

December 2025

Great Shefford Parish News

www.GreatShefford.org.uk

GtSheffordNews@gmail.com

Editor: Linda Bowden

Please email to receive regular electronic editions



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GREAT SHEFFORD PARISH NEWS

DECEMBER 2025

I must start with an apology to some of those who are signed up for the digital version of the monthly Parish News that some 25% of November's circulation did not arrive in your inboxes. I am still working with the distributors to try and establish why this is and hopefully this will be sorted in time for this copy, although many of those affected will receive a hard copy this month anyway.

Thanks to our Parish Council who have kindly provided the funding for this hard copy and to the volunteers who have undertaken delivery to all residents in the Parish. I hope you will find the pages giving contact details of various organisations and businesses within the village useful in the coming months.

If you have arrived in the village in the last two years, welcome, you may not be aware that this magazine is published in digital format most months, if you would like to subscribe, send an email to gtsheffordnews@gmail.com. I hope it will also give you some idea of the activities in the village, there are a number of community events to take part in – bellringing, cricket in the summer months, weekly craft mornings, if you fancy growing your own, there are several vacant allotments on the site just outside the village and although the pub has been closed for some time, it is hoped to re-open in the Spring and we have an update on this. There is a thriving Social Club behind the Village Hall where all are welcome which will be open on Christmas Day 12-4 – an opportunity to raise a glass to friends and neighbours.

As always in the run up to Christmas, the calendar is quite full, the first event being the PTFA's Xmas Fair on Saturday 6th with Santa's Parade on Sunday 7th December and the ever-popular candlelit service at St Thomas, East Shefford is on Saturday 20th. All are welcomed to the Carols through the Avenue on 18th December which will be followed by festive drinks in the lovely tithe barn at Manor Farmhouse.

Looking back on 2025 we have finally seen the completion of the Flood Alleviation Scheme which should allow the residents of Wantage Road better sleep in the event of large volumes of spring water coming down in future years, and whilst Thames Water have done much to improve the management of sewage recently, it is hoped the lining of 'side' pipes will be completed before ground waters rise.

I like to take this opportunity to wish all residents and contributors a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year and to thank all those who contribute and those who have distributed this news for us.

Linda Bowden
Editor

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Village Calendar December 2025

Monday	1 st	6.15pm	Yoga, Village Hall
Wednesday	3 rd	7.30pm	Bellringing, St Mary's
Thursday	4 th	6.15pm	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	5 th	9.30am	Craft Club, Village Hall
Saturday	6 th	10.00am	Churchyard tidy, St Mary's
Saturday	6 th	11am - 2pm	PTFA Xmas Fair, Shefford School
Sunday	7 th	4.30pm	Santa's Parade
Monday	8 th	6.15pm	Yoga, Village Hall
Wednesday	10 th	7.30pm	Bellringing, St Mary's
Wednesday	10 th	7.30pm	Cheese Club, Social Club
Thursday	11 th	6.15pm	Pilates, Village Hall
Friday	12 th	12 – 2pm	Craft Club Christmas Party, Village Hall
Friday	12 th	7.00pm	Carol Service, St Stephens, S. Woodlands
Saturday	13 th	7.30pm	Xmas Double Prize Bingo
Monday	15 th	6.15pm	Yoga, Village Hall
Wednesday	17 th	7.30pm	Bellringing, St Mary's
Thursday	18 th	6.15pm	Pilates, Village Hall
Thursday	18 th	6.30pm	Carols through The Avenue, St Mary's
Friday	19 th	9.30am	Craft Club, Village Hall

Saturday	20 th	3.00pm	Candlelit Carols, St Thomas, East Shefford
Saturday	20 th	7.30pm	Xmas Quiz & Spud Night, Social Club
Sunday	21 st	10.30am	Christmas Café Church, St Mary's
Monday	22 nd	6.15pm	Yoga, Village Hall
Thursday	25 th	9.00am	Christmas Day Communion, St Mary's
Wednesday	31 st	7.30pm	New Year's Eve Time Warp Party, Social Club

GREAT SHEFFORD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

It has been four years since I took on an allotment in the village, I have had bumper crops to complete disasters all of which have been a learning curve but every minute has been enjoyable. Spending time with like minded people who are happy to share their knowledge and help each other out it has become a small Community.

One moment that stood out for me was when my Granddaughter was elbow deep in compost pulling out new potatoes, "look Grandad it's a potato and another and another" That was my eureka moment, how do we preserve this for our children and Grandchildren getting them off of their phones/tablets and spending time in the fresh air learning about our food and how to grow it. Fast forward six months and I find myself as the new owner of the Allotments looking to introduce chickens to the plot and other ideas, a place where people can come and spend quality time together and reap rewards during the year.

So if you are interested in taking on a plot please contact me on 07977 585971 or Linda on 07850 643952 and we will be happy to show you round.

All the best

Paul

A SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CHRISTMAS CAROLS



ST THOMAS' CHURCH
EAST SHEFFORD

SATURDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2025
STARTING AT 3PM



COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH



This operates under the umbrella of Thames Valley Police with volunteer trained operators using equipment loaned by Thames Valley Police. The police have strict rules as to where and when speed checks can be carried out as there have to be clear sight lines and safe exit points for the operators, who work in teams of three. Checks can only be carried out during daylight hours and only in 20, 30 and 40 mph areas.

We currently have nine trained operators and seven approved sites in the village. Training is completed on line (timing of this is up to the trainee and takes about half an hour), followed by shadowing of a team undertaking a live check. At this time of year particularly, we would like more volunteers as many have full time jobs which obviously restricts their ability to help. If you are concerned about the speed of vehicles in the village, go to the Community Speedwatch website and sign yourself up to the group:-

1. Firstly type <https://www.communityspeedwatch.org> into a web browser.
2. Click on the [Register] tab.
3. Then to the left, click on [Join Existing Group].
4. Choose [Thames Valley] from the pull down and click [Continue].
5. Choose [Berkshire] from the pull down and click [Continue].
6. Now choose [Great Shefford] from the pull down and click [Continue].
7. Finally complete your details in the registration form and follow the emailed instructions.

Linda Bowden
Group Co-Ordinator

THE SWAN ON THE RIVER... PUB UPDATE



***Photo taken in June 2025
outside the pub...
A good omen.***

It has been a while since The Swan Team put pen to paper largely due to the fact it has been a waiting game for permissions and, therefore, progress has been quite slow.

The pub was acquired at the beginning of April 2025. When we bought it, we were aware that there were various issues with the building, but as is often the way, we chose to ignore the dire warnings from the surveyor in order to get the purchase over the line and secure its future as a pub in the heart of the village. As a listed building on a flood plain there were already additional problems that needed addressing in the acres of red tape and hoop-jumping that our wonderful bureaucracy demands. Thankfully, these have been navigated. It has been a real bonus to feel the support of the village behind us, so thank you all for that.

The time waiting for LBC and planning permission has not, however, been wasted. We have managed to carry out some fundamental repairs internally and

reconfigure the riverside terrace. Now that permission is granted, we are able to speed up on the main body of work. The time waiting has also been really useful in terms of understanding the building flow and I hope we have managed to improve it significantly, so some of the problems faced by previous tenants have been dealt with and the whole place should be much easier to manage efficiently. We also have the enormous benefit of being a genuine freehouse, in charge of our own destiny. Super exciting!

So, what is the plan? I have spoken to many people about it over the last few months. In short, we are creating a proper pub, the warm beating heart of any community. The Swan has been welcoming travellers and its locals for centuries. Pubs are at the heart of British tradition and culture – they are central to what is good about our country and, in particular, our rural communities. My youngest son, Freddie, recently walked the length of Britain, looking at our ancient crafts, from Lands-End to John O'Groats (#Slowways_). He was wild camping and had virtually no possessions with him. One of his observations was the sense of feeling safe at the sight of the church spires and the lights on at a village pub. They signify humanity and welcome – giving succour to a weary traveller. He was blown away by the kindness shown to him by strangers he met in the pub, offering to do his laundry and giving him a bed for the night. This is so deeply rooted in our culture we should celebrate it and try to keep an open mind and an open heart, especially as there are currently so many forces that seek to divide and destroy.

In our pub we hope to provide a warm welcome, an excellent pint and thoughtfully chosen delicious wine, simple good food that supports our farmers and a place that

anyone can come to and feel at home. In addition, the café kiosk will be re-formed as a café with indoor seating, good wi-fi and excellent coffee. There will be an upstairs dining room for private occasions which will have a screen for watching anything from matches to family videos. The aim is to have something for everyone.

The pub has now been closed for 2 years. This is a long time to be without it and we will try to get through this next phase as quickly as possible without compromising on the work that we need to do. Our aim is to be opening in Spring 2026, barring any other hold ups. Let's keep our collective fingers crossed.

Thank you again for your continuing support and patience.....

The Swan on the River Team.

PEOPLE OF GREAT SHEFFORD



TO RING THE CHURCH BELLS!

Many people enjoy the classic English sound of the church bells echoing across the village. Our small team of bell ringers works hard to ring for the two Sunday services each month, as well as for weddings and other village events.

But we need your help. We now often struggle to find enough ringers to use all six bells, so we are looking for new volunteers. No need to be a churchgoer and no experience needed either—beginners receive dedicated training with a couple of experienced ringers. Once you're ready, you can join our regular Wednesday practice sessions from 7:30 to 9:00 pm, starting with simple "rounds" and moving on to more advanced ringing as your skills grow.

You are very welcome to come along and watch us ring, either on a Sunday morning or during a Wednesday practice. Stay for as long or as little as you like. If you're interested in seeing what we do - or even learning to ring - please get in touch with me.

Peter Birtwhistle email: peter@birtwhistle.org.uk

Local Lottery, Season 2024-2025

Welford Park Cricket Club and Great Shefford Under Fives would like to thank everyone who was kind enough to purchase a ticket in the draw for this year year. We thought we would publish an up to date schedule of all the winners so far in case you have missed all the lucky winners this year. The winners are listed below:-

Christmas / New Year Draw – December 2024

£150 Adrian Clark - £100 Kirsty Philips - £50 Jeremy Nickson

Draw 1 – December 2024

£50 Dot Channing Williams
£25 Ian Herrington
£15 Carrie Pettman
£10 JP De Chazal

Draw 5 – April 2025

£50 Penny Cowley
£25 Melinda Webb
£15 Dominic Armstrong
£10 Annebel Brown

Draw 9 – August 2025

£50 Jim Carter
£25 John Fletcher
£15 John Westbrook
£10 Dominic Armstrong

Draw 2 – January 2025

£50 Adrian Bean
£25 Steve Holden
£15 John Fletcher
£10 Ian Herrington

Draw 6 – May 2025

£50 Roger Thornton
£25 Sara Hewitt
£15 Ben Myers
£10 Geraldine McCaughrean

Draw 10–September 2025

£50 Stuart Jeffcott
£25 Matt & Will Barker
£15 Steve Holden
£10 Caroline Pettman

Draw 3 – February 2025

£50 JP De Chazal
£25 Beryl Jonesds
£15 Ian Herrington
£10 Mike Brook

Draw 7 – June 2025

£50 Myrle Povey
£25 Carrie Scarrott
£15 Adam Reeves
£10 Bruce Bucknell

Draw 11 – October 2025

£50 Ian Herrington
£25 Steve Holden
£15 Denise Herrington
£10 Roy Bailey

Draw 4 – March 2025

£50 Lily Brown
£25 Dot Channing Williams
£15 Ed James
£10 Mary Girdler

Draw 8 - July 2025

£50 Caroline Pettman
£25 Penny Cowley
£15 Matt Lawson
£10 David Johnson

Draw 12 –November 2025

£50 Hayley Brown
£25 Ian Herrington
£15 Laura McManus
£10 Mike Harrison

If you have not purchased a ticket before you still have a chance to get yourself a number at a cost of £15. There are 12 monthly draws with prizes of £50, £25, £15 & £10 with the special Christmas / New Year draw prizes of £150, £100 and £50. If you would like a number in this year's draw then please contact Ian Herrington on 07879 204 696 and he would be more than happy to sell you one of the remaining numbers.

Many thanks for your continuing support for "The Local Lottery".

The Cricket Club also has a fundraising project on the Good Exchange. This is their "Oaks and Acorns Development & Welfare project" Within this they are looking to fundraise for two mobile defibrillators to be available at all their games, plus the costs of Helmets for the children and the cost of Coaching Courses so more people are available to teach the children on a Friday evening. If you would like to help please go to:-

<https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/21128/welford-park-cricket-club/welford-park-cricket-cluboaks-and-acorns-welfare-and-development-project> - press the blue "Donate Now" button and follow the instructions. Your donation will be matched by the Greenham Common Trust and if you click the gift aid box the government will add another 25%.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

Although since it's inception in 2010, the focus of the group has been flood management, this is not the main aim of the group. The team, and others around the country were set up with the guidance of West Berks Council following the floods in 2007 when the Council's resources were overwhelmed with requests for help. The aim is to provide assistance at the beginning of the emergency, defined as a serious, unexpected and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action. In a rural location this could be heavy snow – blocking roads, losing power, etc. or an unexpected incident drawing on the emergency services over a wide area, as happened in 2007.

Team Leaders hold a copy of the Emergency Management plan which includes details of skills and equipment available, locations of emergency shelter (and how to access), and other relevant information.

The village is split into six zones which include Shefford Woodlands, each with a Team Leader. A breakdown of the areas allocated to each zone can be found on the village website **www.greatshefford.org.uk/emergency-management-team** and the Emergency Liaison Officer, who co-ordinates the teams and is the link with West Berks Council's Civil Contingency Team, is David Blundell.

Volunteers, particularly those with potentially useful equipment or skills, should make themselves known to their Team Leader. Examples are:- First Aid qualifications, portable heating, chainsaws (with appropriate qualifications), 4 x 4 vehicles, portable lighting. A volunteer is still required to come forward to lead the Shefford Woodlands team. Contact David Blundell if you would like to know more.



Registered Charity 300158

Great Shefford Village Hall

Great Shefford Village Hall is a valuable community asset situated in the heart of the village & run by a committee of volunteers.

The hall is regularly used by several groups in the village which include Toddlers, the Pre School, Yoga, Pilates, the Art & Craft Group & the Parish Council. It is also available to hire to all villagers & those from the surrounding area for children's parties, family celebrations or get togethers where extra space is required!

There is a large space to set up tables & chairs or a dance floor & a well equipped kitchen available for use.

The hall can also be linked up with the Great Shefford Sports & Social Club for some bookings – please contact Denise Herrington, Bookings Clerk for further information & rates of hire.

She can be contacted on 07867 934687 or email denise.herrington@btinternet.com

30
Nov

Advent Sunday Carols

10:30 am – St James, Leckhampstead

A festival of Advent music and readings followed by refreshments

07
Dec

Carols Round The Tree

4pm – Leckhampstead Green

Join us as we light the Christmas Tree and sing carols before drinks in the village hall

12
Dec

Carol Service

7pm – St Stephens, Shefford Woodlands

A familiar service of readings and carols with festive refreshments and good cheer

14
Dec

Community Christingle

10:30am – All Saints Brightwalton

You will remember this one! A great way to share the meaning of Christmas

14
Dec

Contemporary Carols

7pm – St Marys, Fawley

Readings and Carols with a live band, this is an experience not to be missed

16
Dec

Carol Singing In The Five Bells

7:30pm – The Five Bells, Wickham

We'll bring the carol sheets, you bring the voices and we'll raise the roof

18
Dec

Carols Through The Avenue

6:30pm – St Marys, Great Shefford

Join us through the beautifully lit avenue of trees into church for carols & festive drinks

19
Dec

Phoenix Brass @ the Pop Up Pub

7pm – St James, Leckhampstead

What can be more Christmassy than carols with a Brass Band in the Pop Up Pub?!

ADVENT AND C

JOY

20
Dec

Christmas Carol Service

3pm - St Thomas, East Shefford

Christmas Carols and Readings in the beautiful 12th Century church.

21
Dec

Christmas Café Church

10:30am - St Mary's Great Shefford

The Christmas Story, Café Church style.
Breakfast served from 10:15am

21
Dec

Nine Lessons and Carols

7pm - All Saints, Brightwalton

Readings and Carols led by the benefice choir. With Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

22
Dec

The Longest Night

7pm - St Marys, Fawley

A service of contemplation and music for those who find Christmas overwhelming.

23
Dec

Carol Singing In The Ibex

7:30pm - The Ibex, Chaddleworth

Another chance to grab a carol sheet and bring the joy of carolling to the local

CHRISTMAS 2025



CHRISTMAS WEST

24

Carols by Candlelight

3pm – St Margarets, Catmore

Carols and readings in the beautiful church.
In aid of the Church Conservation Trust

24

Live Nativity Crib Service

4pm – St Gregory's Welford

Come dressed as your favourite nativity
character as we celebrate the Christmas
Story in live action!

24

Midnight Communion

11:30pm – St Swithuns, Wickham

The most famous Christmas service of all.
Join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ

JOY

CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN THE DOWNLAND BENEFICE

25

Christmas Day Communion

9am – St Marys Great, Shefford

10:30am – All Saints, Brightwalton

All welcome at this all-age communion service. Even bring your favourite present!

28

Christmas Communion

9am – St Andrews, Chaddleworth

10:30am – St Gregorys, Welford

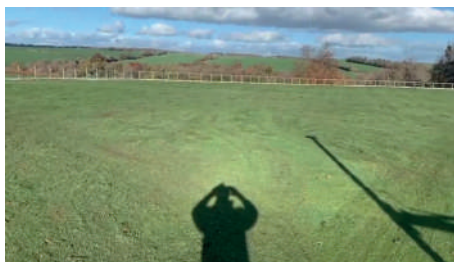
A simple service of Holy Communion in the Christmas Season.

Follow us for more info

f   **@**
@westdownland

News from Welford Park Cricket Club

What's the difference between a cricketer and a hedgehog? Well they can be both be spikey so it's not that. The answer is that, whilst those sleepy hedgehogs hibernate all winter, if you wait very patiently at the edge of the boundary and be sure to not make a sound you might be lucky enough to spot groundsman John Fletcher emerging from the pavillion, sniffing the air, and pootling around the outfield. Yes, John has been busy keeping things in good order.



Groundsman John Fletcher admires his work after an Autumn mow

Meanwhile Ian Perry has been doing some quality joinery to create storage for the junior kit and coaching equipment under the benches in the home changing room. And Marc Greenslade has been repairing sight screens.



And regards funding, in 2025 the club welcomed new sponsore PASS THE PIGS. You can see the 1st XI resplendent in their new kit in the photo.

The club also welcome matchday sponsors. If you would consider being a sponsor the contact is Ian Herrington whose details are at the end of this report.

Club members have also been active lately playing indoor cricket. The rules are simple. If you hit a wall you

get one run unless it's the boundary wall in which case you get a boundary and if you get a run you get two runs. Oh, and the ceiling is a wall. Hope that's clear.

Anyway, in the Berkshire Indoor League, Welford Park are mid table with two victories and two defeats. In the victory against Hurst, Charles Anthony, Mark Jurgens and Karthik Mohan all reached 25 (at which point batters retire).

The second success was much closer with Jacob Griffith scoring the winning runs off the last ball of the match.



Jacob Griffith in his match winning innings



Although some of the results in 2025 were hard to take (the 1st XI finished bottom of TVCL Division 7 and the 2nd XI fared little better; ninth in Division 10) it was a happy season.

In particular, 2nd XI captain Mike Harrison instilled a positive atmosphere with his philosophy that everyone tries their best and there's no such

thing as a dropped catch, only a wholehearted attempt. Mike also instigated a player of the match award.

In the batting Suvo Datta topped the scoring with 852 but Will Herrington had the best batting average with 393 at 65.5. Ian Herrington was the leading bowler with 44 wickets followed by Marc Greenslade (39) and Mike Harrison (37). Mike Harrison and Andy Cale each took 18 catches. Quite an achievement as both are outfield players (as opposed to wicket keepers)



A major joy of the season was the entry of the U13s team to the Berkshire junior league. As a team they'd played a few friendlies in 2024 but this was the first time a Welford Park U13 team had ever played league cricket. And they did pretty well winning 3 out of 8 league matches played.

Alfie Mabey's 89 runs topped the U13 batting stats, pipping Liam Edwards by just two runs. Finn Walters took 8 wickets with Seb Jones a close second. Charlie Quaintance-Blackford led the fielding with 5 dismissals and the best all round performer was Olly Paphitis with 75 runs and 6 wickets.



The parents seemed to enjoy it too, sitting in the sunshine watching their offspring aspire to be the next Ben Stokes, sometimes with a BBQ and a glass of beer too (the parent not the offspring).



Welford Park Cricket club is a beautiful place and it's a delight that all age groups enjoy being at the ground. Primary school children from the age of 5 up have fun at the Friday evening colts sessions, the U13 team debuted in the Berkshire U13 League in 2025 and the senior teams have a few players in their sixties.

It's a constant battle to keep it all funded though and the club have launched an "Oaks and Acorns" initiative,

supported by the Good Exchange to fundraise for two mobile defibrillators, batting Helmets for the children and the cost of coaching courses to improve the support for children on Friday evenings. The Good Exchange will match all money raised and the club will be grateful for all donations.

If you can help please Google “Good Exchange Welford Park”, press “Donate Now” and simply follow the instructions.

Contact: To contact the club about participation in any of these activities it's: Ian Herrington: lanherro810@gmail.com 07879 204696.

FARMING NEWS



As the weather turns colder and the nights draw in our attention turns to seasonal tasks. The tups have been put out with the ewes and the shepherding year starts again.

We take the time to look at the soil and asses what we can expect from the next spring season, although with our recent historic weather trends there's an element of trepidation in the air.

We are well stocked with our hay should we get a long hard winter, time will tell.

We are catching up on the machinery side of things like tractor repairs we have been putting off because they need to be working.

We will be doing some landscaping around the new barn shortly to enhance its aesthetic appeal as a sympathetic nod to the old black barn.

I have moved the ewe lambs away from the hay meadow as they have been out wandering beyond their limits. My thanks go to a budding new group of shepherds that turned up to help load them



Independent Visitor

Befriend a young person in care and volunteer as an Independent Visitor

What is an Independent Visitor?

An Independent Visitor is an adult volunteer who provides support to a young person in care. You'll build a meaningful relationship and provide them with guidance, a listening ear, and most importantly, friendship.

What You'll Do:



Be Bold

Commit to a few hours once a month to build a friendship with a young person in care.



Befriend

Become a consistent and supportive figure for a young person in care.



Be There

Together you can learn new skills and hobbies, or head out on a fun adventure.

We are looking for adults of all ages and from all walks of life.

If you want to become an IV, get in touch!

0151 649 8700

www.nyas.net

volunteering@nyas.net

Contact your local IV Coordinator:

FLICK DRACOTT - WEST BERKS

07711765923

felicity.dracott@nyas.net

Summary of minutes of meeting of Great Shefford Parish Council held on 3rd November 2025

Present: Councillor Piers Storey (Chairman)
Councillors Miranda Armstrong,
Steven Bullock and Tony Coard

Apologies for Absence were received from

Councillors Jessica Copcutt, Louisa Freeman and Carol Turner.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Armstrong declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item number 4ii as proprietor of The Swan Inn.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

the Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record

OPEN FORUM

- i. A request on behalf of the PCC had been received after publication of the agenda, for grant funding to upgrade the lighting in St. Mary's Church, agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting.
- ii. A resident expressed concern at poor visibility when crossing Wantage Road from the pub side to the bridge, due to a fence obstructing the view of traffic. It was agreed that the Parish Council would discuss the matter with the new owner of the pub and seek the opinion of West Berkshire Council Highways Officers.
- iii. A resident expressed concern regarding local drainage infrastructure with particular emphasis on the culvert under the petrol station, where debris (e.g. branches) could cause blockages and increase flood risk. It was noted that existing grilles at The Mead already filtered some debris before this point. The resident highlighted the importance of ensuring the sluice gate remained operational. It was agreed that the Parish Council would seek advice from the Environment Agency and West Berkshire Council through a site meeting to understand the risks and any potential remedial actions.

District Councillor Clive Hooker reported that the East Garston Sewer lining project was complete, but monitoring continues, with assessment of private drains feeding into the system to follow in the next phase.

Unitary Council Proposal: Full Council to consider submission to Government regarding proposed merger of West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse authorities (total population approx. 498,000). Expected outcomes include significant restructuring costs, staff reduction and reduction in number of Unitary Councillors. Wards expected to remain unchanged. Elections would be held in 2027, with the new council initially shadowing before taking over in 2028. Discussions ongoing regarding Local Plans, location of the Unitary Council and whether there would be a Mayor.

Service Delivery Offers to Town and Parish Councils: A revised Service Delivery programme was launched at the recent District Parish Conference, with Pop-Up Libraries being promoted, to encourage social interaction. Packages could potentially be adaptable to parish budgets.

Pedestrian Crossing: Councillor Coard provided Councillor Hooker with an overview of the recent site meeting, as discussed at the last meeting of the Parish Council.

Speed Review Programme: Consultations underway, the position of Great Shefford within the programme was not currently known.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

At the previous meeting, it was agreed to request that West Berkshire Council assess the potential relocation of the school bus stop, along with improvements to road and highway signage. Councillor Armstrong suggested an alternative location for a pedestrian crossing on the A338, opposite the existing bus stop, noting good sight lines in both directions, although there was currently no street lighting and a footpath would be required. Following discussion, it was agreed not to include the alternative crossing location in the current request to West Berkshire Council at this time, but to focus on speed reduction and signage improvements.

Planning Applications approved by West Berks included: Alterations and renovations to The Swan Inn, Rear Extension at Winterbourne Cottage, Wantage Road, Erection of retractable pergola at The Pheasant Inn, Shefford Woodlands. A decision was awaited on the development of land to the west of Spring Meadows.

A budget report for the period 1st April 2025 – 31st October 2025 was noted.

There were no updates to the second draft budget for 2026/27. Councillors were asked to inform the Parish Clerk of any projects they wished to undertake

in 2026/27, before the January meeting, to allow for funding to be included in the final draft budget prior to adoption.

There were no updates regarding the ongoing dispute with SSE over street lighting charges, and it was agreed to proceed with referral to the Ombudsman. A quotation from Utility Aid for a new unmetered supply contract for street lighting had not been received at the time of the meeting and was deferred to the next meeting.

A request for funding had been received from the Editor of Great Shefford Parish News, to produce a hardcopy Christmas edition was approved at a total cost up to £500.

It was noted that an application for a Members' Bid grant from West Berkshire District Councillor Clive Hooker, for repairs and maintenance of the play area / recreation ground, was successful with an award of £2,571.

The Trustees of Great Shefford Village Hall had agreed that the Parish Council may use the village hall as its postal address and had requested upgrade of the current inadequate postbox on the porch exterior, expenditure of up to £50 to purchase a replacement postbox was approved - Councillor Coard to install.

2025 - 11/09

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL SERVICE DELIVERY OPPORTUNITIES

It was noted that West Berkshire Council had published an updated programme of service delivery offers for Parish and Town Councils.

Traffic calming and speed awareness Councillor Bullock circulated the first data reports from the speed monitoring device on Wantage Road. The question of whether a schedule of monitoring dates could be produced was raised, noting that activity had reduced recently, while acknowledging that factors such as weather, shorter daylight hours, and volunteer availability can contribute to this. It was agreed to request that a programme of dates be set to maintain momentum.

Flood Alleviation Scheme and SAGLUV: Councillor Freeman had attended a productive and positive meeting the previous week.

Village Events: The Halloween event held the previous week had been reasonably well attended, after a quiet start. The activities were very good and well received, although some might have benefited from being guided or led by volunteers. It was agreed that more advanced advertising was needed for future events, including the forthcoming Christmas Tree light switch-on.

VILLAGE MATTERS

Flood Alleviation Scheme and SAGLUV (Sewage Action Group for the Lambourn Upper Valley):

Councillor Freeman had attended a meeting the previous week, which had been productive and positive.

Village Communications – Website, Facebook etc:

The new website was nearing completion, and a link had been circulated to Councillors for feedback. It was noted that it was not functioning properly on a mobile device. It was agreed that a card or poster with the Parish Council's contact details would be useful; containing email address, website, social media etc, along with details of what the Parish Council does. Thanks were recorded to all those involved in the Halloween event.

Councillor Storey recommended agreeing an annual programme of events to be published at the start of each calendar year.

Councillor Armstrong suggested that the Parish Council should focus on one 'showcase' event each year, namely the Christmas activity.

The Parish Clerk advised that sponsorship had been sought for the Christmas Tree but no response had been received. The tree was due to be delivered on 21st November, with the lights switch-on event scheduled for Saturday 29th November.

Bulbs from North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust: It was noted that 1,500 bulbs received from North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust, were planted at the recreation ground on Tuesday 21st October.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING Monday 5th January 2026, at 7.30pm.

The full minutes of the meeting can be found on the village website:

<https://www.greatshefford.org.uk/parish-minutes>



Great Sheffield Under Fives

www.greatsheffordunderfives.co.uk



A Year at our Under Fives Groups.

We are so very fortunate in Great Sheffield to have a popular, well-established Pre-School and Baby & Toddler group based at the Village Hall. We have operated for over 50 years, have “Outstanding” Ofsted judgements, fantastic resources plus a qualified and dedicated staff team. Our aim is to give local children and their families the best start in life so that they can flourish.

We welcome families with babies and toddlers to our Monday Baby & Toddler group to give new parents an opportunity to meet others for friendship and support plus giving the youngest children a chance to socialise.

Our Pre-School group is busy and provides a wealth of indoor and outdoor learning opportunities throughout the year; singing, playing, baking, reading stories, music lessons, phonics preparation, walks into the countryside, visits to the woods, paddling in the river, playing at the park plus watching the building of the barn and arrival of the sheep! We visit the interesting places in our community including the church, the Bug Hotel and the school. The children collect harvest goods for the Lambourn Junction Foodbank, lay a wreath on the War Memorial at Remembrance and hold both a Christingle service and traditional Nativity at St. Mary’s church, followed by a visit from Father Christmas and party lunch in the Manor House Barn, by kind permission of Miranda and Dominic Armstrong.

In the summer term our families visit Bucklebury Farm Park plus spend a day at Welford Park Cricket Club and walk around the grounds of Welford House, by kind permission of Debby Puxley.

We hope that families feel supported and cherished at our group as we look forward to another year of early education and learning opportunities.

Thank you to everyone in the community for your support. We wish you all a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas time.

With best wishes,

Denise Herrington

www.greatsheffordunderfives.co.uk

West Berkshire Book Groups

Join a library book group or set up your own and borrow your books from us.

For more information: 01635 519900 or
email: library@westberks.gov.uk

www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries



Great Shefford Sports & Social Club

Visit us:

Wednesday	7:30pm - 11:00pm
Friday	7:30pm - 11:00pm
Saturday	12:00pm - 4:00pm & 7:30pm - 11:00pm
Sunday	12:00pm - 4:30pm

Contact us:

Email: greatsheffordsocialclub@gmail.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567726790943>
Phone (Sandra): 07748403778

We are a volunteer committee run social club situated behind the Village Hall. The social club run many events through out the year for all our villagers to enjoy. This year the social club have hosted a plethora of events like Race Nights, Bingo, Cheese club, BBQs, Pool and darts competitions, Quiz nights, Halloween events and many more. The social club also hosted some private functions like birthdays, baptisms, wakes and also opened our doors for the parish council village meetings. We are open on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings and Saturday & Sunday Lunch times. We have many Christmas evens coming up in December and lots more planned for next year. You can follow up on Facebook or Instagram or just pop in and speak to our friendly committee members behind the bar. Families and children are always welcome and we are also dog friendly. We have a vast variety of club priced drinks and snacks. There's always something going on from sports events on the TV to games of killer where everyone is encouraged to join in.

Hopefully we saw you on the 29th November when we switched on the village Christmas tree lights in partnership with the Parish council.

Don't miss the next events:

Cheese Club: 10th December 7.30 p.m.

Xmas double prize Bingo 13th December 7.30 p.m.

Xmas Quiz and Spud night 20th December 7.30 p.m.

New Year's Eve... it's a time-warp party 7.30 p.m.

Next year we hope to put on more events like meat raffles, Karaoke evenings and casino nights along side our regular monthly events.

Memberships are just £6 for the year. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Society & Club Contacts:

Baby & Toddler Group	Great Shefford Village Hall Mondays 9.30 -1100 a.m.
Bell Ringing (Wednesdays) 7.30pm – 9.30pm	St Mary's Church Bell Tower. Peter Birtwhistle peter@birthwhislte.org.uk
Community Speedwatch	Linda Bowden 07850 643952 Ljbowden883@gmail.com
Craft Club in Village Hall	Fridays 09:30am -12noon Belle Jones 01488 648889 Alanbell2@gmail.com
Gt Shefford Allotment Society	Paul Akers 07977 585971
Great Shefford Under 5s	Village Hall. 9:15 am to 2:45pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Local Lottery	Ian Herrington 07879 204696 lanherro810@gmail.com
St Mary's Churchwardens	Phillipa Phelps 07836 200051 Phillipaphelps@gmail.com
Welford & Wickham CC	Ian Herrington 07879 204696 lanherro810@gmail.com
West Downland Benefice	Rev. Mike Griffiths 07866 727146 mike.griffiths@westdownland.co.uk

JOY

Join us through the beautifully lit
avenue of trees into church for carols
followed by festive drinks in Manor
Hour Barn at the annual...

Carols Through The Avenue

Thursday 18th December @6:30pm
St Marys, Great Shefford

