, Cajun music, and plays based on James Herriot's life and the TV series Lark Rise to Candleford. Watch this space.

Thanksgiving at St. Barbara's

The service at 11 am on 16 May, thanking those who support the church, will be followed at 10am a week later by the rogation ceremony, to give thanks for the natural life of the parish.

Churchgoers should meet at the village cross to progress through the churchyard, field, farmyard and garden. A collection will aid the county charity, Farmers Overseas Action Group.

A Songs of Praise service will follow the Open Gardens weekend at 6.30 on Sunday 13 June, and a week later the church will celebrate Fathers' Day at 11am.

Big Lunch Day at 11am on Sunday 18 July will be followed by a sharing picnic as part of an Eden Project scheme to encourage all to grow and share their own food.

Ashton win first title for 10 years

'Rooney effect' seals it after great season

It started well and ended brilliantly. Ashton FC started the season in emphatic form, winning their first four games, including clear victories at Badsey and Tewkesbury.

After the last fixture, the initial confidence was clearly justified. For with 13 wins, three draws and only two defeats, and 42 points from a possible 54, Ashton were confirmed as champions of Evesham Sunday League Division 3 – their first title for ten years.

It was a tough division, facing teams from larger villages including Broadway, Northway, Defford & Besford, as well as Fladbury and the Lenches.

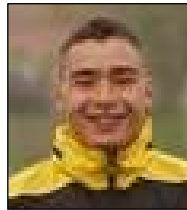
The decisive games came in April. A home



Champions: Ashton's Star performers after receiving the Evesham Division 3 cup at Wickhamford—and a drop to pour into it.

win against Defford on Easter Monday secured promotion, then a 2-0 victory at Wickhamford three weeks delivered the championship, four points clear of closest rivals WMK FC.

After the match, league chairman Richard Bate



presented the trophy to captain and Ashton lad Simon Large (pictured).

Other locals who contributed to the club's success included James Baker, Jack Mayo, Matthew Ross, James Nicholls, and Robert Bromfield.

Winger Bromfield led the way by scoring in three of the first four games. Then in a season that already included a 7-1 thrashing of Tewkesbury, they were joined by striker Chris Walton, an academy player with Rushden and Diamonds, who had moved to the area.

Tennis players courted

Ashton Tennis Club has appealed for new players, organisers and helpers prior to its annual meeting at 8pm on Wednesday 3 June at Graham House.

Fees are adults £26 pa, juniors £8, families £50. For details contact Derrick on 881239.

Meanwhile Bredon Middle School has reminded players that its courts can be hired. For details, contact the school office on 8812426, or by email at office@bredon.worcs.sch.uk

Guides mark centenary

More than 100 adults and young people celebrated the centenary of the Guide movement at St. Barbara's.

Guides, Brownies and Rainbows took a leading parting the service, taking the congregation through 100 years of guiding. Leaders Ali Stephenson, Wendy Brewster and Nicola Joscelyne were thanked for assembling a fine exhibition of photographs and memorabilia, as were those who had kindly loaned mementoes.

The collection of £150 was shared between the church and the Guides Friendship Fund.

Star Inn seeks new dining area and patio

The Star has lodged a planning application to demolish and replace the timber building now used as a kitchen and dining area and to provide an outside patio.

Fuller details of current planning applications, and of the annual parish meeting will be reported in the next issue of *Ashton News*.

"It was like having Wayne Rooney come on," said club secretary and goal-keeper Nick Organ. "He was just fantastic."

Walton hammered eight goals in the last seven games, but the defence also contributed largely to the championship, guided at the back by player-manager Michael Norman, by conceding only 23 goals, the lowest total in the division.

"It means a great deal to the players to play for a well-run club, with great facilities, a great sponsor in the Star Inn, a superb pitch, and the village of Ashton-under-Hill to back it," Organ said.