

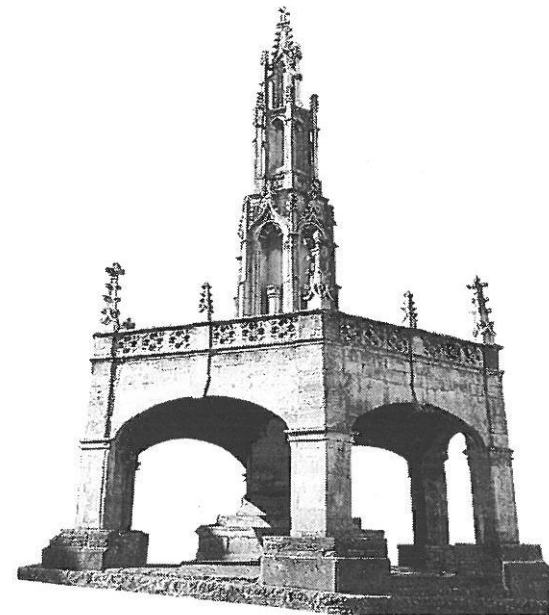
SHEPTON MALLET TOURIST INFORMATION & HERITAGE CENTRE



Providing good visitor information in an era of cuts

Alan Stone

Chairman of Shepton Mallet TIC and Heritage Centre

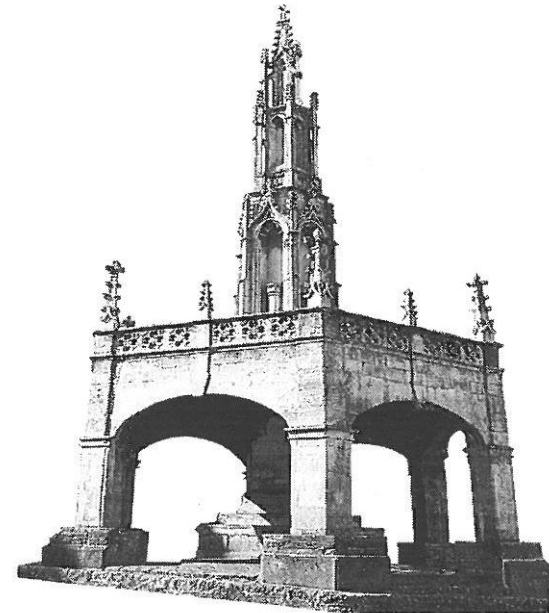


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Potted History

- Petticoat Lane
- Share with museum
- Full status TIC
- Appointment of Manager
- Developing of commercial trading to cover shortfalls in funding

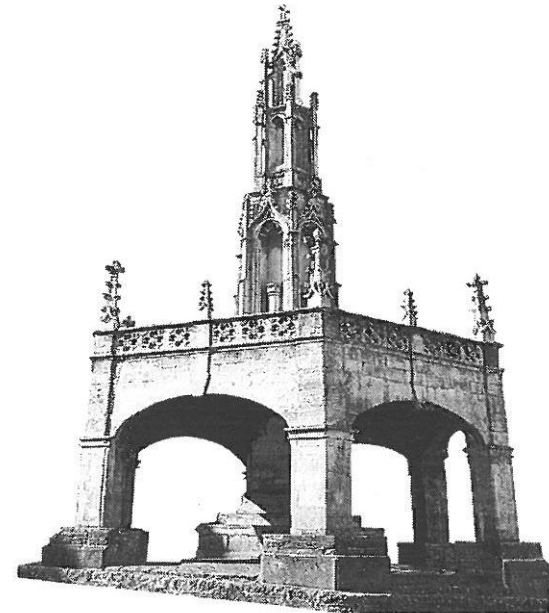


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Biggest Problem

- Need to pay rent!

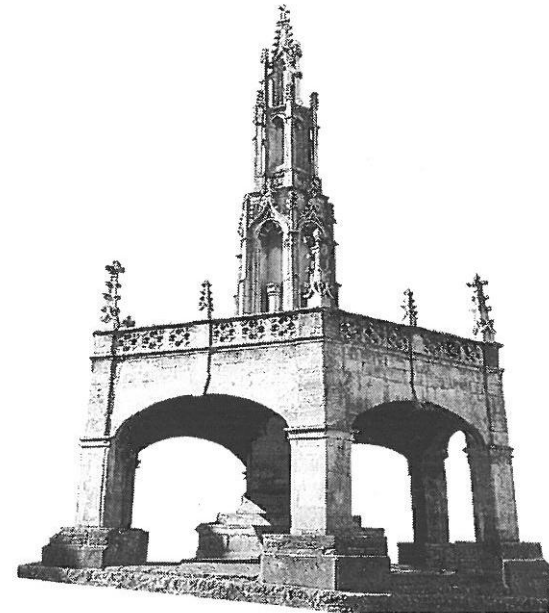


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Standards

- All paid part time workforce
- Two staff on at all time
- All staff experienced and trained
- All staff wear uniforms
- High standards of service are vital



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What is Tourist information today?

- Largely about looking after the visitors when planning visits and more particularly when they arrive in the area
- Signposting them to local attractions
- Local accommodation
- Local restaurants, pubs and other facilities
- Supporting the local businesses that our providing services for visitors to the area

There is no sign at all of a drop-off in numbers of enquiries due to the growth of the internet
– probably the reverse

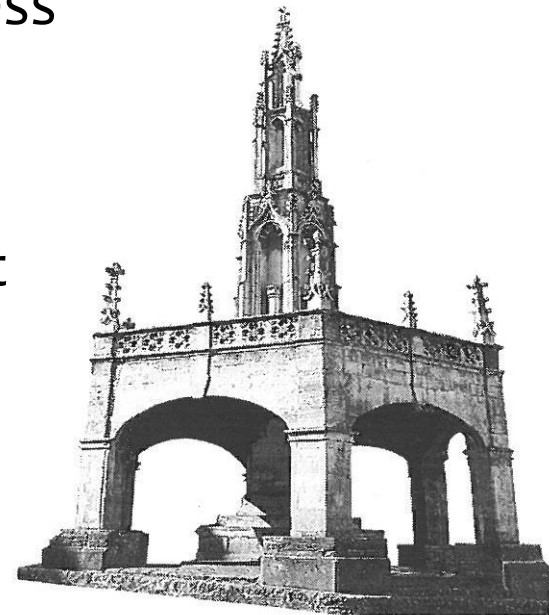


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What is Tourist information today?

- Providing information for the local community
- Again about local attraction and facilities but also as a High Street presence for many other local services
- Providing information to people and business looking to move to the area
- Providing support for local businesses
- Tourist information is a fully integrated part of local business development



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Funding

- Shepton Mallet TIC costs around £45,000 per annum to fund – including rent and salaries
- Currently £10,000 from Mendip and £5,000 from Shepton
- 66% funded from own trading efforts and fundraising
- Much of this comes from local businesses and the community



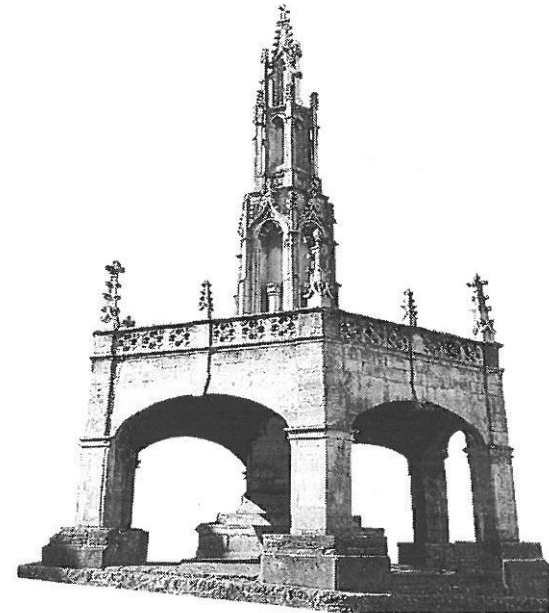
SHEPTON MALLET TOURIST INFORMATION & HERITAGE CENTRE



Other sources of income

- £12k from annual accommodation guide
- Calendar
- Raffles
- Ticket sales
- Local books and goods sales
- Donations

It is very very tight. Currently just managing to break even

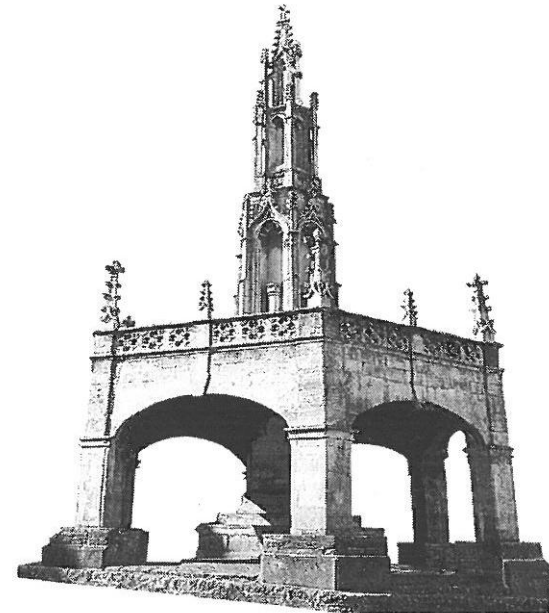


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Other TICs in the county

- Mendip Tourism Ltd
 - Wells
 - Frome
 - Glastonbury and Street
- South Somerset
- Elsewhere

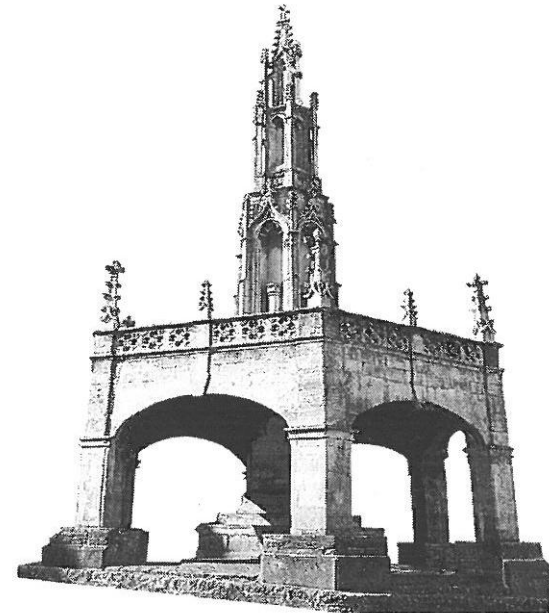


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Helping to promote Shepton

- Town Leaflet
- Supporting local books and crafts
- Accommodation guide
- ‘Eating out in the Shepton area’
- Website
- Town Walks
- ‘Museum’

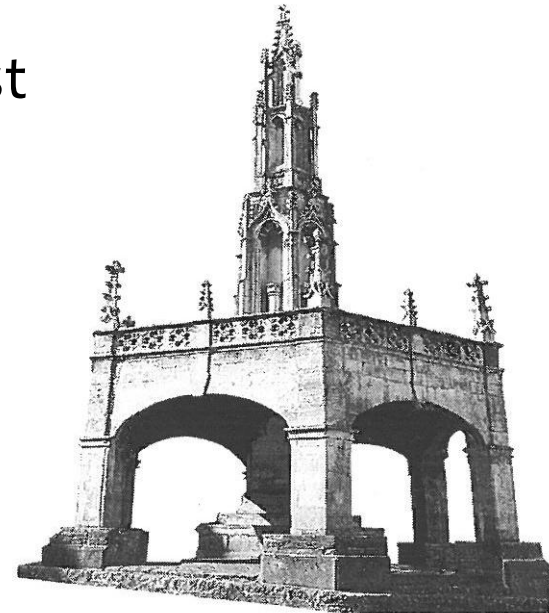


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Lorraine Pratten

- Our manager of 12 years – I appointed her
- Amazing energy
- An ambassador for the town
- The reason why Shepton has one of the best performing TICs in the county

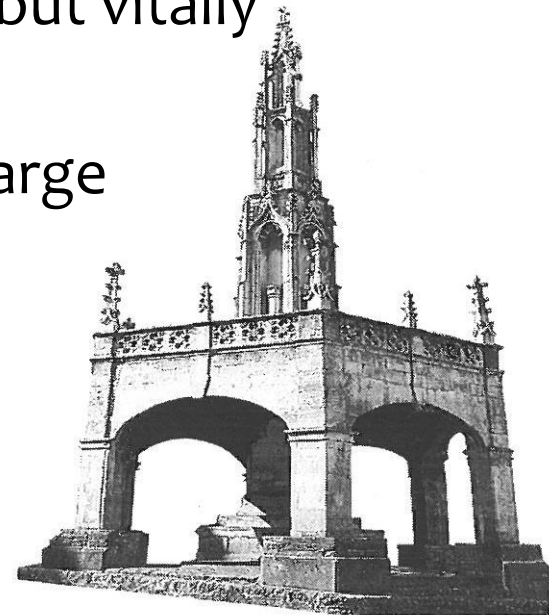


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Threats to finance

- The funding from Mendip is by no means certain for next year – let alone further ahead
- The local TICs will not be able to survive without it
- visitsomerset and the STA has a connected but vitally different role
- They are geared to bringing visitors to the large attractions in the county
- We have to find mutually beneficial ways of working together into the future



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Conclusion

- Local TICs, through providing the face of tourism in the Market Town High Streets, have a crucial role to play
- Not only in direct tourism but in supporting local businesses and local economic viability
- The TICs have reacted positively to getting local funding and business support
- But it is only through a low level of support in terms of finance from District Councils that they will be able to survive



SHEPTON MALLET TOURIST INFORMATION & HERITAGE CENTRE



Conclusion

- Shepton TIC provides a model of how a successful TIC can work with the local community
- The cost of support required per annum from Mendip for the five TICs is less than one full time manager at the council
- Whatever your interest our county TICs are worthy of your support
- As we look to move out of recession the role of the TICs becomes even more important!

