

**a). Creative Kids Christmas Light Design Competition**

The Town Council now has funding to run a children's competition to design a new Christmas light. The competition will be run from 16th June to 11th July 2025. This timeline allows sufficient time for the winning design to be fabricated and installed in time for the Christmas Festival.

**Eligibility:**

The competition will be open to:

- Children of primary school age living in Wem; or Children attending St Peter's Primary School, Wem.

**Proposed Location for the Winning Design:**

Contractors have advised that the most suitable location is the CCTV pole in Jubilee Square. This site is central and highly visible, making it ideal for showcasing the children's light.

**Installation Notes:**

- The pole is owned by Shropshire Council, so permission must be obtained.
- There will be additional installation and connection costs, to be confirmed once the design is selected.

**Recommendations**

**Council is asked to consider the following recommendations:**

- 1. To approve the eligibility criteria that the competition is open to all children of primary school age who either live in Wem or attend St Peter's Primary School.**
  - 2. That the Town Clerk seeks permission from Shropshire Council to install the winning light design on the Jubilee Square CCTV pole.**
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**b). Christmas Lights 2025****1 Festoon Lights – High Street**

In 2024, the Council purchased 220m of MaxiLED Festoon Lights from LITE. A section near the library remained unlit due to a lack of a high-level fixing point and an insufficient number of lights. The Town Council's contractors have installed a fixing bolt on The Castle Pub, which will allow the completion of the festoon lighting along the length of the High Street

**Estimated Costs:**

- Purchase of an extra 60m lighting: £862.50, Delivery: £50
- New catenary wire to link Castle bracket – to follow
- **Total budget request: up to £1,100 (excluding VAT)**

**2 Tree Lighting – Leek Street**

The existing string lights in trees on Leek Street have been installed for several years, however they regularly damaged by passing delivery vehicles clipping the trees. Despite previous attempts to resolve this, the problem persists.

**Alternative Proposal:**

Install uplighters in five trees in the main car park to provide a more durable and visually appealing lighting solution.

- A quote for uplighters will be presented at the Council meeting.
- Permission from Shropshire Council is required for installation and connection to the car park power supply.

### **3. Small artificial Christmas Trees mounted on buildings**

There are currently around 80 small Christmas trees which are placed in brackets above buildings in the town. Some are no longer fit for purpose, with branches falling off resulting in them looking very poor when installed.

After removing trees from disused buildings, approximately 70 trees remain in use. It is proposed to replace 15 of the worst-condition trees in 2025.

#### **Cost Summary:**

- Tree: £85
  - Lighting string: £60
  - Total per tree: £145
  - Total for 15 trees: £2,175
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### **4. Finance Report**

In the 2025–26 budget, a total of £10,000 has been allocated for Christmas Lights. This includes £5,000 from earmarked reserves.

This funding will cover:

- The contracted installation of the 2025 display, and
- The upgrade of the final section of electrical wiring to the trees.

Any additional Christmas Lights expenditure (e.g., for new festoon lighting, uplighters, or replacement trees) will need to come from general reserves.

If the Council is minded to support these additional projects then it is recommended that an extra £5,000 is earmarked from general reserves to fund proposed costs beyond the core display.

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### **Recommendations**

**Council is asked to consider the following:**

- 1. That the Town Clerk is authorised to place an order for up to 60m of additional MaxiLED festoon lighting and supply and installation of catenary wires at a cost not exceeding £1,100 (excluding VAT).**
- 2. That the Council considers replacing the Leek Street string lights with five uplighters, subject to quotation and permission from Shropshire Council.**
- 3. That the Council approves the use of £2,175 from general reserves to replace 15 small Christmas trees and associated lighting.**
- 4. That an additional £5,000 be earmarked from general reserves to cover the extra costs related to the recommendations.**