

SST Ltd Chairman's Report May 2009

In many ways the last 12 months has seen more changes than at any time since the SSTA was formed.

Whilst our change to a Ltd Company, may not appear to be much different on the surface, it does mean that we operate as a proper business. As such we will be better equipped to take on the challenges of the future.

In our board structure we have both experience & expertise, as well as a good representation of our members' operations. We have a director on the DMP & another in the South Shropshire Partnership, as well as an ongoing participation in the AONB.

The change to a unitary council has brought changes in itself. We no longer have exclusive use of a TDO. We would have liked to have seen all tourism matters in one department instead of three. However our immediate contacts within the new structure are familiar faces—namely Tim King, Alison Patrick, Delia Yapp & their immediate 'boss', Louise Cross.

I have already had—along with the other chairmen--- a meeting with Louise & her department & the plan is that these meetings will be ongoing.

So as far as tourism is concerned we have voices in the 'movers & shakers' of Shropshire.

Two points came out of the meeting with Louise, one that we should keep up our good relationship with our VICs & two that we should foster our relationship with local tourism/parish groups. Both of which we already plan to do.

There is no doubt that over the last few years our brochure has reached a high degree of excellence. Unfortunately, as yet we have no outside funding for our 2010 brochure. Therefore we have decided to reduce the number of pages to cut costs, rather than downgrade the production quality.

This is your brochure & it is a good marketing tool, not only for your business, but also for the area as a whole. So your contribution for your advert not only helps you, but it also helps us collectively as well as the wider area.

We have also upgraded our website. For both these operations we are grateful to the staff at ST & also at the AONB, who also provided £3000 of funding.

Our 'Discovery Maps' have nearly all gone & need updating. This we plan to do this year.

With the elections coming up, please do question your prospective councillors on where they stand on tourism in Shropshire.

Lastly, I would like to thank past committee members, who have brought us to where we are today, for their commitment to the SSTA and I would also like to thank the current directors & board members for their support & commitment to SSTLtd.