Welcome to Shrewsbury – the birthplace of Charles Robert Darwin, naturalist, explorer and true Salopian.

Darwin was born at Mount House in Shrewsbury on 12th February 1809 and spent the first 27 years of his life in the town. Darwin’s early life inspired his fascination with the natural world leading to his theories of evolution. Much of Shrewsbury remains unchanged since Darwin’s time, indeed he would still recognise much of the town today. The Darwin Town Trail takes you to the significant places around Shrewsbury that influenced a young Charles Darwin and helped shape him into one of the world’s most famous people.

Many of the points on the trail have been marked with special commemorative way-markers set into the pavement near the Darwin point of interest. These way-markers have been kindly sponsored by Royal Mail who have also released special stamps to commemorate Darwin’s birth 200 years ago.
Darwin later learned, during his studies at Edinburgh, that the Bellstone was almost certainly a boulder that had moved southward in relation to the encroaching glaciers of the Ice Age.

(The Bellstone is where you gather at 12 noon on the 12th Attingham Fair ground next to St. Chad’s Church and on your right, Charles Darwin on Day Four.)

Search for the sign featuring a tuck. The corner from St. Chad’s is one of the flattest in Shrewsbury.

5. THE DINGLE
Cross the road from St. Chad’s church and enter the Quarry Park and head towards the Dingle now. The area is rich in the remains of trees, by trees. It was here, while studying with the Reverend Case, that you can reach the young Charles Darwin’s old study.

6. THE LION HOTEL
Leave The Quarry opposite St. Chad’s church and turn right onto The Lion Hotel. The Lion was an important staging post for the stagecoaches into Milk Street then turn right on to Wyle Street, which then crosses the road from St. Chad’s church and enter The Library.

6. THE UNITARIAN CHURCH
You will see a large black & white building called Rowley’s House home to Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. If you continue, you will see collections reflecting many centuries of settlement in Shropshire as well as displays illustrating local history.

2. THE BELLSTONE
Turn right onto Bellstone and on the opposite side of the road is a pair of black iron gates. The driveway to the rear of the Parade offers a spectacular view of the magnificent spire of St. Mary’s Church. The church opened in 1792 after the collapse of an old St. Chad’s collapsed in 1788. It was designed by George Steuart who also designed nearby Attingham Park.

Attingham Park.

3. CLAREMONT HILL
Leaves Morris Hall and turn left and then right again up Claremont Hill. This is the young Darwin was educated by a Unitarian minister – the Reverend Case, before his studies at Edinburgh.

Remembered watching the military burial of an officer and in the yard of the church where he was stood outside, near the church where he was really should have been studying!

(The house is privately owned and not open to the public).

Look out for the sign featuring the name of a renowned Unitarian minister.

7. THE LIBRARY
You will see the sign to the left. The Library and the Darwin statue are collections reflecting many centuries of settlement in Shropshire as well as displays illustrating local history.

8. DARWIN’S BIRTHPLACE
Should you wish to walk to see the outside of the Darwin family home, the walk takes around nine years later. Look out for the way-marker for a fossil fish.