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OUR COMMUNITY AND COVID-19

Controlling the pandemic in Shropshire will need us all to continue to do our bit; wearing masks and keeping to social distancing rules, staying in touch with neighbours and with the mutual aid groups.

For track and trace to work effectively council staff need full information from the government's system. It is very worrying that councils have struggled to get this and I welcome efforts by many councils to push for better information. Green Party councillors have called for the whole system to be run by local authorities rather than by firms like Serco.

If you are concerned about the ongoing support you or a neighbour might need as we continue to move away from strict lockdown, please get in touch with me.



SUCCESS FOR NEW STREET SAFETY CAMPAIGNERS!



Julian has backed the campaign to make New St safer for pedestrians and cyclists

Pedestrian safety in New Street has been greatly improved with the new experimental one-way system. Backing a long-standing residents' campaign, I have been pushing for better safety since before I became Councillor for the area, so this is very welcome. In addition, some other streets now have 20mph limits, but at the time of writing these were not clearly signed – I am pushing for this to be improved.

More can be done for the wider area to prevent through traffic and to control speed. I will be asking for local views on this in the coming months. I am in regular discussion with council staff to keep this under review and will continue to push for 20mph limits on all residential streets.

THE POWER OF GREEN

As the UK makes essential moves towards 'zero carbon', investments in companies like BP and Shell are becoming increasingly risky. Many local people will be counting on a decent pension from the Shropshire County Pension Fund which currently includes these high-risk investments. Leaving money in these companies only slows down the urgent need to stop burning fossil fuels.

I was therefore very pleased to win a motion at the council meeting in July for 'divestment' from fossil fuels. This now needs to be acted on by those who manage the fund.

Thanks are due to the dedicated campaigners who backed me on this. Find out more about their campaign at www.fossilfreeshropshire.com.

Right: Julian campaigning against climate change in Shrewsbury last year. His motion to divest the Council's pension fund from fossil fuel investments was recently passed.

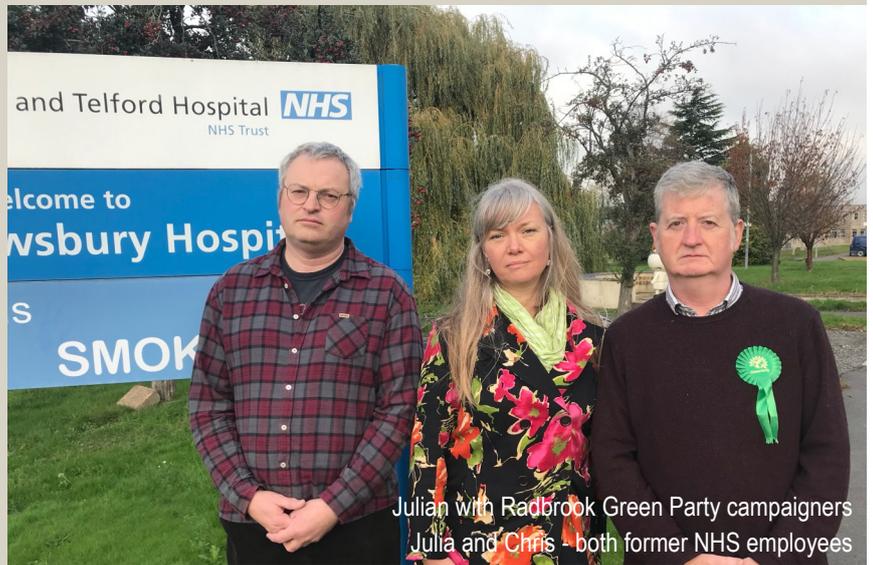


SUPPORT NEEDED FOR VICTIMS OF THE LOCAL NHS CRISIS

Over 1,800 cases are now included in an inquiry into maternity care at the Royal Shrewsbury and Princess Royal hospitals and a police investigation is also underway. The history of poor care and tragic outcomes is shocking, as is the way this situation has been allowed to continue. Families deserve so much better. I have asked Shropshire Council's health team to ensure that support, independent of the NHS Trust, is made available to affected families.

The Hospital Trust leaders will need to be held to account. It is now clearer than ever that we cannot trust them with the 'Future Fit' reorganisation of local services, including the closure of one of Shropshire's two emergency centres.

On top of all this, the frontline NHS staff in our community need our continued support. Having faced the stress of the Covid-19 emergency they now face the strain of this inquiry. I have also asked that Shropshire Council ensure NHS frontline staff have somewhere to go to get help and, if necessary, to report their concerns.



THE FUTURE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Covid-19 has been a huge challenge for many small businesses in our area and beyond. Help has come from the government, and the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District (BID) has provided free packs to help as lockdown is eased. Nevertheless, as Rosie from Rosie's Emporium in Frankwell puts it, "it's been a ride".



Looking ahead, polls show that people want a 'green recovery' in our economy. I am talking to Shropshire Council staff about a range of opportunities that could be promoted including home retrofitting, recovery and reuse of building materials and green distribution opportunities. This needs a rethink for how the

Economic Development team works (in economics speak; focusing on community wealth creation rather than extractive investments from corporations), but I'm confident there is enough will out there that it is doable.

There is help available for making businesses more sustainable on the Shropshire Council and Shropshire Live websites. Please get in touch if you want further information or have ideas that I can help promote. I'd love to know how your business is faring and how you see the future.

LITTER PICK 13TH SEPTEMBER

Community litter pick - all welcome. Social distancing rules apply. All equipment will be provided.

Meet at 12:00pm outside the Bricklayers Arms. Please come and join us!



GET IN TOUCH



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