

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

Wednesday the 3rd of June 2026, Festival Drayton Centre 1pm-3pm

### Attendees

Charlotte Hollins – General Manager, Fordhall Community Land Initiative / We're Right Here Campaign.  
Mel France - Public Health Principal Integration & Inequalities Health, Wellbeing and Prevention Directorate, Shropshire Council  
Carolyn Lawrence – Project Lead, Market Drayton Baby Bank  
Richard Kolbe - Deputy Chair, Parent Governors Grove School and Communities Lead  
Iana Jacobson - Ukrainian Hub  
Jenny Horner – Chair, Market Drayton Patient Group  
Michael Dams – Parish Councillor, Chair, Sutton upon Tern.  
Gary Hoggarth – Manager, Festival Drayton Centre  
David Strudley - Chair, Market Drayton Foodbank  
Lin Sherwin - Parish Councillor, Hodnet  
Judith James – Parish Councillor, Moreton Say.  
Barney Hill – Operations and Business Development Manager, Fordhall Community Land Initiative

### Apologies

Sarah Planton – Parish Councillor, Vice Chair, Stoke upon Tern (welcomed as new members at this meeting).  
Helen McSherry – Market Drayton Foodbank  
Kerry Williams – Shropshire Youth Association  
Ellie Radcliffe – Head of Policy and Research, Power to Change (observer).  
Tim Manton – Mayor of Market Drayton Council and Market Drayton Town Councillor.  
Catherine McBride - Market Drayton St. Mary's Church  
Alan Cartwright – Market Drayton Community Enterprise (and Market Drayton Town Councillor)  
Catherine Westwood – Manager, Market Drayton Library  
Grant Robertson – Chair, Market Drayton Sports Association  
Malcolm Kay - Chair of Trustees, Festival Drayton Centre

## 1. Welcome and purpose

Charlotte opened the meeting and explained that the purpose was to update on the wider Community Covenant work, then to discuss local development opportunities and how the group can help shape future plans for the MOD site at Tern Hill Barracks.

The group agreed that the Community Covenant is already helping to shift expectations locally and create a more community-led approach.

## 2. Community screen and tourist information building

The group discussed the proposal from Market Drayton Community Enterprise (MDCE) to install a TV/community information screen in the tourist information building.

There was unanimous agreement that it would support wider community engagement and visibility.

Charlotte has spoken with Suzanne Edwards who is now having further discussions with Rob Blackwood at Shropshire Council. Her proposal is to request that Shropshire Council lease the old tourist information building to MDCE on a peppercorn rent for as long as the Council are willing. MDCE are happy for the space to be shared with other projects in town who may wish to use it. This space has been vacant since 2018.

### **Decision:**

The group agreed to support the proposal and were happy for Charlotte to draft a letter confirming support on behalf of the Community Covenant

### **Action:**

- Charlotte to draft a formal letter on behalf of the Rural Parishes and Market Drayton Community Covenant, of support to Shropshire Council.

## 3. Local Plan and housing development

The group discussed the Shropshire Council Local Plan and the possibility of up to 1,000 new homes in the area.

There was concern that this could place pressure on local services, transport, infrastructure, schools, health provision and parish councils.

The Community Covenant are seeking to work with Shropshire Council, the MOD and the new developer as a strategic partner. We would like to be the conduit for community input, to shape the development to ensure it works in the best possible way for existing and new community. We are keen for this to not only provide homes that are healthy and sustainable, but that it is a flagship development for the whole area.

Key points included:

- The development must be connected to Market Drayton, not isolated.
- The A41 is a major barrier and needs safe crossings.
- Walking, cycling and public transport links need to be improved.
- Green spaces should be protected and enhanced.

- Housing numbers should be based on what works for the area, not just what maximises development.
- Housing should support community life, not just provide units.
- The development should include homes, jobs and opportunities together.
- Any future development must include strong broadband, Wi-Fi and mobile phone coverage.
- Integrating nature, ecological systems and environmental sustainability are vital for climate resilience and community wellbeing.
- The community covenant and local Parishes need to be recognised as a key stakeholder in the master planning process.

#### 4. MOD site and relationship building

The group discussed the importance of building relationships early. The group agreed that it would be useful to access the site and arrange a walkaround to understand what is currently there and what could be protected or repurposed.

We are waiting for contact with the welfare officer thanks to Catherine McBride.

##### Actions:

- Charlotte?Catherine M to continue building the relationship with the MOD and seek a site visit.
- Mel to circulate Copthorne Barracks in Shrewsbury as possible case study
- Charlotte to seek examples of community land trusts who have worked with housing developers

#### 5. Transport, access and connectivity

Key points included:

- Current bus services are not enough for a development of this size - or at the right times for young people to access jobs in local factories.
- Can the Market Drayton Town bus be extended to cover the Tern Hill area?
- Buses may need to start earlier, especially for factory workers and shift workers.
- The A41 needs safe crossings, possibly including traffic lights.
- Footpaths and cycle routes need to be joined up - is there an opportunity to open discussions with Buntingsdale Hall?
- Cycling along the A41 and A53 to Market Drayton is not a safe option. Alternatives need to be sought.
- Car-free communal green spaces at the front of houses should be a priority - encouraging a village green feel to encourage safe play, wellbeing and social cohesion.

- Parking will still be needed due to its rurality, possible parking for second cars and caravans to be considered in nearby location.
- The development should include secure cycle storage, shared parking and accessible routes.
- Existing and successful community bus and community car scheme should be funded to allow expansion to support the new community.

## 6. Digital connectivity

Poor mobile signal, Wi-Fi and internet are existing issues and concerns.

Digital connectivity is essential for:

- Working from home.
- Attracting younger people.
- Supporting businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Making the development suitable for modern living.

The group noted that the MOD site may already have strong fibre infrastructure, which should be investigated.

## 7. Housing, affordability and demographics

There was concern that developers may prioritise larger detached homes rather than affordable homes for young people, families and local workers. As those homes can be built more easily and sold for more profit.

Key questions raised:

- How many affordable homes for young people do we want/need?
- How can Market Drayton keep young adults in the area?
- Can housing be linked with apprenticeships, jobs and local enterprise?
- How can the development avoid becoming a disconnected estate?

## 8. Jobs, enterprise and local economy

Any large housing development should support jobs, skills and local business growth.

Ideas included:

- Starter business units.
- Small rental spaces for artisans and entrepreneurs.
- Apprenticeship links with local employers and public services.

## 9. Services, schools, nursery and health

The group discussed the pressure that a large development would place on existing services.

Concerns included:

- Hodnet Medical Centre is already under pressure and at capacity
- A new medical or diagnostic centre may be needed.
- School relocation or expansion needs to be considered.
- Nursery provision may not be enough. Should be expanded.
- Youth services, sports clubs and wellbeing activities should be included.
- A place to socialise and come together is vital.
- Developers may try to avoid obligations by phasing development, so this should be monitored. I.e. if they split into 200 houses at a time, the developer may work around having to provide extra services...?!

**Service provision to be focus of next meeting.**

## 10. Green space, growing space and environment

The group agreed that green spaces should be central to the proposal.

Ideas included: Allotments, Community gardens, Shared growing spaces, Play areas, Public footpath access, Green social spaces, Safe car-free areas. Agreement that green spaces should be enhanced and not lost.

The group noted that growing spaces help build community and wellbeing.

**Action:**

- Jenny to speak to commercial builder contact to see if they can help share a commercial builders perspective. Also info on allotments and community growing spaces.
- CH to share Wildlife Trust document - building homes with nature, possibility group can use this as a baseline suggestion.

## 11. Building design and sustainability

The group discussed the importance of sustainable and healthy building design.

Affordability was agreed as the priority, but the group also discussed:

- Good airflow. (also helps with various health conditions such as asma)
- Healthy and low-allergy materials.

- Energy efficiency.
- Heat pumps.
- Solar panels.
- Renewable heating.
- Natural building examples.
- Learning from eco-build projects, including Fordhall Farm. Straw Lodge.

**Action:**

Gather examples of good developments from around the country, including natural building, green spaces, transport and community-led housing.

## 12. Community voice and consultation

The group agreed that the Community Covenant should act as a credible community voice and be involved early in the planning process.

The group discussed creating a clear statement for Shropshire Council setting out the community's principles, priorities and concerns.

This should include:

- Affordable housing.
- Better transport.
- Digital connectivity.
- Health and school provision.
- Jobs and apprenticeships.
- Green space and growing space.
- Community-led input.
- Keeping young people in the area.
- Healthy, complete living.

**Actions:**

Charlotte to draft a few paragraphs setting out the Community Covenant's position.

A clear form of words should be prepared for the group to review and agree. - [see draft below](#).

### Summary proposals

## 13. Next steps

The deadline for submission is **15 July**.

The next meeting should focus on the remaining key areas for the proposal, including:

- Services.
  - Health provision.
  - Schools and nursery provision.
- Jobs and employment.
- Green spaces.
- Community ownership potential

**Date of Next meetings:**

- Wednesday 24th June 1pm-3pm
- Wednesday 15th July 1pm-3pm
- Wednesday 12th August 2pm-4pm

WE'RE  
RIGHT  
HERE.

The Campaign for  
Community Power

**The Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community Covenant wishes to be a strategic partner within the master planning and development of the Tern Hill Barracks site.**

We support the development of this site and wish for it to be a development that enhances the lives of our existing residents together with the lives of its new residents. We want this site to be a flagship for Shropshire because:

- it is community-led
- incorporates nature
- holds health and wellbeing at its core
- creates a place that is sought after by young people and families
- Integrates with and enhances its locality through thoughtful design, considered building materials, suitable infrastructure and community empowerment.

**Principles the Community Covenant have so far discussed and agree on are:**

- Housing should support community life, not just provide units for developer profit.
- Extensive community consultation will be led by the local Parishes and Community Covenant to ensure local voices are heard and incorporated
- Small affordable homes are required for the younger population to stay in the area. Too many larger detached homes in the area are not affordable for resident young population.
- Safe, regular, environmentally sustainable transport options should support access to large employers, healthcare and amenities.
- Existing and successful community transport should be enhanced
- Street design prioritises people, green spaces, social cohesion and safe play alongside appropriate car use.
- Community car parks and cycle storage with easy access to homes.
- The natural landscape is safeguarded and enhanced, including the integration of renewable energy, ecological improvements, public access
- Employment allocations should encourage start-ups and entrepreneurship.
- Super-fast broadband and excellent mobile phone coverage are required to support modern life.
- We will actively seek good examples from across the country that we can learn from, ensuring our input into the process reflects local need, national ambition, creativity and a willingness to step out of the 'business as usual' and do things differently.

The Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Community Covenant wishes to develop these principles in much greater detail, in partnership with the MOD and Shropshire Council.

We understand that community-led development is already supported by Homes England, the Affordable Homes Programme and the Government's New Towns Taskforce.

We hope you also see the benefit in working with us.