



## Why not join the Village Community?

Welcome to Issue 6 of the Theale Newsletter put together by local volunteers working together to help improve Theale and build our community. Please share your ideas and what information you'd like to see featured by emailing us at [tf@thealevillage.com](mailto:tf@thealevillage.com) or pop in to our next meeting - details at [www.thealevillage.com](http://www.thealevillage.com).

Theale's Future was created to develop and implement the Parish Plan and its Action Plan, all of which can be seen on the village notice board outside the Co-op or at [thealevillage.com/thealesfuture](http://thealevillage.com/thealesfuture). If you are interested in helping to improve the village, please get in touch!



## Sharma and Theale's Future welcome announcement of access improvement at Theale Station

Alok Sharma, Reading West MP, and Roger York, Chairman of Theale's Future which is a sub-committee of Theale Parish Council, have welcomed Rail Minister Norman Baker's announcement on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December that Theale railway station will benefit from investment of £1.25 million to provide a new footbridge and three lifts, which will make Theale station more easily accessible. Theale's Future has been campaigning for improved access to Theale station and Alok has previously raised the matter with First Great Western, which operates the station.

The Government funding is being provided as part of the Department for Transport's (DfT) Access for All scheme which is a key part of the Government's strategy to improve the accessibility of Great Britain's railway stations. This funding is specifically targeted at providing infrastructure improvements at stations which will enable more disabled people to access the rail network.

First Great Western (FGW), which made the funding bid to the DfT's Access for All scheme, will be working with Network Rail and the DfT to install the new footbridge and lifts. FGW is now working on the timescales for implementation of the project.

Alok said: "I welcome the Government's £1.25 million investment which is excellent news for my constituents in Theale who travel by rail. For many people, whether they are elderly, disabled or parents with prams, getting from the station entrance and on to the train can be the hardest part of their trip, and the improvements at Theale station will help make journeys easier."

Roger York, Chairman of Theale's Future, said: "Theale's Future and the community of Theale are extremely pleased with this news. Access has long been a problem for mothers with buggies and impossible for wheelchair users. We owe special thanks to Andy Button of Theale's Future for his leadership in pursuing this and to Alok Sharma for promoting our cause."

David Wood, Chairman of Theale Parish Council, said: "I am absolutely delighted with this fantastic news. It shows that we can make a difference. This will not only help the disabled but also young mums with pushchairs, passengers with luggage, and cyclists who need to take their bikes on a train. I have struggled many times on the existing stairs which are really quite dangerous."



## What's on in Theale?

Have you ever thought how great it would be to know about all the events in the village? To publicise your next event let us know all about it by emailing [tf@thealevillage.com](mailto:tf@thealevillage.com). Thanks to everyone who is already sharing news of events - check out the next pub quiz, library activities and more. Please visit the 'What's On' page at [www.thealevillage.com](http://www.thealevillage.com)

The Christmas Lights switch-on took place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, with stalls all down the High Street and La Baguetterie won the prize for the best shop window. The weather was kind (it didn't rain!) and it was great to see the support of so many people. We hope you all enjoyed a fun event and got to see Santa! Please let us know about your events for 2012.

## Coming up for 2012 Olympic Torch to visit Theale

You may have seen the news that the Olympic Torch will travel within 10 miles of 95% of the UK population. For us in Theale it is that little bit closer.



After arriving in Reading for an evening celebration on 10<sup>th</sup> July, the torch will actually travel through the village on 11<sup>th</sup> July. Check the Olympic website for further details.

[www.london2012.com/olympic-torch-relay-map](http://www.london2012.com/olympic-torch-relay-map)

[relay-map](#)

## A4 Crossing between Theale and Arlington



Despite the enthusiasm from many people for a crossing to Arlington Business Park from the village, West Berkshire Council has said demand is not high enough to justify the cost. In March the Council conducted a survey of the number of people crossing the A4 to and from the Business Park. The results showed that there were not enough people crossing the road to



justify the Council spending money to make it easier to cross.

When reporting the results to Theale's Future, the Council suggested the possibility of a "latent" demand (i.e more people would cross if it was made easier for them to do so). We are currently looking to understand how this latent demand might be determined- or even if it is possible to do so - and how it might be measured.

## Dog Fouling



Since the last newsletter, Theale Parish Council (TPC) has decided to install three new dog waste bins rather than two, and re-evaluated the positioning.

Theale's Future has secured funds for the additional bins and now TPC is awaiting permission from West Berkshire Council to install them. Following a consultation with residents a bin will be installed at the recreation ground near the entrance to the doctor's surgery, another in the corner of the ground almost opposite the road to North Street and a third on the junction of Blossom Lane and Blossom Avenue. Let's hope this encourages more people to use them.

## Theale Business Network [www.theale.biz](http://www.theale.biz)



Theale.biz is a growing community website with the aim of promoting business within the local Theale area and providing a regular newsletter for both business and local communities.

Founder of the site, Steve Hodder, set up his own video production, web design and consultancy business, just over a year ago. After a long career in the media industry, working and travelling into London, Steve had little knowledge of the local business community. His wife, Fiona, had also recently set up her own, training and consultancy services and faced similar challenges. They both attended various networking events but felt that for start-ups, the cost could be prohibitive and were also unsure whether these were the correct forum for their businesses. Being regulars at The Bull pub they discussed the possibility of hosting networking events there, with Mark the Landlord and, with great support from him, the first few business breakfast meetings were held. From there Steve set up the Theale.biz website and maintains it in his own time. The site offers a **free listing service** for any business based in Theale and surrounding areas. Anyone can have their business listed for free and there are a number of small paid advertising opportunities, just to cover hosting costs.

Listings increase monthly and the network has now held two evening network events. The first was addressed by local MP Alok Sharma, with a talk about Government initiatives to support small business and Mr Sharma has requested that business owners keep him informed of

ideas or issues. The second recent event enjoyed an informative presentation by Mike O'Shea, owner of the Sales Doctors, on "How to sell in a recession".

More events are planned for 2012 and will be listed on the site. Speakers are welcome, so if you feel you have a skill or information that you can impart to help local business owners achieve their goals please contact Theale.biz ([contact@theale.biz](mailto:contact@theale.biz)) with your proposal. By having your business listed on the site and attending the networking events where possible, this is your opportunity for free advertising, networking and ensuring that the services we buy and provide are kept local.

The next stage for Theale.biz is to get the word out to the Theale Community so that people in the area can benefit from knowing there is a wealth of expertise and experience on our doorsteps. These local businesses can provide high quality services and keep our local economy strong. Can you help to make Theale.Biz the local directory of choice? What do you want from local business networking? Get in touch with Steve to share your thoughts and business news at [steve@stevehoddermedia.com](mailto:steve@stevehoddermedia.com) get involved with discussions online about business issues such as parking changes and the impact and opportunities of upcoming events. You can also access Theale.biz from [www.thealevillage.com](http://www.thealevillage.com)

## Digital Switch over



2012 is the year of switchover to digital television, February (Meridian) or April (London) 2012. Although all those eligible for assistance with the switchover

should have received full information by now on what is happening and how to obtain the necessary help with the change, someone you know may not understand or have someone to explain it to them. If you know of anyone living near you who will have difficulty when the switchover occurs and you cannot help them yourself please contact the switchover help scheme on 0800 4085900.

## Contact Us

If you would like to contact Theale's Future regarding any of the articles in this newsletter; or be involved with the group, we would love to hear from you:

Email: [tf@thealevillage.com](mailto:tf@thealevillage.com)

Post: **Theale's Future**, c/o TPC, The Pavilion, Englefield Road, Theale RG7 5AS

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