

Parish Website

The previous Newsletter mentioned possible improvements to the parish website, since when there have been discussions with a number of people to determine what additional features might be provided. It has also become clear from the initial SVP questionnaire and the subsequent work of the Steering Group that we need to improve communications within the parish. The SVP main survey in April will seek to address what it is residents want and how we can best achieve this. The average percentage of people accessing the parish website is over 60% from the USA, 25% from Europe and 10% from Asia; it is clear the use by residents is very small. In short, we are not taking advantage of a potentially valuable capability. The Parish Council would like to make improvements that more people would find of value and encourage many more residents to use it for the benefit of the whole community. We need your help. Please make sure you let us know what you want and why not get more closely involved with this project. Make contact on 07743 816515 or via dhpheasant@yahoo.co.uk

Shiplake Pop-Up Cafe

What is a *Pop-Up Cafe*? – A community coffee morning; a chance for Shiplake residents to meet, chat and have a coffee. A group of residents thought it would be a good idea to organise a series of coffee mornings throughout the year, for people from Shiplake to enjoy, and at the same time raise some money for charity. In 2013 we will be supporting 'Headway' the charity for people suffering from brain injury. There will be a small charge for coffee (£2), and, who knows, there may even be some cakes or biscuits! The second Pop-up Café will be on March 27th at 10 Brampton Chase. Look out for further information nearer the time, but put the date in your diary now! After that we have other venues planned in Shiplake, about every two months throughout the year. For more information contact Sally Taylor on 940 2142.

Dates for your Diary

A number of events are being planned in aid of the Memorial Hall Modernisation Appeal. More details will be available on posters around the village and from Pam Hudgell on 940 2105.

Thursday 23rd May: Annual Parish Meeting

Future Newsletters

The next Newsletter will be published in July 2013. Ideas or suggestions about content, input from clubs, or changes to the contact list should be with Bob Partridge (940 1907) or Roger Hudson, (shiplakepc@hotmail.com), preferably by mid June

Useful Contacts

Parish Clerk	Mr R Hudson 07809 829628	Rector:	Please contact the
Shiplake Village Community Club	Mr J Jenkins 940 2041	Rev Paul Bradish.	Parish Office on
Rosemary Club	Mrs J Bryant 940 3936		940 6098
	Mrs T Drew 940 2823	Parish Magazine adverts & contributions	940 6098
Beavers	S Doyle 07767 250192	Primary School	940 2024
Cubs	S Turner 07979 607050	Memorial Hall Bookings	940 3303
Scouts	P McCarthy 07979 566125		www.shiplakehall.com
SHADDO (Amateur Dramatics)	Ms H Tucker 940 2067	Church Room Bookings	R Appleby 940 3837
	www.shaddo.org.uk	Corner Shop & Post Office	940 2932
Brownies	Mrs K Piercey 01491 579783	Butcher	940 2728
	Ms J Kuspisz 01491 573379	Shiplake Motors	940 3125
Tennis Club	Mrs C Cousins 940 1454	Baskerville Arms	940 3332
Bowls Club	Mrs V Beaumont 947 0535	Plowden Arms	940 2794
Football Club	C Wagner 07799 773296		
Shiplake WI	Mrs P Hudgell 940 2105		



SHIPLAKE NEWSLETTER

Developing The Shiplake Villages Plan

Since the launch of the Shiplake Villages Plan (SVP) the initial survey has been completed and the outcomes, based on returns from 450 households (65% response rate), have been publicised recently on the parish website, by email to those we have addresses for, all notice boards and inserts into the copies in the Henley Standard available via the Lower Shiplake corner shop. I would like to take this opportunity to again thank all the residents who helped with distribution and collection of the survey, those people who helped with the analysis and all those villagers who actually completed the questionnaire.

There was a very large agreement about what was good about our villages: the benefits of our rural location, good local businesses, access to the river, transportation links, together with the Church, school, Memorial Hall and the pubs.

Serious concerns were expressed about the impact of commuter parking in Lower Shiplake and issues related to school 'pick-up' in Memorial Avenue/Plough Lane and at the top of Station Road. Poor maintenance of roads, paths and drains were cited strongly, along with the incidence of inappropriate 'infill' developments and speeding traffic. Additional footpaths within the villages and cycle ways to Henley and possibly Wargrave were requested by a number of people as were calls for more community activities and upgraded community facilities. Broadband speeds and internet connections, dog fouling as well as inadequate street lighting were also concerns. A number of transport issues were also raised and I am pleased to report that we have an additional late night train mid-week and a promise from Network Rail that barriers at the rail crossing will be in place by end of March.

The next stage in developing the SVP is the main survey scheduled for April. The Steering Group members have worked with extended groups of volunteers from across the parish to produce a questionnaire that seeks to clarify the issues raised in the initial survey and to test out some possible solutions with the residents. Developing a questionnaire of this breadth is not easy and my personal thanks go to all those who have given their time on this task.

The teams developing the main survey have completed their work and it is now up to the residents of our villages to play their part. Successfully shaping the future of our villages will depend upon the level of community support. If the projects that emerge through this planning process are to have credibility we need the best response possible to the main survey and I would hope that with your help the main survey response will be even better than that from the initial survey. One of our volunteers will be calling on you in early April with your copy of the main questionnaire, please complete it and help make the difference. If all goes well I hope to be in a position to share the initial results of the main survey with you at the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 23rd May.

Dennis Oliver - Chairman of Steering Group

A Shiplake Joseph

From the moment that boys and girls from Shiplake Primary School's Years 5 and 6 poured onto the stage with their smiles and infectious enthusiasm it was evident that *A Shiplake Joseph*, a Community Youth Production between Shiplake College, the Primary School and the Shiplake Parish Church's Sunday Club would be a high-energy entertainment bonanza.



Andrew Lloyd-Webber and Tim Rice had originally written *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat* for a performance in an English school. Catherine Saker and Jenny Unwin's slick edit romped through the action. Such was the pace that matinee performances, with seventy actors and singers on stage in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, for St Mary's School and the remainder of Shiplake Primary School kept even the youngest of children entertained.

Louise Rapple's eight-piece band picked out the honky-tonk sounds of the seventies, but Joseph's multi-coloured onesie, proudly worn by Ruaridh Sheppard, (pictured), epitomised the nod to contemporary tastes. His eleven brothers were wonderfully disgruntled as they hissed, booed and gestured amongst the audience whilst Jacob showered affection on his favourite son. Tom Jones, as Reuben, soon won the audience's affection.

The element of pantomime was heightened by a camel that made asides to the audience. A limousine made of MDF and a golden "pimped" BMX bike were typical of the production's irreverent sense of fun. Once in Egypt there was comic slapstick as Potiphar's wife chased Joseph around the stage. A truly uplifting and amazing performance, very many congratulations to all those who took part.

Broadband

Faster broadband has been identified as a key requirement for many residents. The Parish Council subscribes to and monitors the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) initiative, OxOnline, to facilitate faster broadband throughout the county, with the aim of providing up to 24 Megabits per sec (Mbps) connectivity to homes by 2015. OCC is investing £13.86m, with £3.86m from the government to achieve this. The minimum requirement, however, is stated as 2Mbps compared with the average for urban areas of 10.5Mbps. Within our villages current speeds vary considerably from less than 1Mbps to approximately 4Mbps and as small villages there is no guarantee that we would attain more than the minimum speed (2Mbps) from OCC's initiative. We need to ensure Oxfordshire and Berkshire authorities really do appreciate our needs, otherwise we could get left behind and may well have to pursue and fund alternatives to ensure we have the future broadband speeds we need for home, business and community requirements. It was good to see 49 responses from Shiplake to the OxOnline survey, but this is much lower than the 89 from Binfield Heath, and Wargrave's responses in the Berkshire scheme are significantly higher. As a Wargrave exchange user you can also register on www.superfastberkshire.org.uk as well as on OxOnline. The more we make our needs known, the more chance there is of improving our broadband speed.

Shiplake & Binfield Heath Runners

Shiplake and Binfield Heath Runners meet on Wednesday mornings at Shiplake Memorial Hall field at 9am. Beginners as well as more experienced runners are welcome and, best of all, it is free! The group is run by Julie Rayfield who is a qualified UK Athletics coach and the group is registered with 'Run Oxfordshire' who provide incentive gifts for those that keep up the training. If anyone would like more information they can e-mail Julie at this address: julierayfield@mac.com

Planning

In 2012 the number of planning applications in the parish was 41 compared to 64 in 2011. As successful applications have 3 years in which to start work, it is likely that current levels of building activity will continue for some time.

SODC asks the Parish Council for its views on each application. Of the 41 applications, the Parish Council recorded no objection to 34 and recommended refusal to 7, usually on grounds of scale, impact on neighbours or impact on the immediate environment. A number of these recommendations for refusal led to withdrawal and subsequent revisions, which were considered acceptable. In the event of a strong objection by us against a Planning Officer's recommendation for approval, we can have the application referred to the SODC Planning Committee, composed of District Councillors, for a final decision. Two such applications were referred to the Planning Committee and subsequently granted planning permission.

We objected to the application by Thames Farm to change the use of the barn on the Reading Road from industrial to residential, when the owner went to appeal after its application had been rejected by SODC. This application, however, was ultimately approved by the Government's Planning Inspectorate.

Residents need to be aware that a significant factor in the villages' retaining their current environment and not suffering from over-development is their categorisation as two "small villages". This classification has been determined on the basis that any significant developments are viewed as unsustainable for SODC and national planning purposes. This has been reaffirmed in the recently approved SODC Core Strategy and should mean that there will not be a government allocation of new housing placed on our villages for the foreseeable future.

Geoff Thomas (940 3432)

Level Crossing Update

After much lobbying by the Parish Council, Network Rail are about to start work to fit automatic barriers to the level crossing in Lower Shiplake. Please note that on the 5th April, the crossing will be temporarily closed between 00.30am and 5am, (apart from emergency vehicles). After completion of the work, we look forward to increased pedestrian safety and fewer dangerous incidents involving cars.

Tudor Taylor - Parish Council Chairman

Memorial Hall Modernisation Project Phase A - Work Starts

The Memorial Hall Modernisation project took a massive step forward on 28th January when work on phase A began. The work is expected to take 7 months, weather permitting, and the hall will remain in operation for all but a few days of that period. Phase A provides a new catering-standard kitchen with direct hall access, all new toilets, a new entrance with improved disabled access, a new store room and a new heating boiler. The appeal team have raised all the £395,000 needed to complete the funding for this phase of the work, through a combination of donations, grants and fund raising events, a magnificent effort. Our sincere thanks go out to all those who have contributed.

Fund raising is continuing to try and achieve the additional £21,000 needed to undertake phase B - replacement of the flat roofs on the west side of the building with new insulated pitched roofs. The cost of this work is much lower if it can be done whilst the building team are on site undertaking phase A and it has become urgent because of the increase in the rate of water ingress through these roofs whenever it rains, buckets now being needed to catch the water.

If you have already made a donation to the modernisation of this vital community asset, the appeal team are most grateful, but if you have not yet done so, please consider making a donation to help us complete phase B.

Donations can be made using the form on the hall web site www.future.shiplakehall.com or by calling 940 1907 or 940 4058.