

# 1718

## **ANNUAL REVIEW**

Dedicated to making  
Shrewsbury a better  
place to live, work, visit,  
study & invest.



**SHREWSBURY**  
BUSINESS  
IMPROVEMENT  
DISTRICT

# Welcome

## Annual Report and Review 2017-18

I have once again enjoyed the privilege of serving as Chairman for Shrewsbury BID over the past year, working closely with our members on issues which matter to business and on projects which are creating a better and healthier trading environment in which business can flourish.

The past year has seen some major initiatives come to fruition with the BID sitting at the heart of partnership working to make things happen here in Shrewsbury town centre. This has been evident in the number of high profile events and activities undertaken, ranging from ensuring BID businesses had their say on the Shropshire Council car parking strategy and consultation on the Big Town Plan, through to the impact and engagement which the DarwiN Shrewsbury Festival generated this year across the town.

Working collegially with others maximises the potential of what can be achieved to improve trading within the town and we continue to build on the strong relationships with Shropshire Council, Shrewsbury Town Council, West Mercia Police and the many other organisations we connect with in order to drive our business plan forward.

Our Board of Directors has continued to provide invaluable knowledge and skills to support Seb and the Shrewsbury BID team and I commend the enthusiasm and passion which they continue to provide to the many task groups and other activities where they are involved.

Whilst a number of notable milestones have been reached this year, there is of course still much to do to complete the five year business plan objectives and all of us at Shrewsbury BID remain fully committed and determined to deliver those priority projects which our businesses outlined as key to the ongoing success of the town.

**Mike Matthews**  
Chairman



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# Executive Summary

Over the last year Shrewsbury BID has continued its focus on delivering projects which improve the trading environment for all of our members. We remain dedicated to making Shrewsbury a better place to live, work, visit, study and invest in.

It has been our most successful year in terms of media coverage, reaching an audience of 9.7 million people culminating in the BBC broadcast on Midlands Today in February. Our promotional work has also focussed on providing a platform for our members to showcase their business to a wider audience. We've done this through an improved Original Shrewsbury website which received over 250,000 visits during the past year, Instagram takeovers, and printed materials such as the Christmas Gift Guide which was distributed to over 50,000 selected households. The Shrewsbury Christmas Video was our most watched video to date with over 200,000 views in the run up to Christmas.

The Shrewsbury BID community has made its voice heard on key issues affecting business in town. The significant changes to the new Car Parking Strategy detailed in this report and the decision to retain the Quarry Swimming Pool in the town demonstrate the effectiveness of the BID's professional response. We continue to lobby central government for Business Rates reform in response to the significant impact the recent revaluation has had on many businesses.

Shrewsbury BID has provided leadership and is giving the business community a genuine stake in the future of the town through the creation of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan. With project partners, Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council, we ran a pop-up consultation with over 2,500 local businesses and residents having their say. The Big Town Plan will set the priorities and principles for the town and aims to ensure that we are making the most of opportunities and are well positioned to manage future challenges.

Our award-winning Shrewsbury Watch and Night Time Ambassador schemes have grown significantly over the past year, and with the DISC mobile app, we are providing members with additional tools to share important safety information across the town. The first of fifty wayfinding totems has been installed at Shrewsbury station. This transformational project will be rolled out over the coming year and will help visitors navigate and discover the different areas of our town.

For the first time Shrewsbury BID organised and promoted the Darwin Shrewsbury Festival, with over twenty events taking place in the town centre during February, including Wild Cop which was created in response to potential negative impact of road works and which received significant local and regional publicity for the town.

As we approach our renewal ballot in October, our small BID team remains focussed on delivering against the priorities set by the business community and we look forward to continuing our partnership with members in the months and years ahead.

**Seb Slater**  
**Executive Director**



## Strategic Aims 2014/19

- ✓ **Backing Business**  
Reducing business costs, sharing data and delivering projects to help business thrive.
- ✓ **Access & Car Parking**  
Helping secure Shrewsbury's competitiveness with an accessible town centre.
- ✓ **Marketing & Promotion**  
Promoting Shrewsbury through major marketing and PR campaigns as a unique place to live, work, study and visit.
- ✓ **Drive & Direction**  
An influential voice with a lead role in the future direction of a prosperous town centre.

# Year 4 in Facts and Figures

Secured 3<sup>rd</sup> **Purple Flag** Accreditation

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Attracted **210,000** views of the Christmas video

Free training and workshops programme delivered for over **530 members**

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A total average saving of **£1,322** for **82 members** using our cost saving services

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A **significantly improved** Car Parking Strategy negotiated including free Sunday Car Parking in Frankwell & Abbey Foregate

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Delivery of successful **Big Town Plan** Consultation and Masterplanning week for the Town

Reached **9,713,323** people through media coverage

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Distributed **55,000** Shrewsbury **Christmas Gift Guides** to selected postcodes within an hours drive

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Staged innovative experiences, from lectures to **Wild Cop**

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Funded additional **Park and Ride** services and a **Night Bus** during Christmas 2017

**252,000+** annual visitors to [originalshrewsbury.co.uk](http://originalshrewsbury.co.uk)

# Backing Business

We continue to work hard to ensure we deliver value, championing businesses' voices on issues that matter and helping to promote Shrewsbury as a thriving retail and leisure destination. We have worked collaboratively with others to deliver tangible outputs that support trading and deliver vital services to assist in cost saving, information sharing and attracting footfall into the town centre.

In Year 4 this support has ranged from securing Shrewsbury's Purple Flag status for the third consecutive year, to launching our new Independent Retailers' forums.



Kevin Lockwood was elected by businesses as the Chair of Shop Watch



The first Independents Retail Forum was held in April

## Cost saving scheme

We have helped businesses identify possible savings by enabling access to exclusive group buying rates and deals from providers. This year, the total realised savings for our members increased to over £108,000 equating to an average of £1,322 for each of the 82 members who have used the service.

## Purple Flag

Working with partners at Team Shrewsbury, we secured the town's Purple Flag status for a third year underlining its reputation as a vibrant, safe and well-managed destination.

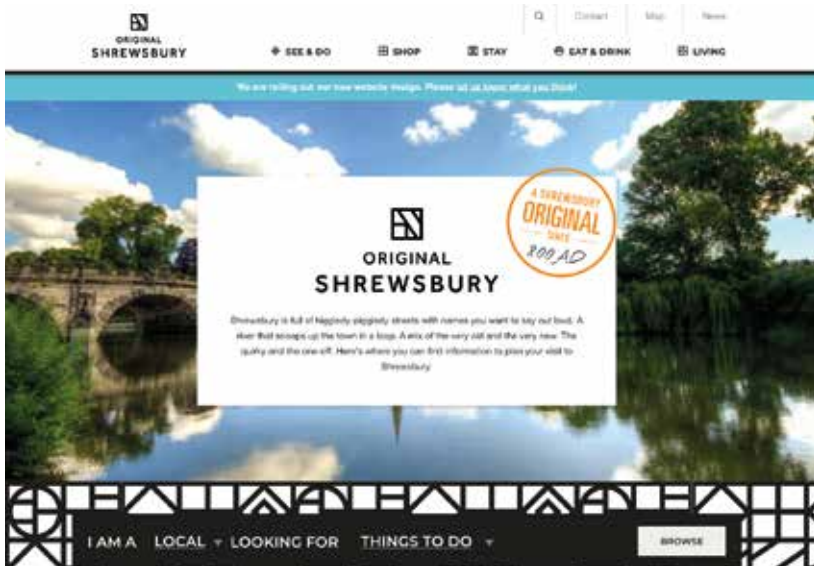


Shrewsbury has retained its prestigious Purple Flag status



## Pubwatch and Shopwatch

With our members we are creating and promoting a stronger and safer trading environment through Shrewsbury Watch initiatives. This includes the management of Shrewsbury Pub and Shopwatch with the 'Try before you Buy' Radio Link Scheme and the DISC app to promote well-connected and safe trading in the town centre.



## New Original Shrewsbury website

We have enhanced the Original Shrewsbury website design and features to make it easier and more useful for locals and visitors alike. Improved business profiles are now live for all BID members.

## Data Sharing

Our two footfall cameras in the town centre monitor footfall 24/7. Monthly reports are shared with an overview of regional and national trends for benchmarking. Further updates are shared via email with information ranging from business rate changes to town centre events.

## Future of Shrewsbury Network

We have continued to deliver regular events for local professionals to network with others. This year's well attended events have ranged from gin and wine tasting to a Dana Prison experience.



## Staff Workshops

A programme of free workshops has been organised to help members and their teams' upskill and stay ahead. These workshops have included PR, HR and First Aid, helping businesses make savings against their existing staff training packages.

## Retailers' Forums

The first Independent Retailers' Forum was launched in April, a coalition set up to support traders in the town centre with advice on free training, business cost savings, networking opportunities and events. These quarterly meetings run alongside the National Retailers' Forums.

# Highlights

- ✓ Purple Flag accreditation 3rd year
- ✓ 82 members have saved on average £1,322 through the cost saving scheme
- ✓ Independent Retailers' Forum launched
- ✓ Improved Original Shrewsbury website attracting 35% more visitors to 252,000
- ✓ New BID website received 11,000 visits
- ✓ 7 Future of Shrewsbury networking events staged
- ✓ Monthly footfall reports delivered to share trends
- ✓ 12 Bulletins, 3 quarterly reports distributed

# Access and Car Parking

In a bid to ensure the town is both accessible and welcoming, we lobbied and negotiated significant improvements to the latest Shropshire Council Car Parking Strategy. We are making sure the views of the business community are heard as Shropshire Council develop their final proposals for the town centre elements of the Strategic Integrated Transport Package. The first of the new wayfinding system totems has been installed outside Shrewsbury station leading the way for the full programme to roll out in the year ahead.

## Summary of changes negotiated by the BID:

- Free car parking on Sunday in Abbey Foregate and Frankwell
- St Julian's Friars reduced from £2/hour to £1/hour
- Introduction of an 8 hour cap
- Cheaper in Frankwell, St Julian's Friars and Abbey Foregate car parks for up to 5 hours than it is today



We supported Street Pastors with the promotion of their new vehicle



The BID supported additional Park & Ride in the run up to Christmas



The first of fifty Wayfinding totems was installed at Shrewsbury Station

## Car parking response

A response to the Shropshire Council Car Parking Strategy was published, following our largest ever response from members. We worked with car parking specialists AECOM to provide a qualitative review of the Shropshire Draft Car Parking Strategy to consider the potential effects of the proposals on Shrewsbury Town Centre.

We also met with senior Shropshire Council Officers and Members outlining business concerns about the proposals.



The new Christmas night bus service was used by 328 people

## Extra buses

A festive night bus service was trialled in Shrewsbury in December, every Friday and Saturday night until the 23rd December, bringing a cheap and easy way to travel for those coming in to enjoy the town's vibrant night time entertainment offer. The trial scheme was launched by Arriva and supported by us as part of the campaign to ensure the safety of those enjoying nights out in the town centre.

We sponsored additional Park and Ride buses on the busiest shopping days of the year, improving access and the experience for visitors to the town in the run up to Christmas. An extra bus each hour, throughout the day was added, increasing the frequency to every 15 minutes across the three Park & Ride routes.

## Taxis

We co-ordinated efforts to improve safety of Shrewsbury's night time economy by encouraging people to think ahead and book in advance through a striking poster campaign.

Proposals to set up a new taxi rank at Shoplatch, next to the Market Hall, were also discussed with Shropshire Council, and it was agreed that Street Pastors who have identified vulnerable people should be in a position to make priority arrangements to get these people home.

# Highlights

- ✔ Lobbied and negotiated improvements to the Shropshire Council Car Parking Strategy
- ✔ Delivered night bus service during festive period
- ✔ Sponsored Park and Ride additional services in run up to Christmas
- ✔ Promoted safe journeys through taxi poster campaign
- ✔ Assisted in increasing assistance of Street Pastors



# Marketing and Promotion

During the past year, we have created exciting experiences to promote the town including an invigorated Darwin Shrewsbury Festival with fresh ideas such as Wild Cop, and delivered seasonal campaigns showcasing the strength and breadth of Shrewsbury's offer to a wider audience.



Photos of Wild Cop were widely shared across social media and traditional media

## Public Relations

The press office delivered 45 articles to support our business community, communicate news and providing a voice for the trading community. During the year the proactive consumer PR plan secured 268 articles of coverage across our local and regional target media as well as featuring on BBC Midlands Today for Wild Cop and the Young Thinkers Competition, both staged as part of the Darwin Shrewsbury Festival.

## Seasonal campaigns and events

We continued to support Shrewsbury's busy events programme which attracts regional, national and even international visitors.

Over the summer, **100,000 Little Books of Darwin** were devised, produced and distributed via targeted postcodes within an hours' drive of Shrewsbury.

They were also stocked in Tourist Information Centres, through businesses and schools.

In summer, we attended the Flower Show and Food Festival with our new stand and Charles Darwin character, handing out Little Books of Darwin, Hello from Shrewsbury postcards, Darwin masks and branded biscuits.

**A window display with a difference** was created to celebrate Shrewsbury's connections to Charles Darwin and its vibrant retail offer during the summer.



We created a stand out window display in a vacant unit on Pride Hill

## Highlights

- ✓ 268 positive editorial articles negotiated
- ✓ Coverage worth £379,279
- ✓ 9.7 million people reached through media exposure



We promoted the town through Darwin at summer festivals

## Be Our Guest this Christmas

The 2017 Christmas Campaign promoted Shrewsbury's range of festive activities and events, as well as its eating, drinking, entertainment and retail offer.

**55,000 Christmas Gift Guides** were produced and distributed. 183 businesses were visited and invited to take part in the well received shopping guide, which was divided into nine areas of the town, with items displayed in eye-catching flat lays.

An **authentic video** starring three local families was produced to showcase what locals love about their home town at Christmas, its our most popular to date.

For our **Elf Trail**, a dozen distinctive 12-inch elves were hidden in shop windows and shopping centres around the town centre and the challenge was to spot eight of them for the chance to win great prizes.



## Original Shrewsbury online

Visits to [originalshrewsbury.co.uk](http://originalshrewsbury.co.uk) **increased year on year by 35%** and numbers grew across all our social media platforms.

**252,936** sessions on [www.originalshrewsbury.co.uk](http://www.originalshrewsbury.co.uk)

Facebook followers **increased by 28%**

Twitter followers **increased by 22%**

Instagram followers **grew to 2,248**

12 consumer newsletters sent

Consumer data **increased by 13%**

## DarwIN Shrewsbury Festival

A DarwIN Shrewsbury Festival Working Group was established to direct activity towards delivering a programme of 21 events, working closely with numerous businesses. The eye-catching logo was printed onto lamppost banners, flags and posters for businesses to promote the event around the town.

The two-and-a-half-week DarwIN Shrewsbury Festival programme inspired audiences with a diverse range of specialist talks, workshops, free guided tours and activities.

# Highlights

- Successful DarwIN Shrewsbury Festival staged
- 210,000 views for the Christmas 2017 video
- BBC TV coverage for Wild Cop worth £10,620





BBC West Midlands filming on Wyle Cop in February

## Wild Cop

Six life-sized fibreglass animals including a bear, gorilla, lion, zebra, hippo and baby elephant, were installed on the closed section of Wyle Cop during the part road closure, as part of the Darwin Shrewsbury Festival. This attracted widespread enjoyment and engagement on social media as word spread and visitors arrived to see the unique Shrewsbury 'zoo'.

A vacant shop front was also transformed into a rainforest, providing entertainment for children, with free activity booklets available from shops on Wyle Cop to engage with.

The event has prompted a fantastic response from the public, with #wildcop trending across all social media channels. The two week event was also featured on BBC Midlands Today, creating fantastic publicity for the area and businesses.

## Supporting Independent Businesses

A range of activities have supported our independent retail sector from Market Hall Hoardings, Wild Cop, Small Business Saturday PR, pumpkin making promotion and the sponsoring of the town's Christmas Trees.



The BID worked with partners to promote the Market Hall during improvement works

**DARWIN**  
**SHREWSBURY**  
**FESTIVAL**



The eye catching festival brand created by BID

## Highlights

- ✓ 55,000 Christmas Gift Guides distributed
- ✓ 100,000 Little Books of Darwin
- ✓ Striking window vinyls animating the town centre

# Drive and Direction

Our role in representing members on key issues that affect trading has seen us continue to lobby and liaise with decision makers, delivering a voice for businesses to influence and affect positive change.



Cllr Nick Laurens, Helen Ball, Seb Slater and Gemma Davies at the launch of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan consultation

## Big Town Plan

We provided the public with an opportunity to share their opinions and suggest ideas on the outline proposals for Shrewsbury's Big Town Plan through a bespoke pop-up space at 80 Wyle Cop. Over 5,000 comments were recorded, supported by media coverage and a full response scoped and published by us.

We have continued to work to evolve the Big Town Plan following the public consultation, taking into consideration the contributions from the public and have commissioned, in partnership with Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council, a Masterplan.

## Strong voice on town issues

We have led on issues affecting trading in the town, from supporting businesses during the roadworks, to becoming the first port of call for comment from the media on key issues such as the Dana Prison redevelopment and the Sports Direct proposal to build a new store outside the town centre.

## Quarry Swimming Pool

In partnership with Shrewsbury Town Council, we commissioned Fourth Street, national experts in placemaking and destination development, to explore the options for the future of Shrewsbury's swimming pool and its economic impact on the town centre. This contributed to the recent announcement of the Council's intention to reconsider the current site for the Quarry Swimming Pool.



## Highlights

- ✓ Staged interactive Consultation for the Big Town Plan
- ✓ Attracted 5,000 engagements to help shape the Plan
- ✓ Voiced business concern on key issues
- ✓ Successfully lobbied on retaining the town centre Swimming Pool



# Financial Statement

Financial performance is monitored throughout the year via the Company Operations Group, a subgroup of the Board, with regular reports and financial controls in place to provide assurance to the Board.

	2017/18	2016/17	2018/19 Budget
Reserves Brought Forward	112,927	72,876	33,921
BID Levy	289,051	326,719	300,000
Project Contributions	89,176	84,297	90,000
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>491,154</b>	<b>483,892</b>	<b>423,921</b>
Marketing, Profile & Promotion	171,018	159,249	146,000
Access & Car Parking	106,010	76,577	76,000
Backing Business	64,629	52,878	53,500
Drive & Direction	43,211	7,347	53,000
<b>Projects Total</b>	<b>384,868</b>	<b>296,051</b>	<b>328,500</b>
Management & Overheads	72,365	74,914	75,000
Contingency			20,421
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>457,233</b>	<b>370,965</b>	<b>423,921</b>
<b>Surplus / -Deficit for the year</b>	33,921	112,927	-
Reserves brought forward	112,927	72,876	33,921
In year change in reserves	-79,006	40,051	
<b>Reserves Carried Forward</b>	<b>33,921</b>	<b>112,927</b>	<b>-</b>

The financial statements for 2017/18 confirm a continuation of the strong financial performance seen to date. This year Levy income was slightly lower than last whilst we have seen increased expenditure across all areas as business plan priorities are progressed. This has resulted in achievement of the planned reduction in reserves carried forward. Income in addition to levies has again increased and has exceeded the total reported for management and overhead costs, therefore enabling total levy income collected to be invested in planned projects.

A strong cash-flow position has been maintained throughout the year. This is supported by strong Levy collection performance which in turn facilitates prompt settlement of liabilities. The cash balance carried forward at year end enables the company to effectively manage activities in the opening months of the new year.

These figures are presented as accurate at the time of writing. Full company accounts are prepared by independent accountants and are expected to remain consistent with the position reported here. The full accounts will be available at our annual meeting and on our website as a separate document.

# Governance

Shrewsbury BID is solely accountable to its members and is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors from a representative range of sectors, organisations and businesses. Board members can be elected to the Board annually.

The Board meets quarterly and working groups meet on a regular basis between these meetings to steer each objective area. BID members and relevant stakeholders contribute to these and are invited to join or get involved in particular projects.

BID members receive regular updates and we engage our members on a range of town centre issues, inviting involvement in the BID's work wherever possible.

## Board of Directors

**Mike Matthews**  
(Chairman)  
Prince Rupert Hotel

**John Hall (Deputy Chairman)**  
Write Here

**Kevin Lockwood**  
Shrewsbury Shopping Centres

**James Handley**  
AHR

**James Hitchin**  
The Alb

**Rob Walker**  
GAME

**Ann Tudor**  
Claremont Accounting

**Gemma Davies**  
Shropshire Council

**Helen Ball**  
Shrewsbury Town Council

**Dilwyn Jones**  
Sabrina Boat and Shrewsbury Tourism Association

**Trish Donovan**  
Vinterior

**John Major**  
Majors

**Rachel Williams**  
Marks & Spencer

**Paul Kirkbright**  
University Centre Shrewsbury

## Shrewsbury BID Management Team

**Seb Slater**  
Executive Director

**Aleks Vladimirov**  
Partnerships Manager

**Emma Molyneux**  
Project Co-ordinator

Shrewsbury BID is a not for profit company, accredited by British BIDs. Since April 2014 we have worked in partnership with our members to make Shrewsbury a better place to live, work, visit and invest.

Get in touch with your BID team:  
[members@shrewsburybid.co.uk](mailto:members@shrewsburybid.co.uk)

# Our Thanks

Partnership working is at the heart of everything we do. We collaborate with our 500 members, organisations operating in Shrewsbury, sponsors and other businesses to make Shrewsbury a better place to live, work, visit and invest.



# Year 5 Priorities

## Backing Business

Operating the Shrewsbury Watch safety partnership as a free service for members - Shopwatch and Pubwatch schemes and BID Ambassador schemes.

Promoting cost saving schemes to help businesses save time and money.

Providing useful business focussed forums and workshops.

## Marketing and Promotion

Managing marketing and promotion and delivering year-round marketing support with proactive press office, promoting Shrewsbury as a great place to live, work and visit through seasonal campaigns.

Organising free town centre events to attract, engage and excite.

Growing the Darwin Festival with more partners and town centre events.

New promotional video to attract more visitors.

Providing high profile online and digital activity, including social media and destination marketing content.

Sponsoring Christmas lights 'switch on' and managing Shrewsbury's Christmas marketing campaign.

## Access & Car Parking

Working with partners to promote the new Car Parking Strategy.

Working with Shropshire Council to install transformational on-street wayfinding and signage improvements.

Working with businesses and Shropshire Council to mitigate the impact of building works.

## Drive & Direction

Working with Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council to create and adopt the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan to guide the development of the town.

Acting as a credible and representational voice for business in Shrewsbury and taking the lead on the co-ordination, management and direction of the town centre.

Lobbying on issues which matter to business including Business Rates Reform.

Circulating regular information and updates on footfall, key town centre developments and relevant business information.



Shrewsbury BID  
Windsor House  
Windsor Place  
Shrewsbury  
SY1 2BY

Email: [members@shrewsburybid.co.uk](mailto:members@shrewsburybid.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01743 358625  
Website: [shrewsburybid.co.uk](http://shrewsburybid.co.uk)