More Safe Places make our towns welcoming for all

A Safe Place provides a short-term haven for anyone who is feeling vulnerable when they are out in the community. The Safe Places scheme in Shropshire and Welshpool is run by a committee of Shropshire Disability Network volunteers in cooperation with West Mercia and Dyfed-Powys Police. Our volunteers regularly visit existing and prospective participants in the scheme across Shropshire. More business, community and council premises have become Safe Places in Wellington, Oswestry, Whitchurch and Bishop’s Castle in the past few months. Here are just some of them… Wellington…

Bishop’s Castle…
Dear Members,

Seasons’ Greetings from myself, Paul Bryce, your Interim Chair. It gives me great pleasure to have been asked to take on this position, which I’ve done since early October.

This message wouldn’t be complete without starting by thanking outgoing Chair and Secretary, Ruby Hartshorn and Ann Shaw, for their sterling efforts, and wishing them well as they continue their work with Safe Places.

It also comes at what is both a difficult and exciting time for the charity. Our membership is steady and our profile is on the increase, which bodes well for the future, but your charity needs you, more than ever, to spread the word and maintain the presence which so much hard work in the past has allowed us to achieve.

We have a small but dedicated band of volunteers, but more are needed to help us to develop at a time where more and more charities are appearing, which means more competition. As Interim Chair, I have an open door policy which welcomes all comments and suggestions as to how we can achieve this.

Our work with Safe Places and our signposting efforts to help those who need this most are the cornerstone, and the fact that we help so many different people makes us unique within the sector, and is something of which we can be rightfully proud.

I look forward to continuing as we are, though there may well be more changes in the New Year. I wish you all peace, prosperity and everything you wish yourselves.

Warm wishes,

Paul (Interim Chair)
Sharing useful information

At Shropshire Disability Network, we reach out to people at community events, linking them up with appropriate services, and provide an informative website as part of our mission.

SDN’s volunteers enjoyed taking part in the biannual Health and Wellbeing Festival in Market Drayton in October as well as holding one of the charity’s own awareness days at Princess Royal Hospital in Telford. SDN also reached a milestone at the end of October – since the beginning of this year we have published over 1,000 useful items on our website!

News: https://shropshiredisability.net/news/
Events: https://shropshiredisability.net/events/

Thanks to fundraisers…
Morrisons Shrewsbury welcomed Shropshire Disability Network into its store for a bucket collection in October. Thanks to SDN’s volunteers and the generosity of Morrisons’ customers, this event raised almost £140. We were also able to share information about useful services with customers who had disability related enquiries. We had some very worthwhile and moving conversations.
If you would like to join SDN’s Fundraising Sub-Committee, please get in touch using the contact details on the back page.

Tribute
The family of Layla McKee and Shropshire Rural Communities Charity have relayed the sad news that Layla passed away on 21st October 2019. She passed away peacefully aged 92 in the kind and gentle care of Radbrook Nursing Home.

Layla had been an active member of her local Sight Loss Opportunity Group and Shropshire Disability Network and she will be missed by all.
Disability inclusive and accessible
Christmas church services and events
in Shrewsbury

There is a wide variety of church services and
events leading up to Christmas. All aim to be as
inclusive and accessible as possible.

St. Peter’s Church, Monkmoor Road | 24th November 2019 | 9.30am
All Ability Service

With a British Sign Language (BSL) accredited interpreter.

A service of inclusion and participation with special consideration for the
needs of disabled people.

This starts at 9.30am with breakfast of croissants and pastries, followed
by the service at 10.15am.

Contact: Sue on mobile telephone number 07817 363 215.

Shrewsbury United Reformed Church, English Bridge | 7th December 2019 | 2pm to 2.45pm
Inclusive and Accessible Christingle and Carols for All!

With a British Sign Language (BSL) accredited interpreter, Makaton,
Braille*, Large Print and a quiet area.

An opportunity for everyone to enjoy singing carols, celebrate, light a
Christingle and round it all off with tea and festive refreshments.

A downloadable copy of the service will be available on the church website
beforehand: https://shrewsburyurc.co.uk/wp/whats-on/.

*Please contact the Church Office to order a Braille copy of the service by
24th November.

Contact: Church Office on landline telephone number 01743 368 932.
St. Peter’s Church, Monkmoor Road | 11th December 2019 | 1pm
Mencap Service

Carol service for people with additional needs, with coffee and cake to follow.

Contact: Sue on mobile telephone number 07817 363 215.

Christ Church, Bayston Hill | 15th December 2019
(and every 3rd Sunday of the month) | between 2.30pm and 4pm
‘Joyful Noise’

Joyful Noise enables children with additional needs and their families to encounter the Christian message by engaging in physical activity such as parachute games, obstacle courses, music, sensory play and dance. Our time together is rounded up with drinks and cakes, including gluten free and dairy free options. Alongside welcoming children’s noise and activity, we also provide a chill tent for those seeking space and quiet. Joyful Noise is an evolving venture; we are very willing to learn from families, so please do come along and share your ideas. It is Church for You!

Contact: Sue on landline telephone number 01743 821 824.

For further information about any of these Christmas services and events, please contact the relevant contact person OR Phil on email pramsbotham.t21@btinternet.com or landline telephone 01743 240 465.

More details of all church services in Shrewsbury can be obtained from Churches Together in Shrewsbury’s Christmas adverts or from the relevant church offices. Contact Churches Together in Shrewsbury through Secretary Ian Peake on email jamiemccrimmon@hotmail.com.

Thanks to hosts…
Warm thanks to Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors and the residents of Lindale Court in Shrewsbury for hosting Shropshire Disability Network’s Management Committee meetings in 2019.
Accessible films and pantomimes

Meet Me in St Louis
Judy Garland stars in this classic musical film. Dementia friendly screening with interval and refreshments. £5 entry. Carers enter for free. Wem Town Hall, High Street, Wem, SY4 5DG. Monday 2nd December 2019, 1.30pm.

Scrooge
Alastair Sim plays Ebenezer Scrooge in this film. Relaxed screening where people are welcome to move around and come and go as they please. Includes interval with refreshments. £5 entry. Carers enter for free. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, 1 Mill Street, SY8 1AZ. Tuesday 10th December 2019, 2pm.

A Christmas Carol
Filmed on location in Shrewsbury. Screening with captioned subtitles. £7-£9 entry. 50% off full price for people with disabilities and carers; proof of eligibility required. The Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LH. Saturday 14th December 2019, 11.30am.

Jack and the Beanstalk
Pantomime performance with British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, Saturday 28th December 2019, 6.30pm. Relaxed performance, Sunday 5th January 2020, 11am. Tickets from £8 upwards. The Place, Oakengates, TF2 6EP.

Aladdin
Panto performance with BSL interpreter, Wednesday 8th January 2020, 6pm. Performance with Stagetext captioning, Thursday 9th January 2020, 6pm. Tickets from £15.50. 50% off full price for people with disabilities and their carers. Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, SY3 8FT.
New initiative to find caring superstars in North Shropshire

What makes a great carer or support worker? I meet lots of people who want to offer care but they don’t want to work for a big organisation, travel for miles to reach their customers – and, most importantly, they do want to get to know the people they work with and to spend as long as they need with them. I help people to set up their own small enterprises offering care and support to their neighbours in North Shropshire for a social enterprise called Community Catalysts. We believe that local people, doing things for themselves, are best placed to offer a wider range of great quality options for people looking for support.

Not everyone who wants to provide care knows how to set up a small business. So that’s where I come in: helping with understanding the rules and regulations, best practice, finding training and funding, networking with others doing the same thing, and help to tell people about their offer. Sometimes, though, all that’s really needed is a listening ear and some encouragement.

I’ve been helping people to set up small enterprises for some years, and it’s so rewarding to see people’s ideas become a reality. From when I first meet them in a local café to discuss their plans, to when they launch their enterprise and then when they find local people to support and get to know. It really boosts the whole community.

If you want to find support locally, then please do get in touch – and I’d love to know what you think makes a great carer! Or you may know someone who would want to help our community through providing great quality care. Please do pass on my details. I look forward to hearing from anyone who wants to know more. I can be contacted on:

- 07876 836 317 (call or text)
- c.clarke@communitycatalysts.co.uk
- Facebook @HelpatHomeShropshire

This project is run by Community Catalysts. We make sure that people, wherever they live, have real choice of great local social care, health services and other community resources. We are a social enterprise which means that we are focused on making positive change happen, not on profits. My help is totally free to you as this project is funded by Shropshire Council.

Chris Clarke, Community Enterprise Catalyst for Shropshire
Anyone can be a victim of a loan shark – your family, friends, neighbours and even you.

It’s not always easy to spot a loan shark, as they come in all shapes and sizes and will at first appear friendly, just part of the community. It is when you can’t pay that they will turn on you.

A loan shark is someone who lends cash as an unauthorised business.

If someone is struggling to pay a debt, the loan shark will resort to threats, violence and intimidation to get what they think that the individual owes, even if the debt has been paid off several times over.

A loan shark will typically have little paperwork and will add penalty charges for late payments. Sometimes they will add random sums to the bill.

Many victims keep paying, because they think that they can afford the agreed weekly sum, but they don’t realise how much their continuing weekly payments add up to – or they are afraid to stop payments.

The advice from the Illegal Money Lending Team (England) at National Trading Standards is that you should never go to a loan shark. They do not provide a community service; they are simply out to make money.

Loan sharks:

- are running an unauthorised business under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000;
- often refuse to tell the borrower how much they still owe or when they will finish repayments;
- often increase the debt or add additional amounts;
- may take items as security – including passports, bank cards and driving licences;
- may resort to violence, threats and intimidation.
What is being done to stop this?

The Illegal Money Lending Team investigates illegal money lending and any related offences – in the past this has included violence, blackmail, drugs offences, threats, kidnap and even rape. The team prosecutes loan sharks and supports victims.

If you think that you may be involved with a loan shark, contact the team in confidence: call 0300 555 2222, text 07860 022 116, or email reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk. You can also visit the website, www.stoploansharks.co.uk, to find out more information.

Changes to Transport for Wales timetable from December

The hourly train service on the Chester – Shrewsbury line will be reduced to accommodate a new express service between Cardiff and Holyhead.

Statement from Chester Shrewsbury Rail Partnership

The proposal by Transport for Wales to reduce the number of trains stopping at Chirk, Ruabon and Gobowen from December 2019 has been widely condemned by passengers, the Rail User Group and the Chester Shrewsbury Rail Partnership.

The Chester Shrewsbury Rail Partnership received a letter from the Minister for Economy and Transport at the Welsh Government on 11th November, confirming that they intend to press ahead and deliver the Cardiff – Holyhead express service from December. This will remove a morning and an afternoon service from Chirk, Ruabon and Gobowen and also leave Wrexham with a 90-minute gap in morning services between 9.30am and 11.03am.

Chester Shrewsbury Rail Partnership will continue to press for the reinstatement of these services and will be involved in the discussions that Transport for Wales has now arranged.

Chester Shrewsbury Rail Partnership Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/Chester-Shrewsbury-Rail-Partnership-373957012970982/
Citizens Advice helps people to claim Universal Credit

Citizens Advice Telford & the Wrekin provides information and advice on areas including: benefits, consumer affairs, debt, discrimination, employment, housing, immigration, legal affairs and relationships.

The charity operates services that are free, confidential, impartial, independent and available to everyone. It will always do its best to help, whether you visit its main office in Wellington, take part in one of its community outreach sessions, or get in touch by telephone or online.

This year Citizens Advice nationally launched a service called ‘Help to Claim’ for people who need help to apply for Universal Credit. This service can support people in the early stages of their claim for Universal Credit, from opening their account through to receiving their first full payment.

Help is tailored to the individual and available face-to-face, over the phone and online through web chat and web pages containing advice. This may be help with completing the online application form, providing evidence such as childcare costs, or preparing for a first Jobcentre appointment.

Universal Credit is the new benefit that combines six benefits into one, including Jobseeker’s Allowance and Working Tax Credit.

Get help to make a new claim for Universal Credit

Need to see someone face-to-face?

Citizens Advice Telford & the Wrekin, http://telfordcab.co.uk/, runs drop-in sessions at Telford Jobcentre Plus, Telford House, Southwater Way, Telford, TF3 4PD, on:

Monday, 9am to 12noon;
Tuesday, 2pm to 4.30pm;
Wednesday, 10am to 12noon;
Thursday, 2pm to 4.30pm;
Friday, 9am to 12noon.

This may be one-to-one or group support.
Call the free, national Help to Claim phone line:
England 0800 144 8 444
England textphone 18001 0800 144 8 444
Wales 08000 241 220
Wales textphone 18001 08000 241 220
Advisers are available Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

Use the chat box on the national website:
https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/helptoclaim/
Read the advice on the national website:
https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/

Get a referral to the Help to Claim team or advice on non-Universal Credit related issues

Citizens Advice Telford & the Wrekin, 40 Tan Bank, Wellington, TF1 1HW.
Drop in: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9am to 5pm; Tuesday, 9am to 7.30pm; Thursday, 9am to 12.30pm (appointments only, 12.30pm to 5pm).

First Point, Southwater One, Southwater Square, Telford, TF3 4JG.
Appointments only, Monday to Friday. Call 01952 459 268 to book.

Madeley Library, 21-22 Russell Road, Madeley, TF7 5BB.
Appointments only, Tuesday, 10am to 3pm. Call 01952 459 268 to book.

Hadley Community Centre, Hadley, TF1 5NL.
Appointments only, Wednesday, every other week, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

The Sambrook Centre, Grange Avenue, Stirchley, TF3 1FL.
Drop in: Wednesday, 9.30am to 11.30am.

The Guildhall, High Street, Newport, TF10 7AR.
Drop in: Thursday, 10am to 1pm.

The Wakes, Theatre Square, Oakengates, TF2 6EP.
Drop in: Thursday, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Leegate Centre, Leegomery, TF1 6NA.
Drop in: Friday every other week, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Dawley Christian Centre, High Street, Dawley, TF4 2EX.
Drop in: Friday, 10am to 12.30pm.
Derwen College Open Day

Whittington Road, Gobowen, Nr Oswestry, 10am to 3pm, Wednesday 4th March 2020.

As a young person who may be considering entry to this college in 2020 or beyond, you are welcome to visit the campus on this day. Bring parents, carers, or other family or friends to find out more about the college’s vocational training, support for learners with special educational needs, and facilities. You will be able to meet staff and students and take part in activities.

If you would like to register your interest in visiting Derwen College on this Open Day, please contact Amy Snow on email amy.snow@derwen.ac.uk or landline telephone number 01691 661 234 (extension 381).

SDN Members: please let us know at Shropshire Disability Network, if your contact details change, so that we can keep them up to date and ensure that you continue to receive Your Voice and our other news.

To submit items to Your Voice, email newsletter@shropshire-disability.net or write to SDN, C/o 26 Aldwick Drive, Radbrook Green, Shrewsbury, SY3 6BN. Telephone or text SDN on 07780 852 229.

Visit us on Facebook /ShropshireDisabilityNetwork and /SafePlacesShropshire and on Twitter @ShropDisNetwork and @SafePlaceShrops
Browse https://shropshire-disability.net/

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