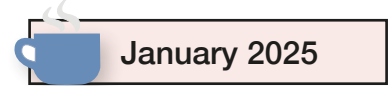




Shipston Forum



Ringling in Christmas

The Rotary Club estimated that as many as 2,000 people attended its Victorian Evening in December. The annual event to mark the start of the festive season was another success – even with Storm Darragh brewing.



The church bells rang out and seasonal musical accompaniment was provided by the Primary School choir, Shipston Town Band and the Cotswold Choir.

After MC Robin Payne invited Shipston Rotary President Fay Ivens to welcome everyone, Mayor John Dinnie, accompanied by the Town Crier, Marian Ladd, turned on the Christmas lights and Amit Patel switched on the Rotary Tree of Life.

There was plenty for the children. Father Christmas took time out of his schedule to be in his grotto, Charlotte the stilt walker and the balloon man made shapes out of balloons and the carousel was kept very busy. Huge bubbles floated overhead, catching the light.

Over 35 stalls stretched along the High Street and into Market Place, offering local craft items, tombolas, raffles and games, and there was candy floss, hog roast, hot dogs, and plenty of mulled wine and mince pies. The shops stayed open late and Shipston Community First Responders displayed their new car.

Shipston Rotary has been organising the evening, one of their main fundraising events, for 24 years. “It involves a lot of work,” says Rotarian Nigel Willis. “But we enjoy doing it and hope it can continue.”

“There was a very special atmosphere in our special town,” adds Fay Ivens.



River blessing

At the end of last year, a special ceremony was held to bless the town’s river, the Stour. Over 40 people gave thanks to the river as druid and humanist celebrant Martin Russell invoked the elements in a Celtic blessing. At the time of writing, the town has been spared – just – from floods. Could this be a reason? Read a full report from Katie Beswick on page 8.



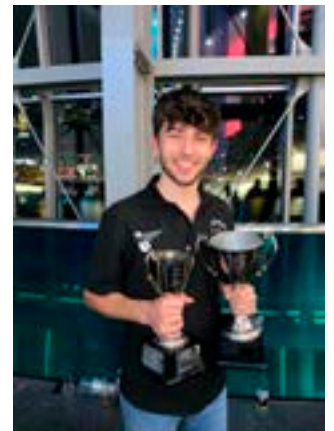
Star sign?

One of the many signs signalling the many roadworks that took place during 2024 renamed the town Shipston on Star. The Town Council has met with the Warwickshire County Council Highways team and has an update – see a report on page 3 and find out what you can do on page 8.



Another award for Luke

Luke Barker, who began his cornet playing with both Shipston Town Junior and Senior bands before becoming principal cornet with both the National Children’s Brass Band and the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, has earned a further accolade by being awarded the Best Principal Cornet Prize at the Prestigious Brass in Concert Championship in Gateshead. Luke with his Flowers Band were also awarded the audience’s choice for the best performance.



In this issue:

- What medical services will you need in 2025? – page 5
- Stour Singers reaches the big 5-0 – page 5
- Dick Burge tribute – page 6

- What to do about roadworks – page 8
- The beautiful night skies of winter – page 11
- To weed or not to weed? Letter – page 14

Mayor's column

Dear Shipston,

As we experience the changing of the year, we each feel in different ways about the year that has been and the new one yet to unfold. For a lot of us, 2024 has been a year of change in so many ways, while others may be looking forward to changes in 2025. As things about us alter and shift with the passing of time it is good to feel the permanence of the Spirit of Shipston with its ever-friendly face and willingness to help all comers relax, settle down and enjoy the moment as it happens.

Not, however, moments like Sunday 24th November when after heavy rain in the south of the catchment and flooding in Long Compton we experienced a river level of 3.67m at the Shipston gauge, resulting in sufficient depth of water in Mill St. for a road closure to be requested. The problem is vehicles driving at speed through the flood waters driving waves into people's properties. Please drive slowly and carefully in flooded areas. You cannot see what is below the surface. It will be deeper than it looks.

Locally I was pleased to attend the launch of the Toy Library at St Edmund's and the 40th anniversary of the Shipston Probus Club.

On the Civic side, Bryony and I attended an excellent quiz and curry night at Galanos House (Royal British Legion Care Home) hosted by Angela John, Mayor of Southam. I also attended the 45th Anniversary of VASA. (<https://www.vasa.org.uk/>) This group provides volunteer drivers and their cars to transport residents in need to hospital or other appointments across Stratford, Warwick and beyond.

My visit to Ryse 3D, Mitch Barnes' 3D printing company on upper Tilemans Lane was a highlight. The highly productive, low waste, additive manufacture of specialist parts for high-end vehicle makers combined with manufacturing their own design of a highly competitive 3D printer was a joy to behold. Their use of a predominantly UK supply chain is good news for local suppliers. This is exactly the kind of enterprise that Shipston needs, and it richly deserves the King's Award that was presented by Lord Lieutenant, Tim Cox, on behalf of the King.

Back to the Spirit of Shipston, I hope you all enjoyed the Rotary Victorian Evening as much as Bryony and I did. The hard work of the organisers and the support of the sponsors made this an event the town can be proud of. Well done to all who came to a great evening held despite Storm Darragh. Another festive highlight was the Christmas concert by the Town Band. Alex Bland's humorous touches added to a sparkling performance by our favourite musicians.

I hope you all enjoyed the rest of the Christmas period. I trust the Spirit of Shipston will keep you safe in 2025 and I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

Your town mayor,

John

John Dinnie,

Mayor, Shipston Town Council

News from Shipston Town Council's November meeting**Events**

Councillors praised the organisers of the Victorian Evening for a successful event, well-timed just before the storm arrived. Councillors had enjoyed the Town Band's Christmas concert, helped at Holiday at Home and attended the Shipston Lodge Winter Festival.

Blue Light report

Police update: burglary to dwellings has decreased. The main target is vehicles, with offenders usually gaining access via rear doors. Steering wheel locks offer an early visual deterrent, and air tags can offer further protection even if the vehicle is fitted with trackers. Owners are urged to remove items where possible. Ensure deliveries are left in a safe place or with a person, and use timer lights so properties don't look unoccupied.

It was noted that Warwickshire's Chief Fire Officer has returned to post. The First Responders have made a report of activity this year, showing that 80% of their activity was within Shipston, with 359 calls so far this year. Of these, 80 were category 1, a serious heart attack or stroke. The team is the second busiest in the Coventry and Warwickshire area after Nuneaton.

Ellen Badger

The Integrated Care Board will be invited to meet the Town Council to present their pre-consultation business case on 13th January. A public face to face meeting will be held in the Townsend Hall, with other meetings in Stratford, Warwick and Leamington. Council will make provision to reply to the consultation process as an organisation.

Environment

A draft biodiversity policy has been circulated and will be discussed at the January meeting. Cornmill Meadows tree-planting is scheduled for on 16th December and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust will plant wildflowers at Riverside on 9th January and will help plant hedge whips at Cornmill Meadows on 18th January from 10.30am. Volunteers with spades needed please!

Geoff Smith from the Flood Action Group reported that the recent storm was a near-miss in flooding terms, with the river level rising to 3.67 metres. The Environment Agency had not foreseen the 23mm of rain that fell in one hour in Long Compton which had an effect on river levels downstream. He suggested that the flood action resilience plan be re-examined, along with more natural flood management although this requires funding and cooperation between the County Council, Severn Trent and landowners – the latter group on the whole being very willing to help with measures such as ponding. Geoff Smith is to step back from the management team, and the councillors thanked him for his hard work and efforts in recent years in helping to prevent flooding in town. The Council's Emergency Plan Action Group is to be reconvened.

Planning

Shipston Enterprise Centre's plan for resurfacing the former bowling green, with new fencing and floodlights (subject to consultation with Warwick Ecology) met no objections from Council.

Remedial tree work at Ashgrove was passed, along with request for tree reduction and felling in Redwood Park conservation area, if

Town Council News/Health News

resident can replace according to the council's two-for-one policy.

The South Warwickshire Local Plan is due for consultation during January and February. A full briefing on the proposed development sites is to come. Council's response to be discussed at the next planning committee meeting at the end of January.

Heritage, Amenities and Leisure Projects

The HALP working group is being put on hold for the time being but will re-convene on a project-by-project basis moving forward.

Communications

Shakespeare's England has a new events page for the whole of Warwickshire, which may become the main site for promoting events and festivals. Councillor has requested Shipston Business Group have more input into the LoveShipston website. Council's new IT contracts to be phased in after new year.

Town assets

Twin chapel to be checked for recent storm damage. Second quotation for repair is expected shortly.

District Council

Councillor Hatch reported that Sport England has given a £135,000 grant to the leisure centre for solar panels. Work will start next year. Councillor Passingham reported that the Integrated Care Board will be coming to the District Council's scrutiny and overview committee at the beginning of February. This meeting is open to the public and will be part of the consultation process about the Ellen Badger hospital. Those who wish to speak need to make a request two days in advance.

Roadworks special meeting

Councillor Richard Walters reports On 3rd December Town Councillors met Shail Chohan, Head of Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Highways and Jeff Morris from the Network Team at New Clerk House to relay the concerns of residents at the scale of disruption caused by roadworks in recent months. The meeting was frank and open, but also constructive and collaborative.

Councillors questioned why so many works appear to overlap and highlighted the impact to local businesses. The permit authorisation process was outlined as well as the emergency works process. Often it is instances of pre-planned works clashing with a spate of emergency works that create the density and therefore the disruption. Although the County is the authority, often the works are conducted by third parties such as telecoms and utility companies. Sometimes, these companies exceed the terms of their permit and are therefore subject to financial penalty. Councillors cited specific examples of works that had been in place for extended

periods with limited work taking place. Although Highways have enforcement teams, they welcome residents highlighting where works are not being carried out correctly. Councillors were shown how to find details of permits on the One Network website and how to log issues directly with WCC (details below).

Roadworks in the town are a hugely emotive subject and rightly a cause of great concern. The Town Council are committed to working with County to minimise disruption and keeping residents informed, but there are things that we can all do. Please see page 8



Warwickshire County's Jeff Morris (centre) and Shail Chohan (left of Jeff) meeting with Shipston Town Council.

Litter picking – a great job!

Councillor Hilary Kelly writes: Sadly, our last litter pick of 2024 had to be cancelled because of Storm Darragh, but thank you to all the people who helped out last year. When I am out picking litter in my hi-viz jacket passers-by often say, "Thank you, you're doing a great job." It's lovely to be appreciated. If you would like to join our team, we meet on the first Saturday of each month, weather permitting, at 10am outside New Clark House, in West Street for an hour's litter collecting, before having refreshments in the council office.

**Townsend Hall**

Happy New Year to one and all!

The calendar for 2025 is filling up with bookings and some dates are already being taken for December!

We will be kicking off our 2025 musical evenings on 7th March with Kim Cypher, a much-loved lady of UK jazz. Together with husband Mike, she has created a huge following with her sunny brand of uplifting jazz. Kim plays sax and sings popular jazz standards with a zany presentation and style. Not to be missed – get the date in your diary.

The full programme of our 2025 musical evenings will be available on our website soon. Take a look at www.townsendhall.co.uk for this, other events and clubs booked into the hall, and to make your own booking if you have something you'd like to put on.

Jenny Glover, Townsend Hall Chair

Beds for Badger campaign

Thank you to the well over 4,000 people who signed the petition across rural South Warwickshire in favour of returning inpatient beds to the Ellen Badger Hospital, and also to the countless people who support our aims but did not get the opportunity to sign the petition before it was handed over to Manuela Perteghella MP at the rugby club.

Thank you all for your considerable support for this campaign. Please continue to visit the website (bedsforbadger.org) for the latest news. Your kind donations on the GoFundMe page and more directly have helped with printing costs and other expenditure.

Through the help we are getting from Chris Humphris from the Community Hospital Association, we held a meeting with the Integrated Care Board (ICB). They expect the pre-consultation business case (PCBC) to be ready for approval by NHS England shortly. They were unable to change the two options but confirmed that both were financially viable. The options are for the distribution of 35 rehabilitation beds either only to Leamington and Stratford with no inpatient beds in Shipston or the possibility of 12 beds returning from Leamington to the 1992 Princess Diana retained building at the Ellen Badger Hospital. We have asked why the numbers of beds are restricted to 35 when SWFT announced 41 and 50 are currently in use. The ICB team are gathering information on this and more information on the Community Recovery Service which is intended to support home-based recovery. While home-based recovery is good for some, there are others for whom an inpatient bed in easy reach of family, friends, local doctors and other healthcare professionals is essential.

The ICB are planning their consultation for a six-week period from 6th January to 14th February. During that period everyone will have a chance to comment on the options proposed both online and at a face-to-face session to be held in Shipston. Similar events are to be held in Stratford, Warwick and Leamington. We do not want this to be a contest between the rural south of the county and the nearby conurbations, but we do want sufficient inpatient beds to be distributed fairly. Please make sure that your views and comments on the consultation are received by and registered with the ICB during the consultation period.

Thank you all for the support we are getting from across Rural South Warwickshire.

B4B Campaign organisers

Sponsor our nurses

Shipston Home Nursing is asking the local community to help its nursing services, by launching a 'Sponsor our Nurses' campaign. Raising essential funds for its hospice care at home, the charity is inviting people to make donations, from as little as £5 a month, to support the cost of providing palliative nursing care for patients in our community.



This year Shipston Home Nursing expects to have provided free hospice care at home to around 170 patients and their families in Shipston, Wellesbourne, Kineton and the surrounding villages. This essential service costs over £650,000 to provide, yet the charity receives just six per cent of its funding from the

NHS.

“Our nurses and healthcare assistants are at the heart of our hospice at home service,” says Gemma Roberts, Head of Nursing Services. “They are experienced in palliative care, focusing on symptom control and personal care and offering emotional support to the wider family. This campaign is vitally important. We want to be here to provide support to anyone in our community who needs us.”

Signing up to Sponsor our Nurses will make a real difference. A donation of £10 a month over a year, often less than the cost of a monthly music subscription, could fund a respite visit from one of our healthcare assistants.

“The support we receive from the local community is wonderful and means the world to all our staff,” says Gemma. “By supporting our Sponsor our Nurses campaign, you can make a big difference to the patients and families we have the privilege of caring for.”



To support the campaign please visit <https://www.shipstohomenursing.co.uk/sponsor-our-nurses/> where you can register online or download a form. Alternatively, contact the Shipston Home Nursing team on 01608 664 850 or email fundraising@shipstohomenursing.co.uk.

Medical Centre update

What will you need in 2025? The new year can be an opportunity for change, whether you are looking to tackle existing issues or to develop new habits, some of the services below may be able to help:



- Would you like to give up smoking? Call 0333 005 0092 or text QUIT to 60777

- Are you caring for someone? The Carers Trust can offer support and advice – https://www.carerstrusthofs.org.uk/help_and_advice/category/main/warwickshire/ or ask for a carers' appointment with our Carer Champions, Nurses Katie and Laura

- Living with dementia? Support for those diagnosed and their families locally through Dementia Connect 033 150 3456

- Worried about your drinking or drug use? Contact Change Grow Live on 01926 353 513

- Help following sexual assault, recent or historical, call the Blue Sky Centre confidentially on 0800 970 0370, helpline open 24/7

- If you know someone affected by domestic abuse Freephone 0800 408 1552, www.talk2someone.org.uk

- Do you need mental health support? IAPT is a service for people feeling stressed, anxious or depressed – 024 7667 1090, <https://www.healthymindservice.com/> or there is the Mental Health Matters 24hour helpline - 0800 616171, available 24/7

- Worried about a vulnerable adult? Call 01926 412080, and choose the adult social care option. Worried about a child's safety? Call 01926 414144

- Need help and advice about weight management? see <https://www.happyhealthylives.uk/integrated-care-board/resources-and-services/weight-management-services-and-pathways/>

- Wanting to be more active? <https://www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/preventing-heart-disease/staying-active>

If you are not sure where to turn for information and advice please try the services above, or make an appointment with one of our doctors or nurses. There are other services that may be able to help.

Tribute to David Burge

A true friend to Shipston was lost when David 'Dick' Burge died on 27th November, aged 87. His long time commitment to having a Shipston museum, together with co-founder Mike Ashley, was the foundation of the Shipston museum we have today. He sometimes said with a smile: “As long as I live long enough to see the Museum re-open!” So it was a very special day when he cut the ribbon to open the doors of our museum two years ago to see that hope realised.

Trustee chair Bekky Hillman paid tribute to fellow trustee Dick: “His passion for history and archaeology and his local knowledge was second to none. I hope that the museum and the Historical Society will remain a tribute to him and Mike, and we will try to maintain his values in everything we do going forward.”

At the funeral on 5th December his children John and Helen who were over from Australia paid tribute to 'Pops'. Then a poem, written by former colleague Frank Storr when Dick left consulting firm IDC to join Warwickshire Highways was read, including the lines:

No more the smile of cynicism, often wry

Behind those narrow eyes the wit -ah, how dry!

So practical his thinking, yet so deep

That many a time thought he had fallen asleep!

Local friend Pete Cox also paid tribute to this truly remarkable man:

“Dick Burge—a man whose love for Shipston-on-Stour has left an enduring mark on this town and its people. Dick was more than a resident; he was a steward of Shipston's history,

a storyteller of its past, and a guardian of its heritage. Through his tireless efforts, he ensured that the stories, artefacts, and memories that define our town were not lost to time, but preserved to be celebrated for generations to come.

“Dick was not content to merely collect history; he sought to bring it to life. Whether uncovering forgotten documents, cataloguing cherished artefacts, or sharing fascinating stories, his work was always a labour of love. He understood that history isn't just about dates and events—it's about people, community, and identity. Through his dedication, he made sure that Shipston's rich tapestry of life, work, and culture would never be forgotten.



Dick having just cut the ribbon opening Shipston Museum - the realisation of his hope to see it brought alive again.

But beyond his remarkable contributions to history, Dick was a kind-hearted and generous soul. He had a knack for connecting with people, for listening and learning, and for sharing his enthusiasm in a way that inspired others.

Thank you, Dick, for everything you have given us. You will always hold a special place in the heart of Shipston-on-Stour. Rest in peace.”

People, Planet, Pint

Sustainability Meetup

Pop down to your local People Planet Pint meetup to find more about what's going on locally with sustainability and how you can get involved. The Shipston one will be on Wednesday 15th January, 6pm at the Horseshoe Inn. The first 33 drinks are free! Let them know you're coming via Eventbrite -

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shipston-on-stour-small199s-people-planet-pinttm-sustainability-meetup-tickets-1113163645429>

Sing with Stour Singers as we hit the big 5-0

This year will be a momentous year for Stour Singers, as we celebrate our GOLDEN anniversary. The choir was founded by its director Richard Emms in 1975 and he has chosen Brahms' Requiem for our anniversary performance in May. We will soon share some very exciting news about our concert; suffice to say that if you've ever thought about singing in a choir then joining Stour Singers now will be an amazing and memorable introduction for you! We rehearse on Thursdays from 7.30-9.30pm at Shipston Primary School, and rehearsals re-start on 9th January.

For more information check out our website “<http://www.stoursingers.org.uk/>”www.stoursingers.org.uk, contact our coordinator Gayle on 07791 769102, or just come along on a Thursday evening!

Regular Events

Monday

Seated Exercise Class: 11am Townsend Hall

IT Help!: 10am-12pm Shipston Library (appointment only)

Shipston Duplicate Bridge Club:
6:50pm for a 7pm start.
The Church Room, Darlingscote Road,
Contact Matthew Hunter: 01608 684499

Shipston Knitting and Crochet Group: 7-9pm, Low Furlong

Pickleball:
1:30pm – 3:30pm, Townsend Hall. Free to attend. Dec dates 9 & 16 only

Tuesday

Rhyme Time: 10.30am, Shipston Library

Dementia Café: Shipston Lodge, 10.30am-12:30pm

Community Hub: Shipston Methodist Church, 2pm-4pm

Lego Club: Shipston Library, 3.30pm

Strictly Fitsteps Fab: 10am, Townsend Hall

Age Concern Lunch Club: Stour Court 12pm. Contact Jill Case 01608 662226

Wednesday

Seated Tai Chi: 9.30am, Townsend Hall. Free Admission

Standing Tai Chi: 10.30am, Townsend Hall. Free Admission

GLOSS Coffee Morning: 11am, The Garden Room, The George Townhouse

Indoor Kurling: 2pm, Townsend Hall

U3A weekly scrabble: 2-4pm at the George Townhouse. Free for all U3A members

Stour Valley Stitchers: 10am-1pm, 1st & 3rd Wed, The Hall, Stourton, CV36 5HG

Thursday

Shipston Community Warm Hub: Every Thursday 10am-12pm, The Scout Hut, New Street.

Story stomp: 10am, Shipston Library

Scrabble Club: 2pm-4pm, Shipston Library

Age Concern Lunch Club: Rainbow Fields 12pm. Contact Christine Grant 07939 595600

Community Social Prescriber drop in: 10am-12pm, Scout Hut, New Street

Stour Singers:

We rehearse on Thursdays from 7.30-9.30pm at Shipston Primary School. Contact Gayle Burch on 07791 769102

Friday

Pilates for Complete Beginners: 9.30am Townsend Hall

Walks with a friendly group: 10am Mill car park. Call Marleen 01608 663616

Shipston Stitchers:

Every fortnight at The Church Room, Darlingscote Road. 10am -3pm. New members welcome. Contact Anita Spencer on 01993 832665

Age Concern Lunch Club: Fortnightly, Rainbow Fields, 12pm. Contact: Maryann Dobbins 07779 730774

Shipston Knitting and Crochet Group - Friday afternoons in Mrs. Browns from 2-4.30pm

Club Night at Shipston Sports Club: 6pm-9pm, London Road

Alcoholics Anonymous: 7.30-9pm, Blackwell Village Hall, CV36 4PQ, 01865 242373, 0800 9177 650

Saturday

Lego Club: Shipston Library. From 10am.

Shipston Food Bank:
10:30am-12pm, St Edmund's Church, Shipston.
No referral or voucher needed

What's On Calendar: January 2025

4th. Shipston Town Council Monthly Litter Pick: All welcome. Meet at New Clarke House, West Street at 10am. Equipment and refreshments provided. Children's equipment available

7th. Shipston Library Reading Group: 2pm-3pm first Tuesday of each month.

7th & 21st. 'Dance for Joy' Monthly Circle Dance Group in Stretton on Fosse 2.30 – 4pm. First and third Tuesday of each month. Dances from around the world – all taught from scratch. Please contact Geri Hunting geraldinehunting@icloud.com or 07968 338848

8th. Shipston on Stour WI: Helen Cooper - Hands-on craft evening. Meetings held every first Wednesday of the month in The Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscott Road Shipston on Stour CV36 4DR at 7.00 pm.
For more information contact: Gill Smith – Telephone 07759 232899

9th. The Royal British Legion – Shipston Branch: Committee Meeting of the Shipston Branch of the RBL, 18:30 hrs at St Edmund's Church. If you would like to know more, become a Committee member or a member of the Branch call or message the Branch Secretary Alex Black on 07789 968733 or email alblack32@hotmail.com

12th. Senior Residents Afternoon Film Showing: See ad on page 10

13th. Town Council Meeting: 7pm, New Clark House

14th. Stour Community Awareness Network (SCAN): See ad on page 10
Stour Valley Lions Meeting: 6:30pm – 9:30pm; The George Townhouse. 2nd Tuesday of every month

15th. Stour Valley Stitchers: 10am-1pm, The Hall, Stourton, CV36 5HG. 1st & 3rd Wednesdays

15th. People Planet Pint sustainability meet up. 6pm. Horseshoe Inn. First 33 drinks free. See article page 5.

16th. Drop In Clinic: For the over 65s. 10am-12pm, Scout Hut. Every third Thursday

17th. Royal British Legion Social Evening: The Shipston on Stour Branch of the Royal British Legion meet on the third Friday of each month for a social gathering. We meet in The Horseshoe from 7.30pm onwards. Do please come and join us and share your stories with like-minded people. For further information contact Alex Black 07789 968733 or alblack32@hotmail.com.

18th. Lions Prize Bingo: See ad on page 7

28th. GLOSS (Great Ladies of Shipston and Surroundings). A social group for women to have fun and make friends. 7.30pm- 9.30pm at the Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscote Road, CV36 4DR. Meeting on the 4th Tuesday of every month (except December. All ladies welcome. Entry £2.00

28th. Shipston U3A: Judge jury judgement justice. 2pm, Townsend Hall. Members free. Visitors £2.

30th. Local Quaker Meeting for Worship: St Edmund's Church, last Thursday in the month at 2.30pm, followed by tea/coffee, biscuits & chat

Roadworks issues?

As shown by the meeting that the Town Council called with Warwickshire County Council Highways in December, roadworks have been a thorny issue in town over the past year.

Here some things you can do to stay informed and report any issues:

1. Raise issues or concerns directly with Highways Customer Services:

- 01926 412515
- Open Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-4.30pm

2. Reporting issues directly online:

- <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/reporhighwayproblem>
- You can report issues either anonymously, or by creating an account
- Creating an account will allow you to get updates for some defect types, eg potholes

3. Stay informed for when roadworks are planned and how long they will go on for:

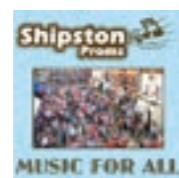
- All roadworks which have a permit agreed can be found here: <https://one.network/>
- Creating an account on One Network brings benefits, including the ability to receive automated emails on any new works in any area chosen by you.



Shipston Proms

With 2025 upon us, the Shipston Proms Music Festival is now taking a more definite shape. Our successful fundraiser in December featuring opera singers Anna Patalong and Benedict Nelson with pianist Lynn Arnold has helped provide music for this coming year. A huge thank you to all involved, especially those who braved the buffeting winds of Storm Darragh and swerved fallen trees to attend what was another memorable night of world class opera.

As with previous festivals, we have tried to book a wide range of acts to cater for all tastes. For the Final Night as well as the acclaimed rock of the Rick Parfitt Junior Band one of our supports will be from the Reggulites, a soulful reggae band hailing from Birmingham. Inspired by Bob Marley and Peter Tosh they bring their own fresh sound to the stage.



We have sorted out a DJ for our Ibiza party night but will have to keep this under wraps for now until the contract is officially signed and sealed! We have also narrowed down the first act to perform at the start of the Shipston Proms Music Festival and will let you know next month who will be playing at the Townsend Hall. We are still working on a country and western night and hopefully a Gilbert and Sullivan production, cancelled last year due to illness.

We are looking for a judge for the Shipston Introducing event, so if you know of anyone in the music business or if you have a musical ear, please get in touch. Who knows, the next Ed Sheeran, Adele or Radiohead could be found in South Warwickshire!

We still need help with our social media and there is currently a vacancy for an assistant chair. If you would like to join our very friendly pro music committee, our contact details are: www.shipstonproms.org or go to our Facebook page. Your input can really make a difference.

The Shipston Proms Music Festival runs from 13-28th June.



Photo credit: Chris Roberts, WiderView Visual Media

River blessing

Our beautiful Stour is only 14 miles long, lacing our communities together and bringing news. Not having been badly affected by navigation improvements, it holds the same course that it has achieved through its own flow. Springing from its source near Swalcliffe, coursing west to Traitors Bridge, Stourton and then north to Shipston; naming towns and villages as it gently meanders through Newbold on Stour, Preston on Stour and Atherstone on Stour until it finally joins a bigger body, the Avon. I have fond memories of the Stour, swinging and swimming at Wimpstone, pooh sticks on Honington bridge, burst banks along the A3400, finding a quiet lunchtime spot and watching it flow, contemplating the famous quote “you cannot step into the same river twice”. Nature always finds ways to quiet our mind helping us make sense of life.

All my rivery love got me thinking, wouldn't it be wonderful if as a community we could come together to show the river our



gratitude and what better way than to hold a water blessing. After all it has given so much to make our town what it is today, from powering the brewery and mills to cleaning wool and driving the spinning machines. Even before that sustaining all life, as water does. And considered precious, hence our ancestors deciding to settle close to it.

I asked Martin Russell to hold the ceremony and thankfully he agreed. Martin is not only an important town elder as a keeper of so much knowledge of Shipston's history and a big part of the museum, but he is also a druid and celebrant and as such is experienced in conducting humanist nature-based ceremonies.

As the date approached the heavens opened and the river flooded, many more people began to notice the river now and not for the reasons I had hoped! But I just thought, well at least the river is on their minds.

On the day of the blessing, the sky was azure and sun shone bright. The river rose up to meet us, swollen by the heavy rains and 40 or so of the town's people gathered near the bank to form a semi-circle facing the river. Martin opened the circle dedicated to the four elements and explained their importance to life. He spoke of the cycle of water and then offered the blessing to the river. Although the ceremony was carried out in English, the actual blessing and invocation of the elements were done using a language from our Celtic past. The words sounded powerfully familiar but unknown. We then passed the stick around and said our name as witnesses and anything else we wanted to thank the river for. It really was a beautifully moving ceremony, a reminder of our interconnection with all.

It was so good we are going to do it next year too, so be sure to come.

The Stour is only 14 miles long and as such it doesn't seem an impossible task to do all we can as a community to protect and keep her and all who reside in and around her healthy. We have some people doing great work testing the water and helping with flood defences, but we have more plans afoot and need you to get involved. If you have skills to share or time to spare, please get in touch, there's many ways to help, Let's make beautiful ripples.

Katie Beswick

littlebirdherbalist@gmail.com

Bookfest returns for 2025

After an immensely successful first year, Shipston Bookfest will return to celebrate books and reading in the town, running from 20th – 28th September 2025.

With over 400 tickets sold and more than 20 local and internationally recognised authors speaking at various events throughout the town, 2024's week-long festival was a testament to Shipston's vibrant community spirit.

We look forward to sharing the joys of reading with all in the town next year. If you would like to join our friendly committee of book lovers, please come along to our first meeting of 2025 on Tuesday 28th January at The George Townhouse.

Shipston's Spirit of Christmas past (well, last month)

Here are some more photos from the Victorian Evening.



FREE for Senior Residents of Shipston on Stour!

**Join us to watch a film
with hot drinks
& cakes to follow!**



**Sunday 12th January 2025
Townsend Hall, Shipston**

Doors open at 2.30pm

Contact:

tel: 0345 833 2835

email: StourValleyLionsEvents@mail.com



*Get your free ticket from The Flower House, 3 Market Place, Shipston
please do not phone The Flower House*



**A New Year Treat to beat
the January blues - for FREE!**

Bought to you by the Stour Valley Lions. Reg Charity: 1191826

SHIPSTON ON STOUR AREA

u3a

Registered Charity no 1170969

Tuesday January 28 2025

2.00 pm at the Townsend Hall



JUDGE ..JURY..JUDGEMENT..... JUSTICE

Involvement is the key to audience appreciation, and everyone loves a meaty murder mystery! Hence Alan Cutler, retired writer, trainer and professional speaker, has designed a series of presentations, in which he plays the part of the judge and prosecution, and defence councils in a real life Victorian murder trial, and where the audience are the jury...deciding the fate of the accused. Will you free a guilty murderer, or send an innocent person to the gallows? Did your verdict accord with the actual jury 100 years ago? Was justice served?

Members free

Visitors £2

*Shipston Amateur Dramatic Society
Present*

Peter Pan

A pantomime by Ron Hall

Townsend Hall
Sheep Street, Shipston on Stour
7.30 pm
(Saturday Matinee 2.30 pm)

Thursday 6th – Saturday 8th February 2025
Adults £10, Children £5

*Tickets available from John Lyne Home Hardware, or online
at ticketsource.co.uk/shipston-drama-group
(Tickets **NOT** available on the door)*

*Children in fancy dress at the matinee will
receive a treat*

*"Second star to the right and straight on
'til morning"*



Come and join us! We are a friendly group who meet every other month to share ideas and learn more about our local community services.

Next meeting: Tuesday 14th January 2025

Speakers: Vanessa Compton and Bob Armstrong, Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership (SHWP)

At: Townsend Hall, 52 Sheep Street, Shipston on Stour, CV36 4AE

10am for free refreshments. 10.30am start
12 noon finish

For further information please contact
Laurie Grove on 07779 151947

If you require transport to the meeting, VASA **may** be able to help. Please call 01789 262889 or email transport@vasa.org.uk

Shipston Primary School



We are hugely excited to launch the Shipston Spirit Awards at school, a new set of awards which we hope will support children in developing their personal and social skills, independence and have fun playing with friends and grown-ups.

Through the Shipston Spirit Awards, we aim to help children to develop ambition as well as the important skills of resilience and perseverance. These awards cannot be earned quickly and require children to work both at home and at school to achieve them. There are 72 fun targets to complete over time. They engage children in developing the 6Cs, our six global competences that are vital for future skills and employment: character, creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration and citizenship.

The Shipston Spirit Formula

(Effective Habits + Relentless Pursuit of Excellence) x Love

= Success

Resilience x Courage

The tasks all fit perfectly with our 'Be Ready' and 'Be Responsible' behaviour expectations.

There are four different levels of award to earn: bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

Bronze Award: earned by completing 18 tasks – nine from the 'at home' and nine from the 'at school' section.

Silver Award: earned by completing 36 tasks – 18 from the 'at home' and 18 from the 'at school' section.

Gold Award: earned by completing 54 tasks – 27 from the 'at home' and 27 from the 'at school' section.

Platinum Award: earned by completing all 72 tasks.

Children can begin earning awards in Key Stage 2 but they can begin practising (and maybe even completing) many of the tasks before then, for example, learning to ride a bike, swimming 5m and completing the Summer Reading Challenges.

Awards are earned by completing the tasks. Half are to be completed in school and half out of school. Some can be completed individually, and some require children to work with others, including their trusted adults. Tasks can be completed in any order. We hope that the awards help our children to become successful people who care about themselves, others and our town as they grow.



Astronomical Society News



The Stratford upon Avon Astronomical Society meets every first and third Tuesday at 8pm (doors open at 7.30pm) at Alderminster Village Hall. Everyone is welcome, especially beginners and those wanting to learn more. The first Tuesday is a club night. In January that will be on 7th January and the speaker on the third Tuesday, 21st January, will be Dr Steve Barrett from Liverpool University with a talk called "The ABC of Stellar Evolution". Please note that the speakers usually start quite promptly at 8pm.

Each month one of our members, Adrian Wakeham, writes an article on aspects of astronomical observation. This month he is looking at the winter stars.

At this time of year, astronomers are at their happiest. The skies are at their darkest and Orion is high in the southern sky.

Most people recognise Orion's belt, which is also known as the Three Kings and the Three Sisters and consists of three bright star systems – Alnitak, Alnilam, and Mintaka. Below the belt is his sword, of which the middle 'star' looks like a fuzzy blob. This is the famous Orion's Nebula, a 'star factory'. Above and to the left of the belt is a red (giant) star – Betelgeuse, a potential candidate to go supernova – well, sometime in the next ten thousand years!

Below and to the right of the belt is Rigel, a giant blue star. It's a rock star of a star. Because of its size, it's halfway through its life cycle, but so much younger than our sun. So, you could say, it will 'live fast, die young!'



Following the belt to the right you come to a local star cluster (150 light years away) of young stars, this is the Hyades or the head of Taurus, the brightest of which form a 'V' of stars. The red star is Aldebaran, which is a line-of-sight interloper at just 60 light years distance.

Following that line, you'll come to the most famous star cluster, the Pleiades, otherwise known as Messier 45 or the Seven Sisters, even though there are a lot more than seven stars in it. It's a jewel box of young stars. These are just a few of the beautiful sights of the winter sky.

Club nights offer more information on what to look out for each month. If it is clear we do some observing just outside the Village Hall, so please join us. There is no charge initially to come along and find out more, but if you do want to become a member then the fee is just £15 a year and it's free if you are in full time education. For more details go to the website <http://www.astro.org.uk> or contact the Chair John Waller john.waller@astro.org.uk or on 07703 192188.

Happy observing!

Stour Valley Lions at work

The last few weeks of the year were filled with preparations. The incredibly successful and fun Winter Festival at Shipston Lodge with Father Christmas and his reindeer, bratwurst and glühwein at Bar Varia, and the oompah band, all helped to make for a very festive occasion to kick-start the Christmas season.

This year there was an additional hamper added to the Stour Valley Lions Christmas Hamper Raffle, with tickets selling like hot cakes. We very much hope that the winners all enjoyed their extra bits and pieces for Christmas.

There are two events that we have been working on for the New Year. On Sunday 12th January, we invite Shipston's senior residents to join us in the Townsend Hall at 2.30pm for a film, a cup of tea (or coffee) and a piece of cake. There is no charge for this event, but please secure your place by collecting a ticket from the Flower House in Market Street. The advertisement in this issue of the Forum should provide all the information you need about this event.

Bingo will take place in the Townsend Hall on 18th January and we hope that you will come and enjoy this family-friendly event with us. Again, there is no entry cost, enabling you to buy as many game cards as suits your pocket. There will be prizes galore, refreshments and a raffle to add to the fun. See the advertisement in this issue for the full details.

Finally, we are preparing for the Lions' Den: this is the opportunity for all local groups seeking funding to present their story to us. Last year we gave money to a variety of causes across the Stour Valley to enable them to make a difference in the lives of their communities. Once again, see the advertisement for details or speak to one of us when you see us around and about.

Probus celebrates forty years of fellowship



Probus members celebrate forty years of fellowship in Shipston. Nineteen-eighty-four will be remembered by some for the chilling prophecies in the book by George Orwell or maybe the dreadful Brighton bombing. More happily, Probus members celebrate that year as the time a newcomer to the town, Bert

Watkins, disappointed that there was no Probus Club, brought together a small group for the inaugural meeting of Shipston Probus Club at the George Hotel in November 1984.

Current members celebrated with a Gala Lunch at the original venue, now the George Townhouse, to mark 40 years of providing fellowship and convivial company for retired and semi-retired men of the town and surrounding villages. Subsequent years have seen the club flourish and, in need of larger premises, is now based at Shipston Sports and Social Club just off the London Road.

After a fine lunch, celebrations included toasts to past and future members, a birthday cake, and a talk by one of the club's regular speakers, Mike Aggletom from Gloucester Gluvium Probus Club. Mike entertained with a brief history of Probus throughout the UK and worldwide. Probus originated from Rotary members, who had to retire from the organisation at the age of 65, and hence were left with a distinct gap in their social life!

Numerous name changes followed, but groups flourished and by 1971 one hundred and fifty clubs existed in the UK. Each club manages its own affairs, some men only, some mixed, some ladies only, each with its own rules and routines according to members' wishes.

Shipston Probus meets alternate Fridays at the Sports and Social Club, 10.30 until 2pm. Members gather for coffee and a chat and, after brief club business, listen to a talk given by an experienced lecturer or perhaps by one of our own members. The bar is opened and for those who wish, we sit down to an excellent lunch made the more enjoyable by a seating lottery designed to encourage maximum fraternisation!

If you feel Probus could appeal to you, then why not give us a try as our guest? Guests enjoy a free lunch and no initial commitment to join, entirely your choice! Please contact Tony Joint on 01608 663407 or email tonyjoint73@hotmail.com for further details.

Shipston-on-Stour Women's Institute



The December meeting of Shipston WI got into the spirit of Christmas with its annual Christmas party. Members had brought delicious nibbles and canapes and drinks were served. Festive poems were read and gossip exchanged. It was an opportunity to forge new friendships and catch up with what is going on in everybody's lives.



Before the party started business had to be got through. The President, Bridget Smith, reported that Shipston WI had supplied refreshments at the recent Arts in the Cotswolds event held on the last weekend of November in the Townsend Hall. This had been very successful, and it is hoped the event will be held next year when the WI will again, profitably, supply refreshments. The WI also had a stall at the Victorian Evening

in December where they sold preserves, cakes, biscuits and knitted items.

Jacqui Close reported that 240 items of babywear had been knitted for the Stratford Baby Bank. She thanked everyone for their support: the items will be greatly appreciated.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 8th January 2025 at 7pm in the Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscote Road. The speaker will be Helen Cooper who will run a hands-on craft evening. Visitors always welcome. There will be a coffee morning on 21st January 2025 at a venue yet to be decided.

Shipston Cricket Club

Although the season is over, lots of hard work is being done behind the scenes to help prepare for next season, where we hope to defend all of our hard-earned titles from last season.



We are delighted to announce that Clubman of the Year Tom Wood has secured funding for a second net to be installed at London Road. This will allow us to increase our offer for coaching for even more children and youth players, and will enable us to push ahead with establishing a girls' team, something which is a key aim for us for next season. We hope that building work will begin in the new year.

We begin our pre-season nets in January. If you are interested in joining our happy club, either as a player, a sponsor, a spectator or someone who would just like to come and watch cricket in the sun and enjoy a chat on Saturdays during the season, please contact us.

We are also delighted that The George Hotel are joining Immediate Mortgage Solutions as club sponsors. During the season we welcome sponsors for match day balls and man-of-the-match awards. If you would be interested in being a match day sponsor, please do get in touch. You can follow us on Facebook and find out more details at our website <https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/shipstononstourcricketclub>

Shipston Music Society



The Music Society reports on its monthly dose of live music performance, this time from November, when Jazz 59 made a memorable return visit to fulfil the task, again doing so with their usual skill and enthusiasm.

With the opening glissando from the trumpet, the scene was set for the first half, a contrast of Bebop and Ballads. Two pieces to highlight; My Funny Valentine, with a lazy, gentle accompaniment to the intricate melody line of the trumpet and Pent up House, a complete contrast with excellent ensemble work and a trumpet part not for the faint-hearted! After the interval we heard Kind of Blue played in the original order. So What, Freddie Freeloader and Blue in Green all displayed the traditional style of each performer, each having the opportunity of playing the melody – or their own version of it – with different accompaniments from the group which produced a varied selection of sounds to delight the audience. All Blues followed and proved to be most interesting. Initially the saxophone took

on the task of introducing the melody and soon the trumpet (with mute) joined in with what could be classed as a descant – the effect was most interesting. Then we heard snippets of melody from different instruments until finally, the complete melody emerged. A fascinating piece. The programme ended with Flamenco Sketches introduced by a very soft, slow rhythm on drums and bass producing all the elements of a lazy, relaxed atmosphere as the other instruments joined in with snatches of the melody before the complete performance made one dream of evenings spent somewhere in a warm climate with the stars shining overhead. This was greeted with much applause – and an encore, Take 5.

This was live music performed by a group who all enjoy performing together to a high standard – and they then donated the fees earned to the Dementia Society. Congratulations to them, and their leader Paul Dowler, for a most enjoyable evening.

As usual there is no meeting in January, but we meet again on Friday, 21st February when we will have the pleasure once again of listening to cellist George Wilkes whose first cello teacher was Chris Winpenny, who brought a group of students to play for us in October. We hope to see you all (and your friends!) on that occasion.

Shipston SCAN



The SCAN meeting in November was the AGM. While most of the meeting inevitably comprised formalities there was one item of more general interest. SCAN is no longer an acronym for Senior Citizens Action Network. As membership is open to all local residents over the age of 50 it was considered that the term was somewhat misleading. The group is not taking much action at the moment, albeit through lack of resources rather than lack of desire to do so.

From now on SCAN is an acronym for Stour Community Awareness Network, which more accurately reflects the present nature of the group. The hope is that this change will make the group more appealing to a wider audience. If you are under the age of 50 you will be welcome, especially if you are looking to pass on the content of the meeting to an older relative or friend.

The AGM concluded with a very enjoyable recital given by a quartet from the U3A recorder ensemble of music through the ages.

Our next meeting is on 14th January 2025 when the speakers will be Bob Armstrong (chair of the Trustees) and Vanessa Compton (chair of the executive committee) from the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

If you have ever wondered exactly which local council is responsible for what, then the March meeting (Tuesday 11th March) is your chance to find out. Three local councillors have agreed to come and talk about this. John Dinnie (town council), Dave Passingham (district council) and Jo Barker (county council) will be making the whole issue clear.

At the AGM, members were given a list of five possible talks for the remainder of the year. The three selected were First Responders, Blood Bank and Warwickshire Fire Service.

County Council

I am going to start the year with good news! Every year, County Councillors get a pot of money – £8k – to distribute to local organisations and projects. So, I thought I would celebrate with you how some of my grant fund has been spent over the last 10 years. Two hundred pounds to chair aerobics kicked things off. If you have benefitted, then isn't it amazing what a small sum will do? I gave the seed funding to SHWP, so whether you meet at the Warm Hub, play pickleball or enjoy indoor curling - it was a WCC councillor grant which started it! I've helped fund Youth Club, CAB provision, mentoring by Lifespace, MIND, chairs at school, a cooker at the rugby club (which I have even used when Barker Jr was playing!), Food Fest, Bookfest, a stairlift at the sports club, the Toy Library and many more! Over 100 projects, large and small, for all generations in Shipston and the wider area.

And this is down to you – thank you for applying and thank you for volunteering. Let's all keep at it. And yes, I am still working on a Men's Shed and Repair Cafe.

We are going to have to do even more for ourselves over the coming year(s). We live in a rural patch, as you know, and whether it's running a car, lack or heating an off-grid house, we all know it can cost more to live here. Until now, WCC has received extra rural funding to make up for the relative remoteness in which we live. No more.

The countryside is likely to get more central government funding cuts, to add to the removal of agricultural and business property relief. Oh, and cold weather payments...if you are affected by the latter, please talk to me about Pension Credit and I will see if I can help sort it. (Please don't be cold and too proud - you've paid in, and we owe you.)

Back to good news. One of the other huge chunks of funding I leveraged into Shipston was £1.5m for the Ellen Badger and services. I was grateful to be in a cabinet which thought outside Stratford town and agreed to this. Whatever happens in the consultation starting mid-January we have a great provision at EBH. Who wants to travel for outpatients' appointments? Mammograms? Scans? Physio? Counselling? Podiatry? Jabs? Bloods? And much more. Much better for us to have our appointments here and only travel for our acute needs, to be treated by the specialist best. But what I would do is encourage you to get involved and take part in the consultation. Maybe we will get a share of the Stratford beds here?

And finally, I am praying for a drier spring, so we can sort out the potholes, road surfaces, gullies, culverts, drains and ditches – you know my obsession with all things grotty, dirty and messy! One day we will fix them, but we may have to be radical. Shipston gullybuster anyone?

And finally, finally, I am working on a Job Club with some other volunteers (watch this space - there are fewer jobs around than there were), disability projects and my own Breadline (cheap and nutritious food project).

Whether I see you at school, in town, at meetings, church or in the pub, Happy 2025 in Shipston - getting on with it for all of us! PS If you want to get involved in any of my projects, let me know.

Yours ever, Jo

Councillor Jo Barker (she/her) Shipston Division

Chairman of Adult Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny
07748968712 | jobarker@warwickshire.gov.uk | @jmvbarker

Letters

Letter from Vanessa Benjamin-Smith

To weed or not to weed?

In response to the letter from Jill Licence in the November issue, I think it is important to gather residents' views on whether or not we should use chemical weedkillers.

No one would wish residents to feel unsafe when walking around our lovely town. Our pavements and roads need to be accessible to everyone, especially the elderly and disabled. However, it is possible to remove weeds in safer, more environmentally friendly ways than using harsh, potentially dangerous chemicals. Whether or not you believe these chemicals to be unsafe, it is very obvious that not using them will not do any harm to people or wildlife.

Many of the weeds on pavements in Shipston grow where soil has washed into hollows after storms. It would be easier and more cost effective in

District Council

The next stage of the South Warwickshire Local Plan has just been published, and we are being asked to comment on it from 10th January to 7th March. It is important, because on the one hand there is a housing crisis in this country. At the current rate of house building, it will take more than 120 years to give affordable homes to the people waiting for social housing. And on the other, Shipston has been overdeveloped in the last 15 years without the accompanying infrastructure that should have accompanied the increase in population.

These are the headlines from the next stage of the plan:

1. Eye-watering numbers of houses are expected to be built in the next 25 years – 54,450 in South Warwickshire. Although that number can be halved when existing housing commitments are taken into consideration.

2. In the call for sites in the first stage of this Local Plan in 2023, developers and landowners submitted 700 parcels of land: 200 are being considered, including 12 settlements where most of the housing need for the district could be accommodated (the closest one being Long Marston airfield).

3. A Sustainable Travel and Economy model has been adopted, rather than a Dispersed model. In other words, new houses should be built near employment and public transport networks.

Taking into consideration what Shipston has in the way of infrastructure, especially transport and jobs, it looks like the district's housing need could and should be absorbed further north, and this is what we'll be pushing for.

The plan opens with its five guiding principles: all development should be climate resilient and net zero carbon; well-designed and beautiful; healthy, safe and inclusive; well-connected; biodiverse and environmentally resilient. This all sounds positive, except I don't yet understand how we can insist that developers stick to these principles.

Please see this website: southwarwickshire.org.uk/swlp for more info. There will also be in-person and online meetings and presentations to learn more about how we can submit our comments. When we know any dates, we will spread the word. Shipston has never been set in stone. It will always evolve, but the key is to have our shopping list at the ready and plan how we would like it to evolve.

Olivia Hatch

District Councillor, Shipston North

07752562114 | olivia.hatch@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Vanessa Benjamin-Smith

the long run to clear the soil before weeds establish than use dangerous sprays. Other alternatives to weedkiller are available which could be as effective.

It is a sad and undeniable fact that many species of insect are declining in numbers and anything we can do to prevent their eradication is surely worthwhile. Air pollution is also a fact. Only recently, the government made an undisclosed financial settlement to the family of a nine-year-old girl whose death was attributed to asthma caused by air pollution. Any chemical that is routinely sprayed is going to affect the quality of the air we breathe and, as Jill points out, there are many more pollutants already present. Instead of forcing people to make a choice between walking on weed-free streets and breathing clean air, why can't we aim for both so that we all feel safe not only to walk the streets but also to breathe in clean air while we walk?

Your town councillors

**John Dinnie, Mayor**

Environmental Working Group, Co-Chair
t: 01608 664590
e: john.dinnie@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Tony Booth, Deputy Mayor**

General Purposes and Communications Working Group Chair
e: tony.booth@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Gerry Kelly**

Planning Committee Vice Chair
t: 07471 687720
e: gerry.kelly@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Ian Cooper**

Finance Working Group Chair
t: 01608 663785
e: ian.cooper@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Paul Tesh**

Planning Committee Chair
t: 07711 433566
e: paul.tesh@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Jo Barker**

t: 07748 968712
e: jobarker@warwickshire.gov.uk (for town and county matters)

**Hilary Kelly**

Environmental Working Group, Co-Chair
e: hilary.kelly@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Chris Howarth**

Heritage, Amenities and Leisure Projects Working Group Chair
e: chris.howarth@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Michelle Kelly**

e: michelle.kelly@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Richard Walters**

e: richard.walters@shipstontowncouncil.org

**John Williams**

e: john.williams@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Jerry Corless**

e: jerry.corless@shipstontowncouncil.org

**Mitchell Barnes**

e: mitchell.barnes@shipstontowncouncil.org

Useful contacts

Community Links Transport	01789 264491
Shipston Library:	0300 5558171
- 24/7 renewal line	01926 499273
Highways customer services	01926 412515
Severn Trent Emergency Line:	0800 7834444
Shipston Volunteer Transport Scheme	01608 663122
Shipston Leisure Centre	01608 662354
Shipston Medical Centre	01608 661845
- Out of hours	111
Shipston Link (local transport)	01386 593446
Shipston Recycling Centre	01926 412593
Stratford District Council	01789 267575
Townsend Hall	07514 704057
Warwickshire County Council	01926 410410
UCHW Hospital	024 7696 4000
Warwick Hospital	01926 495321
Local police (non emergency)	101
Shipston Police Safer Neighbourhood Team:	01789 444670
e: shipston.snt@warwickshire.police.uk	
Churches of Shipston:	
Stour Valley Baptist	01608 664876
Our Lady & St Michael	01608 685259
St Edmund's	01608 661210
Methodist Church	01295 257193

Shipston-on-Stour Town Council

New Clark House, West Street, Shipston-on-Stour, CV36 4HD

General Enquiries

t: 01608 662180 e: enquiries@shipstontowncouncil.org

Town Clerk

e: clerk@shipstontowncouncil.org

County Council Contact:**Councillor Jo Barker**

t: 07748 968712 e: jobarker@warwickshire.gov.uk

District Council Contacts:**Dave Passingham (Shipston South)**

e: dave.passingham@stratford-dc.gov.uk

Olivia Hatch (Shipston North)

e: olivia.hatch@stratford-dc.gov.uk
t: 07973 846605

Something exciting to share?

If you have a story that's relevant to Shipston residents, please contact the editor, Laura Parker, by email: forum@shipstononline.org or call 07989 530069 (if you don't have email access).

To request posts on the council's Facebook page, contact enquiries@shipstontowncouncil.org

Forum copy deadline:**Second Monday of the month**

- but the sooner you can notify the editor of a potential story the better.

The Shipston Forum is produced monthly by the Town Council.

While every effort is made to ensure information is accurate, the Town Council and its contractors do not accept responsibility for material submitted by readers or third parties and does not endorse any organisation or event publicised. Contributions may be edited to fit available space.

Lions Den 2025

DO YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION NEED HELP OR SUPPORT?

We are here for you!

we can support....

- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Clubs and Societies
- ✓ Charities
- ✓ Individuals in need and much more....

Why not take part in the Stour Valley 'Lions Den' initiative for the chance to get funding or support?
Closing date 28th February 2025



Scan the QR code or contact us now using the details below to obtain an assessment form

For more information contact Paul Macpherson on:

01608 682102

<https://stourvalleylions.club>



an initiative supported by Stour Valley Lions Club