

# Highley and Surrounding Area Place Plan

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## Context: what is a Place Plan?

Shropshire Council is working to make Shropshire a great place to live, learn, work, and visit – we want to innovate to thrive. To make that ambition a reality, we need to understand what our towns and communities need in order to make them better places for all. Our Place Plans – of which there are 18 across the county – paint a picture of each local area and help all of us to shape and improve our communities.

Place Plans are documents which bring together information about a defined area. The information that they contain is focussed on infrastructure needs, such as roads, transport facilities, flood defences, schools and educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, and open spaces. They also include other information which can help us to understand local needs and to make decisions. This wider information includes things like housing needs in light of population changes, and environmental issues in light of development.

In an ideal world, we would be able to support all of the infrastructure needs within the 18 Place Plan areas of Shropshire. However, funding restrictions mean that we have to make some difficult decisions and prioritise the infrastructure that is most important. Place Plans help us to do this.

### **The aim of the Place Plans is:**

- To enable Shropshire Council and its partners, working closely with local Elected Members and Town and Parish Councils, to deliver the infrastructure needs of our communities.

### **The objectives of the Place Plans are:**

- To develop a clear picture and understanding of the Place Plan area.
- To identify and prioritise infrastructure needs within the Place Plan area.
- To identify lead partners, supporting partners, and funding opportunities (where possible) to deliver those infrastructure needs.
- To feed in to the Strategic Infrastructure Implementation Plan for the county as a whole.
- To feed in to Shropshire Council's Corporate Plan and Service Plans.

There are 18 Place Plans in Shropshire, covering the following areas:

- Albrighton
- Bishop's Castle
- Bridgnorth
- Broseley
- Church Stretton
- Cleobury Mortimer
- Craven Arms
- Ellesmere
- Highley
- Ludlow
- Market Drayton
- Minsterley and Pontesbury
- Oswestry
- Shifnal
- Shrewsbury
- Wem
- Whitchurch

The Place Plans also include the wider hinterlands around each of these towns or key centres. In this way, everywhere in the county is included within a Place Plan.

Place Plans are reviewed regularly, and as such are 'live' documents informed by conversations with Town and Parish Councils, and with infrastructure and service providers. This document is the 2019/20 version of the Highley and Surrounding Area Place Plan.

# **1. List of Projects**

## **1.1 Data and information review**

The infrastructure project list in the table below is based on information submitted to Shropshire Council by Town and Parish Councils in each Place Plan area. This information is then tested against data held by the Council, and further informed by consultation with a range of infrastructure providers. By gathering this information, we have been able to understand more clearly the needs of each Place Plan area, and to use this information to make some difficult decisions about prioritisation of projects.

For the Highley and Surrounding Area Place Plan, a review of information has shown that key infrastructure issues are:

- Highley Village is a linear settlement, spread over a mile on the B4555. The town is isolated to the east by the river, apart from a footbridge that provides pedestrian access to Alveley.
- Local infrastructure priorities include provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment for sport, recreation and leisure.
- The area's predominantly rural nature will require development to be both limited in scale, and sensitive to the environment.

## 1.2 Prioritisation of projects

Following collation and assessment of this information, the difficult task of prioritisation of projects can be undertaken. Projects are allocated to a category, based on extensive discussions with a range of partners, and on information included within the Implementation Plan of Shropshire's Local Development Plan:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/8603/ldf-implementation-plan-2016-17.pdf>.

Projects will be allocated to one of the three categories identified below:

- Priority A Projects
- Priority B Projects
- Neighbourhood Projects

The table below and overleaf gives further information about the categories.

Category	Description	Examples
<b>Priority A</b>	<p>This is infrastructure which will unlock development.</p> <p>These are usually projects which will be led by Shropshire Council and/or its strategic infrastructure delivery partners, such as utilities companies, the Environment Agency, Highways England, broadband providers, etc.</p> <p>These projects are sometimes also legally required (i.e. Shropshire Council has a statutory duty to provides this infrastructure) or may be strategically important (i.e. essential for the good of the county as a whole).</p>	<p>Improvements to drainage in Whitchurch to allow significant housing and business premises development.</p> <p>Works at Churncote roundabout on the A5 to the west of Shrewsbury – improvements here will impact across the county.</p> <p>Provision of sufficient school places to meet local need.</p>

<b>Priority B</b>	<p>This is infrastructure which will support development in a number of ways and/or a number of locations.</p> <p>These projects will often be required across numerous locations in the Place Plan area, or will impact widely within the Place Plan area as a whole.</p>	<p>Improvements to Broadband connectivity across the county.</p> <p>Provision of housing to meet local need.</p> <p>Improved access to public transport facilities, such as rail stations.</p>
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	<p>Projects which will support and are important to an individual community.</p> <p>These projects will usually be led by partners in the local area, such as the Parish Council.</p>	<p>Playgrounds, village hall car parks, street lights, local road safety improvements, etc</p>

### 1.3 Projects for Highley and Surrounding Area Place Plan

The projects in the following table have been identified through evidence and data gathering as described in section 1.1, and through discussions and consultations with Town and Parish Councils. Discussions have also taken place with relevant departments across Shropshire Council, and with external providers of strategic infrastructure. However, please be aware that this table does not commit any partner to undertake specific activity, as priorities and resources are subject to change.

Further, whilst Shropshire Council will continue to support its Town and Parish Councils to identify infrastructure needs within the Place Plan area, the final decision on the level of priority given to specific infrastructure projects rests with Shropshire Council, based on the evidence gathering noted above.

Projects have been presented in two tables: the first covering Priority A and Priority B projects, and the second covering Neighbourhood projects.

Please note that completed projects will be included in a separate supporting document. This document will be made available on Shropshire Council’s website, alongside the Place Plans themselves.

**Table 1: Priority A and Priority B Projects**

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	Notes
<b>Priority B Projects</b>				
<b>Economic Opportunities</b>				
Possible business park development project (Highley)	Not known	ERDF (replacement fund)	Shropshire Council, Parish Council, businesses	The need for this project will be assessed as part of the development of a Shropshire-wide Business Park Programme.
Facilitation of ICT / broadband technologies, including through Shropshire Council's Connecting Shropshire programme (ALL parishes)	To be updated	To be confirmed	Shropshire Council, private sector delivery partners, local parish councils	<p>Work is ongoing by Shropshire Council and various providers to identify particular blackspots in terms of coverage and connectivity. Local intelligence around these issues will help to improve understanding of localised issues.</p> <p>Shropshire Council remains committed to seeking a solution to provide superfast broadband for unserved premises and is confident that it can ensure that all premises in the Shropshire Council area have access to a superfast broadband connection by 2021. For queries about the availability of faster broadband, please email address details and landline numbers (if available) to <a href="mailto:connecting.shropshire@shropshire.gov.uk">connecting.shropshire@shropshire.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Housing, Health, and Education</b>				
Relocation of medical centre due to accessibility issues (Highley)	Not known	CCG / NHS, GP	CCG / NHS, GP	The CCG is in contact with the local GP and is aware of some concerns relating to the Highley



Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	Notes
				<p>facility. If changes to the facility are required, it would be the responsibility of the local GP to submit a business case to the CCG.</p> <p>Shropshire CCG's Estates Strategy, along with the emerging Primary Care Network, will assess and inform how primary care services are best organised to meet the healthcare needs of the area. This Estates Strategy is currently under development and will report towards the end of 2019.</p> <p>If GPs or local residents wish to provide further comment on these issues, or to receive further details about the process, they should contact the CCG directly on 01743 277500 or email <a href="mailto:SHRCCG.ShropshireCCG@nhs.net">SHRCCG.ShropshireCCG@nhs.net</a></p>
<b>Transport and Accessibility</b>				
Highways improvements to include sections of B4555 (Highley)	Not known	Not known	Parish Council, Shropshire Council	<p>A surfacing scheme for the B4555 is currently included within Shropshire Council's Highways programme of works.</p> <p>For local highways concerns – such as pavements and pedestrian linkages, speed monitoring and reduction, signage, etc – please contact Shropshire Council directly, so that the issue can be assessed in light of other priorities within the Local Transport Plan. Please email <a href="mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk">transport@shropshire.gov.uk</a></p>

## Table 2: Neighbourhood Projects

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	Notes
<b>Neighbourhood Projects</b>				
<b>Community Infrastructure</b>				
Footpath from the, now-closed, Kings Arms to School Lane (Chelmarsh)	Not known	Neighbourhood Fund, Grant Funding, precept	Parish Council	Parish lead. For local highways concerns – such as pavements and pedestrian linkages, speed monitoring and reduction, signage, etc – please contact Shropshire Council directly, so that the issue can be assessed in light of other priorities within the Local Transport Plan. Please email <a href="mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk">transport@shropshire.gov.uk</a>
Improve quality and accessibility of the Severn Centre site including improved opening hours, more health care services, more access to council services (particularly through the Library), more efficient use of Library (e.g. provision of computers), creation of an events diary to include all village activities and make it available in public places. (Highley)	Not known	Neighbourhood Fund, Grant Funding, precept	Parish Council	Parish lead. Shropshire Council is commissioning a Playing Pitch Strategy to support the Local Plan Review. This will assess supply and demand for playing pitches in Shropshire. The Council also intends to commission a Built Facilities Strategy to support the Local Plan Review. This will assess the supply and demand for indoor sports facilities.
Improved youth facilities – youth café, recreational facilities for children; refurbishment of Skate Park / play area, better use of the Severn Centre link with Extended Services and schools' initiatives that support healthy lifestyles e.g. Healthy Schools, HENRY (Highley)	Not known	Neighbourhood Fund, Grant Funding, precept	Parish Council Severn Centre	Parish lead.

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	Notes
Extension to Churchyard (Highley)	Not known	Neighbourhood Fund, precept, Public Works Loan Board	Parish Council	Parish Council and Church lead. Shropshire Council is currently progressing an enquiry regarding burial space capacity across the county. The results of this enquiry will be available in Autumn 2019 and will inform any further provision in the county.
<b>Transport and Accessibility</b>				
Additional crossings on Bridgnorth Road to access school if development occurs to the north / east, improved links between Severn Valley Country Park and village. (Highley)	£200,000	Neighbourhood Fund	Parish Council, Schools	<p>Parish and School lead.</p> <p>If these projects impact upon land that is the responsibility of Shropshire Council's Highways department, then they must be delivered through the Highway authority.</p> <p>For local highways concerns – such as pavements and pedestrian linkages, speed monitoring and reduction, signage, etc – please contact Shropshire Council directly, so that the issue can be assessed in light of other priorities within the Local Transport Plan. Please email <a href="mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk">transport@shropshire.gov.uk</a></p>
Traffic calming measures throughout the village (Highley)	Not known	Neighbourhood Fund, Astbury Hall Developers	Parish Council	<p>This project is not currently included within the Highways programme of works.</p> <p>For local highways concerns – such as pavements and pedestrian linkages, speed monitoring and reduction, signage, etc – please contact Shropshire Council directly, so that the issue can be assessed in light of other priorities within the Local Transport Plan. Please email <a href="mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk">transport@shropshire.gov.uk</a></p>

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	Notes
Local highway and safety improvements on the B4555 including reducing and enforcing speed limits to support the redevelopment of the Astbury site into a holiday village (Chelmarsh)	Not known	Section 106 Astbury Hall Developers	Parish Council, Developers	Parish lead.  There is some potential to deliver this project through the Astbury Hall development. For local highways concerns – such as pavements and pedestrian linkages, speed monitoring and reduction, signage, etc – please contact Shropshire Council directly, so that the issue can be assessed in light of other priorities within the Local Transport Plan. Please email <a href="mailto:transport@shropshire.gov.uk">transport@shropshire.gov.uk</a>
Enhancement of Eardington Halt (Chelmarsh)	Not Known	Section 106 Astbury Hall Developers	Parish Council, SVR, Developers	Parish lead.  There is some potential to deliver this project through the Astbury Hall development.

## 2. Planning in Shropshire

### 2.1 County-wide planning processes: the Local Development Plan

Planning is a statutory process (required by law) that all local authorities across the UK must undertake.

A number of planning policy documents consider a wide range of important planning issues such as housing, employment, retail, the environment, and transport. Together, these documents constitute the Local Development Plan, which plays a crucial role in prioritising and shaping development in the local authority area. In Shropshire, the current Local Development Plan period runs until 2026.

Of all the documents that make up the Local Development Plan, there are three that we will refer to here. They are:

- Core Strategy – adopted 24 February 2011
- Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan – adopted 17 December 2015

At the moment, the Local Development Plan is undergoing a review, which will ensure that Shropshire Council can respond to changing circumstances. The review will include, but is not limited to, consideration of housing requirements, employment land requirements, the distribution of development, and a review of green belt boundaries. Until the review is completed, the existing Local Development Plan remains as the overarching guide for all development across the county.

There is also a third set of documents which are of vital importance to the Local Development Plan. These are the 18 Place Plans, and you are currently reading the Place Plan for **Highley and Surrounding Area**.

## 2.2 This Place Plan area in the county-wide plan

The Core Strategy, as referenced at section 2.1, recognises the role of Shropshire's market towns and key centres through Policy CS3. This policy outlines how all of our towns have distinctive identities, which new development is expected to reinforce, by respecting each town's distinctive character, and by being sensitive to its landscape setting, historic features, and the towns' functions. You can read more from Policy CS3 by following this link: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/8534/core-strategy.pdf>

For Highley, Policy CS3 recognises that:

- Highley is seven miles south of Bridgnorth town and within commuting distance of Kidderminster. It is a linear settlement, spread over a mile on the B4555 on a ridge above the River Severn.
- Highley is isolated to its east by the river, apart from a footbridge that provides pedestrian access to Alveley.
- The settlement expanded significantly in the early twentieth century in conjunction with the Highley / Alveley colliery. The closure of the mines in the 1960s has left a legacy of regeneration needs.
- Highley is not a main employment centre and although most local jobs are filled by residents, the majority of resident workers are employed elsewhere.

The SAMDev Plan, as referenced at section 2.1, also provides brief settlement policies for each Place Plan area. You can read more from the SAMDev Plan by following this link: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/8503/samdev-adopted-plan.pdf>

The policies for Highley, and then for the wider area, are as follows:

- As a key centre, Highley will continue to provide facilities and services for its rural hinterland with development to meet local needs.
- To support this role Highley will have growth of around 200 dwellings and a minimum of 0.6 hectares of employment land up to 2026.
- New housing development will be delivered primarily on the allocated housing site at Rhea Hall, set out in schedule S9.1a, alongside additional small-scale infill and windfall development within the village's development boundary.

- New employment development will be delivered primarily on the committed employment site at Netherton Workshops alongside other appropriate brownfield opportunities within the village's development boundary.
- In the wider Highley area, proposals for small scale office, workshop and light industrial uses and expansion of existing businesses will be supported where they are well located and well suited to employment use.

Shropshire Council started reviewing its Local Plan in 2017 and recently consulted on the preferred sites which are needed to meet the county's development needs during the period to 2036. The new Plan is unlikely to be adopted before 2021. The review will ensure that the Local Plan continues to be the primary consideration for decisions about development in Shropshire by maintaining robust and defensible policies that conform with national policy and address the changing circumstances within the County and beyond.

You can read more the Local Plan Review preferred sites consultation by following this link: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/local-plan-review-preferred-sites-consultation/>

Key points from the Local Plan Review include:

- The Local Plan Review will seek to achieve balanced housing and employment growth within Highley, through the provision of around 250 dwellings and around 3 hectares of employment development between 2016 and 2036.
- In 2016-17, 59 dwellings were completed and a further 69 dwellings were committed through planning permission, prior approval or site allocation. Therefore, a further 122 dwellings will need to be identified on new housing sites to support the housing growth objectives of the Local Plan Review.
- Around 2 hectares of employment land is already committed in Highley, through planning permission, prior approval or site allocation. Therefore, a minimum of 1 hectare of additional employment land will need to be identified to achieve the preferred level of employment development in the settlement.
- It is proposed that one site will be allocated for residential development. This site is located to the east of the settlement and benefits from good links into the town centre. The site will deliver a mix of house types including bungalows and an extra care scheme.
- No employment allocations are proposed as it is considered that appropriate employment land will be achieved through windfall development.

You can read more about the Local Plan Review by following this link: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/>

### 3. More about this area

#### 3.1 Place Plan boundaries

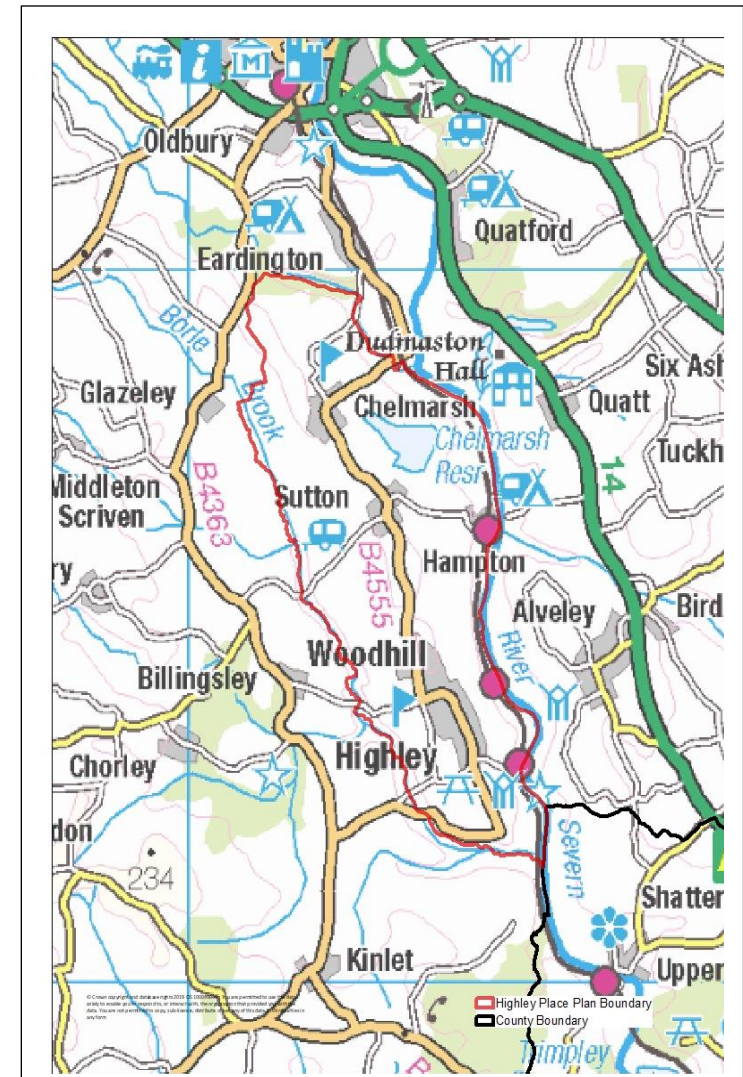
Place Plans were developed to include a main centre (often a market town) and its surrounding smaller towns, villages, and rural hinterland. These areas are recognised in the Local Plan as functioning geographical areas, with strong linkages to and from the main town and the wider area.

The Highley and Surrounding Area Place Plan geography is shown in the map.

#### 3.2 Pen picture of the area

Highley is a large village located in the east of Shropshire, just seven miles south of Bridgnorth town. The village of Highley is the main settlement and is predominantly urban in nature with rural surrounds. The settlement is spread over a mile on the B4555 to the west of the River Severn and the Severn Valley Railway.

Highley contains a mixture of housing in terms of age and type, and the overall population density is higher than the average for Shropshire. The village provides the area with a range of shops and other amenities including a sports and community centre at the Severn Centre.





Highley began as a rural farming community, and is identified as 'Hughli' in the Domesday Book entry, named after the lord of the manor. Later the area became significant for stone quarrying, which provided some of the stone for Worcester Cathedral.

Coal mining began in the area in the Middle Ages but the formation of the Highley Mining Company in 1874 saw the expansion of the village. The mine closed in 1969 and is now home to the Severn Valley Country Park.

Chelmarsh is a village within the Highley Place Plan area, being 4 miles south of Bridgnorth on the B4555 road to Highley. The main activities are farming and tourism, with the village having a population of about 500 people. Various activities are based at the hall and social club in the village. The hamlet of Hampton is by the River Severn and close to the Severn Valley Railway, which has a period station in Hampton.

Chelmarsh Reservoir attracts many species of wild birds, and there are two public bird hides near the 'scrape'. The reservoir is home to an enthusiastic sailing club whose refurbished facilities were opened by Princess Anne in 2004.

### **3.3 List of Parishes and Local Elected Members**

This Place Plan covers the following Parish Councils:

- Chelmarsh Parish Council
- Highley Parish Council

The following Elected Members of Shropshire Council represent constituencies within this Place Plan area:

- Councillor David Tremellen (Highley Ward)
- Councillor Robert Tindall (Brown Clee Ward)

### **3.4 Other local plans**

When developing the Place Plan for an area, Shropshire Council also looks at any other local plans and strategies that focus on infrastructure needs within this particular area.

For Highley and the surrounding area, the relevant plans include:

- Highley Parish Plan

## 4. Reviewing the Place Plan

### 4.1 Previous reviews

To date, the Place Plans have been updated through conversations with Town and Parish Councils, Local Elected Members, infrastructure and service providers, and local businesses. The ambition was to hold such conversations on an annual basis, but this approach has been difficult for the Council to resource, and has not enabled the Place Plans to be quickly and easily updated in response to changing local circumstances.

### 4.2 Future reviews

Undertaking an annual conversation involves significant consultation and engagement across the county. In light of current resource constraints, Shropshire Council will therefore now update the Place Plans on a rolling basis. This means that the Place Plans are 'live' documents, which can be updated as required in order to reflect changing infrastructure needs within a community. Town and Parish Councils will be able to submit projects for inclusion in their Place Plan on an ongoing basis.

A summary of the process that we will follow to review and incorporate these updates is shown below and overleaf.

Update required	Process
The local community wishes to remove, update, or add a Priority A or Priority B Project	<p>The Town or Parish Council submits the relevant information to their Place Plan Officer (see contact details at Annexe 1). This can be done via letter, email, or conversation and discussion.</p> <p>Shropshire Council's Internal Infrastructure Group (a group of officers with responsibility for delivery of infrastructure) will consider the information and agree any amendments that need to be made to the Place Plan.</p>

	<p>The proposed amendment will then be shared with the Strategic Infrastructure Forum (external infrastructure providers, such as utility companies, Environment Agency, etc.) for their input.</p> <p>The Place Plan Officer will feedback the results of the discussions to the Town or Parish Council, and the final form of the amendment will be agreed.</p> <p>The Place Plan Officer will make the changes to the Place Plan and upload the revised document to Shropshire Council’s website.</p>
<p>The local community wishes to remove, update, or add a Neighbourhood Project</p>	<p>The Town or Parish Council submits the relevant information to their Place Plan Officer.</p> <p>The Place Plan Officer will consult with internal and external partners to ensure that there are no reasons why the project should not be included.</p> <p>The Place Plan Officer will make the required changes to the Place Plan and upload the revised document to Shropshire Council’s website.</p>
<p>Shropshire Council or an external infrastructure provider wishes to remove, update, or add a Priority A or Priority B Project</p>	<p>The relevant Place Plan Officer will contact all Town and Parish Councils in the Place Plan area to discuss any proposed amendments to A and B projects.</p> <p>Once any amendments have been discussed and agreed, the Place Plan Officer will make the changes to the Place Plan and upload the revised document to Shropshire Council’s website.</p>

## Annexe 1 Supporting information

For more information on Shropshire Council's planning policies, please go to:  
<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/>

For more information on Place Plans, please go to: <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/place-plans>  
or contact your Place Plan Officer via [PlacePlans@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:PlacePlans@shropshire.gov.uk)

For additional information on Council services, please refer to the telephone numbers below:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Number</b>
General enquiries	0345 678 9000
Housing benefit	0345 678 9001
Council tax	0345 678 9002
Business rates	0345 678 9003
Planning and building control	0345 678 9004
Housing	0345 678 9005
Streets, roads and transport	0345 678 9006
Bins and recycling	0345 678 9007
School admissions, free school meals and school transport	0345 678 9008
Concerns for the welfare of a child/children's social care or early help support	0345 678 9021
Registrars	0345 678 9016
Concerns for a vulnerable adult and Adult Social Care	0345 678 9044
Elections	0345 678 9015

Alternatively, you can contact us via our website using the online enquiries form:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/forms/contact-us?>

For more information on health provision, please contact Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group directly:

NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group,  
William Farr House,  
Mytton Oak Road,  
Shrewsbury,  
SY3 8XL.

Tel: 01743 277500 (main switchboard)

Email: [SHRCCG.ShropshireCCG@nhs.net](mailto:SHRCCG.ShropshireCCG@nhs.net)