



## Intelligent Energy for our low carbon future



The Marches Energy Agency (MEA) nowadays has five teams involved in giving advice and managing grant schemes, from insulation to renewable energy systems, as well as carrying out energy audits and training. We are now housed in our newly renovated offices at the Pump House, Coton Hill, next to The Gateway, which has integrated many new 'green' technologies including intelligent lighting systems, a wood pellet boiler, photovoltaic panels on the roof and a solar hot water system. We are a registered charity and much of our work is funded on a project basis. To find out more, go to <http://www.mea.org.uk>.

MEA won a bid to coordinate an exciting three-year European project to look at ways of making historic urban communities more sustainable in the context of a conservation area. Our challenge is to show how historic buildings can provide opportunities for carbon saving. The project is called SECHURBA - Sustainable Energy Communities in Historic Urban Areas - and we are working with partner organisations from six other European countries.

As SECHURBA Project Manager, I am looking to study at least five buildings or streets within Shrewsbury over the next two years. MEA needs a mix of public, commercial and residential buildings of traditional construction, including some listed ones to be used as case studies. One such is likely to be a terraced house on Town Walls. Others include St Alkmund's Church, Tanners, The Parade, and maybe the Station. We are concentrating on the Town Centre, Castlefields and part of Ditherington. We hope to include a terrace of Victorian houses. Currently we are gathering data on all aspects of the area, social, economic, and energy-using, including traffic movements and parking, in an attempt to map the 'before and after' scenario. The buildings will be audited, and recommendations made for saving energy, possible generation from renewables, and other conservation techniques. The overall object is to set 'best practice' examples and to influence policy makers.

During our first European partners' meeting at the start of September representatives toured some of the case study buildings, notably to look at newly installed photovoltaic panels on St Alkmund's - a great example of integrating new technology into a Grade I listed building - no one would know they were there!

I want to get the whole community involved and let residents and local interest groups express opinions on how energy saving impacts on the historic environment. To this end, I will be holding a public meeting in the town and it would be great to involve as many members of STCRA as possible. I will keep STCRA informed. We will also be distributing questionnaires and creating an on-line forum. It is crucial to galvanise the interest and involvement of those that live and work in Shrewsbury, but who also value the unique nature of our cultural heritage.

**Nicole Solomons**

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## An Update on the Railways

From December Arriva Train Wales' services to Birmingham will terminate at Birmingham International rather than New Street.

The Wrexham and Shropshire Railway services to London Marylebone will be speeded up from December, with the journey time cut to around three hours. Their rolling stock will be replaced by the end of November. Additionally their management has confirmed to us that "Saver" tickets bought using Senior Railcards are valid on all trains - bringing the return fare to London down to £27.05.

## Shrewsbury a 'Cycling Town'

As a representative of STCRA on the Central Area Partnership I was invited to attend a seminar, run by Shropshire County Council and Cycling England at which our new status as a 'Cycling Town' was explained.

Cycling England was established in 2005 by the Department for Transport. Backed by key Government departments and cycling organisations, the original remit revolved around two key projects:

- to create a cycling proficiency scheme for the 21st century
- to trial the impact of European levels of funding in six English towns and cities.

This was so successful that funding for another 12 towns was granted.

Shrewsbury's bid to become one of the 12 new 'cycling towns' was successful and the town will benefit from £1.8 million of grant from Cycling England over the next three years. The funding will be used

- to improve cycle routes to schools and workplaces across the town, and to make it easier to cycle into and around the town centre
- to fund a package of training and promotional activities, many focused around schools and workplaces. This will include improved information on cycling opportunities, more cycle training, free cycle maintenance to get old bikes back on the road, bike loan schemes and cycling events.

For more information see - [www.cyclingengland.co.uk](http://www.cyclingengland.co.uk)

**Lyn Leach**

*The Shrewsbury Town Centre Residents' Association  
Committee*

<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Rosemary Thomes</b>
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