



# SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER

ISSUE 3 2023

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# CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



## KEVIN LOCKWOOD

Manager of Shrewsbury Shopping Centres

**Summer is nearly over. If you can say we have had a summer this year... we have certainly had some miserable weather, and some may say that it's been similar picture in business as pressures from all corners continue to take their toll.**

In an attempt to lift spirits and encourage like minded businesses to meet and share their ideas, Shrewsbury Business Chamber has put on some great networking events over the last few months which have included, Netwalking, Veolia waste facility tour, a trip down the River Severn on the Sabrina Boat and finishing up with one of our best attended events, our summer BBQ and summer window competition, with over 70 people in attendance. During this time, we have also welcomed several new members, some of which are featured in this edition of the magazine.

We continue to lobby and monitor a couple of the larger projects, including the NWRR, Riverside development and the plans for an 81-bedroom hotel on the Barker St car park. It is important for us to hear about your views on any planning application (for or against) as this helps us tailor our approach going forward. We are in the process of updating the look and feel of our website with fresh images and an easier way to become a member. Feedback from some of our recent new members suggested it was difficult to navigate the 'join us page' and was quite a long-winded process.. we listened and hopefully the improvements mean it is quicker and easier to join.

Please keep the suggestions and ideas coming as we really appreciate your comments. I hope you enjoy our magazine and look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events.

Best wishes,  
Kevin Lockwood Chairperson, Shrewsbury Business Chamber

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# QUARTERLY REVIEW

**Shrewsbury Business Chamber regularly reviews planning applications, major infrastructure projects and political changes as they affect the town.**

**These are discussed by the executive committee each month, and a brief update to members is usually given at the monthly general meetings.**

**Here are some of the matters we are commenting upon or reporting.**

## **1. River Severn**

We regularly attend meetings on this subject organised by Shrewsbury & Atcham MP Daniel Kawczynski, including one with Therese Coffey, Minister for the Environment, and are also briefed by Shropshire Council officers. The Chamber has called for co-ordinated apolitical management covering all aspects of the River Severn's effect on the town including commercial/leisure uses, flooding, sewerage discharge, bridging, etc. There does seem to be steady progress being made towards a co-ordinated strategy for the river from its source in Mid -Wales to the Bristol Channel. Measures being discussed include the provision of 'flood reservoirs' , additional emergency flood alleviation barriers, and better provision for leisure and other users. As part of the national debate concerning water quality the utility companies and Environment Agency are promising more investment. We are pressing for input from leading insurance companies, as the consequence of continued flooding is most directly felt by members in higher premiums or reduced cover.

## **2. North West Relief Road**

This continues to be a 'hot potato', and as has been the case for many years the Chamber maintains its support for the scheme, but being mindful of members concerns about the possible environmental impact of the chosen route. At the time of writing, it is understood that the Environment Agency still has outstanding questions about some aspects of the scheme; following meetings between Shropshire Council, Daniel Kawczynski and the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency in early August there is promised an update in September, and an EA visit to Shrewsbury before the end of the year. In the meantime, with the scheme having had financial 'allocation' since 2019 the Marches LEP is also applying pressure for the town planning decision. Newly appointed Shropshire Council Cabinet Member for transport Dan Morris advises that it is now hoped to be presented to planning committee in November.

## **3. Rail infrastructure**

After a flurry of announcements last year, including a presentation by Midlands 'Business Connect' there has been little news about the planned investment in signalling, more frequent trains, etc on the Shrewsbury- Birmingham route. We suspect this is linked to the Government's "loss of nerve" about the HS2 Project and the ongoing dispute between the railway companies and the trade unions about working conditions. We will request an update.

## **4. Bus Services**

Shropshire Council with the principal local bus operator Arriva are planning reductions in some services owing to reduced financial support. In the meantime, Shrewsbury College is seeing an expansion in numbers with its catchment extending into Mid Wales, and Shrewsbury based businesses have ongoing staff recruitment issues, especially for trainees/apprentices. Clearly there are challenges with a mismatch between demand and supply. Reductions in public transport services create long term adverse effects on the local economy. We will be working with the College to try to reverse this trend and improve local transport facilities.

# QUARTERLY REVIEW CONTINUED...

## 5. Shrewsbury BID

Welcome news that the hard work by Seb Slater and his team has resulted in the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District is to be continued for a further 5 years, to 2029. Their priorities for the town centre include a continuation of the successful 'Original Shrewsbury' marketing campaign to promote the town and deliver activities to attract new visitors and customers to the town centre, working with the Police and other partners as the 'Safer Shrewsbury' challenge, the 'Work in Shrewsbury' platform guide for people working and studying in the town centre, and 'Future Shrewsbury' which reviews and promotes issues such as the roll out of Gigabit fibre in the town centre, data collation and sharing to aid business decision making, The Big Town Plan which provides more strategic town planning/land use guidance, and linked with this the forthcoming Design Guide which promotes best practice for building design in the town centre.

## 6. Political boundary changes

As part of population changes as measured the Census, the Shrewsbury & Atcham Parliamentary constituency will change, with some wards being reallocated to Ludlow. In addition, there are forthcoming suggested boundary changes within the Shropshire Council administrative area.

## 7. Planning Applications

Major recent planning applications include new buildings at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital as part of the remodelling of its facilities; hopefully the receipt of consent will be quickly followed by a construction start on this major infrastructure project which comprises a new main hospital building of about 30,000 sq m. There are however concerns about the type of medical facilities to be offered, and lack of a travel plan. [Sketch of proposed building attached]



Travelodge are proposing a new hotel on the Barker Street car park site in the town centre. Members have expressed concern about the size, and position of the building so that whilst Travelodge are to be welcomed to Shrewsbury a more suitable location may be the proposed Riverside redevelopment in Smithfield Road. In association with Shrewsbury BID a Chamber representative expressed these viewpoints at a presentation by Travelodge which discussed the technical reasoning behind the application.

The much-delayed application for the demolition of the Riverside has now been approved, so that it is hoped that the first phase of building work could start before the end of the year. Shrewsbury Business Chamber always welcomes the opportunities to discuss matters which are felt to be of importance to its members but maintains an apolitical stance in our dealings with Local and Central Government. If there are particular issues which are of interest or concern, do please let us know.

26th August 2023

# SHREWSBURY BID SEES TERM RENEWED WITH 94% VOTE



## **Shrewsbury BID is celebrating overwhelming backing from businesses for the renewal of its five-year term - with one of the best UK BID ballot results in recent years.**

94% of businesses voted in favour (97% by rateable value) to renew the BID's term, giving it an "exceptionally strong" mandate to continue with its work to promote and support the town centre on behalf of its members. Turnout in the ballot was 61% which was well above the national average.

**Seb Slater**, executive director of Shrewsbury BID, said the ballot showed an extremely strong level of support from town centre businesses.

*"We are delighted with the result and would like to thank every business which took the time to vote," he said. "This huge vote of confidence puts us in a fantastic position to move forward.*

*"When we launched the business plan for our next five-year term, we outlined four main priorities: Original Shrewsbury, Safer Shrewsbury, Work In Shrewsbury and Future Shrewsbury.*

*"The overall investment over the next five years will amount to over £3 million, which will enable us to build on our work to make Shrewsbury a great place to do business both now and in the future."*

**Mike Matthews**, chair of the Shrewsbury BID board, said the overwhelming support from businesses was testament to the positive work achieved over the past 10 years.

*He said: "From activities that make the town more welcoming through town dressing, window displays and visitor campaigns, to crime prevention and the Shrewsbury Rangers, the BID team and its board have worked tirelessly to ensure maximum value for our levy payers.*

*"I am absolutely delighted that businesses have given us such an exceptionally strong mandate to build on our collective success and continue working together so effectively.*

*"I would like to thank everyone for voting, and we can now look to the future with strength and optimism."*

**Councillor Dean Carroll**, Shropshire Council's Cabinet member for growth, regeneration and housing, added: *"What brilliant news for the business community in Shrewsbury and a deserving result for the Shrewsbury BID team.*

*"Shropshire Council will continue to support the BID and its work, and I look forward to seeing how their new business plan can come to life, to improve the local economy of Shrewsbury.*

*"Congratulations!"*

# NEWPORT FIRM HITS £7,000 FUNDRAISING MILESTONE FOR SEVERN HOSPICE IN MEMORY OF BRAVE COLLEAGUE



## Staff at a Newport business are planning their annual fundraiser for Severn Hospice after raising more than £7,000 in memory of a dear colleague who passed away.

Bryan Cutter, a director at Henshalls Insurance Brokers on High Street, received end of life care at the facility and since his death in March 2020 colleagues have dedicated their spare time to raising money. They have staged regular cake sales and made individual efforts such as sponsored walks, cycle rides and runs to support patient care. Each year the team walk to the top of the Wrekin together to mark the anniversary of Bryan's passing, aged 60.

Bryan's sister, Sarah Lincoln, who also works at Henshalls in Newport, ran the London Marathon and was part of an office team who competed in the hospice's Dragon Boat Race on the River Severn, Shrewsbury in July.

Now the work pals are planning their annual golf tournament, The Cutter Cup, named in Bryan's honour, will be played at Lilleshall Golf Club in October.

**Sarah said:** "Bryan faced his illness with dignity and resilience, in fact, he was totally inspirational throughout. He encouraged me to start running through a Couch to 5k initiative with Lawley Running Club where he was a keen runner and run leader.

"He continued to run even after surgery and subsequent chemotherapy treatment, always making the most of life right up until he passed away peacefully at Severn Hospice."

Bryan was much-loved by colleagues and the business community after working for Henshalls for over 25 years. He fought a brave battle against cancer, even taking part in 5k and 10k Park Runs with Sarah and continued to raise money for the care of other sufferers whilst he was poorly.

His picture still hangs up in the office and people regularly call in to ask how the fundraising is going for the hospice.

Their Dragon Boat Race, raised £1,500, bringing the total to £7,000. The golf tournament is expected to add hundreds more.

Sarah added: "Severn Hospice looked after Bryan when he needed them. We want to help the hospice support other families with its steadfast commitment to step in and surround them with dignity, compassion and love."

Henshalls, a well-known name on the High Street for more than 50 years and employ more than 40 members of staff across Shropshire and Staffordshire. Founded in 1967, the firm specialises in insurance cover for various industries including food and drink, manufacturing, construction, charities, sports, and hospitality throughout Shropshire and beyond. Earlier this year Henshalls was acquired by Global Risk Partners (GRP), who are part of Brown & Brown, the fifth largest independent insurance brokerage in the world.

Henshalls Managing Director Mark Freeman: "The ongoing fundraising for Severn Hospice, and fantastic £7,000 already made, is testament to Bryan's popularity and the strong bond between colleagues in our Newport office.

"Judging by what we have seen so far, we know they will go all out to make the golf tournament a big success."

To donate to their fundraising get in touch with Henshalls.

For more on the company go to [henshalls.com](https://www.henshalls.com)



# BUTTERCUP BOOKSHOP ENCOURAGING THE CHILDREN OF SHREWSBURY TO READ



**“It’s our way of promoting off-screen time and reading.” - Estaban Bridges**

Throughout the year we provide different editions of Buttercups colouring sheets, each completed piece can be exchanged for a free children’s book.

Buttercup Bookshop is now located within DVDMEGASTORE, as a shop-in-shop experience and boasts hundreds of children’s books and proudly supports its free book initiative.

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# YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE FEELING DESPERATE OR AS IF YOU SIMPLY CAN'T COPE ANYMORE TO BEGIN COUNSELLING



## **I believe that counselling and therapy need a rebrand. Being able to make time for yourself to really be listened to and heard is the ultimate in self care.**

To care for your body maybe you book a spa day, go for a walk or to the gym.

What do you do to help take care of your mind?

Counselling can help you to:

- Feel calmer
- Sleep better
- Learn how to say no
- Make positive changes
- Improve communication
- Laugh more
- Consider your own needs
- Find a better work/life balance
- Be kinder to yourself
- Grow in confidence
- Develop new awareness
- Know yourself better
- 

Our brains are amazing and they can develop a coping mechanism that may work really well, until suddenly it doesn't! It's important to offer our mental health the same attention we give our physical health. So that our brain stays healthy, preventing burnout from stress.

I believe within each person is the 'way forward'. As a person is heard they are able to really hear themselves, possibly for the first time. This is significant because the most important relationship we have is the one we have

with ourselves. When you hear yourself it may lead to new awareness and different choices are able to be made when awareness comes.

I've written a blog about how to cope with distressing feelings here:

<https://www.presencecounselling.co.uk/12-calming-ideas-to-soothe-distress/>

I've worked as a counsellor and psychotherapist for 10 years. I'm an accredited registered member of the National Counselling & Psychotherapy Society (NCPS).

I trained to be a therapist because I'm really interested in people and I've always been the person they found easy to talk to.

I work with individual adults and young people from the age of 10.

Life can be fun, fulfilling and amazing, it can also be disappointing, stressful and overwhelming. Being able to explore your experience with someone who is professionally trained to listen and accompany you can make a big difference to how you feel. New possibilities emerge.

I offer a booked, free 20 minute phone call to have a friendly, informal chat about your hopes for counselling/therapy.

Email me,

Susie Harris at [office@presencecounselling.co.uk](mailto:office@presencecounselling.co.uk)

Phone: 07958 794265

For further information: [www.presencecounselling.co.uk](http://www.presencecounselling.co.uk)

# EMPLOYEE BURNOUT IN THE 'REMOTE WORK' ERA



**Businesses are grappling with a pressing issue: employee burnout in the remote work era. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of remote work, offering flexibility and convenience.**

However, as Harriet Cooke of The HR Dept Shropshire explains, the lack of clear boundaries between work and personal life, reduced social interactions, and increased screen time have led to heightened stress levels and burnout among employees.

*"HR departments play a pivotal role in addressing this emerging challenge. They hold the responsibility to not only identify the signs of burnout; but also implement effective measures to mitigate it.*

*What can you do to prevent employee burnout in your workplace?*

*Promoting work-life balance is essential, encouraging employees to establish regular work hours, take scheduled breaks and fully disengage from work-related activities after business hours, can maintain a clear boundary between professional and personal life.*

*Fostering employee well-being such as implementing 'wellness programmes' can be an effective tool to combat burnout. From mental health webinars to stress management workshops, HR can provide resources that promote holistic well-being.*

*Finally, one of the most significant measures would be to implement regular check-ins with your employees! Regular one-on-one check-ins can help businesses identify potential signs of burnout early on. It also provides a platform for employees to voice their*

*concerns or difficulties they may be facing in their work environment."*

While the shift to remote work brings new challenges like increased employee burnout, Harriet believes that HR departments can effectively mitigate them proactive measures. As organisations continue to adapt to the new normal after COVID-19, maintaining employee well-being should remain a top priority.

For more strategies and HR advice contact Harriet and the team on [shropshire@hrdept.co.uk](mailto:shropshire@hrdept.co.uk)



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# REECH LAUNCHES SHROPSHIRE BIZFEST FOR 2023



**Full-service marketing agency, Reech, has announced the return of Shropshire BizFest. The exclusive networking event is set to take place on Thursday 14th September 2023 at the Dye House at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings.**

Launched in 2018, BizFest is an invaluable opportunity for business owners to gather insights and information they can apply to their own business. Whether they already have an established strategy for their growth and marketing, or they want to learn about new trends and approaches, BizFest promises to have something for all attendees to take away.

This year's event is off to an exciting start already as Reech has announced that Mark Wright, previous winner of BBC's The Apprentice, will be appearing as the event's Guest Headline Speaker. Following his win in 2014, Mark went on to develop and launch Climb Online, one of the UK's fastest growing digital marketing agencies. He has since invested in a number of business opportunities and will be bringing his knowledge of marketing and scaling businesses to Shropshire to both inspire and educate.

In addition to hearing from keynote speakers, attendees can meet with prospective partners and suppliers, network with other like-minded individuals and develop new and fruitful working relationships that support the future growth of their business. Upon closure of the learning and development portion of the event, attendees will enjoy live music and food and drink from Shropshire based suppliers.

Rob Hughes, Managing Director at Reech, commented: *"As a result of the pandemic, BizFest has unfortunately been absent from the Shropshire business events calendar, but we're proud to be bringing it back and focusing on business growth. We're excited to have Mark Wright join us as a headline speaker and we*

*have no doubt that all attendees will come away with new ideas for their businesses from all speakers they hear from."*

BizFest is free to attend, with a limited number of spaces available. You can register your interest to attend at [www.shropshirebizfest.co.uk](http://www.shropshirebizfest.co.uk). In addition to attending as a visitor, there are also opportunities for businesses to sponsor or attend as an exhibitor.

Email [bizfest@reech.agency](mailto:bizfest@reech.agency) for more information on how your business can get involved.



# SALOPIA HEALTH & PERFORMANCE HIRE NEW STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH



**Salopia Health have hired James to support the growth of their business as they expand to deliver new group sessions and take on new 1:1 clients on their waiting list...**

**“Our ethos is to provide the highest quality coaching and rehab services in Shropshire, which is backed up by our 5 star reviews on google and we are looking forward to James continuing this trend.”**

James is a friendly, positive & enthusiastic coach who has range of experience from leading a professional football teams sport science programme, supporting the professional football associations rehab scheme, to helping the general public improve their health and fitness. He has a Masters Degree in Strength, Conditioning & Rehabilitation from the University of Portsmouth, and a Degree in Sport & Exercise Science from the University of Winchester.

James will be leading our new group sessions Child to Champion (youth strength &

conditioning for 11-16's), Hybrid Conditioning (functional strength & conditioning circuits for the general public), and Athlete Hour (adult strength & conditioning for enthusiastic athletes of all levels who want to improve their sports performance).

Owner & Head Coach Ashley Downing had this to say: *“We’re excited to have James joining the team to support our 1:1 clients, members and new group sessions. What’s unique about our group sessions unlike normal fitness classes is we cap the numbers low to maintain very high quality coaching during sessions, we adapt exercises to the individuals needs and every exercise is bang for buck to make sure our clients get the very best results possible”*

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# BENEFIT FROM LEARNING A NEW SKILL



**Whether you are a business looking to upskill yourself or one of your employees, by learning a new skill everyone benefits.**

For business owners who wish to retain their staff, investing in their development is critical. Whether that be a bookkeeping course or a management workshop, the impact on job performance, business efficiency, staff morale and general performance is undeniable.

For individuals, it is proven that learning a new skill can enhance your quality of life, reduce stress, gain confidence and improve mental health and sociability. Arguably, that's a lot of benefits from a 5-week plastering course, but it's true - and how many of us can repair a cracked wall at home?!

So, whether it's for your business or simply for pleasure, Shrewsbury Colleges Group has a wide variety of courses to choose from:

[www.scg.ac.uk/our-courses/part-time](http://www.scg.ac.uk/our-courses/part-time)

To book your place on one of our wide range of courses, call our Course Advice team on 01743 342333 or apply online.

Can't find what you are looking for? Call our Employer Engagement team on 01743 342602 or email [employer@scg.ac.uk](mailto:employer@scg.ac.uk)

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# SUCCESSFUL SHREWSBURY PARTNERSHIP



## Ahead of this year's Shrewsbury Food Festival, organisers Shropshire Festivals formed a partnership with The Darwin Centre.

The Darwin Centre came on board as a sponsor to produce scratch cards to encourage visitors into the town centre. Prizes up for grabs came from businesses in the shopping centre, as well as discounts to Shropshire Festivals' events.

In the run-up to the fesAval, the cards were available at The Darwin, and on the weekend of the festival, they were given to visitors to raise the profile and increase footfall to the town's largest shopping centre.

Beth Heath, Director of Fun at Shropshire Festivals, said, "I'm so pleased that The Darwin Centre came

on board as a sponsor this year. Not only is it great to have the support of a local business, but it has worked wonders for tourism in the town centre.

"We attract thousands of visitors to the Quarry every June with the Shrewsbury Food Festival, locally and nationally. It's great to have an initiative which gets people exploring the town after their visit to the festival.

"And who can resist a free scratch card? Our visitors loved having a go and scooping lots of lovely prizes. Thank you to The Darwin Centre and all their businesses for supporting this year's festival."

Next year's Shrewsbury Food Festival takes place on June 29th and 30th 2024.



# SHROPSHIRE LIVE PARTNERS WITH GINGER & SPICE FESTIVAL



*Shropshire Live's Ryan Kennedy with Ginger & Spice Festival Director, Julia Roberts*

**Shrewsbury-based Shropshire Live has been announced as a media partner for this year's 7th annual Ginger & Spice Festival taking place in Market Drayton from 28th September to 1st October 2023.**

You can listen to Shropshire Live at [shropshirelive.com](http://shropshirelive.com), via the free mobile app on Android or iOS or ask Alexa to enable Shropshire Live, then after that play Shropshire Live.

Shropshire Live will be supporting the communications before and during the annual festival with a series of interviews on their new mid-morning radio show with local presenter, Ryan Kennedy.

The interviews will showcase local artisan traders, businesses, sponsors and artists lined up to attend this year's award-winning festival. Shropshire Live will also have a presence on the main day in which Ryan will be interviewing festival goers and participants on Saturday 30th September 2023.

Commenting on the sponsorship, Chris Pritchard, editor, and business partner at Shropshire Live said: "This is a great opportunity to further showcase the Ginger & Spice Festival to our Shropshire Live readers and listeners across the county."

Broadcaster and presenter Ryan Kennedy said: "The Ginger and Spice Festival is a huge event in the Market Drayton calendar, so it's fantastic to be a part of it. I'm looking forward to bringing some of the highlights and atmosphere to our listeners and readers." Festival Director, Julia Roberts, added: "We are delighted to be partnering with the Shropshire Live digital media platform for this year's Ginger & Spice Festival."



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# SHREWSBURY SHOP WINDOW COMPETITION

## KEY DATES

CALL FOR SPONSORS	1 OCTOBER 23
CLOSE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR SPONSORS	20 OCTOBER 23
SPONSORS ANNOUNCED VIA SOCIALS & COMPETITION ENTRY OPENS	1 NOVEMBER 23
TOWN CENTRE LEAFLET DROP	4 NOVEMBER 23
WINDOW CATEGORY CLOSES	20 NOVEMBER 23
PEOPLE'S CHOICE VOTING OPENS	20 NOVEMBER 23
JUDGING DAY	25 NOVEMBER 23
PEOPLE'S CHOICE CLOSES	5 DECEMBER 23
AWARDS NIGHT	12 DECEMBER 23

# TAPAS NIGHT

WITH PEAKES TRAVEL ELITE  
BUSINESS DISCUSSION FACING BUSINESS ADVERSITY

27 SEP

FREE FOR MEMBERS  
NON-MEMBERS - £15



**SHREWSBURY**  
BUSINESS CHAMBER

**6-9PM**  
**ORIGINS RESTAURANT**

**Set in beautiful origins restaurant, enjoy Tapas and a drink whilst meeting with other local businesses to network and join the discussion about coming back from adversity, and facing tough times in business.**

This event is going to be one of our best.

A Great chance to meet Chamber members and other business owners in shrewsbury to network.

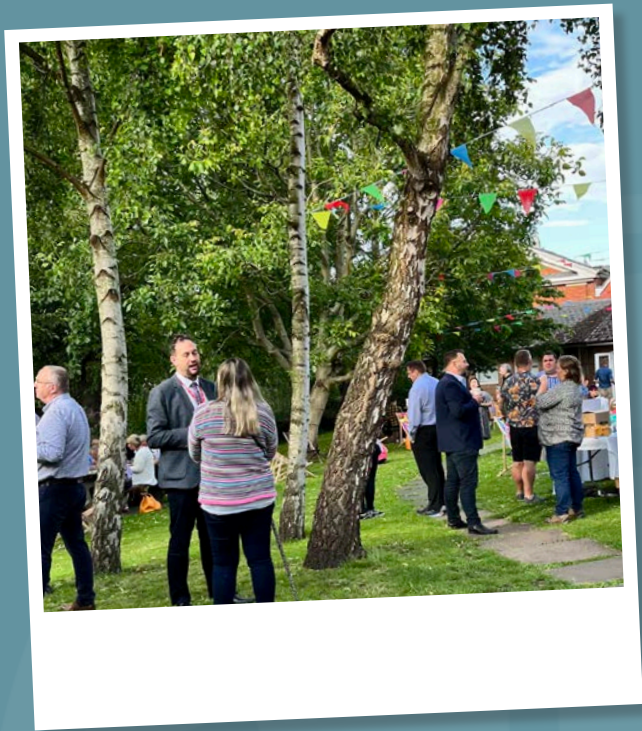
One free ticket per membership. Guests are £15.

Origins Restaurant London Road Shrewsbury SY2 6PR - 6pm - 9pm.

To book your place go to -

**<https://shrewsburybusinesschamber.com/events/>**

# SUMMER BBQ & SUMMER WINDOW COMPETITION RESULTS



Thankyou to all who attended our Summer BBQ, it was a wonderful evening & we were very lucky with the weather!

And congratulations to our competiton winners - featured on the next page.

We look forward to seeing you all again at our upcoming events.



To make sure you don't miss out on our events make sure you check out our website

<https://shrewsburybusinesschamber.com/events/>

and follow us on all socials...

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# SUMMER WINDOW COMPETITION WINNERS



Winner of Larger Shop Category - Tanners



Winner of Market Hall Category - Vintage 49A



Winner of Charity Shop Category - Crane Counselling



Winner of Smaller Shop Category - Deja Brew



Winner of Peoples Choice Category - Christmas Perks

AND A BIG THANKYOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS...



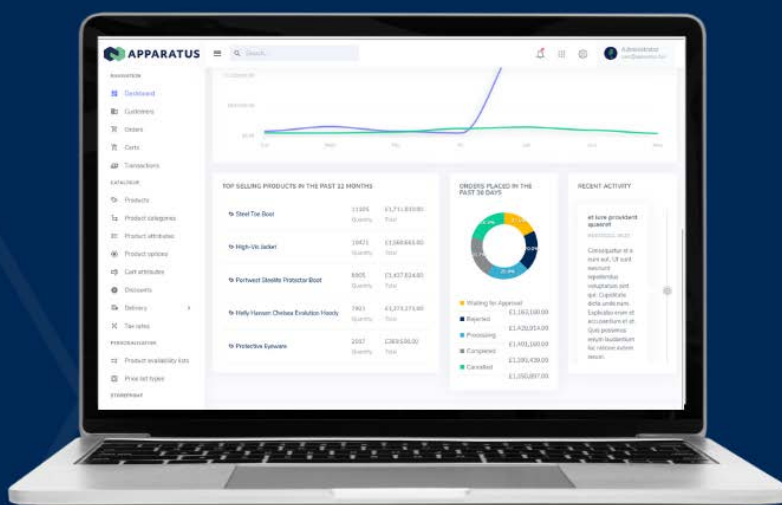


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B2B Digital Commerce Software



Ordering - Payments - Stock - Product Listings



Ecommerce and Customer Experience Software for Wholesale, Distribution and Manufacture

www.apparatus.io

Gartner research has shown:

- 83% of B2B buyers prefer ordering and paying through digital commerce.
- 75% of B2B buyers prefer a rep-free buying experience.
- 61% of sales leaders are less than satisfied with their current tech stack.

B2B digital commerce software solves these problems for both the buyer and the seller.

Apparatus is a B2B ecommerce and customer portal platform used by wholesale, distribution, and manufacturing companies, to attract new customers & grow existing accounts with a suite of digital procurement solutions, that increase efficiency, visibility,

and control for both customer and supplier.

The software makes things easier for you and your customers and lets them do more things for themselves. This means your customers will be happier and you'll make more sales with less admin.

Our expert team will help you from the very beginning, like setting up your account and connecting it to your ERP system. They'll also be there to support your users into the future.

"By integrating Apparatus with our ERP system, we've increased our sales without any extra admin. We're offering the B2B order portal to our new customers, and it's becoming a great new selling point for our business." Clena Supplies - Garth Stacey, Sales Director

# CRYSTAL LABYRINTH JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER



## “NATURE IS THE SUPREME CREATION OF ART.”

Deborah Austin is Founder & Owner of Crystal Labyrinth. Enthusiast in gemstones & crystallography.

Launched in 2002, Deborah specialises in exquisite natural gemstones & bespoke jewellery. Evolving naturally from trading in London, in the world-famous Shepherds Bush Market & then moving on to Taunton for a year, Crystal Labyrinth opened its third showroom in the famous World Heritage Site in Ironbridge, set within the boundary of Merrythought Village. Due to the sale of Yew Tree Cottage in Ironbridge, the business had to close until a new location was found in Butcher Row, in the heart of Shrewsbury! This is now where we continue to 'sparkle'!

Deborah is very passionate about gemstones & their background from a scientific stance & is eager to convey that crystals & crystal-based jewellery can be used in a variety of different ways ~ For thousands of years, people around the world have used gemstones & minerals for their metaphysical properties, or perhaps just to show off ... Just think how Kings & Queens have used jewels in their lifetimes! However you choose to use, or work with crystals; whether you believe in the energy they hold, or if you wish to enjoy them for their outstanding beauty alone, Crystal Labyrinth brings to you exceptional quality gemstones & every piece has been hand selected!

To further enhance & capture a fascinating ambience in the shop, an abundance of Swarovski cascading crystals shimmer in the window. They are created by Deb in the early hours & sold to customers who hang them in their bay windows & conservatories. They draw the light from the sun & refract thousands of rainbows all over the room. These emulate chandeliers that hang in Palaces around the world & light fittings in stately rooms of large Victorian houses. Swarovski components are no longer available anywhere, but Crystal Labyrinth still holds some stock.

The shop sells candles, incense, books & other interesting gifts as birthday presents, bespoke anniversary & wedding gifts. Crystal Labyrinth is a specialised crystal shop & looks forward to educating many people in the gem world. There are many rare & expensive gemstones that can range up to thousands of pounds! We hope you will enjoy furnishing your rooms with a beautiful, rare gem from us one day in the future!



# ESTABAN BRIDGES JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER

**Estaban is the owner of DVDMEGASTORE on the middle floor of the Darwin Centre which also houses Buttercup Bookshop & Darwin's Barbers which is located within The Collective on the lower floor of the centre, too.**

Below are the highlights of his journey so far...

**Released Trilogy of Leon** - At 19 years old Estaban had a mission to create a young writers group to support and encourage creative writing in the minds and hearts of our next generation of wordsmiths. He approached Telford & Wrekin Library Service who said if he could get an author on side that they would be willing to help. So Estaban became that author and the writing group was created, running successfully and held at Oakengates Theatre.

**Community Filming Project** - The main purpose of this project was to provide an opportunity for people to taste an amateur filming environment, to see if they would enjoy further education in media studies and related fields.

**2008 Pride of Shropshire Awards** - Estaban was proud to be a finalist in the Pride of Shropshire Awards. He had also been nominated for a National Community & Heritage Award.

**Exo Sound & Artist Support Krew (ASK?)** - In order to provide a free promotional network to help independent and unsigned musicians showcase their work, Estaban created Exo and ASK?

**2015 DVDMEGASTALL - LAUNCHED** - Late 2014 Estaban suffered mobility health issues which found him unemployed and struggling to see a future in employment within retail. During this time of reflection he took the opportunity to study and complete a diploma in life coaching, he also obtained another in business coaching; both of which he passed with distinction. He enlisted as part of the Princes Trust New Enterprise Initiative and created a business called Gifted - selling craft work manufactured by local vendors.

**First Shop** - Estaban obtained his first shop within 2 months of this as part of the enterprise zone at the Pride Hill Shopping Centre, Shrewsbury.

**Finalist Princes Trust Natwest Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2016** - Estaban was proud to have the privilege of attending the awards ceremony with his Princes Trust mentor, Pete.

**Many moves, one goal; growth.** - Over the last 8 years they have moved location a total of five times. Always striving to be bigger and better. They are now located opposite Marks & Spencer, near Primark, WHSmith and Home Bargains.

**Buttercup Bookshop** - In the middle of the pandemic we took the opportunity to open Buttercup Bookshop which is now located within DVDMEGASTORE, as a shop-in-shop experience and boasts hundreds of children's books and proudly supports its free book initiative.

**Darwin's Barbers** - The following September Estaban created Darwin's Barbers within The Collective, located on the lower floor of the Darwin Centre.

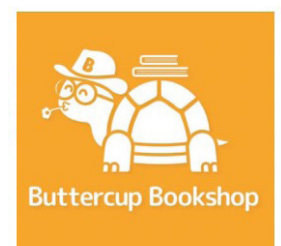
## What's current with Estaban?

DVDMEGASTORE's Aspirations Initiative uses funds raised from donations and carrier bag charges to finance business management diplomas for aspiring entrepreneurs, who may not otherwise be able to access or obtain them.

Pocket Money Pit Stop is a new brand that focuses on fun toys at pocket money prices and currently sits as a concession within DVDMEGASTORE, with the view of becoming a stand alone store in the future.

**DVDMegaStore**  
games | blu-ray | merch

**Aspirations Initiative**  
Promoting Learning and Knowledge for the Future



# PRESENCE COUNSELLING JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER

Presence  
counselling



**I'm Susie Harris, I've worked as a counsellor and psychotherapist for 10 years. I'm an accredited registered member of the National Counselling & Psychotherapy Society (NCPS).**

I trained to be a therapist because I'm really interested in people and I've always been the person they found easy to talk to.

I've helped people who lack confidence and struggle to value themselves as well as those experiencing anxiety, depression, divorce or separation, bereavement, grief and loss, including pet loss.

I offer sessions face to face, online (via video call), telephone and walk and talk sessions.

It may be a rare experience to talk and to really feel heard and understood.

When you feel understood it can help you feel less alone with whatever it is you are experiencing in your life. Being heard can bring new awareness that leads to more choice.

Counselling is confidential and offers a safe space to feel heard and to find new ways to move forward.

I'm pleased to become a member of Shrewsbury Business Chamber and so enjoyed the Sabrina trip in June this year.

I've found the Netwalks fun that Donna Lucas kindly leads each month too. I love to be outside in nature. To find out more about Susies Business -

Email - Susie Harris at [office@presencecounselling.co.uk](mailto:office@presencecounselling.co.uk)

Phone: 07958 794265

For further information: [www.presencecounselling.co.uk](http://www.presencecounselling.co.uk)



# SALES GEEK SHROPSHIRE JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER



**At Sales Geek Shropshire, we're a bit different! We help you drive your sales, and we do that in various ways, depending upon your need.**

Our flagship service is called 'Your Sales Director' where we fulfil a business' sales director needs, on a pay as you go basis. This is perfect for SME's that can't afford/don't want a sales director in on a full-time basis, with all of the associated costs. We embed with the business during this time, and join you on your journey. We don't just tell you what to do!

My passion area is in training. Sales is a really underrated skill, and not everyone appreciates this or does it well. I act as 'Your Sales Trainer' and coach anything from individuals in their own businesses to teams within global companies, and get them upskilled in new sales techniques. Most people don't believe that they're in a sales role, but if you work for commercial gain, or you're customer facing - I can help!

We also perform team diagnostics, from Skills Gap Analyses, to Performance Climate Systems. I'm an accredited DISC practitioner too. All of these diagnostics mean that we know exactly what we're dealing with in a company and can identify how to improve certain areas. People are the driving force in any business, and by getting everyone upskilled and confident, performance will rocket!

The advertisement features a white background with a decorative border of brown and white geometric patterns. At the top, it says 'THE COLLECTIVE SHREWSBURY'. Below that, the main headline reads 'RETAIL LETTING OPPORTUNITY IN THE HEART OF SHREWSBURY'. A sub-headline asks, 'Are you running a small business and considering a retail unit in Shrewsbury? If so - we'd love to hear from you!'. Two polaroid-style photos are shown: one of a retail store interior and another of a sign that says 'Do you have the THING every day that makes you HAPPY'. At the bottom, it states 'TOWN CENTRE RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES AT THE COLLECTIVE IN THE DARWIN CENTRE, SHREWSBURY'. A note mentions 'Flexible 2 year lease at an affordable rent - inclusive of utilities, service charge, wifi and marketing support (does not include business rates but some smaller units may be eligible for relief). Includes store room.' The bottom of the ad includes contact information: 'TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST AND BE FIRST TO HEAR ABOUT THE LATEST OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE EMAIL: info@shrewsbury-shopping.co.uk' and the 'THE DARWIN' logo.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER

**BEHIND THE SCENES  
AT VEOLIA WASTE**

**WED 6 SEP**  
9.45AM

FREE TO MEMBERS

**NETWALK**

2 HOUR WALK COVERING 4 MILES AND  
INCLUDES A PUB STOP.

**WED 20 SEP**  
6PM

FREE TO ALL

**TAPAS NIGHT**

PEAKES TRAVEL ELITE BUSINESS DISCUSSION  
FACING BUSINESS ADVERSITY

**WED 27 SEP**  
6PM

MEMBERS FREE  
NON MEMBERS £15

## OCTOBER

**MEMBER'S ONLY: BUSINESS  
NETWORKING LUNCH (GAME CHANGERS)**

**THU 19 OCT**  
12PM

MEMBERS £20

**CHEESE & WINE EVENING  
WITH LEZLEY PICTON**

**WED 25 OCT**  
6PM

MEMBERS FREE  
NON MEMBERS £10

## NOVEMBER

**FLAXMILL TOUR, CYBER SECURITY  
TALK & ANNUAL FUN QUIZ**

**WED 15 NOV**  
7PM

MEMBERS FREE  
NON MEMBERS £15

## DECEMBER

**CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**TUE 12 DEC**  
6PM

MEMBERS £5  
NON MEMBERS £15



**For more information about our events, please take a look at the events section of our website and follow all our socials for updates.**

 [WWW.SHREWSBURYBUSINESSCHAMBER.COM](http://WWW.SHREWSBURYBUSINESSCHAMBER.COM)

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# THANKYOU!

## Thankyou to everyone who has contributed to this issue of the Shrewsbury Business Chamber magazine.

We are always looking for new content to promote over social media, so if your business has some exciting news, any events or good news to share, then please send these to us so we can promote for you across our social media.

If you would like to be featured or have a story or an event you'd like included, if you could please send an email to [shrewsburybc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:shrewsburybc.editor@gmail.com) with all copy and any images.

To advertise in future issues if you could please contact [shrewsburybc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:shrewsburybc.editor@gmail.com)

## Thinking about becoming a member?

Shrewsbury Business Chamber is the business group of choice for the Shrewsbury area. The Chamber organises regular events allowing businesses to network, voice their opinions and gain useful business expertise. The Chamber provides a collective voice and ensures business issues reach the right officials. A not-for-profit membership organisation which is headed up by a volunteer business focused Executive Committee. The Business Chamber works closely with other local private and public sector organisations for the betterment of businesses from across the Shrewsbury area.

BUSINESS SUBSCRIPTIONS	ANNUAL FEE
Sole trader	£60
Up to 10 employees	£90
More than 10 employees	£120

OTHER SUBSCRIPTIONS	ANNUAL FEE
Student (0-24)	FREE
Charity (less than ten employees)	£30
Retired Business Owner	£30

For more information on how to join please head to our website [www.shrewsburybusinesschamber.com](http://www.shrewsburybusinesschamber.com)

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily represent the views of the editor, or those of Shrewsbury Business Chamber.

To advertise in future issues if you could please contact our editor via email at

[shrewsburybc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:shrewsburybc.editor@gmail.com)