

## STEM CLUB 2019.

In January the Shropshire Star invited schools across the region to take part in their STEM Challenge event. Pupils have to use their skills and knowledge from Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths to solve a problem they've identified.

The Idsall team that competed in this event comprised of five Year 10 boys, Jake, Tom, Calum, Joe, with two Year 9 girls, Chloe and Amilia. To support the group three mentors were allocated from Network Telecom who regularly visited to assist them.

Perhaps the hardest part of the challenge was starting and identifying a problem, but inspired by Mr Wright's collection of waste plastic bottles, and watching a car run over a plastic bottle at the front of school they put their heads together. The team decided to focus on reducing the carbon footprint of a waste plastic bottle by fitting more bottles into one bin, thus increasing the bin's capacity and reducing the amount of times the bin would need collecting or emptying.

Through drawings, Leggo, and Meccano models a plan was devised to build a prototype of the bottle crusher. Weekly attendance of the Tuesday night STEM Club in Product Design resulted in their 'Crump Master Crusher'. To encourage usage they recognised that it should be fun to use, thereby encouraging people to recycle. Secondly, thinking of its commercial viability they aimed the product to be used at public events such as festivals where plastic disposal is a problem.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> July at the Marches Centre for Manufacturing and Technology, the group competed against 14 other schools, being judged in six different categories. The team performed brilliantly on the day, clearly demonstrating to the judges their knowledge and understanding of STEM and how it had been applied to their solution to solve a real problem. The team were delighted to win the award for 'Best Working Prototype'.

