



Around Ashton



Season's Greetings from Ashton Hayes Parish Council

Our new community energy company starts earning revenue

Ashton Hayes has become one of the first community owned power companies in England and everyone is invited to become a member and comment on how we run the company and spend our revenues.

The Parish Council installed two banks of PV panels – one set on the low carbon pavilion and one set on the Primary School using part of the £400,000 given to the village after it won a DECC Low Carbon Communities Challenge Grant. However, in order to claim the energy revenue and Feed-in-Tariffs (FiTs) legally, the panels need to be owned and managed by a community energy company.

It's a long story that has taken hours of work by the Going Carbon Neutral team (especially Roy Alexander) but basically the PC has 'sold' the panels for £1 to the new Ashton Hayes Community Energy Company - a so-called Community Interest Company (CIC), formed in October 2011. Under CIC rules, all the proceeds of the company must be spent on improving the future sustainability of our community, particularly energy saving, power generation and carbon reduction. We will be issuing an invitation for membership in the New Year.

We are also delighted to report that the new low carbon school classrooms and associated PV generating system were completed on time and were available for use by December 12th, with an official opening at the school on Tuesday 10th January.

Under the arrangements, the school will be granted free energy generated by the panels and surplus will be sold to Good Energy. Income from the Feed-in-Tariffs from both the school and pavilion, which are now guaranteed for 25 years, will pass to Ashton Hayes Community Energy Company, which hopes to make a surplus of around £7000 a year to spend on our community.

We wish to recognise that, via the Carbon Leapfrog charity, we have received a large amount of very effective legal support from top lawyers, Levent Gurdenli and Andrew Brockett, at Bird & Bird in drawing up the necessary legal documents – all free of charge! Thanks are also due to teams of folk from ASHRA and Rod Trippier for his CDM work.

A new 'generation' of local residents



Martin (above) and Jane Colville have installed an impressive bank of 'pin stripe' PV panels that produce green energy profitably. The Savil family have also installed this PV array on their barns. We now have around 12 banks of PV and solar water heating panels on properties around Ashton Hayes.



Scottish Power Networks is also kindly spending about £250,000 in monitoring our power use across the village and advising us where we might try to go next with renewables. A meeting about their results will be held early in the New Year and we will publish the data via the Carbon Neutral Website.

We have now completed successfully the final DECC assessment of our grant use and Garry Charnock has now been appointed to a Government Advisory panel as a community representative. We are also working on a number of new initiatives and seeking new funding. More on this soon.

On the downside, use of the Nissan Leaf electric car has not been as high as we would have liked despite major marketing initiatives by Greg Ambrose and Tom Ellis. They have

made a great video on YouTube explaining the community response (visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nbDIDvZJR8>).



If membership does not increase we will sadly need to sell the car by March 2012 and reinvest the money into other community initiatives.

More at www.goingcarbonneutral.co.uk.

Calling all vocal locals!

Can Ashton get enough people who want to have fun by forming a village choir? The initial responses are very encouraging and so we will going to give it a go. If you are (the type of person) inspired by 'The Choir' on TV, or sing in the shower or along to the radio, why not join our new group called 'Ashton Sings'. You don't need to be a good singer, or sing solo, or even read music - and there are no auditions!

The idea is to have fun with a friendly bunch. Interested? Then just drop us an email to ashtonsings@yahoo.co.uk and we will let you know the time & place of the first meeting. Or reply to our leaflet that will be coming around soon. *Jacqui Malpas, Ali Ambrose, Cathy Rounthwaite & Andrew Garman.*

Our unbeatable cricket club

The mid-week team retained the Chester & North Wales mid-week league, Division 1 title ahead of Northop Hall and Hawarden Park - again a wonderful performance throughout the season in which 10 games were won out of 12 played, with 2 rained off.

Many week-end matches were played - the high point being the 4-day tour to Barcelona, Spain. Seventeen players and committee went on tour and two games of cricket were played in the city's Olympic Baseball Stadium.

Towards the end of the season, 8 teams entered the club 5 -aside tournament and this was won by Heido's Hitmen who defeated a

Shell team in the final. The final day of the season was the annual President's match in mid-September, won this year by the President's team and this was followed by an excellent curry night in the Golden Lion. We now look forward to next season and would welcome new cricketers into the club.

If you are interested in joining a great club please telephone Robert Lewis (01829-751541) or Martin Bolton (01829-752092).

Community Shop Xmas reminder

A reminder that as Christmas falls over a weekend the Bank Holidays will be shifted to the Monday and Tuesday the following week. So to be sure you can get your provisions, please check in store for our Christmas opening hours during December.

We are delighted that the Community shop was recently shortlisted for the Community Award in the recent Cheshire Business Awards. This award recognises those companies that support their local community. Although unfortunately we did not take the prize we are very proud to have made the top three.

The shop also had a good second year of trading. We held our second AGM on last July at the Ashton Hayes Primary School and reported on our trading for 2010/2011 and the plans for the current financial. Details of the accounts and presentations given are available on our website at www.ourvillageshop.org. Thank you to Chris Priddey, for the use of the school for this event.

During the AGM we welcomed two new members to the shop management committee, Carol Rowntree and Nicky Partington, who replaced Naomi Deynem and Lu Strudwick. Naomi and Lu were both original members of the shop steering committee and we would like to thank them both for their hard work and commitment over the last three years, in securing a community shop for the village.

We now able to offer a Dry Cleaning Service with collections on a Wednesday and Friday. Prices are competitive to local services. Please ask at the shop for details.

Don't forget that the shop could not function

without the help of our volunteers. If you could spare even one hour to help, please let Deb know in the shop. There are many roles available as well as helping behind the counter. In fact at the moment we are looking for more help with the sorting of the papers early morning. We would like more volunteers who can either provide back up to our existing two volunteers when they are away or who might like to do a day a week or whatever suits with their existing commitments on a regular basis. It requires an early start ...6am or thereabouts but you finish usually by 7.30. If you want some more information please speak to Deb about it.

Let us know if you have any suggestions for the shop, we are always grateful to hear your views. Merry Christmas! *Lisa.*

Theatre Club January auditions

Ashton Hayes Theatre Club is holding readings for its next play at the WI Hall in Ashton on Sunday January 8th at 7.30pm. The play is yet to be decided but it will be an adult production and we are looking for people aged between 18-40 for acting parts and anyone who might like to get involved backstage particularly with sound and lighting. *Contact Yvette 01829 751327 for more information.*

What's cooking at the Opal Club?

As you know, the Kelsall Opal Club provides a one day a week [Monday] service to local elderly people who are at risk of becoming socially isolated and are finding it hard to get out and about. The Club brings a group of about 12 people together for a day of activity, a home-cooked lunch, conversation and companionship. We are wholly reliant on volunteers who provide transport, support when the members are at the base [the Methodist Church Hall in Kelsall] and cook the lunches. We are always looking out for new volunteers and at the moment we are **very short of cooks** so if you are interested or know anyone who might be interested please do let us know. The cooks operate a rota and cook once every 4 weeks but the more cooks we

have the easier it becomes. We would be happy to have volunteers who want to work together as a pair on the cooking and if there are people who can't commit on a regular basis but could provide cover in the event of the existing cooks being on holiday or unwell then please let us know. We are also always looking out for older people who might benefit from and enjoy the club so if you or someone you know are finding it hard to get out and are finding that this is restricting the opportunity you have to be with other people then please do make an enquiry of us.

Contact numbers are as follows ...Anne Greenshields [Organiser] on 07851253587, Jane Colville on 01829 752607 or Mary Diggle on 01829 752608

Ashton Hayes “sounds like a very nice place to live in” – HRH The Queen

Over the last few months three women from Ashton Hayes have been presented with awards for services to the community.

Helen Rimmer, Postmistress, was awarded an MBE in October by Her Royal Highness the Queen. Helen told us that the Queen asked her about Ashton Hayes and how she described some of the things happening here to which the Queen replied “well it sounds like a very nice place to live in”.

Pauline Tilley was at around the same time presented with a Cheshire Rural Women's Achievement of the Year Award for the huge contribution she has made in all sorts of ways to the wellbeing of the village. **Lisa Allman was also presented with a Cheshire Rural Women's Achievement of the Year Award** for her work in relation to the Community Shop.

A very big well done to Helen, Pauline and Lisa, you all deserve the recognition!

REMINDER: The Parish Council usually holds its mothly meetings on the SECOND Monday of each month at the Parish Rooms. Most meetings start at 8pm. Please check in the Post Office or on notice boards or visit our website www.ashtonhayespc.co.uk for the latest updates. Nect meeting is to be held on 16 JANUARY 2012