

Helen Morgan is the Liberal Democrat MP for **North Shropshire**, since winning that famous election on 16th December 2021.



'Nothing happened on Thursday. There was not a by-election. It was just a gathering of Lib Dems with pencils and voting slips'

She is the spokesperson for *Levelling up, Housing and Communities, and Local Government.*

In her first year [22-23] she and her team dealt with 6000 pieces of casework for North Shropshire residents

In addition, in Parliament she: -

- ◆ Took part in 208 VOTES
- ◆ Made 68 speeches.
- ◆ Questioned the Government in writing 101 times
- ◆ Supported 65 motions
- ◆ Secured 3 debates [ambulance delays, rogue developers & fracking]

When contacting her, she should be addressed as **Helen Morgan**.

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What is the Parish council FOR?

The parish council is responsible for some street lighting, various areas of green space and Trefarclawdd cemetery.

The Parish is divided into 5 wards:

- * Maesbury with Aston: 561 electors,
- * **Morda with Sweeney: 1,819 electors,**
- * Rhydygroesau with Llanforda: 195 electors,
- * Sychtyn: 86 electors and
- * Trefonen with Treflach: 1,060 electors

making a total electorate of 3,721

(electoral figures at December 2022 electoral register).

Oswestry Rural Parish Council aims to:

1. *Deliver local services cost effectively and efficiently through best value.*
2. *Ensure that community development is driven by the local community and that it represents their needs and ambitions.*
3. *Represent the views of the local community by working with them to improve the local environment and preserve its heritage.*

What does it DO?

The council's objectives are to:

- ◆ *Work closely with the local community by listening to their views, needs and aspirations and assist to bring these into fruition.*
- ◆ *Demonstrate openness, transparency and accountability in all Parish Council activities.*
- ◆ *Support the local economy.*
- ◆ *Work with partners and stakeholders to improve and enhance the local environment.*
- ◆ *Support the work of voluntary groups and organisations.*
- ◆ *Represent the views of local residents in response to local planning applications.*
- ◆ *Promote ethical and fair practices to promote harmony and social inclusion.*
- ◆ *Support efforts to sustain the social, environmental and economic capital within the parish.*
- ◆ *Ensure that Councillors and staff are sufficiently trained to deliver public services to the people served by the Parish Council.*



Number

3

Spring 2024



a Newsletter for Morda & Sweeney Ward

from your Oswestry Rural Parish Councillors

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At the time of writing there are 2 vacancies for councillors



VOTER ID

Voters at polling stations now have to show a **photo ID** to be able to vote. May 2nd 2024 and the Police and Crime Commissioner election may have caught some out, but from now on if you want to vote in person—and especially with the prospect of a General Election soon, and local elections next year, it is important that you have something to take with you.

Acceptable ID includes, driving licence or a 'bus pass, Blue Badge, or a passport.

University or College student IDs or work based ID's are *not* acceptable forms of photo ID.

Anyone who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID will be able to apply for free ID at: **www.gov.uk** [and search for "Voter Authority Certificate"] or by completing a paper form.

You will not need voter ID if you have a POSTAL VOTE.

If you need a Postal Vote please contact one of us.



now read on about:

- Devolution of services from Shropshire Council: *how far can it go?*
- Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Re-configuration: *what will it mean for us?*
- What is there for young people in the ORPC area to do?

And a few other items too!

Devolution or Resolution?



We all know about the problems Shropshire Council is having: including their latest wheeze, to axe the School's Library Service from 1st September.

In the Local Council world (parish and town councils) whispers have been heard about local councils 'taking on' services (or parts of services) which the cash strapped Unitary Council cannot afford.

You see, while the BIG councils cannot legally increase Council Tax by more than a set amount [5% usually] we small, mostly independent councils can, if we wanted, could double or treble it, or if we went totally bananas, sting you for £50K. That would be bonkers, but it would NOT be illegal under the present laws.

Hence the whispers about 'if the service is important to you and your electors, would YOU like to run it, or pay US to run it for you?'

At the moment this is all talk, although one or two councils have been looking hard at how this might affect them.

In THIS area your ORPC is taking the lead, and hoping to get as many councillors from ALL the local councils around—Like Oswestry Town Council, Whittington, Gobowen, Weston Rhyn and the rest, together with our MP Helen Morgan, for a BIG meeting later in the year.

We want to see if we can hammer out some way to find a resolution to the potentially complicated matter of devolution, which holds on to what YOU value, but does not hit you too hard in the bank-

Hospitals Transformation Programme

Perhaps the most worrying word in the English language is 'change'. We *really* don't like change, but it's a part of life.

Take the proposals for the Shrewsbury and Telford hospitals. *What will these changes mean for the patients who will need the hospitals and their services?*

Many things will NOT change ----
EXAMPLES ----????

But with health finances as they are does it make sense – medically as well as financially – to try to duplicate everything on both hospital sites?

The medical staff don't think so – and they should know, and the new model of care was designed, led, and supported by clinicians.

The **Royal Shrewsbury Hospital** will specialise in *emergency care* from a dedicated, modern streamlined and effective emergency care service, delivered by the Emergency Department.

Patients will be seen more quickly, with faster ambulance handover times, and shorter stays there.

Meanwhile the **Princess Royal Hospital** in Telford will specialise in *planned care*, with an investment of £10million of funding announced recently to create an elective surgical hub.



This should lead to patients benefiting from fewer cancellations and delays for those planned procedures.

Surely this can only be good for us all – whether we need a surgical procedure, or are involved in an accident, and our friends, neighbours and relatives?

And let's not forget that we are on the border with Wales!

The changes will [hopefully] transform health and care services across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, and mid Wales too.

The aim will be to improve quality, safety, experience and outcomes for people from across our large geographical area.



Design for the new building at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital



Design for the Planned Care Hub at Princess Royal Hospital

What is there for young people in the ORPC area to do?

The form-filling of 2 years ago may seem a long time ago, but some results are through the filter of the Office for National Statistics. Looking at those figures, the age profile of people in the Oswestry Rural Parish area seems to stack up with the general Shropshire result.

Total: Shropshire All residents 323,608		%	ORPC residents 4,831	%
Age 4 & under	14,422	4.5%	214	4.4%
Age 5-9	16,249	5.0%	246	5.1%
Age 10-15	20,689	6.4%	344	7.1%
Age 16-19	13,474	4.2%	220	4.6%
Age 20-24	15,125	4.7%	191	4.0%
Age 25-34	34,824	10.8%	462	9.6%
Age 35-49	53,927	16.7%	764	15.8%
Age 50-64	72,810	22.5%	1,143	23.7%
Age 65-74	42,768	13.2%	675	14.0%
Age 75-84	28,497	8.8%	381	7.9%
Age 85 +	10,823	3.3%	191	4.0%

While for Primary school children, the percentages are almost equal, for the Secondary/College group they are not, and adding those two groups together, (10-19 years) the difference is even starker [Shropshire 10.6% - ORPC 11.7%]

And while there may be provision for the primary group, the question is: what is there for our secondary/college young people to do in the Morda and Sweeney Ward to do?

As Morda and Sweeney councillors, we would like to hear from our young people (10-19 years) suggestions about what the ORPC might be able to provide, promote or negotiate for them, the citizens of tomorrow!

So please, pass the message on!



Over to YOU

If there are any issues that you would like us to take up with the ORPC council please let us know.

What do YOU think?



What services would you want to keep if the Parish had to pay for, or run them on your behalf?