

## **Appendix 4**

# **Vibrant Shropshire Strategic Review**

**2021-2031**

Cultural Strategy for Shropshire

Developed in partnership by



**Shropshire**  
Council

## Appendix 4- Vibrant Shropshire Strategic Review

This document maps local, regional and national strategies that are relevant to the development and delivery of Vibrant Shropshire- Cultural Strategy 2021-31.

### 1.0 Local Strategy

1.1 Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 'Innovate to Thrive' 2019/20 to 2021/22

1.2 Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2017 – 2021

1.3 Building an economic vision for Shropshire: a research report by IPPR North for Shropshire Council (November 2016)

1.4 Shropshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2021

1.5 The Social Value Charter for Shropshire

1.6 Shropshire Museums Service Strategy 2018 – 2023

1.7 Shropshire's Great Outdoors 2018 – 2028

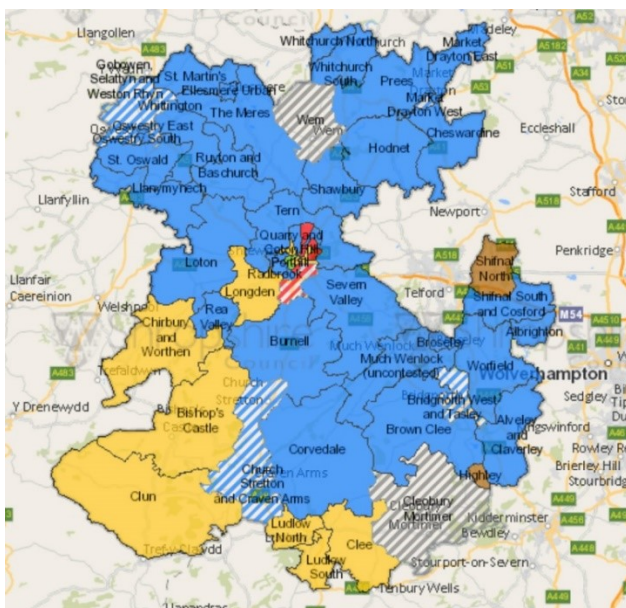
1.8 Actively Improving Lives – Energize Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin County Schools Partnership

### 1.1 Shropshire Council Corporate Plan 'Innovate to Thrive' 2019/20 to 2021/22

Developed by Shropshire Council

Key ideas:

- Environment and rural nature key to identity, economy and health and wellbeing
- Ageing population is big issue - 30% above national average
- There is a need to develop local creative economy
- Access to services is challenging due to rural nature
- Largest Rights of Way network in the UK
- Partnership is key on regional and local level
- Low productivity and high travel to work times
- Target Return on Investment of 1:10.



Map of wards

Priorities:

- More people with a suitable home
- Care for those in need at any age
- A good place to do business
- A healthy environment
- Sustainable places and communities
- Embrace our rurality.

Values:

- Environment
- Equality & Inclusion
- Excellence
- Fairness
- Innovation
- Listening
- Partnership
- Self-Reliance.

## **1.2 Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2017 – 2021**

Developed by Shropshire Council

Key ideas:

- Natural and cultural heritage central to profile / investment
- Opportunities to build hubs in different towns
- Partnership across the borders important – Wales and Midlands
- Creative industry growth could be linked to agri-tech and health-tech
- Volunteering hubs
- Wellbeing important and linked to skills and employment.

Vision:

To be the best place to do business and invest, renowned for its pool of local talent and expertise. We will strive to maximise our economic potential and increase productivity by fully utilising the benefits of our special environment and high quality assets.

Objectives

To increase productivity:

Support and grow new and existing businesses

Attract inward investment

Develop and retain talent and skills

Priorities:

1. Target actions and resources where there are economic opportunities
2. Enable businesses to start, grow and succeed
3. Deliver infrastructure to support growth

4. Meet skills needs of businesses and people's aspirations for work
5. Promote Shropshire to investors
6. Build our reputation as a Council that is 'good to do business with'

Targets to 2021:

Increase GVA (currently £6 billion) by 12%

£300 million of private sector investment

At least 3,700 new jobs

1,375 new homes per annum

### **1.3 Building an economic vision for Shropshire: a research report by IPPR North for Shropshire Council (November 2016)**

In 2016, IPPR North was commissioned by Shropshire Council and the University of Chester to develop a new economic vision for Shropshire's economy in the future.

Vision

By 2030 Shropshire can be a world-leading rural economy.

With its dynamic and diverse workforce, cutting-edge capabilities in agritech and digihealth, and as an area of outstanding natural beauty, well-connected to the Midlands Engine, there is no good reason for it not to flourish in post-Brexit Britain.

With the right ambition, strategy and leadership, Shropshire will be a case study in England's modern industrial strategy.

Key Findings:

- Proportionately high rates of ageing in comparison with neighbouring areas and with England as a whole, with implications for health and social care costs but opportunities to unlock the potential of this relatively affluent and active population group through developments such as digi health
- Relatively low productivity but with a higher employment rate and higher gross disposable household income compared with surrounding areas
- Good economic linkages with neighbouring areas and a diverse business base but with significant dependency on agriculture, tourism and manufacturing which have lower productivity levels than many sectors
- A relatively well-skilled labour force in comparison with neighbouring areas and the UK average with good school performance but challenges concerning graduate retention and skill shortages in specific service sectors.

### **1.4 Shropshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2021**

Developed by Health & Wellbeing Board, governed by CCG, Shropshire Council

Key Ideas:

- Big commitment to wellbeing as a determinant for health
- Rural nature of the county calls for different approaches and systems leadership
- Ageing population is increasing pressure on services
- Focus on empowering communities to use their assets to help improve their own outcomes – 'social value'
- Healthy environment lined to health outcomes

- IT solutions to access challenges are important.

**Vision:**

For Shropshire people to be the healthiest and most fulfilled in England

**Aims:**

- To improve the population's health and wellbeing
- To reduce health inequalities that can cause unfair and avoidable differences in people's health
- To help as many people as possible live long, happy and productive lives by promoting health and wellbeing at all stages of life.

**Priorities:**

- Start Well
- Live Well
- Age Well.

The HWBB defines wellbeing as 'personal contentment, fulfilment and ability to remain resilient in difficult times, in addition to having good health'

Has been developed according to the Social Value Charter for Shropshire

**The key issues in Shropshire are:**

- Mental health including dementia
- Rising obesity
- Child poverty
- Ageing population
- Outcomes
- Reduce health inequalities
- Increase healthy life expectancy.

**Principles:**

- Empowerment
- Respect
- Communication and engagement
- Evidence
- Compassion
- Flexible infrastructure
- Governance and accountability
- Social value and social action.

## **1.5 The Social Value Charter for Shropshire**

**Key ideas:**

- Clear framework which all stakeholders are signed up to

- Clear principles; economy, wellbeing and place.

The Social Value Charter for Shropshire sets out how public sector commissioners, service providers, voluntary, community & social enterprise organisations and businesses will aim to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Shropshire. The charter requires all commissioners and suppliers to consider the following principles:

1. Supporting the Shropshire economy:

- Supporting / purchasing from the local supply chain where possible
- Supporting or creating the conditions for growth in the Shropshire economy
- Developing education, skills and training opportunities within the Shropshire economy
- Employment opportunities for local people
- Good conditions of employment and fair wage rates and structures

2. Promoting wellbeing in Shropshire:

- Keeping people connected and maximising use of community infrastructure
- Initiatives to address social and rural isolation
- Supporting people and communities to be self-reliant, resilient, safe and mutually supportive
- Addressing the social, economic and environmental factors which contribute to poverty and inequality (prevention)
- Residents are involved in the design and delivery of integrated and accessible quality services

3. A great place to live:

- Support or contribution to community initiatives
- People are able to contribute through volunteering opportunities
- People have a good, decent and appropriate place to live
- People are proud to live in Shropshire and have a stake in their communities
- A green and sustainable county

## **1.6 Shropshire Museums Service Strategy 2018 – 2023**

Developed by Shropshire Council Shropshire Museums Services

**Mission:**

We will work as a team to ensure that all of our customers have a wonderful experience of our museums and collections. We will focus on attracting families, embracing their diverse make-up and needs. Our services will benefit the health and well-being of our local communities and we will strengthen our resilience by planning for the future.

**Shropshire Museums Service:**

- Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery
- Acton Scott Historic Working Farm
- Ludlow Museum Resource Centre
- Much Wenlock Museum
- Shrewsbury Castle
- Coleham Pumping Station.

#### Values:

- Customer experience,
- Family focus
- Health and well-being
- Resilience
- Teamwork.

#### Objectives:

- Provide a high quality well organised and accessible collection that supports the values of the Museums service and helps us tell Shropshire's stories
- Provide places where all customers feel welcome, comfortable, educated and excited to return
- Proactively engage with partners to welcome and diverse audience into our museums and to strengthen the cultural offer across Shropshire including (3.2) deliver an annual programme of activities aligned to the cultural calendar and (3.3) We will take our museums out to new spaces through a pop-up museum
- Increase our resilience by developing our fundraising capability and making the best use of our assets.

#### Priority Projects

- Increase access through rationalisation and digitisation
- Adopt the 'Kids in Museums' Manifesto
- Introduce an 'Object of the Month'
- Deliver a Customer Insight Plan
- Maintain visitor numbers and develop income streams
- Continue to recruit active volunteers
- Introduce a membership scheme
- Install 'wow' objects
- Redesign the Shropshire gallery to create more playful spaces.

### **1.7 Shropshire's Great Outdoors 2018 – 2028**

#### **Inspiring action to improve health, prosperity and happiness by cherishing Shropshire's Great Outdoors**

Developed by Shropshire Council but governed by a Strategy Board.

#### Key Ideas:

- Partnership led and delivered
- Clear KPIs
- Opportunities for the public to take part.

#### Vision:

By the end of 2028, people will be happier, healthier and more prosperous by being better connected to Shropshire's Great Outdoors through safe and cherished publicly accessible outdoor assets.

#### Aims:

- Happy – Encourage enjoyment of Shropshire’s Great Outdoors by more people, of all ages and abilities
- Healthy – Benefit the health of residents and visitors through increased physical activity and improved mental wellbeing in the Great Outdoors
- Prosperous – Promote opportunities to improve the local economy by sympathetic commercial use and development of the outdoor assets
- Connected – Bring people together within their communities to appreciate the potential of their outdoor assets, to make decisions locally about these, and to participate actively in their maintenance and improvement
- Cherished – Conserve and enhance special places that are important for nature, heritage and people.

#### Targets:

- Increase economic return by 25% (to £125m)
- Increase the amount of accessible natural green space from 1.66ha/ 1,000 population to 2.0ha
- Create four new visitor facilities across the county. Increase visits to the natural environment from 57% to 65% of the population
- Increase users of the Shropshire’s Great Outdoor website from 135,000 to 200,000.
- Ensure the Best Value Performance Indicator for the Rights of Way network at or above 70%
- Increase the ORVal Welfare Value of sites by 10% from £43,882,000.

Becoming a member of the Great Outdoors entitles members to a range of discounts including 10% of Theatre Severn and The Old Market Hall.

The website includes an interactive map of Shropshire

### **1.8 Actively Improving Lives 2022 – Energize Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin County Schools Partnership**

#### Mission

Our mission is to improve lives and empower communities through the power of physical activity and sport

#### Work with

#### Objectives

- Work with organisations new to us to reach inactive audiences and empower them to
- use physical activity as a vehicle for change
- Explore innovative approaches and partnerships to encourage those who are occasionally active to make physical activity / sport a regular habit
- Help deliverers to sustain and improve their provision whilst considering new audiences and approaches
- To become a renowned local charity that achieves the highest standards of governance and a balance of national and local investors.



## Approach

### Identified audiences:

- Independence in Later Life
- Actively Ageing Well
- Building Active Families
- Stabilising Young Lives.

### The organisation works as:

- A project partner
- An independent advisor
- An expert enabler.

### Other interesting facts:

Over 65,000 people in the county have dementia – set to increase by 55% by 2025.

1/3 of the Shropshire population will be over 65 by 2033

4/5 young people aged 5-15 are not active enough and 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school

Shropshire has significantly more care homes for young people than the national average.

## 2.0 Local Plans

2.1 Shropshire Hills AONB 2017/2018 review of progress against business plan

2.2 Shrewsbury BID Business Plan

2.3 Shrewsbury Big Town Plan

2.4 Oswestry BID Business Plan

2.5 Oswestry Town Plan

2.6 Oswestry HAZ

### **2.1 Shropshire Hills AONB Business Plan and 2017/2018 review of progress**

2020 is 62<sup>nd</sup> year of the Shropshire Area of Outstanding Beauty. It is governed by a 41-member strong board.

#### **Statistics:**

Size 804km<sup>2</sup> (approximately 23% of Shropshire)

Parishes 82 parishes, but only 16 wholly within the AONB

Population around 20,000

A rich natural and built heritage with:

- 126 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- 315 Local Wildlife Sites (+70 candidate sites)
- 2 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) covering 588ha
- River Teme SSSI & River Clun Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- 145 Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)
- 180 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs)

Public access:

- 1275km public footpaths
- 448km bridleways
- 97km byways
- 81km<sup>2</sup> of open access land

Projects:

2017-18 was the final year of a £2.32million, Heritage Lottery funded Stiperstones & Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme.

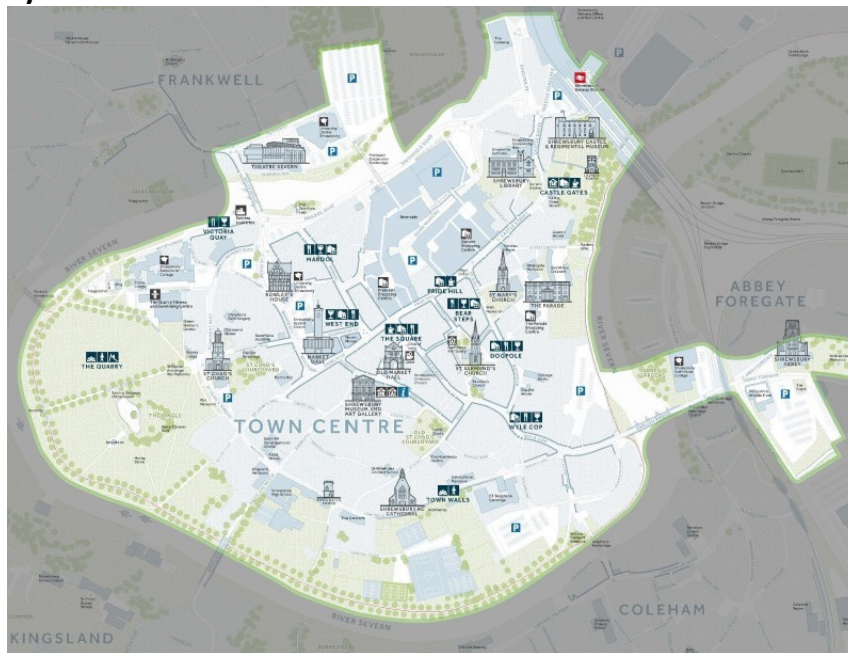
- £60,000 awarded in 43 small grants to landowners and community groups for natural and built heritage conservation work.
- 491 volunteers supported the Scheme, contributing over £150,000 worth of voluntary effort.
- 129 public events were delivered by the Scheme, involving at least 3,450 people.
- 47 traditional rural skills courses were delivered to 390 people.

Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership brings together local tourism groups, public sector bodies and tourism businesses in the area. EU funded tourism co-operation project

In 2017, between April and October, three artists used different media (song, visual and theatre) to explore and help people understand the fragile Shropshire Hills landscape.

'Heartland' was a partnership with National Trust, Stiperstones & Corndon Landscape Partnership Scheme, Arts Alive and Ben Osborne Photography.

## 2.2 Shrewsbury BID Business Plan 2019 - 2024



Shrewsbury BID is in its second term. The first was established in 2014

- Invested £1.9million including £430,000 raised above levy
- Developed the Big Town Plan
- Supported festivals and events including the DarwIN Shrewsbury Festival.
- 500 attendees to business workshops
- 20,000 social media followers on 'Original Shrewsbury'
- Footfall went up 2% between Jan and June 2018 (4% more than regional average)
- Purple Flag 3 years in a row.

The priorities for BID 2 are:

- Promoting and attracting more people
- Improving the experience

The proposed budget is £2m with 82% from the levy and a fundraising target of £310k.

Plans include:

- £800k into Promoting and Animating including: Promoting Shrewsbury as the birthplace of Darwin and New seasonal experiences for families
- £460k into Supporting and Enhancing including Improving visitor experience and Enhancing Public Realm
- £15k into Representing and Influencing including Influencing Local Decision Making and Driving the Big Town Plan forward.

## 2.3 Shrewsbury Big Town Plan

Developed by LDA Design for local partners including Council and the BID.

Vision for the plan - 'We see the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan as a blueprint for how County Towns or other towns might adapt and evolve in the middle part of the 21st Century. As the birthplace of the father of evolutionary science we want to celebrate Darwin's legacy by developing the Big Town Plan as a blueprint for thoughtful and purposeful change and adaptation in the Town into the future.'

500 residents engaged with shaping the vision. Have developed a 'Shrewsbury Test' to ensure development is best for the town.

10 goals for Shrewsbury includes these where culture can make a particular impact:

- (2) We recognise the rapid changes in working patterns and working practice. We want to create new, flexible workspace environments built around buzzy, active places, both in and around the town centre and out on the edge of town.
- (4) We want to build strong physical and virtual networks connecting education, healthcare, business start-ups, new industries and sports provision across the town to improve mobility and to form new alliances. The importance of well-being in Shrewsbury is key.
- (6) We are very proud of our education establishments. We want to retain more of our best young talent in the town and attract new talent from outside. We want to support innovation and start-ups in exciting new places.
- (7) We want to strengthen the all-round appeal of the town centre based around better place-making and the visitor experience. We want to strengthen independent shopping whilst continuing to attract destination brands. We want to inject greater diversity of use into the centre, housing leisure, entertainment, culture and the arts.
- (8) We want to make this green town greener still, by connecting existing green spaces across the town, making new links and new parks where we can and making much more of the River corridor. We want to make strong connections from the town centre, through the suburbs and out into the wider countryside and improve the health and well-being for everyone.

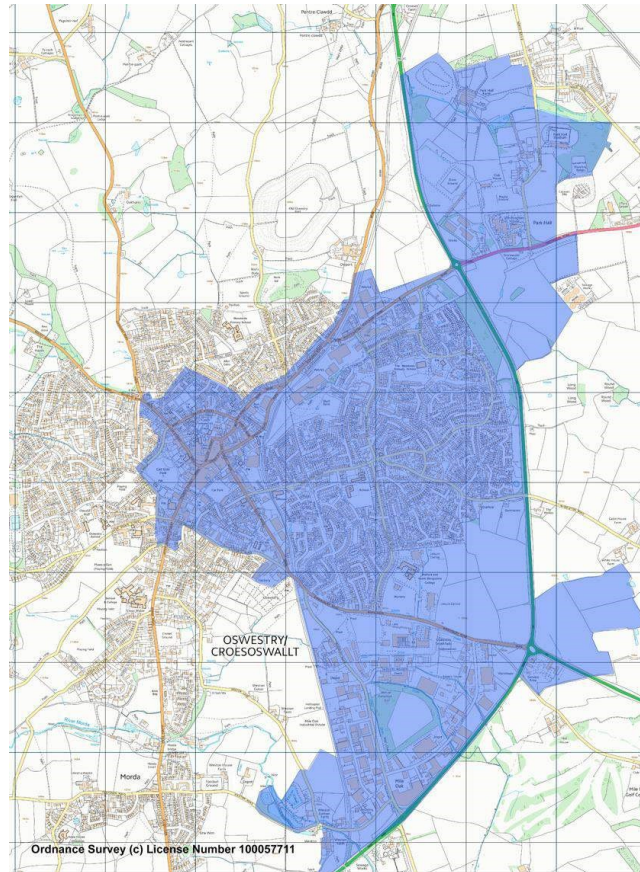
Four priorities:

- Rethinking movement and place
- Supporting, creating and nurturing vitality, life and a mix of uses
- Creating a place for enterprise
- Nurturing natural Shrewsbury

A Place for Enterprise includes plans for a Flagship Creative Hub at West End and high quality shared space/ studios along northern corridor

#### **2.4 Oswestry BID Business Plan 2018 - 2023**

The BID covers Oswestry's commercial core with surrounding commercial areas. It is one of 2 in Shropshire.



The income is expected to be £1.5m over 5 years with £270k from levy revenues per year.

The vision is for the town:

- To be recognised regionally & nationally as a great place to live, work, shop, relax and be entertained.
- To be a high performing centre for business growth and a national destination of choice for business investment.

The objectives are:

Raising Profile

- To effectively develop and promote the strengths and characteristics of Oswestry to prospective visitors and business investors

Business Support & Investment

- To actively support the growth and development of existing local businesses
- To attract and support start-ups, young businesses and new investment which complements and builds upon Oswestry's existing strengths

A Great Place To Be

- To build upon Oswestry's multi-faceted heritage and cultural assets to further develop a welcoming, vibrant & enriching environment where visitors, workers & residents want to be
- To be recognised regionally & nationally as a great place to live, work, shop, relax and be entertained.
- To be a high performing centre for business growth and a national destination of choice for business investment.

## Accessible & Safe Environment

- To facilitate safe, functional.

A survey was conducted of local businesses – 161 took part:

- Floral displays (81%) and festive lighting (74%) were rated highly
- Developing area's identity and branding to attract more visitors was considered to be the second most important initiative for businesses within the town centre (76%) after bringing derelict buildings back to i.e. (81%) and then developing the night-time economy (74%)
- Specific outcomes and outputs including pledge to get Purple Flag status (Shrewsbury has a Purple Flag).

## 2.5 Oswestry Town Plan

Developed over 2012 and 2013 this presented a vision for Oswestry in 2020.

Second largest town in Shropshire, close to the Welsh border

Relatively younger profile

Retail biggest employer

Indoor and outdoor markets

Relatively affluent but pockets of deprivation

Identified opportunity around 'developing the town's growing arts and culture scene'

Also needs to enliven town centre and attract tourists

Vision:

Oswestry – A distinctive and progressive borderland market town

Themes:

- A vibrant and welcoming town centre
- A strong and enterprising local economy
- A sustainable town with an attractive physical environment
- A caring, healthy and safe community
- A well-connected town.

Interesting ideas:

Vacant Premises

Town Team

Oswestry season of festivals

Wilfred Owen born in Oswestry

Ambition to develop a multi-purpose arts venue

Identified funding through CiL

Developing Oswestry's cultural, arts, sporting and heritage offer is a 'very high' priority for investment for 30% of resident survey respondents. 78% of resident survey respondents feel Oswestry should be looking to build on its growing arts, events and music scene.

## 2.6 Oswestry HAZ

Oswestry received £40m for a High Street Heritage Action Zone in 2019 led by the Future Oswestry Group.

High Streets Heritage Action Zones will deliver a four-year programme of physical improvements, community engagement and cultural activities to revive England's struggling historic high streets and town centres. Historic England will be working closely with a variety of local partners, including local authorities, Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce, community groups and cultural organisations to deliver positive change; supporting high streets adapt to the challenges they face by investing in their local heritage.

As a Heritage Action Zone councils, businesses and community groups can access expert advice and investment to bring historic buildings back into use and support historic high streets to adapt to the challenges they face.

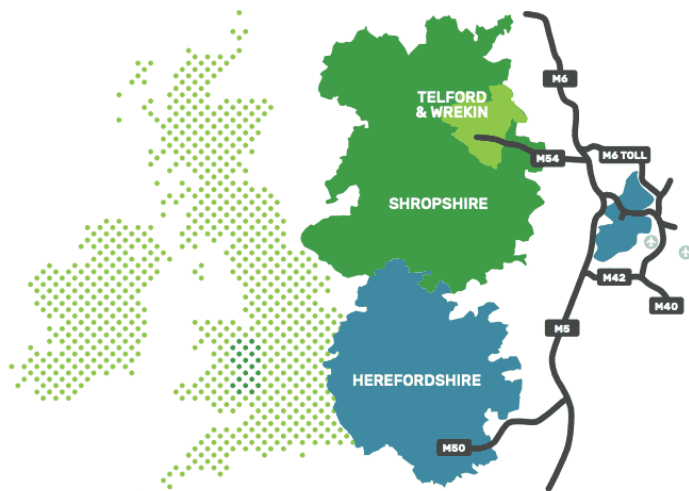
### 3.0. Regional Strategy

#### 3.1 The Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2019

#### 3.2 The Marches SEP Evidence Base

#### 3.3 Visitor Economy Strategy for the Marches (June 2019)

#### 3.4 Midlands Engine – Vision for Growth



The Marches map

### 3.1 The Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2019

Key ideas:

- Focus on digital connectivity for business to thrive
- Destination development ambitions linked to enabling wider economy
- Ambition to pioneer digital health and social care
- High quality places key to economic success.

The Marches is the LEP for Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire and Herefordshire.

The SEP sets out a plan to by 2038 to grow its economic output to £23.8BN, adding £8.7bn to the UK economy, and creating approximately 58,700 new jobs. Also, to be in the top 25% for life satisfaction.

There are four strands to the Marches LEP's work:

- Innovation and Business Environment – developing new spaces and business support
- Skills – developing partnerships between business and learning providers
- Infrastructure – supporting digital networks
- A High Quality of Place - Improving the fabric of place including a new 'Opportunity Town Programme' investing in distinctive strengths and needs of Market Towns.

Vision:

1. A place which is open for business, up for business and pro-growth.
2. At the forefront of changes in how people live and work using new technology and improved physical and digital connectivity to enable businesses and people to develop and succeed.



3. A growing place, attracting more people to come, stay and build their careers and businesses.
4. A destination not a boundary - gateway to markets in the Midlands, Wales, South West, North and Europe. A visitor destination with significant natural and cultural resources that is well known and attracts people looking for a high-quality experience.
5. A pioneer in the provision and testing of digitally driven health and social care for dispersed populations supporting healthy ageing and economic participation in later life.
6. A global centre of excellence in advanced manufacturing specifically automotive, cyber security, and the next phase of technology development in agriculture, environment and food production.
7. An inclusive place that enables residents from all communities to thrive and develop with quality jobs offering good wages, training and progression.
8. A collaborative and proactive place with businesses, further education institutions (FEIs), higher education institutions (HEIs) and public organisations working together to agree what needs to happen and getting things.

#### Interesting points:

- We are pioneering new approaches to health and social care in dispersed communities
- We have a very high quality of life with rich natural, cultural and heritage assets, and high-quality schools, attracting professionals and families
- The age profile of our area is older than the UK average and our dispersed population is relatively slow growing – this provides a core market and test bed for innovative health and social care technologies and approaches
- Historically low skills levels in some of our communities are being tackled by active, community level partnerships between businesses, schools, learning providers, our colleges, now strengthened following the Area Review process, and a growing university sector
- Micro businesses (those with fewer than 10 employees) make up 89.7% of the Marches business base, which is similar to the UK average of 89.4%
- Shrewsbury is the second largest town in the Marches with a population of 71,864
- The Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre in Shrewsbury is one of only 10 centres nationally. It offers food production start-ups and SMEs excellent production units equipped to the highest standard with on-site business support.

#### Sectors

- Core sector: Food and drink: The legacy and heritage of the Marches as a farming region has evolved into a nationally significant food and drink sector with over 9,000 jobs
- Emerging sector: Innovative Health and Social Care - An ageing population in a rural area offers opportunity to pioneer new innovative health and social care approaches and technologies. 'Shropshire has been selected as one of nine local authorities in a Government funded programme to explore how technology can shape the future of social care through piloting a data visualisation tool to identify areas of need for care homes and domiciliary care. Another technology project being trialled in Shropshire brings together the Council, The Lady Forester Centre, UCS, local GPs, the community and large technology companies Hitachi, Microsoft and Amazon to use smart watches, voice activated devices and messaging to support independence amongst vulnerable people. (p38)

- Enabling sectors: Visitor Economy - The Marches has a diverse visitor economy offer, comprising our beautiful natural landscape, including three AONBs, high quality locally produced food, World Heritage Site and historic market towns. The visitor economy plays an important role in our economy. Our natural, cultural and heritage assets are essential to attracting people to live and work in the Marches. The visitor economy is also a large employer with almost 4,250 jobs in accommodation, supporting thousands more jobs in related sectors such as restaurants, museums, transport, and visitor and leisure attractions
- Retail - Retail is a large employer. There are 33,700 retail jobs across the Marches, amounting to over 12% of total jobs. Only 3 BIDS – 2 in Shropshire plus Hereford
- Health and social care - A high number of people are employed in health and social care. The sector has 41,000 jobs with 23,500 of these in human health and a further 10,500 in residential care
- Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) - There are more than 4,000 registered VCSE organisations with a further 2,418 small informal groups in the Marches. The sector employs 6,760 people and has a large voluntary workforce, contributing over £6m to the local economy.

#### Innovation and Business Environment:

- Develop incubator, accelerator and grow on space at our key employment sites, such as Hereford Enterprise Zone, the Flaxmill, and Ni-Park, offering resources, mentoring and business support for new businesses in the early stage development and those which are rapidly growing. Through these we will encourage firms to be creative, learn about new ways of doing things and try new technologies
- Bring together SMEs and larger firms (starting with construction and agri-tech), as well as our HEIs, to develop business-led networks, events and workshops for companies to understand the opportunities which exist in their sector to innovate and boost productivity
- Continue to work with local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, the NHS and businesses to trial new innovative health and social care technologies.

#### Business Environment

- In an economy with such a high proportion of small businesses and high level of economic activity there is a real opportunity to strengthen the ability of the overall business environment to support growth and innovation. This can be through providing the right kind of space, networking opportunities and support for smaller scale commercial research projects and business/FEI/HEI links to engage with real world technical and business solutions.

#### Skills

- Our schools have a vital role to play in allowing young people to understand the careers available and to experience work, particularly in our more rural and less connected communities
- Build on the work of our local authorities, Young Enterprise and Careers and Enterprise Company programmes to develop a 'Future Leaders' scheme. This will offer schools the opportunity to engage with businesses locally to provide short term mentoring, workplace experiences and real world problem solving projects for 13 to 14-year-olds.

## Infrastructure & Place

- High-spec broadband and mobile coverage is also essential for high productivity growth. Given the shift towards remote/agile working and an internet-based economy, provision of ultrafast broadband across the area is vital to support home-based businesses and home-workers, as well as larger companies based in rural areas.

## A High Quality Place

- The Marches is a beautiful place with a high quality of life. People choose to live here and visit because of the many outdoor experiences that our countryside offers; the quality of our historic towns, large and small, and the opportunities of our larger urban centres. Our approach is two-fold:
  1. Our three main urban centres of Hereford, Shrewsbury and Telford
  2. Market towns across the Marches, which are important economic and employment centres serving the rural hinterland, with different specialisms and opportunities.

## Shrewsbury:

Shrewsbury is a renowned historic market town with excellent cultural and heritage assets a gateway town to Wales. Also mentions Darwin and the University Centre, Shrewsbury Big Town Plan, Flaxmill and Riverside schemes, food and drink

## Opportunity Towns:

- Oswestry (17,400)
- Ludlow (11,000)
- Bridgnorth (12,000)
- Bishops Castle.

Our rural places are important for their contribution to our high quality of life – identified opportunities: Digital connectivity, One Public Estate approach to land management and mobility innovation.

## Investing in our brand

- Work with our investment (Invest in Telford, Invest in Shropshire, and Invest Herefordshire) and tourist partners (Shropshire Tourism, Visit Herefordshire and Discover Telford) to develop a campaign to attract families and young people to locate here. This will use physical and digital connectivity, housing choice and affordability, education and employment alongside quality of life as drivers, and/or a 'Start your business in the Marches' campaign.

## 3.2 The Marches SEP Evidence Base

This uses data from 2016/2017 and compares that to 2014 figures in order to inform the SEP above.

## In summary:

- The Marches contributes £14.3bn to the UK economy
- Economic activity and employment rates are high

- The business base is characterised by micro businesses and has a high survival rate and low death rate
- Businesses in the LEP area have a strong trading relationship with the EU
- However, the economy of the Marches area as a whole is less productive than the national average
- Low productivity in part reflects the fact that the Marches has a relatively low proportion of residents with high-level skills.
- The Marches is an attractive place with a high quality of life
- Because of the high quality of life, the Marches area attracts more residents than those who leave
- The Marches has an ageing population, many of whom live in rural areas
- The Marches area's infrastructure is both a strength and a weakness – good connectivity generally but significant gaps.

#### General

- Since 2014, strong population growth in Ludlow, Bridgnorth and north of Shrewsbury with population falls in Oswestry
- Evidence base does not measure Creative and cultural
- Older residents in the south west of the county (Bishops Castle, Clun, Church Stretton).

### **3.3 Visitor Economy Strategy for the Marches - Blue Sail (June 2019)**

#### Key ideas:

- 'Independent' is golden thread for tourism
- Festivals identified as key strength and opportunity especially considering target markets
- Sector skills development strategy prioritised
- Potential for a joined-up approach across Marches area.

To deliver the full potential of the visitor economy as a contributor of wealth and local jobs, and to ensure the visitor economy is a showcase for the excellent quality of life that Herefordshire, Shropshire & Telford offers to everyone, whether they come for a day or stay for a lifetime.

There are five objectives that create the focus for the strategy.

1. To raise the profile of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin as a distinctive short-break destination within target markets, to showcase the special quality of the place and its people, and to use targeted promotion to drive more visitors and higher spend.
2. To raise the profile of Telford as a destination for conferences, meetings and exhibitions in priority sectors and industries.
3. To grow the capacity of local businesses and organisations, to support their role as ambassadors for Herefordshire, Shropshire & Telford and to raise the profile of the visitor economy as a career choice.
4. To show leadership and direction in the public sector and lever the resources required for the visitor economy to achieve its potential.

5. For public sector partners and businesses to work together productively to deliver a competitive visitor economy.

The golden thread is 'Independent': 'This is what differentiates the Marches from many other rural destinations.'

Target audiences: Independent Explorers

- Late 20s to 40s
- Professionals
- Couples, groups and families
- Interested in a culture of a place
- Attracted to places off the beaten track
- Activities
- Food and drink very important
- Want interesting, quality places to stay, eat, drink
- Enjoy cool niche festivals
- A bit of quirkiness a good thing.

The strategy calls for:

Investment in Visitor experiences including creative use of townscapes and landscapes, and for festivals:

*'Festivals are a reason to visit now and create more to do and see. Presenting the Marches as the natural home to interesting, niche and quirky festivals will profile the Marches particularly among the younger/family end of the Independent Explorers. Festivals present the opportunity for creative collaboration across assets, for example showcasing local food & drink and crafts, local artists/makers running workshops and creating learning opportunities.'* (p23)

Investment in People –

'skills and entrepreneurship are an enabler for this strategy'

Volunteers can be cultivated as champions and incentivised with discounts.

Micro-businesses need training and business advice at times and places which are business-friendly

Call for digital skills development

Next steps include commissioning a baseline visitor survey and audited skills need of tourism businesses.

In the longer term a Destination Partnership for the Marches is proposed, which calls for representation from the Cultural Sector as well as joining up Local Authority resources.

### **3.4 Midlands Engine**

Key Ideas:

- Taking holistic view across Midlands highlights Shropshire as a high quality place to live and work



### 3.4.1 Vision for Growth

The vision for growth is a manifesto for the region that focuses on the priority areas where partnership can add value of the work of LEPs and LAs.

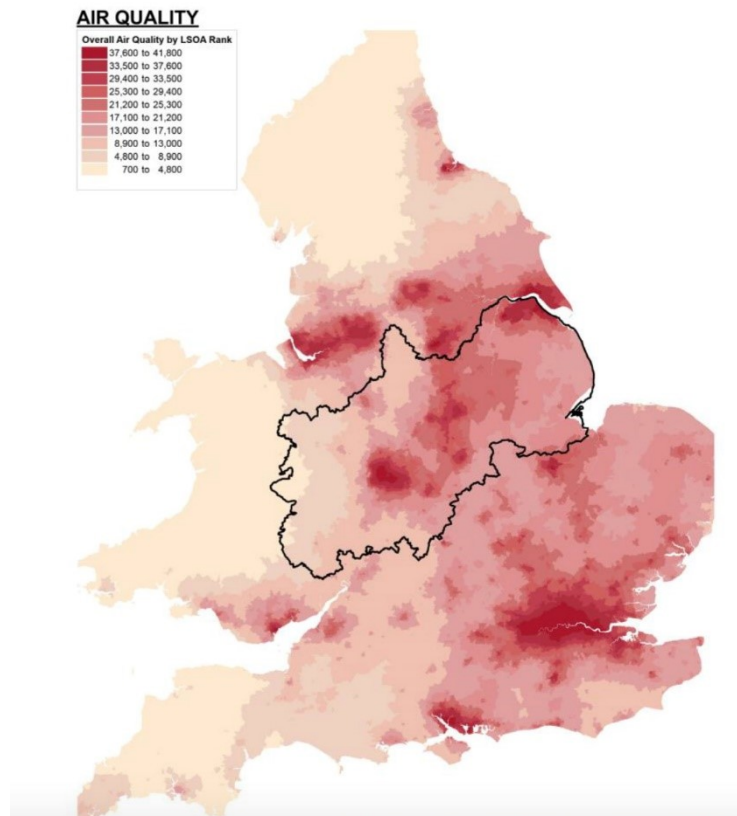
These are:

1. Connect the Midlands
2. Invest in Strategic Infrastructure
3. Grow International Trade and Investment
4. Increase Innovation and Enterprise
5. Shape Great Places - Promote the Midlands as a great place to live, visit, learn and work

Home to over 10 million people and 440,000 large and small businesses, the Midlands economy has grown by 18% over the last five years, slightly higher than the UK rate, but continues to under-perform nationally.

### 3.4.2 Midlands Engine Quarterly Economic Commentary (August 2019)

There is not much to report in this except that the information shows that there is significant better air quality in the Shropshire area than anywhere else in the Midlands area.



#### 4.0 National Policy and Strategy

4.1 Arts Council 10 year plan Shaping the Next 10 years (draft summer 2019)

4.2 Industrial Strategy (2017)

4.3 Culture White Paper (2016)

4.4 Industrial Strategy: Creative Sector Deal/ Bazalgette Review (2017/ 2018)

4.5 DCMS Culture is Digital (2018)

4.6 Healthy Lives Healthy People (2010)

4.7 Creative Health: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry Report (July 2017)

4.8 DEFRA 25 Year Plan

#### 4.1 Arts Council England Strategy 2020-30- Let's Create

Arts Council England has consulted extensively over the last 18 months on a new national strategy to guide their work from 2020 to 2030.

Vision: 'By 2030, we want creative nation in which every one of us can play a part. England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.'

Outcomes:

- Creative People: Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life
- Cultural Communities: Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture
- A Creative and Cultural Country: England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international

#### Investment Principles:

- **Ambition and Quality:** Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work
- **Dynamism:** Cultural organisations are dynamic and able to respond to the challenges of the next decade
- **Inclusivity and Relevance:** England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture they produce

**Environmental Responsibility:** Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility, ACE is expected to continue its commitment to environmentally sustainable practices which are embedded in the reporting requirements for National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) following an extensive research project with environmental charity, Julies Bicycle. ACE has an on-going focus on the Creative Case for Diversity and evidence of inclusive practice is required for all of their major investments.

ACE support both project and capital funding with an increasing focus on 'doing' not 'being': i.e. supporting specific projects aligned to evidenced need instead of core funding for strategic organisations.

ACE are committed to helping creative practitioners and cultural organisations made more use of new technologies to make and share work and to develop new audiences and new experiences. They have a Digital Culture Network to facilitate the cultural sector's adoption of digital tools and technologies.

#### **4.2 Industrial Strategy (2017)**

The Industrial Strategy is the economic white paper that sets out a long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK.

The strategy describes five foundations of productivity:

- **Ideas** — how we make the UK the world's most innovative economy
- **People** — how we build a successful, high-calibre workforce, now and in the future, ensuring good jobs and greater earning power for all
- **Business Environment** — how we secure the UK's position as the best place to start and grow a business
- **Infrastructure** — how we drive improvement to the country's connections, delivering a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure
- **Places** — how we put our national strategy on a local level, creating prosperous communities across the UK.

The strategy also outlines four grand challenges: Artificial Intelligence and Data; Clean Growth; Future of Mobility and Ageing Society. All of these are underlined with the need for global reach and partnerships.



### **4.3 Culture White Paper (2016)**

Published in 2016 and the first Culture White Paper for 50 years, this is still driving the DCMS agenda:

- Everyone should enjoy the opportunities culture offers, no matter where they start in life: with pledges around Arts Education; Skills and Talent Pathways; Diversity.
- The riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country: Productivity and Wellbeing; Place-making; Heritage including HAZ and Technology
- The Power of culture can increase our international standing: Cultural Exports; Brand Britain and Protecting World Heritage
- Cultural Investment, resilience and reform: Invest in growth and impact: Mixed economy and alternative financing, impact evaluation.

### **4.4 Industrial Strategy: Creative Sector Deal/ Bazalgette Review (2017/ 2018)**

This sector deal announced in March 2018, was developed in response to The Bazalgette Independent Review of the Creative Industries published in November 2017.

The government and the creative industries sector, through the Creative Industries Council (CIC), have agreed a Sector Deal to unlock growth for creative businesses.

The Sector Deal has invested more than £150 million across the lifecycle of creative businesses, including:

- Places of the future - by funding leading creative clusters to compete globally
- Technologies and content of the future - via research into augmented reality and virtual reality
- Creative skills of the future - via a careers programme that will open up creative jobs to people of every background.

### **4.5 DCMS Culture is Digital (2018)**

This document has led the way for the AHRC Creative Economy programme, Innovate UK and Immerse UK. The policy has three themes:

- Audiences: Using digital technology to engage audiences
- Skills and the digital capability of cultural organisations
- Future Strategy: Unleashing the creative potential of technology: Digital Infrastructure for Culture; Innovation: Collaboration and Partnership.

### **4.6 Healthy Lives Healthy People (2010)**

The public health White Paper '**Healthy Lives, Healthy People**' published in 2010, with its focus on promoting healthier lifestyles to prevent illness and promote wellbeing, there has been a growing body of evidence to support arts and culture's role in public health; much of this is documented in the all-party enquiry which produced the Creative Health report (2017).

### **4.7 Creative Health: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry Report (July 2017)**

A comprehensive and wide-ranging inquiry into the evidence, policy context and practice of arts contribution to arts, health and wellbeing. The key messages are:

- The arts can help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived.

- The arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health.
- The arts can help save money in the health service and social care.

#### **4.8 DEFRA 25 Year Plan**

##### **A Green Future: Our 25 year plan to improve the environment (2018)**

The policy document sets out a vision for a 'green Brexit' and sets out 25 year goals:

1. Clean air.
2. Clean and plentiful water.
3. Thriving plants and wildlife.
4. A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought.
5. Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently.
6. Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

Whilst managing pressures:

7. Mitigating and adapting to climate change.
8. Minimising waste.
9. Managing exposure to chemicals.
10. Enhancing biosecurity.

The plan will be achieved through six actions:

1. Using and managing land sustainably
2. Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes
3. Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing
4. Increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste
5. Securing clean, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans
6. Protecting and improving the global environment

Of particular relevance is (3) Helping people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces and Encouraging children to be close to nature, in and out of school.

Spending time in the natural environment – as a resident or a visitor – improves our mental health and feelings of wellbeing. It can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression. It can help boost immune systems, encourage physical activity and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as asthma<sup>21</sup>. It can combat loneliness and bind communities together. P70

As part of a development of social prescribing across England, specialist social prescribing teams could help to connect patients with environmental support.

We will do this by seed-funding a project, led by The Conservation Volunteers and supported by NHS England

We will launch a three-year 'Natural Environment for Health and Wellbeing' programme, focused on supporting local authorities, health organisations, health professionals, teachers

and planners in promoting the natural environment as a pathway to good health and wellbeing.

Developing a Nature Friendly Schools programme for schools and supporting more access from young people in PRUs