

SICK OF LEDBURY? EVENT REPORT



Our "Sick of Ledbury?" event on Saturday, September 13th, was inspiring! Run entirely by volunteers, it was an incredible day filled with vibrant energy from across the political and social spectrum with passionate conversations and attentive learning. The speeches were truly inspiring, and the live music created a fantastic atmosphere for everyone who attended. We were thrilled to see people from ages 6 to 76 come together to share their ideas and help shape our future initiatives.

KEY DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Talks ranged from starting refugee support groups, calls to action, how to 'just start' and how art, politics and small change can all become part of a positive future



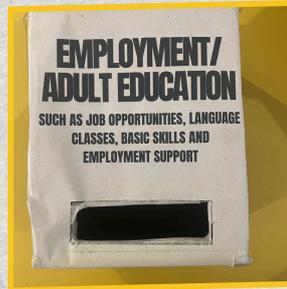
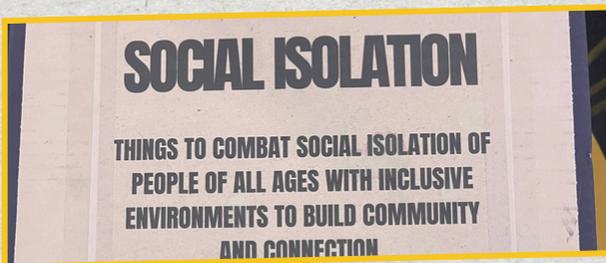
Attendees discussed a range of topics, including starting community-led initiatives, finding new ways to approach politics, and how to join up services across Herefordshire. It was clear that people were looking for direction and support in order to sort the issues that they see around them every day, from the small and achievable to the ambitious and global.

ACTIVITIES

The event featured several interactive games designed to spark discussion and collaboration, revealing what the community truly cares about:

Kingfisher Cash

- **Results:** This activity revealed the community's priorities by having participants allocate "cash" to different areas. The top results were:
 - **Social Isolation: 26.6%**
 - **Adult Employment and Education: 20.2%**
 - **Amenities for New Houses: 20.2%**



Discussions:

- **Discussions around social isolation, which topped the voting, focused on the need to start with young people. Many felt that addressing the social needs of youth and providing opportunities locally to play, take risks and grow would be a crucial first step in reducing inequalities through shared understanding and so build a more resilient community.**

Conclusion

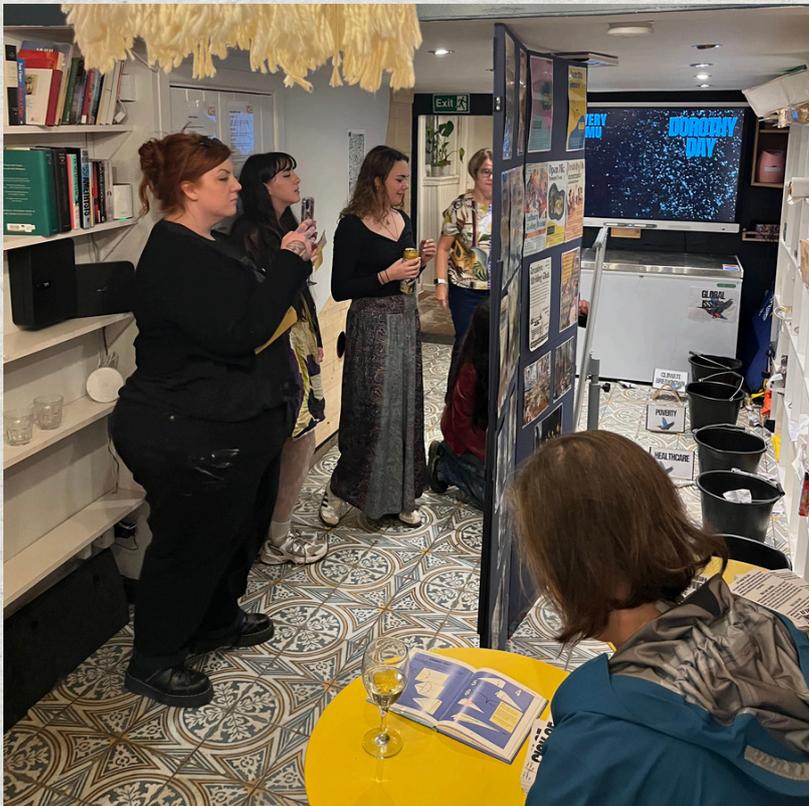
- **The results of this activity clearly highlight a community-wide concern for social isolation across all of society with the solution needing to come from the grassroots, breaking down barriers and inequalities, solidifying the need for lived experience led activities, campaigns and support that the hub is rooted around.**



ACTIVITIES

Global Games

Results: Participants flew paper airplanes into categories representing global issues, with harder-to-solve issues placed farther away. The issues included immigration, education, healthcare, climate breakdown, and poverty. While the target most aimed at was climate change, as this was the furthest away, planes often fell into easier targets - peoples efforts towards solving climate change were often misdirected towards issues like immigration.



Discussions:

- Conversations around this activity often revolved around the complexity of tackling large-scale issues and the frustration of feeling like your efforts don't hit the mark. People shared personal experiences of wanting to make a difference but not knowing where to start or feeling overwhelmed by the scale of the problem as well as how unhelpful broad categories like 'immigration' are when trying to tackle inequality.

Conclusion:

- The outcome of this activity, where intentions were sometimes misdirected, reinforces the importance of providing a clear, accessible, and supportive framework for community action. Going forward the Hub needs to think globally while acting locally, breaking larger issues down into solvable activities with achievable goals that can be worked on by people living with those barriers.

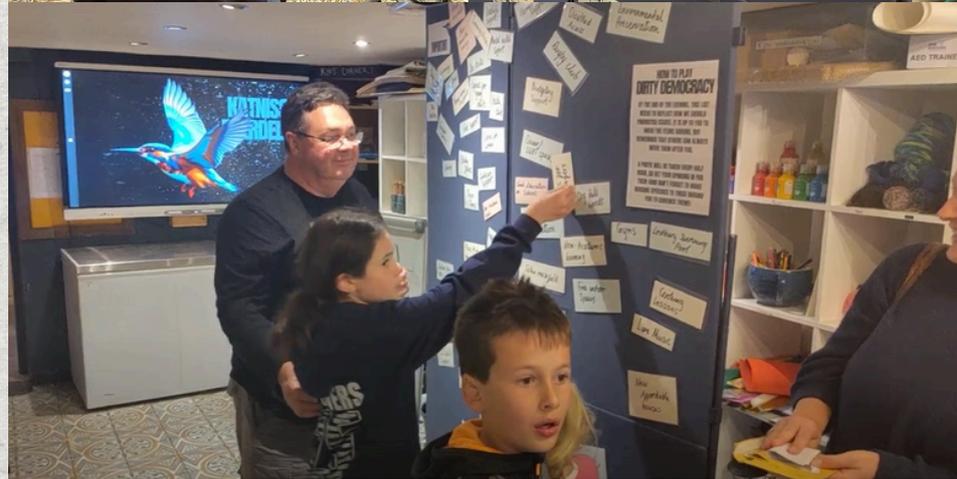
ACTIVITIES



Dirty Democracy

- **Results:** This game involved a list of issues that participants could rearrange to reflect their priorities. It was a dynamic and collaborative activity where people were encouraged to move the issues up and down the list throughout the day, making speeches to convince others of their viewpoint. Photos were taken every half hour to track the changing priorities. The priorities most commonly at the top of the list were:

- Drug and Alcohol Support
- Disability Support
- Wildlife Preservation
- Mental Health Support
- Youth Club
- Counseling
- Bus times and routes
- Spaces for young adults
- Outdoor spaces
- Food support
- GP surgery
- Library
- Child support
- Arts
- Queer Spaces



- **Discussions:** The most passionate discussions here centered on the need for local, tangible solutions. People talked about the lack of safe, inclusive spaces for young people and the challenges of accessing mental health services. There was a strong consensus that creating a "Youth Club" or "Spaces for young adults" would not only address social isolation but also provide a central point for tackling many other issues on the list as well as more community art showcasing local values and desires as well as pressuring and persuading authorities to make positive change.
- **Conclusion:** This game showed that the community is not only aware of a wide range of issues but also that a central youth hub is a recurring, and highly-prioritized, solution to many of these problems.

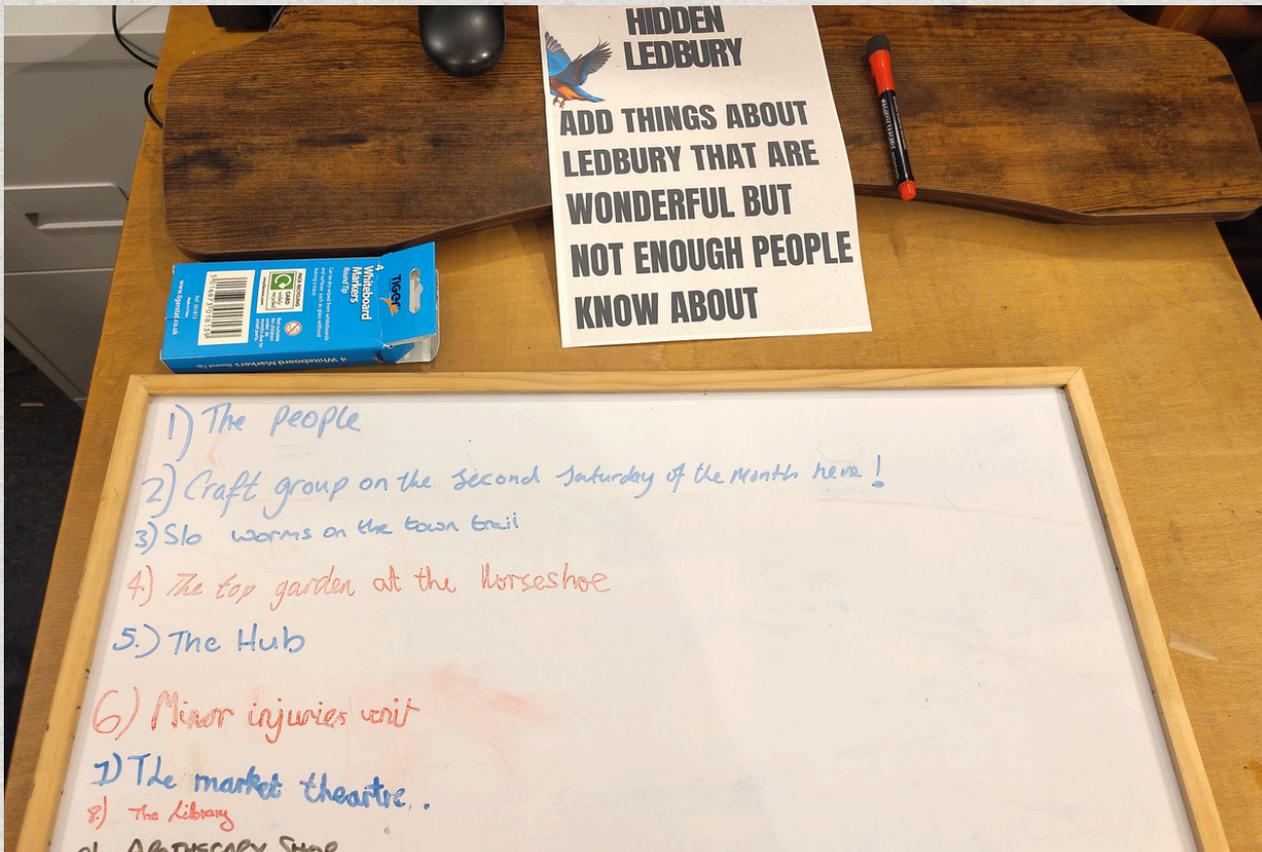
ACTIVITIES



Hidden Ledbury

Results:

This activity highlighted "wonderful things" about Ledbury that are not widely known. Submissions included the people, local crafts, slow worms on the town trail, the top garden at the horseshoe, and various local institutions like The Hub, the market theatre, and the library.



Discussions:

People enthusiastically shared their personal connections to the town, often celebrating the hidden gems that make Ledbury special. This activity sparked conversations about the power of community networks and how existing resources, if connected effectively, could be a powerful force for change.

Conclusion:

The focus on "hidden gems" like local institutions and the people themselves shows that the community already has the tools and the passion to make a positive impact, simply by working together. Many of the beginnings of solutions to our local inequalities exist already if only we could work in a more linked up way.

ACTIVITIES

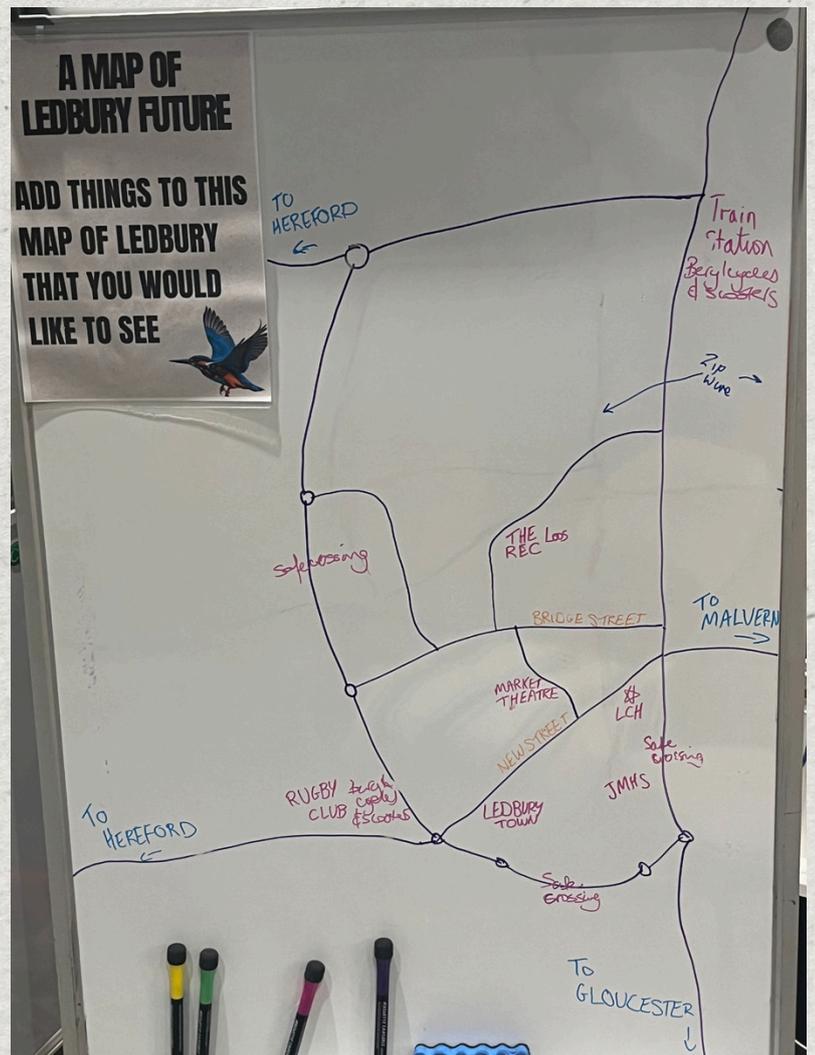
Map of Ledbury Future

Results:

Participants brainstormed ideas for future amenities, such as a zip wire, safe crossings across the bypass, bike and scooter rentals at the train station, and toilets at the recreation ground.

Discussions:

This was a highly imaginative and playful activity. The discussions ranged from big, whimsical ideas like a zip wire, to practical solutions like better pedestrian crossings, more public toilets and bike/scooter rentals. The recurring theme was a desire to have the power to change barriers faced on a daily basis without having to overcome the bureaucratic barricades faced when trying to get these things sorted through the local authority



Conclusion:

The diverse and creative ideas put forth in this activity demonstrate a willingness for bold, forward-thinking change in which people with lived experience around the town highlight inequalities that they face on a daily basis. If we could empower these people to work with those around them and give them the tools to do so, change would be sustainable and meaningful.



ACTIVITIES

Decorate your Flag

Results: This activity allowed people to express their values and beliefs through personalized flags. Some of the highlights were: "My skin is not a fetish", "Embrace change, embrace growth", "Understanding solves difference, not war", "We are all human beings", "I am not tanned", "Political integrity", "Social awareness", "This country was built on immigration", "Proud work - proud workforce", "Empathy", "RNLI", and "Treat others how they would like to be treated".



Discussions: This was the most personal and reflective activity. The discussions were less about specific solutions and more about the core values that people felt should guide our community's future. The flags became a visual representation of a shared desire for a more inclusive and empathetic Ledbury.

Conclusion: The powerful and personal messages on the flags reinforce the community's desire for a more empathetic, inclusive, and socially aware environment - values that will be central to all our future initiatives.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The passionate feedback and incredible support we received have given us a clear and thrilling two-step direction for our future initiatives. Our next steps are a direct response to the community's most resonant visions.

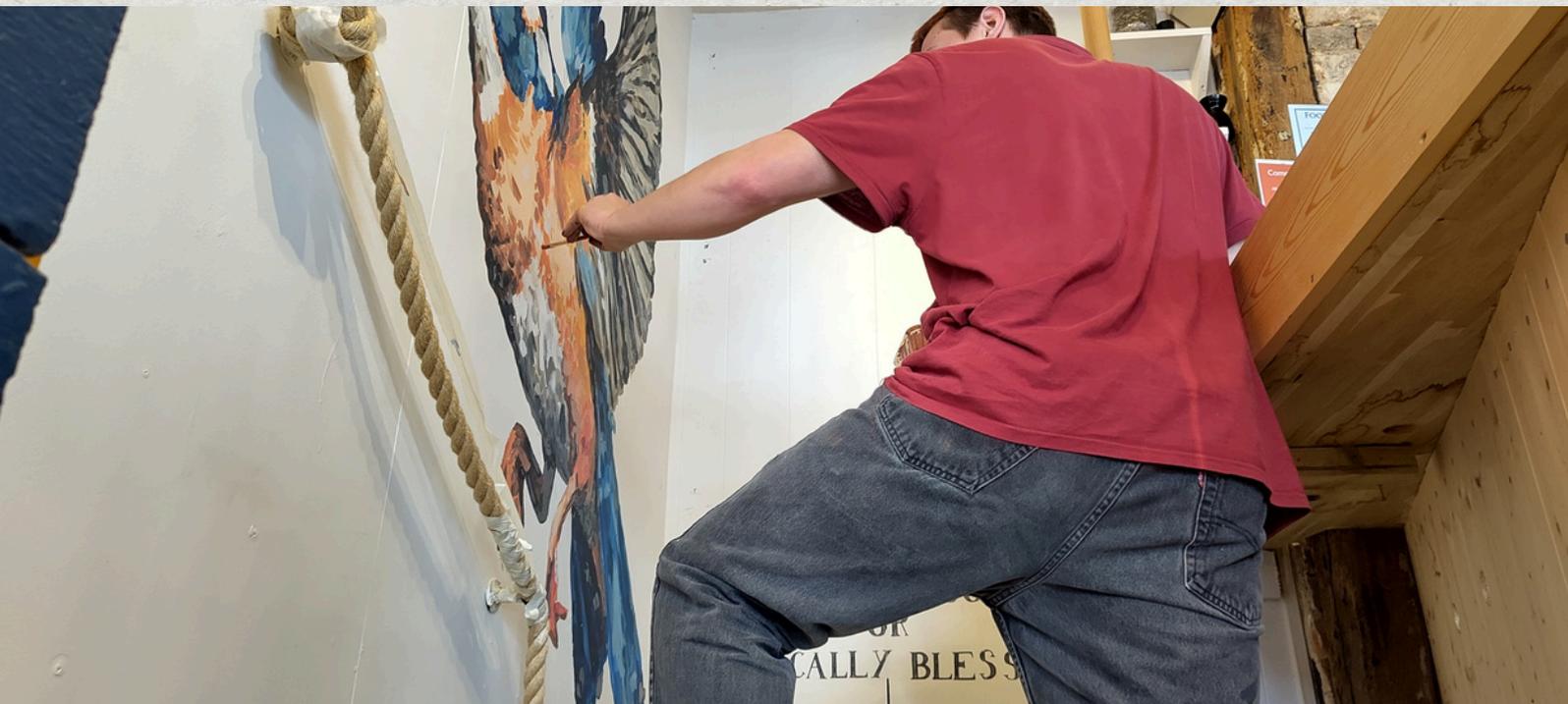
- **Our Kingfisher campaign:** To continue to combat social isolation and inequalities by making a more connected Ledbury and the three counties that it borders through community-led initiatives, empowering those with lived experience to be pathways to change. This includes strengthening our volunteer base of community leaders as well as securing funding to support those projects that can be run by people with lived experience but will need money to make their visions a reality.
- **To work with the town council to get a functioning, welcoming, and inclusive youth space set up within 24 months.** This will be a partnership, joining up many of the existing services across the three counties into a locally created but wide reaching youth initiative



SPECIAL THANKS

We want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success:

- **Beth Hartness for organizing the event, coordinating volunteers and designing the activities.**
- **Bethan, Mags, and Joanne for sorting, serving and procuring the food and drink.**
- **Mathew for filming.**
- **John for painting the most wonderful mural**
- **Callum for bringing the vibes and playing throughout the evening**
- **Ellie for sorting and fixing everything that needed sorting and fixing.**
- **Aimee Williams, Caroline Handley, and Rebecca Tully for speaking so passionately**



This event came about because someone with lived experience of feeling powerless and isolated, but wanting to make a change, came forward. They planned, organised and executed a powerful event funded and hosted by the Ledbury Community Hub. Together we can make a fairer world. Get involved at ledburycommunityhub.org.uk/Volunteer