

# Destination Management Plan

## Consultation Report

May 2023



# 1. Background

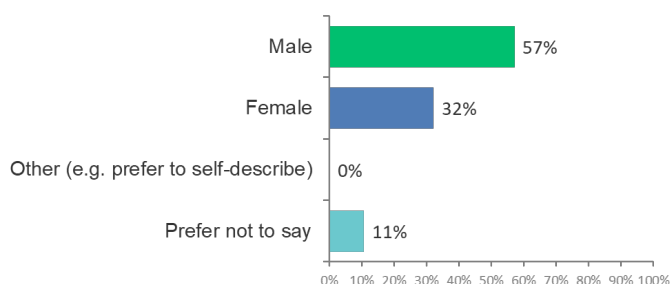
- 1.1 The draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan provides key information to communicate how the county intends to manage its visitor economy between 2023 and 2025. It is designed to support a partnership approach across public and private sectors. The priorities contained in the plan are jointly designed with the aim of transforming Shropshire into an important visitor destination.
- 1.2 The draft Destination Management Plan 2023-2025 (DMP) aims to use best practice from elsewhere whilst retaining a keen sense of what will be right for Shropshire. It details a proposed visitor economy strategy and a set of priorities agreed by stakeholders. The plan will also form a reference document for future funding and a basis for future bids into government programmes. It builds on the local Shropshire Recovery Plan (assessing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic) and can be used by developers and tourism businesses to shape their investment. It will inform, guide, and influence how resources are used and allocated.
- 1.3 The plan complements national, regional and neighbouring plans and reviews (such as the national Tourism Recovery Plan, De Bois Review, West Midlands Combined Authority Tourism Strategy, Marches LEP Tourism Strategy and others outlined in section 3 of the draft document). The DMP has been created to work in conjunction with Shropshire Council's wider strategic plans, including the Shropshire Plan 2022-2025 and the Economic Growth Strategy 2022-2027.
- 1.4 The consultation on the draft Destination Management Plan was designed to gather feedback from a wider range of stakeholders, beyond those already involved in its creation, and also to seek the views of members of the public and others interested in tourism and the local economy.
- 1.5 The consultation ran from the 6th February to the 31st March 2023 (8 weeks).
- 1.6 To obtain feedback an online survey was used and other response options were provided including email and postal options. Members of the public and stakeholders were also encouraged to get in touch if they needed to request alternative response methods or accessible versions.
- 1.7 The consultation was widely promoted across Shropshire via the Shropshire Council newsroom, local partnership and business networks and Shropshire Council's 'Get Involved' consultations and surveys portal.
- 1.8 This report summarises the feedback received. Key sections include:
  - Demographics
  - Vision and content
  - Priorities
  - Positive feedback
  - Negative feedback
  - Gaps and suggestions
  - Engagement
  - Conclusions
- 1.9 All feedback obtained will be used to finalise the Shropshire Destination Management Plan 2023-2025 prior to final decision and publication.
- 1.9 The final version of the plan will be shared via Shropshire Council's website and support future partnership working as the plan progresses to implementation.

# 2. Demographics

2.1 There were 29 responses to the consultation on the draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan 2023-2025. The response was smaller than anticipated given the extensive promotion of the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the draft.

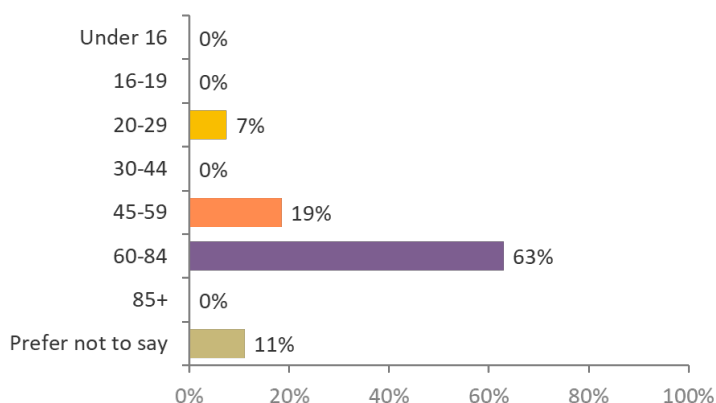
2.2 The 29 respondents were asked about themselves to see if the responses were representative of the wider population. The small response means it is hard to draw too many conclusions but it is nevertheless helpful to understand the respondent profile. The chart below illustrates the gender of respondents. There were more male respondents 57% (16) compared to females 32% (9). This is not typical within surveys in general; usually more women respond.

**Gender of survey respondents**



2.3 The chart displays the age group of survey respondents and highlights that 63% were aged 60 to 84. This is helpful and may be used to inform future engagement as part of the plan's implementation and review.

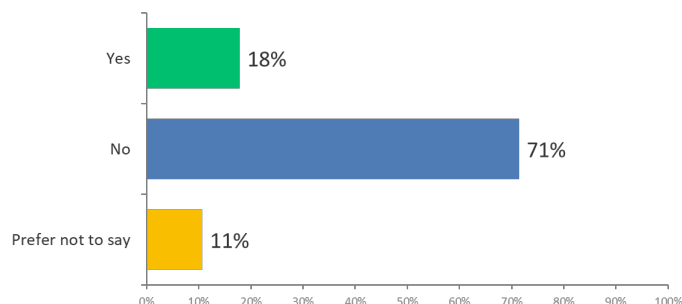
**Age of survey respondents**



2.4 The location of respondents was considered but there were too few responses to map.

2.5 A standard question considered within any consultation is whether survey respondents have any long-standing illness or disability that limits daily activity. This question is frequently accompanied by a question to measure impact of any new plan/strategy, policy or service change (to consider a diverse range of needs). The feedback obtained can be very valuable and this is considered in more detail later in the report (see section titled 'Engagement'). The results highlight that 18% of the survey respondents (5 of the 29 respondents) do face limits to daily activity.

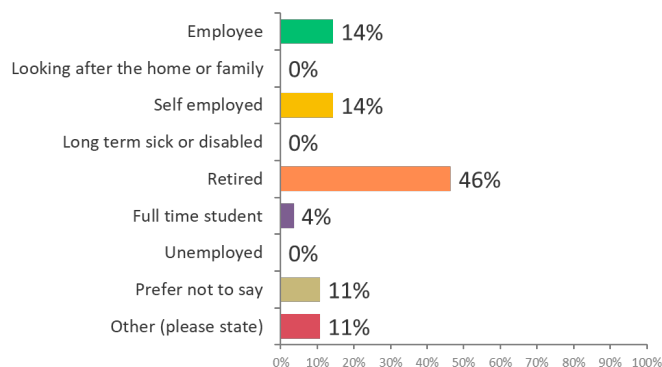
**Do you have any long-standing illness or disability that limits your daily activity?**



2.6 82% of the respondent sample describe themselves as White (British, Irish Polish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Other White) and 14% preferred not to say.

2.7 The survey respondents were asked about their interest in the survey and daily occupation. 26 of the survey respondents (90%) explained they responded to the consultation survey as an individual or member of the public and 3 (10%) on behalf of an organisation. 46% are retired.

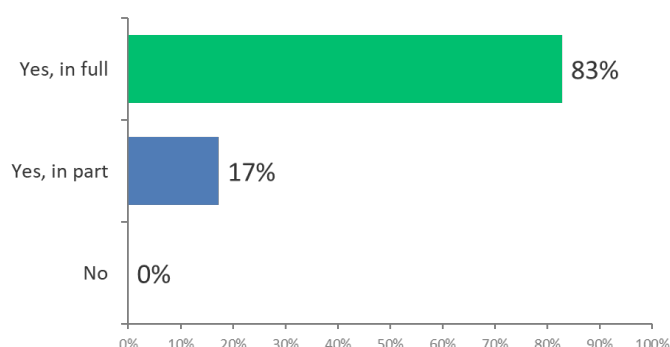
**Daily occupation of survey respondents**



# 3. Vision and content

3.1 The consultation included a copy of the draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan 2023-2025 to ensure those engaged were able to make an informed response. Each respondent was asked if they had read the draft plan and all had considered the document either in full or in part as the chart below shows.

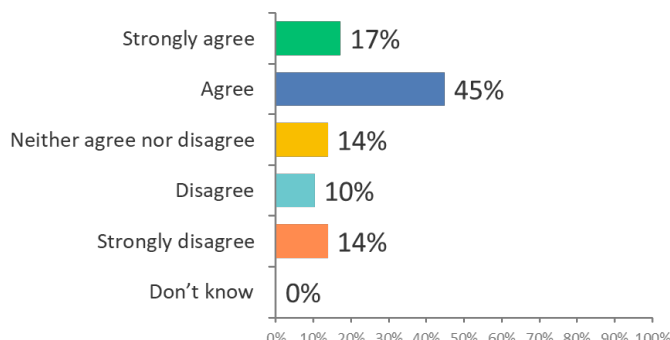
**Have you read the draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan 2023-2025?**



3.2 The survey asked for views on the vision set out within the plan. The vision is that: *“Shropshire will be a sustainably managed destination that welcomes the curious and the adventurous to explore its outstandingly beautiful natural landscapes and internationally recognised built heritage in a way that safeguards these precious assets now and for future generations. It is a place where world-changing ideas were born and are celebrated, and it continues to display a refreshing independence of thought and spirit. Its market towns and villages are alive with artisan producers, cultural practitioners and hospitality businesses that combine to create a quality environment in which visitors and residents alike are able to rethink, refresh and recharge.”*

The following chart illustrate that the views were quite mixed but with a majority in support of the proposed vision. 62% either agree or strongly agree with the vision, 24% either disagree or strongly disagree and the remainder do not have an opinion or do not know.

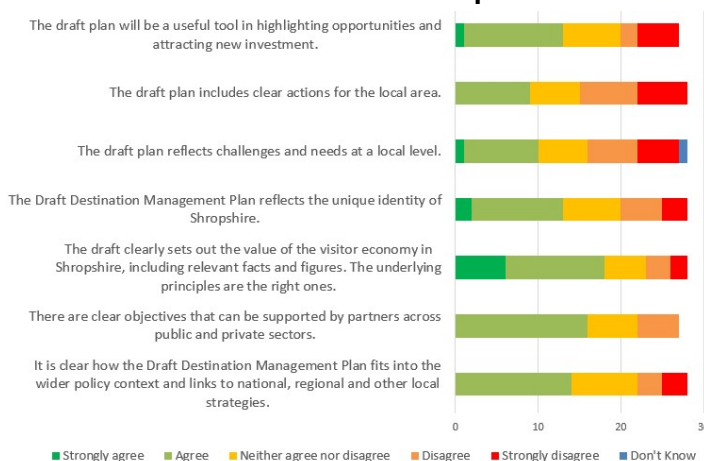
**Views on the draft vision**



3.3 To test levels of satisfaction respondents were given a number of statements and asked to give their view for each:

- It is clear how the draft Destination Management Plan fits into the wider policy context and links to national, regional and other local strategies.
- There are clear objectives that can be supported by partners across public and private sectors.
- The draft clearly sets out the value of the visitor economy in Shropshire, including relevant facts and figures. (The underlying principles are the right ones).
- The Draft Destination Management Plan reflects the unique identity of Shropshire.
- The draft plan reflects challenges and needs at a local level.
- The draft plan includes clear actions for the local area.
- The draft plan will be a useful tool in highlighting opportunities and attracting new investment.

**Views on the draft plan**



3.4 On average, 13 of the 29 survey respondents agree with the aims and contents of the draft plan and an average of 8 disagree, although the results vary across the statements. There is fairly widespread agreement that draft plan clearly sets out the value of the visitor economy in Shropshire, including relevant facts and figures. The two areas where there is most disagreement are around whether the plan sets out clear actions for the local area and whether the plan reflects local needs and challenges.

3.5 To understand any concerns or areas of disagreement, the survey respondents were asked to add comments. 17 of the 29 survey respondents added a comment. Example comments are shown in the box below.

#### Survey responses - All comments

- *“Although you have mentioned disability on page 7 under equality, there is no mention about the specific needs of people with disability and how adaptations / accessibility will be considered, including digital infrastructure”*
- *“It promotes a horrific vision of Shropshire, my native county. It presents as 'vision' a gross commodification of our English heritage and way of life. Reading it made me feel physically sick...”*
- *“The plan strikes me as being too keen on slogans and words rather than a clear recognition of the problems the plan will cause for the Shropshire countryside. Increasing access and tourism will by definition, undermine the key features of the Shropshire countryside - which are that it is thinly populated and has few visitors (although numbers are increasing). It takes courage to say "no" to increased access...”*
- *“Sustainability is the largest in the Word Cloud & it figures strongly in the vision and Priorities but when it comes to actions environmental sustainability got lost! There is no reference to The Council's net zero strategy. The nearest it gets to active travel is when it suggests there should be information for the visitor after they have arrived in their car. This is not a serious approach to sustainability!...”*
- *“Needs a section on access without a car. Public transport needs to reach further.”*
- *“.... the words 'horse riding' and the words 'Active Travel' are not mentioned in the document. It is not credible to make a case for sustainable tourism without incorporating alternatives to car travel. The assertions of 'Healthy Economy' 'Healthy People' 'Healthy Environment' are little more than meaningless green washing without addressing the car-centric approach to Shropshire Tourism.”*

- *“More hot air. Past experience does not inspire confidence in the competence or integrity of our local government. Every vanity project, from cobble streets via Quantum Leap to shopping malls is going to deliver wonders. Aims are rarely translated into results.”*
- *“More scope for unique Traveller type caravans, Yurts and glamping sites.”*
- *“Aspirations and strategies are not costed policies.”*
- *“It's a sloppy piece of work which prompts the thought as to whether it has received sufficient overview by senior management.”*
- *“Sustainability does not sell- the best tourist destinations are branded as historical, unique or exciting! The Shropshire Council is badly run by metropolitan Shrewsbury people who haven't stepped foot in a field in their life (except maybe once for DofE).”*
- *“The draft helps to identify priorities.”*
- *“There are some gaps in the list of the attractions of Shropshire.”*
- *“The county-wide focus underplays the need for better integration and development within the south, north and west of the county.”*
- *“More needs to be done for the South of the county.”*
- *“Please do not forget the opportunity for people to stay in South Shropshire and visit places like Berrington Hall and Croft Castle- although in Herefordshire the opportunity is for South Shropshire to capture some of the spend.”*
- *“Might be suitable for consultants to read their own efforts, but does not appear to be targeted at relevant players.”*

3.6 The example comments shown above illustrate how strongly some of the survey respondents feel about tourism in Shropshire. There are a range of views but some themes include an interest in active travel and travel options, the importance of embedding environmental priorities into the strategy (linking to the Council's net zero ambitions), the importance of considering the whole county and all attractions, some concerns about impact visitors have on the countryside and some more general comments suggesting a lack of confidence in Shropshire Council and its ability to deliver the plan.

3.7 The next section expands on some of the points above and considers views on the plan's priorities.

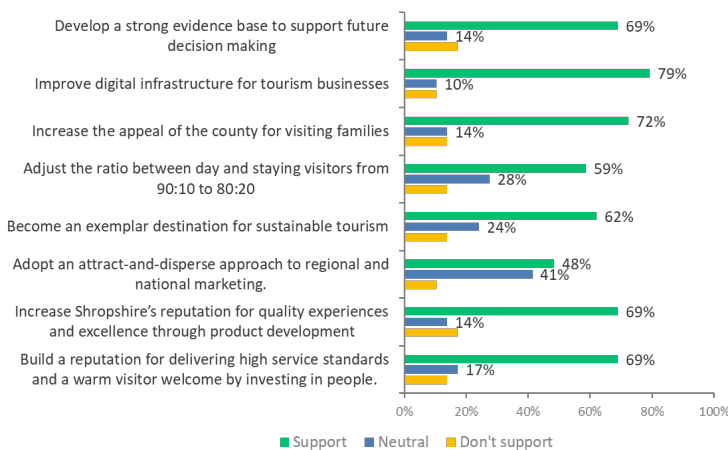
# 4. Priorities

4.1 There are eight priorities included in the draft Destination Management Plan:

- Develop a strong evidence base to support future decision making.
- Improve digital infrastructure for tourism businesses.
- Increase the appeal of the county for visiting families.
- Adjust the ratio between day and staying visitors from 90:10 to 80:20.
- Become an exemplar destination for sustainable tourism.
- Adopt an attract-and-disperse approach to regional and national marketing.
- Increase Shropshire's reputation for quality experiences and excellence through product development.
- Build a reputation for delivering high service standards and a warm visitor welcome by investing in people.

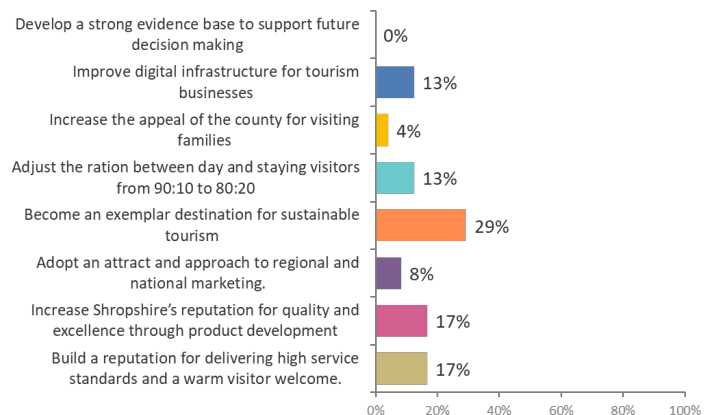
4.2 For each priority the consultation respondents were asked if they support or don't support the priority. There were high levels of support for all the priorities. The priority supported most was improving digital infrastructure with 79% support followed by increasing the appeal of the county for visiting families. The priorities supported least were adopting an attract and disperse approach to regional and national marketing and adjusting the ratio between day and staying visitors from 90:10 to 80:20.

**Views on the plan priorities**



4.3 To test which priorities are considered most important, survey respondents were asked which priority is most important to them. The chart below shows the response. The most commonly chosen priority (7 respondents) was to become an exemplar destination for sustainable tourism. The next top priorities, chosen by 4 people each were to increase Shropshire's reputation for quality and excellence through product development and to build a reputation for delivering high service standards and a warm visitor welcome. The least popular of the 8 priorities, chosen as top by only one survey respondent was to increase the appeal of the county for visiting families.

**Top priority choices**



4.4 The next sections of the report look more closely at some of the feedback obtained when survey respondents were asked more open questions and asked to comment. Although small numbers completed the survey the results are very helpful and all comments help to highlight what matters to people. The next section looks more closely at the positive feedback obtained and the elements of the draft Destination Management Plan that people liked most.

# 5. Positive feedback

5.1 The 29 respondents were asked whether there survey were elements of the draft Destination Management Plan they liked most. 17 of the 29 took the time to add a comment but unfortunately 2 of the comments were that there was nothing positive to feedback and a few of the other comments are not very positive in nature (this is considered in the next section of the report). As many comments as possible have been included in the box below as examples and to illustrate the range of feedback received.

## Survey responses - Example comments

- *“Worthy Priorities.”*
- *“It sets out ambition and review process.”*
- *“At least the DMP will exist and shows what must be done.”*
- *“I like the fact that Shropshire are looking at tourism as whole county. It is a stunning place to live and can be a more affordable place to visit than the Lake District.”*
- *“The united approach.”*
- *“The recognition that improving the visitor economy benefits the resident population also.”*
- *“Clear targets- although they ned to be monitored and reported on- how does this happen?”*
- *“It is the start of a coherent County wide plan for Shropshire. Previously different parts of the County have been competing for attention but as Shropshire has such low visitor awareness it is better to promote the county as a whole than try to differentiate between regions. Put Shropshire on the map and hopefully all areas will benefit.”*
- *“The ONE SHROPSHIRE name .... Shropshire is diverse and we need to differentiate between places which will appeal to different segments.”*
- *“Improve digital infrastructure for tourism businesses.”*
- *“I was glad to see the clear commitment to sustainable growth. Tourism in Shropshire is all about its environment and heritage, two things that must be sustainably managed now and into the future.”*

- *“I like that Shropshire is thinking about a new strategy but the content is very low-tier. The council would benefit from some innovative and original thoughts rather than the unambitious, bland and amateur-ish report created so far. Start again and consider Shropshire as an actual brand to export across the country. Yorkshire has achieved it and now the Yorkshire brand is not just a tourism success but also a product brand success.”*
- *“Not much, I'm afraid, since it proposes more visitors to the Shropshire countryside rather than fewer, which is what is really needed to protect it. Reducing the ratio between staying and day visits from 90:10 to 80:20 is not a meaningful target. It should be 10:90 (only 10% day visits).”*
- *“Omissions (which I recognise you flagged in the document) and straightforward schoolboy errors which point to an absence of oversight, e.g: • “Mitchell’s Ford Stone Circle” - “Fold” surely? • “Land of Lost Content” - closing/closed • “Oteley Gardens” is a housing development in Shrewsbury. Oteley garden is, I believe, part of Oteley Estate, Ellesmere • “Clun Man Festival” might have the key word, Green, missing.”*
- *“Well laid out in terms of printing, but I'm afraid that is about all.”*

5.2 The feedback on the draft is mixed, there appears to be some agreement that the plan is important and necessary. There are some positive comments on the ambitions/priorities and fact that the plan is a more united approach, engaging partners across sectors for the benefit of the whole county. In addition to the positive comments there are some clear concerns mentioned in relation to the impact of tourism on the environment and some suggestion that perhaps the draft Plan could be reconsidered or developed further. The comments included in the next section of the report help to explain views of perceived gaps and suggestions for improvement.

# 6. Negative feedback

6.1 In the same way that survey respondents were asked to comment on what they liked about the draft Destination Management Plan, they were also asked if there was anything they didn't like or felt needed improvement. There were 20 comments from the 29 who gave feedback through the survey. As many comments as possible have been included in the box below to illustrate the range of views and issues highlighted. Some of the comments express strong negative emotions towards the plan and others are more constructive in nature.

## Survey responses - Example comments

- *"This is an evil, evil plan."*
- *"Start again."*
- *"A failure to state how to achieve the stated priorities."*
- *"Nothing here says who is to take on the various tasks involved."*
- *"Develop a robust evidence base to support future decision making can develop alongside the other priorities."*
- *"Appears to be a typical consultant's exercise, meaning an abundance of data, but who is it actually targeted at?"*
- *"Not convinced the time and resources will produce any improvement."*
- *"It seems to be a pointless exercise. Life will go on, in an economy weakened by Brexit. Council funds, such as they are would be better spent on school meals and day care."*
- *"Consideration of the disabled."*
- *"Not enough support or proposed support for smaller accommodation sites and facilities."*
- *"There needs to be a clear policy on things like parking charges in market towns as high charges and lack of space puts off visitors- suggest Morpeth is a good example- abolished charges and prospered."*
- *"Potentially more references to infrastructure, especially in areas such as Ironbridge where visitor numbers can be an issue. Also visitor pressures on more natural sites e.g. Carding Mill Valley and the Long Mynd where footpath erosion and general visitor pressure is an issue."*
- *"The lack of inclusion of a sustainable approach to travel and tourism."*

- *"The danger of targeting increase in 'staying' visitors might mean that 'chain' hotel applications are approved, which do not allow Shropshire to be differentiated in the eye of the visitor."*
- *"There is no mention of how traders, accommodation-providers, event organisers and local councils need to work together at the local level."*
- *"Recognition of the fact that most accommodation businesses are very small and work will be needed to bring them all together - it is easy to focus on large chain/national hotels at the detriment of smaller owner run businesses yet it is these small independent businesses that offer a personalised visitor experience."*
- *"Part of me doesn't want tourists because there will be an increase in traffic on the roads. Places I like to visit as a resident are too busy."*
- *"I can really only comment mostly on items relating to Ludlow... I feel that the emphasis for Ludlow is based on its reputation for food but way before the Michelin starred restaurants arrived and the Ludlow Food Festival Ludlow was famous for not only the Castle and that it had been the Capital of the Marches for over 2 centuries ruling vast tracts of land including much of Wales but also for its wonderful architecture - The Feathers and Broad St. to name just 2 areas....I think to just point Ludlow as a food destination is completely wrong....As previously stated Shropshire has fewer open gardens than many counties so it is foolish to leave out these."*

- 6.2 The comments are quite varied overall but there are a few common themes including more information relating to implementation (e.g. resourcing, roles and responsibilities), concerns about impact, concerns about meeting the needs of small businesses (particularly small accommodation providers), impact of visitors (e.g. parking, roads and the environment), and some concerns relate to messaging and target audience.
- 6.3 The next section considers the issues respondents felt are missing or need further consideration.



# 7. Gaps and suggestions

7.1 The 29 survey respondents were asked if there was anything missing from the draft Destination Management Plan 2023-2025. 19 people provided feedback. Some of the feedback reinforced the points made previously or included very general negative comments rather than any specific concerns or areas to address prior to the final plan being published. The example comments below are those more focused on an issue or subject for attention.

## Survey responses - Example comments

- "... the management of visitor pressures. On the natural environment as well as built infrastructure."
- "Potentially more references to infrastructure, especially in areas such as Ironbridge where visitor numbers can be an issue. Also visitor pressures on more natural sites e.g. Carding Mill Valley and the Long Mynd where footpath erosion and general visitor pressure is an issue."
- "Part of me doesn't want tourists because there will be an increase in traffic on the roads. Places I like to visit as a resident are too busy."
- "The courage to say "no" to those demanding more access/right to roam to the Shropshire Countryside."
- "Another indication that this document is far from 'sustainable' is exemplified by the stock picture of a narrow boat. These are a health hazard as they rely on burning diesel, coal and gas. How does this fit with the reference to Shropshire Climate Change Strategy?"
- "The lack of inclusion of Sustainable approach to travel and tourism."
- "There needs to be a clear policy on things like parking charges in market towns as high charges and lack of space puts off visitors- suggest Morpeth is a good example- abolished charges and prospered."
- "How to help the increasing number of farmers now diversifying into tourism post-Brexit."
- "An endorsement by the local authorities of the 'Visit Shropshire' organisation placing them at the centre of the work that needs to be done."
- "Invest in and improve what we already have before attempting to develop other opportunities."
- "No mention of Shropshire's Mayflower Children <http://shropshiremayflower.com/> No mention of Much Wenlock's ancient buildings and its Olympian connection."

- "You mention the built heritage briefly, but there is much more to say about this. Visitors are amazed and delighted by the Built Heritage in Shrewsbury, but this is not currently understood as a major visitor attraction. Our Built Heritage must be - CONSERVED - there are too many fine, ancient buildings in Shrewsbury in a poor state e.g. Rowley's House and Old St Chad's; the Lion Hotel is one of the finest historic inns in the country and has been left to decay; St Mary's Church (not mentioned in your report) has some of the finest stained glass in the country and is under threat; Displayed - the listed buildings in Shrewsbury (there are more than in York), including streets and terraces, need to be accessible easily on foot and not spoiled by traffic and traffic signage."
- "Shropshire should look at destinations just outside its traditional borders to see if it can capitalise on tourists who want to stay in the area but need information about activities and places to visit outside the area- Berrington, Croft etc."
- "Missing? An appreciation of who would actually benefit from what has been presented."
- "Tasks involved."
- "Develop a robust evidence base to support future decision making can develop alongside the other priorities."

7.2 There are some quite strong areas of agreement within the comments with the top issue being sustainability and managing the impact of tourism on the natural environment and infrastructure.

7.3 Another commonly mentioned theme within comments was appreciating the wide range of visitor attractions and assets Shropshire already has (different examples are provided within the comments). One other theme within comments was calling for a bit more clarity on implementation and allocation of resources.

7.4 Everyone who responded to the consultation was asked if there were any other points they wished to raise. There were 7 comments and they included suggestions to consider Tourist Information Centres (TICs), to make use of the work carried out by Shropshire Cycle Forum, to measure customer experience and use the skills and experience locally (including private businesses).

# 8. Engagement

8.1 The draft Destination Management Plan has been developed through engagement but the consultation aimed to gather views on future engagement and a question read 'Shropshire Council will continue to encourage stakeholder engagement in the development and delivery of the Destination Management Plan. Do you have any comments to make about future engagement?' There were 17 comments but not all were a response to the question and some were general negative comments about Shropshire Council. Example comments are included below.

## Survey responses - Example comments

- *"Continue to engage with residents and communities."*
- *"This is a good thing as long as it engages with wider organisations as well."*
- *"Get more local and independent businesses involved."*
- *"I would be happy to contribute as a resident in a historic area, if that would be helpful."*
- *"Perhaps involving 'normal Salopians' a little more."*
- *"Consider consulting with destinations which already cater for the disabled."*
- *"Local fora for engagement would encourage local businesses to co-operate and create individual experiences for visitors."*
- *"Consult the countryside and rural businesses."*
- *"Too much focused on councils and non profit entities, it will only have a chance of improvement when actual business providers are engaged."*
- *"Shropshire Council needs to facilitate the development of more collaborative working amongst stakeholders at the local level and upskilling digital marketing across the county."*
- *"Stakeholders should not just be people who demand things - there needs to be a proper recognition of stakeholders who are exposed to the adverse effects of your vision. It is not a fair balance to have Stakeholder A (increased access/right to roam) having the same leverage as Stakeholder B (landowners) when it is only Stakeholder B who is having their property taken from them...."*
- *"I suggest that you contact the Severn Valley Railway - their published timetable for 2023 makes it very unattractive to visit Bridgnorth with a view to taking a day's excursion on the SVR using Bridgnorth as the start point."*

- *"This should be lead by 'Visit Shropshire'."*
- *"We receive no funding for tourism from Shropshire Council and the Visitor Information Centre is only able to operate due to the endeavours of its volunteers....the furniture and display standard are absolutely appalling. A mish mash of cupboards and stands that make Ludlow look very much the poor relation compared to its nearest TICs ...We received 20,000 visitors to the VIC last year and they must have been taken aback that such a popular destination such as Ludlow had such a poor looking visitor information centre. If Shropshire Council really wishes to promote and increase tourism to the county they should cough up some money for a decent display for all the promotional material we hold for the county."*

8.2 The comments highlight support for future engagement and a particular theme includes engaging with rural businesses and existing key contacts for tourism including Tourist Information Centres, Visit Shropshire and key attractions. There are some helpful suggestions within the comments.

8.3 One suggestion includes the importance of meeting the needs of disabled people. Shropshire Council undertakes Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessments (ESHIA) for new strategies, plans and service changes. The survey asked for any comments on diversity, equality or social impact that respondents would like the council to consider in the work on the Destination Management Plan. There were 9 responses in total and 4 were negative, including a comment that the Equality Act should be scrapped. The remaining comments are shown below.

## Survey responses - Example comments

- *"Access to all groups is important."*
- *"Post-Covid Church Stretton saw an increase in minority ethnic visitors from the West Midlands. As Church Stretton and Shrewsbury are on the Transport for Wales rail-line...."*
- *"A fair representation of local support and input."*
- *"Advice and grant funding for wheel chair and disabled access to venues."*
- *"Consider rural opinions and maybe pull resources from more successful counties...."*

# 9. Conclusions

- 9.1 The response to the draft Destination Management Plan 2023-25 consultation was small considering the active promotion of the opportunity to comment. 29 people responded and most (26) described themselves as individuals or members of the public. Considering the profile of the survey sample, there were more men aged 60 to 84 than any other group and many respondents described themselves as retired.
- 9.2 The survey results highlighted that all respondents had read the draft either in full or in part and that 62% of respondents either agree or strongly agree with the vision contained within the draft Destination Management Plan.
- 9.3 There is fairly widespread agreement that draft plan clearly sets out the value of the visitor economy in Shropshire, including relevant facts and figures. The two areas where there are more concerns include whether the plan sets out clear actions for the local area and whether the plan reflects local needs and challenges.
- 9.4 In terms of content the survey respondents suggest they would like to see more information concerning active travel and travel options, more work to embed environmental priorities into the strategy (linking to the Council's net zero ambitions), an emphasis on considering the whole county and all attractions, and some coverage of how visitors impact on the countryside. Feedback also included some more general comments suggesting a lack of confidence in Shropshire Council and its ability to deliver the plan.
- 9.5 Eight priorities are set out in the draft plan. The priority supported most is improving digital infrastructure (79% support), followed by increasing the appeal of the county for visiting families. The priorities supported least were adopting an attract and disperse approach to regional and national marketing and adjusting the ratio between day and staying visitors from 90:10 to 80:20.
- 9.6 The feedback on the draft is mixed. The positive feedback includes that the plan is important and necessary. There is support for many of the ambitions/priorities and appreciation that the plan takes a united approach, engaging partners across sectors for the benefit of the whole county.
- 9.7 More negative feedback includes themes that more information is required relating to implementation (e.g. resourcing, roles and responsibilities), concerns about impact, concerns about meeting the needs of small businesses (particularly small accommodation providers), environmental and infrastructure impact of tourism/visitors (e.g. parking, roads and the environment), and some concerns relate to messaging and target audience.
- 9.8 Perceived gaps within the current draft include the need to emphasise sustainability and managing the impact of tourism on the natural environment and infrastructure. Another commonly mentioned theme within comments was appreciating the wide range of visitor attractions and assets Shropshire already has (different examples are provided within the comments). One other theme within comments was calling for a bit more clarity on implementation and allocation of resources (similar to the concerns raised under improvements).
- 9.9 The feedback received highlights support for future engagement, and a particular theme includes engaging with rural businesses as work to deliver the plan progresses.
- 9.10 Although it is disappointing that more people did not engage in the consultation, those who did answered questions comprehensively and took time to add considered feedback. The main issues raised can now be considered in full and used to make changes to the draft document. A final copy of the Destination Management Plan 2023-2025 will then be produced and Shropshire Council decision makers will be asked to consider that next version of the document for publication and implementation.

**May 2023**

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**Shropshire**  
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