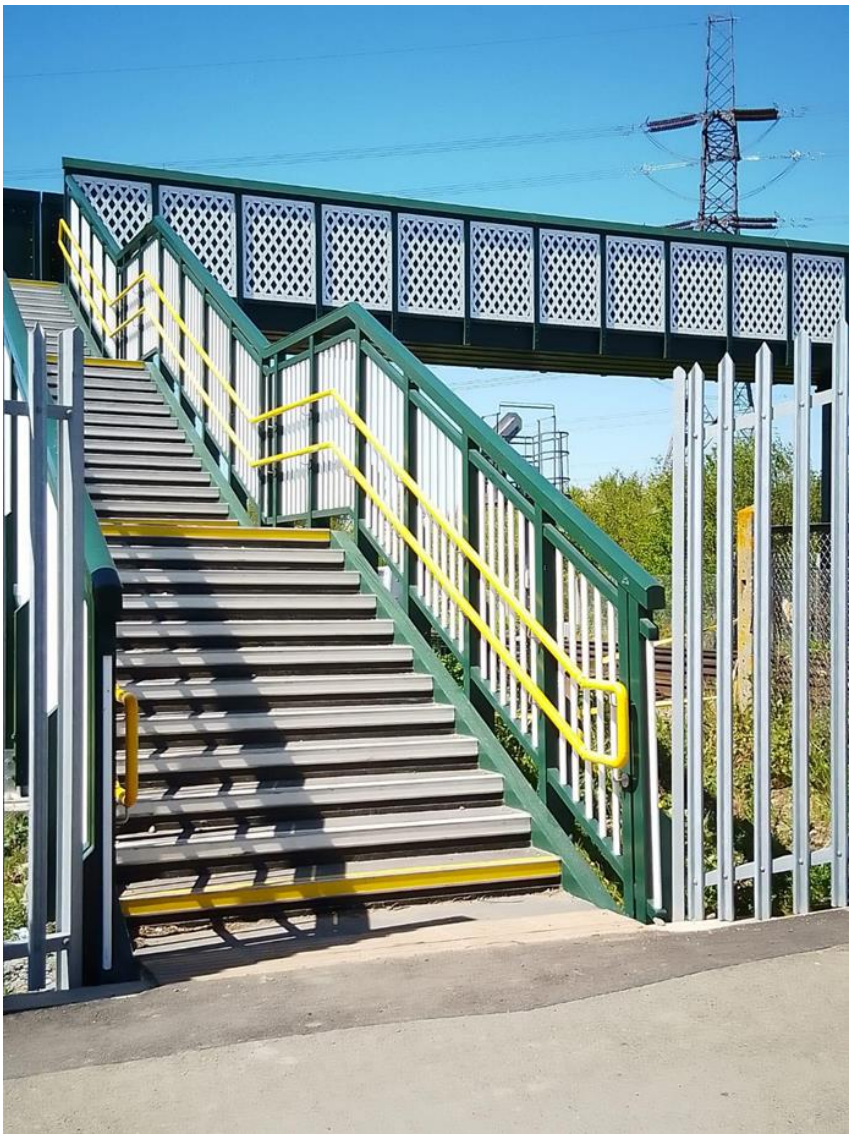
SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

2025-26

ANNUAL REPORT



The new footbridge at Shornemead Crossing

As a Parish Council, we are required to hold an Annual Parish Meeting once a year, to report to our parishioners about what we have been doing, and to answer your questions in person. It was a great pleasure to have a number of parishioners attending in the Village Hall this year, and sharing the excellent refreshments afterwards.

This published Annual Report contains the full reports from the Council that were presented as summaries at the meeting - if you have any questions about the content then please do not hesitate to address them to the author of the particular report.

The Annual Report likewise contains reports from parish organisations/clubs, providing an opportunity for them to report on their activities and to encourage new members.

We hope that you will find this 2025-26 report interesting and informative.

Chairman's Report



On 23rd April 2026, I welcomed everyone to this year's Annual Parish Assembly at Shorne Village Hall and gave a brief summary of Parish Council activities over the past year.

Following the successful completion of the orchard restoration in Crabbles Bottom last year, Shorne Parish Council has been accepted as an Affiliate Partner of the National Nature Reserve, and Crabbles Bottom and Shorne Common Rough now form part of the North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve. Pauline Clifton has further details below.

We also have the opportunity to obtain over 4 acres of woodland and grassland leading up from Crown Lane to Shorne Common, in exchange for a small, relatively unused piece of land adjacent to Mill Hill Lane. Responses to our informal local consultation last year were overwhelmingly supportive of the proposal, and we will be pursuing this over the coming year.

The pedestrian footbridge across the railway at Shornemead crossing was finally completed after considerable delays, reopening access to the marshes and the river. We owe a considerable debt of gratitude to Robin Theobald and Susan Lindley for their previous work in establishing the public right of way across the railway, for without their successful efforts it is unlikely that Network Rail would have agreed to fund and install a footbridge.

Although Michael Gardens open space is in Shorne West, it is owned and managed by Gravesham Borough Council. Shorne Parish Council had set aside a budget to install adult gym equipment in the park, and on seeking permission from Gravesham Borough Council we discovered that they had some adult gym equipment available, previously used at the prom, but in need of refurbishment. There was considerable interest in this equipment from other parts of the borough. We therefore offered to pay for its refurbishment and installation, provided it was located in Shorne West. Gravesham Borough Council accepted our offer, and the equipment has been brought back to as-new condition and is now being put to good use in Michael Gardens park. I'd like to thank Clive Rea for helping to make this possible.

These items of good news are overshadowed by the mobilisation for the Lower Thames Crossing. People in Thong and Shorne West will be aware of the preparation work being carried out in the area, and the impending road alterations to facilitate the utility diversions work. Shorne Parish Council continues to liaise with representatives of the Lower Thames Crossing and their contractors to try to mitigate the adverse impacts of their plans, for which funding has not yet been secured. But we can expect to see significant work between Thong and Shorne West during the coming year.

Kent County Council kindly agreed to our request for mobility dropped kerbs in Manor Field, and they were installed towards the end of March. But within 24 hours, drivers were parking their cars across the ramps, preventing them from being used by those who need them. Please leave them clear for pedestrians with mobility issues or pushchairs. Gravesham Council's Parking Enforcement Team have been informed, and they will issue fixed penalty charges to offenders.

We are also aware of the problems caused by inconsiderate parking by people attending the Romanian Orthodox Church activities at St Katherine's Chapel. We have raised these issues with Gravesham Borough Council, and with the Church themselves. They assure us that the use of the chapel is a temporary measure and they are searching for more suitable premises. We will continue to keep in touch with the Church to monitor progress in their search for alternative premises.

We continue to press Kent County Council for safety improvements at Shorne Crossroads, and they have secured £100,000 funding to develop a scheme. Their consultants are due to submit costed proposals shortly, which will form the basis of a bid for funding to implement the scheme later this year. We await to hear what the proposals are and, importantly, whether they are successful in securing the funding to carry out the necessary improvements.

One of the most important facilities we have in the parish is the village hall. Although Shorne Parish Council is custodian trustee, we don't manage the village hall - the village hall is a registered charity, managed by local people who act as trustees. Following the £5,500 we donated to the village hall in 2024, last year we gave a £6,400 grant to help them with urgent roof repairs. We will continue to provide financial support to help meet the cost of major repairs and capital expenditure, to safeguard the future of this important facility in Shorne.

Once again, Shorne's precept per property charge is the lowest in Gravesham, and by a considerable margin. This is partly because we don't have street lights, public toilets, allotments or offices to maintain, and we have been able to soft-pedal with the precept over the past 3 or 4 years as we have released some of the cash we held in reserve.

Finally, I'd like to finish by thanking my colleagues for their work on behalf of the Parish, including Robin Theobald for supporting me as Vice Chairman, to Pauline Clifton for her excellent work as Chair of the Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee, and to Susan Lindley for her continuing diligence as Chair of the Planning & Highways Committee. In particular, my thanks go to Diane Salmon, who has done an excellent job as Parish Clerk, and has now qualified with the Certificate in Local Council Administration.

I hope that you found this summary of interest.

Bob Lane
Chairman of Shorne Parish Council

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Council Committee on Planning and Highways

2025-26 PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

I would particularly like to thank my Vice-Chairman John Bugg and Diane our Parish Clerk for their assistance during the year, as well as all the members of the Parish Council for their advice and input. This report only covers a few of the matters that the Committee has dealt with during the past year. More detailed information is in the Minutes of the Planning and Highways Committee meetings which can be found on the Parish Council website.

PLANNING

This year the Parish Council was consulted by Gravesham Borough Council (GBC, the decision makers) concerning 69 planning applications of various kinds affecting the Parish (up from 51 the previous year). 13 of the applications were at business/industrial locations and included an application for a house and a massive cold storage building in the middle of farmland.

That leaves a total of 56 domestic/residential planning applications:

- 16 on 10 properties were in Shorne West and Thong;
- 15 on 10 properties were in the Shorne Village area, with 4 applications being for one property;
- 10 on 7 properties were in the Ridgeway area and side roads;
- 8 on 3 properties were in Pear Tree Lane (with the 6 on one property winning this year's workload competition!);
- and there were 7 in Lower Shorne/Gravesend Road on 7 properties.

For residential properties to date: 5 decisions are awaited, 4 applications were withdrawn leaving 47 decided of which 14 were refused permission and 33 were permitted.

As usual, some parts of the Parish caused more problems than others, but well considered and reasonable proposals did not encounter any problems.

All applications are examined very carefully, and generally some kind of comments, of varying levels of detail, have to be submitted. All comments we submit can be viewed on the GBC website and are recorded in the Planning and Highways Committee minutes, as is information about individual planning problems. As said in previous years, we have to guess which applications might go to Appeal if refused by GBC (and applicants are much less willing to just accept a refusal), and submit very detailed comments in anticipation. This is because, due to the changes in the way Appeals are handled by the Planning Inspectorate, we may only get one chance to ensure that Parish representations are considered.

There continue to be changes to National Planning Policy. The new content unfortunately has poor/rushed drafting which defies clarification, the "Grey Belt" concept being the latest complication, and very unhelpful to areas such as ours.

Planning matters particularly worth mentioning:

Lower Thames Crossing (LTC):

The planning approval for the project was given just before the start of the year and National Highways (NH) have been busy since with preliminary ecological works and more detailed surveying.

Activity will increase again shortly as both gas pipeline and electricity cable diversions will be made. Residents of Thong and Shorne West are already being adversely impacted by works and footpath closure/diversions, and this will increase.

NH held some information events recently at Cascades which local residents will have been able to attend, and they are also proposing to hold informal drop-in sessions. The Parish Council has been involved in liaison meetings which started recently and are held about every 2 months presently, at which we raise concerns and questions on behalf of residents.

Please be assured that the Parish Council will continue battling on behalf of all residents of Shorne Parish, but particularly those who live in Shorne West, Riverview Park and Thong, who will be the most directly affected.

Developments in the wider area:

We continue to keep a watch on developments in the wider area that might impact on Shorne:

- Ebbsfleet developments: The various building schemes in Ebbsfleet are a concern as they will impact adversely on residents' ability to access and park at Ebbsfleet International Station. The proposals

for redevelopment of the Ebbsfleet football stadium and surrounding area, with yet more housing and passenger demands on the station, were permitted by GBC but were then "called in" for a Planning Inquiry by the deputy Prime Minister. The report has been very delayed but is now expected in May. The outcome is important because it impacts on Gravesham housing needs and development locations.

- Hoo Peninsula: Development, both residential and industrial, is still proceeding piecemeal, with increased housing numbers causing increased pressure on the local road network.

HIGHWAYS

To achieve highway improvements, we regularly discuss our "Highways Improvement Plan" document with KCC, however the ongoing situation is that there are severe budget constraints at KCC which make it extremely difficult to get anything done. Despite this we keep on raising issues about important safety concerns that need to be addressed:

- Shorne Crossroads is the highest priority. We have been drawing the problems to KCC's attention since 2021 and continue to do so. An expert safety review was undertaken and further design work is in progress. While having a design does not mean that it will be funded, the important point is that the need for improvement at the junction is being taken seriously and is recognised as an issue by KCC. These types of schemes are complicated and expensive so unfortunately take a very long time to achieve but we are hopeful for a good outcome eventually.
- HGV's using Green Farm Lane (GFL) is an on-going issue due to so many HGV drivers ignoring the restriction signs. New signs were put up on Lower Higham Road to try and direct lorry drivers to use correct routes, and additional speed limit roundels and warning signs have been installed in GFL. Both Mr Lane and the new Lower Shorne Lorrywatch volunteers are working very hard to properly identify offending vehicles so that official letters of complaint can be sent to vehicle operators.
- We had two good successes within the year: the installation of the dropped kerbs by KCC to facilitate crossing Manor Field (but also see about parking problems below) and Network Rail at last provided a footbridge at Shornemead Crossing, which shows what dogged persistence can sometimes achieve!

My reminder/plea this year is about Parking, always a problem and cause of upset in built-up areas:

If one looks at aerial views of our area over time, the relentless increase in on-street parking can be seen, particularly in the village centre. People have more cars than they can park on their own properties, or it's just easier, and some properties have no parking of their own at all yet occupiers have multiple cars and large vans. There are also instances of people parking vehicles fully blocking the pavements and others that seem to just be stored as they are never moved. All bad, and adding visitor parking into the mix just magnifies the problems.

Many of our roads are very narrow so parking is already constrained. Where we have yellow lines in place they get ignored, driveways and even the new dropped kerbs have been blocked, and large vehicles get parked on corners so obstructing safety sightlines. When we discuss the problems with KCC and GBC, they point out that people are supposed to know and follow what the Highway Code has to say on the topic, but what we really need is a lot more neighbourliness, for people to think about how their parking is affecting other residents, and road and pavement users, and to change their bad behaviours for the better.

Susan Lindley
Chairman of the Planning and Highways Committee

Council Committee on Footpaths, Land and Properties

Another busy but enjoyable year as Chair of the Footpaths, Land and Properties Committee (affectionally known as FLaP). Thank you to all my colleagues, especially Clive Rea, the Vice-Chairman, who has been successful in completing various projects, and to Diane for all her support.

Footpaths

There is now a new KCC Public Rights of Way Officer for our area, I shall be liaising with him over any issues concerning the Public Rights of Way (PROWs) which KCC maintain. We would still encourage you to report any overgrown or blocked paths on the KCC website. You can find the link on our Shorne Parish Council website. Also, on our website you'll find maps showing the 13 miles of PROWs within the parish.

As Bob reported, the pedestrian footbridge at Shornemead crossing is now open. Unfortunately, NS 318, the path running north from the crossing which gives access to the marshes and river, will be closed from 1st April for up to 6 months for National Grid to upgrade the overhead power lines.

We were very concerned that hedges had been removed and agricultural farmland levelled around Muggins Lane, NS 165. This runs from Shorne Ifield Road towards the A226 Gravesend Road. Gravesham Borough Council concluded that there had been no breach of planning control. There are ongoing problems with the adjoining footpaths including NS163 / NS164, and I have been in contact with KCC regarding these. It is however possible to walk these paths.

Land owned by the Parish Council

- **The Recreation Ground:** Eagles FC as the primary tenant and Eagles Gold FC as the secondary tenant continue to lease the ground. These teams play their home matches on Sundays during the season.

- **Shorne Common Rough:** This is also now part of the new National Nature Reserve, with woodland and natural landscapes largely preserved in their original state. The old quarry area continues to be popular with off-road cyclists. We have appointed a contractor to carry out tree felling and removing dead branches, as identified in our Arboriculturist Report this year.

- **Shorne Common:** The play area continues to be very popular and is used regularly by young children.

- **Crabbles Bottom:** This is also part of the new National Nature Reserve. The fruit trees which were planted last year struggled in the very dry weather. Thanks to Louisa Williams and her family for transporting a bowser into the Orchard which meant that some watering was possible. Thank you to all who helped with this. Thankfully, most of the trees appear to have survived.

The wildflower meadows were cleared of invasive trees earlier this year. Unfortunately, motorbikes have been gaining access and have done considerable damage to the meadows. It is hoped that the wildflowers will survive. We are working to prevent the motorbikes gaining access, including repairs to fencing.

Shorne Young Farmers have been grazing sheep in the Orchard over the last 6 months. This will support the soil health and encourage plant and insect biodiversity. As the sheep don't eat the nettles or bracken, our contractor will be cutting these back later this month.

We have commissioned a Woodland Management Plan (thanks to Clive for instigating this) which has been submitted to the Forestry Commission. We are hoping to get grants to restore the old Pear Orchard as well as carrying out coppicing in the woodland. If anybody would like to see the Woodland Management Plan, which also covers Shorne Common Rough, please let me know.

Crabbles Bottom has been designated a Local Wildlife Site (administered by Kent Wildlife Trust) due to it being home to a considerable array of flora and fauna, including several notable species.

North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve, of which Shorne Parish Council is an Affiliate Partner, is part of the prestigious King's Series of National Nature Reserves, a collection of sites designated during the reign of King Charles III for their exceptional ecological value. It covers various sites from Shorne Woods Country Park in the North to Trosley Country Park in the South. Its mission is to conserve beauty and wildlife in the area while offering a place for people to connect with nature. Core Partners include KCC, National Trust, Woodland Trust, West Kent Downs Countryside Trust, Plantlife (Ranscombe Farm) and Vineyard Farms Ltd (Silverhand Estate).

Properties

The notice board previously located on a fence in Vigilant Way, Shorne West has been removed in order for it to be renovated prior to reinstallation.

The defibrillator at Michael Gardens has been made available to S E Coast Ambulance Service on three separate occasions.

Scout Hut

Dandelion Time continue to use the Scout Hut. Dandelion Time is a charity providing a nature based therapeutic programme for children affected by trauma.

Finally, Shorne Parish Council will have a stand at the Shorne Woods Country Park Open Day on May 27th. This date coincides with the launch of the North Kent Woods and Downs NNR. If you're around, please come and say Hello.

Pauline Clifton
Chairman of Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee



Shorne Common Rough



Sheep Grazing at Crabbles Bottom

Michael Gardens

Michael Gardens play area in Shorne West is a small play park which was created when the “new” estate was built in the mid-1990s. Within the park is a fenced children’s area which has two activity stations as well as two swing sets. Over the years the swing sets have been replaced and upgraded by more modern equipment and the activity stations are currently in the process of being replaced. The work should be completed by the time of publication. There is also a grassed area which has a youth sized Football goal.

I and my fellow councillors have been trying to improve and add to the usefulness of the play area. We have had two benches and two picnic tables installed. I have been very keen to get something in the Play area for adults to enjoy, to encourage our parishioners to keep fit and active.

While the play park is maintained by GBC it does lie within the Parish Boundary so anything extra that is needed in the park must be part of a joint enterprise between GBC and the SPC. To this end, I had been in discussion with James Young from GBC to look at the possibility of installing Adult Exercise equipment. New equipment is extremely expensive and not a cost level that the PC would be able to justify. James informed me that the equipment at the Gordon Gardens was being removed. It needed refurbishment and repair but was otherwise structurally sound. If SPC was able to fund the refurbishment and installation, then James and his team would organise it.

There was quite a lot of equipment available, but it was thought that not all of it would be suitable for the site. My priorities were for equipment which had no or at least very few moving parts to minimise any noise issues. This would also mean that maintenance would be minimised. Between James and I we chose 5 exercise stations that would fit the bill and these were sent off to be refurbished to an “as new” standard. New ground anchors were supplied and installed for the refurbished exercise stations to be installed on.

The siting of the exercise equipment was chosen so that it was away from the football goal but close to the tree screening so that users are shielded from the worst of the wind and weather. It was also as far away from any properties as could be managed so that noise issues would be kept at a minimum.

The newly installed equipment has proven to be an immediate success with parishioners. Some are merely inquisitive and are “trying out” the equipment but others are more serious in their exercise regimes. One person I spoke to has cancelled his gym membership and uses the exercise stations instead!

At the entrance of the Play Park is the Parish Notice board. There is an AED which was supplied and installed by SPC. This was purchased by SPC but paid for entirely by grants so there was no cost to Council Tax payers.

The AED is registered on the national defibrillator network called “The Circuit” and is run by the British Heart Foundation. Whenever a 999 call is made and the call handlers suspect it is a cardiac incident, Ambulance Crews and Paramedics are made aware of any AEDs in the vicinity, and these are made available to the Emergency Response Teams.

The AED owners or Guardians are then made aware of any incidents that have occurred where their AED has been made available to Emergency Response Teams. After being made available the AED is taken out of service and must be checked to see if it was used. Once the check is complete the AED is put back in service if it is unused, or recharged and single-use accessory items replaced if it has been used.

In the short time the AED has been at Michael Gardens it has been made available to the Southeast Coast Ambulance Service three times. It has never been utilised as the Emergency teams have used their own AEDs but the fact they have a backup available for the safety welfare of our parishioners is a comfort.

Clive Rea
Vice-Chairman of Footpaths, Land & Properties Committee



Cllr Rea trying out the new equipment!

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Crabbles Bottom Apples Baking Competition Autumn 2025

Shorne Parish Council was pleased to run its first Crabbles Bottom Apples Baking Competition in Autumn 2025 following the completion of the restoration works at Crabbles Bottom Orchard.

Parishioners were invited to visit the Orchard at any time to pick some apples and then send the Parish Council pictures of their wonderful apple bakes.

At the Parish Council meeting in November, Members reviewed the delicious looking bakes and are pleased to announce the winner is:

Peter Gibson

for this interesting looking Apple and Wensleydale Pie





Well done to Peter from everyone at Shorne Parish Council!

Thank you to everyone that took part, we hope you enjoyed eating your delicious bakes and visiting the beautiful Crabbles Bottom Orchard!

Note: There was also a Juniors Baking competition, but no entries were received – maybe this year?!

Diane Salmon
Parish Clerk

The Story of Shornemead Footbridge

When I was a boy we were warned not to go down to the marshes because it was a military training area and you did not know who might meet, and we would need to use the crossing. Records show that in the early 1950's there was a crossing gate keeper's hut and gate keeper. I can remember big white gates with a red disk on them each side of the crossing for the road and white painted kissing gate seach side for pedestrians. There were notices – Stop, Look and Listen.

There was an occasion when we went to use the crossing and a padlock and chain had been round the kissing gate. The next time we went to use it, it was open as usual. Late in 2009 the wooden gates were replaced by steel palisade fencing painted black. In December 2010 the Parish Council received reports that the crossing had been closed. It was checked again - the gate in the palisade fencing had been welded shut.

The County Council are the registration authority for rights of way and maintain the Definitive Map. If a right of way is shown on the map, it is legal proof that it is a right of way. The Parish Council was seeking to get the obstruction removed. The path had been shown on what is referred to as the Draft Revised Map (a later version of the definitive map) which was in general use but Lord Denning (a very distinguished judge) had ruled that that this was only a draft and had not the adopted it as the official record. To the Council's amazement and dismay the path over the crossing was therefore not on the then current Definitive map.

Leanne Hornby (who had been a legal secretary and was then a member of the Parish Council) and I made a visit to the County Council rights way department. They were very helpful. Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, a register of rights of way and a definitive map were to be produced and Parish Councils were to lay claim to rights of way in their areas. The county officers knew we were coming and had checked the record. They had found the Parish Councils original claim form, which included the crossing as a bridleway; on it was a pencil note saying: objection from British Rail, it's not a bridleway, it is only a footpath. In these circumstances, it would have been reasonable if it had been shown on the Definitive Map as a footpath rather than being missed off altogether. We were advised to apply for a Definitive Map Modification Order to get the right of way added to the map.

We had been told by county officers that in order to carry weight we needed a solicitor so we approached Mr Nicholas Kingsley Smith who commented that he really dealt with planning but he would act for us. He advised us to take Counsel's Opinion which the Council did in July 2011 but this was inconclusive. The Parish Council researched the legislation and began collecting evidence to support our application. We examined historic records visiting the County Library and collected evidence of use. Graham Davis who was a notary public took affidavits from local people in the Village Hall as such evidence. We then discovered that the County Council had forms they wanted completed for use claims, and had to re-submit some of the evidence. On 20th February 2012 the Parish Council submitted an application to Kent County Council for a Definitive Map Modification Order.

In September 2014 the County Council began processing the application. On 3rd February 2015 we were informed that the Parish Council's application had been refused. In the meantime Leanne Hornby had left the Council and Susan Lindley had joined. We looked at the County Councils grounds of refusal and found that a number of them proved the reverse of their conclusions. For instance, the county quoted that there was common land on the marshes that had been enclosed which meant any right of way to it became a private access. They ignored the fact that some land remained common and the commoners needed to access it as a public right On the 19th February 2015 the Parish Council resolved to lodge an appeal to the Secretary State against the County Council's decision.

With Susan on the case we set about gathering further evidence and setting out our appeal case like a legal submission with commentary, claim and exhibits. Susan made several visits to the British Library, the National archives at Kew and other archives looking at historic documents like early ordnance maps, the enclosure maps and land tax records. We made two visits to the House of Lords Library together to look at the Plans and Books Of Reference associated with the various canal and railway acts. The canal company had provided a bridge over the canal. The Southern Railway Company which built the line had made provision for the crossing at Shornemead and with nationalisation the duty passed to British Railways and then RailTrack and now Network Rail. In making our case we also received significant legal assistance on

the case law from Eugene Suggett of the Ramblers Association. On 27th March 2015 the Parish Council's appeal was lodged.

On 24th August 2015 the Council were informed their appeal had been allowed. There followed a six week period during which a third party could seek an enquiry. I had heard a Susan Rumffit talking about rights of way on the radio programme Farming Today. The Ramblers told us who she was and how to contact her, and we asked her for an estimate of the cost for representing the Council and sent her a copy of our proof of evidence. Ms Rumffit agreed to act for us if there was an enquiry. Six weeks passed with no third party intervention and the County Council were instructed by the Secretary of State to modify the Definitive Map and Statement. The Order was made on the 17th November 2015. On 16th June 2016 the order took effect, Network Rail completed work on the crossing and the path was re-opened.

All was then well until 24th October 2019 when an incident on a level crossing was on national television. Boys on motor bikes were filmed on a crossing with a high speed train passing closeby. The crossing was Shornemead. On the 30th October 2019 at the request of Network Rail a 21 day Temporary Closure Notice was placed on the right of way by Kent County Council and the crossing was closed. This was followed on the 20th November 2019 by a six months closure notice. A meeting was arranged between the interested parties on 13th March 2020. Having met up at the Shorne Village Hall we discovered the room had been double booked and others were already in it. We retreated to my dining room and representatives of Network Rail, the County Rights of Way Officer, and representatives of the Parish Council discussed the situation. Network Rail announced they had carried out a safety audit and decided, subject to Treasury funding, to install a Foot Bridge. This was likely to take at least two years.

At a site meeting on the 6th November 2020, the Parish Council learnt that Treasury funding had been obtained. Meanwhile the County Council had obtained the Secretary of State's approval to keep renewing the temporary closure orders and a two year order was made on 8th January 2021. On 27th September 2022, a planning application for a footbridge was submitted to Gravesham Council. On the 18th November 2023, it was determined that prior approval for the bridge was required and duly granted. Planning consent had been given for the bridge. The right of way needed to be diverted (to the west side of the road); the order was made on 21st May 2023 and confirmed on 23rd June. On the 19th October 2023, Network Rail informed residents that they were going to undertake works. On 17th November, work was suspended. On 19th November residents were informed that work was due to take place on 11 to 12th January 2025. This was then delayed and work was re-programmed to 1st March 2025. On 7th March, work was suspended due to alignment issues with possible resumption at the end of June. On the 23rd June notification was given that the bridge was to be erected on 6 and 7th June 2025 which proved to be the case but there was then further delay. After several enquires the Parish Council was informed on 26th November 2025 that the Bridge would be open on 1st December 2025, and IT WAS!

Robin Theobald
Vice-Chairman of Shorne Parish Council

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Gravesham Borough Councillors

On behalf of the Gravesham Borough Councillors, Cllr Jordan Meade gave an update of the work being done for the local communities within the borough, and reported how he, Cllr Helen Ashenden and Cllr Leslie Pearton are able to help Shorne and its parishioners with a variety of issues.

If you require any assistance, or if you would like to meet with your Borough Councillor's, please contact them via their emails below:

Jordan.Meade@gravesham.gov.uk
helen.ashenden@gravesham.gov.uk
leslie.pearton@gravesham.gov.uk

Kent County Councillors

Since taking office at Kent County Council as a Reform UK member representing Gravesham Rural, I have been proud to serve residents and represent local interests at County level. It has been a privilege to support our communities and ensure rural voices are heard.

While this role carries significant responsibility, it is not entirely new to me, having previously served as the Gravesend East member. I remain grateful for the support and guidance of colleagues, including Cllr Sweetland and Cllr Lane, whose experience has been invaluable.

Over the past year, I have worked closely with Cllr Lane on local priorities, including efforts to secure a signalised traffic light crossing at Shorne Crossroads and addressing concerns at Park Pale. We also met with Kent Highways in Aylesford to explore further opportunities to progress the scheme.

As a council, a key priority has been to keep council tax as low as possible. For 2026/27, we limited the increase to 3.99%. Alongside this, we focused on improving efficiency, delivering savings of £114 million. Despite a projected overspend in Adult Social Care of over £50 million during the summer, this has now been reduced to under £45 million, and we have broadly ended the year in line with our starting position.

Through my Members' Grant, I have supported local initiatives including Dandelion Time, which provides vital support to children affected by trauma.

This has not been an easy year, but I remain committed to serving residents and delivering the best possible outcomes for our communities.

Diane Morton RMN
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Member for Gravesham Rural
Kent County Council

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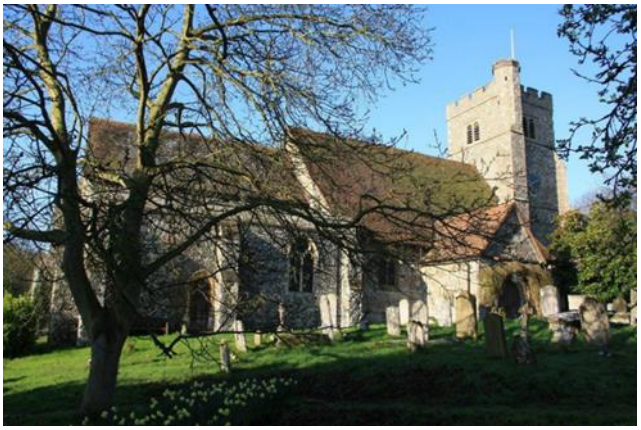
CHURCH AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul

Our parish church of 'St. Peter and St. Paul, Shorne stands at the heart of the village, a place it has occupied for over 900 years. It is a grade II listed building where village life has been celebrated and prayed for and where we have many social functions and activities.

Thankfully we did not have as much repair work as in the last few years. The churchyard gates were replaced by new ones made by Robin Theobald at his cost and the piers that support them rebuilt. It was found that the oil-fired boilers are at the end of their life and a new sustainable heating system is needed urgently.

As we are still reliant on the generosity local people and church members to foot the bill, we always value your contributions whether large or small: every penny helps towards keeping our lovely church open and ready for use.



The church continues to contribute to village life with weekly worship; weddings; baptisms; funeral & memorial services and social activities. The church is also available at other times for community use, by arrangement with the PCC. In the meantime, we invite everyone to celebrate with us whenever possible, to support us in our social activities and through our fundraising events.

At the end of January our vicar, Ted Hurst, retired. We are grateful to him for his dedication and hard work during the eight years serving the church and village. We now wait for the diocese to decide the future of our parish and those of Ifield and Holy Family where Ted Hurst was also vicar. Only then can we start the process of seeking a new vicar which is likely to take many months. In the meantime, our small congregation is doing its best to keep services and other activities going but it is inevitable there will be some changes.

Andrew Moffat

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Shorne Bell Ringers

Shorne Church bells have been ringing and the bell ringers have been very active in the last year. We have been ringing for services when we can get a band together, which we did this Easter, as reported on “Ringing World”. It is great to know how the sound of bells on Sunday is appreciated around the village. Of course, we are on hand for weddings etc and members have been ringing in wedding bands elsewhere when needed.

Last May the band made a work team to have a maintenance day, wearing their work clothes for the heavy and dirty work. The clock case was rebuilt, doors were painted and slider beds and sliders were degreased. Old grease was removed from the bells, bearings and the frame. A safety guard rail was installed across the top of the clock weight shaft, a rather dangerous hole in the corner of the bell chamber. It was a warm day and as the days got even warmer one of our ringers commented “The tower is probably the coolest place around, in more ways than one!”. Photographs from maintenance day:



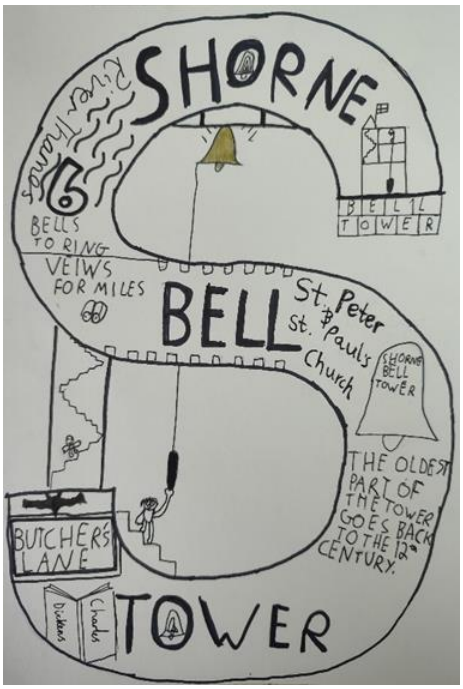




In June we had a “Tower Outing” which happens regularly, when we go out for the day, touring a different area, ringing in different towers, with a pub lunch of course! One of our regular visitors has moved to Sheppey so we went to Minster Abbey and Eastchurch.

On 29th June we were proud to ring for the church Patronal Service as all the local government officers attended.

In September we had an “Open Tower” and welcomed 14 guests, we also welcomed Gravesend 11th Cub Scouts and their supporters to have a tower tour of our bells, clock and the top of the tower with the beautiful views over Shorne. This will be part of their badge, with posters and leaflets drawn as part of the process. Everyone had a great time and we hope that when they are older they will give the art of bell ringing a try.



Scouts poster



Scouts tour of the tower

Tower outings come to Shorne sometimes, so if you unexpectedly hear bells, you may guess we have visitors. In January we welcomed the COOTS (Come out on Tuesdays) and in February a band from Surrey. As you gather, bell ringing is a very sociable hobby.

In advent we had our usual “Sherry and Mince Pies” which was very well attended with lots of food and drink of all different sorts! In Holy Week we had our AGM and social/meal, where it was decided to continue as we are with the addition of Alan Gull taking the role of Flag Captain.

We are very proud of our youngest member, Lily, who, with the Kent Young Ringers, competes with steady achievement in their striking competitions and was in the band which was first at the last “Call Change Striking Competition” in April this year. Well done Lily!

We now have 8 full members of the KCACR in Shorne tower which is a good tribute to our Tower Captain.

If you would like to know more about any aspect of bell ringing, Shorne’s bells or opportunities to climb the tower you can contact us by email at shornebellringers@gmail.com, by telephone on 397887, find us in the church on Wednesday evenings between 7.30pm and 9pm.

Celia Burns
Tower Secretary, St Peter & St Paul, Shorne

1st Shorne Scout Group

The group is facing ongoing financial challenges and has recorded a loss for the fifth consecutive year. Rising costs and limited income have placed increasing pressure on our ability to sustain appropriate financial reserves.

In addition to financial difficulties, we are also experiencing a further shortage of adult volunteers and leaders. Recruiting and retaining volunteers remains one of our most significant challenges, and this is impacting our capacity to operate at full strength.

Despite these challenges, we are proud to continue delivering a well-rounded and engaging Scout programme for approximately 40 young people each week. Our sessions focus on skills development, teamwork, outdoor activities, and community values, providing consistent support and opportunities for local young people.

The three age groups and meeting days/times are: Beavers (6-8 Years), Thursdays 17:30 – 18:30; Cubs (8-10 Years), Wednesday 18:30 – 20:00; and Scouts (10-14 Years), Thursday 19:00 – 21:30.

We remain committed to serving the community and are actively exploring ways to improve our financial position and recruit new volunteers.

Martin Taylor
Trustee



Shorne Scout Hut, Mill Hill lane

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LOCAL AMENITIES/SOCIETIES and WILDLIFE:

Shorne Woods Country Park

Last year we successfully retained the Green Flag and South and South-East in Bloom gold award. Shorne Woods is now core partner of the new North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve and we have finished the fourth year of a 10-year biodiversity enhancement project for dormice and veteran tree works. This is fully funded by National Highways.

30 veteran trees had work carried out on them by arborists funded by the NNR. The other part of the project involved gapping up 1800 trees out of 17000 that had died over the last 3 years. The aim of the project is to improve the diversity of the woodland and improve its resilience to climate change while providing a varied food source for dormice and other animals. We have installed 1000 dormouse boxes as part of the LTC dormouse translocation project. They will be monitored for the next 10 years by ecologists then we will take over the monitoring thereafter.

The knoll area was grazed by 3 Long Horn cattle for 2 months in the summer to help manage the rare acid grassland habitat. We then trialled 3 ponies grazing in Autumn to see if it is beneficial, this will take several years to see.

In the winter we carried out ride widening work in Randall and Brewers Wood, opening up zone 2 and 3 on the wider rides. This allows lots of light into the wood which encourages biodiversity.

As part of the biodiversity enhancement project funded by National Highways we have reduced the size of each coppice coupe to approximately 0.3ha this improves the habitat for dormice and small mammals. We have cut 2 coupes in Randall Wood this winter. All the timber we cut is used to heat the visitor centre or can be bought as kindling or logs from the visitor centre, our logs are ready to burn certified.

Our countryside volunteers have been busy repairing the boundary fence, installing benches, building new fishing swims, cutting back paths and helping with the winter woodland works. If you want to get involved in volunteering, please call 03000 414747.

We had 45 school visits amounting to 1350 children at forest school last year and sold 3500 tickets for our events programme. There is a varied events programme for this year.

You can keep up to date with all the work the team do and upcoming events on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/ShorneWoods/. If you have any questions or queries, please call 03000 414747 and one of the team will be happy to help you or alternatively come and find us at the visitor centre.

Michael Shulver
Senior Ranger

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Dickens' Country Protection Society

In the past year we have been very busy as usual, continuing (at our fortnightly meetings) the basic work of monitoring and commenting on (when considered appropriate), the various local planning applications being submitted to both Gravesham and Medway Councils.

The Society also continually keeps under review major plans affecting our area of interest and makes input and representations as and when possible. More detail can be found in our Newsletter sent out to Society members.

Like all small Societies we need active members so that we can continue our work. If anyone might be interested in joining the Society or especially our Committee, please contact our secretary as detailed below.

The Lower Thames Crossing (LTC):

The Lower Thames Crossing Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate received the equivalent of planning permission in May 2025. Preparatory work is underway although the overall financing is not assured. DCPS Committee members (who are also parish councillors in Shorne) are having regular meetings with National Highways representatives to exchange information about detail of activities and to resolve any problems arising. Traffic issues through Shorne and Higham will be an important focus as the project moves ahead.

Other major developments in the area:

Large housing developments continue to be proposed in the area and the Society monitors and responds to these as they get submitted. In recent months both Medway and Gravesham Councils have also, after much delay, progressed their Local Plans and the Society already has/will submit further input about adverse impacts of the proposals and site allocations on local amenity.

Other items that are particularly worth mentioning are:

Shornemead Crossing railway bridge: Achieving this is something that DCPS Committee members (who are also parish councillors in Shorne) can rightfully congratulate themselves about. Over a decade of interaction with Network Rail and Kent County Council after the unilateral closure of the footpath across the railway line at Shornemead Crossing eventually resulted in the provision of a footbridge across the track so restoring the much-valued footpath leading to Shornemead Fort and the bank of the Thames.

Planning Appeals: The Society has submitted representations to several Planning Appeals, which contributed to decision outcomes defending our area from potentially damaging development.

Society contact details: Mrs P Lippiatt, 01322 275389, palippiatt@gmail.com

Susan Lindley
Committee Member of DCPS

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Shorne Wildlife Community Group

Our aim is to nurture, conserve and sustain wildlife in Shorne and our environment through collaboration and by promoting this message.

With a membership grown to over a hundred interested Shornites, this year has seen a consolidation of our on-going collaborations, firstly with the Parish Magazine where our monthly articles are spreading the word of wildlife friendly gardening, nurturing the environment and providing information about wildlife in the area. Member Julia Deeley organised and sponsored a poster design competition for the school children to encourage the fight against litter in our environment.

Throughout the year we have been continuing to collect used stamps in the boxes around the village. There is one in the porch of the church, one in the Village Hall, one in the Rose and Crown and one in Shorne School. Please continue to save any stamps as we pass these to the British Hedgehog Preservation Society. We shall continue to endeavour to preserve our connectivity by keeping the gardens in Shorne wildlife friendly, spreading the word of preserving significant trees and ancient hedges, and adding to the number of trees in gardens. In the spring members walked to Crabbles Bottom where the White Letter Hairstreak butterfly is found, an endangered species flagged up by the Butterfly Conservation Trust at the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy Launch (See below).

Throughout the year our meetings have continued with various talks, one by Victoria Golding BEM on the Kent Wildlife Trust and we had an illustrated talk by Alan Gull about his work in ornithology, gathering data for scientific studies.

As a group we have rescued two hedgehogs, one out in daylight and underweight and one which fell in a pond. They are in residence at the moment in the hedgehog rescue centre having being nursed through the winter. In November members attended the launch of the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy. We are now in the middle of the new North Kent Woods and Downs National Nature Reserve. “a powerful reflection of the area’s extraordinary biodiversity – and a bold symbol of what the future of conservation looks like. Rather than a single site, the Reserve is a connected mosaic of habitats: ancient woodlands, chalk grasslands, farmland, and even vineyards. Together, these diverse environments provide a lifeline for some

of the UK's most threatened species." A new organisation which fits our area is "Chalk to Coast" – chalk meadows of Crabbles Bottom to the Thames at Shorne Mead Fort - just the right label for Shorne Parish so we are registered with them.

As ever, our deepest thanks go to the Rose and Crown for having our meetings there in community spirit enabling us to continue without subscription.

To find out more or join contact shornewildlifecommunitygroup@gmail.com.

Celia Burns and Jean Craig
Joint Founders



Rescued Hedgehog



Chalk to Coast Map



Prize winning school children
(from Facebook)

VILLAGE HALL, HOSTED ORGANISATIONS AND USERS:

Village Hall

It has been a difficult year. A major leak occurred in a gulley on the roof at the stage end of the large hall, resulting in significant damage to the wood block floor. Insurance did not cover the roof repairs - as this was the most part of the cost, it was decided not to make a claim.

The Parish Council grant for such incidents was much appreciated. Repairs were also needed to the roof over the bay window in the small hall.

Temporary repairs were made to the external doors to the large hall, boiler room and kitchen. It is hoped that a grant may be obtained to eventually replace these doors.

The boiler system continues to be a problem and may soon need replacing, another significant expense.

The hire pricing structure had not been reviewed for a number of years. There were many 'special rates' some of which were artificially low. A small sub-committee carried out a review, a surprisingly difficult task. Much thanks to Bob Lane and latterly Henry Harryman.

Inevitably there are some complaints as some organisations may see a significant increase. Thanks are given to Chris Clarke, Diane Salmon and Alison Wallace.

A new on-line booking system has been installed and is working well.

The Christmas raffle was thought to be a success and raised the sum £1825.

Owing to my wife's rapidly deteriorating health, I have decided to step down as a trustee and chair.

Alan Holt
Chairman, Shorne Village Hall Management Committee





Cottage Garden Society

It has been another good year for our Society. Our three annual shows in Spring, Summer and Autumn have seen superb exhibits from our members which in turn have resulted in record numbers of visitors and members coming to the shows. We are endeavouring to encourage children to enter the cookery section and it has proved popular with both boys and girls entering. There is always a demand to buy plants and enjoy a welcome cream tea followed by a very lively and competitive auction of all the exhibits.

In May we organised a trip to Columbia Road Flower Market and 52 very contented passengers returned back to Shorne with the coach's hold laden with plants.

We have also enjoyed informative talks on the growing and nurturing of roses and drought tolerant plants for the modern Cottage Garden.

The year culminated in our Annual Supper and Presentation of Cups and Trophies. There are over twenty trophies to be won, many on aggregate points over the year so there is always an element of surprise for the many exhibitors.

We are a friendly society and we welcome new members. Our subscription is £12.00pa and our email address is shornecgs@gmail.com

Hilary Moore
Chair

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Early Retirement Club

The Early Retirement Club continues to meet in Shorne Village Hall, on a fortnightly basis with a loyal, supportive and enthusiastic membership (1982 was the inauguration of the club started by ex-employees of Portland Cement)

We are always looking for new members and anyone interested in joining would be most welcome to come along initially as a guest to see how we function as a warm friendly group.

We meet on alternate Tuesdays at 9.15am for tea/coffee biscuits, a raffle for a bottle of wine and time to have a chat and catch up followed by a speaker's talk starting 10am and finishing by 11.30am.

During this past year our speakers have covered a broad subject matter with talks as varied as The Berlin Telephone Tap, Ambulance Anecdotes, The Story of Music by Rogers and Hammerstein to Concrete Tanks and our regular historian Christoph Bull is often regaling us with his inimitable, knowledgeable facts about a wide range of topics concerning our locality.

Like so many groups we need your support to survive and our contribution to the future existence of the Village Hall is also so important. We have a wonderful venue and clubs like ours are the life blood of the community.

The programme for the current year is in the process of preparation but if you are retired or about to retire and are interested and want more information please ring me! Tel: 01474 355816

Jim Pearce
Chairman

Local History Group

The Group meets on the third Thursday of the month from October to April at the Village Hall to hear talks on, mostly, our local history. The meetings start at 2.00 pm and usually finish about 3.00 pm. New members and visitors are welcome - just turn up to receive a warm welcome. The annual subscription is £15 and the visitors' fee £5.

Our meetings heard these talks:

October: *Gravesend in the 1920s* by Christoph Bull

November: *Building a Cathedral* by David Carder

December: *A Virtual Walk Through Shorne* by Ian Craig

January: *An Architectural Pub Crawl* by Jo Livingston

February: *A Schoolgirl's War* by Mary Smith

March: *Crossings of the Thames & Medway* by Rob Poole

April: *How the Jutes Made Kent* by Audrey Dreher

For more information and our next programme please contact Andrew Moffat at aimoffat@btinternet.com or (01474) 822280.

Andrew Moffat
Chairman

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Pop-up café

Shorne Pop-up Café is held on the 1st Monday of every month, 10am-Midday (unless there is a Bank Holiday). The Pop-up Café continues to have a good number of Shorne Residents visiting each month and often new Visitors popping in too for the first time.

Some of our regular visitors have been coming along since 'Pop-up Café' was initially set up by 'Rural Kent' Charity. At Shorne 'Pop-up Café' we give a warm welcome to ALL ages, and hope we make the café as friendly and welcoming as possible. We try to be a listening ear to anyone who has a problem, give advice where we can, or signpost to where a Visitor may get the help they need. A number of our Visitors live alone and can feel Isolated at home, but we know they look forward to friendly chats at our regular monthly meet-ups. We also welcome well behaved dogs on leads with their owners to join us too.

Going forward, we would love to welcome more Shorne residents of any age. Young families - if you have young children at home, call in to see us. Toys, a playmat, books and colouring can be made available. We can set up a special area in the hall for them all.

We continue to follow Rural Kent's original pathway design for our Cafe, still managing to keep all drinks, cakes, savouries etc 'Free To All', but we have donation pots on tables. Any donated money helps with our running costs.

I'm always very grateful that Pauline and Allan Chandler get the hall ready for us, thank you both so much.

We must say a big 'thank you' also to 'Shorne Parish Council' for their yearly money donation to help our funds, and thanks also to Susan Lindley for her very delicious muffin cakes which Susan makes us every

month. It's always lovely that Pauline Clifton and Robert Hardy, Shorne PC Councillors visit regularly to have a Cuppa with us, and sometimes other Shorne Parish Councillors call in too.

Occasionally, a Rural Police Officer from Kent Police has attended to meet and speak to visitors too.

Next Pop-up Café dates: Monday June 1st, Monday 6th July and onwards.

Hope to see you soon.

Ruth Hensman and Pauline Chandler, Cafe Voluntary Organisers &
Celia, Nicola, Nikita, Jean, and Joan our Volunteer helpers.

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Probus

The PROBUS movement, an off-shoot of the Rotary Club, was formed in 1965 for retired and semi-retired PROfessional and BUSiness men, hence the name PROBUS. Formed in 1967, the Northfleet & District club is the oldest in Kent. We meet alternate Tuesday mornings at Shorne Village Hall, from 10.00am until noon. Whilst being a male only club, members wives, partners and guests are welcome at our various social events, including specific Ladies Invitation meetings during the year.

The annual subscription is £15, plus £5 per meeting, includes tea/coffee, biscuits, a free raffle for a bottle of wine and a talk given by a guest speaker. Our calendar of speakers, arranged by our Speaker Secretary Mike Fizsimons is, as always, varied, stimulating and covering diverse topics, recent talks being 'The Kent Side of the Thames, 'Wunsdorf Germany' and 'Titanic.'

Social activities are club lunches, day trips/visits and various holidays. Club lunches, held quarterly and comprising an aperitif and 4 courses with tea/coffee are modestly priced, held in the village hall and are well attended. Recently, our Winter lunches have featured a Christmas jumper theme, whereby attendees are encouraged to sport a Christmas jumper.



Richard Slater with Titanic Model



Club Lunch

In addition to our club lunches, members have enjoyed various holiday breaks including a return visit to Belgrave Sands Hotel, Torquay for a five-day fine dining break. Additionally, an interesting local tour and talk was arranged by Colin Fooks our publicity secretary to Charles Dickens' country home at Gad's Hill place, the only home he ever owned. The tour was given by very knowledgeable guides, after which we enjoyed tea and biscuits. Highly recommended.

Along with Civic dignitaries, our Chairman, David Finnemore, and Mike Fitzsimons attended the Remembrance Day Memorial Ceremony at The Hill, Northfleet, during which the Chairman laid a PROBUS wreath on behalf of the club.

New members are very welcome, so if you would like to enjoy the convivial friendship of like-minded members, then come along and join us. More details, including a full list of meetings can be viewed at https://shornevillagehall.org.uk and clicking the regular users tab or by contacting our Club Secretary, Robin Friday, Tel: 01474 363135.

David Finnemore
Chairman



Gads Hill Place Talk



Remembrance Day

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Shorne Active Retirement Association (ShornAra)

ShornARA is a Club for men and women aged 50+. We hold our meetings in Shorne Village Hall on the last Tuesday of the month when we have speakers or entertainers followed by tea or coffee and biscuits. In June we generally organise an afternoon tea and at our last meeting of the year in November there is a Christmas tea with musical entertainment.

We also arrange day trips and in the last year our members have enjoyed a visit to Maldon and the Tiptree Jam Factory, with a tractor tour and cream tea. We also visited Godinton House and enjoyed a ploughman's lunch, and also had a guided tour round Cobham Hall, again with cream tea. A very popular trip was to Hever Castle which included lunch and time to visit the magical Christmas trail through the grounds once it got dark. Earlier this year we arranged a theatre trip to The Greatest Showman in London. We also have occasional lunches, sometimes with musical entertainment, and regular Ten Pin Bowling at the Hollywood Bowl in Rochester.

Proposals for this year include the Tulip Festival at Pashley Manor, The Three Rivers Tour in Suffolk, Sussex Coastal Curios and Cruising into Christmas, as well as more lunches.

Our members always enjoy the holidays and this year we went to Bournemouth and Blackpool and are looking forward to visiting Weston-Super-Mare and Whitby in 2026.

For further information please don't hesitate to contact our Membership Secretary Andrea Brickell on 01474 746606 or the Secretary Janet Bennington on 01634 353681.

Janet Bennington
Secretary



Poole Harbour Cruise



Samlesbury Hall



Christmas Lunch at Hever Castle

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STAGES (Shorne Theatre Appreciation & Group Entertainment Society)

The Committee was very active in organising the following events and meetings from 1" April 2025 to 31" March 2026: 11 Members meetings and 1 booking meeting in the Village Hall. These included entertainers and speakers, and two meetings with Cakes/Scones. Our monthly members meetings are for the members to see what we have organised for the future and to sign up to events already agreed at previous meetings.

Stages arranged 12 events from 1" April 2025 to 31" March 2026:
• 5 Diners club in various restaurants
• Potters holiday from 12th to 16th May 2025
• 3-Day trips to various sea side resorts
• Cobham Hall tour followed by cream tea
• Dinner dance Shorne Villoge Hall
• Tour Caterham Classic cars Dartford

We do our best to offer something for all our members. Suggestions for trips come from members and our dedicated committee who run and accompany members on trips.

Our membership is open to residents of Shorne, Higham, Chalk, and Cobham and we are always looking to recruit now members to join our very friendly group. We meet the 2~ Monday in the month at Shorne Village Hall doors open 2.00 pm. Membership fee is £22.00 a year. From April 2024 Stages have extended our membership to include members who often bring along family members or friends, we invite those people to contact Tony Scott on 01474 365400 or email: Anthony.scott01@blueyonder.co.uk for an application form.

Christine Moore and Denise Hiscock
Joint Chairs

Table Tennis

2026: Wow, what a start to the year……

Shorne Village table tennis club has had a great start to the year, more on this further down.

From our humble beginnings of 6 people with two borrowed tables we now have a thriving club with circa 20 members, we run both social sessions and winter league matches side by side.

We own 6 tables and have 3 league sides playing in the Gravesend league. The club have only been in the league for 4 years, starting with one team in Division 1, we now have two established premier league sides and a division 1 side.

The 2025/26 season ended with Shorne A winning 3 games in the last week of the season to pip last year's winners Meopham. Champions of Gravesend is something we are immensely proud of. A marvellous achievement from a still fledgling club.

Our social sessions are great fun and equally important and we have limited availability for adults to join in.

We will endeavour to build on that success and strengthen the club both in numbers of members and quality of players

Thanks for reading

Paul Gregory





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Tai Chi

Tai Chi is an ancient Chinese martial art that offers many benefits to health, both mental and physical, as it is a low impact exercise which focuses on movement and breathing. We are a small group of local residents, with a good sense of humour, and are guided by our Instructor Steve Martin of Shizendo Martial Arts on the Yang 108 form of Tai Chi.

We meet on Tuesdays, 11:30 -12:30.

Contact: Sue Manning 07947831181 or just turn up – no need to book.





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WI: Shorne and Thong Women's Institute

Shorne & Thong WI has had another successful year. We have, at the time of writing, 26 members who have enjoyed a variety of meetings during the 2025-26 year.

We learned about the good work undertaken by Tools with a Mission or TWAM. David Heren explained that any type of tool is accepted by this charity, refurbished and then sent to Africa to help people in small communities support themselves and their families. Another charity we learned about through Ruth Portway's talk is My Shining Star which supports families whose children are affected by major illnesses.

Members also enjoyed a very interesting talk on becoming a magistrate from Dr Sue Plummer. Dr Clive Nuttman opened our eyes to the lives of wasps and the part they play in supporting farmers. Nigel Roberts also entertained the club with the history of conjuring and showed us many tricks.

In house, we held a craft afternoon to create baubles for our Christmas trees, took part in quizzes and held a Scrabble tournament.

As always, cakes and other baked goods played an important part in our year. At every meeting we enjoy delicious baked goods from the 'tea ladies'. We also had a stall at the craft fair in the church while we entertained members of other WI's at our Strawberry Tea in July. Some club members enjoyed afternoon tea at the Inn on the Lake, and we started the Christmas season with lunch at the Rose and Crown.

As well as meeting monthly, we also have a Reading Club which meets in members' homes and a Ladies that Lunch group who meet up once a month.

We are a friendly group of ladies with a busy and informative schedule. If anyone would like to visit for a 'taster' afternoon, please contact Sue 01474 824732.

Sue Muckley

HOW TO REPORT PROBLEMS:

If you see a community problem, carefully note where it is located and if possible take a good photograph that can be uploaded.

Use of the relevant links as follow are the best and fastest way to both report and get action about problems that residents identify:

Planning enforcement (lack or breach of planning permission):

https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/planning/planning-enforcement

Fly-tipping (on the highway and/or GBC-owned land):

https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/keeping-gravesham-clean/flytipping-littering

Dead animal (on road, pavement or verge):

https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/animals/dead-animals

Public Rights of Way (Footpath problems):

https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-on-a-right-of-way

Highways issues (numerous categories):

https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem

PARISH COUNCIL INFORMATION:

Shorne Parish Council 2025-26: (see website for latest personnel information)

Chairman: Bob Lane	01474 822680	bob.lane@shorneparishcouncil.org
Vice Chairman: Robin Theobald	01474 823674	robin.theobald@shorneparishcouncil.org

Members:

John Bugg	01474 823547	john.bugg@shorneparishcouncil.org
Pauline Clifton	01474 825110	pauline.clifton@shorneparishcouncil.org
Robert Hardy	01474 357681	robert.hardy@shorneparishcouncil.org
Susan Lindley	01474 823179	susan.lindley@shorneparishcouncil.org
Clive Rea	01474 568702	clive.rea@shorneparishcouncil.org
Tom Rochard-Pullen	07791 875045	tom.rochard-pullen@shorneparishcouncil.org
Louisa Williams	07850 250852	louisa.williams@shorneparishcouncil.org

Clerk:

Diane Salmon	01474 526332	clerk@shorneparishcouncil.org

Other sources of information on Parish Council matters:

Parish Council Website: https://shorneparishcouncil.org
Parish Council Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/shorneparishcouncil

Reports on Parish Council issues also feature in every issue of the Shorne Parish Magazine.

Annual Parish Assembly 2027:

The next ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY will be held on a Thursday evening at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, date in 2027 TBA, see website. All village organisations are most welcome to present their annual report at this meeting. All reports received in writing will form the basis of contributions to the Annual Parish Report for 2026-27. Reports of more than 250 words in length may be edited to fit available space. Illustrative photographs are welcomed but need to be of high resolution to be suitable for inclusion.

The Shorne Parish Council Annual Report 2025-26 was edited by Susan Lindley and Diane Salmon.

Please contact 01474 526332 or clerk@shorneparishcouncil.org if you have any questions about the content.