



PRESS RELEASE

Progress Report on Telegraph Street District Office – February 2010.

Shipston Town Management Partnership (STMP) is trying to reverse the trend of rapidly reducing public services in Shipston. Following closure of the district office in Telegraph Street, Stratford District Council (SDC) has agreed to lease the building to the Partnership provided we can develop a viable business case to cover the cost of running the building. Costs such as council tax, insurance, utility services, maintenance and security amount to approximately £5,000 per year, before any staff costs are included. We have 6 months to make the case but hope this can be achieved within 3 months.

Following discussions with SDC we expect to re-establish the services that existed before the closure, but on a much reduced level perhaps just two or three morning sessions per week. However, this will be an improvement on the current puny service of three hours every three weeks provided at the Leisure Centre.

This still leaves the major part of the buildings capacity free to let to other organisations and our objective is to work toward establishing a "One Stop Shop" providing access to many public and non-governmental organisations. The Partnership is currently in discussion with the following organisation who expressed interest in the project: Warwickshire County Council, Shipston Town Council, South Warwickshire Tourism, Citizens Advice Bureau and other Community Groups.

The accommodation within the building currently comprises: ground floor (post office type arrangement) with attached meeting area, a disabled toilet and lift to first floor, on which there are two meeting rooms and kitchenette. The ground floor is not ideal for our needs and will be converted onto a more open environment with separate workstations. However, structural changes will have to wait until there is money in the kitty.

We intend to keep the cost of hiring space to a minimum. As we are not for profit organisation we only need to cover our direct costs. Initial thoughts suggest that we can offer accommodation at about £30 per half day or evening session.

What we now need are more Shipston residents to join the Partnership to boost the finances and lend a hand. We have made an impact over the last 12 months entirely due to the efforts of six directors. We need to spread the load so that other worthwhile community projects can be pursued. Also the more people we have as members adds weight to what we can achieve.

Shipston Town Management Partnership

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People power is a growing influence in the community and our Partnership can lead the way. We need to grow our current membership from the present 26 to something over 100 this year so please contact us for an application form. Membership only costs £6 per year. We need your skills: the Telegraph Street Office will need alterations, maintenance, key holders and cleaning. Can you help?

ENDS

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