

GREEN PARTY e-BULLETIN FOR WEST SHREWSBURY including RADBROOK, PORTHILL, FRANKWELL & KINGSLAND

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MUTUAL AID GROUPS

Despite the tragedy of our situation it is remarkable to see how people have stepped up to help each other.

Many people have shared phone numbers with neighbours. People have signed up for support groups. A few of these groups focusing on this side of town are: [Frankwell Mutual Aid](#), [Cophorne Mutual Aid](#), [Radbrook Mutual Aid](#) and the WhatsApp group covering Rad Valley

and Kingsland - if you would like to join please use the links here.

Local people have joined the national volunteer scheme. Many more will have offered help but so far – thankfully - that help has not been needed. Often this is because council staff are looking after those in the ‘shielded’ category. They are also working hard to find those who may have fallen through the net.

I pay tribute to all those who have helped set up these groups.

KEY WORKERS

Our community includes many who work for the NHS, who work in care, in the shops that are staying open, in the delivery services, in the refuse services. It has been very heartening to see these people being thanked and recognised in recent weeks. They provide the foundations that make it possible for all of us to live our lives.

I have been contacted by someone in social work so I want to give a shout out to them. Often demonised by the press, social workers continue to work to keep the vulnerable safe. This includes Social Work students at University College Shrewsbury who are continuing with their placements.



LOOKING AHEAD

Our neighbourhoods are visibly different: rainbows in windows, less traffic and more people out cycling and walking in safety.



None of us know how long this will go on for or what the future will look like. We must work for a future where we properly value and reward our ‘key workers’ and where our community continues to work together for shared goals.

For the sake of our future health and to tackle the climate emergency I hope too that we will hold on to some of changes, for example less commuting and quieter, safer streets. I will continue working with others for this at Shropshire Council.

COMMUNITY SHIELD

The Green Party recently called for the immediate establishment of an effective, local,

‘test, trace and isolate’ system to allow for effective management of the crisis looking ahead.

[You can read our report here.](#)

FROM THE NHS FRONTLINE - by Julia Evans

In more normal times, I campaign for the NHS. I am in awe of those I used to work with and of those who currently work in any caring capacity. I'm also reminded that for every NHS or social care worker there is a network of others making it possible for them to do their jobs. Two that immediately come to mind are the supermarket worker who helped arrange the delivery of Easter Eggs to RSH, and her husband who has been making face visors with his 3D printer and raising money to do so. I know that hospital staff are so grateful for this support.



But the crisis our NHS was in before the pandemic has not gone away and neither have some of the poor management practices. I have been told that pregnant staff are sometimes not relocated to safer areas, PPE is inadequate and nowhere near enough testing has been carried out. When we clap at 8pm each Thursday we must also commit ourselves to a better future for the service.



Pete Gillard with his partner Gill George

I would also like to pay tribute to Pete Gillard, an inspirational campaigner who worked tirelessly to defend the NHS in Shropshire and nationally. Sadly we lost him recently to a combination of illnesses including Covid19.

Julia is Secretary of Shropshire Defend Our NHS, [Green Party Campaigner for Radbrook](#) and joint co-ordinator of Radbrook Mutual Aid group.

FROM THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FRONTLINE - by Chris Lemon



If you've caught sight of a passing bus, you'll have noticed they are almost empty - but not quite. Bus services are being maintained to support key workers, and the same is true of the railways. Timetables are much reduced, but even the 'Heart of Wales' line is still seeing one train a day, proving how vital rail links continue to be. Services to Birmingham on the line I drive have been cut to one an hour for the most part. Many of our passengers are care workers and Royal Mail staff. The 'franchise' model has been suspended and may well not return; we are now working for essentially a nationalised passenger rail service!

Incidentally, along with other train drivers I think that we are having to clean our windscreens more than usual for this time of year - maybe insects are recovering as other human activity decreases?

Chris is a local train driver, [Green Party Campaigner for Radbrook](#) and joint co-ordinator of Radbrook Mutual Aid group.

WILDLIFE BENEFITING FROM LOCKDOWN?

Over the last few weeks the local wildlife has provided some much needed comfort. Birdsong and the hum of insects has been much more noticeable without the noise of traffic and planes. The blossom and spring flowers have added colour and joy to daily exercise visits to local green spaces. Look out for returning swallows and swifts - it's comforting to see that some things continue unchanged!

It has certainly seemed as though there is more wildlife around than usual. There may be a number of reasons for this, but it does seem to show how quickly nature recovers when air pollution and disturbance falls.



OTHER COUNCIL NEWS

Shropshire Council is starting online meetings at the end of April. [You can listen in to the Cabinet meeting by following the links here.](#) I have submitted two questions:

QUESTION 1

At a recent Place Overview Committee there was an agreement that an offer from WSP (contracted transport consultants) to provide expertise on climate issues and transport would be pursued. Meanwhile I am concerned that there is no sign of development towards LTP4 [Local Transport Plan], which should provide an opportunity to shape appropriate transport development, despite plans for new housing and employment areas being pursued through the local plan review.

When can we expect to see a draft LTP4; will this make use of WSP climate related expertise; and will this be timed such that it supports sustainable and active transport solutions for additional housing and employment?

QUESTION 2

The Centre for Public Scrutiny recommend that scrutiny functions remain critical but have a new role during the Covid 19 emergency. They mention in particular the need for continued scrutiny regarding social care - especially given the easements provided by government; the effectiveness of the various levels of collaborative working to face the emergency; and protecting vulnerable children.

What plans are there for a slimmed down but still rigorous public scrutiny process?

ESSENTIAL INFO BOX

If you think you may have Covid-19

Dial NHS 111

Online: <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

Shropshire Council Coronavirus helpline for non-health related enquiries

0345 678 9028

8am to 6pm weekdays, 9am to 1pm Saturday

Email customerfirst@shropshire.gov.uk

Child welfare and safety

0345 678 9021

For concerns about a child's safety or welfare, or for family support

Adult welfare and safety

0345 678 9044

For concerns about a vulnerable adult's safety or welfare, or advice about adult social care

Council tax and benefits

0345 678 9002

Email: council.tax@shropshire.gov.uk

Email: benefits@shropshire.gov.uk

Housing support, including homelessness and prevention

0345 678 9005

Email housing.options@shropshire.gov.uk

Schools and education (including free schools meals)

0345 678 9008

Email customerfirst@shropshire.gov.uk

Waste and recycling, including assisted collections

0345 678 9007

Email customerfirst@shropshire.gov.uk

Business support and advice

For business rates enquiries:

business.rates@shropshire.gov.uk

For business-related enquiries:

COVID19businessenquiries@shropshire.gov.uk

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES DURING LOCKDOWN

Many local businesses remain open during lockdown. Some are operating online, as a delivery service only or have reduced their opening hours so please double check the arrangements beforehand. Any shop that remains open is of course operating social distancing measures.

Here are some examples of the local businesses you can support during this difficult time.



Get in touch



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