

SHROPSHIRE BORDERLANDS





VISION

The Shropshire Borderlands will be well regarded by discerning UK visitors looking for an authentic alternative.

Top Ten Strategic Aims

1. Increase number of visitors and spending – 5% growth per year



2. Raise awareness of NSO as a quality, accessible rural destination –within and outside the area.
3. Two way flow of visits between market towns and their countryside





4. Capitalise on the best-known attractions to encourage visits to lesser known attractions.

5. Improve sharing & communication of visitor research and insight amongst businesses and organisations.



Top Ten Strategic Aims

6. Increase knowledge of the area's attraction within the industry – sell-on.
7. Support local enterprise, business networks – to increase yield & capacity, sustainability & quality.

8. Articulate better the heritage & landscape – interpretation, events and new “product.”



9. Better links and packages between commercial operators.

10. Encourage visitors to leave the car behind (where it works)



Action Plan

Ten Priority Action Areas

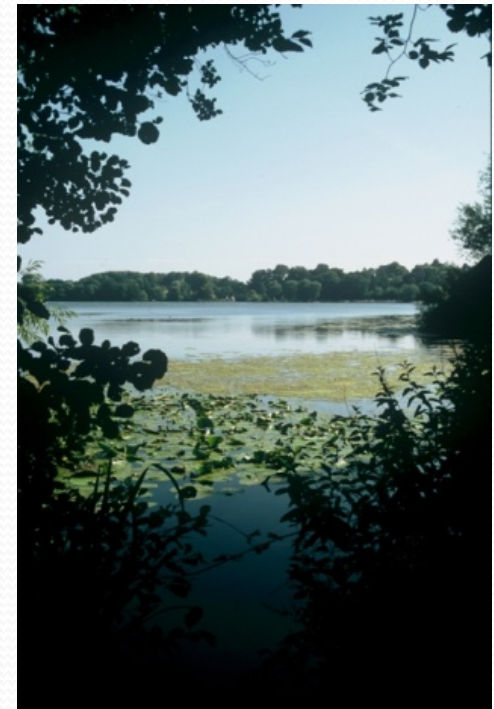
Top Four

- Collaborate to compete
- Who do you think you are
 - Memorable Marketing
 - Focus on Market Towns

And the next:

- Welcoming Walkers & Bikers
- Better Business
- Share our Shropshire
- Surprising Specialisms
- Access All Areas
- Extended Experiences

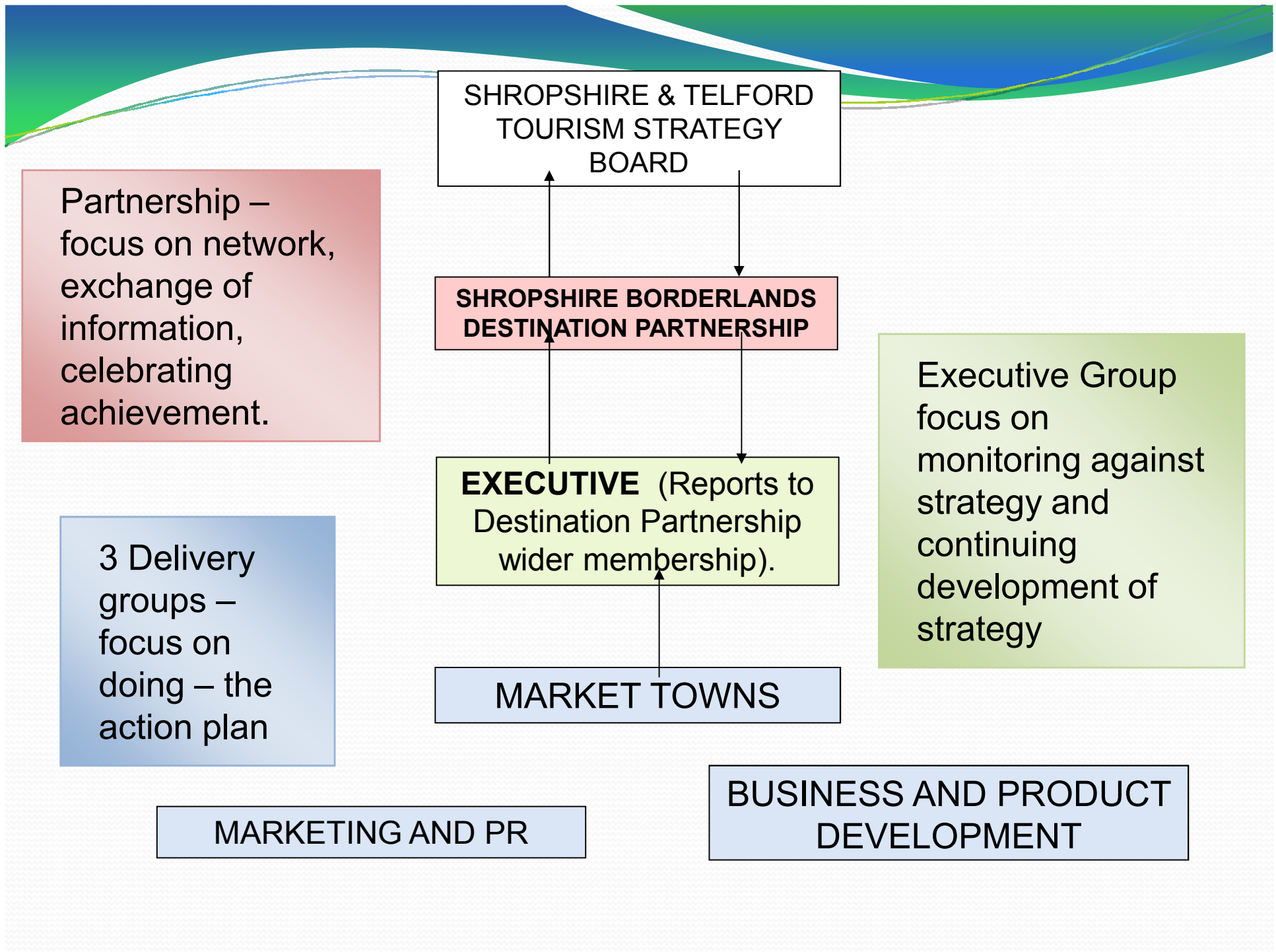






SHROPSHIRE BORDERLANDS VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

Making it Work





Three 'doing' groups

- Marketing & PR
- Market Towns
- Business & Product Development

**Free to meet as when they need to,
involve whoever they need to**



BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT GROUP

AIMS

Skills, quality & training in the industry.

Good links and networks

Opportunities, new products, niche & special interest visitor offers.

Knowledge, familiarisation and communication



Compiling visitor itineraries for websites

Arranging B & B start-up training

Generating more business from major events in the area

Encourage participation in the Occupancy Survey

A programme of activities to increase knowledge

Develop special interest tourism - WWI & Wilfred Owen



MARKETING & PR GROUP

AIMS

Strong, shared messages, values & images - creating an identity that all can be proud of.

Use resources more effectively for stronger campaigns.



Focused consumer research

Photographs, words – available for all to use

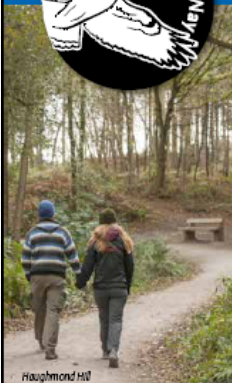
Increase northern Shropshire profile within
existing promotions



hills, woods, rivers, waterways, history, wildlife, meres & mosses

Originally Devised In 1980, the Shropshire Way was a 136-mile trail running mainly through the county's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the Shropshire Hills featuring the great hogs back of the Long Mynd, the mysterious outcrops of the Stiperstones and the unique Wenlock Edge. Links from the South of the County then took it to Wern and on to Whitchurch where it met the Sandstone Trail.

In 2007 a major two year programme upgraded the southern sections and "bumped" the route to take it to places that were not possible to access in 1980. A new guidebook was written, the Shropshire Walking website expanded and a Harvey map created.



Haughmond Hill



Oswestry Racecourse



Silver-studded blue butterfly Press Poth



Canal Locks at Lower Frankton



View of Selattyn and beyond

But the "Shropshire" Way still did not take you to some of the wonderful places in the north of the County so another programme of work started in 2010 using European LEADER funding. This time new routes were created in partnership with the Ramblers, local walking groups, the Canal and Rivers Trust, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Pugs and Natural England taking the walker to the mystical Oswestry uplands and the Meres and mosses landscape that makes this area so special.

The Way now includes:

- Llanyrnnech with its fascinating Hoffmann lime kiln
- Old Oswestry racecourse with its figure of eight track so loved by Mad Jack Mytton
- Chirk world heritage site
- Ellesmere
- Fenns and Whitchurch mosses that are internationally important RAMSAR nature reserves
- Brown Moss nature reserve

There is something other-worldly about the north of Shropshire – a watery landscape of green and blue which seems to be lit up from within. Glacial lakes and canals weave through a countryside with some amazing heritage and attractions. By Offa's Dyke in the west is Llanyrnnech where the wildlife is as interesting as the remains of the 19th century lime works. At Chirk, the World Heritage Site of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal begins as Thomas Telford's aqueduct carries the waterway high over the Celio valley before plunging into the four hundred metres of The Darkie tunnel. The second aqueduct at Pontcysyllte four miles on is even more hair-raising. There's Hawkstone Park, near Wern, an 18th century fantasy of grottos and follies which made just the right location for the TV adaptation of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. And Blesmere, where in spring you can watch herons hatch their young and enjoy the lakeside views anytime of year.

The market towns have character. And decent beer. Stonehouse of Oswestry, and Jukes of Market Drayton are two of the local breweries. Artists and musicians seem to like it here so there's plenty going on.

The walks along canal towpaths and around the Meres and Mosses are not strenuous, but allow plenty of time, look closely and you'll spot wildlife and heritage that you'll probably see nowhere else.

When you visit Fenns and Whitchurch Moss then make sure to have a look at the new history trail, created with Natural England as part of the Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership Project, where a WW2 top secret *Starfish* site is being recreated. This was a bombing decoy where basket fires were lit every time there was a bomber raid on Merseyside in the hope that the Luftwaffe would bomb it and not the cities.

For more details visit: www.shropshirewalking.co.uk where you can download the guides and maps as well as the podcasts sponsored by a local company Pugs.



Llanyrnnech Heritage Area and Nature Reserve



The Rowing Bridge



Chirk World Heritage Site



Whitchurch Moss



The Starfish site on Whitchurch



Find out more at

www.shropshirewalking.co.uk

North Shropshire - Where Shropshire meets Wales



Chirk Aqueduct

The sight of a canal boat 126 feet above your head is almost as extraordinary as watching birds fly below you while the canal boat glides by at arm's length away. This is the experience of visiting the UK's newest World Heritage Site, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal which straddles the Shropshire-Wales border. The eleven mile site includes two eighteenth century Thomas Telford aqueducts which carry the Llangollen Canal over the Dee and Ceiriog valleys. There's nowhere quite like it.

The Llangollen is a branch of the Shropshire Union Canal which features large in the northern part of the county. The canalside towns of Ellesmere, Whitchurch and Market Drayton and market towns of Wem and Oswestry are quaint places of interesting small shops, tearooms, heritage trails, traditional markets and good old fashioned pubs. Market Drayton has its own brewery, Joules, which also supplies fine



Oswestry Heritage Centre

ales to many pubs in north Shropshire and its borders – and nowhere else. Oswestry too has its own Stonehouse Brewery. Oswestry is an English border town full of Welsh character, presided over by Old Oswestry, the most impressive Iron Age hillfort on the Welsh borders.

Shropshire's own long distance footpath, The Shropshire Way allows walkers to explore the landscapes of the north of the county along well-signed accessible rights of way. The Shropshire Way is 298 miles long and rambles scenically through the whole county. Shorter circular routes make great day or half-day walks. Each mile is the result of a labour of love by our volunteer walkers. They showed us their favourite footpaths, suggested beguiling little deviations, even shared their favourite views.

Take in the hilly terrain of Offa's Dyke in the west. Or the Meres and Mosses around Whitchurch, Wem and Ellesmere – a strange wetland landscape formed by glaciers and of international importance. Guide book and leaflets are available from Visitor Information

Centres or download route information from

www.shropshirewalking.co.uk

Shropshire's website specially for walkers.

If the north of Shropshire sounds a bit hearty, relax. The towpath walks are gentle, the landscape a scenic mix of green and blue – countryside, canals and meres. And the gardens are



Ellesmere

special – Wollerton Old Hall Gardens – one of the most important modern gardens in the English Garden style, the romantic Dorothy Clive Gardens and Hawkstone Park & Follies, an eighteenth century fantasy land of cliffs, grottoes and monuments. Wem Sweet Pea Festival and Oswestry in Bloom bring flowers into town adding charm to character.

For more information:

Oswestry Borderlands

(Oswestry & the Shropshire/Wales Border)

www.oswestry-welshborders.org.uk

North Shropshire

(including towns of Ellesmere, Whitchurch, Wem & Market Drayton)

www.northshropshire.co.uk

Visitor brochure for Oswestry & northern Shropshire available from Oswestry Visitor Information Centres at Mile End Tel: 01691 662488 & the Town Heritage Centre Tel: 01691 662753





MARKET TOWNS AIMS

Cultivate the retail, markets, hospitality, food, events, culture & heritage of the market towns

Improve visitor infrastructure and facilities

Create clearer awareness of the towns



Use the Whitchurch & Oswestry Town tourism plans to
help the other towns create their own plans

Town tourism planning starting now



DESTINATION PARTNERSHIP

AIMS

To bring together tourism businesses, organisations and stakeholders (public and private) to deliver the Shropshire Borderlands Visitor Economy Strategy.

To increase the volume and value of tourism in the northern Shropshire area

To celebrate achievement, build confidence and a positive team approach to developing tourism in the area

