



SHIPSTON ON STOUR TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2025

MINUTES

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

Telephone: 01608 662180

E-mail: clerk@shipstontowncouncil.org

Website: www.shipstontowncouncil.org

Wednesday 23rd April 2025, TOWNSEND HALL, 7PM

In Attendance: Cllrs J Dinnie, T Booth, M Kelly, H Kelly, G Kelly, J Williams, C Howarth, P Tesh, J Barker, I Cooper and R Walters

Deputy Clerks: E Booth and D Hardiman

Shipston Town Crier: Marion Lowe

16 Members of the Public

SDC Cllr O Hatch

WCC Cllr J Barker

1	<p>WELCOME BY THE TOWN MAYOR</p> <p>The Annual Town Meeting was opened by the Town Crier Marion Lowe. The Town Mayor (Cllr J Dinnie) welcomed fellow Councillors, members of local community groups and members of the public.</p>
2	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>SDC Cllr D Passingham</p>
3	<p>MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2024</p> <p>To approve minutes of the meeting held on 29th April 2024</p> <p><u>Proposed by Cllr R Walters, seconded by Cllr I Cooper, 2 abstentions due to absence, 9 for, motion carried</u></p>
4	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</p> <p>None</p>
5	<p>MAYOR'S REPORT</p> <p>The Town Mayor presented his report for the year. Commented on how the town have worked together in many ways this year, how many of the individual activities made his Mayoral Year a special one and also commented on the Spirit of Shipston Reported that the Town Council has had a very full year, which will be heard from our committees and working groups. Pressure of work has been ramping up in all areas. Expressed thanks to all Councillors and staff for their hard work and determination. Much more ahead in the coming year, and will need more of the Shipston Spirit and working together to make our town what it is.</p>
6	<p>COMMITTEE/WORKING GROUP REPORTS</p> <p>Reports were heard from The Council's Committees and Working Group chairs. Summaries as below:</p> <p>General Purposes and Communications Working Group – Cllr T Booth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Twin chapel roof repair and guttering priority works have been completed. Working towards a use for the buildings, in order to gain funding for remainder of works. Ongoing trees, hedges,

green spaces maintenance with the help of Lawns2Mow and TreeTech. Play areas, parks and benches maintenance. Supporting Lawns2Mow to keep their storage facility after approach from WCC. Sensory Garden on Mayo Road being regenerated with the help of Cllr Hilary Kelly and a group of volunteers. New contracts for a new website have been introduced, new website coming this year. Future works include Twin Chapel restoration as a community asset, Play area inspection training for Councillors, Trees and hedges upkeep, cemetery upkeep, cemetery overflow future planning, support for Youth Club site relocation. Expressed thanks to GPWG team for all their hard work this year.

Environmental Working Group – Cllr H Kelly

- Shipston in Bloom take over, new volunteers recruited including local Scout Group, positive response from local businesses and residents to upkeep some of the planters. English bulbs, shrubs and perennial plants that are pollinator friendly planted, these will remain for future years rather than replaced every year. Request for more volunteers. Sensory Garden on Mayo road regeneration with the help of volunteers. Cornmill Meadows was a finalist in the Stratford Herald Awards and has also received 2 grants from SDC, one to have a hedge layed and bird and bat boxes placed and the other to purchase a new notice board for the meadow. Community orchard was planted last year and is doing well, may fruit this year. Complaints that upper part becomes unpassable, this is being looked into. Wildflower seeds planted in River Meadow. Log pile has been started in Hill meadow to encourage more wildlife. Litter picking takes place the first Saturday of the month. Church yard wall will be repaired soon. River testing continues with the guidance of SDC Cllr O Hatch. Expressed thanks to all volunteers and Councillors for their help with the varied works this year.

SAFAG – Cllr J Dinnie, report given by Mr Brian Cooper

- Flooding occurs when a large volume of water comes down the Stour in a short period of time, leaving riverbanks unable to cope with the volume of water, interventions are in place to help slow the flow, extending the time period. 850 interventions are in place upstream over various watercourses and brooks that feed into the Stour, leaky woody dams, ponds, bunds, wetlands and tree planting. Repairs and maintenance have taken place over the last 12 months, mostly by volunteers. If works required are more significant or structural, contractors are used. Looking to raise flooding awareness, via talks and presentations, but will distribute a flyer to areas considered most at risk from flooding, covering Shipston and affected communities of Long Compton, Brailes, Tredington, Newbold and Halford. Copies will also be left at key locations. Expressed thanks to the Stour Valley Lions for their support with this. Looking for more opportunities to install more interventions moving forward, with the likely collaboration of the EA and Severn Rivers Trust.

Planning Committee – Cllr P Tesh

- In total, Shipston Town Council have been consulted on 53 applications this year, slightly down from the previous year's 57. Stratford District Council are the local planning authority, decisions are made by them, Shipston Town Council are consultees, aiming to ensure comments made by the Council are first and foremost in the best interests of the town and its inhabitants. Significant applications this year have included the proposed Sainsburys store, initially refused permission but has now gone to appeal, a variation to the Ellen Badger Hospital, an application to place 34 dwellings on the reserve site to the rear of Old Butt Road and installation of solar panels on the Leisure Centre. Continuing correspondence with Orbit, Taylor Wimpey and Crest Nicholson regarding obligations to fulfil section 106 agreements on various subjects, including play equipment and roads. Reported on the South Warwickshire Local Plan, preferred options consultation part 1, bringing potentially 3000 dwellings to the town, stressed these are just potential sites and not a definitive list of development areas. Part 2 is due sometime in 2025, the planning committee are monitoring the situation closely and will be making a formal response when the time comes. Reported on the consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework, The Council made comment on the need to assess drainage, both surface water and foul.

Commented on the Neighbourhood Plan, which will expire in 2031, ongoing projects regarding potential improvements to the town centre and electric vehicle charging. Reported on continued dialogue with Severn Trent Water to try to resolve drainage issues in the town, particularly the Campden Road. Applying pressure on both Severn Trent and Warwickshire County Council Highways to resolve the issues.

Finance Working Group – Cllr I Cooper

- Expressed thanks to members of the Finance Working Group for works over the past year, especially Cllr Howarth. The past year money has been spent on improving and maintaining the Council’s assets, refurbish the changings rooms at the hub, enabling junior teams to use the football pitches. Solar streetlights installed on the drive at the Sports Club, repairs to the Cemetery Twin Chapels, repairs at the Cemetery Lodge following multiple break-ins, maintaining playground facilities, supported projects to provide additional junior cricket net at the sports club, currently working on a project to support the Youth Club in securing a dedicated facility and much needed home. Finance Working Group are also responsible for the Council’s regulatory compliance, ensuring standing orders and financial regulations comply with statutory requirements. Reviewing Council policies and filling in any gaps. Annual precept for 2025-2026 is £385,000, increase in £75,000 from the previous year, reflects both increase in town size and inflation that affects many of our services, and additional responsibilities that fall upon the Town Council. Leading to a 25.5% increase in the average “band d” Town Council element of your Council Tax bill.

Heritage, Amenities and Leisure Projects – Cllr C Howarth

- Reported that all alleyway plaques have now been installed. A Plaque for Cecil Sandford has also been installed this year, positioned at the site of where his workshop was on Church Street, lots of motorbike enthusiasts attended, 2 replicas of this plaque were made, one for the museum and one for Cecil’s wife. Expressed thanks to Councillors who came along to support this. Riverside project is now completed, wildflowers have been planted alongside the tables and benches. The decision was made to mothball HALP for the time being and can be brought back for future projects.

Staffing Working Group – Cllr G Kelly

- Reported that there have been changes in Councillors this year, starting the year with 10 Councillors and 3 vacancies.
- In June Council co-opted Ethan Lidell and John Williams – Ethan resigned in September
- In August Council co-opted Jerry Corless – who resigned in March this year
- In November Council co-opted Mitchell Barnes – who resigned in March this year
- Council now have 2 vacancies
- There have been some changes in the office this year, Town Clerk for over 4 years, Helen Morgan has now resigned, The Council wish her the best for the future. Debbie Hardiman and Emily Booth, both operating as Deputy Clerks to cover the role of The Clerk, Emily also taking on responsibility of Responsible Finance Officer. Council is currently recruiting an Administrative Officer to assist in the office.

7

STRATFORD UPON AVON DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS

SDC Cllr O Hatch gave a few highlights from the year

- A year of consultations, Ellen Badger Hospital Beds Consultation and The South Warwickshire Local Plan. Expressed thanks to the Shipston SOS group, who enabled 1 to 1 sessions in various locations in Shipston to help people fill out the SWLP consultation form. 4000 people filled in the form throughout the district, a lot of these were from Shipston. Hopes to see Shipston wiped off as a strategic growth location. A district Council Budget Consultation, booklets available to see how money is spent. Reported that Stratford District Council are now able to recycle soft plastics, this can all go in your recycling bin, Stratford District are now 3rd in the Country for

	<p>recycling. Ongoing battles with Severn Trent, expressed thanks to The Town Council for funding the purchase of the river testing kits.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS WCC Cllr J Barker provided an update for the year</p> <p>Reported that Warwickshire have been named in the White Paper by the Government suggesting that could be in the first round of the next stage of devolution, with Warwickshire becoming a unitary. This hasn't happened yet. There are 2 plans on the table, 1 is for a South and a North Warwickshire and the other is for a combined Warwickshire in terms of the geography, looking as though 2027 will most likely be the year this happens.</p> <p>Reported that a new tank has been installed at Cherington to hold back water and effluence, the hope is there won't be as many nitrates and phosphates this far down the river.</p> <p>Has been involved in helping residents with the SWLP consultation, Shipston put in the most comments, really well researched, a lot of work and help. Seeing villages and Shipston working together was great.</p> <p>Update on the recycling centre, this was a potential development site on the SWLP, there was an enormous call for sites, reported that WCC had to put the site in as a potential development site, but this won't happen. Another reason to keep the site is that Lawns2Mow use it as their depot and storage facility for all the equipment they use for the towns upkeep, including all the flooding equipment.</p> <p>Good news for schools - £10million for the High School and a resource provision for the Primary School, which means children from the Community won't have to travel to get the help that they need.</p> <p>New budget to bid for, £25,000 to fill our own potholes, which means we can get local contractors to come and fill them.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>LOCAL ORGANISATION REPORTS</p> <p>Presentations were heard from the following groups, summaries as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shipston SCAN – Expressed thanks to County, District and Town Councillors that attended a meeting recently to discuss what each Council do and don't do. SCAN now stands for Stour Community, Awareness Network. No longer restricting to over 50s. Trying to bring numerous other local organisations such as SHWP and Councils to the attention of members, meetings take place at the Townsend Hall on the second Tuesday of the month 10 am, free coffee and biscuits and a free talk of differing subjects. - Shipston Music Society – Meet 8 times a year, had a successful programme this year. Jazz groups, Cellists, young musicians, local musicians, sopranos, town training band, lots of interest. 3rd Friday in the month at the Methodist church at 7:30. - Probus – a group for semi-retired/retired gentlemen, meet on alternate Fridays at the Sports Club from around 10:30 to 1:30, social time, talks on various topics, all very fascinating. - Shipston Amateur Dramatics Society – local drama group – production coming up in May – “A Bunch of Amateurs” taking place 22nd, 23rd and 24th May at the Townsend Hall - Bookfest – brings local community together to both celebrate and inspire the love of books and reading. The first Bookfest took place in 2024 and sold over 400 tickets and 300 books across 21 different events across the town and schools. Feedback highlighted that 60% of audiences had not attended a book or literary festival before. Made possible through the support of different people and groups, ticket buyers, word of mouth, volunteers and sponsorship from local organisations such as The Town Council, Stour Valley Lions, Shipston Rotary and more. New volunteers are always welcome. Second Bookfest will be taking place between the 20th and 28th September 2025, events announced over the summer. - Shipston Proms – Chair of Shipston Proms Charlotte Haines, expressed thanks to the Town Council for the grant towards this year's events, they are very appreciative. Shipston Proms is a very large event a lot is involved in organising. 40 events over 14 days. A very small committee. Very lucky with local businesses and sponsors. This year will see a Country night, an Oasis tribute night, Ibiza night with headlining globally known DJ Judge Jules and other local DJs. Coming

	<p>together really well. Last year as Chair, no one has come forward yet to take over, always on the lookout for more committee members and volunteers. Brings the community together, would be heartbreaking if it isn't able to continue. Thanks to everyone for all their support, events start on 13th June, last night 28th June.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SHWP – A group that aims to promote health and well being. What can we do to help ourselves. Helping local communities. Life expectancy is around 80 years, a healthy life expectancy is around 60. How can we extend a healthy life expectancy. Shipston and surrounding villages, partnership working, alongside other organisations. Warm hub takes place every Thursday at the Scout Hut in Shipston, originally set up to help with the cost-of-living crisis, continued to run, twice a month cooking events, once a month Shipston Home Nursing attend, once a month MIND attend and the frailty nurse comes along once a month from the Medical Centre, other agencies drop in to help our community. Toy Library has started this year, supporting youngsters at the Church, huge success with great support from the Church, toy library now goes to the toddler groups locally, supporting around 30-35 families. Also supporting Grandparents with children visiting over Easter. Boxercise – aimed at teenagers in the town, working collaboratively with the high school, also, hired the Townsend Hall. Partnered with the Youth Club and took session there. Dr Sue Pritchard Memorial challenge – getting older people out and about and moving after covid, still running and thriving in Shipston and surrounding villages. Lots of different events taking place. Over the last 3 years there has been lots of fundraising, everything was free until this year. £160,000 re-invested back into the community. Has been successful in gaining £186,708 over 3 years from the National Lottery, which will allow SHWP to continue to grow. Activities are popular and hoping to continue with this success. - SAFE – Stour Action For the Environment - reported that the Great Big Green Week will be running from the 7th – 15th June, lots of events taking place throughout the town.
10	<p>ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Richard Taylor expressed thanks to the Town Council for all their hard work, appreciates all their time and efforts - A resident queried why the Ellen Badger Hospital didn't come up in the reports. Cllr J Dinnie explained that no further updates have been brought to Council's attention. A discussion ensued between Councillors and residents and it was explained that Shipston Town Council don't have a health remit, so are unable to take an active role in this process. Another resident suggested that Shipston Town Council release some sort of statement explaining this, as the Town might not be aware. - A resident asked the question about local transport – it was explained that this area is the responsibility of Warwickshire County Council.
11	<p>PRESENTATION OF THE SHIPSTON AWARD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Award presented to Sue Taylor for her outstanding contribution to the community. Sue has raised large amounts of money for charity by selling donated items outside of her house.
12	<p>THANKS TO PAST MAYOR Thanks were expressed to past Mayor Cllr Gerry Kelly</p>

The meeting closed at 2042

Signed..... Date.....