

Making it Real

Shropshire Adult Social Care

Local Account 2020/21

August 2021—issue nine



Small things matter

**'Behind the scenes at
Bishops Castle food bank'**

Being a Carer

Life changing moves

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The Local Account is....

Shropshire's magazine about adult social care. We call our publication 'Making it Real – our story continues...' We concentrate on true stories from real people about what's worked and what hasn't, and how real experience can trigger change and improvement.

Listening to stories about daily life from the people who make use of adult social care services and support helps the council understand what really happens in people's lives. Without that understanding it's difficult to improve.

We've taken this idea from an organisation called Think Local Act Personal; their Making it Real initiative sets out what good personalised care and support should look like <https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/makingitreal/>

2020 was an extraordinary year.

January and February 2020 saw the impact of terrible flooding. By the end of March, we were into the first of three national lockdown situations as the nation was hit by the coronavirus pandemic. That hit has been devastating for many and only now, a year on with the roll out of the national vaccination programme, are we beginning to emerge from its clutches.

COVID-19 has massively highlighted the challenges facing adult social care, many of which existed long before the pandemic. But it has also powerfully underlined the essential value of social care and local communities in helping people to live the lives they want to lead.

This year's Local Account gives us a chance to look back and ask, 'what happened there?' To seek out the stories that tell of the heroic things that people have done, as well as the mundane. It gives a chance to consider the creativity, the sacrifice and the pain. Most importantly it gives a chance to share and inspire thinking as collectively we seek to shape the future of care and support in Shropshire.



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www.shropshire.gov.uk/adult-social-care/

First Point of Contact (FPOC) - 0345 678 9044

Foreword—in conversation with Tanya Miles

Looking forward.

Responding to the challenges of the national pandemic since March 2020 have been hugely impacting on us all in so many different ways, including how we all now approach winter and continue to respond to the ever-changing position of COVID-19. We remain grateful for the hard work and energy of people across Shropshire to support our communities and the vulnerable people we support in their times of need, and we do remain hopeful that the COVID-19 national and local recovery continues to move in the right direction.

Looking forward, this remains an exciting time in Adult Social Care and health, to continue to support people to live life well at home. Our rapidly growing sector continues to evolve and transform in creative and innovative ways, and this year has been another year of great innovation and work to support this aim. We continue to strengthen our working relationship with key partners across the NHS and voluntary and community sector to ensure our services are more integrated and joined up, ensuring that people receive the best outcomes. We've been doing some really exciting work with our colleagues, particularly around Social Prescribing which has been recognised nationally and we're really excited that it continues at a pace.

We are proud of the strong connections we have with our voluntary and community group partners and providers. They deliver all kinds of community-based activity that supports people to stay well and independent. The Wellbeing & Independence

Partnership Shropshire (WIPS), led by Age UK, supports people in all kinds of ways – practical help at home, social activities, friendship groups and making digital connections. This winter, WIPS will be working with the British Red Cross to make sure that people have extra support to stay safe and well during the colder weather.

Digital and Assistive Technology continues to evolve and offer new and effective solutions to help both people who need extra support and their carers to lead more fulfilling and independent lives. We continue to invest in these programmes to support the health and social care needs of vulnerable people. We've also been using the data we already have to better predict where and when people may start needing help and investing to the greatest effect. We're really excited about how we might develop this kind of work.

We continue to look at how we can provide the support people need much earlier on in their lives that will help keep them healthier and independent for as long as possible. This includes everything from ensuring people have access to a wide range of appropriate, timely and accurate information and advice, to helping people make informed decisions about their health, care and wellbeing.



Tanya Miles,

Executive Director of People

Looking back

The last 18 months have been exhausting but relationships and support for one another have won through.

Working together, whether as a neighbour, volunteer, carer, essential worker or many other roles; we have all made a difference to the people of Shropshire.

For the Council and Public Health; services have been developed and adapted, tests have been delivered, contacts traced, news and information shared, complaints investigated, businesses supported, regulations interpreted and implemented, weddings

booked and rebooked, data recorded, videos produced, orders processed, parcels distributed, support calls made, PPE dispatched, outbreaks responded to, risk assessments undertaken, pieces of advice given, and most importantly conversations with our communities, schools, care homes, businesses, funeral directors, the list goes on and on.

I cannot thank you all enough.

Rachel Robinson

Director of Public Health Shropshire



A year of loss

A year of loss and a lost year for many; we certainly felt its impact in Making it Real.

Our long-standing chairperson, Jon Hancock, stepped to one side. An inspiration and tireless driver of Making it Real for many years. It was sad to lose Jon's energy and enthusiasm for making sure that social care helped make lives better.

There's no doubt that the pandemic played its part in Jon's decision to step down. I was so tied up in the council's response to Covid-19 that I don't think I ever thanked him enough for all his hard work. Thank you, Jon.

A year of opportunity.

Making it Real took the chance to pause and reflect upon our work to date.

The discussions were not easy for someone who has been involved for many years, but they were so important. Refreshed minds asked tough questions that are pushing Making it Real into a better place. We will soon have more Experts by Experience on the Making it Real Board. That means more people who call upon social care to live their daily lives being involved in key discussions.

The biggest question of all was 'have you really helped to make people's lives better?'

Well, honestly, there have been some excellent developments. Read about Direct Payments (p18) or the new Shropshire Carers support service for unpaid carers on p20.

But as always there is so much to do. Join the discussions and help bring positive change.



Shropshire needs you...

Passionate about adult social care?
Join the conversation.

Have your say and make a positive difference.

If you'd like to join us in our efforts to place the people of Shropshire at the heart of shaping the future of adult social care in the county, then get in touch. Your own experience can help change things for the better.

If you'd like to discuss concerns, experiences or wish to contribute ideas then get in touch. See the Making it Real webpage www.shropshire.gov.uk/making-it-real for updates and meeting notes, or get in touch directly through makingitreal@shropshire.gov.uk



We go on thanking the lovely volunteers for all the help with shopping and smiles.

Small things matter.

The story of mutual aid community groups 20/21

I found the whole experience humbling, seeing a community pull together...

As we entered the unknown of lockdown, there was an outpouring of kindness across the country. Friends and neighbours joined together to support others in their neighbourhoods and beyond. Millions joined in – many saying hello to neighbours for the first time. This was the rise of ‘mutual aid’ – the tonic we all needed in a pandemic!

Jo, from the Bayston Hill Community Support group, tells their story.

Small things matter

In March last year I was thinking about what the people who had been told to shield were feeling, how scared and alone and worried about the future they must be, and I knew I had to do something and it had to be fast.

I set up a Facebook page and within a week had amassed over 150 volunteers who were ready to fetch prescriptions and essential shopping, walk dogs and offer telephone companionship to all those who needed it.

We got a dedicated helpline set up and Shrewsbury's MaxPack kindly printed out 2,500 leaflets free of charge (in colour, no less!) so that we could let everyone in the village know about us.

Since then, over 520 official voluntary tasks have been completed, helping more than 125 local households, with last April our busiest month when we were averaged 6.5 tasks every day!

Each of the volunteers has provided comfort to the village, just by being there, able and willing to help. I've often been told by those we've helped that we're a 'lifeline' and that they wouldn't have known what to do without us.

Within the group there are lots of unsung heroes, those who've buddied up with their neighbours to help with shopping and prescription collections every week. Those shielding who would have otherwise been put at risk and who may have felt very alone, were it not for the volunteers. There are many residents who take great

comfort in that weekly natter whilst the shopping is being handed over and it's as much a pleasure for us volunteers as for those we are helping.

I read a quote recently that I thought was extremely poignant for the work we have done:

“Never underestimate the big importance of small things.” – Matt Haig

Last year was one of the hardest any of us have faced in our lifetimes, but it's been wonderful having the chance to create a little rainbow in the storm. I couldn't be prouder of our village and what we've achieved. Stay safe everyone.



Peggy welcomed the support in Bayston Hill



My mum was really pleased, even though she probably won't need help, it's reassuring to know it's there.

There was also a lovely thank you from a couple that they placed as an advert in the Villager magazine

A 'listening ear' was also set up via the helpline should people need a friendly ear to listen to concerns or worries

The wonderful power of community and volunteers

The severity of Coronavirus and the resultant upheaval and change in our daily lives has been staggering, yet, the willingness of people to step up to the mark and participate in their local community response has been remarkable.

We are grateful and want to say a big 'Thank-you' to everyone in Shropshire that has supported in some way during the pandemic. However big or small your contribution, it is important to recognise, that it is often the small acts of kindness, such as checking in on your neighbour, or giving them a smile and a wave that really has positive impact.

As part of the prevention measures to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, the '#BeAPartOfHistory' volunteer campaign was launched to recruit volunteers to support Shropshire's vaccination and Lateral Flow testing (LFT) programmes.

This campaign resulted in a total of 840 volunteers being recruited and deployed.

The Council LFT centre volunteers gave over 820 hours of their energy and time, and alongside Council employees contributed to a massive 10,709 lateral flow tests being carried out across 4 sites.

Volunteer comments on their experience included:

"The team at the Lantern have been brilliant and I've really enjoyed working there with them all. This has been a really positive experience for me so I'm looking forward to seeing how I can help out in future."

"I've really enjoyed my time and met some wonderful people. I'd definitely be open to similar volunteering opportunities in the future."

"I've enjoyed my first spell of volunteering & look forward to doing more"

Many of these volunteers have now chosen to continue their volunteer journey with the Council to support local communities with future Covid-19 and emergency responses, which is greatly appreciated.

It is heart warming to know that during such a distressing and challenging time, local people in all areas of the County came together because they cared and wanted to help in some way: the power of community and volunteers making a difference.

'Cheers' and thank-you Shropshire
(from Ness Hicken)

" I found the whole experience humbling, seeing a community pull together, where it is literally your neighbours that matter. It made me realise people can love one another and in our usual busy lives we often lose this value and perspective. It must have made a huge difference to people feeling vulnerable to feel reassured that their needs would be met. The group was set up mainly via FB, flyers distributed to every house in the village, a Whatsapp group of volunteers pulled together and a helpline set up with about 5 people taking the calls. A one point there were so many volunteers (141+) readily available it was a race to respond to the requests! I personally collected a few prescriptions and dropped them off at people's houses. I know the group buddied up people as means of meeting their needs weekly. A 'listening ear' was also set up via the helpline should people need a friendly ear to listen to concerns or worries. MB

Jo, Bayston Hill Community

I've really enjoyed my time and met some wonderful people. I'd definitely be open to similar volunteering opportunities in the future.

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This has been a really positive experience for me so I'm looking forward to seeing how I can help out in future.

SEND developments

Strategy & developments

“We all want to live in the place we call home with the people and things that we love, in communities where we look out for one another, doing the things that matter to us?” Social Care Future.

These are our plans for the education of children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities called SEND. The plans are for Shropshire from 2020-2025

Special educational needs is when a child or young person needs some extra help to learn.

Shropshire says:

SEND, our priority, everybody’s business

This means:

We want children and young people who have extra support needs or disabilities to be healthy, happy and safe.

We want them to be able to lead a good life.

We want them to have the same opportunities in life as other children and young people who don’t have extra needs.

The Shropshire SEND Strategy - Listening to SEND Families and Joining Things up Zara guides us through the developments.

Developing the new SEND Strategy has been quite a journey.



It started in May 2019 when children and young people with SEND and parent carers joined professionals and shared their ideas, hopes and dreams for the future.

Powerfully, what stood out when describing their ‘dream life’ were the everyday things. Things that others might take for granted as being part of their future - a job, go to college, join in with activities in the

local community, a home of their own, friends, to be listened to...

Following the event, PACC (Parent and Carers Council) organised workshops to collectively agree the vision and refine priorities. By the beginning of 2020 there was a draft version of the strategy, which committed to creating the same opportunities for children and young people with SEND as experienced by those without.

As the strategy was being finalised two things happened, Shropshire had its SEND inspection and Covid-19 hit. Combined, these two things changed the next steps but in fact while they created difficulties, they also offered opportunities.

The SEND Inspection resulted in Shropshire being required to develop a Written Statement of Action, it recognised that there was positive work being done, but there was room for improvement in terms of the SEND offer, including poor strategic planning across education, health and social care, a lack of co-production within health and in particular excessive waiting times for Autism assessment and support.

The Inspection provided a much needed, local focus on improving SEND services and support. It acted as a catalyst for change.

Covid 19 presented challenges in getting things done, but the move to online meetings in fact helped to bring people together and the flexibility and need to consider new approaches benefited the work on the strategy.

In 2021, the SEND Strategy is now live.

So, What does this mean for Shropshire families? Most importantly the system now understands what it needs to help SEND families achieve, it is clear what a good life looks like for our community.

The strategy provides services across education, health and social care, in fact all services, with a clear picture of what they should be working towards, and it creates a framework for measuring progress towards outcomes.



Members of the Shropshire Educational Psychology Team supported children and young people from both mainstream and specialist settings along with parent carers.'



SEND developments continued...

This is particularly important since it provides a single, clear message for local decision makers and supports the need for a more joined up approach.

It means that families have had their voice heard, and this will continue to help shape services and influence decision making into the future. The strategy alone will

not make the change needed but it is an important step on that journey.

The real challenge will be making sure that everyone takes the opportunity to work together, with a shared vision and to commit to delivering the lives that young people with SEND have told us that they aspire to.



You can find out more about the SEND Strategy on the Shropshire Local Offer where you will be able to read the full document, listen to a podcast that explains why this document is important and also view an easy read version of the strategy.

Facebook/Twitter/Instagram

NEWS: The Shropshire SEND Strategy is now live and available to view on the local offer here: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/strategy-policy-and-guidance/send-strategy/>

#ShropshireSENDstrategy #SENDstrategy #shropshirelocaloffer



Catch a falling star

Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket
Never let it fade away (never let it fade away)

The Fontane Sisters



Over the rainbow

Somewhere over the rainbow, Skies are blue,
And the dreams that you dare to dream, really
do come true.

Judy Garland



Alzheimer's Society Singing for the Brain has gone virtual!

Pre Covid, four groups existed for Singing for the Brain in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin with over 80 participants. All of our existing service users in these groups were contacted to register their interest in our Virtual Group.

Of those people interested, there were factors for them to consider

- Were they able to use the technology?
- Did they have the equipment necessary?

In a couple of cases family members purchased tablets for their elderly relatives to use, standing outside living room windows shouting instructions on how to join Zoom.

Surprisingly a lot of our service users were tech savvy and jumped at the chance to join us. Some people joined the singing on their phone but the majority are with us 'in person'.

At the same time we were discussing options of format, content, presentation and personnel with all involved with our existing offer, including our current leaders, volunteers and our facilitator colleagues.

The Singing for the Brain Zoom sessions take the same format as the physical groups, facilitated by a staff member, run by existing group leaders with memory songs, words on screen, action songs, use of instruments, themes and dressing up. Our group is evolving and now includes a Quiz, as people have become more confident with unmuting themselves on Zoom. We now also incorporate a chat session prior to singing.

New members are being attracted through word of mouth and new referrals to the Society, some of our group members, who have moved into Residential Care are able to join us again, along with other residents and carers who really liven up the sessions for them. We regularly have 50 attendees at the weekly session and there is a growing feeling of community and comfort in the groups, sharing of experiences is increasing as is trust in the new platform.

Singing in the rain

I walk down the lane with a happy refrain
Just singin', singin' in the rain
Dancing in the rain, I'm happy again

Gene Kelly



Three little birds

Rise up this mornin'
Smile with the risin' sun

Bob Marley and the Wailers



Performance matters



Living with Coronavirus - One Year On

96%

of care homes have received their vaccination



40%

of adults in Shropshire received a COVID-19 vaccination by end of Feb 21



12,000

calls made by our vaccination support line



We helped **280** vulnerable residents without transport get to their vaccination appointment.

20%

increase in Looked After Children



Over **50%** of young people experienced loneliness during the pandemic



20% of adult carers' mental wellbeing affected

Almost doubling of adults suffering depressions and anxiety from **10 to 19%**



19% say they have a less healthy diet



27% say they are drinking more alcohol

30% of adults say they have put on weight

10,000

new Universal Credit claimants- early data shows by December 20 up by 112%

35%

of businesses reported cash flow problems



2 in 5

voluntary or community organisations are financially worse off



More pupils are now claiming school meals

72%

increase in people using local foodbanks



Living with Coronavirus - One Year On



11,000

calls made to our COVID-19 helpline

Lockdown has cut global emissions by

7%



£125m

worth of support to local businesses



£235k

worth of support grants given to Shropshire residents

Provided over **100** homeless people with shelter

More people volunteering, particularly young people



New community groups set up to deal with challenges of pandemic



39% of employers expect to continue to work remotely

1 in 4

expect to continue remote working as long as targets are met

PPE



Use of Shropshire rights of way up **131%**

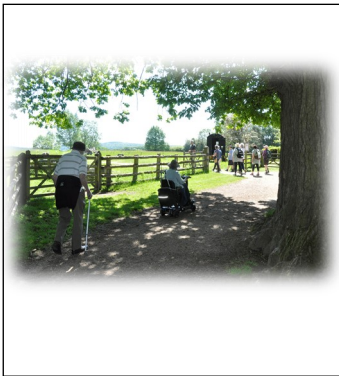
278K pieces of PPE distributed

Our priorities 2021

1: Creating resilient communities



3: Delaying the impact of your needs



2: Helping you prevent or reduce need



4: Meeting your needs through a creative approach

'Behind the scenes at Bishops Castle food bank'

"It takes a lot of courage for somebody to say they need help".

Coordinator and chair of the trustee group, Andy takes us

Across Shropshire we've seen a 72% rise in the numbers of people using their local foodbank.

It's hard to write about the success of a 'foodbank'; if the world were a better place, we wouldn't have to, but the Coronavirus pandemic highlighted their importance while it showed the reality of rural poverty.

We opened in early April 2020 with just 3 customers; now we supply food and other provisions to an average of over 50 people (at each of the twice weekly sessions).

This is a massive undertaking that involves 23 volunteers: collecting, replenishing, and delivering. Unfailingly cheerful, they create the welcoming atmosphere that encourages usage and overcomes the fear of stigma.

The generosity of residents from Bishop's Castle and the surrounding area has meant a healthy financial balance and plentiful supplies of food and other provisions, topped up by regular bulk purchases.

Faye, Robert and Andy are involved with the Foodbank. Their stories are a testament to the value of local community support.

Robert is a single man on sickness benefit, the pandemic made little difference to his normal life in terms of freedom of movement. He needed to supplement his weekly food purchase and so he went to the foodbank on its first day, he's has been in twice a week since then.

For Faye the pandemic has been "awful", she is the mother of adult children who she couldn't see, and she's married to a man who has severe heart problems. Faye has been using the foodbank since August 2020; introduced by a friend because the family had no money for food after all their outgoings.



Both stories are not unusual, but they are a testament to the value of local community support. Both agree about the foodbank; Robert didn't know what to expect, he **"hoped it would be friendly"**, importantly **"it helps with the bills"**. Also, he **"likes the companionship"**. Faye was **"glad and relieved"** at the friendly welcome she got, **"it has relieved me of a huge amount of pressure"**.

It's hard to understand that pressure unless you've been there yourself.

The foodbank has now moved from strengths to strength. They've been partners in a refurbished bikes scheme for customers, organised a clothes bank that acquired and shared an absolute mountain of items and they made Christmas memorable for many. Now they're instrumental in the development of a sustainable food strategy for South Shropshire. Let's hope they'll be successful and make foodbanks a thing of the past.

The Foodbank also offers:

- ◆ a clothes bank, sharing a mountain of items
- ◆ a refurbished bikes scheme for customers
- ◆ it's made Christmas memorable for many

Mental Health support and employment

Matt introduces....

ENABLE support people facing barriers to paid employment, helping them get into meaningful, sustainable paid work that they want to do. My team works with people who manage **enduring mental health** issues...3 stories show how this works:



Dan's reflection on Covid lockdown

Dan is an Employment Advocate who manages his own mental health and promotes employment as a positive health intervention.

“When the national lockdown was announced, many people baulked at the idea. Of course, it was vital and crucial to the protection of our struggling health service, but the thought of being trapped at home, unable to see loved ones and friends, was horrifying. But I don't think I was one of those people.

I have always been an introvert. My natural inclination towards isolation, combined with Social Anxiety Disorder, made the idea of time at home an opportunity for some much-needed mental housekeeping.

Since the last deterioration in my mental health, I have been making a constant effort to become a functional part of society, both as a productive individual and, to a small extent, a social entity. Not only has this practice been of tremendous benefit to my mental health, it has also improved my quality of life in general. But it's been extremely hard work.

I realise that any working process can become physically and emotionally tiring with time, so the opportunity to stay at home, unburdened by the pressure of having to go out into the world and interact with others, was almost welcomed.

However, having been through several declines in my mental health through the years, I know myself well enough to realise that I need some interaction with the outside world in order to stay stable. Life is far easier without the outside world, but that world becomes harder and harder to re-enter as time away from it passes.

Through my interaction with ENABLE I was able to obtain a part-time job with a company called IDEA. For the past two-and-a-half years I have been their gardener and maintenance man and it is a job that I love. As soon as we were told that we could return to work I began to return to IDEA for my day a week. IDEA is an interior design company with a high level of digital technology, so all their other staff were able to work from home.

Despite the lack of interaction with others, I found that the structure of returning to work, as well as the small interaction with the societal structure, acted as a prop for my mental health and prevented me from slipping into a possible decline.

I think I was lucky. Not only did I have my family with me, I had a friend to connect with and a job that I was still able to do. Others were far less lucky than me, not only struggling to fill their days but battling depression and mental illness at the same time. I realise that the focus for the health service right now is the continuing threat of Covid-19, but I hope that the mental health services are not side lined because of it; there are many people who need them more than ever.”

The Summit on the hill: A supported employment story

June, an employment specialist, had to get creative to meet Lucy with her employer during lockdown

When I first spoke to her, Lucy had been off work for some weeks with depression. During lockdown I spent time getting to know her over the phone. She was feeling overwhelmed at the prospect of going back to her role as a senior care assistant. She had not worked during lockdown and had little contact with people outside of her home.

To support Lucy back to work it was agreed that we needed to meet with her employer and talk about her return. To make this meeting possible whilst still sticking to government guidelines we decided to go for a socially distanced walking meeting near Lucy's home, in the Cleve Hills.

The meeting was very relaxed and because of the rural location, confidentiality was possible. After the meeting we all agreed that the location, weather and informal setting had created a relaxed atmosphere in which Lucy was able to talk about her concerns more freely. Emma, her manager, said that she was going to encourage similar meetings after lockdown had been lifted.



June with Lucy and her employer
Emma from CM Bespoke Care Ltd

Sian's account of being supported into work

I was referred to ENABLE through my mental health team in spring of 2020, after losing my job and struggling with my well-being in such an unusual time. Lockdown meant that my regular support, coping mechanisms and day-to-day techniques were stripped away, I was left feeling very low. Redundancy on top of this left me feeling lost and unsure where to step next. Matt introduced himself at the right time and we spent time getting to know each-other, my wants and needs. He was an invaluable constant in this challenging time.

Initially we worked on getting my case together to find the right job. We discussed the different qualities, ambitions and skills that I have, and thought about what kind of work might be both sustainable and enjoyable for me. Matt helped tweak my CV and fine-tune covering letters. He helped me to find potential employers, as well as liaising with services such as Citizens Advice to support me in my benefit claims.

Importantly Matt supported me with growing my confidence. I began to choose what positions to apply for with care and consideration, as well as broadening my horizons with opportunities such as college courses and workshops. ENABLE helped me each step of the way, from completing lengthy application packs right up to interview prep' when I secured opportunities.

In Autumn 2020, I was successful in securing full-time work with a local employer, a job that used my strongest skills and offered opportunities for growth and personal development. Matt and I developed an in-work support plan and he supported me in disclosing my mental health condition and other sensitive information. This took such a weight off my shoulders, making the process of starting a new job stress-free.

Enable have kept in touch with me during the initial months at my new job, providing advice and support whenever I have needed it. I am now settled in a job that I enjoy, and I feel valued; something I had not previously experienced.

Enable helped me get here and I could not recommend them more highly.

If you want to find out more about ENABLE go to

Find out more about ENABLE:
<https://enableservices.co.uk/>

enable
supported employment services



Direct Payments. You said - we did.



Positive 'working together' art by Mary, who makes use of her own Direct Payment.

What a time it's been! Yet, for some, self-isolation hasn't felt alien but normal. The barriers faced and difficulties getting the right support can stop people living life how they want.

Direct Payments are one way to address the problem of off the shelf support. They may not suit everyone, but they do give the opportunity to create individualised support.

In Shropshire, people who use a direct payment or support a loved one with their direct payment, have been a central part of the Direct Payments Board which guides local developments.

A big thank you goes to all the Experts by Experience who have committed to promoting and challenging direct payments in Shropshire through the last two rollercoaster years.

Shropshire is dedicated to making Direct Payments simpler and better for all using them.



Beth Baker, Chris Roberts & Tammie Doyle (The Direct Payments Support Team)

In the last two years we have seen many changes to Direct Payments. Here are just a few.

For the latest information go to the Direct Payments web page: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/direct-payments-in-adult-social-care/>

Being involved 2020 onwards

RICH

Working along side a local authority who are so receptive to customer involvement is a new experience for me and one that has been wholly positive. When it is disabled people who use direct payments, it has been great to contribute to the shaping of the service, for myself but also on behalf of others



Katie explains what Direct Payments mean for her



Rob argues for change at a Direct Payment event

'You said - we did'


PRIORITY 2 - Helping you prevent or reduce need continued...

You asked for a clear Vision and policy

Direct Payments Shropshire Council

You Said

'The entire process is complex, terminology difficult to understand specially on the DP letter'
 "I could never access information sent to me".
 'Language – jargon on paperwork'
 'We need to focus away from eligibility onto the person living a better life'
 'The struggle trying to find which bits of information are important to me'



With a Direct Payment I can live the life I want Shropshire Council

Open and Honest
 Working Together, through open and honest communication the right information can be shared from the first decision to have a Direct Payment and every step of the way after.

Flexible and Creative
 Working Together, Direct Payments can be used in flexible and creative ways so that they support wellbeing and the lives people want to lead.

Clear and Simple
 Working Together, Direct Payments can be straightforward and managed in a clear and simple way which develops skills and confidence as an employer.



You asked for things to be simplified and for the jargon to be thrown out

Words becoming vision



- Exciting
- Individual
- Radical
- Flexibility
- Choice
- Transparent
- Diverse
- Information
- Communication
- Communication
- Trust
- Simplicity
- Together
- Trust
- Choice / Control



We reviewed all the language in the finance letters - for example we changed


From	To
<p>Unauthorised expenditure "Due to the issues identified during the audit, I have sought instruction from the area Team Manager/Service Manager, whom has confirmed the listed expenditure is not authorised on your support plan and is therefore due to be repaid to Shropshire Council by yourself."</p>	<p>"During the financial check-up there was some spending on things which didn't seem to be specified in your support plan. We asked you to explain whether you had to use any of the money differently, when you sent your information in, as we know that this sometimes happens. If you have already explained the changes to your social worker, please let us know so that we can check with them."</p>

You said you wanted good information at the right time



Direct Payments Shropshire Council

You said

- Too much information
- Not the right kind, at the right time
- Dread getting letters
- Don't read it



We created a Welcome Pack

My experience of change.

Sarah supports her sister with her Direct Payment (DP). She recently joined a working group called 'Mend the Gap', (MtG) and along with other users of direct payments, social workers, students, and the DP team, she's been working to make DPs better.

"My fears about DP's changed when I heard a speaker at a large Council event in 2019. Out loud and in front of council workers and bosses, she raised every concern I had been thinking. How brave. and the fact that the council encouraged her to say what she said, inspired me to join 'Mend the Gap'. It felt much needed change was coming.

So together, over 6 sessions we started to fix some of the issues mentioned on these pages.

At the end, we were asked to creatively feedback using CLAY! Yes, that's right.

Here's what I created and why.

How I felt before



How I felt after joining the conversations



Before MtG I felt like the person in 'The Scream' by Munch. Every time we tried our hardest to do what we thought was right, there was a letter asking for unauthorised spend!

Working with others changed my views. I had previously experienced the Council as 'the enemy'. After seeing the faces behind the letters, I realised that they are people who care about what they're doing. We're all just trying to do our best.

That is the reason for the heart in the middle of my tile. I also camouflaged some coins (look closely and you can see them) this reflects the feeling of wanting to hide the fact we're in receipt of DP money. Previously we didn't want to stick our 'head above the parapet' in case the money was taken away.

At the top of my tile is the Houses of Parliament because understanding the legal implications and the requirements of DP was totally life changing for me. We aren't fraudsters, my sister is legally eligible for the money she gets. Understanding the eligibility criteria and that my sister fits the criteria, made me feel validated. We should have the money and we've been using it the right way all along - to make her life better.

That leads to the cloud and rainbow. The cloud was to signify that there is still work to do. And the rainbow colours show my learning. I learnt a huge amount through 'Mend the Gap' and so did the social workers and other staff. Now it's time to share the learning.

Fiona's story A life changed during lockdown

Social Worker Julie Weaver has recently supported Fiona to live in her own flat for the first time in her life at 60. Living a happy and fulfilling life, Fiona is continuing to develop her potential.

It's been a long-term commitment to support Fiona through this life changing process.

Fiona's experienced many forms of care in her life; shared living, shared lives, day services support and even convent living in her teenage years. Carers have tended to do stuff for her rather than support her to build independence.

In 2019, out of the blue, Fiona and her shared lives carer had a serious car accident. Both ended up in hospital and with two broken wrists Fiona eventually moved back in with her 90-year-old mother. It was time for change.

Tessa, Fiona's sister, had been running the Frankwell community café called 'In good hands', for many years. She describes it as a 'community living room'. Realising that with the right kind of support she could involve Fiona in that community, she began to explore the opportunities that Direct Payment support might offer.



'Life has started to open up for me' – Fiona

Using Direct Payments, Fiona now is supported by a team of Personal Assistants (PAs). Fiona's life has dramatically changed for the better, despite the circumstances of the last 16 months, because of her growing community. Independently doing her laundry; using the oven, and planning her time including getting involved in arts and craft clubs, going to the gym and shopping, Fiona's in charge of her life.

Tessa continues to be significantly involved including managing the Direct Payment. Now Fiona is getting to know her local community better by working in Tessa's café. She made the most of lockdown to practice her "barista" skills and she will putting those new skills into action now the café has opened its doors again.

Alison's Story Thinking out of the box.

I'm a full-time carer for my adult daughter who has Down's Syndrome. She's beyond college and I don't think a day centre is for her. Instead, she goes horse riding, to the gym and other activities.

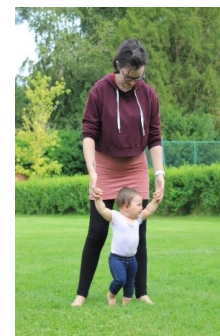
With Covid we lost our routine. I could feel myself sinking into a deep depression being stuck in and I noticed my daughter had her moments too.

Then a few months into lockdown, my daughter started to pinch my skin care products. I am in an Elemis group on Facebook and I posted her using it. She has become an online sensation! Some companies sent her products to trial and review and this gave us both reason to get up and have something to do. Now she gives demos, tips and product reviews. I believe it saved us both from going insane.

In the past I have used my direct payment for massages as I have a bad back and fibromyalgia. With Covid restrictions I'd been unable to have a massage and I read about a body pillow to sleep with as it aligns the spine and helps to give a more restful sleep. Sleep has been a struggle for years!

The Direct Payments team rang to see how I was getting on during lockdown (I really appreciated the chance to sound off). I asked if I could buy the body pillow with my direct payment. They said yes. Good on them for thinking out of the box as everyone has different needs. If carers are cared for then we do a better job and let's face it, we save the government a fortune.

This brought me to another idea. I decided to get a camper van so if my daughter is miserable, we could just up and go and have a change of scenery whilst social distancing. Having the toilet with us means we don't have to use public toilets. We stopped overnight on a site a few weeks back, but the mattress was terrible. Yet again it was agreed to let me use my money to get myself a better mattress for the camper.



The Direct Payment team and social workers listened. I asked for help in these difficult scary times and they helped.

Being a Carer carers are the best people to tell you what it's like and to offer advice

'It ain't easy'- Admitting you're a carer is hard. 'I'm just her husband' or 'I'm just his wife' is so common.

I didn't get much advice when I started caring but after I got in touch with Shropshire Carers they got me a place on a 'zoom' art class - it was a saviour during lockdown. It's hard to give yourself 'permission' to look after your own physical and mental health. My advice to new carers would be 'you're not being selfish looking after yourself as you'll both benefit from a more relaxed and 'nicer' you'.

It became clear that I had started to lose myself. I had become so consumed with looking after my partner and coping with his behaviour and needs.

The tiredness and responsibility weigh so heavy on me - that's the worst thing!

I wish I didn't have to be a carer - no one chooses it. You just want your loved one to be fit and well, but you also want to do your best for them. Caring unbalances a relationship. We are not always equal partners anymore and that's sad. It's hard to see the person you love diminish in what they can do

I had no idea I was a carer until it was suggested I had a carer's assessment. I believed that part of my role in a loving relationship was taking care of my partner. It turns out this is true up to a point.

I'm 42, I work for myself, my partner is 44 and suffers with mental health issues, the most prevalent being schizophrenia. He hears abusive voices shouting at him 24/7, has attempted suicide a few times and regularly self-harms.

Currently not on any medication - antipsychotics did not help in the past - he has periods of stability as well as psychotic episodes. His mind is so full that he is totally distracted, and I have taken on the responsibility of ensuring he completes day to day tasks, eating, drinking, using the bathroom. I provide constant reassurance that the voices in his head are

Now, when things are distressing, I adjust to my role of carer as, if I'm not careful, his mental illness can suck all the air out of the room and I'm left gasping for air. Without the mental and emotional support I receive as a carer, I wouldn't be able to cope.

Initially it was difficult to see myself as a carer within my relationship, but the help I receive enables me to reframe how I perceive things and I'm able to see my role of carer as a positive one.

I now see how strong and resilient I am, my partner is, and our relationship is. He is one of the kindest, most encouraging, people I have ever known. Every day we get through is a successful day and I'm grateful for the time we spend together. I make a huge difference to his life as both his partner and his carer, just as he makes a huge difference to mine. Knowing that I have helpful, friendly people I can contact who will listen and give good advice, makes me feel stronger. This helps me stay objective as I need to stay rational even when my partner isn't.

Since identifying as a carer and receiving help I have felt heard and supported and am able to get through the challenges I face and not feel alone.

I care for my husband with Parkinson's and my Mum who is in her late 80's with COPD.

For my husband I'm full time caring - his cognitive functioning is challenged so I deal with everything - bills, medical needs, planning and organising everything we do. I help physically with things he finds hard - dressing and shaving - and he has disturbed nights which is common with Parkinson's, so I'm often up with him.

Mum is living independently but miles away. We visit as often as we can as we bubbled with her through lockdowns. My husband can't stay home alone and manage his medication, so we go together.

I help Mum with practical things around the house as well as shopping or going for a walk. I help her attend medical appointments and manage paperwork.

I used to work in carer support and my Mum cared for my Dad with MND so I knew early days I was a carer. When you find yourself putting their needs before your own and you're doing things for them that you would do for yourself - making phone calls, sorting out medication, doing up zips then you soon realise you're a carer.

I've found carer support groups on Facebook can be helpful, particularly one that is disease specific. Everyone on the group is helpful and supportive and as the group is international there is always someone with a sympathetic ear even at 4am.

I suppose we all think we are indestructible so it's hard to admit we are a carer; to admit we need help with our role - we feel we 'should' manage! It's also hard for the loved one to admit they need help and that their partner is looking after them.

It's a difficult conversation to have and seeking carer support early depends on how accepting your cared for person is.

If I was talking to a new carer I would advise them to find out all they can about their rights as a carer, claim everything they are entitled to and look after themselves. Often the caring role doesn't improve - it sadly only becomes more demanding

Are you a carer? Contact Shropshire Carers on 01743 341995 or email: Shropshire.Carers@shropshire.gov.uk so we can discuss what support may be available for you.

"thank you to Shropshire Carer Team, Shropshire Mental Health Service and Mobilise – all have been invaluable".

I was a carer for my parents. My father had cancer followed by a severe stroke and my mother had Alzheimer's. They passed away some years ago and I then became a founder member of our local carers support group in Cleobury Mortimer.

Through this group I met Shaz and Margarete, who have been an amazing support to my husband and me.

My husband is disabled and has dementia too and I am now his sole carer. Recently he had a terrible fall off his stairlift at the top of the stairs.

I immediately got in touch with Shaz and my GP surgery, who have also been so helpful.

With their input we have been awarded a major equipment grant for a lift and outside ramp as my husband is sometimes wheelchair bound now. At some point we will have the bathroom adapted to a disabled wet room which we are contributing towards financially. We couldn't have managed all this on our own.

Assistive Technology Project across Supported Living in Shropshire

“Supported living refers to a range of services and community living arrangements designed with individuals with disabilities and their families to support disabled citizens to attain or retain their independence or interdependence in their local communities” Wikipedia

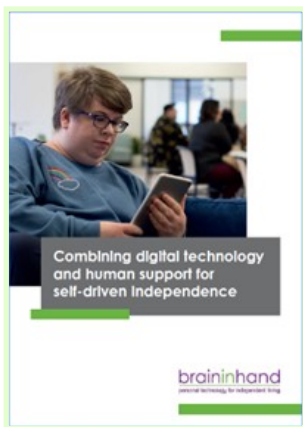
There are 200 individuals who live in 100 Supported Living properties in Shropshire.

Our project aimed to develop and implement the use of advanced Assistive Technologies across the Supported Living schemes, in a bid to increase levels of independence, facilitate learning, manage risks and reduce the dependency on others.

Isolation and the pandemic stretched many of our technological skills, whether that’s with shopping or consulting a doctor online or just staying in touch through zoom calls.

Young adults living in Supported Living households have bucked the trend and taken up the chance of increasing their independence by taking part in an Assistive Technology project.

Here are some examples of the technologies used in the project so far.



<https://braininhand.co.uk/>



<https://www.grandcare.com/>



<https://www.abilia.com/en>



<https://www.autono.me.uk/>

Priority 4: Meeting your needs through a creative approach continued...

Conversations began with supported individuals, care providers and tech companies all thinking about how tech could enhance an individual's life. This meant understanding each person's strengths as well as their needs, and this is the part I like most, it meant understanding that the tech might prove one of many small and simple steps towards greater independence.

Good conversations informed preparations. Before handing out tech it was important to know individuals well, to understand what they required support with, how they responded to prompts and tasks being set, whether they were confident in the use of tech such as an iPad and how the care team would respond to the implementation of tech into the Supported Living schemes.

Each device allocated was then slowly moulded to the needs of its owner. Reviews stressed the need to make kit very personal so that it maximised the engagement and interest of the individual. Further training also ensured that the care teams were confident in the use of the tech and could promote the benefits and actively support individuals to achieve and develop their skills.

All of this meant trying things out, reviewing what was working, and then making adaptations. The success of the project so far can best be measured in the words or the achievements of the people involved.

See what you think.

Here are some photos of GC using his GrandCare system.

Dorreen: I really didn't think that GC would benefit from this device, but I'm thrilled with how he has started to become more independent. GC now manages his medication, can make a sandwich himself and makes his own cups of tea. We are working on adding more prompts so that GC can do more for himself.

dimensions



To support TH to develop his skills, GrandCare was configured to facilitate the following:

His daily schedule

Recipes for healthy living

Favourite games

A collection of photos

Access to websites and videos

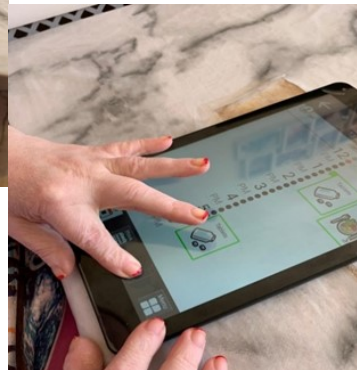
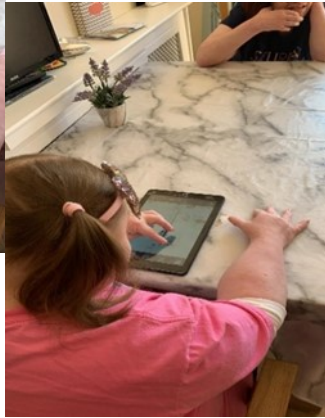
The Supported Living Team worked closely with GrandCare to ensure the device was configured and personalised to suit TH's needs and to ensure he has every opportunity to get the most out of the system.

"In November I received my brand new GrandCare tablet. It's to help me complete more everyday tasks, independently by giving me prompts with alarms or videos of me doing the tasks. Once I have done the tasks, I tick them off. I find my tablet very useful, and I like that it is my own, with my own pictures and websites. I am very happy with my GrandCare and I hope to keep it after the project ends. I will keep videoing myself doing my everyday tasks, so that I can remember how to do things right first time!"

Priority 4: Meeting your needs through a creative approach continued...



“AH has improved her confidence in using the washing machine, is regularly washing her hands and making Hot Chocolate using the AutonoMe videos. She really enjoys using it and we can plan lessons ahead of time to support her” **Georgina, Support**



When JB received her Abilia device, staff were unsure if this would work but they were very keen to give it a go and to help JB become more independent with some of her tasks.

Staff received the training and then started to load pictures and events on to the device. Some of the pictures are of JB's personal items so she will recognise them. JB was very good from the start with the Abilia device, every time the alarm alerts, she attempts to press the green button however sometimes she is unable to press it, so staff encourage and support.

JB now recognises images and tasks on screen and tells the staff what the prompt is saying, for example for a picture of tablets she says “tablets go on then” so she knows it's time to take her medication. Staff have also added activities such as puzzles and having

her nails polished.

This device has been a very positive item to have for JB and as time goes on, more and more activities are being added. Staff have said they have seen a big difference in JB and she looks very proud of herself when the Abilia device alerts her of anything and she has completed the task.

As the project develops, we continue to work closely with our supported living providers to continue to identify new candidates for the project so that we can ensure the project remains as inclusive as possible, enabling the individuals we support to have access to these technologies.



Adults who live with a learning disability are doing things a little differently these days...



Here is a simple snapshot. Good things to do at Home.

National lockdown meant that adults with learning disabilities could not access support at the Council's traditional day centres. This was a major issue for many people and so a conversation began about doing things differently. That conversations is still going on.

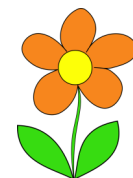
New ideas began simply - starting with the delivery of a 'Happy box' to people at home. This idea developed into a series of arts based online activities called 'Good things to do at home'. Working closely together: Taking Part, the Qube (Oswestry), day service staff, carers and the individuals who make use of services have all contributed ideas and creations.

As a way of sharing and keeping in touch this partnership developed 'The Rainbow Times', a newsletter which opened with these words:

Welcome to our first Rainbow Times Newsletter. This is a way of keeping you all in touch with each other and finding out what people are up....."

The Rainbow Times has been running for a whole year now and more and more people are starring on its pages. Have a look at what people have been up to as they have found new interests and ways to be independent.

To find out more about the Good Things to do at Home activities check <https://qube-oca.org.uk/arts/good-things/>



Oak Farm

The farm is now back to life...



"I felt stressed out in the first lockdown, mum and dad struggled with me at home. I discovered a love of jigsaws. Staff came to deliver packs during lockdown which I really enjoyed and all the things on zoom kept me busy." **Carla**

"Lockdown was hard. I found the change of routine difficult. It was nice hearing from staff and doing activities on zoom. Since coming back I've enjoyed getting back to a routine. I've adapted well to the changes....." **Claire**

We asked Ceri the site manager to tell us what goes on at Oak Farm

What is it?

A working farm that provides a unique opportunity for adults with learning disabilities (LD)

Managed on behalf of Shropshire Council by Bethpage; we specialise in supporting adults with LD, mental health and autism.

What goes on?

It's a working environment. People engage with the outdoors; everyone does real activities based around animal husbandry and horticulture.

People develop transferrable skills, relevant to other aspects of their lives. Together we identify goals and work towards them whether that be independent living or employment.

What happened during the pandemic?

Our main priority was to keep everyone safe. Then it became clear that Covid-19 was going to alter the way we live our lives for some time, so we needed to adapt the way we worked.

When the farm was closed for people coming in, we delivered activity packs (tomato plants for the 'biggest beef tomato competition', puzzles, craft kits and much more). We hosted online zoom sessions such as yoga, quizzes, dance sessions and even a virtual afternoon tea! We did doorstep visits and weekly phone calls to keep people connected. This was a lifeline.

And when you opened your gates again?

We provide a Covid secure environment using visual prompts where possible. We are still discovering our new normal, but it is fantastic to see individuals enjoying learning skills again and spending time with their friends.

"Lockdown made me angry and anxious, I missed the farm and my friends. I liked it when staff delivered packs and spoke to me on the phone. I liked the zooms, particularly the quiz. It's good to be back at the farm I feel less wound up and enjoy seeing my friends and all of the animals." **Karl**

"In the first lockdown I had a breakdown due to the loss of a family member from Covid. Staff at the farm kept in contact and came to see me at home in the garden. Since the farm has been open again my mental health has improved massively and I feel safe with the changes made." **Laura**

Life changing moves

“When councils were instructed to provide accommodation for their homeless population to protect them from coronavirus, Mike Matthews, owner of the Prince Rupert hotel in Shrewsbury, was one of the first to step in. The decision was part business decision to save his hotel, part philanthropy to help homeless people he admits he usually ignored. The new residents, including a former employee, feel it has given them some dignity back and offered them a rare feeling of family and safety.”

Quote from the Guardian newspaper.

You may have read about the excellent partnership work between The Prince Rupert Hotel, Shropshire Council and people who were without a home. It was so successful and powerful that it reached the national press. We are so proud of what was achieved, and you can watch a great video here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWhn5GN_Muo

That was the big story, but here are a few smaller ones that never made the press. Just as important for those involved, they shine a light on the everyday. All have come from the work of STaR Housing.



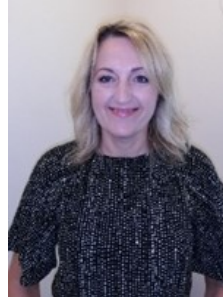
“Teams work hard to ensure that neighbourhoods and communities are happy places to live. We continually invest in neighbourhoods and over the gruelling covid and lockdown periods, it was important that we worked in partnership to support local people and our residents through the adversity”.

Ayyaz Ahmed - Head of Neighbourhoods

Here's the team



Charlie – Housing Support Officer



Jo – Housing Officer



Steph – Housing Support Officer



Jane – Housing Support Officer



Richard – Housing Support Officer



Julie – Housing Support Officer



Katie - Housing officer – Income Management and Bronwen - Financial Inclusion Assistant



Lucy – Housing Support Officer



Hats off to the team – they shared so many stories – the Local Account wants to thank everyone involved. Sorry – we could not fit everything in.



STaR have seen first-hand the devastating impact of Coronavirus affecting tenants both psychologically and financially during lockdown.

Here are a sample of their stories. (All names have been changed)

Helen lost her job in March 2020 due to her deteriorating mental health, just as lockdown hit. The thought of coping on her own was too much. She stopped paying her rent and was facing homelessness. We made efforts to contact her, but she did not respond. Worried for Helen's welfare; a few discreet investigations led to social media contact. Helen emailed us; she was in a 'dark place'. She was desperate for help.

So, we met at a social distance, assisted her to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment and the arrears were cleared. Assistance was given for a further 6 months to pay the bedroom tax, as Helen was living in a 2-bedroom property and now had a shortfall to her Housing Costs. We linked Helen to the Oswestry food bank. Further applications were then made for a Personal Independence Payment and her Universal Credit was put in place. Helen's rent is now being paid and her income has increased thanks to a good deal of perseverance.

Excellent partnership working has increased Helen's income and started to ensure a better quality of life.

Lockdown was a shock for everyone but even more unsettling for homeless people living in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation. I had been working with **Mike** when he had moved into the Premier Inn following a relationship breakdown. He was working full time but needed help to complete paperwork and find a property.

When lockdown started the Premier closed. The only available accommodation was a hotel over thirty miles away. This was devastating for Mike; he now faced the choice of having a roof over his head at the expense of losing his key worker job. Unable to drive his early shifts ruled out public transport. The whole situation seemed harsh for someone who had already felt things couldn't get any worse.

Mike made the decision to stick with his job and stay wherever he could which, after a few nights rough sleeping was a caravan in very poor condition. We did manage to find a property for him which would become his new home. I don't think Mike had ever imagined he'd need a support worker but without the help I don't know how he'd have managed to sort everything out and hang onto his job.

Months later I got a text from him and I thought 'oh no what's gone wrong' but it said 'I'm settling into my new flat, thank you for all your help, I hope you are well'

Craig has learning difficulties; he was living in one of our properties with his mom, but sadly she passed away earlier in 2020 and he didn't have the Right to Succession. This meant he had to leave the property.

Craig was targeted by a local gang demanding he gave them money and marching him to the cash point. He also had a part time job which meant he had to catch the train; the gang would wait at the train station for him to get off. It got so bad that family members would have to collect him.

I visited Craig with his grandad, and we filled out an online Homepoint application. I mentioned that I would be having a flat become available in the new year on the Independent Living Community Scheme I manage, and I asked Craig if he would be interested in it. He was.

Craig moved into the Independent Living Community scheme in May 2021. He and his family are "over the moon" and relieved that he is now safe and living independently.

SUFFERED A BEREAVEMENT?

**FREE
COUNSELLING**

**NEED TO TALK?
0345 678 9028**



www.Shropshire.gov.uk

Help is just a phone call away

**If you live in Shropshire and
you're struggling with the loss of a
friend or loved one, give us a call.**

BLOG – interviewing the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS

When I got the email asking if I would participate as a member of the public in interviewing candidates for the role of Executive Director of Adults for Shropshire Council, I was surprised.

Was it lip service? Was it a genuine offer to have input on a Council decision? How could I make my questions count – and reveal something about each applicant?

One of a panel of four, I was asked to come up with a single question, without knowing what the other three might say. Then we were given comprehensive details about each candidate's experience.

I realised this wasn't lip service, this was a serious responsibility. Yes, my question (which I sneakily turned into a two-parter) and the answers would only be a very small part of the selection process, but I still felt I had to pay close attention.

I was glad I wasn't making the final decision but hope I contributed to highlighting each candidate's approach, understanding and style of working if they became Executive Director.

This individual didn't just have to be able to work within the Council structure, they had to have a good feel for Shropshire, its unique geography, and people, especially the age profile. They needed way more than practical, hands-on experience with bureaucracy and an ability to liaise, negotiate and form workable partnerships with other organisations. That will require not only diplomacy and persistence, but a culture change in Shropshire! They also must be able to empathise, preferably because of personal experience.

Everyone lumps 'health and social care' together, but they are mostly separate systems. One of the reasons I was asked to be involved in the interviews is that I've complained and explained endlessly, to local healthcare and social care organisations, why this doesn't work. Everyone should work together with one aim – the best for everyone, whoever does what or funds what! One of the things I've moaned about is that getting through 'the system' is like wading through porridge. Blindfold!

By the time of the interviews, the covid pandemic was really causing problems. I felt it was essential the successful applicant could think on their feet, respond in new ways to old problems, be brave enough to test new ideas and be up front that not everything works first time or all the time.

I wouldn't want the Executive Director's job, but I did want a Director who wouldn't just do the same old thing, I wanted them to rethink and redirect. I think we got the right one.

Useful contacts

Which are referred to in this local account

Shropshire Council – www.shropshire.gov.uk

Shropshire Choices – www.shropshirechoices.org.uk



Follow us on Twitter @ShropChoices



Find us on Facebook 'Shropshire Choices'

First Point of Contact (FPOC) – 0345 678 9044

Concerned about someone – Safeguarding – 0345 678 9044

Children's safeguarding concerns – 0346 678 9021

Adult Mental Health Services, Shropshire Telford & Wrekin– 0300 124 0365

Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin – 01743 233 123

Shropshire Carer Support Line – 0333 323 1990

Citizens Advice Consumer Service Helpline – 03454 04 05 06

ENABLE: Supported Employment Services – 01743 276 900

Housing Services – 0345 678 9005

Independent Living Partnership – 01743 250 820

Making it Real Shropshire – 01743 258 422

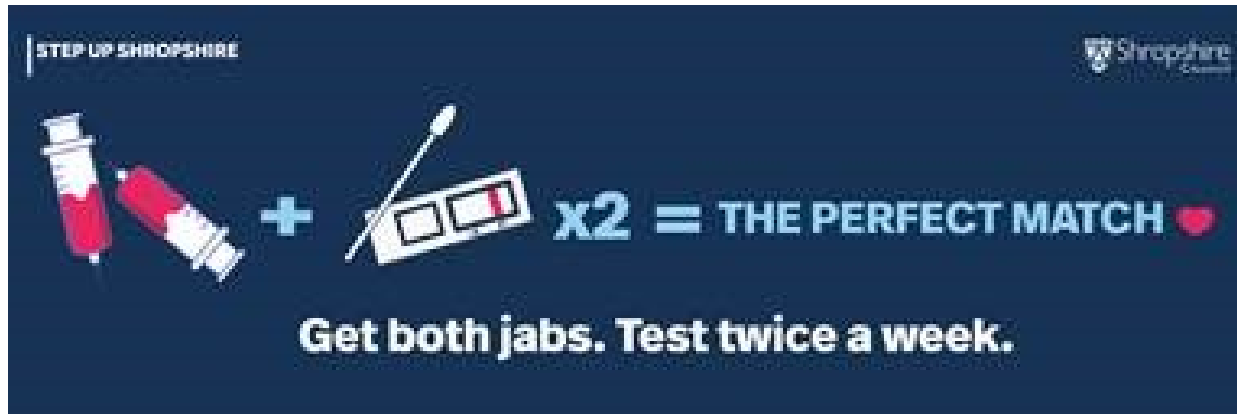
Positive Steps Shropshire (Shared Lives scheme) – 01743 251 568

Vision Technology & Training Shropshire (VTTS) 01743 257 746

Making it Real

Shropshire Adult Social Care

Local Account 2021/22



Dedicated to the support offered in the last 2 years by family, friends, neighbours and local residents in all Shropshire communities.

Thank you for your courage and commitment

Personal dedication to Claire, an inspiration to all
<https://www.severnospice.org.uk/claures-story/>

What do you think about this publication?

If you have any feedback about the Local Account email us at makingitreal@shropshire.gov.uk

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Find us on facebook www.facebook.com/ShropshireChoices/

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/adult-social-care/>

First Point of Contact 0345 678 9044