

## **Summary of actions agreed at Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community Covenant Meeting**

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025, Raven House**

### **Attendees**

Charlotte Hollins – General Manager, Fordhall Community Land Initiative / We're Right Here Campaign.  
Melanie France - Public Health Principal Integration & Inequalities Health, Wellbeing and Prevention Directorate, Shropshire Council  
Hannah Thomas – Community and Wellbeing Team Manager, Shropshire Council, community outreach.  
Catherine Westwood, Manager, Market Drayton Library  
Judith James – Parish Councillor, Moreton Say.  
Tim Manton – Mayor of Market Drayton Council and Market Drayton Town Councillor.  
Gary Hoggarth – Manager, Festival Drayton Centre  
Grant Robertson – Chair, Market Drayton Sports Association  
Richard Kolbe - Deputy Chair, Parent Governors Grove School and Communities Lead  
Carolyn Lawrence – Project Lead, Market Drayton Baby Bank  
Iana Jacobson - Ukrainian Hub  
Alan Cartwright – Market Drayton Community Enterprise  
Catherine McBride - Market Drayton St. Mary's Church  
Mark Lawrence - Pastor, Freedom Church, Market Drayton.  
Jenny Horner, Chair, Market Drayton Patient Group  
David Strudley, Chair, Market Drayton Foodbank  
Dan Woolley, Power to Change (observer)

### **Apologies**

David Beckwith – Treasurer, Market Drayton community sports club.  
Kerry Williams – Shropshire Youth Association  
Andy Brown – The Civic Society (Museum) and Walking for Wellbeing group.

**At the start of the meeting we welcome David Strudley to the group and new Covenant Member.**

## 1. Reminder of our Covenant Commitments

We reviewed the Covenant Charter, and reminded ourselves specifically around our commitments to

- Innovate and Learn
- Be Inclusive
- Remain rooted in community

We discussed the difference between a Covenant member and our roles as Community Leaders within our organisations. We reflected on our need to ensure our voice in the room was that of the wider community, and that our decisions are to be made are for the collective good.

Mel from Shropshire Council shared a slide highlighting the differences. All agreed to append slide to the Community Covenant Charter document.

**Action:** Charlotte to add this to website.

**All agreed:** As long as we can rationalise our statements at the point we make a decision, we are prepared to test and learn, adapting as we go. The aim is to have enough information through today's session so we can start to take some action!

Everyone has been working hard over the summer to gain the collective voice of the community with regards to the community and family hub. Some of this has been conversations and others have been written surveys.

All agreed to bring this collective knowledge to inform the conversations and decisions we make today.

**Action:** Hannah agreed to collate all the surveys and write a summary of data collected.



## A Community and Family Hub for Market Drayton and our Rural Parishes

The Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community and Family Hub will be a welcoming, friendly and supportive place/spaces where our community can share their problems and know that someone will do their best to help.

Our Hub will be accessible and wide reaching in its approach. Whilst it won't deliver services directly, it will be aware of our **community's priority areas** and our Hub will be a caring space offering guidance (signposting) and support at whatever stage people are within their life-journey.

Together, we will build a happier, healthier and more connected community.

### 2. Agree by vote our preferred hub location

- **By defining the facilities available at each location**
- **Matching this with the identified needs of our community**
- **Matching also to our Hub criteria**

The potential hub locations have been narrowed down to Festival Drayton Centre, the Library and Raven House. A representative from each venue shared main facilities and opportunities available at each venue. Members asked questions where appropriate.

	<b>Festival Drayton Centre (independent charity)</b>	<b>Raven House (Shropshire Council run)</b>	<b>Library (Shropshire Council run)</b>
<b>Connection to local community</b>	Very much part of the local community. Feels welcoming to all – it is a very sociable place. It is a Warm Hub. Everyone knows where it is. Existing café open Mon-Fri. It is a neutral well-liked space.	Not connected to local community. Many people have not heard of it. Most have never been in the building. Those who have accessed it directly for services do feel safe and perceive it as a private space.	Very welcoming and connected to local community. Is a Warm Hub. Inclusive approach in all offers. No café facility. Occasional drinks available. No air con.
<b>Capacity</b>	70% occupancy with room for expansion. Capacity to open weekends and evenings easily.	Lots of capacity within a very large building. Kitchen installed, but not café currently operating. Capacity could be increased if there were more volunteers.	No spare capacity. No available rooms. No storage space. Restricted floor space.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Full disabled access. Free toilets. Bus stop outside. Car park (paid) outside.	Full disabled access. Free car park across the road. However, getting keys is difficult. Building is often	Full disabled access. No toilets. In town centre. Local car parks (paid)

	Easy walking from town centre.	closed and not staffed. 10min walk from Town Centre. Volunteers at Baby Bank have found it extremely hard to access the building for their bookings.	
<b>Opening times</b>	Mon-Sun and evenings. Currently open access Mon-Fri 9-3.	Tuesday ONLY 9-12 No other open access.	Open Tues-Sat (Sat is half day)
<b>Clinical space available</b>	Yes - can be available with some additions. Rooms are high quality spaces already. Rooms are flexible and can be split - private spaces can be created.	Yes – rooms set up and ready. Capacity to use more rooms. Private space available.	No
<b>Access to volunteers</b>	121 volunteers existing. A place where local volunteers naturally gravitate to. Daily requests to join.	No.	Limited.
<b>Staff resource</b>	In place. More staff would be required to resource the Hub.	Limited.	No spare staff resource.
<b>Services offered</b>	Over 50 community services currently delivered here	8 – 10 community/health services currently delivered here.	Free wi-fi, computers, arts & crafts, sensory sessions, games. Job clubs, blood pressure checks, wellbeing fair.
<b>Opportunity to expand</b>	Plenty of flexibility at reasonable cost. Very adaptable to needs of community. Very few restrictions.	Yes – lots of room capacity. Not very flexible on use as building is a PFI with Shropshire Council – this makes all arrangements very complex and difficult.	Not much. Some council restrictions in place.
<b>Ability to leverage in additional funds</b>	Yes – registered charity.	No/ very limited.	Yes – Friends of Library can access small funds (non-constituted group)

### Pop-ups in village halls or small community venues

These were discussed, although in lesser detail to the above. The group agreed that satellite hubs would be stage two of the project, as the priority needed to be a permanent base.

Advantages of pop-ups, possibly with volunteer link workers

- We could reach those in the rural villages where public transport is almost non-existent

- We can reach our most deprived communities where feel safe is paramount to them asking for help. Surveys indicated that locations such as The Zone, were key anchor points for these communities, especially when their main contact is someone from within their community.
- A link worker could attend the Foodbank and offer a drop-in service there
- We also discussed the possibility of a travelling Hub Bus or the potential of converting an empty building in town into a new Hub if Festival Drayton was to reach capacity.

After the discussion, the group agreed that it mattered where the Hub was located, but that we could be flexible with where services are delivered, especially if moving them was going to incur additional cost.

#### **Needs we have identified**

- Adult mental health
- Rural isolation
- Access to health services
- Crime and safety
- Children and young people
- Cost of living
- Transport and infrastructure

#### **Hub Criteria we have agreed in previous sessions**

- Unconditional listening / Understand people – their situation
- Signposting to all services
- Encourage connectedness
- Welcoming space
- Well known in our community and well-connected in our community
- A place for Community Gatherings
- Services/Hub are available outside work hours
- Its accessible and easy to get to
- A place where lots of services already exist and there is scope to have more
- There are lots of volunteers who are patient and offer support
- There is a private space to share problems

*"I know where the hub is and that it is a place to seek help, everyone knows it's here including all the frontline services, and even my neighbour! It comes highly recommended."*

### **3. VOTE**

We agreed that those with a conflict of interest could not vote for their own venue, but they were permitted to vote for someone else's venue. Therefore, representatives from Shropshire Council (Melanie France, Hannah Thomas and Catherine Westwood), Festival Drayton Centre (Gary Hoggarth) abstained from voting for their venue.

**Members were asked to vote for the best venue, on behalf of the community they represent, to be the main Community and Family Hub location for Market Drayton and its Rural Parishes.**

Total votes cast: 14 organisations present held one vote each.

**Raven House:** 2 votes in favour, 1 abstention (Shropshire Council staff)

**Festival Drayton Centre:** 11 votes in favour, 1 abstention (Festival Drayton Staff abstained, Shropshire Council staff voted for Festival Drayton Centre)

**Market Drayton Library:** 0 votes in favour, 1 abstention (Shropshire Council staff)

**It was therefore agreed, by majority, that the main location for the Market Drayton Community and Family Hub will be the Festival Drayton Centre. It was also agreed that pop-up hubs should be sought where opportunities arise within the rural parishes and venues in our most deprived communities.**

#### **4. Next steps.**

The group agreed that more detail on what the hub should look like and how it should operate in the bests interest of our community warranted more discussion, and this should form the focus of our next meeting.

We have already noted that a landline number will be important for the new Hub.

**Action:** Festival Drayton Centre, Shropshire Council and the Fordhall Community Land Initiative will meet in September to draft a funding bid for the new Hub, for The Rayne Foundations, Where People Meet grants programme.

Expressions of interest must be submitted by Monday October 6<sup>th</sup> 2025.

Projects can be up to 2-years long, must be in a community centre, and must improve the health and welfare of the local community.

More information on the grant is available here [Where People Meet Grant Programme - Rayne Foundation](#)

#### **Next meeting:**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 1-3pm at Festival Drayton Centre

#### **Draft Agenda:**

- Review key criteria for Hub delivery/operations at Festival Drayton Centre to feed into grant application.
  - More detail on the who/what/when/How
- Agree next steps