



Shrewsbury
Town Council



Shropshire
Council



SHREWSBURY
BID

SHREWSBURY MINI-HOLLAND BID

AUGUST 2021

Part 1 – Who is behind a Shrewsbury Mini-Holland and Why?

The key to Shrewsbury being able to create a successful Mini-Holland is due to the collaborative partnerships which already exist across the town; united in a vision to develop radical ways to address traffic congestion and the associated climate impacts. These come via formal partnerships such as the Big Town Plan, collaborative working groups such as the Shrewsbury Recovery Taskforce as well as through other organisations, schools and businesses in the town.

Shropshire Council

- Declare a Climate Emergency in May 2019
- Support the School Street Initiative in July 2020
- Support the Prime Minister's Gear Change Announcements in September 2020
- Agree that all new cycle infrastructure will meet LTN1/20 standards in September 2020
- Climate Strategy & Action Plan agreed December 2020
- Approval for 2 x Liveable Neighbourhood Trials for neighbourhoods adjoining the town centre in June 2021. The first ever Liveable Neighbourhood trials for Shropshire
- Support an Expression of Interest for a Mini-Holland. The Leader of the Council to sign in July 2021
- Agree a process for the permanent installation of a one-way system and reallocation of carriageway space to walking and cycling as well as a permanent 20mph zone
- Agree a process for continuation of the High Street Pedestrianisation post COVID & consultation on LTZ for Town Centre in July 2021

Shrewsbury Town Council

- Declare a Climate Emergency in March 2019
- Establish a £1/4m Climate Emergency Fund with walking initiatives on the priority list in April 2020
- Create a Climate Action Plan in September 2019
- Establish a Climate Change Committee & Active Travel Working Group in May 2021
- Unanimous cross political party support for a Mini-Holland in June 2021

Shrewsbury Business Improvement District

- Lead the Big Town Plan Pop-Up Shop Public Consultation with Connectivity being a key theme in September 2017
- Create a pocket park on major town centre road in June 2019
- Lead a campaign for High Street Road Closures to support COVID Recovery in May 2020
- Support an Expression of Interest for a Mini-Holland in July 2021

Shrewsbury Big Town Plan

- Publish Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Vision in June 2018
- Shropshire Council, Shrewsbury Town Council & Shrewsbury BID partner with a commitment to fund £150k each for the next 3 years in April 2019
- Publish Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Masterplan in January 2021
- Hold Big Town Plan Festival in February 2021
- Agree a Movement Strategy Brief for tender in April 2021

Shrewsbury Recovery Taskforce

- Start meeting weekly with partnership budget of £50k in April 2020
- Shrewsbury's Open Campaign begins in May 2020
- Social Distancing Road Closures begin in June 2020
- Programme of Road Closures continue following Lockdown start lifting in June 2021

Daniel Kawczynski MP

- Tweets his supports for Shrewsbury to become a Mini-Holland in July 2020

Priory School

- Hold an Active Travel Week in June 2021

Coleham School

- Introduction of the first School Street in November 2020

Shropshire Cycle Hub

- New organisation founded in 2020
- In its first year, 400 bikes given to NHS Workers, 800 new bike customers, 700 bikes donated, 25 volunteers by 2021
- Initiate a Rickshaw Service between St Julian's Carpark and the town centre in July 2021

National Trust (Attingham Park)

- Launch a new vision of which Active Travel is key in 2021



Who will help make a Mini-Holland Happen in Shrewsbury?

- Shropshire Council
- Shrewsbury Town Council
- Shrewsbury Business Improvement District
- Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals Trust
- University Centre Shrewsbury
- Shrewsbury Colleges Group
- Local schools including:
 - Priory School
 - Meole School
 - Coleham School
 - St Georges School
 - Woodfield School
- Shropshire Cycle Hub
- Sustainable Transport Shropshire
- Dave Mellor Cycles
- Quest 88 – Shrewsbury based specialists in adaptive cycling

Part 2 – Technical Components

Shrewsbury is a compact, mostly flat and cycleable town with a population of 77,964 (ONS,2019) lying within a 3 mile ride of the historic town centre, situated in a tight loop of the River Severn. Shrewsbury was a Cycling Demonstration Town and still benefits from the cycling infrastructure installed during this time, although this requires improvement to meet LTN 1/20 standards. Census commuter data from 2011 shows that over 7% of all commuting trips were cycled, which is much higher than the County average of 3%. Secondary schools in Shrewsbury achieve the highest levels of cycling in the County. The PCTE-Bike scenario forecasts that 34.25% of all trips would be cyclable if conditions were improved which highlights the significant potential for increasing cycling and reducing car use across the town.

The focus of the Mini-Holland Programme will be on developing a comprehensive network of key walking and cycling corridors and introducing low-traffic schemes to the residential areas between these routes. The plan opposite illustrates the geographic scope of the programme and how the three project phases would interact with each other - the phased delivery of our programme would be sequential, with the route- and area-based interventions expanding out from the Town Centre.

The rationale is to build upon the successes of the existing EATF Town Centre measures which significantly improved conditions for walking, cycling and local buses in the historic core in 2020/21, by reducing access for general traffic. These changes were an important first step in delivering on the Big Town Plan's vision of a largely motor-traffic free town centre. The public's response to these measures was overwhelmingly positive and there is real opportunity for Shrewsbury's Mini-Holland to take advantage of this positive momentum.

Shrewsbury's Mini-Holland programme will consist of the three key design components described below.



Liveable Neighbourhoods

Shrewsbury is already committed to the development of a Low Traffic Zone in the town centre and two pilot Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN); and the Mini-Holland programme would enable several more neighbourhoods to benefit from similar treatment. Through the Mini-Holland programme, we would also review through-traffic movements to ensure that the LNs do not adversely impact upon neighbouring areas. Experience from other local authorities suggest that LTNs have tended to fail where there has not been a cohesive strategy which accounts for displacement of traffic and which is developed in collaboration with local people and stakeholders. This approach would also support the long-term delivery of further LNs as well as use the lessons learnt from the trial LNs in Shrewsbury to inform the Mini-Holland geographic scope.



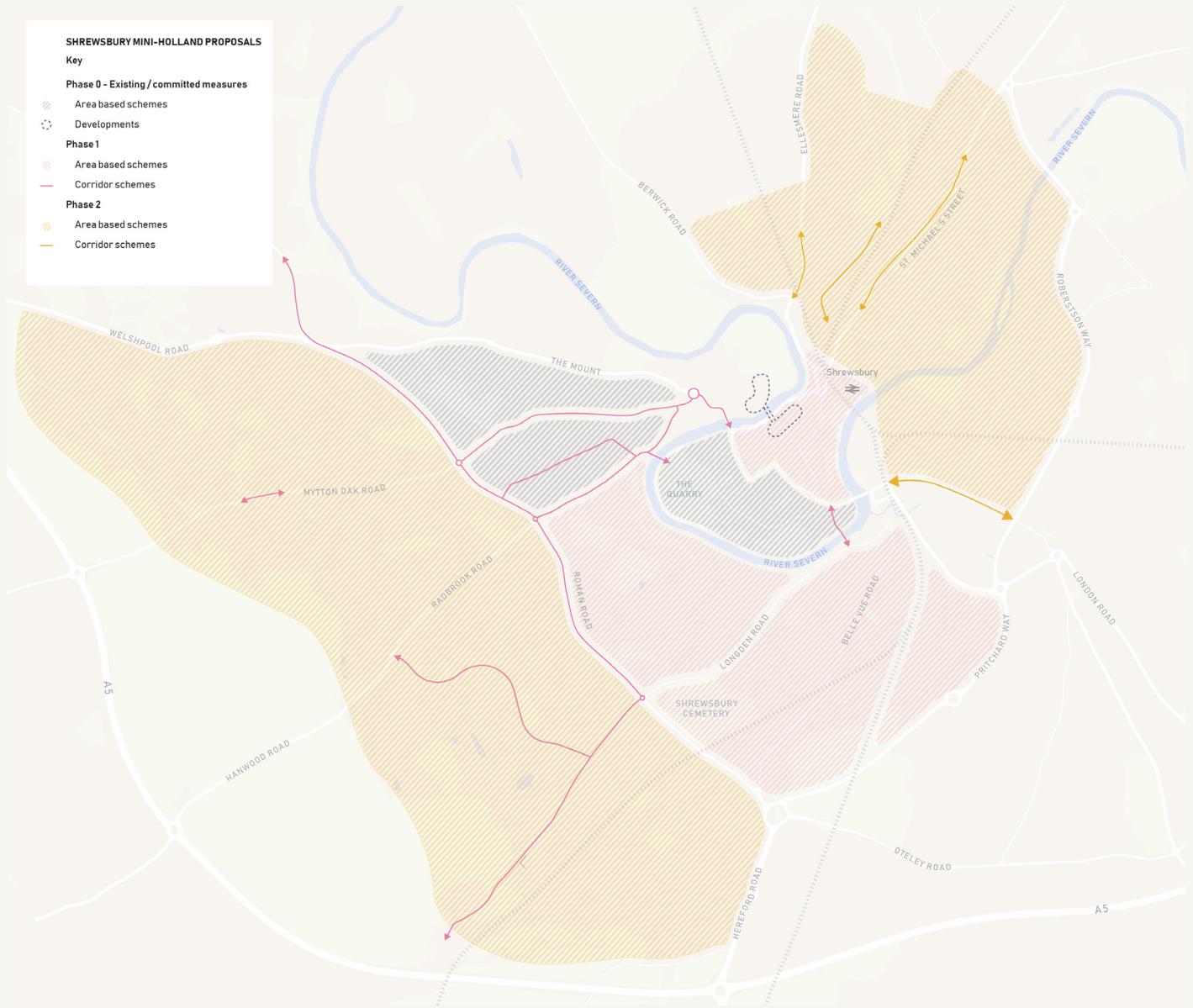
Corridor Improvements

In addition to the LN programme, it is essential that conditions are improved for walking and cycling on the main corridors into and around the town centre linking to the proposed LNs. A key consideration in this process will be exploring opportunities to install modal filters on strategic routes to reduce traffic volumes and improve conditions for walking and cycling. For example, there is a dense network of main roads (The Mount (A458), Copthorne Road (B4386) and Porthill Road (A488)) surrounding the pilot LNs which all meet at the Welsh Bridge. We would explore the feasibility of removing through motor traffic to prioritise sustainable modes on one of these routes.



Network Upgrade

Shrewsbury already benefits from a partially-complete cycle network with many schemes constructed through the Cycle Demonstration Town status. However, most of these facilities, including NCN routes 81 + 44, are not LTN 1/20 compliant and therefore require design upgrades to fulfil their potential. In particular, there are several examples of shared use facilities on main roads with no priority over side roads and no junction treatments, resulting in a poor level of service. Road space reallocation would be carried out where possible to create protected cycle tracks in line with current best practice.



Phase 0

The measures in this phase are existing/ committed measures which form the foundations of our Mini-Holland vision. Phase 0 will deliver a Low Traffic Zone in the southern part of the town centre to remove all east-west through motor traffic, making use of the new powers to enforce moving traffic offences, and Shrewsbury's first Liveable Neighbourhoods in the Copthorne and Frankwell areas. New developments at Frankwell and Shrewsbury Riverside are also committed and will improve walking and cycling connectivity between the Town Centre and the proposed LTNs, including a new planned active travel bridge across the Severn.

Phase 1

The measures contained in Phase 1 form the basis of Shrewsbury's Mini-Holland bid. The measures are a combination of corridor improvements, Low Traffic Districts/ Neighbourhoods, and upgrades to the town's existing cycle network. The Phase 1 areas include the remainder of the town centre, delivering on the Big Town Plan's vision to remove all through traffic; and the Kingsland and Belle Vue districts to the south and east, completing a continuous walkable and cycleable area between the railway station and the B4380 former ring road.

Within Phase 1, we would undertake a town-wide review of through-traffic movements in Shrewsbury to better understand vehicle flows and proportions of through traffic. This exercise would inform the development of the LN boundaries and support our longer-term ambitions for LN implementation throughout Shrewsbury.

Phase 2

This phase will extend the interventions beyond Phase 1 to cover Coton Hill, Castlefields and Cherry Orchards to the north; and Bowbrook, Radbrook and Meole Brace to the south. We recognise that the extent of this phase will depend on the funding available; and we need to be mindful of impacts from Phase 1, such as potential traffic displacement, and need to mitigate for any adverse impacts.

Part 3 – Policy + Geographic Context



Policy

The Shrewsbury Big Town Plan is an ambitious and bold masterplan for Shrewsbury which seeks to reshape the public realm and revolutionise movement.

Shrewsbury was a **Cycle Demonstration Town (CDT)** which installed measures to enhance the town's cycling network. The programme improved conditions for cycling on over 5km of the town's network and included protected cycle facilities, new crossing points, and reducing speed limits along routes. Evidence from the Shrewsbury CDT evaluation programme found a 15% increase in levels of cycling between 2007–2011, a 28% increase in the number bikes parked in the town, and a 1.3% increase in the number of school pupils cycling to school.

Shrewsbury Big Town Plan's Vision focuses on the need to create better connectivity and green networks to link residential communities with the retail and commercial heart of the town and beyond into the country. This vision was based on extensive consultation which pressed the need for walking and cycling to have greater prominence. The Big Town Plan Partnership worked collaboratively in the submission of a Levelling Up Bid to government, part of which was looking at developing better connections within the town.

COVID Social Distancing measures were installed on the back of local pressure to create greater opportunities for walking and cycling into the town centre. This has resulted in a number of experimental orders that would never have been likely to have been delivered at such a pace. As COVID Social Distancing measures are on the cusp of being removed the local pressure to make these temporary measures more permanent is growing. This is backed by a large submission of comments to a Common Place Map, separate public consultation on the closure of the High Street, Common Place consultation on the development of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Masterplan draft and intensive discussions with the residents of Town Walls with regards to the development of the town's first Low Traffic Zone.

LCWIP: LTNs/Mini-Holland approach will be core to the development of a cycling and walking network plan for Shrewsbury. LCWIP will provide the framework for building the Mini-Holland programme.

Shrewsbury is designated as a **High-Growth area in the Shropshire Local Plan**, with the lion's share of new development on the western side of the town. Work has been done with developers promoting current local plan sites to work collaboratively to develop better networks and calls have been made for strong master planning to ensure developers collaborate on connectivity.

Shropshire Council is currently tendering for consultants to work on the development of **Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans** for the six key towns in the county.

Over the last couple of years flooding has become a growing problem with successive Februarys in 2020 and 2021 seeing in a 100 year flooding episodes which have blocked off the town centre to vehicular traffic.

There are widespread health and wellbeing issues, many of which have been exacerbated by COVID; these include obesity, traffic congestion and air pollution, climate change, class inequality and social isolation many of which can be targeted through such an initiative.

Recently the Priory School carried out a very successful Active Travel Initiative to encourage students to come to school by alternative means to the car.

Geographic Context

Our Mini-Holland bid has been developed by the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Partnership which over the past four years has worked with the community and stakeholders to develop a collective and ambitious vision for Shrewsbury. A Shrewsbury Mini-Holland project would be a huge step forward delivering on our objective of transforming movement to create a more connected, prosperous and healthy town.

Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Vision 2021 has a focus on the need to create better connectivity and green networks to link residential communities with the retail and commercial heart of the town. This vision was based on extensive consultation over the past year which has gathered support for big improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure. The Big Town Plan Partnership has also worked collaboratively on the submission of a Levelling Up Bid to government, part of which looks to improve other connections into the town.

COVID Social Distancing and Active Travel measures were installed at pace in June 2020 to create greater opportunities for walking and cycling into the town centre during the pandemic. These measures were developed by Shropshire Council and the Big Town Plan partnership and have been well supported by the public. There is significant public and business desire to keep and develop some of the measures on a permanent basis:

- CommonPlace Consultation Map on social distancing measures – 3670 contributions
- Public Survey on the closure of the High Street to motor vehicles – 1,505 responses
- CommonPlace consultation on Big Town Plan Masterplan Vision – 2359 contributions
- Movement & Recovery working group meeting regularly to bring together businesses, residents, bus operators/users, Councils to collectively develop plans

An **LCWIP** for Shrewsbury is currently being commissioned by Shropshire Council and this will provide the framework for developing our detailed Mini-Holland programme.

Shrewsbury is designated as a High-Growth area in the **Shropshire Local Plan**, with a large amount of proposed development on the western side of the town. Work is being carried out done with developers promoting current local plan sites to work collaboratively to develop better active travel connectivity which would be very well supported by a Mini Holland programme.

Flooding has become a growing problem with successive Februarys in 2020 and 2021 seeing in very significant flooding which blocked off the town centre to vehicular traffic and demonstrated the resilience of active travel.

There are widespread **health and wellbeing** issues within our local communities, many of which have been exacerbated by COVID; these include obesity, air pollution, climate change, class inequality and social isolation. Many of these issues would be targeted through a Shrewsbury Mini Holland programme.

Recently the Priory School (over 800 pupils) carried out an **Active Travel Week** to encourage students to travel to school by alternative means which had an 83% participation rate demonstrating the desire of our schools and communities to increase active travel.





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