

Shavington-cum-Gresty D-Day Program: A Community United in Remembrance

By Simona Garner, Clerk/RFO to Shavington-cum-Gresty Parish Council

Shavington-cum-Gresty prides itself on fostering community spirit and engagement. This year, our Parish Council aimed to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings with a series of events and activities open to all community members. By doing so, we not only honored a significant historical event but also reinforced our commitment to building a united and vibrant community. With the help and support of our amazing councillors and team, we successfully organised and delivered the Shavington-cum-Gresty D-Day program, showcasing our community's strength and creativity.

Starting Strong

Supported by a £3,900 grant from the Borough Council and an extra £2,500 allocated from our Parish Council, the D-Day program began with help from local historian Mark Potts, local artists, video makers, and creative writers. These funds were crucial in ensuring our events and workshop programs were engaging and inclusive for everyone.

Community Outreach

We teamed up with Shavington Academy to create an exclusive interview with D-Day veteran Sergeant Bernard Morgan. This interview, shared on social media, garnered over 4,000 views, effectively connecting our community to history (here the link: <https://fb.watch/syR909R1tc/>). Additionally, students worked with a creative writer to craft a commemorative poem, which was read at the International D-Day 80th Anniversary Beacon Lighting ceremony held on 6 June 2024.

We also offered creative writing workshops at Shavington Primary School, leading to Year 5 pupils writing poems for the Beacon Lighting ceremony. Additionally, a series of art workshops produced banners commemorating D-Day, involving our young residents in a meaningful way.

D-Day Exhibition

A major highlight was the two-day exhibition curated by local historian Mark Potts. Featuring documents, photos, and artifacts from WWI and WWII, it showcased stories of local residents who served in the wars. Talks by Potts and a children's trail enriched the experience for 400 visitors.

Additionally, the Council funded and distributed a booklet about local hero Richard Pryce Hughes, written by Potts. Every household and school pupil received a copy, keeping his story alive.

Beacon Lighting Event

On 6 June 2024, over 200 residents attended the International D-Day 80th Anniversary Beacon Lighting ceremony in Shavington-cum-Gresty. This event symbolised our community's commitment to remembering D-Day. A poignant moment was when the beacon was lit, casting a warm glow that united everyone in a shared sense of history and remembrance. The hard work of our Community Manager, councillors, and volunteers made this program a success, demonstrating the power of community spirit.

Conclusion

The Project Shavington-cum-Gresty D-Day program demonstrates our Parish Council's ability to unite the community through history and remembrance. Despite our small size and limited resources, we achieved remarkable results through creativity, collaboration, and commitment. This initiative highlighted the importance of working together—staff, members, and volunteers alike. I am immensely grateful for their passion, support, and determination. Their collective efforts made this program possible and truly special. As we honor our past, we look forward to building an even stronger, more connected community for the future. Together, we will continue to celebrate our heritage and foster a sense of belonging and unity in Shavington-cum-Gresty.

Fact File

- Population: ca 6,000
- Local Council Award Scheme Level: Foundation Award
- Number of Staff: 1.5 FTE
- Annual Budget 2024/2025: £336,015
- Parish Share of Council Tax at Band D: £88.76
- Cost of Project: £6,400 (including grants)
- S Garner is CiLCA qualified