

Shrewsbury in Bloom



Portfolio 2016



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Cover image Illumination of the Welsh Bridge in Shrewsbury by Hamish McKeown

A graphic design & illustration graduate, Hamish McKeown is a new media light and sound artist, animator and programmer who lives in Shropshire. His works range from intricate multi-projector interior and exterior installations to large-scale outdoor projection projects. He is the resident artist at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery and his works also include illumination of Liverpool Cathedral, projects at the JQ Festival in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and Gateshead's Enchanted Parks project. His most recent Shropshire illumination was for Shropshire Wildlife Trust 'Shrewsbury Green Spaces' illumination of the Old Market Hall www.hamishmckeown.com



Councillor Ioan Jones – Mayor of Shrewsbury

As the Mayor of Shrewsbury it is my great pleasure to welcome you to Shropshire's County Town. We are delighted to have this opportunity to once again showcase our horticultural prowess in the "original one off" that is Shrewsbury.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our enthusiastic Bloom Committee who, along with our sponsors and partners, work so hard throughout the year to make Shrewsbury a blooming great place to live, work and visit.

We take our reputation as the Town of Flowers very seriously and it's a mantle we strive to uphold 365-days a year.

We are extremely lucky that our medieval county town is most definitely one of those hidden gems in the English countryside, providing a wonderful backdrop against which we are able to showcase our fabulous floral displays.

I hope that you enjoy your visit to Shrewsbury and uncover some more of the wonderful sights that makes Shrewsbury the "Town of Flowers".



Keith Roberts – Chairman, Shrewsbury in Bloom

As chairman of Shrewsbury in Bloom I am extremely proud to welcome you to our beautiful town of flowers, especially as we return to the Heart of England in Bloom competition in the Small City category.

The Bloom Committee, alongside extremely supportive Town and Unitary Councils, has managed to embed the Bloom philosophy across everything the town does, touching so many areas of Shrewsbury and the people who live and work in the town.

For Shrewsbury, entering the Bloom competition is not just about winning a competition, we undertake our work year in, year out for our residents and visitors. Our main aim is to produce our floral displays for the height of our summer season and the visitors who come to our wonderful town for both the floral aspects and its history.

We are lucky to have so many community groups, organisations and individuals who work so diligently to uphold our prized floral reputation – these are the fantastic people that make Bloom happen every year. They include; Severnside Housing Association, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service, Severn Hospice, The Hive, Shropshire Council, Veolia, Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents Association, Shropshire Horticultural Society, the Environment Agency, the Allotment Associations and Tidy Shrewsbury.

Together these people, in conjunction with Shrewsbury Town Council, all help to make Shrewsbury **THE** Town of Flowers.



The Shrewsbury in Bloom Committee

- The Shrewsbury in Bloom committee meets on a regular basis all year round, but more frequently during the summer months, to help plan floral displays in and around the town. Income is generated from actively marketing, promoting and selling hanging baskets to local businesses in the town centre and by seeking floral sponsorship for roundabouts, planters and other floral beds.
- The committee is principally made up of volunteers from the local community and businesses. There are currently 7 volunteer members, 3 council officers and 2 councillors who work closely with all its partners to ensure the town always looks its best.
- The group's main objective is to act as a stakeholder for new ideas and projects to enhance the town.
- Shrewsbury currently has 32 business sponsors, which over the past twelve months (01/04/15—31/03/16), has generated an income of £22,289. A total of 271 commercial hanging baskets were sold last year, raising over £11,473 and numbers continue to rise year on year, despite the continuing austerity factors within the economy. We are delighted with the excellent response to our continuing collaboration with companies which is testament to the pride and commitment of local businesses here in Shrewsbury to the visual impact of the floral displays around the town.
- The town's sponsors range from franchises of large corporations to small, local independent companies and are as follows: Morris Properties; Veolia Environmental Services; Albright Hussey Manor Hotel & Restaurant; Crowmoor Primary School; Ironcraft of Shrewsbury; James Holyoak & Parker Limited; W R Pugh Undertakers; Marches Care Ltd; Ray Parry Playground Services; Alan Ward Furnishers; Greenthumb; Copthorne Road Vets; Sign & Poster; MiPower Limited; Bannatynes Health Club; Bluebird Care; Dyke Yaxley Solicitors; Cleartone Communications; Inocencia; GreenTek; Gild of Freeman of Shrewsbury; Kingsland Polymers; Whitecroft Fish & Chip Shop; First Car; Lunts The Chemist; Sign & Print; Oxon Touring Park; The Parade Shopping Centre; Salop Leisure; and McDonalds.
- The committee is dedicated to working with local primary schools and launched its own online educational programme, 'Get Schools Blooming' in 2011. The scheme aims to encourage and support local primary schools to create and actively use a school garden. Members of the committee are also actively involved in supporting their local schools and are happy to provide hands-on help and advice to young gardeners and also encourage schools to enter the various floral competitions supported by both Heart of England in Bloom and Shrewsbury Town Council.
- Shrewsbury in Bloom has its own website www.shrewsburyinbloom.co.uk which is updated on a regular basis and is used to promote projects, events and activities, display schools' work and announce winners of competitions.





Review of the Year

July 2015

- Judging for Shrewsbury in Bloom's annual school gardens competitions takes place with Shrewsbury High Prep School winning both the Unusual Floral Container and School's Wildlife Garden categories
- Shrewsbury BID welcomed the judges in the Heart of England in Bloom competition as part of their first BID category entry
- Hundreds of women took part in Severn Hospice's first Midnight Walk in the town, helping to raise much-needed funds for the charity
- Hermitage Gardens in Frankwell, Bowbrook Allotments and Severn Hospice are all judged in the Heart of England in Bloom "It's Your Neighbourhood" category

August 2015

- Horticultural staff from Shrewsbury Town Council were represented at the 128th Shrewsbury Flower Show with a stand reflecting the horticultural work undertaken in the town
- With a slight change in format to simplify the categories, judging was completed in Shrewsbury in Bloom's annual Town of Flowers competitions, with awards in both Commercial, Residential and Schools Categories
- Shrewsbury Folk Festival at the West Midlands Showground
- Shrewsbury Steam Engine & Vintage Vehicle Rally, now in its 53rd year, commemorated the centenary of the Sentinel factory being established in Shrewsbury

September 2015

- Shrewsbury Carnival & Show Annual Presentation evening to distribute funds raised to local charities and voluntary organisations
- Servicemen and women paraded through Shrewsbury to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain followed by a memorial service in St Chad's Church and wreath-laying in the Quarry Park
- Shrewsbury Market Hall celebrated its 50th anniversary with a ceremony attended by traders, civic leaders and local dignitaries
- Shrewsbury BID won Gold and the BID Category in the Heart of England in Bloom competition in their first entry into the vBloom competition
- Hermitage Community Garden in Frankwell was awarded a Level 4 – Thriving rating in the Heart of England It's Your Neighbourhood awards with their first entry in the competition
- Mayor of Shrewsbury, Councillor Miles Kenny and the Town Crier welcomed six wounded Armed Forces veterans to the town as they passed the halfway point in their gruelling 1,000-mile charity trek in aid of Walking with the Wounded, with the local branch of the charity in Shropshire handing over a cheque for £5,391

October 2015

- Spring bedding planting programme completed in the early part of the month
- Christmas lights erected around the town
- Shrewsbury residents are invited to have their say in a public consultation over the future of the play area within the town's Quarry Park
- Fifty community activists launched a campaign to win £1m funding as part of Sainsbury's "Waste Less, Save More" promotion to help make Shrewsbury the greenest and cleanest town in the UK
- Shrewsbury's Charity Christmas Card Shop launched at St Mary's Church, with 42 national, regional and local charities signed up to showcase their festive goods



November 2015

- Shrewsbury paid tribute to all the men and women who died serving their country in the annual Remembrance Sunday service at St Chad's preceded by a parade from the Castle through the town
- The community came together to celebrate the Christmas lights switch-on which included Father Christmas on his sleigh in the Square as well as bands, carol singers and choirs all joining in the fun around the town to entertain the crowds and herald the start of "late-night shopping" in the town
- Bulb planting sessions held by Councillors around the town

December 2015

- Shrewsbury's annual pantomime at the Theatre Severn started its longer than usual seven-week run with Dick Whittington, with over 40,000 people snapping up tickets to enjoy the festive performances.
- December saw the first anniversary of the re-introduction of the Shropshire to London direct rail service
- The first Christmas Festival in the Quarry Park with over 150 food and craft producers with items for the festive season together with carol singing and even an ice rink
- With milder weather this year, more than 4,000 people gathered in the Square for the annual Christmas Carol Concert, which is broadcast live on BBC Radio Shropshire and online the week before Christmas. For the first time, the event was also broadcast inside the Shrewsbury Market Hall via large TV screens where shoppers could also enjoy mulled wine and mince pies
- With unusually heavy rain over the winter, flood barriers along the River Severn were erected



January 2016

- Residents were encouraged to vote for the town as one of five locations shortlisted by Monopoly chiefs in a race to have the proposed new board game named after Shrewsbury, which was up against Gloucester, Royal Leamington Spa, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick
- National Cyclocross Championships held at Shrewsbury Sports Village

February 2016

- Professional women's tennis returned to Shrewsbury in the Aegon GB Pro-Series at The Shrewsbury Club
- Flood barriers erected in Shrewsbury in the wake of heavy rain from Storm Imogen leading to the highest flood levels seen over the winter
- Shrewsbury was awarded Purple Flag status for its night time economy, which is the gold standard for town and city centres at night and reflects the hard work of Team Shrewsbury partners to make Shrewsbury a desirable, and safe, night-time destination for people of all ages

March 2016

- Shrewsbury's inaugural 10k run in the town centre attracted hundred's of runners and was started by the county's celebrity chef, Marcus Bean
- Taiwan's ambassador to the UK visited Shropshire businesses as part of an effort to build trading links between the county and the Asian country
- Shrewsbury Magistrate's Court closed its doors for the final time





May 2016

- Annual Town Council and Mayor Making ceremony held at the Walker Theatre which saw Councillor Ioan Jones sworn in as Mayor of Shrewsbury
- Current and former Mayors, dignitaries, officials and civic leaders paraded through the town from the Castle to St Chad's Church for the annual Mayor's Sunday Service
- Annual Town Meeting held at the Guildhall
- Shrewsbury Regatta held on the River Severn with over 2,000 competitors taking to the water in what is one of the oldest events in the rowing calendar, having started in 1871
- Shropshire County Agricultural and Horse Show, one of the oldest surviving agricultural shows in the country, held at the County Showground
- The third Cycle Grand Prix held on the streets of the town
- Open evening at Shrewsbury Town Council's Weeping Cross Centre where sponsors and members of the public were invited to get a glimpse of the "behind the scenes" work which helps to make Shrewsbury the "Town of Flowers"

June 2016

- Great Service of Thanksgiving for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday held at Shrewsbury Abbey
- Official opening of the new Splash Park in the Quarry
- Hanging baskets were installed and summer planting undertaken around the town
- Shrewsbury River Festival
- Race for Life with over 900 women taking part in the Quarry
- Shrewsbury Carnival and Show with a theme of "Carnival goes to the Movies"
- Shrewsbury's fourth half marathon around the town with nearly 2,000 participants
- Fourth Shrewsbury Food Festival in the Quarry

April 2016

- The grounds of Shrewsbury Castle were overtaken by a stunning sea of metal forget-me-nots as part of a Severn Hospice Appeal
- The first Shropshire Kids Festival held in the Quarry Park with over 100 activities and workshops throughout the weekend
- To mark the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death, a full programme of events was organised in the town with music, songs, performances and recitals to entertain shoppers, who also had an opportunity to perform their favourite piece of Shakespearean text in front of the cameras for a YouTube film called "Shrewsbury Shakespeare Day Selfies"
- The Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire lit a beacon in the Square to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's 90th Birthday
- The annual Mayor's awards were held at the Guildhall, with 4 bronze, 13 silver, 35 gold and 9 Special Awards presented to local unsung heroes who selflessly give their time to help their local communities
- On the first day of the cricket season, gardeners had to protect their tender plants from the onslaught of an Arctic blast with snow, hail and unseasonal frost



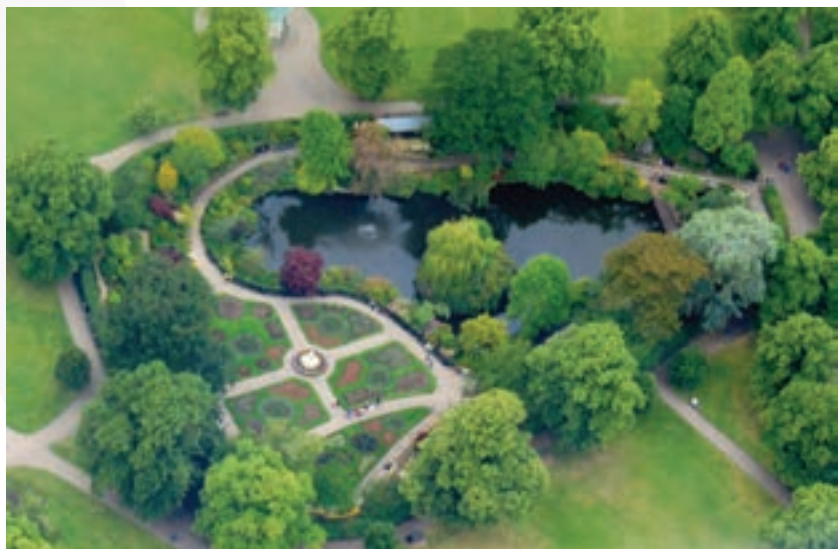


Illustrating your Achievements

Horticultural Achievement

A1 Impact

- The Dingle Garden offers a highly visual floral impact throughout the year and is planted with a wide variety of trees, shrubs and seasonal flowers which never fail to delight the visitors to this horticultural haven of tranquillity.
- The flower bed at the castle provides an annual focal point for visitors, with a new planting scheme each year. With centenary commemorations of the First World War continuing, the theme this year focuses on “those we left behind” highlighting the important role played by the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD).
- The Town Council reviews its planting schemes each year with a view to including as wide a variety of plant species as possible from seasonal bedding plants to sustainable plants where appropriate with the aim of providing both colourful and memorable displays.



- As part of the Town Council's continuing drive to introduce a variety of new features into its displays around the town, an additional 10 bollard planters were ordered, which brings the total of these displays to 60 and will help to improve the floral displays around the town.
- The colourful floral displays around the town are planted in 6 darleks, 160 floral pole planters, 100 railing inserts, 50 troughs, 6 large tiers, 277 commercially-sold hanging baskets as well as the 150 hanging baskets installed by the Town Council. In all, these displays help to enhance the historic town centre for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.



A2 Horticultural Practice

- Shrewsbury Town Council purchased 12,000 bulbs as part of its spring bedding programme, all of which have been planted at various locations around the town, including schools, local parks and banks along main roads into the town.
- As part of its fleet of maintenance vehicles, Shrewsbury Town Council has purchased a number of vehicles to expand on its existing stock including a new John Deere Gator (12,500) which will be used to service the pocket parks around the town as well as the mowing of the Abbey Church grounds and general handyman jobs; a three-man working platform costing £1,200 can be attached to the front of the tractor to enable Town Council staff to put out the hanging baskets and assist with tree work in the winter months; a Thwaites 1.5 ton dumper at a cost of £16,850 to help with grave digging together with a Vauxhall Movano 3½ ton tipper van (£14,700) for the rural round and Bloom preparations and will also be used for the winter tree barking of the shrub beds. The grounds maintenance of the Golf Course is aided with the purchase of a John Deere Fairway mower (£41,500) and a new greens mower (16,950).
- The Town Council uses a dedicated area at its Weeping Cross depot to enable it to grow its own trees and shrubs, where the cuttings will ensure it is self-sufficient in producing its own stock for its displays and will prove to be cost-effective in the longer-term.



A3 Residential and Community Gardening

- Allotments in Shrewsbury are organised through devolved management by local Allotment Associations, of which there are twelve in the town. With the increasing popularity of people wanting to “grow their own”, there are waiting lists for each of the sites spread over 40 acres.



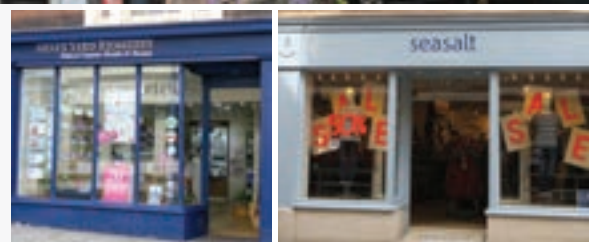
- The Shrewsbury in Bloom Committee actively encourages residents to enter its annual Town of Flowers competition with categories that involve schools, residential front gardens, allotments and business premises. The Mayor of Shrewsbury visits the winning schools to present their certificates, prizes and trophies whilst other winners are invited to the Mayor's Parlour for an informal prize-giving ceremony.

- Hermitage Gardens in Frankwell offers local residents a chance to come together as a community and use the facilities for both recreation and gardening. Last year saw the community enter the Heart of England in Bloom It's Your Neighbourhood category for the first time, where they were awarded Level 4 – Thriving for their first entry in the competition.



A4 Business Areas and Premises

- It is encouraging to see that local businesses support the Town Council's hanging basket scheme with year-on-year increases in sales. With another record-breaking 271 hanging baskets sold to businesses last year, this year sees 277 adorning the business buildings around the town centre as well as a number of companies who have their own private displays.
- Shropshire's county town is bucking the national trend for the closure of shops, where more multi-branch retailers have opened than closed, with High Street names including Neal's Yard and Seasalt opening in the town centre.
- With the re-introduction of a direct rail service between Shropshire and London by Virgin Trains, the first twelve months saw more than 80,000 passengers using the route to the capital with business users travelling to London as well as visitors arriving in the county town to help boost the tourist economy.
- With an investment amounting to around £5m, a new winery and vineyard has been given the go ahead on land at Hencote Farm in Cross Hill, which will see a visitor centre and restaurant being built to provide facilities for conferences, weddings and private functions, with up to 25 full-time jobs being created which could increase to 60 posts on a seasonal basis. It is anticipated that up to 80,000 bottles of wine will be produced each year once the vineyard is fully operational.
- Marks & Spencer opened a new Foodhall and café at Meole Brace Retail Park, bringing 50 jobs to Shrewsbury.
- Sainsbury opened a "Local" store on the site of the former ambulance station on Abbey Foregate, creating 24 jobs.
- The Co-operative supermarket chain is to open a new store as part of the expansion of Shrewsbury Business Park, creating 20 jobs and will serve customers from both the business park and nearby residential properties.
- Shropshire's first Enterprise Zone has seen a revitalisation of the Riverside Mall in the town centre with full occupancy of the units with a variety of organisations, including start-up businesses, charities and social enterprise groups, which has created new jobs and training opportunities for the long-term unemployed, young people and individuals over 50 as well as those with disabilities and other health-related conditions.
- Shrewsbury Town Football Club has been given the go-ahead to expand its non-football events programme at the Greenhous Stadium, which could see major name stars perform at the site, which could help to boost the local economy.
- A Harvester restaurant has opened in Shrewsbury, creating 40 new jobs.



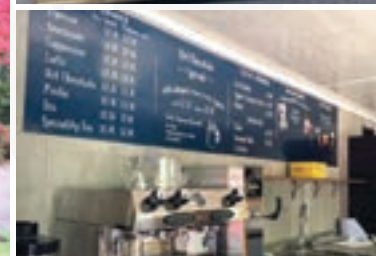
- Salop Leisure has been granted planning permission for a £2m scheme for a caravan site with 120 pitches at their Head Office in Emstrey. With a fishing pool, reception block and warden's accommodation, it is hoped that around eight jobs will be created and help to bring more visitors to the town.

- Work has begun on a £3.3m development to provide almshouses for elderly people on an unused site at Horse Fair, Abbey Foregate, providing 25 homes from the Shrewsbury Drapers' Company. They are the first almshouses to be built in the town by the Drapers' Company for 50 years and will meet a growing need for such accommodation to allow elderly people to live independently in the community.
- The former cold store for Shrewsbury's Cattle Market on Whitchurch Road has been given a multi-million pound makeover and is now operating as one of the county's largest independent breweries with all production carried out on site. The Battlefield Brewery shop opened at Easter and there are plans for a bar and restaurant in the summer of 2016.
- The University of Chester opened its doors to students in September 2015 with around 90 students choosing to study at the new University Centre Shrewsbury based in the Guildhall. Applications for the 2016 intake are substantially higher. The University forges strong links with the local community and businesses with a programme of public events, including talks on Darwin's childhood garden, the Roundheads in Shropshire and the evolution of the musical brain.



A5 Green Spaces

- The Quarry Park, which is owned and managed by Shrewsbury Town Council, is a valuable green space close to the centre of town. There is a full programme of events held throughout the year on the 29 acre site to suit all ages and tastes, including music concerts, the annual Shrewsbury Flower Show, Shrewsbury Food Festival, the circus and fairground attractions. The ever-popular Saturday morning Park Run regularly attracts over 400 participants each weekend with plans to introduce a junior event.
- As well as planned events, the Quarry is a recreational hub for residents and visitors alike, where the spectacular landscaped gardens in the Dingle are a favourite for many people.
- The Town Council has given permission for a refurbished freight container to be installed in the Quarry Park which has been converted into a café for the use of visitors to the facility.



- Shrewsbury Town Council has invested £375,000 in a new play park at the existing children's site in the Quarry. Despite a wet winter, work was completed on time and the revamp transformed the facilities into Darwin's Islands of Adventure. The design, which was chosen by Shrewsbury residents after an extensive public consultation, incorporates traditional play equipment such as slides and swings, as well as fountains and water features which were built in place of the old paddling pool. Much of the existing equipment will be retained, refurbished and recycled for use in other Town Council playgrounds. The former paddling pool has been completely removed, along with a section of hedging to open up the area. A brand new pump house and new pipe work was installed for the exciting new splash park.
- Shrewsbury Town Council has made improvements to its key play scheme, which allows Shrewsbury residents access to sporting facilities that are not normally manned or available for public use during the day. Previously, access had been via a gate key which required a £10 deposit which is no longer required as access is now via a key code. The facilities and locations included in the scheme are: Monkmoor Recreation Ground with three tarmac tennis courts; Silks Meadow's two grass tennis courts and one crown green; Saint Michaels Recreation Ground with one grass tennis court and All Saints' three grass tennis courts and two crown greens.
- Using funding provided by local developers under the S106 Agreements, the Town Council has been able to completely redevelop the play area at Greenfields. The children from Greenfields Primary School helped to design the play area and the facility has been well used since it was opened last autumn.
- Shrewsbury Town Council is responsible for the maintenance of the majority of playing fields, recreation grounds and open spaces in the town. In addition, over 120 miles of highway verges and hedges are trimmed and the Town Council looks after in excess of 30,000 trees throughout the town.
- The Town Council manages more than 250 acres of Countryside land within the town boundary. Many of these sites are Special Sites of Scientific Interest, local nature reserves and community woodlands.
- Shrewsbury Town Council maintains over 50 play facilities in the town centre. The Town Council has been working with Beacon Cricket Club with the construction of a two-bay practice net facility which will be available for local clubs using the County Ground as well as the general public. In addition, the Town Council has spent £20,000 on completely relaying the pitch at the County Ground.
- The Town Council has been working with the Lawn Tennis Association at Monkmoor with the LTA loaning the facility the Davis Cup. Plans are in hand to provide 10-week family coaching sessions and it is anticipated that the Tennis Club will become a Community Tennis facility.



- Monkmoor Bowling Club has modified and refurbished an old shipping container which will be used as a clubhouse and paid for an electricity connection to the building. The Town Council has been working with local clubs, and whilst funds are extremely limited from local government, the Town Council has overseen the works and gave permission for the building to be erected.
- Shrewsbury Town Council owns a number of Recreation Grounds with sports pavilions, football pitches and cricket wickets, bowling greens, tennis courts and croquet lawns, which are used by many local teams in the Shrewsbury area. Improvements have been made to the drainage system at the Boiler House football pitch, and working with the Lawn Tennis Association, the Town Council has improved the tennis courts at Monkmoor Recreation Ground. As new housing developments take place throughout the town, new opportunities for sports provision are being looked at with the Town Council ensuring that an 8-hectare site has been made available for future recreation/educational use in the west side of the town.



Illustrating your Achievements

Environmental Responsibility

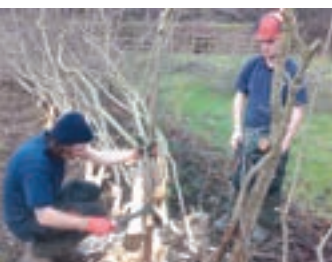
B1 Conservation and Biodiversity

- With low river levels in early November, there were a number of sightings of salmon clearing the weir at Castlefields as part of their normal migration back to their spawning grounds further up the river at Lake Vyrnwy and Llyn Clywedog, providing a good indication that the River Severn has a healthy salmon population.
- Shropshire Wildlife Trust staff were kept busy with the antics of a large dog otter enjoying the River Severn and its fish supplies in close proximity to the English Bridge.
- A tree inventory has recently been undertaken across the town of Shrewsbury using methods prescribed by the i-tree eco system (USDA Forestry Service). This assessment has provided important information about the extent, condition and value of the current stock of trees and woodland within the urban area. This information will be invaluable in directing future management decisions concerning these assets and will ensure that the town's trees are managed in a way that both maximises their benefits and is sustainable for future generations.
- Grazing animals play a vital role in conserving the species-rich grasslands of Shrewsbury. In previous years, grazing animals have been able to walk down to the brooks in what are known as 'cattle drinks' – fenced areas that stick out into the water and allow the animals to drink, which require digging out every year, and also allow a lot of cattle manure to wash into the water, causing low oxygen levels.

With grant funding from the Severn Rivers Trust, Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Unit has installed several pasture pumps onto the meadows they maintain. These are simple pumps operated by the cattle, who didn't take long to get the hang of the new system. Now the cattle have a source of water, and the Countryside Unit has been able to close off the brooks and improve the quality of the local watercourses.



- Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Sites are being seeded with wild plants to provide a wide range of nectar rich plants for insects.



- Trainees and volunteers have been learning the traditional art of hedge laying by helping out at the Rea Brook Valley Local Nature Reserve with the Town Council's Countryside Unit. Hedgelaying involves thinning and partially cutting through the stems of an existing hedge, which prevents it from becoming sparse, and provides cover for wildlife as it grows. This method was used to stock proof fields for hundreds of years before people started to use fences. The number of hedgerows in the UK is thought to have declined by about 50% since the 1950's due to intensive farming and neglect, so by passing this skill on to others, the Countryside Unit can help to safeguard them for the future. Although the hedge line looks bare for the first year, there are several hedges along the reserve that are now thick and green, having been laid a few years ago.

- As it is now about 20 years since Shrewsbury's eight Community Woodlands were planted, they now need to be 'thinned' to maintain a balance of tree species and understory vegetation. The fast growing species such as Ash and Cherry are dominating the canopies whilst the Oaks and Hawthorns are suffering and declining in number as they struggle to compete for space and die. The closed canopies have also resulted in bare ground underneath the trees, which is of little benefit to wildlife. By selectively removing and coppicing trees, Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Unit can let light in to the woodland floor and ensure the long term health of the area by having a wide variety of species and ages of trees.

The timber is sold to a local firewood dealer to offset the cost of the land management, although some of the material is left in the woodland for habitat

- Because of the many recent developments around the Old Canal site, Natural England require the Town Council's Countryside Unit to monitor the population of Great Crested Newts there. Alongside staff from Shropshire Council's Natural Environment team, 'bottle traps' were laid out late in the evenings, and returned early in the morning to count them and ensure they are released unharmed. The Countryside Unit's staff hold a special licence to do this. Over 100 newts were found in a single survey during April for the first time in 5 years, which means that the population is officially classed as 'large' by Natural England.



- Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Unit has been working together with Shropshire Council's Outdoor Partnerships team and Shropshire Wildlife Trust to rebuild a vehicle access onto the Town Council's site off The Mount, which enables the Unit to maintain their land efficiently, as well as allowing Shropshire Council access to the Severn Way, and the Wildlife Trust access to their new 'Darwin's Garden' site. This kind of partnership working allows all parties to pool money, resources and expertise without the need to use contractors. A new gateway at the bottom of the site will prevent livestock from straying up the path, and the reinforced revetments will support the Unit's tractors and 4x4's.

- Longden Road Cemetery was established in the 1850's and the oldest part contains many traditional memorials with some great examples of memorial masonry. Having been used as a cemetery since Victorian times, the grounds have escaped being sprayed with herbicides, insecticides and fertilisers, and as a consequence, a rich diversity of wildlife can be found in the cemetery. Amongst the many species of grasses, wildflowers and fungi found there, expert wildlife surveyors have made a number of interesting finds such as Tor grass, unrecorded elsewhere in Shropshire and fungi with fantastic names such as Parrot Waxcap, Russet Toughshanks and Stinking Dapperling.

The density and mixture of species present in the cemetery has amazed wildlife surveyors and has led to the oldest part of the cemetery being designated as a new local wildlife site since April 2015.

Shropshire Council, which owns the cemetery, has joined forces with a Shropshire-based charity, Caring for God's Acre, to set up a Friends of Longden Road Cemetery group. Together with the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, the group hosts a number of events each year plus volunteer work party days at the cemetery. Tasks such as wildlife recording, scrub and sapling management, scything and raking are carried out to augment the work done by Shrewsbury Town Council who are contracted to maintain the cemetery grounds. The Friends group has grown steadily since its start and makes good use of Facebook to communicate what is happening at the cemetery.



B2 Resource Management

- The Environment Agency has allocated £350,000 of initial funding towards a six-year “Slow the Flow” project to help create “sustainable drainage systems” in the Battlefield area of Shrewsbury. The scheme, organised by Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Shropshire Council, includes the creation of landscape features that capture and slowly release surface water before it reaches Shropshire’s rivers and causes flooding further downstream. It is also expected that wildlife habitats will be created in this new landscape as well as reduce the flow of sediment into the county’s rivers.

- Shropshire Council has installed 496 solar panels on the roof of Shirehall which will generate a source of income and will help to reduce electricity bills at the site by £16,000 a year. The solar panels will produce 8% of the total electrical energy needed to run the council building. The £180,000 project will also give the council £1,000 from feed-in-tariff payments and are expected to have covered the costs in about 10 years. The energy production will reduce the council’s carbon footprint by about 7,400kg CO2 a year.

This scheme brings the total solar energy capacity throughout the Shropshire Council estate to over 1MWp, saving approximately 2.5MWh of electricity and 1,342,000 kg CO2 - equivalent to the water boiled for 123,427,950 cups of tea, or the electricity used by 520 typical houses per year since 2012.



- Municipal waste management activities in the Shrewsbury area are provided by Shropshire Council through a long-term contract with Veolia Environmental Services Limited to around 46,000 homes in the area with more than 3.5 million individual collections each year, collecting over 37,000 tonnes of domestic waste last year.
- The collection service allows residents to recycle paper, cans, glass, plastics and household batteries, with a separate in vessel collection of garden waste which is taken for composting on local farms to create a soil improver. The scheme is supported by over 30 public recycling areas at community venues around the town and includes the state-of-the-art, award-winning £4.5m Battlefield Household Waste Recycling Centre in the north of the town. In the 2015/16 financial year, residents in the Shropshire Council area recycled or composted well over 50% of the domestic waste produced.
- Shropshire Council and Veolia’s flagship energy recovery facility built on the outskirts of Shrewsbury is set for an official opening later in 2016, and recovers energy from around 90,000 tonnes of municipal waste each year, generating enough electricity, partly from a renewable source, to meet the needs of around 10,000 homes annually.
- The purpose built, multi-million pound, modern, clean building with a controlled indoor environment, means that all waste handling is under cover and out of sight, in a 5,200 m2, 14m high building. The design takes advantage of the natural slope of the ground, incorporating a split-level design so that the public and bulking operations are kept safely apart.
- The state-of-the-art Household Recycling Centre in the north of the town features “green measures” which include:
 - Energy efficient lighting complemented by south-facing roof lights to maximise use of daylight;
 - Heating in the main office is provided using a ground source heat pump using over 300m of buried pipe to take advantage of the earth’s natural warmth;
 - Rainwater is harvested and used for toilet flushing and wash-down facilities, resulting in further CO2 savings;
 - The facility has been designed using Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, with a storm water balancing pond, interceptor, buried storm water attenuation tanks and a man-made wetland area which helps wildlife;
 - The exterior was architecturally designed to present an attractive view from the neighbouring enterprise park. Landscaping enhances ecology along the Battlefield Brook and links with surrounding developments;
 - The design incorporates tight controls on emissions to the environment, particularly odour, dust and bio-particulates. It includes automatic fast-open/close doors and provision for air extraction and filtration system.
- Last year, Shropshire Council recycled 52.4% of the domestic waste produced in the Shrewsbury area, which is well ahead of the UK average and puts the town in the upper quartile for recycling performance for local authorities in the UK.
- Alongside the expansion of recycling in the county, it is expected that household waste going to landfill will be reduced from 65% to 5% with the new Energy Recovery Facility.

- From May 2016, Shropshire Council and Veolia introduced food waste collections in the Shrewsbury area for the first time. Residents have been provided with kitchen caddies, caddy liners and information on how to take part. Residents can now put their food waste in their garden waste wheelie bins and the contents are collected together for treatment locally by in-vessel composting. This service is set to be introduced in other parts of the county over the coming months.
- To encourage residents to make sure that their recycling is correctly sorted, a “£6,000 Recycling Prize Pot Campaign” has been introduced in 2016 to reward households that have recycled all their materials correctly. Each month a Shrewsbury address is selected at random to win £100 which they can donate to a charity of their choice. Locally, the Severn Hospice has been the recipient of a number of donations as a result of this competition.
- Shropshire Council will be launching a new collection service for cardboard for Shrewsbury residents in October 2016, which will see paper and cardboard collected together for recycling. Shrewsbury will be the first area in Shropshire to use the scheme with the remainder of the county set to follow soon after. These measures are set to increase recycling and composting rates for the town.
- Each year Veolia runs a campaign recommending residents put out their real Christmas trees so they can be collected for composting. To encourage residents to participate in the scheme, Veolia nominates a local charity to be the beneficiary of a donation equivalent to the money saved by composting these trees rather than sending them to landfill. In 2016, Caring for God’s Acre benefitted from a £3,000 donation.
- Shropshire Council has expanded the range of plastics it collects for recycling in Shrewsbury to include plastic pots, tubs and trays, which has resulted in an increase in plastic recycling of 25% in the town since the kerbside collection was introduced, resulting in less waste being sent to landfill sites.
- Shropshire Council, working in partnership with Veolia and national charity, Garden Organic, has developed a network of volunteer “master composters” in the area, who encourage people to make their own compost. A two-day foundation course is held at Shirehall with the second day being held at Ryton Organic Gardens in Coventry at various times throughout the year. The course covers all elements of the home composting process including an in-depth look at the types of materials that make successful compost. Once qualified, volunteers go out and about across the county to talk to groups about how to compost at home.
- There are a number of Bring sites across the area - recycling banks in accessible locations which offer recycling facilities for a variety of different materials and are located at supermarkets and car parks in the town.



- Hair salon Toni & Guy in the town centre is in the running for being the most eco-friendly hair salon in the region. They have been awarded a Silver Standard Certificate in the Green Achievers Scheme, a national accreditation for UK business. They recycle foils, colour tubes and bottles which are particularly harmful to the environment. They also recycle paper, plastic, glass, cardboard and batteries. In addition, they encourage their customers to refill their shampoo bottles instead of buying new.
- With the Town Council receiving £85,000 from the Unilateral Agreement for the installation of the Solar Farm at Sundorne, members of the Town Council have been keen to see some of these funds directed towards renewal energy schemes, including the possibility of having solar panels at the Town Council’s Weeping Cross Depot.
- Severn Trent Water is undertaking an extensive programme of works to ensure that water supplies in the town are more reliable. As part of a £2.1m investment in the infrastructure project the company has conducted extensive consultation with residents.
- Shrewsbury Town Council’s Arbor team, responsible for the management of 20,000 trees in the town, chip any tree waste, which in turn, is used as mulch for water retention on the town’s shrub beds.
- Shrewsbury Town Council harvests water from the roof of its 4,000m² greenhouse into a 70,000 litre water tank. The water is used for both watering the plants in its greenhouse, as well as the many planters and hanging baskets throughout the town.
- All green waste in Shrewsbury is processed by Agripost Limited which processes up to 15,000 tonnes every year, helping to reduce landfill and make a high quality compost to spread on their land.



B3 Local Heritage

- Shrewsbury's Grade II Listed Victorian railway station is set to receive a major revamp as part of plans to boost its role as a gateway to the town and improve facilities for rail travellers. The programme of works is set to cost in the region of £2m and is expected to be completed within five years. There is also a pledge of £800,000 to fund improvements on the Dana footbridge at the station.
- The Grade I Listed St Chad's Church has been awarded £220,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund towards crucial repairs to the building's roof. Work needs to be undertaken on the church's unusual circular nave and vestibule, the stonework of the cornice and insulation above the ceiling, with costs set to rise to £300,000. Additional funds have been secured from the Friends of St Chad's Memorial Fund, the Owen Family Trust and the Listed Places of Work Grant Scheme and will enable the venue to continue to be used for community, civic, education and tourism projects as well as a place of worship.
- Shrewsbury's iconic 200-year-old Grade II* listed Lord Hill statue, which was built between 1814 and 1816 in honour of General Rowland Lord Hill who served as one of Wellington's commanders at the Battle of Waterloo, has undergone extensive work in recent years, but the statue is starting to show cracks at the top. A campaign has been started to raise £500,000 to replace the statue to minimise the ongoing expenses from repairs to the landmark.
- Grade II Listed buildings in Belmont built in 1800, forming part of Shrewsbury's landmark Roman Catholic Cathedral, are to get a £750,000 overhaul, including a café, heritage centre and improved parking. The Cathedral, which was consecrated in 1856, will also undergo major works which will improve access with new steps and a platform lift, together with the installation of wrought iron and cast iron railings and new gates.



- After the closure of HMP Shrewsbury in March 2013, the site was bought by the Osborne Group with a view to redeveloping the historic buildings into a mixed-use location following a theme of "Shrewsbury's Walled Garden". Whilst plans are being finalised, the prison has been transformed into a visitor attraction, offering tours, prison escape days and school events. Ghost tours of the prison will also take place in the evenings. Sky 1 drama "Lucky Man", starring James Nesbitt, used the former prison site for some of its scenes. There has been a prison on the site since 1793, the original building being constructed by Thomas Telford from plans by Shrewsbury architect John Hiram Haycock; the present prison building was constructed in 1877. The prison took female convicts until 1922.

- As part of the continuing renovation work of the internationally-important Flax Mill Maltings site, a new multi-million pound state-of-the-art visitor centre has been opened with funding amounting to £2.3m from Historic England as well as grants from the European Regional Development Fund. The new centre comprises a reception, interpretation displays, film and audio material and learning resources, allowing members of the public to learn about the building's architectural and social history. The Main Mill was built in 1797 and, as the world's first iron-framed building, is the forerunner of the modern skyscraper.

B4 Local Environmental Quality

- The Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents' Association hold monthly litter picks in the town centre. They invite members of the public, including the Police, local retailers as well as the Mayor of Shrewsbury and local Councillors to come along and join them. All volunteers receive a free cup of coffee from Starbucks in the town centre as a "thank you".
- Tidy Shrewsbury is a group of volunteers who take pride in the town by ensuring that it is kept clean and presented in the best light for both residents and visitors. They hold regular meetings and organise litter picks as well as teaching good practice in schools.
- Organisations in the town are working together as part of the Team Shrewsbury initiative to develop an enhanced co-ordinated approach amongst various stakeholders to address anti-social behaviour, creating a safer environment and encouraging visitors to visit, dwell and ultimately spend; utilising respective stakeholders' strengths it is intended this approach to be proactive involving local people and the business community.



- Shrewsbury does not have a major problem with graffiti, but there are instances when it does occur. Pupils from Sundorne School together with staff from the Sports Village and Tesco helped with the removal of graffiti at the Sundone Day of Action.
- Having taken over the management of the Market Hall building earlier in the year, Shropshire Council was successful in attracting a number of "pop-up" shops into previously empty units and helping to breathe new life into the area. A Carluccio's Christmas shop, a new bar/restaurant and a pop-up wedding dress and celebration wear retailer were among four businesses to take over the empty premises in Shoplatch.
- Cycle Shrewsbury is Shropshire Council's campaign to get more people cycling more often in Shrewsbury. The annual Bike Fest at Shrewsbury Sports Village encourages people to pop along for taster sessions and general information on a fun day for families. The organisation also has its own Facebook page to keep their members up-to-date with the latest news and events.

- The Town Council's Countryside Unit strives to keep all of its sites tidy and free of litter and collects approximately 300 bin bags of litter in a year.





B5 Pride of Place

- Shrewsbury has been named the second happiest place to live in the UK and first in the West Midlands in a national survey that quizzed people on how content they are with their home and community.
- Despite continuing pressures on local spending, Shropshire Council manages the street furniture in the town, ensuring that it is well maintained and regularly painted to keep it in good condition.
- Shrewsbury Town Council continues to play its part in enhancing Shrewsbury's visitor experience and promotes a "Team Shrewsbury" approach amongst its partners and stakeholders. The Town Council supported local businesses in developing a Business Improvement District within the town centre and much of that organisation's remit is centred around marketing and promoting Shrewsbury as a visitor destination.
- Shrewsbury Town Council has negotiated £2.2m worth of contribution with numerous developers around the town for the maintenance of their greenspace on any new developments for the benefit of new residents.
- The Shrewsbury BID has acted as a lead partner, together with Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council, in commissioning the Wayfinding System for the town which includes the development of a royalty-free map. The Local Enterprise Partnership has ring-fenced £200,000 towards a programme of wayfinding for Shrewsbury. The first phase of the commissioned work is nearing completion although there are still some areas of the system that need to be finalised before it can be adopted within the town.



- A recent edition of BBC1's Countryfile featured the stunning new mural in the Rea Brook Valley Local Nature Reserve. Local artist Matt Sewell was joined by presenter Ellie Harrison to paint the redwings and fieldfares and discuss his other work.



Illustrating your Achievements

Community Participation

C1 Development and Continuity

- Shrewsbury Town Council encourages local organisations to submit applications for grants to help them achieve their aims and objectives. The Council awards grants to local groups and national bodies with an independent branch based in the Shrewsbury Town Council area, which provides support to the residents of the Parish of Shrewsbury. Awards have been made to the following organisations over the last twelve months: Shrewsbury's Interfaith Forum; Fairness, Respect, Equality Shropshire (FRESH) Ltd; Forever Invasion Ltd; 16th Shrewsbury Guides; Shrewsbury Heritage Ltd; Shrewsbury Baptist Church (Senior Moments); Rainbow Film Festival; Omega the National Association for End of Life Care and Arts for Health, South Staffordshire & Shropshire Healthcare.
- Each year Shrewsbury Town Council takes on a university student for a 'sandwich placement' year. Whilst studying for a degree or HND in a conservation or countryside based subject, the year out allows them to gain hands-on experience and a range of formal training certificates. Statistics from universities show that these students tend to do better in their final year and have a much higher success rate in gaining relevant employment when they leave university. The scheme has been running for 16 years, and former students have gone on to work for Tilhill, the Forestry Commission, the Wildlife Trusts, the Environment Agency, the RSPB as well as the Town Council. Of the recent students, Jim has been taken on to the permanent workforce having completed his degree.



C2 Communication and Education

- Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Unit has been working with 'Futures' group from Severndale School. A group of young people from the school has been helping the Unit to surface paths at Copthorne Park on a weekly basis until the summer as part of their course.
- The Shrewsbury in Bloom Committee is actively engaged in encouraging schools around the town to become involved in various competitions, including the annual Town of Flowers competition, as well as the Mayor's Awards, through nominations and inter-school competitions.
- Shrewsbury High Prep's School opened a new garden, which has been a labour of love for the staff, children and parents over the last year. As a partner school in the Shrewsbury area of the RHS last year, the initiative inspired it to create a gardening community and includes a wildflower meadow, a heritage orchard, a sensory garden, and wildlife habitat and an extended vegetable patch.
- Shrewsbury Town Council hosts a disabled group of people who visit the greenhouse to help with various jobs around the place, including planting and watering.
- The Shrewsbury in Bloom Committee communicates with schools through their own dedicated section on the Town Council's website, which has details of its "Get Schools Blooming" education pack. Using new social media routes, communication also takes place via Shrewsbury Town Council's Facebook and Twitter pages.

- With strong links to various media groups around the region including Shropshire Live, the Shropshire Star, Shrewsbury Chronicle and Radio Shropshire, the Town Council is able to promote activities throughout the year. This includes a live broadcast by BBC Radio Shropshire from the Square as part of the annual “Carols in the Square” celebrations. Shrewsbury Town Council’s in-house Press Officer regularly sends out press releases to keep the public informed about local events in Shrewsbury and helps to develop the social media side of communications by encouraging interaction and feedback from the public.
- Students on a public services course have been helping Shrewsbury Town Council’s Countryside Unit with their winter work. A 16-strong team spent the day laying woodchip on the muddy paths and helping with thinning in the woodland at Mousecroft. As well as a change of scene from the classroom, they also get an insight into the workings of a public-facing team. The group will continue to attend volunteer days with the Countryside Unit over the summer.
- Shropshire Council, in conjunction with Veolia in Shropshire Limited, offers a number of schemes to Shrewsbury’s schools to help them minimise waste and recycle more. These include offering schools a free composting bin and advice on how to compost at school.
- Veolia Waste Management Services are keen to raise awareness about waste issues and have an Education Centre at the Battlefield Energy Recovery Facility, which is open for schools, colleges and visitors from the local community to learn about energy recovery and how green energy benefits the community.



- Shrewsbury Town Council has introduced a new website to help make it quicker and easier for residents to interact with the Town Council with the aim that it will keep all residents better informed of what the Council is doing while providing two-way communication on important issues and concerns. The new look website has been built using modern technology so that it can be accessed from any digital device and has been designed to be simpler to use and be more responsive.

- Shrewsbury Town Council is working with world-renowned illuminator Andy McKeown to create new uses for shared spaces within the town. With funding from an Arts Council grant and the Town Council, Andy will be hosting workshops for young people to show them how to create their own illuminations.
- Shropshire’s very own “Master Composters” help to educate their local community to reduce waste. They attend events as diverse as school assemblies, farmers markets, flower shops, “Green” days, village fetes and music festivals. They have also run environmental education projects, made video guides, established allotments and set up community composting schemes.



C3 Community Involvement

- Fifty community activists launched a campaign to win £1m as part of Sainsbury's "Waste Less, Save More" promotion to help make Shrewsbury the greenest and cleanest in the UK. The town was one of only five across the UK to reach the final stages of the company's campaign to become its zero food waste ambassador and was up against Swadlincote, Hinkley, Newcastle-Under-Lyme and Loughborough. Although Shrewsbury was pipped to the post by Swadlincote, in South Derbyshire. The judging panel was so impressed by the town's efforts that Shrewsbury was invited to become one of Sainsbury's Discovery Communities which would involve testing new ideas, sharing best practice tips, inclusion on the Sainsbury's WLSM website and opportunities to work with local branches on waste less initiatives as part of a national bid by the supermarket to drive down food waste.



- The Rubbish Diet has been embraced by a number of areas in Shrewsbury resulting in a culture change to save tonnes of waste ending up in landfill sites.



The residents of Ashley Street in Shrewsbury celebrated 2 years of "slimming their bins" together. With better use of recycling, planning their shopping and sharing items, they've saved more than 6 tonnes from landfill and saved Shropshire Council £500 in landfill tax. Originally started in December 2012, Jackie Jones and Howard and Naomi Hutchings took part in the first ever trial of The Rubbish Diet, the UK's slimming club for bins. Following their success, they encouraged their neighbours to take part, with 15 families joining the project, with an emphasis on thinking about what they throw away, finding that they could recycle or re-home what they used to throw in their bins.

- Youth Services in Shrewsbury has been taken over by the Town Council after funding of £80,000 had been agreed with the county council, with the Town Council providing an additional £25,000 funding from its own budget. Providing young people in Shrewsbury with a range of clubs and facilities, the newly appointed team of youth workers launched weekly sessions at Flaxivity on a Monday evening; The Grange Youth Centre on Tuesdays; Sundorne Youth Centre on Wednesdays and New Lodge Youth Centre in Monkmoor will be held on Thursday evenings. All sessions are aimed at youngsters in Years 7, 8 and 9 and run from 6.30pm until 8.30pm.
- Shrewsbury Town Council workers who saved a baby girl from drowning when her pram was blown into the fast-flowing waters of the River Sever were nominated for a Pride of Shropshire award. James Williams and Andy Hill leapt into the freezing water in February 2015 when the six-month old girl's pram was blown away from her grandmother and into the ice-cold water. Colleague Mickey Bramall then threw in a life buoy before giving the youngster first aid. The trio were selected as finalists in the Outstanding Bravery category in the 2015 Pride of Shropshire campaign, promoted by the Shropshire Star and voted for by members of the public.



- Team Shrewsbury is a multi-functional team drawn from different agencies that work together to tackle issues of crime, anti-social behaviour and to improve the quality of life in the town centre. With funding from the Government's "Our Place" initiative, the partnership embraces the public, voluntary and private sectors, including local authorities, police and fire & rescue services, the Business Improvement District, the three shopping centres in the town, Safer Shrewsbury and Shrewsbury Street Pastors as well as Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents Association, Shrewsbury Tourism Association, Arriva Trains & Buses, Churches Together and the Shrewsbury Ark. Weekly tasking meetings ensure that information is shared which allows for a targeted approach to solving problems, with the result that arrests have been made for drug dealing, misuse and shoplifting.



The Team Shrewsbury model is being held as a shining example of best practice and has been rolled out to other parts of the country, including Worcester. The project has been promoted as best practice by the Department for Communities and Local Government.



- The Edgefield Greenfingers Garden Club, based at Severnside Housing's Edgefield Green sheltered housing scheme, continually strives to make improvements to communal areas for the benefit of all its residents and their visitors. The award-winning club has been hailed as a general role model for the association's other sites and regular community events are held at the Edgefield Green Community Hall.

- The dedicated residents of Frankwell have worked together to turn a piece of unused and semi-neglected land between two houses into a little green oasis in the heart of the town. The land has been signed over to the community and residents of all ages have worked hard to develop a huge green asset for the neighbourhood. Last year, Hermitage Gardens entered the Heart of England in Bloom It's Your Neighbourhood competition and were awarded a Level 4 – Thriving award with its first entry into the competition.



- The Town Council opens its greenhouse to the public once a year with an open evening at their Weeping Cross Centre and invites sponsors and members of the public for a behind the scenes tour of the plants ready for summer planting, as well as showcasing how staff prepare the hanging baskets which will be displayed around the town over the summer months.
- In a town like Shrewsbury, the benefits of gardening in terms of health and well-being is evident and church groups like Riversway Elim Church have the ability to garner the enthusiasm of the local community. With funds from organisations including the Carnival Committee and support in the form of plants from Shrewsbury in Bloom and the Town Council, they have created a little green jungle in their area.



- The Grange Urban Safety Group was set up in 2000 with local residents, Councillors, Church Representatives, Police, Shropshire Council and Severnside Housing taking an active part. They meet monthly and aim to resolve anti-social behaviour and community issues in Harlescott. Over the years, they have addressed abandoned vehicles, driving on green spaces, litter, graffiti, noisy neighbours and fly-tipping, showing that local people can sort local issues at a local level.
- Veolia Environmental Services Limited is committed to working with the community sector and are currently involved with the Shropshire Furniture Scheme to encourage people to donate their unwanted furniture so that it can be re-used by those in need. In addition, the company engages with schools to develop recycling via Bring sites and consciously uses organisations who are committed to employing people with learning difficulties.
- Residents in the Sundorne area of the town attended a "Community Day of Action" event in a bid to help tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and to enhance their neighbourhood area. The event was organised by Team Shrewsbury in conjunction with key partners including Shrewsbury Town Council, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Council, Sundorne College, the Sports Village, Tesco and Severnside Housing Association.



C4 Year Round Involvement

- Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Unit has a regular volunteer group, which is made up of people who enjoy being outdoors, including retired people, adults with learning disabilities and young people seeking experience. The group has carried out a huge range of tasks this year, including helping out with their many coppicing jobs during the winter.
- The work of the Shrewsbury in Bloom Committee, Shrewsbury Town Council and its grounds maintenance team continues all year round with tree and blub planting in the autumn; Christmas events and gritting of roads and pavements in the winter; planting flower seeds and preparing hanging baskets in the spring ready for planting out following a full programme of horticultural work in early summer. Events are held in the Quarry throughout most of the year and members of the Shrewsbury in Bloom Committee and the Town Council attend shows including the annual Flower Show.
- Every autumn, the communities around the town work together to plant bulbs at a number of locations around Shrewsbury. The Town Council has provided local schools and allotment associations with bulbs to enhance their areas in the spring. Over 12,000 bulbs, including daffodils, crocus and hyacinths were planted last year.

C5 Funding and Support

- With milder weather this year, the residents of Shrewsbury came along in force to support the annual Christmas Cracker event to mark the switching-on of the Christmas lights in the town centre and the start of late night shopping. Entertainment on the night included choirs, bands and street entertainment around the town. A lantern parade made its way around the town to herald the start of the evening's proceedings and there was also a visit from Santa on his sleigh and the annual Rotary Tree of Light switch on in the Darwin Shopping Centre. For the first time, the festivities were broadcast around the town from strategic points in a bid to alleviate the congestion experienced the year before and Shrewsbury's Eat Street also joined in the fun.
- The hugely popular Carols in the Square, managed by the Town Council, attracts thousands of people joining in with Shrewsbury Brass Band and Shrewsbury Male Voice Choir to sing a range of traditional Christmas carols. The event is broadcast live on BBC Radio Shropshire, with live-streaming of the event by Shrewsbury-based Microvideo as well as being broadcast in Shrewsbury Market Hall via large TV screen.
- Shrewsbury Town Council actively promotes business sponsorship of its floral displays and roundabouts in and around the town, which provides both an enhancement to the area as well as promotion opportunities for the companies involved. The commercial hanging baskets scheme raises over £12,000 income for the Town Council, whilst roundabout sponsorship raises £22,289, all of which is reinvested in other floral schemes around the town. Sponsors are regularly invited to attend presentations throughout the year as well as the open evening at the Town Council's greenhouse at Weeping Cross.
- Following the signing of the Unilateral Agreement for the new Solar Farm at Sundorne, the Town Council has received £85,000, which will be utilised towards projects and schemes for the benefit of the residents of the Battlefield Ward and surrounding areas.




- Theatre Severn has sold its one millionth ticket since its opening on 25 March 2009. The £28m complex has become one of the most popular provincial theatres in the UK, drawing big crowds and bringing money to the Shropshire economy by offering a variety of performances to suit all tastes.



Key Achievements in 2015/16



- Shrewsbury BID business group winning gold and the category award in Heart of England in Bloom BID with their first entry into the competition.
- Shrewsbury Market Hall celebrated its 50th anniversary and boasts almost full occupancy from stalls selling a wide range of goods and services.
- After a wide-ranging public consultation, the installation of the new £375,000 play area and splash park in the Quarry and improvements to the pavilion.
- Using funding provided by local developers from Section 106 Agreements, the complete redevelopment of the play area at Greenfields.
- The development of Team Shrewsbury from the "Our Place" initiative – a partnership agency to make the town an even better place to live, work and visit.
- Introduction of the Alternative Giving scheme which is designed to combat people purporting to be homeless and seeking money from visitors and residents.
- Shrewsbury achieving Purple Flag status, a national accreditation scheme designed to promote the night-time economy. 
- After the re-introduction of a direct rail link to London, the service has seen an increase in passenger numbers using the rail link.
- Setting up of the new Youth Services by the Town Council to help reduce youth-related anti-social behaviour and raise serious issues with young people including drugs and solvent abuse.
- With the Town Council in receipt of £85,000 from the signing of the Unilateral Agreement for the installation of the Solar Farm at Sundorne, a number of improvement schemes in the Battlefield Ward have been identified as requiring attention, which will improve some of the facilities in the area for the benefit of local residents.
- Despite increasing austerity concerns for the Town Council, an increase in sustainable and permanent planting in the town's roundabouts and floral displays has helped to maintain the floral displays on a year-round basis.
- We continue to see annual increases in commercial hanging basket sales.
- New lighting on a river footpath between the Weir and the English Bridge to make the towpath safer and more pleasant for people walking at night time.

- The Town Council has installed new bollards at Mereside Recreation Ground to prevent a repeat of travellers illegally camping on the site and causing damage to local facilities.
- The Town Council has started a process of replacing its Amberol barrels to plastic containers with built-in reservoirs to improve the quality of the floral displays and reduce the need for frequent watering.
- Shrewsbury topping the table of UK's "Healthiest High Streets". Businesses were scored by more than 2,000 members of the public, and by public health and local government experts, on the extent to which they encouraged healthy choices, promoted social interaction, provided access to health advice and promoted positive mental wellbeing.
- Improved drainage at the Boiler House football pitch and improvements made to the tennis courts at Monkmoor Recreation Ground.
- The Business Improvement District has become established in the town centre to market and promote Shrewsbury as a visitor destination and has improved car parking and access aimed at reducing parking costs. 
- Completion of the Battlefield Energy from Waste facility with the capacity to process up to 100,000 tonnes of rubbish each year and create energy to power 10,000 homes.
- The use of empty shops in the town's Riverside Shopping Centre has helped start-up businesses make use of the centre in the newly-designated Enterprise Zone.
- Shrewsbury Town Council's appointment of two apprentices to its permanent workforce, after they had undertaken college work whilst learning on-the-job working as part of the Castle and Dingle Gardening Teams. One has subsequently moved to Cumbria for a better job with the result that a new apprentice was taken on from August 2015 to provide work experience.

Key Aims and Objectives for 2016/17



- Find new ways to work with all stakeholders to promote savings during times of continuing austerity.
- Delivering a service standard with reduced staff and Service Level Agreement income.
- Continue to engage schools and gardening clubs through Shrewsbury in Bloom's various activities and the online educational resource.
- Purple Flag annual review to be undertaken by all stakeholders in October.
- Continuing to support Team Shrewsbury to encourage all public sector partners to work collaboratively on projects for the benefit of the local communities.
- Supporting schools with surplus plants, compost and woodchip material.
- With increased budgetary pressures elsewhere, it is expected that the Town Council will take on those services that are potentially at risk, including library services, the Museum & Art Gallery, the Square and the Castle.
- Improving signage around the town and providing better public transport provision as part of the Wayfinding strategy.
- To expand the centres in the town offering Youth Services facilities and engaging with more young people.
- With the introduction of an updated fleet of vehicles, Shropshire Council and Veolia anticipate that kerbside collections of cardboard will be reintroduced from autumn 2016.
- Redevelopment work on the derelict Grade II Victorian greenhouse and council depot at the entrance to the Quarry Park.
- Encourage community groups to develop to help improve the quality of life for residents.
- Following the first year success of the new Shropshire to London direct rail link, plans to extend the service to Gobowen and Wrexham.
- Continued investment in young people through the apprentice and graduate schemes.
- Develop new initiatives with the Shropshire Horticultural Society to encourage horticultural excellence, engendering local pride and promoting Shrewsbury as the "Town of Flowers".



- Continue to increase the use of sustainable planting where possible and develop new planting schemes to incorporate permanent planting features in the light of continuing budgetary cuts.
- Continue to support the Business Improvement District, which will market and promote Shrewsbury as a visitor destination as well as improve car parking and access aimed at reducing parking costs.
- The redevelopment of key buildings in the town, including the Grade II Listed Dana Prison, the Shrewsbury Sorting Office and the Copthorne Army Barracks to bring more employment opportunities to the town and help improve the local economy.
- Following analysis of the results of a public consultation, the recommendation of the future location of Shrewsbury's Quarry swimming pool will be decided.
- The £12m Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Plan proposals to improve the appearance of Pride Hill, The Square and Mardol, as well as changes to major junctions and traffic systems will help to reduce congestion throughout the town and attract more visitors.
- Now that the new university has been established in the town, more courses will be added to the curriculum with the anticipation that around 2,500 students will study at the new campus.
- The development of a new footpath linking the Dana with the town centre.



Appendices

Please pass on my thanks to Danny and his team for all the hard work they have done today to catch up with the work on the golf course, I have been round the whole course and thanked the other Dan and his chums for such a splendid effort!! I am fully aware of staffing problems and work load for all your men, which is why the effort made by Danny and his team is even more commendable. Two players from Hawkstone Park Golf Club have just this minute come off the course, and their words were they are working like Beavers out on the course do not see this at Hawkstone well done!!

NEWS IN BRIEF

Baskets bringing colour to town

A RECORD number of hanging baskets will bring a kaleidoscope of colour to Shrewsbury town centre throughout the summer.

Shrewsbury Town Council has decided up and installed 372 baskets this year, a large number of which have been purchased by town shops and businesses as part of the council's commercial hanging basket scheme.

Baskets are available to commercial premises at a cost of £45 each which includes installation, watering and removal at the end of the season. All plants are grown from seed or plugs at the council's Woppley Cross nursery.

Bloom Chairman, Councillor Keith Roberts said: "Hanging baskets are a superb way to ensure the town centre looks blooming brilliant all summer long."

"It's fantastic to see more businesses than ever before proudly displaying their floral features. Many thanks to all of our local shops and businesses for helping us to maintain our reputation as THE Town of Flowers."

Town strikes gold in new floral awards



From left, Mark Stevens, gardening team leader, Helen Bell of Shrewsbury Town Council, Pete Jenkins, Quarry Gardens, Kirsten Herby, Shrewsbury BID manager, Tim Boudillon, environmental maintenance at Shropshire Council and Garry Farmer, operations manager

THE town of Shrewsbury has struck gold in a national floral competition.

The Shrewsbury BID joined the Heart of England's Best in Bloom competition in 2012. It was crowned a new Heart of England in Bloom award category held in Shropshire, winning gold for their best outdoor garden, environmental responsibility and community participation.

Shrewsbury BID joined community groups, towns and villages across the region at the prestigious award ceremony receiving floral excellence across the

Heart of England. Kirsten Herby, BID manager said: "Shrewsbury was proud to win the gold award in the new category."

"The new category has given us the opportunity to participate in this competition, which is working to transform communities to make them more green and vibrant and demonstrate that attractive green spaces really can help businesses grow."

The town council and Shropshire Council work throughout the year to care for Shrewsbury's

streets, but this year we've been able to involve the business community and recognise the contribution they also make to the town's 'best offer'."

Helen Bell, town clerk added: "We are delighted with the results of Shrewsbury BID's first entry into the competition."

"Shops and business go hand in hand, green spaces encourage people to linger longer, help to boost economic growth and reduce environmental damage. All conditions which help businesses to thrive," added Mrs Bell.

Bloom judges cast eye over displays



Judges from Britain in Bloom, Mark Stevens and Helen Bell, assess the town's floral displays in the Dingle

JUDGES from the national Heart of England in Bloom awards have been assessing the town's floral displays in the Dingle for a second year.

Two judges were given a two hour tour, which took in areas including The Dingle, Shrewsbury Castle, the flower-filled town centre, and even McDonald's - believed to be the oldest building occupied by the fast food chain in the world.

In 2014 Shrewsbury was judged the Champion of Champions in the Britain in Bloom competition.

This year the entry is being sub-

mitted by Shrewsbury's Business Improvement District (BID).

The entry is focused on three areas - horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation.

Judges Roger Tait and Nicola Clarke were remaining tight-lipped on the town's prospects but said they had been impressed with what they had seen, describing The Dingle as "a gem."

Mr Tait said: "It is my first visit to Shrewsbury and I am extremely impressed by the way everyone is working together to make sure

Shrewsbury looks the best, and finishing off in the Dingle is just the icing on the cake."

"What has been very impressive is the amount of collaboration and partnership working, particularly with the gardeners themselves."

Speaking about the Dingle Mr Tait said: "I think it is a fantastic asset, it is a real gem."

Kirsten Herby, manager of Shrewsbury BID, said: "You can see how the business community looks to help provide the town of Shrewsbury and how important that is to attracting tourists and visitors."

Miles marks big day with ride



Councillor Keith Roberts, left, celebrates his achievement by riding the cycle challenge with his fellow Shrewsbury residents

Most people celebrate their birthday with cake and balloons but for Councillor Keith Roberts, it was the chance to ride his bicycle for 100 miles to mark his 50th birthday.

The councillor, who is also a keen cyclist, set off on his journey at 7am and completed the challenge in 10 hours and 30 minutes.

"It was a great day and I was very lucky to have the support of my family and friends," he said.

Councillor Roberts and his wife Jane also took part in the challenge.

He said: "We're really looking forward to the next challenge."

Report by Naomi Parry

Shrewsbury's Mayor, Councillor Keith Roberts, has been celebrating his 50th birthday by completing a 100-mile cycle challenge.

The Mayor, who is also a keen cyclist, set off on his journey at 7am and completed the challenge in 10 hours and 30 minutes.

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He said: "We're really looking forward to the next challenge."

We wanted to pass on our congratulations to those who maintain the Quarry Park, the various roundabouts, St Chad's and other places. Each year the group that maintain these sites gives us a bright and interesting display. It is not only at the time of the Flower Show as now, but at all times of the year. I am impressed with their dedication to making the "Town of Flowers" just that! Please pass on our thanks for making our town a place to be proud of.

Please would you compliment your Parks Dept. staff on the wonderful flower display in the Dingle. We have enjoyed many lunches there and watched as the planting has moved from Spring to now. This year's planting must be one of the best we have seen - well done to all!

Saying it with flowers - county is a winner

Report by Naomi Parry

Shropshire was today celebrating floral glory in the 2015 Heart of England in Bloom Awards.

Towns, villages, and parks across the county competed for a range of categories.

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Shrewsbury's Dingle in the Quarry park. The Town of Flowers was recognised with a gold award

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS - WHERE THE FLORAL AWARDS WENT

Main awards:

● Shrewsbury BID gold and category award

● Coventry in Bloom: gold in the large town category

● Lichfield in Bloom, Shropshire Town Council and Ludlow in Bloom: gold in the town category

● Llangynydd in Bloom: gold in the village category

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Town points the way with new signs plan

Report by Naomi Parry

A group representing Shrewsbury's business and community leaders has set up a new sign plan to help visitors and residents find their way.

The group, which includes representatives from the town's major employers and businesses, has agreed to fund a new sign plan.

The plan will involve the installation of new signs at key locations throughout the town.

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Judges bowled over by blooms



Mark in England in Bloom judges Roger Tait and Nicola Clarke took up the challenge in the Dingle in Shrewsbury

Dingle delight for visiting duo

Judges from Britain in Bloom, Mark Stevens and Helen Bell, assess the town's floral displays in the Dingle

Judges from Britain in Bloom, Mark Stevens and Helen Bell, assess the town's floral displays in the Dingle

Isn't it just blooming marvellous!



Shrewsbury's second happiest place in UK
 It is named as the town of flowers and many visitors have named the world - and now Shrewsbury has been named the second happiest place in the UK.
 The town's reputation for its flowers and gardens has been well established for many years. It is a place of beauty and interest, and the town's people are proud of it. The town's people are proud of it. The town's people are proud of it.

My husband and I visited Shrewsbury last week and were highly impressed with the town, in particular the floral displays. They were outstanding and we just wanted to let you know how much we appreciated all the effort which has gone into them. Shrewsbury is a delightful place to visit with interesting buildings and lovely walks, all enhanced by your flowers. The Dingle was a wonderful place to enjoy our picnic and was certainly the best town gardens we have seen for a long time. Please pass on our congratulations to all concerned.

I visited Shrewsbury today and by lucky accident found myself in the Dingle. Can I congratulate the council and its staff for such a beautiful floral display, only the fact I needed to catch a train back to Chester forced me to leave. It's a credit to the town, I will visit again to see the summer display.

Chance to check out 300,000-plant site that grows winners Nursery where Town of Flowers takes root



The town's reputation for its flowers and gardens has been well established for many years. It is a place of beauty and interest, and the town's people are proud of it. The town's people are proud of it. The town's people are proud of it.

Survey joy but mayor insists town should have come out on top Shrewsbury's second happiest place in UK



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Special report



Town packed for lights switch-on



Nominations close this evening and voting starts tomorrow Towns prepare for battle of the parks



Town blossoms for bloom judges



Staff put final touches to displays



Emily's artwork nets prizes



Please excuse the informal note, I hope to get it into your hand later today. Last night the wind snapped off one of our 30ft cedars and neatly laid it across Bell Lane, completely blocking the roads. Your brilliant emergency team were at the site commendably quickly and had the significantly sized tree cut up and even removed and the road re-opened in under an hour. I gather it was a combined team from county and Town Councils. All the team were most courteous and helpful to the road users and was hugely reassuring to me. As a crisis team they exuded all the consideration and professionalism that could be hoped for. If possible, please forward on my thanks and appreciation to your staff.

Colourful splash area part of £375,000 outdoor fun zone Quarry play plans inspired by Darwin



It was so great to bump into you at the Kids festival - what a fantastic event it was! AND now the Kids splash park has arrived - the Quarry is just going from strength to strength. I wanted to say that I think the council has been truly visionary recently in embracing so many new events and it is reflecting well on the town!

Council decision unveiled after thousands have their say Winning design for £370k play area



Bosses keen to find memorabilia on building for exhibition



Market hall rings up its 50th anniversary





With special thanks to all organisations and individuals for their involvement in Shrewsbury in Bloom once again this year to improve the quality of life for visitors, residents and those who work in the town.

Shrewsbury Town Council

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Shrewsbury Town
Council

