



Minutes of Shepreth Annual Parish Meeting

Monday 6th May 2025 at 7.30pm

at Shepreth Village Hall

Present: Cllr Stone, Cllr Bast, Cllr Dutton, Cllr Fisher, Cllr Maison, Cllr Pankhurst, Cllr White, Parish Clerk and 18 members of the public

The meeting opened at 19.30

- 1) The Chair of Shepreth Parish Council (SPC), Cllr Turlough Stone, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
- 2) The minutes of the last APM meeting on 13th May 2024 were accepted by the meeting, proposed by Cllr Fisher and seconded by Cllr Pankhurst, all in favour.
- 3) Parish Council accounts will be presented at an upcoming meeting of the Parish Council. They will be available by request from the clerk or online.
- 4) Chairman Cllr Turlough Stone gave his report from the Parish Council over the past year and took questions from the meeting
- 5) Report from District & County Councillors (reports attached below)
- 6) Reports from village groups
 - (a) Sustainable Shepreth (report attached below)
 - (b) South Cambridgeshire Climate and Nature Group (report attached below)
 - (c) For Shep (report attached below)
 - (d) Meldreth Shepreth & Foxton Community Rail Partnership (report attached below)
 - (e) Shepreth Spitfires

Lucy Smith reported that the Spitfires have had a successful year, offering vital sporting and recreational facilities to local young people. They are shortly to embark on a trip to France, after having fundraised for this throughout the year. The Spitfires currently have 17 teams, including a new girls U15s team, and thanks to financial support from SPC, a tots team for U7s. Lucy also thanked Shepreth in Need for the support that they have given. The Spitfires have started training up young people as referees and some of the older players can now referee for major matches. They have also organised a range of social activities through the year and have supported village life by helping clean Shepreth Church for mother's day.
 - (f) Shepreth Church (report attached below)
 - (g) Shepreth Relief in Need (report attached below)
 - (h) Shepreth Schools Trust (report attached below)
 - (i) Shepreth Village Hall Committee (report attached below)
 - (j) Shepreth Events Committee
 - (k) Shepreth Bowls Club

Pat Stigwood reported that the bowls club continues to play at the Village Hall on Friday afternoons. Currently there are only 11 regular members, new members would be very welcome.
(l) Happy Bunnies nursery (report attached below)

- 7) **OPEN FORUM** – everyone had the opportunity to discuss issues that affect themselves and the village and local community

Please note: reports attached to this document

Annual Parish Meeting

6th May 2025



Working as a village to nurture our environment

Find us:

at <https://bit.ly/sustainableshepreth>

And on Facebook

Join our mailing list and/or our
WhatsApp group:

sustainableshepreth@gmail.com

89% of people want stronger action to fight the climate crisis but they are trapped in a “spiral of silence” because they believe they are in a minority

The Guardian, 22nd April 2025



Working as a village to nurture our environment

Breaking the silence:

- *Community*
- *Collaboration*
- *Conversation*

Two years in and we now have...



3 areas of focus

Some ongoing activities



Old School
Field



Community
Energy &
Village Hall
upgrade



Nature,
Creativity and
Wellbeing

Shepreth Litter Pick



Red bins



Drains & ditches



Swaps & repairs



L-Moor

Past event: Working parties on the L-Moor - second Thursday of every month: 11th January (cancelled), 8th February (cancelled), 14th March 12:30 - 3:00 pm



L-Moor in October
Join us for our monthly working

Films & talks



The Old School Field is progressing well!



1st February

9 Heritage apple trees were planted - they are now in full bloom.

8th April

Work started to install an accessible path - see previous slide

The small mound created from the dug up earth has been seeded with wild flowers

10th May

Join us to plant the wild flower 'meadow' from plants grown from seed

What's next?

- Two picnic benches will appear soon.
- Fundraising for some new play equipment, hopefully for the summer

Watch this space!



Opportunities for community, collaboration, conversation are increasingly happening



Upcoming events

- Saturday 10th May - from 10 am - Wildflower planting on OSF
- Friday 16th May - from 4:30 pm - Litter Picking (meet at Village Hall)
- Saturday 17th May - from 2:00 pm - Litter Picking (meet at Village Hall)
- October - March 2026 (2nd Thursday of each month) - L-Moor working parties

Other events under discussion:

- September - stand / activity as part of Shepreth Events Picnic on OSF
- October - Apple Pressing, plus Eco Market at The Plough
- October - Working title: “Reimagining growth: what do we really need to thrive in the coming decades?” Joint event with Haslingfield & Harlton Eco Group and others
- November - Swish and clothes repair
- Timing tbd - Community Energy village meeting

Our ongoing aspirations...

Aspirations

- Build village engagement
- Encourage intergenerational involvement
- Develop our resilience (e.g. food, cool & warm hubs, flood resistance)
- Enhance biodiversity
- Add a sustainable travel group¹
- Add a sustainable food group
- Build our partner, sponsor, supporter, collaborative network

What else could we be doing?

Do help us to shape all of this

¹*Thanks to Sarah Grove for all her support*

Our Steering Team for 2025

1. Chair - Elisabeth Spain
2. Deputy Chair - Steve Swain
3. Secretary / membership - Tamara Kosikova
4. Treasurer - vacant
5. Old School Field - Carol Dutton
6. Reduce, re-use, re-cycle - Patrick Fletcher¹
7. Built Environment and Energy - vacant²
8. Nature, Creativity and Wellbeing - Felicity Norman³
9. Water Resilience - Nick Mann
10. Sustainable Travel - vacant
11. Sustainable Food - vacant
12. General support - vacant

Stood down in 2024/25:

- Tom Blundell
- John Mochan
- Amanda Davis
- Tammy Ashwell

Thanks to:

¹Amanda Davis - Red bins and
Events support

²Roger Faires - Advisory support

³Bob Race - L-Moor support

Thank you to all our sponsors!

- Shepreth Wildlife Park
- Phillimore Garden Centre
- The Plough, Shepreth
- Wrights Mower
- Storigraphic
- Wood, Wool, Wild
- The Green Man
- Eltek
- Happy Bunnies Nursery School

**A big thank you to our
supporters**



Photo from Alexas-fotos on Unsplash

Thank you for listening

6th May 2025



How you can support us:

1. Share your ideas
2. Become a member (it's free)
3. Come to and/or help with our events
4. Join one of our working groups
5. Join our Steering Team
6. Donate to help with miscellaneous costs

Find us:

at <https://bit.ly/sustainableshepreth>

And on Facebook

Join our mailing list and/or our
WhatsApp group:

sustainableshepreth@gmail.com

Working as a village to nurture our environment

South Cambs Climate and Nature Group

Supported by members of Sustainable Shepreth, and
Haslingfield & Harlton Eco Group

Driven by The Climate Coalition

<https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/our-members>

Our Strength Is In Our Members

From sports and nature to faith and international development organisations, here at The Climate Coalition we represent a diverse group of people across the UK. But in spite of our varied interests, we are all unified by one thing: we passionately want to protect the things we love from climate change.

You can see a full list of our members and find out more about them further down.



8 “W” themes for communication with our MP, Pippa Heylings

- Warm Homes
- Water**
- Wellbeing*
- Wheels (transport)
- Wildlife (and chalk streams)
- Wind (renewable energy)
- Workers
- World



*Themes we've added

The communication continues

- 12th October 2024 - in Shepreth Village Hall (National Day of Action)
 - 35 people from 17 villages
 - Defined “Asks” on the W themes for climate and nature
 - Shared these with Pippa Heylings
- 10th February - online conversation
 - Detailed response from our MP to all of the Asks
- 5th July - Foxton Village Hall (Local Mass Lobby)
 - Next full constituency meeting
 - Aiming for 100+ people from 30-40 of the 70+ villages in the constituency
- 9th July - Westminster Mass Lobby



Please get in touch if you'd like to be involved

The Friends of the River Shep ('ForShep')

2025 Shepreth Annual Parish Meeting

Tuesday 6th May 2025 – Shepreth Village Hall



A Reminder of Our Aims ...

- To sustain and protect the River Shep
- To encourage and protect the biodiversity of the river's flora and fauna
- To encourage and promote the preservation and enhancement of the river

**MISSION – To Safeguard
the River from the
pressures of modern
life!**



Committee changes

Current Committee:

- Steve Swain (Chair)
- Tammy Ashwell (Treasurer)
- Laura Mungovan (Secretary) *
- Darren Bast
- Wanja Mungai
- Nick Downer *

(* new since last APM)

- Rob Mungovan –
Environmental Adviser

Resigned since last APM:

- Charles Cook
- Jenny Ravenhill
- Sir Tom Blundell

Thank-you for all your
contributions!

New committee to be elected
at AGM on Tuesday 13th May



2024 – Our 25th Anniversary



Angle Lane river habitat improvement project 2024/25

- Improve a length of river with **good connectivity** to the River Rhee
- Improve a length with excellent **habitat potential** to support more species
- Improve the setting of **our village**
- Opportunity to **train-up** new volunteers
- A chance to meet **new friends** through volunteering
- Utilising a £6,700 grant from Cambridge Water Pebble Fund and generous donations from Angle Lane residents, the Shepreth School Trust and the Parish Council



Work Parties along Angle lane



Angle Lane Helpers



Village Events



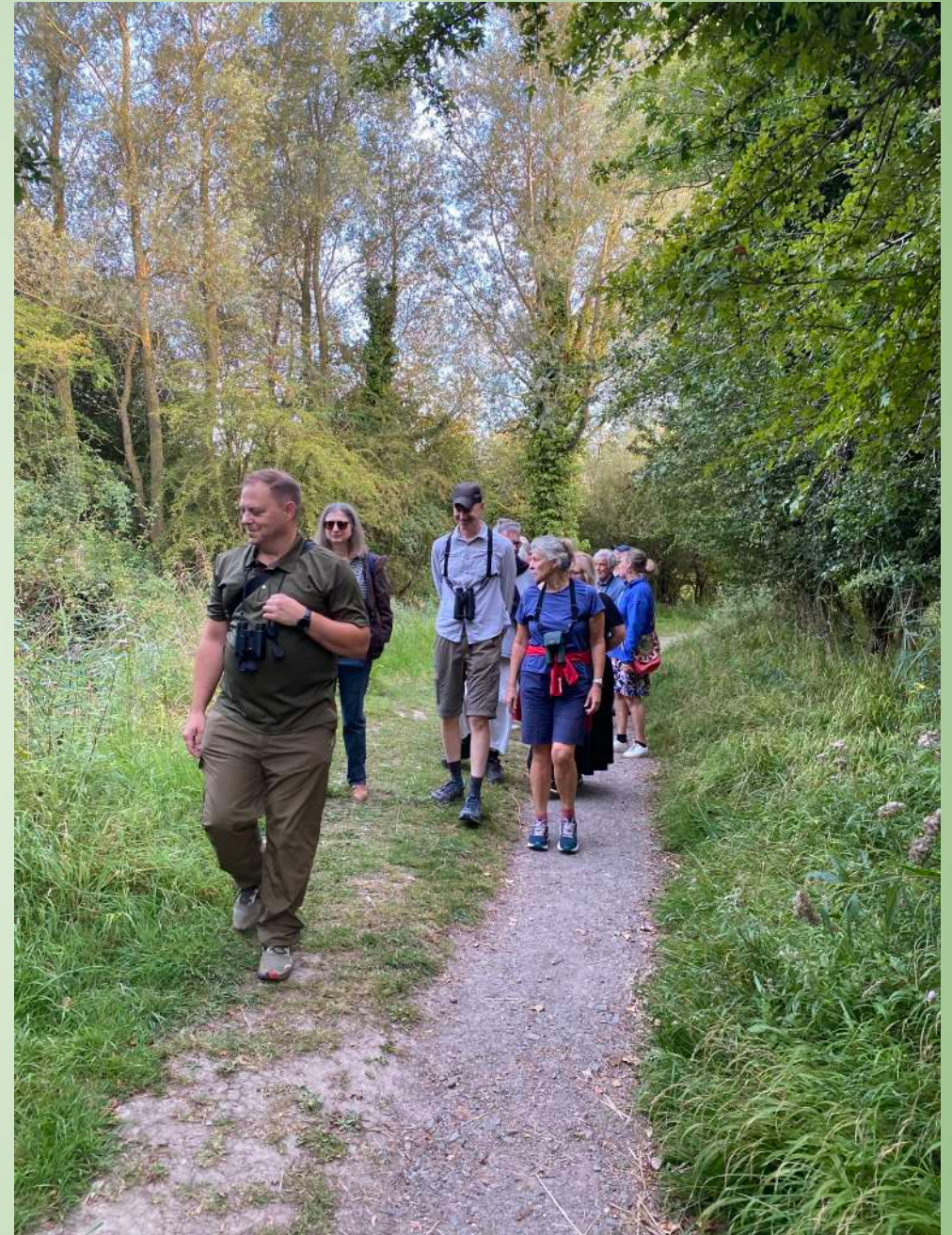
Shepreth Past, Present, Future – August '24



Sustainable Shepreth Eco Fair – January '25



Summer Walk



Apologies ..



Pond Dipping cancelled
due to torrential rain!



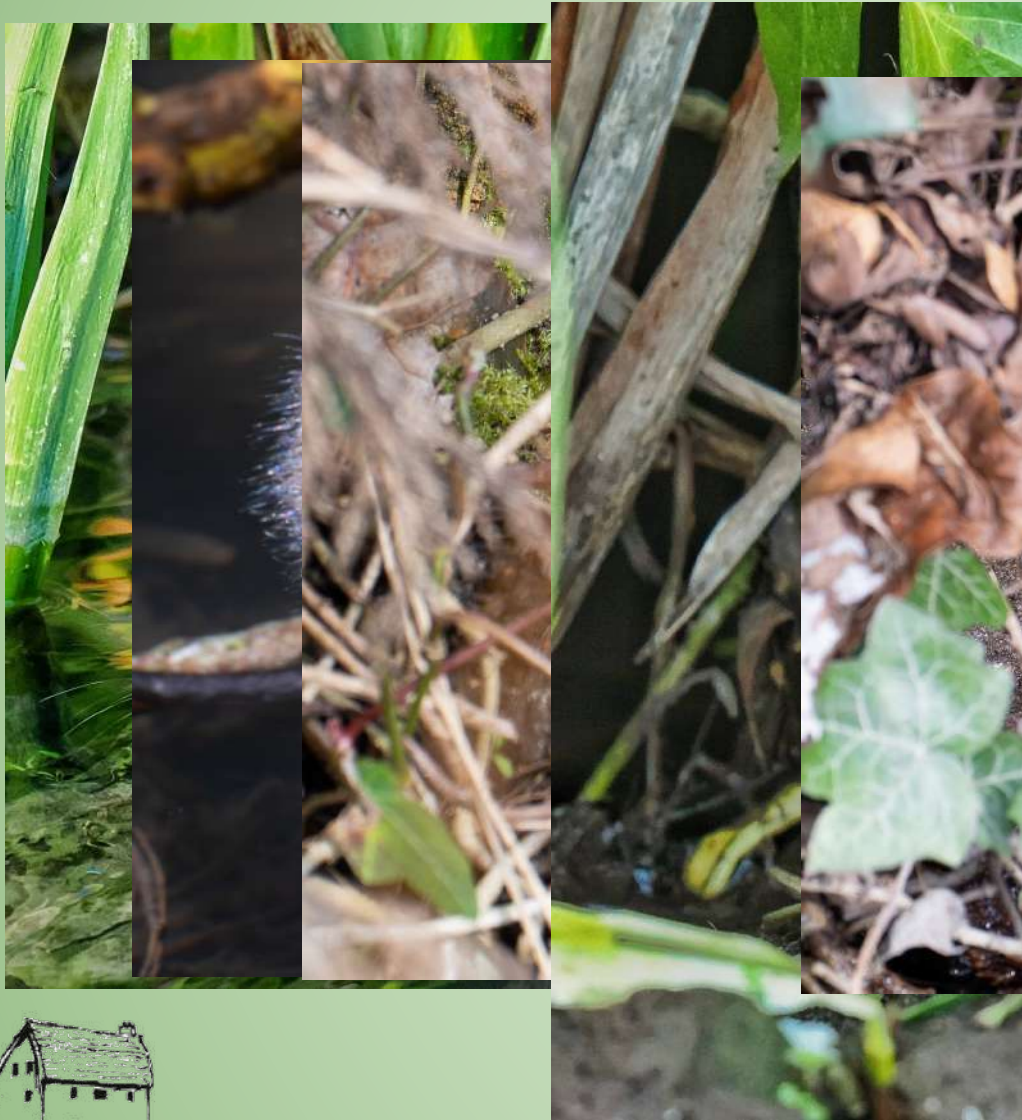
2024 Boxing Day Walk cancelled due to all
committee members being unavailable.
WE WILL RETURN IN 2025!



Brown Trout



Water Voles



Otters



Pure Clean Water

- The Chalk Streams crisis in Greater Cambridgeshire
- A joint screening with Sustainable Shepreth and Haslingfield & Harlton Eco Group



FILM SCREENING

PURE CLEAN WATER

THE CHALK STREAMS CRISIS IN GREATER CAMBRIDGESHIRE

SUNDAY 6TH APRIL

7PM

HASLINGFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Refreshments available

FREE TICKETS

PLEASE BOOK USING THE EVENTBRITE QR CODE



Donations welcomed
for tickets and
refreshments on
the night by cash or
QR code.



"Brilliant, passionate,
poetic piece of activist
film-making."
- Robert Macfarlane



Suitable for ages 12+

Co-sponsored by Haslingfield and Harlton Eco Group, Friends of the River Shep and Sustainable Shepreth

With introductions from Friends of the Rhee and Friends of the River Shep

Many thanks to Haslingfield Parish Council



Engagement with our MP



Friends of the River Shep



A volunteer group in South Cambridgeshire is working to protect the River Shep, one of England's Chalk Streams, often known as "England's Rainforest".

#COP16 - Interview with Pippa Heylings MP

Chalk Streams are a rare and threatened by clear waters and a rich variety of voles and brown

Chalk Streams are under threat from abstraction and insensitivity

Chalk Streams urgently need safeguarding ancient woodland, to deliver comprehensive these globally rare and endangered



that the water companies do local community groups and as well as us making sure that the water companies



2025 and beyond...

- Complete the Angle Lane Project
- Explore new projects with Cambridge Water
- Investigate water quality monitoring
- Continue regular river maintenance
- Regular events
 - Summer walk, Pond Dipping, Boxing Day walk etc



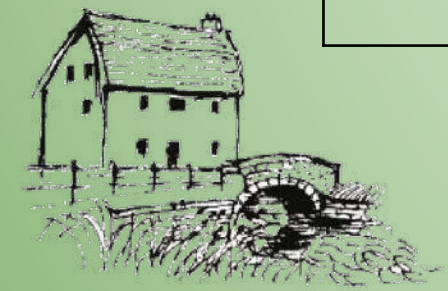
Upcoming Events ...

- AGM at The Plough
 - Tuesday 13 May, 7.30 pm
- Planting work party in Angle Lane
 - Saturday 7th June, 9.30 am
- Summer Walk around Fowlmere
 - Thursday 12th June, 7 pm



How to keep informed and in touch ...

Where?	What?
<i>ForShep Members Updates</i>	<i>Regular monthly e-mail updates (members only)</i>
<i>ForShep Members Newsletter</i>	<i>Occasional newsletter (members only)</i>
Facebook	Join the “Friends of the River Shep” Facebook Group
Website	https://forshep.wixsite.com/forshep
ForShep Noticeboard	By the river near Riverside Cottage, High Street, Shepreth
Church & Village Newsletter	Monthly snippets in the Shepreth Church & Village newsletter



Become a member ...

Why...

- Funds contribute to the essential river maintenance
- Membership benefits include regular newsletters, river updates and invitations to events
- “Community spirit” and “feeling good 😊”

How....

- Membership is by household
- Membership is from £5.00 per year – or contribute more if you like!
- Joining instructions are found on our web page

<https://forshep.wixsite.com/forshep>

1. Set up an annual standing order to our bank account
2. E-mail us your contact details



Friends of the River Shep

ForShep is a voluntary group of local people interested in conserving their chalk stream, its habitat, and the village environment.

For a minimal annual contribution, you can become a member of the ForShep group and enjoy the benefits listed on our website <https://forshep.wixsite.com/forshep>

To become a member, follow the instructions below:

Step 1. Set up a regular payment/standing order with your bank to the ForShep account (details below)

- a. Please make an immediate payment and annually thereafter
- b. Our minimum contribution is £5 per household annually, you can of course contribute more
- c. For identification purposes please include your name in the payee reference

Bank:	Santander Business Banking, Bootle
Sort Code number:	09-01-54
Account:	Friends of the River Shep
Account No.:	32173285

Step 2. Email ForShep forshep4@gmail.com to confirm your intended membership, please include the following information:

- a. Name
- b. Full address
- c. Date of your first annual payment
- d. Preferred email address for the email updates

You will receive an email to confirm your membership once the initial payment has been received.

If you are not able to set up a standing order directly with your bank, please contact ForShep for an alternative method.

Everyone's support is valuable. We hope that members will enjoy one or more of the events arranged throughout the year, however it is not obligatory for our members to do anything - just to enjoy the river!

Any queries, please email forshep4@gmail.com, or call the Secretary on 07944 037130 or Treasurer on 07771 55 66 73

Thank-yous...

- Rob Mungovan – our environmental adviser
 - The Committee – for their hard work and dedication
 - All our amazing volunteers who give their time and energy
 - Our funding partners – for their grants and gifts
 - All the members of ForShep
-
- The people of Shepreth and other local villages for supporting our work



Questions & Answers ...



Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership



200
Years of Train Travel
Since 1825



2024-25 Annual Report



Contents

Introduction by the Chair	3
Projects	4
Meldreth Station Link	4
Sustainable Shepreth Eco Fair	5
Safety of Women and Girls Event	6
Meldreth Road Level Crossing	6
Platforms for Change	7
School Outreach	7
Rail and Ale Trail	8
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility Study	9
Financial Report and Funding	10
Who We Are	12

Cover photo: Station staff on Meldreth & Melbourn Railway Station in the 1920s. From left to right: Mr Allen, Mr Hale, Mr William Vellum, Mr Scott (Station Master) and Leonard Dodkin (clerk). Photo from Melbourn Magazine Winter 2002

Introduction by the Chair

It has been a busy and adventurous year for MSFCRP. Long-term projects like the Meldreth Station Link have come to fruition, and collaborations with community groups like Sustainable Shepreth have strengthened. Horizons have expanded in a multitude of ways.



A notable change to our organisation was the decision to wind up the 'Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Rail User Group,' and consolidate the work of championing local rail under the auspices of the CRP. The RUG was established in 2009 and was the pre-cursor to the CRP; the CRP was now felt to be in a strong position to champion daily rail services, along with its growing community development programme.

At the same time, the notion of expanding the reach of our CRP to other South Cambridgeshire stations, both to share good opportunities with our neighbours, and strengthen the profile of local sustainable transport, gained a foothold through the offer by Greater Anglia, which runs through Whittlesford Parkway and Shelford Stations – and soon the new Cambridge South Station – of formal support to an expanded CRP. We look forward to working further on a new collaboration with these stations in the coming year.

New horizons have also been explored by the much-enjoyed Rail and Ale Trail: why not look and give it a try?

The most important have been universal themes of encouraging rail travel, through continuing School Outreach and schemes like Platforms for Change and confidence to travel through the Safety of Women and Girls event. First-time travellers are always greeted by our station gardens, setting the tone for the joy of train travel and the new horizons that it exemplifies.

With enormous thanks to all our volunteers, partners and supporters who make the Community Rail Partnership exactly what it says on the tin.

Susan van de Ven

Chair, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership

Projects

In this section of the report, we highlight a number of projects carried out this year and identify those pillars of Community Rail with which they are aligned.

Melbourn Station Link

We are delighted that work to widen, resurface and light the path between Melbourn and Meldreth station took place this year – a scheme we have long championed. We look forward to celebrating the opening this summer.

We are still concerned with the lack of accessibility at Meldreth for the London platform, and we invited our MP to the station in February help consider avenues to achieving better accessibility at Meldreth.



- ✓ Providing a voice for the community
- ✓ Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- ✓ Bringing communities together
- ✓ Supporting social and economic development
- ✓ Strengthening the partnership

Sustainable Shepreth Eco Fair

Once again, we enjoyed attending the Sustainable Shepreth Eco Fair in January with support from Shepreth Parish Councillor, Barbara Pankhurst. Our theme this year was Sustainable Transport, and we had resources to share covering walking, cycling, buses, rail and EV charging. Additionally, we conducted two surveys, one on the location of cycle racks required in Shepreth, where the Village Hall was top of the wish list, and one around uses for the station building at Shepreth - 90% of respondents told us they would like to see a café in the village, 67% wanted a meeting space and 62% a shop.

- ✓ Providing a voice for the community
- ✓ Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- ✓ Bringing communities together
- ✓ Strengthening the partnership



Safety of Women and Girls Event

Our Community Rail Partnership has always championed the fact that local rail is there for anyone and everyone. In December we organised an information stall at Cambridge Railway Station, offering valuable resources and guidance to help women and girls stay safe at night and on public transport, especially during the festive season. Cambridge Station is an important gateway to the night-time economy for visitors from connected villages and towns.

The event was a joint initiative with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the British Transport Police, Dardan Security, White Ribbon, Cambridge Businesses Against Crime (CAMBAC), Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre and Businesses Against Abuse. The event was hosted by Greater Anglia and supported by Stagecoach.



- ✓ Providing a voice for the community
- ✓ Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- ✓ Bringing communities together
- ✓ Supporting social and economic development
- ✓ Strengthening the partnership

Meldreth Road Level Crossing

We have continued to help facilitate conversations between Network Rail and local parish councils around the upgrade of the level crossing at Meldreth Road, Shepreth. Because of safety concerns at the crossing, and in the context of a possible increase in the number of trains facilitated by the digital signalling upgrade, Network Rail intend to proceed with an application for a Level Crossing Order to upgrade the crossing from Automated Half Barriers to Full Barriers. We will continue to ensure that the concerns of local residents are heard.

- ✓ Providing a voice for the community

Platforms for Change

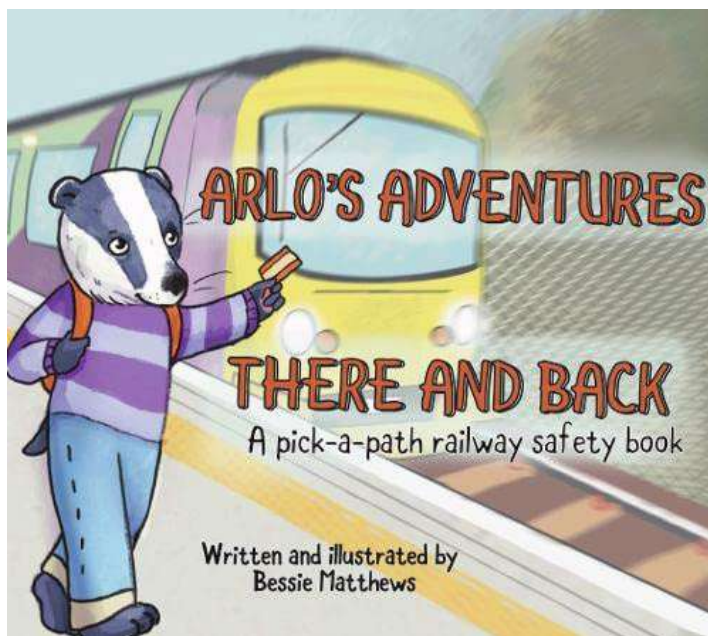
This year we worked with Letchworth Cubs to help them achieve their Platforms for Change badge. The programme involves several visits to the cubs and the station. We started with a rail safety talk at the cub meeting. This was followed by two further sessions at Letchworth Station of gardening/litter picking, followed by a cake sale when the cubs also had a “backstage tour” of the ticket office and station manager’s office. The final session was a train trip from Letchworth to Cambridge to visit the Botanic Gardens in September. We are very grateful for the help and assistance provided by our Govia Thameslink colleagues in facilitating these sessions, particularly to Karen Chudovszky, our Area Station Manager.



- ✓ Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- ✓ Bringing communities together
- ✓ Strengthening the partnership

School Outreach

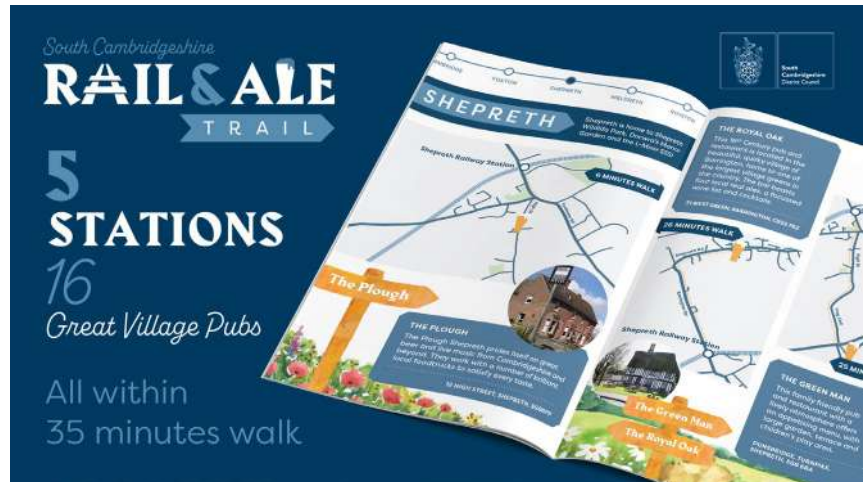
One example of our school outreach this year has been our work with Foxton School. We supported each of the four classes in the school to make sure that all pupils had received lessons in rail safety. Class Four had a lesson on safety and travel planning before a train trip to Cambridge for some comparative Geography. Class Three’s lesson focused on safety at level crossings, of which we have many local examples, followed by a visit to the signal box at Foxton station and a train trip to Royston to visit the town museum. Class Two had a rail safety lesson, followed by a visit to the signal box and a trip to Shepreth. We were very grateful for the support from Happy Bunnies Nursery School who allowed us to use their toilets to facilitate the trip. Class One had a lesson based on Arlo’s adventures including storytelling and games. Class One are saving their class trip for next year.



- ✓ Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- ✓ Bringing communities together
- ✓ Strengthening the partnership

Rail and Ale Trail

We worked with Visit South Cambs (VSC), to create the South Cambridgeshire Rail and Ale Trail aiming to support local pubs, promote the area to visitors and raise the profile of the VSC website. The booklet features 16 pubs all within half an hour's walk of five local railway stations and contains photographs of the pubs, plus maps detailing how to walk to them from the stations.



The trail was launched during Community Rail Week at the Tickell Arms Beer Festival. Hard copies were distributed to all the pubs featured in the booklet, plus local campsites and information hubs, and handed out at subsequent beer and music festivals. The trail was promoted by MSFCRP and VSC on their websites and social media. It also gained coverage in local newspapers and radio. A fruitful collaboration with the local CAMRA branch saw the trail highlighted in their email newsletter, website and magazine. The initiative has successfully encouraged visitors, including wheelchair users, to explore and enjoy the welcoming pubs along the route and reminded local people to use their local railway stations and rediscover the delightful views on their doorstep.

The trail has been shortlisted for a Tourism and Leisure Award at the Community Rail Awards 2025.

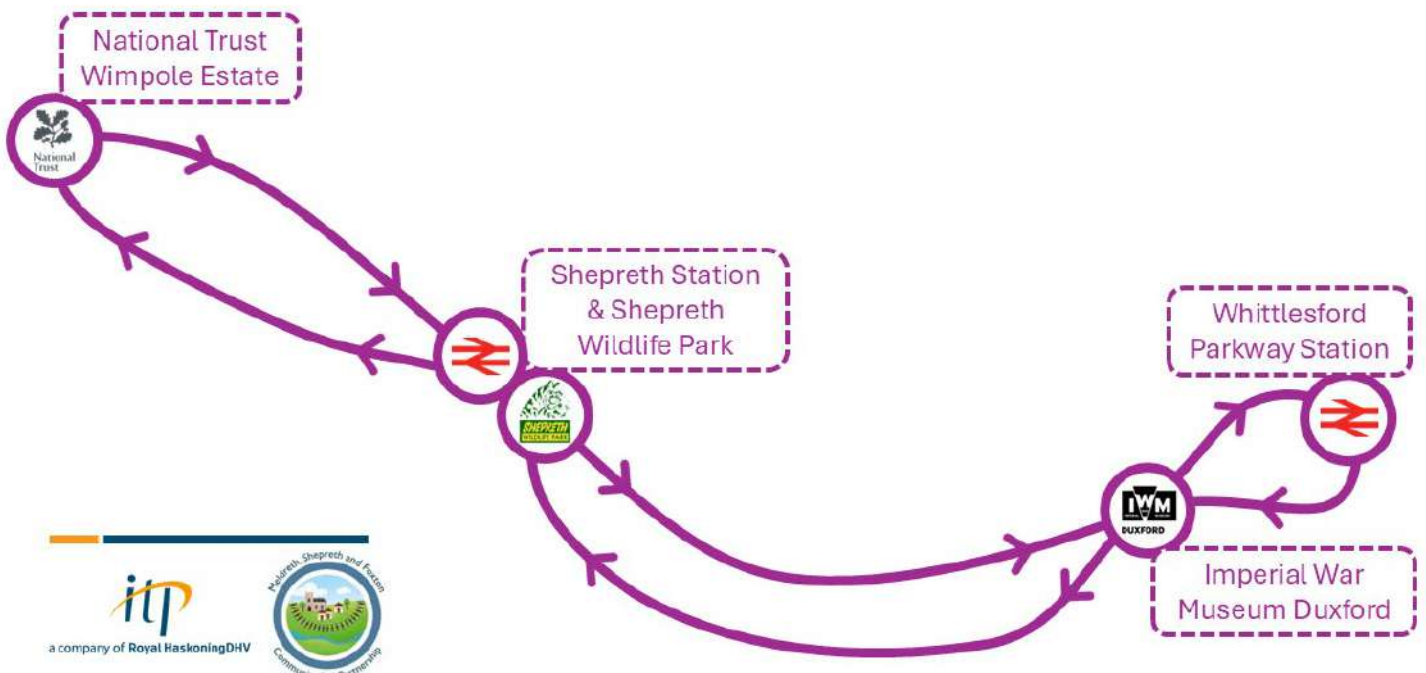


- ✓ Promoting sustainable, heathly and accessible travel
- ✓ Supporting social and economic development

Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility Study

MSFCRP commissioned transport consultants ITP to conduct a feasibility study to understand the opportunities and constraints of providing a bus service to connect three tourist destinations in South Cambridgeshire: NT Wimpole Estate, Shepreth Wildlife Park and IWM Duxford with the railway stations at Shepreth and Whittlesford Parkway. Engagement with tourist destinations, rail and bus operators, and public sector officers were key to understanding the local context, and how such a service might serve residents alongside visitors. The resulting report highlights challenges associated with delivering mode shift in a rural environment, as well as opportunities for partnership working.

- ✓ Providing a voice for the community
- ✓ Promoting sustainable, healthy and accessible travel
- ✓ Supporting social and economic development
- ✓ Strengthening the partnership



Financial Report and Funding

MSFCRP is extremely grateful for the continued funding support from Govia Thameslink Railway and South Cambridgeshire District Council. It is also thankful for continued funding from Melbourn, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Parish Councils.

Accounts for 2024-25

Income

Core Funding	£16,451
Grants	£4,400
Brought forward from 2024-25	£21,440
Total Income	£42,291

Payments

Partnership Officer	£17,844
Operational Expenses	£434
Eco Tourism Bus Feasibility Study	£9,827
Accounting	£882
Total Payments	£28,987

Balance at 31 March 2025	£13,304
---------------------------------	----------------



Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership

Our Partners



Melbourn Parish Council

Meldreth Parish Council

Shepreth Parish Council

Foxton Parish Council

Phillimore Garden Centre

Melbourn Village College

Melbourn Practical Solutions Group

Melbourn Timebank

Foxton Gardens Association

Meldreth Veg Club

Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton Community Rail Partnership

Our Community Rail Partnership aims to develop links with schools and local businesses associated with our local rail services, and to enhance sustainable transport links in the wider area. The partnership is hosted by South Cambridgeshire District Council and funded by Govia Thameslink Railway, the Parish Councils of Melbourn, Meldreth, Shepreth and Foxton, and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The partnership is accredited by the Department for Transport. Accreditation is formal recognition by the DfT that a Community Rail Partnership operates to a high standard and that its objectives and activities are supported by Government.

The partnership would like to thank all our station volunteers, members of the Stakeholder Group and Hilary Marsh and Sarah Hatcher for recording the minutes of meetings.

Contact us



sarah.grove@scambs.gov.uk



meldrethsheprethfoxtonrail.org.uk



[@MSFCRP](https://twitter.com/MSFCRP)



[MSFCRP](https://www.facebook.com/MSFCRP)



[msf_crp](https://www.instagram.com/msf_crp)



Church Report to the Annual Parish Meeting May 2025

For most of 2025 we were in “Vacancy” with our Associate priest Rev. David Lee leading our services and looking after the spiritual needs of our congregation. It is not unusual in the C of E for the “vacancies to be more than 18 months. We were fortunate in that the Rev David Lee was appointed and licensed in less than 9 months. We were able to do this because the 4 PCCs in the 4 churches and David agreed that we are a good match for each other enabling to ask for and to be granted a Bishops license to interview 1 named candidate. Thus, drastically shortening the process. Although there was only one candidate, we still needed to follow the full process of producing a parish profile, person specification and formal interview.

Church Fabric – As the previous few years no major tasks or changes have occurred, and the church and churchyard are in a reasonable state of repair. There are no obvious defects or hazards which prevent or inhibit the everyday use and/or access to the premises.

Routine tasks have been carried out to preserve the premises and keep it fit to use. Safety inspections on the stability of the memorials (with particular emphasis on the crosses that can be moved on their bases) identified two crosses that had become more unstable; these were removed from the memorials; one has been laid beside the memorial the other is securely tethered to the metal fence.

The trees appear to be in a sound condition.

The major projects that require doing, the vacancy resulted in us not progressing the lighting previously reported. We still need to prepare the faculty application (planning permission).

Volunteers

Last year I paid particular thanks to the incoming and outgoing editors of the Shepreth Newsletter. However, we must not forget the many others who help make the church a pleasant place to visit, the cleaners, the flowers arrangers, the fund raisers and working parties. We are extremely grateful to several Shepreth Spitfire members and their families who joined a working party to spring clean the church for Mothering Sunday. The speed and vigour with which they worked was amazing. The way that the brasses gleamed, and fresh clean smell brought joy to all who attended the Mothering Sunday Service.

We have also formed an association with Sustainable Shepreth who have used the church as a venue and who are exploring, with us, ways that we can make the church yard more ecofriendly and also have the church open during the summer months.

Malcolm Price
Church Warden
May 2025

The Shepreth Relief in Need Charity

Report to Annual Parish Meeting May 2025

During 2024 our income was up slightly to £8852.00p, and we paid out in grants £5,575.00p, a full copy of our Annual Report is available for inspection and a copy will be given to the Parish Council on request.

During the year we were able to help many people in the Parish. We have the funds to help more, welcome enquiries and suggestions from villagers, either regarding their own situation or regarding others who may be struggling silence. All communications are treated with the utmost confidence and can be made to any of our trustees.

At the beginning of 2024 Nick resigned as Clerk to the charity but expressed a willingness to remain a Trustee. After much discussion we agreed to split the role of Clerk to Treasurer and Secretary. Nick agreed to be Treasurer, and I became Secretary. We are very grateful to Nick for remaining a Trustee and greatly value his experience and knowledge of the investments. We are also pleased that we do not need to change the Banking signatures.

Our Current trustees are Mrs B Smith (Chairman), Mr M Price (Secretary), Mr N Lee (Treasurer), Mrs P Stigwood, Miss D McCabe and Mrs J Willis.

Malcolm Price

May 2025

SHEPRETH SCHOOL TRUST
Charity Number: 1062515

Annual Parish Meeting Report for 6 May 2025.

The Trust was set up following the sale of the village primary school to manage a proportion of the funds set aside for Shepreth residents.

Funding relies on income received by the Trust from its closely monitored investments especially during the recent inflation trends.

The Trust offers assistance for the advancement of education of children and adults, recreation facilities and other leisure or occupations that are in the interest of social welfare for the inhabitants of the village and the protection of the village environment.

During the year two trustees resigned and two new trustees have been appointed.

During the financial year ending 31 March 2025 the Trust, disappointingly, received and approved only three applications awarding a total of £700 for a range of needs including study materials, sport equipment, tuition, educational trips and environment enhancement.

Annual Return for income and expenditure to 31 March 2025, will be available on the Charity Commission website. later this year.

The current trustees are: Caroline Pepper, Catharine MacLeod, Jeremy Hill, Peter McDonald, and Hugh Wood.

Applications for grants are invited throughout the year and should be submitted in writing either by email to sheprethschooltrust@gmail.com, or letter to any of the Trustees, or to the Trust Secretary at 18 High Street, Shepreth, SG8 6PP. These details are published in Shepreth's monthly Church Newsletter.

Charles Cook 6 May 2025
Secretary to the Trustees

SHEPRETH VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MAY 6TH 2025

Shepreth Village Hall has had another successful year.

Happy Bunnies is flourishing, intake is growing, and their year-round daytime hire continues to provide the hall with a steady income. The Carpet Bowls Club still use the hall on Friday afternoons from September to Easter.

The hall is used regularly in the evening by a Pilates group, Shepreth Parish Council and, of course, the Village Hall Management Committee. Barrington Scouts and Rangers used the hall and, although they have now moved back to Barrington, we have already had a show of interest from an exercise dance class for that evening.

Weekends see a regular hire from Heidi's Sewing Group plus bookings for children's parties, other family celebrations and community events. Sustainable Shepreth held a Repair Café and their second Eco Fair both very well attended, and the Social Events Group another successful Quiz Night.

We continue to put the income to good use replacing the fire doors in the meeting room and main hall and the original Crittall windows in the Meeting Room with Double Glazed units. HB staff soon remarked that, along with the new door, what a difference they had made to comfort levels in the room.

Dave Chappell replaced the clock on the front of the Village Hall with a mains powered clock that automatically adjusts to daylight saving and GMT.

The second boiler was replaced; Gas and Electricity suppliers have been changed. Our new 'Lemon Booking' system has been successfully in place for the last year, making it easier for potential users to book and for Ali, our booking clerk, and Wanja, our accountant, to keep track of both bookings and payments.

This year's big project is to make the village hall more thermally efficient. On behalf of SVH and with approval from SPC, Councillor John Fisher applied for another Grant for us. On March 18th we heard that we had been awarded £68,080.00 by Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority from their 'Net Zero Villages Grant'.

It is proposed that this will be used to put insulation above the dropped ceilings, replace the remaining 10 old Crittall windows – 2 in the Lobby, 8 in the Main Hall – with double glazed units and fix insulation to the external brickwork of the hall, followed by a coloured render. Having been awarded the grant, we learned from Kate, the Parish Clerk, that we will need Planning Permission for the work. Although the VH is not Listed or in a Conservation Area, we need approval as it's a community building.

Meanwhile, Trulight will replace the last three remaining old windows in the front and back extensions of the hall with double glazed units.

There is still plenty that can be done to make the hall more attractive to potential hirers and more comfortable for those who already use it. We will continue to renew and upgrade the facilities as and when we have the available funds.

Ruth White. Chairman SVHMC 28/4/25

Report from Happy Bunnies Nursery

By Rob Fox, Nursery Manager

At Happy Bunnies, the Seasons Don't Just Change the Weather — They Change Us. As spring unfurls its colours across Shepreth, the tulips bloom and tiny hands return to the soil — digging, building, painting, and wondering. At Happy Bunnies, the seasons shape more than our surroundings. They shape our rhythm, our relationships, and our pedagogy.

This spring, I'd like to share a few stories — not as headlines, but as heartlines.

A Setting Rooted in Relationship

From nine months onward, we welcome children into a nurturing environment where every voice is valued and every rhythm respected. Here, play is not just allowed — it is honoured. Our team of experienced, attentive educators understands that care, curiosity, and connection form the bedrock of lifelong learning.

The Power of the Child and Investing in Our Future

At Happy Bunnies, we believe the child is not only our present joy but our future promise. To invest in early childhood is not merely to fund hours of care — it is to honour the very foundations of society.

Every block tower built, every muddy footprint, every question asked with wonder — these are acts of future-making.

Children do not wait to become citizens — they already are. Their voices, gestures, and drawings speak to a world we too often rush past. When we listen, truly listen, we see that the child's play is a blueprint for empathy, innovation, and community.

We invest in our future by protecting the right to play, by nurturing educators who see with both head and heart, and by creating spaces that invite discovery, risk, connection, and care.

To stand alongside a child is to believe in what the world could be — and to act, with courage, to make it so.

A Place of Recognition and Quiet Courage

We were deeply honoured to be named a finalist at the National Nursery Awards 2024. While spotlights often seek the loudest achievements, we believe this recognition celebrates the quieter work: the tender pauses, the patient guiding hands, and the unseen courage it takes for a child to try again after falling. Our practice is rooted not in performance, but in presence.

A Partnership That Centres the Child

We're proud to be working with the PEDAL Centre at the University of Cambridge in a research partnership grounded in respect, reciprocity, and joy. This is research with us, not on us — a collaboration that honours children's right to play and positions curiosity as the very fabric of the curriculum.

Reflections in the Mirror of Ofsted

In October 2023, Ofsted rated us as Good — a valuable affirmation. But even more meaningful were the words that recognised the warmth of our relationships and the thoughtfulness of our

environments. Regulatory frameworks have their place, but the true reflection of our work lives in the children's faces, in the educator's intentions, and in the trust we build with families.

Looking Ahead

We're excited about what's to come:

- New research projects with the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education
- An increase in places as part of our long-term commitment to sustainable expansion in Shepreth
- Enriching visits to Shepreth Wildlife Park
- A potential new location within the village
- Continued visioning for a Growth Village — where childhood is seen not as preparation, but as possibility.

With Gratitude

To the Shepreth Village Hall Committee — and in particular to Nick Mann and Ruth White — thank you for your continued partnership. Your support makes our roots stronger and our reach wider.