shipstontowncouncil.org

Shipston Forum

November 2026

Gather for Remembrance Sunday

This year's Remembrance Sunday is on 8 November and will be marked in town by a parade from the High Street led by the Town Band at 10.45am, followed by a wreath-laying ceremony and two-minute silence at the War Memorial on Church Street. There will then be a service at St Edmund's Church. See the centre pages for more details from the Royal British Legion, which are also posted on their noticeboard in The Bury. Please note temporary road closures will be in place on that day from 9am-12.30pm. Armistice Day on 11 November will be marked with a ceremony and a two minute-silence at the Gyratory Memorial Garden. The community is invited to gather for both occasions to honour those who gave their lives in service. *More details on page 8 and see also the Mayor's reflections on the significance of Remembrance on page 2.*

Victorian Evening moves to Sunday

After over 25 years of being held on a Friday, the Rotary has decided to move the annual Victorian Evening, and this year it will be held on Sunday 29 November from 2-6pm in the town centre. 'The size of the event has grown and grown and we felt it was time for a review, with the increase in Shipston's population and possible further growth in the future,' says Rotary President Fay Ivens. 'Holding the event on a Sunday will allow a longer shopping and entertainment time for both the stallholders and shoppers, with more events throughout the afternoon and the grand switch on of the town lights and Tree of Life lights at 5pm. Gone will be the rush to do your weekend shopping on the Friday morning before the town centre closes for traffic and gone will be our problem of fitting everything in during two hours. There will be a build up to the lights going on and you will have another hour to admire them and complete your purchases.' She assures us that there will still be the pig roast, the choir, the town band and of course Santa in his grotto – all highlights of a treasured annual event that has raised thousands for charity.

Proms – get involved for next year!

Shipston Proms will be back for another year, after dates were agreed for next year's event: Friday 18 June to Saturday 3 July. The Proms committee say they are raring to go to supply the town with the widest possible range of musical events in the town's unique annual festival. They are, however, seeking a new chairman, and there are other vacancies on the committee. So if you enjoyed this summer's Proms events, why not consider getting involved? *More on page 9.*

The committee and volunteers outside the Black Horse after this year's Proms.

New run club

Shipston Shufflers, a new running club, has been formed this summer and now has a regular programme of runs three times a week to suit everyone interested in this low-cost sociable form of exercise. The mixed-ability, supportive group welcomes everyone, from those training for events, to people returning from injury, beginners, regular runners, dogs on leads, and even toddlers in buggies. Every run has a leader and backstop, ensuring no one is left behind. *Read how the club came about on page 12.*

Ram raid shock

Credit: Shipston on Stour Facebook Group

The peace of our town was shattered with a ramraid and robbery at the Coop on the night of 15 October. Raiders used a telehandler to grab the ATM and then set the machine on fire before making off in a van. A similar raid took place in 2019.

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Mayor's column

As we move further into autumn, Shipston continues to demonstrate what makes it such an excellent town: a remarkable sense of community, a thriving cultural life and an extraordinary number of people willing to give their time for the benefit of others.

The past few weeks have been particularly busy. Shipston Bookfest delivered another tremendous programme, with a fantastic variety of speakers and events. My congratulations and thanks go to the volunteers whose hard work makes this increasingly important fixture in our cultural calendar possible.

I also had the pleasure of visiting Shipston Gallery to meet its owner, Sophy, and enjoy the latest exhibition featuring the work of Anna Perlin and Lucinda Storm. From Bookfest and the Proms to our amateur dramatics, Town Band and local artists, Shipston really does punch well above its weight when it comes to arts and culture.

It was equally rewarding to visit the brilliant volunteers at Shipston Food Bank, whose combination of kindness, good humour and practical support makes a genuine difference to people's lives. I also enjoyed celebrating the second anniversary of Chiropractic and Wellness in Shipston. Supporting and recognising the people and organisations who contribute to our town remains one of the greatest privileges of being Mayor.

Beyond Shipston, I have continued to represent the town at civic occasions across Warwickshire, including services in North Warwickshire and Coleshill, and a wonderful charity concert in Southam in support of Myton Hospices and Acorns Children's Hospices. These occasions are a welcome reminder of the strength of community spirit across our county.

November promises to be another important month in Shipston's calendar. We have the excitement of Fireworks Night to look forward to, bringing families and friends together for one of autumn's great traditions. Shortly afterwards, our attention will turn to something altogether more solemn: Remembrance.

Remembrance has always been deeply important to me and my family. Seven members of my family have served in the Armed Forces in the period since the Second World War. I also served as an Army Reservist and, during my time at the Ministry of Defence, worked as part of a small team involved in the identification of historic war remains.

That experience, in particular, shaped how I think about Remembrance. Behind every set of remains was not simply a soldier or a name on a memorial, but an individual. Someone who had lived, loved, laughed and worried, and whose life had been interrupted by war.

I have often reflected on the language we use when speaking about those who have fallen. We frequently hear them described as 'brave young men'. There is, of course, truth in that description. Many were young, and many demonstrated extraordinary courage. But I have increasingly come to believe that this familiar image, however well intentioned, can be reductive. It conjures up an almost romantic ideal: the handsome young hero, courageous and selfless, the sort of figure who might have stepped straight from a wartime recruiting poster. Yet there is something artificial about looking at sacrifice through that lens. Those who died were not romantic ideals. They were ordinary people, full of the same flaws, foibles, hopes, anxieties and contradictions as the rest of us. Some were brave, some were frightened, and most were probably both. They had families, friendships, ambitions and plans for futures they would never see. They could be funny, irritating, stubborn, generous or difficult. In short, they were human.

And that, to my mind, is precisely why we remember them.

We do not remember them because they were somehow better than us, or because their youth or courage made them exceptional. We remember them because they were us. And when we asked it of them, they fought and died for us.

I appreciate that Remembrance can sometimes feel abstract, particularly for those without a personal or family connection to military service. How do we truly comprehend the loss of people who died eighty, or even a hundred, years ago?

The advice I often give is very simple. Think of someone you love. Someone around whom your life revolves. A husband or wife, a parent, a sibling, a child or a dear friend. Picture them clearly in your mind. Think about the ordinary things that make them who they are, the conversations you have, the laughter you share and the place they occupy in your life.

Now imagine that person being called upon to fight, leaving home, and never returning. Imagine the empty chair, the conversations never had, the birthdays missed and the lifetime of ordinary happiness that simply disappears. If you can do that, even for a moment, I think you can begin to comprehend the true price of freedom.

I have the impression that in recent years we have increasingly come to regard freedom rather like oxygen: something that simply exists, something we expect always to be there without giving much thought to what sustains it.

Previous generations had a much more immediate understanding of its fragility. They knew that peace and liberty were not inevitable, and that preserving them could demand a terrible human price.

We live in a world that feels considerably less secure than it did even ten years ago. War has returned to Europe on a scale many hoped had been consigned to history, and the international order we have grown accustomed to can no longer be taken entirely for granted.

Against that backdrop, I believe Remembrance could scarcely be more important.

It is not about glorifying war, romanticising sacrifice or imagining that those who served were somehow different from ourselves. Quite the opposite. It is about recognising their humanity, understanding what was taken from them and appreciating what was preserved for us.

This November, I hope as many residents as possible will join us in Shipston's acts of Remembrance. Whether you have a personal connection to the Armed Forces or none at all, there is a place for everyone.

Because Remembrance belongs to all of us.

Richard Walters

Mayor of Shipston

News from Shipston Town Council's October meeting

Open Forum
Residents Frank Wardak, Clive Hickman, Helen Boswell and John Dinnie raised concerns about the management of Cornmill Meadows, in particular the hedge and fruit tree planting, and the construction of a scrape. Council resolved to reply to each individually.

Richard Taylor reported that the Shipston Education Charity paid out 28 grants to students, amounting to a total of £2,275.

Shipston Area Flood Action Group
It was agreed that the group should create and put in place a flood resilience plan. This can be based on the template of the Coventry and Warwick Resilience Forum and will be done by a working group at no cost. Council will have a say on the final plan.

Environment Working Group
Advice on Cornmill Meadows to be taken during a meeting with the Severn Rivers Trust and Environment Agency. Council will seek further legal clarification.

Planning
No objection to rear two-storey extension to 24 Stratford Road. Previous objection withdrawn to proposal for garage extension to 59 Norgren Crescent. Three applications for housing on Darlingscote Road are expected to go to the District planning committee in November.

Finance
Recommendations for funds for first aid support for Remembrance Day event and for a mapping company in respect of new lease for police accommodation were approved, along with agreement to re-adopt the LGA Code of Conduct.

Councillors' reports
Cllr Booth commented that the Bookfest had been a real success again and was helping to put Shipston on the map.

Stratford District Council
Cllr Passingham had met with the Housing Land Supply Officer, trying to get district council housing allocation back, so that Shipston can be protected from developers. Cllr Hatch said that under the new National Scheme of Delegation, the town will have two 'gatekeepers' to lobby on housing. A meeting on 22 October will explain this further.

Warwickshire County Council
A feasibility study into a cycle path route has been approved.

Medical centre news

Information for patients
Please be aware that the Ellen Badger waiting area is shared by Shipston Medical Centre and other healthcare services, including physiotherapy, cardiology, midwifery and catheter clinics. These services are managed separately, and we do not have access to their appointment details or clinic schedules. Please follow the instructions provided with your appointment.

Checking in
Shipston Medical Centre can only check in patients attending our own appointments. Our reception is on the first floor. Other services will provide their own check-in instructions.

Thank you for your understanding.

Walk-in blood tests
Walk-in blood tests are offered at the Ellen Badger Medical Unit, located to the left-hand side of the hospital. Note they are not held at Shipston Medical Centre.

They are available Monday to Friday, 8am–2pm, no appointment needed.

Marion Lowe sent the Forum this photo of the queue for flu and covid vaccinations outside the Ellen Badger on Saturday 17 October. She says: 'On a lovely sunny morning there was no problem being outside in a mainly good natured queue. With 400 appointments between 8am till 1pm the six nurses coped well!'

What is Cornmill Meadows for?

There has been some controversy about Cornmill Meadows recently and I would like to know what you think. Some residents have requested that the wildlife hedge on the right hand side of Meadows Way, (the footpath from London Road to the Pig Brook) be pulled up or cut down on the grounds that it obstructs the view. The hedge was there before the Council took over the ownership of the meadows, and planting more whips where the hedge was thin was the very first project we did with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and a group of volunteers one Saturday morning.

We have been asked to remove the scrape and butterfly bank which were created last year as an alternative habitat and flood control measure. The new butterfly bank has had plenty of wild flowers growing on it this summer; although the scrape did not have much water in it this year because of the drought, nevertheless we had hoped when well-established and the grass grows back, we would see wildlife come to use it.

Another resident would like the community orchard removed as the grass growing round it is too long and is a fire hazard to the houses, even though there is a SUDS (a sustainable drainage system), which collects water run-off from Haddon Fields between the orchard and the houses.

Sadly, I have to apologise to Shipston Brownies and Rainbows as the bug-hotel they filled has to be removed from Cornmill Meadows.

Almost all the work at Cornmill Meadows is done by volunteers, the exceptions being the paths which are cut by Lawns2Mow and the trees that are pollarded by TreeTech, both of which are funded by the Town Council. It is a designated wildlife site, and we believe it is a huge benefit to all residents as well as a much-needed sanctuary for plants and animals. If you have walked around the site, have you any opinions? I am interested in what people from the town think of the area and what you would like to see there? Please let me have your comments. Thank you, Hilary Kelly, Chair of Environment Working Group, Shipston Town Council, hilary.kelly@shipstontowncouncil.org or write to me c/o Shipston Town Council, West Street, Shipston.

New defibrillator for west Shipston

A new defibrillator has been installed on Herdwick Fold, providing a potentially lifesaving resource for residents across the five new developments off Campden Road.

The Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), located in Bradley Drive, Herdwick Fold, was installed in September with the help of Shipston First Responders. The unit is now live and available 24 hours a day. In an emergency, callers should dial 999 and will be given the code needed to open the locked cabinet.

The Herdwick Gate & Herdwick Fold Residents Association would like to thank the League of Friends of Shipston Hospitals, Shipston Rotary Club and Stour Valley Lions for providing grants towards the cost, together with local residents who generously contributed.

Shipston First Responders will maintain the defibrillator, which is the 70th AED in the area under their care.

The Residents' Association is also working with the First Responders to arrange free local CPR and defibrillator training.

Save Our Shipston...still!

Well, the latest news is that there isn't any! Stratford Council has been in meetings involving our councillors Dave Passingham and Olivia Hatch to discuss how to meet the five-year land supply for housing as demanded by the government. Once they have made that decision they will then consider which of the existing planning applications to grant and which to deny.

Still waiting

The Fell Mill development is still very much a risk. The planning application for 1,150 houses at Fell Mill is still pending (at time of going to print) but may have come in by the time you read this. Or we could still be waiting. The developers are keen to try and get planning permission before the South Warwickshire Local Plan comes into force around 2028. Keep posted for latest news.

Still spreading the word

SOS did an 'on the street' a couple of weeks ago, got some more donations – thank you – and spoke to some very supportive people. We still found some residents who didn't know the situation about the threat of development and its potential detrimental consequences for our town. SO please keep up the conversation and get friends and family on our email list from our website if they don't have access to social media.

Still planning and raising awareness

Our team of SOS volunteers meet regularly to discuss any updates and are planning lots of activity and public support meetings for when the Fell Mill planning application comes in. Once that is in, we will need volunteers, so do get in touch if you'd like to play a part and we'll put you on the list to approach once we need you.

We have got through our supply of SOS badges and we now have a new stock ready to go. Wear your badges with pride, to generate conversation and raise awareness! Lost yours? Look out for further on the street events where you can get another one! Some of the team are also volunteering to be part of the development of the next Neighbourhood Plan. More on that in due course.

In the meantime, stay tuned, keep up the support and we'll publish any news as soon as it comes in.

New activities in Shipston

A round-up of activities from the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Free pickleball

A new weekly pickleball session is starting at Townsend Hall every Tuesday from 6pm to 7pm. Beginners and experienced players are both welcome. Sessions are free for the first few months. A charge will apply after that, and we'll share details nearer the time.

Community Hub

The Community Hub opens every Monday and Thursday from 10am to 12 noon, offering a comfortable place to stop for refreshments, chat to others and learn what local support is available.

Toy Library welcomes more families

Families and grandparents keep coming to the Stour Toy Library to borrow toys for children under four. Children get new things to play with, and households save money and space. Open Tuesdays 9.30–11am and Thursdays 11am–12 noon. Anyone can drop in without joining, and a year's borrowing membership costs £5.

Singing Down Memory Lane

Join us on the last Friday of each month, 11am–12 noon, for an hour of songs, memories and company. Everyone is welcome, and you don't need any singing experience.

Bereavement Café

The Bereavement Café is meeting again at the Ellen Badger on the first Tuesday of every month, 11am–1pm. It's a welcoming peer-support space where you can talk about losing a loved one and share your experiences with others.

Repair Café

The Repair Café came back in September and has been busy ever since. The next session is on Saturday 14 November, 10am–2pm. The last repairs are booked in at 1pm. Come along to have items repaired and enjoy a cuppa and the fun and friendly atmosphere.

Letter

From Richard Adams

Poppies to wear on Remembrance Sunday

With Remembrance Sunday approaching please wear only the true, sole and proper emblem of remembering the fallen, that being the red poppy. It is not wrong to wear a purple poppy, the emblem only of remembering animals who died in conflicts but please also wear a red poppy above it.

Please do not wear a white poppy, the emblem of the Peace Pledge Union (PPU) who while avowing it also signifies Remembrance, have another deluded agenda namely that, in short, all disputes between nations can be resolved through negotiation and therefore no military expenditure should happen. Those who wish to wear a white poppy should realise that they are abusing the sacrifice of the fallen who fought and died for, among other things, the right of freedom of speech and expression which would most certainly have been denied to them had WW2 been lost. If the PPU wishes to exercise the right to freedom of expression paid for in part by the blood of the fallen, by all means have a White Poppy Day at another time of the year. The PPU was formed in 1933 when everyone understandably desired there should never again be the horrors of WW1. Our government in the 1930s chose to appease Adolf Hitler by not rearming as should have been done to deter him despite his war aims being obvious and even stated in Mein Kampf. The PPU's objectives were thus disastrously achieved.

The outcome when war inevitably came was a nation unprepared for it. Many servicemen (and civilians during the Blitz bombing) lost their lives in the early days as a direct result. With modern, better and more fighting equipment to fight with, the servicemen casualties would have been less and outcomes of the conflicts they engaged in less disastrous.

Does anyone seriously believe today that the inadequate state of our defences would deter any would-be aggressor despite our NATO membership? The PPU say (look at their website) that spending on hospitals, education, welfare etc should always come before defence of the realm. But adequate military spending before WW2 would have avoided us being bankrupt at the end of it and might even have avoided it altogether. Please respect the wishes of today's servicemen and women and veterans, and indeed surviving relatives of the fallen and wear only the red poppy with pride and dignity.

Rotary Tree of Life

Each year the Tree of Life stands proudly in the centre of Shipston. Its white lights a glowing symbol of love and hope in memory of loved ones who will not be with us to celebrate this special time of year. If you have a friend or relative to be remembered in this way you are invited to sponsor a light by returning the Form below and making a donation knowing that every name will be entered into the Book of Remembrance.

Every contribution will be donated by Rotary, this year, to its Rotary Charities.
The illumination of the Rotary Tree of Life will take place at 17.00 of the Rotary Victorian Christmas Fair

On Sunday November 29th, 2026

.....

Rotary Club of Shipston on Stour Tree of Life

Please find enclosed my donation of £..... (minimum £5.00) Cheques payable to Rotary Club of Shipston on Stour
Or by bank transfer to Rotary bank account – Lloyds Bank 30-98-26 /53350268 - Ref TOL2026

In Memory of.....

From (name).....

Your Address.....

Please return to :-
Rotarian Avryl Thompson, Willow Bank
Pillerton Priors, CV35 0PS – Tel 01789740047
avryl.thompson@hotmail.co.uk

Forms are also available in St Edmunds Church, Greys Opticians,The Flower House, Richard Harvey, Low Furlong, post office or contact Avryl.

Regular Events

Monday

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

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

Core Balance to Promote Falls Prevention: 9.30am-10.15am, Ellen Badger Hospital. Free

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

Story Stomp: Ages 2-4 10am, Shipston Library.

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

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

The Stour Toy Library: Stay and Play: 9.30am-11am, Ellen Badger Health and Wellbeing Hub. https://borrow.shwp.org.uk/

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 0-5 years: 9:30am-11am every week including during the school holidays. Badger Valley Children's Centre, Tileman's Lane. Free. Book via Eventbrite.

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

Lego Club: Shipston Library, 3.30pm

Pickleball: 6-7pm, Townsend Hall

Shipston Shufflers Running Club: 6.30pm, Bridge car park

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

Baby Time for 0 to 1 years: Thursdays, 10 to 11.30 every week including during the school holidays. Badger Valley Children's Centre, Tileman's Lane. Free. Book via Eventbrite.

Community 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 Sue Taylor 01608 664490

Scrabble Club: 2pm-4pm, Shipston Library

Shipston Shufflers Running Club: 6.30pm, Bridge car park

Stour Singers: We rehearse on Thursdays from 7.30-9.30pm at Shipston Primary School. Contact stoursingers@gmail.com

Friday

Pilates for Complete Beginners: 9.30am Townsend Hall

GLOSS: Crafty Coffee Morning: 10am, The George Townhouse

Walks with a friendly group: 10am Mill car park. Call Marleen 07456 578467

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: November 2026

1st Lego Church: 10.30am, 1st 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 1st Tuesday of each month

3rd Shipston Library Reading Group: 2pm-3pm 1st Tuesday of each month

3rd &17th 'Dance for Joy' Monthly Circle Dance Group in Stretton on Fosse 2.30 – 4pm. 1st 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 Shipston on Stour WI: The Heart of England's Carer's Trust, followed by our AGM. Meetings held every 1st 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

6th Shipston Sports Club: Fireworks Night. Gates open 5pm, Bonfire Lighting 6.30pm, Fireworks 7pm. See ad on page 16

7th Royal British Legion: Veteran's Breakfast Club: See ad on page 10

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

8th Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service: Gather on the High Street from 10am. See article on page 8

9th Town Council Meeting: 7pm, New Clark House. 2nd Monday of the month

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

10th Stour Valley Lions Meeting: 6.30pm–9.30pm; The Lion in Tredington, 2nd Tuesday of the month

11th Armistice Day Service: Gyratory Memorial Garden. See article on page 8

13th Lions Cinema: My Mother's Wedding. See ad on page 10

14th Repair Cafe: 10am - 2pm Ellen Badger Community Hub. 2nd Saturday of the month

17th-18th Shipston Home Nursing Christmas Gift Fair: See ad on page 7

19th Drop-In Clinic: For the over 65s. 10am-12pm, Ellen Badger Health & Wellbeing Hub. Every 3rd Thursday

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 Horseshoe, starting at 7:30pm. Additionally, every other month, the Branch Committee meets on the third Friday at St Edmund's Church from 6.30pm to 7.30pm, before joining the social gathering. If you are interested in Branch events or enquiring to join the Branch, please contact the Branch Secretary, Ali at ShipstonOnStour.Secretary@rbl.community

20th Shipston Music Society: See ad on page 10

21st Shipston Museum: Stories from Shipston Union Workhouse. Townsend Hall, 2.30pm. See ad on page 10

22nd Stour Concert Brass: Autumn Brass Concert - see ad on page 16

24th Shipston U3A: See ad on page 7

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

25th Shipston and District Literary Society: Talk by Carolyn Kirby on her novel, When we fall. 7pm Tredington Community Hall. Visitors £8.

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: 11.30am - 12.30pm Ellen Badger Community Hub, free to attend. Last Friday of the month

29th Rotary Victorian Christmas Fair: See ad on page 16

SHIPSTON ON STOUR AREA u3a

Registered Charity No 1170969

TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2026, 2 pm TOWNSEND HALL

WILFRED OWEN

A talk by Howard Robinson

Wilfred Owen, war poet extraordinaire, came from a relatively humble background. Born in Oswestry in 1893. At age 23 he joined the army before then going to fight in France as a lieutenant during the Great War in 1916. Wilfred was invalided back to Scotland with a mild form of shell shock, and there he wrote poetry which fully represented the gritty, harsh and shocking conditions of life in the front-line trenches. Reassigned to the front lines in August 1918, he fought bravely and was even awarded the Military Cross but sadly died in an ambush near a canal on 4th November 1918, just 7 days before the end of the war aged only 25. Wilfred Owen was an amazing young man whose poetry described the reality of war in truly wonderful language.

Free entry for u3a members

Visitors are welcome - £2 to include refreshments

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 November 2026

Speaker: Annual General Meeting & Marilyn Chalmers, Assistance Dogs

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.

Christmas starts here .....

at **Holiday at Home**

on

Monday December 7th

in the **Townsend Hall**

from **10am~2.30pm**

Activities, games, quizzes and entertainment for the over 65s

Booking essential

£14 to include Christmas dinner entertainment and all crafts

To reserve your place contact Rosemary 01608 662584

An event organised by Christians Together in Shipston with help from Shipston Lions and Rotary

Registered Charity no 1162586

CHRISTMAS GIFT FAIR

Tuesday 17th November
3.30pm - 7.30pm
Wednesday 18th November
10am - 3pm

Ettington Community Centre
Rogers Lane, Ettington CV37 7SX

FREE ENTRY

- 30 stalls
- Cafe
- Tombola

Proceeds to Shipston Home Nursing

Providing free end of life care to adults with terminal illnesses and support to their families.

Registered Charity no 1162586

Paul Sargent obituary

Shipston Town Band is sad to announce the death of one of their longest-serving members. Paul had been associated with the band as player and latterly supporter for more than 75 years before he died aged 88 in Shipston on 22nd September. When the band was reformed after the Second World War, Musical Director Bert Smith encouraged local youngsters to join the band to secure the band's future. Paul was one of the first to be recruited and along with a number of others can be seen in the picture of the band taken in the Square on Mayday in 1953. Paul is in full uniform standing just in front of the bank.

When Paul joined the band his father Sid became a regular supporter of the band and was chief collector for many years making some magnificent collecting boxes which are still in the band's possession. Like all his contemporaries, Paul did his National Service where he was a member of the band of the Shropshire Light Infantry and used to delight in telling me of the speed at which the band marched and the various things they sometimes inadvertently trod in when performing at agricultural shows.

This was a particularly successful period for the band winning no less than 20 trophies in an 18 month period winning the Midlands Championship in 1961 culminating in being the Midlands representative at the National Finals in London in October.

Paul is seen with his BBb Bass at the left hand of the bass section. His younger brother Dave is pictured to the right of the bass drum playing 1st Baritone.

In 1970 the Band Hall was replaced by the current Band Hall and when the new hall arrived on the back of a low loader the band was fortunate to be well blessed with some very capable trades people and Paul's carpentry skills were put to good use. Some of his long-lasting creations were the music stand boxes which are still in use today.

In order to guarantee the future of the band it is always important to develop young players and Paul was the inspiration in starting off a junior section when the band purchased some cornets from Barrats of Manchester and Paul began teaching a group of youngsters including current cornet player Andy Smith. This was the beginning of Shipston Junior Band developed by Denis Abbotts and such a vital part of the band's development.

Paul would always encourage youngsters and in the picture to the right he is demonstrating his EEb bass to Claire Higgenson at Shipston Junior School Fete and Claire did in years to come become a member of the band but on cornet not EEb Bass.

I cannot remember any Remembrance Day Parade during Paul's time with the band when he was not there complete with his bass so it seems fitting to conclude with a picture of Paul on the march. This was taken by the band's former conductor Peter Stevens on Remembrance Sunday 1992.

As I no longer play regularly I often found myself sitting with Paul at the back of the Townsend Hall during concerts and we could share our memories. That and the memory of seeing Paul walking briskly from his home to the square and back when I was in Shipston are etched in my memory.

David Birch, Band Historian

Remembrance Sunday arrangements

The Shipston Branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) is proud to be working hand-in-hand with the Town Council, local Police, the Lions, St Edmund's Church, the Town Band and our dedicated bellringers to prepare for this year's Remembrance Sunday parade and service, taking place on Sunday 8 November.

We warmly invite all members of our community, parade participants, veterans and spectators alike, to gather on the High Street from 10am. The parade, led with dignity by the Town Band, will step off promptly at 10.45am. As in previous years, we will come together in Church Street, in front of the War Memorial, to lay wreaths, read aloud the names of the Fallen, and observe the two-minute silence in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the service of their country, particularly during the two World Wars and in subsequent conflicts, and for those who returned.

The service will then continue at St Edmund's Church. Please note that, due to financial constraints, the service will not be live-streamed this year. Following the service, the parade will return to Church Street. After the formalities, all are warmly welcomed to join the RBL at The Horseshoe for a time of fellowship and reflection.

Further details will be shared via social media channels of the SRBL, St Edmund's and the Town Council, as well as on the SRBL noticeboard in The Bury. If you know someone who isn't online, please do pass this information along.

Road closures

Temporary road closures will be in place from 9am-12.30pm to facilitate the parade, and we kindly ask everyone to plan ahead and show appreciation to the Lions and local Police, who will be marshalling the event. A big thank you to Richard Synge and Eazylay Concrete who will be providing trucks to act as security barriers, without which the parade would not be allowed to happen due to the UK national security level.

Two small Lions' marquees will be erected close to Morrisons where lost children should be instructed to go to and first aid can be received.

Armistice Day Service

On Wednesday 11 November, we will mark Armistice Day with a special ceremony at the Gyratory Memorial Garden, as we honour those who gave their lives in service. The community is invited to gather for a two-minute silence at 11am.

Excitement builds for Shipston Proms 2027

The Proms is returning and will run from Friday 18 June to Saturday 3 July.

The Proms Committee's 2026 AGM on 23 September at The George Townhouse was a lively and enthusiastic meeting with much reflection on the events this year and suggestions for ensuring the Proms musical magic happens in 2027.

The general opinion was that the 2026 Proms was a great success, enjoyed by a broad cross section of communities from Shipston and surrounding villages. Despite issues with Stratford District Council and licensing applications for some events, everything planned went ahead, thanks to the persistent efforts of the logistics team, with the Last Night of the Proms being a resounding success enjoyed by well over 1,000 revellers in the town square. All the acts were very well received, as many of you told us. The committee is now looking for ideas from local residents for 2027. We're raring to go to make next year's event even more spectacular. So please get in touch and let us know what sort of acts you would like to see included. We want to ensure that the Proms really does provide 'Music for All' so if you have a particular entertainment genre in mind that you feel would appeal to others, then please let us know.

Our sponsors for this year were truly amazing and our thanks goes out to them all; without the generosity of the sponsors, the Proms could not go ahead, so if you are a local business, or an individual and feel you could offer sponsorship for 2027 then please contact us. It really does help to raise the profile of your business and gives you recognition as a community supporter.

Ideas were put forward for another opening event at The Townsend Hall, as the Studio 54 70s Disco was a well-attended resounding success, as was the Ibiza Night and the ever-popular Pubs Trail and the Songs from the Shows events. All the regular favourites will be back at your request, and the committee is eager to hear what else you would like to see included for the Proms 2027.

Vacancies

The chair of the committee for this year has now stepped down, as it was his intention to take on the role for one year only, leaving a current vacancy for that position. There are also several unfilled roles on the committee, so we appeal to everyone who wants to see this fantastic event continue to consider joining us. Roles could include assisting at gigs, setting up venues, selling raffle tickets, distributing programmes, drumming up sponsorship, working with logistics, managing the accounts, social media support, and many other areas. Please help us to continue to make the Proms happen by volunteering a few hours of your time.

Email: shipstonproms@gmail.com
Facebook: Shipston Proms Music Festival
Website: www.shipstonproms.org

Arts and Crafts Christmas Fair

Running from 27-29 November, ARTMIX is a hugely successful Arts and Crafts Christmas Fair, held at Chipping Campden Town Hall. This year will be a very special event as ARTMIX is celebrating its 20th year. The exhibition is an ideal opportunity to meet many local artists and view their work. Opening times are Friday 27 November 12-5pm, Saturday 28 November 10-5pm and Sunday 29 November 10-4pm. More information from pennyvarleyceramics@hotmail.com

100km for Parkinsons cure

Nikki Turner has been raising funds for Cure Parkinson's by walking 100km over the month of October, accompanied by her dog Barnaby. Aiming to complete 25km per week, by half way through the month the pair were well on track to meet their goal. Nikki, who was inspired to take on the challenge after her father was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, says: I have learnt that Shipston folk are incredibly generous, having received some amazing donations. The time walking has enabled me to really take in our stunning rural views and allowed for some reflective time, thinking about how my Dad and our family have been impacted by the disease and how others will be going through similar challenges. We have done all the walks in and around Shipston and surrounding villages. We have had plenty of well wishers along the routes. Barnaby has taken centre stage, combining his daily exercise with some time in a buggy as his little legs are too short to do the lengths I've been doing. It has made me determined to continue fund raising for Cure Parkinson's and we're keen to see what we can do next!'

You can still support Nikki and Cure Parkinson's at www.justgiving.com/page/nikki-turner

Rotary Victorian Evening

The Rotary Victorian Evening has been a staple part of Shipston's Christmas for over 25 years. During that time thousands of pounds have been raised for charities and for children through the Tree of Life. Hours of entertainment have enthralled the crowds and only Santa knows how many children have told him their Christmas wishes.

As announced on the front page, this year the event will be held on the afternoon of Sunday 29 November in the town centre from 2pm to 6pm, giving everyone more time to enjoy the shopping and entertainment at their leisure. 'No more rushing home from work, getting the children fed and having to think about their bedtimes,' promises President Fay Ivens. 'More time means you could even visit, go home for a cup of tea, then come back for the grand switch on at 5pm with no Friday rush hour to contend with and perhaps a less crowded experience. So put the date in your diary and we look forward to seeing you there.'

STOUR VALLEY LIONS CINEMA

Certificate 15 – Three sisters return home for their Mother's third wedding – Funny and heart-warming.

TOWNSEND HALL,

Friday 13th November, 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.

The Brandenburg Concertos

a detective story talk by Tim Brain

Friday 20th November 7.30pm
Methodist Church, 52 New Street, Shipston-on-Stour
Tickets £10 on the door
or in advance from E.H. Spencer
Free entry to Shipston Music Society members
New members always welcome
Information: ph 07779 151947

SHIPSTON Music Society

Supported by

Registered Charity No: 1146459 (England)
www.shipstonmusic.org.uk

Stories from Shipston Union Workhouse,

Saturday 21st November

2:30pm

The Townsend Hall

CV36 4AE Adults £5

VETERANS' BREAKFAST CLUB

Supported by the Shipston-on-Stour Branch of the Royal British Legion

Full English Breakfast:

£5 for RBL Members
£7.50 Non Members

SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER | 9-11AM

No pressure, just good food and chat!

BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Please reserve your space by
Monday 2nd November

Contact Clare on 07940786755
clare.cuthbert1510@hotmail.com

Low Furlong, Darlingscote Road,
Shipston-on-Stour
CV36 4DY

RBL Shipston on Stour Branch

Shipston Primary School

What an exciting autumn term we are having here at Shipston Primary School! It has been a whirlwind of learning, competition, and hands-on community visits, and I am delighted to share a few highlights of what our wonderful children have been up to recently.

Harvest celebration

We were delighted to celebrate Harvest at St Edmund's Church this month. Guided by Revd Sarah Edmonds and supported by our Year 6 pupils, it was a memorable occasion centered on gratitude, reflection, and appreciation for the food we enjoy. A huge thank you to Jules from Longborough Opera for once again inspiring our children and helping them bring our Harvest songs to life so beautifully. We are deeply grateful for our strong community links.

A taste of High School life

Our Years 5 and 6 pupils have already had some fantastic opportunities to collaborate with our local High School. In October, Year 6 joined children from neighboring primary schools for an immersive Culture Day, spending the day diving into Chinese New Year traditions, Aboriginal art, and the rhythmic energy of African drumming.

Our talented mathematicians also stepped into the spotlight at the Quiz Mathsters competition. They put their problem-solving and logic skills to the test against several local schools, and, true to form, our brilliant team came away with first place! We couldn't be prouder of their achievement.

Finally, our Mixed Year 5 and Year 6 football team kicked off their season by competing in their very first tournament of the year. The team were thrilled to get the chance to play on the High School's fantastic new astro pitch! They showed brilliant teamwork, determination, and sportsmanship throughout the day, securing a fantastic 3rd place finish. Huge congratulations to all the players involved!

Heroes in blue and red

Down in Reception, our Chicks and Ducklings classes have been bringing their Me and My Community topic to life with some very special visitors. We were thrilled to welcome our local firefighters and police officers to school. The children had a wonderful time exploring the fire engines—and I'm reliably informed that a few of our teachers couldn't resist having a go with the water hose, too! PC Faye Brown also dropped by to talk with the children about how the police help keep us safe. Ending the session with a turn of the siren definitely made it a visit to remember!

Opening our doors

October saw our first round of Open Mornings, and there is nothing we enjoy more than opening our doors to show prospective parents, carers, and children our school in full swing.

A massive thank you goes to our fantastic Prime Minister, Madeleine Hudspith, and Deputy Prime Minister, Freddie Powell. They did an outstanding job leading guided tours and sharing an authentic, enthusiastic insight into what life at Shipston Primary is really like.

If you missed our October dates, don't worry. We have two more Open Mornings coming up in November. We would love to welcome you, answer your questions, and show you around our school.

Shipston High School

As we reach the end of another busy half term, it is wonderful to reflect on the many opportunities and activities our students have enjoyed over the past few weeks.

On 9 October, we held a Wear Something Yellow Day in support of Young Minds Matter, a charity that provides vital mental health support for young people. Thank you to everyone who got involved and helped raise awareness for this important cause.

Earlier in the month, on 7 October, we welcomed 160 pupils from our primary feeder schools for our annual Culture Day. The event provided a wonderful opportunity for students to work together, experience life at Shipston High School, and celebrate the diversity and creativity within our wider school community.

Today also saw the return of our third annual Shipston QuizMathsters competition, which brought together ten teams of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils for a morning of mathematical challenges and problem-solving. Students tackled a variety of activities, including tangrams, a mathematical relay, and even a *Traitors*-themed round. Congratulations to all those who participated, and a special well done to Fish and Shipstons, who claimed first place, while The Traitors and The Faithfuls, both from Welford Primary School, secured second and third places respectively. We are already looking forward to welcoming everyone back for next year's competition.

Sporting successes

It has also been a busy period for sport at Shipston High School. We were delighted to welcome our North Cotswold Chess League partners from across three counties, hosting approximately 65 students from Chipping Campden School, The Cotswold School, Kingham Hill School, and Burford School.

Our students have represented the school superbly across a range of sporting fixtures and events. Year 11 students recently competed in a County Hockey Tournament, while football and netball teams across all year groups have taken part in numerous fixtures throughout the half term. Their commitment, teamwork and sportsmanship continue to make us proud.

As we head into the break, we would like to thank all our students, staff and families for their support during what has been an exciting and productive half term. We wish everyone a restful and enjoyable holiday and look forward to welcoming students back refreshed and ready for the next half term.

Shipston SCAN

On 8 September we should have been listening to local councillors talking about Local Government Reform. This was sabotaged by the government's announcement the previous day that the proposed reforms were being put on hold. Their timing could not have been better, but we rose to the occasion.

Olivia Hatch, one of the planned speakers, gave a summary of the local government situation as it is. There will now be local elections in May 2027 based on existing boundaries and the proposed North and South Warwickshire councils will not, as previously expected, take over from May 2028. The reasoning for the delay was that the government needs legal advice about challenges to the plans in some areas where consultation was allegedly insufficient. Watch this space!

Olivia then introduced the parliamentary petition she has initiated to make water companies statutory consultees in planning applications. Many thought that they already are. Problems after the building of the new Campden Road estates may have been averted had it been necessary to have comments from Severn Trent before the applications were considered. The petition is online only – petition.parliament.uk/petitions/769979. It was also revealed that the processing plant at Fell Mill is not as comprehensive as many thought and much sewage has to be transported by tanker to other sites.

We then turned to John Dinnie, one of the trustees of the League of Friends of the Shipston Hospitals, to talk about the Extraordinary General Meeting being held on 29 September. The meeting is to consider a proposed change to the League's constitution to reflect the new hospital situation in Shipston.

Many thanks to Olivia and John for their contributions.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, 10 November. The speaker will be Marilyn Chalmers who will be talking about Assistance Dogs. The ways in which dogs can help humans these days are extremely varied. Do come along and be amazed. The talk will be preceded by our AGM. As always, start at 10am for refreshments, AGM and talk at 10.30 and finish around noon. The venue is the Townsend Hall and there is absolutely no cost. Please ring Laurie Grove, 07779 151947, if you'd like to know more.

SAFAG

The advent of more favourable weather conditions (recent rain and more forecast) delivered the chance for SAFAG to action one of the outstanding tasks, namely the re-seeding of parts of Brexit Brook and Paddle Brook. Both watercourses had major works undertaken by a contractor earlier this year. On 15 September, the team of Mike McCarthy, Vanessa Benjamin-Smith, Katharine Rutherford, Heidi Ellis, James Law and John Fedorowycz raked and re-seeded the watercourse banks around 14 dams on Paddle Brook and four dams on Brexit Brook. This will give the soil/banks more resilience during the winter storm surges. It's estimated that this workday involved walking in excess of four miles.

Winter talks at the Museum

The museum may have closed its doors for the season, but the winter talk series offers a fascinating opportunity to stay in touch with local history.

On 21 November at Townsend Hall, the Museum hosts a talk revealing the stories and realities of life in Shipston's Union Workhouse. Built between 1836-8 off what is now Darlingscote Road, the workhouse accommodated up to 300 inmates, making it a substantial local institution operating for nearly a century. The workhouse represents a pivotal moment in social history. Established following the Poor Law reform of 1834, these institutions were intended to provide relief for the destitute, but they also embodied strict controls and harsh conditions. Shipston's workhouse, with its administration block and separate accommodation wings for different classes of inmates—children, the able-bodied, the elderly and infirm—reflected the rigid classification system of the era. A chapel added later suggests something of the moral dimension deemed essential to workhouse life.

The building eventually became known as Shipston House after 1930, when it came under Warwickshire County Council. *See advert on page 10 for details on how to book.*

Also, don't forget the revived Shipston on Stour and District Local History Society continues to meet on the third Monday of each month at the Black Horse Inn. These informal gatherings—featuring talks on various local history topics followed by discussion—are free to members and volunteers.

Shipston Shufflers

It started with a Facebook post on the Shipston Noticeboard and Emma-Jane asking if there was a local running group. Josh thought a social running group would be a great way to meet people and replied, 'No, but let's start one!' Georgina reached out, bringing experience of running a group at university. On Tuesday 18 August the trio—joined by new admins Chris and Barry—held the Shipston Shuffle Social Running Club's first run with 21 runners. We now have a steady group of regulars and a WhatsApp group that grew to 70 members in just two weeks to share routes, tips, and achievements.

The club meets three times a week at the Bridge car park:
- Tuesdays, 6.30pm – 5k
- Thursdays, 6.30pm – 5-10k
- Sundays, 9am – longer distances

Thursdays and Sundays start with a 5k loop, so there is no pressure to complete the longer distances. Routes vary—and we moan about Shipston's inevitable hills—but as the nights draw in, we stick to well-lit estates. We also arrange Saturday meetups at local parkruns.

The Shufflers are all about being social, with new friendships forming over runs and post-run pub drinks. Want to join? Find us on Facebook or meet us at the Bridge car park on Tuesdays at 6.30pm.

Shipston WI

Clare Shivlock from Warwickshire Willow (www.warwickshirewillow.com) gave us a fascinating insight into the world of willow weaving. Willow was used extensively in times gone by for weaving baskets for a multitude of uses, including gathering and agriculture, storage and transport. The herring industry even used wicker creels for measuring fresh herring catches. Sadly with the advent of plastic, willow weaving was

used less and less but Clare is committed to keeping heritage crafts alive. She grows all the willow she uses on a plot the size of two football pitches on a farm in Stratford on Avon and there are about 60 different varieties and colours which were clearly illustrated in the woven baskets she makes. She explained the processes of growing and harvesting the willow before it is ready to use.

Clare runs workshops for anyone wishing to get involved in willow weaving and she brought along several examples of willow to encourage us to have a go at weaving a fish. With Clare's enthusiasm examples of woven fish emerged at the end of the evening. As well as baskets for a variety of uses, Clare also produces hand crafted willow sculptures including hares and ducks, some of which she brought along.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 4 November when we welcome a talk from Carers Trust Heart of England, followed by our AGM. New members and visitors welcome at the Catholic Church Hall, Darlingscote Road at 7pm.

Probus

The work of a District Councillor, by Cllr Dave Passingham
It is perhaps remarkable that few of us have much idea about the detailed work of our District Council, unless perhaps we have had a particular problem that needs sorting out!

Cllr Dave Passingham represents the Shipston South ward on Stratford District Council (SDC) and took time from his busy schedule to give Probus members an insight into his everyday work. Stratford District Council is responsible for waste and recycling, planning, housing, parking, leisure and tourism and the organisation of local democratic elections. Other matters are dealt with by Town/Parish Councils and Warwickshire County Council.

The district council works through a committee system, manned by the elected council members. The full cabinet is typically attended by the council leader and portfolio holders, supported by council officers. Several committees and work groups focus on specific areas, also manned by councillors and council officers.

Dave is a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Planning Committee. He is involved with specific issues relating to Shipston South Ward including infrastructure concerns on the new estates off the Campden Road, trying to bring more treatments to the Medical Case Day Unit (outpatients) in the Princess Diana Building at Shipston Ellen Badger, licencing requests for local events such as the Shipston Proms, issues arising from management of local housing stock, tree preservation orders, asbestos removal, empty property in the town centre, to name a few!

A major issue currently facing Shipston is the potential applications for 2,000 new houses in and around the existing town in the next twenty-five years. Much will depend on the South Warwickshire Development Plan which makes provision for only 500 houses. However, the developers might appeal to the Government Inspector if the remaining 1,500 houses are refused planning.

Finally, the future structure of local government is again up for debate. Westminster government has paused the proposed merger of Stratford DC with Warwick DC. Once again, we await a final decision which could take another two years. A vigorous debate, inevitably including the Ellen Badger 'hospital', was stimulated by Dave's talk. We are indebted to him for taking the time to help us through the complicated inner workings of local democracy.

If you feel Probus could appeal to you, why not give us a try as our guest? Enjoy a free lunch and no initial commitment to join, entirely your choice! Please contact Chris Skeath on 01608 661561 or email cmskeath@hotmail.com for further details.

Shipston and District Literary Society

The Society started its new season with a fascinating talk from Mike Bottomley on the Life and Works of Rudyard Kipling. This covered Kipling's troubled childhood, moving between India and England, his status as the first British winner of the Nobel prize for Literature and his personal tragedies, including the loss of two of his three children, Josephine and John. Josephine died age six of pneumonia on a family trip to America. Kipling's *Just So stories* were written as bedtime stories for Josephine and, we were told, were so called because she didn't like it when he changed them as she liked them 'Just So'.

Kipling's son, John, died age 18 at the Battle of Loos during the First World War. Kipling had used his political connections to get his son into the Irish Guards as John was very short-sighted and failed his military and naval medicals. John went missing during the battle and Kipling and his wife spent many years trying to find out what happened to him. His grief inspired Kipling to work with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission where he helped select the famous inscription: 'Known Unto God'. Kipling wrote the poem *My Boy Jack* about parental grief during World War One. We were entertained with extracts from *The Jungle Book* and readings from Kipling's poems.

In November Carolyn Kirby will be talking about her own book *When we Fall* – a wartime story of three lives altered forever by one fatal choice.

We meet on the last Wednesday of the month at Tredington Community Hall at 7.30pm and would welcome new members. Further information from Alison Hook 07772 202915.

Shipston Sports Bowls – 2026

The club enjoyed a successful – as well as hot – summer season. A number of matches had to be rearranged as a result of the extreme heat, but we still managed a full programme of social activities, friendly matches and a commendable finish in the Pickering League. In our club competitions, history was made when husband and wife Geoff and Chris Rudd won their respective singles championships. Congratulations to them.

The Club is grateful for the support given to us by our Friends the Richard Harvey Collection and Highmead Electrical, as well as the generosity of the Town Council and Stour Valley Lions.

We are looking forward to the winter season when we will be undertaking maintenance works as well as keeping the bowling going by playing Short Mat Bowls.

County Council

Both my grandads served in the First World War. Let me tell you the stories of two men who served their country and won the peace which we so lightly value. My paternal grandad fought with the Oxfordshire Yeomanry in Belgium. He was captured and taken to a prisoner of war camp where he parlayed his skills as a tailor for black bread to supplement any rations he got. He made slippers for the German guards from any material available. When the war ended, he was released and told to walk home. He did. My grandmother never really talked about her surprise at his return. We still have the telegram from the King announcing his death – somewhat premature, as he survived until the 1950s. My maternal grandad served in the new Royal Air Corps as a mechanic and fitter. He caught Spanish flu while in service, and awoke from a coma to ask when Christmas was, to be told: three days ago.

Such is the chaos of war. Those men served and suffered so that we can be free. Over the last few days – I've been mulling for longer – I am wondering what they would think today of the country we live in? Horror and incomprehension at the lawlessness of ramraiding the Coop – again? Anger that the community is being deprived of its access to cash, a lifeline for those who have to budget carefully? Concern for the Coop staff and the inevitable delay of getting back up and running? Maybe the same frustration I feel that our community and society in general is fracturing? I know that the UK stands at a fork in its long road of democracy.

I have my grandfathers' example to follow. I do fight for what I believe in. That's why I do politics – freedom for you and for me. I would fight, as they did too, should I be called on. But today only about 25% of under 25s would fight for their country. What has happened to our communal beliefs? How have they been so eroded? Is it popularism? Is it the long march through the institutions' gradual capture by one belief system? Is it that we have become too cosy in our nice country where luxury beliefs are easily bought?

War should not be glorified, but make no mistake, the courageous Ukrainians are on the front line for our European democracy, and the breakdown of our own society lets in those who wish us ill. I've waxed a bit lyrical, I know, but for me there is nothing more important than protecting the hard fought freedoms so many died for.

In other news, the government had another wobble over LGR (Local Government Review) this week, then backed off again. District Council elections are still on. I have signed a letter from the CCA (Conservative Councillors Association) asking for the Greens to distance themselves from the 'Zionism is Racism' position their party has taken. As was said after the Holocaust: never again. The EHCP figures are set to improve with more people employed to process applications. I make no apology for repeating this from last month: if you need help let me know. It is not good enough when we do not give every child the best start in their school journey. I am considering looking at some funding for parenting classes. Would people be interested? I attended one when Barker Jr was little and found it really helpful and reassuring. Do DM me – I'd like to gauge real interest.

I hope people enjoyed Bookfest. Ditto benefitting from the Bereavement Café. I've done some noticeboards in the villages, lots of Highways projects and am waiting on crossings, once Sainbury's is done. All of these are from budgets I can access at WCC. And finally, after the ramraid and other anti-social behaviour, I will try to access the fund to improve community safety.

As ever, thanks for the support you give me, and remember: I am here.

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

District Council

Olivia and I have been hearing from many residents who are worried about road safety and the extra traffic that could come with new housing around the town. The biggest concern is the crossroads where Darlingscote Road meets the A429 Fosse Way. Three major applications are likely to be approved in November: 25/01521/OUT, north of Darlingscote Road; 25/01810/OUT, north of Tilemans Lane; and 25/01843/OUT, south of Darlingscote Road. Together, they could bring another 300 to 400 homes—and, with one or two cars per household, hundreds more journeys through an already busy junction.

At the moment, each developer appears to be looking only at the traffic from its own site, which makes the impact on the Fosse Way junction seem small. But local roads do not work one development at a time. We believe the three housing schemes—and the traffic from the new Sainsbury supermarket—need to be considered together. That is why Olivia and I are asking the developers to contribute towards installing traffic lights at the junction.

Sadly, the collision record shows why action is needed. According to the Road Crash UK collision map, the junction has seen four fatal collisions, nine serious collisions and 20 slight collisions over the past 30 years. The most recent fatal collision was on 1 November 2023, and the serious-collision figure does not include incidents from the past year. A petition signed by more than 1,000 people is calling on Warwickshire County Council to install traffic lights. It was started in Ilmington after the latest collision involved an elderly resident from the village who had been visiting Shipston, and it is due to be presented to the County Council in December.

There is also a fresh start for an important local organisation. Now that we know beds will not be returning to the Ellen Badger Hospital, the League of Friends of Ellen Badger Hospital has relaunched as Friends of Shipston Health. Its focus will now be on supporting other local health groups, including Shipston First Responders and the Shipston Health and Wellbeing Partnership. I am delighted to be one of the new trustees, and it was encouraging to see around 40 people at the Extraordinary General Meeting, where the new constitution was approved.

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

The views expressed in these columns are those of the individual elected councillors and are not those of the Town Council nor the Forum.

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e: ian.cooper@shipstontowncouncil.org

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

Jo Barker
t: 07748 968712
e: jo.barker@shipstontowncouncil.org
(for town and county matters)

Hilary Kelly
Environmental Working Group Chair
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Chris Howarth
e: chris.howarth@shipstontowncouncil.org

John Williams
e: john.williams@shipstontowncouncil.org

Vacancy

Vacancy

Vacancy

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
Samaritans	116 123
Food Bank	07386 352456
Local police (non emergency)	**101**

Shipston Police Safer Neighbourhood:
PC1508 Sid Hammond – 07967 303185
PCSO Katie Brooks – 07870 978973
Warwickshire Connected: www.warwickshireconnected.com

Churches of Shipston:

Stour Valley Baptist	01608 664876
Our Lady & St Michael	01608 685259
St Edmund's	07951 064778
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, if you don't have email access, on 07989 530069

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

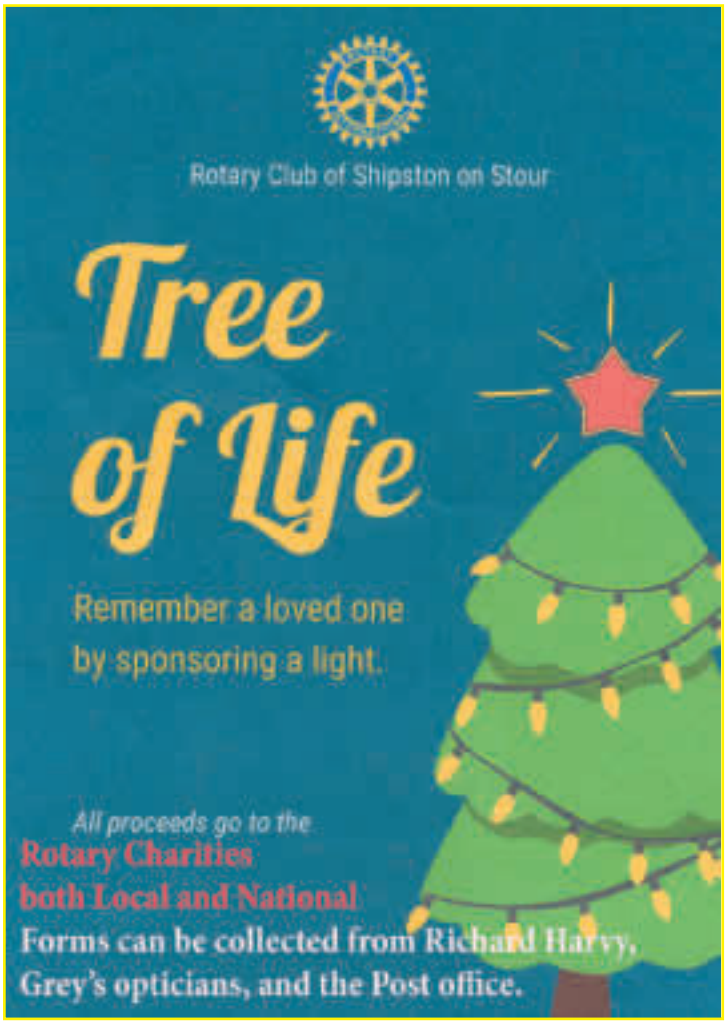
Forum copy deadline:

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.


Rotary Club of Shipston on Stour
Tree of Life
Remember a loved one by sponsoring a light.
All proceeds go to the
Rotary Charities
both Local and National
Forms can be collected from Richard Harvy, Grey's opticians, and the Post office.

ROTARY VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS FAIR
Join us for an exciting Christmas Fair where you'll find unique gifts, a magical atmosphere and festive spirit!
CHILDRENS CHOIR * STALLS * FOOD
SHIPSTON TOWN BAND * COTSWOLD CHOIR
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON AT 5PM
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29TH
FROM 2PM TO 6PM
SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR TOWN CENTRE

STOUR CONCERT BRASS
Autumn Brass
an afternoon of favourites & more
BOOK NOW
Sunday 22 November, 3pm
Cherington Village Hall, Stourton
Shipston-on-Stour CV36 5HG
TICKETS: £5 (+fees) IN ADVANCE - £8 ON THE DOOR - U18S: FREE
www.shipstonband.co.uk

SHIPSTON SPORTS CLUB
Fireworks Night!
FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER
GATES OPEN 5PM
BONFIRE LIGHTING 6:30PM
FIREWORKS 7PM
ADVANCE ONLINE: Over 16s £5 | Ages 5-15 £3
ON THE GATE: Over 16s £8 | Ages 5-15 £5
Under 5s Go Free
FOOD STALLS AND 3 BARS!
SHIPSTON SPORTS CLUB
21 LONDON ROAD, CV36 4EP