

Ludlow 21 AGM 2025

Group Reports

Ludlow 21 Family

Ludlow 21 AGM Fairtrade Town Group report 2024 – 2025

The Steering Group of currently five members meets regularly and has held nine meetings in the past year. Autumn 2024 saw the launch and distribution of the Fairtrade Town Shopping Guide. Also in the autumn some of the group met with Stuart Anderson MP to discuss his role in helping Fairtrade.

There have been three Fairtrade stalls at the Local to Ludlow Producer's Market, Christmas 2024, Transform Trade Big Brew spring 25, and Fairtrade Fortnight (September to October) this year. We also ran a stall at the Green Festival in July. Stalls, manned by a wider group of volunteers. Our stalls help promote Fairtrade generally and support specific campaigns run by the Fairtrade Foundation and Transform Trade. The current campaign is on tea in 'Brew it Fair'.

St Laurence's Church has run regular Fairtrade stalls following Sunday services. There have been many special stalls and refreshments for the Big Brew and Fairtrade Fortnight. After many years, regular stalls are to be wound down for now.

A few of the group recently attended a Town Council meeting of the Climate Action Task and Finish Group. Our presentation on Fairtrade highlighted the devastating effects of climate change in the global south. The Council is supportive of Fairtrade.

Work with primary schools in Ludlow has continued during the past year and successful and stimulating assemblies and workshops (the latter in conjunction with the Green Festival) run in St Laurence Primary School and Ludlow Primary School.

We have a Fairtrade website and a Facebook page.

Trade Justice and Climate Justice are at the forefront of our work. They go far beyond just asking members of the public to buy Fairtrade goods. However, every purchase of Fairtrade means that farmers and workers are able to make a living wage, support themselves and their families and have the means to fight the climate crisis. **Please support Fairtrade farmers.**

We need help on the Steering Group to help plan and organise events and activities. We need ideas on how to reinvent ourselves! We need manpower and enthusiasm!

Ludlow 21 AGM Sustainable Transport Group Annual Report

Our Group has been adversely affected by several members' incapacity this year which has made progress on a number of our projects difficult. In addition the uncertainty resulting from local and county elections has affected key strategy decisions. Nevertheless we have been able to achieve several objectives.

Ludlow Station: Transport for Wales completed the major upgrade to station facilities we requested including the new lift, CCTV cameras and flood lights on both platforms. The next stage will involve the installation of 5 new planters with soil, compost and plants which we plan to maintain with volunteers. We will continue to press for an improved entrance to the station and try to resolve the problem with platform height and gap between it and the trains.

Buses: Ludlow Town Council has continued the programme of installing new bus shelters throughout the town and cleaning some existing ones. We have also cleaned the Park and Ride (P&R) bus shelter and cleared the area around it of weeds. The P&R service now is for residents and visitors alike. In May/June STG members conducted a bus survey to ascertain the level of satisfaction with the 701 and 702 bus services. Buses are clearly essential for passengers to access medical appointments, shopping, attend to other business such as banking and for social engagement. The reduction of a half-hourly service to hourly was a complaint shared by all but the elimination of bus stops was also a concern to many.

A comprehensive report was shared with Ludlow's town and county councillors, as well as Shropshire Council and Minsterley Motors. With the strong support and lobbying of Councillors Boddington, Parry and Waite, new and slightly improved town bus timetables for the 701 and 702 were introduced October 27 as an interim measure until the bus contract ends next summer.

The report received attention from the Guardian, Radio Shropshire and local newspapers and the photograph was published in the Ludlow Advertiser.



Cars: We have continued to press for a 20mph speed limit on all the residential roads in our town but, despite repeated requests from Ludlow Town Council, Shropshire Council has refused to implement 20mph in any of the county towns. We will not give up!!! The programme of EV chargers on residential roads has continued with new chargers on Sandpits and Charlton Rise and we are pleased that the existing ones are being used regularly now. Although we have handed over the running of Ludlow Car Club to Co-Wheels the cars are being well used and we are hoping the club will introduce electric cars as soon as possible.

LCWIP: We will be pressing the new County Council to proceed with this initiative to ensure that our town centre is quieter, safer and more attractive for visitors and residents alike.

No Flights: We are running a major campaign to persuade more people to use less polluting modes of transport than planes. Our Green Festival stall had a number of examples of cleaner alternatives which are more comfortable, cheaper and more enjoyable as well.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING US – LET US KNOW!!

Incredible Edible Annual Report

The Ludlow Seed Swap took place on Saturday 15th February at Ludlow library. We had a great response in terms of donations of seeds and some plants and there was some serious swapping taking place, more so than previous years. We also incorporated advice from the local Master Composter and a book swap aiding local charity Working Together. In March the group wrote a letter to Ludlow Town Council about possible creating a community orchard somewhere in Ludlow to help commemorate this year's Green Festival's theme, which was 'Food for Thought'. We received a positive response which resulted in planting some local variety apple trees in an area just off Weyman Road on land owned by Ludlow Town Council. These trees were created from last year's grafting workshop which we organised. The plan is to plant some more trees and plants to create a larger community garden in Winter 2025/6 on the green space just off Weyman Road. On Saturday 19th April we hosted a Seedling Swap again at Ludlow Library, we had plenty of plants/seedlings, chat about growing, tea, cake and more.

On Monday 21st April, group member Roz Cox hosted a Biodynamic Gardening Talk by at Ludlow Green Drinks: Incredible Edible Ludlow member Roz gave a talk at April's Green Drinks on the subject of biodynamic gardening at the Blue Boar, Mill Street. (Green Drinks is a regular event on the 21st of each month hosted by Ludlow 21).

In May and in June the group donated an apple tree and some surplus aubergine and herb plants to the new group garden at Ludlow Foyer for their young residents to help plant out and care for.

In July the group managed a stall at the Ludlow Green Festival – we had some plants and our seed swap on offer.

In August the group re hung variety signs on fruit trees in and around the Station Drive area.

We have a date in the diary Thursday 20th November to decide on dates for the seed and seedling swaps for next year.

ENERGY GROUP

Over the last year, the 'landscape' for energy systems has changed markedly:

- On-shore wind is now feasible from a planning consent perspective. This has changed the debate to where such system could/should be built
- Planning consent for solar farms is now more readily given. In Shropshire, several installations are in progress, along with some battery storage facilities
- The re-structured National Grid operator (now called NESO) has started to think about the structure of the grid and how local energy 'economies' could be constructed in a new way
- DESNZ has produced a new Clean Energy policy, which includes consultation on how 'community benefit' schemes could be constructed
- As we are increasingly aware, despite much opposition, the UK is now routinely generating over 50% of its electricity from green sources.

So, what does this mean for Ludlow?

- We will need to engage more on how we want local energy schemes to work.
- This means more pressure on the local planning system to come up with the right solutions for Shropshire, with its particular rural characteristics, rather than using 'urban' approaches followed by pressure on grid operators
- We will need to think about how we can join together as communities to think about (and fund) our energy needs and how these link to transportation, social justice and housing quality.

Green Festival 2025

This year's Ludlow Green Festival took a fresh look at all things related to food. The festival now in its 27th year, providing people of all ages with a range of activities to inform, stimulate and entertain.

Setting the scene on the Friday, before the big day Ludlow's Assembly Rooms, screened the film '6 Inches of Soil' introduced by local farmer Ed Rollings, the film documented how young British farmers are challenging the industrial model of food production.

Our partnership with the Shropshire Good Food Group allowed us to involve a wider selection of food producers and farmers that featured on the Soap Box as well as staging the colourful procession led by a 12ft puppet, 'Goddess of the Wye' the from Castle Square to the bank of the river Teme for a beautiful and moving, river-connection ceremony.

There were plenty of activities for families as always including the ginormous life size 'Food-For Thought' Snakes and Ladders game, as well as gathering your own food, with chef and forager, Alex McAllister-Lunt (Force of Nature) who led pre-booked groups on foraging walks. Children were also able join Easy Peasy Cookery sessions using local ingredients to make seasonal pizzas and fruit muffins.

A few hundred metres away from the festival site, you will meet enthusiastic local organic growers at the Wigley Field Allotments who were delighted to share their growing tips with you. Not forgetting 40 plus stalls of local community groups, ethical businesses and live music throughout the day.

The festival also inspired a day of activities associated with food production held at Ludlow Primary School and featured key aspects of pollination, fair trade, food miles and surplus food ideas. The pupils created the Sustainable Plate which then was exhibited at various locations throughout the town in advance of the big day.

A big thank you to all the volunteers that made the Green Festival possible, it was as always the best one to date! We will be working on 2026's Green Festival as of early next year, it's a theme I am hoping will set a focus for educational and community activities throughout the year up until the event that takes place in July.

Ludlow Repair Café

Ludlow's Repair Café started in 2016 and over the years has seen hundreds of items - and many more owners - through its doors.

The pattern of Café events quickly settled into quarterly meetings, which is still the case, on the last Saturday morning of January, April, July and October.

The pandemic and the resultant lockdown disrupted that pattern, of course, but that didn't stop things continuing to break or stop working so we introduced an At Home repair service where those on the repair team who felt comfortable and confident to do so, accepted items at their own homes. The H&S for that was stringent, both to protect the repairer and the owners, but it worked - and when the lockdown was lifted, the At Home service continued - and continues still.

Its success has been double-edged, though, resulting in a drop in footfall at our quarterly events, which has been especially noticeable this year.

We have a stall at the Green Festival which is a great way of raising our profile and which is always a positive experience - as well as a surprising one with many people telling us they didn't know we existed - this despite various forms of advertising! However, the Green Festival has brought us new members of the repair team as well as new customers. Plus - it's fun!

As part of our literature for this year's Green Festival, I produced a list of some (not all) of the items we have repaired or attempted to repair over the years which I have to say impressed me - and I run the Café!!

So ...

Clocks and barometers; ceramics, glassware, statuettes and ornaments; toys, teddy bears and dolls; clothes; tents, rucksacks and handbags; jewellery; shopping trolleys and pushchairs; irons; toasters; vacuum cleaners (many!); food mixers; mowers, leaf blowers and hedge trimmers; chainsaws, electric drills and sanders; garden and household tools; radios and CD players; torches, lamps and lights; Xmas decorations; umbrellas and parasols; printers and paper shredders; furniture; sewing machines; hair driers, straighteners and wands

Everything that's mended means it's not added to landfill or incinerated and of course saves the owners money - so it's a win-win whichever way you look at it!

Ludlow 21 Friends

Local to Ludlow CIC

One of the first UK farmers markets, traders need to grow, breed, brew or make the goods themselves within 30 miles of Ludlow. The Producer's Market is every 2nd and 4th Thursday throughout the year on Ludlow's traditional marketplace, Castle Square. With over forty stalls it's the largest regular farmers' market in the Marches, also having a reputation for being the friendliest.

In July 2025 the market raised a glass of elderflower champagne and ate locally-baked cake with past and present colleagues to celebrate its 25th birthday. There was a speech and live music for the audience of customers and stallholders to enjoy.

Born out of Ludlow 21, the local environment group, it promotes the consumption of local food and drink and reduces food miles. The Ludlow area has always been the home of outstanding produce and the Local to Ludlow initiative supports local independent businesses selling local products.

The familiar 'three green stars' Local to Ludlow logo is actually three tomato tops. It is trademarked and signifies produce that is locally grown or products made from local ingredients. The 'Local to Ludlow' green bags feature the logo and can be seen all over town, with over twelve thousand sold since 2005!

Over the years Local to Ludlow have also managed a café and shop on Castle Square and run a community project, Grow Cook Share, with the Rockspring Centre. Other activities have included farm tours, bee friendly days, kids' cookery sessions and chef demos.