

Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community Covenant

Memorandum of Understanding / Covenant Charter

Purpose:

To work collaboratively with Shropshire Council at a neighbourhood-level to share power and make decisions together, that are rooted in our community and enhance and improve the lives of the people of Market Drayton and its rural parishes.

Values that we will adhere to:

Rooted in community

- We are residents, living among and contributing to our community.
- We are always listening to our community and actively bring that knowledge back into the Covenant, giving us an awareness of local need, priorities and limitations.
- We work to ensure we retain the trust of the communities we represent
- We practice 'dynamic local accountability' by have ongoing community participation via clear two-way lines of communication with our communities for example via: Facebook/social media, Whatsapp, website, face to face conversations, newsletters, community events, workshops, emails, surveys, elections etc.
- Knowledge gained through our connections and on-going community participation supports and shapes our decision-making in a way that encourages and promotes inclusion
- We leave our personal agendas/bias at the door – our voice in the room is the voice of the community we represent
- We keep decision making local.

Democratic

- Everyone has a say in decisions – we all have a voice in this space
- We listen to each other
- We ensure decisions reflect the views of the communities we represent, rather than institutions alone.
- We make decisions by majority (one vote per organisation) and once made, we all commit and back the result
- We encourage consistency of Covenant membership to build trust with our community and local authority

Inclusive

- We ensure we include the voices of all those within our community, including:
 - our rural villages on the periphery of Market Drayton
 - vulnerable people or under-represented in our community
 - those of minority cultures/faiths
- We ensure our communication is inclusive and diverse – using a mix of electronic, paper and person-to-person approaches
- We seek to hold meetings at dates and times that suit most people, recognising that not everyone will always be able to make it, we will work in a way that keeps everyone up to date.

Collaborative

- We commit to working collaboratively, making the most of partnerships where possible
- We are open about sharing our resources and information
- We are happy to share our journey with others
- We are happy to share our contact details with each other

Supportive

- We will act authentically and with integrity – we want to be genuine and transparent with each other and as a collective group
- We understand that we all come from different perspectives and believe that we all have the best interests of our community at heart.
- We appreciate that Shropshire Council have to work within a framework and have their own specific duties and responsibilities to uphold. We believe that they have the best interests of our community at heart as much as we do.
- We show respect, and act with transparency and honesty, whilst being critical friends to each other and the process
- We respect the process
- We take collective responsibility
- We take a heart centred approach whilst taking into account practical, spiritual, financial, emotional and environmental factors.

Innovate and Learn

- We are not be afraid to ask questions and to ask for clarity when we need it
- We have a reflection session at meetings to review our work and the feedback we have received from our communities, to check we remain rooted in Market Drayton & surrounding villages and for the highest good of the community. We amend our practices to suit.
- We are not afraid to try something new and take a risk.
- We don't mind failing as long as we learn along the way and apply this learning to improve our decision-making in the future

Empowering

- We will give each other encouragement.
- We will speak positively about each other and have each other's backs even if personally we are unsure
- We will empower our community to feel engaged with the process
- We will celebrate success and share our journey
- We give hope and wish to connect different cultures and sectors within our community
- Our decisions will encourage community independence, choice and control over their own lives.

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding, I am agreeing to join the **Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community Covenant** and adhere to this Charter through my own actions and through the actions of my organisation.

Members List as of 22nd July 2026

Organisation	Name / Representative	Role
Shropshire Council	Melanie France	Public Health Principal Integration & Inequalities Health, Wellbeing and Prevention Directorate
Market Drayton Town Council	Tim Manton	Councillor and Town Mayor
Moreton Say Parish Council	Judith James	Parish Councillor
Fordhall Community Land Initiative	Charlotte Hollins	General Manager
Stoke on Tern Parish Council	Sarah Planton	Parish Councillor, Vice Chair
Sutton-upon-Tern Parish Council	Michael Dams	Parish Councillor, Chair

Hodnet Parish Council	Lin Sherwin	Parish Councillor
Market Drayton Library	Catherine Westwood	Manager
Market Drayton Patient Participation Group	Jenny Horner	Chair
Festival Drayton Centre	Gary Hoggarth Malcolm Kay	Manager Chair
St. Mary's Church and Foodbank	Catherine McBride	Vicar
Ukrainian Hub	Iana Jacobson	Coordinator
The Grove School, School Governors	Richard Kolbe	Deputy Chair, Parent Governors, and Community Lead
Market Drayton Baby Bank	Carolyn Lawrence	Coordinator
Market Drayton Community Enterprise	Alan Cartwright	Chair
Shropshire Youth Association	Kerry Williams	Youth Lead
Market Drayton Foodbank	David Strudley	Chair
Market Drayton Community Amateur Sports Club	? Representative TBC	
Market Drayton Sports Association	? Representative TBC	

Other groups kept informed of our work:

The Royal Irish Regiment

Civic Society

The Zone Community Centre

Men in Sheds

Rural Parishes

How the Roles of Community Covenant Member and Community Leader Interact

Covenant Member

- **Works within a shared agreement:** They've signed the Community Covenant Charter and follow its values.
- **Makes decisions collectively:** One vote per organisation, decisions are made together. Majority decision is respected.
- **Focuses on inclusion and collaboration:** Ensures all voices are heard and works closely with Town & Parish Council, Shropshire Council and other respected local leaders and members of the Covenant.

Community Leader

- **Inspires and mobilises others:** Leads projects, speaks up for community needs, brings people together and makes projects happen on the ground.
- **Acts as a connector:** Builds relationships across groups, organisations, and services.
- **Advocates for change:** Pushes for improvements in local services, funding, and support.

When One Person Is Both

What's Possible

- **Stronger voice:** They can represent their community in Covenant decisions and in wider forums.
- **Better coordination:** They can align community-led projects with Covenant priorities.
- **Deeper trust:** They're seen as both a formal representative and a local champion.

What to Watch For

- **Balance is key:** They must separate personal leadership views from the collective Covenant voice through honesty and transparency
- **Stay accountable:** They need to follow and respect the Covenant's decision-making process, even if they lead elsewhere.
- **Avoid overreach:** They shouldn't make decisions alone or speak for the Covenant without agreement.

Example in Action

Imagine a local leader who runs a youth wellbeing group and is also a Covenant member:

- In their **leader role**, they organise events, apply for funding, and speak at public forums.
- In their **Covenant role**, they bring feedback from young people to the table, vote on shared decisions, and help shape inclusive strategies.
- They use **both roles** to strengthen community outcomes—but always respect the boundaries of each.

Community Leader and Covenant Member

Covenant Member



Works within a shared agreement



Makes decisions collectively



Focuses on inclusion and collaboration

Community Leader



Inspires and mobilises others



Acts as a connector



Advocates for change

◆ When one person is both



What's Possible

- Stronger voice
- Better coordination
- Deeper trust



What to Watch For

- Balance is key
- Stay accountable
- Avoid overreach