

Ashurst St James Parish E-Newsletter Spring 2026

Above - Recent work by the Artynoons Group. Further work and info about them can be found on Page 12.

Father Mark writes

Immediately after his baptism in the Jordan, Jesus was 'led' or 'driven' by the Holy Spirit into the Wilderness (Matt 4:1 and Luke 4:1; compare Mark 1:12-13). At the very start of his mission and ministry, Jesus had a lot of time to consider the implications of everything that God was asking of him.

We might assume that Jesus found it easy to pray. Instead, he was 'tempted'. This would have been no surprise to his contemporaries. The wilderness was considered to be the abode of demons and dangerous spirits. Still, he went there. One writer has compared his temptations to the 'whispering voices' that can speak to any of us – whispers that seek to distract us from the loving purposes of God. Instead of prompting Jesus with the clear voice of God, the Holy Spirit was supporting Jesus in confronting these inner voices, one-by-one. For each of us and at different times these whispers will be different, whether they might be promptings to self-doubt, tendencies toward procrastination, or the lure to make the nonsensical assumption that life revolves around us ('because I'm worth it').



It would be so much easier if these inner voices ceased to plague us, if they would go away, or if we could find something else to fill-up our minds and distract us. But that is not the way. The experience of Jesus spending 40 days in the wilderness shows us that we need to make time to stand up to the demons – to face them. As if we were setting out to prune a beautiful rose bush, and looking to the Loving Spirit of God to guide our hands, as we take up the shears.

Come down, O Love divine, seek thou this soul of mine,
and visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near, within my heart appear,
and kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

Bianco da Siena, d. 1434

Yours in the love of Christ

Fr Mark

Collect for Ash Wednesday

Almighty and everlasting God,
who hatest nothing that thou hast made and
dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins and
acknowledging our wretchedness,
may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



The Collect for Easter Day

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your
Son overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory.

Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!
Alleluia!

PCC Update Spring 2026

Recent Events

Village Carol Service

There was a great turn out for our annual Carol Service and we were pleased to welcome a number of first timers! We also enjoyed listening to our Ashurst Choir.

Service for Mothering Sunday

Our Mothering Sunday was held on a lovely spring day. The mothers (and fathers and children!) in the congregation were each given a spring plant.

Ashurst Electoral Roll

On Christmas Day it was wonderful to see the church full to overflowing for the service. Like all parish churches, Ashurst is required to have an Electoral Roll which contains the names of all those who support and worship at the church. To show that support please consider joining the Roll which entails completing and returning to me the simple form sent with this Newsletter.

Once you have completed this form, you are able to attend the Annual Meeting (this year to be held after the church service on 10th May) and vote for the churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council. Being on the Roll is your way of showing that your parish church matters to you.

If you need further clarification please be in touch.

Deborah Hanson Electoral Roll Officer on debs.hanson@hotmail.co.uk or 01903 812214.

Forthcoming Events:

Easter:

Our Easter Sunday service will take place on Sunday 5th April at **11.00 am**. It will be followed by our traditional Easter Egg hunt!

Please find below the full schedule of Easter Services due to be held at Ashurst (as highlighted in yellow) and Steyning. As you will see, there is a good and varied selection of services on offer!

Holy Week & Easter Services - Sunday 29 March to Sunday 5 April 2026

Palm Sunday	(9:20 for) 9:30am Palm Procession & Sung Eucharist <i>Commencing from Church Cottage.</i> NB No service at Ashurst.
Monday	11:30am Holy Communion with Meditation.
Tuesday	11:30am Holy Communion with Meditation.
Wednesday	11:30am Holy Communion with Meditation.
Maundy Thursday	7:00pm Liturgy of the Day, Last Supper and Watch.
Good Friday	Midday Liturgy of the Cross with Holy Communion. 2:00pm Stations of the Cross at Ashurst. 7:30pm Sacred Concert: Faure's Requiem.
Easter Eve	8:00pm Easter Vigil & Blessing the Easter Garden.
Sunday 5 th April Easter Day	11:00 am Parish Communion of Easter Morning at Ashurst. <i>Followed by an Easter Egg Hunt for the children.</i>

Other Services:

On May 10th our family service includes a baptism and will be followed by our Annual Meeting.

On June 14th, the family service is 'God's own acre', a celebration of worship and nature in tune.

Then on 12th July we will be holding a 'sharing picnic' family service in the church grounds.

Our Patronal Evensong takes place on 27th July at 4pm, followed by refreshments outside, if possible. Once again this is a most enjoyable service - the only Evensong we hold in the year.

So lots of different services to try out this summer - we'd love to see you at some of them!

Churchyard Notes

Spring 2026

The Churchyard is brimming with colour at the moment.

The snowdrops which brightened the winter months are giving way to primroses, daffodils, crocuses and plentiful wild flowers such as celandine.

The bird song is tremendous with song thrush, blackcap, goldcrest and redwing all recently recorded alongside garden stalwarts such as robin, blackbird, blue tit, great tit, wren, chaffinch, dunnock, jackdaw.

Spring is a great time to visit the Churchyard to inspect the wildflowers and listen to the birdsong.



We were delighted to receive a recent visit from the School and look forward to receiving further visits so the children can absorb more of the unfolding naturescape.

Our Churchyard is a special place which provides a haven of peace and tranquillity, Ashurst residents are very welcome.

David Fischel March 26

Ashurst Public Recreation Ground

Spring 2026

Ashurst Cricket Club

We have three fixtures confirmed for this summer, all on Sundays, usual starting time 1.30 or 2pm:

5 July - Nuthurst

22 August - Mark Fischel X1

13 September - Bury and West Burton.

We will be looking to slot a game into June as well.

The Ashurst Recreation Ground is a lovely spot for village cricket with leafy surroundings and far reaching views of the South Downs. Spectators are always welcome.

Anyone interested in playing should contact

Rowley Gregg - 07850 051850 or David Fischel - 07710582843.

Ashurst Football Club

As we approach the last 6 games of the season the fight to stay in Division One is in full swing.

The 2nd half of this season has been far better and more like the Ashurst United of past seasons. With new players arriving and performances hitting 8s out of 10s most weekends. We have managed to put well needed points on the board with a dramatic 3-2 late winner against Southwater, another late goal that got us a point against Royals in a thrilling 4-4 draw. We secured a massive 2-1 win last weekend against Wisborough Green, who have only lost one game this season.

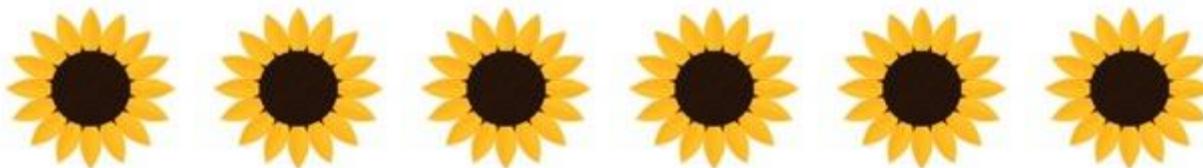
If this run of form continues then hopefully we will still be playing Division One football next season.



Ashurst WI has started 2026 very positively with two Open Meetings (when anyone can join us) in the first two months of this year. The first Meeting in January was a really informative talk from Heather Kingdom, who is with the Partridge Green First Responders, showing us all about how to do CPR (Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation). We all had the opportunity to practice on a dummy and most of us were really surprised by how hard you have to push to do chest compressions! We had lots of non-members attending the meeting and hopefully we would all now be a bit more prepared to help in the event of coming across someone who has had a cardiac arrest. It is also useful to know that there is Defibrillator outside Ashurst Village Hall in the event of an emergency,

Our February meeting was at a very different pace as our lovely speaker, Shirley Blanch, came to talk to us about Mindfulness. As a frazzled young mum, Shirley learnt all about mindfulness and meditation and how both of these can help so much to alleviate stress and anxiety. She has gone from strength to strength teaching the benefits of mindfulness to the young and the old - you are never too old to learn! Shirley has written several books on the subject and she has an excellent website - <https://www.getmindful.co.uk>. This meeting was also very well attended by members of the Ashurst WI and we also were able to welcome a number of guests.

At Ashurst WI not only do we have speakers we also arrange visits to local gardens, Daylands Farm and other places of interest in the area. We are a very friendly bunch and we meet on the Second Monday of the month at 2.00pm at Ashurst Village Hall and new members, or anyone interested in joining us, can be assured of a very warm welcome. There is always a great cup of tea and lovely home made cake available at each meeting. If you would like any further information about our future programme or any information about Ashurst WI please contact Crissy Smith on 07967 356333 or at christinasmithlc@yahoo.co.uk .



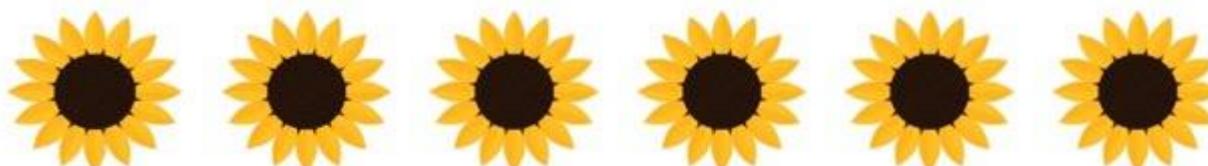
Ashurst Flower Show

Spring 2026

The days are getting longer, the grass on the lawn will need some attention, the fruit trees are budding and soon seeds will need to be sown. And no doubt Michael Nash will remind me to get my onions into the ground. All in preparation for the Ashurst Flower and Produce show on Sunday, 19th July 2026 (and feeding my family). I wonder what will grow well this year. We plan to update the website with all the entries before the seeds need to be sown.

Between now and then, we are having the Committee's annual Sausage Soiree - made famous by the last village play - on Friday 15th May, Chez Burnetts, School Lane, BNY44 3AY. There will be some plants for sale, one or two drinks, nibbles and some sausages!! It all starts at 7:00 p.m. and finishes at 9:00 p.m., or thereabouts. All villagers are welcome and anybody staying with you over the weekend, even if it is just for 15 minutes. A great way to get to know your neighbours, beyond a "Hi" or a "Bye".

By popular demand we will share ideas on how best to "show" your produce, from topping your carrots to getting your marmalade just right. Mrs Garnett believes our marmalade is a winner this year - we will find out. Looking forward to seeing you on 15th May!





General Council update:

As you may have heard, current Local Government Reorganisation plans are afoot, whereby a Unitary authority will replace County, District and Borough Councils - although Parish Councils are currently scheduled to remain. It has not yet been determined how many unitaries West Sussex will be split into but we are expecting to hear by the end of this month.

You should all have had your new Food Waste Collection Bins and accompanying instructions. It'll be interesting to see how successful this initiative is.

Steyping is adopting 'Town' Status with effect from this May!

You will have noticed additional signage on the bend of Peppers and Honeybridge Lanes, so hopefully no more vehicles will be ending up in ditches and hedges round there!

New/refurbished sports building on the Recreation Ground.

Thank you to all those who submitted a completed questionnaire for the proposed new sports building on the Recreation Ground. We had 22 responses and your input has been most useful.

The community consultation, which comprised the distribution of a survey, public meetings, inclusion of the matter on all Council meeting agendas in recent years, and the provision of opportunities for residents to meet with councillors, has now been completed.

Preferences expressed in the results of the consultation can be summarised as follows:

- The 'spectator area' - both inside and out - and the kitchen facility, as provided by the existing Cricket Pavilion, should remain in their current location.
- The current space of the Cricket Pavilion is also appreciated.
- Improvements to the sports provision should be kept simple.
- There were a number of requests for extra parking.

For those residents who are interested, we will be putting up a page on the Ashurst Parish Website shortly, providing more detailed analysis of the results of the questionnaires, together with an excerpt from the January minutes, where the results of the questionnaires and the consultation process, and their implications and then discussions on how best to move this project forward are recorded.

The Council feels that the key issue it faces with this project is its funding. So we would like to ask anyone who is interested and prepared to get involved with the fundraising, to please contact Oliver Last, the Clerk, at ashurstclerk@outlook.com, and let him know.

Any offers of assistance would be much appreciated. If you are interested, it would be helpful if you were able to contact Oliver by, say, 31st March. Many thanks and we look forward to hearing from you.



The rather sad looking grit bin on the School/Church/Peppers junction.

We are not sure what the vehicle that came face-to-face with the bin looked like after the encounter!

Village Clean-up day Sunday March 29th

We have set our next Clean-up Ashurst Day as Sunday 29th March. So please come and meet us at the Village Hall at 10 am.

We usually spend about an hour/hour and a half, with different groups volunteering to clean up a specific location in Ashurst.

If you have high visibility clothing, please do wear that and hard-wearing gloves are also a good idea. We'll have collection bags to give you.

There will be tea, coffee and biscuits afterwards in the Village Hall (as well as the now traditional photo)!

Hope to see as many of you there as possible!

Ashurst Parish Council joins the Weald to Waves Programme

Ashurst Parish Council has joined the Weald to Waves programme, a network of parish councils, farmers, land managers, gardeners, community groups, schools, churches and wildlife charities working together to establish a 100-mile nature recovery corridor from the High Weald to the Sussex coast.

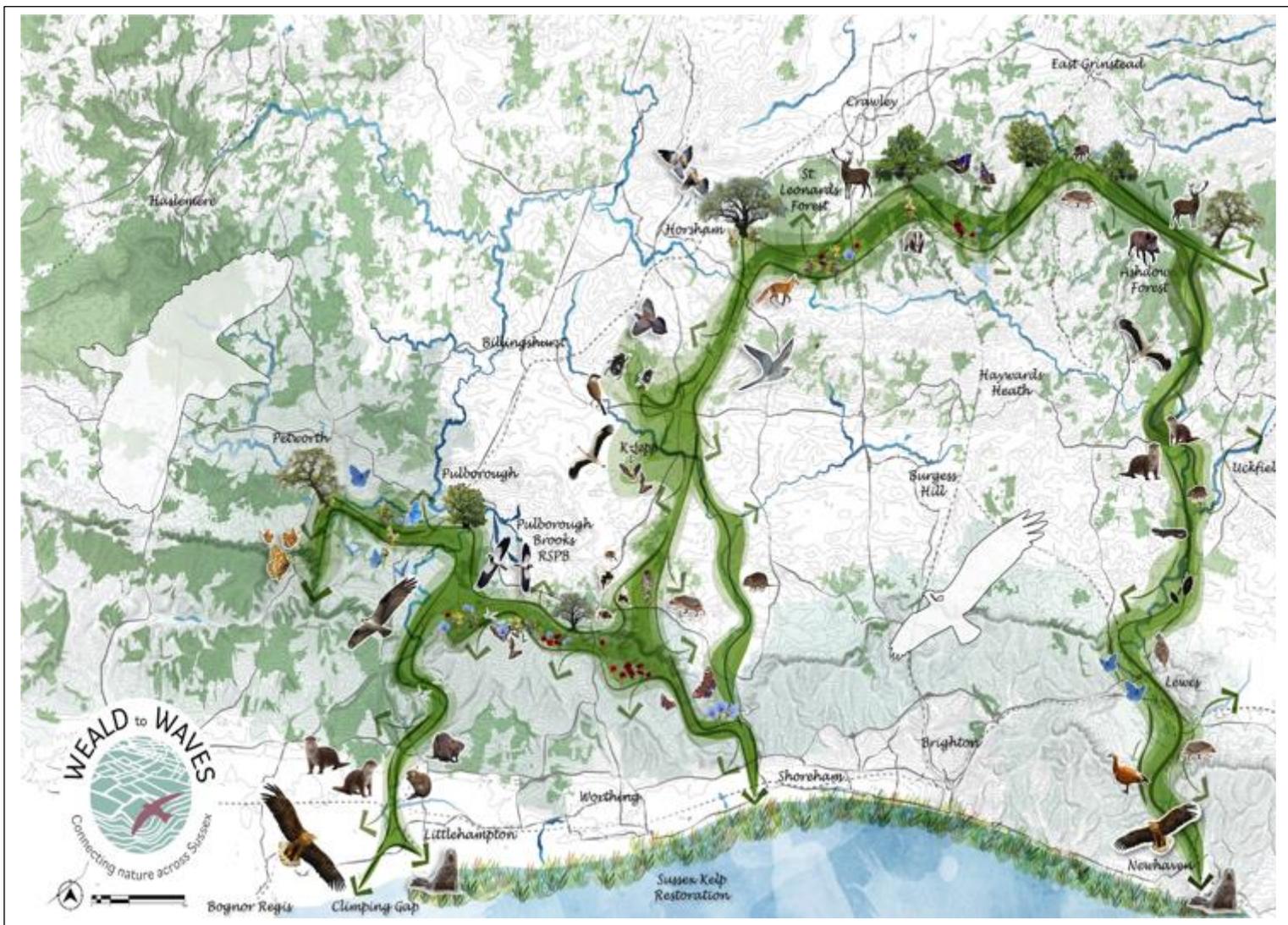
The land and properties in Ashurst Parish lie within the corridor and so the Parish Council believes the village has an important role to play within the programme.

Ashurst Recreation Ground and the churchyard surrounding St James's Church have both signed up to join the programme which is coordinated by the Knepp Wildland Foundation.

Gardens and community greenspaces make up 10% of the Sussex landscape and have a huge collective power to restore nature. By taking action together, these spaces can create vital stepping stones for wildlife to reconnect natural habitats, reduce the impacts of climate change and support resilient food production across Sussex.

To find out more and sign up for free to Gardens & Greenspaces go to <https://www.wealdtowaves.co.uk/gardens-greenspaces>. Anyone with a Sussex postcode can join and access the members area of the website. You will have the opportunity to put your 'dot' on the Weald to Waves map and find resources and expert advice, read other members stories and check the events calendar.

There is also a new 'Actions for Nature' tool to support members – whether starting on their wildlife gardening journey or looking for new ways to progress and add complexity to their green space. So, if you have a garden, whatever its size, or you know there's a community greenspace in the parish that could support wildlife, then join the programme and let's join the dots across Sussex!



Please remember- we are here to represent you, so don't hesitate to contact us if you think we can help in some way. Contact e-mail: ashurstclerk@outlook.com

We have added some new equipment, including a projector and pull-down screen in the committee room and a new bluetooth sound bar to make it easier for hirers to play their own music. Many parties have commented already about how good it is to use.

We now have the barrier to allow a safe area outside, particularly for children's parties in the nicer weather. Bouncy castles seem to be bigger and we have been told that we were host to the biggest one available for internal use!! If anyone wants to donate tea towels, please do as ours seem to walk out of the door very often!!!

Please tell friends, work colleagues and anyone else, our hall can be hired by anyone living outside the village, far and wide, as well as just for villagers as, without the income, it cannot run. Through the grapevine we have heard of so many halls closing because of lack of funds. We certainly do not want our hall to get to that point!! What would the public do every other year without the renowned Ashurst pantomime!!!

For hall bookings please visit the website: <https://www.ashurstvillagehall.org.uk/>.

There are special rates for local hirers. Graham Timms Chairman. 07966 518207 or 01403 710015



Ashurst Village Pantomime 2025

This year's pantomime, Make Ashurst Great Again (MAGA), was another shining example of why our village is so special. With a record-breaking cast of 44, a tech team of six, a stage management trio, one wonderful front-of-house and two excellent bar staff, it was a classic Ashurst village effort. In addition to this, two films were produced (thank you, Charlie Forte!) one kindly hosted by the 'Duke and Duchess of Sussex', featuring several fictional international champion fishermen (and our own very real one!) supported by a magnificent naturist and another small crowd of villagers, plus several very talented dogs. Award winning journalists joined in the fun, with a real-life professional cameraman.

The pantomime is never complete without its indecipherable storyline. However, this year, the audience confounded the cast by following the plot with relative ease! Whatever next?

The evil stepmother, Carla Condiment, with her ghastly daughters, Catty and Bratty, caused mayhem at every turn with plans for an airport, Gratwick Airport no less, and a theme park at Wiston. Meanwhile, romance blossomed between Danny, their hapless stepbrother, and Sandy, with frolicking on the beach (Shoreham) before their eventual happy ending at the Fire Station with President Trump back in attendance.

The cast navigated endless health and safety rules with aplomb, thanks to Elf and Safety, while Mayor Naise, the hapless mayor of Ashurst, did his best to thwart Carla's dreadful schemes, with the support of his wife, Bea Naise, Sandy, his daughter, and the motley crew of villagers. The Pink Ladies were utterly magnificent, the T-Birds ultra-cool, while the Pigeons, ranging from extremely funky to grey and somewhat plump, added their own unique charm to the proceedings.

Above all, the pantomime was a triumph of village kindness, friendship and commitment. A huge thank you to every member of the team who worked tirelessly to bring so much joy and laughter to our village hall. And thank you to each audience member for all your support and love.

And here's to the next Ashurst pantomime - already eagerly awaited for in 2027!

Oh, no it isn't. Oh, yes it is!

Helen Garnett

Ashurst Country Fair & Fun Dog Show 2026

Planning is in full swing for this year's **Ashurst Country Fair & Fun Dog Show 2026** being held in its usual glorious location of the **Ashurst Recreation Ground** on **Sunday, 6th September** from 12pm.

Stalls are already booking their spaces and there will be our usual wonderful range of things to see and do. We would love to have **even more country craft stalls** join us, so if you know anyone who would like to book a space, please do get them to contact us via our website.

The **Car Boot Sale** will also be a feature again, with even more bargains to be had, don't forget you can always share a pitch with friends.

The **Fun Dog Show classes** are always popular, along with the special class of **Dog Fancy Dress (any theme this year - the funnier the better!)** so get your thinking caps on to make your costumes ready for the event. *Prizes for all in this class*, entries and judging take place *throughout the afternoon*. Don't forget the very popular **Fun Agility** too!

We will as usual be putting up the marquees etc on the Friday evening before the show (4th September) from 6pm, so please do add that date to your diaries, we need lots of help! It seems like a long way off yet, and we certainly all need a good summer in between, but the date will come round quickly as always!

If you are free to help run any of our **village stalls** - for example manning the skittles, or organising and running a tombola, we would love to hear from you.

The **fire brigade** will be with us once again and **Ashurst Football Club** for some more footy games' fun, plus **LOTS** more.

Details of where donations of **raffle prizes, cakes, bottles for the bottle stall, prize hamper food & gifts** can be left, will be included in the next parish newsletter.

We have also been fortunate to have had some **sponsorship from individuals and companies** in the past, this helps us to cover the costs of putting the show on and is always welcome. Please contact any of the organisers should you be able to help. All proceeds help us to maintain and improve Ashurst Village Hall with the added benefit of keeping hire costs down.

Once again we will have a small **'bank' facility** for cash this year (Graham & David), but please do bring cash if you can on the day.

Any local groups are welcome to join us with a stall or activity for their own fundraising or village projects, please contact the organisers in advance to discuss.

We look forward to seeing you all there. Please visit the website for lots more information including the Fun Dog Show classes list.

<https://sites.google.com/view/ashurstcountryfair> Email: ashurstcountryfair@gmail.com

Tel: Mandy 07774585313 or Liz 07821799004



The Friends of Ashurst Primary School Spring 2026



This term the children have been baking up a storm!

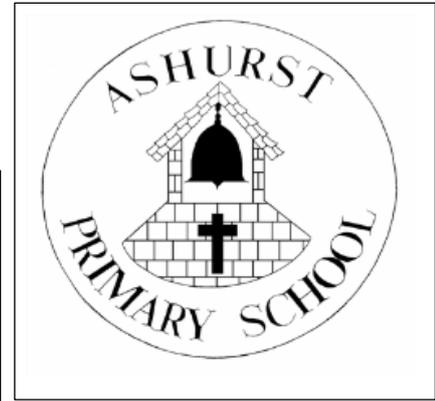
A huge well done to Squirrel Class, who raised an amazing £140 for our FAPS school fund.

Parents, carers and friends came in their dozens to support the bake sale, which thankfully landed on one of the drier days we have seen this spring. We were able to enjoy the sale outside in the school grounds, and tea and cake were enjoyed by all. Thank you to everyone who baked, bought and helped out!

We're also excited for our upcoming Easter celebrations at the school. The children will be taking part in our annual Easter egg hunt and trail, as well as an Easter bonnet parade – with prizes for the most creative bonnets! 🥰👒

Thank you for continuing to support our school community. We're already busy planning lots of exciting things for the summer term!

As we look back over the end of last year and the first half of the spring term we can't quite believe the variety of activities we have managed to participate in- we have been very busy!



At the end of last term we had our first Spirituality Day. Children worked in their four house teams and explored the verse from Isaiah 'To us a child is born. To us a child is given.' Our activities included, music, stillness, creativity and nature. Our next Spirituality Day is Wednesday 25th April with activities in school followed by our Easter service at St James's Church on Wednesday 25th March at 2.45. If you would like to join us in school, please contact the school office for more details.

At the start of the year we were once again delighted to be able to use the Village Hall to extend our gymnastics and dance provision for our KS2 children, the sessions have put our new gym equipment into good use and are really enjoyed by everyone involved. We have continued with our swimming this term, with sessions for Y3 and the additional ones for Owl class have included how to respond if they find someone in difficulties in the water.

Mouse class have been to visit the Sealife Centre in Brighton as part of their learning about all things fishy and sea related and Squirrel class have been to Haslemere as part of their learning about Egyptians. They returned with some well bandaged, but hopefully not embalmed, toys!

Inspired by 'Caring for God's Acre' Squirrel class visited St James's churchyard and met with Mr Fischel who kindly shared his expertise with the group. Some of the plants they spotted were lungwort, celandine, crocus, primrose, daffodil, snowdrop, yew and winter jasmine and these were recorded on the iNaturalist App. The children completed tables of what they spotted and produced some very lovely sketches. Mr Fischel recorded the birdsong they heard and invited the children to guess which ones they were. We are hoping to repeat this visit after Easter to look at the seasonal changes in our local environment.



At our Young Ashurst Governors meeting, the children suggested holding a Pyjama Day. We all came dressed accordingly and brought our favourite books. Children were given (almost) free choice as to where they read during several DEAR (drop everything and read) sessions during the day - as you can see they found some very cosy spots!



We were delighted to enter the inter schools Dodgeball tournament at The Tube in Horsham. The Y3Y4 team were unfailingly fair and honest in their games and went from strength to strength—thank you Mr Preston for driving us. We all really enjoyed the event and are looking forward to a further dodgeball competition later this year. Friday 27th February saw Mrs Welstead and I heading up to the interschools football tournament in Horsham. We took part last year and enjoyed it just as much this year, the children played brilliantly and we were very proud of them.

As part of our Climate Action Plan, we've partnered with Bags2School to boost recycling and raise funds for our school. Bags2School pays 30p per kilo of donated items. We are collecting clean clothes, paired shoes, handbags, hats, scarves, bras, socks, belts, ties and jewellery. If you would like to take part, simply place your unwanted items in a bin liner and bring them along to school house on Monday 16th March or Tuesday 17th March when they will be collected. Every donation helps our school and the environment!

Our after-school clubs have been thriving and just before half term, our Dance and Drama Club shared with us a wonderful performance of 'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse'. Meanwhile, our Watercolour and Art Club members have been creating beautifully intricate pieces, as well as collaborating on an impressive large-scale artwork. Over in Grow Your Garden Club, children have been very industrious making paper plant pots and planting sunflowers, as well as recycling plastic milk containers to create watering cans – now we're just waiting for some sunshine!

Over the past few weeks, it has been wonderful to maintain connections with our former pupils and welcome new friends to our school community. We've been delighted to support young people with their work experience placements and Duke of Edinburgh volunteering opportunities.

We have been very fortunate once again to have the opportunity to further develop our other partnerships in the community; we have all enjoyed the SPLASH! and Open the Book assemblies and are looking forward to celebrating an in-school Eucharist after Easter on Thursday 21st May at 9am. Please do join us for this if you are able to.

We look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Smith and all at Ashurst CE Aided Primary School.

“Achieving Together with Love, Hope and Joy.”



Ashurst Flix in the Stix Spring 2026

Our next film, the *Ballad of Wallis Island*, is a multi-nominated film about an eccentric lottery winner living alone on a remote island wanting to make his fantasies come true by getting his favourite musicians to perform at his home.

Heartwarming with spot-on humour.

Unfortunately the singing duo broke up some years previously, the island is tucked away from the rest of civilization and cut-off from Wi-fi and technology. What could possibly go wrong?

James Griffiths directs Carey Mulligan, Tim Key and Tom Basden.

Its wonderful performances, unconventional story, and heartfelt themes make "The Ballad of Wallis Island" a stellar drama.

It should win multiple awards due the individual (and some unknown) artistic brilliance, a gentle style and such deep real life subjects.

Showing at the Village Hall tonight, Saturday 14th March 7:30.



After 10 years of sporadic but regular film presentations, Ashurst Flix in the Stix, due to increased demand, will now have monthly film presentations on the 2nd Saturday of every month (14 March, 11 April, 9 May, 13 June etc).

We have also enabled CC purchase of tickets at the door. But have cash with you, just in case.

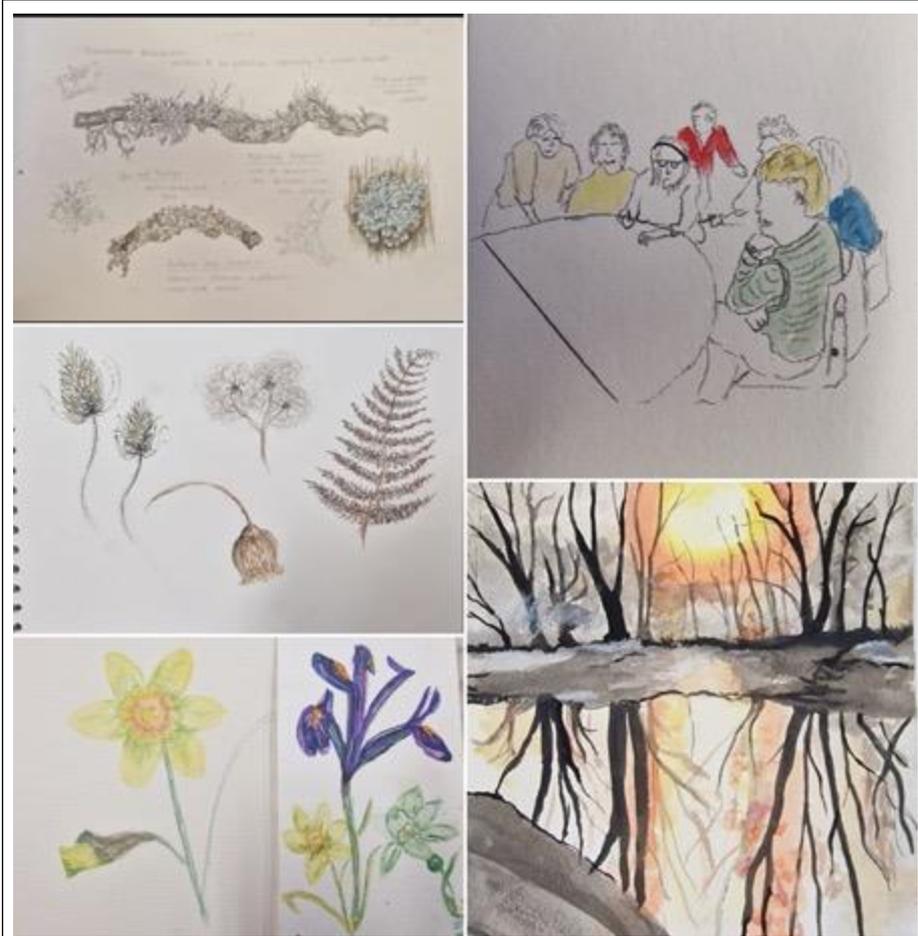
The 14 April presentation will be "Song Sung Blues" starring Hugh Jackman and Kate Hudson at the Village Hall at 7:30 pm.

More details can be found in the Flix newsletter. To join, just write to me as below.

Thank you

Bob Harari (bob@flixinthestix.com)

Ashurst Artynoons (Village Hall, Tuesdays 2 to 4pm)



Ashurst Artynoons is a keen and friendly Art Group.

Some of us have not done any art since school whilst others have been practicing for decades.

We have fun experimenting with a variety of media and enjoy lively and varied conversation. There is always a cuppa and homemade cake.

Sometimes we have demos and workshops led by local artists. We enjoy observing and recording nature throughout the seasons. During the spring and summer months we hope to visit the bluebell woods at Daylands Farm, revisit St James's Church and explore some local gardens.

Experimenting with printing and making our own ink is also on the agenda. New people are always welcome to drop in and join us. It costs £3.50.

Please contact Janice on 07733238169 or merrionfarm@aol.com for more info.

Ashurst Nature Notes

Spring 2026

After a very wet and unsettled start to 2026 with relentless rain in January and early February, Spring seemed to arrive right on cue at the beginning of March with a few very welcome sunny and warmer days to begin the process of drying up the Ashurst mud.

In the woods around Ashurst, a green carpet is emerging in readiness for the anticipated spectacular show of Spring, from the white of wood anemones to the yellow of celandine through to the bluebell display, with many other colours as well, until the canopy closes in May as the leaves fully open. Hazel catkins are prominent and hedgerows are suddenly full of the white spray of blackthorn blossom.

The bird song is picking up in intensity and we are beginning to see or hear the first summer migrants such as the chiffchaff and blackcap. Some interesting species are now seen regularly in the Ashurst vicinity - red kite, cormorant, raven and the occasional Egyptian goose. We have had some songbird flocks over the winter months including starlings performing their spectacular murmuration.

Easter is a great time to get out and enjoy nature. Spring in the countryside is always exciting with something new to note every passing day. Let's hope we are fortunate enough this Spring to hear the song of the nightingale and the call of the cuckoo.

Ashurst, March 2026



Forthcoming Village Dates

Flix in the Stix	Village Hall	Saturday 14 th March	7.30 pm
Eucharist	Church	Sunday 22th March	10.30 am
Easter – Stations of the Cross	Church	Good Friday 3rd April	2.00 pm
Easter – Sunday Service	Church	Sunday 5th April	11.00 am NB Note time
Flix in the Stix	Village Hall	Saturday 11 th April	7.30pm
Eucharist	Church	Sunday 26th April	10.30 am
Flix in the Stix	Village Hall	Saturday 9 th May	7.30 pm
Family Service – Baptism Followed by the Annual Church Meeting	Church	Sunday 10th May	10.30 am
Sausage Soiree	Burnetts	Friday 15 th May	7.00 – 9.00 pm
Eucharist	Church	Sunday 24th May	10.30 am
Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	Thursday 28 th May (tbc)	7.30 pm
Flix in the Stix	Village Hall	Saturday 13 th June	7.30 pm
Family Service – God’s own Acre	Church	Sunday 14th June	10.30 am
Eucharist	Church	Sunday 28th June	10.30 am
Flix in the Stix	Village Hall	Saturday 11 th July	7.30 pm
Family Service – Sharing Picnic	Church	Sunday 12th July	10.30 am
Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	Thursday 16 th July	7.30 pm
Flower and Produce Show	Village Hall	Sunday 19 th July	Public from 2 pm
Patronal Service	Church	Sunday 26th July	4.00 pm



Deadline for the Summer 2026 Newsletter

Please note that the deadline for the next Parish Newsletter is **Friday 19th June 2026**.

Please send items for inclusion either as an e-mail or as a Word attachment to susie.fischel@outlook.com. All contributions particularly of photos are most welcome.

Many thanks for all the contributions to this Newsletter – they are much appreciated.

