Hills Ford Stages Rally Testimonials Received and agreed for sharing with the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to inform their meeting on the 12th November 2026

NFU County Adviser for Shropshire =	*"As promised, I put out a call for comments, and whilst I cannot say there are not members out there who were not happy with the event, all I can say is that of those that did reply, all were universally happy.* *Here are some of them:* • *Very good event for Shropshire, Bringing money into the County. Pubs, hotels and other eatery. Very well organised and carried out. All of it.* • *The Rally seems to have been well received and professionally run. David Mills (former County Chair) led the Rally Charm offensive. The Rally repaired any potholes in the by road travelled by the event. Many farmers helped with bales on the corners and provided extra parking.* • *Was great to attend and they raised lots of money for Shropshire Rural Support.* • *If word gets out that that they repair the potholes on roads they are going to use, the rally will be welcomed in all of Shropshire.* • *We were on a green route on the road leading up to the actual race route. We personally had no issues from it during the day. They personally came by and dropped off information booklets as well as green route access passes."*
Local Resident =	*"We thought that the rally was very well organised. We were kept informed right from the start of the process regarding what the event would involve i.e closure of road, parking for spectators, viewing areas, number of competitors. A week or so before the event signage was put up to make people aware that the road would be closed on the 20th September. Competitors were allowed to drive the section and make notes, all the drivers we met were driving slowly and were courteous. On the day of the event itself the course was cordoned off to prevent public access. The rally went well and the weather was beautiful.* *A significant number of spectators parked in the field below our house and viewed from the adjacent hill. They were charged £10 for parking and this raised at least £1600 which was donated to Lingen Davies Cancer Treatment Centre.* *After the event all the course 'furniture' was promptly removed and clean up was good.* *In view of the amount of money the event raised for various charities we would be very happy for the rally to be run again after all it is only one day of disruption per year."*
Shrewsbury Town Council =	*"I was the main contact for Shrewsbury Town Council in respect of the rally. This came about because the Hills Ford team were considering The Quarry as a potential location originally for a 'ceremonial finish' and then latterly for the 'ceremonial start' once it became clear that the town's main square was unavailable.* *The Quarry was discounted as a potential location relatively early in their event planning, but I agreed to stay in touch with the small organising team and assist where I could with regard to progressing their plans for the town centre.*

	None of the final stages or ceremonial start locations were on our land in the end, so our involvement in the event was extremely limited. However, from our perspective the event itself seems to have been very well organised and thankfully taken place without any major incident or concerns as far as we are aware. It received an enormous amount of positive publicity when it received the final go ahead with a similar reaction both during and after it had taken place. Shropshire Council were also given credit for granting permission having recognised the positive economic impact the event brought both to Shrewsbury itself and the County as a whole. *The location of the ceremonial start may need to be reviewed due to the loss of valuable car parking spaces, however it was more than satisfactory as a relatively late replacement in the circumstances. It is certainly an event which is worth considering being brought back to Shropshire in future years."*
Elected Member from one of the areas affected =	1. *"I think organisers, participants, council officers deserve congratulations for a largely well-organised, successful event. Getting any new event off the ground is difficult - I've written already to HFS to congratulate them.* 2. *I'm sure there are genuine benefits to Shropshire's profile and economy from holding the event here, and I personally would be happy with it becoming a regular 'shoulder season' event (ie late Sept/early Oct).* 3. *However as a community councillor I have and would strongly oppose running closed stages where the local community is clearly and consistently opposed for many months. Shropshire Council is right now seeking a more positive, collaborative relationship with its communities, so I can't see that ignoring sincerely-held local views can help that. As well it seems there are many Shropshire communities which would welcome the Rally - so why not route the Rally stages there instead.* 4. *Two my parishes welcomed the Rally and I supported them in that, offering to help comms, road repairs etc. However in the case of Pulverbatch Parish Council their - and their residents - clear and consistent objections (I saw several dozen) which i supported, were ignored. This was though perhaps not helped by Shropshire Council asking that objections come to them rather than to HFS - who if they had known earlier might have rethought the route or at least proposed mitigation measures sooner.* 5. *This experience surely calls for greater clarity in all parties - MUK, HFS, Shropshire Council - about where any objections and concerns should be made, and greater commitment to information sharing to address where possible local concerns.* 6. *This also highlights a key issue which didn't help the sharing/responding to local concerns, which is that permission to run the event had been given to CMC Ltd - but it clearly wasnt CMC Ltd organising the event, it was HFS. Indeed easy checks on Companies House showed CMC Ltd to be a dormant shell company, in the process of being closed down. This caused local anxiety - and confused the issue of who to relate to still further.* 7. *Having flagged concerns about relating to individual communities and respecting their concerns, where they existed, I would also flag the following more detailed points:*

	8. *Works to protect the closed sections - bales, tapes, signs - which I and others had expected to be put out early on the Sunday - appeared over preceding days, to some surprise and annoyance. I suggest it's made clear this is going to be done on preceding days?* 9. *I've seen multiple concerns about difficulties residents/businesses had getting in and out on the Sunday. Personally I was surprised anyone was expecting to get in and out thru closed stages! But I suggest this calls for more clarity about the necessary restrictions - and perhaps some on-the-day live info so people can check live closure updates, rather than finding out the hard way* 10. *I remember asking about how RoWs crossing closed stages would be handled, and I was told there would be marshals at every RoW crossing and signs at 'point of no return' RoW junctions so walkers wouldn't only find out about a closed stage when they reached it. I saw several RoWs incl Shropshire Way which had no such signing (I have photos). The RoW I walked on the Sunday terminated at the closed stage with good signage, and a stripy tape - but no marshal.* 11. *Returning lastly to information sharing mentioned in 5 above, I think wider comms should be a priority. While there was laudable door-to-door leafletting and mailings to parish councils, as I recall I (and other councillors) wasn't consulted directly at the outset. I was also surprised to find the SC Carer team - Start - which has clients they need to reach on or by the closed stages, weren't aware till I let them know the week before the Rally. If they weren't aware, were the private domiciliary agencies - visiting clients thru the day for 1/4 or 1/2 hour slots - aware? And what about DoE Award groups? Organised ramblers? Cycling groups? Of course it's impossible to reach everyone, but as Shropshire's bread and butter visitor economy depends on those groups' support year round, we would not be doing ourselves any favours if ignoring them on one weekend prompted them to go elsewhere."*
Affected Parish Council =	*"In January 2026 the Parish Council voted unanimously to object to the rally taking place in the parish. We were given assu rances in writing from Shropshire Highways that approval would not be given for the road closure in Pulverbatch. We were asked to survey public opinion. We emailed thirty households for their opinion, all but two objected to the rally.* *Shropshire council were given copies of these objections in the first week of May.* *We also highlighted the very serious case of Lane Farm where the rally route directly passed through the farm. There had been no attempt by the organisers to speak to the owners and despite a Councillor subsequently attending two site meetings and appearing to agree with the owners' objections, Shropshire Council made no attempt to intervene.* *The organisers claimed from the outset that all the residents along the route had been contacted and all were in favour of the rally. This was not true.* *Hills Ford Stages have confirmed that even if there is a 2027 Shropshire Rally, they will not use the whole of the Dorrington stage. We request that Shropshire Council ensure that no rally road closure is granted should the organisers renege on this promise.* *Para 4 - my email from Kim commits to not using the whole Dorrington stage, not just Lane Farm*

	On the para about SC officers bring unhelpful, you cd mention: ***Rally Day Positives*** *No major incidents* *Rally 'crew' at Lane Farm professional & cordial* *Residents allowed to cross the rally-road during the day with help from marshals* *Chicane at Lane Farm proved to be adequate* *Residents/ visitors at White Horse pub were positive & enjoyed the event* *Some residents on the rally route invited friends to watch and enjoyed the event* ***Negatives*** *Insufficient rounds bales available. Organisers to borrow from Wilderley farm at 8.00am on rally day* *As predicted, slalom style chicane previously recommended by HFS found to be inadequate but luckily, ground crew on the day overruled. 'He (marshal) advised that when the virtual chicane was put in the organiser (HFS) wanted a slalom over the frontage of the cow shed. I said that'd be stupid seeing it goes off asphalt road onto lower sloping concrete. He said exactly so he insisted it was a straight run which would help drivers see the speed sign rather than worry about staying under control* *Poor signage. No warning signs at start of 3 Rights of Way including points Shropshire Way as promised.* *No marshals evident on Rights of Way* *Resident in Church Pulverbatch complained of noise of cars & backfiring* *Relative visiting Church Pulverbatch resident had to make large detour* *Non-resident cars parked in the Church Pulverbatch area blocking gateways, bridleways & footpaths.* *Holiday makers staying in Church Pulverbatch took 3 hours to get back from Church Stretton. The sat nav kept sending them back to roads which were closed. Spoke to marshals who could not help them. A physical map from Shropshire Council would have been useful. The one on the internet was unintelligible* ***Post Rally Positives*** *No serious damage to verges* ***Negatives*** *Evidence of 3 crash sites. One hedge clearly damaged* *Some incremental damage to road surface along Wilderley Road* *Some Debris & litter left on route & not cleared up* *Non-resident cars parked on verges* *Numerous skid marks at Moat Junction*

	Pre Rally Positives *None:* ***Negatives*** *We found communication with Hills Ford Stages to be difficult and combative. Rather than listen to our concerns, their approach appeared to be 'the event is going to happen, so tough'. We felt that this was their attitude even before Shropshire Council Cabinet Meeting giving the rally the official 'go-ahead.'* *Throughout the pre rally process we felt that Shropshire Council were unsupportive, deliberately vague and made little or no attempt to listen the objections of the residents they represent. Officers were unhelpful in explaining the objection procedure and we had to contact Shropshire Council repeatedly to get a response. It became apparent much later that Shropshire Council failed to share our objections with HFS, which made finding a compromise at the very last minute much more difficult.* *We also feel that in future they should take more responsibility to ensure the event is organised professionally rather than just assume their sole responsibility is to issue a road closure, even when that road closure passes directly through a working farm.* ***Other Negatives*** *8 residents on the route. 4 of those residents were not consulted. One of those consulted just 3 days prior to the event.* *Rally marshal stated that residents on the route should be contacted 18 months in advance of rally date* *One resident living on the route stated that 'the mis-information spouted through-out the preceding six months was on a monumental scale'* ***<u>Suggested</u>*** *Shrop' Council should insist that social medial posts by the organisers should not categorise those on the rally route who would rather not be inconvenienced, be called 'anti-rally' and 'deniers'.* *Were the costs incurred by Shropshire Council (road closure signs etc) covered by the organisers* *Who was the insured organiser. This needs to be made clear in the event of an accident/damage* *Where does the money go (£900 per car x 150 cars?)* *If a future event is proposed could a representative each of the areas directly affected be included on the decision making 'panel' i.e. not just councillors who will not be affected.* *Can the status of Cheltenham Motor Club be investigated and made clear*
<u>Local Resident =</u>	*"We, are deeply disappointed with the organisation of the Hills Ford Stage rally event and pretty much everything that followed in our dealings with Shropshire Council. We were never consulted about the rally going past our door and through our farm that has buildings on both sides of the road. When we became aware of the possibility of the Dorrington Stage in April, via the Parish Council, we were told the Parish Council was opposing the route and that Shropshire Council were in their own consultation stage and would prevent/cancel the route. Indeed my own dealings with*

	David Vasmer in the early stages was that nothing has been decided and resident views would be considered before giving route approval. This was continually stressed. *After a good many emails and meeting with the organisers we rejected their proposed chicane as that would lead to heavy braking and hard acceleration through and away from our property which would increase noise levels and also the likelihood of drivers loosing control of their vehicles leading to accidental damage. We, instead, proposed work arounds of a 30mph zone through our property and top gear running. The organisers rejected both of our proposals because the 30mph zoning wasn't specifically allowed within their rally rule book (it wasn't excluded either) and the top gear running through an area proposal just went ignored (this is included in the rule book as a noise abatement rule for roads running close to residential property).* *Concerns about the professionalism of the organisers were raised locally as many residencies within the Dorrington red road stage that were claimed to have been visited by the organisers as part of the supporting case presented to the Council to grant permission for the Rally, were in fact never actually visited. This concern developed into looking at the organisers and questions of insurance cover were raised due to CMC Ltd being a non trading company (allied to Hills Ford Stages) and that company later entered (on 18th August) a compulsory winding up process. The insurance cover was only finally confirmed in the week before the event after Motorsport UK were forced to intervene by myself.* *Three days out from the event we, received a call pleading from the organisers to go with their plans as they have written the 'chicane' into their route book and they require access onto our land to station rally crews. Our permission to their plans for the chicane at our property was reluctantly granted to protect our neighbour's property wall facing at 90 degrees to the road which would be directly in line to oncoming rally cars and set fair for several incidents without an introduced traffic calming measure; their chicane. A concession negotiated for our granting access to our land is that the Dorrington stage will not be run in 2027 with our stated strong preference that it never be run again.* *This all leads into my biggest criticism. The entire consultation process has been a scam. I would add utterly inept into the mix but I don't think it is as the organisers have got exactly what they intended and planned from the outset. The organisers resident consultations - a scam where comments were recorded that were never received. The Council consultation - a scam as resident concerns were never addressed. The council overtures of support for a speed limit through our farmyard - meaningless. How else would we end up with the original, rejected by us, proposal for the route after nearly 6 months of consultations? How did we end up without even Motorsport UK knowing if the event was insured less than a week out and possibly the event would have run uninsured if I hadn't inserted myself into the mix to ensure it could be sorted? I wasted a lot of my time on this event process and that was a pointless waste of my and other peoples time, this annoys me immensely.* *PS - I'd like to thank the following Councillors for their support received throughout the entire 'consultation' process*

	Chris Naylor - SCC *David Taylor - Longden Parish Council* *Bill Higgins - Longden Parish Council"*
Affected Parish Council =	*"I am writing on behalf of a number of Abdon residents who live along the route that was taken by the Hills Ford Stages Car Rally on 20th September 2026.* *Residents have provided their feedback to me, which I have summarised in this email.* ***Introduction*** *Hills Ford Stages made a lot of money from this rally completely at the expense of local people and businesses along the route.* *We had to suffer all the disruption, anxiety and upset this event caused. We did not benefit from this rally in the slightest.* *Please find below a summary of our concerns and complaints.* ***Residents were not consulted*** *Hills Ford Stages are promoting the myth that residents were consulted and that everyone was happy with this rally. This is far from the truth. Many residents and businesses along the route are extremely unhappy about this event being forced upon them.* *A leaflet through the door (with no contact details of any organisation) telling us that a rally is happening was NOT a consultation.* *A number of us have complained to our Parish Councillors, our Shropshire Councillors and to our local MP.* *We also complained to Hills Ford Stages and Motorsports UK, although none of us received replies.* *The Hills Ford Stages organisers claimed to have gone door to door, although we have struggled to find people who were actually spoken to. Someone not being available to speak to was treated as agreement that the household in question was happy for it to go ahead. This is completely undemocratic.* *The few people that were spoken to were left with the impression that a few old cars would be coming by. The representative completely minimised what it would be, and there was no opportunity to voice opinion.*

	Hills Ford Stages have made it clear to local people that they intend to hold the rally in our area again next year. They have already started their campaign to make sure that this happens, by telling people that Shropshire Council is on their side, and that everyone is supportive of the rally, and that there were only a "small number of negative voices". *A Hills Ford Stages representative smugly told Abdon residents who complained after the event that "Shropshire Council are extremely satisfied with the outcome of the rally."* *Hills Ford Stages have put a notice on their Facebook page urging supporters to write to Shropshire Council to ensure that next year's event will be held in Shropshire. Here is a section of the notice:* *"Once we can demonstrate the level of support for the rally, we can secure the future of the rally and move on from the small number of negative voices that were heard during the early stages of planning. You don't have to be local and you don't have to be a competitor; just someone who supports the principle of the rally running in Shropshire. "* *<u>This is not indicative of an organization carrying out a genuine consultation with local residents.</u>* ***Impact on Local Residents*** *Residents' lives were completely disrupted by this event, and it caused a great deal of stress and upset in the time leading up to the event, and on the day.* *Residents were trapped in their houses, unable to carry out their normal weekend activities such as: shopping, working, gardening, walking, attending church, making/receiving visits, riding horses etc.* *Sunday Church going was prevented. Church services had to be cancelled, and residents were unable to get to other churches to attend their services.* *Local events had to be cancelled, for example a planned 80th birthday party at Abdon Village Hall.* *Pets had to be locked in the house all day due to the danger caused by the rally.* *Carers were unable to visit clients at the usual time.* *Hills Ford Stages did not adhere to the road opening times for residents. Residents trying to get through at the given lunchtime opening were prevented from doing so, and the rally continued well after the 5.30pm finish time. This caused a huge amount of problems for residents who had planned their day around these times.* ***Impact on Local Businesses***

	Farming and local businesses were completely unable to function. *Local businesses were unable to carry out their work and lost out financially because they were unable to get to their customers, or their customers could not get to them.* *Farmers could not get to their fields to tend stock, or access various parts of their land to cut hedges, carry out spraying etc.* *People who work on a Sunday had to leave ridiculously early in the morning to get to work, and return home really late in the evening.* ***Impact on the Environment*** *Wildlife and livestock were not respected by the rally. Deer and sheep often wander along our roads, which is why locals drive slowly and carefully. A deer was killed by this car rally.* *Livestock were distressed by the noise, and farmers were unable to get to them.* *Residents with horses said the animals ran round their field absolutely terrified by the noise.* *There was a big impact on air pollution from vehicle emissions and extreme noise pollution from such a large number of cars driving at high speeds.* ***Safety Concerns*** *The rally was dangerous. Residents were warned of possible road collisions, damage to our properties and roads, and risks to life if we stood near our own garden hedges during this car rally.* *At least 3 vehicles on our stage crashed, fortunately only into hedges or gates.* *A deer was killed by this car rally, it could so easily have been a child.* *A hiker on foot got onto the road at the crossroads and walked for several hundred metres whilst the rally was in progress, until he got into a field.* *Hay bales were placed on people's land without their permission. Bales were placed early in the day on Saturday, causing residents to exit junctions on the wrong side of the road at Heath crossroads. There were no reflectors on the bales for night time drivers.* ***Conclusion***

	Abdon is a completely unsuitable location for a car rally for all the reasons detailed above. *It was featured on the BBC Inside Out programme a few years ago as the most tranquil location in the Midlands. We are at the centre of the Shropshire Hills Natural Landscape Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a beautiful, natural and peaceful environment with narrow country lanes, scattered hamlets and farms, rolling fields of grazing sheep and home to rare species such as red kites.* *<u>How can anyone possibly think this is a suitable location for a race track for 150 cars to hurtle around?</u>* *We are asking Shropshire Council not to allow this rally to take place in our area again."*
<u>Local Resident =</u>	*"I am writing to express my sincere concern about any repetition of the September rally as it caused severe anxiety and disruption to my community. I live on a farm along the route which was bisected by the rally. Poor communication regarding something as basic as indemnity and false confirmations of support by the organisers of this event left me feeling deeply offended by their disregard for others. This must not happen again. In an agricultural region such as ours, the impact is not merely confined to the inherent inconvenience and dangers associated with the road closure itself. The recklessness of those who organised the event was palpable–as the event compromised livestock, veterinary and emergency access, contractors, deliveries, workers, fragile lane edges, drainage, tranquillity, wildlife and spectator traffic and outrageously even church goers. Normally an event as intrusive as this should have required proper assessment. To say that this was lacking is an understatement. Due to the numerous emails our community had to send regarding the simple matter of insurance I have been left with the feeling that the Council and rally organisers were negligent in this regard. The entire process was thoughtless and must not reoccur in Shropshire. It was interesting to learn that the rally event was rejected by the people of Herefordshire and therefore slipped over to Shropshire (perhaps the path of least resistance?). This is unfortunate. It is those who live in my community who suffered from the disruption and the rally planner's disrespect for others, and I trust that this will not take place again in future."*
<u>Local Resident =</u>	*"I have additionally forwarded this to others who I know were very concerned by the Rally as wells the its approval process.* *Whilst it is fresh in minds this should be taken further.* *Whilst seemingly no accidents happened at Abdon, though I do not know about elsewhere and believe that at least an animal was killed, it is still a massive imposition on peoples lives to effectively be imprisoned in their homes for the profit ma king pleasure of others.*

	Farming and local businesses could not function, emergency services were effectively blocked however the rally people claimed to have deal with it, and on a Sunday Church going is prevented and the general pursuit of our lives was suppressed. *The organisers took the majority of people for granted. Ie they visited houses, or claimed to, to say what they were proposing, and apparently regarded not being available to speak to as agreement that the household in question was happy for it to go ahead. This is manifestly undemocratic and unfair.* *There was patent opacity in who was organising the event, and I for one am extremely relieved that I did not have to claim against any so called insurances as it appeared likely that it would be very difficult if not impossible.* *In my own case, whilst someone came to see me about nine months ago the idea I was left with was that in a similar way to when sometimes in the past, there would be a few old cars coming by, this competitive rally with 2 x 150 definitively fast rally cars was another thing completely. It certainly minimised what it might be and there was no opportunity to voice proper concern before it was somehow passed, for the benefit of others, in Council. They also claimed to have returned twice and finding me not considered it a positive answer, which is simply not acceptable.* *Overall, the reason that people exist in the villages that I do are complicated with very poor services. To become the playground for others at the expense of our peace, quiet and mobility and possible danger is not right.* *On a personal level, the route for the rally completely bisects my farm. There are 10 field gates onto the road that it runs through as well as the farm yard. The route also wound round residential property within the thickness of a wall, and shortly afterwards the back of a house within 3 or 4 yards.* *Lastly, I understand that there has been support from people who do not live here for repeating the rally. This is obviously unacceptable. There are few that live in this area, ie those affected, but those who do not live here are far greater in volume and wish to continue to impose on those who do.* *I would like to hear more about how any future plans may be objected to."*
Local Resident / Business Owner =	*"With reference to the subject matter, now that I have calmed down let me explain yesterday's experience.* *The plan yesterday was to run my business committent around the rally road opening times.* ***In order to comply** with the rally road open times I left home at 4.30 on the 20th so as not to cause any inconvenience with the rally preparations.*

	65 miles, 1.45 hrs. journey to JCB completed without any issues. *Left JCB's site **again in order to comply** with the rally lunchtime road opening times. (11.40 - 13.00 hrs.)* *The plan was not to be at the tape across the road at 11.40 to give the rally organisers some leeway, so I arrived at the Earnstrey turning at 11.50 to find the road blocked.* *I approached the marshal, sat in his van, and produced the resident's pass. I requested to be allowed to continue my journey home. The marshal stated that the rally was running behind schedule.* *I then remonstrated with him (no explicit language) and he then contacted his superior on the radio. (lady)* *She confirmed that the road would remain closed as cars were still circulating, albeit behind schedule.* *I asked to speak to the supervisor and the marshal declined.* *At this point someone standing watching the cars, basically said 'leave it as you probably only need to go home for a cup of tea.' I responded by requesting, would he accept a penalty payment for non performance which could have been the case on my outward journey. He did not respond.* *At this point another local resident joined the queue of cars. He got out of his car and as we passed I stated that I had remonstrated with no result and requested that he should discuss the same issue with the marshal.* *I got back in my car at this point.* *The road reopened at 12.25 some 45 minutes outside the advised 11.40 opening time which was totally unacceptable.* *Not to put too fine a point on it, but I think we have been blagged by the organisers as the Residents Pass means no priority access and I guess their defense will be that the times advised were only estimates.* *Also for your information, unable to go for an evening service at Tugford as the delays extended beyond the 17.30 road ope n time/finishing time advised.* *I look forward to receiving your thoughts and next steps regarding this matter."* *----------* *"Thanks for getting back to me.* *Also the 17.30 road open time for residents access or to go about their business was also not met by some distance.*

	The delay to rally proceedings was apparently due to a deer strike. Not a surprise to the residents of Abdon. *Wild animals in the lanes of South Shropshire are commonplace and are sighted on a regular basis around Abdon.* *Would a rally be allowed across Cannock Chase where numerous deer strikes occur on a regular basis?* *Further update - the main organiser of the rally wondered up our drive on Mon. with a thank you leaflet to which I responded in the same vane as my email.* *For the record this guy is totally oblivious to causing a nuisance for local residents and politely quipped that we all need to 'chill out at our time of life' when I mentioned running my business during weekends.* *When I said 'let's see what happens next year' he said with a smile that Shropshire Council were extremely satisfied with the outcome of the rally. He then played the £10K raised for charity card.* *I also mentioned Herefordshire council causing the rally to be cancelled by not granting the necessary road closures and motor race orders. The guy blamed Herefordshire council for delaying the permissions."*
Local Resident =	*"Impossible to attend some church services without leaving ridiculously early and not being able to return until the lunch break.* *Having to leave really early for work. Someone near us left at 4.30am and couldn't get back home until after about 6.30pm because the rally ran late.* *Times not adhered to as per the leaflet [apparently a deer was hit on an earlier stage and didn't die immediately, so the rally was held up for 40 minutes. Consequently everything thereafter ran at least 40 minutes late]* *At least 3 vehicles on our stage crashed, fortunately only into hedges or gates.* *A hiker on foot got onto the road at the crossroads above us and walked for several hundred metres whilst the rally was in progress, until he got into a field almost opposite us* *Friends on Hillside who have horses said the animals ran round their field absolutely terrified by the noise.* *Difficult for carers to visit clients at the usual time.* *The village hall missed out on a booking because it was on the route of the rally."*
Affected Parish Council =	*"There was one small issue following the rally where there was some debris left on the road where a rally car had crashed into the hedge on the North side of the Acton Pigott to Cound Moor minor road just before one heads down to the ford. Our Councillors were keen that the rally organisers should be financially responsible for clearing and repairing any damage caused by the rally and that it should be done as quickly as possible following the rally. This should probably be a condition of any future events, if it was not this time around.*

	I would also say that the Councillors felt the information on the run up to the rally could have been clearer and more helpful. It was hard to determine the exact routes the rally cars would be taking at what time and which local roads would be blocked as a result. Many locals seemed to be taken by surprise by the event. *Other than this the feedback we have received has been very positive and the event seemed to have been successful. Everything seemed well organised and looked to go to plan, there were quite a few locals out and about all of whom seemed to be enjoying watching Locals enjoyed seeing something different in the area and commented on the variety of cars competing."*
Affected Parish Council =	*"The general consensus of the Cllrs was that the Rally was well organised and of a benefit to the community including some retail and hospitality providers. However, they did note that a Parishioner from Rushbury had commented as follows* *'I am writing following the motor rally noise and poor driving experienced in Rushbury on Sunday 20th September. To be exposed to this amount of noise for the whole of Sunday is not acceptable. I witnessed poor and dangerous driving on the wrong side of the road by more than one vehicle. We were never told that there would be so much disturbance' "*
Affected Parish Council =	*"The contentious of opinion was that the Rally was professionally organised with signage, volunteers and marshals in place to ensure the enjoyment and safety of the competitors, local residents, visitors and spectators. It is noted by this council that signage was put out later than anticipated for safety reasons. This council was made aware of the economic benefits to Shrewsbury and the wider area.* *We had representation from residents of Frogs Gutter and it is considered that this stage of the route could be excluded from any future rally's?"*
Visit Shropshire =	*"From Visit Shropshire's perspective, feedback from local businesses/members about the Hills Ford Stages Rally has been mixed. While some have raised concerns about the event's environmental impact, others recognise the value of events like this in attracting visitors to Shropshire.* *Visit Shropshire were advised by organisers that there was no promotional budget available to invest in promoting the rally. This raises an important question about the event's wider economic impact. Without a strategy to attract visitors beyond its existing rally audience, there is a risk that the potential economic benefits for local businesses may be limited.* *Going forward, we believe it is important to consider how the event can deliver greater economic value to Shropshire, alongside addressing the environmental concerns raised. A clearer focus on visitor attraction, destination promotion and measurable economic impact would help ensure the benefits of the event are proportionate to its wider impacts."*

Local Resident =	*"I am writing to express my sincere concern about any repetition of the September rally as it caused severe anxiety and disruption to my community. I live on a farm along the route which was bisected by the rally. Poor communication regarding something as basic as indemnity and false confirmations of support by the organisers of this event left me feeling deeply offended by their disregard for others. This must not happen again. In an agricultural region such as ours, the impact is not merely confined to the inherent inconvenience and dangers associated with the road closure itself. The recklessness of those who organised the event was palpable–as the event compromised livestock, veterinary and emergency access, contractors, deliveries, workers, fragile lane edges, drainage, tranquillity, wildlife and spectator traffic and outrageously even church goers. Normally an event as intrusive as this should have required proper assessment. To say that this was lacking is an understatement. Due to the numerous emails our community had to send regarding the simple matter of insurance I have been left with the feeling that the Council and rally organisers were negligent in this regard. The entire process was thoughtless and must not reoccur in Shropshire. It was interesting to learn that the rally event was rejected by the people of Herefordshire and therefore slipped over to Shropshire (perhaps the path of least resistance?). This is unfortunate. It is those who live in my community who suffered from the disruption and the rally planner's disrespect for others, and I trust that this will not take place again in future."*
Elected Member from one of the areas affected =	*"I have however had significant representation from a number of residents within the Parish who have raised real concerns about the planning, consultation and running of this rally and are very clear that they object to it being re-run in the future.* *I should also state that I have had one positive e mail from a local resident telling me how much they had enjoyed the rally a nd some Parish Councils have simply fed back that some people had enjoyed the rally and thought that there is likely to be some overall economic benefit although this was not backed up by any specific evidence.* *As the Shropshire Council member with a division much of which sits with the SHNL (AONB), I do have significant concern s about the environmental impact that the rally has had and would have again if repeated. However, to save duplication I wil l simply refer you to the detailed response from the Advisory Committee of the SHNL (a body that I sit on) which should be available shortly to understand the wider effects and implications of such an event on our area."*
Local Parish Council Chair =	*"I am not expecting any vehement objections to a possible repeat. There was obviously significant disruption to a few people but I understood others thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. There were a few concerns on the day involving spectator stupidity but I understood the marshals reacted rapidly and professionally. I do not believe PCllrs have received any strong objections or other reactions but tomorrow will confirm an overall reaction"*
Local Resident =	*"I would like to remind the Committee of Shropshire Council's commitment to supporting and encouraging the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and for ease I have copied part of the text from Shropshire Council's website, see below:* *"Our Outdoor Partnerships Service:*

	• *Maintains and develops recreational access* • *Conserves and enhances the natural environment* • *Helps to develop the local economy based on the high quality environment* • *Encourages people to improve their wellbeing by being active outdoors* *The service maintains and protects public rights of way, country parks, heritage sites, green spaces and play areas, supports the Shropshire Hills National Landscape Partnership and manages the Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme.* *Working with local communities across Shropshire, our priorities are to:* • *Conserve and enhance the natural environment* • *Improve people's health and wellbeing* • *Support the local economy* *To find promoted walks, horse riding sites, cycle routes, parks, countryside heritage sites and play areas please take a look at the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website."* *I therefore strongly suggest that if a rally, such as that held in September by Cheltenham Motor Club (Hills Ford Stages), wish to use the roads within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape then Shropshire Council should stand by their commitment and refuse the road closures within this area."*
Local Resident =	*"..... TO MEMBERS OF ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY.....* *Dear Cllr Potter and Colleagues* *Your review will be particularly important as this Rally potentially set a precedent.....so your recommendations will set the scene for any future similar events.* *I write to ask you to recommend that in the future,* *---------- there should be a presumption against using the Shropshire Hills national Landscape (aka AONB)* *The NL protects landscape,wild life,sustainable farming,Tranquillity . The rally does not use routes there for those purposes ; its interest is in challenging lanes, bends and twists,etc. There are very many such routes in Shropshire outside the NL !!. So the NL is not necessary to the Rally's success. And the Rally's entering it disturbs the 'protected features' of the NL. (eg , farming , walkers,etc,Tranquillity)* *Tourism is important to the Hills and may be characterised as 'The Quiet Enjoyment of The Countryside.' eg,cycling,walking,.riding. September is a busy month , especially for 'silver surfing' adults (and,in fact, Duke of Edinburgh*

	groups.) This is why operations like The Bog Visitor Centre and the Long Mynd Shuttle Bus continue to the end of the month. These will be deterred if the Shropshire Hill gets a reputation as friendly to rallies.. *The special status of our Hills has been established for nearly 80 years. It is of national importance. If rallies may use it however well managed),they intrude unnecessarily ; and it begs the question , What other inappropriate activities may be countenanced ?* *In June, Cabinet approval basically on the grounds of economic benefit to Shropshire. this will still accrue to the County in general , irrespective of the routes taken. ..again, excluding the NL will not hurt that. (Money is not always the over riding criterion,surely.)* *I hope Members will agree the suggested Recommendation, or something like it : if not , it will be difficult to close the doors in the future.* *...Many thanks for your interest* *IN PRACTICAL TERMS in THIS year's Rally, the sole apparent effect would have been to remove the Linley Stage...wholly within the NL;on the edge of the Stiperstones (and with impact on the surrounding area.)Its exemption would have really been no problem for the rally overall. It is a self contained stage,out on a limb. Drivers came out of Shrewsbury, did the Stage (a round trip at speed through Linley Woods) and then return to join up with the main route. Its removal would not threaten the integrity of the whole Rally. In fact,it could be argued that it might have improved it.. "*
Affected Parish Council =	*The Rally was discussed at the Parish Council Meeting held last night.* *I was asked to forward the following comments:-* *1.comments from the members of the public and the meeting were generally positive and all felt that the event had been well organised and residents affected had been contacted prior to the event.* *2, Concern was expressed that the road closures were not shown on google maps and this resulted in some confusion on the day.* *3.Local businesses such as accomodation did benefit from the event.* *4. Although the feedback has been positive some residents on route were inconvenienced and if the event takes place next year consideration should be given to slight changes to the route.* *5. Members of the public are now more aware of he route used this year and the Parish Council feel that if the route is unachanged there will be more pedestrians trying to access the route from paths and lanes and this could present a hazard.*
Local Member =	*"I note this is on an upcoming Scrutiny Committee.* *Not sure what the item will cover but in any review I hope comments will be requested from Parishes both within the so-called rally areas, where various RTOs were put in place and those areas, roads through which the cars were driven. Many*

	of the latter parishes were never contacted or asked their view on it. This also included the local members who only learnt about it quite late in the day, were ignored during any and all earlier discussions. *One issue which I do not expect to be logged is that a further total road closure lasting up to 5 days is now having to be put in place through the centre of Plealey due to work on the road having to be stopped and the surface reinstated so that the rally could use it when transiting from one closed area to another. The uncompleted work will necessitate digging it up again during the School Easter Holidays."*
Affected parish Council =	*" The Parish Council discussed the rally at their meeting yesterday. There were mixed views:* *There were a lot of spectators, some local, who thoroughly enjoyed the event.* *The information provided regarding the event was well in advance and well organised* *The closed sections prevented some people accessing their land, leaving their properties, or had to rearrange an event due to access* *There was one unpleasant incident where a landowner had not given permission for their land to be used. They found that a padlocked gate had had the chain cut and several vehicles and a toilet were in their field. When they contacted the rally organiser, they were not helpful and quite rude."*