



Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

Case Study



Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings proudly stands as a beacon of architectural history. As the world's first iron-framed building, it is celebrated as the grandparent of the skyscraper – its pioneering legacy visible in the skylines of New York, Tokyo, and countless cities worldwide.

Originally a flax mill and then a maltings, this iconic Shropshire site fell derelict after closing its doors in 1987. Despite years of unsuccessful attempts to breathe new life into the site, a turning point arrived in 2005 when Historic England stepped in as the “owner of last resort”.

Following an ambitious eight year £28 million restoration scheme, largely funded by a £20.7 million grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the site is now transformed into a proud example of heritage-led regeneration, winning 18 architectural awards including recognition from RIBA and Europa Nostra.

Today, the Grade I listed **Main Mill** and Grade II listed **Malting Kiln** are revitalised as offices, cultural spaces and a community café, generating over £13 million in net economic

value and creating over 60 jobs, and there is potential for further growth as additional floors are leased to businesses.

The local community has been integral to the redevelopment of the site, through shaping the design and volunteering their time. The benefits reach beyond economics; community pride has improved, and crime rates have reduced, reaffirming the positive transformation.

Historic England is now working in partnership with social impact property developer Capital&Centric to develop a three-acre site within the grounds of Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings for residential use. Using designs by architect Peter Barber, the project will deliver high-quality homes, while preserving the legacy and heritage of the mill complex.

The success of Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings demonstrates that heritage is not just about the past but can be a powerful, dynamic catalyst for delivering economic prosperity, social value and community cohesion.

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