



**Draft Healthcheck & Action Plan  
for Shipston on Stour & Rural Hinterland**

**Prepared  
by  
Stour Power  
Market Towns Partnership**



CD Rural Associates Ltd

**Draft 5 (16 November 2003)**

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## **1.0 Introduction & Background to the Healthcheck**

### **1.1 Location & Development of the Town**

The town of Shipston on Stour lies in the extreme south of Warwickshire, where the land begins to rise from the Avon Valley into the limestone escarpments of the Cotswolds edge. The immediate area of Shipston is fairly hilly and the town is quite closely surrounded by hills. Although the Stour valley itself is relatively flat, it is constrained by the surrounding topography and the river channel.

The town experienced a relatively rapid rate of housing and industrial growth in the 1960's and 1970's but in recent years this slowed as development opportunities reduced and other commercial centres such as Leamington Spa and Stratford on Avon continued to expand.

### **1.2 Features of the Town**

Shipston on Stour is an attractive market town still preserving its Medieval street plan that developed over the years through its association with the sheep and woollen industries. It has a wealth of listed buildings set within the compact historic core of High Street, Church Street, Sheep Street and Telegraph Street.

The town contains a number of industrial sites and acts as a local employment centre. Major employers within the area include Norgren IMI a long established engineering company, situated on the edge of the town, Pettifer Building Group and the Renault Agriculture Head Office.

### **1.3 The Rural Hinterland Area**

The surrounding parishes comprise an interesting mix of villages extending north to include Newbold on Stour and Tredington, to the east, covering the Cotswold fringe villages of Brailes and Cherington, to the south including the linear village of Long Compton and to the west to incorporate Great Wolford, Stretton on Fosse and Ilmington.

### **1.4 The Market Town and Rural Hinterland**

The Market Towns Initiative is based upon the town acting as the service centre within an identified rural hinterland. The hinterland represents a geographical area within which a range of retail and local services are carried out. The Shipston on Stour Partnership has defined the extent of the rural hinterland as follows:

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The town of Shipston of Stour and the parishes of:

1. Barcheston & Willington
2. Barton on Heath
3. Burmington
4. Brailes
5. Cherington
6. Great Wolford
7. Honington
8. Ilmington
9. Little Compton
10. Little Wolford
11. Long Compton
12. Shipston on Stour
13. Stourton
14. Stretton on Fosse & Ditchford
15. Sutton under Brailes
16. Tidmington
17. Tredington (includes Newbold on Stour)
18. Whichford

### 1.5 The Development of Stour Power Market Town Partnership

The membership at present comprises the following persons and organisations:

Chair person – Gudrun Berry

Secretary – Susan Lewis

Members:

Mike Lee

Mike Smith

Mike Ashley

Sarah Penrose

David Thurburn-Huelin

Andrew Lewis

Malcom Pendery

Trevor Russel

External Organisations:

John Ridgely (Warwickshire County Council)

Chris Wood (Stratford on Avon District Council)

Nick Kightley Coventry & Warwickshire Development Agency Limited)

Pauline Unwin (South Warwickshire PIE)

### 1.6 The Healthcheck Process

Although Shipston on Stour is not a designated market town funded by the Countryside Agency, the health checking process has been carried out in accordance with the guidance from the West Midlands Market Towns Programme and the Countryside Agency Market Towns Toolkit. The process is strongly supported by government agencies such as Advantage West Midlands and Action for Market Towns and there are numerous examples of town partnerships within the UK that are in a similar position to Shipston on Stour. Shipston on Stour Town Council, Warwickshire County Council and Stratford on Avon District Council are supporting the process.

Stratford on Avon District Council has identified market towns initiative as one of three corporate priorities in the Corporate Plan for 2002/2003. SDC is being requested to provide funding for 2003/2004 to support some of the projects identified in the Action Plan.

The market town healthcheck is an important part of the process to establish factual information and the community's aspirations for the town and its surrounding countryside. The healthcheck identifies key issues affecting Shipston on Stour and its hinterland, which will require a range of activities and will feed into the action plan.

The Healthcheck worksheets consist of questions that cover all aspects affecting peoples' quality of life. The worksheets cover four main topic areas:

environment, economy, social and community, transport and accessibility. The Healthcheck has been carried out by the Stour Power Partnership and co-ordinated by CD Rural Associates. Local organisations, local businesses and the community have heavily supported the Healthcheck.

### 2.0 The Stour Power Vision

Stour Power encourages the active participation of all residents, businesses and organisations in regenerating Shipston on Stour and the Stour Valley and will seek partnerships with official and other voluntary organisations in order to finance and realise their objectives on behalf of the community. In determining and helping to implement whatever is needed to ensure Shipston continues to develop as a vital market town for business, work, shopping and leisure, and is attractive to residents, surrounding villages and visitors, Stour Power will throughout recognise the needs of families, youth, the elderly and the disabled.

### 2.1 Stour Power Objectives

Stour Power will Achieve this Vision through Meeting these Objectives by:

- encouraging the continued appreciation of Shipston's position as an attractive historic market town;
- embracing the best of modern ideas and facilities in developing the community;
- encouraging support for a wide range of commercial, retail and leisure activities;
- encouraging schemes that will attract patronage of local businesses by residents, tourists and customers from further afield.

In particular, Stour Power will:

- encourage a business environment which:
  - supports existing shops and businesses;
  - attracts quality new businesses to the area;
  - enables residents to improve their skills to help them to capitalise on the job opportunities created;
  - will lead to the introduction of Broadband communication;
- lobby for the provision of quality affordable housing to encourage young people to stay in, or move to, the area, and help to provide a source of labour for developing businesses;

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- lobby for a significant improvement in the scale and scope of public transport to provide better access to services, facilities, leisure opportunities and links to surrounding communities, and rail and national bus services;
- lobby for the increased provision of community services including:
  - a significantly improved police presence;
  - the inclusion of a dental service for NHS clients, or improved access to such a service;
  - an increase in GP cover over and above the existing basic Department of Health General Medical Services contract;
- encourage the sympathetic improvement of the local environment by supporting:
  - sensitive business and residential development planning, and
  - the provision of parks, river walks etc;
- actively support the development of appropriate leisure facilities for all its inhabitants, including arts, sports, social and educational activities;

### 3.0 How the Healthcheck was Carried Out

The local community has been extensively involved in a wide range of recent consultation and research activities. In order to meet with the tight timetable for submission of the completed Healthcheck and to avoid duplication of effort in previous consultation exercises, it was decided to utilise key documents, which have been recently produced including town and village appraisals and other core references. In addition, a series of interviews were carried out with key workers, local organisations and agencies. The complete set of references and list of interviews are compiled in the Appendix.

A series of topic workshops on the healthcheck questions took place based upon the four topic areas. In addition, there were a series of community consultation exercises including the distribution of the Stour Power Questionnaire to schools, community groups and individuals. The Open Forum was held in June and provided an important opportunity for the community to observe the healthcheck findings to date and comment on the priorities that had been identified. The details of publicity on the healthcheck are set out in the Appendix.

Throughout the healthcheck process, individuals, groups and organisations or anyone with access to the internet have had the opportunity to view the healthcheck questions and make responses through the [markettowns.org](http://markettowns.org) website. Registration as a user permits individuals to comment on the responses and is designed to be a live "discussion forum". It is intended that this information will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis throughout the life of the initiative.

## 4.0 Identification of Key Issues

A summary of the key issues by topic area is outlined below. It is inevitable that there is considerable overlap between topic areas as these issues form the themes for future projects to be identified.

### 4.1 Environment

#### Key Findings

- ❑ Shipston town centre and surrounding streets have a wealth of architecturally and historically important buildings and open spaces;
- ❑ The area has a high quality environment, denoted by designations such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Landscape Area and a high number of Conservation Areas within the villages;
- ❑ Shipston has a number of key features within the town centre that could be enhanced and exploited as visitor attractions, namely the River Bridge and riverside environs
- ❑ The locality has a wealth of public rights of way, linking the town and countryside that are well established.

#### Priorities

- ❑ Provide a riverside park area, which allows people to walk and picnic alongside the Stour, and enjoy the river area;
- ❑ The need to create a more sustainable future for Shipston on Stour through community led initiatives and links with organisations to improve public transport and open space management;
- ❑ Tidy up the riverside area surrounding the Stour Bridge;
- ❑ Tidy up the alleyways in Shipston, and improve the lighting;
- ❑ Work with parish councils to improve the quality of the surroundings within the Stour Valley villages;
- ❑ Ensure Stour Power continues to influence future development proposals;
- ❑ Examine traffic management within the town centre.

### 4.2 Economy

#### Key Findings

- ❑ Shipston has a key location on the edge of the Cotswolds and is within easy access of Stratford upon Avon and Chipping Campden but is not actively promoted as a visitor location;
- ❑ Shipston has a unique selection of high street shops that could be better promoted to the local population and visitors alike;
- ❑ Shipston as a shopping area remains fragile. A large proportion of residents use other retail centres such as Stratford upon Avon and Leamington Spa as they offer more retail choice;
- ❑ There are very limited tourist information facilities within Shipston;

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- ❑ Many businesses within Shipston and rural areas are hampered without broadband links to aid communication;
- ❑ There is significant demand for start up premises and limited availability within Shipston and surrounding villages;
- ❑ Employment prospects are limited for some sections of the community. Jobs are being lost through downsizing, and there are not enough new opportunities to replace them;
- ❑ Diversification opportunities within the rural areas are lacking from localised support;
- ❑ The need to address local skills gaps, increase training and life-long training opportunities.

### Priorities

- ❑ Improve visitor information and facilities in Shipston, including signage, toilets and town maps in the car parks;
- ❑ Promote visitor attractions including the Museum, shops, local facilities and leisure opportunities;
- ❑ Review the information on trends in tourism and engage more research into the perceptions of visitors in order to draw up a progressive strategy;
- ❑ Develop and give further support to small business units within the town and rural hinterland;
- ❑ Get broadband installed for the Stour Valley;
- ❑ Rationalise and improve town signage to direct visitors to Shipston and highlight its attractions;
- ❑ Get organisations and businesses working together to build and promote an identity for Shipston;
- ❑ Develop training and re-training opportunities within Shipston to serve the whole community;
- ❑ Develop a more active community policing presence within the town;
- ❑ Develop a town trail;
- ❑ Examine the opportunity for a cycle tour within the village networks;
- ❑ Develop opportunities or events to bring the whole business community together.

### 4.3 Transport

#### Key Findings

- ❑ There are poor public transport links within Shipston town centre, particularly for the elderly and those with mobility problems;
- ❑ There are some key gaps in public transport provision, mainly affecting the smaller outlying villages;
- ❑ Public transport information is patchy and often inconsistent;
- ❑ Shipston has no railway station and a very limited National Coach Service;
- ❑ There is a poor evening service from Shipston to nearby towns such as Stratford upon Avon for entertainment, recreation and for access to further education and training opportunities;
- ❑ There are limited/ no direct bus services to Moreton in the Marsh and Oxford;

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- ❑ Traffic congestion and car parking problems within the town centre detract from its enjoyment by visitors and residents;
- ❑ There are a number of agencies working together to improve the quality and availability of public transport
- ❑ Planning gain contributions for new development should be maximised to improve public transport and community facilities;
- ❑ There is poor directional signage and information for visitors that could be improved and better co-ordinated;
- ❑ There is a reluctance to use public transport, especially for travel to work journeys due to perceived unreliability, slow service and poor quality passenger service;
- ❑ The main bus stop in Shipston is very unattractive and buses stopping block the traffic flow;
- ❑ Many routes to school are hazardous and could be improved to encourage pupils to walk or cycle.

### Priorities

- ❑ Car parking issues need to be re-examined in Shipston Town Square;
- ❑ Work with Rural Transport Partnership to see how public transport links can be improved;
- ❑ Evening services to Shipston and to Stratford upon Avon plus links with Leamington Spa and Moreton in the Marsh need to be improved;
- ❑ Services to Warwick and Stratford hospitals need to be improved including better liaison with the voluntary sector;
- ❑ Review the location of bus stops shelters within the town;
- ❑ Examine opportunities for improving safe routes to school.

## 4.4 Social and Community

### Key Findings

- ❑ There are perceived problems with vandalism and petty crime in areas of Shipston town centre and outlying residential estates;
- ❑ There is a poor range of facilities for young people in Shipston and very little within the villages;
- ❑ The lack of adequate youth facilities is seen as a contributory cause of increasing crime, vandalism and drug abuse;
- ❑ There is often resentment of organised activity within the youth culture, which makes them a difficult group to target;
- ❑ There are over 100 different groups and organisations operating within the locality, but many young people are not involved in community activities;
- ❑ There are pockets of rural deprivation within the town and surrounding rural areas;
- ❑ There is a lack of affordable housing to buy or rent;

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- ❑ There is a need to address improved access to housing and health advice where there are barriers;
- ❑ There is a need to address barriers to community involvement through education;
- ❑ People without their own transport experience difficulties with accessing health facilities;
- ❑ Significant new housing development has taken place recently and more is scheduled, which will place an increased demand on existing services.
- ❑ There is very limited facilities for those with mobility problems, the elderly, disabled and those with young children;
- ❑ There is a need to improve communications between the town and the rural hinterland.

### 4.3 Social and Community

#### Priorities

- ❑ Improve Shipston Pool to provide swimming for children and adults, with good changing rooms, and leisure facilities;
- ❑ Set up a leisure facility with pool tables, etc., that could be used by older children and teenagers after school and at weekends;
- ❑ Examine the idea of a cinema club within the town;
- ❑ The Townsend Hall is a well liked venue, but needs upgrading;
- ❑ The Scout Hut needs upgrading, or an alternative venue needs to be provided for smaller group activity such as dance classes, lunches, etc;
- ❑ Upgrade the leisure areas in Shipston, and replace the playground areas that have been removed;
- ❑ There is a shortage of public open space that needs to be remedied;
- ❑ The management of all areas of public open space should be reviewed;
- ❑ Work with parish councils to improve the quality of life within surrounding villages;
- ❑ There is a desperate need for Rural Housing Enabler to co-ordinate schemes within the rural parishes;
- ❑ There is a need to explore the concept of an out-reach worker to address youth problems within the area;
- ❑ There is a need for someone to co-ordinate town centre management issues and initiate projects.

### 4.5 Emerging Ideas

- ❑ The opportunity to enhance key focal parts of the town;
- ❑ The opportunity to develop the town as a base for touring the Cotswolds;
- ❑ The opportunity to improve training opportunities within the town to serve the local community;

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- The opportunity to improve facilities for small businesses;
- The opportunity to enhance existing community facilities such as the swimming pool and community hall within the town;
- The opportunity to improve transport links and public transport information within the town and surrounding villages working with the relevant agencies;
- Ensure broadband communications are available;
- The opportunity to address community safety issues;
- Improve communications between official bodies, local businesses and organisations;
- Improve access to arts facilities within the locality.

### 5.0 S.W.O.T Analysis of Shipston on Stour Rural Hinterland

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the town and its rural hinterland have been analysed as part of the healthcheck process. This analysis helps to assess the positive and negative elements of the area as perceived by a wide range of stakeholders and how they view the future potential for the area through examining its opportunities and threats. This helps to provide a broad picture of the local situation and will help to develop ideas and potential projects to address the issues arising from the healthcheck.

The information has been obtained from existing documents and surveys using information collated from the worksheets, the Stour Power Questionnaire and a series of interviews with stakeholders.

### 5.1 The Physical Environment

The small town character and individuality is the main quality of Shipston on Stour, still benefiting from a traditional high street frontage and small traders that serve the local community. The town has a number of fine heritage buildings within a market place setting and has not been spoilt by the commercialisation that can take place when the larger multiple stores move in. However, it is noticeable that the street fabric is starting to look worn and outdated in places and vehicles dominate the central shopping area.

Shipston also has a very fine rural setting on the northern fringes of the Cotswold Escarpment that is in itself an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is linked with a good network of public footpaths and bridleways. It is surrounded by a series of attractive villages that provide a pleasant environment for the visitor.

## 5.2 The Local Economy

The provision of business support and tourism development has implications for the town and rural hinterland areas. Although the town has a fairly diverse economy, there is some dependence on a few large employers, some of which are undergoing restructuring at the moment. Due to the small size of the town, these changes are causing some uncertainty in the locality at present. There is however, a solid base of smaller businesses operating within the town and rural hinterland. Some of these businesses are hampered by their remote working environment, poor accessibility to training facilities and limited accommodation for small business units.

The town and surrounding rural area has a generally high quality built and natural environment. There is potential to build on its visitor profile taking into account its attractive location within the Cotswolds and the features of interest contained within the town and surrounding villages.

## 5.3 Transport & Accessibility Issues

The area surrounding Shipston is typically deeply rural and some of its inhabitants, especially the young, elderly and those without their own transport experience problems in accessing healthcare, training and leisure facilities. Although specialist transport facilities are available for certain groups of the population, there appears to be a lack of awareness of which services operate within the area.

The Shipston Link service operating between Stratford and Shipston provides an important service, however the outlying areas of the town are poorly served in terms of a town centre shuttle bus service. There is also poor provision for safe cycle routes within town and rural areas.

## 5.4 Social & Community Issues

Although the area appears to be fairly affluent and well provided for, there are some indicators of social deprivation and rural poverty within the local population. This is denoted by information on housing benefit data and the indices of deprivation. It is significant that 20% of the population earn less than £10,000 per annum as a number of jobs are linked to agriculture and tourism or maybe casual employment. In addition, the high cost of housing relative to low incomes has caused there to be a significant proportion of people unable to access the housing market, especially for young single persons. There are isolated pockets of drug dependency within the youth culture.

There are a high proportion of elderly persons resident within the population, many who have moved recently into the area to retire and this will have

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implications in terms of healthcare provision and the future socio-economic balance of the area for the future.

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<b>5.5 Environment</b>			
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>The town centre has a wealth of architecturally and historically important buildings.</p> <p>The town has the River Stour running through it.</p> <p>High Street frontage still exists with individual high street traders.</p>	<p>Some of the street furniture within the town centre is in poor condition, inconsistent in design and out of keeping with Conservation Area.</p> <p>Financial inability of some owners to maintain and upgrade historic buildings</p>	<p>The distinctiveness of the town's character (quality of buildings, and rural setting) makes it an attractive place to visit.</p> <p>To enhance and upgrade the riverside environs</p>	<p>The management of town centre improvements has been tackled in the past by a multiplicity of different agencies that has meant the approach has been very fragmented.</p>
<p>There are some examples of good design in new buildings within the town.</p>	<p>Impact of traffic congestion in town square in terms of visual intrusion and attractiveness as a shopping environment.</p> <p>Areas of poorly maintained footpaths and car parks, seating etc may deter shoppers from using local facilities.</p> <p>Poor gateway areas to the East and West.</p> <p>New residential development on the edge of the town does not always respect the traditional character of the town or its rural surroundings.</p>	<p>To promote the town as a traditional market town with local services.</p> <p>The appointment of a town centre manager would assist with ongoing management issues and tackle enhancement programmes.</p>	<p>Deterioration of the town centre from traffic problems and poor maintenance in the past.</p>

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### 5.5 Environment (continued)

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>The area has a high quality environment, denoted by designations such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Special Landscape Area and a high number of Conservation Areas within the villages.</p> <p>There is an extensive rights of Way network around the town and within the rural hinterland to give access to these areas.</p>	<p>The environmental quality of the area and its location on the edge of the Cotswold's is undersold in marketing of the town.</p>	<p>Promotion and marketing can exploit the location and quality of the countryside.</p> <p>The surrounding area is largely unspoilt and not commercialised, which appeals to an increasing group of visitors seeking peaceful locations to stay.</p> <p>Potential visitors to the area are increasingly mobile and discerning, and as such the town needs to identify itself as a destination of choice.</p>	<p>This kind of tourism needs to be very carefully managed to ensure it does not become a victim of its own success. e.g. traffic congestion with quiet country lanes.</p>

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<b>5.6 Economy</b>			
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
There seems to be considerable demand from businesses and the community to support the introduction of broadband access.	There is no access to broadband for businesses within the Shipston area.	There is considerable support from external agencies such as AWM to pilot projects in rural areas.	The lack of broadband may inhibit businesses and cause them to consider relating elsewhere.
The area has a high quality built environment and is surrounded by key towns of interest including Stratford upon Avon and Chipping Camden.	<p>Poor tourist information facilities within Shipston.</p> <p>A lack of quality in streetscape and facilities, poor signage etc.</p> <p>There is no coach park and most travellers arrive by car as public transport opportunities are limited.</p> <p>There is a high turnover of staff working in the hospitality business due to low wages and benefits and staff moving out of the area in search of better remuneration.</p> <p>Distribution, hotels and restaurants employ a high proportion of employees in the area, particularly significant in</p>	<p>The town could benefit from better promotion and marketing, particularly in terms of short-break packages that are very popular in this area. This attracts the local population (within West Midlands), an area of tourism that continues to grow.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to support a town trail and link them with existing cycle routes in conjunction with SDC and HETB.</p>	<p>Events such as the Music Festival are constrained by the lack of suitable premises to cater for large numbers of people.</p> <p>The overseas tourism market continues to be volatile due to world events.</p>

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	Tredington at 52.2% and Shipston at 29%, compared with the national average of 24.3%.		
<b>5.6 Economy</b> (Continued)			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
	<p>This type of employment can be temporary in nature and typically low paid.</p> <p>There is a shortage of quality accommodation for people seeking short-breaks and moderately priced hotels.</p> <p>Lack of up to date qualitative and quantitative data on the pattern of tourism, trends and perceptions of visitors.</p>		
<p>There is significant demand for start up premises.</p> <p>There are a significant number of smaller high value companies that have become established within the area.</p>	<p>There is a shortage of available business premises that may inhibit growth and cause businesses to relocate elsewhere.</p>	<p>There is a significant parcel of land that could be made available for additional employment purposes on the Tileman's Lane site. This is being promoted through the Local Plan Review.</p>	<p>Currently there is a limited range of business premises to let at the Industrial Estate on Tilesman's Lane.</p>
	<p>There is a lack of broadband communication within the town and rural areas.</p>	<p>South Warwickshire Partnership is keen to support business ventures within the area.</p>	<p>The restructuring of large companies continues to cause uncertainty for the local economy.</p>

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	Manufacturing business employs a significant proportion of local people and is undergoing a general decline.	There are initiatives such as the GROWs project that could benefit the rural economy.	
<b>5.6 Economy</b> (Continued)			
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
The area provides an attractive living environment to encourage the existing working population to remain within the area and seek new skills or attract new staff with technical or management skills.	<p>There are some deficiencies in key skills and training for a large sector of the community.</p> <p>There is also a shortage of skilled labour, employees being attracted to the larger commercial and industrial centres.</p> <p>Diversification opportunities within the rural areas are lacking from localised support.</p>	There are joint opportunities to improve training facilities within South Warwickshire through a number of local organisations.	The Shipston area has pockets of poor literacy & numeracy skills within the local population.
<p>Shipston still has a selection of local high street traders that provide important services to the community.</p> <p>The number of vacant units has fallen significantly in recent years.</p> <p>The town is generally well provided in terms of car parking but this could be</p>	<p>Shipston suffers from the pull from the retail diversity of other retail centres such as Stratford and Leamington.</p> <p>As a shopping centre, Shipston fails to attract the younger shopper who seeks the large multiple retailers.</p> <p>Shipston has very poor facilities for the disabled. (access to shops, dropped kerbs, designated car</p>	There is the opportunity to promote town as a shopping destination and emphasise independent/specialist nature of businesses	<p>There is generally poor retailer confidence within the town. There is weak support from a retailer's forum.</p> <p>Some people feel threatened by perceived poor security within the alleyways leading to car parks and poor lighting.</p>

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<b>5.7 Transport &amp; Accessibility</b>			
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>School bus provision appears to be adequate.</p>	<p>Very limited National Coach Service.</p> <p>The town has no railway station, the nearest being 6 miles away.</p> <p>Much of hinterland has limited access to a basic bus service or no provision at all.</p> <p>There are some key gaps in public transport provision, mainly affecting the smaller outlying villages. In particular, there is a lack of evening services to Stratford to access education, cultural and leisure facilities.</p> <p>The outlying areas of the town are poorly served in terms of a town centre bus service.</p> <p>Poor provision for cyclists within town and rural areas.</p>	<p>There are a number of agencies working together to improve the quality and availability of public transport.</p> <p>There are opportunities to provide cross-boundary service provision with the Rural Transport Partnership. (across Warwickshire &amp; Worcestershire)</p>	<p>There is reluctance to use public transport, especially for travel to work journeys due to perceived unreliability, slow service and poor quality passenger service.</p> <p>There are some accident black spots within the town and the rural areas.</p>

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<b>5.7 Transport &amp; Accessibility (Continued)</b>			
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
	<p>Those with mobility problems often have to rely on the voluntary sector to meet their needs.</p> <p>There is a lack of clear and concise public transport information.</p> <p>There is poor integration between cyclists and public transport and other modes of transport.</p> <p>Many routes to school are hazardous and could be improved to encourage pupils to walk or cycle.</p>		

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<b>5.8 Social &amp; Community</b>			
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>There is a good stock of social rented housing managed by a number of local housing associations that have the capability to carry out joint ventures linking housing and local regeneration initiatives. South Warwickshire Housing Association is firmly established within the locality as the major social housing provider.</p>	<p>Plan-led sites for social housing within the rural areas will be dependent on the emerging development strategy of the Local Plan Review. It appears as though the opportunity for new housing in the locality will be limited to small allocated and windfall sites which will be insufficient to fulfil the perceived need for local affordable housing.</p> <p>Opportunities for the villages are slim other than through the rural exceptions site policy or Local Choice Sites for social housing. These schemes can be difficult to achieve and usually have a long lead in time. The planning system and other constraints such as sewerage embargoes seem to be particularly frustrating their progress.</p>	<p>There may be an opportunity to achieve valuable town centre homes for smaller households through the appraisal of redevelopment opportunities, Living over Shop Initiatives etc.</p> <p>The Rural Housing Enabler soon to be appointed maybe able to kick-start some those schemes frustrated by the planning system.</p>	<p>There are hotspots of housing need within parts of the town and its rural hinterland denoted by households living in unsuitable housing (i.e. too small, too expensive, or unsuitable for special needs). There is a shortage of smaller single persons housing .</p> <p>A significant amount of social housing is being lost through Right to Acquire Legislation in desirable rural locations and Registered Social Landlords are finding it difficult to replace through planning measures and the purchase of existing rented housing stock.</p>

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

<b>5.8 Social &amp; Community</b> (Continued)			
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
	A number of leisure facilities within the town are in a poor state of repair such as the swimming pool, rugby club and some of the play areas have been removed.		
There are committed groups of people and organisations within the town dedicated to helping young people.	<p>Poor range of facilities for youths in the town and very little within villages.</p> <p>There is often resentment of organised activity within the youth culture. This makes them a difficult group to target.</p>	There is a range of community/leisure buildings and land resources, which with future investment could provide better venues for young people to get involved in community activities.	<p>The youth age group expresses higher levels of dissatisfaction with community's leisure facilities.</p> <p>The lack of adequate youth facilities is seen as a partial reason for crime, vandalism and drug abuse.</p>

### 6.0 Key Themes & Prospective Projects

The Healthcheck process has identified many aspirations for the community of Shipston on Stour and its hinterland. The vision attempts to draw these together against which the focus of future planned activities may be determined.

The Steering Group will seek partnerships with other voluntary and official organisations in order to realise this vision. A number of these organisations have been consulted with throughout the Healthcheck and are now aware of the Partnership objectives. The following themes have been developed and in turn, a series of projects identified.

#### 6.1 Key Themes

- ❑ Town Enhancement Initiatives
- ❑ Promotion of Shipston on Stour for Business and Tourism
- ❑ Sustainable Transport
- ❑ Improved Training Opportunities
- ❑ Improved Leisure Facilities & Public Art
- ❑ Improve Community Policing
- ❑ Strengthen Business & Community Communication Links

#### 6.2 Prospective Projects

These prospective projects have been identified from the key issues in the healthcheck and represent a broad list of actual projects which have already been identified, are ready to be progressed or purely ideas which need to be examined by the partnership and could be taken further with the correct partners. This list is not meant to be exhaustive by any means and should be further developed by the partnership as the action plan is progressed. In the action plan proforma, the projects have been prioritised according to the importance of the project and the community's aspirations. It is intended that further consultation will take place with the community at an Open Forum meeting in October 2003.

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

### Draft Stour Power Action Plan (Indicative only at this Stage)

For definition of acronyms, please refer to Appendix 9

Aim/Vision	Project Theme / Action	Lead	Partners	Potential Funding	Timescale	Milestones
<b>Short Term Projects (less than 1 year)</b>						
1. To improve effectiveness and management of partnership	Develop a structure for the Steering Group & consider broadening Partnership	Chairman/ Secretary	SP/WCC/ SDC	SP Budget	Sept-Nov 2003	Agreed Structure in place
2. To improve communications within town and rural areas	Better links with rural communities & parishes through regular updates from Stour Power and press articles	Chairman/ Secretary	SP, STC	SP Budget	4 Oct 2003 – Open Forum Oct 2003 – Website updates Oct 2003 – Press releases to local papers & newsletters	Feedback from Forum Copy Deadlines
3. To make Shipston more attractive and safer for business and visitors	Promotion of Shipston for Business & Tourism Civic Pride Environmental Improvements: Town Signage Tourist Information Events in Shipston	Chairman	SDC/CPRE WCC/STC Local businesses	TBA with WCC	Mini-action Plan drafted by Oct 2003	Physical improvements secured within town centre
4. Provide enhanced communication links within the area	Provide Broadband for Shipston & surrounding rural areas	Sarah Penrose	STC, SW Business Partnership	Check with AWM	Oct-Dec 2003 – Awareness campaign, Research with businesses	TBA
5. To improve transport facilities and access to leisure facilities for residents of the Stour Valley	Social Transport Scheme Pilot Project	RTP Officer	RTP, CA	RTP Budget	Initial Meeting with RTP set for 29/09/03	Feasibility study complete
6. To make Shipston and Stour Valley a safer place to live and work	Improve Community policing	Bill Hannis/ Andrew Lewis	Police, SDC,WCC, Local businesses	TBA	Oct-Dec 2003 Explore possibility of traders/police partnership	Partnership established

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

7. Improve playground facilities for children in Shipston, with disabled access. Support the community group that is replacing the removed Mayo Road playground at the Rugby Club	Mayo Road Sensory Playground, with disabled access	Angela Noyce, Jackie Warner, Shirley Balhacket	TBA	Some funds secured	TBC	
<b>Medium Term Projects (6 months to 1 ½ years)</b>						
To provide a permanent site for the display of art within the town	Arts in Community Initiative	SDC Arts Officer	<b>SDC, local art groups, WCC, Arts Council</b>	TBA	Meeting with SDC Arts Officer	Research with Art Groups complete
Improve safety and layout of bus shelters	Review of Bus Shelters within the town centre	TBA	<b>TBA</b>	TBA	TBA	TBA
Build an identity for Shipston	Build an identity and personality for Shipston that can be used to promote Shipston to visitors and businesses	Susan Lewis Mike Smith	<b>Local Businesses SDC, SW Tourism</b>	TBA	TBA	TBA
<b>Longer Term Projects (1 year and beyond)</b>						
To improve the attractiveness of an important gateway to Shipston and provide a valuable community resource for the town	Improvements to Riverside Environs	STC	CPRE, STC, SDC & WCC	Potential THI grant	Oct 2003 – discussions with Partners & Funding Officer (SDC) Oct 2003 – check land ownership	Feasibility study completed. Study will need to be revisited.
To provide premises for small businesses, support facilities and networking opportunities	Shipston-on Stour Workspace Support	SDC, Malcolm Pendry	AWM, SWBP, local businesses	SDC budget	Oct-Dec 2003 Set up meeting with SW Business Partnership and other key partners	Research on Incubator units in S Warks complete. Visit to Minerva Mill, Alcester
Improve leisure facilities, by building new pool and sports facilities	Shipston Swimming Pool	SDC,	SDC, Shipston High	SDC budget	October – tenders due in March 2004 Q1 2005	Out to tender Work on pool to start Due for completion

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

			School			2005
Improve access to training and community facilities	Community Learning & Youths Facility	Chairman	SW PIE, SDC, LEA, DASH, SW Youth Service, SWHA?	SW PIE	Oct-Dec 2003 Set up meeting with SW PIE and other key partners	TBA
To provide a co-ordinated network of community facilities to serve Shipston and the Stour Valley	Review Community/Leisure facilities within Shipston	Susan Lewis, Stephen Gray, Mike Smith	SDC	None identified	TBA	Feasibility study required.
<b>Lobbying/Influencing Activities</b>						
Lobby for affordable housing for key workers and to get people onto the housing ladder	Affordable Housing Project	TBA	SWHA SDC WRHA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Lobby for one more GP for Shipston	Medical Provision	TBA	Badger's Clinic	TBA	TBA	TBA
Lobby for access to NHS dentist for Shipston residents	Dental Provision	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA

The representatives of the project for the short-term projects numbers 3,4,5,6,7 have compiled the following proforma.

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

Project Theme	Town Centre Regeneration
<b>Project Title (if known)</b>	<b>3. Promotion of Shipston for Business &amp; Tourism: Civic Pride Environmental Improvements</b>
<b>Agency/Organisation proposing</b>	Stour Power/Warwickshire County Council
<b>Lead Organisation/Officer</b>	Andrew Savage (WCC) – Civic Pride Initiative Chairman of Stour Power
<b>Benefits of Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve the street furniture and historic signage market town signage within the vicinity;</li> <li>▪ Increased visitor numbers, length of stay and spend within the locality;</li> <li>▪ Improve accessibility for user groups especially elderly, people with young children and the disabled.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Issue Summary Healthcheck: (cross-references)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some of the town centre offers a poor quality environment, especially at key gateways to the town(EN1 C8).</li> <li>▪ There are some prime opportunities to improve the setting of the town's best assets (EN1 C7).</li> <li>▪ There are a number of redevelopment opportunities within the town centre, which could contribute, to the regeneration of the town centre (EN1 C5).</li> <li>▪ Shipston has some key features of interest but information for visitors is very poor (EC5 C6)</li> </ul>
<b>Vision/strategic aim:</b>	To make Shipston streets more attractive and safer for residents and visitors
<b>Case for Project Evidence of need and source</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Civic Pride Audit has highlighted a number of areas of concern within the town centre, denoting street furniture in poor repair;</li> <li>▪ Poorly co-ordinated signage within the town;</li> <li>▪ Alleyways forming key links to car parks are in poor repair and poorly lit;</li> <li>▪ Tourist spending is relatively low and insignificant to the local economy at present</li> </ul>
<b>Action Plan</b>	

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<p>Actual Project: Description of Activity</p> <p>Funds Identified:</p> <p>Estimate of Total Cost:</p> <p>Partner Contribution:</p> <p>Identified Partners:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improvements to street furniture &amp; pavement condition;</li> <li>▪ Signage survey &amp; follow up action;</li> <li>▪ Alleyway enhancement;</li> <li>▪ Improve status of town as business centre and attractive environment for residents and visitors;</li> <li>▪ Define tourist route around Shipston town;</li> <li>▪ Routing signs to town car parks and tourist information;</li> <li>▪ Preparation and publication of a town guide;</li> <li>▪ Signs/maps in each car park showing map of the town, tourist route around the town, list of shops, pubs, restaurants with opening times, list of visitor attractions;</li> <li>▪ Tourist information and tourist information point;</li> <li>▪ Events in Shipston to bring visitors. To include greater promotion of Shipston Proms, investigating effects of farmers markets on high days, promotion of local events. Investigate the possibility of more annual prestigious events such as the vintage car rally meeting. Look for increased promotion of Brailes Show, and all other village fetes;</li> <li>▪ Investigate linking local arts weeks with Oxfordshire Arts Weeks (Links to promoting Arts in the Community)</li> </ul> <p>Shipston High School has volunteered to produce the car park signage as part of their art/technology training</p> <p>CPRE, WCC, SDC, SW Tourism, Tourism Task group, Shipston in Bloom, Twinning Association</p>
<p><b>Impact on Rural Hinterland</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improvement of town centre facilities for rural community</li> <li>▪ Attract visitors &amp;/or increase length of stay in locality which may benefit the rural economy</li> <li>▪ Increased visitor numbers to local attractions, businesses and events</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcomes of Project</b></p> <p>Numbers &amp; Type of Likely Users</p> <p>Number of jobs created (if any)</p> <p>Other outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attract visitors &amp;/or increase length of stay in locality which may benefit the local economy</li> <li>▪ Increased visitor numbers to local businesses, events and free and paid attractions. Increased visitor numbers will lead to the possible creation of more jobs, and will certainly improve revenue streams for local businesses</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Level</b></p> <p>To Agency</p> <p>To Community</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High priority to give the town and hinterland a general lift, and boost trade and visitor numbers</p>
<p><b>Method of Monitoring Progress</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitoring and evaluation by Civic Pride Team &amp; Stour Power steering group</li> <li>▪ Measured economic activity in town centre through follow up surveys</li> <li>▪ Delivery of signage, tourist information point and increased visitor numbers to events, attractions and businesses</li> </ul>

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

<b>Project Theme</b>	<b>Improved Communications Infrastructure for Business and Residential</b>
<b>Project Title (if known)</b>	4. Broadband for Shipston
<b>Agency/Organisation proposing</b>	Stour Power
<b>Lead Organisation/Officer</b>	Stour Power Steven Newman
<b>Benefits of Project</b>	Attract businesses to start/grow in Shipston area Faster Internet access for personal/leisure use
<b>Key Issue Summary Healthcheck:</b> (cross-references)	EC3 S1 EC6 C7 EC6 S5 SC6 C1 TA2 C6
<b>Vision/Strategic Aim:</b>	To provide fast efficient communications links for Shipston and Stour Valley
<b>Case for Project</b> Evidence of need and source	Healthcheck public consultation, focus groups, Open Day and questionnaires.
<b>Action Plan</b>	
<b>Actual Project:</b> Description of Activity	Lobby BT to prioritise Shipston for broadband upgrade Communicate benefits of broadband to businesses and residents Encourage businesses/residents to register interest on BT site
<b>Funds Identified:</b>	
<b>Estimate of Total Cost:</b>	£500 for flyers/publicity materials
<b>Partner Contribution:</b>	
<b>Identified Partners:</b>	SDC WCC SWP
<b>Impact on Rural Hinterland</b>	Improved communications for surrounding villages
<b>Outcomes of Project</b> Numbers & Type of Likely Users Number of jobs created (if any) Other outcomes	60% residential take up 95% business take up Hard to quantify but jobs will result
<b>Priority Level</b> To Agency To Community	High High
<b>Method of Monitoring Progress</b>	Check BT website for progress

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Project Theme	Sustainable Transport
<b>Project Title (if known)</b>	5. Social Transport Scheme
<b>Agency/Organisation proposing</b>	Rural Transport Partnership
<b>Lead Organisation/Officer</b>	Doug Henderson (Rural Transport Partnership Officer)
<b>Benefits of Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve access to social &amp; training facilities for those without their own transport;</li> <li>▪ Flexible demand responsive service but relies on volunteer drivers.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Issue</b> <b>Summary Healthcheck:</b> (cross-references)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Generally there is a perception of poor public transport links between the town and the rural hinterland and between the different modes of public transport which leads to low usage, particularly for the working population;</li> <li>▪ There are poor links between certain outlying parts of the town and the town centre</li> <li>▪ Some of the villages currently have no alternative to the car creating major accessibility problems (health, shopping, education, employment, training and entertainment) for many residents without the use of a car</li> </ul>
<b>Vision/strategic aim:</b>	To improve transport facilities and access to leisure facilities for residents of the Stour Valley
<b>Case for Project</b> Evidence of need and source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The rural hinterland is deeply rural and suffers from a very fragmented public transport scheme.</li> <li>▪ Evening bus services are virtually non-existent in many areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Action Plan</b>	
Actual Project: Description of Activity  Funds Identified:  Estimate of Total Cost:  Partner Contribution:  Identified Partners:	This is a car-sharing scheme operated by voluntary drivers, which could be operated as a 3-year pilot scheme and offered as Community Chest funding to individual Parishes.  £50,000 SWPIE funding. Needs 50% match funding.  £150,000  RTP, Countryside Agency & CVS
<b>Impact on Rural Hinterland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve access to leisure &amp; entertainment for those without own means of transport especially young people &amp; the elderly;</li> <li>▪ Significant benefit to rural dwellers who may be physically and socially isolated;</li> <li>▪ Improves road safety in outlying rural areas</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes of Project</b> Numbers & Type of Likely Users Number of jobs created (if any) Other outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will utilise a team of volunteers and be managed by an Area Coordinator;</li> <li>▪ Type of users: Those groups without own means of transport e.g. elderly, young people, parents with small children</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Level</b> To Agency To Community	Moderate High as highlighted in evidence from questionnaire

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<b>Project Theme</b>	<b>Improve Community Policing</b>
<b>Project Title (if known)</b>	6. Community Policing Scheme
<b>Agency/Organisation proposing</b>	Stour Power
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	Stour Power and the Police led by Andrew Lewis, Bill Hannis
<b>Benefits of Project</b>	To make Shipston and Stour Valley a safer place to live and work
<b>Key Issue Summary Healthcheck: (cross-references)</b>	<p>Concern amongst local trades people about lack of visible policing, difficulties in reporting crime and slow response times, means that currently there is under reporting of incidents and lack of follow up.</p> <p>Local residents are increasingly concerned about drugs and want to discourage dealers and remove the temptation for the local teenagers.</p> <p>There have been reported problems with the cctvs in Shipston, and these issues are now broadly addressed. Public confidence in these needs to be restored, and general awareness raised of successful prosecutions as a result.</p>
<b>Vision/strategic aim:</b>	Improve relationship between community and police and make the partnership more effective.
<b>Case for Project</b>	<p>Concern raised in the Healthcheck about perceived levels of crime being higher than they are, and concerns raised about local drug dealing and the threat to local children and teenagers this poses.</p> <p>Shipston Police Station is closed routinely during the week, which creates the perception that there is little local support. This needs to be addressed, as does the number of police supporting the community.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evidence of need and source</b></li> </ul>	



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<b>Project Theme</b>	<b>Improving Leisure Facilities and Access to Public Art</b>
<b>Project Title (if known)</b>	<b>7. Mayo Road Play Area Scheme</b> (working title) Appropriate Name for the Park to be selected from a competition to be run in the Forum
<b>Agency/Organisation proposing</b>	Mayo Road Play Area Committee (community group)
<b>Lead Organisation/Officer</b>	Jackie Warner and Shirley Balhacket (supported by Councillor Angela Noyce and Stour Power)
<b>Benefits of Project</b>	To replace the removed playground (for safety reasons) at Mayo Road. The new playground will be accessible for disabled children, and will also have state of the art playground equipment for all ages, a basketball hoop, goalposts (already in place), and a cycle track, as well as a walled sensory garden which will be attractive and accessible to people of all ages.
<b>Key Issue Summary Healthcheck:</b> (cross-references)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of leisure facilities in Shipston for children, and no playground with special equipment for disabled children. The sensory garden appeals to the elderly and those in sheltered accommodation as well as schoolchildren and local people.</li> <li>• As there are areas of deprivation in Shipston, this provides an attractive and welcoming place for children and adults to enjoy for free. There are currently no purpose-built leisure areas for the disabled in Shipston currently (check this statement).</li> <li>• Need to quote figures from the Stour Power Healthcheck on how many people mentioned the lack of playgrounds, and specifically the removal of Mayo road, and the request for more play facilities for youngsters, with disabled access.</li> </ul> <p>Historically up to 300 children have used the site. The local nursery and playgroup situated next to the site has x (to fill in) children attending for pre-school, after school and during the day, and would all use the playground.</p>
<b>Vision/Strategic Aim:</b>	Improve playground facilities for children in Shipston and locally, and ensure disabled access.
<b>Case for Project</b> Evidence of need and source	The Mayo Road playground became uninsurable for safety reasons, and was removed by Shipston Town Council, leaving a gap in the provision of play areas for children.
<b>Action Plan</b>	

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<p><b>Actual Project:</b> Description of Activity</p> <p><b>Funds Identified:</b></p> <p><b>Estimate of Total Cost:</b></p> <p><b>Partner Contribution:</b></p> <p><b>Identified Partners:</b></p>	<p>Delivery of state of the art, highly featured and safety- conscious playground with disabled access, and sensory garden for the local community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £1k committed from Greenfield Nursery in September 2003,</li> <li>• £3k committed from Darts Marathon on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2003,</li> <li>• Lions will fund one playground item at around £2k</li> <li>• Three fundraising events (Children's disco 10<sup>th</sup> October- £90, Bingo Evening, November, Comedy evening - £270)</li> </ul> <p>Applications already in to: WCC for £5k (may have to re-present)</p> <p>Possible £1k from Co-op application in October.</p> <p>Possible funding sources: SWHA (Stour Panel Quality Group Improvement Proposal), Biffa Ward (within 10 miles of a Land Fill Site), Tesco Community Charity Trust, Ronald Macdonald Fund, Bulldog Bash.</p> <p>Need help to fill in funding applications to the Living Spaces Scheme and Lottery Fund Application (identify which lottery scheme)</p> <p>Funding request for £20k gone to SDC (identify where and follow up).</p> <p>Including VAT, the full cost of the project will be close to £80k. (£60 before VAT) Partially itemised: £7.5 k Sensory Garden, roundabout £3k, seesaw £2k installed, 2 each of big kids swing £2.5k each installed, 2 each of small kids swing £2.5k each installed, Barriers £4k. (based on current quotes). All equipment is steel, anti-wrap with long guarantees.</p> <p>Stour Power can help by: helping with funding applications and identifying possible sources of funding and promoting the Mayo Road Project, and possibly helping to bring forward the delivery timescales. Stour Power should also help to promote the scheme more widely to partners to generate support for the scheme.</p> <p>Young Firefighters will raise funds, and a number of local businesses will support the fundraising activities.</p> <p>Low Furlong, Rainbow Fields,</p>
<p><b>Impact on Rural Hinterland</b></p>	<p>Goal posts already in place, and basketball net due September 2003.</p> <p>Possibly a two-year project, due for completion by August 2005, but the quoted timescales are only that long if the funding has to be achieved piecemeal. The timescales could be reduced to within one year if all the equipment and landscaping could be done as one project.</p> <p>Proposals already received from a number of playground equipment suppliers, and some initial ideas have been generated for the sensory garden.</p> <p>Both projects could be delivered within three months from secured funding and agreed contracts with suppliers. (Is this reasonable?)</p>
<p><b>Outcomes of Project</b> Numbers &amp; Type of Likely Users Number of jobs created (if any)</p>	<p>Up to 30 to 40 children will be able to use the playground at any one time, as well as additional users will be able to use the sensory garden, goal posts, and cycle track.</p>

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Other outcomes	The area caters to the young, but not exclusively as the sensory playground appeals to all areas of the population. It will provide an attractive area for visits by school children, the elderly, or those in sheltered accommodation, as well as providing an attractive living space for people to visit, and enjoy.
<b>Priority Level</b> To Agency To Community	High – to replace a facility that was removed, and youth a high priority.
<b>Method of Monitoring Progress</b>	TBA – but to include securing funding and delivery timescales.

<b>Project Theme</b>	<b>Promotion of Shipston for Business &amp; Tourism</b>
<b>Project Title (if known)</b>	Shipston on Stour Workspace Support
<b>Agency/Organisation proposing</b>	South Warwickshire Business Partnership
<b>Lead Organisation/Officer</b>	Stratford on Avon District Council – Steven J Newman
<b>Benefits of Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide affordable, accessible and flexible serviced workspace;</li> <li>▪ Encourage business-to-business networking opportunities;</li> <li>▪ Stimulate business growth and development;</li> <li>▪ Attract business finance and business advisory service participation;</li> <li>▪ Provide management, reception, administration and information support;</li> <li>▪ Offer the opportunity of shared training and learning facilities;</li> <li>▪ Encourage sharing of expensive equipment and resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Issue Summary Healthcheck:</b> (cross-references)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support by Coventry &amp; Warwickshire Chamber is managed remotely and has perceived poor links with rural businesses(EC6 C3 &amp; C4).</li> <li>▪ Few events within the locality to draw the business community together so poor networking base (EC6 C5).</li> <li>▪ There are poor business meeting and conference facilities (EC6 S2).</li> <li>▪ There are very limited facilities for business start up units in Shipston and those available are fully occupied (EC4 C2 &amp; C3).</li> <li>▪ There are gaps in IT &amp; other vocational training courses within the area (EC3 C1).</li> </ul>
<b>Vision/Strategic Aim:</b>	To provide premises for small businesses, support facilities and new networking opportunities
<b>Case for Project</b> Evidence of need and source	<p>Research is currently being carried out and MMIC is currently piloting a business incubator and learning centre project part-funded by the Advantage West Midlands Market Town Initiative.</p> <p>There is general support for this kind of initiative from local companies such as Norgren IMI who are downsizing operations and restructuring.</p>
<b>Action Plan</b>	

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<p><b>Actual Project:</b> Description of Activity</p> <p><b>Funds Identified:</b></p> <p><b>Estimate of Total Cost:</b></p> <p><b>Partner Contribution:</b></p> <p><b>Identified Partners:</b></p>	<p>The 'business incubator' should provide key elements of business start-up information and support in addition to shared workspace with time-bound occupation encouraging progression to more permanent locations and therefore enabling more start-ups to take their place.</p> <p>£40,000 committed in SDC budget for 2003/04 to provide rural workspace contributions. Support from AWM to be sought.</p> <p>To be identified with Partners</p> <p>To be identified with Partners</p> <p>South Warwickshire Partnership, Innovation Groups including University Groups, AWM and local businesses which are currently being identified.</p>
<p><b>Impact on Rural Hinterland</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offers opportunities for access to ICT and vocational training to those unable to access formal training opportunities</li> <li>▪ Improved skills and business support for those in rural businesses</li> <li>▪ Provides local premises for start up business accommodation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcomes of Project</b> Numbers &amp; Type of Likely Users Number of jobs created (if any) Other outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High quality starter businesses</li> <li>▪ Direct job creation (to be assessed)</li> <li>▪ Improved training opportunities</li> <li>▪ Meeting/conference facilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Level</b> To Agency To Community</p>	<p>High High</p>
<p><b>Method of Monitoring Progress</b></p>	<p>Progress monitored by Steering Group and SW Business Partnership</p>

### 6.3 Potential Linkages with Other Towns

There are a number of towns within South Warwickshire which have benefited from the healthcheck process through the Market Towns Initiative and offer opportunities for joint initiatives and cross boundary working. These include the towns of Stratford upon Avon and Southam that are presently undergoing their own healthchecks. There are examples of good practice in Alcester, a town within the District that has received market town funding from Advantage West Midlands and has carried out a similar healthcheck and developed a rolling action plan that is now in Year Two of its progress.

### 7.0 Next Steps

The following steps will need to be taken to ensure there are clean lines of communication within the Partnership and with other organisations such as the District and County Councils from whom a considerable amount of support is required:

- i. Clarify the role that is required for the Partnership taking into account existing organisations and joint ventures.
- ii. Work with the Market Towns Officer (to be appointed) to undertake the following activities:
  - develop projects and establish monitoring groups;
  - facilitate implementation;
  - activate resources;
  - undertake the key functions of reporting progress, monitoring and evaluating;
  - support the management of the Partnership
- iii. Arrange handover from Healthcheck Co-ordinator to Partnership including maintenance and review of healthcheck database.
- iv. Ensure that healthcheck material is circulated and utilised to assist other groups and organisations that require this information.
- v. The need to monitor and evaluate projects progressed throughout programme.

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

- vi. The benefit of establishing linkages with other market towns such as Stratford upon Avon, Alcester and Southam to share good practice and the results of surveys and commissioned pieces of research that may be relevant.
- vii. Consider the need to broaden out the constituents of the partnership to reflect external agencies that can contribute to the action planning process and have access to funding streams.

**8.0**            **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1**    **Timetable for the Healthcheck**

**Appendix 2**    **Map of Shipston on Stour and Rural Hinterland**

**Appendix 3**    **Key References**

**Appendix 4**    **Key Interviews**

**Appendix 5**    **Stour Power Questionnaire**

**Appendix 6**    **Stour Power Publicity**

**Appendix 7**    **Stour Power Communications Plan**

**Appendix 8**    **View the Healthcheck Questions & Answers on the Town's website**

**Appendix 9**    **Prospective Partners / Funders**

### Stages in the Healthcheck Process

#### **March – June 2003**

- Develop Partnership
- Gather Healthcheck & Snapshot information
- Workshop Development & Research
- Interviews & Desktop Research
- Prepare for Open Forum
- Funding Opportunities Review (SDC)
- Open Forum to present initial findings

#### **July – August**

- Review Healthcheck information
- Funding Seminar
- Consider Constitution of Partnership
- Feedback from Forum
- Summary of Consultation Process
- Vision Statement for Stour Power
- SWOT analysis & Key Issues
- Action Plan Workshops
- Draft Action Plan

#### **September - October**

- Finalise Healthcheck Information
- Finalise & Publish Action Plan
- Open Forum Meeting
- Formalise Partnership
- Start Year One Project Implementation with support of SDC/WCC

**APPENDIX 2**

**Map of Shipston on Stour and Rural Hinterland**

# STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

## APPENDIX 3

### Key References

No	Reference	Source	Date
1.	District Local Plan	SDC	Revised Deposit Draft 2003
2.	Parish listing of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Importance	DETR	
3.	Urban Capacity Study	SDC	January 2002)
4.	Urban Land Capacity Study	SDC	2002
5.	Stratford on Avon Council Electoral Division	SDC	
6.	Draft Retail Study Update	Colliers Erdman Lewis	2003
7.	Reports on Market Research amongst Village Residents to Assess the Potential of Village Shops and Service Centres	Warks & Worcs Rural Retail Partnership	2000
8.	Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines	WCC	1993
9.	District Council Design Guide	SDC	2001
10.	Countryside Design Summary	SDC	1998
11.	Shipston on Stour Town Appraisal	STC	1999
12.	Village Design Statements - various	Various Parish Councils	
13.	Village Parish Appraisals - various	As above	
14.	Stratford on Avon District Council Housing Needs Survey plus updates	Richard Fordham Associates	1999
15.	Housing Strategy Statement	SDC	2003-2007
16.	Local Homelessness Statistics England	SDC/DETR	2000/2001
17.	Single Homelessness Strategy	Centre Point	2001
18.	Warwickshire Constabulary Performance Figures	West Mercia Police	
19.	Clinical & Health Indicators	Warks Health Authority	2001
20.	Crime & Disorder Audit of South Warwickshire	WCC	2001
21.	Electoral Services Information	SDC	
22.	South Warwickshire Commercial Vacant Property Register	Warwickshire Investment Partnership	
23.	Stratford District Household Survey	LSC	2002
24.	Coventry & Warwickshire Survey of Employers	Warks Employment Research	2002
25.	Population Health Assessment	South Warks PCT	March 2002
26.	Shakespeare Country Visitors Attractions	SWT	2002/3
27.	A Sustainable District – Wide Tourism Strategy for Stratford on Avon	South Warwickshire Tourism	1998
28.	Economic Impact Assessment	HETB	1996/7
29.	“The Business”	Directory & Guide for the District of Stratford on Avon	2002
30.	A Rural Strategy	SDC	2000-2002
31.	Deprivation Mapping	SDC	
32.	An Evaluation of a High Street Presence for Joint Shipston Churches	PPCR Market Research	2003

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

No	Reference	Source	Date
33.	Warwickshire's Local Transport Plan	WCC	2000
34.	Stratford on Avon Rural Transport Summary Action Plan	Rural Transport Partnership	2001
35.	South Warwickshire Tourism Business Plan	SWT	2002-2003
36.	Coventry, Solihull, Worcestershire & Warwickshire Rural Needs Analysis	Ecotech Research & Consulting Ltd	June 2003
37.	Alcester, Shipston & Southam Arts Development Strategies on behalf of SDC	Artservices	1999

**Key Interviews**

The following interviews were conducted either face to face or by telephone

Steven J Newman	Economic Development & Tourism Manager	SDC
Doug Henderson	Rural Transport Partnership Officer	
Renata Mosz	Housing Research Officer	SDC
David Jones	Area Planning Policy Officer	SDC
Jo Manning	Conservation Officer	SDC
Sue Rapp	Co-ordinator S Warwickshire Business Partnership	
Sue Hawthorn	Schools Team Area Education Officer	WEA
Sally Lightfoot	Early Years Development Officer	WEA
Carol Wheeler	Warks Education Authority	WEA
Chris Wood	Market Towns Manager	SDC
Emma Rynberk	Account Manager S Warks	Chamber of Commerce
Bill Hunt	Housing Management	SWHA
Acting Inspector Long	Stratford District Police	
Greg Wells	Directorate of Public Health	S Warks PCT
Ruth Washbrook		Public Health - Dentistry
Moiria Birbage	Community Nurse for the Elderly	Ellen Badger Hospital
Girda Jones	Community Education	WCC
Barbara Moore	Arts Officer	SDC
Bill Brittan	Kimran Coaches	
Bill Stirling	Parking Services Manager	SDC
Peter Owen	Leisure Services Manager	SDC

**Stour Power Questionnaire**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please answer as many or as few of the questions as you want. When the survey refers to the town, it means Shipston-on-Stour. If you wish to make a comment about a village please make a note of the village's name, so we can address that particular village issue.

It would be helpful, although not essential, if you could let us know how many people have helped to fill in this survey, and the age ranges, purely so we can see if all age groups have been properly involved.

Number of people who have filled in this survey:
--

Village or Town you are from:
-------------------------------

Age groups represented: Please tick. 10 years and under: 10-20 years: 20-30 years: 30-40 years: 40-60 years: 60 and over:
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You can also submit your answers to any of these questions or the full health check survey on-line. To do this contact: [www.markettowns.org](http://www.markettowns.org). Register yourself as an interested party by following the instructions, and find the questionnaire for Shipston and the Stour Valley by clicking on the Midlands, Warwickshire, and then Shipston, then enter your comments. These will then be logged next to your name and taken into account in the health check.

To return your completed questionnaire to us please give it to your Parish clerk of the council if they distributed it to you, or return it to your school, if your school distributed it. Alternatively, you can post the completed form to Chris Wood, c/o Operational Services, Stratford on Avon District Council, Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford upon Avon, CV 37 6HX. If there are any queries, please contact Chris Wood at Stratford District Council on 01789 267575, or by e-mail to [chris.wood@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:chris.wood@stratford-dc.gov.uk) . Or you can contact Gudrun Berry on 01608 662645 or [gudrunberry@hotmail.com](mailto:gudrunberry@hotmail.com) , or Claire Dolan on 01386 882788 or [cdolan@cdrural.co.uk](mailto:cdolan@cdrural.co.uk)

Please return your questionnaire, to arrive no later than 4th June 2003. Thank you.

**Section: Environment**  
**Worksheet: Character and Vitality of the Town**

**EN1 C5** Are there any unattractive areas in the town?

**Answer:**

**EN1 C7** Are the buildings, streets and furniture in the town centre in good condition?

**Answer:**

**EN1 C8** Are the 'main gateways' to the town centre attractive and well maintained (including train and bus stations)?

**Answer:**

**EN1 C9** Are the main pedestrian routes between car parks and the town centre attractive, well maintained and safe to use during the day and at night?

**Answer:**

**Worksheet: The Countryside**

**EN2 C1** What is the local countryside's distinctive character?

**Answer:**

**EN2 C2** Is the landscape of high quality?

**Answer:**

**EN3 C3** Are there any memorable views either from the town to the countryside or from the countryside of the town?

**Answer:**

# STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

**EN3 C6** How does the town sit in the landscape?

**Answer:**

## **Worksheet: Tourism & Visitor Services**

**EC5 S4** Does the range of visitor facilities match expectations and needs?

**Answer:**

**EC5 S10** Is there adequate signing to visitor attractions and the town centres?

**Answer:**

## **Worksheet: Business Support**

**EC6 C1** Do the banks, financial institutions and other business support services offer a full range of business advice and support?

**Answer:**

**EC6 C5** Are there regular events, which have the potential to draw the business community together, e.g. trade fairs?

**Answer:**

**EC6 C6** What is the current and likely future demand for broadband (>2Mbs) communication services?

**Answer:**

**EC6 S2** Are there adequate business meeting and conference facilities locally?

**Answer:**

## **Section: Social & Community Worksheet: Health & Public Safety**

**SC3 S3** Is the fear of crime significantly worse than actual crime rates?

**Answer:**

**SC3 S4** Is there visible evidence of vandalism, unlit streets, litter or graffiti?

**Answer:**

## **Worksheet: Local Government & Community Organisations**

**SC4 C2** Are a large number of local people involved in community activities?

**Answer:**

**SC4 C5** Have community groups been influential in developing policies or strategies?

**Answer:**

**SC4 S1** Is the local community well represented on committees?

**Answer:**

## **Worksheet: Sport Leisure & Open Space**

**SC5 C6** Are there adequate opportunities to pursue outdoor sporting activities?

**Answer:**

**SC5 C7** Do you have to travel outside the town to take part in certain sports?

**Answer:**

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

### Additional Questions:

**Pool 1** Do you use the Shipston Swimming Pool or other facilities at the High School?

**Answer:** Yes or no

**Pool 2** If so how do you get there, by public transport, your own car, lift with a friend, by a school bus, by cycle or walking?

**Answer:** Please fill in the method of travel

**Pool 3** How long does it take you to get there?

**Answer:**

### Worksheet: Culture & Heritage

**SC6 C1** Does the town have an adequate range of cultural facilities e.g. theatre, cinema, art gallery, museum or library?

**Answer:**

**SC6 C4** Do town and rural communities have adequate community venues?

**Answer:**

**SC6 S2** Do facilities for arts and cultural activities meet the demand of the local arts groups?

**Answer:**

**SC6 S3** Are churches of all denominations active in the community?

**Answer:**

### Section: Transport & Accessibility Worksheet: Ease of Access to Services

**TA2 C1** Is there good public transport coverage connecting rural settlements to the town?

**Answer:**

**TA2 C2** Are bus and train times from outlying villages to the town convenient for traveling to work and children going to school?

**Answer:**

**TA2 C5** Are there special bus/taxi services in places where there are number conventional public transport service catering for people who are mobility impaired?

**Answer:**

**TA2 C6** Is information on public transport easy to obtain?

**Answer:**

**TA2 S3** How easy is it to get to health, education, cultural and retail services by public transport?

**Answer:**

**TA3 C12** Is it easy to find your way around town?

**Answer:**

**TA3 S1** Are pavements in good condition and are there dropped kerbs at crossing points?

**Answer:**

**TA3 S8** How easy is it to walk to/from school?

**Answer:**

*If you are part of any groups or organisations, please let us know what they are here:*

*Are you answering on behalf of any of these groups or organisations?*

**Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey.  
If you have any additional comments, or requirements, you may write them here.**

### Stour Power Publicity

While 'informing' is a key objective of the healthcheck process, facilitating 'opportunities to comment' around the development of the vision and the action plan is also vital to ensure that all 'stakeholders' buy in to the process.

Publicity to inform and provide opportunities to comment has included:

- ❑ public meetings, including a major open day in the Townsend Hall which attracted in excess of 130 visitors, to present the findings from robust research and to facilitate discussion;
- ❑ focus group and individual presentations and discussions with key business and community leaders and groups;
- ❑ internet survey on a Stour Power market town survey website to measure support, lack of support, capture suggestions and recommendations, and raise issues;
- ❑ Self-completion surveys delivered to residents and businesses, again to measure support, lack of support, capture suggestions and recommendations, and raise issues.

The name "Stour Power", supported by the statement "Shaping Tomorrow Together" was adopted by the Steering Group to be inclusive of the villages and hamlets in the rural hinterland, as well as the market town itself.

A strong image was created by a professional design agency and applied to all publicity material for the initial information, consultation and public participation exercises.

Awareness raising has included:

- ❑ posters on notice boards in the town centre and surrounding parishes, on 'A' boards on pedestrian routes from car parks to the town centre, in the library, shops and churches;
- ❑ media publicity covered by all local newspapers and radio for progress reports and the open day;
- ❑ regular reports in the town council newsletter.

All this 'drip feed' publicity led to a major burst for the Open Day, which ran from 10am to 6pm on 20th June in Shipston's Townsend Hall:

- ❑ an exhibition of findings from the robust research was produced (and later exhibited in the library);
- ❑ balloons, pens, posters, leaflets and giant banner were produced to publicise the open day (all designed to be useable at other consultation events);
- ❑ students from Shipston High School worked with Stour Power volunteers to entice visitors to the event;
- ❑ local businesses and individuals donated prizes for a free draw (which was used to capture contact details of people who visited and contributed to the event);
- ❑ visitors were encouraged to complete survey forms, fill in individual 'post-its', and visit the web site;
- ❑ local media attended and reported the event.

# STOUR POWER

## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

**DRAFT 1**

Prepared by David Christmas

# STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

## 1 Background

- 1.1 Good communications are key to Stour Power's success. Clear, succinct communications should be its hallmark. As a small organisation, driven by volunteers with limited time and resources, Stour Power will only achieve its objectives by persuading others to adopt its proposals for the future of Shipston and the surrounding villages, hamlets and countryside.
- 1.2 This means assembling and presenting a convincing case and backing it up with facts. As we move into delivery Stour Power also needs to demonstrate its effectiveness, showing how it is making a difference by reporting its successes.

## 2 Objectives

- 2.1 To raise the profile of Stour Power and ensure consistency and efficient delivery of messages to all stakeholders.
- 2.2 To communicate positive messages about Stour Power to key opinion formers and funders.
- 2.3 To generate ownership and enthusiasm for Stour Power amongst all stakeholders.
- 2.4 To provide routes for receiving new ideas and listening to feedback.
- 2.5 To project Stour Power as the leading regeneration project in the region.
- 2.6 To manage expectations.

## 3 Target Audiences/Stakeholders

### 3.1 Key Opinion Formers

including MP, Town Council, Members and leading Officers of the District and County Councils, prime movers in local, regional and national voluntary sector organisations, other public sector service providers such as the police, bus companies, etc, key freeholders, local activists, special interest and minority group representatives.

### 3.2 Potential Funders and Partners

including members and key Officers in Advantage West Midlands, Business Link, Countryside Agency, Council for Voluntary Service, Department for Food & Rural Affairs, Environment Agency, Heart of England Tourist Board, Local Education Authority, Learning + Skills Council, Rural Transport Partnership, Stratford on Avon District Council, Shipston on Stour Town Council, South Warwickshire Housing Association, South Warwickshire PIE, Vital Villages Scheme, Warwickshire County Council, West Midlands Arts.

### 3.3 The Public

including local community and voluntary groups, schools, residents and potential residents.

### 3.4 The Business Community

including existing local employers, retailers, Round Table, and potential employers.

### 3.5 The Media

## STOUR POWER HEALTHCHECK & ACTION PLAN

including local TV and radio, local and national newspapers, all producers of newsletters, professional journals, press and PR officers in opinion forming, funding and partnership organisations.

### 4 Resources

- 4.1 Until funds are available for professional support, the most important resources are the stakeholders themselves, particularly those with access to opinion formers.
- 4.2 An inexpensive standard briefing pack will be required to inform the stakeholders, spread the load, and reach the wider audience.

### 5 Developing the Vision

- 5.1 Visioning is essential to help local residents and other stakeholders decide what they would like Shipston and area to be like in 5/10/ 15/20/30 years. It is important to have short, medium and long-term visions.
- 5.2 The health check process rightly focuses on the short to medium term with an emphasis on 'practical realities'. Worse still, it can be constrained by 'what we can afford'.
- 5.3 In order to generate exciting visions based on aspirations, we need to help people to travel in time to 20/30 years ahead, to see their ideal, perfect Shipston area, unconstrained by reality and practicality.
- 5.4 We also need to engage individuals and groups who have not yet contributed to the process. Consultation to date has been largely with self-selected individuals and groups - the articulate who usually contribute. When consulting about the future of an area it is doubly important that we reach all layers of the population, including the 'harder to reach' groups and, especially, the 'next generation'.
- 5.5 Individuals and groups that, traditionally, are not engaged by consultation processes include demographic groups (e.g. people with disabilities, singles and young couples), behavioural groups (such as non-users of key services), and attitudinal groups (like those who think their views will make no difference).
- 5.6 This is a dangerous situation, and Stour Power provides a wonderful opportunity to engage these groups and individuals in discussions about the future of the area.

### 6 Action Plan

[A month-by-month time-line action plan for each of the objectives, which needs to be developed in consultation with the key movers in the Partnership. It will detail who needs to be addressed, what media we use, who does what when, and how we monitor and evaluate success]

E.g. identifying and branding all 'quick wins and easy hits', regular contributions to Shipston council newsletter, parish and voluntary group newsletters, events and exhibitions, time travel visioning, printed materials, lobbying and face-to-face influencing, develop briefing pack, branding recruitment and other advertising, promoting features on SP process and actions, news releases on achievements, buy local campaign, broadband campaign, etc, etc

**APPENDIX 8**

**Viewing the Healthcheck Questions & Answers on the Market Towns website**

To View the full Healthcheck Questions and Answers log onto the Town's website at [www.markettowns.org](http://www.markettowns.org)

At the drop down menus select: Midlands; Warwickshire; Shipston

Follow the prompts to log on as a new or existing user

**Select a topic under the headings:**

- Environment
- Economy
- Social & Community
- Transport & Accessibility

Key in your comments

### Prospective Partners / Funders

AWM	Advantage West Midlands
BL	Business Link
CA	Countryside Agency
CVS	Council for Voluntary Service
DEFRA	Dept of Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
ETW	Enterprise Training (WCC)
HOE	Heart of England Tourist Board
LEA	Local Education Authority
LSC	Learning Skills Council
RFCSW	Rural Forum for Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire
RTP	Rural Transport Partnership
RCC	Rural Community Council
SDC	Stratford on Avon District Council
STC	Shipston on Stour Town Council
SWHA	South Warwickshire Housing Association
SWPIE	South Warwickshire Partnership
VV	Vital Villages
WCC	Warwickshire County Council
WRHA	Warwickshire Rural Housing Association
WMA	West Midlands Art