



# Shaftesbury Town Council

Town Hall, Shaftesbury, Dorset. SP7 8LY

Telephone: 01747 852420

Interim Town Clerk: Billy Maddock

e-mail: [office@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk](mailto:office@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk](http://www.shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk)

To: All members of the Shaftesbury Arts & Culture Advisory Committee

## A G E N D A

### Shaftesbury Arts & Culture Advisory Committee:

Fran Hill (Chair), Cllr Elaine Barratt (Vice-Chair), Rachel Diment, Cllr Virginia Edwyn-Jones, Charlie Hamilton-Saul, Amber Harrison, Deborah Jones, Julia Markus, Tim Royle, Cllr Conor Smith, Janet Swiss, Mark Thistlewood, Pete Wildman and Karen Wimhurst

You are summoned to a meeting for the transaction of the business shown on the agenda below. To be held at **9am on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026** in the **Council Chamber, Shaftesbury Town Hall**.

Billy Maddock

Interim Town Clerk 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Public Participation:** The Chairman will invite members of the public to present their questions, statements or petitions. The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed twenty minutes. A member of the public shall not speak for more than three minutes.

1. Apologies – To receive and consider for acceptance
2. To receive any Declarations of Interest
3. To approve the minutes of the last meetings on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025
4. To receive further information on the proposed Shaftesbury Waters Spring feature
5. To discuss how to move forward with the installation of brown tourist signs

## **Agenda Item No. 1**

### **Apologies – To receive and consider for acceptance**

The Council (including committees) should approve (or not) the reason for apologies given by absent councillors. If a council member has not attended a meeting of the council (or its committees) or has not tendered apologies which have been accepted by the council (or committee), for six consecutive months, they are disqualified.

Apologies received from Mark Thistlewood.

## **Agenda Item No. 2**

### **To receive any Declarations of Interest**

Members and Officers are reminded of their obligations to declare interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct – adopted in May 2025. The Interim Clerk will report any dispensation requests received.

## **Agenda Item No. 3**

### **To approve the minutes of the last meetings on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025.**

When the meeting is approving the draft minutes of a previous meeting as an accurate record, the only issue for the meeting is whether the minutes accurately record the proceedings of the meeting and the resolutions made at them. It is irrelevant if the chairman or other councillors were not present at the meeting to which the draft minutes relate.

If it is necessary for the draft minutes of the previous meeting to be corrected because of inaccuracies, then the amendments to the draft minutes must be approved by resolution. (Tharmarajah, 2013, p. 154).

#### **Recommendation**

Confirm the accuracy of the Minutes of the Arts & Culture Advisory Committee meetings held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025.

## To receive further information on the proposed Shaftesbury Waters Spring feature

A proposal for a new special feature for Shaftesbury, to commemorate the historic importance of water for the town.

### Introduction

We have a vision to create a special springhead feature near the ponds at Enmore Green, on community land, owned and cared for by the Town Council.

The Spring consistently flows from the Shaftesbury rock along its channel through the grasses, wild plants, under the little bridge and into the ponds. It would be wonderful for the town to preserve this as a special spot, to value and protect the waters, making a beautiful feature.

Shaftesbury Greensand stone can be sculpted to create the springhead feature with a watery design and inspiring words 'Waters of Life'. (see Appendix 2)

All work will be carried out with as minimal impact as possible on the land.

### How this Water Spring Feature will enrich Shaftesbury:

- To honour and value the waters that crucially gave life to the town for hundreds of years.
- The springhead would be a supportive feature for the Byzant ceremony and could become a key feature in the celebration, again important historically.  
Also important as a feature for visitors to the town.
- For community wellbeing; this will be a shared communal feature for all, something special to be proud of and add to the identity of the town.
- Springs have been traditionally held sacred, a source of life, the flowing 'Waters of Life'. It links with Shaftesbury being a sacred site with the Abbey remains being consecrated ground in its stunning location on the hilltop, hugely important for sacred pilgrimage.
- A new spring water feature would be a symbolic starting point to raise awareness about the future of Water, its quality, sustainability and the future of water globally, so we can truly value this precious resource.

### Actions, Plans

1. *Shaftesbury Waters*: A group of enthusiastic supporters is forming, calling ourselves *Shaftesbury Waters*, contributing to help the development of this initiative.
2. Stonework: Harry Jonas, local stonemason, has been working with us as we develop this project. For Harry's estimate quote, please see Appendix 1.
3. *Design*: An outline design is being created with the support of Shaftesbury Waters. Please see Appendix 2.
4. *Friends of the Springhead*: We aim to encourage a group to work together to help care for the feature. Rev. Mary Ridgewell has already been watching over and caring for the spring, using its sacred waters from the rock of Shaftesbury in some ceremonies.
5. *Information Board*: We would like to install one nearby, perhaps by the bridge, to provide some of the unique history and traditions connected with waters for the townsfolk and visitors to Shaftesbury.

### Support

Thanks to everyone who has helped develop this project to get us to this point:

Sustainable Shaftesbury and Shaftesbury Arts and Culture Advisory Committee have both approved the idea in principle.

The trustees at Shaftesbury Abbey also gave their support in principle. (I am the Abbey Herbalist and Head Gardener and have been volunteering at the Abbey since 2001, Julie Wood)

### Fundraising

We would present this to townsfolk with the aim of crowd funding.

The hope is to encourage the people of Shaftesbury to contribute so that they have the opportunity to feel some personal ownership through their financial support.

We will also approach local funding groups in Shaftesbury and other sources of funding and would apply to the Town Council for a contribution.

Wessex Water will be also approached as this feature will support their efforts to inform the public about water sustainability and quality.

### Proposed launch

Assuming timely funding, the hope is that the project can be completed during 2026. It could be celebrated at a special Byzant ceremonial procession from the town hall to the spring at Enmore Green, led by the mayor.

### Recommendation

Members are requested to propose to seek support in principle from Shaftesbury Town Council for this project so the group Shaftesbury Waters can develop this further.

## **Appendix 1**

### Harry Jonas Estimate Quote

Totalling approx.; £14,000 – £20,000

To cover meetings, quarry visits, design development: £2000

For the preparation and carving of the stone and two water features: £11,000 - £16,000

On site groundwork, footings, foundations, fixings: £1100 - £1500

Harry will be responsible for site erection and securing the features.

## **Appendix 2**

### Proposed Design for the Spring, Enmore Green

- Greensand Stone Features
- Keep the design simple, with rustication giving it a more historic feel.
- Frost resistant, impermeable, anti-vandalism.
- To feel appropriate for the natural environment.
- Will not impede the waters flowing from its source in any way.
- Made from greensand stone. If an inset or plaque was necessary needing a finer finish, local Chicks Grove stone would be used.
- Carvings would be in bas-relief so nothing protruding that could be damaged easily and would weather/erode more rapidly.

- Use the same font on the Abbey entrance archway for the words.
- Footings, foundations will ensure it is secure and stable.

We are exploring the idea to use a natural stone boulder shaped with an arch underneath to rest over the source of the spring, not interfering with the flow of the waters.

Additional features could be a simple rustic shallow stone bowl placed in the waters as they flow out from the bank and turn through 90 degrees into the stream channel. Perhaps also a simple stone waterfall further along the channel to enhance the watery sounds.

A stone bench could possibly be added later for people to sit and contemplate.



## To discuss how to move forward with the installation of brown tourist signs

### Background

The following report was presented to the committee in December 2025.

### Information

Officers have investigated Dorset Council's tourism sign policy, and the requirements for urban areas, and set out below the application process.

- Discuss with DC initially to assess the general viability  
Signs must (a) be seen to aid tourism in Dorset (b) be in keeping with the environment (particularly in AONB and Conservation Areas) (c) be seen to aid the journeys of those wishing to visit and the smooth flow of traffic to tourist destinations (d) abide by traffic sign regulations (e) minimise the risk of discrimination.
- Submit an application with supporting information  
This is to include: (a) the number of complaints/comments/enquiries about tourism signs (b) efficiency of cost recovery for administration, design and maintenance of tourism signs (3) records that demonstrate the consistent application of this policy across the county.
- If successful, signs can be supplied and installed by DC or supplied and installed by a contractor approved by DC under DC supervision (the approved contractor to have public liability insurance cover of £5m+). A fee would be payable to DC for either of these options and, regardless of funding, signs remain the property of DC.
- No private advertisement signs related to the facility/attraction must be located at or near the proposed brown sign.
- Signs are reviewed by DC every 3 years to ensure the facility/attraction remains open.

Signage falls under two categories:

- Facilities (eg. serviced accommodation, pubs, restaurants, cafes, shops, garden centres and recreational, entertainment and sports facilities)

For facilities:

- (1) The facility must be open for at least 6 months of the year
  - (2) Evidence must be provided of publicising the facility and informing visitors of its location
  - (3) Adequate on-site parking must be available (if vehicular signing) or off-site parking to be within 400m (signing to be agreed with the car park owner)
  - (4) The facility must meet quality standards appropriate to its category, standards required by professional or regulatory organisations appropriate to the facility and its conduct of business and operation (evidence required), and the general criteria.
- Attractions (eg. historic houses, museums, gardens and country parks, craft centres and natural attractions)

Attractions are classed as a permanently established excursion destination, the primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest or education rather than being a primary retail outlet or a venue for sporting, theatrical or film performances, and should meet the definition of a tourist attraction in the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Service (VAQAS).

For attractions:

- (1) The attraction must be open to the public throughout the day for at least 100 days each year.
  - (2) It must be open to the public without prior booking for published periods each year and capable of attracting day visitors or tourists as well as local residents.
  - (3) The attraction must provide an adequate level of visitor facilities appropriate to the size, location and character of the operation.
  - (4) The number and size of signs will relate to (a) the location of the attraction (b) the number of other destinations qualifying for tourism signs in the area (c) local, environmental, traffic management or road safety considerations
  - (5) Except where urban attractions have their own adequate parking, the general presumption will be to sign traffic to the town centre car parks with pedestrian signing to and from the tourist facilities.
- All qualifying major attractions (more than 20,000 visitors per year) will be considered for signing from the nearest point on the defined strategic road network (all 'A' and some 'B' roads).  
All qualifying minor attractions will be considered for signing from the nearest point on the defined tourist road network (all 'A' and 'B' roads and some 'C' roads).

*All qualifying smaller attractions and facilities will be considered for signing from the nearest point on this network.*

### **Financial Information**

|         |                                |   |
|---------|--------------------------------|---|
| Stage 1 | Application                    | £350.00   |
| Stage 2 | Supply of signs                | At cost + 10% for administration<br>(quote to be provided on request) |
| Stage 3 | Ongoing maintenance/ removal * | <i>May need to insure against damage/theft</i>                        |

\*Ongoing maintenance includes: cleaning, replacement/repair of fixings and replacement of sign if damaged or stolen (*unless covered by DC insurance*) or due to general deterioration, and cost of removal (if appropriate) will be met by the applicant. Signs are expected to last 10 years.

### **Recommendation**

Members are requested to

- (1) Consider this information and if they wish to investigate the installation of brown signs further by seeking support in principle and funding support of £350 from Shaftesbury Town Council in the first instance.
- (2) Appoint committee members to take this project forward, providing further information for consideration to a future meeting.