



SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER

ISSUE 1 2024

**FIND OUT ABOUT UPCOMING
NETWORKING EVENTS**

**9 WAYS TO NAVIGATE LIFE
CHANGING EVENTS**

MEET SBC'S NEWEST MEMBERS

WWW.SHREWSBURYBUSINESSCHAMBER.COM

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



KEVIN LOCKWOOD

Manager of Shrewsbury Shopping Centres

Welcome to our first publication of 2024 and a huge welcome to a raft of new members who have joined us over the last 12 months.

The influx of new members is testament to the subtle changes we have made as an organisation by investing in our Marketing strategy and team, updating our website, including an easier way to join us, a focus on small, Independent Business and a varied and relaxed events calendar where members can interact and share experiences, both positive and negative. I'm confident that we can expect similar membership growth in 2024....

We have also been quite vocal in some of the local issues affecting Shrewsbury and Shropshire which include the proposed Car Parking increases by Shropshire Council, the scrapping of the Shrewsbury to London rail link by Avanti, proposed Riverside development consultation, Movement Strategy consultation and North West Relief Road. Not forgetting the flooding which seems to be a regular feature affecting businesses... If there is anything affecting your business, that you need support or advice on, please let us know as there is a vast and varied depth of knowledge that we can draw on to help.

Have a look at our events page on anything that takes your fancy. They are a great way to meet like minded people in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

I hope you enjoy the magazine.

Best wishes,
Kevin Lockwood Chairperson, Shrewsbury Business Chamber

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NORTH WEST RELIEF ROAD SECURES PLANNING PERMISSION



Shropshire Council Image

Planning Permission for Shrewsbury's North West Relief Road , which will link the A5 at the junction of the A458 from Mid Wales at Churncote, with the A49 at Battlefield Enterprise Park , has been given , subject to their being no Judicial Review and subject to conditions to be agreed with amongst others Severn Trent Water and The Environment Agency .

After much debate and delay, this major infrastructure investment for Shropshire and Mid - Wales does now appear to be moving forward.

Shrewsbury Business Chamber have supported this project for many years, but with important reservations about the possible adverse environmental impact on the adjoining rural area. However the benefits include the completion of the town's "ring road" to divert though traffic and link up business districts , an associated 'trigger effect' for ongoing investment in employment and housing; the preservation and enhancement of Shrewsbury's historic town centre; environmental improvements for central, suburban and village

residential areas; and also to help flood alleviation schemes and traffic relief in times of flooding itself.

As with all planning consents the permission is subject to Judicial Review (although here a request for the Secretary of State to 'call in ' the decision has been refused because it was felt that the decision was best made in Shropshire) and conditions . The latter vary between applications; here there is ongoing discussion between Shropshire Council's Highways team and The Environment Agency about a range of environmental issues including whether construction activity will affect nearby groundwater resources.

At this stage it is difficult to predict if and when construction will actually start but 2024 will hopefully be the year when this much debated project will significantly progress.

Shrewsbury Business Chamber Executive will continue our liaison with the relevant parties including Shropshire Council, local press and the town's politicians to keep Members informed about progress.

For further details please contact Charles Howell/Kevin Lockwood at any of the Members meetings.

START TECH NAMED AS ONE OF BRITAIN'S BEST MANAGED IT COMPANIES



A Shrewsbury business has been named as one of Britain's 50 Best Managed IT Companies.

Start Tech has over 23 years of experience providing IT support throughout Shropshire and beyond.

Start Tech offers managed IT support, which is more involved than your average IT company. They were one of the first IT providers in the UK to become a National Cyber Security Centre Assured Service Provider, leading the way for cyber security in the country.

The top 50 list evaluates 12 key areas of each business, with approximately 200 questions to measure their best practices. Areas include help desk support, business operation processes, and customer satisfaction.

The system uses a sophisticated business AI algorithm to score the best businesses. The questions were developed with the input of over 30 professional business coaches who understand the IT Industry.

Ian Groves, managing director at Start Tech, said, "I'm very proud that Start Tech has been recognised as a top IT company in the UK. We've worked hard to make the business what it is today, with slick processes and a top team who look after our raft of satisfied clients."

The Start Tech team has recently grown with the addition of two new members of staff on the service desk team. Jasmin Ruff has joined Start Tech as Ticket Coordinator and Kieron Walker is an Apprentice Technician.

Ian adds, "We hope this award cements our reputation locally and nationally, as a premier managed service provider."

To find out more about Start Tech visit www.start-tech.co.uk.



9 WAYS TO NAVIGATE LIFE CHANGING EVENTS

Presence counselling



Whether it be leaving home, starting a new job, being made redundant or losing a loved one, life changing events happen to everyone. Whatever the event and whenever they occur, these 'transitions' impact on all of us at different times throughout our lives.

For most of us, at some point and regardless of when such events come; 'out of the blue' or 'planned', we feel some degree of distress and sometimes prolonged anxiety and despondency as a result.

In this article I will explore some different transitions and ways to cope with these, in a way that can lead to more positive outcomes for our well being.

Some more examples of life changing events include:

- Getting married
- Not having children
- Losing your job
- Restarting education
- Relationship breakdown
- Serious health issue
- Death of a loved one
- Career change/new job
- Divorce or separation
- House move
- Children leaving home
- Death of a pet

Types of life changing events

Expected

What if your experience isn't the same as others who go through a particular event? New mums may expect to feel so happy with their new baby. Many will do. Some new Mums may feel totally overwhelmed and there can sometimes be issues with forming a bond. Then they may feel a sense of guilt or shame on top of this and it can be extremely distressing.

What if you get a new job you may find you miss the routines you are familiar with and your work colleagues. This may not have been what you expected when you

looked forward to starting your new role.

Unexpected

A pandemic that caused disruption for the world. Loss of a child. The loss of any loved one can be heartbreaking, however to lose a child may be something that you can never fully recover from. It seems against the natural order of things, a loss so huge it changes your life and expectations forever.

Non event

Not finding a romantic partner.

Not being able to become a parent.

A non event can leave you feeling very isolated. Others around you will not always be aware of what you are experiencing and may say things that are unhelpful. You may feel unsupported by those around you, from their perspective, nothing has happened.

Perceptions

Different people see the world through their own lens. You may be looking forward to retiring and still have a sense of purpose, or you may feel that it is an ending you dread and may feel purposeless without hope, affecting your identity and sense of worth.

Your unique experience

Each transition is such an individual experience, even if it is something many people go through.

It is normal to feel excited about a transition at first and possibly more deflated later on in the process of something new.

The greater your life change affects your relationships and the routines you are accustomed to, the bigger impact you will feel.

It is likely that this may cause a greater amount of unsettled feelings. You may even experience a type of grief due to so much change at once.

For example: If you had a close relationship with work colleagues, moving jobs could entail loss of those relationships. If your new role means your daily routine is totally different you can imagine how this could be a shock. If you move to a new area, everything may feel so unfamiliar.

Continued...



Assumptions and beliefs

Has what has happened changed the way you view yourself, others or your environment? Did you expect the event to be different from the reality? It does take time to acclimatise to the new situation, for your brain to familiarise itself with the change.

Roles

Is this a new role for you?
Is there any loss that needs to be grieved for?
Loss of a spouse, means losing your role of being a husband or wife. Your identity may be different now. You may not feel whole.
This is a normal feeling. It will take time to adjust to the fact you are a whole person even without your spouse. You have not only lost the presence of your loved one, you've lost the role they had and their support of you.

How can you cope with transitions?

Are you the sort of person who can ask for help?
How do you cope with ordinary changes?
Do you need the help of your GP or Citizens Advice?
Some people hide from change and may withdraw into themselves instead of reaching out for help.

Where are your strengths?

Knowing your strengths can help your mindset by bringing a 'can do' attitude and increase your confidence to support you through the change. This does not mean dismissing your feelings, it is always important to acknowledge how you truly feel. Despite the discomfort of change, can you remember where your strengths are?

Where are you feeling vulnerable?

Being curious about feeling unsafe when change happens can help you identify what you need to help you through this time of uncertainty and possible not knowing.

Helping yourself

If you are experiencing low mood, what helps to lift you?

Can you plan ahead to find ways that can support you?
Watching a comedy?
Going for a walk where you notice things around you in the present moment.

If you can ask for help this is a real strength.

Asking for help may include seeking professional support such as talking therapy. You will be offered the presence of another trained to listen well. Your feelings can be heard and validated. This helps you to make sense of your situation and feel less alone. You will not be judged and your strengths can be recognised and shown to you.

1. Remember your experience is unique to you. Offer yourself kindness during the experience.
2. Seek out your support network, those you feel accepted and valued by.
3. Plan how you can support yourself: eg take part in fun and enjoyable things
4. Find ways to relax and soothe/calm yourself
5. Perhaps learn about mindfulness techniques to help you live in the present.
6. Notice your self talk, are you able to be as compassionate to yourself as you might be to someone else going through a life changing event?
7. If you're able, use exercise such as walking, swimming or going to the gym.
8. Acknowledge your feelings, they are yours and valuable. Your feelings can teach you something. Give yourself time to adjust to what has happened.
9. Remember there is professional support that is available. Your GP may be able to help you and talking therapy is an option you can be referred to that provides a confidential space where you can feel heard and accepted.

Susie Harris MNCPS (accred)
www.presencecounselling.co.uk

SHREWSBURY BASED COMPANY AIMING TO MAKE SHROPSHIRE THE MOST CYBER SECURE COUNTY IN THE UK.

Cyber & Data Protection

Cyber & Data Protection Limited Launches Campaign on Shropshire Day to Combat Cyber Threats.

On Shropshire Day, February 23rd, Cyber & Data Protection Limited (CDP) launched a groundbreaking campaign aimed at combating the escalating cyber threats faced by all businesses in Shropshire. As technology continues to advance, so do the risks associated with it. From small local enterprises to large corporations, the threat of cyber and data attacks looms larger than ever, necessitating proactive measures to protect against potential disruptions and losses.

CDP has initiated the "Securing Shropshire" campaign, designed to fortify the region's digital defences and ensure the safety and prosperity of its businesses. Building upon the framework of **Cyber Essentials**, their aim is to benchmark Shropshire against the wider country, empowering local businesses to meet and exceed industry standards in cybersecurity.

Central to the campaign's mission is the protection of organisations and their **supply chains** within the county. Recognising the interconnected nature of businesses, a cyber incident affecting one organisation can have devastating ripple effects throughout the county, leading to **disruptions, job losses, and economic instability**. By safeguarding each link in the supply chain, we not only protect the county's enterprises and with it strengthen the economic resilience of the entire region, but it will also protect Salopians against locally stored individual data being infiltrated.

The "Securing Shropshire" campaign offers two distinct levels of protection: **essentials** and **complete**. These

tailored packages provide businesses of all sizes with flexible options to address their specific cybersecurity needs, from basic essentials to comprehensive solutions.

Moreover, the campaign highlights specific service offerings aimed at piquing the interest of readers and potential participants. Services such as **monitoring for domain breaches** and assessing **Microsoft 365 configurations** are emphasised. Many businesses unwittingly operate with substandard configurations, leaving them **vulnerable to cyber threats**. Through CDP's assessments and recommendations, they enable businesses to fortify their systems and mitigate the risk of breaches, often at minimal cost.

In addition to offering practical solutions, the campaign emphasises the importance of collaboration and community support in combating cyber threats. By fostering partnerships with local businesses, CDP seeks to create a network of mutual assistance and information sharing, further enhancing Shropshire's cyber resilience.

As Shropshire celebrates its rich history and vibrant community on Shropshire Day, the launch of the "Securing Shropshire" campaign serves as a reminder of the importance of safeguarding its future in the digital age. By uniting businesses in the fight against cybercrime, this initiative not only protects individual enterprises but also strengthens the economic resilience of the entire region.

For further information on how the "Securing Shropshire" campaign can benefit your business, please call the CDP team on **01743 644404** or visit the website at **www.securingshropshire.co.uk**

Together, you can help fortify Shropshire's digital defences and shape a safer, more resilient future for all in our beautiful county.

PIPEKIT SUPPLIES SJ ROBERTS CONSTRUCTION FOR NEW ALLSCOTT MEADS DEVELOPMENT IN TELFORD, SHROPSHIRE



Pipekit, an independent distributor of specialist pipework systems and drainage solutions, supplied a range of pipework and fittings to meet the needs of the new heating and hot and cold-water systems installed into the new Allscott Meads Primary School, which has been constructed as part of the award winning Allscott Meads Development project.

The site, which was originally home to the British Sugar's sugar beet factory before closing in 2007, has been redeveloped by SJ Roberts Homes to breathe new life into the rural village of Allscott. The Allscott Meads development will have a total of 470 homes on completion, as well as a primary school, sports and social club, nature trail and community orchard, as the visionary homebuilder puts community at the heart of homebuilding.

During the design and build of Allscott Meads Primary School, which was completed in September 2023, SJ Roberts Construction Ltd, sister company to SJ Roberts Homes, selected Pipekit because of the distributor's locality and readily available stock levels, which was available for local collection and delivery, as well as offering high quality training for all new products. The team at Pipekit worked alongside SJ Roberts Construction to select the appropriate products for the job in hand, which saw a range of leading brands selected from Geberit Copper Mpress, Flamco Pipe Clips and Air Admittance Valves and Albion Valves to fit out, contain and secure the constant and variable heating circuits and hot and cold-water services throughout the

building. The brands were selected to offer high quality fittings at a competitive price.

Commenting on the project, Matthew Roberts from SJ Roberts said: "We have worked with Pipekit before and were impressed with the smooth ordering process, quick delivery times and overall high-quality technical support and customer service. Working on this project, time management was particularly crucial as we worked to open the school on time for the new autumn term, and Pipekit's locality and good stock levels of leading brands was key to meeting those deadlines".

Adding to this, Jamie McQueen, Sales Director at Pipekit said: "We were really pleased to supply SJ Roberts and support an award-winning project that has been instrumental in creating a new community and strengthening the local infrastructure. It's always rewarding to work with existing customers and be able to offer our expertise and service as part of an overall design and build project such as the Allscott Meads Development".

SJ Roberts Homes and the Allscott Meads Development was recently 'Highly Commended' in the 'Best Regeneration Initiative' category at the national Housebuilder Awards and was named 'Placemaking Project of the Year' at the Insider Midlands Residential Property Awards in 2023.

Pipekit is an independent pipework and drainage distributor that stocks and supplies a range of leading brands for the national and international marketplace. For further information log onto: www.pipekit.co.uk, telephone 01743 860088 or Email enquiries@pipekit.co.uk

Berrys Ranked In The Top 25 UK Planning Consultancies.



The Top 10 UK Consultancies For Heritage & Conservation Services.



The Top 10 UK Consultancies For Transport Planning Services.



The Top 10 UK Consultancies For The Leisure Sector.

Berrys has been ranked amongst the top UK planning consultancies in the annual Planning Consultancy Survey.

The survey conducted by the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) listed Berrys in the top 25 in the country and in the top 10 UK consultancies for heritage and conservation, transport planning services and the leisure sector.

This achievement places Berrys amongst the biggest and best private planning consultancies in the UK. The prominent position within the rankings and continued growth in the sector demonstrates the value placed on Berrys by their clients.

"To be ranked highly again by the RTPI is a great accolade and testimony to the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our planning team," said **Stuart Thomas, Partner and Head of Planning.**

"Our staff are at the heart of the business and are the sole reason for our success. We pride ourselves on being an employer of choice and investing in every member of the team," he added.

For any planning or development related enquiries, please contact PJ Triplow in the first instance on 07741 310312 email pj.triplow@berrys.uk.com.

More information:
Berrys is a UK-wide consultancy business that covers all property-related services under one roof. The planning team works alongside in-house architects,

engineers and heritage consultants to provide a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to development projects.

Visit berrys.uk.com for more information.



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FLEXASSISTS TRIUMPHANT JOURNEY IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL CHARITY



Helen Pugh, the dedicated founder of FlexAssist, has wholeheartedly committed her efforts to championing the cause of the local Shrewsbury charity, Bethphage. This exceptional charity focuses on providing crucial support to adults with learning disabilities, and Helen's personal connections to this cause have ignited a passionate drive within her.

Motivated by her deeply rooted connections, Helen took on a challenge in December—a gym triathlon aimed at covering 35 miles through a combination of rowing, recumbent cycling, and arm cycling. Her objective was to raise £500 to contribute to Bethphage's impactful work, a goal she not only reached but surpassed, raising closer to an incredible £1000.

In sharing her motivation, Helen revealed, *"My daughter, Lucy, is a committed member of the Bethphage team, and witnessing her unwavering dedication to their mission has truly revealed to me the profound impact of their work. Additionally, my stepdaughter, Emily, also benefits from similar organisations in her area. Observing the positive influence of charities like Bethphage has further fueled my passion to support their cause."*

Despite facing her own mobility issues and various health challenges since 2019, currently on the waiting list for a spinal cord stimulator, Helen strongly believes that everyone, irrespective of their personal struggles, holds

the power to make a difference. It's this unwavering belief that propelled her to embark on this deeply meaningful journey of support.

Furthermore, FlexAssist has chosen to forge a lasting partnership with Bethphage, continuing their efforts to raise vital funds for this commendable cause. For those still willing to contribute and support Bethphage's remarkable work, donations can still be made through their webpage at <https://bethphage.co.uk/>.

Helen's dedication and commitment to making a positive impact serve as an inspiring example of how each of us, despite challenges, can contribute meaningfully to causes that matter.



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That's not all though, the day is packed full of thought-provoking keynote speakers and masterclasses to inspire, challenge and evolve your thinking about the future of leadership, focusing on belief in potential, change and technology.

We can't wait to welcome you. For tickets and more information, visit www.shropshireleadership.co.uk



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SALES GEEK EARNS PRESTIGIOUS ENDORSEMENT FROM INSTITUTE OF SALES PROFESSIONALS

Sales Geek, the UK's fastest-growing sales training provider, proudly announces its recent endorsement by the Institute of Sales Professionals (ISP), a Government-backed professional body dedicated to elevating the sales profession globally.

Sales Geek, headquartered in Lancashire, has rapidly become a leader in the sales training industry, with offices located across the UK and internationally. The company marked a significant milestone in September with its expansion into the United States, establishing franchises in Texas, Florida, the Carolinas, and Georgia.

"We are thrilled to receive the endorsement from the Institute of Sales Professionals, it's the result of months of hard work to prove what we've always believed, that our sales training is the very best around. The ISP aligns perfectly with our mission to change the way the world perceives sales and this recognition is a testament to our commitment to delivering exceptional sales training that fosters a culture of professionalism within the sales community."
said Richard Few, Chief Geek and Founder of Sales Geek.

The ISP plays a pivotal role in advancing the sales profession's reputation. Representing sales in the UK and worldwide, they are dedicated to creating a world where sales is not only recognised but celebrated as a respected profession. Their commitment to supporting salespeople in achieving their career goals aligns seamlessly with Sales Geek's ethos.

"We are proud to endorse Sales Geek, a company that shares our vision for elevating the sales profession globally. Their commitment to sales excellence, innovation and ethics is a perfect fit for the ISP, and based on our shared vision, the endorsement is just the beginning" commented Patrick Joiner Managing Director of the Institute of Sales Professionals.

Sales Geek's endorsement by the ISP marks a significant achievement for the company, reinforcing its position as a leader in the sales training industry and amplifying their commitment to supporting sales professionals achieve remarkable results.

For more information about Sales Geek and its sales training programs, visit salesgeek.co.uk, or contact pippa.tait@salesgeek.co.uk or for further information regarding the ISP visit the-isp.org



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SHREWSBURY TRAVEL AGENTS OPENS LUXURY LOUNGE



Shrewsbury travel agents, Peakes Travel Elite, are going the extra mile for customers in 2024.

The multi award winning travel agency is now in its key booking season for 2024 and 2025 holidays. To complement their one-to-one appointment service, they have created a luxury travel lounge on their top floor at their base on Mardol, in the heart of Shrewsbury.

Claire Moore, managing director, said, "Our new lounge offers customers a private space away from the shop floor where they will receive VIP treatment. We can talk through options over a glass of fizz or a good cup of coffee and we can even video call tour operators to collaborate on a complex itinerary.

"We have seen a surge in appointment bookings this month, with people setting their holiday goals for the year ahead. As a business, we have been investing in sending our team on trips to seek out amazing destinations. This means the team at Peakes are armed with all the inside knowledge and experience to help plan amazing

holidays. It helps we're all fanatical about travelling as well! Get your appointment booked in and let's get your 2024 and 2025 holiday plans sorted."

Peakes Travel Elite is also bringing back their in-house monthly events where customers can meet a travel operator in-store.

Claire adds, "The in-house events give customers a deeper insight into particular destinations and the options available. Inside Asia is kicking things off our new event series with a Japan event on Saturday, February 17th from 10am-4pm. You can secure an hourly slot at the event by emailing sales@peakestravelite.co.uk."

Peakes Travel Elite is open Monday to Saturday from 9am to 5pm for appointments.

Visit www.peakestravelite.co.uk for more details.

SIRES MASTER GOLDSMITHS: CRAFTING TIMELESS TREASURES IN SHREWSBURY

In the heart of our gorgeous town, one of our Chamber members has been making waves with its timeless craftsmanship and dedication to preserving traditional jewellery techniques.

Sires Master Goldsmiths, owned and operated by master goldsmith Kirt Parekh, may be new to Shrewsbury, but the Parekh family's legacy in the jewellery trade spans generations.

The name Parekh itself has its roots in the Sanskrit word for 'examiner,' reflecting the family's longstanding tradition of working with precious gems and metals. Jagdish Parekh, Kirt's father, learned the art of goldsmithing from his own father and established a jewellery workshop in the West Midlands in 1977, after relocating to the UK.

Following in the footsteps of his forebears, Kirt Parekh pursued his passion for jewellery-making by studying at Birmingham's prestigious School of Jewellery. He honed his skills in the bustling Jewellery Quarter of the city. However, when the time came to open his own store, Kirt chose the creative and independent retail scene of Shrewsbury.

Nestled within a Grade II-listed building adorned with a stylish black and gold storefront, Sires Master Goldsmiths specialises in handcrafted, bespoke jewellery designs. Their offerings include exquisite hand-engraved family crest signet rings and diamond engagement and wedding jewellery. Additionally, the store provides on-site remodelling and repair services, allowing clients to breathe new life into their cherished pieces.

"We offer very high-end pieces designed and handcrafted by us to be accessible to all - for example, 9ct with white sapphires to 18ct with natural flawless diamonds to satisfy all budgets, without reducing quality," says Parekh, emphasising the brand's commitment to quality and inclusivity.

The essence of family and heritage is interwoven into Sires' design philosophy. Whether creating a custom 'family crest' signet ring, restoring a customer's heirloom jewellery, or transforming a sentimental piece into something new for the next generation, Sires Master Goldsmiths celebrates the enduring connection between jewellery and personal history.

"We are going back to traditional handmade jewellery

and hand engraving at a time when the industry is becoming reliant on technologies such as CAD and 3D printing, losing the artisan human touch that today's clients long for," explains Parekh, highlighting the importance of preserving traditional craftsmanship. Sires Master Goldsmiths has found success since its inception, with a significant portion of its work dedicated to restoration and remodelling. With this customercentric ethos, Parekh believes there is only one direction for their business to go. Among the unique services that set Sires apart is its free advice and design service for either remodelling using customers old sentimental jewellery, or signet rings, which includes researching the customer's family crest and creating a personalised design for hand-engraved initials.

In just ten months since opening, Sires Goldsmiths have accumulated 24 5* Google Reviews, which make for wonderful reading and are playing their part in bringing new customers through the door. One happy customer said: 'Kirt has made a beautiful job of restoring my ring and I'm incredibly grateful. Competitively priced, great communication and brilliant customer service.'

Sires Master Goldsmiths stands as a testament to the enduring beauty of handcrafted jewellery and the value of preserving time-honoured techniques. With a deep connection to their heritage and an unwavering commitment to their craft, the Parekh family continues to create exquisite pieces that tell stories of love, history, and tradition in every precious detail.

Sires Master Goldsmiths
Mob: +44 (0) 747 427 3339
<https://www.siresmastergoldsmiths.co.uk/>
Open from Tuesday to Saturday, 10am - 4.30pm
16 St Marys Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 1EQ

Instagram: @siresmastergoldsmiths
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/Sires-Master-Goldsmiths/100090033588895>



START TECH GETS BEHIND FOOD FESTIVAL BURSARY SCHEME



A local IT service provider has announced it will support up-and-coming businesses at this year's Shrewsbury Food Festival.

Start Tech will cover two thirds of the cost to exhibit at the two-day festival for up to three small, local businesses.

Beth Heath, Director of Fun at Shropshire Festivals, said, "We are delighted that Start Tech is the official Bursary Sponsor of Shrewsbury Food Festival 2024. We understand the struggles of being a family-run, independent business in the current economic climate. It's really tough starting out and having the capital to pay for stands at festivals and shows, so it's fantastic that Start Tech will be providing this opportunity for up to three small businesses.

"Bursary places are for small, fledgling businesses that would struggle to cover the cost of an exhibitor space but would greatly benefit from the platform. If you're interested in applying for one of these spots, please email fun@shropshirefestivals.co.uk to express your interest."

Start Tech began partnering with Shropshire Festivals'

events last year. In 2024 they will also be sponsoring Shropshire Oktoberfest and providing a Cyber Security Zone at Shropshire Business Festival on April 11th.

Ian Groves, managing director at Start Tech, said he is thrilled to be helping the next generation of small businesses in the area. He said, "Shrewsbury Food Festival offers a brilliant platform for local businesses to get their products in front of customers. Not only is it a great event for sales, but it's where you can build brand awareness and generate new leads. After getting involved with Shropshire Festivals' events last year, we know first-hand the impact they can have on Shropshire businesses.

"We are looking forward to finding out who gets accepted onto the bursary scheme and seeing them trade at the festival in June."

Shrewsbury Food Festival is taking place on June 29th and 30th at the Quarry. There will be 200 food, drink, and home stalls, two live entertainment stages, a field of free kids activities, chef demonstrations, a chef school, a kids cookery school, and an educational field to fork area. Early bird Tickets are available for a limited time at www.shrewsburyfoodfestival.co.uk.

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AWARDS
2022



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AWARDS
2022



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www.salopleisure.co.uk

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info@lblaw.co.uk

Find us:

Chapter House North,
Abbey Lawn,
Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, SY2 5DE

Pleased to support
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www.lblaw.co.uk

NETWORKING & SALES GEEK MASTER CLASS

Get ready to level up your networking and sales game at the ultimate Geek Master class, where you'll hear from Local Sales Expert Pippa Tait



March 13th, 2024
6:00 pm

'The Enterprise Suite' at Shrewsbury College,
London Road. SY2 6PR



MEMBERS FREE | NON MEMBERS £11.55

shrewsburybusinesschamber.com



SHREWSBURY
BUSINESS CHAMBER

Join us for an exciting in-person event at Origins Restaurant, Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology!

Get ready to level up your networking and sales skills with our Geek Master class. Whether you're a seasoned pro or just starting out, this event is perfect for anyone looking to boost their business connections and sales techniques. Learn from industry experts, participate in interactive workshops, and network with like-minded individuals. Don't miss out on this opportunity to become a networking and sales guru!

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

Free for chamber members. Guests are £10.

Origins Restaurant London Road Shrewsbury SY2 6PR - 6pm - 8pm.

To book your place go to -

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

SOME SNAPS FROM RECENT EVENTS



Gin Tasting & Quiz



Gin Tasting & Quiz



Speed Networking

We love welcoming your lovely faces to our monthly events, and this year we've got some great ones lined up.

Our events give you the chance to network with other local business owners, while trying/learning something new. We have met so many new lovely people & businesses in the last 12 months and we have welcomed a huge amount of new members.

If you would be interested in sponsoring an event please contact Donna - shrewsburybc.events@gmail.com

We hope to see you soon!

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..

 SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER

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THE COLLECTIVE
SHREWSBURY

RETAIL LETTING OPPORTUNITY IN THE HEART OF SHREWSBURY

Are you running a small business and considering a retail unit in Shrewsbury? If so - we'd love to hear from you!

TOWN CENTRE RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES AT THE COLLECTIVE IN THE DARWIN CENTRE, SHREWSBURY

Flexible 2 year lease at an affordable rent - inclusive of utilities, service charge, wi-fi and marketing support (does not include business rates but some smaller units may be eligible for relief). Includes store room.

TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST AND BE FIRST TO HEAR ABOUT THE LATEST OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE EMAIL:
info@shrewsbury-shopping.co.uk

THE DARWIN

BLA SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY & COMMS JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER



Sustainability strategy & comms

I am a Shrewsbury-based comms and strategy expert focused in the sustainability space, effectively helping businesses become more sustainable.

Sustainability a big, complex subject. It can be difficult to know where to start. The chances are, you're already doing some good things. In other areas you may not be where you want to be. You'll undoubtedly be under pressure to do more.

Starting with a clear, actionable strategy and framework that you and your stakeholders can buy into will set you up for success and provide a direction of travel and an action plan for you to take your business into the future.

Communication with your stakeholders - be they customers, suppliers, investors or employees - is vital, for driving both credibility, and engagement and collaboration to help you deliver your goals.

I can help with:

- Workshops and ideation
- Materiality and gap analysis
- Strategy creation
- Commitment and target setting
- Framework building
- Governance and ownership
- Stakeholder engagement and cultural change
- Internal and external comms
- Sustainability project/campaign design and management

I can work with you through the whole strategic journey,

or support on individual projects - I can also provide condensed packages of support for smaller businesses.

A sustainable approach to doing business will give you a refreshed, future-facing direction for your business; it allows you to assess risk and meet future challenges; it provides you with credibility, competitive differentiation and new business opportunities; and it makes you more attractive to employees and customers.

With 25+ years in business and comms leadership roles, and 12+ years working in sustainability, I can provide balanced solutions -rooted in the triple bottom line of profit, people and planet - the will set your business up for the future.

For an initial chat email me at liza@bla.london



MY SHREWSBURY KEEPS US 'IN THE LOOP'



Alongside sparkling quality daily content to reflect life in Shrewsbury across its award-winning digital channels, My Shrewsbury has now also launched the lively weekly digital guide 'In the Loop' to add to its offerings.

My Shrewsbury was established in 2017 by journalist Katy Rink and is attracting attention as a shining example of 'new breed' hyperlocal media in the UK. Initially a print magazine only, it launched online in 2021 and continues to grow apace, winning second prize in the national Digital Publishing Awards 2023 (AOP Award for Inspiring Local Journalism, sponsored by Google News Initiative). Editor Katy Rink attended a glittering ceremony at Old Billingsgate in London, which was attended by all the major UK publishing houses and national newspapers.

Its latest addition is a digital weekly content guide 'In the Loop' which is sent directly to subscribers' inboxes every Wednesday (for just £5 per month). 'In the Loop' keeps subscribers connected to the beating heart of town, with 'Pick of the Week' stories, a comprehensive guide to the weekend ahead and two exclusive offers from local businesses every week.

My Shrewsbury editor and founder Katy Rink said: "We're excited to build in a subscription revenue newsletter to add to our offering - our readers are loving feeling in the loop and getting the low-down on up and coming events, or tip-offs about offers and 'hot tickets'. 'In the Loop' is an umbilical cord connecting them to the heart of town. We're working with all kinds of events promoters and restaurants across town to ensure that our offers remain exciting and exclusive - if you have something to offer, get in touch!"

"And if you'd like to keep your staff 'In the Loop' we'd love to hear from you too - it's a great offering for people moving to Shrewsbury or who those want to have their finger on the pulse of local life.

"Subscribing to 'In the Loop' is also a way of supporting My Shrewsbury for those who love what we do. Publishing is a tough gig and we're very grateful to those who recognise the value of our content. So if you'd like to subscribe or support and invest in what we do, visit <https://www.myshrewsbury.co.uk/subscribe/>"

Peter and Sue Hayden said: "We love getting *In the Loop* weekly. When we moved to Shrewsbury we wanted to get up to speed with what's on and My Shrewsbury magazine's *In the Loop* guide is really useful. It keeps us right up to date. We've gone to lots of events because of it, including a great vegan night at Glouglou, Secret Suppers and lots of music stuff. We wouldn't even have known about these if it wasn't for *In the Loop*."

Norma Carron adds: "I always look forward to receiving the My Shrewsbury print issue and reading the weekly digital guide. I find the weekly guide very informative and helpful and always look forward to seeing the link in my inbox."

"The best compliment we've heard from readers about our content is that it's like a taking warm bath," Katy says. "We see our job as helping communities to shine online - to make people feel great about where they live and want to get out there and get involved."

There's a lot more to come from My Shrewsbury in 2024 with an exhibition planned at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery as part of a special project to celebrate the Town Crier's 40-years service to our town - and a very special Summer issue front cover!
www.myshrewsbury.co.uk

SHROPSHIRE CAT RESCUE JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER



Purrfect Place for a Bargain **The Shropshire Cat Rescue shop is at 69 Mardol Shrewsbury and is a vibrant independent shop - a real one-off run by a manager and volunteers.**

The shop plays a vital role in raising much needed funds for Shropshire Cat Rescue and offers customers a wonderful range of pre-loved treasures.

Customers can be certain of a warm and friendly welcome and of course, bargains aplenty as the donations we receive from our loyal supporters are truly fantastic.

If you can't easily get in to the shop then one of our volunteers has set up a Facebook selling page packed with goodies. Search for Shropshire Cat Rescue Selling Site. And of course, all funds raised from both the shop and Facebook go to the cat's welfare.

The SCR Rescue Centre itself is based on the outskirts of Shrewsbury and covers the whole county (and sometimes beyond). We provide much needed shelter, food and veterinary care for homeless, stray,

abandoned and unwanted cats and kittens.

Our primary aim is re-homing wherever possible but Shropshire Cat Rescue also helps feral cats with veterinary care including neutering. For those cats too long in the tooth or too frail for re-homing then we have a lovely 'Retirement Village' where they can live out their days in peace and comfort (with no shortage of strokes from the volunteer team!).

We also educate the public on all aspects of health and welfare of cats and kittens.

Looking to the future we are raising money towards 'The Big Purr Project'. This aims to create a long term, sustainable and tailored rescue centre that can handle more cats and kittens in an even more professional way.

The shop always needs volunteers to help out. So, if you are interested in joining a lovely friendly team (known to have an occasional night out too!) then get in touch, even if it is only a few hours when you can.

Please call into the shop for a chat or email SCRCharityshop@gmail.com or call on 01743 236222.

WALKING FOOD TOURS JOIN SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER



Meet Gareth Boyd, the passionate owner and creator of Walking Food Tours UK.

Gareth's heart belongs to the world of food, drink, exploration, history, and travel. Fuelled by this deep-seated love, in 2018 he established Tours Around Chester, followed by the launch of Liverpool Food Tours in 2019.

Over the past 5 years, his multi award winning tour experiences have welcomed 1000's of tour guests and the tours have consistently earned 5* reviews.

Gareth is delighted to launch in Shrewsbury this year and he is very excited about partnering with and showcasing the amazing independent food/drink venues in the town.

What exactly is a Food Walking Tour?

Well, think walking tour with great food/drink thrown in on route. Welcome to a world of delectable experiences, where every bite tells a story.

Go to www.walkingfoodtoursuk.co.uk for further info



WELLMEADOW: DRIVING BUSINESS GROWTH

Dave Parry



Richard Buckle



Wellmeadow, established in 2010 by Dave Parry and Richard Buckle, has become a trusted partner for businesses, supporting their journey towards strategic growth. Offering a range of services including non-executive board support, lead generation marketing, and HubSpot implementation, Wellmeadow offers a comprehensive approach to business development.

Getting results with data-driven marketing

What sets Wellmeadow apart is its commitment to growth strategies that go beyond traditional marketing. The team prioritises creating engaging customer journeys rooted in data, fostering interactions designed to attract, engage, nurture, and convert leads.

Benefit from board-level expertise

With a wealth of experience working at board-level with over 100 SMEs and start-ups, Wellmeadow understands the challenges facing businesses in 2024. More than just marketing specialists, the consultancy extends hands-on support in critical growth areas, including financial modelling, business strategy and board support.

Dave Parry, Managing Director of Wellmeadow said: *"Wellmeadow is a powerful partner for any business wanting to drive its growth. We use our strategic business experience and marketing*

expertise to help businesses attract new leads and stand out in their market."

Tune into The SME Growth Podcast

In addition, Wellmeadow is home to popular The SME Growth Podcast, which hosts honest, engaging discussions on the current business landscape. Currently on Episode 55, the podcast provides practical takeaways on current business topics and challenges, and often features guests.

Unlock growth potential with HubSpot and more

Wellmeadow also extends its commitment to knowledge-sharing through informative webinars covering topics on HubSpot, content creation, and consultancy. Whether you're diving into HubSpot's capabilities or mastering content creation strategies, our webinars offer actionable advice tailored for business owners like you.

Find out more at www.wellmeadow.co.uk



SHREWSBURY MUSICAL THEATRE CO. JOINS SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER

SMTC Shrewsbury Musical Theatre Co.

This amateur production is presented by Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI

Beautiful

The Carole King Musical

THEATRE SEVERN, SHREWSBURY - JUNE 13TH - JUNE 15TH

FEATURING THE HIT SONGS
Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow, Up On The Roof, On Broadway, The Locomotion, You've Lost That Loving Feeling, One Fine Day, Chains, We Gotta Get Out of This Place, You've Got A Friend, (You Make Me Feel) Like A Natural Woman, I Feel The Earth Move and more...

Box Office: 01743 281281 SEC members can save 10% with code: 10SMTOCK

Shrewsbury Musical Theatre Company, formerly known as Shrewsbury Amateur Operatic Society, stands as Shropshire's most enduring community theatre group. With a legacy spanning over a century, save for interruptions during the War Years and Covid lockdowns, this esteemed company has captivated generations of audiences with both traditional and contemporary productions.

Despite its not-for-profit orientation, SMTC boasts a reputation for professionalism and consistently delivers breath-taking performances. It serves as a platform for members to explore and showcase their creative talents, with many past members finding success in the professional theatre world. Newcomers are warmly welcomed, with auditions typically held for principal roles, whilst no prior experience is required for ensemble or backstage roles—just an interest in participation and a willingness to have some fun.

Notably, SMTC integrates charity fundraising into each production, recently raising over £2300 for Hope House Children's Hospices following their production of School of Rock at Theatre Severn in November. Furthermore, members enjoy the privilege of treating show sponsors to audience tickets, adding an extra layer of appreciation for their involvement

In essence, SMTC not only enriches the cultural tapestry of Shropshire but also extends its impact beyond the stage, embodying the spirit of community and creativity.



UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

**NETWORKING & SALES GEEK
MASTERCLASS** SPONSORED BY SALES GEEK

WED 13 MAR
6PM

MEMBERS FREE
NON MEMBERS £10

APRIL

**HELPING BUSINESS ENGAGE WITH AI
TOOLS WITH PAUL MCGILLVRAY**
SPONSORED BY PIPEKIT

WED 10 APR
6PM

MEMBERS FREE
NON MEMBERS £5

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

WED 24 APR
6PM

FREE TO ALL

MAY

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

WED 15 MAY
6PM

FREE TO ALL

**BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR OF WEEPING
CROSS** THE SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL'S AWARD
WINNING HORTICULTURE HUB STOP.
SPONSORED BY SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

WED 22 MAY
6PM

MEMBER ONLY EVENT
(FREE)

JUNE

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

WED 12 JUNE
6PM

FREE TO ALL

**THE SHREWSBURY BUSINESS CHAMBER
QUIZ AND NETWORKING AT STFC**
SPONSORED BY SHREWSBURY TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

WED 19 JUNE
6PM

MEMBERS FREE
NON MEMBERS £10

JULY

SHREWSBURY HISTORY TOUR
WITH MAGGIE LOVE FOLLOWED BY A PRIVATE PICNIC
IN THE BEAUTIFUL DINGLE.
SPONSORED BY ANDREW'S CONSERVATION LTD

WED 3 JULY
6PM

MEMBER ONLY EVENT
(FREE)

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

WED 10 JULY
6PM

FREE TO ALL

AUGUST

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

WED 7 AUG
6PM

FREE TO ALL

**EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE - IMPORTANT
CHANGES FOR SMALL BUSINESS BY WR
PARTNERS**

WED 14 AUG
6PM

FREE TO ALL

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

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 with all copy and any images.

To advertise in future issues if you could please contact 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

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