

Broadband

The need for improved broadband was ranked the second highest issue in the recent Shiplake Villages Plan (SVP) survey, reflecting frustration with the slow and variable speeds provided within Shiplake. The survey looked into variabilities in levels of service, use of the internet and how much people might be prepared to pay for a better service.

Volunteers will be meeting on 31st July to discuss the findings of the survey and how we might best improve the services we get. A key element of progress on this initiative, however, is the dependency on the outcome of the OCC's OxOnline broadband initiative and the award of the £13.86m contract due at the end of July/early August. This contract is intended to provide Superfast Broadband to 90% of homes and businesses in Oxfordshire and Basic Broadband (2Mbps) to everyone else: 2Mbps does not meet our requirements. Although we may not know with any certainty how we might benefit from OxOnline until later this year, we will be looking for a determination as soon as possible and looking at possible alternatives, local initiatives and potential access to other grants from such as DEFRA and SODC. Relevant proposals will be presented in the Shiplake Villages Plan later this year.

David Pheasant

Something Different Day

Shiplake WI are organising a *Something Different Day* on 21st August at the Memorial Hall to raise funds for the local Air Ambulance charity. Coffee and biscuits at 10.00am will be followed by a demonstration and tasting by Jennifer Marshall-Jenkinson, an author and expert on microwave cooking. After lunch with a glass of wine there will be a hands-on surprise craft session. This will be followed by a talk by a local media celebrity. The day is open to all and the charge for all of this in a very worthwhile cause is just £20 each. Tickets are available from Pam Hudgell on 940 2105.

Dates for your Diary

A number of events are being planned in aid of the Memorial Hall Modernisation Appeal and more details will be available on posters around the village. Shaddo will be performing a Murder-Mystery at the Memorial Hall in the autumn, (date yet to be confirmed).

Future Newsletters

The next Newsletter will be published in October 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 late September.

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 www.shaddo.org.uk	Church Room Bookings	R Appleby 940 3837
Brownies	Mrs K Piercey 01491 579783	Corner Shop & Post Office	940 2932
	Ms J Kuspisz 01491 573379	Butcher	940 2728
Tennis Club	Mrs C Cousins 940 1454	Shiplake Motors	940 3125
Bowls Club	Mrs V Beaumont 947 0535	Baskerville Arms	940 3332
Football Club	C Wagner 07799 773296	Plowden Arms	940 2794
Shiplake WI	Mrs P Hudgell 940 2105		



SHIPLAKE NEWSLETTER

Proposed Housing Development at Thames Farm

Many of you will have heard about a proposed development of 110 houses on the Thames Farm site which borders our parish on the A4155. The site is actually located in Harpsden Parish, but any development there would certainly look to Lower Shiplake for amenities and services. We have also had representations for housing development further along the A4155. At the moment no formal planning application for either site has been received.

The results of the Shiplake Villages Plan survey clearly confirm that a very significant majority of respondents are against the development of green field sites. Reflecting these views, the Parish Council is firmly against any development of housing at these or other, similar sites.

The parish of Shiplake is made up of two smaller villages: Lower Shiplake and Shiplake Cross and the term small village is very important from a planning perspective as highlighted in the quotes below from the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) Planning Department.

“Thames Farm is greenfield land on the edge of Lower Shiplake, which is a ‘smaller village’ according to our settlement classification in the Core Strategy appendix 4. A planning application for housing adjacent to a smaller village would be contrary to our Core Strategy policy CSR1 which only allows infill housing development on sites of up to 0.2 hectares, rather than extensions to villages onto greenfield land”.

Our near neighbours Harpsden have joined with Henley to develop a neighbourhood plan which will give them a greater say over where new housing will be allocated. Harpsden Parish Council will not favour any development at Thames Farm. SODC Planning have confirmed that:

“The SODC Core Strategy requires 400 homes at Henley. Lower Shiplake does not score highly enough in our settlement assessment to warrant allocations. Decisions on where to allocate homes will be a matter for those preparing the neighbourhood plan, but it will need to meet the basic conditions set out in the Localism Act. These conditions include that the plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan (in our case the Core Strategy) and that it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.”

Shiplake Parish Council strongly support the SODC position as we feel any development would: unacceptably erode the rural character of the landscape; be contrary to SODC Core Strategy policy CSR1; increase to an untenable extent the pressure on our local amenities which are sufficient for Lower Shiplake’s smaller village status only; possibly lead to continuous development of housing along the A4155 and present major infrastructure issues. Examples of the latter include placing more demand on the already significantly over-subscribed Shiplake Primary School, increased traffic and parking problems and the creation of more pedestrian safety issues.

Tudor Taylor - Chairman Shiplake Parish Council

Shiplake Villages Plan (SVP)

With the completion of the main survey and the presentation of results at the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) in May we are at the halfway stage in developing a Community-led Plan for the villages of Shiplake. It has taken us about 7 months to get this far and compared to the time taken by other villages that's a real achievement and is entirely due to the efforts of our steering group, all those who have helped with distribution and analysis and not least our community who have supported the whole enterprise every inch of the way. A measure of the community support is that 78% of all the dwellings surveyed have returned at least one completed survey.

The development of the plan commenced in earnest with the initial survey conducted in October 2012. The message that I and the steering group took from that survey was that most residents of Shiplake were happy to live here, were happy with what the villages had to offer and did not want to see major change. The overriding sense that came through was that residents valued the community they lived in and prized the rural nature of our environment. The improvements that residents wished to see were not fundamental but looked to build on what already existed. It was with this in mind that the main survey was constructed to provide a vehicle that would allow us to better understand what the residents were saying and test out the possible solutions that emerged from the scrutiny of their comments.

In this article it is difficult to cover all the data we have, but the complete presentation of results discussed at the APM can be found by going to the parish council website at www.shiplakeparish.org.uk and following the link to the main survey results. The top priorities identified in the main survey are consistent with what you told us in 2012 and in order of priority are:

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| 1. Road and path maintenance; | 4. Improved paths & cycle ways; |
| 2. Improved broadband; | 5. Traffic calming |
| 3. Parking; | |

The key difference compared to the initial survey is that improved broadband has moved from fifth place to second in order of importance. While housing and development policy is in the overall list of priorities with the recent proposals for development along the Reading Road this is a subject that will no doubt gain greater prominence.

So where do we go from here? In a sense collecting the data is the easy bit. Analysing the survey results properly and developing ideas and possible solutions is the next challenge. The members of the SVP Steering Group have been assigned responsibility for each of the prioritised topics and they are establishing project teams to undertake the necessary analysis and develop solutions. Many thanks to all those who volunteered to help on project teams and who gave us their e-mail addresses, we now have a database of approximately 350 residents. If it is practical we will use this database to conduct electronic surveys to verify findings and test solutions as we proceed

If all goes well we hope to deliver a report to the community towards the end of 2013. The report will provide a snapshot of the villages of Shiplake in that year, a consideration of the issues raised by residents, proposals on how those issues can be addressed and suggestions regarding implementation. Actually delivering on the proposals in the report will be a joint enterprise between the steering group, the community of the villages of Shiplake and the various levels of local government (parish, district and county) involved. Inevitably there will be different timescales associated with different projects, where possible we will try to make an early impact but some projects like improved paths and cycle ways may take many years to bring to fruition.

Dennis Oliver SVP Steering Group

Memorial Trail Quiz

Janet Matthews, leader of the Shiplake Local History Group has produced a Quiz Trail that starts at the Memorial Cross and ends at the Memorial Hall. Follow the trail, answer the 42 questions and find out some interesting facts about Shiplake along the way. Send in your completed answer sheet and it will be entered into a prize draw. Top prizes have been donated by The Baskerville, The Plowden Arms, Shiplake Butchers and Shiplake Corner Shop. The trail runs over the summer, so is a great thing to do in the school holidays, and is available to buy at the Corner Shop, priced £2.50p. All profits will go to the Memorial Hall Restoration Fund. There is still time to get your copy and return your entry by the 30th August closing date.

Memorial Hall Modernisation Project - Progress Update

Builders Blue Qube of Bracknell are making excellent progress with the £455,000 modernisation project at Shiplake Memorial Hall. On the east side, the extension (pictured) containing a new catering-standard kitchen, new toilets, a store room, new lobby and entrance is well on the way to completion and will be finished on time and within budget by the end of August.



However, the phase B work on the opposite side of the hall to replace leaking flat roofs with new insulated pitched ones has revealed more extensive previously hidden damage to the original 1926 timberwork than anticipated, with many rotted beams and joist ends, (see picture). Additional work has therefore been necessary to correct this damage. This has now been completed and construction of the new pitched roofs is well under way with completion of phase B due in early August.



Although the project budget (for which all the funds had been raised) included a contingency sum, an additional £14,000 above this to cover the unforeseen phase B work will be required. The trustees are therefore continuing their fund raising

to close this gap. Donations can be made using the form on the hall web site www.future.shiplakehall.com or by calling 940 1907 or 940 4058. A public open day to showcase the restored hall will be held on Sunday 27th October.

A New Parish Web Site

The SVP survey highlighted that 98% of respondents use the internet for personal/social purposes and 57% for business. Significantly, a high level of 78% of users are rated as either proficient or expert. These responses underline why there are frustrations with poor broadband service levels as referenced elsewhere in the Newsletter. They also, however, contrast significantly with the apparent low levels of use of the Parish website...apparently less than 2% of respondents on a daily basis and 76% never use it!

So, what do people want from a Parish website? You gave us some answers in the survey: 75% want information on social events in the village, 65% more local news and travel updates and information on planning applications, 39% more information on local businesses and 35% an information exchange forum.

The Parish Council has made funds available for an enhanced website, intended to address the requirements raised in the recent SVP survey and other aspects of use and ease of access. A team of 8 – 10 volunteers has already been established with a goal of making the website a valued means of improving communications within the parish. All contributions to a better website are welcome.... contact dhpheasant@yahoo.co.uk