Visitor Economy Strategy

For:

Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council

Destination Shrewsbury

BrittonMcGrathAssociates

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1 Introduction

Shrewsbury is a quintessentially English county town that offers an intensely historic, medieval experience all set in a glorious location, within a loop of meandering River Severn, at the heart of Shropshire.

With its black & white buildings Shrewsbury is renowned to be one of England's most splendid heritage towns with over 600 listed buildings.

On top of this, the town itself is vibrant hosting an exceptional number of interesting, independent shops which make Shrewsbury's shopping special. It also has a new theatre and hosts many events or festivals that take place each year, particularly Shrewsbury's Summer Season, catering for every age and interest.

Complementing this, the town also offers exceptional river frontage, parks and gardens which offer yet another element to its visitor appeal.

Together this unique mix of ingredients makes a compelling proposition for visitors and it is this which has been identified by both Shrewsbury Town Council and Shropshire Council as an opportunity for growth and future prosperity for both the town and county.

This new strategy for the Visitor Economy is intended to identify the potential that exists and define and prioritise the means by which Shrewsbury might unlock this potential

Britton McGrath Associates are delighted to have been able to assist The Destination Shrewsbury Partnership in developing this strategy. We would like to thank the many people representing a wide variety of businesses, roles and interests within the community that have contributed to this study. A list of all of the stakeholders and consultees that have participated in this study is contained within the appendices.

2 Background

An original Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan was developed for Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council in 2004 and updated in 2007 by TEAM. This was a very thorough study which involved bespoke research and the conclusions of this study in terms of the Strategic Objectives for Shrewsbury are shown below:
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Strategic Objective 1

Improve and enhance the Visitor Experience

Strategic Objective 2

Increase visitor spending through targeted promotions utilising the TIC to maximum effect.

Strategic Objective 3

Develop Shrewsbury as a leading regional cultural centre

1 Priorities

1.1 To provide excellence in the environment and facilities of the town.

1.2 To develop specific facilities to enhance the quality of the Shrewsbury ‘offer’.

1.3 To provide excellence in interpretation, information and interface with visitors

2 Priorities

2.1 To use CRM* techniques to target potential visitors with special event-based offers and itineraries.

2.2 To increase off-peak business through tactical promotions.

2.3 To use visitor information print to promote repeat visits and extended stays

3 Priorities

3.1 To encourage the development of cultural facilities and audiences within the town.

3.2 To stimulate and coordinate new and existing events and promote them through data collection, CRM and dissemination of information via the TIC.

3 Objectives

The overall objective of this study is to:

Provide the strategic framework that will enable the work of all contributing organisations to maximise their impact on the visitor economy of Shrewsbury and thereby contribute to the future prosperity for the town.

This will manifest itself in terms of:

- Overall increased visitor spending in Shrewsbury
- The tools to allow Shrewsbury to enhance its profile as a visitor destination

It is worth noting that, in our view, success in these areas will also unlock an improved environment for local residents and businesses within the town and that achievement of this has been considered a priority when developing this strategy.

In executing this project the following main areas have been covered:

- A review of the Market within which Shrewsbury sits
- A review of comparative visitor destinations to frame the discussion on the potential opportunity that harnessing the Visitor Economy in Shrewsbury offers
- A review of the Shrewsbury Visitor Experience

Rather than creating a cumbersome strategy document, effort has been focused on extensive consultation and communication with the many stakeholders across Shrewsbury. The conclusions of the study are contained within this summary which is designed to operate as a management tool as opposed to a simple and inevitably lengthy record of information.

4 Executive Summary

The Market:

- The market intelligence indicates that there is significant potential to develop and grow Shrewsbury's Visitor Economy [although the data does need to be strengthened and updated]
- By collaborating more proactively with the visitor economy assets across Shropshire, Shrewsbury has the potential to draw visitors from further afield and for longer stays

The Product:

- Shrewsbury has a strong portfolio of tangible assets that have the potential to deliver a rich visitor experience to a wide audience, however in order to succeed in this:
    - The town needs to embrace delivery of its assets in a visitor orientated manner
    - The town needs to improve its infrastructure in order to enable the visitor experience – helping visitors to find their optimum visitor experience and provide the means and support for them to enjoy them

Branding and Marketing:

- The town needs to strengthen its branding and visitor proposition in order to engage better with prospective visitors and compete effectively with other destinations
- Shrewsbury needs to create a marketing strategy and to invest in its wider communication, albeit, given budgetary constraints, in a carefully managed and targeted manner.

Management/Delivery:

- The Key Stakeholders in Shrewsbury need to embrace this strategy and provide leadership in the process of exploiting its potential
- The Key Stakeholders need to provide support and invest in their asset and experience providers
- Success needs to be communicated and rewarded

5 Methodology

Britton McGrath Associates have undertaken an extensive programme of consultation with a wide range of Stakeholders as part of this exercise.

This programme of engagement started prior to their appointment with a Strategy Workshop hosted by Councillor Mike Owen in February 2011. This involved a wide range of Stakeholders from the local community [attendees as per the Stakeholder list in the appendices] This workshop explored the major themes or “Five Big Ideas” that might provide future potential for the Shrewsbury Visitor Economy as well as a brainstorming session which enabled participants to download specific ideas for improvements to Shrewsbury in order to deliver an improved Visitor Economy performance.

Starting with this material, Britton McGrath Associates consolidated the outputs from the workshop and invited Stakeholders to participate in the project via a questionnaire and further small discussion groups in order to tease out the key issues and priorities for Shrewsbury.

An example of the Questionnaire has been included in the Appendices.

A summary of all stakeholders directly involved in this study is also included in the Appendices

Feedback from these workshops has been combined with information gathered from discussions and research into comparative destinations – primarily Chester but also including Cardiff, Lichfield and Durham, desk research into market size and demographics, more detailed interviews with a number of individual Stakeholders and a review of the product and visitor experience that Shrewsbury has to offer.

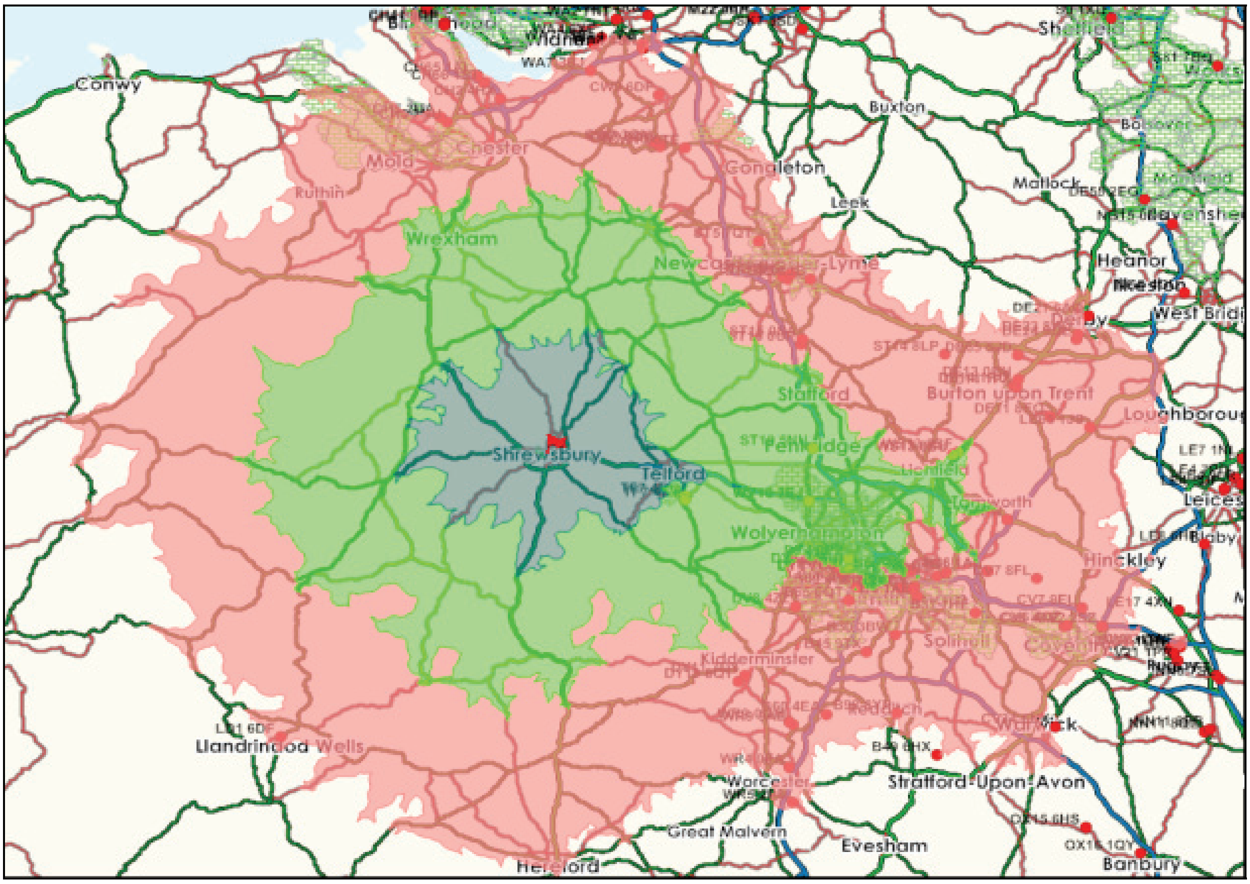
A final stakeholder workshop was held on July 21st where the initial conclusions of the study were discussed and stakeholders had a second opportunity to input into the study.

The findings and conclusions from all of these exercises have informed the sections to follow.

6 Summary of Conclusions of the Study

The following pages summarise the feedback from this study as presented in the final workshop on the 21st July

6.1 The Market



The above map shows the contours for the 30 60 and 90 minute catchment area based on normal drive times.

Despite the good geographic spread one of the challenges for Shrewsbury becomes clear when you look at the resident population base. Based on the census, there are only just over 200,000 people living within a 30 minute drive of Shrewsbury. There are a further 1.45 million people within 30-60 minutes drive time and the 60-90 minute drive time, which encompasses the conurbation of Birmingham adds just under a further 4.6m. This is summarised in the table below:

	30 minutes drive time	30 - 60 minutes drive time	60 - 90 minutes drive time
Population	219,000	1,458,000	4,594,000
Cum. Population	219,000	1,677,000	6,271,000

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Insight into the catchment areas of comparative visitor destinations can help to inform the background to the Visitor Economy potential for Shrewsbury.

	30 minutes drive time	30 - 60 minutes drive time	60 - 90 minutes drive time
Population			
Shrewsbury	219,000	1,458,000	4,594,000
Chester	666,000	3,741,000	3,201,000
Cum. Population			
Shrewsbury	219,000	1,677,000	6,271,000
Chester	666,000	4,407,000	7,608,000

We have looked at the populations within the 0-30 and 0-60 minute drivetime isochrones for Chester, Lichfield, Durham and Cardiff. These can all be compared as follows:

	Shrewsbury	Chester	Cardiff	Lichfield	Durham
0-30 mins	220,000	666,000	485,000	494,000	676,000
30-60 mins	1,450,000	3,741,000	749,000	3,201,000	1,602,000
0-60 mins combined	1,670,000	4,137,000	1,234,000	3,695,000	2,278,000

This clearly demonstrates one of the challenges for Shrewsbury being the relatively small resident population living within an hour of the town.

- Shrewsbury has 50 - 70% fewer people living within 30 minutes of the town centre as compared to these comparators
- Only Cardiff has a weaker 30-60 minute catchment area
- Shrewsbury's total 60 minute catchment area is 25% smaller than Durham, 55% smaller than Lichfield and 60% smaller than Chester

This means that in order to achieve a visitor economy as strong as some of these comparators Shrewsbury will have to generate a significantly higher level of repeat business from local markets or pull people from at least the 60-90 minute catchment area or beyond.

The good news is that residents from the major Birmingham, and surrounding, conurbations are just beyond the 60 minute drivetime making this a potentially strong and attractive market from which to target for visitors.

6.2 Research into Visitor Audiences

Based on the information provided it would appear that Shrewsbury has a limited amount of information on its current visitors. The most recent independent market research study was conducted in 2007 and provides a simple snap shot of the visitors to the town over the summer that year.

In contrast to this, destinations such as Chester have historically carried out extensive research into their visitors. Whilst this may be the subject of review in the current economic climate and, in our opinion, may have historically been a little excessive, it does mean that they have been able to monitor trends and perhaps identify opportunities or challenges in a timely manner.

By way of a summary, the following table compares the key visitor statistics, where comparison is possible, between the performance for Chester versus Shrewsbury.

Chester	Shrewsbury
Origin of visitors • 20% from Cheshire • 44% of visitors from Cheshire, West Mids, Merseyside • 7% Manchester • 6% Lancashire • 2% Cumbria • <60% from within 2 hours • <40% overseas	**Origin of visitors** • 29% from Shropshire • 55% Shropshire, West Mids, Staffordshire • <75% from within 2 hours
Age • <35 17% • 35-44 21% • 45-54 30% • 55+ 34%	**Age** • <35 22% • 35-44 15% • 45-54 20% • 55+ 43%
Proportion of repeat visitors • 70%	**Proportion of repeat visitors** • 79%
Average number of nights stayed [of those on a staying visit] • 2.62	**Average number of nights stayed [of those on a staying visit]** • 3.2 [NB this is for Shrewsbury and Atcham plus a small sample]

This simple comparison indicates that, at 55% versus 44% for Chester, Shrewsbury does appear to pull a more significant proportion of its visitors from the local markets. Combine this with the information that these local markets are 60% smaller in terms of population numbers than the markets surrounding Chester gives a good indication as to why Shrewsbury's visitor numbers are significantly smaller than Chesters.

It also indicates that Shrewsbury must have a strong repeating audience and this is borne out by the fact that the research showed a 79% repeat visitation rate as opposed to 70% for Chester.

The age profile for Shrewsbury is also shown to be more polarised than that for Chester. 22% of visitors to Shrewsbury are under the age of 35 where Chester has only 17%; but also, the 55+ visitor numbers for Shrewsbury are higher at 43% versus Chesters 34%. These are distinct differences which will impact on the requirements and appeal of the visitor experiences in each location.

The research also provided some very top line insights into what people were doing when they visited Shrewsbury or Chester and also an indication of the key things that appeal about each visitor destination. Whilst not directly comparable these are helpful as indicative themes.

Chester	**Shrewsbury**
Main Activities • Shopping 90% • Food 71% • Walk the walls 52% • Walk the Rows 48% • Walk the river 40% • Visit an attraction 18% • Attend an event 1-2%	**Main Activities** • Food 74% • Shopping 69% • General sightseeing 54% • Visiting an attraction 14% • Visiting an event 13% • Visiting friends and relatives 13% • Visiting a historic/heritage centre 3%
What did people like? • Character of the town 71% • Architecture/buildings 67% • Everything in walking distance 55% • City Walls 52% • Quality of shops 47% • Atmosphere 41% • River 34%	**What did people like?** • Shops/choice/type 37% • Historical/old 21% • Buildings/architecture 20% • Nice place/area 10% • Flowers 10% • Rural countryside 10% • River 8%

6.3 The Economic Impact of Tourism

In order to inform our report on the scale and potential of the Visitor Economy for Shrewsbury we have looked back at the previous Economic Impact study that was carried out in 2007 and compared it to information gathered from the comparative destinations.

Once again, information from Chester, Cardiff, Durham and Lichfield has been gathered. Whilst each is likely to be slightly different thereby meaning that it is not all directly comparable it does provide a useful insight into the idiosyncrasies of the different destinations. This information is summarised in the table below:

	Shrewsbury	Chester	Cardiff	Durham	Lichfield
Visitors per year	**2.6m** visitors per year • 2.3m day trips • 300k overnight visitors	**41.9m** visitors pa	**14.6 m** visitors pa • 13.1m day visitors • 1.5m overnight visitors	**17.5m** visitors pa • 16m day trips • 1.4m overnight visitors	**1.9m** visitors pa
Overnight visitors	1.4m nights in the area	N/A	3.3m nights in the area	1.4m nights in the area	950k nights in the area
Tourism spend	£137m • £48.6m from overnight visitors • £88.3m from day visitors • £53m town trips • £35m countryside trips	£1.78bn	£700m • £331m from overnight visitors • £372m from day visitors	£627m • £282m from overnight visitors • £345m from day visitors	£60m • £13.2 m from overnight • £46.8m from day visitors
Tourism jobs	3,593 jobs • 2,835 direct tourism jobs • 741 non tourism jobs	27,000 jobs	11,000 jobs	11,000 jobs	1,600 jobs • 1,300 direct • 300 non tourism

6.4 **Conclusions**

Whilst much of the information available to this study is not directly comparable and in many cases out of date it does provide a means to frame the scale of the opportunity available to Shrewsbury should it choose to proactively pursue and embrace the Visitor Economy.

It would appear not unreasonable to suggest that, given the above performance measures and our knowledge and confidence in the quality of the visitor experience that Shrewsbury has to offer, with the appropriate investment, it might be possible to increase income from the Visitor Economy significantly, perhaps even in the order of an incremental 50-100% of current performance.

If the tourism spend in Shrewsbury increased to, in the order of £275m per year, it would still place it well below 50% of the tourism spend achieved by Durham or Cardiff and still only 15% of that achieved by Chester and Cheshire West.

Whilst this doesn't represent a forecast of potential it does illustrate the sort of scale of the opportunity open to Shrewsbury and should give confidence to those that have the potential to make it happen.

7 The Current Visitor Experience

The slides to follow formed part of the final stakeholder workshop and were chosen to illustrate the challenges that Shrewsbury faces if it is to fully embrace and exploit the potential that the Visitor Economy represents

- A potential visitor to Shrewsbury may start by looking at the Enjoy England web site for inspiration. At the moment, possibly due to challenging policies, it would be almost impossible to find Shrewsbury
- Assuming a visitor persevered they may discover Shropshire….

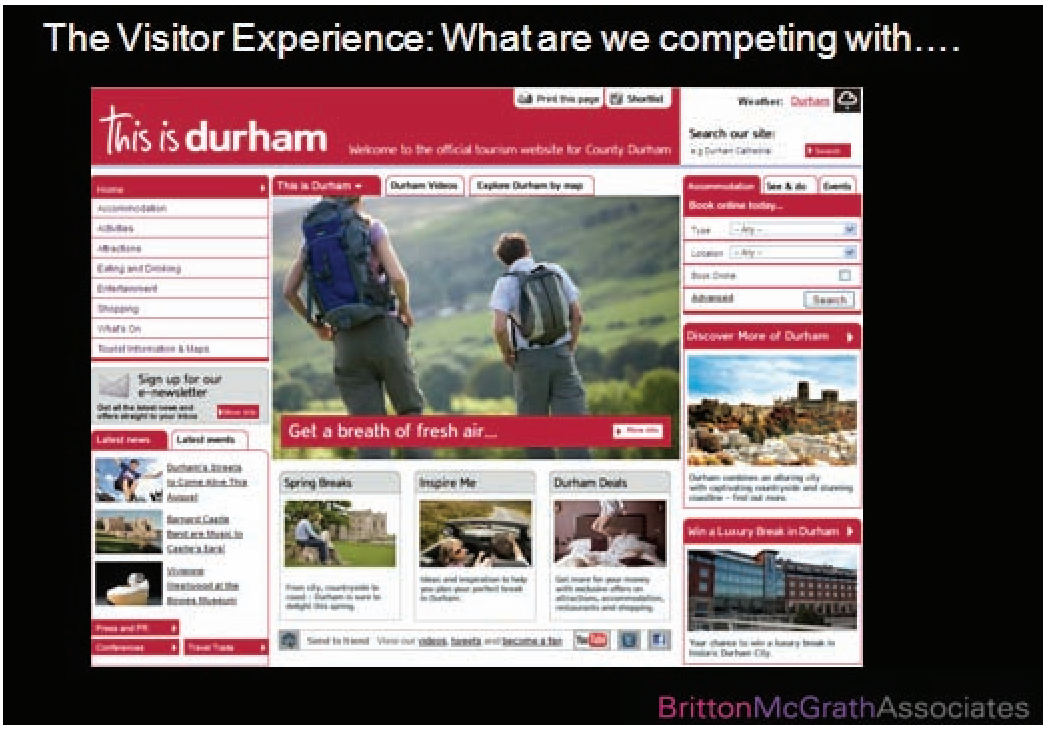
- But Shropshire exists in multiple locations, presented from a wide range of perspectives on the web.

- But assuming a visitor finds Shrewsbury on the Shropshire Tourism website…

- The message – how to pronounce the name and what the town doesn't have to offer - is not entirely compelling as a reason to visit
- But assuming that a possible visitor made it through to the Destination Shrewsbury web site…..

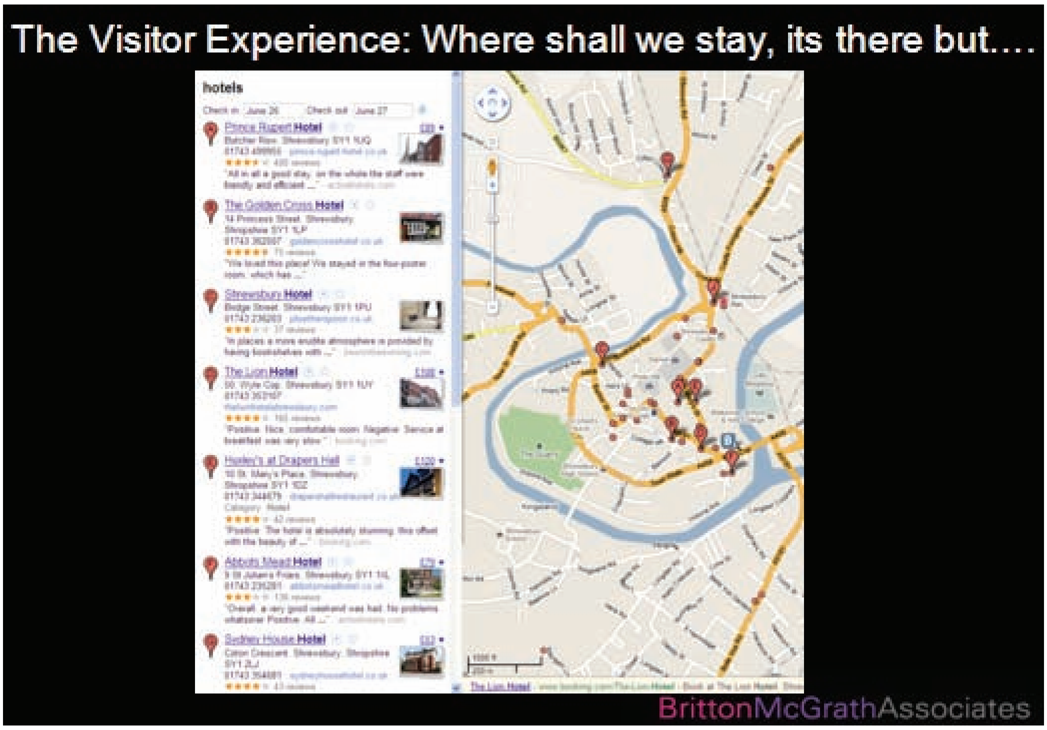
- The challenge here is lack of identity and focus on the unique selling points [USPs] that Shrewsbury has to offer. This could almost be a web page for a large number of provincial British towns most of whom have little tourism potential

- Some example from Shrewsbury's competitors help illustrate this point – the following slides show websites with clear identity, focus on reasons to visit and the means to secure a sale.



- Whilst Leeds may not be a direct competitor, this towns web site does provide an example of a location that understands its identity and knows what message it is trying to communicate

- Assuming a possible visitor perseveres and looks for a hotel in Shrewsbury, the information is there



- …but it lacks appeal and is less than compelling as compared to some of the aspirational web sites looking to secure short breaks

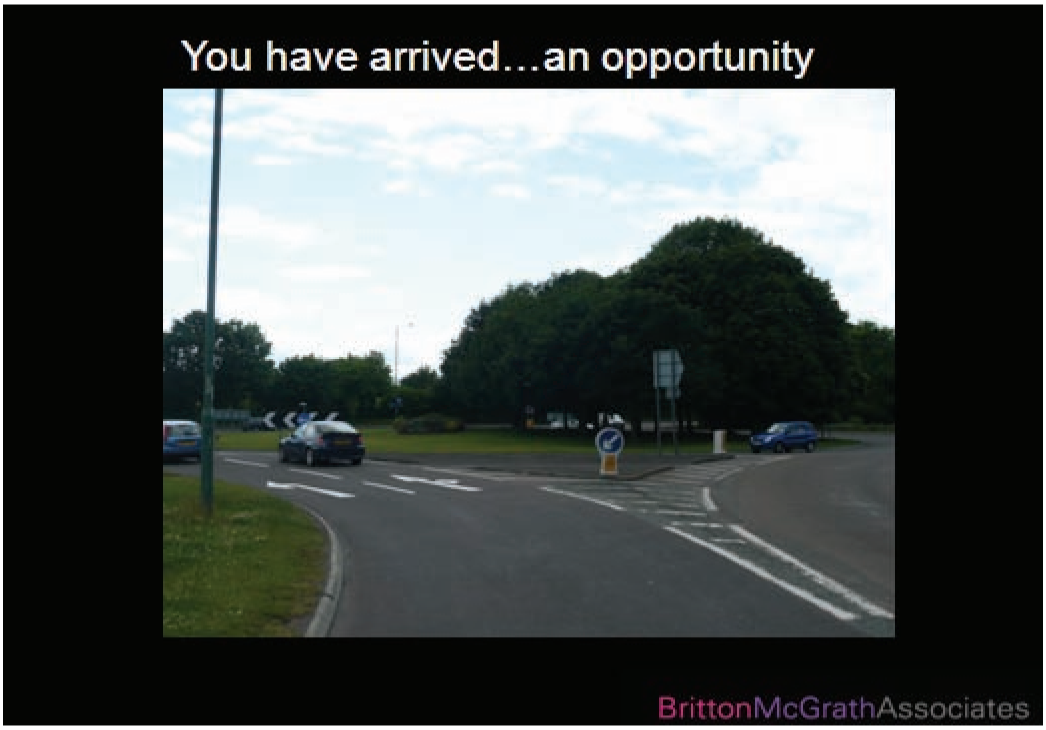
- During the research phase of this study we received a lot of feedback about concern and a lack of confidence in the visitor offering – why would anyone come, we don't have a cathedral.
- Our view is that Shrewsbury has a wealth of visitor experiences to offer….

- ….but the uniqueness of Shrewsbury comes primarily from its location and context within Shropshire.

- At the moment, the visitor experience, on the ground, is weak
- There is a lack of welcome or sense of arrival

- Although there are tangible opportunities to improve this

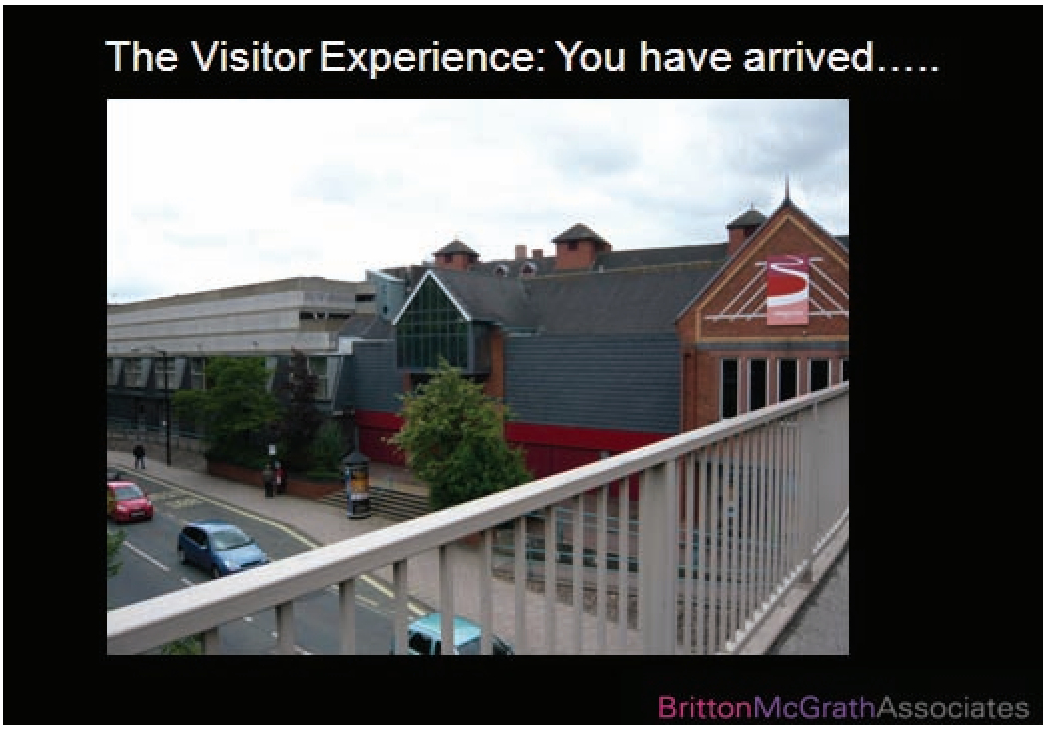
- And locations where more welcome and arrival messages could be developed

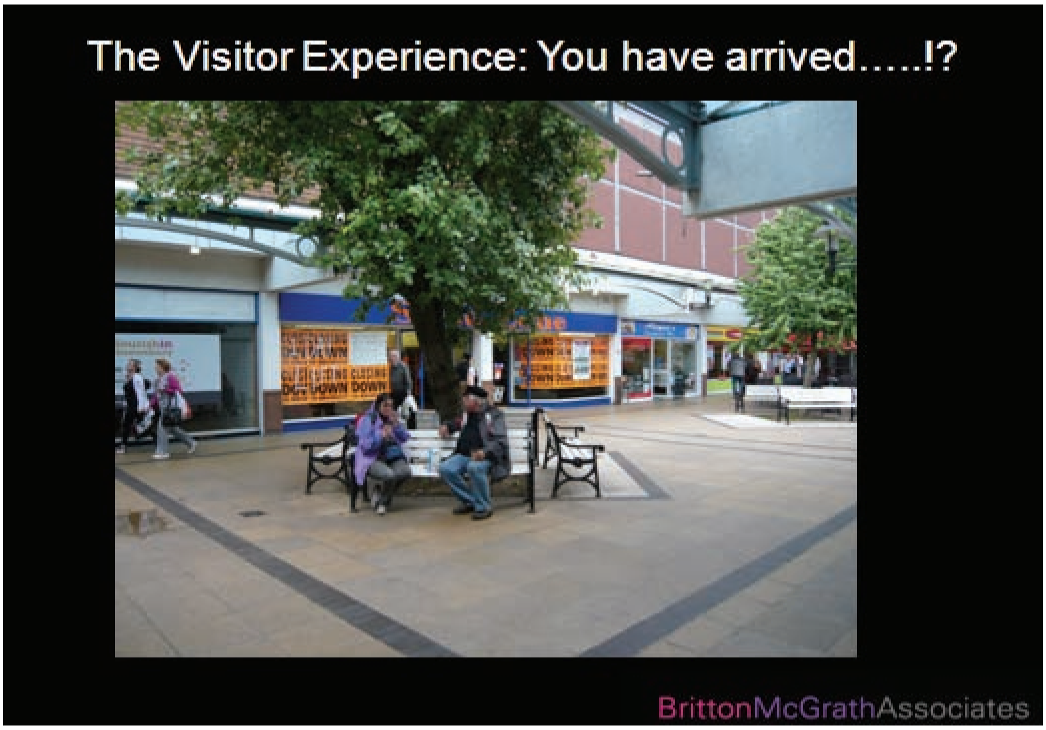


- But most visitors that enter the town from the East, using the brown signs, will enter via an industrial estate!

- Nando's and Asda don't give a visitor confidence that they have come to the right place for a unique day out!
- The sense of arrival for visitors that come by train is equally weak at present

- And the walk in from the Frankwell car park leaves a lot to be desired





- But there are good examples of where investment has been made in the arrival and welcome. There just needs to be more of this!

- In terms of the “product” there is a very promising castle….

- But finding the entrance is a challenge…and the asset is really not exploited in terms of its visitor experience potential

- Throughout the town, it is a challenge for a visitor to find the “best bits” – the historic market square is just out of site from this main thoroughfare

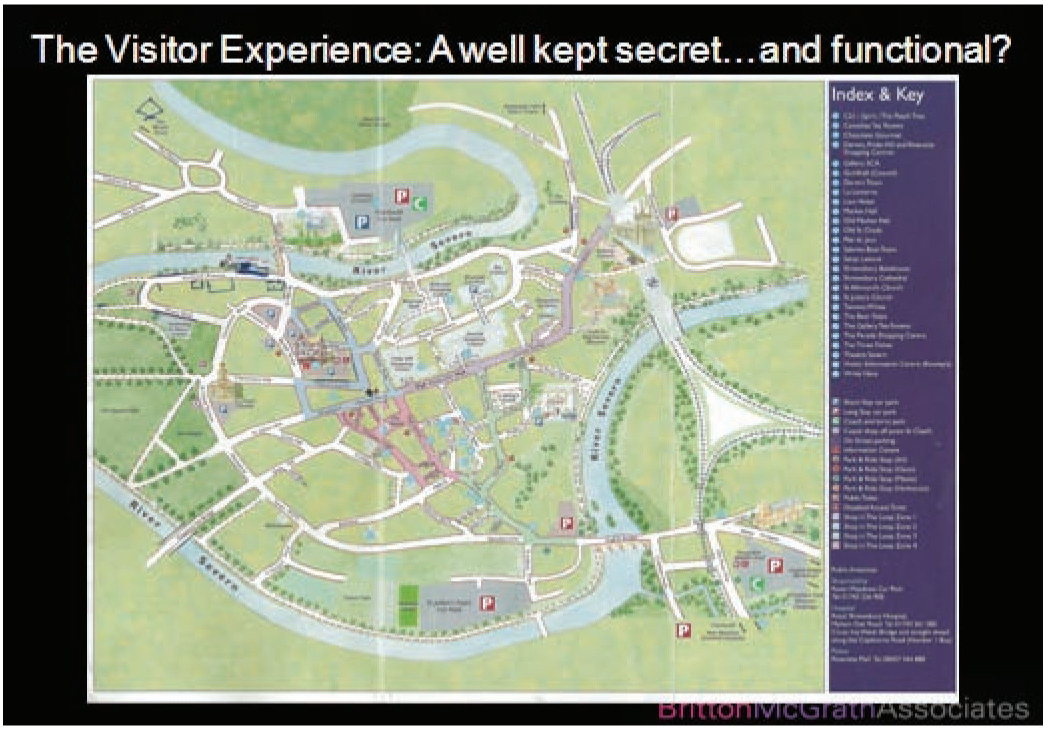
- The historic Market Square is tucked away and even if you find it the elements that offer a genuine visitor experience e.g. the café, the unique film experience, the pavement/café culture, is hard to find

- Across the town, the visitor signage is hard to see or recessive

- Meaning that visitors may not find the unique features that they lead to

- Assets such as Butcher Row have lots to offer a visitor in terms of unique history, but its only available to those in the know

- Where visitor aids exist they are basic and at best functional

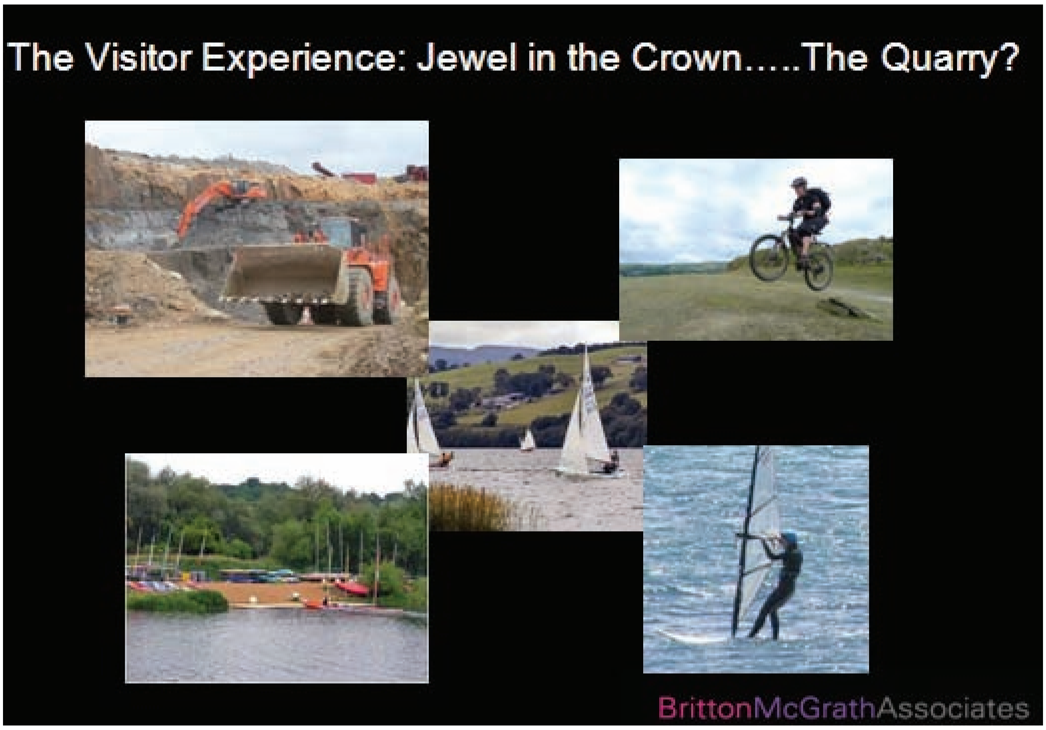


- Particularly as compared to the material available within towns that have a lot less to offer – this map from Lewes leaves the visitor in no doubt as to where they should go and what they should see in order to get the most out of their visit. Its creativity also means that it is an attractive proposition for sponsorship resulting in a sustainable business opportunity as opposed to a cost to the Council or Tourism organisation

- The best bits of Shrewsbury are off the beaten track and visitors need help finding them

- Even major assets like the Quarry are poorly visible from very near by

- And to anyone outside of Shrewsbury, The Quarry has significantly different connotations



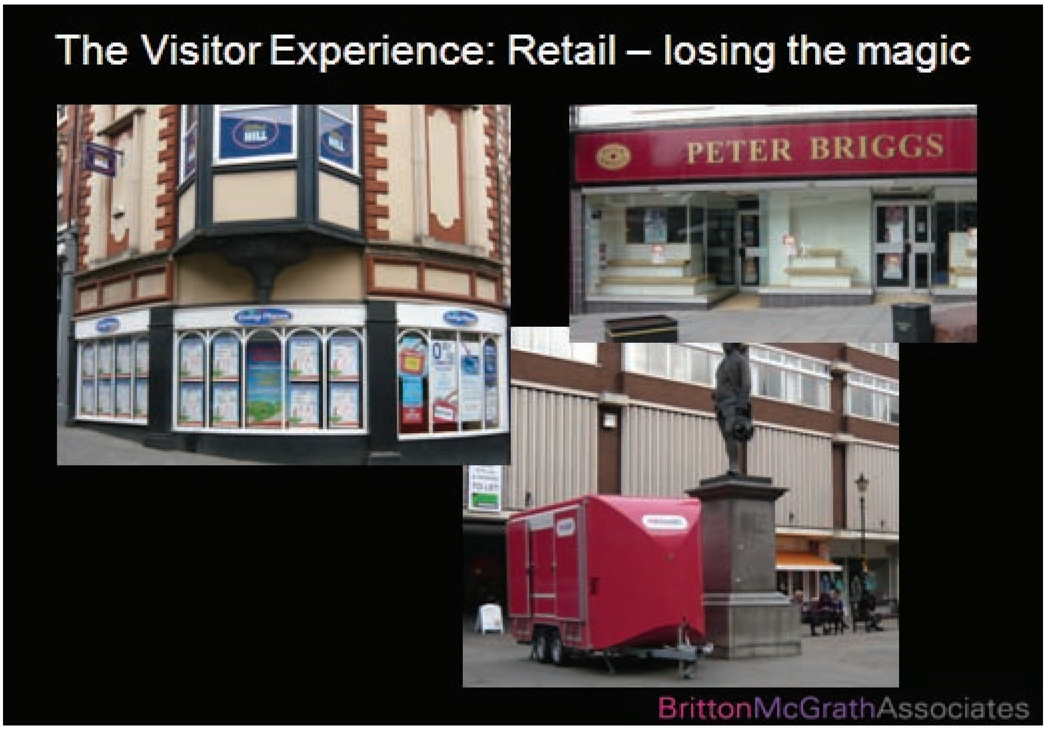
- As compared to what it really delivers….

- Even within the Quarry, unique gems like the Dingle are hard to find

- One of Shrewsbury's key strengths is the size and depth of its independent retailing

- In some cases, where high street brands exist, they are well integrated with the historic vernacular

- But in other areas, the businesses undermine the town experience

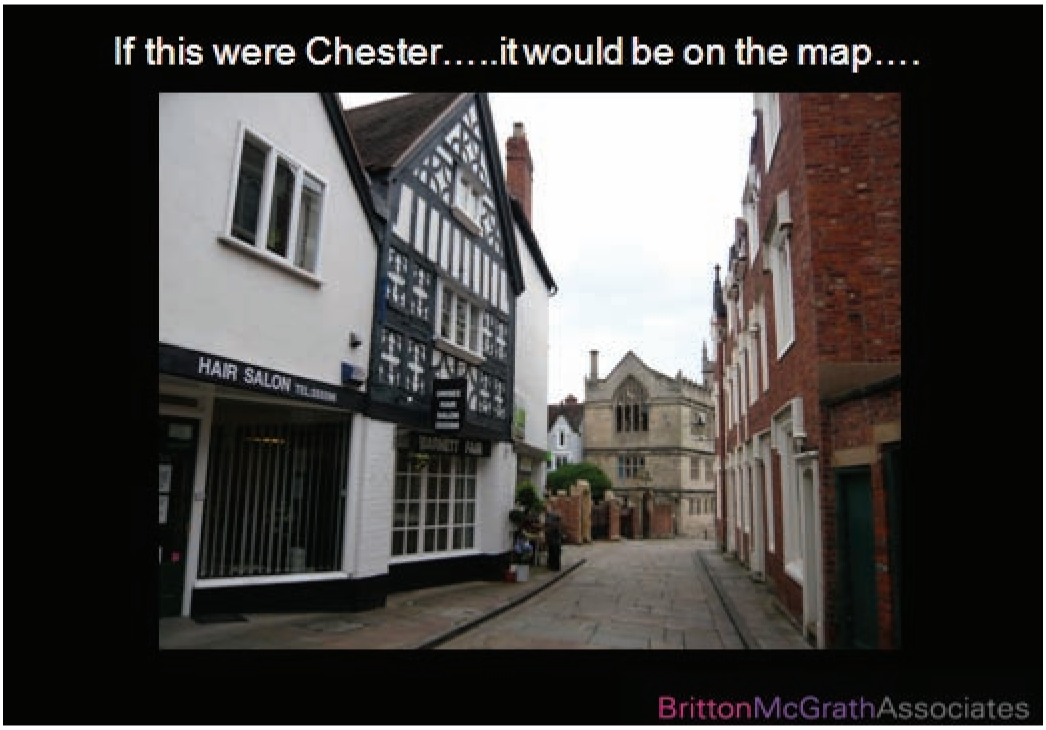


- And in other areas, the high street looks like it could be anywhere

- Shrewsbury genuinely has a unique ambience to offer a visitor

- But this will only be possible to sustain if the intrusion of 21st Century clutter is proactively managed

- Other cities, arguably with a lot less tangible historic "product" to offer than Shrewsbury, have successfully marketed their assets significantly better.




If this were Chester…..with an unmissable brass plaque….
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If this were Chester….. and floodlit at night!
Reference Library
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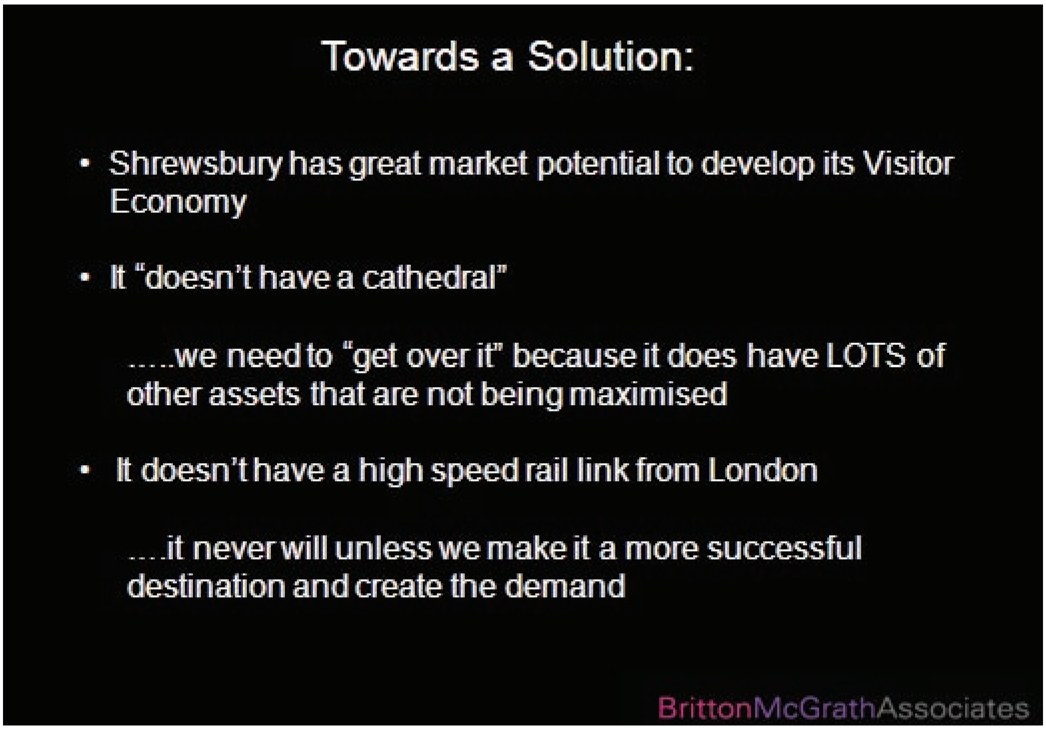
8 Towards a Solution

This section includes the slides from the final stakeholder presentation which summarise how Shrewsbury might strategically tackle some of the issues raised in the earlier slide show about the visitor experience.

The section to follow goes on to focus in on an Action Plan by which this strategy could be implemented.



Towards a Solution:

- Shrewsbury needs a Vision and a Personality
  - In a nut shell,
  - What is it
  - Why would I go there

  .....not a 10 line description as developed previously

- It needs to be taken seriously, adopted by the people/local businesses and lead from the front
- The Council needs to be seen to support and prioritise the visitor economy as well as reassuring residents that success is good news for all.
- All the different stakeholders need to be going in the same direction – fundamentally fractured at present

- A good place to live: a great place to visit....is achievable!

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Towards a Solution:

- Shrewsbury needs to be marketed competitively

- It needs a stronger brand identity
  - That pervades all aspects of what it does
  - Websites, leaflets, VIC activity, theatre.....
  - Music Hall
    - A perfect opportunity to make a statement
    - Or an opportunity to fade into the wallpaper....

- It needs a single minded proposition

  - Edinburgh has lots more to offer than the Festival
  - Cheltenham has more than its races
  - Chester is struggling with its identity – locked in its past
    - Currently investing in identifying their own DNA

  - A generic, all things to all people message will fail....

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Towards a Solution:

- Targeting the different audiences e.g.
  - Local 0 - 60 mins - repeat
  - 60 - 90 mins - day trip
  - 90 mins plus - short break
- Branding and Communication
  - Not strong enough visually or single minded enough technically
  - Need to lead a coordinated message
  - Have to work in the 21st Century
    - Tripadvisor
    - Twitter
    - Facebook……etc
- A new marketing strategy for Shrewsbury [in Shropshire] is needed to distil this and direct action

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Towards a Solution:

Shrewsbury town needs to think like a "visitor attraction"….

The town centre is no bigger than Alton Towers!

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Towards a Solution:

- Arrival and welcome
  - Where is it!?
  - A relatively small investment could make a big difference

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Towards a Solution:

- Functionality – make it easy!
  - Car parking – within walking distance of the town centre
    - The plan is in place - Frankwell, Wyle Cop and Abbey Foregate are the right locations for car parks where people enter the town centre
    - Possibly the only "big ticket" capital investment item on my list
  - Loos
    - Major investment…..or does it have to be?
    - Community Toilet Schemes have been very successful elsewhere
      - Low cost, high value
      - Intangible benefits
        - Improved community spirit
        - Improved business flows
  - Early closing…..a relic of the past.
    - The Castle can't shut on a Thursday afternoon
    - Sunday trading needs to be the norm

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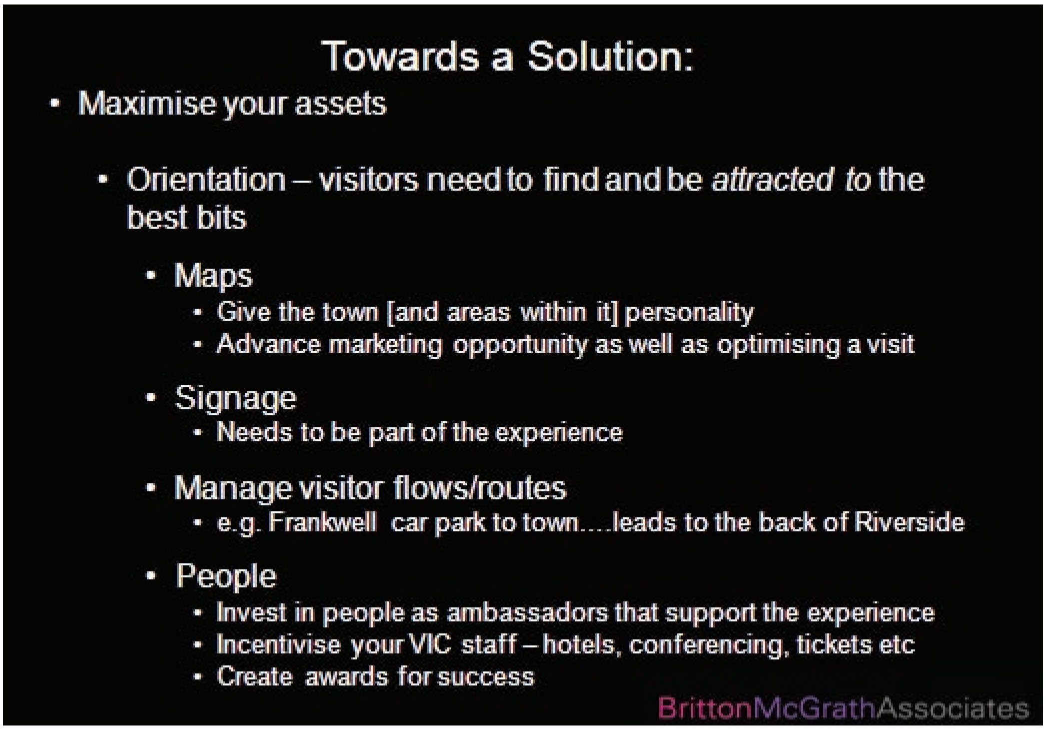
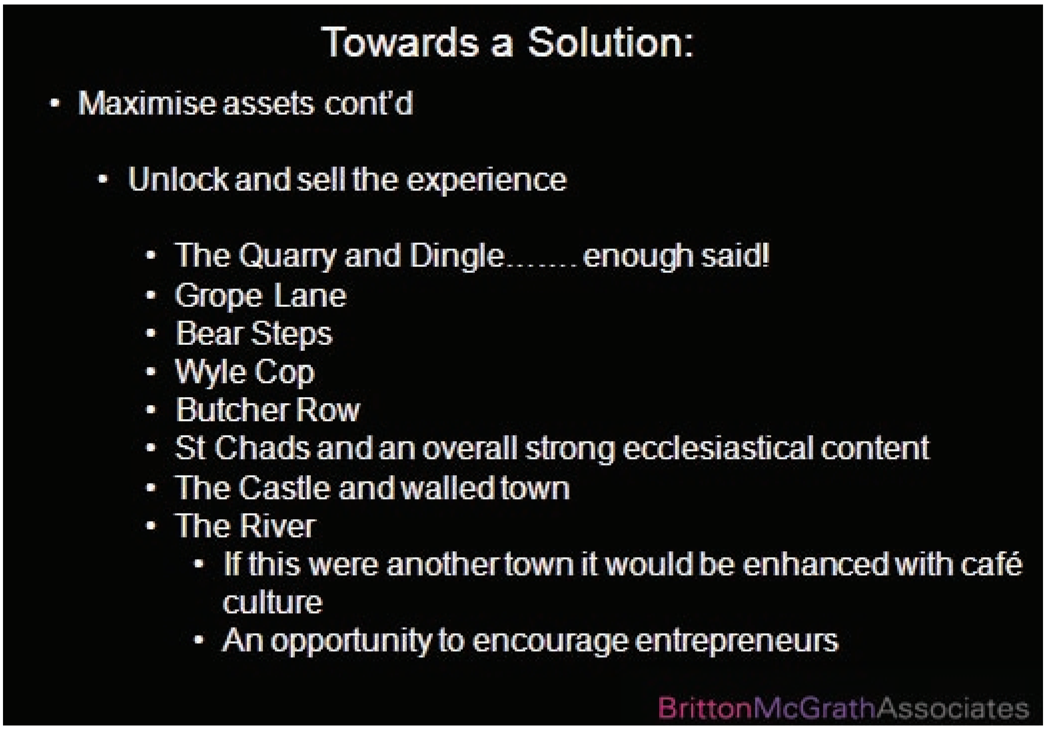

Towards a Solution:
Maximise your assets
Orientation – visitors need to find and be *attracted to* the best bits
Maps
Give the town [and areas within it] personality
Advance marketing opportunity as well as optimising a visit
Signage
Needs to be part of the experience
Manage visitor flows/routes
e.g. Frankwell car park to town….leads to the back of Riverside
People
Invest in people as ambassadors that support the experience
Incentivise your VIC staff – hotels, conferencing, tickets etc
Create awards for success
BrittonMcGrathAssociates


Towards a Solution:
Maximise assets cont'd
Unlock and sell the experience
The Quarry and Dingle…….enough said!
Grope Lane
Bear Steps
Wyle Cop
Butcher Row
St Chads and an overall strong ecclesiastical content
The Castle and walled town
The River
If this were another town it would be enhanced with café culture
An opportunity to encourage entrepreneurs
BrittonMcGrathAssociates

Towards a Solution:

- Maximise assets cont'd
  - The stories and people – Darwin, Spooner, Cadman, Thomas Telford, Admiral Benbow etc
  - Darwin
    - Polarised views
    - High risk capital investment – the fact is that its done better elsewhere and Shrewsbury doesn't own the "content"
    - Longer term potential does exist
      - Some good ideas on the table
    - My advice is to go for organic growth initially
    - Maximise and prioritise current "assets"
      - Darwin Festival
      - Darwin trails
      - Marketing investment
    - Longer term consider capital investment if the appeal is proven

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Towards a Solution:

- Maximise assets cont'd
  - Create itineraries
    - For families
    - For the grey markets
    - For those into retail
    - For those into history
    - Pushed at people [marketing] as opposed to available for those that ask

- But remember...

.....Your granny ain't what she used to be!

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Towards a Solution:

- Maximise assets cont'd
  - Join the dots
    - Within the town
      - 45,000 people visit St Mary's.....only 18,000 reach the Castle
    - Beyond the town – Shropshire could be the deciding factor in a visit to Shrewsbury
  - Unlock or exploit further your basic asset/current investment potential e.g.
    - Flower display themes
    - Christmas lights
    - Bus stops – ideal sites for map

But also, continually scrutinise the return on these investments.....

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Towards a Solution:

Review the return on these investments.....consider the unthinkable....

- Perennials vs annuals in some of the permanent flower beds?
- Focus the annual flowers in the baskets and hot spots?

Towards a Solution:

- Protect and enhance the ambience
  - Traffic, volume and flow speed – particularly Abbey Foregate and Wyle Cop through-route
    - Potentially/genuinely damaging businesses

•Some public realm investment – but it's not enough
•20mph signage/zones on their own aren't working
•Flowers are part of Shrewsbury's proposition – use them
  •Intrusive planters
  •Chicanes
  •Physically slow the traffic down

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Towards a Solution:

- Maximise assets cont'd
  - Protect and enhance the ambience
    - Quality of environment
      - Pavements and streets
      - Litter management
      - Shop fronts, bins etc
    - Antisocial behaviour
      - Communicate success
      - ….but a need to keep working on the problem, it is still impacting on business

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Towards a Solution:

- Maximise assets cont'd
  - Protect and enhance the ambience
    - Pride – manage the environment e.g. signage, hoardings etc
      - The streetscape would look different if it were owned by Grosvenor Estates!

- This needs to be proactively managed
  - Consultation
  - Design – create a "brand manual"
  - Communication and support

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Towards a Solution:

- Target dwell time
  - Positive experiences result in
    - Extended dwell time
      - = increased spend
      - = Reason to stay
      - = Reason to repeat
    - Good word of mouth
      - Free marketing
      - = Recommendation to visit
    - Overall increased visitors and income performance

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Towards a Solution:

- Target trial
  - A lot of towns have used festivals to reinvigorate their image
    - Flower Festival – good but not unique
    - Darwin Festival – too narrow at present
    - Cartoon Festival – possible potential if exploited
      - Broaden appeal
      - Invite expansion e.g. newspapers
      - Marketing investment
    - The Summer Season
    - A need to evaluate current performance and opportunity/potential based on real value and return on investment

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Towards a Solution:

- Support and lead your asset providers
  - Hoteliers
  - Restaurants
  - Independent retail
- Be positive and help businesses add to their current assets or experience e.g.
  - Quality signage
  - Outside seating for café's [Market Hall]
  - Investment in facilities e.g. bathrooms etc
- Be supportive e.g.
  - Use them!
  - Help current businesses when "negatives" happen e.g. Waitrose, Premier Inn, traffic.

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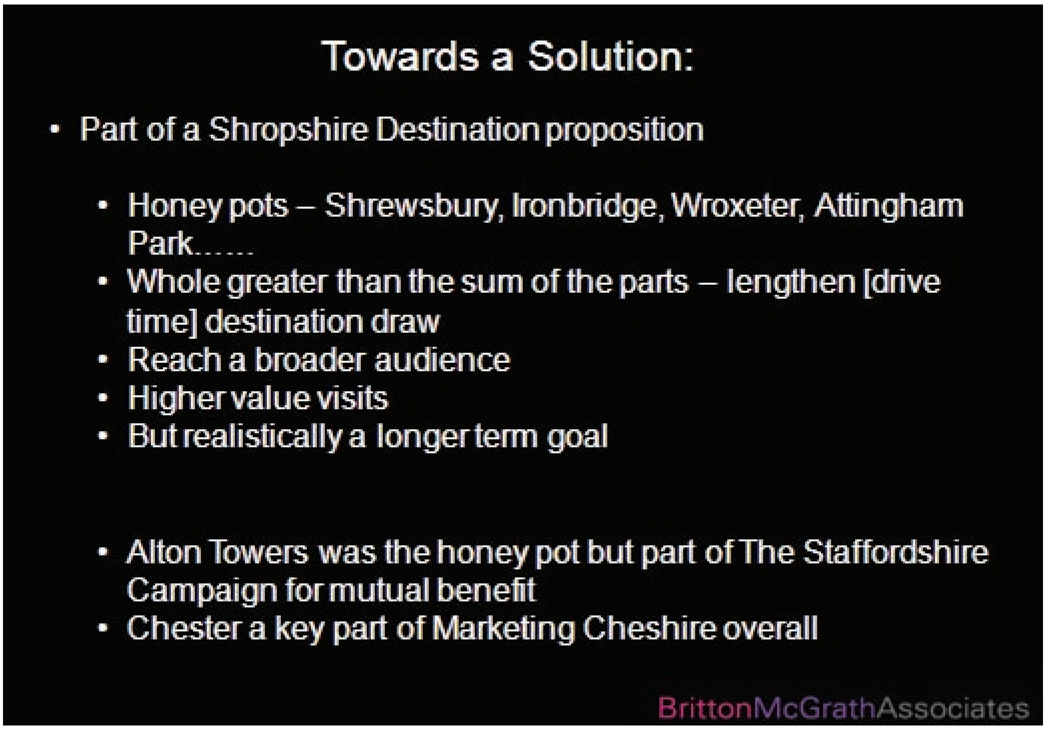
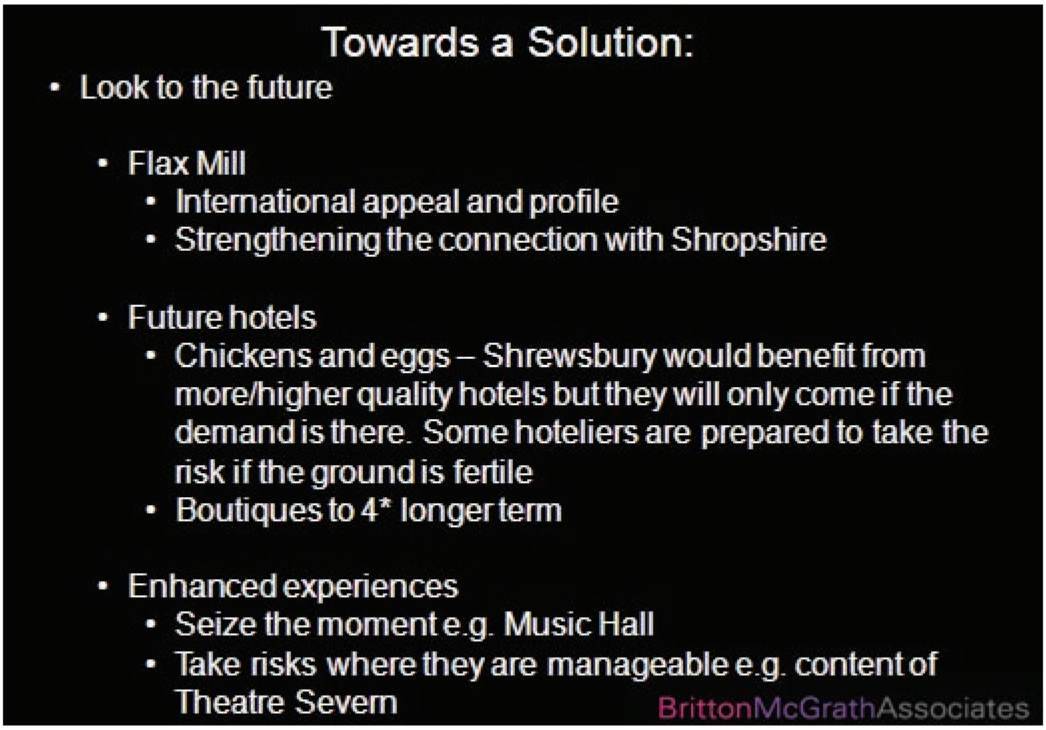

Towards a Solution:
Part of a Shropshire Destination proposition
Honey pots – Shrewsbury, Ironbridge, Wroxeter, Attingham Park……
Whole greater than the sum of the parts – lengthen [drive time] destination draw
Reach a broader audience
Higher value visits
But realistically a longer term goal
Alton Towers was the honey pot but part of The Staffordshire Campaign for mutual benefit
Chester a key part of Marketing Cheshire overall
BrittonMcGrathAssociates


Towards a Solution:
Look to the future
Flax Mill
International appeal and profile
Strengthening the connection with Shropshire
Future hotels
Chickens and eggs – Shrewsbury would benefit from more/higher quality hotels but they will only come if the demand is there. Some hoteliers are prepared to take the risk if the ground is fertile
Boutiques to 4* longer term
Enhanced experiences
Seize the moment e.g. Music Hall
Take risks where they are manageable e.g. content of Theatre Severn
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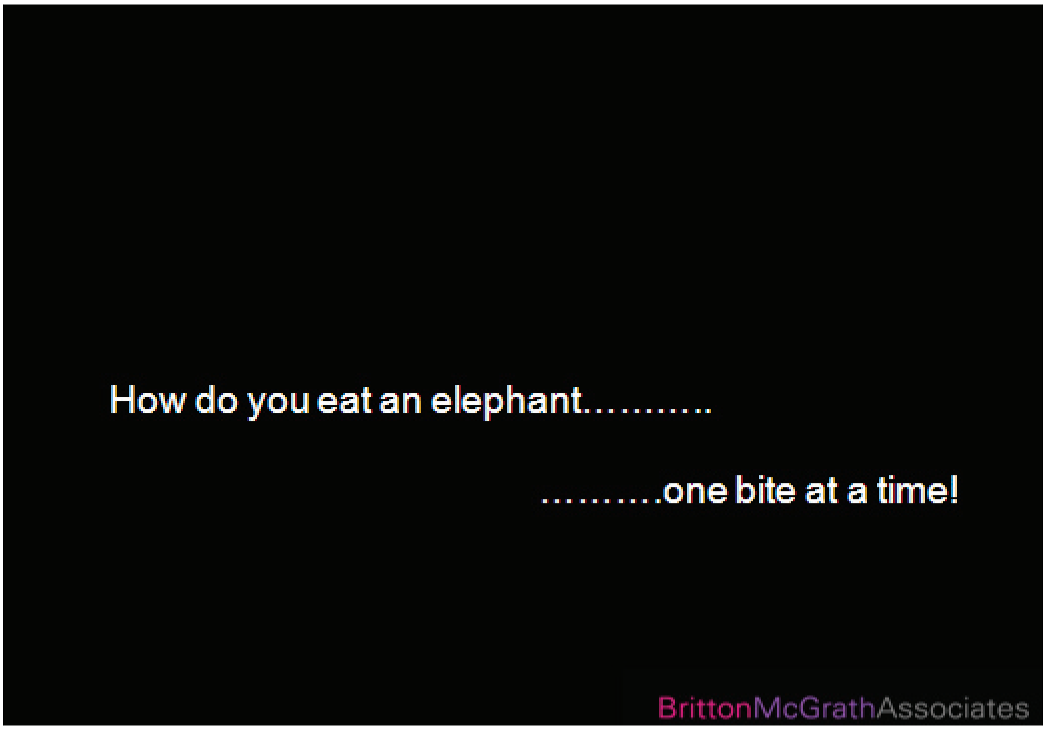

The following section translates these strategic thoughts into a tangible action plan which can be owned by individuals, measured and evolve as a management tool over time

9 Shrewsbury Visitor Economy Action Plan

The following Action Plan has been developed by Britton McGrath Associates with initial input from the Destination Shrewsbury team.

This represents a working model that the team can now adopt and develop. Its strength will lie in its ownership by the organisations and individuals that will go on to implement it. As a result it is partly a framework where the initial stage will be for the organisations and individuals to develop and populate the tables and sign up to delivering on the actions agreed.

This is a working management tool that is anticipated to develop and evolve over time as stakeholders sign up to supporting it and progress is made.

Shrewsbury Visitor Economy Strategy 2011
Vision Mission and Guiding Principles

Vision

Work in Progress Marketing Strategy
Welcome to our Boutique, Historic, Quintessentially English Town

Mission

Work in Progress Marketing Strategy

To develop Shrewsbury as a historic town that delivers a rich visitor experience; enabling the enjoyment of its unique assets for all our visitors from across the UK and around the world.

Guiding Principles

Visitors: sharing a unique mix of historic and boutique experiences within the river loop and across the Shropshire hills, we are like a book our guests can't put down. Everything that they experience will add to their visit, everything that we do will ensure that they recommend us and come back.

Employees and Experience Providers: We are all vital to sharing the story with our visitors. As a team we will strive to deliver to our visitors. We will create an environment in which everyone will feel recognised and proud of the part that they play

Local Community and Residents: Shrewsbury has been a vibrant and close knit community for thousands of years – historically looking to keep visitors both out and in! We will develop the relationship with our visitors by creating and building on mutual respect and understanding of everyone's needs and by managing the visitors and the environment sensitively

Stakeholders: Shrewsbury is both a National Treasure and an Asset. We will work with our stakeholders to ensure that they support our plans and are proud of their association with Shrewsbury.

Shrewsbury Visitor Economy Strategy 2011
Executive Summary

The Market:
- The market intelligence indicates that there is significant potential to develop and grow Shrewsbury's Visitor Economy [although the data does need to be strengthened and updated]
- By collaborating more proactively with the visitor economy assets across Shropshire, Shrewsbury has the potential to draw visitors from further afield and for longer stays

The Product:
- Shrewsbury has a strong portfolio of tangible assets that have the potential to deliver a rich visitor experience to a wide audience, however in order to succeed in this:
    - The town needs to embrace delivery of its assets in a visitor orientated manner
    - The town needs to improve its infrastructure in order to enable the visitor experience – helping visitors to find their optimum visitor experience and provide the means and support for them to enjoy them

Branding and Marketing:
- The town needs to strengthen its branding and visitor proposition in order to engage better with prospective visitors and compete effectively with other destinations
- Shrewsbury needs to create a marketing strategy and to invest in its wider communication, albeit, given budgetary constraints, in a carefully managed and targeted manner.

Management/Delivery:
- The Key Stakeholders in Shrewsbury need to embrace this strategy and provide leadership in the process of exploiting its potential
- The Key Stakeholders need to provide support and invest in their asset and experience providers
- Success needs to be communicated and rewarded

Objectives Evolution

Objectives from the 2007 strategy	Proposed Evolution of Objectives 2011
1. To Improve and Enhance the Visitor Experience	1. To expand upon and deliver our unique visitor experience anchored by its core assets a. Historic town experience b. Boutique retailing c. All set within a picturesque river loop d. In the heart of Shropshire and all it has to offer
2. To Increase Visitor Spend	2. To increase income to Shrewsbury from the visitor economy by targeting a. More visitors b. Repeat Visits c. Visitors from 90+ minutes drive time [and therefore….] d. Extended dwell time and Short breaks
3. To develop Shrewsbury as a leading regional cultural centre	3. To develop Shrewsbury as a quintessentially English, Historic town that is nationally recognised as a visitor destination

Shrewsbury Visitor Economy Strategy 2011
Objectives and Strategies

Objectives 2011	Strategies Adopted to Deliver the Objectives
1. To expand upon and deliver our unique visitor experience anchored by its core assets a. Historic town experience b. Boutique [retailing] c. All set within a picturesque river loop d. In the heart of Shropshire and all it has to offer	1. Engage with all of the stakeholders, residents and experience providers and develop a sense of "team Shrewsbury" 2. Remove barriers and enable visitors to enjoy the visit experience 3. Unlock the potential in existing assets 4. Communicate and apply Shrewsbury's brand essence [see Obj 3] to visitor focused assets 5. Optimise all current plans to deliver against visitor experience objectives 6. Invest, where necessary, in the product experience 7. Support local businesses and experience providers 8. Communicate and engage with other service providers in Shrewsbury where their operations impact on the visitor experience 9. Celebrate and communicate what Shrewsbury has to offer

Shrewsbury Visitor Economy Strategy 2011
Objectives and Strategies

Objectives 2011	Strategies Adopted to Deliver the Objectives
2. To increase income to Shrewsbury from the visitor economy by targeting **a. More visitors** **b. Repeat Visits** **c. Visitors from 90+ minute's drive-time** **d. Extended dwell time and Short breaks**	**1. Deliver on Objective 1 above!** **2. Explore, identify and communicate the key visitor destination drivers for Shrewsbury** **3. Proactively target dwell time** **4. Develop a competitive Marketing Strategy** **5. Leadership and coordination of all of the tourism marketing and communication** **6. Proactively identify and work to remove negatives that detract from the visitor experience**

Shrewsbury Visitor Economy Strategy 2011
Objectives and Strategies

Objectives 2011	Strategies Adopted to Deliver the Objectives
3. To develop Shrewsbury as a quintessentially English, Historic town that is nationally recognised as a visitor destination	**1. Invest in Market Research focused on….** **2. Identifying the most compelling brand and visitor proposition and personality for Shrewsbury** **3. Develop a competitively focused Marketing Strategy** **4. Engage with an aspirational mentor e.g. Chester, Cardiff to develop the optimum delivery strategy for Shrewsbury** **5. Provide leadership, profile and support for the Visitor Economy Opportunity** **6. Communicate and engage with all key stakeholders in order to enable coordinated delivery and ensure all Stakeholders are pulling in the same direction** **7. Celebrate, reward and communicate success** **8. Look to the future – plan future investment to keep the momentum going**