

## Chairman's Report 3rd October 2019

In last week's column I mentioned the launch of our new Shepton Mallet Community Survey. It's now ready and open for all residents to tell us what they see as the priorities for the town's future. We've made the survey as straightforward as possible with 3 simple questions: "What's your favourite thing about living here, and why?", "What one thing would you like to happen in your neighbourhood?" and "How would you spend £10,000 to improve the lives of Sheptonians?".

You can complete the short questionnaire online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/sheptonmallet>. We are also dropping a card into letterboxes across town to get your opinion. Please take a moment to answer the questions and send in your response by Monday 14th October. We hope to include as many of your suggestions and ideas as possible within the town council's 4 year plan. We would love to hear from everyone who lives and work here. I thank all those in advance for taking part.

At the recent Town Council Planning Committee meeting the contentious issue of inconsiderate on-street parking in and adjacent to the Ridgeway Estate was once again raised by local residents. Councillors are seeking a solution that can reduce or eliminate vehicles that are left throughout the day by workers that use the estate as a carpark.

There have also been concerns of long term parking in Shepton by those travelling to events like the Glastonbury Festival. While the Town Council has no direct responsibility for parking, we can make representations to the District and County Councils, who are the relevant authorities.

Residents also have concerns about the drainage infrastructure within the town. With 800 new homes planned for Shepton in the next decade, Wessex Water, who are responsible for storm and waste water, will need to address problems caused by existing narrow drainage pipes. These have already caused flooding in the Bowlsh area. The volume of water when sewerage and stormwater meet overflows into the road and has the potential to flood people's homes.

There is an urgent need to address water management and flood prevention across our town. With climate change, pressures on our existing systems will only increase. Flash floods caused by incidents of heavy and unpredictable rainfall make it essential that we plan ahead. The impact that the new proposed development next to Cannards Grave Road on the Mid-Somerset Show-field site will only exacerbate these problems.

I'm sad to announce that the funeral will be held for 97 year long-time Shepton resident, Ted Madgwick. Ted flew Spitfires, Hurricanes, Mustangs and Thunderbolt aircraft in the 2nd World War, and was our guest of honour at Collett Festival in 2015 where we reunited him with his beloved Spitfire. He will be sadly missed. All who had the privilege of meeting him are invited to attend the Mendip Crematorium at 10.30am this Friday, the 4th October.

On a happier note, everyone is invited to a lunchtime "Tree Walk" on Friday 18th October starting at the Collett Park Café at 1pm. Conducted by Mendip Tree Officer, Bo Walsh, it's a chance to learn about the trees in our lovely Green Flag park, and whether they can be protected by tree preservation orders. We're also inviting people who use and love the park to join a new Collett Park Users' Group. 3 meetings a year are planned to advise on our management and planting regime and what would improve and protect the park.

To sign up for the Tree Walk or the Users' Group, email [info@SheptonMallet-TC.gov.uk](mailto:info@SheptonMallet-TC.gov.uk) or call us on 343984.

Also a note for your diary: the Collett Park Café is organising a special event on Hallowe'en and another is planned for just before Christmas.

Finally, it's wonderful to see local people shining in their fields of expertise. Congratulations to Shepton FC on their magnificent run in the FA Cup, and I would like to record my pleasure when I learned that Mandy Gregory had achieved a silver medal in the Commonwealth Judo Championships in Walsall. Great results to be proud of!

**Chris Inchley, Chair, Shepton Mallet Town Council**