


Your Parks & Countryside

Helping people shape the future of where they live 


Countryside Access Team

Outdoor Recreation,
Shropshire Council, Shirehall,
Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6ND.

 E: countryside.access@shropshire.gov.uk
T: 01743 255061

Parks & Countryside Sites Team

Outdoor Recreation, Shropshire Council,
Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6ND.

 E: parks@shropshire.gov.uk
T: 01743 255957

Offices & Depots around the county:

North Shropshire

Parks & Countryside Sites Team
Swan Hill, Ellesmere,
Shropshire, SY12 0DQ.
T: 01691 624448

Ellesmere Park Managers Office

Mereside, Ellesmere, SY12 0PA.
T: 01691 624280

Visitor Centre & Boathouse Restaurant

Shrewsbury Road, Ellesmere, SY12 0PA.
T: 01691 622981 & 01691 623852

Central Shropshire

Weeping Cross Depot
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY5 6HY.
T: 01743 359199

Southern Shropshire

Severn Valley Country Park
Chapel Lane, Alveley, Bridgnorth,
Shropshire, WV15 6NN.
T: 01746 781192

Access Maintenance Team

Old Nils Quarry, Pontesbury Hill,
Pontesbury, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY5 0YH.
T: 01743 791984



Introducing...Adrian Bird, Ellesmere Park Manager



Shropshire Trees No.3
Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*

Shropshire Name: Catty

Growth Rate: Medium

Stature: Spindle is a small tree or big bush,
reaching 20ft in woods and hedgerows.

Conditions: Calcareous soils, dry/damp.
Common on limestone / heavy clay. Frequent
in NW Shropshire.

Wildlife / Landscape Value: Food plant for the
scorched carpet moth. Produces beautiful red/
orange fruits in autumn.

Uses: High quality
charcoal for artists.
Spindles used for
threading wool
by 'spinners', usually
unmarried girls.
Spindle wood is
also known as
skewerwood and
pegwood, indicating its other uses. In former
times the powdered leaves and seeds were
dusted onto the skin of children and animals
to drive away lice.



The Countryside Access Team

In this edition we would like to introduce you to the Countryside Access Team. We take the lead in the county in providing high quality access to Shropshire's wonderful countryside and providing information on where you can go to explore the county. The work we carry out is extremely varied.

We maintain the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way which underpins all access to the countryside in Shropshire. In partnership with landowners and local communities, we maintain and develop over 5,500 km of footpaths, bridleways and other routes and 10,000 hectares

of Open Access land. We manage and promote the flagship routes in the county such as the Offa's Dyke National Trail, Shropshire Way, Jack Mytton Way and Severn Way, but also of equal importance to us is supporting local communities to improve and promote their own local routes.

We have a responsibility to make sure that people's enjoyment to the countryside is made easier. We do this by ensuring greater accessibility for all, through increased provision of gates rather than stiles, but also through providing high quality information on where people can go and developing projects which help more people to get out and about into the countryside.

Helping people get more physically active is very important to us and we do this in partnership with a broad range of organisations and by directly supporting the 58 Parish Path Partnership groups, numerous Parish Wardens and large number of Walking for Health schemes across the County. These groups of volunteers work hard to help improve their local areas and get more people out and about walking.

We would love to hear from you if you have any ideas for developing access in your area, please get in touch.

Deb Hughes
Countryside Access Manager

Easy Access Guide Launch



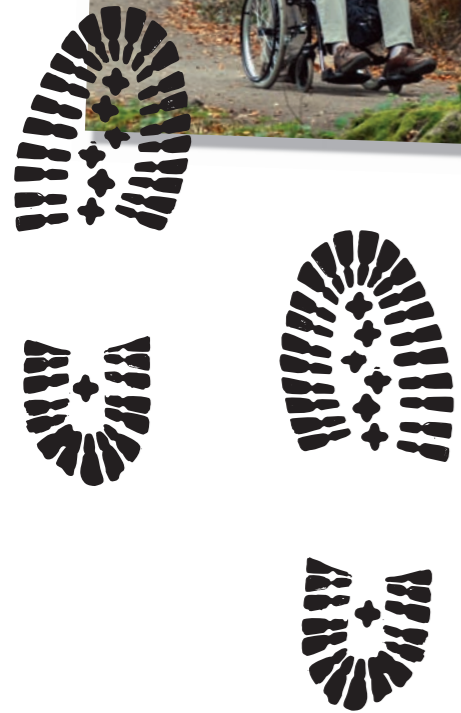
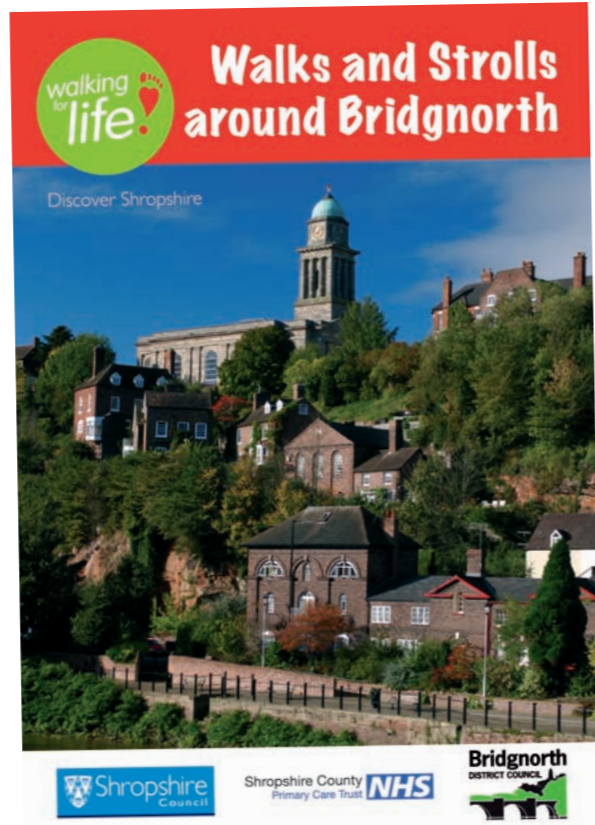
On Saturday the 12th of June the new Easy Access Guide was launched on Haughmond hill. Thirty people attended the launch and walked the Bardon Trail in the sunshine. For some of the less abled walkers this was the first time they had ever been to the viewpoint and looked over Shrewsbury.

The guide tells you all about 12 key sites around the County where people with less mobility can go for a walk. It tells you what walks are suitable for mothers with pushchairs, people with walking difficulties and wheelchair users. It is available from Visitor Information Centres and will soon be downloadable from the Shropshire Walking website.

The month also saw a second guide launched.

'Walks & Strolls around Bridgnorth' It contains a number of gated, easy access circular walks around Bridgnorth's countryside, through this unique town and along the banks of the river Severn. All of the walks offer a great variety of scenery, from enjoying the wildlife on the river to experiencing the fabulous views of the surrounding countryside. It is available as a download from the Shropshire Walking website: www.shropshirewalking.co.uk and local Visitor Information Centres.

Don't forget that the very popular **'Family Friendly Walks'** guidebook is still available as a download from the Shropshire Walking website. Have a look at where you could go, print a leaflet off and get out and about with your family!



De-silting Donington Pool



The pool was last de-silted around 30 years ago. A recent survey suggested that, since then, silt had accumulated to a depth of over 1m. Concerns were raised that this could be having a negative impact on the fish population in the pool.

Firstly, around 170lbs of fish were removed from the pool. A digger on a floating pontoon was then used to stir up the silty water, and pump it into a settling lagoon.

The silt will be allowed to dry and will then be spread onto nearby farmland.

Autumn 2010 will see a re-stock of fish into the pool. The final stage of the project will be to apply for grant-funding to enhance the surroundings of the pool.

This will aim to encourage bankside flora, and create better fishing access so that the people of Albrighton can enjoy their silt-free village pool!

Donington Pool is part of Donington and Albrighton Local Nature Reserve. The site is managed by the Parks and Countryside Sites Team as part of a management committee.

March and April 2010 saw heavy machinery on site as part of a £100,000 de-silting project funded by Shropshire Council, Donington with Boscobel Parish Council and Albrighton Parish Council.

Oswestry's New Town Green

Oswestry's new Town Green is nearing completion and is due to be opened in July 2010. The 5 acre Green in the heart of Oswestry has been designed to incorporate wilder areas of woodland and wildflower meadows. This will be complimented by areas of short mown grass whilst retaining the sites role as an important green corridor enhancing biodiversity in the centre of this market town.

Additionally the site will have several features for natural, imaginative play, this includes a slide and a 40m diameter raised turf labyrinth, one of the biggest in Europe.

This £170,000 project will breathe new life into this important area of Oswestry, acting as a catalyst for increased tourism and economic regeneration together



Architect, Tim Nicol of NJL Consultants and Project Manager, Geraint Dodd of P&W Contracting inspect progress

with the health benefits urban greenspace gives. For more information contact Shaun Burkey, Tel: 01691 624448, or, Email: shaun.burkey@shropshire.gov.uk

Severn Tree Trust (Originally Men of the Trees following the work of St. Barbe Baker)

We are a new voluntary tree organisation covering Shropshire, the Midlands and Wales. The group exists to promote, protect and plant trees. There are monthly meetings - indoors in winter, visits in summer - a regular newsletter and opportunities to get out and plant trees.

Would you be interested?

For more information and a membership form, please contact the membership secretary: Jay Mitchell on; 01743 354009 or email: jayj.mitchell@tiscali.co.uk web: www.2shrop.net/stt

Legend of the Mere at Ellesmere



According to local legend the Mere at Ellesmere was created when a selfish old woman called Mrs Ellis refused to give her neighbours water from her well. The spring overflowed uncontrollably and by sunrise had created a huge flood which drowned Mrs Ellis's house, garden and the old crone herself thus creating Ellesmere or 'Ellis Mere'.

Both young and old will be fascinated by more historic tales and artefacts awaiting visitors at the Boathouse Visitor Information Centre at The Mere, Ellesmere in a new facility created as part of the Mere Heritage Restoration Project. Inside you will find the 'Cabinet of Curiosities' with unusual objects from days gone by. You can learn the difference between a Coot and a Moorhen, do brass rubbings of wildlife and look at objects under a huge microscope. A really exciting sight for visitors this spring are the live close-up images of the nesting herons and their chicks on Moscow Island viewed on plasma screens inside the centre. Herons have been returning here for thirty years to build huge nests high up in the trees.

The Mere Heritage Restoration Project is a partnership between Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council and has been funded by Big Lottery, Heritage Lottery - Parks for People and European Regional Development Fund. The last two years has seen the total restoration of the formerly run down promenade and buildings including the 1930's timber Boathouse, which has now been extended to encompass the new Visitor Centre and Gift Shop. An avenue of lime trees and colourful beds of ornamental shrubs lead visitors along the smart new promenade into Cremorne Gardens, once the private pleasure grounds of the Earl of Bridgewater and his agent. Today the gardens lawns are a popular place for a picnic under the shade of one of the giant wellingtonia or californian coast redwoods (sequoia) planted by the Victorians.

To explore the park you can take a wander up through Castlefields meadow to the Garden Terraces, or follow the informal path along the edge of the Mere and on through the beech woods to the tiny beach on the far side of the Mere known as the Crimps where you look back

at the panoramic view across the water to St Mary's Church. Walking packs on sale in the Giftshop for £1.00 will guide you on circular walks to Ellesmere with its medieval buildings or along the Llangollen Canal to nearby Colemere.

Entrance to The Boathouse Visitor Information Centre is free and is open seven days a week from 10am to 5pm. There is ample parking at The Moors and Castlefield car parks, adjacent to the Visitor Centre on the A495, Shrewsbury Rd. For more information call 01691 622981.

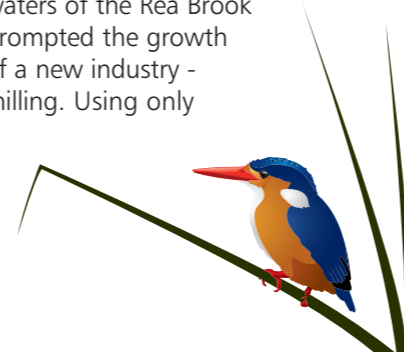


Featured Site Rea Brook Valley Country Park

The Rea Brook Valley Country Park is located in south Shrewsbury and extends from near Abbey Foregate to Meole Brace. Rea Brook is one of the largest, most visited sites managed by the Parks and Countryside Sites Team. Its status as a Local Nature Reserve recognises its importance as a haven for wildlife and a place for people to enjoy. The valley is a green corridor from the open countryside right into the heart of the Shrewsbury. Its landscape has been shaped over centuries by the lives of monks, millers and farmers and continues to be managed to conserve its wealth of wildlife and provide opportunities for quiet recreation.

The valley is home to an enormous variety of plants and animals. The regular flooding of the brook has ensured that the meadows, hedges and copses have been preserved in the traditional pattern of land use that has disappeared from many other parts of the countryside. Kingfishers can be seen throughout the year, giving themselves away with a high pitched whistle before darting past in a flash of blue and orange. Otters have been spotted by patient fisherman, swimming up from the junction with the River Severn. Dragonflies can also be seen hunting over the still open waters of the mill ponds.

The history of this area can be traced back over a thousand years to a time when Shrewsbury was a small town on the River Severn. At this time the fast flowing waters of the Rea Brook prompted the growth of a new industry - milling. Using only



hand tools, a complex system of deep channels called races and leats were dug. Many of these can still be seen today adding great historical and archaeological interest to the valley as well as providing a habitat for damp loving plants and animals.

The Outdoor Recreation team aims to maintain and enhance the landscape and wildlife value of the Valley by bringing the ancient meadows into traditional grassland management regimes such as hay cutting and cattle grazing providing ideal conditions for wildflowers to grow. Trees and hedges are managed to improve their biodiversity interest through the ancient crafts of coppicing and hedgelaying. Existing wetland habitats such as the old mill leat system are being conserved and new meadows, wetland and woodland habitats are being created in areas currently of low wildlife interest. The past year has

seen many improvements to the Rea Brook Valley, including the installation of new stock proof fencing, easy access kissing gates and access improvements to the Brook banks for fishermen. Local volunteers and users from local day centres have been hard at work installing new steps, handrails, benches and picnic tables. They have also helped us plant a new Hazel coppice at Laundry Lane, carry out our annual coppicing at the Willow plantation in Meole Brace, and lay a hedge in the Pritchard Way Field. The cattle will soon be returning to the fields and the tractor will be out ready to start making hay-weather depending! For more information about this extensive site, its varying habitats, wildlife and numerous access points, please visit our website at: www.shropshire.gov.uk/countryside.nsf and put Rea Brook Valley into the search box.

Matt Wilcoxon Countryside Ranger



Meet the Countryside Access Team...



Deb Hughes 01743 255057
Countryside Access Manager responsible for Rights of Way (ROW) & developing & overseeing all aspects of the service, the staff & the budgets.



Gemma Price 01743 255066
Countryside Access Support Officer responsible for providing administrative support to the team.



Pippa Murphy 01743 255068
Mapping & Information Officer responsible for all aspects of data management & information for the public and team.



Richard Knight 01743 791984
Access Maintenance Team Leader based at the Maintenance Depot at Pontesbury, & responsible for the day to day delivery of maintenance on the ROW network.



Peter Atkinson
Access Maintenance Officer with responsibility for Capital contracting projects especially larger bridges & improvements to The Severn Way & Jack Mytton bridleway.



Andy Lipa
Access Maintenance Officer (part-time) with responsibility for improving The Offa's Dyke National Trail & other ROW.



Paul Butter
Access Maintenance Officer with responsibility for The Shropshire Way, Open Access land improvements & higher status routes.



Helen Beresford
Assistant Access Maintenance Officers responsible surveying, negotiating & improving Rights of Way as a result of reported problems.



Matt France
Assistant Access Maintenance Officers responsible surveying, negotiating & improving Rights of Way as a result of reported problems.



Robert Purcell
Assistant Access Maintenance Officers responsible surveying, negotiating & improving Rights of Way as a result of reported problems.



Phil Betts 01743 791984
Parish Paths Partnership Officer responsible for supporting 55+ Parish volunteer groups across the county, the Parish Warden scheme & the Active Volunteering Partnership.



Paul Daly
Parish Access Project Officer managing a programme of targeted ROW improvements in selected parishes.



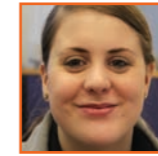
David Hardwick
Assistant Access Project Officer responsible for surveying, negotiating and improving ROW in the project areas.



Peter Higgins 01743 255015
Information Assistant responsible for providing administrative support to the support to the project.



Jim Stabler 01743 255067
Access Development Officer responsible for Countryside Access Strategy delivery, external funding bids, project management & support to the Shropshire Local Access Forum.



Becky Johns 01743 255059
Walking for Health Coordinator responsible for supporting Walking for Health Schemes in the Shrewsbury & Oswestry areas.



Mick Dunn 01743 255059
Walking for Health Coordinator responsible for supporting Walking for Health Schemes in the Bridgnorth & North Shropshire areas.



Kevin Jones 01743 255055
Access Enforcement Team Leader responsible for the work of the team and day to day management of the resolution of problems reported on the ROW network.



Terry Hughes 01743 255054
Access Enforcement Officer for the resolution of Rights of Way problems with landowners in the North Shropshire, Oswestry & Shrewsbury areas.



Shona Lewis 01743 255062
Access Mapping Team Leader responsible for the work of the team & the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way & legal changes to this record.



Kate Nore 01743 255052
Public Path Orders Officer responsible for progressing applications to amend Rights of Way under the Highways Act 1980.



Jean Jones 01743 255056
Definitive Map Orders Officer responsible for the publication of legal orders & resultant Public Inquiries, land charge searches & other consultations.



Mat Stevens 01743 255007
Acting Access Mapping Team Leader responsible for the work of the team and the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way & Legal changes to this record.



Lucy McFarlane (Job Share) 01743 255058
Definitive Map Review Officers responsible for investigating claims to alter the Definitive map & other updating work.



Andrew Ventin 01743 255068
Definitive Map Review Officer (Job Share) but also responsibility for all consultations & resultant legal orders for Rights of Way affected by built development.



Mark Blount 01743 255053
Outdoor Recreation Development Manager responsible for Project Developments & External Funding.

