

## **Report on The Green Festival**

The very fact that this year's Green Festival, the 24<sup>th</sup> in its history, took place at all represents a vindication of the optimism and faith that the planning committee showed from its first meeting back in March. The fact that it turned out to be such an undoubted success was a tribute to the organisers' attention to detail, energy and team work. However, even in the two weeks leading up to the festival in July, with daily reports of spikes in Covid cases and a general jitteriness pervading the country, there remained doubts about whether or not we would be able to go ahead and whether or not we would attract any visitors if we did.

In the event, we need not have worried on either account. Even the allure of European football and Wimbledon tennis failed to prevent the steady stream of visitors from filling Castle Square. There was clearly an appetite amongst Ludlow residents and visitors to the town to have some human contact. That contact was managed within strict social distancing and sanitary protocols adopted by stall-holders and exhibitors, and reinforced with tact by a small army of stewards and other volunteers. It felt safe, but it also felt like a proper festival: bustling with life, colour, the smells of delicious food and the sounds of live music. In fact the music, superbly well organized by Nick Robinson, made a huge contribution to the atmosphere of the day. The transitions between the seven different groups also provided an opportunity for visitors to take the mike and speak about sustainable matters close to their hearts. Mention should be made here of the six Ludlow High Schools students and their teacher, who stayed throughout the day and gave voice to their concerns about the climate crisis. The musical entertainment was also enhanced by the surprise appearance of an Extinction Rebellion dance group, who both entertained and provoked thoughtful reactions to their rendition of 'Staying Alive'.

Our chosen theme of 'Build Back Greener' also seemed to strike the right chord with both the exhibitors and visitors alike. It was very satisfying to note how many visitors were engaged in earnest conversations with the representatives of L21 groups and other local groups about issues ranging from energy production and conservation, plastics in the oceans, flooding, sustainable diets, and so much more. Talking to a number of visitors on the day, it was clear that many felt that they had gained useful insights about how to build resilience and instigate change to mitigate the climate emergency.

For those visitors wanting to experience more formal sessions on many of these matters there was the opportunity to attend one or more of the talks delivered in the Democracy Tent, one of the new initiatives organised by Kim this year. We are also grateful to Kim for facilitating the Climate Crisis Café workshops, run by a group of psychologists who are responding to the clear and growing levels of anxiety about the climate crisis. They were well attended and there is every indication that such regular meetings places will be established in local communities.

More energetic visitors also had the opportunity to try out the electric bikes brought along by Isla Bikes (I hadn't realised how easy it could be to nip up to Whitcliffe Common and I am already saving up for one). There were also some splendid looking electric motor bikes on display, which later joined the electric cargo bike in a very quiet and understated cavalcade around the town.

With the stall-holders and those providing refreshments reporting their satisfaction with the day's taking, we reached 4 o'clock and the beginnings of a light drizzle falling on the Market Square, very happy with the way the 24<sup>th</sup> Green Festival had gone and looking forward to a rather less problematic lead up to the 25<sup>th</sup> one.

Thanks are due to all of the Green Festival Planning Committee, who mastered the vagaries of Zoom meetings and were able to organise the entire event remotely. Special thanks also go to Tish, for her calm and professional oversight of the whole event; to Kim and Christina who did a great job booking and organising the stall holders, speakers and exhibitors; to Roger and Megan for organising the publicity material distribution; and to Roger and Sally on the day for their splendid efforts with megaphones in hand; to Denise and the Sustainable Transport group for organising the electric vehicle cavalcade; and of course to the volunteers who arrived early in the morning to get the festival ready, stewarded throughout the day and helped to pack it all away at the end. I hope we can call upon you all next year.

Ian Urry

## Education

Much of the last year has made any effective engagement with schools and other youth groups impossible. It has felt like treading water and we have missed the experience of working with youngsters on projects.

However, once the children returned to schools after the second lockdown, we took the opportunity to invite the local schools to work with us in encouraging their students to become involved in the National Children's Gardening Week, to be held in June. Ludlow Junior School, and specifically a year 5 teacher, Ms Rebecca Smith, jumped at the chance and, before long, she had recruited many of her students to commit to undertaking some gardening activity at home during the summer half term. The Gardening Centre of Home Care was extremely generous in donating a number of high quality gardening tools, tools that we were able to offer as prizes for participating students who could provide us with evidence of their gardening efforts. Home Care also donated bags of peat-free compost that we were able to pass on to the school. Megan produced some wonderful posters with the aid of her youngest daughter. Trays full of young plants were donated from various sources including Incredible Edible Ludlow. Packets of cress and pea seeds ready for planting were funded by Ludlow 21.

Thus, all of the children were offered a starter kit of plants, seeds and compost, as well as suggestions and instructions for a range of fun gardening activities that they could pursue during half term.

We were able to display many of the photos that we received from them of their gardening activities at the Green Festival, and the most impressive of these found themselves the proud owners of brand new gardening tools. Ms Smith was delighted with the involvement of the children in the project and she hopes to make it an annual event from now on.

We were also delighted to welcome back Ludlow Girl Guides to the Green Festival this year, doing a great job providing refreshments throughout the day. Similarly, the presence of six students from Ludlow High School taking the mike at the Speaker's Corner part of the festival, together with their teacher, Leah Harper, was very welcome and went some way towards making up for the fact that social distancing rules prohibited the type of children-centered activities that we normally include in the festival.

Hopefully, the coming year will provide more opportunities to engage with the children of Ludlow in projects promoting sustainable lifestyles.

Ian Urry

## Ludlow 21 Energy Group 2020-2021

Activities have been limited by the Covid restrictions. However, we have accomplished the following:

- a) work with the Nene Sollars hydro team to rebuild the control system enclosure and replace the generator unit and actuators following the late 2019 flooding. This has improved the reliability and output and the system has run more-or-less continuously since late Dec 2020 and has now generated over 40MWhr of output.
- b) There has been considerable activity on the organisational front. There are now South Shropshire (aligned with Philip Dunne's constituency) and a 'geographic Shropshire' zero carbon groups. The energy group is engaged with both of these and has been working on mapping the renewable generation potential of Shropshire and how this could be aligned with a self-sufficiency strategy.
- c) The energy group prepared a stand at the 2021 Green Festival, highlighting the elements of a zero-carbon energy infrastructure for Shropshire.

Chris Deaves

## **Ludlow Fair Trade Town Group**

It's been challenging trying to maintain any momentum to our work during the pandemic, though there has been a real need to do so since the situation for producers in developing countries has been extremely difficult due to a combination of circumstances caused by covid and climate change. We have organised some online campaigns and managed to create a certain amount of interest. A real success has been launching our new website [ludlowfairtrade.com](http://ludlowfairtrade.com)

We have now resumed in person meetings and are re-evaluating our work and planning new ways forward.

A major emphasis in planning ways forward is to make sure that we are working in partnership with other organisations whose interests link with our own. With that in mind, we will be meeting with representatives of the Shropshire Good Food Partnership and South Shropshire Climate Action in September to look at sustainable food sourcing how we link into the climate change agenda.

We are also planning work, again in partnership with others, about ethical clothing.

*Jenny Hume*

*Chair – Ludlow Fair Trade Town Group*

## INCREDIBLE EDIBLE LUDLOW Report 2020-21

As we all know 2020 was an odd year, however we had our own success with our 'no-contact' seed and plant swaps, which just kept rolling and lots of new people were swapping and joining our mailing list. The swap wheelbarrow was mainly positioned on Castle View Terrace and went once a week to the Local to Ludlow 'pop up' shop on Castle Square. We reckon we had over 100 swaps and £300 in donations during this period. This will give the Incredible Edible Ludlow a great boost and means we can buy tools, signs and other kit to help us grow as a group. We've also given growing advice to all those that have asked for it, we seem to be helping a new generation of growers and re-inspiring some lapsed ones!

We reintroduced the 'no-contact' seed and plant swaps in Spring 2021 and we've had less interest but certainly some- the group have shared the hosting of this throughout the year and wheelbarrow can still be found on Julian Road today! We had many plants available for swaps or donations at the Ludlow Green Festival which were greatly received by customers.

We managed to have some virtual social evenings over a video call every month on the first Monday during 2020 and we've met in the real world a few times at different venues in 2021. Just before lockdown the Incredible Edible group had a 'Save Shropshire Verges' meeting with Janet Cobb. After an initial positive turnout – the group have created their own energy and done some great work on The Sheet in Ludlow supported by Janet's team. The Incredible Edible group donated £60 to this project to help them get established. We've also commissioned and bought some hardwood signs for the fruit trees planted in 2017 on Station Drive. We're working on using a pyrograph pen to write on the wooden signs, so people will know what tree varieties they are.

In the Spring of 2021 we managed to be donated some apple trees from Tom the Apple Man, a grower in North Shropshire. We made an offer to local community groups if they would like some trees, and this offer was taken up by Brimfield Common Parish Council who planted the trees in late March in the grounds of their village hall. We also replaced and planted an additional quince tree in the land at the end of Glencoe Terrace, where we have a number of fruit trees in a public grass area.

We still meet up and welcome new members and hope to have a 'real seed swap' in February 2022.

Tish Dockerty

## Sustainable Transport Group

### Ludlow 21 STG Report for the Ludlow21 Annual General Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Since our last report in August 2019 we have managed to continue our Group meetings via ZOOM and have continued with our planned programme of work, despite the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic. For this, I must thank all the group members who have come together as a mutually supportive team with individual members taking lead responsibility for different topics.

#### **South Shropshire Climate Action (SSCA)**

Seven members of STG was involved in this major activity which aims to make the South Shropshire Constituency reach net zero carbon by 2030. It lasted from October 2020 until the final report was published in May 2021. Most of us were in the Transport Group but we also had one member in the Communities and Education Group. We are now helping to plan the next stage of the programme which will plan activities to meet the objectives of the report.

#### **Pedestrians**

Since our last report we have succeeded in getting the fingerposts in the town centre to show correct information and point in the right direction. Many thanks to Robin Pote who negotiated enormous administrative issues to accomplish that.

Our 20's Plenty town survey in 2017 (led by David Currant) showed a majority of Ludlow residents in favour of this and, as a result, Ludlow Town Council has asked Shropshire Council to implement a 20mph limit on all Ludlow's residential roads. To date, they (Shropshire Council) have refused to do so despite all the evidence from International and National organisations, the introduction of 20mph in increasing numbers of English towns (and every town in Wales). This is a disgrace and we will fight on.

#### **Future projects are:**

- Through the In and Out of Ludlow forum (IOL) to address the pedestrian issues with problem road junctions, especially the Gravel Hill/Henley Road One-Stop junction.
- Work with other Shropshire Towns to get 20mph implemented throughout the county wherever vulnerable pedestrians mix with motorised traffic.
- Develop proposals for greater pedestrianisation/shared streets for the town centre.
- Initiate projects to encourage active travel in Ludlow.

#### **Cycling**

Ludlow Town Council approved our proposal (led by David Currant) to sign post Route 44 (the National Cycle Network route which will eventually connect Shrewsbury and Hereford) through the town and signposts along the route have been erected.

Through IOL, we are continuing to press both Shropshire Council and Ludlow Town Council to install 10 additional racks in the town centre which were approved in 2019.

Our proposal for a Cargo Bike Scheme for town centre goods deliveries has been enthusiastically embraced by Islabikes and a trial has been running since April this year. It is going very well and we expect it to become a viable business once the trial ends this December.

**Future Projects are:**

- A campaign to persuade more children to cycle to school (this is dependent on a 20mph limit throughout the town)
- Giving priority to cyclists and pedestrians in our town centre. This will depend upon more pedestrianisation /shared space in the town.
- A programme of cycle lanes for urban roads which will be driven through SSCA.
- A bike hire scheme, preferably using electric bikes.

**Buses**

We are delighted that Ludlow Town Council enthusiastically approved our proposal for a bus shelter in Corve Street and they have now committed to erecting one shelter every year. The second shelter was erected on Parys Road last year and a further one will be installed on Upper Galdeford this autumn.

The Ludlow bus timetable (led by Roger Furniss) has proved to be a great success and we have now secured funding from our town council for a further print run and newly designed A2 versions of the map, including timetables, for all our bus shelters and the Visitor Information Centre.

**Future Projects are:**

- A new Ludlow-Worcester bus service (led by Les Lumsdon)
- Cabling at all bus stops for interactive display boards.
- As part of the Ludlow Sustainable Transport Strategy, making a business case for a fit-for-purpose Park and Ride.
- Electric buses for our town services (led by Philp Adams). A highly persuasive business case was presented to Shropshire Council and Philip Dunn in 2019 and will now form part of the Ludlow Sustainable Transport Strategy.

**Trains**

We are now making much better progress with the Railway Station improvements we first identified in 2017 thanks to an excellent collaboration with Transport for Wales (led by Robin Pote). Ticket machines have been installed and a lift on the northbound platform will be installed in 2021. There is also the possibility of having a real-time display of train times in the Ludlow Information Centre at the Assembly Rooms.

**Future Projects are:**

- Major improvements to the Station forecourt by removing the parking bays and creating a new, disabled entrance to the north of the Ticket Office.
- Installation of some EV Charging points in the car park.
- A new bus shelter and relocated bus stop in front of the booking office.

**Cars**

Our major effort (led by Philip Adams) is to install ev chargers in car parks and on residential roads in the town centre. A charger was installed in Galdeford car park in 2019 as a result of our recommendations to IOL. Also, as a result of a public consultation, managed jointly by our group and Ludlow Town Council, the Council has agreed the need for more chargers for residents and visitors alike. We will have 4 on-street chargers in Mill Street this year and our town council has just requested Shropshire Council to apply for an On-Street Residential Charging Scheme grant to enable us to install a bank of chargers in the Castle Square car park.

The Car Club changed its fleet in Shrewsbury and Ludlow to new hybrid cars in the autumn of 2019 and they have proved to be very popular. The club had a difficult time during the major Covid-19 lockdowns because members were, understandably, reluctant to car share with strangers and longer journeys were initially banned anyway. However, the last three months have seen increases in both membership and car journeys but these need expanding further to make the club viable long term.

**Proposed projects are:**

- Install a bank of fast ev chargers in the new Park and Ride
- Significantly reduce, or eliminate, on-street car parking for non-residents in the town centre.
- Eliminate all pavement parking throughout the town.

Finally, I should point out that, while I have specifically mentioned the leads, every member of the group participate in our work and so my thanks must also go to Kim Holroyd, Paul Weeden and Jim Smithers who have been enthusiastically involved on many aspects of our work programme over the last two years.

Denise Crampton-Thompson (Chair, Ludlow 21 Sustainable Transport Group)