



Shipston Forum



March 2026

Nature action meeting

The Local Nature Action Plan is an important document that has been adopted by Shipston Town Council. 'It affects all of us and will help people work together to tackle the decline in biodiversity,' says Councillor Hilary Kelly. Now the Council is seeking residents' input to identify opportunities for improving biodiversity in Shipston.



What changes or improvements would you like to see in your area of town? Do you want more trees, or wildflowers? Would you like to join with neighbours to make a hedgehog highway? Can small corners in town be made more butterfly friendly? Would you like to be able to identify birds, or the creatures that live in our hedgerows?

Come along to the annual town meeting on 21st April at 7pm in the Townsend Hall with requests and ideas, or to ask what the council is doing for nature locally.

Campaign ends

Campaign group Beds for the Badger is ceasing operations. Following a meeting in January between the League of Friends (LoF) and Adam Carson, Interim Chief Executive of South Warwickshire University Foundation Trust (SWFT), the group has concluded that the LoF is the best body to represent the community through the next period of evolution and into the future of neighbourhood health teams under the NHS Ten Year Plan.



Baxter the Camel making a point outside Warwick Shire Hall, 21st January 2025

Adam Carson is to update the LoF in June about the respective roles of the WCC Health and Wellbeing Board; the newly-created Integrated Care Board Cluster for Coventry, Warwickshire, Hereford and Worcester; the Primary Care Networks of GP practices, and the Hospital Trusts like SWFT (which is now joined by George Elliott Foundation Trust) as part of the NHS reorganisation.

'Although we remain disappointed that all our efforts did not manage to return inpatient beds to the Ellen Badger Hospital, we accept that the trial of the Ellen Badger Medical Unit is the most hopeful sign of improvement,' said B4B member John Dinnie. 'We will support the League of Friends in their quest to improve our healthcare services. We thank the marchers, petition signers, consultation responders, social media participants, and everyone else who wished us well, for their encouragement. We're also grateful for the support of District Councillors and our MP, Manuela Perteghella, for continuing to advocate for better rural healthcare.'

'There's still a need to demonstrate demand for services, so keep asking for treatment in Shipston,' he added.

Fifty years of Age Concern

Age Concern Shipston is celebrating half a century of providing lunch clubs, outings and other services for the elderly in Shipston and surrounding villages. In the past 50 years it has served over 80,000 meals, all prepared, cooked and served by volunteers from the community. It remains a local charity, working with Orbit Housing and using its facilities at Stour Court and Rainbow Fields. Volunteers know that their service brings joy to the Lunch Clubs' customers, where new members are always welcome so they can eat with friends instead of on their own, and where a two-course meal is just £5.



'We very much hope we'll be around for another 50 years, but we do need volunteers and new trustees to help us carry on,' says Chairman Gill Roache. She urges anyone who can offer three hours a week as a volunteer or attend four meetings a year as a trustee to contact her on 01295 680309 or 07778 848431. More information on the website www.ageconcernshipston.org



Silver award for RBL



The Shipston branch of the Royal British Legion has earned a Silver Beacon award for excellence in community engagement, fundraising, and support to the armed forces community. It was one of only three branches in Warwickshire to be conferred a silver at this year's County Conference.

'This award is a testament to the hard work of our volunteers, the commitment of our members, and the strong support we receive from the people of Shipston,' says branch Secretary Alistair Watkins. 'We're an active branch and we would love more people to be involved. Whether they've served, have family connections, or simply want to support a great cause, they'll be warmly welcomed.' Contact shipstononstour.secretary@rbl.community



More bank closures



Following the closure of Shipston's last bank in November, Lloyds bank has announced that it will shut its branches in Moreton-in-Marsh and Southam by March 2027, as part of a programme that will see 95 branches close across the country. Lloyds says it is offering 'more choice and ways to manage money than ever before' and is giving customers 'the flexibility to bank wherever and whenever they need us.'

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Mayor's column

Hello Shipston and I hope you are all well.

As I write, we hear that it has been raining every day since the New Year! I'm sure we are all looking forward to brighter and hotter times ahead.

From a Mayoral point of view, it has been very quiet, although my wife and I were invited to join the Mayor of Solihull for her Civic Dinner and more recently we attended our first silent disco at Stratford Town Hall, hosted by the Mayor of Stratford in aid of her charities. More locally I have just returned from a morning with Shipston Primary School at the invitation of their Head Teacher, Glyn Roberts. I watched the children in their pancake-racing relay races before Glyn and I were put head to head for the finale. Cue lots of kids shouting and screaming our names as we bounced across the hall like cheetahs, or should that be asthmatic heffalumps? Anyway, it was a draw and the children loved it.

A tour of the school followed, and I have to say how very impressed I was not only with the facilities but the children themselves. They are a credit to the school and to Shipston and the culture of the school and engagement by the children was a lovely thing to see. I am also so pleased to hear that there is now a big push to reintroduce and coordinate activities between the High School and the Primary School and develop a much closer relationship for the benefit of the children of Shipston. This is something that I hope to help and encourage in the final months of my mayoral role. Mr Roberts will be retiring at the end of the year, and I can see how proud he is of what has been achieved there and also how proud and respectful the children and staff are of him.

Can I also extend my congratulations to the organisers and cast of the recent pantomime, *Aladdin* (played by Debbie Hardiman). It was a triumph and enjoyed by so many who attended. Our town is very lucky to have such a gifted theatrical group to put such enjoyable productions on for our community.

You may recall that we lost our only bank last year and were told to use Lloyds at Moreton as the closest alternative. Well, guess what? That is going to close now too! You would be forgiven for thinking that Shipston is being increasingly detached from society! Limited alternative options remain at the post office, but we are not alone and these widespread closures are now impacting many rural communities like ours across the country.

My Mayoral Civic Service (not as boring as it sounds!) is on Sunday 22nd March at 3pm at St Edmund's Church, and everyone is invited. This is an annual Mayoral event to celebrate the people and groups in our town who provide support to so many within our community who need it. It's an uplifting and retrospective look back at what has been happening over the last year, and I hope to see you there to celebrate our town with me.

Another date for your diaries is the annual town meeting to be held at the Townsend Hall at 7pm on Tuesday 21st April. I will remind you again next month but this is an opportunity to meet



with me and all the town councillors. You will hear about all the issues that matter to our community and also be able discuss the things that matter to you. We would love to see you there so come down and meet us.

I need to go and lie down now after the pancake race so I will wish you a great month and I look forward to writing to you again soon.

TTFN

Tony Booth

Mayor of Shipston

The Mayor of Shipston
invites you to his
Civic Service
Sunday 22nd March 2026

at St Edmunds Church,
Shipston on Stour, CV36 4AP.
2.45pm arrival | Refreshments available

Please complete RSVP form and send to:
emily.booth@shipstontowncouncil.org

News from Shipston Town Council's February meeting

New councillor

Dr Vivien Walden was co-opted onto Shipston Town Council. Having read her declaration she was warmly welcomed by councillors and took part in the meeting.

Open Forum

Concerns were raised about the layby on Campden Road which has increasingly become used to dump detritus of all sorts, including human waste. Residents report fly tipping, broken bottles and cans, emptied garden waste, dog mess and nitrous oxide canisters. Cllr Passingham has ensured that the site –

which is not officially a layby – will now be visited by Street Scene cleaners every two months, but all agreed that more should be done. The matter will be discussed at the next General Purposes meeting, and the site will be monitored over the next six months.

Environment

Volunteers pruned the fruit trees at the community orchard at Cornmill Meadows. An issue with access to the river for anglers at the Meadows, and parking, will be discussed in the next meeting of the working group. WCC tree officer Lyndon Campbell met to discuss the possibility of planting suitable trees at the Ellen Badger and Badger Crescent.

Planning

Council is to write to the planning officer at Stratford District Council to express concerns over the cumulative impact on the town's existing infrastructure from the current seven proposed housing developments, in particular on drainage, sewage treatment works, health provision, schools' provision and highway capacity and operation.

Council voted to object to an outline planning application for a residential development of up to 110 dwellings off Hanson Avenue, on the grounds of various concerns relating to access, traffic management, drainage, transport and employment sustainability.

Finances

The working group is looking at more efficient ways of identifying and applying for grants. Council agreed to a memorandum of understanding for a feasibility study into cycle ways.

Councillors' reports

Cllr Howarth reported updates to the Love Shipston website and the Town Council news page on its new website. He attended meetings of the Towns Network, Shipston businesses, the Proms, and the Youth Club, and took an asset management course run by NALC. Cllr Williams raised the issue of parking and access at Tesco's. Several councillors attended a meeting of the Community Land Trust at Hook Norton to learn how they have created environmentally friendly, affordable housing.

Blue light update

PC Sid Hammond reported a rise in burglary, with larger and isolated houses being targeted by an organised crime gang as well as a more local group. He is continuing to carry out his pledge of getting out on foot into the community at every shift. Shipston's First Responders attended 44 incidents in January.

New councillor

Vivien Walden moved to Shipston four years ago. 'I want to give back to the community and be more involved rather than just live here and use the facilities,' she says of her decision to join the Council. A medical doctor, Vivien has carried out humanitarian work all over the world and currently works part time for the British Red Cross as a special adviser. She loves nature, walking and birdwatching and is very much into recycling.



Local government reorganisation

By Richard Walters

Speak now or wait another 50 years!

Have you ever had an issue about bin collections, potholes or wanted an extension on your house and not known which 'council' to go to? The Government published its English Devolution White Paper in December 2024 with the clear intention to create 'unitary authorities' to replace two-tier models of district and county councils. This is probably the largest reform in local government we've seen in Shipston since 1974, when Shipston on Stour Rural District Council was abolished.

What does that mean for us in Shipston?

In short, it is likely that Stratford District Council and Warwickshire County Council will be abolished in favour of a single authority covering all aspects currently administered by the two separate authorities, with a proposed start date of April 2028. Town and parish councils like Shipston Town Council will remain under new proposals, but the relationship between them and the future authority is currently unclear.

What does the new authority look like?

We don't currently know. Warwickshire District Councils and the County Council have all been asked to input on what they think is

best. The two options presented are for a single unitary authority for Warwickshire, or for two authorities: one in the north and one in the south of the county. Now the Government has launched a public consultation so everyone in the county has a chance to put their thoughts directly to them.

How can I participate?

The consultation is open until Thursday, 26th March. If you would like to share your views on Local Government Reorganisation in Warwickshire, you can find the proposals online and provide your feedback through the online survey <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/warwickshire/>.



Alternatively, paper copies will be available from the main Warwickshire County Council office reception areas, libraries operated by Warwickshire County Council, and council-operated museums. Paper copies can also be requested by calling 01926 410410 and responses can then be submitted by email to lgrconsultationresponse@communities.gov.uk or posted to: LGR Consultation, Fry Building 2NE, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

AT THE TOWNSEND HALL
TUESDAY 21ST APRIL 2026
AT 7PM

The Annual Town Meeting is a meeting for all local government electors of the Town. It is not a meeting of the Town Council.

Anyone may attend and registered electors of the town may speak during the meeting.

Local organisations and community groups are invited to attend and report on their activities during the past year and their future plans

**YOUR TOWN. YOUR VOICE.
YOUR FUTURE.**

For further information please contact Shipston Town Clerk on clerk@shipstontowncouncil.org or phone on 01608 662180.



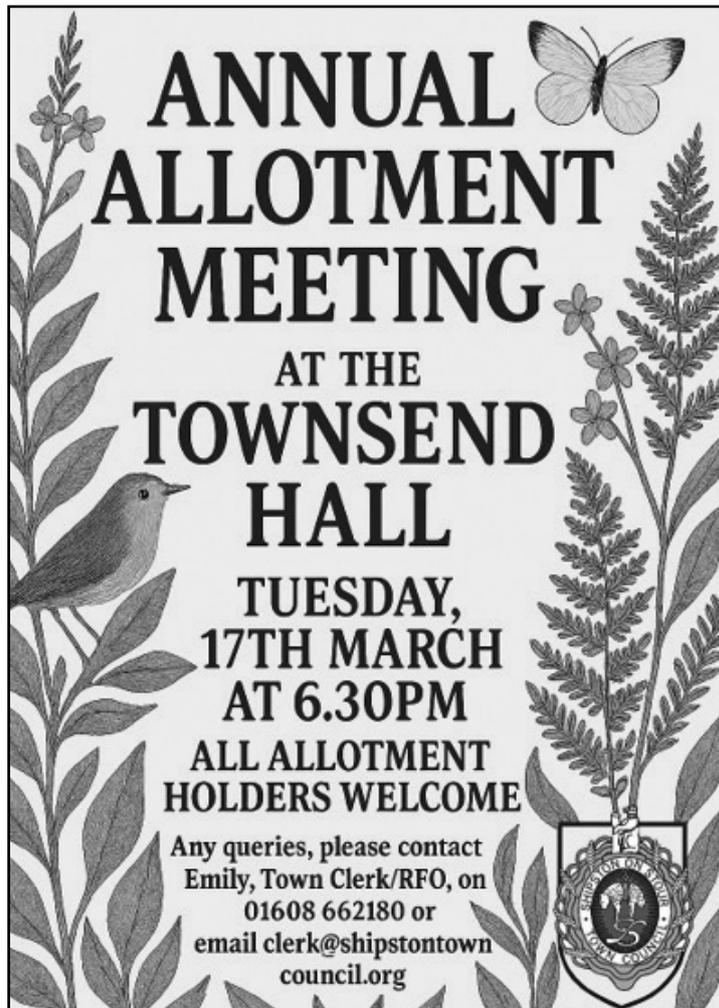
ANNUAL ALLOTMENT MEETING

AT THE TOWNSEND HALL

TUESDAY, 17TH MARCH
AT 6.30PM

ALL ALLOTMENT HOLDERS WELCOME

Any queries, please contact Emily, Town Clerk/RFO, on 01608 662180 or email clerk@shipstontowncouncil.org



**Saturday mornings
10.30-12.00**

St Edmund's Church, Church Street, Shipston

We are open to anyone.
No referral or voucher needed.

Donations of basic items can be left in the church porch **between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Saturday.** There's also a collection point in the Co-op and Tesco.

For information about our current needs please check on our Facebook page or our website:

www.facebook.com/ShipstonFoodBank

www.shipstonfoodbank.org.uk

Singing

Down Memory Lane

Come along and join in with the singing for people with memory issues and their carers.



February 27th and March 27th

11:30 - 12:30

Ellen Badger Community Hub

Accompanied by Sophie on guitar

Refreshments provided

Contact Fay Ivens 01608 662133



Shipston on Stour - A Dementia Friendly Community.

www.shwp.org.uk



New head of nursing

Shipston Home Nursing has appointed Anna Briggs as its new Head of Nursing.

‘I feel incredibly proud to be stepping into this role,’ says Anna. ‘Having worked within the team for the past three years, I’ve seen at first-hand the compassion, dedication and kindness that defines our care. End-of-life care is something I am deeply passionate about, and it’s a privilege to lead such an exceptional team.’



For more information about Shipston Home Nursing and its services, please visit www.shipstohomenursing.co.uk.



Thanks for the welcome

‘Time has absolutely flown by since we arrived in Shipston!’ says Richard Allen, who with Julie Inch opened Chiropractic & Wellbeing Clinic in the High Street opposite the Bower House in September 2024. Their search for business premises and a home brought them to Shipston. ‘We couldn’t be happier with our choice,’ says Richard. ‘We look forward to many more years in this unique town. Our goal is simple....to keep this wonderful community moving well and feeling fitter to fully enjoy life!’



To thank everyone for making them feel so welcome, they are offering a free 15-minute spine/muscle check. Call 01608 532006 or email: hello@chiropracticandwellbeing.co.uk.

New chapter for SHWP

For five years, the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership (SHWP) has quietly but powerfully shaped community life in Shipston. What began as a small, volunteer-driven effort has grown into an organisation that many residents rely on, from seated exercise at the Ellen Badger Community Hub to the ever-popular Warm Hub and the sustainable Stour Toy Library for young families.



This growth has not happened by accident. It has been fuelled by dedicated volunteers, committed trustees, and a shared belief that supporting wellbeing should be at the heart of community life. Now, SHWP stands on the brink of an exciting new era.

In 2025, the Partnership took a bold step, applying for National Lottery Funding via the Community Fund to expand its work and meet the increasing needs of Shipston and its surrounding villages. That decision has paid off. With significant new funding secured, SHWP is now able to move from a volunteer-led organisation to one supported by professional staff, without losing the community spirit that defines it.

At the helm of this new chapter is Kirsty Holder, stepping into the role of Chief Executive. With a strong track record from her years leading local based charity VASA, Kirsty brings invaluable experience and a deep understanding of community-based services. Her leadership marks an important milestone as SHWP shifts into a more sustainable, forward-looking structure.

The Partnership is also welcoming a new Community Builder, Claudine Pearson, who will work alongside Rowena Webb. Claudine brings experience working closely with local parishes to strengthen grassroots engagement, skills that will be essential as SHWP turns its attention outward. Her role will focus on taking the success achieved in Shipston and extending it into the rural communities that surround the town, ensuring that all residents, no matter how remote, have access to the support and connection they deserve.

This new funding and expanded team will allow the Partnership not only to continue its valued programmes but to innovate, reach further, and make an even deeper impact. But one thing remains unchanged: its mission to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in the Stour area to live longer, healthier and happier lives. With renewed energy, professional leadership, and a vision rooted firmly in community needs, the Partnership says it is poised to make the next five years even more transformative than the last.



24-hour medication collection

Shipston Medical Centre is now able to offer 24-hour medication collection using its secure system MedPoint. It is available to those eligible living more than a mile from a pharmacy, who can now collect their dispensed medication any time of day or night, even when the practice is closed, with a simple and secure QR code access. The practice says the new system offers more convenience for patients and is ideal for shift workers, carers, and busy families.



Shipston Medical Centre

Lent Lunches



Please support these, all in aid of charity

St Edmund’s Church	March 4th at 12.30pm
Our Lady & St Michael’s Church	March 12th at 12.30pm
Shipston Methodist Church	March 24th at 12.30pm

Regular Events

Monday

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

Story Stomp: 10am, Shipston Library.

Shipston Community Warm Hub: 10am-12pm, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub

Seated Exercise Class: 10:30am or 11:30am, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub

Pickleball: 1:30pm – 3:30pm, Townsend Hall.

The Stour Toy Library: 11am-12noon at Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub

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

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

Tuesday

Strictly Fitsteps Fab: 10am, Townsend Hall

Rhyme Time: 10.30am, Shipston Library

Dementia Café: Shipston Lodge, 10.30am-12pm

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

Baby Time (under 12 months old): 12:30pm-2pm, Badger Valley Children's Centre, Tileman's Lane. Book via Eventbrite.

Let's Play for Toddlers: 1:15pm-2:45pm, Badger Valley Children's Centre, Tileman's Lane. Book via Eventbrite.

Community Warm Welcome: 2pm-4pm, Shipston Methodist Church, New Street (Sep-Mar) free refreshments, a chat, games and jigsaws

Lego Club: Shipston Library, 3.30pm

Wednesday

Seated Tai Chi: 9.30am, Scout Hut

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

Standing Tai Chi: 10.30am, Scout Hut

GLOSS Coffee Morning: 11am, The White Horse

Indoor Curling: 2pm, Townsend Hall

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

Shipston Training Band: 6pm-7pm at the Band Hall, New Street CV36 4QR

Shipston Town Band: 7.30pm – 9.30pm at the Band Hall, New Street CV36 4QR

Thursday

Shipston Community Warm Hub: Every Thursday 10am-12pm, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing hub

Community Social Prescriber drop in: 10am-12pm, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub

The Stour Toy Library click and collect 11am - 12noon, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub. <https://borrow.shwp.org.uk/>

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

Scrabble Club: 2pm-4pm, Shipston Library

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

Still Space Community Group: Stillness, Reflection, and Creative Presence. 10.15am-12pm. Ellen Badger Wellbeing Hub. Contact Emma elhughes@outlook.com

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

Shipston Stitchers: Every fortnight at The Church Room, Darlingscote Road. Contact Anita Spencer on 01993 832665

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

Alcoholics Anonymous: 7.30-9pm, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub, 28 Stratford Rd, Shipston-on-Stour CV36 4AU, 01865 242373, 0800 9177 650

Stour Concert Brass: 7.45pm – 9.15pm at the Band Hall, New Street CV36 4QR

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: March 2026

1st Lego Church: 10.30am, first Sunday of the month during morning service at St Edmund's. For school age children. Please bring an adult. Contact rector@shipstonchurch.org



3rd Bereavement Café: 11am-1pm, Ellen Badger Health & Wellbeing Hub

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

3rd & 17th '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



4th Lent Lunch: St Edmund's Church, 12:30pm. See ad on page 5

4th Shipston on Stour WI: Ann Harrison – "Call Me Auntie" A Life in Care. Meetings held every first Wednesday of the month in The Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscote Road Shipston on Stour CV36 4DR at 7.00 pm. For more information contact: Gill Smith – Telephone 07759 232899

4th & 18th Stour Valley Stitchers: 10am-1pm, The Hall, Stourton, CV36 5HG. 1st & 3rd Wednesdays

7th Shipston Town Council Monthly Litter Pick: All welcome. Meet at New Clark House, West Street at 10am. Equipment and refreshments provided. Children's equipment available

7th Shipston on Stour and District Local History Society: Talk - Roman Era in The Stour Valley. See article on page 12

9th Town Council Meeting: 7pm, New Clark House

10th Stour Valley Lions Club: Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscote Road, 6.30pm for 7pm start. Second Tuesday of the month

10th Stour Community Awareness Network (SCAN) meeting: See ad on page 7

12th Lent Lunch: Our Lady & St Michael's Church, 12.30pm. See ad on page 5

13th Lions Cinema: White Bird. See ad on page 7

14th Breastfeeding Support Group: 9.30-11.30am, Ellen Badger Health & Wellbeing Hub

14th International Rivers Day: free event at Bridge car park. See article on page 9

15th Victor & Albert: See ad on page 16

17th Annual Allotment Meeting: See ad on page 4

18th People, Planet, Pint; sustainability drinks. The Horseshoe Pub. Come and hear what is going on in Shipston and see how you can join in to make Shipston more sustainable. 1st 10 drinks are free. Booking essential on Eventbrite.

19th Drop-In Clinic: For the over 65s. 10am-12pm, Ellen Badger Health & Wellbeing Hub. Every third Thursday

20th Royal British Legion – Shipston Branch Committee Meetings: The next Committee Meeting will be held on Fri 20th March 26; 18:30 hrs, 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 Alistair Watkins (Ali) on 07786 690502 or email ShipstonOnStour.Secretary@rbl.community



20th Royal British Legion Social Evening: The Shipston on Stour Branch gathers for a social event on the third Friday of each month at The Black Horse, starting at 7:30 PM. Additionally, every other month, the Branch Committee meets on the third Friday at St Edmund's Church from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM, before joining the social gathering. If you are interested in Branch events or enquiring to join the Branch, please contact the Branch Secretary, Alistair Watkins (Ali) on 07786690502 or email ShipstonOnStour.Secretary@rbl.community

21st Celebrating World Poetry Day: See article on page 11

24th Lent Lunch: Shipston Methodist Church, 12.30pm. See ad on page 5

24th-25th Shipston Home Nursing Pop Up Shop: See ad on page 16

24th 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. The 4th Tuesday of every month (except December). All ladies welcome. Entry £2.

24th Shipston U3A: See ad on page 10

25th Shipston Literary Society: The Dictionary People – unsung heroes created the Oxford English Dictionary. 7.30pm, Community Hall Tredington. Contact: Alison 07772 202915

26th Local Quaker Meeting for Worship: St Edmund's Church, last Thursday in the month at 2.30pm, followed by tea/coffee, biscuits & chat

27th Singing down Memory Lane: See ad on page 4

28th Cotswold Choir: See ad on page 16

31st Historic Auction: See article on page 9



Rural Enterprise Hub
Supporting Rural Businesses In
Warwickshire

**UNLOCK YOUR
BUSINESS
POTENTIAL WITH
FREE, FULLY
FUNDED BUSINESS
SUPPORT**

📞 **Calling all business owners based in
Shipston On Stour & surrounding villages**

📅 **Join us on Tuesday 10th March**

🕒 **Drop in between 10:00am & 2:00pm**

📍 **Shipston on Stour Council Offices**

👉 **A Free Friendly drop in for business owners,
sole traders, start ups & entrepreneurs**

🗣️ **Whether you've got a new idea, looking to
grow or overcome challenges, we're here to help.**

**Providing access to:
FREE, FULLY FUNDED business support
Workshops, training, funding and mentoring
Helping you start,
grow and overcome challenges**

To find out more contact Vicky:
✉️ vicky@minervamill.co.uk or ☎️ 01789 761334



Lions Den 2026

**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 27th March 2026**



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

For more information
contact us on:
0345 833 2835
<https://stourvalleylions.club>



an initiative supported by
Stour Valley Lions Club

STOUR VALLEY LIONS CINEMA



White Bird
a wonder story

Struggling to fit in at his new school after being expelled for bullying another student, Julian is visited by his grandmother (Helen Mirren) and is transformed by the story of her attempts to escape Nazi-occupied France during World War II.

Certificate 12A - Drama/Family/War

TOWNSEND HALL
FRIDAY 13th March, 2026 at 7.30pm
Tickets on sale from The Flower House,
Shipston for cash £6.00, or pay on the door,
Drinks, Chocolate and raffle.



SCAN
Stour Community Awareness Network
Formerly Senior Citizens Action Network

**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 10th March 2026
Speakers: Warwickshire & Solihull Blood Bikes



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

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

If you require transport to the meeting, VASA may be able to assist. Call 01789
262889 or email transport@vasa.org.uk.

Focus on Shipston business...London House and Touch of Dust

Independent gems A Touch of Dust in Sheep Street and London House Past and Presents on the High Street are run by husband and wife team Andy and Norah who are both fiercely protective of our local community and town character. You can't fail to miss either of these shops as you walk into town. Both have fascinating items spilling out onto the pavement, enticing you into an Aladdin's cave of mysterious and wondrous things from past times and distant shores.



Norah has been selling from London House for 23 years, running the shop as her own since 2017, and is a central figure in our community. The shop offers smaller collectibles, antiques and housewares of such a wide variety it is hard to describe. When you walk in you are drawn through the shop just looking at the vast array of things you never knew you needed. From jewellery to books to home products there is literally something for everyone and, like the Tardis, it goes on for miles! Norah is very proud of her business and its place at the heart of our community.

Andy and Norah are a lovely couple who live and breathe the Shipston spirit and hope to do so for many years to come. Sadly, the recent loss of our bank has noticeably impacted footfall, and this, coupled with increases in overhead costs and rent, is presenting challenges for them, along with all of our small and unique businesses in town, so I would urge everyone in our community to support our shops and buy local.



A Touch of Dust, run by Andy, is even more surreal. Split over two dwellings, it offers a vast array of larger, more fascinating centre pieces and a small insight into so many cultures around the world. Fancy a 17th century sword? Take your pick. Or how about a 16th

century Chinese pot? The oldest item dates back to the 10th century, but here again there is so much to take in including a room full of stunning rugs. This is a destination shop for home designers and fashion connoisseurs looking for that X-factor to display in the house. Andy often sits outside the shop, so please stop and say hello and take a peek at the treasures on offer.

The incredible, eclectic nature of these shops attracts celebrities and collectors from across the country, and they have a very loyal A-list client base living in and around our town.

Andy and Norah are a lovely couple who live and breathe the Shipston spirit and hope to do so for many years to come. Sadly, the recent loss of our bank has noticeably impacted footfall, and this, coupled with increases in overhead costs and rent, is presenting challenges for them, along with all of our small and unique businesses in town, so I would urge everyone in our community to support our shops and buy local.

Tony Booth

Last Night of the Proms



Photo credit: Charlotte Haines

Following our public consultation, the Last Night of the Shipston Proms will feature three local bands we know you're going to love. The absolute peak of

the Proms' fortnight of high quality music, the famous Last Night, is where the community comes together in the town square to show the world how to party big time, with a variety of performers, bars, food stalls, and our wonderful town pubs all working flat out to provide a continuous and uplifting experience. Just wait until you hear what's in store this year!

First up will be the winners of 'Shipston Introducing', Shipston's own X-Factor, with entrants. There are categories for soloists and bands. If you are interested in taking part, and fancy your chances of appearing on stage on The Last Night, then please message us at shipstonproms@gmail.com

Second on will be the fabulous Orange River Remedy, a well-established young Stratford based band, who write, record, and play music steeped in the traditions of the 60s and 70s with powerful riffs and three-part harmonies. Their music pays homage to artists such as The Rolling Stones, Neil Young, Bob Marley, Pink Floyd, and The Doors...now how exciting does that sound? To find out more and listen to their music go to their website www.orangeriverremedy.co.uk or to YouTube where you can find a selection of their videos.

The penultimate band are The Texan Peacocks, who are regulars on the Shipston music scene. They are an awesome and exciting rock and roll covers band led by the charismatic Tex Austin, playing classic songs from the 60s through to today's hits.

The set list has been crafted to appeal to all ages, with tracks from The Beatles, The Police, Blondie, The Killers, Radiohead, Talking Heads and The Jam. To see their full set list, go to their website www.texanpeacocks.co.uk



Finally, and back by popular demand from the Shipston community, we have our very own Shipston and Moreton based rock band The DropOuts. This band blew the audience away at the 2024 Last Night, so here they are, back as headliners for 2026! Well-known on the local music scene's festivals and parties, and for their regular gigs at The Valkyrie in Evesham, these boys can rock the loudest and the dirtiest. As they say, 'You name it! We will rock it!' The lead vocalist and ace on the bass is Warren Truman, who up until the decommissioning of the Shipston fire station had been one of the retained fire fighters there for many years. Benny Arthurs is the lead guitarist, with Chris 'The Bear' Arthurs on rhythm guitar and vocals. Tim 'Bert' Sheasby keeps it all together behind the drumkit. Expect to hear covers of all the rock staples and a thundering dose of classic heavy metal crowd pleasers as well.

Once again, we ask for volunteers for help on The Last Night, particularly with taking down and clearing up the event on Saturday evening. The square has to be pristine and cleared for the shops opening the following morning, and the more volunteers (and brooms) we have, the quicker we can have it done and get home after an exciting, but exhausting two weeks.

The committee, who are all volunteers, are so looking forward to bringing you these two weeks of music, from 19th June-4th July. Keep your eyes on The Shipston Proms social media, our website, www.shipstonproms.org and posters around the town. The full programme will be dropping through your letterbox nearer the time when everything is finalised.



Shipston housing developments

Taylor Wimpey has now submitted a planning application for 110 houses off Hanson Avenue. To make your comments, go to the Stratford e-planning site, put in reference 25/03144/OUT, go to speech bubble icon, click and fill out your details and make your comments known.



There could still be an opportunity to comment on the other applications awaiting consideration. For all those reference numbers see our social media, our website www.saveourshipston.org or the helpful site Terry has put together: www.cv36.co.uk.

www.saveourshipston.org
 @SaveOurShipston
 @SaveOurShipston
 Say No to additional 3000+ houses

We now have some SOS badges and will be out on the streets of Shipston asking for donations (in the same way RBL does for poppies). Grab your limited-edition badge and help us to spread public awareness to fight these proposals.

At time of going to print, we are still waiting for the planning application for the Fell Mill site to be submitted. We are planning a walk around Fell Mill to encourage folk to see the site that will be lost to concrete forever if that development for 1,150 houses goes ahead. You can do that in your own time and get sponsorship for it. Details, once this is fully organised, will be available on our social media and website.

We want to thank you all for supporting the campaign: by joining the mailing list and spreading the word, by sending in flooding evidence, by speaking to us on camera and by quietly in the background sharing all sorts of useful information. And of course, by donating to help us fund the leaflets, badges, posters and banners for the whole campaign and the legal backing we need to specifically defend the Fell Mill site. Keep up the good work!

To donate through **gofundme** Scan me with your phone camera!

Please go online and type in the link below:

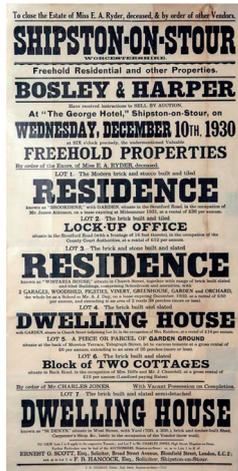
[gofund.me/tall.bear.form](https://www.gofund.me/tall.bear.form)

To donate directly:

Bank Name: HSBC
 Account Name: SaveOurShipston
 Sort Code: 40-18-57
 Account Number: 60770736

Historic poster auction

Going, going, gone! The auctioneer's gavel will come down once again for a re-enactment of a traditional auction on Tuesday 31st March at The George, the scene of many such sales in the past.



Under the hammer will be 25 posters dating from 1918 about local homes and farms in villages like Chipping Campden, Ilmington, Brailes, Blockley and Shipston itself. These posters were saved from memorabilia donated to the Museum that now form the Bosley & Harper Collection. The auction keeps faithfully to the original timing, Tuesday being the original day for markets alternating between Shipston and Moreton, with sales commencing at 6pm precisely. An auction catalogue, replicating the original conditions of sale, will be on sale for £2 at The George and local venues as a collectable item even if you're not bidding

for one of the valuable posters. These reveal much about the community's past, from the sale of the contents of the mansion at Compton Verney in 1924, Shipston's Monumental Mason's Workshop and Osier Bed to a house sale including a harmonium, magic lantern, dog cart – and a cocker spaniel! Even the gavel is historic, having been presented in 1842 to William Bull, auctioneer and then proprietor of The George. The posters will be available to view from 11am on the day of the auction.

International Rivers Day



A free event at Shipston Riverside (Bridge Car Park) will be held on Saturday 14th March from 10.30am-2.30pm to mark International Rivers Day.

- Join in a river blessing ceremony by our local Druid, Martin Russell, at 11am.
- Shipston Area Flood Action Group display.
- Information about water power and the many historic watermills on the River Stour.
- Learn about the Water Quality Testing (SafeAvon Citizen Science) that takes place weekly by the bridge – and safely have a go: 11.30am and 1.30pm.
- Learn how to safely carry out kick-sampling in the shallow water by the bridge; find out how to identify the invertebrates present, and why they are so important for understanding the general health of the river. With Alex Jones of Riverfly Monitoring Project, at 11.30am and 1.30pm.
- Enjoy some 'water' music by Misspent Ukes, our local U3A ukulele band, at lunchtime.
- Bring a picnic and wear weatherproof clothes!

Contact verityrichardson@gmail.com 07929 889091.



The event will raise funds for local charities including Shipston Home Nursing, Shipston Proms, Shipston Educational Trust, Save Our Shipston and Shipston Museum.

Flood prevention

The Shipston Area Flood Action Group team has been out and about in the first wet months of 2026, at times braving sub-zero temperatures, to check the condition of the 'leaky dams' which help to slow the flow of water from tributaries of the River Stour such as Paddle Brook and Whichford Woods Brook. Thanks to John Dinnie, the locations of the dams are now logged precisely using what3words locations.

SAFAG attended a meeting of the Long Compton Flood Action Group, where Mike McCarthy presented its nature-based options and 'catch the water where it falls' solutions, together with the promotion of better farming practices. After a discussion about LCAG's concerns and the potential funding shortfall for both groups, a meeting with the WCC Flood Group was agreed for May. SAFAG also hosted a visit by Rachel Woodward, newly-appointed Community Flooding Officer for Warwickshire at Severn Trent Water, with a view to establishing a positive working relationship.



Save the date
6 to 15 March 2026

The Gathering:
for water and Nature



Join us for a ten-day programme to see water differently – as a living presence that connects people, place and Nature.

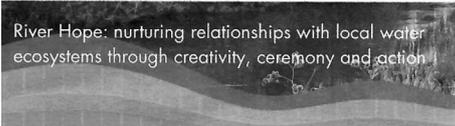
Communities across South Warwickshire will come together for learning, creative exploration, reflection, and action to mark the International Day of Action for Rivers on Saturday 14 March.

Expect: book talks, film screenings, exhibitions, storytelling, discussion panels, workshops, ceremonies, and activities that bring together residents, creatives, environmentalists, schools, local organisations and elected representatives.

Collaborations: include Rubbish Friends, Brook Arts Hub, Stratford Literary Festival, Moving Souls Midlands, UK River Summit and the Crowne Plaza Hotel, and more coming soon.....

Follow River Hope: see QR code.

If you are interested in co-creating events, volunteering, exhibiting and sponsorship, email riverhopeinfo@gmail.com



Shipston on Stour Area
U3a

Registered Charity 1170969

Tuesday March 24

2.00pm at the Townsend Hall



Edith Cavell wrote ‘Someday, somehow I am going to do something useful....Little could she have known as well as being a pioneer of modern nursing through her Christian compassion and for doing her patriotic duty she would pay the ultimate sacrifice. via poverty stricken Victorian London to war torn Europe, follow this incredible journey with “Edith” helping to tell her remarkable story in her own words.

Admission

Members free

visitors £2

MARCH 2026



Contact details for activities in Shipston on Stour

Warm Hub, Toy Library and Bereavement Cafe 01608 691129 rowena@shwp.org.uk
 Strictly Fitsteps 07764 496947 michellefitsteps@gmail.com
 Seated and Standing Tai Chi 07808 921899 juliareeves211@gmail.com
 Pilates for Beginners 07854 289446 suebatting@outlook.com
 Yoga 01608 661410 sophie.mobberley@swif.nhs.uk

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY			
1st Week	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Seated Exercise 10:30 or 11:30 Toy Library 11- 12	Pickleball 1:30 - 3:30	Strictly Fitsteps 10 - 10:45 Bereavement Cafe 11 - 1	Seated Tai Chi 9:30 Standing Tai Chi 10:30 Booking require	Disordered Eating Drop in Session. 12 - 1 Indoor Curling 2- 3	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Cooking with Wendy. Booking required	Toy Library 11- 12 Annual Membership £5	Pilates for Beginners 9:30 - 10:15
2nd Week	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Seated Exercise 10:30 or 11:30 Toy Library 11- 12	Pickleball 1:30 - 3:30	Strictly Fitsteps 10 - 10:45	Seated Tai Chi 9:30 Standing Tai Chi 10:30 Booking require	Indoor Curling 2 - 3	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Cooking with Wendy. Booking required	Toy Library 11- 12 Annual Membership £5	Pilates for Beginners 9:30 - 10:15
3rd Week	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Seated Exercise 10:30 or 11:30 Toy Library 11- 12	Pickleball 1:30 - 3:30	Strictly Fitsteps 10 - 10:45 Yoga 11:30 - 12:30	Seated Tai Chi 9:30 Standing Tai Chi 10:30 Booking require	Indoor Curling 2- 3	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Frailty Nurse Drop in Sessions	Toy Library 11- 12 Annual Membership £5	Pilates for Beginners 9:30 - 10:15
4th Week	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Seated Exercise 10:30 or 11:30 Toy Library 11- 12	Pickleball 1:30 - 3:30	Strictly Fitsteps 10 - 10:45	Seated Tai Chi 9:30 Standing Tai Chi 10:30 Booking require	Indoor Curling 2 - 3	Warm Hub 10 - 12 Bereavement support from SHN	Toy Library 11- 12 Annual Membership £5	Pilates for Beginners 9:30 - 10:15

Venues: Community Wellbeing Hub @ the Ellen Badger Hospital CV36 4AX, Townsend Hall. CV36 4AE, Scout Hut. CV36 4EW

KEY: £ (circle), Free (star), Need to book. (triangle), Waiting list (circle with star)

Shipston Primary School

Curling competition

We were delighted to take part in a curling competition against several other local schools at Shipston High School. We were made very welcome (including being given cookies half way through!) and were able to make use of the super facilities available.



Thank you so much to the PE staff and the Year 10 students who did an amazing job of running the tournament. Congratulations to our team who competed so well and supported each other and the other schools, whilst also having fun learning a new sport.

The children competed brilliantly and narrowly lost winning the whole tournament when we lost our final game on the very final stone of the match, knocking us from first to fourth place. Congratulations to the children from Acorns who won the tournament.

We are looking forward to our next visit to the High School after half term for a bocchia tournament.

Pancake races

Just before half term, we were lucky to have our Town Mayor, Tony Booth, visit us and take part in our annual House Pancake Day races. The children had a 'flipping' fantastic time, earning lots of house points and having great fun. It was lovely to be able to show our school off to Tony. He will be coming to meet with our school council soon.



World Book Day

We are looking forward to World Book Day on Thursday 5th March.

We will be celebrating reading in different ways across the whole of that week. Staff will be sharing favourite stories with children in assemblies and on the day itself some children will be taking part in the 'Little People, Big Dreams' virtual event.

Literary corner

Bookfest back for 2026

The town's book festival returns 18th-27th September 2026 — save the date! Described by actor and author Ben Miller as 'quite simply the Cotswolds' finest fest for books — warm, witty, and wonderfully book-mad', the festival will once again bring authors, ideas and lively conversation to the town. Full programme details will be announced over the summer.

In the meantime, are you a local business wanting to get your name out there? We're looking for businesses and groups to sponsor the festival. To discuss sponsorship options, please contact info@shipstonbookfest.org. As a not-for-profit, we rely on sponsorship, along with ticket sales and grants, to make the Bookfest happen.



If you'd like to meet fellow book lovers and get involved behind the scenes, come along to our next committee meeting at 7pm on 2nd March at The White Horse. We're a friendly, enthusiastic group dedicated to creating a book festival the whole community can enjoy.

On Friday 6th March, Shipston Library is opening specially to host children from Reception and Year 1, and we will again be running our successful 'Share a Story' week where we invite parents into our classes at the end of the day to enjoy listening to stories together. We will also be running a 'design a book cover' competition.

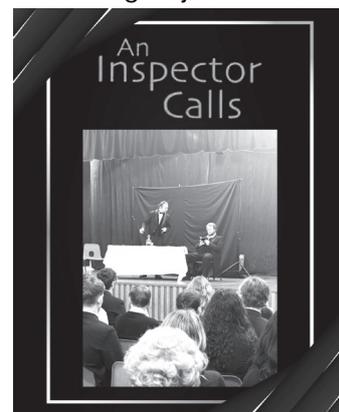
More details will follow after half term from Mr Mogg about his work organising World Book Day and associated events.

High School

The past month at Shipston High School has been an energetic and memorable one, packed with exciting opportunities both on and off the school site. Students embraced the spirit of Number Day, hosting a whole school non-uniform day to raise money for the NSPCC. Beyond the classroom, several groups took part in enriching trips, including visits to Shakespeare's birthplace to explore the life of England's most famous playwright, and a Houses of Parliament trip that offered students a fascinating insight into democracy, debate, and how laws are made. Year 9 also benefited from a valuable road-safety workshop, learning key skills to help keep them safe and aware in their daily journeys.

Back at school, learning came to life in a different way as a visiting theatre company Katch 22 delivered an engaging performance of *An Inspector Calls* for Year 11. Their interactive approach helped bring the text to life and offered valuable insights just in time for the upcoming mock exams. With revision sessions intensifying and important assessments around the corner, the pace is certainly picking up for Year 11 — but the month's enriching experiences have provided inspiration, motivation, and plenty to talk about.

We look forward to sharing even more in next month's edition of The Forum.



Celebrating World Poetry Day

To mark this very special day

Here at Shipston in this way

Share your favourite, poem or prose

From a famous name to one you compose!

Established in 1999 by UNESCO, the aim of World Poetry Day is to share reading, writing, and teaching of poetry worldwide. Shipston Literary Society invites you to join us, whether you enjoy reading the work of others or write your own poetry. Sonnets, stanzas and limericks all welcome! Come and share your favourites at a friendly drop-in session on World Poetry Day at the George. 11am-1pm 21st March More information about the Society from our chair: Alison 07772 202915.

Stour Valley Lions



Our senior citizens' tea party and film at the Townsend Hall on 26th Jan was extremely well attended by 75 guests, who enjoyed *The Return of the Railway Children*, starring Jenny Agutter, and refreshments were served at the intermission. Thanks to all who attended the event.

The Lions Den is open for local charities and organisations who might need some extra support. Application forms can be obtained from our website or email below.

Dates for your diary:

- The next film nights will be on 13th March, 10th April and 8th May.
- 14th March. Shipston Gold Cup Race Night at Townsend Hall. Tickets @ £10, or £100 for a table of 10, can be booked via our enquiry email or phone number below.
- 21st and 28th March. Giant Easter Egg Raffle – tickets from our stall in the Coop.
- 11th April. Bingo Night, Townsend Hall.
- 17th May Duck Race.

Our Book Sale on 7th March has been cancelled due to a booking conflict. The next sale will be 6th June, unless we can find another interim venue.

We are always looking for new members, so if you interested to come and join us or help with events please email enquiries@stourvalleylions.club or call us on 0345 833 2835. We meet at the Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscote Rd, 6.30pm for 7pm, on the second Tuesday of the month. <https://stourvalleylions.club/lions-den/> 

Shipston U3A Bridge Group

Our local charity day just before Christmas raised £720 which was divided between the Food Bank and First Responders. Enormous thanks to Bridget Smith and Juliet Cox for organising the buffet lunch, Alan Lamb for running the bridge, Caroline and her helpers from St Edmund's for serving the tea, to the Richard Harvey Collection, the Shipston Therapy Centre, Mad Molly, and Creature Comforts for donating to the lottery prizes which added generously to the amount raised, and to all those who attended. We meet Wednesday afternoons to play social (ie friendly) bridge. There's no teaching, so a bit of playing experience is necessary.

Roman era in the Stour Valley

What really happened when the mighty Roman Empire arrived in our corner of England? Shipston Museum invites you to an extraordinary talk that will transform how you see the landscape around you.

Nearly 2,000 years ago, Roman legions brought revolutionary materials and technologies to Britain. How did our Iron Age ancestors respond? Did they embrace the Roman way of life, cherry-pick what suited them, or simply coexist alongside these powerful newcomers?

Local archaeologist Bekky Hillman will answer these compelling questions through the lens of recent local excavations. From

burial grounds to trading centres, from grand villas to humble farmsteads, archaeological discoveries at Dorn, Stretton-on-Fosse, and along Campden Road in Shipston itself paint a vivid picture of daily life during this pivotal period of change.

This isn't distant history, it's the story of real people who walked our streets, tilled our fields, and shaped the community we call home today.

Saturday, 7th March
Starts at 2:30pm
The Townsend Hall
CV36 4AE Adults £5

Talk | Roman Era
in The Stour Valley

Tickets   

Event details:

Date: Saturday 7th March at the Townsend Hall. Doors open 2:15pm, talk begins 2:30pm. Tickets: £5 (available from Richard Harvey's on Church Street, Eventbrite, or on the door subject to availability.)

Genuine Roman artefacts unearthed locally, including brooches, coins, ceremonial belt plates, gaming pieces, amphorae and much more will be available to explore when Shipston Museum reopens on Easter Saturday 4th April. We'll also be open Easter Monday (6th April).

Don't let history pass you by. Reserve your tickets today and discover the Roman roots of the Stour Valley!

Women's Institute



In my end is my beginning: the last words of Mary Stuart, the opening lines of a poem by TS Eliot, or an explanation of the universe? Robin Smitten from Chipping Norton Amateur Astrological Society talked about his passionate interest in the stars and stargazing, and in so doing showed how nothing ends and nothing begins. The universe of which we are an infinitesimal part is infinite, made up of stars which are dying, exploding, and then continuing to exist in a new form. The debris from the explosion of a supernova is made up of vital elements which are scattered through the universe. Eventually some will form new stars, and some go on to enrich planets such as Earth. The universe is a vast continuum and in a constant state of change. It can only be measured in terms of light years and the more we learn about it, the more there is to learn.

The Chipping Norton Astrological Society meets at the Rollright Stones, a designated 'dark sky' area to view the stars. Dark skies are becoming rarer as light pollution from towns and cities increases. Roy showed clear photographs taken of the night skies by Society members, some taken using a mobile phone. Mankind has always been fascinated by the stars. The ancient Chinese made some of the first observations, and the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Greeks, all studied the heavens. Stonehenge and other henges in the British Isles were erected to measure time and the movement of the stars – it is assumed. Henges remain a mystery, but what the ancients saw thousands of years ago is what we see now – the universe moves slowly and, although it is always moving, that movement is almost undetectable.

Shipston WI will be hosting a strawberry tea in June to support a charity of its choice.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 4th March at 7pm when Ann Harrison will be talking about her life in care. Visitors are welcome at all meetings.

Townsend Hall



The Godfather of Swing, Ray Gelato, is always on the road with his classic saxophone. Together they fill venues around the globe taking Ray's sound of swing, jazz and R&B to an ever-widening and appreciative audience.

Ray has played some of the most prestigious jazz festivals: Montreal, Lincoln Centre, Umbria, and some of the greatest jazz clubs including Birdland and Bluenote Milan. And on 17th April the Townsend Hall will be added to the list! Ray's events are always very well attended so advance purchase of your ticket is recommended. ticketsource.co.uk/townsend-hall

Probus

Our own Probus member, John Moyle, initially challenged us with the title of his talk, printed backwards and upside down! Eventually we clarified it as 'Reverse Engineering' or a process by which understanding how something works is gained from taking it apart.

Archaeology provides an example. In 1901 some Greek sponge fishermen dragged up a strange object in a wooden box containing a complex system of interlocking gears. Taking it apart eventually revealed its remarkable function as a mechanism dating from around the 1st century BCE, capable of predicting the positions of the sun, moon and planets.

Throughout history items of warfare have been collected and analysed to gain an advantage. The so-called 'Oslo Report' smuggled to Britain in 1939 by a disaffected German scientist revealed the use of remotely controlled gliders and rockets and an aircraft range finder that was to become vital to our own war effort. Churchill entrusted the Report to a Scottish scientist, RV Jones. Further information gained by eavesdropping into casual talk amongst German prisoners of war alerted Jones to the use of radio beams giving direction to bombers. Reverse engineering of equipment in a captured aircraft revealed what they were up to, and a means of jamming was worked out. So started the use of electronic warfare, now in use worldwide.

Copying other's military equipment is well-known. The Russians made an exact copy of the American B27 bomber even down to repeating some non-essential screw holes. Nevertheless, the Russians were furious when their equipment was similarly copied by the Chinese!

Virtually nothing is safe from reverse engineering, legally or otherwise. Cameras and films are frequently illegally reproduced and even circuit boards, so essential to modern life, can be copied using an MRI scanner. Sadly, moral standards and respect for others' property is rarely followed by the international competitive world.

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 07711 310272 or email: tonyjoint73@hotmail.com for further details.



Shipston Rotary Club



Shipston Rotary Club was delighted to welcome Karen Ellis, Mark Barnes and Mike Raines. Karen and Mike were proposed by Bob Armstrong and Mark by John Round, who both gave supporting statements. Secretary David Dawkins read out the Objects of Rotary and the 4 Way Test, which are important



Letter

After nearly falling for a scam which I had not come across previously, I thought an alert to others and readers of the Forum might be valuable.

I received a phone call from a 'police officer' in London saying they had in custody a young man claiming to be my nephew, and that he had my surname and contact details. I don't have a nephew and told them that. They then wanted further details supposedly to build a case against this man. I refused.

To assure me, the 'officer' gave me his station and police number etc. I put the phone down and after some time (to ensure the line was clear), rang the police via 101, eventually reaching the Metropolitan Police who said they have hundreds of calls like this. It was a scam. Never give personal details over the phone. If in doubt, check by ringing the police via 101.

Name withheld by request

Editor's note: If you are unsure whether a call is genuine, you can also call Report Fraud, the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cyber crime, on 0300 123 2040.

County Council

The Budget: a live blow-by-blow account from the meeting on 17th February.

Anyone who spoke at the last meeting on 5th February had to say something new this time! Hmm... So far the opposition have used the same points over again but generally in a snippier manner. The leader of the LibDems and his deputy have both belittled the Leader of the Council. Yes, he's 19, he's young, but so of course are all the young people and youth projects they are putting forward for funding. They seem to have ignored the fact that the money is in the budget!

Lots of points of order. My colleague Cllr Kettle is asking whether the £340k average reduction of various bits of funding is actually millions as the LibDems suggest... now comes our [Conservative] leader – Adrian Warwick, giving thanks to the government for our settlement which give us 0.833% more to reduce council tax. More important is the fact that we got the adjournment last time, knowing the settlement would come in and would improve the position. I can safely say we are pleased to have been proved right!

Keith Kondakur, a Green councillor, always brings a model of the Titanic behind which he sits – it is not listing yet!

We have made the point that we do not want to raise council tax by the maximum amount. We are all feeling the pinch, across the county.

District Council

Stratford District Council sold off all its council houses in 1996 for a reputed £54m to what was then South Warwickshire Housing Association. The total of homes transferred was about 5,000. Since then, Orbit Housing Association has taken them over and they have become part of a massive portfolio estimated to be 47,000 homes across the Midlands and Southeast. Shipston has around 592 Orbit houses and there are about 230 in surrounding villages. Most of the houses were built in the 1930s, 40s, 50s and 60s, but on some of the new estates in Shipston, Orbit was the housing developer. On these estates, some of the houses are owner-occupied, some are shared ownership and some social housing.

Over the 30 years since the takeover, Orbit's reputation as a social housing supplier has not been good. Neighbourhood Officers who tenants could easily contact were abolished and residents have complained about the difficulty getting through on the helpline. The time taken for repairs to be completed and damp houses were also points of aggravation. Some of this can be put down to the centralisation of such a big company and some to the way they subcontracted out repairs.

I am on the Housing Association subgroup at Stratford District Council, and for the past two years we have been highlighting Housing Association customer service failures and trying to get improvements. After little response from Orbit for the first year, there are now signs they are attempting to make improvements. They have appointed new directors, and in January we had a face-to-face meeting with two of them and some senior managers at which they outlined changes they were making. One of these is monthly online clinics for councillors to bring up issues with senior managers. Another was the re-establishment of Neighbourhood Officers that tenants can contact directly.

Cllr Sarah Boad (LibDem) is now yelling about 32.7p (which actually widens every year) and frankly patronising us all. Another snippy comment about age – blimey, this is getting boring. Now Cllr Bannister (Reform), when he was asked where he was coming from, has claimed it is the planet Zog!

And very quickly we have been moved to a vote. All parties are against the Reform first attempt at a budget, so we will have the theatre of going at it again in this meeting with a better council tax level! Anyone would think that these things were discussed beforehand! At least we will not be spun with a new budget attempt at 8pm and expected to digest it in 40 minutes like last time!

30 minute break...yawn...another hour til we reconvene...double yawn...maybe time for a drink?

And finally, after another half an hour, we have moved to a vote rather than add to the now nearly 14 hours of debate.

So, council tax rises by 4.44%, £2.5m to cover the pressures in adult and children's services, and youth grants and community autism saving removed! RESULT!

Jo Barker

County Councillor, Shipston Division
077489 68712 | jobarker@warwickshire.gov.uk



Hopefully, these changes will make for the sort of customer service that tenants and residents are entitled to.

We would be keen to hear of any problems that residents may continue to have with Orbit, and we will bring them up directly with the managers at these clinics. It would also be good to hear from tenants if they have experienced any improvements in service. Please let Olivia or me know if you have anything to report by using our contact details below.

Parking charges

Warwickshire County Council has withdrawn its plans to introduce on-street parking charges in Shipston town centre and other market towns like Alcester and Southam. The decision came after strong objections from independent shop owners in these towns. Currently, parking remains free for up to two hours on High Street and Church Street, which accommodates the average 30-minute stay for most shoppers. Businesses had feared that the proposed charges would deter visitors and reduce custom.

Soon, at Telegraph Street, the only Shipston car park with charges, the RingGo app will not be the only charging service that can be used. From 1st April 2026, the National Parking Platform, which allows multiple apps, can be used by drivers to pay for parking.

Remember, you can respond to the Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation here: www.stratford.gov.uk/council-democracy/local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution.cfm

Dave Passingham

District Councillor, Shipston South
07752 562114 | dave.passingham@stratford-dc-gov.uk



Your town councillors



Tony Booth, Mayor

General Purposes and Communications Working Group Chair

e: tony.booth@shipstontowncouncil.org



Richard Walters, Deputy Mayor

e: richard.walters@shipstontowncouncil.org



Gerry Kelly

Planning Committee Vice Chair

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Ian Cooper

Finance Working Group Chair

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Paul Tesh

Planning Committee Chair

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Jo Barker

t: 07748 968712

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



Hilary Kelly

Environmental Working Group Chair

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Chris Howarth

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Michelle Kelly

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John Williams

e: john.williams@shipstontowncouncil.org



Steve Crockett

e: steve.crockett@shipstontowncouncil.org



Vanessa Benjamin-Smith

SAFAG Chair

e: vanessa.benjamin-smith@shipstontowncouncil.org



Vivien Walden

e: vivien.walden@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 (VASA)	01789 262889
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:
PC1508 Sid Hammond – 07967303185
PCSO Katie Brooks – 07870978973

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 Clerks

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, if you don't have email access, on 07989 530069



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

Forum copy deadline:

Second Monday of the month

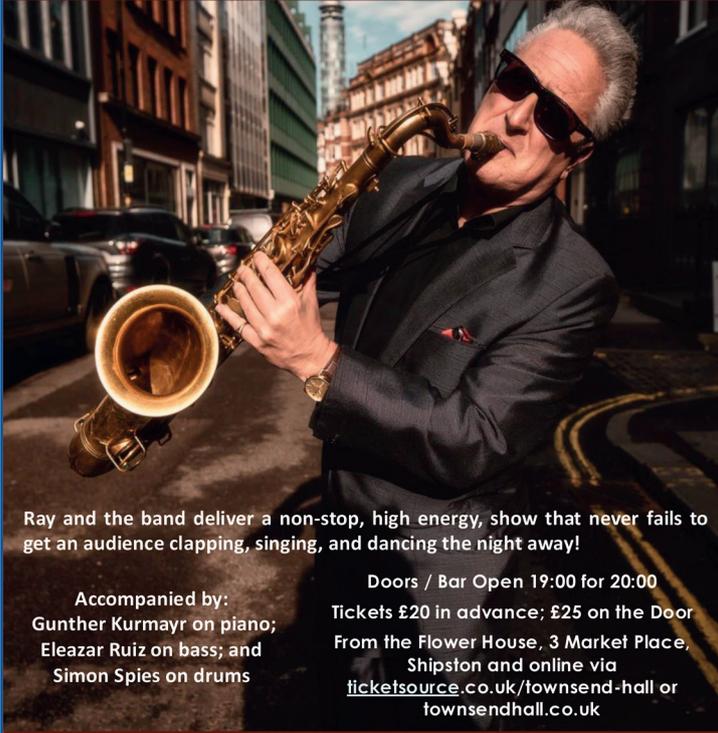
- but the sooner you can notify the editor of a potential story the better.

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.

T Townsend Hall 52 Sheep Street, Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire. CV36 4AE
Charity No. 522997

Townsend Hall, Shipston, presents...
On Friday, 17th April 2026
Ray Gelato



Ray and the band deliver a non-stop, high energy, show that never fails to get an audience clapping, singing, and dancing the night away!

Accompanied by:
Gunther Kurmayr on piano;
Eleazar Ruiz on bass; and
Simon Spies on drums

Doors / Bar Open 19:00 for 20:00
Tickets £20 in advance; £25 on the Door
From the Flower House, 3 Market Place,
Shipston and online via
[ticketsource.co.uk/townsend-hall or townsendhall.co.uk](https://ticketsource.co.uk/townsend-hall-or-townsendhall.co.uk)

Tickets are for general admission. For a table reservation of 4 or more people, phone Peter on 07711-562317

The Hall Invites You to be Thoroughly Entertained by.....

VICTOR & ALBERT. PURVEYORS OF FINE MUSICAL COMEDY!



Victor & Albert's unique brand of entertainment is a riotous blend of music, comedy, games - plus a dash of magic and silliness, offering a fresh twist on a classic two-man variety show!

Sunday 15th March
Doors & Bar 6:30pm
Curtain Up 7:30pm

Perfect Treat for Mother's Day!

Tickets £13.50 / £7.50 u-16
Book Now: info@thehallevents.org.uk / 07775 765572
Online: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/thehall-cherington-stourton-sutton>

  AT THE HALL, CHERINGTON, STOURTON & SUTTON, CV36 5HG



POP UP SHOP
CLOTHES • ACCESSORIES • HOMEWARE



Tuesday 24th March
10:30am - 5:30pm
Wednesday 25th March
9:30am - 3pm

Ilmington Village Hall
Front Street, Ilmington, CV36 4LD



FREE ENTRY

For further information please email fundraising@shipstonhomenursing.co.uk or call 01608 664 850

Registered Charity No. 1162586

COTSWOLD CHOIR PRESENTS

Spring CONCERT

28 MARCH
DOORS 6.30 PM

ADULTS £10 - U16'S £5

TOWNSEND HALL
SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR - CV36 4AE
TICKETS ON THE DOOR - LICENSED BAR

POP - ROCK - SHOWS - CLASSICAL - GOSPEL