



## **AGM 2019 Chair's and Group Reports**

### **Ludlow 21 Chair's Report - Tish Dockerty 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

In 2018 Ludlow 21 consisted of seven 'Family' sub groups: Sustainable Transport, Fairtrade, Climate Friendly Diet, Swifts, Education, Incredible Edible and the newly formed Energy group and 3 'Friends' GSX, Car Club and Food and Farming (Local to Ludlow). You will today be hearing from them on their activities mainly from 2018, but also give you an opportunity to bring you up to date with activities to the current day and most possibly imminent plans for the future. Additional to these groups is the Green Festival, Ludlow 21's annual big day out, celebrating themes that are important to their members.

AGMs give us an opportunity to reflect on one's organisation, and I think this is an important exercise for Ludlow 21. Over the years we have positioned ourselves as the voice of local opinion on environmental matters. In my mind Ludlow 21 is first and foremost a community organisation, made up of volunteers contributing within our community to promote greater understanding of the challenges that face our environment and bring about positive change. For me it is important that that the community is always at the centre of everything we do, particularly focusing on young people, the next generation.

More recently the board held a special meeting to discuss whether Ludlow 21 should be called Ludlow 21 anymore. Some members had said the term is meaningless to most with the connotations from the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, where 'Agenda 21' was first mooted as part of a forward strategy, lost in the depth of time. After much consideration the board took the unanimous decision to retain the name Ludlow 21 and its tag line 'Local Initiatives, Sustainable Future' which undoubtedly says it all. I'm sure much thought went into coming up with such salient and succinct phrase, as relevant today as it was then. After years of achievements, a good brand's name becomes synonymous with its product or activities. As we stand here 21 years after Ludlow 21 was first established by a small group of individuals in 1998, and thankfully with some still involved today, I believe as an organisation we have attained this stage of maturity.

I feel as us the Board could harness some of the new energy that has been achieved by international and national activities of late, which has brought about a greater awareness of environmental matters to hopefully a broader community of people, businesses, civil servants, councillors and politicians. We plan to have a 'tree of hope' for people to hang their wishes for the town's future, which I think should form an action plan going forward for our town. Ludlow 21 are keen to organise a Green Summit, possibly in the autumn where these matters can be discussed and put to paper with actions associated with them.

So, when I became Chair back in September 2016, it was on the understanding that I would do it for a year and see the organisation through a very sticky phase after a period of mass resignations of board members. I also made it very clear that, whilst Chair in name, I had very little additional capacity to give the organisation. My commitments within the family and friends of Ludlow 21 are substantial, with the Incredible Edible group and with Local to Ludlow. Other significant voluntary roles which I undertake for the town include past Chair and Secretary of Ludlow Chamber of Commerce (more latterly finance and publicity) and the Chair of the Destination Ludlow Partnership. These sit alongside my main occupation: producing the best tasting apple juice from local orchards.

After almost 3 years at the helm I believe Ludlow 21 is financially and organisationally stronger than it was. It is now time for me to consider stepping down as Chair, and I propose in order to do this in a helpful way, I will aim to leave within the next 6-12 months (or before if suitable) as and when we have recruited a suitable new chair and possibly some new blood for Ludlow 21's board.

With regard to 2018/19 I would very much like to thank all members of the Ludlow 21 Board for their contributions, efforts and energy as well as officers that do the essential work that allows us to function. These include Megan Blackmore for assiduous attention to detail as our Secretary and Nina Foord, our outgoing book- keeper, and we give a warm welcome to Jenny Nicol, our new book keeper.

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## **Ludlow21 Sustainable Transport Group Report 2018/19**

This year has been a mixture of intense frustration but with some good news too.

First of all, we have amended and simplified our Vision Statement to:

*Helping people access the places they need to go, conveniently and sustainably, whether on foot or on wheels.*

We think this better reflects our belief that people should come first in any consideration of

transport requirements.

Progress on our main objectives for the year can be summarised as:

### **Pedestrians**

We have gained Ludlow Council's approval and funding for the revised finger post signs. These are now being fabricated and should be installed throughout the town this summer. All our fingerposts will now be accurate in terms of content, correctly sited and pointing in the right direction!

### **Cycling**

Proposals for increasing the number of cycle racks in the town and adding some extra sites have been submitted to Shropshire Council and we are waiting for approval of the details. We are looking at an electric bike rental scheme which we think could encourage more people to cycle rather than use their cars. We are also working on improving existing cycle ways and identifying new ones.

### **Buses**

Ludlow Town Council have now approved the design for a new bus shelter in Corve Street, it has been ordered and will be installed soon. We were disappointed that Shropshire Council were unable to fund their portion of the cost of the shelter (as they were legally obliged to do) but very grateful to our Town Council for accepting the full burden of costs themselves. We hope that we can now plan for more shelters across the town.

The proposed cuts to bus services in Ludlow are depressing and we are challenging them. We are also participating in Professor Whitelegg's new project which will map out a strategy for an integrated bus framework across the county. This work is being funded by The Foundation for Integrated Transport and could have a significant impact on national bus network strategy in rural counties.

We are about to start developing a case for a fit-for-purpose Park and Ride service in Ludlow as we believe this would go a long way to resolving many of Ludlow's parking problems.

### **Train Station**

Progress continues to be slow because of the various entities involved but, after meetings with Network Rail and Transport for Wales this year we have been assured that our proposals for a ramp on the northbound platform (similar to that on the southbound platform) will be included in NR's 5 year plan. We are making slower progress on improving the station forecourt and expect a few battles ahead of us in the coming year. Essentially, this is because NR believe that car parking spaces are more important than footpaths and pedestrian safety and we need to challenge this view.

### **Cars**

We were delighted that Ludlow town Council both endorsed our 20mph campaign and formally requested Shropshire Council to implement a 20mph limit on all our residential roads. Professor Whitelegg now has over 50% of Shropshire towns requesting the replacement of 30 mph limits with 20mph and is working to get this approved for the whole county by Shropshire Council. Because of that Council's intransigence, we do not expect much further progress in the near future.

Our EV Subgroup have produced a series of very helpful documents to support anyone

considering buying an electric car. We have also made representations to our Town Council to urge them to install EVcharging points within the town and to encourage planners to include chargers in their housing developments. A more detailed presentation about the development of an EV strategy for Ludlow has been prepared for the IOL, Rep Committee and other organisations with an interest in the subject. With the greater emphasis on Climate crisis, we are confident that this initiative will gather momentum over the coming months.

Finally I would like to thank all my colleagues in the group, including our three new members this year, for their continued support, enthusiasm and diligence in all the work that we do. We were sorry to lose Philip Sams who has too many other commitments but reassured that he will continue to advise us when needed. We are always looking for more help because our workload is heavy and so if you are interested in any of our projects, please contact me at [sunniva.dt@btinternet.com](mailto:sunniva.dt@btinternet.com).

Denise Thompson

**Our current STG membership is:**

Philip Adams  
David Currant  
Kim Holroyd  
Cllr Robin Pote  
Cllr Jim Smithers  
Nick Robertson  
Nigel Rowley  
Denise Thompson  
Neil Timmins  
John Whitelegg

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## **Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group – 2018-2019**

A busy and exciting year for the fairtrade group, some highlights being:

- The celebration in November of fifteen years as a Fairtrade Town, at which we were joined by many organisations and businesses in Ludlow
- A successful schools conference, where notable contributions were made by a number of our local retailers to the children's experience
- An interesting event learning about 'Shared Interest', an ethical investment company
- Design agreed by all relevant bodies for a new town sign featuring our Fairtrade Town Status – we're busy fundraising to erect this, so keep your eyes open for it coming in the near future!
- Participation in the successful national tea campaign aimed at improving working and living conditions for tea pickers in Assam
- Our usual round of market stalls, fairs and special events to support Traidcraft
- The publication of our first 'Ludlow Fairtrade Shopping Guide', available from the featured retailers: Broad Bean, Myriad Organics, La jewellery, Bensons, Tiger Lily, Eclectica, Kaboodle, Wesley's café, Oxfam and the Traidcraft outlet in the Ludlow Mascall Centre
- Entering into collaboration with other food related charities and voluntary organisations in the town to raise awareness of ethical issues around food and our

town's response to these – watch out for more about this at the Green Festival and the Food Festival

Jenny Hume  
Chair – Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group

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## **Planet-Friendly Diet Family Group of Ludlow 21**

The Planet-Friendly Diet group has largely been dormant the past year. The shared suppers which allowed for discussion of food sustainability issues in a social context have not taken place for several months.

Food packaging, primarily trying to eliminate plastic, has recently been a focus. And some energies have been directed at assessing the viability of two cooperative initiatives with other groups. The outcome of those will, hopefully, become apparent in the next few weeks.

Kim Holroyd

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## **Ludlow Swift Group**

The walk led by members of Ludlow Swift Group for the Ludlow Branch of Shropshire Wildlife Trust on mid-summer's evening in 2018; was attended by over 50 people and whilst it was not the best evening for seeing Swifts it was good to be able to talk about the birds and where and why they nest in Ludlow – and how fortunate we are to have them here when so many places have lost them.

The annual display in the library coincided with the first UK Swift Awareness week in June 2018 and other events to celebrate this week included a stall on the Local to Ludlow Market and the Welcoming the Swifts evening at the Charlton Arms. Sadly neither event generated many, if any, visitors; neither were there volunteers forthcoming to help at either. So although there is a good sized email list of those who are pleased to hear news from the group, there are very few who are willing and able to help with the work we are trying to do.

We were delighted to find that there was evidence of successful breeding in one of the Swift boxes installed in 2014 in the tower of St Laurence's. The call system that has been played regularly was instrumental in advertising potential nest sites to the birds and we hope to see the number of birds nesting there increase.

So, the group continues on an ad-hoc basis – looking for opportunities to install boxes, talking to people about Swifts and commenting on planning applications to ask for provision for Swifts in new build and also in renovations of the town's older buildings. We

are recognised in the town and indeed contributed to the portfolio created for Ludlow in Bloom.

Swift numbers continue to decline at 3-4% a year and we should not be complacent about Ludlow's Swift population – indeed all the urban bird species are in need of support. New members who can actively complement the activities of existing members are always sought – maybe engaging with other sectors of the community or installing boxes.

Peta Sams

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## **Education Group**

The Education Group has had a fairly quiet year. Offers to visit local schools and run assemblies and workshops on climate change have met with a lukewarm response, although we are now taking some bookings. Our focus is on the problems caused by plastics in the environment, particularly in the oceans. It may be that schools feel that they are covering these topics in-house.

On a more positive note, our relationship with Ludlow High School has been strengthened through Chris' collaboration with staff and students on the production and analysis of a local energy audit. Also, we are delighted to welcome two art teachers from the school, Wendy and Helen, to our Green Festival Planning Group. This has already resulted in much greater involvement of students, and it bodes well for the future.

The participation of local youngsters in the recent Hereford climate crisis protest is a testament to their determination to be heard on this crucial issue. Our intention is to provide an additional platform for their views at the Green Festival this year. The plan is to organise and record conversations on the subject between young people and their parents and grandparents. I am hopeful that Radio Shropshire will be involved in the project in some capacity.

Ian Urry

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## **Incredible Edible**

The group spent 2018 mainly attending to the planters in the Parkway area, increasing their number and planting out mainly herbs, we managed to get some support from businesses in the area to help water and we thank the Cottage Herbery and Ludlow 21 for their small but invaluable financial assistance. We also replaced a number of vandalised fruit trees in the public spaces which we had planted out in 2016.

We planned and executed a very successful 'Ludlow Seed Swap' in early February 2019, we were very encouraged by its popularity, so we therefore hosted a seedling swap just a few weeks ago, which was equally well attended. We now plan to do quarterly events that are suitable to growing and managing produce.

We also aim to label the fruit trees in public spaces this year as they are now relatively substantial. We will maintain a link with Ludlow Scouts and their edible garden which we created back in 2016, we have already had a session with them this year, weeding and sowing. We also plan to run a 'seed bomb' workshop at this year's 2019 Green Festival. Going forward we think we could have some informal self help 'grower' group sessions where we invite our list of interested attendees who have added their names to our mailing list whilst attending our swap events. We have a very small group of extremely busy people – new members are always welcome – just get in touch!

Tish Dockerty

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## **Energy Group**

The energy group has started to develop its new programme of activity in the last year. The overall intent is to see if we can make Ludlow a zero-carbon town.

In conjunction with the education group, we delivered two 'save your weight in CO2' sessions to local schools.

We have been able to get one of the Ludlow middle school years to do a home energy usage survey as a project, we have the detailed results from this.

We have started to work with the Neen Sollars hydro scheme to bring the plant back into production and have established contact with the Ludford hydro operators, both as part of understanding the potential for energy production in Ludlow.

We are investigating the possibility of restarting the Coder Road digester plant and are currently studying the 'end-of-project' report produced by DEFRA.

We have extended the 'green energy' map of the Ludlow area, this now has 21 installations listed.

We are continuing to use estate agent listings to map the EPC ratings of the Ludlow housing stock and expect to have a first view of this by the end of 2019.

Many of these items will be further shown at the Green Festival later in the year.

Chris Deaves