

Shropshire Destination Management Plan 2025 – 2029 Survey

Feedback Report

February 2026



1 Introduction

In October 2025 Shropshire Council sought to gather views and opinions on the draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan (DMP). This plan is designed as a blueprint for how the county intends to manage its visitor economy between 2025 and 2029, and intended to build on the current plan, which expired in 2025.

The draft was developed by Shropshire Council with the support of partners and stakeholders from across the county. It was approved by Visit England and was written to align with Telford and Wrekin's DMP. This is more important than ever as we have recently formed the Telford and Shropshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) with them and Visit Shropshire.

The DMP identified priorities and objectives that will help to further develop Shropshire as a visitor destination and will form a reference document for future funding and a basis for future bids into government programmes. The plan will be used by developers and tourism businesses to shape their investments, and it will serve to inform and guide how resources are used and allocated.

Shropshire Council has recognized the importance of engaging with stakeholders and the public to gain insight and feedback on the plan, before it is approved and implemented. Therefore, a survey was published as a way of collecting feedback, and this report aims to analysis the views and opinions of the respondents, to help shape and guide future and ongoing changes to the plan.

The survey was available online on Shropshire Council's website, in alternate forms by request and through Shropshire Council's face-to-face services in libraries and Shropshire Local (hub spots in various locations throughout the county). The survey and consultation on the draft Destination Management Plan ran from 1st December 2025 and closed on 2nd February 2026. It was well advertised on social media, Shropshire Council's Get Involved page and through posters with QR codes in various Shropshire Council Customer Services locations.

This report describes the survey findings within 5 main sections:

- **Section 1: Background** (this section) provides an overview of the survey and how it was promoted.
- **Section 2: Respondents** covers those engaged within the survey to provide context to the feedback and understand whether the response is representative of the wider community.
- **Section 3: About the respondents** explores who has answered and their background, in order to provide a clearer image of opinions offered.
- **Section 4: Recommendations** considers recommendations for change, based on the feedback presented in this report.
- **Section 5: Summary and Conclusion** provides a summary and conclusion based on the overall analysis of the feedback received.

2 Respondents

The survey was responded by 84 people over a 2-month consultation period (1st December 2025 to 2nd February 2026). The survey was published with the Draft Shropshire Destination Management Plan 2026-2029 alongside it and the first question asked whether respondents had read the draft DWP.

Figure 1: Has the DMP been read by the respondents.

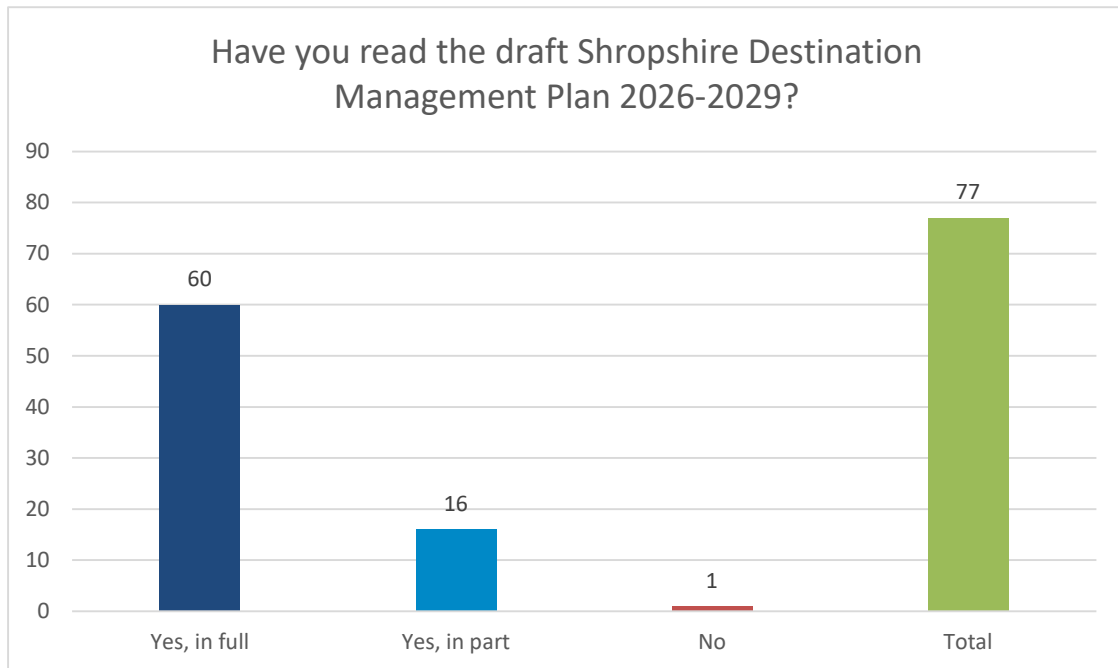


Figure 1 shows that 77 people responded and overall, 78% of respondents had read the draft DWP in full, 21% in part and 1% had not read the draft at all. This is positive to see, as it should mean respondents will understand the questions, and can provide meaningful and considered feedback.

When asked for their overall thoughts on the DWP, 75 people answered under 5 categories, and figure 2 will show the results in full.

Figure 2: Thoughts on the draft DMP.

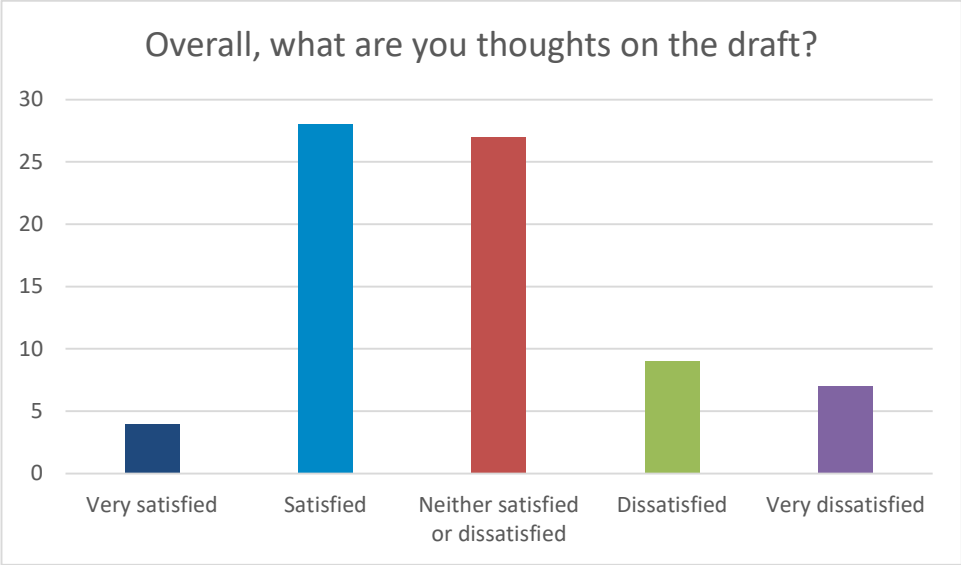


Figure 2 shows that in general, people were satisfied and very satisfied with the draft DWP; 43%. Cumulatively, 21% of respondents were dissatisfied and very dissatisfied, and 36% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied. It is encouraging that the majority of people reading the DWP are happy with it rather than unhappy.

The next question asked the respondents to rate how much in agreement or disagreement they were of 8 key points. Figure 3 shows the breakdown in full.

Figure 3: Responses that best reflect respondents' opinions on statements

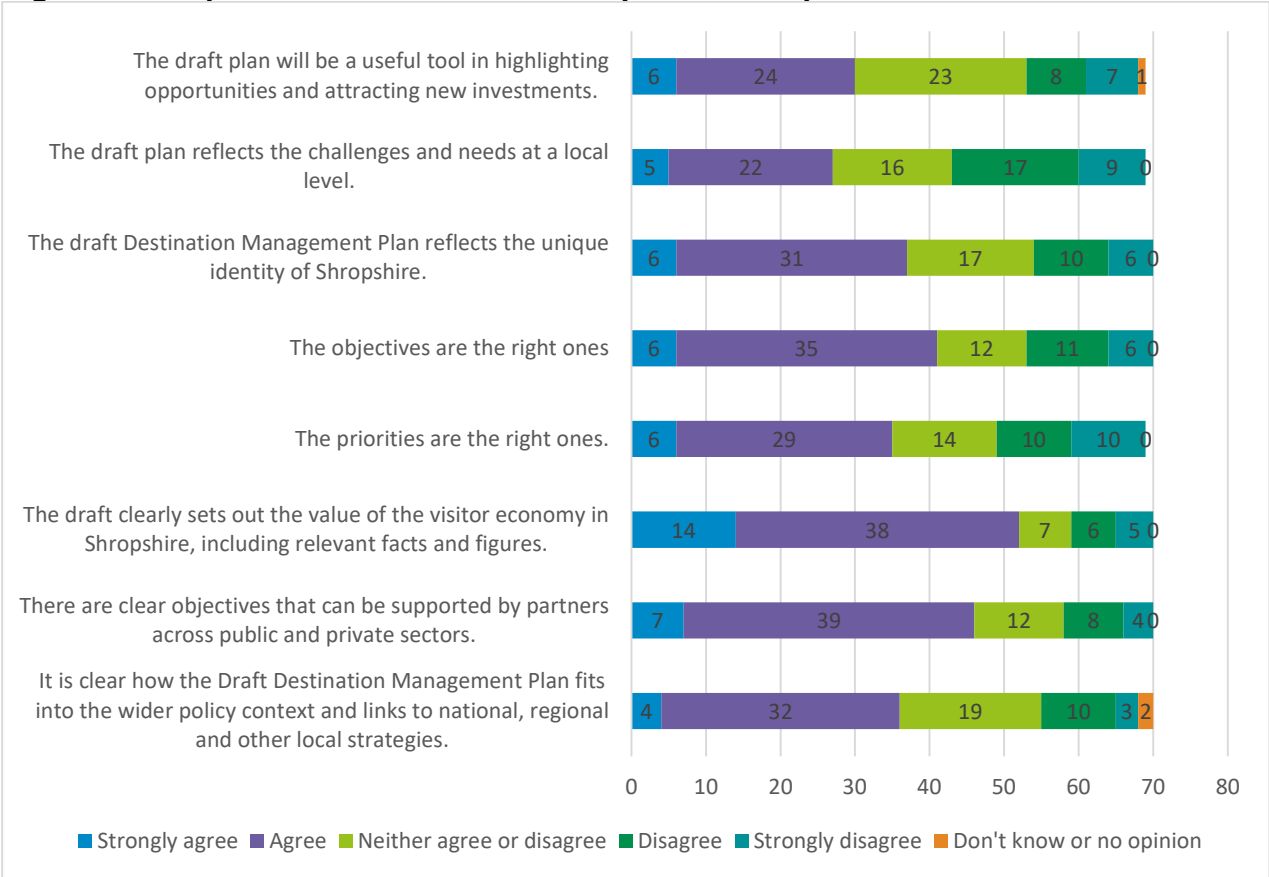


Figure 3 shows that overall, people who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements accounted for 55% of the responses, whereas 23% disagree and strongly disagree. The rest (22%) were made up of people with neutral responses and those that had no opinion or could not give an opinion.

The survey then asked for comments to explain the selections made above, with an emphasis on wanting to hear the comments of those that chose 'strongly disagree'. There were 47 comments and the key themes are shown in table 1.

Table 1

Theme	Number	%
Lacking specific area identity/ too broad or focuses on Shrewsbury	17	31
No detail on how to achieve things listed e.g. bed space	9	16
Lacking some important tourism aspects e.g. canal tourism, equestrian, church tourism	12	22
Clarity and explanation on terms are needed	1	2
Not enough thought given to important issues like transport/connectivity	3	5
Tourism is hampered by Council policies – e.g. planning	2	4
The plan is good	1	2
Other comments – including general/negative comments	10	18
Total		100%

The main themes from these comments focus on how the plan does not feature individual places enough, or focuses on Shrewsbury too much; that the plan does not include all aspects that make up tourism in Shropshire such as canal and church tourism; and there is no real detail on how to achieve the things the plan sets out to achieve, such as bed space. There are also other comments including negative comments about the plan and money-wasting by the Council.

Example comments:

- *The DMP is good at the county wide level but doesn't have the right approach to the very local level. It feels like the unique vibe of specific areas is missing.*
- *The plan does not suggest any meaningful way of increasing bedspaces in the County.*
- *Whittington Parish Council were disappointed to not see any mention of Whittington Castle in the document as it is a significant tourist attraction in the county.*
- *There are some references which need more clarification - what exactly is regenerative tourism? Responsible tourism tends to suggest that visitors are consciously responsible - surely too vague.*
- *The Shropshire Union Canal is a key draw to the county for boaters and waterside enterprises but there was nothing about drawing in more boater visitors and providing facilities for them. Hire boaters usually spend one or two weeks on the canal but continual cruisers and leisure boaters can spend several weeks even months on the canals here. There did not seem to be any mention of the Canal and River Trust and its roles.*
- *The plan is clearly laid out, attractive and well presented, but fails to show all of Shropshire clearly. It is highly focused on South Shropshire and the urban areas therein. There is inadequate coverage of north Shropshire in general and the Ellesmere area in particular. The town and its environments is not adequately described, and their particular attractions are totally absent. In short, it needs to be more fully representative of the often-overlooked areas and rural areas like Ellesmere, the Meres, mosses, canals and other attractions.*

- *The DMP provides an excellent foundation for the development of tourism in Shropshire overall but then what? Shouldn't there be individual town/ regional area versions that break down the tourism growth for all elements of the region into something deliverable - who / how would be responsible for delivering? In addition, there are no indications of budgets - costs or ownership of the elements of the DMP to actually be delivered. Making it somewhat a 'nice to have'.*
- *If we are to raise staying guests then difficulties we've experienced as parish councilors in getting pods/chalets etc. past planning permission because of planners interpretations of policies by non-local consultant planners engaged because of a lack of full-time Shropshire based planners will need addressing.*
- *As a business and resident of Shropshire the plan does not support growth or help. Shrewsbury gets too much priority with the other towns suffering.*

Question 5 asked for views on the 7 priorities included in the DWP, they are:

- Increase bed stock to encourage longer stays
- Build on past work to create a clear identity for Shropshire as a tourist destination.
- Implement integrated marketing strategies to attract visitors.
- Support regenerative tourism initiatives that benefit the environment and local communities.
- Continue to create a destination partnership that can embrace all, and that brings people together.
- Create an evaluation framework that can inform activity based on economic impact survey e.g. STEAM and working with partners on data sharing to generate objective performance and evaluation metrics.
- Build a reputation as an accessible and inclusive destination by instilling a determination across the sector to ensure everyone is welcome.²

Figure 4 shows the results of these views:

Figure 4: Responses to reflect opinion on the 8 priorities in the DMP

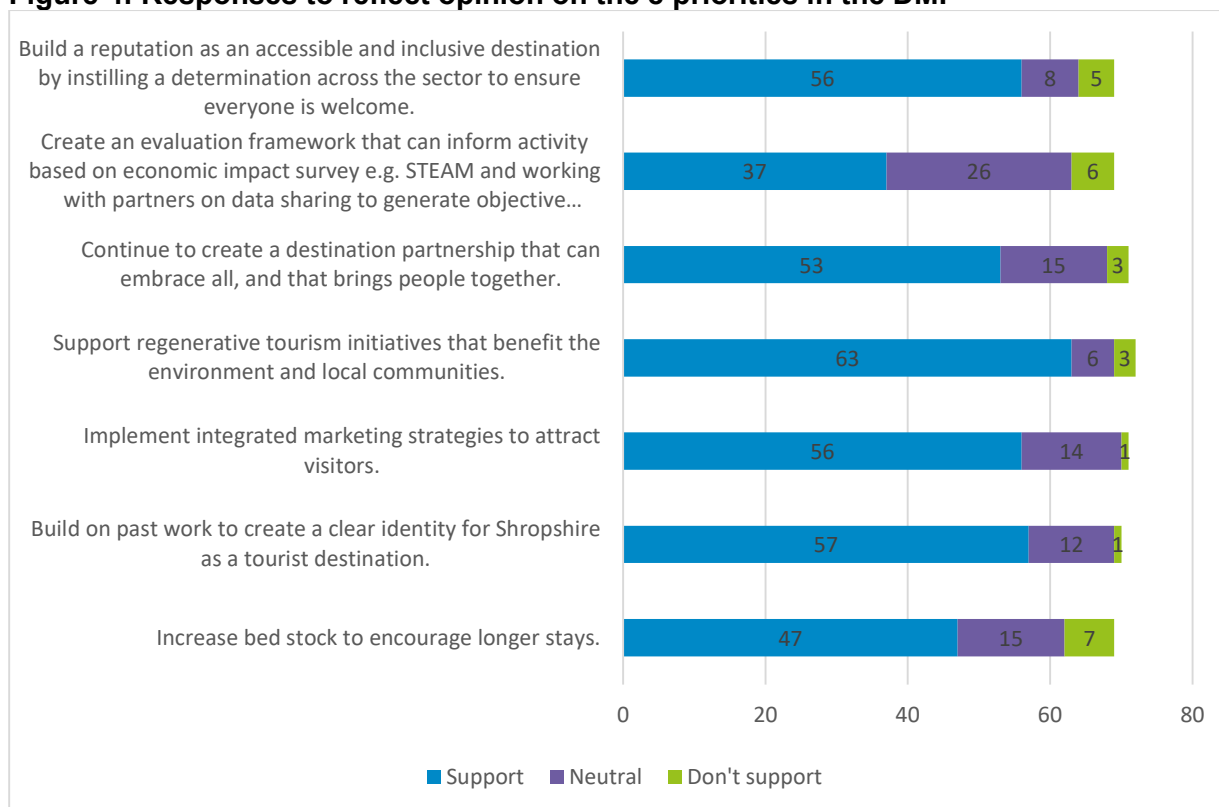


Figure 4 shows that people are more in support of the 7 priorities than not; 75% of responses are in support, 20% are of a neutral opinion and 5% do not support. Supporting regenerative tourism initiatives to benefit the environment and communities is the most supported of the priorities followed by creating a clear identity for Shropshire as a tourist destination. There is also strong support for integrated marketing strategies to attract visitors and for building a reputation as an accessible and inclusive destination. The priority with the least support is for the creation of an evaluation framework based on economic impact.

The next question follows on from this and asks the respondents to rate the priorities in importance to them.

Figure 5 – A graph that shows the rating of importance of the 7 priorities from most to least important

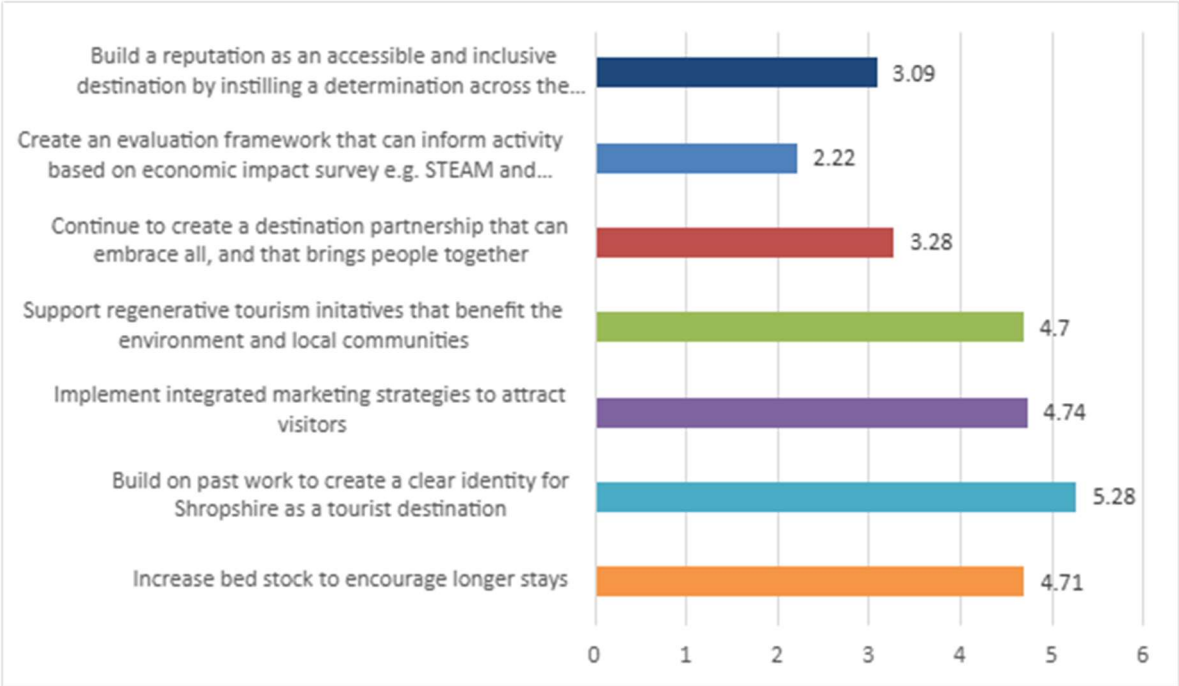


Figure 5 shows that building on past work to create a clear identity for Shropshire as a tourist destination is the most important to most people, followed closely by supporting regenerative tourism, implementing integrated marketing strategies and increasing bed stock to encourage longer stays. Overall, the results back up the previous answers and confirm that there are clear priorities within the priority list and widespread consensus among consultation respondents. Building a reputation as an accessible and inclusive destination by instilling a determination across the sector to ensure everyone is welcome was a priority that was not quite as well supported when survey respondents were asked to rank priorities in order.

The next question asked the respondents to provide views on the 4 objectives that were laid out in the plan. These are:

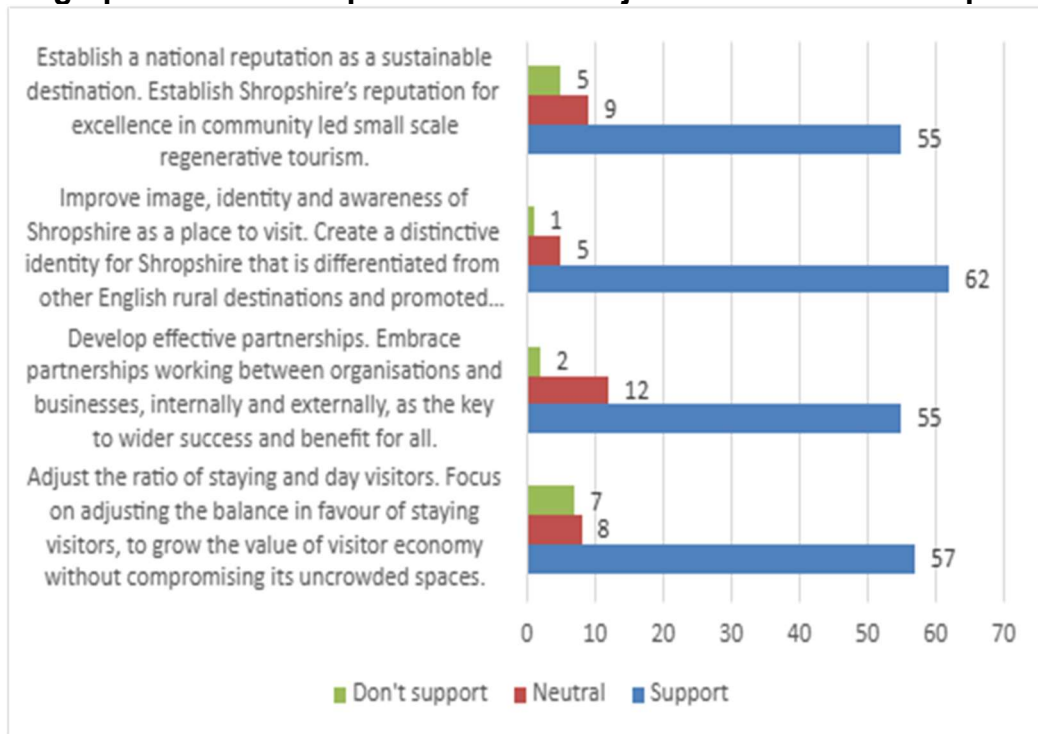
1. Adjust the ratio of staying and day visitors. Focus on adjusting the balance in favour of staying visitors, to grow the value of visitor economy without compromising its uncrowded spaces.
2. Develop effective partnerships. Embrace partnerships working between

organisations and businesses, internally and externally, as the key to wider success and benefit for all.

3. Improve image, identity and awareness of Shropshire as a place to visit. Create a distinctive identity for Shropshire that is differentiated from other English rural destinations and promoted effectively.
4. Establish a national reputation as a sustainable destination. Establish Shropshire's reputation for excellence in community led small scale regenerative tourism.

The respondents were asked whether they supported the objectives or not, or were neutral towards them. 72 people answered and Figure 6 shows that overall, people are in support of all the objectives.

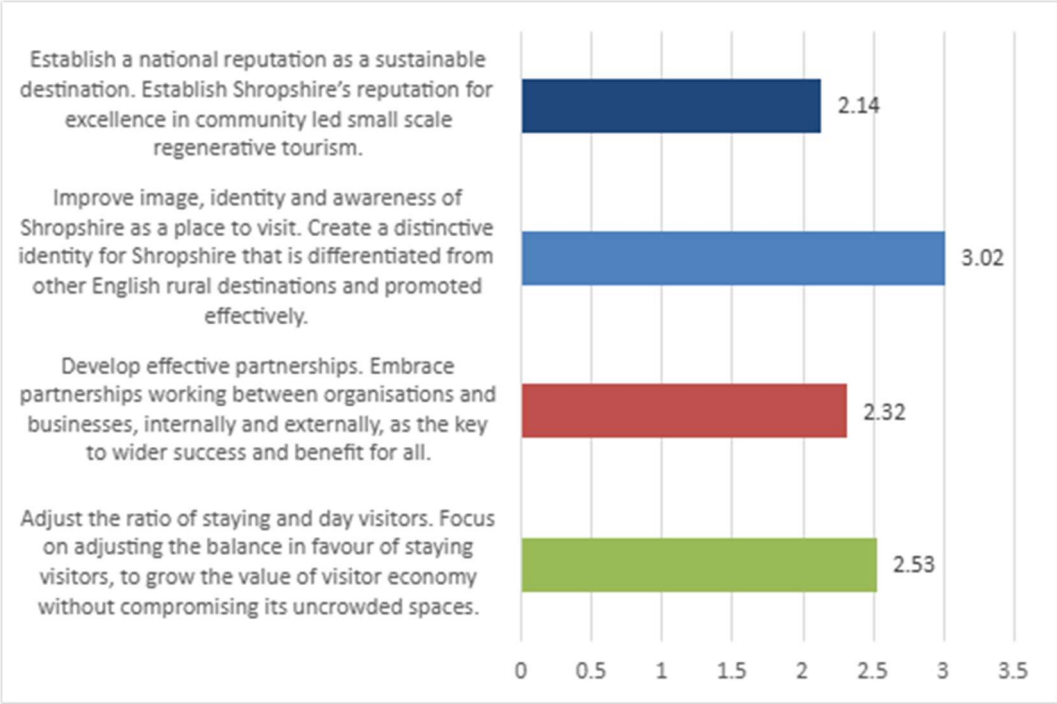
Figure 6 – graph that shows opinion on the 4 objectives laid out in the plan



As shown in Figure 6, the respondents support the objectives more than not supporting or having a neutral opinion. They are particularly in support of objective 2 of improving identity, image and awareness of Shropshire as a place to visit. This aligns with some of the comments from question 4; we can see that people are very keen to have distinction for Shropshire but also the individual areas within the county, as well as increasing awareness of other tourism areas like churches and canals, which they feel are not mentioned enough in the DMP. 7 people have concerns about increasing staying visitors and it may be helpful to consider those concerns within the next stages of work.

As they did in the previous question, the respondents rated the importance of the objectives. They were similar in their responses but objective 3 was rated the most important, as seen in Figure 7

Figure 7 – graph that shows 4 objectives from most important to least



There is not much difference between the objectives in regard to their importance, bar the improvement of the improving image objective which is clearly ranked the most important, according to those who answered the survey. This might point to all the objectives being of equal or at least similar importance.

The next question allowed for further elaboration from the respondents as they were asked to comment on what they particularly liked about the Destination Management plan. 41 people answered, which allows for a good range of comments.

Table 2: Table of themes arising from comments on what respondents liked about the DMP.

Theme	Number of responses	%
Comments about plan's layout and presentation/colour	9	22%
Good as a draft but needs action	4	10%
Well written and thought out	9	22%
Tourism is being given positive consideration	5	12%
People like specific sections - ie accessibility	4	10%
Suggestions	5	12%
Negative comments	5	12%
Total		100%

Overall, the respondents thought the plan was well written and well thought out, as well as liking the way the plan looks; in its presentation and colour. Other themes include the thought that tourism being considered is a good thing, that the plan is good as a working draft but it will need action; there are some suggestions for additions and that the respondents liked specific sections or aspects of the plan and there are some elements of negative comments.

Example comments

- *It is a good working document, but it needs to translate to the local areas.*
- *Seems to be a good starting point for the future but needs building on.*
- *To market Shropshire nationally, ideally using television adverts and social media to create an embracing image for Shropshire.*
- *Lots of good ideas which if applied would increase demand for staying visitors.*
- *It's bright, clear and attractive.*
- *It is well written and focuses on value rather than quantity of visitors.*
- *I like the focus on Market towns and encouraging independent small businesses, no one wants to go on holiday and have the town be a carbon copy of where you came from Costa, Wilkos, Greggs, etc. people want cute little shops selling interesting things! and they certainly don't want to see 7 Turkish barbers on medieval streets and associated flashing lights- they should be banned.*
- *Expressed in clear terms, with evidence based proposals, and sensible objectives laid out.*
- *I think Section 1 does a good job of identifying the benefits and problems facing the tourism sector in Shropshire.*
- *You need to support business already doing this as you don't support at all.*
- *I'm pleased to see Shropshire's potential as a destination recognised, along with the need to raise awareness of its many appealing features for visitors. We live in South Shropshire (Bucknell), a common comment when speaking to visitors is 'We didn't expect it to be such a lovely area to come and visit'.*

The next question asked the opposite question of what the respondents didn't like about the plan. There were more responses to this question; 51 respondents. However, this doesn't necessarily have to be viewed as negative, more as an opportunity to gather real feedback and to listen and value residents' opinions.

Table 3: Themes reflecting opinions given on what respondents didn't like about the DMP.

Theme	Number of responses	%
Not individual enough – too much focus on bigger towns	14	25%
Not enough focus on the delivery of the objectives	9	16%
Focus on transport and connectivity	6	11%
The plan omits important aspects – equestrians/motorhomes/failure to focus on infrastructure	14	25%
Collaboration needed -joined up thinking	2	4%
Other comments	11	20%
Total		100%

As presented, the respondents mostly think the plan is too focused on the bigger towns, namely Shrewsbury, and the plan omits important aspects e.g. equestrian's, motorhome, failing to focus on infrastructure. Further themes include that the plan does not focus on the delivery of the objectives enough, there needs to be a focus on connecting Shropshire via transport, and other comments, including comments on the plan's layout.

Example comments

- *The uniqueness of individual towns and villages is not present. Bishop's Castle is a town that has its roots connected to Empire and industry that are not highlighted. It would be*

reasonable to conclude there are more hidden gems that could bolster Shropshire's portfolio.

- The plan needs to focus on raising awareness and bringing people into the whole county.
- The plan is too heavily focused on South Shropshire. Despite being a tiny town which has very little to offer tourists outside of organised events, Clun is mentioned more than twice as often as Ellesmere, Whitchurch or Market Drayton. The north of the county has a lot to offer tourists and more should be done to attract visitors.
- More emphasis on connectivity, people being able to get around by public transport.
- There is no mention of individual parts of Shropshire, each one has different needs & objectives, some are larger towns, some smaller.
- In theory it looks good for rural businesses, but without support in developing infrastructure to enable people to get to us and stay without blocking roads etc. needs to be thought about.
- Reconsider the layout so you don't have to get to the very end of the document before you can understand what the proposed actions are. Some sections seem a little repetitive. A few typos to sort out.
- It is not clear how Shropshire Council will in practice work in partnership with Town Councils, especially those which do not have a BID and promote collaborative inter-town working (currently minimal).
- Not clear how this will be taken forward.
- I feel that the North/South divide has not been improved upon, perhaps worsened. As a resident of Ellesmere, I feel that the plan writers are not fully in tune with the distinctive offer from the North, are not particularly interested in developing the North and aren't really looking for opportunities there. I therefore feel disheartened by this project.
- Much more mention of public transport which is mostly terrible in Shropshire.
- Lacks information on most places, focuses mostly on Shrewsbury, which is also stated that there feels a divide because there is one.
- I'd like to understand more about how you intend to encourage longer term stays, this feels like a commercial decision for each accommodation provider. How will you influence this?
- It needs joined up thinking. Equestrians must be considered and included in ALL initiatives.

The survey then asked if there was anything missing in the plan or if there were gaps. Again, there was a higher number of people engaging with this question; 57 and this is reassuring that the consultation has done what it set out to do – to understand public opinion.

Table 4: Themes arising from analysis of comments on what is missing from the DMP.

Theme	Responses	%
Important tourist aspects missing e.g. church/canal etc.	9	15%
Lack of support or consideration for localized areas	6	10%
Transport links and connectivity – how to manage and promote.	6	10%
How to deliver on the objectives/measure success/ deliver the service/ promotion	13	21%
Development of the countryside e.g. equestrian access/walks	7	11%
Sectors not represented	3	5%
Suggestions	5	8%
Other comments – including negative comments.	12	20%
Total		100%

Moreover, we can see that the respondents feel that overall, there are gaps in how to deliver on objections, how to measure success and in the promotion of the area. They also feel there are some important tourism attractions not represented, with a focus on church and canal tourism. Development of the countryside is needed, according to the respondents, as well as transport links and connectivity throughout the county. There

were some suggestions on how to encourage tourism, as well as some negative comments.

Example comments

- *Perhaps a glossary of terms to clearly define e.g. 'outdoor activities', 'rights of way' etc.*
- *Proper consideration of infrastructure support for visitors.*
- *How this strategy translates into local visitor businesses and engages with these businesses at the frontline of the visitor economy How does this help them/ do they know about it/find out about it or even engage with it. It would be good to develop/support volunteer festivals/events which are key attractions to visitors to be sustainable, expand or just increase viability.*
- *There is no mention of the fact that Crewe station, with nearly 5m passengers using or connecting annually, is only 17 minutes from Whitchurch and 30 minutes from Shrewsbury. More should be done to attract visitors by rail.*
- *How the council is going to attract new businesses to invest in Shropshire.*
- *The canals and their users are not represented and CRT is nowhere mentioned when it is an important stakeholder in the county. Attracting more boater visitors with proper facilities is absent and they contribute greatly to local economies. There is no mention of digital tourism or immersive tourism experiences for people who cannot visit in person.*
- *We need more entertainment in the evenings for visitors who are staying. Draw local bands etc. Ludlow has a lot of good music/ shows that encourage visitors.*
- *Financials on how this may be achieved and actually delivered and who is responsible for delivering it - otherwise could be something that is dusted off every year with no real actions.*
- *Encouraging market towns to create their own events- ghost walks, treasure hunts, history walks with different themes.*
- *Little mention of role of Visitor Information Centres in encouraging people to visit your town - and how centres could be provided with marketing material to promote other places to visit within Shropshire. Very little printed information being produced these days but people still want it as well as digital information.*
- *Very little real focus on public transport. Outside of Shrewsbury, it is comparatively expensive, infrequent, with few options. If you wanted to get to the Devil's Chair or the top of the Longmyd, I don't know how you'd get there if you weren't driving. Maybe help local people to set up walking tours? Focus on Offa's Dyke for walkers which could be linked to other counties. Many people who have grown up in Shropshire don't really see the benefit of tourism, they see it as outsiders, they need to be able to see it as a benefit to the area... highlight the impact of tourism, investment in transport etc.*
- *Actions seem very broad and not measurable. Lots of words, lack of tangible benefits.*
- *Extra visitors in the county place an extra burden on facilities in the area. Roads see extra traffic, public toilets need servicing, waste generated from visitors needs to be managed. All these areas are typically managed by the council. How are they going to pay for this extra demand?*
- *Improvements in public transport so market towns and attractions are more easily and reliably accessible.*
- *Lacks plans for most other towns, Bridgnorth for example is mentioned once and only as a quote.*
- *If outdoor activities are going to be pushed as a selling point for Shropshire then it would be nice if equestrian and equestrian access wasn't overlooked as is usually the case. Bridleways, byways and permissive routes are important both to locals and as a tourism prospect. A large proportion of the county are equestrian yet repeatedly only walker and cycle access is pushed.*
- *Encouragement and development of countryside access would be great (i.e. Bridleways, byways and other access routes).*
- *Tactics to achieve strategic goals.*

The next question focused on the continuation of stakeholder engagement in the Destination Management Plan and asked if the respondents had any comments. 37

people commented.

Table 5: Themes arising from comments on the continuation of stakeholder engagement.

Theme	Responses	%
More people or areas should be involved in the engagement - members of the public/other stakeholders	21	57%
The engagement has been good and is necessary	6	16%
Shropshire Council needs to offer more support to more people	3	8%
Other comments	7	19%
Total		100%

Though there were less comments, the consensus throughout is that more people or areas should be involved in the engagement and this made up 57% of the comments. 16% commented that the engagement has been good and it is worthwhile, and 8% commented along the theme of Shropshire Council needs to offer more support to more areas or organisations. 19% of the comments fell under the 'Other' theme and included general negative comments and specific mentions of the definition of 'stakeholder'.

Example comments

- *The face to face workshop held previously with representatives from stakeholder groups eg equestrians was a useful way to engage.*
- *P26-27 of the DMP list a large number of consultations 'for alignment'. This is an indication that stakeholder engagement has been poorly managed and directed historically. Until this fundamental weakness is addressed, consultations 'for alignment' will continue to accumulate. A good starting point would be to limit each engagement to specific and distinct topics.*
- *'Stakeholder engagement' is management speak for 'we'll do what we intend to do and pretend to take other views into account, which obviously we have no intention of doing in reality.'*
- *SC [Shropshire Council] could engage with owners of bedspaces in the county to find out what would help them to thrive with and how to encourage possibilities for expansion.*
- *Need to meet more often to develop ideas and meetings held around the county to encourage greater local participation*
- *To include more owners of hospitality businesses to engage with the council to develop tourism.*
- *Actually ask the people who pay for all the people in substantive roles what they need in their individual area too.*
- *Ensure more stakeholders are aware and given the opportunity to participate - eg Ellesmere TC believe they were not consulted !*
- *Involve local town and parish councils. embed accessibility and do it well. this is more than putting in assessable info which is good but does not go very far for rural areas.*
- *Shropshire Council should offer more support to the Sustainable Tourism Strategy of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape.*
- *Residents should be viewed as important stakeholders not just bod organisations.*
- *I think it is vital that the council continue to encourage stakeholder engagement but also act on it.*
- *I think you have to get out there and visit as many businesses as possible, don't just ask for contributions because you'll only get the most motivated. Find out why the "small trader" in a small town is feeling depressed about their future. There are many of those.*
- *Increased engagement and advice from locals to enhance plans in development would be a good thing*
- *Utilise widespread consultant bodies, such as Create Streets and The King's Foundation to gauge more feedback.*

Shropshire Council undertakes Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact

Assessments (ESHIA) for new strategies, plans and service changes and has included one into this draft Destination Management Plan. The next questions asked for comments on diversity, equality or social impact that the respondents would like to be considered in the plan, and 34 people answered.

Table 6: Themes from analysis of comments made around the ESHIA.

Theme	Responses	%
Diversity is needed but is difficult according to rurality/nature of towns	8	24%
Diversity is not needed	8	24%
No comment	4	12%
There is already diversity in place	2	6%
Diversity and inclusivity needs to be for locals as well as tourists	5	15%
Other comments	7	21%
Total		100%

There is a mixture of comments, but the two main themes are that diversity is needed but it difficult to achieve because of the rural and historical nature of the towns throughout the county; and that diversity is not necessary. Other comments include specific statements about where people and groups could be included, for example making roads and towns accessible for horses; and there are several comments regarding ensuring that diversity and inclusion benefit the local community as well as the visitor sector. There are 2 comments that suggest the respondents feel there are already adequate diversity policies in place, and there are a few no comments. This is not a skipped comment; it is the respondent answering a variation of 'no comment'.

Example comments

- *As a town council, we are committed to giving our time to conversations that not only boost tourism to the town and country but also place residents at the heart of our decision making. We are available for wider conversation around governance.*
- *Be inclusive but also be realistic about what can, and can't, be achieved.*
- *Our 30,000 booklets and website contain details of parking, WC and disabled access. We are very well aware of diversity.*
- *Not needed*
- *Forget DEI [Diversity, equality and inclusivity] just focus on what is actually needed, good places to visit, easily reached if you don't own your own car & affordable, also ensure that there are adequate public toilets, i.e. the toilets in Shrewsbury Town Centre are woefully signposted & out of the centre.*
- *Access for disabled visitors must extend to the waterways.*
- *Ellesmere Town Council are fully inclusive*
- *Although it is difficult to ensure buildings, especially heritage buildings are accessible, more guidance and resources to make simple modifications should be available.*
- *Most people just want to live and let live stop gas lighting and pigeonholing everyone. Leave people alone, most don't want to hear all this nonsense. Most people are good and kind to each other without this.*
- *Shropshire Council should support the Market Towns' initiative to make their medieval town centres more accessible and support the expansion of electric charging points for visitors.*
- *Please consider those that live in tourist destination areas. Limit the use of things like AirBnB and short-term lettings so that people who live in the area can still afford to stay and buy their own property if they want to.*

- *Difficult for market towns to be accessible because of the nature of their architecture - e.g. cobbles, narrow pavements. Is there any funding available to help with this?*
- *Benefits should be for the majority of the residents of Shropshire not just minority and visitors*
- *Stop focusing on vanity projects and woke nonsense and just provide proper basic services without wasting our money.*
- *South Shropshire, because of its geomorphology, is not easy to make fully accessible, and this needs to be borne in mind, and taken account of - financial assistance is likely to be required by businesses to be able to overcome this.*
- *Safer riding areas for horse riders and Carriage drivers. Consideration for travelling between bridleways/byways. As a very rural area Equestrians will travel to areas to ride and drive. e.g. Shropshire hills/moorland but they need safe roads such as provided for cyclists and walkers.*
- *As a disabled business owner you do little or nothing to support this. No support is given and indeed people told not to prioritise this and it can't be supported when we applied for government support to make improvements. We are successful but chose not to proceed and now struggle to expand because you would not support changes that made for more inclusivity.*
- *Making Transport integration work for visitors helps it work for locals too - as does improving awareness of what is on etc. We need to ensure we keep the wider public on-side as we encourage more visitors. For example Oswestry - given the trains still do not run here needs a bus link to the trains in Gobowen that runs to meet the trains coming and going!*

The last question asked for any other comments. These are below in full:

- *We have recognised that each place in Shropshire has a unique visitor offer, and our town wants to drive a circular economy which improves the lives of those who live here. Using wider ambition, we believe we can not only achieve this across town but also support our neighbours. Our overarching goal is to use the strengths of our community members to build local ambition into a national identity, which is clear and welcoming.*
- *It is appreciated that the document in consultation is strategic but looking ahead, the following should be considered: There are 27,082 horses registered to Shropshire postcodes (DEFRA, 2024). This equates to a contribution to the economy of £186,513,734 pa. (British Equestrian Trade Association). Reconomics 3.0 (Sport and Recreation Alliance, 2025) states the combined outdoor recreation sector is worth £22billion with £5 billion of that coming from equine industry. BHS therefore advocates that equestrian activity should feature more clearly in this draft destination management document. Public rights of way are mentioned in the document and the role of the Countryside Service. PRow will be impacted by an increase in tourism and consideration must be given to the investment needed to maintain existing PRow and to extend the network through investment in the Definitive Map Modification process. To be inclusive, any new trails should be multi-user wherever possible to include equestrians, and parking areas should also be inclusive, ideally with designated parking areas for horseboxes. Only 22.7% of PRow are bridleway or byway and only 3.6% are restricted byway or BOAT so at present horse riders have limited off-road access in Shropshire. Where there is a good bridleway network e.g. Long Mynd, there is already a high level of tourism activity. Increasing accommodation that is equestrian friendly is important as many of those transporting a horse will, for welfare and other reasons, not want to travel a long distance for a day out but would prefer to stay for a night or more. Popular accommodation elsewhere is able to accommodate horses and riders, offering a range of accommodation from camping/use of own trailer or lorry to guest house and from stable to paddock for the horse. Education for visitors to Shropshire will be important. For example, how to interact with other users (dogs under close control around horses, parking sensibly, passing horses on roads or paths with care adhering to the Highway Code, keeping to designated paths and understanding the status of routes - footpath, bridleway, restricted byway).*

- *An average start, but only half-done. 6/10.*
- *There is a need to be able to move from this strategy to implementation at the grass roots tourism level.*
- *I don't think I have ever seen a document so stuffed with corporate platitudes and meaningless soundbites. 'climate change' makes an appearance even. I'm only surprised we didn't see the Ukraine war referenced for its impact on the 'product' and the 'customers' of Shropshire.*
- *Needs to gather some pace and be maintained around the whole of the county and not just the big towns.*
- *I hope you will take note of these concerns. They are extremely important for the future of tourism in Shropshire in terms of the economy, the profile, the built environment and the landscape.*
- *Thanks.*
- *The canals as health and wellbeing centres are vital to the county as well as contributing to the tourist experience by providing an environment that enhances the visitor experience. The canals are some of the most loved by boaters and a huge draw. The Council needs to be at the forefront of supporting and developing their waterways. A mile of canal has been shown to add £93 000 to the economy of the local area (CRT Valuing Our waterways report).*
- *I live in Much Wenlock. A town with significant historical connections, not only with the modern Olympic movement, but also to the Cluniac movement and the Priory ruins. Tourism is an important factor in the economy of the town. However, it fails to achieve its potential due to its limited infrastructure, particularly its lack of parking. I believe that your survey makes a very good start on looking at improving the prospects for the whole of the county and it's short timeline of three years is fine but limited. There should be an element for longer-term projects that will both excite and encourage visitors to look at the county as a must-see destination. WE have a UNESCO world heritage site at Ironbridge, and the immediate area has historical associations with the Industrial Revolution with Ironmaster houses in Broseley and the Much Wenlock connections that I have previously mentioned. The problem is the awful lack of facilities to accommodate travelling visitors. To this end, I have approached the directors of Telford Steam Railway because there is a plan in the pipeline to connect the Ironbridge Power Station development with a rail line to Madeley Junction, thereby providing a railway station. An existing disused railway line, that has not been overrun with properties, runs to Ironbridge and beyond. Telford have expressed an interest in running a steam line to The Ironbridge which would mean that the station could accommodate a large quantity of extra traffic, negating the need for creating further car parks. I'm sure that a suitable ticket price could be arrived at in order to encourage visitors to use the facility. I also believe that the visitor experience would be enhanced if they could visit Broseley and Much Wenlock. As I have mentioned, parking here is also a significant problem made worse by the topography of the area. This could be overcome by erecting a cable car connection to the two towns. Cable cars are increasingly being used to overcome traffic issues. They can, and do, deliver people to, or very close to, the centre of the historical area. They also add to the novelty and make the day(s) of visiting Shropshire very memorable and worthwhile. The publicity would and should reflect well on an economic gain for the county. This is a long-term aspiration, and would not be covered by your timescale of three years. However, I believe it would have merit for future serious discussion.*
- *Please see separate email from Ellesmere Town Council which will be sent to [name removed].*
- *Great workshop that was run on partnerships and DMP development. I would like to see more on the LVEP and how to participate.*
- *You can contact me [email address removed].*
- *Regarding bed stock, in Clun there is a large empty-listed building previously offering accommodation - the Buffalo Inn - which is now unused owing to the wealthy owner refusing to sell and choosing to leave it unused.*

- *It's interesting to note the Wales did a significant repositioning to move from being a seaside conventional holiday destination to a shorter stay adventure location to attract a wider year-round audience. Towns which have embraced this like Rhyader have done very well. Central to their particular visitor economy is the welcoming of 4x4 and motorcycles who often spend several days in the area staying in the hotels and B&Bs and eating out at both lunch and dinner! Another area where the county, and particularly Shrewsbury and Ludlow miss out are on coach tours for international visitors. Currently they will visit Bath, Stratford on Avon, Chester, York etc. Shrewsbury and Ludlow should be on those itineraries which would probably require targeted marketing to the tour operators. Overall though everything hinges on accommodation and transportation.*
- *No.*
- *Shropshire was celebrated for real food and drink and has lost its way-SMBs need support. Think of who visits Shropshire and put more resources into our strengths such as outdoor pursuits and walking. There isn't much on offer for families that are not 'outdoorsy' but there are wasted opportunities-e.g. Discovery Centre-why isn't it an Iron Age Village and world heritage site like Bliss Hill?*
- *In the opening statement, say that 'the night sky is darker', which is mysterious and appealing, not 'the sky is darker' which sounds like it's always raining here and you'll need your anorak!*
- *County support for Church Stretton to acquire a hotel would be helpful.*
- *More consideration for the environmental impact of tourism is needed, especially as you have declared a climate emergency. Climate should always be your top priority especially when you consider things like flooding which is a top issue in parts of Shropshire.*
- *It's a start. You need the income, but a bit of work to do on access, knowledge and investment.*
- *Shropshire needs motorhome stopovers, for Transit motorhomers who can stopover at places like, Shrewsbury, Oswestry, Wem ,Ellesmere, most council run carparks are empty after 1800, these could be put to use in designated areas of the car park, generating income, and encourage the nighttime economy, where Transit motorhomers could stop, Example, on the Scottish / English borders a small town called HAWICK, they have free stopover for motorhomes, 16 spaces, this one site generates thousands of pounds for the business in HAWICK, backed by the local council. Come on, open your eyes to this potential.*
- *There's a typo on page 29, which refers to Running Amok Bishop's Castle (I believe the company referenced is called "Runningmonk". On page 22, the Plan mentions, "30 horse riding tails". Should that be trails? The Report mentions five National Trust properties. Is this correct, or does that include Sunnycroft? On page 16 it states, "Activities provided by cultural venues such as museums, theatres and cinemas appeal largely to a local audience are more likely to animate a visit that generate one", which doesn't make sense.*
- *Shropshire council currently has a financial black hole to deal with. There is no mention of any ways that extra visitors can be capitalised on to raise money for the infrastructure in the county. Currently a large proportion of residents of the county will be reading this plan and wanting to know how the knock-on effects to public services in the county will be paid for. The council already struggles to keep on top of maintaining the rural road network. Trying to attract more visitors to areas with no public transport provision only makes that wors*
- *There is an old saying - "You only have one opportunity to make a good first impression". The road signs in Shropshire and around Shrewsbury require a thorough wash and clean. Many have not been touched for 10-15 years and are covered in dirt and lichen. Cleaning them would help give a much better impression of the delights of the County. This is urgent in my view.*
- *We won't pay extra council tax to cover your mistakes.*
- *Some nice ideas, but pie-in-the-sky given the inept political framework we have in this country. Still, it's nice to dream.*
- *I think more could be done to attract a younger crowd, these towns only really attract older*

visitors. I think it has been overlooked that the "visitors" are actually probably mostly local to Shropshire anyway.

- You need to be aware that banks and building societies will NOT lend funding secured on mixed-use properties. This adversely affects small businesses where the proprietors may wish to reside on the property and effectively prevents owners from leveraging finance in order to grow, and operate e.g. guest houses, camp sites, restaurants, cafes, B&Bs, shops on high streets in small towns. This national policy by lenders is a HUGE disincentive to anyone considering setting up or developing such a business. It needs addressing at national level. I am a recently retired solicitor and speak from experience and knowledge of this. Secondly, many of our lovely high street properties are ancient, and in need of renovation and repair, to bring these up to a visually acceptable standard, after a period of economic stagnation, we really will need additional financial assistance. The provision of visitor attractions on agricultural properties was previously funded via European Funding encouraging rural diversification. Following Brexit, this is no longer available, and if additional attractions are to be planned and encouraged, this will need to be addressed. A number of the attractions you refer to are believed to have been developed initially with access to EU development funds, without this, no one is going to be able to start up and develop further projects.
- I saw very little information about short-term holiday lets owned and run in Shropshire. (Known as AirBnB and Booking.com) There are many units available and these bring visitors into the county overnight. There are many opportunities here, but they were not discussed in the plan.
- A wish list would be a public transport network across the whole county, with links across the border, serving both destinations and places of work, so that people could use a fast, efficient bus to work, and even go out in the evening to Shrewsbury without driving.
- Include equestrians in your tourism strategies. Shropshire has a lot to offer us . But link up routes, integrate access, places to stay etc.
- I would be happy to encourage any emphasis on active tourism - with routes that actually lead somewhere
- More equestrian access.
- Glad this is underway.
- TA needs to be at the forefront of this and all strategy plans.
- Support residents that are trying hard to run businesses, live and bring up families in the local community.
- With the closer links to Telford and Wrekin in Tourism Shropshire needs to be even more careful not to overly focus on the South of the County. We also need to be aware that we don't want to alienate the older visitors as we seek to encourage the younger.
- Page 11 - Clun is described as a village, it's actually a town.

There is a wide range of opinions but there are several clear themes that have emerged. Overall, they emphasized the need for better balance, clearer delivery and stronger representation of the whole county. The most frequent points raised include respondents wanting better inclusion of smaller and northern towns; better transport links; recognition of underrepresented sectors e.g. equestrians, and the need to know how the DMP will be delivered.

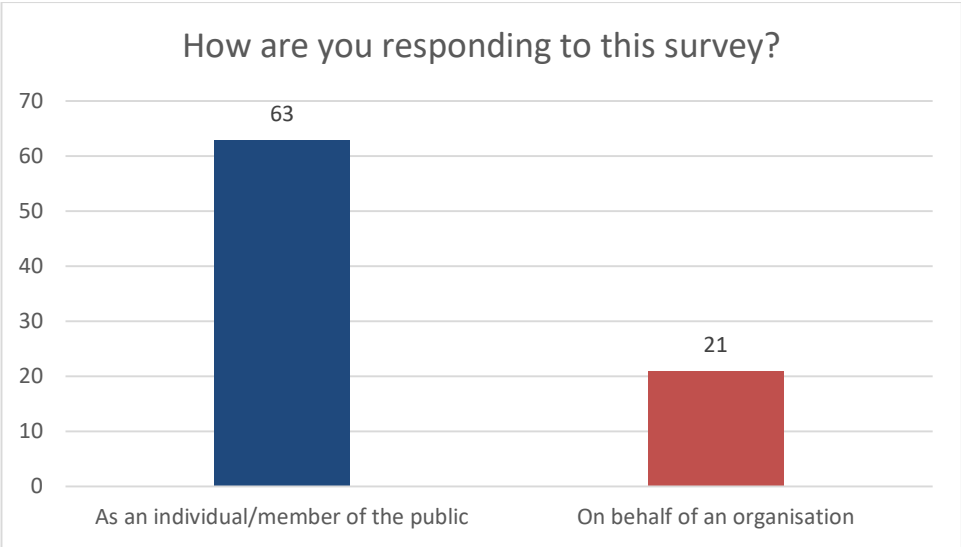


3. About the respondents

The survey also sought to find out more about the people who responded to the survey. Understanding the characteristics of survey respondents allows Shropshire Council to understand whether the research sample is representative of the wider community and whether any groups with particular characteristics have been omitted from the research and their views not taken into account. This data collection and analysis can inform future or further engagement. Survey respondents were asked questions about themselves, and the summary of this data is shown below. The first part concentrated on the individual and the second set of questions focused on people who responded as part of an organization.

The first question shows that all 84 people answered and 75% answered the survey as an individual or member of the public, as seen in Figure 8. This is helpful information and provides an indicator to suggest how many consultation respondents were representing organisations or businesses with an interest in tourism in Shropshire, and the proportion of respondents who are individuals and do not necessarily represent others.

Figure 8: In what capacity are people responding to the survey.



The following questions focused on the individual and therefore, asked the 63 respondents their gender.

Figure 9: The gender of the individual respondents.

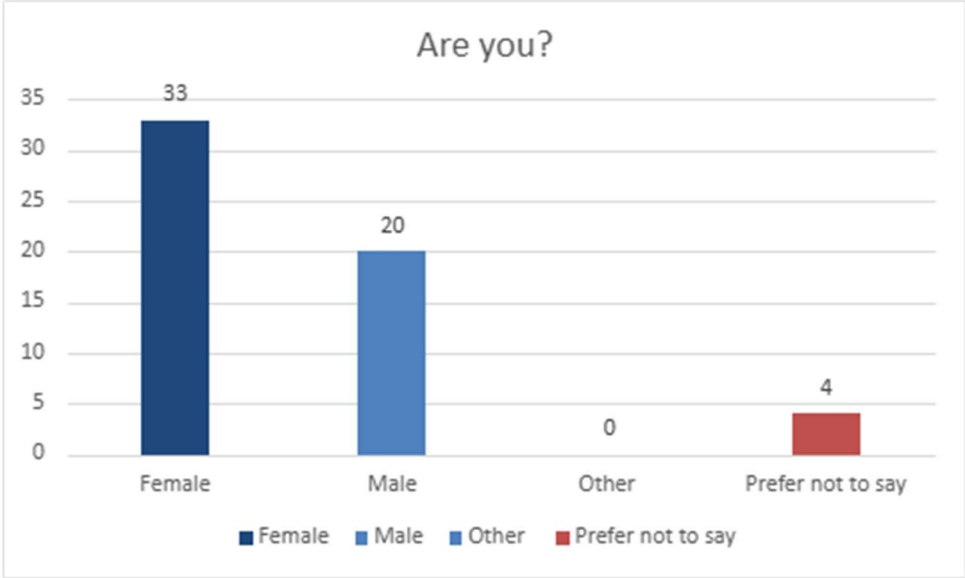


Figure 2 shows that the respondents were predominantly female; 58% with 33 responses, 35% (20 responses) were male and 7% (4 responses) preferred not to say. In total 57 people answered this question, which equate to 91% of those that have answered as an individual, which shows positive engagement with the question.

The individuals were then asked their age groups and the results are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Table of age ranges and people’s responses.

Age groups	Responses	%
Under 16	0	0%
16-19	0	0%
20-29	3	5%
30-44	6	10%
45-59	17	29%
60-84	26	45%
85+	1	2%
Prefer not to say	5	9%
Total	58	100%

Table 1 shows that most of the respondents are in the 60-84 age group, which is reflective of Shropshire demographic, and 58 people answered, which is a good response percentage: 92%.

When asked if the respondents have any long-standing illness or disability that limits daily activity, 58 people answered with 40 people answering no, which equates to 69%. 9 people (16%) answered yes and prefer not to say respectively.

The same 58 people answered the ethnic origin question, with 86% (50 responses) answering white of British, Irish, Polish, Gypsy or Irish traveller descent. 2% (1 response) answered they were of ‘other ethnic group (Arab, other)’ and 12% (7 responses) preferred not to say. There is an under-representation of non-White British respondents which should be noted for future engagement planning. Culture, heritage and ethnicity

are considerations for planning tourism attractions and visitor marketing.

They were then asked about their employment status. Figure 10 shows the results in full.

Figure 10: In terms of employment, how would the respondents describe themselves.

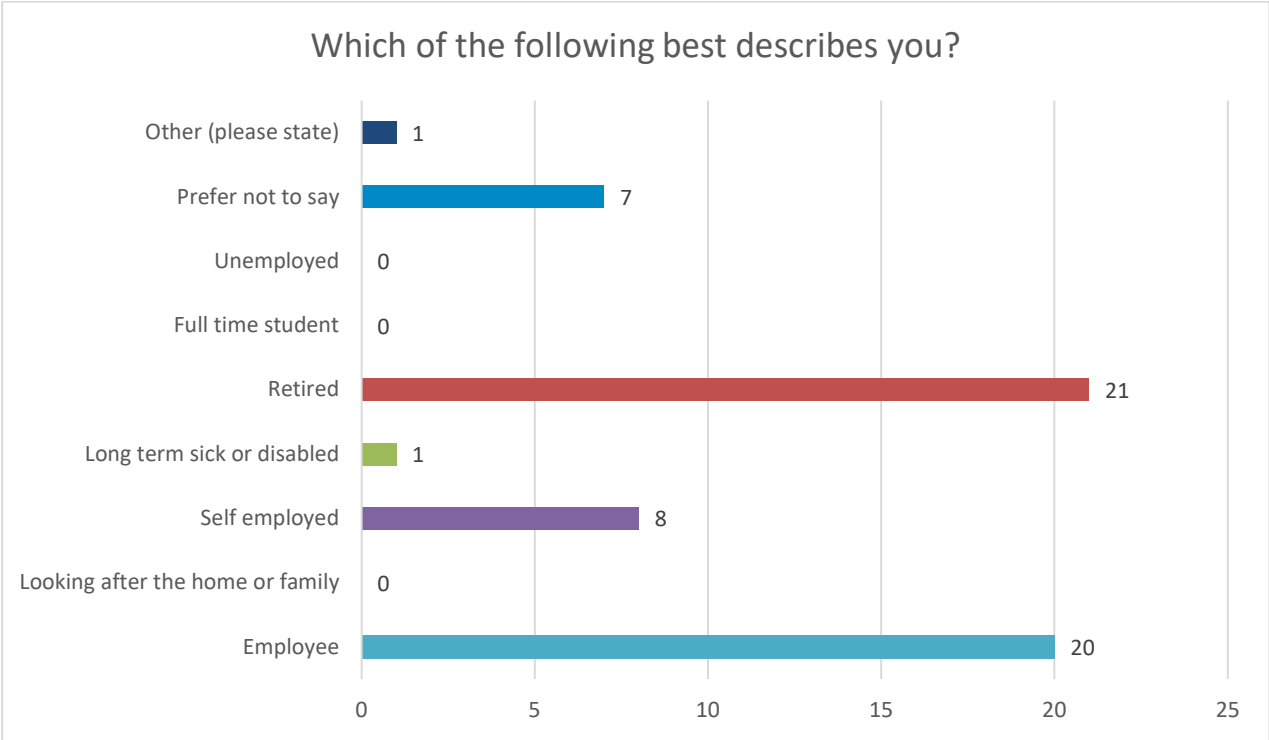
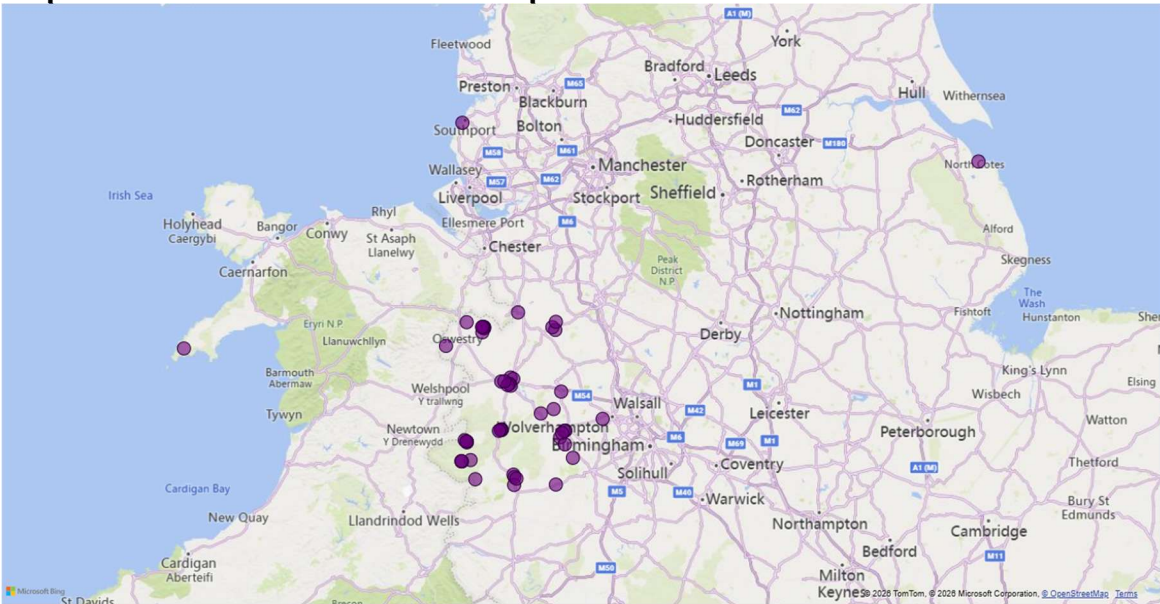


Figure 10 shows that the majority are retired or employed, with 36% retired and 35% employed. 14% are self-employed, 12% prefer not to say and 2% are long term sick or disabled and other respectively.

The final question for the individual respondents regarded postcode.

Map 1: Postcodes of individual respondents.



The majority of people are shown to have a SY postcode, with a few individuals answering from North Cotes, Southport and North Wales.

The survey then returned to the people answering on behalf of an organization. On the first question of which type of organization that people were answering on behalf of, 28 people answered.

Table 8: Table showing what type of organization people are answering on behalf of.

Organisation type	Responses	%
Representative of business	5	18%
Councillor representative of a Shropshire Ward	0	0%
Representative of a Town or Parish Council	10	36%
Representative of a Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) organisation	0	0%
Representative of a local interest, community and faith group	3	10%
Provider of public services	0	0%
Organisations with strategic and cross boundary interests	0	0%
A local partnership body or network	1	4%
Other (please specify)	9	32%
Total		100%

This shows that people were mostly answering on behalf of a Town or Parish Council. Thereafter, ‘Other’ received the most responses, which people were asked to specify and which are below:

- National charity with staff and volunteers involved in Shropshire.
- Charity.
- County-wide voluntary tourism organization.
- Local author of walks, former director of re-tourism.
- Clun Community Benefit Society.
- Bishops Castle Town Hall Trust, an independent organization working in partnership with Bishops Castle and Enterprise SW Shropshire (Tourism etc.)
- National charity.
- Motorhome user.
- Community Campaigner and Consultant.

They were then asked if they wanted their responses identified to name their organization. 20 people answered:

- Bishop’s Castle Town Council
- Bridgnorth Town Council
- Clun Town Council and Chapel Lawn
- Diddlebury Parish Council
- Ellesmere Town Council
- Much Wenlock Town Council
- Oswestry Rural Parish Council
- Oswestry Town Council
- Whittington Parish Council
- Clun Communtiy Benefit Society

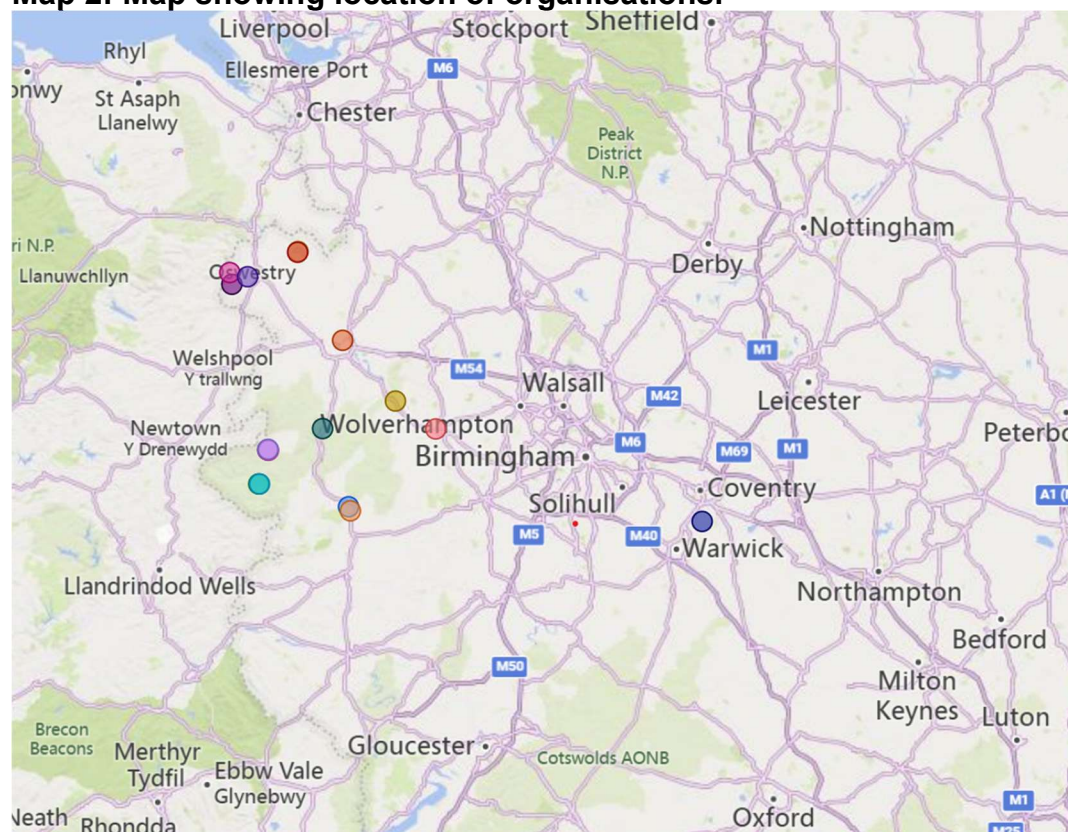
- Bishops Castle Town Hall Trust
- British Horse Society
- Montgomery Canal Partnership
- Shropshire Climate Action
- Rural Lifeline C.I.C
- Shropshire Churches Tourism Group. Also a member of Inland Waterways Association.
- White Horse Inn
- English Heritage
- No organization (2)

Shropshire Council would like to gauge how many employees these organizations have and 68% answered that they were micro-organizations (1-9), 23% were small (10-49), 5% were medium (50-249) and 5% were part of a large organization (250+).

When asked what sector the business is in, 20% answered tourism and visitor economy, 10% are in the retail sector, 10% in the accommodation sector, 5% in hospitality and property each, 15% in public administration and defense, and 35% in other.

They were similarly asked about where their businesses were based and Map 2 shows as we saw with the individuals, the majority are in a SY postcode.

Map 2: Map showing location of organisations.



Section 3 outlines who took part in the DMP consultation, showing that most respondents (75%) participated as individuals, with the remainder representing organisations. The individual respondents were predominantly female and mostly aged 60–84, reflecting Shropshire’s older demographic.

Most reported no long-standing illness or disability, and the majority identified as white. Employment status varied, though most were either retired or employed, and most lived in SY postcode areas.

Organisational respondents were mainly Town or Parish Councils, alongside charities, community groups and tourism-related bodies, with most being small or micro-organisations operating within the visitor economy or related sectors.



4 Recommendations

The recommendations below are based on the feedback analysed and presented within this report. It is acknowledged that there will be budget and staffing constraints and other limiting factors that may prevent these recommendations from being taken forward and implemented. The recommendations are presented as an ambition for the future. Readers are asked to recognise the council's budget situation (similar to local authorities across the UK) and the financial emergency announced in September 2025, do not form the economic conditions necessary for significant service investment. Similarly the economic conditions may mean local tourism providers find investment equally challenging. Despite this the recommendations can form ambitions should funding and other resources increase in future.

1. Strengthen Local Representation Across the County

Feedback consistently highlighted that the plan is perceived as too focused on Shrewsbury and South Shropshire, with insufficient attention paid to northern and smaller towns and rural areas.

Recommendation:

- Include more place-specific content, ensuring each area's unique identity, assets and challenges are acknowledged.
- Add examples, case studies or micro-profiles from North Shropshire, canal-side towns, and lesser-featured communities.

2. Provide Clear Delivery Plans, Timescales and Responsibilities

A major concern was the lack of detail on *how* objectives will be delivered, measured and resourced.

Recommendation:

- Add a delivery framework outlining actions, ownership, timelines and expected outcomes.
- Include KPIs for evaluation, such as transport improvements, visitor awareness metrics, or accommodation growth indicators.
- Publish an annual progress update to maintain transparency and trust.

3. Expand Coverage of Underrepresented Tourism Sectors

Church tourism, canals, equestrian access, motorhome provision and countryside trails were repeatedly cited as missing.

Recommendation:

- Integrate these sectors into the main narrative of the DMP.
- Develop dedicated sub-strategies or working groups (e.g., for canals, equestrian access, motorhomes).
- Strengthen partnership working with sector bodies such as the British Horse Society, Canal & River Trust and local faith tourism networks.

4. Improve Focus on Transport and Connectivity

Transport barriers—particularly public transport limitations—were among the most frequent complaints.

Recommendation:

- Include a dedicated transport and connectivity section.
- Explore options such as integrated rail-bus links, seasonal shuttles to rural attractions, circular routes, and improved evening services.
- Map key visitor journeys to identify critical gaps.

5. Enhance Communication of Shropshire's Identity

Respondents were clear that developing a stronger, unified tourism identity was highly important.

Recommendation:

- Build a clear and distinctive county-wide visitor brand rooted in Shropshire's landscapes, market towns, heritage and outdoor offer.
- Support this with tailored marketing for different sub-regions so each area feels represented.
- Highlight unique assets like dark skies, heritage rail potential, equestrian landscapes and canal networks.

6. Deepen Stakeholder Engagement and Make It More Inclusive

Many respondents felt stakeholders weren't fully consulted or aware of opportunities to engage.

Recommendation:

- Establish ongoing themed stakeholder forums (e.g., accommodation, accessibility, market towns, outdoor tourism).
- Hold rotating in-person sessions across the county to widen participation.
- Strengthen communication channels—newsletters, briefings, and sector bulletins—to ensure all groups feel included.

7. Strengthen Diversity, Equality, Accessibility and Social Inclusion

Views varied, but a strong theme was the need for meaningful, practical accessibility measures.

Recommendation:

- Provide guidance for businesses on improving physical accessibility, particularly in heritage and rural settings.
- Promote inclusive design for new trails, horse-friendly routes, digital accessibility, and visitor information.
- Recognise local residents as key beneficiaries, not just visitors.

8. Address Infrastructure and Capacity Pressures

Concerns were frequently raised about roads, toilets, waste management, rights of way, and parking.

Recommendation:

- Working to influence those responsible for infrastructure planning and delivery to highlight the importance of considering how increased tourism demand can be accommodated.
- Work with town councils to promote the importance of parking solutions, improved signage, modernised toilets, and rights of way networks.
- Highlight how visitor revenue can support these improvements.

9. Support Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism

Respondents welcomed this priority but wanted clearer actions.

Recommendation:

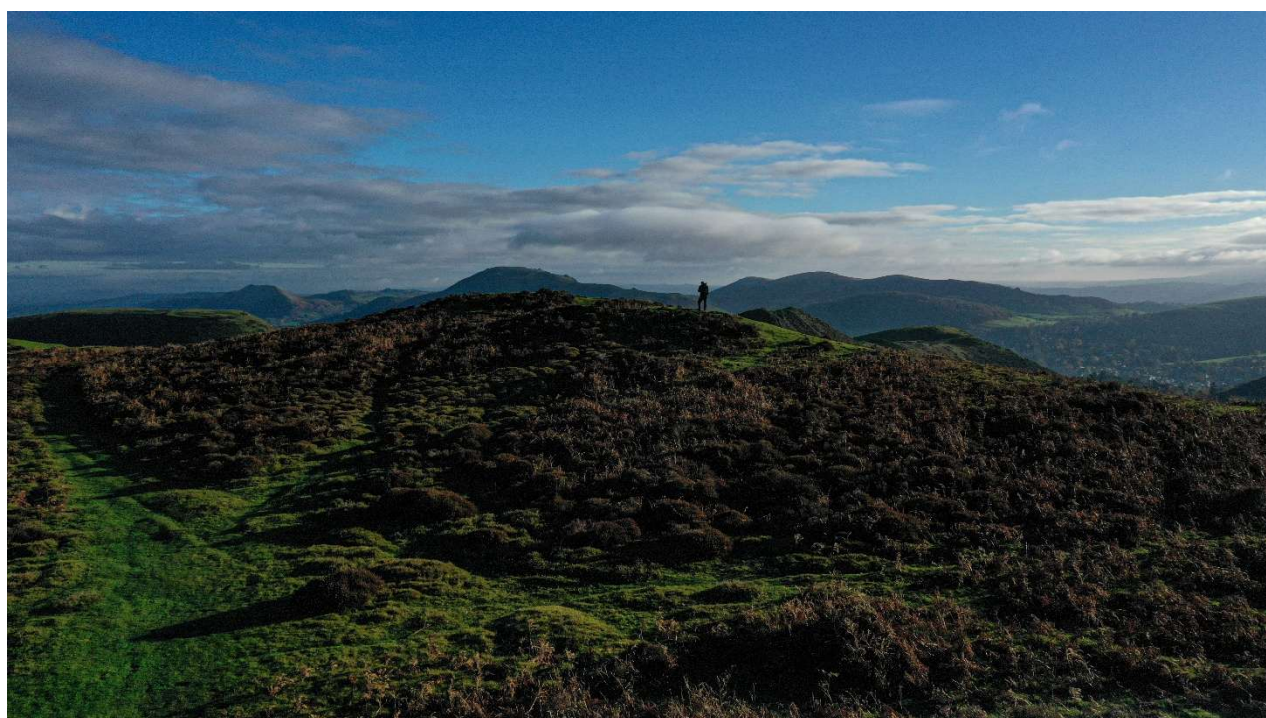
- Create a set of practical regenerative tourism initiatives with measurable outcomes (e.g. habitat restoration, community-led walking festivals, local food partnerships).
- Provide support for market towns seeking to diversify into sustainable visitor experiences.

10. Offer More Support to Businesses and Accommodation Providers

Businesses want clearer guidance and help—especially around increasing bed stock and navigating planning challenges.

Recommendation:

- Develop a business support package offering planning guidance, funding signposting and marketing support.
- Explore incentives to help expand accommodation types (e.g. equestrian-friendly stays, motorhome stopovers, accessible accommodation).



5 Summary and Conclusion

In summary this report has reflected on respondent's comments and responses to a variety of closed and open ended questions on the draft Destination Management Plan, in order to understand public and stakeholder opinion, with a view to better form this plan and future planning.

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with eight key statements relating to clarity, priorities, objectives, identity, and the plan's usefulness in attracting investment. Overall, **55% agreed or strongly agreed** with these statements, **23% disagreed**, and **22% remained neutral or unsure**, reflecting broad but not universal support. When invited to elaborate on their views, 47 people provided comments. These highlighted a range of recurring concerns, such as the plan being too broad or too focused on Shrewsbury, lacking detail on delivery, overlooking important sectors like canal tourism and equestrian activities, and failing to address transport and connectivity challenges. These themes point to a desire for stronger local representation and more tangible, practical actions.

The section also reports on levels of support for the DMP's seven priorities. Here, respondents were broadly positive: **75% supported the priorities**, **20% were neutral**, and only **5% did not support them**. Among these, the creation of a clear Shropshire identity, development of regenerative tourism, and integrated marketing strategies stood out as especially important. Similarly, respondents were supportive of the four strategic objectives, with the objective of improving Shropshire's image, identity, and awareness emerging as the most important. There was relatively little difference in how the other objectives were ranked, suggesting they are viewed as similarly valuable.

Respondents were also invited to comment on what they particularly liked about the draft plan, and 41 people contributed. Many praised its layout, clarity, and presentation, describing it as well written and thoughtfully structured. Others appreciated its focus on tourism as an economic priority and felt it offered a solid basis for future work—though many emphasised that meaningful action would now be essential. In contrast, when asked what they disliked, 51 respondents shared concerns, most notably that the plan overlooked smaller towns and rural areas, lacked detail on how its objectives would be delivered, and did not sufficiently address transport limitations or infrastructure needs. Some also criticised the structure and readability of the document. Further exploration of perceived gaps attracted 57 responses. These comments reinforced previous concerns, highlighting missing tourism sectors (including churches and canals), insufficient localisation, unclear delivery mechanisms, limited success measures, and a need for improved countryside access. Issues around transport links, rural connectivity, and the practical realities of promoting tourism in dispersed communities were again prominent. Overall, the survey demonstrates strong engagement, broadly positive attitudes toward the DMP's aims, and a clear appetite for a more detailed, place-specific, and delivery-focused approach.

The Shropshire Destination Management Plan (DMP) 2025–2029 consultation ran from 1 December 2025 to 2 February 2026 and received 84 responses from individuals, organisations, and community representatives. The survey aimed to gather informed feedback on the draft DMP before finalising its direction and delivery. Most respondents had engaged with the document closely, with 78% reading the draft in full and a further

21% reading it partially, enabling thoughtful and detailed contributions.

In conclusion, sentiment toward the draft plan was generally positive but mixed, with 43% feeling satisfied or very satisfied, 36% neutral, and 21% dissatisfied. When asked to reflect on key elements of the DMP—clarity, objectives, identity, and perceived usefulness—55% agreed or strongly agreed with the statements, while 23% disagreed, often citing a lack of detail or uneven geographic focus.

A consistent message across the feedback was concern that the plan lacked strong representation of northern Shropshire and smaller towns, with many respondents feeling it placed too much emphasis on Shrewsbury and South Shropshire. Other repeated themes included insufficient detail on how actions would be delivered, omission of important tourism sectors (such as canals, churches, equestrian activity, and motorhomes), and significant worries about transport and connectivity, especially in rural areas. Respondents also felt that practical issues such as infrastructure, parking, rights of way, digital access, and evening activities needed stronger consideration.

Despite these reservations, support for the DMP's proposed seven priorities and four strategic objectives was high. The most valued priority was creating a clear visitor identity for Shropshire, while the most important objective was improving the county's national image and awareness. Many respondents praised the document's layout, clarity, and ambition, but stressed the need for a clear delivery framework, measurable outcomes, and stronger alignment with local communities.

Feedback also explored what respondents liked and disliked about the plan. Positive comments highlighted strong presentation, well-considered foundations, and a focus on value rather than volume of tourism. Negative comments pointed to concerns about local representation, transport gaps, lack of practical detail, and the omission of certain tourism sectors. Additional views emphasised the need for more inclusive stakeholder engagement, better communication, and stronger support for businesses and organisations delivering tourism on the ground.

Section 3 of the report showed that respondents were predominantly older adults (especially 60–84), mainly from SY postcode areas. Most organisational respondents represented Town or Parish Councils, community groups, charities, and visitor-related bodies—mostly micro or small organisations rooted in tourism, hospitality, or public services.

Across the final open-text questions, several themes recurred: the need for clearer delivery and accountability; concerns about infrastructure pressures; calls for more balanced county-wide representation; greater recognition of equestrian, canal and heritage sectors; stronger public transport links; and more practical support for businesses and accommodation providers. Many also stressed that any diversity or accessibility ambitions must be realistic within Shropshire's rural and historic environments.

Overall, the consultation demonstrates strong engagement, cautious optimism, and a clear appetite for a more detailed, geographically balanced and action-focused DMP, supported by improved transport planning, inclusive engagement, and meaningful collaboration with both residents and industry.

Many thanks are extended to all those who took the time to provide considered and helpful feedback. The findings will now be used to inform a final version of the Destination Management Plan 2025-2029. The final version will be presented to Shropshire Council's Elected Members for formal approval.





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