



**Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Service
Annual Report 2017/18**



Contents

		Page
1.0	Summary	3
1.1	Achievements	3
1.2	Issues	4
1.3	Future developments	4
2.0	Strategic Priorities	5
2.1	Happy	5
2.2	Healthy	6
2.3	Prosperous	7
2.4	Connected	7
2.5	Cherished	8
2.6	Safe	8
3.0	Budget	9
4.0	Activity in 2017/18	10
4.1	Improving accessibility and the natural environment	10
4.2	Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme	25
4.3	Active volunteering	26
4.4	Promotion	36
4.5	Projects	39
4.6	Consultation and survey results	40
4.7	Partnership working	45
5.0	Priorities for 2018/19	46
6.0	Further Information	48
7.0	Appendices	49
7.1	Rights of Way maintenance tasks completed	49
7.2	Rights of Way maintenance case study	50
7.3	Rights of Way mapping and enforcement actions	51

1.0 Summary

The report gives an overview of the work of the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships team in 2017/18. It discusses the achievements and issues encountered and includes evaluation of activity where possible. It is not designed to be completely comprehensive but to illustrate the quality and breadth of the activity being delivered.

This report will be used to provide feedback to Councillors, other Council staff, funders and other stakeholders on the activity of the Outdoor Partnerships Team in 2017/18.

1.1 Achievements

Key facts and figures

- ✓ Countryside Access Strategy 2008-2018 evaluated and report published
- ✓ New Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy published for public consultation
- ✓ Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board successfully developed
- ✓ Funding application for extension to the visitor facilities at Severn Valley Country Park submitted
- ✓ New Volunteer Manual for Volunteer Rangers
- ✓ Income generation of £464,455, this has almost quadrupled since 2012/13 (£118k)
- ✓ An estimated 868,000 visits to Country Parks and Heritage Sites
- ✓ 751 children on school visits
- ✓ External funding continues to be secured for parks and sites projects despite heavy workloads
- ✓ Severn Valley Country Park Visitor Centre project submitted
- ✓ Over 1,100 improvements to Right of Way, Parks and Sites
- ✓ 182 stiles replaced by gates to make access to the countryside easier for those with limited mobility
- ✓ Shropshire Way Main Route South launched
- ✓ £886k LEADER funding allocated- 25.25 jobs secured to date
- ✓ 26 improvements to the Definitive Map
- ✓ Responded to 447 planning applications
- ✓ Responded to 5811 Public Rights of Way Searches.
- ✓ Successful ploughing and cropping campaign
- ✓ 963 volunteers, mostly 55+ years old, supplying over £337,000 worth of volunteer support, which is equivalent to 21 full time staff
- ✓ There are 64 Parish Paths Partnership groups across the county now
- ✓ Parish Paths Partnerships groups dedicated over 10,000 volunteer hours
- ✓ Healthy Outdoors for Schools paid-for service launched- one school involved this summer
- ✓ Walking for Health groups are working more independently following a review of the initiative and the development of a new Walking for Health Forum
- ✓ 50 Wild Team volunteers have been involved this year and 12 volunteers in total have gone on to find employment or other volunteer roles from the scheme
- ✓ 134,000 users of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website, 76% of whom were under 45
- ✓ 2,960 likes on Facebook and 2,258 Followers on Twitter
- ✓ 26 Shropshire's Great Outdoors memberships, of which 4 were joint

- ✓ Over 1,500 people take part in Walking for Health, this is a drop from last year, due mainly to the poor weather this winter

1.2 Issues

The following issues were raised by users:

- Better promotion of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website and the work of the Service is needed
- Concerns over impact of housing and other developments
- Concerns about lack of funding and reliance on volunteers
- Conflicts between user groups are becoming more common as interest in outdoor activities continues to grow

The following issues need to be addressed to further develop the work of the Service:

- Simple Terms and Conditions are required for small contracting works with external parties
- A Working Capital account is needed into which any income that is earned beyond the annual targets could be stored between years.
- Better promotion of the Service through development and delivery of communication plans.
- Increased staff capacity is needed to fully address the on-going needs of the Service.

The reduction in funding is having an impact on the quality of the Rights of Way network, with the latest survey demonstrating that 66% of it is open- this has fallen from 70% two years ago. There are also more issues being raised on parks and sites, partly due to reduced staffing.

1.3 Future development

The priorities for 2018/19 are:

- Publishing the Shropshire's Great Outdoors 2018-28 Strategy
- Continued development of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board
- Development of a new wood fuel business- using timber extracted from the sites
- An extension to the Visitor Centre at SVCP to enable more events, education visits and space for the café
- Development of Swan Hill Depot at Ellesmere for new café and indoor activities for families
- Initial discussions about new Country Parks for market towns as part of planning for new housing, transport and economic growth development
- Continued emphasis on income generation
- Successful delivery of Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme
- Developing a new approach to volunteer co-ordination across the county to better fulfil the aims of Public Health
- Creation of a calendar of events across Country Parks and Sites to interpret natural and cultural heritage
- New signage at Country Parks
- Focused work at Nesscliffe Country Park to improve information for users and address issues between user groups
- Restructuring the Outdoor Partnerships Service to accommodate the loss of the Country Parks and Sites Manger in March 2019

2.0 Strategic Priorities

The Shropshire's Great Outdoor 2018-28 Strategy sets out the priorities for Outdoor Partnerships, working with relevant partner organisations.

Our Vision

By the end of 2028, people will be happier, healthier and more prosperous by being better connected to Shropshire's Great Outdoors through safe and cherished publically accessible outdoor assets.

The quality and promotion of the recreational access, Country Parks and Heritage Sites will be inspiring people to be more involved, get more active and enjoy and celebrate our wonderful habitats and heritage. Communities will be happier and healthier as a result. Businesses will benefit from this increased activity and more visitors will be enjoying the outdoors. Biodiversity and climate change mitigation benefits will be maximised.

In a time of reducing Government support, this will be achieved through increasing income, securing more external funding and working more closely with other departments and partner organisations.

Core Principles

- The provision of high quality ecosystems, cultural heritage, assets and outdoor infrastructure underpins the community need for outdoor recreation
- The involvement of local people in the provision of service will increase physical and mental wellbeing and community resilience
- Provision of high quality outdoor recreation assets will give many businesses the products on which to build the local economy
- Joint working with relevant partners is the best way to deliver a range of outdoor recreation provision across the county
- Well managed ecosystems benefit wildlife, the environment and help mitigate climate change
- There is a legal requirement to manage land, along with the statutory duties regarding Rights of Way
- Our natural and cultural heritage should be protected for future generations

2.1 Happy- Encourage the enjoyment of Shropshire's Great Outdoors by more people, of all ages and abilities

Outcomes:

- More people will be enjoying Shropshire's Great Outdoors, especially those who do not do so at present
- Provision for different types of users will be identified and better promoted
- More schools and families will be visiting the outdoor assets
- People will be better informed about the outdoor assets
- There will be better understanding between different user groups and more responsible use by all users

Whilst more people are using the Country Parks, Heritage Sites and Rights of Way, those with a disability, economic disadvantage and the unemployed are still less likely to visit the natural environment. These people need better access from their homes or that are accessible by public transport.

We will be working with partners to better promote the outdoor offer and offer a range of events to attract those who might not otherwise get involved.

Conflicts between users is becoming more common and a new User Guide and campaign will help address some of these issues.

2.2 Healthy- Benefit the health of residents and visitors through increased physical activity and improved mental wellbeing in the Great Outdoors.

Outcomes:

- Residents and visitors to Shropshire will be more physically active, helping avoid the onset of chronic health conditions.
- More people will connect with their local communities and build social networks as a result of their involvement with the Great Outdoors, improving their mental wellbeing.
- People with chronic physical and mental health conditions will be better able to live independently for longer.
- Children will be more physically active; increasing educational attainment, reducing issues with weight and anxiety and improving overall wellbeing.

Public Health allocated the Outdoor Partnership's Service £200,000 funding in 2017/18 to develop active volunteering and improve outdoor recreation provision. This has been reduced to £100,000 for 2018/19 and is likely to be withdrawn entirely after that.

Through this funding, volunteering, route and site improvements and Walking for Health participation is increasing, especially in the over 65s and research shows that the work is:

- Increasing physical activity, including for those who were previously 'inactive'
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Providing facilities that encourage everyone to be more active more often
- Promoting opportunities to easily get more active

The funding enables the Service to better deliver against Public Health England's Everybody Active Every Day and the Public Health Framework Indicators and Adult Social Care outcomes and a report explaining more about Outdoor Partnerships contribution to these is available on request. All of this means that the Outdoor Partnerships Service is helping people to remain independent longer, reducing reliance on Adult Social Care provision. Our capacity to deliver these outcomes will be severely restricted without the funding from Public Health.

"I understand the continuation of Walking for Health group, particularly on Saturdays, may be under threat of closure. This would be a great loss. Please don't forget the benefits of mental health issues, as well as physical issues." Annual User Survey respondent

A full report for Public Health on the health benefits of the work is available.

2.3 Prosperous- Promote opportunities to improve the local economy by sympathetic commercial use and development of the outdoor assets.

Outcomes:

- There is a greater contribution to the local economy from the Great Outdoors.
- There are more opportunities for people to gain employment in the outdoor assets.

The £2.2m Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme was launched in January 2016. The programme funds organisations, mostly businesses, to develop the local economy in ways that help sustain the high quality environment.

Outdoor Partnerships launched the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website at Easter 2016 and was used by 134,000 people in 2017/18. This is an invaluable resource for local people, visitors and businesses to help encourage recreational use of the countryside and derive economic benefit in the process.

The Rights of Way network and the high quality natural and cultural heritage of our Country Parks and Heritage Sites form part of the essential infrastructure for visitors and encourage many to choose Shropshire for their holiday. These assets underpin the local area, especially in rural parts of the county.

2.4 Connected- Bring people together within their communities to appreciate the potential and make decisions locally about their outdoor assets and actively participate in its maintenance and improvement

Outcomes:

- The value of country parks, greenspace and Rights of Way to local communities are truly understood, especially by decision makers.
- New green space and access secured where there is evidence of need.
- More people are involved and making a difference to their local outdoor assets.
- Businesses are actively supporting and contributing to the management of the Great Outdoors.

Shropshire has one of the largest Rights of Way (RoW) networks in the country: The 5,600 km would reach across the Atlantic to New York. It is an invaluable resource for local communities and enables people to access the fantastic scenery throughout the county. Through the Parish Paths Partnership groups and the Walking Forums, local people can decide on the priority routes for their parish and wider area and work towards making improvements themselves. More than half the county now has a P3 group and these volunteers taking on much of the management of the RoW in their area is one of the reasons that the BVPI for the ease of use of RoW is still as high as 70%.

Volunteers also make a major contribution to the management and development of the Country Parks and Countryside Heritage Sites, again helping maintain the local facilities for future generations and help with events and activities of local benefit.

2.5 Cherished- Conserve and enhance special places that are important for nature, heritage and people

Outcomes:

- Better conservation of sensitive habitats, key wildlife species and important heritage.
- Better understanding of why these sites are so important.
- Dissipation of visitors from key sites.

We manage 469 ha (1,158 ac) of Country Parks and Heritage Sites (24 sites in total) spread across Shropshire, which have over 1 million visits per year (£7 million into the local economy based on Natural England data of £7/head). They include 3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 3 Registered Commons, 1 Geoparc, 3 RAMSAR/ Special Areas of Conservation (International Status), 3 Special Sites of Scientific Interest, 7 Local Nature Reserves, 3 Regionally Important Geological sites, 8 County Wildlife Sites and 12 Open Access areas. All have designated Rights of Way across them.

The Council has statutory duties to manage the sites through the Occupier's Liability Act 1957, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the Open Spaces Act 1906. Provision of easy access is required under the Equality Act 2010 and we have a general duty to have regard to the EC Habitats Directive.

We will work with local people and partner agencies to ensure the best management of these sites within current financial restrictions.

2.6 Safe- Ensure Shropshire's outdoor assets are safe and well maintained to meet statutory obligations and new opportunities now and in the future, within current financial restrictions

Outcomes:

- Outdoor assets are well managed and meet statutory requirements.

The budgets and staff resource are less than half what they were in 2013/14 and Council financial support is continuing to fall. This has had a dramatic impact on the capacity of the team to fulfil their statutory duty and to involve local people and co-ordinate volunteers. There was considerable support for the work done by the Outdoor Partnerships Service, for example:

"Overall paths here are well signposted and maintained - well done to the team especially in these difficult times."

"Good job, good facilities. Keep up the good work."

"Walking and mountain biking routes are of a very good quality in the area as long as both groups are aware of the routes they are allowed to use."

3.0 Budget

The total Council budget for 2017/18 was £1,298,148. The budget has dropped by around 50% since 2012/13 as shown in the graph. This reflects a similar drop in staff numbers of more than 50% in the same period.

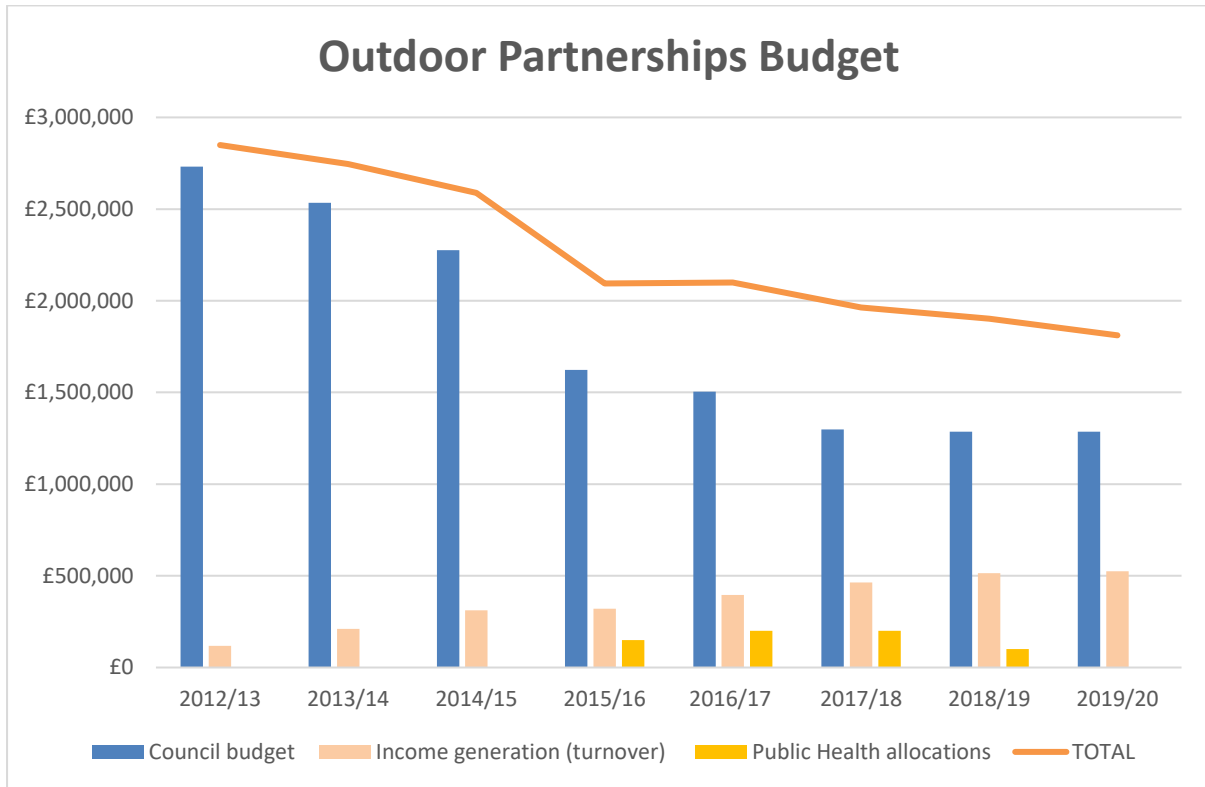


Figure 1- Total budget for Outdoor Partnerships Service

The budget for 2018/19 is £1,329,230 of which £491,210 is non-controllable, leaving £838,020 controllable costs.

Income generation

Figure 1 also illustrated the increase in income from £118k in 2012/13 to £468k last year, which is over a quarter of the total spend of the Service. Income has been generated by a number of commercial activities over the past few years and is growing year on year as expected. All of the teams within Outdoor Partnerships are contributing to this.

4.0 Activity in 2017/18

This section gives more detail about the activity, achievements and feedback from our customers in 2017/18.

4.1 Improving accessibility and the local environment

Work by the Countryside Maintenance, Parks and Greenspaces and Mapping and Enforcement teams make a significant difference to improving accessibility, biodiversity and the local environment.

4.1.1 Country Parks and Heritage Sites

The Country Parks and Heritage Sites Team manages sites that require specialist management of specific natural and cultural heritage features e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Schedule Ancient Monuments and Internationally important wetlands, which are used by more than the local community and are important for the visitor economy.

Activities include:

- Oversee site repairs and maintenance
- Work with local communities and support volunteering activities
- Apply for external grants to deliver projects
- Develop and implement site management plans
- Deliver wildlife habitat and access improvements
- Deliver events and educational activities

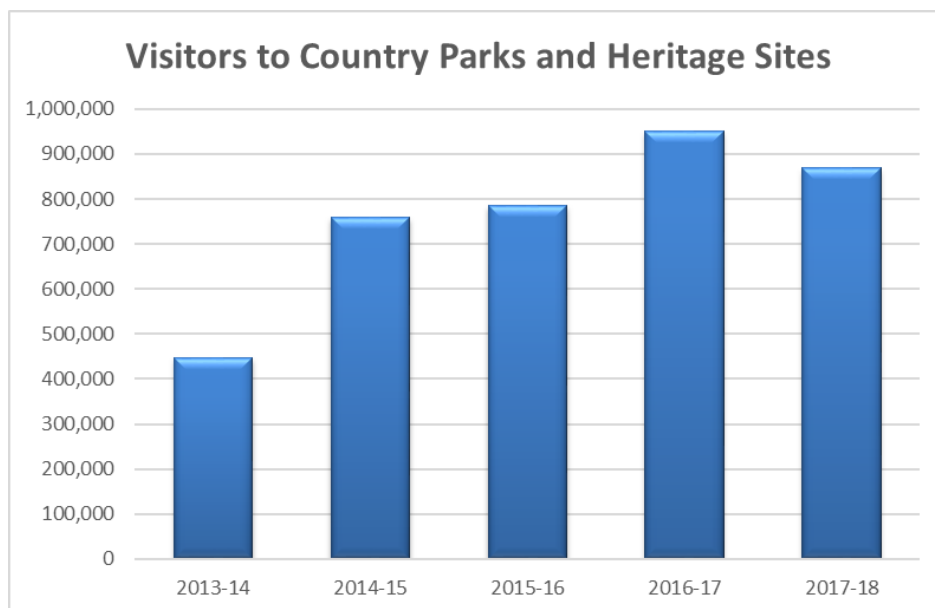


Figure 2- Visits to Country Parks and Heritage Sites across the county

Country Parks and Heritage Sites in northern Shropshire

In the north of the county we manage 14 Countryside Heritage Sites and 1 country park, The Mere at Ellesmere, our flagship site in the north and gateway to the Meres & Mosses landscape.

These 15 sites cover 320 Ha of publicly accessible land which is managed both for people's enjoyment and recreation but also for the important wildlife, flora and fauna found therein.

Three sites, Brown Moss, Colemere and Corbet Wood are Sites of Special Scientific Interest. In addition, Brown Moss and Colemere are internationally important wetland sites and are protected with RAMSAR designation.

During 2017 / 18 we have been working more closely with partners from Natural England, The Freshwater Habitats Trust and Shropshire Wildlife Trust alongside local graziers, community groups, Parish Councils and Friends of Sites.

At Brown Moss Countryside Heritage Site, grazing has been reintroduced after a 50 year absence. The lack of grazing has certainly had a detrimental effect upon the rarer habitats and species with woodland encroachment spreading and drying the site. A £25K grant from Natural England enabled extensive tree felling across the site during the winter of 2017/18. Together with experimental habitat management work to restore *Luronium natans* (floating water plantain), the future of the site looks good for the specialist and rare species once found there.

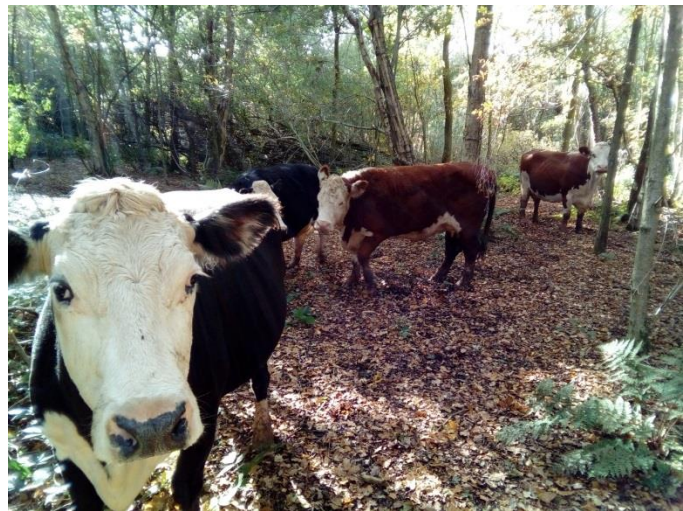


Figure 3- Cattle grazing at Brown Moss

Colemere Countryside Heritage Site continues to see an above average increase in visitor numbers which puts a strain upon wildlife and the aesthetic values of the site, dog walkers in particular have been problematic at this site. On a positive note, The Friends Of Colemere has been established to work alongside Shropshire Council.



Figure 4- Least water lily [photo courtesy of Dan Wrench]

Colemere is the only site in England where the Least Water Lily (*Nuphar pumila*) can be found. This last year we have been working with partners in Natural England and Key Gardens who have lead on the

development of a conservation plan involving DNA analysis sample collection, storage and propagation trials.



Figure 5- monitoring the mere at Colemere



Additional habitat management work funded by a £5K grant from Natural England included removing overhanging trees from the Mere edge and creating dead hedges along the mere edge to stop disturbance by dogs. Colemere also has areas of species rich grassland with many species of local and national importance.



Figure 6- Ifton Meadows Nature Reserve

We also manage 2 Local Nature Reserves at **Ifton Meadows**, St. Martins and **Steel Heath** near Tilstock. These sites have seen increased habitat management work during 2017 / 18 to improve areas for ground nesting birds such as the skylark and to save ponds from drying up and heathland species such as Heather and bilberry being lost altogether from woodland expansion.

A number of our sites in northern Shropshire have a strong sense of heritage; these add a wealth of value for a visitor and reveal a depth of

human interaction with the landscape dating back thousands of years, millions if including Corbet Wood which is a SSSI for its geology and dinosaur remains.

Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage Site features an iron age hillfort, Oliver's Point, notable during the English Civil War and Humphrey Kynaston's Cave, the original Dick Turpin. Work to these heritage features during 2017 18 included the clear felling of all trees on the majority of the hillfort as storm damage was ripping the trees up by the roots, damaging archaeology. This domino effect couldn't be allowed to continue so the trees were felled in a cost neutral operation, payed for by the value of the timber. We continue to work with Historic England and Dr Andy Wigley from Shropshire Councils Environment Team to protect and interpret the hillfort. Heathland restoration and site protection from mountain bikers remain the top priorities.



Figure 7- Iron Age Hill Fort at Nesscliffe Country Park



Figure 8- Carnog Working Horses rolling bracken on The Cliffe

Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage site as with all sites across Shropshire has seen a steady and considerable increase in visitor numbers to the point where it is starting to have a very negative impact upon the site. In particular there is an emerging conflict of user groups between mountain bikers, horse riders, pedestrians and local residents. A more proactive approach to visitor management has been initiated as a

consequence.

Work continues on the **Cliffe** to restore this large expanse of important heathland habitat, a rare habitat by global standards. Carnog Working Horses completed their second summer of rolling the newly emerged fronds of bracken which over time eradicates the plant.

The Mere at Ellesmere during 2017 / 18 has seen a steady increase in volunteer numbers, visitor numbers, group activities and events organised by external bodies. We have completed the Tesco's Bags of Help project known as the "Lost Garden Terraces of Castlefields" project. This £12K scheme has improved a previously unmanaged part of the country park and told the story of its origins and use as private grounds of the Brownlow Estate, an estate that once entertained the likes of King Edward VIII and Wallace Simpson during their difficult years before his abdication. This project was inspired by volunteer enthusiasm and work has involved tree thinning and tree planting, an array of trees selected for their beauty form and colour will create a new arboretum for the future amongst partially restored terraced gardens. Additional seating offers new views across The Mere and an archaeological dig has revealed an early Victorian icehouse.



Figure 9- The Mere at Ellesmere



Figure 10- Wild flowers for the bees at The Mere

The Bee Metropolis, a 20 foot tall living sculpture, constructed in 2016 continues to draw the attention of visitors for its bee conservation message it delivers and for the beauty of the extensive beds of nectar rich herbs, cornfield flower beds and perennial wildflower meadows.

The new office, The Wardens Bungalow has seen the addition of a workshop for the final move over from the Swan Hill depot. We continue to take bookings to hire the building for private parties and vents but also from other Shropshire Council departments. There is a steady climb in bookings.

Public Realm funding via the Community Action Team has enabled us to make improvements to the appearance of the Promenade which includes landscaping, flower bed management and lamp post painting.

Llanymynech Heritage Area contains a fine example of a Hoffman kiln alongside restored industrial heritage structures and features including the landmark chimney of Llanymynech. Over the last year we have continued to work closely with the friends of Llanymynech known as The Limeys who have shown a huge amount of dedication to the site over the years. During this last year the final section of footpath was installed, the 150m of stoned path now gives visitors the opportunity to walk the



Figure 11- The Hoffman Kiln at Llanymynech

entire site taking in it's much restored and interpreted heritage, meadows and woodlands.

Work continues on all sites across the north of the county with some receiving attention for the first time in many years. The process of bringing these sites up to a common standard across the service has seen the production and implementation of site action plans together with better contact with local communities, individuals and partners.



Figure 12- Wollerton Pools

Visitor Numbers

Visitor numbers across all sites in northern Shropshire are estimated to be 500,000 and this figure continues to climb at a steady rate every year.

Site Infrastructure

We maintain 13 car parks across the 15 sites and these are maintained fit for purpose. Recent investigations have taken place to determine whether we could increase revenue by installing car park ticket machines. Some sites have no internet signal and others are too remote leaving them vulnerable to vandalism and some site residents are opposed to introducing car parking charges as it could lead to cars parked on the sides of lanes. Some residents however think car parks could in fact reduce the number of people visiting sites which they would favour.

Volunteer numbers and site groups

We continue to empower local communities to actively participate in site management via conservation tasks, Friends of Groups and specialist project groups. 8 Friends of groups are now supported with two new groups established in 2017.

Tree Safety

Tree safety management continues to be effective with close liaison with Tree Team. In 2017 – 18 we experienced several extreme weather events affecting tree safety. The most notable was a tornado which swept through Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage site uprooting dozens of mature trees and damaging many others in it's path of devastation, thankfully no one was injured.

Aerial Photographic Monitoring



Figure 13- Aerial monitoring of the Old Racecourse, Oswestry

In 2017/18 we began working with Drone Rangers of Ludlow to begin a continuous data set of aerial maps of sites to enable greater site monitoring and more effective habitat management. This data will also be used to demonstrate site management to external funders such as Defra as part of Countryside stewardship schemes. Oswestry Racecourse is a good example. Stewardship payments are enabling us to restore the heathland by reduction in bracken coverage via mechanical cutting, this gradual heathland restoration is apparent over a number of years aerial coverage.

Country Parks and Countryside Heritage Sites in southern Shropshire



Through 2017-2018, a total of 140 volunteers have helped out on the parks and countryside heritage sites in south Shropshire. The total number of time that the volunteers have clocked up is an incredible 15079 hours!

The following is an outline of key achievements and developments across the southern sites:

Severn Valley Country Park (Alveley and Highley)

Severn Valley Country Park now attracts somewhere in the region of 180,000 visitors a year. To cope with this number of visitors and to ensure that the park remains a vibrant visitor attraction, plans are underway to build an extension to the visitor centre, renew interpretation and update the visitor offer. A grant has been submitted to RDPE and the team eagerly await the outcome.

The continued growth of the volunteer group has meant that 2 sessions a week are now possible. On a Tuesday, around 20-25 keen volunteers work on the park and the Thursday group has also now grown to around 10 regular helpers. The



Figure 14- Severn Valley Trail Run

groups carry out works on Shropshire Council sites across the area and have also been helping with a project at Alveley Primary School to create a wildlife garden.

In recognition of the incredible work that the Severn Valley Supporters Group do on the park, in 2017 they were awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. The Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire presented the award. It is the highest accolade that a volunteer group can be awarded and is an indication of the incredible commitment that the volunteers demonstrate each year to making Severn Valley Country Park a wonderful place for people and wildlife.

Through 2017 the team at Severn Valley Country Park also worked hard to further increase income through the park. The teasshop was updated, a soft play area was installed for younger visitors and a number of large events were organised. Severn Valley Trail Run was the biggest of these events. The 2017 event attracted around 300 runners and raised around £3000 for the park.

Severn Valley Supporters Group have also been successful in attaining several grants. £500 was awarded from Veolia's "Make a Difference Fund" which funded the creation of a butterfly garden in the car park. An interpretation board has been donated by the local branch of Butterfly Conservation.

The volunteers also applied to Astley Solar Farm fund to install a new woodland bird hide near the Visitor Centre. The hide meets accessibility standards and will be a wonderful facility for school groups who are visiting the park on ranger-led visits.

Ranger-led school visits are a great way of encouraging young people to get active in the outdoors and learn about their local wildlife. Through 2017 staff at Severn Valley Country Park took 751 children on ranger-led visits.

Corporate volunteering is also offered at the park and regularly attracts volunteers from companies such as Severn Trent Water.

Lyth Hill Countryside Heritage Site (Bayston Hill)

The management of Lyth Hill is now a partnership between Shropshire Council, Bayston Hill Parish Council and Longden Parish Council. Staff from Outdoor Partnerships Team have re-written the site management plan. Site management works are now progressing at pace thanks to a growing volunteer work-force.



Figure 15- Lyth Hill volunteers

One of the most important habitats at Lyth Hill is acid grassland with plants such as harebell. This is threatened by bracken encroachment. During 2017 the bracken was targeted by horse-rolling and spraying. Dexter cattle are also now used on site to graze the grassland areas and help keep scrub in check.



Figure 16- Dexter cattle grazing on Lyth Hill

In order to increase the floristic diversity of the meadow areas of the site, green hay strewing is also being carried out at Lyth Hill by the volunteers. The species-rich hay meadow at Severn Valley Country Park is the donor site for this.

Eardington Nature Reserve (Nr Bridgnorth)

Friends of Eardington Nature Reserve have been awarded £10,000 from Awards for All. This has paid for brand new wheelchair-friendly paths, interpretation boards and a bird hide.



Figure 17- Friends of Eardington Nature Reserve

Each autumn the grassland is grazed by hebridean sheep to create good conditions for butterflies. The reserve also now has a 'Bee Village' made from recycled washing machine drums to give a home to solitary bees.

Stanmore Country Park (Nr Bridgnorth)

The volunteer group at Stanmore continues to grow and attracts people from neighbouring communities and further afield. The group have been successful in obtaining a grant of £500.00 from Veolia's "Make a Difference Awards" to fund new bat and bird boxes around the site. The boxes went up in February and last month monitoring of the boxes took place and we were very pleased to see that many boxes were being used already. The group are holding a number of events for the public and volunteers over the summer. These include bat walks, green hay strewing and collecting yellow rattle seed from Severn Valley Country Park.

Donington Pool Local Nature Reserve (Albrighton)

The volunteer group here now number seven regular volunteers and have been supported over the last twelve months by members of Severn Valley Country Park Thursday Group. The main project over the winter has been to create a green walk with wild flowers which runs along our boundary in St Cuthbert's Meadow. Material that has been cut from the hedge has been laid to form a dead hedge. A new pond dipping platform has been built by the volunteers and this will allow schools and other community groups to study wildlife in the pond dipping pool safely. The nature conservation area will be opened up to the public on the first Saturday of every month from May until September and volunteers will be on hand to give information and show people round.



Figure 18- Volunteers at Donington Pool LNR

Rectory Wood, Church Stretton

Although this site is now owned by Church Stretton Town Council, the Outdoor Partnerships Service still manages the site under contract. Staff within the team have the necessary conservation skills and knowledge to oversee site management, arrange contracts and supervise volunteers at this Capability Brown inspired site. Through 2017 volunteers have been restoring an original pathway and have re-built a bridge that was marked on an old map of the woods. The next exciting project involves carrying out archaeological investigations of the site of Stretton Old Hall and beginning a woodland management project to remove sycamore and re-plant.

Birchmeadow Park, Broseley

It is a diverse portfolio of sites across south Shropshire. Birchmeadow Park features a play area, BMX track and football pitches. Staff from the Outdoor Partnerships Team are working with the Birchmeadow Park Management Committee to try and find a solution to water-logging issues on the football pitches that are meaning lots of games get cancelled.

The Bog Mine, Poles Coppice and Snailbeach

The Outdoor Partnership Service also manage these sites around the Stiperstones area. Poles Coppice and the Bog Mine has benefitted from extensive habitat management works under the Stiperstones and Corndon Landscape Partnership Scheme. This will be continued working in partnership with



Figure 19- Grayling butterfly

local volunteers. The Bog mine has the largest inland population of grayling butterfly in the UK. This butterfly is a master of disguise and likes bare spoil on which to bask. Ongoing conservation management will need to control scrub and tree growth at the site. The Outdoor Partnerships Team work closely with the Shropshire Mines Trust to ensure the safety of the buildings and mine workings at Snailbeach for the hundreds of visitors who take part in mine tours each year.

Customer feedback

Customer attended Severn Valley Country Park as a parent helper with Castlefields Primary School from Bridgnorth. She just wanted to say what a pleasure it was to visit the park and what an absolute credit Ed the ranger is to the park and the company. Ed met them off the train and was extremely welcoming and brilliant with the children, he captivated their attention from the off-set. His knowledge is immense with regards to the park and all its wild life. It was certainly a very educational visit for both the children and adults too. She will definitely be paying a return visit with her family.

— Customer

“My husband and I have taken part in the monthly organised walks lead by the Rangers at Severn Valley Country Park, Alveley for many years. The walks are very friendly and enjoyable, good for both physical and mental health. The walks range from five miles to fourteen miles. We live in Telford and join ranger James Brookes and his dog Millie to learn about the Severn Valley area. We hope these walks continue and that Shropshire Council realise how popular they are and recognise the valuable work done by the rangers and their volunteers to the community and the Severn Valley Country Park.”

Annual User Survey feedback

“I am keen that heritage be preserved and explored. It is sometimes difficult to balance the needs and mores of different users, but education can help. I have only recently moved here from Kent, but like what I have seen so far.”

Annual User Survey feedback

4.1.2 Rights of Way improvements

The Countryside Maintenance Team delivers improvements to the rights of way network through a number of different areas of work:

- Resolution of problem reports from the public, Parish Councils and Councillors
- Support and development of the Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme
- Restoration and maintenance of Offa’s Dyke National Trail and other promoted routes such as the Shropshire Way and



Figure 20- New Rights of Way gate installed

Jack Mytton Way

- Implementation of new project work such as the development of new promoted routes
- Implementation of works that arise from legal changes to the map where routes are diverted or added to the definitive map.

Key achievements

- 913 individual improvements made on the network (target 800)
- 182 gates replacing stiles to improve accessibility (target 150). These were spread around the county more this year, with more done as training for P3 groups, so they can continue the good work elsewhere.
- Existing P3 groups supported and new groups formed (please see active volunteering section of this report)
- Offa's Dyke programme delivered and funded up to 75% by Natural England
- Further development of the commercial output for the team's skills, over and above the network management task. New staff have been appointed and the team have built a strong customer base for future work. Income targets were met alongside good performance in Rights of Way work output.
- The working relationship with Shrewsbury School was developed further, leading to an ongoing week of community work every year with the students (see case study in appendix 2).

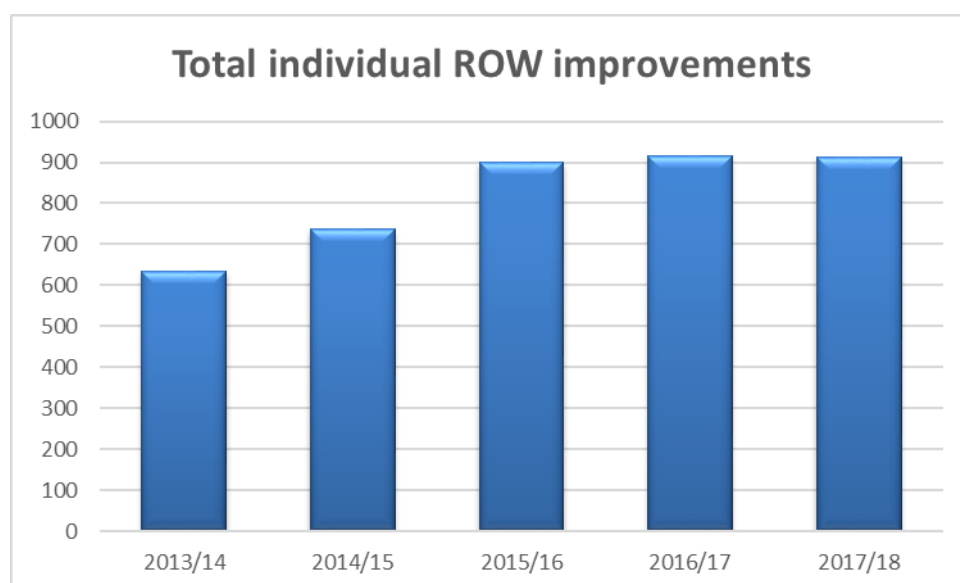


Figure 21- Improvements to Rights of Way

Appendix 1 shows what type of work was delivered through the 913 individual improvements and shows a comparison on recent years output.

The progress in replacing stiles with gates has grown with a further 182 stiles replaced with gates. This demonstrates the team's commitment to negotiating the replacement of stiles with gates to improve the accessibility of the network. On top of this further gates were installed independently by Parish Path Partnership groups to replace stiles.

The team were not able to sustain last year's increased amount of path clearing due to staff shortages in the vital time of year. Overgrowth remains a key obstacle to users according to the user survey results, so this will have to be maintained and increased year on year.

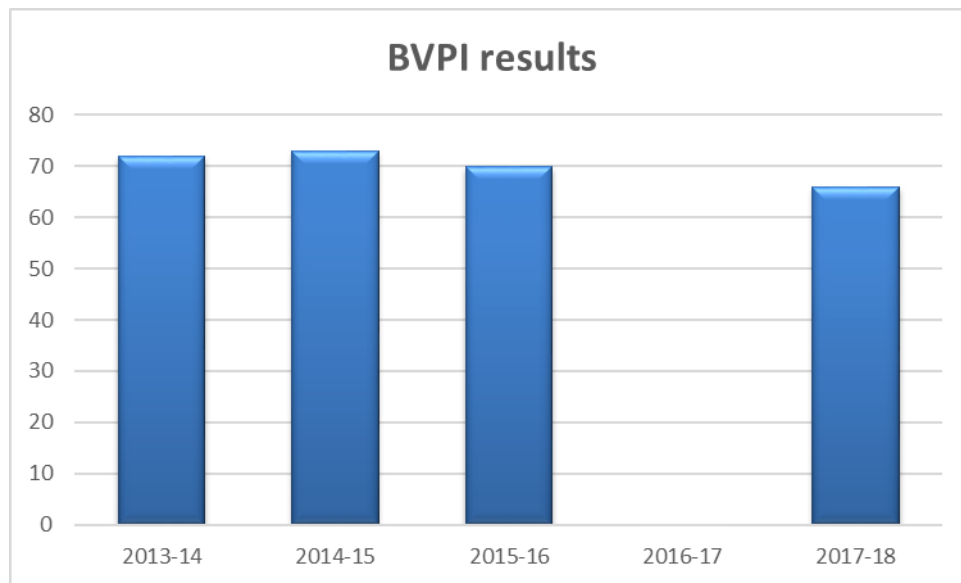


Figure 22- Rights of Way survey results

Customer feedback

"Thank you very much. The stile I referred to has just been repaired. Very impressed with the response. Thank you again.!"

A resident of North Shropshire

"You may remember I reported some issues along the Maelor Way (Sept/Oct 2016), I sent photos of a broken footbridge and stiles. Well last Sunday I was again on this section of the way and to my surprise I found a new footbridge and new metal kissing-gates replacing the rickety stiles. I would like to thank you for your efforts in this matter it looks like Shropshire council is on the ball."

A resident of North Shropshire

"Just a further note to thank you and your Team for carrying out the works to the above footpath. A number of Councillors and parishioners have contacted me to let me know how delighted they were with the works and reiterated what a difference it will make."

A Parish Clerk

4.1.3 Mapping and Enforcement of Rights of Way

The Mapping and Enforcement Team are responsible for ensuring that the Definitive Map is kept up to date and the protection and enforcement of the Public Rights of Way network. This covers a number of different areas of work:

- Processing, investigating and making recommendations on all applications to alter the map and public Rights of Way.
- Legal orders to amend the Definitive Map (both evidential and preferential).
- Maintaining statutory registers.
- Responding to Planning application consultations and land charge searches.
- Responding to problem reports and legal notices.
- Site inspections and negotiations with landowners.
- Enforcement action.
- Motor Rally permissions.
- Traffic Regulation orders.
- General Enquiries and supply of information.
- Temporary Closures.

The team consists of six Officers but the equivalent of 4 FTE, four who undertake all mapping and enforcement works within their allocated areas and a support officer who publishes legal orders, undertakes many of the tasks detailed above and provides direct support to the team. Since November 2016 a Land Charges and Planning Support Officer has joined the team to respond to Land Charge Searches and Planning Applications since Public Rights of Way queries became part of the standard searches in June 2016 and an officer on a 2-day basis to assist in the logging of issues on the network and other matters.

Key Achievements

- Public Path Orders (Preferential Orders)
 - Seven diversion orders were made under the Highways Act 1980 and four orders were confirmed.
 - One Extinguishment order was made.
 - Nine orders were made and six orders were confirmed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where routes were affected by development.
 - One bridleway and one footpath were dedicated by landowners.

These orders provide an income of just over **£28,250**

- Two Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) (Evidential Orders) were made and three were confirmed.
- Thirteen ROW Temporary Closure Orders and extensions (to allow works to be carried out usually on Health and Safety Grounds) were undertaken raising **£10,350**
- 46 Rights of Way Searches were carried out in house bringing in an income of over **£2,750**
- Nineteen Highways Statements/Declarations (to protect landowners against claims for Rights of Way based on user evidence) were made to deposit with the Council a Landowner Statement or renew a Landowner Declaration bringing in income of **£5000**

These applications protect landowners from future claims for additional public rights of way over their land based on user evidence. Current regulations allow the Council to charge for such applications.

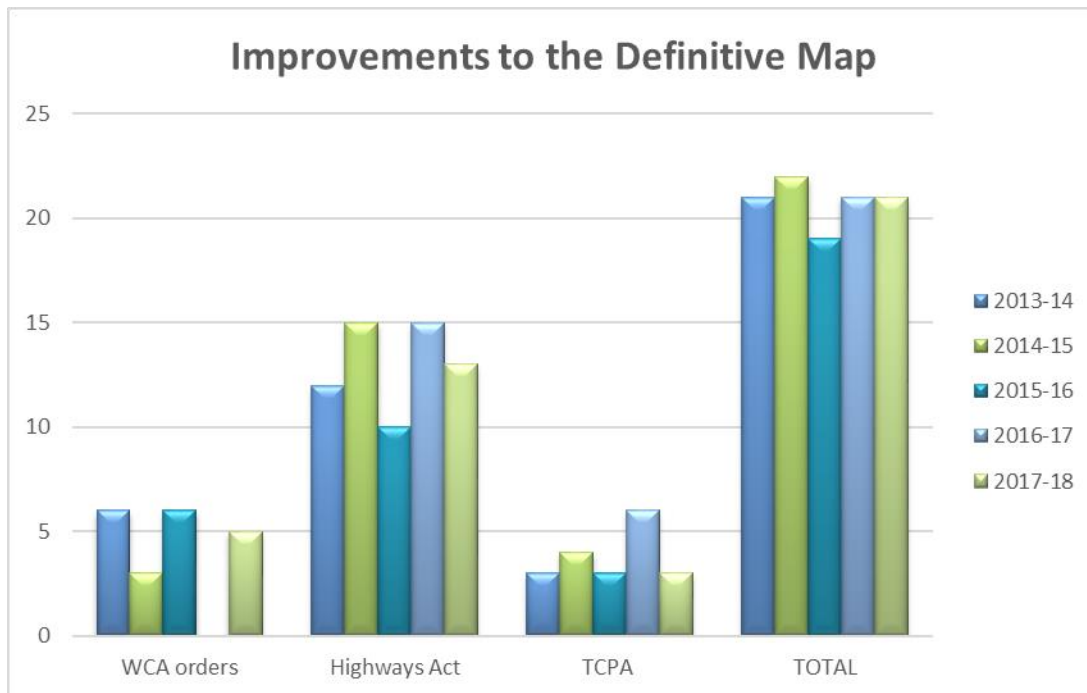


Figure 23- Improvements to the Definitive Map

- Responded to **447** Planning Applications that directly affect or has a Public Right of Way running within close proximity and **87** applications affecting Public Open Space provision. These are dealt with via the Council’s Planning Portal. Where routes are directly affected this can often result in an application to divert the route under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or the Highways Act 1980. (See above).
- Since June 2016 the Public Rights of Way question has become part of the standard Land Charges Search. **5811** searches have been responded to by the Mapping and Enforcement Team during the last year.
- A total of **1539** general enquiries were logged during the year. These include letters, emails to the generic e-mail address, from the Councils website and from the Customer Call Centre. This does not include phone calls or e-mails direct to individual officers. The majority of the enquiries logged are matters which are dealt with by the Mapping and Enforcement Team.
- **1028** complaints/ issues were reported and logged on the System used by the team to manage the Public Rights of Way network.
- **80%** of the issues reported related to problems which were allocated to the Rights Of Way Team who undertake practical works on the network. The remaining **20%** of issues reported relate to matters requiring enforcement so were allocated to the Mapping and Enforcement Team.
- **83** enforcement matters were resolved.
- Officers have also made progress towards the revision of the Definitive Map and Statement which involves examining all legal orders made and confirmed since 1 September 1965. All

orders have had to be scanned and converted which to date has involved **1280** individual routes. It is hoped that this will be completed by the 2018/19 financial year.

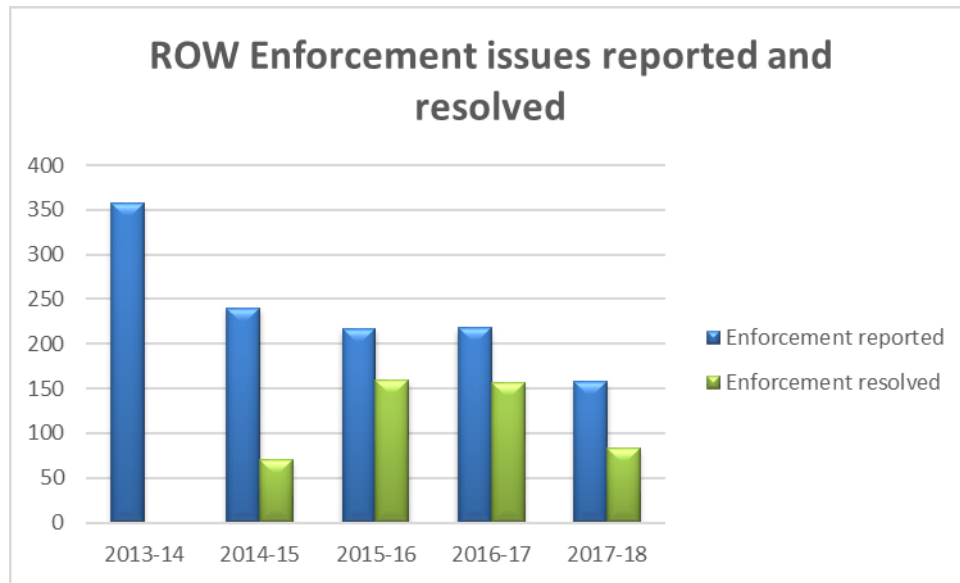


Figure 24- Reported and resolved Rights of Way issues

More detail on each of these achievements can be found in appendix 3.

Customer Feedback

Compliment for the Mapping and Enforcement Team in Outdoor Partnerships:

Just a quick note to thank you (and Emily earlier in the process) for all your efforts on our footpath diversion. The process is obviously quite lengthy, but we very much appreciated your advice, prompt responses to queries and actions on the ground to get this finalised.

Please feel free to pass this on to your managers!

(This was regarding a diversion at Myddle and Broughton)

Compliment for Emily Parsons-Jones - Rights of Way Officer:

Last Sunday customer was on Maelor Way and to his surprise he found a new footbridge and new metal kissing-gates replacing the rickety stiles. He would like to thank you for your efforts in this matter it looks like Shropshire Council is on the ball.

4.2 Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme

The Southern Shropshire LEADER Local Development Strategy seeks to implement the six national LEADER priorities:

- Increasing farm productivity in ways which enhance natural capital;
- Developing sustainable micro and small enterprises and farm diversification;
- Building rural tourism making the most of Shropshire's assets;
- Improving rural services to support business growth and development;
- Enhancing the natural, cultural and heritage attractions of the area;
- Increasing woodland and forest productivity in ways which enhance natural capital.



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development: Europe
investing in rural areas

Businesses, groups or organisations that apply for funding need to demonstrate a benefit to the local rural economy. Projects need to make a connection to the landscape and contribute to the creation of jobs, the development of businesses or rural services in the Southern Shropshire LEADER area.

40 Projects are now contracted, totalling £855,779.20 which will create 25.25 jobs. The table below shows that the spread of projects is across the 6 national LEADER Priorities.

LEADER Priority	Programme Allocation	Amount Allocated	To Allocate	Projects Contracted	No. of Jobs Created
Priority 1 Farming	£ 249,936.00	£ 204,423.69	£ 45,512.31	17	3
Priority 2 Small and micro Business support	£ 666,496.00	£ 310,120.61	£ 356,375.39	10	13.8
Priority 3 Tourism	£ 333,248.00	£ 68,468.59	£ 264,779.41	4	1.95
Priority 4 Rural services	£ 133,299.20	£ 107,491.68	£ 25,807.52	3	0
Priority 5 Culture and Heritage	£ 133,299.20	£ 69,954.23	£ 63,344.97	2	2.5
Priority 6 Forestry	£ 149,961.60	£ 95,320.40	£ 54,641.20	4	4
TOTAL:	£ 1,666,240.00	£ 855,779.20	£ 810,460.80	40	25.25

The Southern Shropshire LEADER Programme Manager continues to represent the West Midlands Local Action Groups at a national level. He attended the LEADER Exchange Group (LEG) meeting in Birmingham on 27th February 2018. Defra confirmed that LEADER groups need to be fully allocated by 29th March 2019 and projects could spend up to 31st December 2020. Running Costs and Animation Claims can be submitted up until 31st March 2021.

Round 6 closed on 9th March 2018 there are now more projects that have been invited to Full Application than there is funding available. A new round is likely to open in August as there is still a high drop out of applications. Opening a round 7 in August will ensure full allocation by March 2019.

The 2017-18 Attestation Report has been completed and submitted to the Rural Payments Agency.

More information about LEADER can be found on the Shropshire Council website:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/outdoor-recreation/southern-shropshire-leader-programme>

4.3 Active Volunteering

The Outdoor Partnership team relies on a range of dedicated residents from across the county to help deliver the Service. Without these fantastic volunteers the level of Service delivery would be significantly lower. In return, the team provide training, co-ordination and support but increasingly these groups are working independently, setting their own priorities locally, with minimum input from the team.

By volunteering to do physical tasks in the outdoors and to lead walking groups the volunteers are also helping themselves and others keep more physically active, more often and the volunteering programmes are therefore contributing to the Public Health ‘Everybody Active Every Day’ agenda and helping improve health and wellbeing locally.

The number of volunteer hours and the value of that time has grown from 2013-14. Volunteers are contributing the time of 21 full time members of staff.

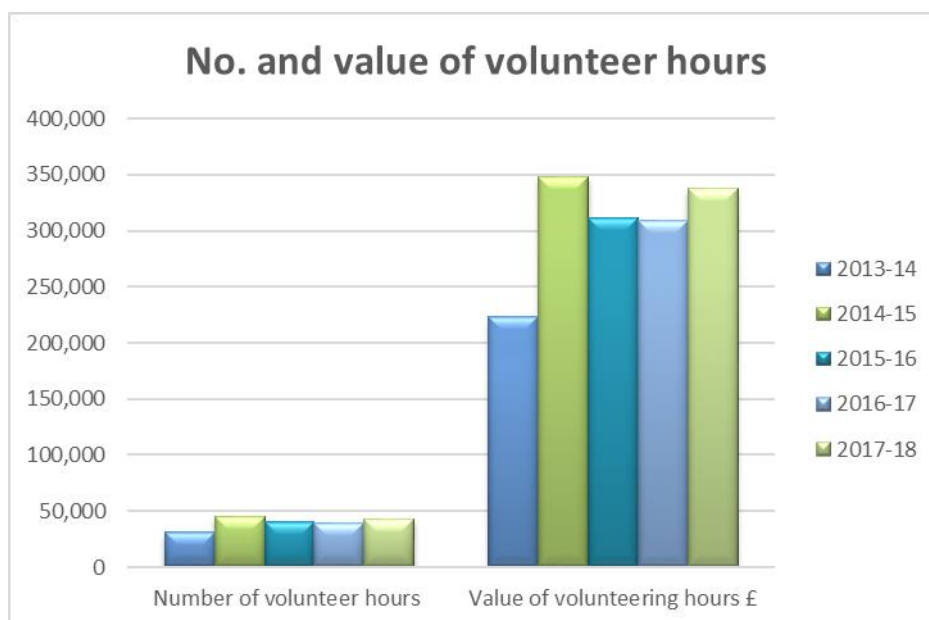


Figure 25- Number and value of volunteer hours

The team would like to note their heartfelt thanks to everyone who volunteers with us.

4.3.1 Walking for Health

Walking for Health has been actively promoted by Shropshire Council for 13 years. We now co-ordinate the scheme with 0.8FTE staff member, following Liz Evan's leaving us in April. This means that the walks leaders for the groups need to be largely self-sufficient, although retaining some capacity to facilitate the scheme is essential as this provides;



- Walks leader training
- Training on the national Walking for Health database for volunteers
- Provision of materials for attendance at local events
- Provision of first aid kits and high-vis waistcoats
- Liaison with Walking for Health national teams
- Back up and support for groups when needed

A new Walking for Health Forum was established in 2017 to help with this process and a number of volunteers have offered to help facilitate the scheme across the county. The volunteers all do a tremendous job and have our heart-felt thanks for all the hours they put in.

Key achievements

- 61 active groups throughout Shropshire
- 1,591 participants, with around 550 walking weekly (a 12% drop on the previous year)
- 323 active volunteer walk leaders
- 59 new walks leaders trained

Participants were most likely to be over 55 (83%) and female (69%). 21% were over 75 years old. Only 3% were referred by a GP or health professional, so most walk of their own accord.



Figure 26- Walking for Health group

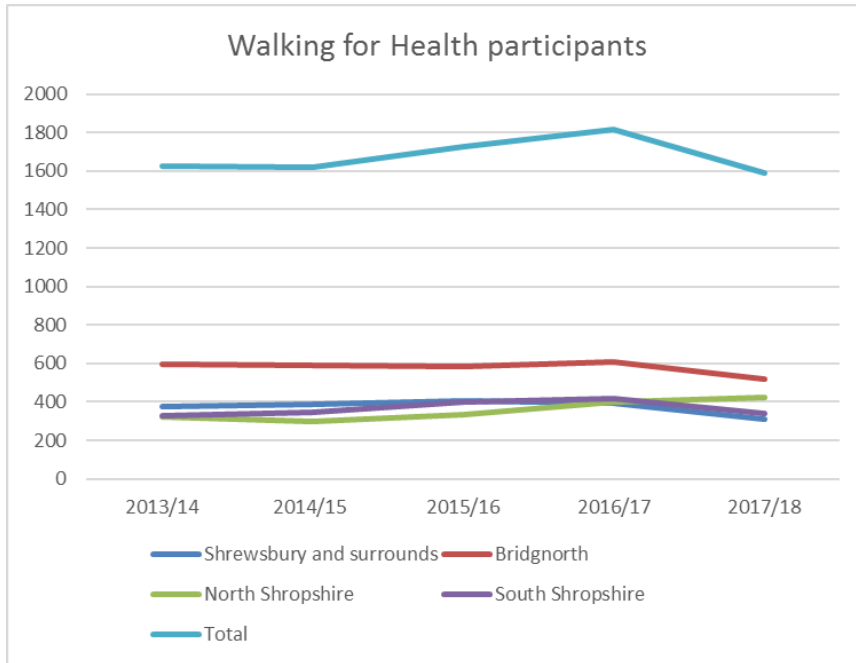


Figure 27- Walking for Health participants

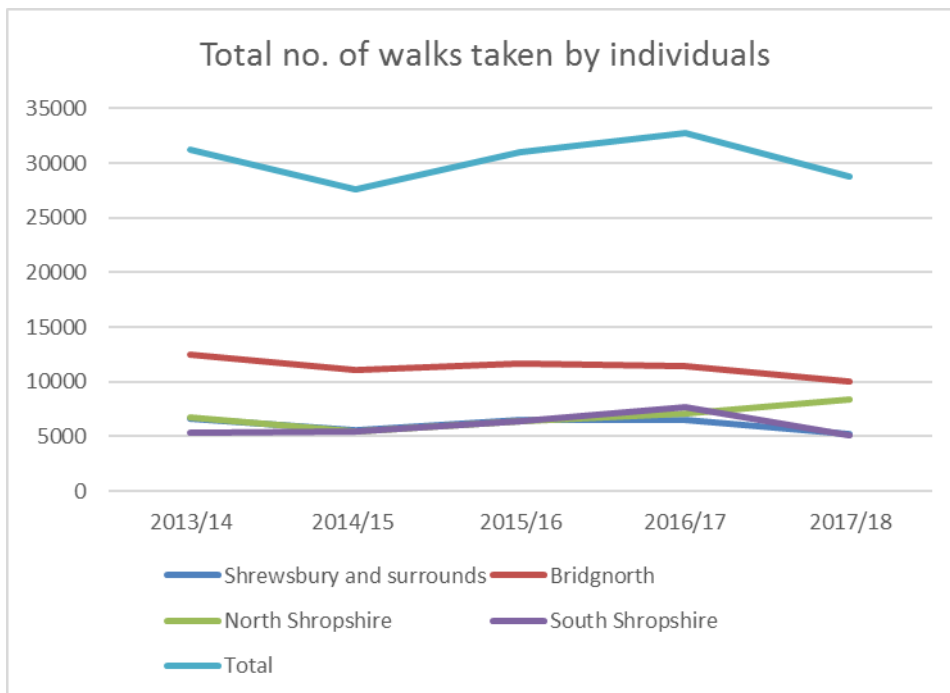


Figure 28- Total number of walks taken

The number of walks taken by individuals fell in 2017/18. There were 2,625 fewer walks from October to March, reflecting the terrible weather conditions before and after Christmas. Due to the reduction of staff, 3 groups have decided to 'go it alone' so this will have reflected in the numbers.

Ongoing support from the Co-ordinators remains important, especially for the development of Level 1 and 2 walks, promotion of existing groups and creation of new groups.

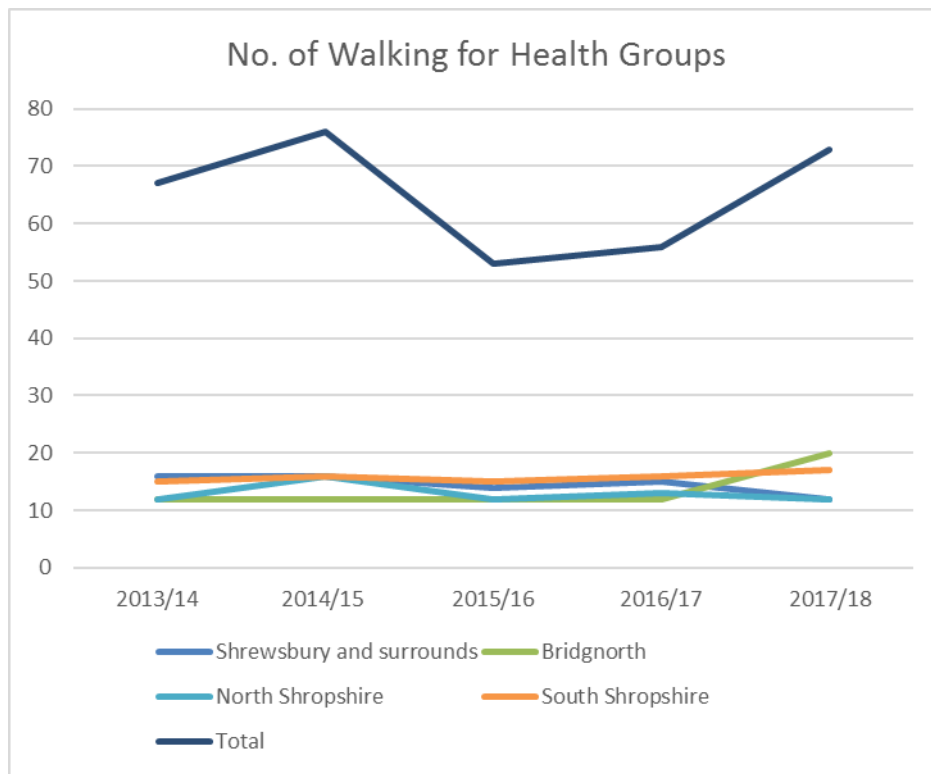


Figure 29- Walking for Health groups

Macmillan have now withdrawn from their sponsorship of walking for health, and the Ramblers have not found a new partner. The Ramblers are continuing to support walking for health with the aid of lottery funding to the end of 2018.

4.3.2 Shropshire Wild Teams

Shropshire Wild Teams provide volunteering opportunities in countryside management and other outdoor activities for people who most need support. The project especially caters for people with physical disabilities and mental health issues including those receiving support from health or care services. The Wild Teams are co-ordinated by a full-time officer and assistant.

The teams travel around Shropshire’s amazing landscapes taking on projects such as:

- Ground clearance
- Habitat management
- Footpath maintenance



Figure 30- Tree planting

- Hedge laying
- Gate installation
- Wildlife survey work

Volunteers can also take part in other activities such as walking, basic map reading, natural navigation and bushcraft, including foraging and tracking skills (and any other preferences voiced within each team).

The Project Officer supports team members to develop their skills and introduces them to the network of outdoor professionals, as well as familiarising them to new landscapes and environments.

Key Achievements

- Volunteer numbers have remained at 50 over the past 12 months.
- Four teams currently running, based around Craven Arms, Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Bridgnorth.
- 12 people in total have gone on to find work or volunteering opportunities in the past 3 years.
- 4,095 volunteer hours have been committed through the work of the Wild Teams. This is up 27% in the past 12 months.

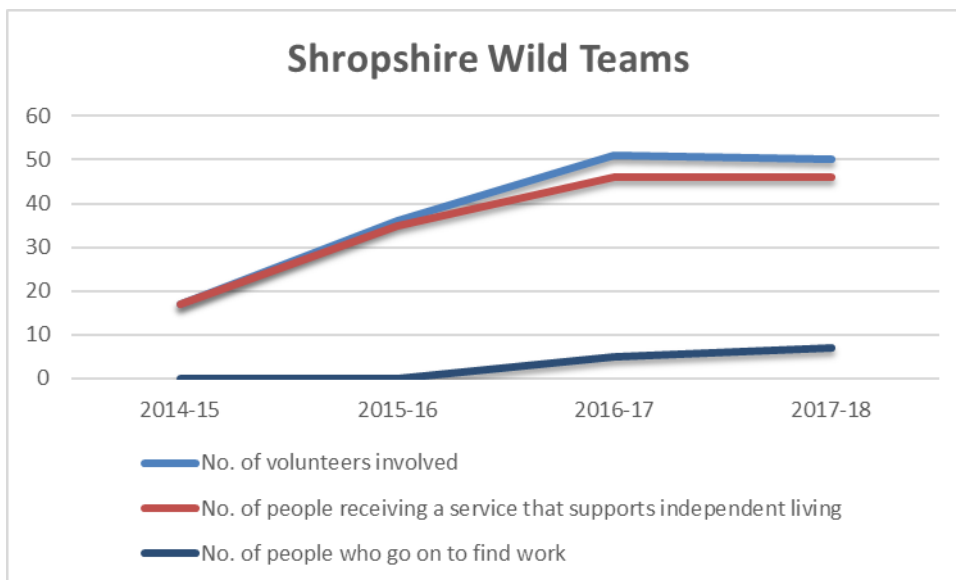


Figure 31- Involvement with Shropshire Wild Teams

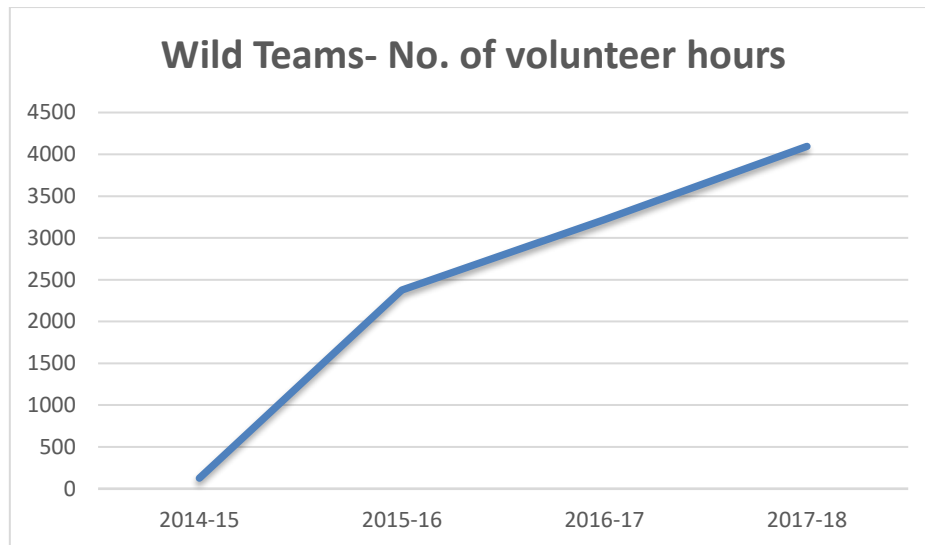


Figure 32- Number of volunteer hours for the Wild Teams

The nature of the project and the personal issues the volunteers are experiencing means the Wild Teams are resource intensive and numbers are necessarily small but the benefits can be fantastic, including:

- Increased personal and social confidence
- Overcoming depression, anxiety and agoraphobia
- Reduction in self harm incidents
- Skills development

Customer feedback

“As someone who struggles with social anxiety and lack of confidence, the idea of getting out and meeting new people is a really daunting one, (especially having recently moved to Shropshire).

Discovering the Wild Teams has been just what i needed at the right time. It has given me the opportunity and motivation to get outdoors, doing something i really enjoy and by giving something back through volunteering, I feel good about myself.

I am really grateful for the genuine welcome and acceptance into the group and being made to feel part of something worthwhile.”

Wild Team Volunteer

“The group has helped the service users to develop confidence to leave their home, develop friendships and increase confidence to interact with others. The group provides a safe place for the service users to develop skills at a pace that suits their level of need. The sessions have helped service users to develop a routine and help with confidence to access transport.

The group also has helped to improve physical health of the service user. The group has also helped service user set goals for the future and be able to link in with other services to help with long term goal for achieving employment / pre-employment training.

In terms of the outcome from a mental health service provision the availability of the group has assisted in the reduction of visits from mental health staff. The feedback from the service user also expresses their level of enjoyment of the group and value and meaning it has for them during their current episode of mental health illness.”

Abigail Payne

Occupational Therapist

4.3.3 Volunteer Rangers

Shropshire Council owns and manages some of the most iconic heritage sites in Shropshire, from The Mere at Ellesmere and Severn Valley Country Park, to heritage sites such as Llanymynech Limeworks and Snailbeach Mine.

In 2017 we recruited a new Volunteer Ranger Co-ordinator, who has supported volunteers on the sites across the county. Further staff capacity was secured through an apprentice at Severn Valley Country Park and a student placement who started in September 2017.



Figure 33- Installing a new bridge

Key Achievements

- There are 193 volunteers helping manage the sites. Numbers have reduced from last year following the handover of the urban greenspaces and associated volunteers.
- The number of hours has increased by 32% to 18,468 since 2015/16, however, reflecting the added benefit of extra staff capacity. The extra 4,498 hours since 2016/17 is equivalent to £34,856 if these hours are valued at £7.75 each. In total volunteers committed time worth £143,127 to the Service in 2017/18.

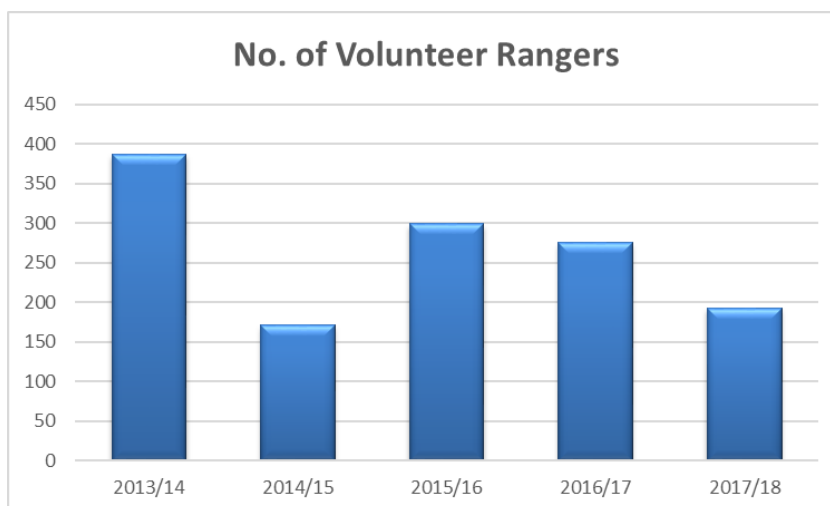


Figure 34- Number of volunteers on Parks and Sites

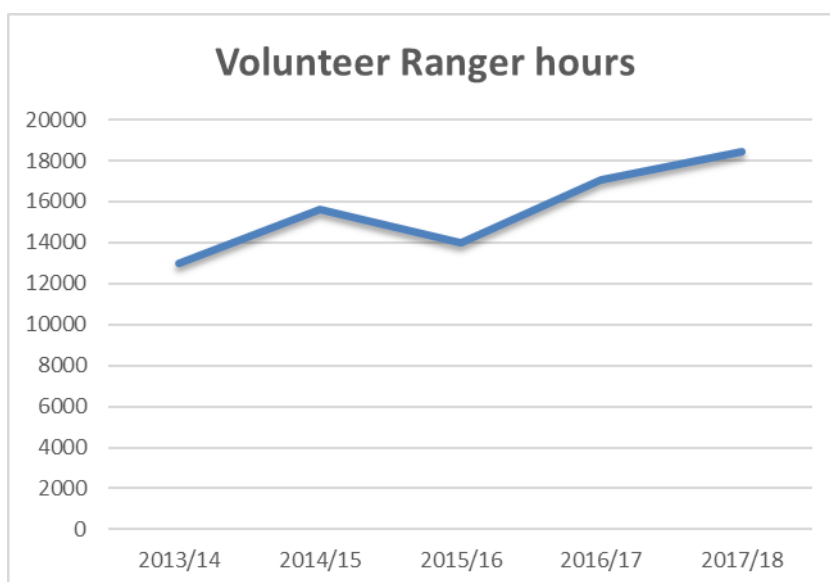


Figure 35- Volunteer hours for Parks and Sites

Customer feedback

“What a great event! Woke up this morning to open the curtains to the sight of snow fall but on route to the event the sun popped out and stayed with us most of the day. Thanks Linda and Syd for organising the event and to James the ranger for sorting out a worthwhile activity for us all to enjoy. I think!”

Corporate volunteer

“Quick meet up with James the Ranger to talk through the mornings activities. Then it was backs to the spades and the barrows to clear that path. A brilliant turnout and what an achievement a long section of path now cleared and set fair for wheelchair users and wobbly walkers. We even managed

to have a litter pick for those who wanted a less boisterous activity and we collected 5 bags of rubbish.”

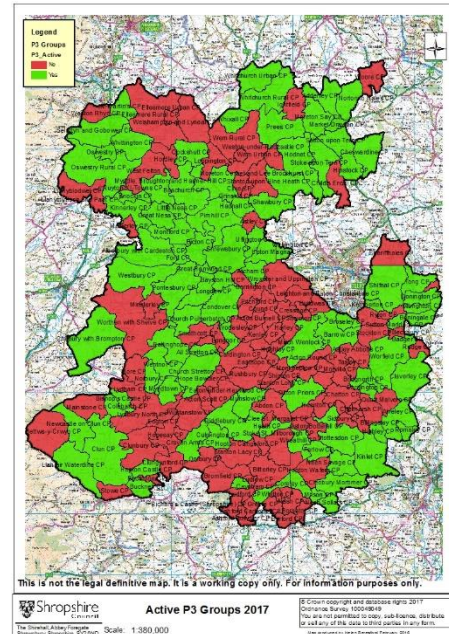
Volunteer

4.3.4 Parish Paths Partnerships

The Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme has been running for over 20 years in Shropshire. The scheme encourages local groups of volunteers to help manage and maintain their local network of Rights of Way network through a variety of activities. The Outdoor Partnerships Team supports this through the supply of tools, training, materials, expert advice and small grants.

The benefits if this are numerous, including:

- Assistance in maintaining a huge network of paths that otherwise would fall into disrepair
- Local prioritisation for maintenance
- Benefits to participants in physical and mental health
- Economic benefit through an improved tourism resource locally and information for visitors
- Increased opportunities for others to enjoy the network locally, with the health benefits that arise from this
- Ability to draw in funding that otherwise would not be available to Shropshire Council



P3 support is a shared role between the Parish Paths Partnership Officer and the Area Rights of Way Officer. The success of this scheme shows how helpful it is to have a full time dedicated member of staff.

Key Achievements

- The number of volunteers involved with Parish Paths Partnership 320
- The number of groups listed across the County is now 64 which is an increase from 55 at the end of 2012/13. Although some groups have been lost due to people moving away or becoming unable to tackle the more physical tasks new groups have been formed across other areas of the County, these include: Bridgnorth, Ellesmere, Ightfield, Hopesay and Whittington.
- Recorded hours of activity have remained constant with recorded hours increasing by just 1.25 hours. This is the second year that the groups have exceeded 10,000 hours.
- The hours recorded reflect 612 individual improvement and 2,299 hours of vegetation clearance amongst a variety of other activities.

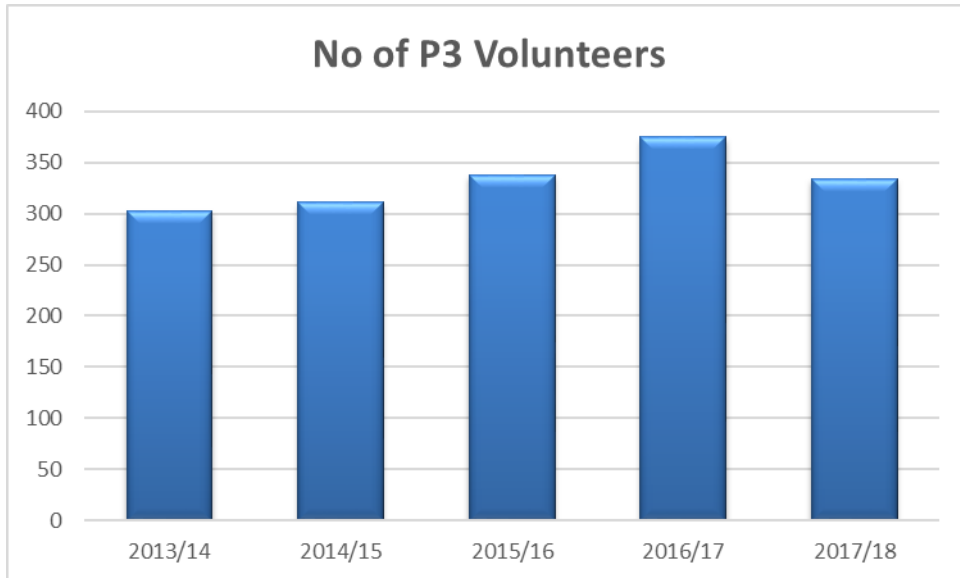


Figure 36- Number of Parish Paths Partnership volunteers

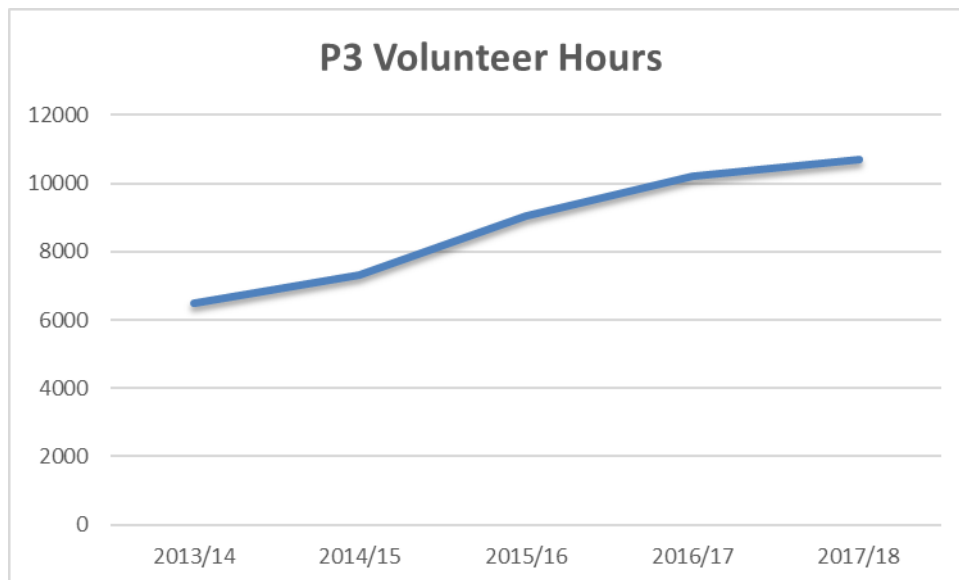


Figure 37- Number of hours committed by Parish Paths Partnerships volunteers

Case Studies

Shrewsbury Ramblers

Shrewsbury ramblers are, and have been for many years, one of our most prolific P3 groups. The group regularly work in wider parts of the County than just around the Shrewsbury area and contribute greatly to filling in the gaps where, as yet, no P3 group operates. Shrewsbury Ramblers P3 consists of 13 active volunteers who performed 45 work parties in



Figure 38- Shrewsbury P3

2017/18. The group have contributed 1520 hours of Right of Way work, this represents 15% of the total hours contributed by all groups across the County. The work undertaken includes the installation of 20 stiles, 35 metal gates, 112 steps, 37 fingerposts & waymark posts, and the installation 25 stile steps.

The group have also been responsible for 710 metres of vegetation clearance on paths, building 275 metres of hard-cored path and installed 6 bridges. The picture shows the resurfacing of a path joining Radbrook Green to Mousecroft Pool.

Bridgnorth P3

Since forming last September, Bridgnorth P3 group has gone from strength to strength with six working groups being held over the last six months. The main focus for the last three working groups has been to improve access on a path from Oldbury through to Daniel's Mill. The path here had been affected by the wet weather annually and particularly badly over the last few months which had made the camber of the original path too dangerous to negotiate. It was decided that the best option would be to move the path a few metres "up slope" by cutting through the overgrown vegetation. The work then required the installation of steps where needed, which turned out to be more than was first anticipated. The hardest part of this process was getting the stone down to the path in order for the steps to be back-filled. Many hands did indeed make light work and the project moved on at great speed, there are a few more sessions planned to finish the route in the coming month.



Figure 39-Bridgnorth P3

4.4 Promotion

4.4.1 Shropshire's Great Outdoors website

The new 'Shropshire's Great Outdoors' website was officially launched at Easter 2016. Since then we have seen over 100,000 users, which far exceeds the number of people using our website previously and we have had some excellent feedback. 76% of people using it are under 45 years old which is very different from the xx% over 55s that reply to the User Survey or volunteer with us. We need to make sure that marketing is targeted at the younger age groups as well as the people we commonly work with.

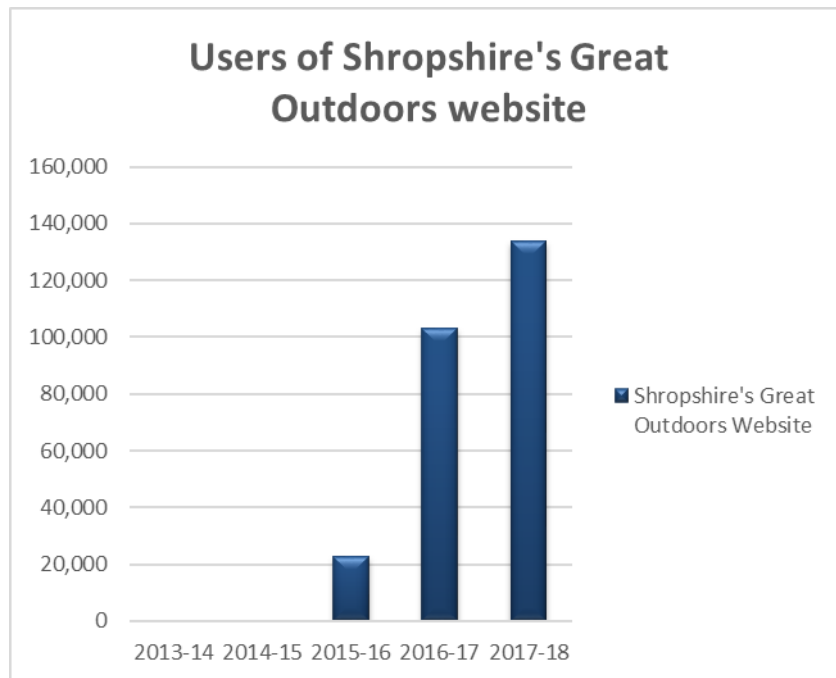


Figure 40- Users of Shropshire's Great Outdoors website

This means that many more people are finding walking, cycling and riding routes and being made aware of the volunteering and other opportunities across the county.

Customer Feedback

“Having lived near Bridgnorth for a number of years I have always enjoyed the Shropshire countryside and local walks. Imagine my pleasure on recently finding your website Shropshire's Great Outdoors. Having now tried some of the walks my congratulations to whoever has pulled together this little treasure trove of information. I know we are often free in our criticism of SCC but this website is, in my opinion, excellent. The level of information, ability to drill down by different criteria, and its understated health message are just right.”

Resident

4.4.2 Social Media

Social media continues to become more and more popular, reflected by the growth in people 'liking' our Facebook pages and following us on Twitter.

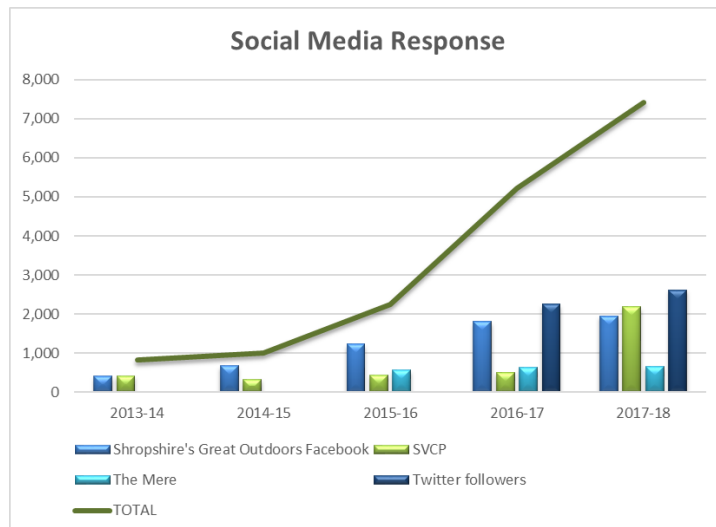


Figure 41- Followers of Facebook and Twitter

The volunteer groups are increasingly creating their own Facebook accounts for their groups as well.

Trip Advisor

We haven't been actively promoting reviews on Trip Advisor but have some feedback.

Severn Valley Country Park- 4.5/5.0

"Reviewed 1 October 2017

Well worth the visit!

A lovely cycle ride through this splendid country park, with the bonus of lunch and coffee at the modern visitor centre. Good to see you can get off the Severn Valley steam train at a special station, to enjoy the Country Park and views of the River Severn. Well worth the visit!"

The Mere at Ellesmere- 4.5/5.0

"Reviewed 4 weeks ago

A beautiful lake and nature reserve

Ellesmere is nicknamed "The Lake District of Shropshire". The Mere is the largest lake and has a wonderful countryside park around most of it. Part is private.

There are many species of bird to be seen and fed if you are inclined. In the middle of the lake is Moscow Island which is a bird sanctuary.

There are trips round the lake to help you explore further than the shores. Hiring a boat is another option.

This area is definitely for all. From a children's playground to observing the wildlife whilst walking in the woods."

Llanymynech Limeworks Heritage Area- 4.5/5.0

Snailbeach Mine- 4.0/5.0

The Bog Visitor Centre- 4.5/5.0

4.4.4 Events, courses and other activities

Interest and participation in events and activities is growing. Whether these are the number of walkers on Walking for Health walks, or the number of adults and children attending the guided walks, events and activities on our Country Parks.

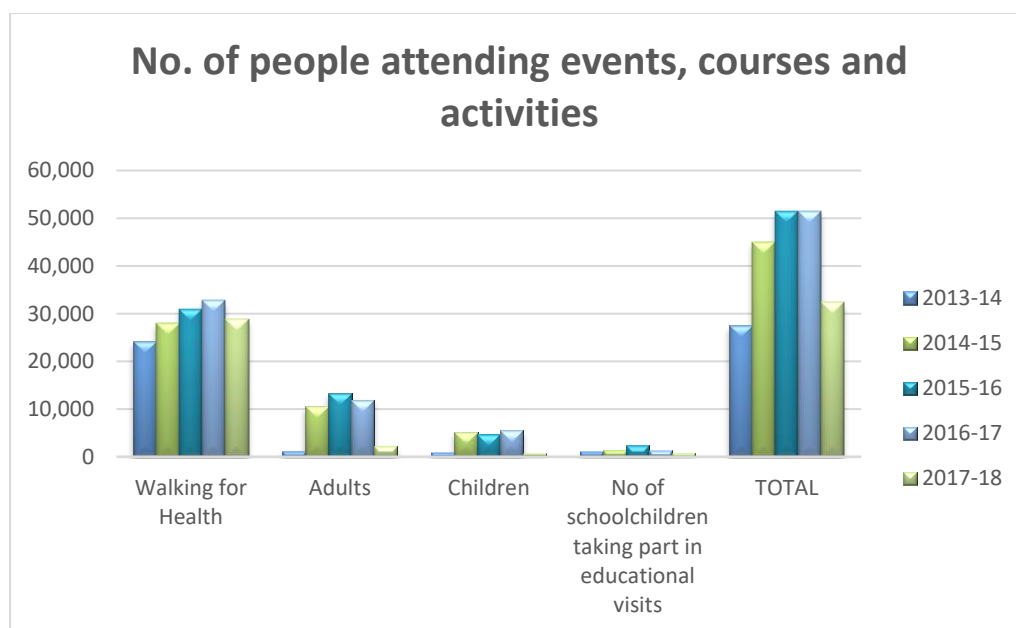


Figure 42- Attendance at events

4.4.5 Other promotion

There were press releases, Radio Shropshire interviews and articles in local Parish newsletters promoting the work of Outdoor Partnerships and the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website.

4.5 Projects

There were a number of projects completed in 2015/16, which, including LEADER, totalled £281,140. Other projects are listed below.

Project	Description	Value
Offa's Dyke Programme 2015/16 - 75% funded by NE via Powys CC World War 1 walks	Offa's Dyke Path National Trail management	£14,900
	Continuation of the development of themed walks commemorating World War 1 in Shropshire, with five guided walks and two more self-guided walks leaflets.	£20

<i>Stanmore Hidden History</i>	Tesco Bags of Help external funding at Stanmore CP	£8,000
<i>The Lost Garden Terraces of Castlefields</i>	Renovating the garden terraces in Ellesmere. Tesco Bags of Help funding	£12,000
<i>Colemere Meres & Mosses</i>	Access improvements. Meres and Mosses LPS funding	£2,100
<i>Walks leader training</i>	Interpretation and group management skills for walks leaders. Funded through the Meres and Mosses LPS	£3,000
<i>Rights of Way training</i>	Training for volunteers on legal aspects of Rights of Way as well as Brush Cutting and practical tasks. Funded through the Meres and Mosses LPS	£2,466

4.6 Consultation and survey results

The results of two national surveys and our local Annual User Survey are summarized below.

4.6.1 Outdoor Partnerships Annual User Survey Analysis

The Outdoor Partnerships User Survey ran from Jan to March 2018. The survey helps the Outdoor Partnerships service at Shropshire Council focus activity on priorities defined by people who use Rights of Way and other access routes and the Country Parks and Heritage Sites managed by Shropshire Council, as shown on the map.

Results

426 people responded to the Annual Survey in 2018, down from 601 in the previous year. 79% were over 45 and 31% were over 65. 53% were female, almost all were white British and lived in Shropshire.

The survey was filled out by fewer users of Countryside Sites and more horse riders and motorised users than in previous years. 77% used the Rights of Way and Parks and Sites for walking, 35% for walking their dog, 28% were horse riders, 20% cyclists and almost 16% motorised users. Bird watching and running were mentioned as popular activities in the 'other' category.

87% were outdoors to improve their health, which is consistent with result over the past 6 years. 82% were enjoying wildlife and nature (up from 56% in 2012/13) and 63% were looking for peace and quiet (compared to 51% in 2012/13). 51% meet with friends, up from just 28% in 2014/15.

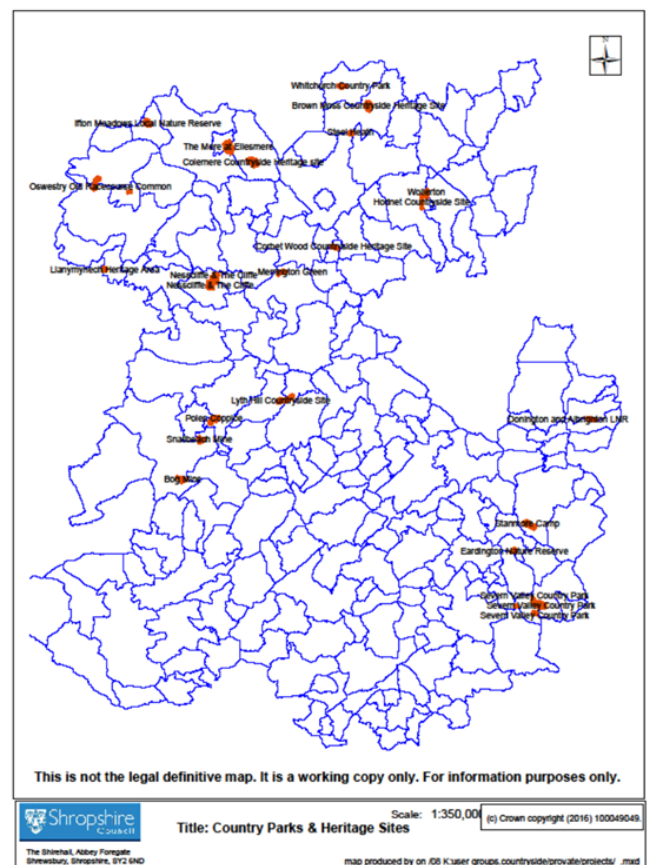


Figure 43- Shropshire Council owned and/or managed Country Parks and Heritage Sites

60% of people don't volunteer, 20% were Parish Paths Partnership volunteers and 13% were Walking for Health walks leaders.

49% were put off by overgrown vegetation, 37% by physical obstructions and 34% by poor signage.

The majority of people use circular or long-distance walks (71% and 40% respectively). With 42% of respondents using circular and long distance bridleways. 27% use green lanes and other routes suitable for vehicles. Only 17% used off-road cycle tracks.

77% used the provision once/ week or more and 52% used then for 2 hours or less.

Only 21% of respondents were under 45, compared with 76% of users of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website, most of whom are using it to find walking routes, so the survey results are unlikely to represent the opinion of the majority of the 134,000 users of the site.

Just over 50% were satisfied with the Rights of Way network in their area, although only 38% have seen improvements in the last 12 months. 52% of respondents are satisfied with the parks and sites but only 28% have seen improvements in the past 12 months.

92% felt better for taking exercise, enjoyed it and wanted to do more. 99% felt that getting outdoors had a positive or very positive impact on their quality of life.

In terms of improvements, 42% asked for better signage, 40% for more circular walks and 30% for walks with gates instead of stiles.

42% got information from printed leaflets and guidebooks, 41% from organised groups and 32% from the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website. Whilst the popularity of social media is growing, it is still only used by a minority of respondents.

Quotes from the User Survey that sum up the key messages:

Issues:

- Other users who are inconsiderate and think they are the only ones entitled to be there.
- Poor attitude of other users to others using legal rights of way, mainly experienced when mountain biking or using motorised vehicles.
- Eradication of over-cropping of right of ways by farmers. Particularly, rape and maize crops. Also, ploughing up right of ways and failing to reinstate them, both across fields and around field boundaries (more and more fields are being ploughed to the hedgerow and destroying the footpaths).
- I'm mostly concerned about personal safety with dogs being on leads while I run alone and around children play areas, so better signage about dog owner responsibilities (including dog mess) would be very helpful.

Improvements needed:

- More accessible paths would be helpful and the Stiperstones accessible path has helped my disabled wife to get out and enjoy this part of the Shropshire Hills.

- Mainly very pleased with Shropshire rights of way, have been to many other areas and Shropshire is up there with best. Would like to see more education of people to accept and respect other people's rights of way. Particularly for motorised vehicle users as by comparison with other activities there are very few legal byways to use. Better signage would promote more responsible use of these lanes and prevent misuse of lanes that are not legal byways for vehicles.
- More off road riding in north Shropshire and better safe links between routes. Lanes getting busier due to farm developments, anaerobic digesters, chicken farms and larger farm vehicles travelling further distances due to share farming etc.
- Better parking
- More Cafe's on or near sites.
- Regulation of Mountain Bikers fast cycling, and riding off designated routes.
- I would love more focus on bridleways, on maintaining them & looking at ways to open new ones. The roads have become more and more dangerous for riders so it is more important than ever that horse riders have safe bridleways to use instead.

General comments:

- Footpaths are definitely far more used than they were 5 years ago.
- My local site is now properly funded via the increased precepts from the two local parish councils and the volunteer group is very active so improvements are becoming visible and long may this trend continue.
- Shropshire has some truly stunning countryside... gates and well maintained and sign posted footpaths provide the most straightforward way to enjoy it!
- Maintenance of existing signs and stiles is important.
- Very good overall.
- Keep up the good work
- It is important that Shropshire Council continues to support P3 Groups and the work they do on maintaining and improving then Rights of Way network.
- I understand that maintaining all of the Public Rights of Way in Shropshire is a big task and I appreciate all the hard work that goes into maintaining it. I have noticed there has been a lot of work done over the last few years on replacing stiles with gates in areas where there tend to be a lot of people walking
- Please please please find the funding to keep bridleways open and access maintained. They are a particular lifeline to older horse riding people, living on their own, who otherwise would not be able to continue to keep a horse & ride in the countryside, with all the physical & mental health benefits this brings...to me and many, many others, of all ages.
- Access to public outdoor spaces is extremely important for the physical and mental health of residents. The rights of way, parks and heritage sites should be supported and improved and not allowed to become victims of the latest round of public funding cuts.
- Maintenance of ROW is an ongoing commitment. Their extensive use plus the effects of bad weather requires constant attention to keep them in good shape. This requires manpower and material. Shropshire has a particularly extensive network of ROW which is slowly being improved. It is important to our tourist industry that it is continued.
- Shropshire is a beautiful and welcoming place for all ROW users, you're a credit to the UK.

62 people asked to be kept informed about the work of the service and volunteering.

Key messages from the User Survey:

- Walking is still the major activity but other users are enjoying the countryside and their needs should be taken into account
- People are well aware of how important the provision is for health, wellbeing and quality of life
- The Service is appreciated and users understand that lack of funding makes maintenance of the network more difficult
- More needs to be done to increase respect between different types of users- this message has come from all user groups about all other users
- More needs to be done about overgrown vegetation and ploughing and cropping issues
- Concerns over impact of housing and other developments
- Support for more all-ability routes and replacing stiles with gates on footpaths
- More investment is needed in horse riding routes

Priority actions as a result of the survey:

Outdoor Partnerships will work towards the following priorities over the next 12 months as a result of the feedback from this survey and from other conversations throughout last year:

- Promotion of all-ability and fully-gated routes on the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website
- Promotional campaign aimed at increasing respect between different user groups, including the creation of a new Users Guide based on the Countryside Code and control of dogs in the countryside
- Continue the ploughing and cropping campaign to reduce blockages on Rights of Way
- Continue support for Parish Paths Partnerships, Walking for Health and Volunteer Rangers
- Development of Supplementary Planning Guidance for the provision of greenspace and off-road routes within and to new developments
- Continue maintenance programme for the Rights of Way, Parks and Sites within the resources available
- Tendering for mobile cafes on some of the key Country Parks where there is no café facilities at present
- Prioritisation of multi-user routes (bridleways) in north Shropshire, where anomalies are preventing better use

Thank you to everyone that took the time to complete the survey.

4.6.2 National Highway and Transport Network (NHT) Benchmarking Survey

The NHT run an annual, postal Public Satisfaction survey that compares results between participating authorities across the country. It covers all Highway and Transport Services including Rights of Way.

2017 Results

928 people responded across Shropshire. The results show that the Service is at or just below average and the trend is downwards, as shown below:

	Your Score	Average	Variance	Rank of 17	Trend
03. Walking and Cycling BI					
WCBI 17-Provision of footpaths for walking/running	61	65	-4	16	-2
WCBI 18-Bridleways for horse riding and/or cycling	56	61	-5	17	-3
WCBI 19-Signposting of Rights of Way	55	59	-4	17	-3
WCBI 20-Condition of Rights of Way	54	57	-3	16	0
WCBI 21-Ease of use by those with disabilities	41	45	-4	17	0
WCBI 22-Information about Rights of Way routes	45	49	-4	17	-3
WCBI 23-Overgrown footpaths and Bridleways	41	43	-2	14	0

Learning

- Public satisfaction in the quality of Rights of Way in Shropshire is starting to fall behind and are in danger of deteriorating. This corresponds with this year's BVPI survey of the quality of our Rights of Way and reflects the halving of funding in the past three years.

4.6.3 Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE)

MENE is a national survey conducted by Natural England that ask people about their visits to and experiences in the natural environment. The last complete year results are from 2014-15. The results and how they compare with those in Shropshire are shown below:

Question	National	Shropshire	Difference
Visited weekly in the last 12 months	59%	60%	1%
Visited at least once in the last 7 days	44%	54%	10%
Estimated visits weekly	3.12 billion people	273,240 people	
Used paths, cycleways, bridleways	15%	33%	18%
Park in a town or city	26%	21%	-5%
Woodland/ forests	13%	25%	12%
Walking with dog	48%	57%	9%
Walking without dog	28%	26%	-2%
Playing with children	10%	5%	-5%
Horse-riding	1%	0%	-1%
Off-road cycling	1%	1%	0%
Eating and drinking	9%	5%	-4%
Enjoyed it	97%	95%	-2%
Appreciated surroundings	84%	92%	8%
Felt refreshed/ revitalised	87%	95%	8%
Felt calm/ relaxed	87%	87%	0%
Felt close to nature	76%	63%	-13%
Learned about the natural world	31%	31%	0%

Learning

- The natural environment is important and visited by a lots of people on a regular basis. We estimate there were almost 1 million visits to Shropshire Council managed Country Parks and Heritage Sites in 2016/17.
- Almost everyone enjoys being in the outdoors and feel refreshed and calmer as a result
- People in Shropshire are much more likely to use rights of way and woodlands to access the outdoors than the rest of the country
- Walking is the most popular activity and many people have a dog with them
- Those visiting the natural environment in Shropshire are less likely to have children with them than the national average or to spend on eating and drinking

4.7 Partnership Working

We work in partnerships with a number of voluntary, public and private organisations as well as individuals.

The user forums give regular opportunities for officers, Councillors and Service Users to get together and discuss national policy, countywide strategies and activities and share local priorities on Rights of Way and the use and enjoyment of open space. There is an Advisory Group to advise on the delivery of The Mere Charitable Trust. Other partnerships are formed to deliver specific initiatives.

4.7.1 Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board

The Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board was formed in 2017. It acts as the Local Access Forum for Shropshire but broadens the role to cover a wider remit in response to current priorities in Shropshire.

Local Access Forums (LAF) are statutory advisory bodies set up under the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Their role is to advice decision makers about improving public access for outdoor recreation and sustainable travel. They can set their own local priorities and are consulted on key documents affecting access.

The aims of the Strategy Board are to make outdoor recreation in Shropshire:

- More financially independent and resilient
- More strategically important across a range of sectors
- More action driven

More detail about the Strategy Board can be found here:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/outdoor-partnerships/countryside-access-and-public-rights-of-way/the-countryside-access-team/shropshires-great-outdoors-strategy-board/>

4.7.2 Walking Forums

There are three regional Walking Forums:

- Shropshire Hills
- Northern Shropshire
- Central Shropshire

The Walking Forums are currently being reviewed following further staff cuts.

A new Walking for Health Forum was set up in 2017 to help move the scheme to being more self-sufficient.

4.7.3 LEADER Local Action Group

The Southern Shropshire Local Action Group (LAG) is made up of members who represent the geographical LEADER area and the six national LEADER priorities. More information about the Local Action Group can be found here:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/outdoor-recreation/southern-shropshire-leader-programme/southern-shropshire-leader-local-development-strategy/>

4.7.4 The Mere Advisory Group

The Mere Advisory Group helps advise the delivery of activity for The Mere Charitable Trust, a charity that was set up to administer the Council managed land around The Mere at Ellesmere. Membership of the Advisory Group include Shropshire Council, Ellesmere Town Council, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and other key stakeholders.

4.7.5 Other Partnership Working

The teams are involved with a wide range of partner organisations and networks including:

- The Outdoor Partnerships Manager is a member of the Local Nature Partnership, is a Steering Group member of Our Picturesque Landscape HLF project and met with a range of partner organisations.
- The Mapping and Enforcement Manager is Vice Chair of the Rights of Way Managers group, part of National Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) and Chairs the Rights of Way Managers West Midland Association of ADEPT, which brings together RoW professionals from across the region and nationally.
- The teams liaise with colleagues from neighbouring authorities to resolve cross-border RoW issues.
- The Country Parks and Sites Manager is a member of the West Midlands Parks Forum and Benchmarking Group.
- The LEADER Manager represents the West Midland Local Action Groups on the national LEADER Exchange Group.

5.0 Priorities for 2018/19

The Shropshire's Great Outdoors 2018-28 Strategy will be published this autumn. This details the strategic direction of the Outdoor Partnerships Service in partnership with a wide range of other natural and cultural heritage organisations.

The draft document is currently available for public consultation:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/shropshire-s-great-outdoors-2018-28/>

5.1 Healthy People

Public Health funding of £100,000 has been secured for 2018/19 and means we can continue delivering Walking for Health, Shropshire Wild Teams and the other active volunteering initiatives. With the reduced funding, one of the Walking Co-ordinators, who took Voluntary Redundancy, will not be replaced and this will have an impact on support for Walking for Health groups and other activities.

With the threat of withdrawal of Public Health funding in 2019/20, investigating other sources of funding to cover the delivery of Wild Teams and Walking for Health will be a priority.

Healthy Outdoors for Schools will continue to be rolled out. One school has signed up this term and it is hoped that more will get involved from Sept. 2018.

Policies such as the replacement of stiles with gates will continue where possible, as will the promotion of easy access and all ability trails through the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website. A new section on the website will highlight fully gated routes.

We will continue to encourage active volunteering in the outdoors.

5.2 Resilient Communities

Local partnership approaches continue to be the focus to enable communities to identify and act upon their priorities for a high quality outdoor environment and biodiversity. This is done through the active volunteering groups, especially Parish Paths Partnerships and Volunteer Rangers, working with Town and Parish Councils.

The Outdoor Partnerships team help communities retain and improve local Rights of Way, parks and sites.

5.3 Prosperous Economy

The Outdoor Partnerships provision helps develop the local economy through the development and promotion of high quality promoted routes, parks and sites.

New activity planned for 2018/19 includes:

- An extension to the Visitor Centre at Severn Valley Country Park
- Project application for the development of Swan Hill Depot at Ellesmere
- Further promotion of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors website

The Southern Shropshire LEADER programme will continue, with the aim of providing 73 jobs in total by Dec 2020.

5.4 Operation of the Council

Income generation will continue to be a key activity of the Service, with a target of £465,000 in 2018/19. In addition to existing activity, the following is planned:

- A new wood fuel business
- New Countryside Stewardship agreements
- Review of User Survey
- Revision of the Definitive Map and Statement
- Preparation for the Deregulation Bill, which is likely to be introduced in 2019
- Promotion of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors Membership Scheme

6.0 Further Information

For further information please contact Clare Fildes, Outdoor Partnerships Manager

Clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk

01743 255067

7.0 Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1: Rights of Way Maintenance Tasks Completed

Work completed	Totals 17/18	Totals 16/17	Totals 15/16	Totals 14/15
Total individual improvements	913	916	901	738
Wicket/kissing gates installed	232	214	200	135
Wicket/kissing gates repaired	16	14	9	10
Stiles installed / repaired	101	85	81	76
BW/Field gates installed	42	55	57	28
BW/Field gates repaired	49	36	44	28
Signposts	128	130	112	112
Waymark posts	37	52	69	52
Sleeper bridge	31	23	9	9
Kit bridges installed	9	15	10	7
Kit bridges repaired	11	13	17	13
Culverts/drainage (m)	24	783	1,123	1,510
Flights of steps	17	19	18	11
Surface repairs (m)	2131	3051	3,021	6,254
Clearance metres	34210	43412	43,342	26,259
Trees removed	115	81	86	113
Horse stiles	1	3	2	2
Gates replacing stiles	182	170	155	111

Shrewsbury School at Severn Valley Country Park

The Outdoor Partnerships Team have teamed up with Shrewsbury School as part of the School's Outdoor Week of activities. Every year the students in year 9 (13-14-year-old) are encouraged to do all sorts of outdoor activities during one week in June. As part of these activities, Tim Simmons, Area Rights of Way Officer for South East Shropshire, arranged three work days based on a riverside path in Alveley between [Severn Valley Country Park](#) and Hampton Loade.

On day one, 30 students attended with 10 – 12 on the following two days. A total of four footbridges were installed to replace old and unsuitable structures. Five gates were installed to replace stiles or upgrade existing gates and some signage was erected.

The result is the total revamp of a key riverside route from Severn Valley Country Park along the river with the path now much easier to use for walkers and fishermen alike. The students showed great enthusiasm and teamwork whilst carrying out the work. We hope that this, our second year of delivering activities for outdoors week, is the start of a regular annual partnership with the school. It was great to see the students getting involved and getting stuck into the work, and hopefully learning some new skills on the way. Thanks, must go to Tim and staff who arranged the work and to the landowners who have been very accommodating to the project.

Nick David, Director of Activities, Shrewsbury School, commented:

'We are delighted to work in partnership with the Council and the projects our pupils completed will hopefully be of real benefit to the community. Our pupils have also learnt much about the work of local authorities in providing facilities such as this, and also picked up some useful skills along the way. Thank you very much to the Countryside Maintenance Team for making this happen.'

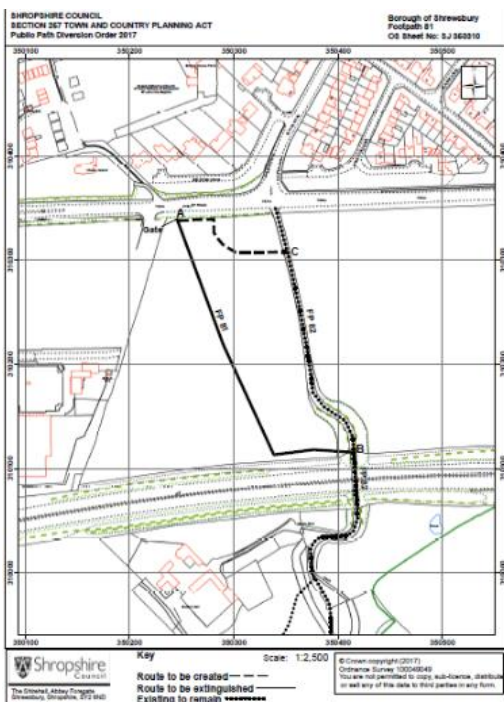
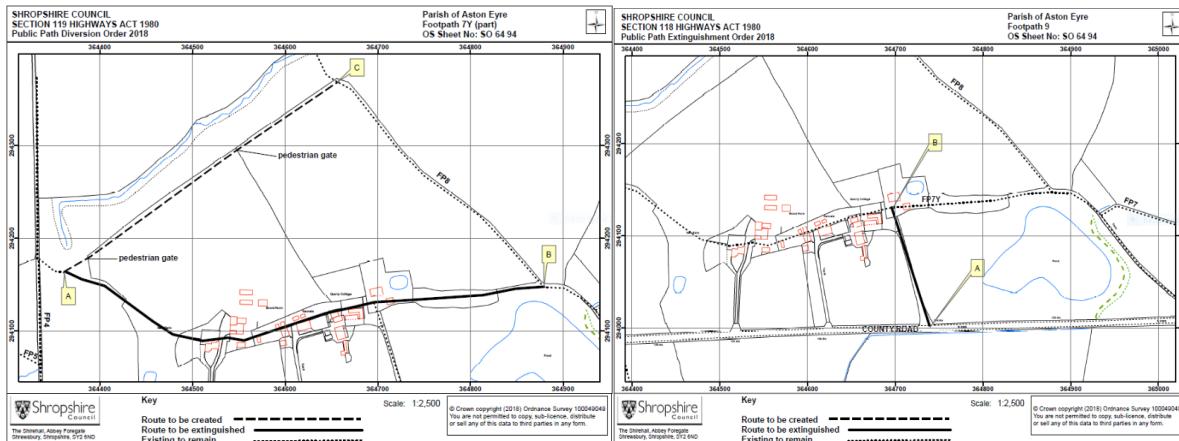


7.3 Appendix 3: Rights of Way Mapping and Enforcement Actions

Definitive Map- Public Path Orders

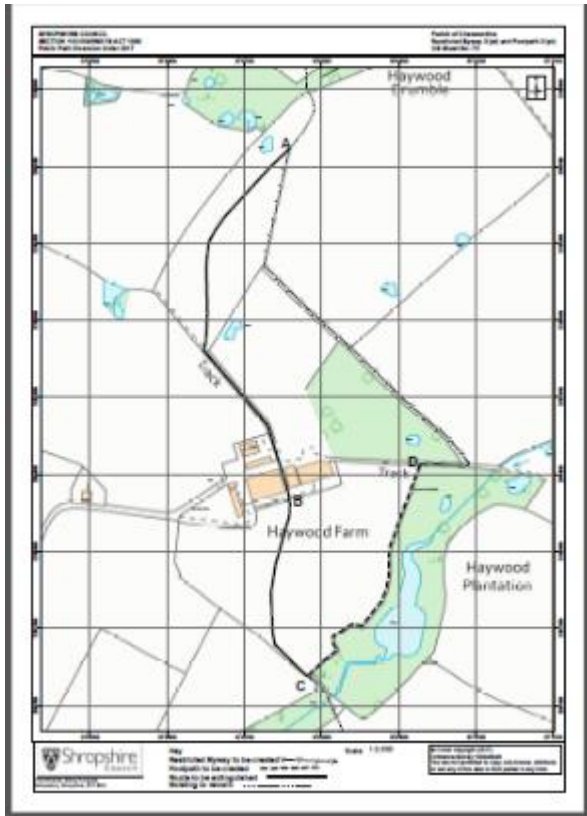
Aston Eyre diversion of footpath 7y (part) and extinguishment of footpath 9

The Definitive route in this location was obstructed by a swimming pool and buildings and was a longstanding issue. The Officer managed to secure agreement for a diversion which has resulted in a usable route for the public and has benefited the privacy and security of the residents. Footpath 9 would have been rendered anomalous so this was extinguished at the same time.



Borough of Shrewsbury footpath 81

This was a diversion to allow development to take place and was made under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.



Chewardine diversion of Restricted Byway 3 (part) and footpath 3 (part)

The application was made due to a change in farming operations from storage to use of heavy plant six or seven days per week. The Restricted Byway passes through the farmyard where tractors and delivery vehicles constantly operate and the footpath is a continuation of the Restricted Byway from the farmyard. The yard has recently been granted an operators' licence for five HGVs to run out of the premises making the current definitive line much less safe for public hence the application to

Highways Act 1980 Orders made/confirmed as follows:-

PARISH	ROUTE	TYPE	DATE MADE	DATE OF CONFIRMATION
Cheswardine	RB 3/FP 3 (pts)	Diversion	09/12/2017	25/01/18
Market Drayton/Moreton Say	BW 9/9B	Diversion	07/12/17	
Moreton Say	FP 21 (pt)	Diversion	25/01/18	
Myddle and Broughton	FP 15 (pt)	Diversion	16/03/17	29/06/17
Prees	FP 38/17B (pts)	Diversion	08/12/16	27/04/17
Prees	BW	Creation Agreement		27/04/17
Conover	FP 40 (pt)	Diversion	06/07/17	
Longden	FP 72 (pts)	Diversion	06/04/17	
Pontesbury	FP 92 (pt)	Diversion	23/03/17	27/04/17
Aston Eyre	FP 7Y	Diversion	22/02/18	
Aston Eyre	FP 9	Extinguishment	22/02/18	
Cleobury Mortimer/Hopton Wafers	FP 59 (pt)	Diversion	09/03/17	08/06/17
Hodnet (old Railway line)	FP UN6	Creation	14/06/17	

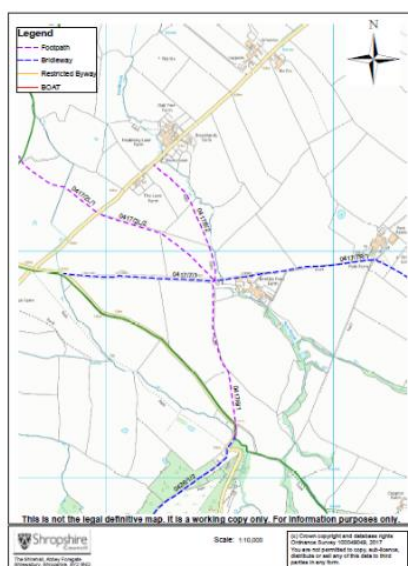
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Orders made/confirmed as follows:-

PARISH	ROUTE	TYPE	DATE	DATE OF
--------	-------	------	------	---------

			MADE	CONFIRMATION
Child's Ercall	FP 5 (pt)	Diversion	25/01/2018	
Llanymynech & Pant	FP 7 (pt)	Diversion	29/06/17	
Selattyn & Gobowen	FP 13Y (pt)	Diversion	22/06/17	17/08/17
Weston Rhyn	FP 14 (pt)	Diversion	22/06/17	17/08/17
Shrewsbury	FP 81	Diversion	09/02/17	31/08/17
Shrewsbury	FP 9 (pt)	Diversion	20/07/17	31/08/17
Caynham	FP 17 (pt)	Diversion	28/07/17	03/11/17
Clunbury	FP 20	Diversion	28/07/17	03/11/17
Ludford	FP 1 (pt)	Diversion	30/06/17	

Definitive Map Modification Orders (Evidential Orders)

Frodesley Modification Order - Further to a public inquiry in December 2016 and advertised modifications to the 2010 order, the Inspector confirmed the proposals in October 2017 to delete a Bridleway recorded through Frodesley Lodge in error, add a Bridleway passing Frodesley Court to join Bridleway 4 and add a Bridleway along the access to Bentley Ford Farm to join Bridleway 7.



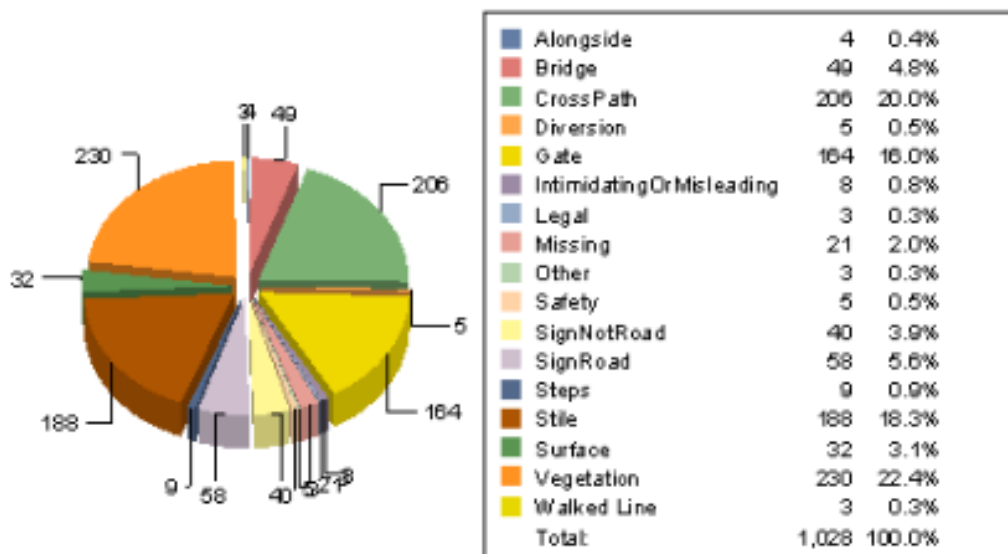
Richard's Castle Modification Order 2015 – made as a result of a formal application supported by user and historical evidence to add a bridleway to link two sections of road known as Mitnell Lane. A Public Inquiry was held in November 2017 where an independent Inspector examined all the evidence. He advertised modifications to the order and subsequently confirmed the addition of a bridleway in March 2018.



ROW Temporary Closure Orders

LOCATION	ROUTE	LENGTH OF CLOSURE	REASON FOR CLOSURE
Baschurch – Drumble Wood	BW UN2	June to Dec '17	Badger setts
Llanymynech Heritage site	Non Def FP	July to Sept '17	Works to Bridge
Alveley - Turley Green	BOAT 29	August '17 to Jan '18	Repair of surface
Baschurch – Prescott Rd	FP 42	Aug '17 to Feb '18	Housing Development
Wistanstow – Rail Crossing	FP 50	Sept '17 to Mar '18	Level crossing to be replaced by other means of crossing railway
Highley/Alveley bridge	FP UN1/4	1 day Dec '17	Maintenance of bridge
Whitchurch – Hinton Old Hall	BW/FP	April '18	New Water Main installation
Whitchurch – Mile Bank	Fp45/46/47	Jan '18 to July '18	Derelict Factory site clearance
Great Ness – opposite the Crescent	FP 11	Feb '18 to July '18	Housing Development
Wistanstow – Rail Crossing	FP41	Dec '17 to June '18	Work to level crossing
Baschurch	Shrewsbury Rd	FP 43	Feb '18 tp Aug '18
Milson – Linwood Farm	FP 44	March '18 to Sept '18	Dangerous Bridge
Whitchurch – Hadley Farm	BW 93/92/91	March '18 to Sept '18	Dangerous Bridge

Issue Type across the network



Most complaints relate to cross path issues which are mainly enforcement matters such as barriers across the right of way in the form of fences, hedges, barbed wire, electric fencing, locked gates, crops or routes having been ploughed.

The Mapping and Enforcement Team has an annual letter campaign to try to raise awareness and seek compliance in respect of ploughing and cropping of the Rights of Way network.



During 2017-18 **83** letters were sent out in March/April 2017

Area spread

- Bridgnorth 20%
- South Shropshire 18%
- Oswestry 16%
- North Shropshire 27%
- Shrewsbury and Atcham 16%

On Inspection

- 30 reinstated 36.5%
- 13 had no crop and /or had been put down to grass 15.6%
- 34 not reinstated 41.5%
- 6 not inspected 7.3%

Further Action

Out of the 34 not reinstated:

22 stronger letters were sent out in June 2017

The 12 remaining were either to be re-inspected as

- Crop very young and not suitable for spraying
- Doubt as to whether grass or corn crop
- Changes in landownership.
- Ground was being actively cultivated on inspection

7 further Letters were sent out after the further inspection

Some were classed No Further Action

- if a very close alternative had been provided
- or contact with landowner had obtained reassurance crop would be cleared

Of the 29 follow up Letters Twelve landowners responded half of whom reported they had reinstated the path, others required confirmation of the route or no longer owned the land. By this time the cereal crops were being harvested so some were given time to clear the crop but warned we would be watching closely next season.



During the season a further 17 Letters were sent to landowners in response to complaints. These produced a response from 5 people who had reinstated path and others who reported harvest was imminent but they said they would make sure paths cleared next year.

In November 2017 14 letters have been sent to landowners as a response to complaints of mainly paths being obstructed by maize. All these landowners will be added to the database to receive a letter in March/April 2018.

The second most prevalent complaint relates to issues with furniture such as gates and stiles, which can vary from total replacement to a missing latch or step board.