



Social Value in Shropshire

Case Study


The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires all public bodies to consider social, economic or environmental benefits which can be secured through their procurement activity. In Shropshire we are committed to maximising Social Value in all that we do and also to ensure that we are able to demonstrate clearly what we do, how we do it and what difference it makes.

This document aims to capture case studies from organisations which demonstrate the great work that is being done around Social Value and the value that it creates.

Our priorities for Social Value are:

1. Supporting the Shropshire economy:
2. Promoting wellbeing in Shropshire:
3. A great place to live:

By completing and submitting this document you are showing commissioners, customers, investors and stakeholders what your organisation is doing and how well you are doing it. All case studies will be highlighted on the Social Value webpage hosted by Shropshire Council.

Organisation Name	Mears Shropshire Home Services 
Organisation Type	Private Business
Brief description of your activity	Home Improvement Agency and Handyperson Service
Describe your customers or clients	People with disabilities or mobility issues who require minor through to major adaptations to the home environment to enable them to remain at home as independently as possible.
Where are your	Shropshire

activities located?	
Name and Contact Details	John Simcox 01743 458332

Description of Activity and Social Value Arising:

MEARS LEAF FALLS INTO SHROPSHIRE.

An event dedicated to employment advice and opportunities, was hosted by the recently established University Centre of Shrewsbury, at its beautiful riverside location in Shrewsbury Town on the 14th June, 2017, organised by Mears Shrewsbury MHI. The LEAF event, a MEARS GROUP initiative, was developed as part of their social value commitment, in order to offer information to the public in local areas, seeking to gain skills, qualifications and employability advice. Visitors made their way to the venue to meet exhibitors representing a variety of vocational sectors, from medicine to banking in order to gain employability advice and to apply for available positions.

LEAF events (Local Employment Advisory Forum) give exhibitors the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and experience in their business sector by giving participants the advice necessary to follow the ideal path towards their chosen profession. Many exhibitors posted available internal job openings and business advice to those wishing to start their own business.

Who was involved?

The day was a great success with 31 strong local exhibitors taking part, including the Army Reserves, Barclays Bank, Doncaster’s Engineering, Hawk Construction Group, Job Centre Plus, Marches Growth Hub, National Career Service, Shrewsbury Colleges Group, Warwickshire & West Mercia Police to name but a few. The feedback given in the exhibitor’s questionnaire was positive with companies quoting that the event was beneficial to their organisation by **increasing their company exposure and candidate base and also offering them the opportunity to network with other local companies.**

Over 55 participants attended the event. They were asked to complete a questionnaire and the general feedback was that visiting the LEAF event was worthwhile as they were offered **the chance to speak to and understand employers, in a friendly relaxed atmosphere and be advised of what companies look for in candidates.** Also finding varied job options available in the local area was helpful and inspiring.

Working together with our partners, Job Centre Plus, Shropshire Council, Shrewsbury Colleges Group, Marches Growth Hub and UCS, we aimed at creating an event that would be beneficial for people trying to make their way back into employment after a period of leave or people trying to enter a specific business sector and making themselves a formidable candidate. This was achieved by inviting businesses and organisations from varied employment sectors, who were advised that not only were they representing their company, but also their specific job sector. We ensured that all exhibitors focused on providing information and advice to visitors.

To date we are aware of at least four people, who attended, have found suitable employment following the event.

Benefits

The atmosphere at the event was one of bustling conversation and interaction between visitors and exhibitors and it was clear that many visitors came to the event with the right attitude and left with a sense of accomplishment.

One visitor was unsure about his future career options and was introduced to a security firm, who gave him the qualifications and skills requirements needed to gain employment as a security guard. The man left with a much clearer sense of purpose and was very happy to have attended. Another visitor, a mother wanting to return back to work, wanted a career change to suit her family life. She was inspired by an exhibitor called Connect Mums, a charity organisation, who helped her focus on self-employment options and advised her on the support available to start her own business.

Job Change, an exhibitor, signed up 5 people for their courses.

SPIC, a care representative organisation, said they would gladly attend another LEAF event quoting the "Informal atmosphere encourages visitors to relax and we meet a broader spread of interested applicants."

The event was put together on a minimal budget, yet the organisation and running of the event was nothing short of professional and well presented.

QUOTES FROM VISITORS , EXHIBITORS AND ORGANISERS

- **Mrs. M, of Shrewsbury** wrote "The event was well organised and the exhibitors were welcoming and encouraging. The advice I was given on the day was honest and informative and I gained the confidence I needed to go forward in my new career path. Since the event, I have written a business plan and put it forward to business mentor who is helping me put together a bid for funding. I am so pleased I attended."
- **Doncasters, Engineering Company** in Shrewsbury offered visitors information and the opportunity to handle the complex aeronautical parts which are manufactured in their local factory. "It was great to meet a variety of people who could offer valuable skills to the company".
- **SYST a charity organisation**, encouraging and supporting youth to start their own businesses, said the event "... allowed us to meet 3-4 new candidates for start-up workshops. The event allowed us to showcase what support is on offer and what the government are doing to support new entrepreneurs"
- **John Simcox, branch manager Shrewsbury** said "Bringing Leaf to Shrewsbury helped local jobseekers by providing a fantastic opportunity to receive free face-to-face advice from professional organisations, in a relaxed environment. The event was a great success and has certainly heightened the awareness and presence of Mears and our branch throughout Shropshire."
- **VISUALS FROM THE DAY** -see below



LEAF partners, Shrewsbury



University Centre of Shrewsbury



SYST – Shropshire Youth Support Trust



Shropshire Star JOBS WALL



Landau Kickstart



John Simcox, Jerry Lipscombe, Alan Long,
Anna Karantanis & Amy Hunter