

Shaftesbury Town Council

Annual Report

2021 - 2022

Mission Statement

Shaftesbury Town Council will work conscientiously with the community to define and provide best value, high quality services and facilities, ensuring that Shaftesbury is a 21st Century Town that respects its heritage and upholds its values, making it a great place to live, work, plan and visit.

Message from the Mayor

Since our last Town Meeting much has happened, not just in the town but across the world. Thankfully, we are now coming out of the long shadow of Covid, and we can all hope that life will move back to a degree of normality.

First of all, I would like to thank the past Mayor Tim Cook for his 18 months in office, and also thank fellow councillors, Claire Commons and our council staff for seeing through the Council's initial response to the Covid crisis. The response of the town, other agencies and organisations was fantastic and demonstrated how well we can work together.



Andrew Hollingshead – Mayor 2021-22

Clearly, over the last two years our Covid response was uppermost in our thoughts, and I have already touched on the terrific volunteering efforts. Part of that response was the temporary pedestrianisation scheme which proved extremely successful, and we owe a debt of gratitude to Brie Logan, our Business Manager for all the work she has put in, along with Cllr Piers Brown, to help make this happen. Also, our thanks to our partners Dorset Highways and to the Chamber of Commerce for their enthusiastic support.

There has been a tremendous amount of work since the last Town Meeting and highlights include the adopted Neighbourhood Plan, the Coppice Street carpark and 3G pitch developments, a new logo for the town and we are currently underway with a new project to improve St James play park experience and Jubilee steps. I'm delighted to note that the 3G pitch would appear to have already made a difference and our congratulations to Shaftesbury Town FC for winning the Wessex League Challenge Cup earlier this year.

Whilst we were all dealing with Covid, the regular ongoing work of gardening, cleaning, maintenance and all the other myriad tasks that go unreported but happen every day and which keep Shaftesbury the lovely place that it is, was continuing to be done. I am sure the Town would join me in recognising and

congratulating the work of our Business Manager, Brie Logan, Tracy and Zoe in the offices, Mike and the Grounds Team and Ryan and all at the Shaftesbury Lido (formerly Oasis Swimming Pool).

Since our last report we have had two councillors resign. I would like to put on record our thanks to Julian Prichard who resigned to focus on his sterling work for the Friends of Westminster Hospital; and to Matthew Welch who resigned to allow him the time to complete his degree at the West of England University. We are indebted to both of them. We have had one by-election as a result and are delighted that Virginia Edwyn-Jones was successful at the ballot and joined us as a Councillor in May 2021. The recent by election was held on 26th May 2022 and we welcome Laura Langley to the council representing the East Ward.

I would also like to once again offer our condolences to the family of one of our Grounds Team, Richard Hare, who passed away in September 2021.

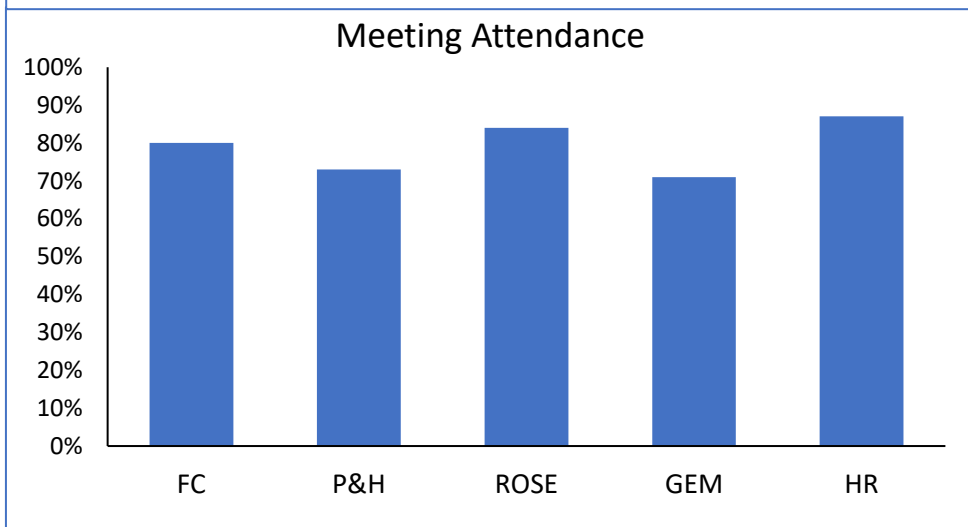
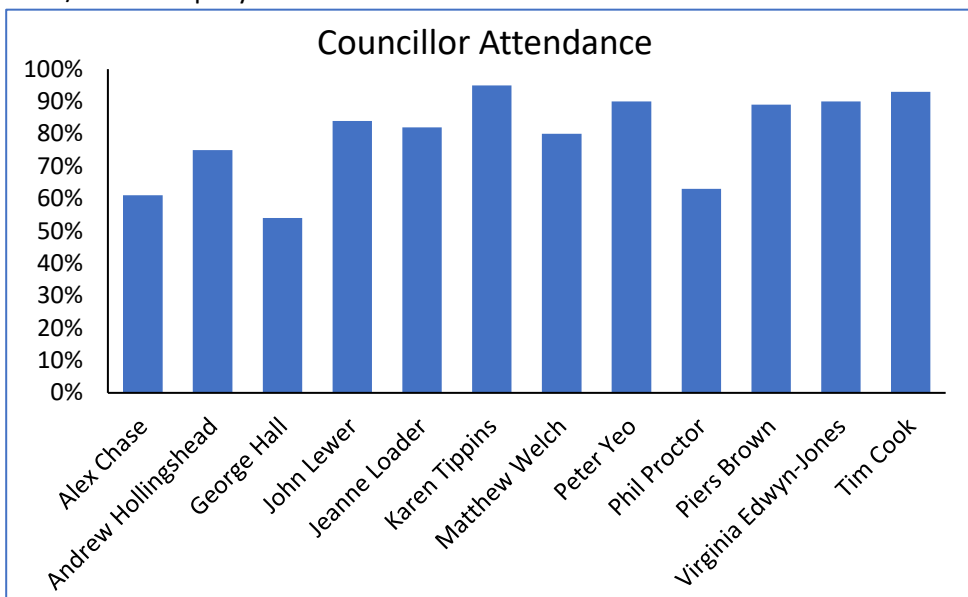
And, finally, a special thanks to Claire Commons, who has dedicated the past 14 years to Shaftesbury Town Council, 5 of which have been as Clerk. She has made a huge difference to the town and to the council not least its reputation. She, with the willing support of her staff, was instrumental in helping make Shaftesbury a special place to live, work and visit. Claire left Shaftesbury Town Council in December 2021 to take up the post of Town Clerk at Shepton Mallet Town Council. Brie has stepped up to be the Interim Town Clerk and has recently been appointed as the new Town Clerk.

CLlr Andrew Hollingshead – Mayor 2021-22



Councillor Attendance

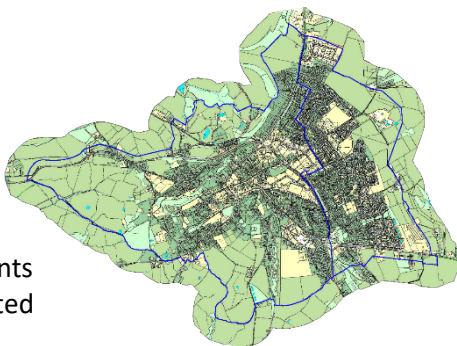
A councillor agrees to attend all meetings (as reasonably possible) that he or she is summoned to. This may only require one meeting of full council a month. However, along with full council meetings, there are further committee meetings or working groups. Most meetings are held at 7pm in the evening but some committees and group representation may be during the day. Below are the statistics for the attendance of Councillors at formal Council meetings for the 2021/22 municipal year.



Who We Are

Councillors

Twelve councillors cover two wards, Shaftesbury East Ward and Shaftesbury West Ward, they are representatives for the residents of these areas. The current Councillors are listed below.



Cllr Piers Brown
Shaftesbury East Ward
padbrown@icloud.com
07511 156811
c/o Shaftesbury Town Council, Town Hall, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LY



Cllr Tim Cook
Shaftesbury East Ward
timcook@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
01747 852420
c/o Shaftesbury Town Council, Town Hall, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LY



Cllr George Hall
Shaftesbury East Ward
georgehall@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
07713 100764
36 Yeatman's Close, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LU



Cllr Laura Langley (elected on May 26th, 2022)
Shaftesbury East Ward
Llangley@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
07929 950839
c/o Shaftesbury Town Hall, High Street, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LY



Cllr Karen Tippins
Shaftesbury East Ward
C/O office@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
01747 852420
c/o Town Hall, High Street, Shaftesbury SP7 8LY



Cllr Peter Yeo
Shaftesbury East Ward
pyeo@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
07879 490893
c/o Shaftesbury Town Council, Town Hall, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LY



Cllr Alex Chase
Shaftesbury West Ward
achase@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
07969 390766
c/o Shaftesbury Town Council, Town Hall, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LY



Cllr Virginia Edwyn-Jones
Shaftesbury West Ward
VEdwyn-Jones@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
07973 914992
36 Layton Lane, Shaftesbury, SP7 8EY



Cllr Andy Hollingshead
Shaftesbury West Ward
ahollingshead@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
c/o 01747 852420
24 Bell Street, Shaftesbury SP7 8AE



Cllr John Lewer
Shaftesbury West Ward
johnlewer@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
01747 852710
39 Layton Lane, Shaftesbury, SP7 8EY



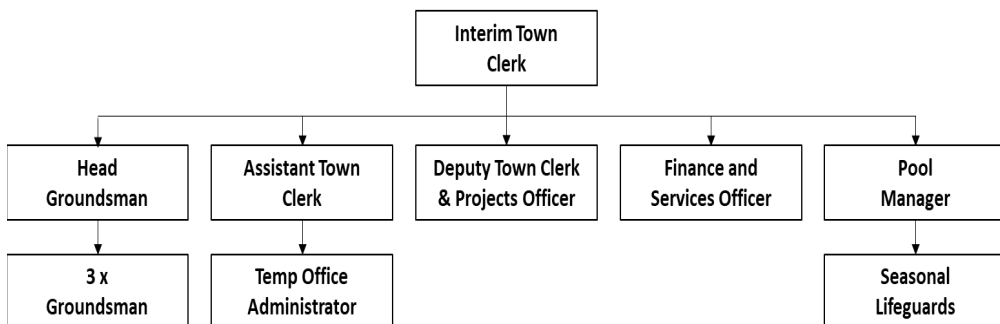
Cllr Jeanne Loader
Shaftesbury West Ward
jeanneloader@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
c/o Shaftesbury Town Council, Town Hall, Shaftesbury, SP7 8LY
01747 852420



Cllr Phil Proctor
Shaftesbury West Ward
philproctor@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk
01747 852628
Walled Garden, 15 Parsons Pool Shaftesbury, SP7 8AL

Staff

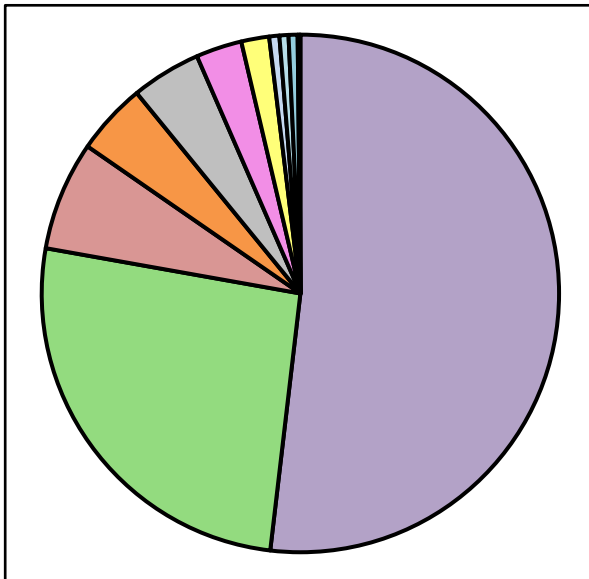
The Town Council currently employs nine permanent staff who are all based in Shaftesbury. The staff are divided into two departments – office and grounds. The office staff are based in the Town Hall in Shaftesbury and consist of a Town Clerk and three full time members of staff. The grounds team are based at Wincombe Business Park.



Note; The staff structure as shown is correct as of 30th March 2022.

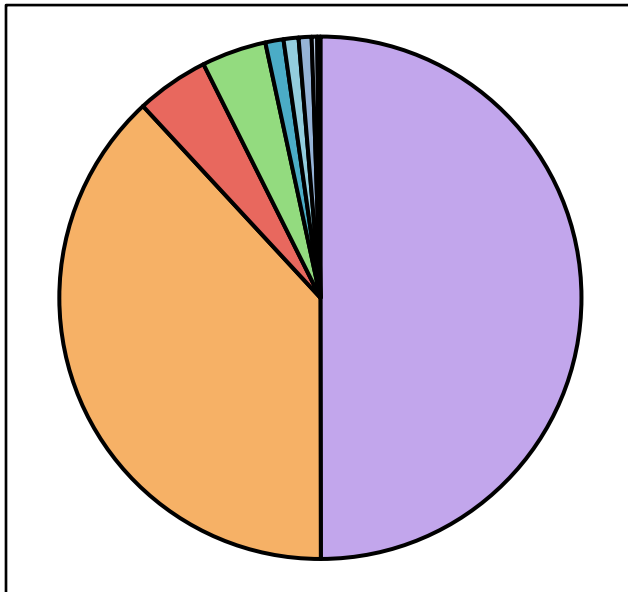
Expenditure 2021 – 2022

Projects - Including Coppice Street (3G) project	£572,920
General Running Costs - inc. Staff	£286,545
Swimming Pool	£75,348
Legal and Professional	£49,461
General Grounds (Grass Cutting SLA, Open Space Hire)	£48,125
Grants/SLA	£31,749
Town Hall (Hire, Weddings, Lease)	£19,229
Civic	£6,994
Covid - 19	£6,248
Local Delivery Services (Market, CCTV)	£6,232
Cemetery	£1,052
Allotments	£809
Total	£1,104,748



Income 2021-22

Projects - Including Coppice Street project	£658,238
Precept	£502,311
Swimming Pool	£59,315
Town Hall (Hire, Weddings, Lease)	£52,730
Local Delivery Services (Market, CCTV)	£14,799
General Grounds (Grass Cutting SLA, Open Space Hire)	£12,181
General Running Costs - Staff (Street Cleansing)	£10,552
Cemetery	£4,519
Allotments	£2,535
Total	£1,317,180



SOME OF OUR HIGHLIGHTS....

Environment

- Town Play Area Management project
- Town Tree Planting Plan (year 2)
- 48 acres of Open Spaces and areas maintained
- Wildflower verges
- 3G all-weather Sports Pitch project complete
- Shaftesbury Wellness 2021 – Free Outdoor Yoga and Qi gong attended by over 600 people
- Development of new A30 allotments – 42 plots
- Shaftesbury's new water bottle refill point situated outside of the Town Hall



Town Hall

- Archiving - Comprehensive archiving exercise has been undertaken. Some documents were over 50 years old!
- 263 Bookings including weddings, commercial and community hire

Working Together

Collaborative working with key groups in Shaftesbury has brought about a better understanding of how to overcome challenges involved in achieving the council's goals and objectives. Various expertise, skills and knowledge have been brought to the table from individuals in these groups and this has been invaluable to the work undertaken so far. Key partners or stakeholders that Shaftesbury Town Council has worked closely with this year include;

- Dorset Council
- Friends of Shaftesbury Swimming
- Shaftesbury Chamber of Commerce
- Shaftesbury Open Spaces Group
- Shaftesbury Tree Group
- Planet Shaftesbury

Planning

Planning Applications

82 - number of Planning Applications received from Dorset Council and comments submitted back to the Local Planning Authority (the decision makers)



Neighbourhood Plan

The Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 was formally 'made' by Dorset Council in May 2021. The plan directs development in our local area and carries legal weight in terms of decision making at Dorset Council.

Communications

51 events and meetings supported
4 information boards updated weekly
52 Press Releases/Website News Items



Followers: 932 Followers 487

Community Engagement



Publication being sent to every household to provide insight into the council, its services, current and completed projects

- Shoppers High Street Temporary Pedestrianisation Survey – 2 shoppers surveys and 5 business surveys during 2020 and 2021 with over 2,000 responses
- Mampitts Square Community Consultation Event – 445 responses helped Shaftesbury Town Council shape its plans for the Mampitts Green project
- Wildflower Project Survey – feedback from phases 1 and 2 taken on board and zone 1 (Grosvenor Road area) plans underway for the 2022 season
- St James Play Area Community Consultation Pop-Up Event – concept plans presented on 6th March. Feedback has been incorporated into the more detailed plans and second event was held on May 22nd.

Grant Recipients 2021 – 2022

Organisation	Purpose	Total
1st Shaftesbury Guide Unit	Purchase of neckerchiefs, Lenovo tablet and Guide flag	£240
1st Shaftesbury Scout Group	Purchase of two steel fire pits	£175
3rd Shaftesbury Brownies	Purchase of laptop, to enable equal access to all due to some badge work elements require online access	£249
Car Link Grant	Contribution towards running costs	£1,000
Friends of the Donkey Field Community Orchard	Purchase of tree identification labels to help visitors identify the different fruit trees and notice board to inform visitors of the purpose of the community orchard.	£242
Kipling Carnival Club	Cost of public liability insurance which has to be kept up even though there has been no Carnivals due to covid.	£382
North Dorset Rugby Football Club	Fertilizer and Herbicides to maintain whole pitches and training areas	£1,000
Read Easy Blackmore Vale North	Contribution towards coordinator travel expenses, books and resources and coach meetings	£229
Rolt Millennium Green	To contribute towards cost of Public Liability Insurance.	£125
Royal British Legion	Painting Memorial Railings	£1,000
Shaftesbury Abbey Museum	Design of new guidebook including text, full colour illustrations and production (professional quality)	£2,500
Shaftesbury & Gillingham Dementia Group	Contribution towards running costs	£390
Shaftesbury Book Festival	To create a new literacy festival for Shaftesbury, running 11th to 13th March 2022. The theme will be "Reading the Land" sharing cultural knowledge and imagination about nature and land	£550
Shaftesbury Bowling Club	Contribution towards the cost of a new mower to maintain the green	£1,000
Shaftesbury Carnival	To purchase more traffic management barriers, which will also be able to be hired out for other local events in the town centre.	£305
Shaftesbury Cricket Club	To supply and fit a new secure, roller door to garages following breaking last year	£1,000
Shaftesbury Football Club	Purchase of defibrillator to be installed outside giving access to the community	£910
Shaftesbury Gold Hill	Insurance for Locomotive sign	£200
Shaftesbury Homegrown Community Farm	New polytunnel and eco compost toilet	£3,000
Shaftesbury Primary PTA	Contribution towards fireworks display	£500
Shaftesbury Rotary	Gold Hill Festival - providing free music, folk dancing and entertainment, refreshments and stalls. All profit goes to good causes and charities - priority being community groups involved in the festival and second priority being other local community groups.	£1,000
This is Alfred	Community Radio Station	£2,182
Vale Pantry	Contribution towards running costs	£1,500
Total Allocated to Community Groups/ Organisations		£19,748

Reports from Community Organisations:

Shaftesbury Home-Grown Community Farm: Review of 2021-2022

Shaftesbury Home-Grown (SHG) is grateful to Shaftesbury Town Council for its £3,000 grant in FY 2021-22, which was key to SHG achieving its crowd-funding aim to buy, assemble and fit out a new poly-tunnel – now fully in operation, with raised beds and sprinklers: spring salads are already cropping.

SHG is a community farm producing vegetables and fruit and keeping hens and bees (with sub-let sheep grazing), at a 4-acre field on the edge of town. SHG aims to grow more of our own food on our doorstep, naturally and sustainably. We share produce among our volunteers; and share the work, so it's less onerous than being alone in charge of an individual plot. We always welcome new faces: come and say hello at the field (SP7 8LF, between 41 and 43 Breach Lane: Wednesday, Friday or Sunday any time from 10am to 1pm).

This year, work on the new poly-tunnel was a significant project for us - from site clearance and assembling the frame and cover, to laying an internal rubble-based path, building raised beds filled with top-soil, installing sprinklers and planting our first crops. Alongside STC's grant, the tunnel, fittings, water system and a new easier-access compost loo were generously part-funded by Sovereign Housing's community fund, the William Williams charity, and many individual donors. These improvements were a highlight in an eventful and broadly successful year. Our volunteer groups worked at the field three mornings a week in every season, as well as tending twice daily to the hens. We were interviewed for an "Alfred Radio" podcast, with positive responses, and welcomed half a dozen new members.

It was a good year for vegetable and fruit crops, despite a dry April and a wet May. Crops included abundant tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, runner/ french beans in our veg cage, strawberries and raspberries in our fruit cage, sweet-corn, sprouts, kale, beet, celeriac, parsnip, chard, sweet potatoes, spinach etc, much continuing beyond December. We responded positively to a proposal to give away some of any surplus and liaised with the "Open Fridge" team.

We are grateful to our landlords for letting us use their land at a pepper-corn rent. We maintain the site, and continue to develop use of our space/ links with other groups:

- Shaftesbury Tree Group's lecture at the field went well.
- A hedgehog event was a success, showing how to make nesting structures.

- We hosted a visit and talks by an expert from Vallis Veg of Frome, and a visit of adults with learning difficulties and their carer from Thorngrove;
- a local bee-keeper added his “Zest” beehive beside our traditional wooden hives.

If any other individuals or groups are interested in similarly expanding the range of ways that our site can benefit the community, come and talk to us about your ideas!

Finally, our crops grow well because of compost: we make lots, and generous horse-owners also bring us manure (more always welcome!). We’re talking with STC about how we can compost the grounds team’s mowing’s in a new wooden bay. And if you’re a tree-surgeon wanting to dispose of wood-chippings, we always need it for paths – talk to us!

Shaftesbury Home-Grown, May 2022



Read Easy – Review of 2021-2022

We are very grateful to Shaftesbury Town Council for their continued support of our charity. Being unable to read properly means that a person is unable to live their own life fully, and also unable to contribute to the community around them. Our work literally changes people's lives.



Our most recent Coordinator's report notes that there are five people in Shaftesbury currently being coached to improve their reading, usually by coaches who themselves live in Shaftesbury. In addition, there are several coaches in Shaftesbury waiting to be paired with potential readers. Very recently a Shaftesbury resident graduated from the scheme with a terrific sense of self-worth and a delight at being able to read at last.

Because of the stigma associated with being unable to read, it is difficult to reach people who would benefit from Read Easy, and constant efforts are being made to ensure that information is readily available and accessible, as well as contacts being maintained with local organisations which refer possible potential readers to us.

We recently put on an event in Motcombe Village Hall featuring the Phoenix Café Orchestra which not only added over £600 to our funds but also raised awareness of our services. We are also planning to hold a "Read Easy Raconteurs" event in September at one of the local supermarkets; this consists of one person reading out loud whilst their partner provides information to passers-by. Our most recent such event provided several contacts to be followed up as well as donations to our work.

Due to the imminent departure of our long-time Coordinator who worked in both Gillingham and Shaftesbury (and all areas around and in between) we now have a new Coordinator who will cover Shaftesbury, Sturminster Newton and Marnhull. She is currently undergoing training and induction but hopes to be in action in the next few weeks. As with all people involved with Read Easy Blackmore Vale North, she is a volunteer.

During the pandemic, the work of Read Easy continued for the most part using WhatsApp, FaceTime and Zoom. There were inevitably those people who preferred to wait until face-to-face coaching resumed, and we are pleased to say that this is now happening. Also inevitably there are one or two people who

prefer to continue with remote coaching for personal reasons! We are very grateful to several Shaftesbury businesses and organisations who give us free access to discreet, confidential spaces where coach and reader can have their reading sessions.

We are now looking forward to resuming “normal” life whilst taking due precautions as regards COVID-19, and also to continuing to raise awareness of our services to the people of Shaftesbury.

Read Easy

Shaftesbury Abbey – Review of 2020/ 2021

Here are some images of the work in progress in the lodge that the council have generously supported.

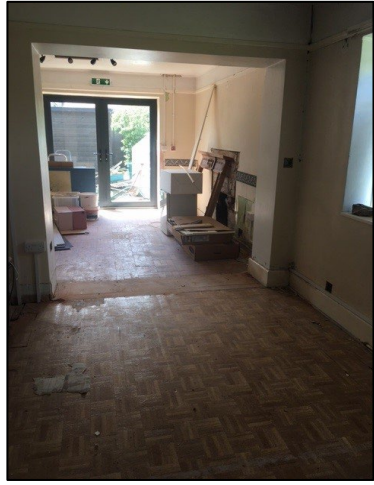
Our trustee, Peter Wildman is overseeing the works and he states:

At last there are real signs of progress in the renovation of the Lodge which will when it is finished give the Museum extra space for conferences, research and exhibitions. With guidance from Dorset County Council we have completed a risk assessment followed by a complete rewiring and the installation of signs and alarms to comply with health and safety requirements. The remaining building works to complete the main room and toilet facilities are about to commence after which the whole building needs a cost of paint before the new flooring is laid.

Outside, we have sought quotations for the patio which will be constructed to give an additional seating area and this will provide wheelchair access to the lodge from the museum gardens. The studio has been removed opening the way for an easy entrance to the lodge.

Finally, we are replacing the rotten windows on the Park Walk side of the Lodge with wooden double-glazed windows and a refurbished gate entrance.

All in all, the prospects are very good and hopefully by next year we will have a fully functioning library, research and conference facility which will greatly enhance the resilience of the museum and add to the overall experience available at the museum.



Festival time at the Abbey



Herb Talk



Museum Interior



Shaftesbury Herb Garden

Shaftesbury Tree Group Report



1. Tree planting - Year 2 of Town Tree Plan and after care of the trees:

Shaftesbury Tree Group have been working closely with the Town Council in preparing and implementing a 5-year Town Tree Plan. Needless to say things have been disrupted over the last two years, but we have carefully managed to achieve planting when it was safe to gather. Shaftesbury Homegrown have provided a haven/nursery for young trees whilst we waited for safer times.

Trees and hedgerow trees were planted by volunteers in the following places in January:

Ash Close Play Area - completing the hedge around the perimeter.

Cockram's Field - completion of hedge along Christy's Lane.

Jubilee Copse, Wincombe Rec: after a team had created a fenced enclosure for the protection of small saplings, we were stopped from planting by Persimmon who wanted to do drainage work nearby. The mass of small trees had to be taken back to Shaftesbury Homegrown and replanted for the meanwhile by Robin Walter. The final planting of these 60 saplings will take place in the autumn.

The planting plan for Year 3 to be agreed soon by the Town Council.

Ordering trees has become very competitive since people are catching up with the need to protect us all from pollution and climate change as well as Jubilee planting.

2. Watering and monitoring the growing trees.

Members of the Tree Group have kept an eye on trees planted over the last few years - remedial planting and care has taken place after some vandalism. Much watering has been done by different groups and we have to thank James Thrift and the Bowser Boys for helping on Barton Hill.

3. Reprinting of the two Shaftesbury Tree Walk Maps and distribution.

8,000 Shaftesbury Tree Walk Maps were reprinted in the spring owing to popular demand. They are available free at the TIC, Town Hall, Grosvenor Hotel (they are put in all the bedrooms), the Salt Cellar and other cafes and outlets in town.

4. READING the LAND – Shaftesbury Book Festival March 2022

The Tree Group sponsored the talk by Robin Walter about his book Living with Trees

5. Christy's Lane trees

After the disturbing loss of three fine Beech adjacent to LIDL's site, due to the close proximity of a newly-constructed cycleway, LIDL's car park & their contractor's non-compliance with Planning & contract conditions, replacement semi-mature trees have been planted.

In addition, two maples have been planted on the other side of Christy's Lane adjacent to Linden Park & Mampitt's Road.

Shaftesbury Tree Group were especially active with the Town Council in remedying this most unfortunate occurrence.

6. Monitoring and commenting on planning applications relating to trees.

The Tree Group have actively monitored & commented on Planning applications in relation to trees, whether those existing & under threat or proposed as integral parts of planning applications for housing.

In particular, the outstanding avenue tree planting by developer Redrow along the A350 frontage to their development, which has not been implemented due to Redrow's temporary 'marketing' planting.

A much-enhanced tree-planting scheme was secured from Persimmon Developments in their development South of the A30 adjacent to the C13 due to detailed comments from STG & STC, & DC's Landscape Architect, which were pursued by Dorset Council's Planning Department.

Angela King and Bernard Ede

for **Shaftesbury Tree Group 24 May 2022**

Photographs of tree planting - January - April 2022 – Tree Group



Castle Hill - Elm Trees (disease resistant)



Barton Hill - Lime trees



Wincombe Rec (N) Hedgerow Saplings



Gower Road Play Area - Field Maples

The Pantry - report

Our Mission....

To provide food, resources and services to any individual or family facing food insecurity. We value dignity of all individuals and work to strive to promote their independence

Open to any individual or household in North Dorset



The Vale Pantry,
a Registered Charity under The Blackmore Vale Charity.



Car Link – report

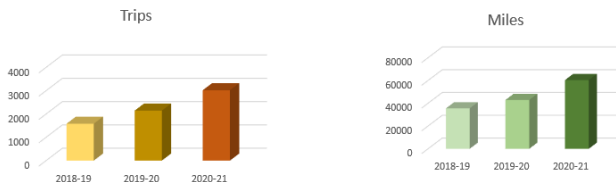
Community transport

When we originally took over car link there were 12 schemes operating in North Dorset. Since the pandemic, including ourselves, there are now only 7 schemes running

Of these, only 3 provide wheelchair transport – their transport times are restricted and limited to their hospital or GP patients. Shaftesbury Car Link now has 3 wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Impacts of Covid

During the pandemic, particularly in the period from March 2020 – June 2020, we were the **ONLY** scheme operating in the **whole** of Dorset. Three of our drivers, whilst recognising the risk and themselves being in what was stated as “high risk” groups, wanted to continue to help the community as people still had urgent needs to attend hospital appointments.



Drivers



- Our drivers' ages range from 56 to 75. They come from all walks of life and every single one of them gives 100%, is caring, empathetic and goes above and beyond.
- All our drivers are DBS checked and use their own vehicles.
- Certain drivers have been trained to use the wheelchair vehicle.

We would like to thank the following for supporting us financially throughout the last three and a half years. Their support has enabled us to fulfil our dream of purchasing a 7-seater wheelchair accessible vehicle.

- Shaftesbury Town Council
- Shaftesbury Charitable Trust
- William Williams
- Trinity Trust
- Shaftesbury Carnival
- Shaftesbury Rotary Club
- Farnfields Solicitors
- John Foyle Trust
- Tesco Community scheme
- Arnold Clark

