

Shipton-under-Wychwood Issue 20 October 2017

WELCOME to our Winter Parish Newsletter

Parish Council, New Beaconsfield Hall, Station Rd,
Shipton-u-Wychwood, OX7 6BQ.

Contact the parish clerk: clerk@shiptonunderwychwood.org



Welcome to the winter edition of the Parish Newsletter. In the last few months we have been joined by Becky Ward as a co-opted member of the council and are now up to our full complement of councillors. Liz Leffman has also joined us as our new County Councillor. A warm welcome to both Becky and Liz. We have also launched our new website and completed the installation of the new defibrillator on Fiddlers Hill. Our thanks go to all those who contributed to the purchase of the defibrillator. Dare I say it; we are also starting our preparations for Christmas, in particular the Carols on the Green on Christmas Eve. As usual there will be a collection for a worthy cause: this year the monies collected will be donated to the Air Ambulance Service so please come along, join in the singing and give generously! This will also be the last service that our vicar Kate Stacey conducts before moving to pastures new so I hope we can give her a memorable send off!

Brian Young, Chairman

A new bus service for 2018?

West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT) is in the process of applying to OCC Communities Fund for a grant towards a bus and to the Traffic Commissioner for a permit to run a regular week day service between Witney and Chipping Norton via the Wychwoods. If WOCT is successful Shipton residents could use the service to go to college or work in Witney, visit the library in Milton, spend longer in Witney or Chipping Norton; the possibilities are endless. During school holidays, teenagers will no longer have to beg lifts from friends and family.

If you want to support this project consider becoming a member/shareholder of WOCT for an investment of £1. It's a not-for-profit organisation so no dividends but you do have the opportunity to influence the decision making process of WOCT. A membership form is on the Parish website or look at their website www.WOCT.org.uk or Facebook page.

If and when the service is up and running we will alert residents via Shipton Alerts (sign up now if you haven't already) and the Parish website. It will then be up to all of us to use the service. I will arrange for the timetable to be on the Parish website for ease of use.

Don't forget the Saturday train service from Shipton to Oxford; for a couple it's easier and cheaper than parking in Oxford.

Playground

There has been some vandalism at the playground in the last two weeks: one of the wooden benches around the memorial garden was ripped off the stones. It has been repaired by a local team of dry stone walling volunteers, many thanks to them. We have a lovely playground and it's a great shame that a few try to spoil it for the many children who use it.

Library

In 2014 the Wychwood Parish Councils entered into a three year agreement with the Library Service in order to support the provision of a full time librarian in our local library. Without this financial support there would have been periods when there was no professional help available in the library. That contract was due to end this October however it has been agreed that the contract should be extended by a further two years. Unfortunately there is an increase in costs with Shipton's contribution increasing by 7.8%.

Website

We now have a new website at <http://www.shiptonunderwychwood.org> Our intention is to publish on the site details of consultations, road closures, County and District news etc. as well as Parish news. There is a facility on the site for you to sign up to email updates when new information is published. We are still in the process of fully populating the site so any suggestions with regard to improvement or additions would be gratefully received.

Defibrillator

As you may already be aware, a new second village defibrillator has just been installed in the telephone kiosk on Fiddlers Hill. The first unit is situated on the outside wall at New Beaconsfield Hall. As part of the agreement for the new defibrillator the suppliers are going to be providing a training session on their usage. This session has been arranged for Saturday 9th December at 11.00 in New Beaconsfield Hall. The session is likely to take up to 2 hours and everyone is welcome to attend.

Speedwatch Programme

The Speedwatch volunteers continue to monitor speed on our roads. Since the programme began there has been just a slight reduction of speed on Station Road, however hopefully the Speedwatch team will eventually produce a greater awareness of excessive speeding throughout the community.

Wild Garden update

We have had a busy year in the Wild Garden with some 30 plus volunteers helping us with a variety of jobs. A team from Elsevier in Kidlington helped resurface one of the paths with wood chips, our regular team on Tuesday mornings have rebuilt the Upper Pond dam wall, installed a buggy bridge and new paths by the Cedar and started to clear out some of the excess growth to define the edges of the pond and our recent Autumn Clear-Up morning with the Shipton Volunteers resulted in a skip load of rubbish and litter and some 15 bags of debris for the bonfire. Looking ahead we are conducting our annual tree safety survey, we have logs to split and deliver to local residents (in return for a donation) and continued work on maintaining the paths. Have you ever wondered what it takes to keep the Wild Garden as an attractive location for residents and visitors of the Wychwoods? In addition to our volunteer teams it costs us between £5,000 and £7,000 a year in external costs just to run the Garden. Much of this goes to professional tree surgeons helping us to keep the paths safe and to manage trees as they come to the end of their lives. Typically we have 3 or 4 major tree falls a year to handle as well as safety work on about another dozen trees. Then there is the mandatory insurance and the administration costs of being a registered charity and company as well as general equipment maintenance costs. All this is financed by subscriptions from our Members and the Shipton and Milton Parish Councils to whom we are extremely grateful.

So if you are already a Member a heartfelt thanks for your support, maybe you can also persuade a friend to join. If you are not a Member and enjoy walking in the garden then do consider helping us by taking out an annual membership subscription, becoming part of the community that determines the future of the garden and helping to leave a legacy for future generations. Just visit the Support page on our website at www.wychwoodwildgarden.org.uk and use our secure Donation Manager, or email info@wychwoodwildgarden.org.uk or call us on 0845 8056804
Mike Watson

Allotments

We have vacant allotments for rent on Swinbrook Road. If you're interested in a full plot, a half or quarter or in teaching a child to garden using a raised bed, please contact Jill on 831091 or themavins66@hotmail.com

County Council News

Since becoming your County Councillor in May this year, I have been on a steep learning curve as I am now working with a large number of new parish councils, each with their own character and issues. The one thing that every parish shares, however, is that our roads need a good deal of attention. I have therefore been out and about with officers to look at what can be done, given the limited budget we have for Highways. I have to say that the officers have been very helpful wherever they can be. I have managed to get a few things done, for example a new sign on the A361 at Shipton advising the exit from the Shaven Crown car park, but there are also a number of issues outstanding, including the very poor road surface on Leafield Road in Shipton. I am hoping to get these sorted in time.

Among the things that I have been able to get done are the new crossing lights at Wychwood Primary School. The school did not have a safe crossing for two years after the "lollipop lady" resigned, and it was frequently mentioned to me when I was campaigning for election. So I was delighted that by working with officers, I was able to get the new lights installed before the start of the autumn term. The safety of our children is paramount, and I am very pleased that I have been able to help with this.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all residents a very merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.
Liz Leffman

Speeding on Station Road

The residents of Station Road and the Parish Council have become increasingly concerned over speeding on Station Road. Earlier this year speed monitoring over a seven day period showed a significant number of vehicles entering and leaving the village at speeds well in excess of the 40mph limit. Recent figures from the Speedwatch team confirm the problem.

The Parish Council and the County Councillor are looking at what can be done to reduce excessive vehicle speed. Measures being looked at include repainting of the hazard chevrons by the bridge, more restrictive road markings, repainting the white lines on the road, moving the 30mph limit to the northern side of the railway bridge and of course an increased police presence. Questions are also being asked over the practicality of speed cameras.

Unfortunately whatever is decided upon cannot be implemented immediately due to legal and OCC budgetary constraints so until something can be done to improve safety on this stretch of road can we please put out a plea that at least the village road users drive with care on this dangerous stretch of road and comply with the existing speed limits.