

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

Friday, 4 September 2015

10.00 am

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

John Tradewell
Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation
26 August 2015

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 24 July 2015** (Pages 1 - 8)
4. **Improving Attendance and Participation in our Schools and Settings** (Pages 9 - 34)

Report of the Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills
5. **Countryside Estate Review** (Pages 35 - 100)

Report of the Cabinet Member, Economy, Environment and Transport
6. **Work Programme** (Pages 101 - 112)
7. **Exclusion of the Public**



The Chairman to move:-

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

nil

Committee Membership

Len Bloomer	Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf
Maureen Compton	Sheree People
Tim Corbett	Simon Tagg (Chairman)
Carol Dean	Paul Woodhead
Ian Hollinshead	Mike Worthington
David Loades (Vice-Chairman)	Candice Yeomans
Geoff Martin	

Note for Members of the Press and Public

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Scrutiny and Support Manager: Tina Randall Tel: (01785) 276148

Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Meeting held on 24 July 2015

Present: Simon Tagg (Chairman)

Attendance

Len Bloomer	Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf
Tim Corbett	Paul Woodhead
David Loades (Vice-Chairman)	Candice Yeomans
Geoff Martin	

Also in attendance: Ben Adams and Gill Heath

Apologies: Maureen Compton, Carol Dean, Ian Hollinshead, Sheree People and Mike Worthington

PART ONE

7. Declarations of Interest

Mrs Gill Heath, Cabinet Support Member for Environment and Rural Issues, declared an interest in minute no. 11 as her brother-in-law owned one of the quarry sites.

8. Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 1 June 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee meeting held on 1 June 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

9. Adult Community Learning Strategy and Quality Improvement

Staffordshire's Adult and Community Learning Service provided programmes of learning that contribute to better health and well-being, employability and social inclusion for nearly ten thousand adults each year. The service had responded to significant changes in funding policy and structures over the last three years, reducing the cost to the Local Authority (LA) and better targeting the funding contribution to those who would benefit most.

Adult Community Learning (ACL) received funding via an annual grant allocation from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), County Council core funds and investment from providers in activities as well as income from fees. In 2015 the commissioning framework was revised in consultation with localities, taking account of the priorities for community learning, and a district needs analysis for each of the eight localities. The percentage of learners from lower super output areas had increased overall from 12.3% in 2012-13 to 12.8% in 2013-14 against a Staffordshire average of 9.4%. This percentage was higher for learners on programmes which particularly targeted

disadvantaged communities. For example on Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund programmes where 15.3% of learners in 2012-13 and 24% in 2013-14 came from lower super output areas.

From 1 August 2015 priorities for Community Learning would be delivered through five main programmes:

- Leisure taster and courses
- Provision for adults with learning difficulties/disabilities (ALDD) and those with enduring mental ill health
- Wider family learning (WFL)
- Family English, maths and language (FEML)
- Employability skills and
- Functional skills.

The Select Committee asked how the needs of a community were identified in respect of commissioning priorities. Data giving the levels of deprivation and unemployment were used and this was matched with local intelligence from the Local Community Learning Trust, having local conversations about local needs. Commissioning was informed by this identified need, with incentivised payments based on delivering to target groups.

ACL also promoted initiative and examples were shared with Members where individuals previously involved in Community Learning had then gone on to develop and lead independent community learning programmes themselves. These were not always easy to track as they were not funded through the local authority.

Progression surveys were undertaken three months after an individual had completed a community learning course to help identify progression into further learning, employment and the impact personally of the learning activity. Nationally there was a lot of data supporting the positive impact of ACL, including with regard to tackling dementia.

Basing learning programmes within the community meant that both learners and providers were rooted in their community, overcoming previous difficulties in identifying learners. Family learning often took place in children's centres and schools, with children's centres able to collect useful data to help encourage participation of those with children under five.

Members commended the success of this service but asked how the quality of provision would be maintained within the continued funding challenges. The "Pound Plus" strategy contributed to the sustainability of provision. Pound Plus investment came through a combination of direct income (fees from learners, sponsorship, grants and tenders, sales from produce or services), cost savings (eg on accommodation, use of volunteers, shared back office services) and value for money (avoiding duplication, effectiveness of curriculum and setting up self-organised groups). In 2013-14 the Pound Plus investment from direct income was £368k with £840k in cost savings. Whilst no data was available on value for money savings it was anticipated that this accounted for £1.2m of investment which was equivalent to around 75% of the Community Learning Budget. Targeting the funding from the SFA and County Council was also extremely important to ensure its most effective use. Quality of provision remained key and Members heard

detail of the robust systems and protocols in place to quality assure the broad range of provision and providers.

Members shared an example of good practice at St Peters CofE Primary School, Hednesford, where adult learning courses were offered to support parents in understanding the way in which core curriculum subjects were taught and therefore help parents support their children's learning. Members asked if this was duplicated elsewhere and were informed that Family Learning Grants were offered to schools to support such work. Feedback from parents who had taken part in this type of learning was very positive.

Members were aware of the employability skills delivered through the Adult Community Learning and that generally these were to a level 2 basic employment level into lower skilled jobs. Members asked whether there would be a progression in provision to provide higher skilled courses. The Adult Community Learning offer was about engagement and learning, with a guidance element to the offer. Progression in this instance was in supporting learners into either Further Education courses through a range of different providers such as local colleges or supported into employment.

Members heard about a recent graduation ceremony for Staffordshire apprentices which celebrated their success. This was the first such ceremony in Staffordshire and marked the achievements of 150 apprentices in a range of Staffordshire businesses. The challenge was now to increase the number of apprenticeships in Staffordshire by a further 50% by 2020.

Members shared their experience of ACL, highlighting the positive impact of lifelong learning, developing a shared interest and helping combat social isolation. The Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills, reiterated that whilst supporting employability skills was important, equally important was learning for learning's sake which promoted wellbeing and had a value beyond getting the next job.

The Select Committee noted that data from adult learning inspections between 1 September 2014 and 17 June 2015 showed that 57% of providers received an overall effectiveness grade of good or better compared with 77% in 2013-14. The thresholds around inspection were more challenging and the need to continue to work with providers to ensure quality had been identified, looking at the key issues highlighted within the inspection reports. A range of measures were in place to ensure quality of provision. A readiness group had been set up to prepare for an ACL service inspection, with the new inspection regime implemented from September 2015.

The welcome reduction in unemployment also resulted in a reduction in the number of unemployed adults available for referral by Job Centre staff to adult learning programmes. Consequently there had been a significant under-utilisation of SFA allocations leading to a reduction in earnings for 2014-15. A rebasing of future income had therefore been undertaken which may see Staffordshire's budget contract. In addition there was a national reduction by the SFA of 24% in all adult skills budget allocations for 2015-16. This would result in a step change over the next 12 months in developing a skills plan, steering more funding to address identified skills gaps.

Members received details of the SAR strengths and areas for improvement around community learning, adult skills budget and apprenticeships and suggested that these targets could be developed further to give smarter clearer targets.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) the Adult and Community Learning contribution towards reducing unemployment be commended;
- b) the SAR strengths and areas for improvement targets be developed into smarter targets that can be more easily monitored and evaluated;
- c) a further report be brought to the 4 March Select Committee highlighting how effective governance and scrutiny with the cycle of Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement will be more closely aligned.

10. Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Framework

The draft Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Framework (SLIF) sets out the proposed purpose, principles and approach to achieving first class education and childcare places based upon taking a longer-term and more joined up approach to the planning of infrastructure. Professional engagement on the draft Framework and associated documentation started in June and views are sought by 3 August 2015.

The County Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that every child in the county has access to a childcare place, a place at school or an offer of suitable post-16 education or training when they needed one. As a result of the rising birth rate in Staffordshire and the scale of housing development within the County, it was anticipated that there would be a need to invest around £330m in an additional 13,000 primary and 8,000 secondary mainstream school places by 2031.

It was important to link the SLIF with locality plans as they developed to ensure school place provision. Cross border provision was more difficult to estimate, but it was anticipated that extra school places would result from cross border growth around Greater Birmingham and Cheshire East.

Members stressed the need for partnership working with district and borough councils to avoid difficulties and ensure sufficient provision for school places in Local Plans. The work between Stafford Borough Council and the County was given as an example of good practice in partnership working around local plan and school place provision.

It was noted that the County Council had formally objected to Planning Inspectors that insufficient provision had been made for school sites in East Staffordshire Borough Council's Local Plan. It was hoped that the SLIF would help to avoid such difficulties in the future as it clearly showed the growth in provision needed within each district.

In particular Members wished to see full consideration of school place planning as a standard for all housing planning applications. Officers from the County Council sent responses to district officers in respect of each planning application and its school place implications, however the detailed response was not always shared with district planning committees. Select Committee Members felt it was important to continue to raise the profile of school place planning with their colleagues in district and borough councils. They were aware of the challenges of securing sufficient developer contributions

towards the provision of school places and the pressure from developers. It was imperative that the consequences of not having enough school provision be understood.

Members raised a specific example of a housing development in Stafford and the timing of the creation of a new school. The detail of this specific example would be checked after the meeting. It was noted there was a balance to the timing of any new school build to ensure pupils weren't drawn from outside the area of development and being aware of the possible de-stabilising effect of any new school.

Members congratulated the Cabinet Member and his officers on the SLIF, which was the platform to allow those more challenging conversations around provision to be held. They also congratulated officers on two new primary schools built in Burton that had been commended for their design.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) the approach set out in the draft Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Framework be endorsed;
- b) clarification over the details of the new school build in Stafford be forwarded to the member concerned;
- c) Borough and District Councils be encouraged to have an education lead at all their Planning Committees who can be fully briefed on the education provision implications of all planning applications.

11. The New Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire

At their meeting of 24 April 2014 the Select Committee had received details on the preparation of the new Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire, informing them on the consultation relating to the first draft of the new Plan. The Select Committee had established a working group to produce a response to the consultation process. Members received details of how the Plan had developed as a result of the consultation. The final draft plan was available to view via the Council's online consultation portal, with the six week consultation ending on 31 July 2015.

The Plan had been considered in detail by the Planning Committee at their 4 June meeting. The Plan had not changed significantly from the first draft. Six key policies were outlined within the Plan to assist in any planning decision.

Once the consultation had concluded the Plan would be considered at full council prior to its submission to the Secretary of State and subsequent examination by the Planning Inspector.

Members reiterated the importance of this document in helping to determine any future planning permissions around mineral extraction within the County. The impetus was for extended use of existing quarries or use of previously moth balled quarries rather than opening new sites. The Plan also helped ensure liaison committees would work around quarry sites to help address any issues within the local communities.

Members expressed their thanks to Matt Griffin, Team Leader, Minerals Planning Policy, and his team for the work they had undertaken producing this plan.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) The final draft of the Minerals Local Plan be endorsed; and
- b) Members congratulate the officers who have produced this plan.

12. Work Programme

The Scrutiny and Support manager reported that the Infrastructure+ Working Group had held its first meeting, with a further meeting planned for 29 July. The Group were working to ensure the right information was available to enable effective scrutiny by the Select Committee.

At their 1 June meeting the Select Committee had agreed to undertake a working group following a petition to full Council in May highlighting concerns over Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) on the A515. Scoping was being undertaken for this work and it was expected that the work would be undertaken through two inquiry days in September. Members debated whether this piece of work should be broadened to consider the issue county wide rather than a focus on the A515, with concerns that addressing an issue in one specific area could simply transfer the problem to another community if a broader approach was not taken. After some discussion members agreed this work should take a county wide approach, with a specific response to the petitioners once this work was finished. Membership of this group had previously been agreed as:

- Len Bloomer
- Tim Corbett
- David Loades
- Geoff Martin
- Martyn Tittley

The Vice Chairman updated Members on the work of the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services Working Group. This Group had met twice and would be meeting again in September. They were taking part in public engagement sessions around the adult mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy led by Healthwatch. The work was likely to take longer than first anticipated and Members would be kept informed of progress.

The Scrutiny and Support Manager reported that visits to the Countryside Estates had now been set up during August. The East Staffordshire Estate visit was scheduled for 26 August with the North Staffordshire visit on 24 August. The visits would help inform scrutiny of the Countryside Estate Review which would take place at the September scrutiny meeting. Members were asked to contact the Scrutiny and Support Manager with their visit preference.

Members were reminded that if they wished to raise items for inclusion on the work programme, or if they had any training or developmental needs, they should contact either the Chairman or Scrutiny and Support Manager.

Members raised the Parking Strategy as an item to be included on the work programme for future scrutiny.

Members earlier decision to bring a further ACL report to their 4 March meeting will also be added to the work programme.

RESOLVED – That the amendments listed above be made to the work programme.

Chairman

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 4th September 2015 Improving Attendance and Participation in our Schools and Settings

Recommendations

1. Comment on and scrutinise the progress made by Staffordshire's Attendance Working Group, providing feedback to further inform the work of the group going forward.
2. Review and comment on the draft "Improving Participation and Attendance at our Schools and Settings: Our Principles and Priorities for 2015-2017" (Appendix A).
3. Advise and inform the county council in regard to the next steps for wider dissemination and sharing of this work-stream.

Report of Ben Adams, Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

4. Select Committee is invited to review the work undertaken by the Attendance Working Group that was established in the Spring 2015. The group has undertaken a range of activity to bring together the diverse intelligence, data and information sets in order to inform further improvement in local delivery arrangements. This spans a number of connected functions that the council and its partners all undertake or contribute to. All are associated with participation and attendance in education.
5. Select Committee are being asked to look at this important area of work because attendance and participation is part of a number of statutory duties that the council fulfils to provide pupils with a suitable education, monitor arrangements regarding elective home education, promote good attendance, inclusion and safeguard children's welfare, fulfil duties for those excluded from school, serve penalty notices and school attendance orders, and investigate the whereabouts of pupils who have poor attendance or are at risk of being deleted from school admissions registers.

6. Good attendance is also critically important to successful attainment, achievement and progression into adult life. It contributes to aspects of the county council's business plan including supporting "best start in life" and being "ready for life". It is also fundamental to the robust safeguarding arrangements for Staffordshire children and young people.

Report

Background and Context

7. Attendance in education really matters. Not only does the Local Authority hold statutory duties in regard to admissions, participation and attendance¹ but research at both national and local level gives clear messages about the imperative of promoting good attendance and also highlights the potential consequence of poor attendance on performance and prospects.
8. The negative impact of poor school attendance are known to be felt not only in lower attainment and poorer achievement at school, but also to be felt into adult life and as a determinant of wider prospects.² Pupils with no absence at Key Stage 2 are 4.7 times more likely to achieve a level 5 or above at the end of Key Stage 2 than pupils who missed 15-20% of sessions. At Key Stage 4 (GCSE level) pupils with no absences are 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSE A-C including English and maths than pupils missing 15-20% of sessions. The negative impact extends into adult life with higher proportion of those who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) post 16 having a record of poorer school attendance and there is a higher rate of offending found in young people who have been excluded from school. Prisoners are 10 times more likely to have been a regular truant compared with the general population.
9. So there is a lot of compelling evidence to indicate that we should all take attendance, participation and inclusion very seriously and act collectively to promote good attendance and to tackle incidences of poor attendance or fixed term and permanent exclusion.
10. An added dimension – with heightened public interest and media focus – has presented in the form of the national awareness of risks related to children missing from education (CME). Ofsted's recent inquiries linked to the "Trojan Horse" debate and their subsequent reviews into the local arrangements in Birmingham and Tower Hamlets has resulted in an advice letter to Ministers from Sir Michael Wilshaw.³ In this letter Ofsted highlight concerns regarding

¹ Statutory Guidance Children Missing from Education Jan 15
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

² See Appendix A - Improving Participation and Attendance p 2/3 for full references

³ 14th July Letter from Wilshaw to SoS Advice Letter Birmingham and Tower Hamlets
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-advice-note-on-schools-in-birmingham-and-tower-hamlets>

the tracking of pupils who are removed from schools' admissions registers and they recommend a clearer requirement on schools to record and share the details of the onward destination of their pupils, in order to mitigate safeguarding risks and support even more robust tracking.

11. A further area of national and inspection focus is the experiences of Children Missing Out on Education (CMOOE). In November 2013 Ofsted reported that too many children are either missing out on full time education or are not getting the education that they are entitled to. The Inspection of Children's Services has become more alert to reviewing local authority arrangements linked to this array of issues.

Staffordshire's Attendance Working Group

12. In Staffordshire we maintain a range of well-developed arrangements that operate across a range of partners. We continue to keep these under regular review and scrutiny – including as part of our self-evaluation and self-improvement systems. Over recent months a working group has operated to undertake a “deep dive” into our local arrangements and as a result of their work we are proposing a number of further improvements in already robust arrangements. These are set out in “Improving Participation and Attendance at our Schools and Settings: Our Principles and Priorities for 2015-2017” (Appendix A).
13. The Attendance Working Group has mapped the range of functions, teams and data measures that are undertaken and this is illustrated in Appendix B “Education Absence Provider Data Map”. This illustrates the business area that all contribute to local arrangements and demonstrates the span from county council internal teams, through to Families First, Entrust and onward to the array of schools and settings that all contribute an essential role or function.
14. A new Attendance and Exclusion Reporting Schedule has been devised by the Working Group (see Appendix C). This sets out the inflow of data that will inform regular and robust reporting and monitoring of key measures related to attendance and participation. Underpinning this, a full data pack (which includes restricted information and therefore is not appended to this report) has been collated and analysed. This is the first time that Staffordshire has systematically mined a rich set of attendance-related data and the recommendations set out in our key partnership document – ref Appendix A – is the direct product of this exercise and therefore a positive development of local arrangements.

Next Steps

15. As set out its Task Log (Appendix D) the Attendance Working Group has a series of actions in train to take forward this work stream. This includes partnership engagement with schools and settings on the Priorities document, and a Staffordshire-wide Attendance Conference, hosted and delivered in collaboration with our partners Entrust. Working to the

overarching Attendance Working Group are a number of specialist task groups, that bring together the relevant leads on elective home education, alternative provision and pupil referral units (PRUs), post 16 participation and NEET, exclusion, children missing out education, and the range of policies that operate linked to these areas of education provision.

Links to the Council's Strategic Outcomes

16. The County Council places priority on all children having access to a good education. The right foundation in learning and skills is vital if our young people are to access good jobs and live healthier, happier and independent lives. Keeping our children safe and well, by ensuring that we have a good understanding of where they are attending school and working together to ensure that their learning is equipping them to succeed is central to the statutory duties and corporate priorities of the County Council. Participation and attendance is therefore fundamentally linked to the delivery of strategic outcomes.

Links to other overview and Scrutiny Activity

- Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Forecast
- The Ofsted Focussed Inspection
- School Improvement Programme

Conclusion

17. Significant progress has been made as a result of the work undertaken by the Attendance Working Group. Select Committee's comment and scrutiny will contribute further to local confidence in the robustness of our arrangements and our demonstrable commitment for further improvement of robust arrangements.

Select Committee is recommended to:

- Comment on and scrutinise the progress made by the Attendance Working Group, providing feedback to further inform the work of the group going forward
- Review and comment on the draft "Improving Participation and Attendance at our Schools and Settings: Our Principles and Priorities for 2015-2017" (Appendix A)
- Advise and inform the county council in regard to the next steps for wider dissemination and sharing of this work-stream

Appendices

Appendix A - Improving Participation and Attendance at our Schools and Settings:
Our Principles and Priorities for 2015-2017

Appendix B - Education Absence Provider Data Map

Appendix C – Attendance and Exclusion Reporting Schedule

Appendix D – Attendance Working Group Task Log

Report Authors and Contacts:

Anna Halliday – Commissioner for Education and Wellbeing

Julie Stevenson – County Improvement Manager – Educational Inclusion

Lesley Calverley – Senior Commissioning Manager – SEND

Improving participation and attendance at our schools and settings: Our principles and priorities for 2015-2017

Pages
5

Draft for discussion: Please note that this document is in draft V0.6 on 28 July 2015

Attendance Working Group (14/07), Anna Halliday and her SLT (15/07)

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee (04/09)

To be sought from:

Cllr Adams (29/07), schools (In September via e-bag and survey), Education Standards and Performance Board (7/10),

For sign off and approval at Children's Improvement Board (20/10) and for info to Health and Well-Being Board (12/11)

A final version will be published by November 2015



Introduction

Every child deserves a good education. The right foundation of learning and skills is vital for our young people to access good jobs and live healthier, happier and independent lives. Parents of children of compulsory school age (aged between 5 and 15 at the start of the academic year) are, by law, required to ensure that their children receive a suitable education through regular attendance at school or otherwise¹.

'Good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects'².

Staffordshire's Learning and Skills Strategy³ outlines the context and aspirations for Staffordshire schools and settings and sets out high expectations for all our children and young people. This document recognises how important the take up of early education places and good school attendance is to ensure that children and young people achieve their full potential and gain the skills they need to access good jobs in the future. There is evidence that shows that children who attend pre-school from under the age of three achieve better intellectual development. Furthermore, disadvantaged children tend to attend pre-school for shorter periods of time. Take up of free early education, particularly those eligible for Think2⁴, is therefore an essential component to improving school readiness and closing the gap between the most disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers.

There are substantial potential negative impacts on young people if they have poor school attendance. Nationally the evidence shows that children with poor attendance are unlikely to succeed academically and are more likely to not be in education, employment or training (NEET) when they leave school⁵. Recent research by the DfE suggests that attendance has an impact on attainment in both the primary and secondary phase of schooling with the general trend being that a higher percentage of sessions missed is linked to lower levels of attainment. Pupils with no absence at Key Stage Two are 4.7 times more likely to achieve a level 5 or above at the end of KS2, than pupils that missed 15-20 percent of sessions. At Key Stage Four, pupils with no absence are 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*-C or equivalent including English and maths than pupils missing 15-20 percent of KS4 sessions⁶.

¹ See https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412638/The_link_between_absence_and_attainment_at_KS2_and_KS4.pdf

² DfE School attendance parental responsibility measures Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police. Jan 2015

³ See SCC Achieving Excellence in Learning and Skills (insert weblink)

⁴ Free childcare for disadvantaged 2 year olds see: <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/childcare/families/EarlyEducation/think2/fundedplacesfortwoyearolds.aspx>

⁵ 'Improving attendance at school' DfE, Charlie Taylor, 2012 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-attendance-at-school>

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/412638/The_link_between_absence_and_attainment_at_KS2_and_KS4.pdf

The negative impacts of poor school attendance can continue into adult life as well as impacting on young people's experience of crime. In 2004, MORI explored young people's experience of crime and found a higher rate of offending amongst excluded young people (60%) in comparison to those in mainstream education (26%). National data also indicates that prisoners are 10 times as likely to have been a regular truant compared with the general population.

In addition, local research undertaken in 2015 by the Council's Insight team indicates that good school attendance is one of the most significant contributory factors to enabling children to progress and achieve at school alongside Free School Meal (FSM⁷) eligibility and having special educational needs (SEND).

'Local authorities and all schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school. In addition to using these powers, local authorities and schools can develop other practices to improve attendance⁸.

As the national expectations with regard to school attendance get more demanding, it is increasingly important for all partners to understand their roles and responsibilities and the contribution they can make to ensure that together we achieve the new national target of 90% attendance for all children and young people. Staffordshire County Council is committed to fulfilling its statutory responsibilities⁹ for improving attendance and reducing exclusions through working in partnership with parents, schools, our strategic partner Entrust¹⁰ and other partners and service providers. By working together, we will ensure that all Staffordshire children and young people and all those who are enrolled at a Staffordshire school or setting have good attendance and are not excluded, as this will enable all children and young people to enjoy and achieve their full potential.

This document outlines Staffordshire's current performance with regard to securing good attendance in schools and settings from the early years to post-16, and identifies a number of key priorities for improving attendance and reducing exclusions. It also sets out how those with a role to play in improving attendance and reducing exclusions for Staffordshire's children can work together. Through each of us playing our part we will make best use of the time and money we have and ensure that all Staffordshire's children and young people attend their school or setting, are not excluded and achieve their full potential.

⁷ Free School Meals eligibility

⁸ See 1.

⁹ See DfE Annex A Clarification of local authority statutory duties relating to services relevant to the Education Services Grant July 2014

¹⁰ Staffordshire County Council's strategic partner responsible for delivering some services relating to improving school attendance and reducing exclusions

Current participation and attendance at our schools and settings

Attendance in schools, and participation in early years settings and post-16

1. **Early Years Participation:** Think2 take up of early education childcare places for disadvantaged 2 year olds continues to be one of the highest (10th) in the country with Staffordshire securing 74% take up as at January 2015, this is 16 percentage points higher than the national take up of 58% (DfE Statistics for Early Years Provision). More recent locally held data indicates that Staffordshire has achieved 80% take up for 2 year olds by July 2015. Take up for 3 and 4 year olds in January 2015 is 99% which is 1pp higher than in 2014, and also higher than the national average (DfE Statistics for Early Years Provision).
2. **Primary and Secondary School Attendance:** School attendance rates in Staffordshire's primary and secondary schools continue to be broadly in line with the national average, and with our statistical neighbours. Staffordshire primary schools have slightly better persistent absence rates than national indicators, and secondary schools are broadly in line with the national average. District level absence rates showed varied performance across the county. Absence rates (for Primary, Secondary, and Special schools combined) in 2013/14 ranged from 4.2% for the best performing district to 5.0% for the worst performing district, which is 0.6pp above the national absence rate of 4.4%. A targeted approach will address the districts that are performing poorly.
3. **Special School Attendance:** Special schools attendance rates are better than the national average, and in the second lowest absence rates amongst Staffordshire's statistical neighbours. In 2013/14 the percentage of persistent absentees for Staffordshire's special schools was 9.6% which was 5 percentage points lower than national.
4. **Attendance of Vulnerable Groups:** In 2013/14 Staffordshire's Free School Meal (FSM) pupils had a higher percentage absence rate than national following comparable performance to national in the two years previous to this. Staffordshire also had a higher proportion of FSM pupils that were classed as persistent absentees than national in 2013/14, this was following three academic years where Staffordshire's performance was better than national. Positively, the percentage absence of pupils who have been looked after continuously (LAC) for 12 months or more and Children in Need (CIN¹¹) are both less than national and Staffordshire's statistical neighbours averages in 2014.

¹¹ Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 defines a child as being in need in law if: He or she is unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the LA

5. **Schools performing below national expectations for attendance:** The proportion of schools which do not meet the national averages for attendance and persistent absence in 2013/14 has decreased in the primary phase and in special schools, but has increased in the secondary phase.
6. **Attendance at our Pupil Referral Units (PRUs):** Overall Absence for Staffordshire's PRUs is 43.5% compared to 31.8% nationally, and persistent absence rates at our PRUs is 55.5% compared to 35.9% nationally (DfE national statistics). There are notable variations in absence rates and persistent absence rates between the 6 PRUs in Staffordshire.
7. **Post-16 Participation:** The percentage of 16 and 17 year olds in education or training as at 31 December 2014 was 89.3%, this is slightly lower than Statistical Neighbours at 91.1% and national at 90.2%. The percentage of 16-18 year olds that are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) has reduced in the last two consecutive years to 4.5% in 2014; this is higher than the Statistical Neighbour group average of 3.8% but slightly lower than the national average of 4.7% (DfE Local Authority Interactive Tool).
8. **Children Missing Education (CME) and Children Missing Out On Education (CMOOE¹²):** Some children and young people do not have access to a suitable full-time education as quickly as they need it. In the 2014-15 Academic Year 38 children and young people were missing education (CME) for more than 6 weeks. Also, there is a small number of children and young people who are being offered a part-time timetable. Nationally there is now an increased emphasis on the recording, reporting and tracking of Children Missing Education (CME) and Children Missing out on Education (CMOOE), and like many authorities, this is a priority for Staffordshire.

¹² Children who have a school place or educational provision but are not accessing it fully, i.e. due to exclusion, non-attendance or a reduced timetable

School Exclusions

9. **Permanent Exclusions:** Early indications based on local data shows the number of permanent exclusions in Staffordshire has nearly doubled over the last 2 years in both the primary and secondary phases - expressed as a percentage of the school population, the Primary phase has increased from 0.03% to 0.07% of pupils receiving a permanent exclusion between 2012/13 and 2014/15. Secondary schools have seen an increase from 0.12% of the school population receiving a permanent exclusion in 2012/13 to 0.25% in 2014/15. 10 LAC children have been permanently excluded in the last 3 years. 5 LAC children have been permanently excluded in the last academic year, 4 of them Looked After to Staffordshire and 3 of those were of primary age. There has been a challenge to find suitable alternative provision for this age range.
10. **Fixed-term Exclusions:** The number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced in both the primary and secondary phases over the last 2 years. However, our most vulnerable children (FSM eligible pupils and pupils with a statement of SEN) are the most likely to be excluded. More worryingly, in 2013/14 our Looked After Children 4.5 times more likely to have a fixed term exclusion than all Staffordshire pupils as a combined population.

Working together to improve participation and attendance at our schools and settings: Our principles

No single organisation can ensure that all Staffordshire's children and young people will attend their early education, school or setting 100% of the time and the roles and responsibilities of the parent and the child are critically important. We have to work together and to do that we need to be clear on how we can all make a contribution. Here, we set out principles to guide the way we work together and give an overview of different roles and responsibilities.

Working in partnership: We will work in partnership with children and young people, families, childcare providers, schools, District Inclusion Partnerships, post-16 providers, alternative education providers, Entrust and other services to ensure that the right support and services are available at the right time to ensure that all children and young people attend their school/ education setting. We will help all involved to understand their roles and responsibilities and take pride in playing their part in achieving our common goals.

Early Help: We will ensure that where children and young people need help to access their early years or post-16 setting, to stay in their school or setting or to attend their school or setting, they get the help and support they need as soon as possible.

Targeted support: We will make intelligent use of data and performance measures to allocate resources and target support to schools and settings and vulnerable children and families who need it most to ensure that we achieve our aspiration of securing improved attendance and reduced exclusions.

Affordable and sustainable: We will ensure that council resources are efficiently and effectively deployed so that support for improving access and participation, improving school attendance and reducing exclusions is affordable and sustainable and provides value for money.

A foundation for excellence: We will ensure that all children and young people will maximise their attendance in education in order to give every child and young person the best possible opportunity to receive achieve their full potential access local jobs and enjoy a prosperous future.

Working together to ensure that all children and young people attend their school or setting so that they can achieve their potential

Accountable: We will each be responsible for taking action to ensure that all children and young people receive the appropriate support they need to participate and attend their school or setting.

Our Roles and responsibilities

1. Parents, carers, children and young people

- To ensure that children of compulsory school age who take advantage of the offer of a suitable full time education attend their school or setting on time, every day

2. Governors and leaders providing education and childcare places (early years to post-16) in Staffordshire:

- To understand who is entitled to free early education and when, and commit to maximising take up of this offer
- To understand who should be participating in education post-16 and when, and commit to ensuring meeting the September offer and maximising take up and retention in the full breadth of provision, including apprenticeships
- To contribute to data and trends and actions needed around improving attendance and reducing exclusions for your school/ setting; your locality/ district and for the council as a whole
- To be accountable for the attendance and exclusions rates in your school or setting, monitoring and reporting on attendance and exclusion rates and actively working to improve these
- To work with others to help design and deliver effective and affordable ways of improving attendance and reducing exclusions acting in accordance with statutory guidance and local protocols

3. County council officers and strategic partners (Entrust):

- To establish a clear understanding of local need and performance and establish robust monitoring, reporting and evaluation arrangements
- To undertake our statutory duties and responsibilities for attendance and exclusions working with all partners (especially schools) to do our best to meet the needs of all children, young people and their families
- To use our statutory powers to ensure the safeguarding of all children and young people and ensure every child has access to a suitable full-time education
- To ensure that the provision we commission and provide is cost effective and targeted to meet local need,
- To ensure that all parts of the council, and those it commissions, work together effectively and efficiently

4. Elected Members/Councillors:

- To have high aspirations for all children and young people, regularly scrutinising current performance and plans for improving the attendance and reducing exclusions of all children and young people particularly the most vulnerable

5. Together:

- To offer a suitable full-time education to all children and young people
- To be informed partners in improving participation, attendance and reducing exclusions
- To champion our most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people to ensure all achieve their full potential
- To have a common understanding of our current performance re: attendance and exclusions

Working together to ensure that all children and young people attend their school or setting so that they can achieve their potential

- To make the most efficient use of limited resources

What will success look like? Our priorities

We all want what's best for Staffordshire's children and families. We want Staffordshire's children and young people to attend their local school and avoid exclusion so that they have the best possible opportunity to enjoy their own personal successes and to be able to contribute to the county's economy in the future. This is what success will look like for Staffordshire's children and young people.

By Summer 2017:

1. **Early Years Participation:** To maintain the take up of Think2 early education (for 15 hours at week) at or above 80% and continue to perform in the top quartile nationally for take up for 3 and 4 year olds.
2. **Primary and Secondary School Attendance:** Staffordshire will perform above the national average for attendance and persistent absence in primary and secondary schools and no district will perform below the national average for attendance and persistent absence rates.
3. **Special School Attendance:** Attendance and persistent absence rates at all Staffordshire's special schools will continue to perform well compared with the national average and better than our statistical neighbours.
4. **Attendance of Vulnerable Groups:** Attendance and persistent absence rates for all our most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children and young people (SEND, FSM, CIN, CYPP, LAC) in our primary, secondary and special schools will be much closer to the Staffordshire average and better than equivalent rates for similar groups in those LAs which are our statistical neighbours.

Working together to ensure that all children and young people attend their school or setting so that they can achieve their potential

5. **Schools performing below national expectations for attendance:** All schools and settings in Staffordshire to be at or above the national average rates for attendance and persistent absence.
6. **Attendance at our Pupil Referral Units (PRUs):** Attendance and persistent absence rates in all of our PRUs will be better than the national average for PRUs.
7. **Post-16 Participation:** The percentage of 16 and 17 year olds in education or training will be better than our statistical neighbours and the national average. The percentage of 16 – 18 year olds that are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) will also be better than our statistical neighbours and the national average.
8. **Children Missing Education (CME) and Children Missing Out On Education (CMOOE):** All services will work in partnership to ensure that all children who are not in receipt of a suitable full-time education will be centrally recorded, monitored and tracked so that no child will be missing from a suitable full-time education for longer than is absolutely necessary. We will fulfil all of our statutory obligations with regard to CME and CMOOE.
9. **Permanent Exclusions:** Permanent exclusion rates in primary and secondary schools will be decreasing and Staffordshire schools will be performing better than the national average. No Looked After Child (LAC) or Child in Need (CIN) or Child on a Child Protection Plan (CYPP) will be permanently excluded.
10. **Fixed Term Exclusions:** We will continue to reduce the number of fixed term exclusions in our schools and ensure that our most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children and young people (LAC, FSM, GRT, SEND, CIN, CYPP¹³) have the early help and support they need to ensure that they are no more likely to be excluded than other children and young people

¹³ Children subject of a Child Protection Plan

How will we deliver these priorities?

1. We will ensure good leadership and governance. The Attendance Working Group was established in March 2015 with representatives from across council departments and included colleagues from Entrust, our strategic partner. This group is responsible for taking forward Staffordshire's priorities to ensure that all children and young people attend their school or setting so that they can achieve their potential. See the following documents for further information:
 - ✓ Attendance Working Group Terms of Reference
 - ✓ Attendance and Exclusions Reporting Schedule
 - ✓ Workplan for the Attendance Working Group
 - ✓ Monthly Attendance Performance Reports
 - ✓ List of LA policies

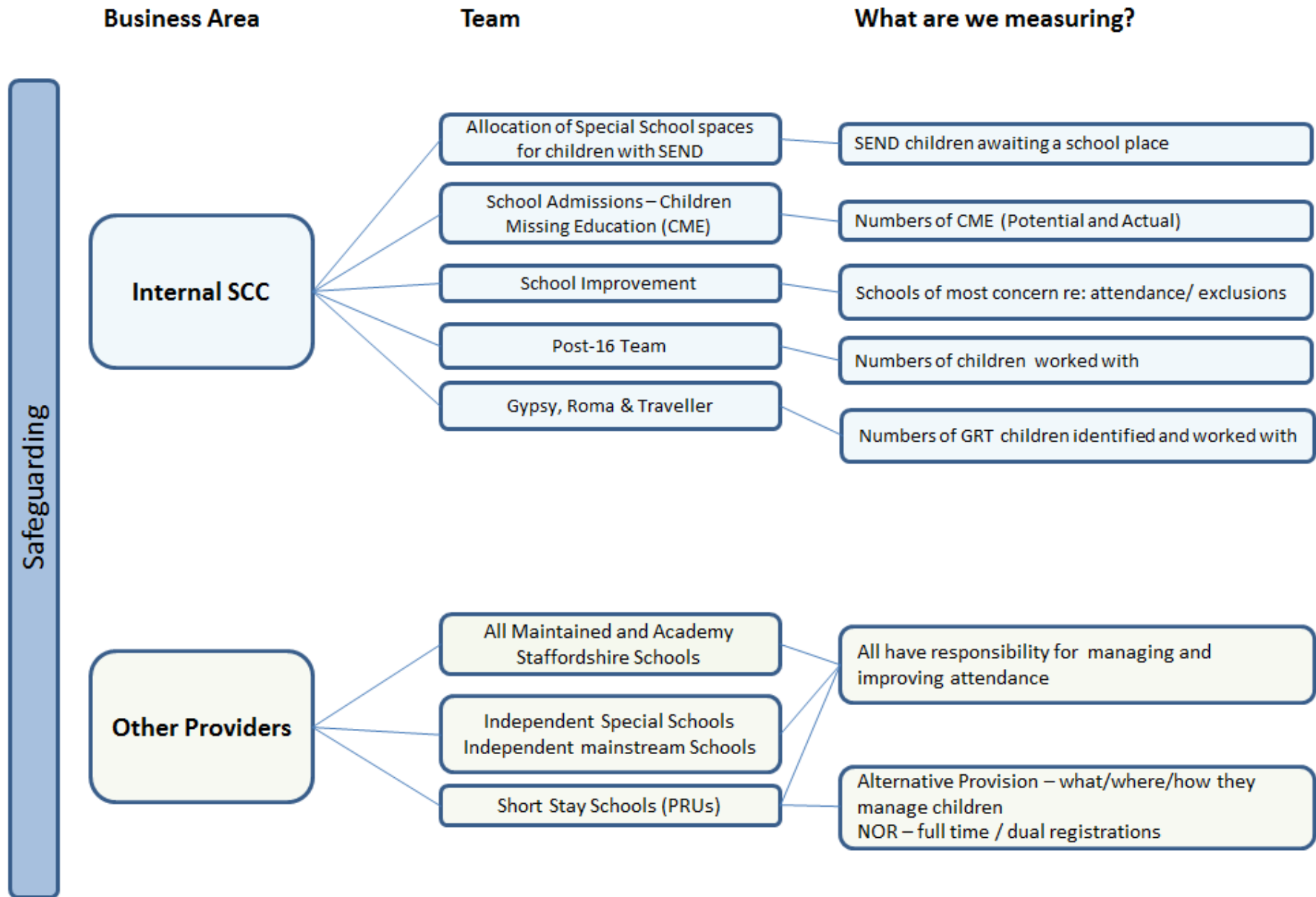
2. We will ensure appropriate commissioning and performance management arrangements are in place to ensure that the right services are delivered by the right people at the right time, and crucially, deliver improvements. See the following documents for further information:
 - ✓ Education Absence Provider Data Map
 - ✓ KPIs for Education Absence Providers

3. We will ensure a relentless focus on our statutory duties and identified priorities and particularly on supporting our most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people to achieve their potential. We will work in partnership to ensure that all those working to improve participation and attendance and reduce exclusions have access to training, information and support to enable our collective ambitions to be achieved.

Get in touch

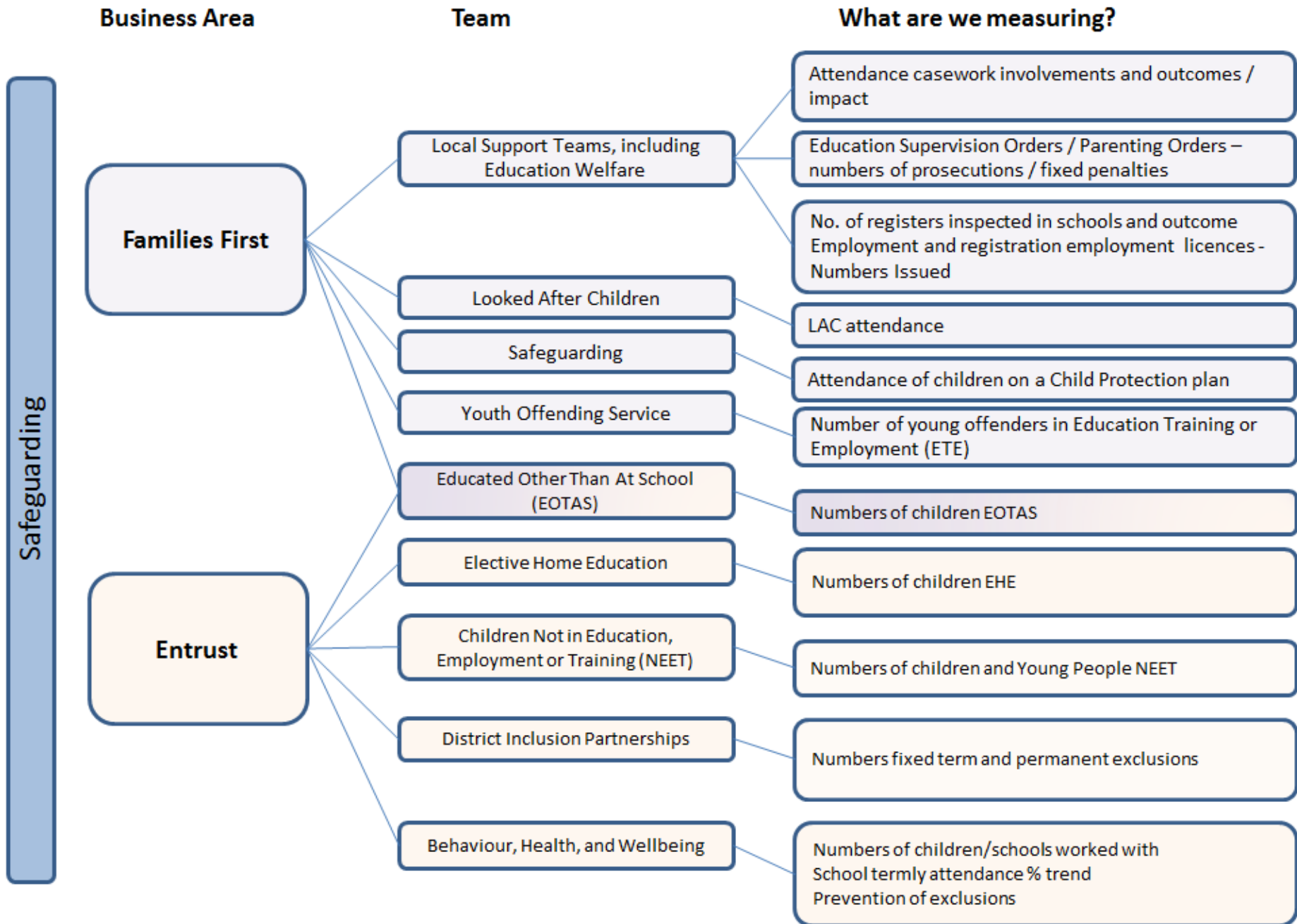
We are currently seeking feedback on this document and would value your views on our principles and priorities. Please go to [and complete a short survey by ?](#). If you have any questions, please contact us at [?](#)

Education Absence Provider Data Map



Safeguarding

Education Absence Provider Data Map



Appendix C – Attendance / Exclusion Reporting Schedule

Month	School Census details					National Data	Details of Report and contents	Forums reported to					
	School Census Collection	Attendance Data collected	Exclusions Data collected	Final database becomes available for use	Lead-in time for workings			Attendance Working Group Meeting Dates	Education Standard and Performance Board	Clr Adams via Anna Halliday Member Briefing	Children's Improvement Board	Health and Wellbeing Board	
September 2015							ANNUAL REPORT: Final 2013/14 attendance data reported incl exclusions info and draft Strategy for sign off National comparisons, with vulnerable groups (where data available).	15 Sept ✓					
October 2015	Autumn Census	Summer term 2014/15 absence data - Full Academic Year collected	Spring term 2014/15 exclusions			2014/15 Combined autumn and spring term release			7 Oct (am) ✓	7 Oct (pm) ✓	20 Oct ✓		
November 2015							Initial unvalidated Full Year 2014/15 attendance data reported - based on Capita information OR two terms School Census validated data with comparisons to previous years, and broken down by vulnerable groups - and linked to categorisation process and subsequent support allocations	12 Nov ✓					12 Nov ✓
December 2015				Autumn Census						10 Dec ✓	11 Dec ✓		
January 2016	Spring Census	Autumn Term 2015/16 absence data	Summer term 2014/15 exclusions - Full Academic Year collected					13 Jan ✓					

Month	School Census details					National Data	Details of Report and contents	Forums reported to					
	School Census Collection	Attendance Data collected	Exclusions Data collected	Final database becomes available for use	Lead-in time for workings			Attendance Working Group Meeting Dates	Education Standard and Performance Board	Clr Adams via Anna Halliday Member Briefing	Children's Improvement Board	Health and Wellbeing Board	
February 2016							Initial unvalidated 2014/15 exclusions data - based on Capita information or Entrust database with comparisons to previous years, and broken down by vulnerable groups	25 Feb ✓					
March 2016				Spring Census		2014/15 Attendance National data released			✓	✓			
April 2016								5 April ✓					<input type="checkbox"/>
May 2016	Summer Census	Spring term 2015/16 absence data	Autumn term 2015/16 exclusions				ANNUAL REPORT Attendance: Final 2014/15 attendance data reported National information comparisons, with vulnerable groups (where data available).	23 May ✓					
June 2016									✓	✓	✓		
July 2016				Summer Census		2014/15 Exclusions National data released		7 July ✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
August 2016									<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
September 2016							Annual Report: Final 2014/15 Exclusions data reported (and progress on Strategy) National information comparisons, with vulnerable groups (where data available).	✓					

Month	School Census details					National Data	Details of Report and contents	Forums reported to				
	School Census Collection	Attendance Data collected	Exclusions Data collected	Final database becomes available for use	Lead-in time for workings			Attendance Working Group Meeting Dates	Education Standard and Performance Board	Clr Adams via Anna Halliday Member Briefing	Children's Improvement Board	Health and Wellbeing Board
October 2016	Autumn Census	Summer term 2015/16 absence data - Full Academic Year collected	Spring term 2015/16 exclusions					<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	✓	✓	
November 2016								<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		✓

Appendix D - Attendance Working Group Task Log (Created: 30 March 2015) Updated: 23 July 2015

Owner: Julie Stevenson

Page 33

Ref #	Start Date	Title	Description	Owner	Deadline	Previous status (RAG) 8/07/15	Current Status (RAG) 23/07/15	Notes	Closure Date
1	30/03/2015	ATTENDANCE PRIORITIES To revise and update the Attendance Priorities for Staffordshire and secure agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draft strategy - consult with providers including schools - finalise strategy - agree strategy at Children's Improvement Board (20 October) and Health and Well-Being Board (12 November) 	JS	12 Nov 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Draft produced for discussion at Attendance Working Group on 14 July 2015 and with Cllr Adams on 29 July. Final draft to be agreed at CIB and H+WB Board in October and then shared with schools	
2a	30/03/2015	LA POLICIES To revise and update the required attendance policies and procedures for Staffordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - list required policies - identify gaps and policies which need to be updated - produce plan/ timeline to revise and update, - revise, write and consult on policies as required - complete and ensure all policies are on internet and communicated to relevant parties 	JS	Dec 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Started on 22 April – initial list created and updating – need to complete with plan for further policies, procedures which may be required Need review cycle/ plan and common format to be developed?	
3	30/03/2015	DATA COLLECTION To create a comprehensive and accurate performance report which can be easily updated and monitored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to ensure all required data is included in the pack - to ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for updating and collating data for the pack on a regular and agreed basis - to update the data pack on a half-termly basis as agreed 	DW	Dec 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Data pack in development, format agreed but not yet completed – some areas still in development including exclusions, LAC and there is some work to be done to resolve data collection, cleanse and analysis issues	
4	30/03/2015	DATA ANALYSIS Through the Attendance Working Group, use the performance report to regularly identify and monitor priority areas for action/ continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to review the performance report on a half-termly basis (Sept/ Nov/ Jan/March/ May/ July) - to identify areas for action/ continuous improvement and monitor delivery and impact - to provide evidence through case studies and data of impact 	JS	Dec 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Attendance Working Group has met and begun to identify some priority areas (e.g. PRU attendance; Exclusions data) but this is not yet completed Case studies and impact data to be considered	
5	30/03/2015	PERFORMANCE REPORTING CYCLE To develop an annual reporting plan so that SCC are clear about what reports will go to which Boards/ meetings and when	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to identify all groups which need to receive attendance reports / updates and ensure this is included in the annual workplan - to provide an update to the CIB in October 2015 on performance and impact 	DW	July 2015	AMBER	GREEN	Initial thoughts to be tabled at meeting in July CIB received brief update on 23 March Plan to be signed off at Attendance Working Group on 15 Sept	15 Sept 2015
6	30/03/2015	WORKING GROUP To further improve partnership working between all those involved in attendance support to schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to establish Attendance Working Group with appropriate membership, Terms of Reference, Governance and workplan - to ensure all parties understand roles and responsibilities - to identify and develop/ revise protocols/ procedures/ working arrangements to ensure continuous improvement 	JS	July 2015	AMBER	GREEN	Attendance Working Group met for the first time on 18 March. Monthly meetings established March – July 2015 and then half-termly. Workplan agreed at meeting on 22 April and ongoing. Julie S to chair from Sept	15 Sept 2015
7	22/04/2015	MAP THE SPEND To map the current spend on attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To map the current spend on attendance 	JB	May 2015	RED	RED	John Bloomer to identify colleague in finance to undertake this work – work not yet started	
8	20/05/2015	CMOOE To improve data collection and practice re: CMOOE pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree definition of CMOOE pupils - To establish how many CMOOE pupils we have, where they are and why they are CMOOE and for how long - To research what we should be doing with regard to CMOOE pupils - to develop an action plan/ timeline to improve our practice re: CMOOE and clarify roles and responsibilities 	JS	July 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Task Group meeting for the 1 st time on 15 June – draft action plan completed, further meetings planned	
9	20/05/2015	PRU To improve attendance at the PRUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure all PRUs are monitoring, recording and reporting attendance appropriately and have excellent processes in place to improve attendance - to ensure that all yp who should be referred to LSTs are referred to LSTs for support and early help - to develop an action plan/ timeline to improve our practice 	LC	July 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Mtg took place 30.06.15 with 2 headteachers and DW & LC in attendance. Draft Action Plan produced and will be shared with PRU headteachers on 13.07.15. Further mtg planned in July with DW/KH/LB/LC/DB to move some of the actions forward during	

Ref #	Start Date	Title	Description	Owner	Deadline	Previous status (RAG) 8/07/15	Current Status (RAG) 23/07/15	Notes	Closure Date
								summer holiday	
10	17/06/2015	EXCLUSIONS To improve the monitoring, reporting and performance re: fixed and permanent exclusions for all groups	- To ensure accurate and timely data collection, recording, reporting and analysis of all groups of cyp experiencing fixed and/ or permanent exclusions - to develop an action plan/ timeline to improve our practice	AG	Sept 2015	AMBER	AMBER	Some initial work presented at Attendance Working Group on 17 June but data inconsistency and analysis needs much more work	
11	March 2015	EHE To improve relationships with some parts of EHE community	- to better understand the different sections of the EHE community - to develop mutual trust and respect between EHE community and LA commissioners and providers	JS	Dec 2015	AMBER	AMBER	5 meetings have taken place, wider group beginning to engage, plan developing and relationships improving	
12	July 2015	Post-16/ NEET To improve participation post-16, specifically of most vulnerable groups	- To better understand the needs and participation rates of different groups, particularly the most vulnerable - to better target our collective resources and support towards more effective intervention and support to ensure that we improve participation post-16 specifically of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups	CB/LW	Dec 2015	New Task	AMBER	Some work ongoing but needs to feed into this group – initial data shared with group in July 2015 but more to do	

CLOSED ACTIONS

Ref #	Start Date	Title	Description	Owner	Deadline	Previous status (RAG) 23/06/15	Current Status (RAG) 8/07/15	Notes	Closure Date
2b	22/03/2015	SCHOOL POLICIES To create a list of policies/ procedures for schools relating to attendance/ exclusions to provide a checklist of what they need	- list required policies - identify gaps and policies which need to be updated - produce plan/ timeline to revise and update, - revise, write and consult on policies as required - complete and ensure all policies are on internet and communicated to relevant parties	AG	July 2015	GREEN	GREEN	Started on 22 April – initial list created Final version shared at meeting on 20 May and uploaded to SLN by end of June 2015 and shared with schools via e-bag	30 June

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 4th September 2015

Countryside Estate Review

Recommendation/s

1. To scrutinise the future management of the County Council's Countryside Estate
2. To make recommendations to inform Cabinet's decision of this matter on 21st October 2015

Report of Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

3. To scrutinise the future management of the County Council's Countryside Estate based on the update to be presented to the committee at the meeting on 4th September 2015, and further to site visits.
4. To make recommendations which will be reported to Cabinet at their meeting on 21st October 2015, for them to take into account when considering this matter.

Report

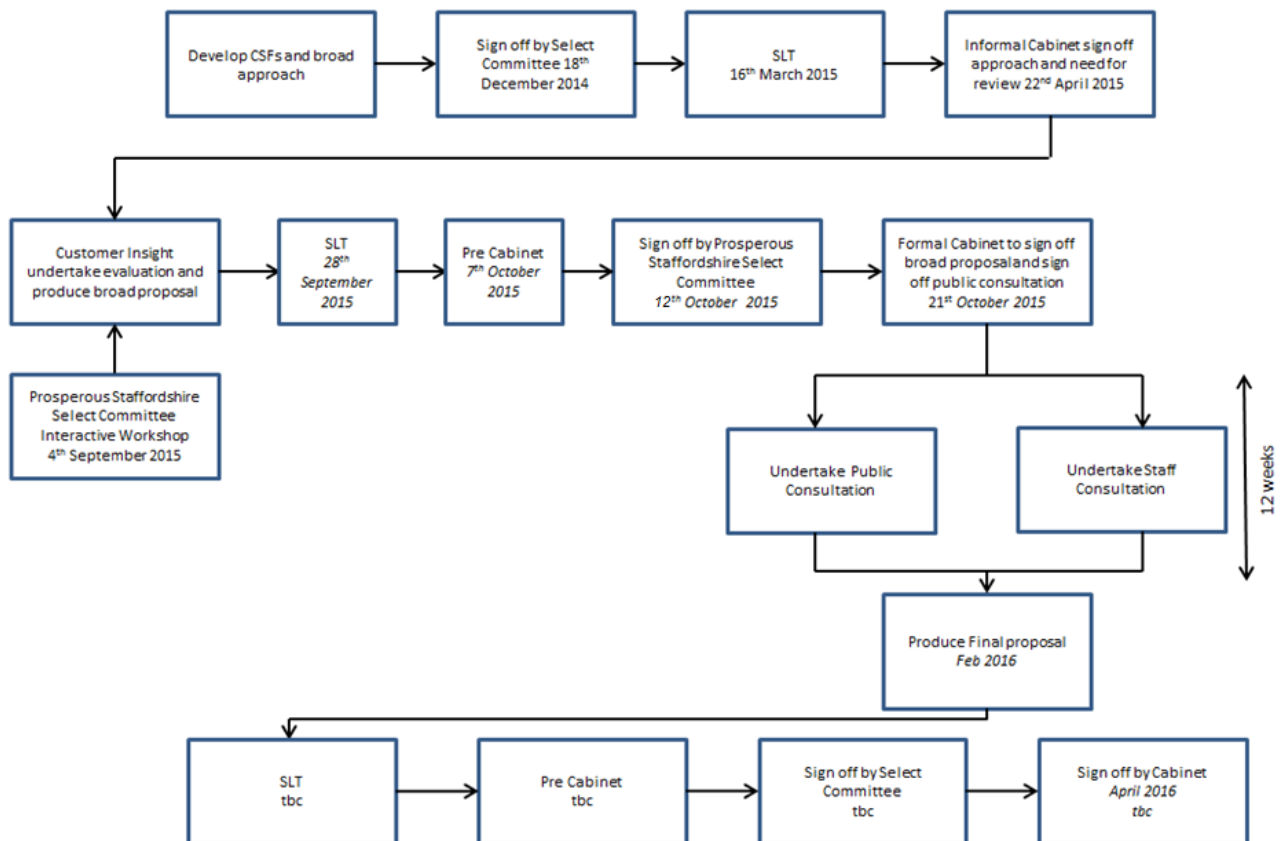
Background

5. A report was considered by Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee at its meeting on 18th December 2014. The committee considered the strategy for reviewing the countryside estate and agreed the adoption of the proposed critical success factors. These were:

- Increased value and prosperity for Staffordshire through a positive impact on local communities and wildlife
- A customer focussed service which enhances customer satisfaction and people's experience of the countryside
- Financially sustainable and resilient services

- The flexibility to meet changing future demands through innovation and development

6. Since this earlier report an engagement exercise has been initiated and Members have been afforded the opportunity to visit the sites. The following flow chart explains the time line of the project through to a final Cabinet decision in April 2016.



7. At the meeting members will be updated on progress and be informed on the initial findings of the engagement exercise. The Committee will be able to make recommendations to shape the review and the options prior to consideration by Cabinet.

8. Initial engagement would suggest that the sites can be considered collectively in four broad categories as follows:

Large Parks	1a	<i>Chasewater Country Park (5)</i>
	1b	<i>Cannock Chase Country Park (6)</i>
Medium sized parks with Visitor Centres	2	This includes four parks all in the north of the county with visitor centres: <i>Apedale Community Country Park (1), Greenway Bank Country Park (2), Deep Hayes Country Park (3) and Consall Nature Park (4).</i>
Smaller “picnic sites”	3	This includes smaller sites mainly used by local communities : <i>Hanchurch Hills (7), Froghall Wharf</i>

		<i>Picnic Area (8), Oakamoor Picnic Area (9), Hanbury Common Picnic Area (10), Wimblebury Road (11)* Hatherton Reservoir (12) Fair Oak Picnic Area (13) Chillington Picnic Area (14), Broad Lane Essington Picnic Area(15)* Brownshore Pools Picnic Area (16) Branston (17)* Sevens Road Picnic Area (18), (*not currently promoted for public access)</i>
Greenways	4	Three disused railways now used as long distance paths (cycling /walking etc.) <i>Stafford to Newport Greenway, Oakamoor to Denstone Greenway and Leek to Rushton Greenway</i>

9. The consequent Cabinet report will be scrutinised by Select Committee at its meeting on 12th October 2015.

Link to Strategic Plan – Great Place to Live

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity –

Community Impact – A detailed CIA will be drafted once the options are better understood. An initial summary is included in the background papers.

Contact Officer

Name and Job Title: Ian Wykes: Commissioner for the Rural County
Telephone No.: 01785 277295
Address/e-mail: ian.wykes@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appendices/Background papers

Countryside Estate Details
Report of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 18 December 2014
Summary Community Impact Assessment

COUNTRYSIDE ESTATE MANAGEMENT REVIEW



revised August 2015

Key Facts and Figures

Site Details

1.1 The countryside estate totals about 2426ha comprising:

- 6 main country parks;
- 12 picnic areas and other smaller sites;
- 3 greenways disused railway lines.

1.2 All of the main country parks have protected habitats and sites.

1.3 Cannock Chase Country Park is the largest of the main country parks and is designated a Special Area of Conservation and is located within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

1.4 Approximately 3,000,000 million visits each year.

Staffing Arrangements

1.5 The management, and maintenance, of the estate is mostly delivered in-house by:

- Rural Access Manager
- 2 Head Rangers
- 1 Works Unit Manager
- 14 Rangers
- 17 Estate Workers
- 1 Development Officer

1.6 The Works Unit Team is trained and skilled to carry out most of the practical work on the Estate and also, well-resourced in terms of plant and equipment. Therefore, external contractors are only employed for large-scale woodland management and engineering works.

1.7 The Service Area is also supported by a team of Environmental Specialists and a significant voluntary contribution of about 25,000 hours per annum (equivalent to an additional 13 FTEs).

Financial Information

The combined budget for running the countryside estate and rights of way service is:

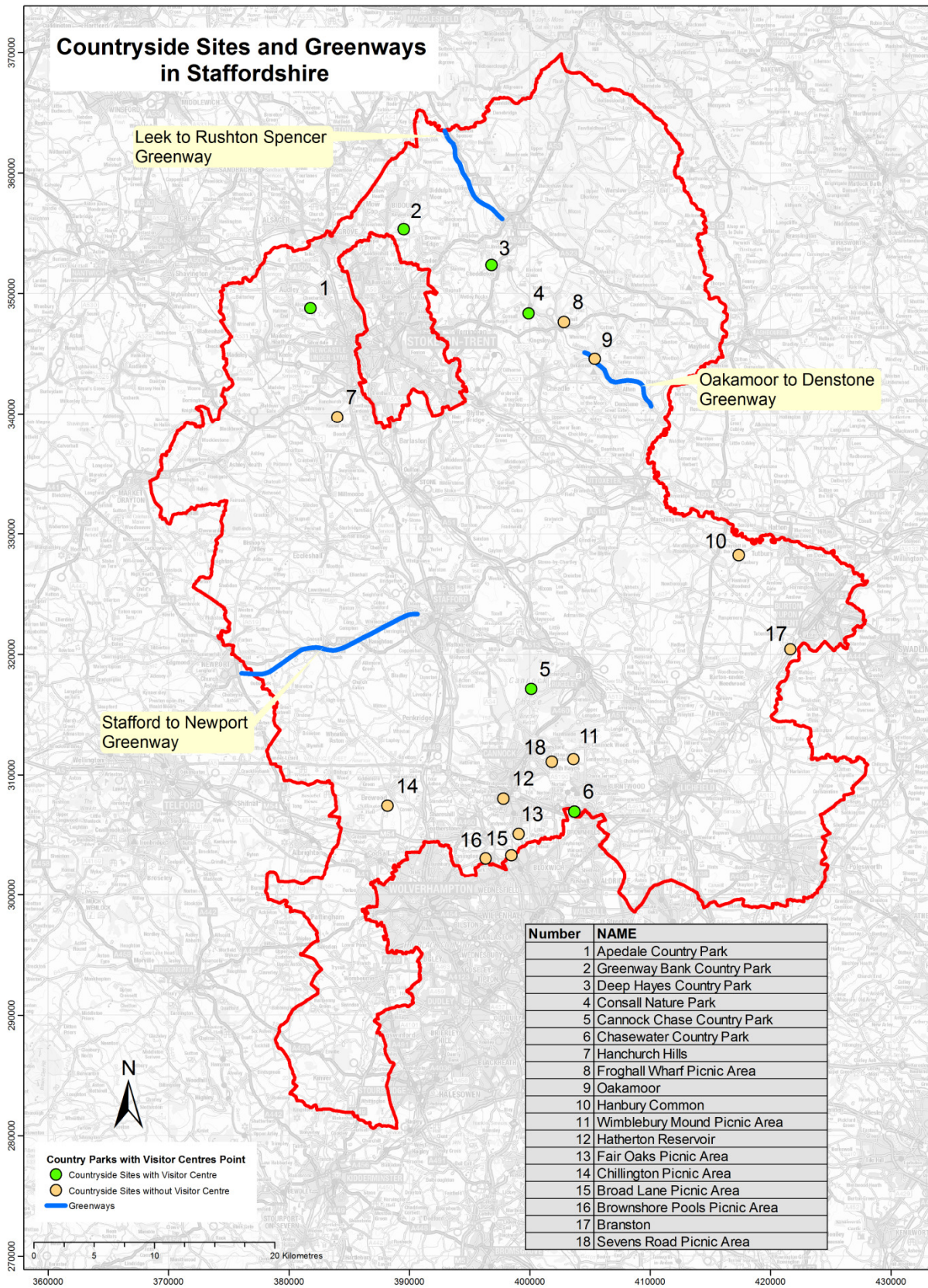
Capital - £180,000 per annum

Net expenditure - £ 1, 875,980

Income – C. £418,200 per annum (includes £185,000 from HLS schemes).

Contract Arrangements

The cleaning and maintenance of the on-site buildings and the operation of the catering facilities at Cannock Chase and Chasewater Visitor Centres are under contract to Entrust.



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 Produced by Staffordshire County Council, August 2015.

LIST OF SITES

	Size (ha)	Page No.
Country Parks (6)		
Cannock Chase Country Park	1,311	5
Apedale Community Country Park	154	7
Consall Nature Park	105	9
Deep Hayes Country Park	61	11
Greenway Bank Country Park	55	13
Chasewater including Norton Bog	472	15
Picnic Areas (10)		
Froghall	3	17
Oakamoor	8	19
Sevens Road, Cannock Wood	13	21
Hanbury Common	2	23
Brownshore Lane, Essington	10	25
Chillington	0.1	27
Hanchurch Hills	7	29
Fair Oak, Essington	4	31
Hatherton Reservoir, Cheslyn Hay	12	33
Disused Railway Walks (3)		
Stafford to Newport	40	35
Oakamoor to Denstone	28	37
Leek to Rushton	23	39
Sites on which Public Access is Not Promoted		
Broad Lane, Essington	16	41
Wimblebury Road, Cannock	3	43
Branston	2	45
Appendix 1 – Summary Details of Countryside Sites		47

Cannock Chase Country Park

Electoral Wards:	Stafford Trent Valley Hednesford and Rawley Brereton and Ravenshill Etching Hill and Heath	Members:	Len Bloomer Geoffrey Martin Alan Dudson George Adamson Christine Mitchell
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Parish Councils: Berkswich, Colwich, Brocton, and Brindley Heath.

Size: 1,311 ha

Description

Perhaps the largest Country Park in England, Cannock Chase Country Park lies within the smallest mainland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is the jewel within the Countryside Service. It has the highest international recognition as a wildlife site – a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). It is also nationally known and attracts over 2 million visitors each year. We are legally obliged to maintain the site in good condition. Its most important feature is the open heathland but it also contains Ancient Woodlands and some conifer plantations. Much of the associated wildlife is both rare and important.

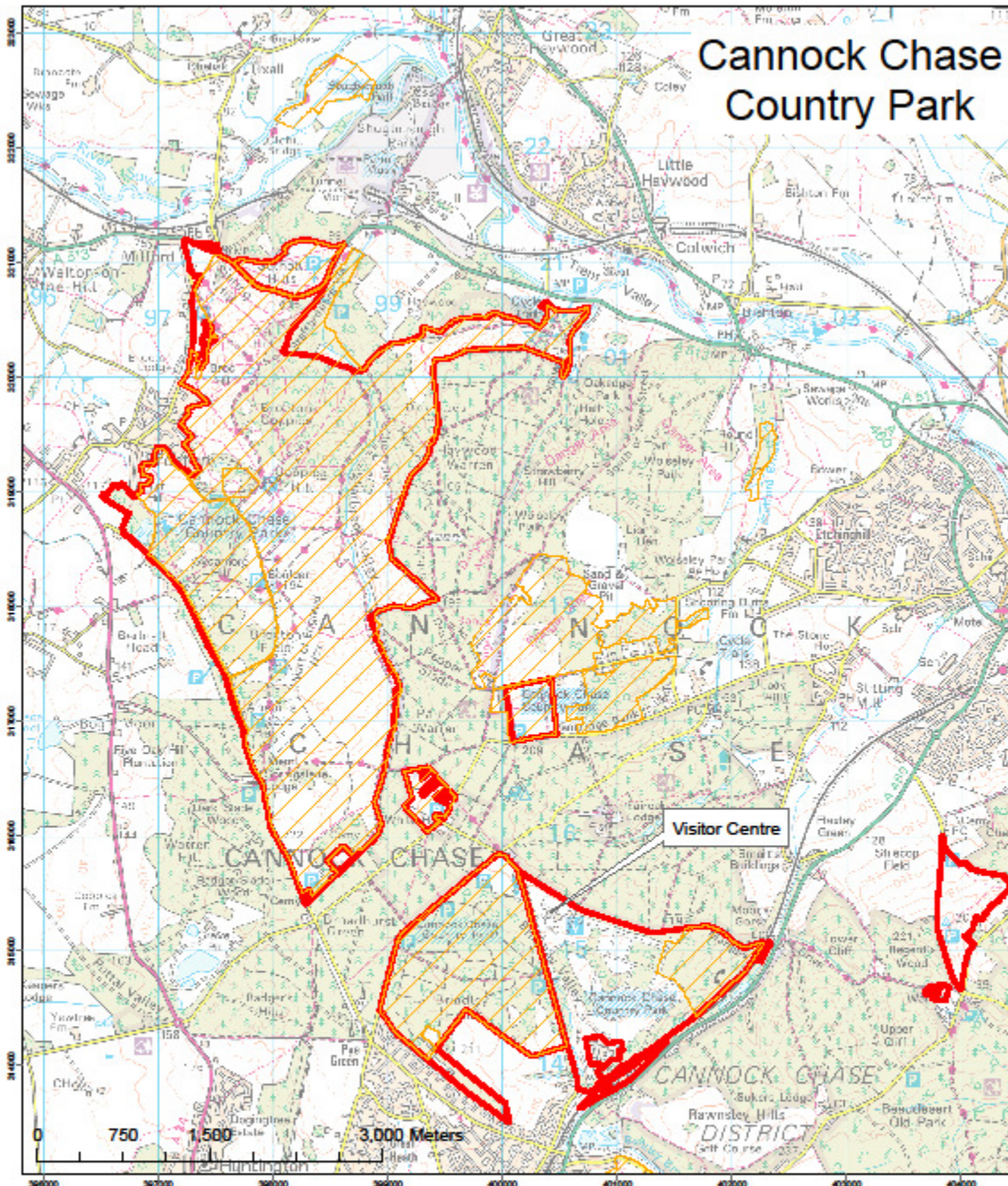
There is a thriving Visitor Centre and café at Marquis Drive attracting thousands of visitors. It is also the base for the Southern Ranger Service and depot for the Works Unit. Other buildings/features include the John O’Leary Education Centre, a reconstructed Great War Hut and children’s play area. The whole site is heated by a wood burning boiler which is fuelled by timber from the Chase. We work closely with the Forestry Commission to manage visitors. We provide a full Ranger Service, including education provision, a guided walks and event programme and facilities for the disabled across the whole site.

Opportunities / Liabilities

This is a high cost site to maintain but grant aid has been gained through Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) for the conservation works. Income is also generated through sales at the Visitor Centre.

The Phytophthora disease on the bilberry has been expensive to try to control and is subject to ongoing management and control. There are two pay and display car parks, one at the Centre and the other at Milford Common (the other main honey pot area). The cafe is managed by Entrust.

The ability to raise finance from the site has to be balanced against the potentially detrimental effect this would have on the wildlife and habitat and landscape. There are many of the usual liabilities associated with high public use, such as track, barrier and car park repairs, grass cutting etc. but also this area is subject to mining fissures and large scale heathland fires. The Chase also provides timber for other county council sites.



Cannock Chase Country Park

- Site Boundary
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Size in hectares	1311
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	Yes
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	High

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Apedale Community Country Park, Newcastle

Electoral Ward: Audley and Chesterton

Member: Ann Beech

Parish Councils: Audley Rural

Size: 154 ha

Description

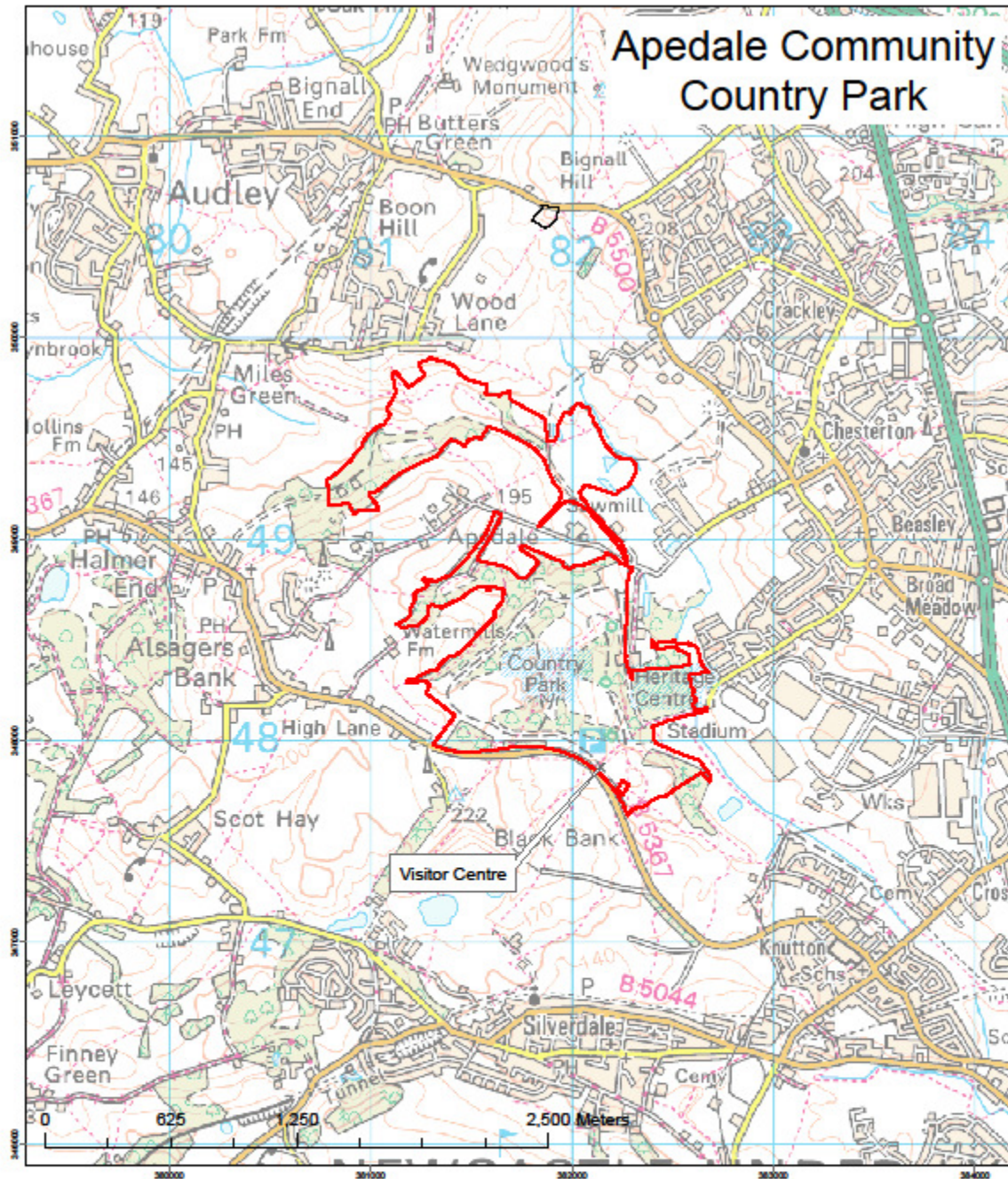
The Park is a reclaimed opencast site, and is a mixture of old and recently planted woodland, together with open grass pasture. It has great views over the Potteries and Cheshire Plain. A new Visitor Centre, Apedale Energy Station was erected in 2011; the old centre is still leased out as a workshop for groups with disabilities. It is on the edge of the large conurbations of Knutton and Chesterton and is heavily used by local people who walk onto the site. It is also popular with visitors, especially walking groups, who use the network of good tracks.

There are two rangers based on the site and also, the Newcastle Countryside Project (now managed by Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust) works in and around the park with volunteers, especially with groups with disabilities.

Opportunities / Liabilities

Two new wind turbines generate electricity for the Centre and for sale to the grid. There is a listed structure (grade 2), Watermills Tower, which is in good condition. The paddocks are grazed with cattle which create excellent habitat for ground nesting birds such as lapwings. There are no protected areas but grant aid has been gained through HLS for some conservation works. Adjacent to the site, and sharing its access off Loomer Road, is the Apedale Heritage Centre and Moseley Railway Trust.





 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	154
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	High

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Consall Nature Park, Wetley Rocks, Cellarhead

Electoral Ward: Churnet Valley

Member: Mike Worthington

Parish Councils: Consall, Kingsley

Size: 105 ha

Description

Consall Nature Park was established in the heavily wooded Churnet Valley in the 1980s. It has a busy Visitor Centre which is popular with day visitors and school groups. Most of the park is part of the Churnet Valley SSSI noted for the semi-natural woodland. The difficult access along a single narrow track and its high conservation value has led to it being deliberately under-promoted. Nevertheless, visitors pack the car park most weekends and the lack of parking is an issue.

Two Rangers are based on site assisted by volunteers.

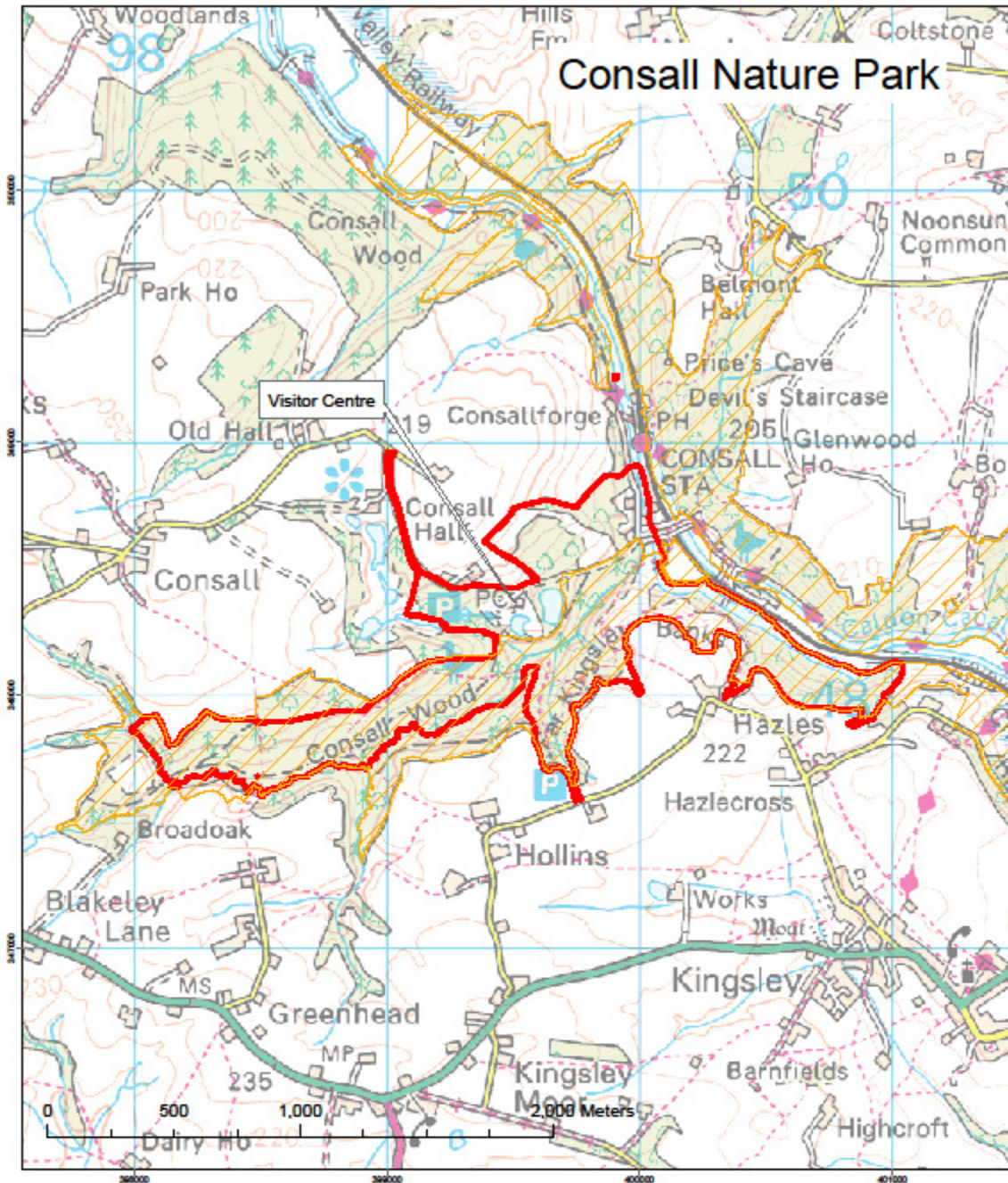
Opportunities / Liabilities

The two pools on the site fall under the new Reservoir Legislation. Currently both are available for day fishing. The main track gives access to the Churnet Valley Railway, Black Lion Pub and a number of residential properties. The track has proved costly to maintain in the past but is now in reasonably good condition.

There is some coppice management but the woodland could be managed to produce wood fuel.

There is some scope for grant aid due to the SSSI status.





- Site Boundary
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Size in hectares	105
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	Yes
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	High

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Deep Hayes Country Park, Cheddleton, Nr. Leek

Electoral Ward: Cheddleton

Member: Mike Worthington

Parish Council: Cheddleton CP

Size: 61 ha

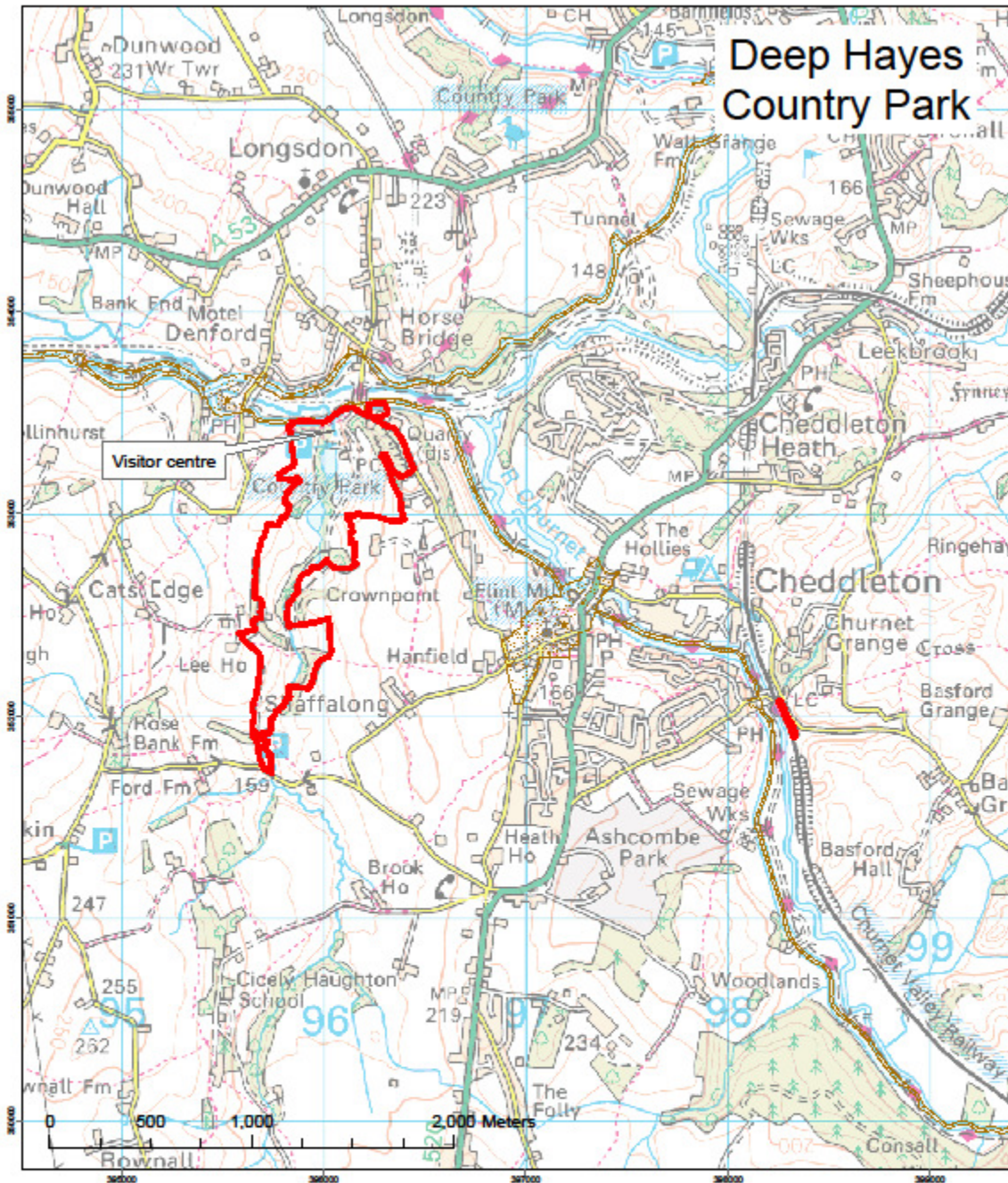
Description

Deep Hayes Country Park was created in the 1970s when the single large reservoir was converted into three smaller pools for safety reasons. There are a number of trails inside and outside of the Park. One Ranger is based in the small Visitor Centre. There is a large surfaced car park and the Park is popular with local visitors. A thriving volunteer group assists with day to day management. There are high quality, flower rich meadows at the top of the site.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The pools which do not fall under the new Reservoir legislation still require regular inspection and maintenance. There are no protected areas and limited scope to gain grant aid on this site. The larger pool is leased to a local angling club. The Park attracts large numbers of visitors for its size.





Deep Hayes Country Park

 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	61
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	Yes
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	Medium
Community Benefit	High

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Greenway Bank Country Park, Knypersley, Nr. Biddulph

Electoral Ward: Biddulph and South Endon

Member: Kevin James Jackson

Parish Councils: Biddulph CP, Brown Edge CP

Size: 55 ha

Description

Greenway Bank Country Park is based on an historical landscape and surrounds two reservoirs; the Serpentine (owned by SCC) and Knypersley Reservoir (owned by Canals & Rivers Trust). The water from these reservoirs feeds into the canal network. One Ranger is based at the newly refurbished Visitor Centre. There is also a small courtyard, play area and car park. The site is a popular and well established venue for visitors and numerous volunteers help with all aspects of the park.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The Serpentine reservoir which is leased to a local angling club requires regular inspection and maintenance.

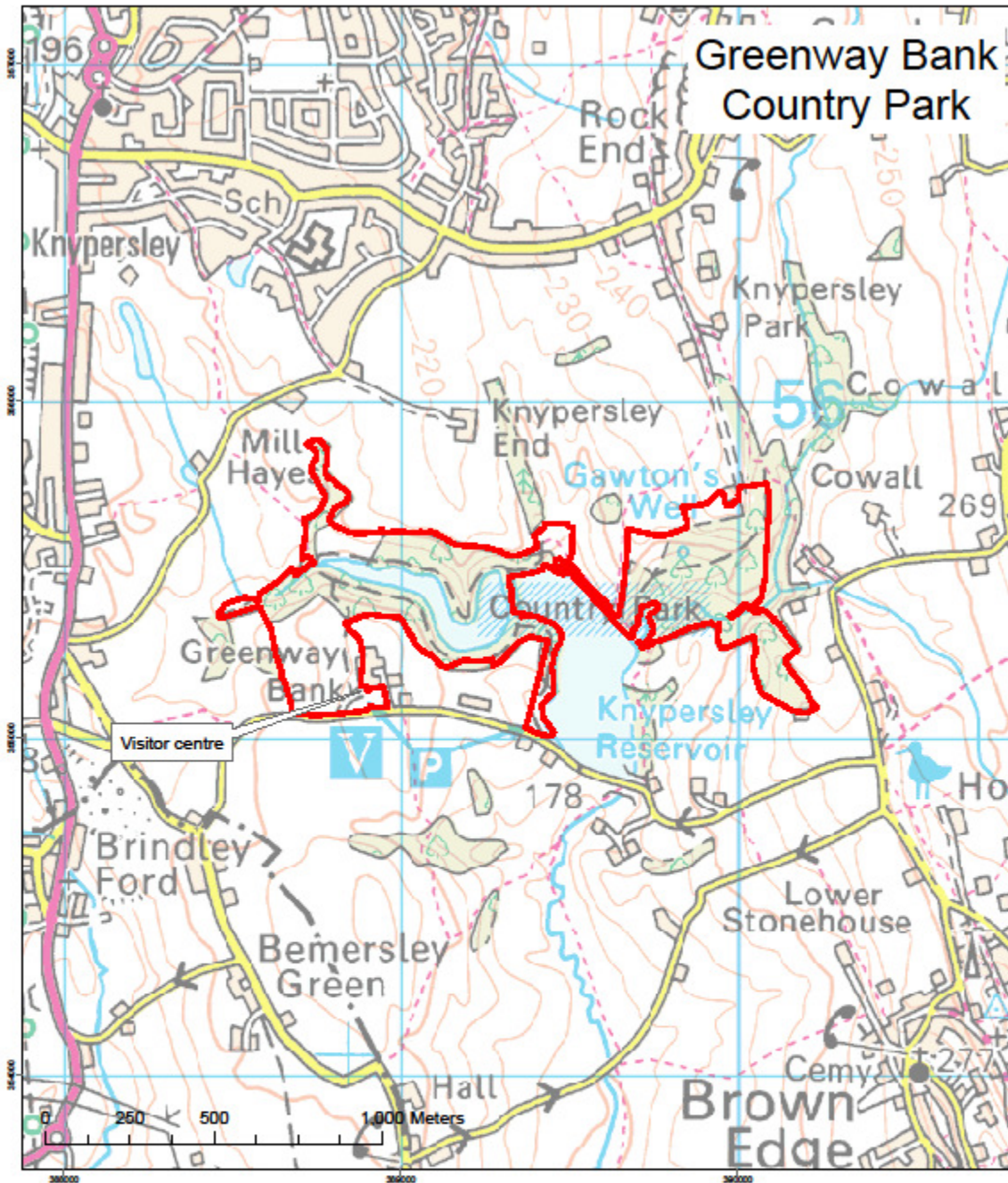
Phytophthora ramorum (a notifiable plant disease) has been found on the Rhododendrons and regular monitoring and treatment is required. Funding for this work has been met via a Forestry Commission Woodland Grant (WGS) to date. Apart from this WGS, there is little likelihood of further grant aid for the site.

There is a Grade II* listed building, the Warders Tower, on the site and a use for this building is being sought. However, it requires extensive works which are likely to be costly.

The woodland could be managed to provide wood fuel.

Warders Tower





 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	51
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	Yes
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	Medium
Community Benefit	High

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Chasewater Country Park including Norton Bog

Electoral Ward: Burntwood South

Member: Jeffrey Sheriff

Parish Council: Norton Canes, Burntwood

Size: 472 ha

Description

The County Council assumed responsibility for Chasewater Country Park in 2011 following major repairs to the reservoir dam. Chasewater Innovation Centre is at the entrance to the Country Park. The Innovation Centre offers visitor information and conferencing facilities and a changing programme of exhibitions, activities and events. The Park also has a café, children's play area and a number of trails. The site supports a number of organisations offering power boating, sailing, a heritage steam railway and an outdoor education centre.

The Country Park links with land formerly known as Norton Bog which was established as a countryside site following reclamation of the slurry pits of old coal workings. The Norton Bog area contains a pool which falls under the Mines and Quarries legislation. There are no buildings or car parks on this part of the site and most visitors walk to it from Chasewater and Norton Canes. The water in the pool is high quality and the reclaimed landscape and tracks are developing well.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The Reservoir dam was repaired in 2010 and the reservoir and pool on the land at Norton Bog require regular inspection and maintenance. Most of the land is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest but grant aid has been gained through HLS for the site conservation works.

Income is generated via the business interests and the Innovation Centre which help to offset the site's operating costs and there is a Development Plan in place.

The café is managed by Entrust.





Chasewater and Norton Bog Country Parks

- Site Boundary
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Size in hectares	472
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	Yes
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	Medium

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Froghall Picnic Area, Froghall

Electoral Wards: Churnet Valley
Leek Rural

Members: Gill Heath
Mike Worthington

Parish Councils: Kingsley and Ipstones

Size: 3 ha

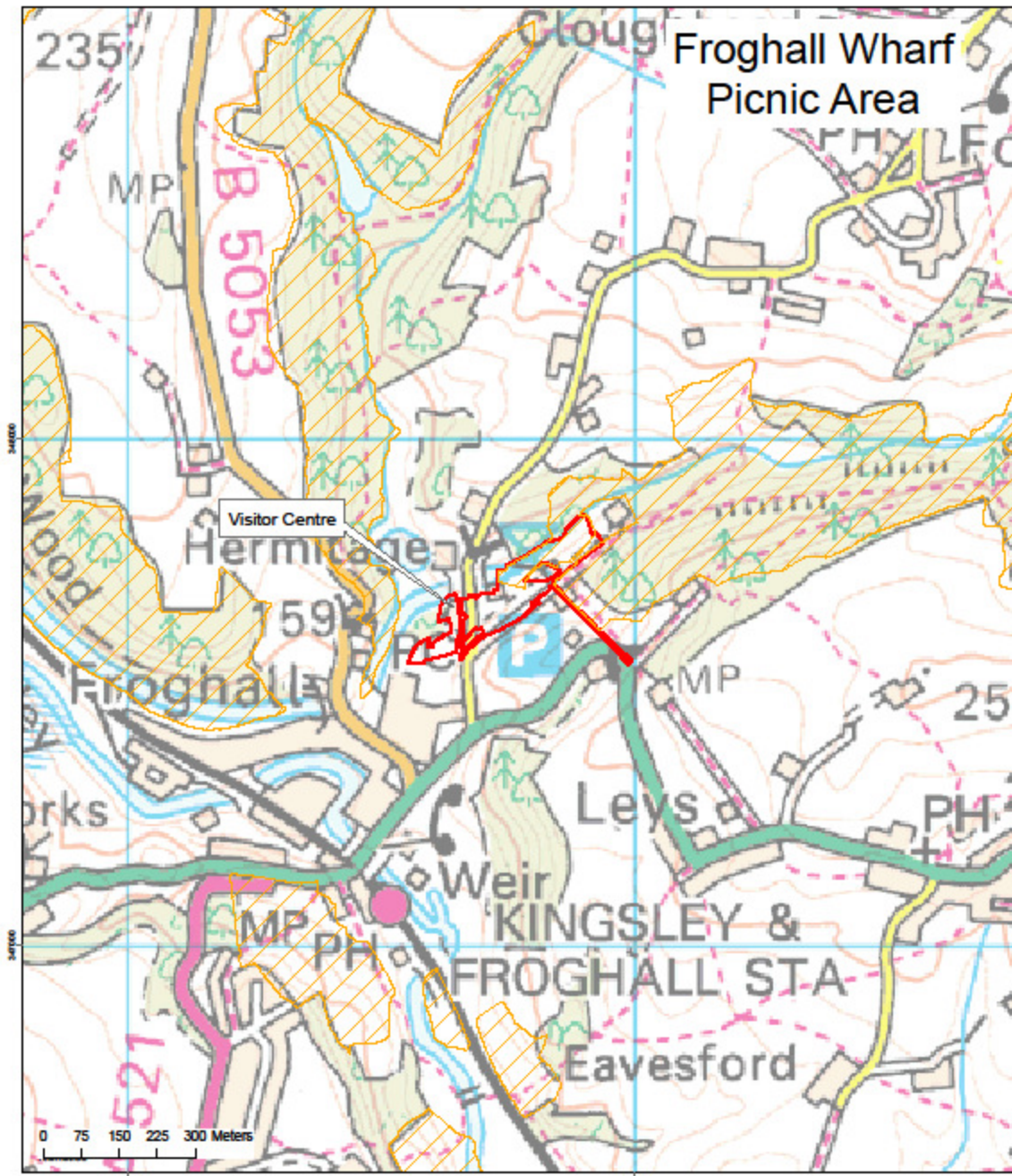
Description



Two existing canal side buildings were converted into an interesting Visitor Centre on the renovated canal basin. There is a toilet block and large car park. Froghall lies in the heart of the Churnet Valley at the end of the Caudon Branch Canal, and for the moment, the Churnet Valley Railway. It is ideally placed to tell the story of the development of the Industrial Revolution as it was the centre for coal, limestone and iron working. The trails from the Centre follow old plateways. There are two lime kilns from different ages.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The large car park is well used by walkers as there are numerous routes along the canal and into the surrounding countryside. One Ranger is based at the Centre. The kilns are listed structures and a watercourse is culverted through one of them and under the site.





	Site Boundary	Size in hectares	3
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Structures present?	Yes
		Waterbodies present?	No
		Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
		Proximity to Local Population	Low
		Community Benefit	Medium

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Oakamoor Picnic Area

Electoral Ward: Churnet Valley

Member: Mike Worthington

Parish Council: Oakamoor CP

Size: 8ha

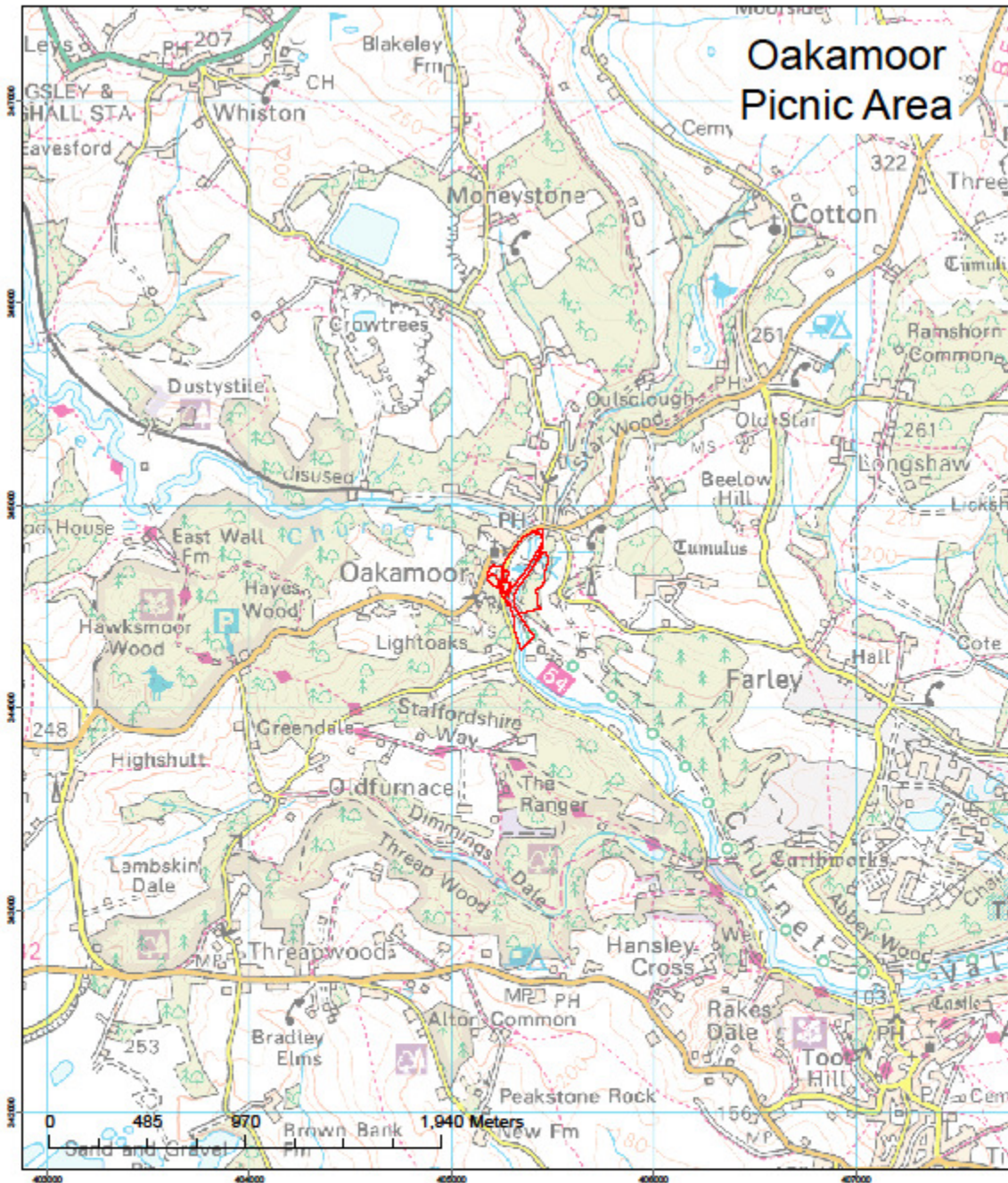
Description

This Picnic Area is located at the western end of the Oakamoor to Denstone railway line. It is very popular as a starting point for walkers wishing to visit other sites in the Churnet Valley owned by Forestry Commission, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and National Trust. At Oakamoor, there is an open grass area with picnic benches, a large car park and a toilet block. It is also well used by cyclists.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The Oakamoor Tunnel is part of the site, although closed to public access. It is currently in good condition but requires routine structural inspections and could be expensive if repairs were required.

There are two bridges over the river which require routine inspection and maintenance and would be expensive if they needed repair.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	8
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	Med

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Sevens Road Picnic Area, Cannock Wood

Electoral Ward: Hednesford & Rawnsley

Members: George Adamson
Christine Mitchell

Parish Council: Unparished

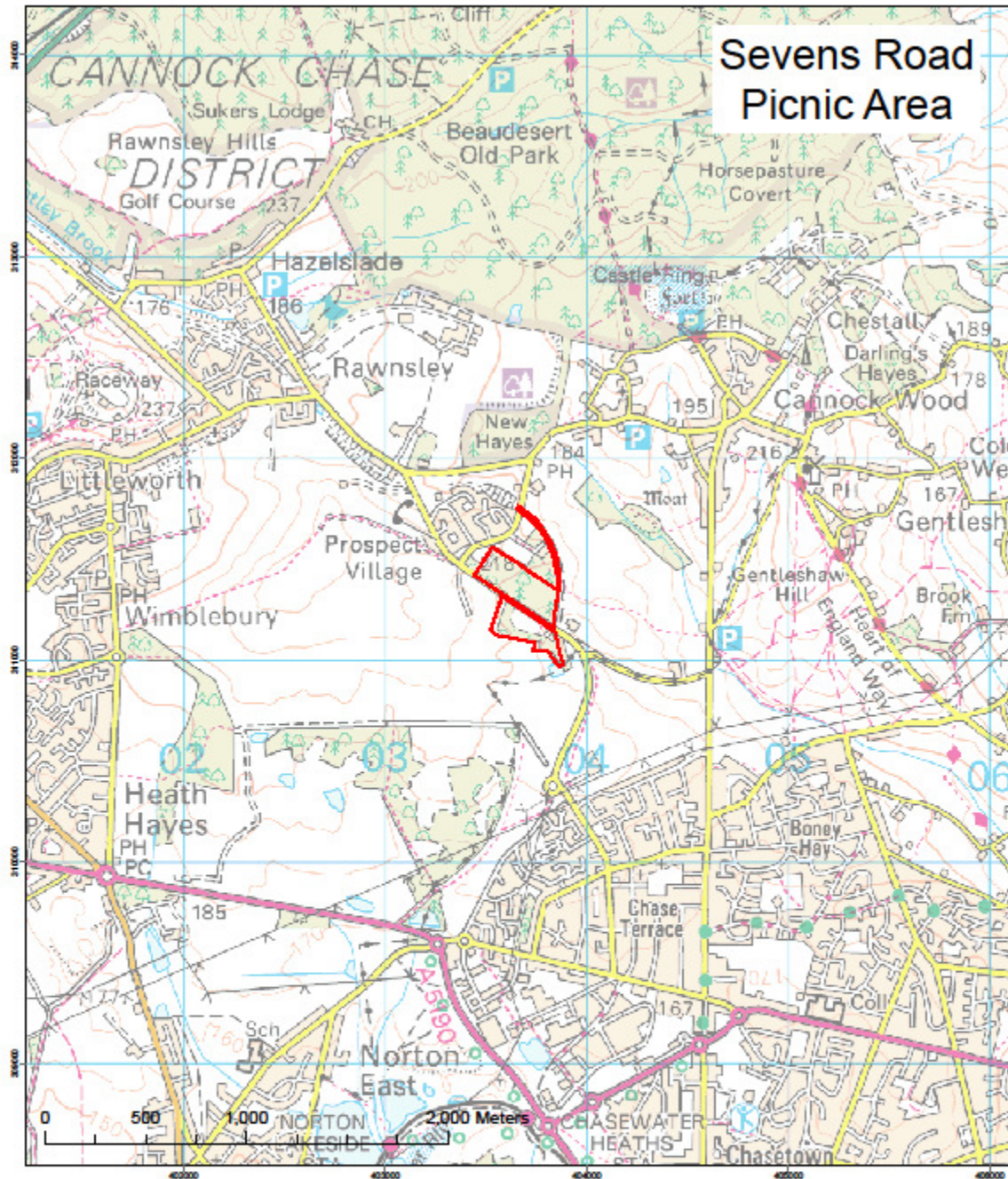
Size: 13 ha

Description

The site is split by a road; one side was used as a demonstration woodland by the Forest of Mercia and is now quite heavily wooded. The other side is mainly open grassland which adjoined the former Bleak House Opencast Site; this side contains a car park which is closed because of anti-social behaviour problems and has often been used in the past by travellers.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The site receives few visitors and is some distance from the nearest residential properties. There are no water bodies or structure on site.



Sevens Road Picnic Area

 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	13
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Low

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Hanbury Common Picnic Area, Hanbury, East Staffordshire

Electoral Ward: Dove

Member: Bob Fraser

Parish Council: Hanbury

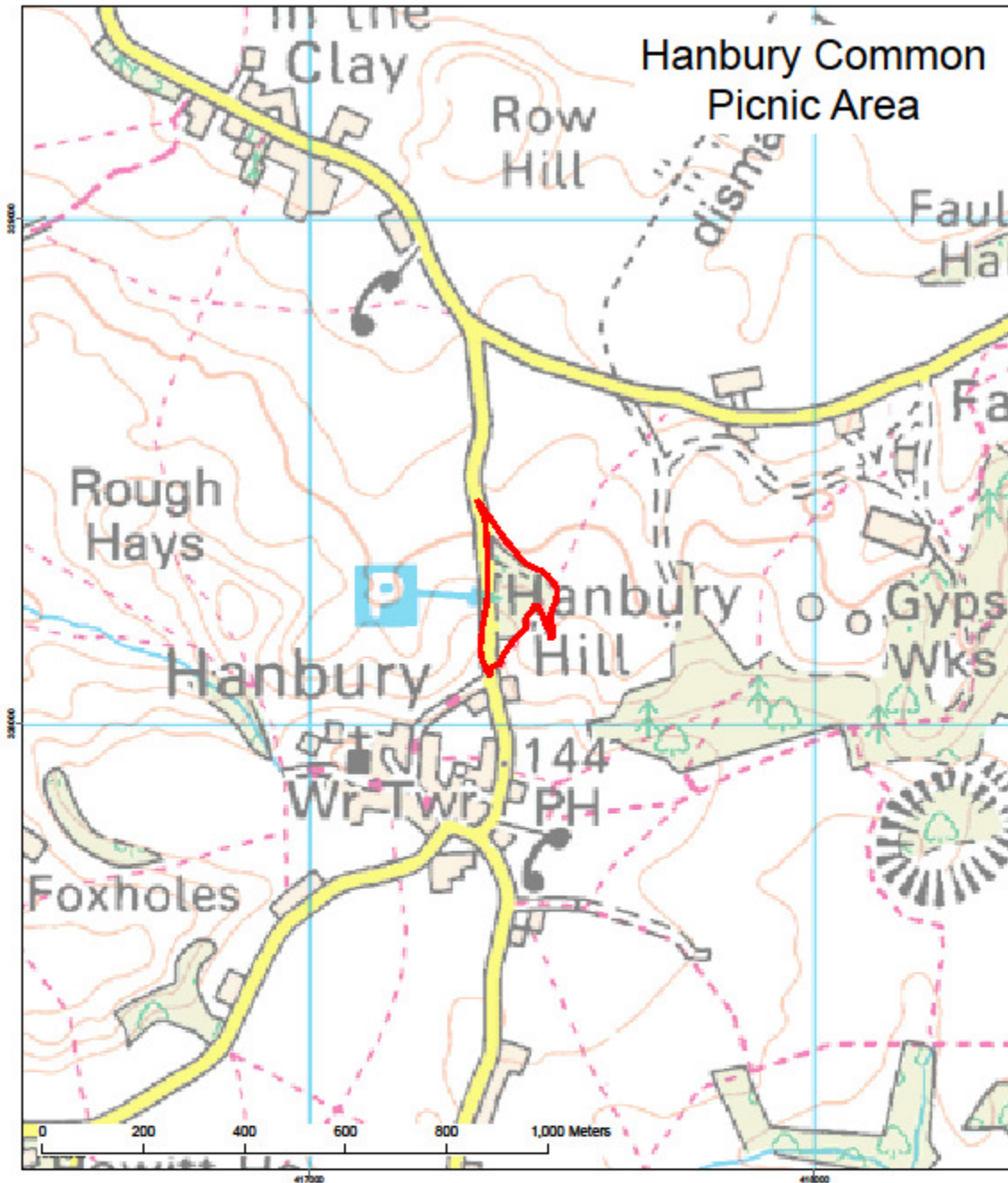
Size: 2 ha

Description

This small isolated site is on the side of a hill giving wonderful views over the Trent Valley. It is popular with the local community. The Parish Council has organised volunteer days to improve the site to create tracks, benches and viewpoints.

Opportunities / Liabilities

There is no water or structures on the site and parking is limited.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	2
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	Medium
Community Benefit	Low

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Brownshore Lane Picnic Area, Essington

Electoral Ward: Cheslyn Hay Essington &
Great Wyrley

Members: Kath Perry
Mike Lawrence

Parish Council: Essington

Size: 10 ha

Description

This site is enclosed by housing on all sides. It was gifted to the County Council by the Vernon Estate for the benefit of the local community. It contains two pools which are managed in partnership with the parish council. The parish bailiff also acts to protect the site and clear litter. It is an extremely important feature in the village and is very well used. There is an area of close mown grass for games and a wildlife meadow.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The site is a local recreational resource and very well used by the local community.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	10
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	High

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Chillington Car Parks

Electoral Ward: Brewood

Member: Mark Sutton

Parish Councils: Brewood and Coven

Size: 0.1 ha

Description

This site consists of two small car parks which are leased to the County Council from the Chillington Estate. They were created to prevent the ad hoc parking in the local lanes by people walking the Staffordshire Way. The Estate carries out most of the routine management (litter picking, etc.). Very low scale works are required to keep these car parks in good order and they provide very useful facilities for walkers.

Opportunities / Liabilities

These car parks have very few liabilities and are needed to ensure that the previous dangerous parking in the local lanes does not reoccur.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	0.1
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Medium

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Hanchurch Hills, Hanchurch, Newcastle

Electoral Ward: Eccleshall

Member: Frank Chapman

Parish Council: Swynnerton

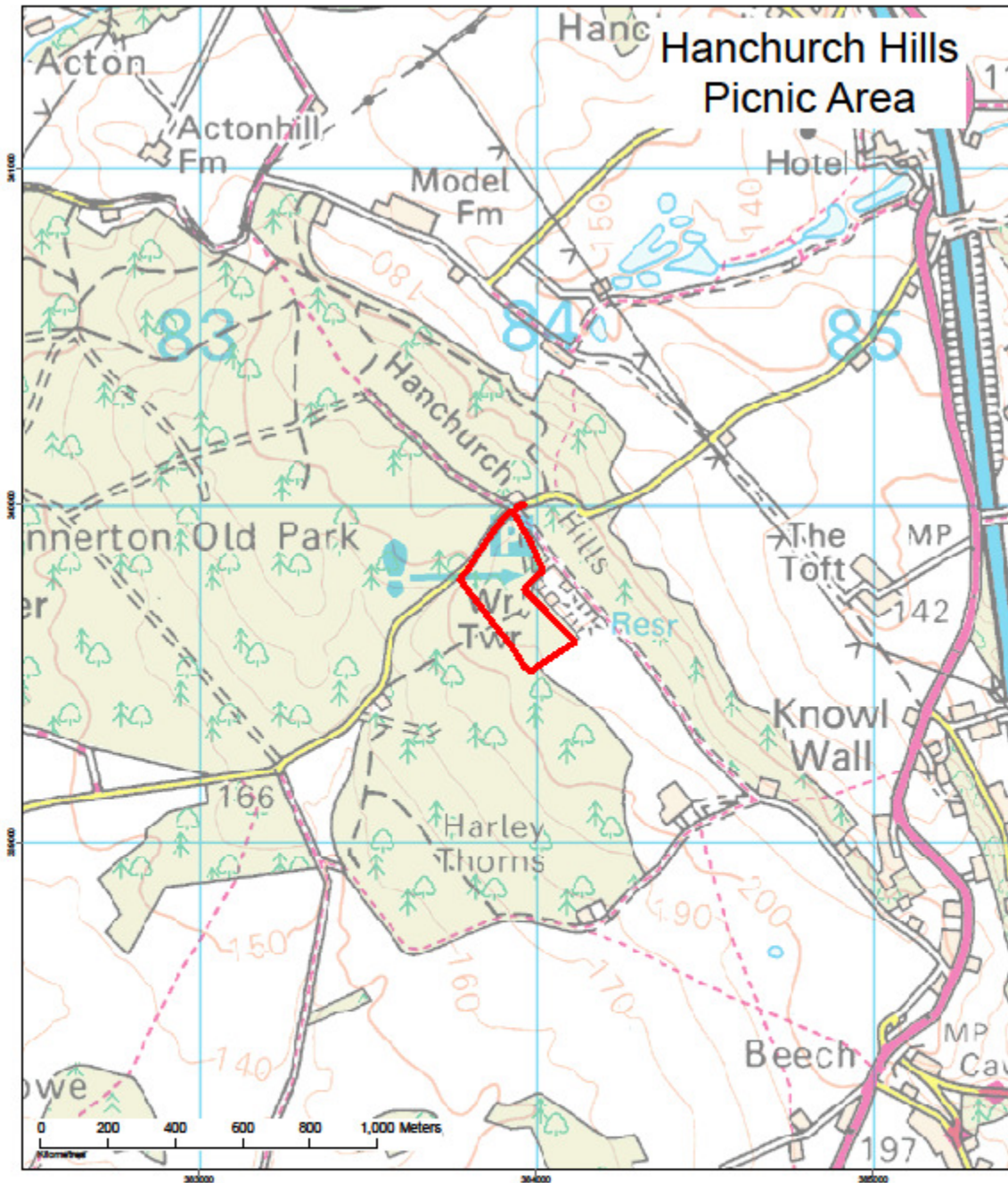
Size: 7 ha

Description

The site consists of a small picnic area within the conifer woodland of Hanchurch Hills. It is bounded by open Forestry Commission woodland and privately owned land. It has a long track to the only car park in that area. The wider site (including Forestry Commission land) is popular with walkers and horse-riders.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The very few features make it relatively easy to maintain but the long track does require constant attention. The woodland could be managed to provide a limited amount of wood fuel.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	7
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Low

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Fair Oak, Essington

Electoral Ward: Cheslyn Hay, Essington & Great Wyrley

Members: Mike Lawrence
Kath Perry

Parish Councils: Essington and Great Wyrley

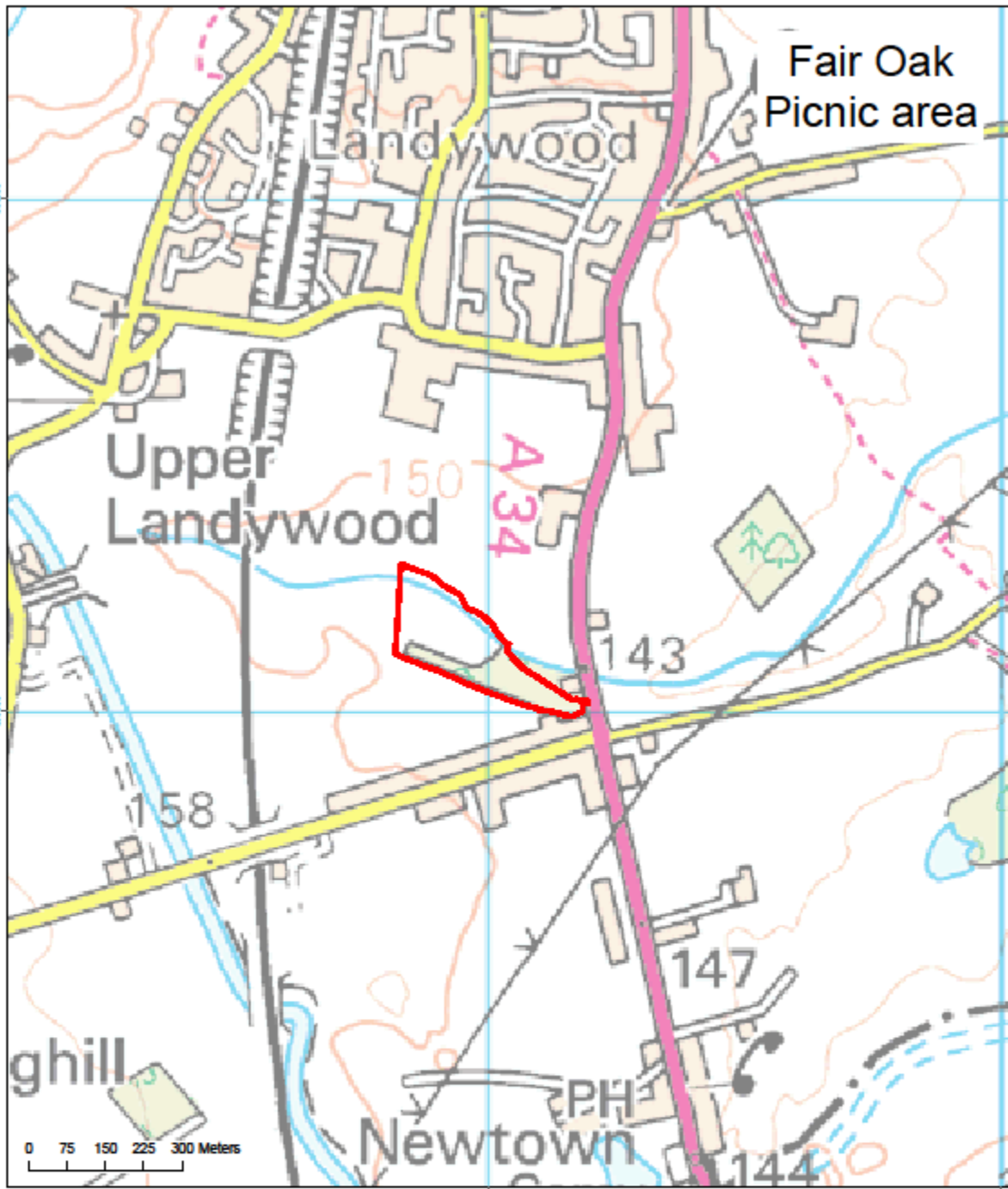
Size: 4 ha

Description

This site came to the County Council as part of some reclamation works in the 1970s. The low hill gives views over the local countryside and the West Midlands beyond. The access to the site is shared with a travelling caravan site. It is some distance from residential properties and is therefore not well used.

Opportunities / Liabilities

None identified.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	4
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Low

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Hatherton Reservoir, Cheslyn Hay

Electoral Ward: Cheslyn Hay, Essington & Great Wyrley

Members: Mike Lawrence
Kath Perry

Parish Council: Cheslyn Hay

Size: 12 ha

Description

This small site on the edge of two villages comprises tracks and woodlands around a partially filled reservoir. The M6 Toll route has reduced the size of the site and the pool, making it less attractive to anglers). The pool falls under the new reservoir legislation, although it is considered to be low risk. The site is well used by local people and dog walkers. The Parish Council and a local volunteer group have been working to improve the site as it is prone to low level anti-social behaviour.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The water body requires routine inspection and maintenance.

The County Council will soon gain another adjacent area of land, Redland Clay Pit, as compensation for the land lost when building the M6 Toll. The Redland site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	11
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	Yes
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	High

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Stafford to Newport Greenway

Electoral Ward: Gnosall and Doxey

Member: Mark Winnington

Parish Councils: Stafford Town, Hyde Lea, Seighford, Haughton, Gnosall and Forton.

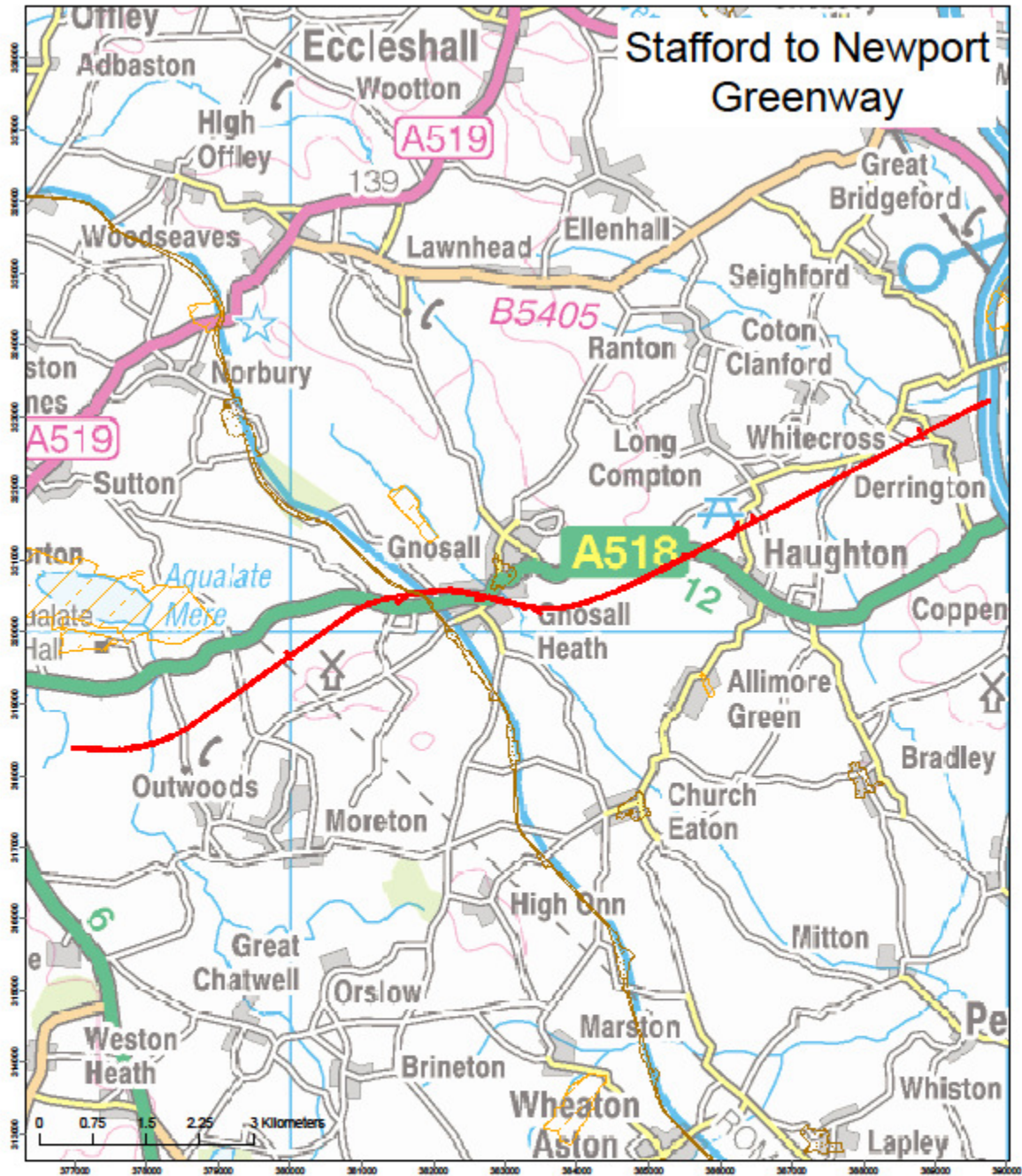
Size: 40 ha, approximately 9 miles

Description

The Greenway has been developed on the old Stafford to Newport railway line. It provides easy walking and riding for cyclists and horses through attractive countryside and is a very popular route. The route has been formally surfaced and now forms part of the National Cycle Network (NCN 55). It is also part of The Way for the Millennium which links Newport with Burton upon Trent. Access can be gained at a number of locations along its length.

There are many structures along the line; bridges, culverts, car parks etc. that need routine inspection and maintenance. The county council is responsible for maintenance of the fencing.

The surface, vegetation, car parks and routes onto the line require constant attention.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	40
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	High

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Oakamoor to Denstone Greenway

Electoral Ward: Uttoxeter Rural

**Members: Phillip Atkins
Mike Worthington**

Parish Councils: Denstone, Alton, Farley and Oakamoor.

Size: Approximately 4.2 miles

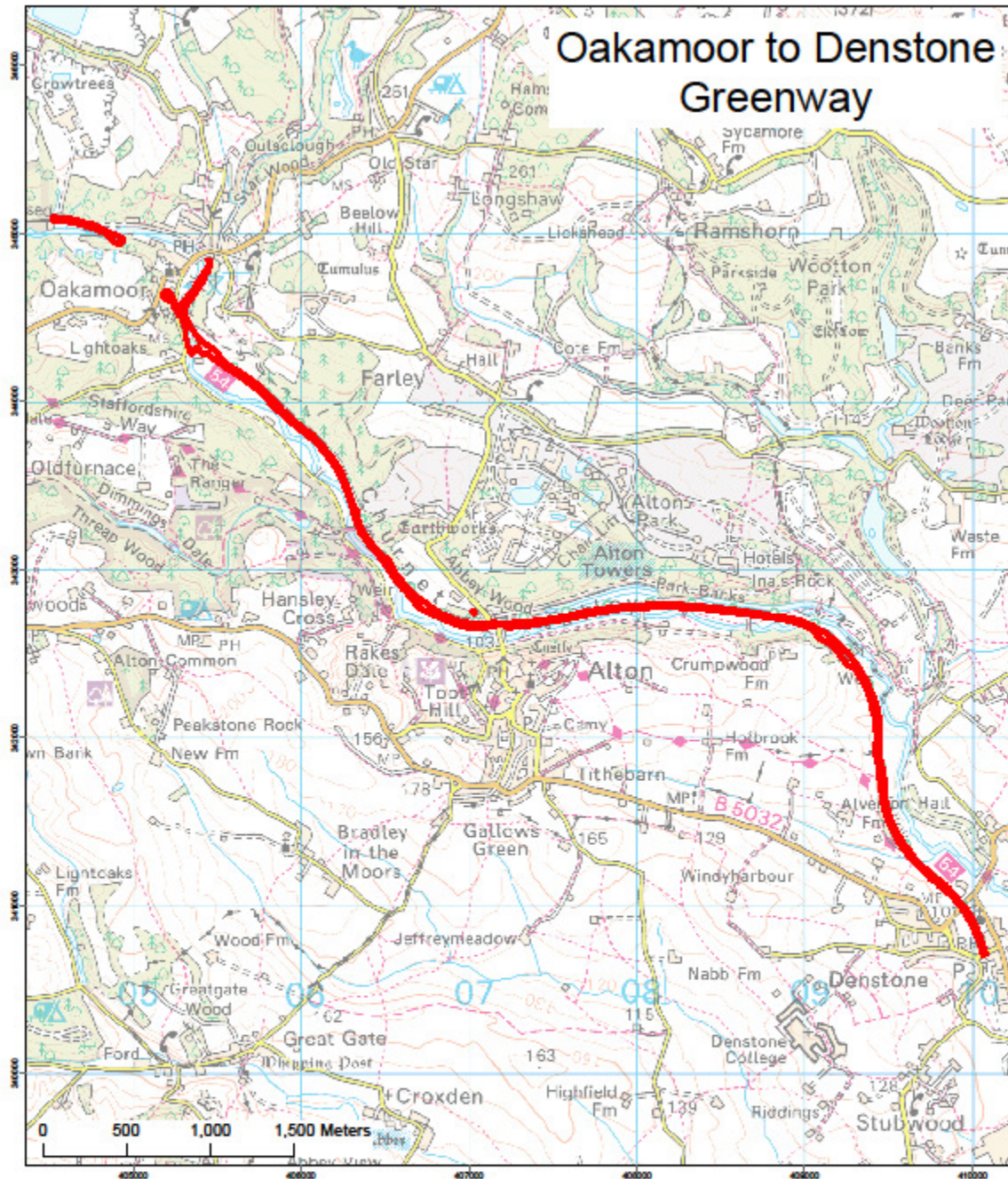
Description

The disused railway line follows the attractive Churnet Valley for 4.2 miles. At Oakamoor, there are large car parks and a new toilet block. It is a very popular route for visitors. It is well used by cyclists and also part of the route is available to horse riders.

Opportunities / Liabilities

There are many structures along the route which require routine inspection and regular maintenance. The county council is responsible for the fencing. The grass areas are regularly maintained.

The Oakamoor tunnel is part of the site, although closed to public access. It is currently in good condition but requires routine structural inspections. There has been some speculation for many years about the restoration of either, or both, the railway and canal along this route.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	17
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	High

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Leek to Rushton Greenway

Electoral Ward

**Leek Rural
Leek South**

Members:

**Gill Heath
Charlotte Atkins**

Parish Councils: Leek, Longsdon, Horton, Rushton

Size: Approximately 5.6 miles

Description

The Greenway runs for 5.6 miles from the north of Leek to the County boundary at the River Dane. It is used primarily by walkers and at low level by cyclists. Horse-riding is not encouraged as part of the route, along the side of Rudyard Lake, is shared with a mini-railway. Rudyard has been a tourist venue since Victorian times and many visitors use the car park to visit the Lake and surrounding venues.

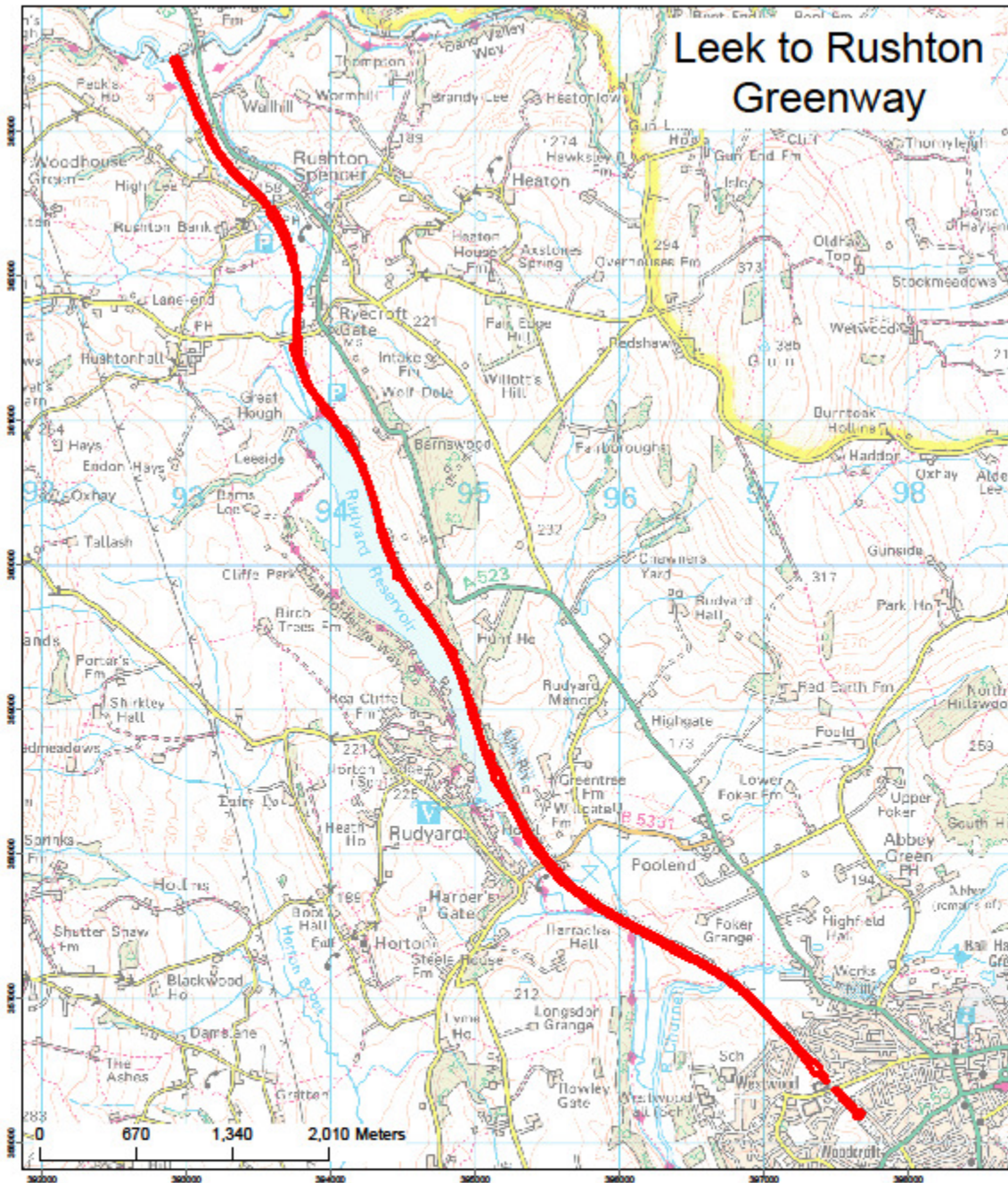
Opportunities / Liabilities

This site also includes the old railway tunnel under Leek which is not accessible for the public but still requires routine safety inspections.

There is a large number of structures, bridges, culverts, etc. which require inspection and maintenance. The county council is responsible for the maintenance of the fencing.

The railway brings in many visitors.

The Rudyard area is a Conservation Area.



Leek to Rushton Greenway

 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	23
Structures present?	Yes
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	High
Community Benefit	High

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Broad Lane, Essington

Electoral Ward: Cheslyn Hay, Essington & Great Wyrley

Members: Kath Perry
Mike Lawrence

Parish Council: Essington

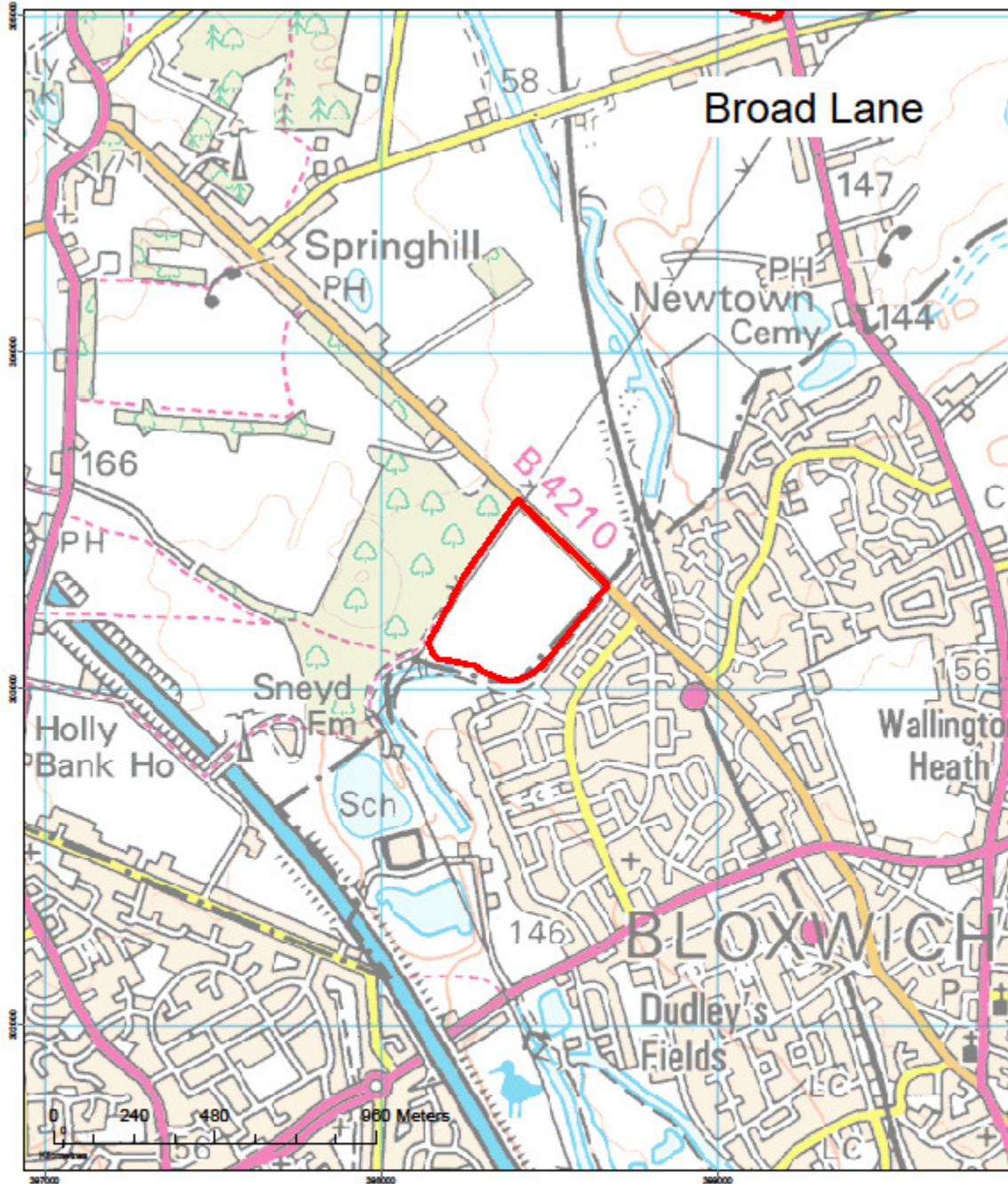
Size: 16 ha

Description

The site was part of the Broad Lane Opencast Site and was managed by the Forest of Mercia until recently. It is on the very edge of the West Midlands border. It is a flat site with young tree plantations and a limited number of informal tracks. It suffers from anti-social behaviour.

Opportunities / Liabilities

The site is in the Green Belt.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	16
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Low

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Wimblebury Road, Wimblebury

Electoral Ward: Cannock Villages

Member: Diane Todd

Parish Council: Heath Hayes and Wimblebury

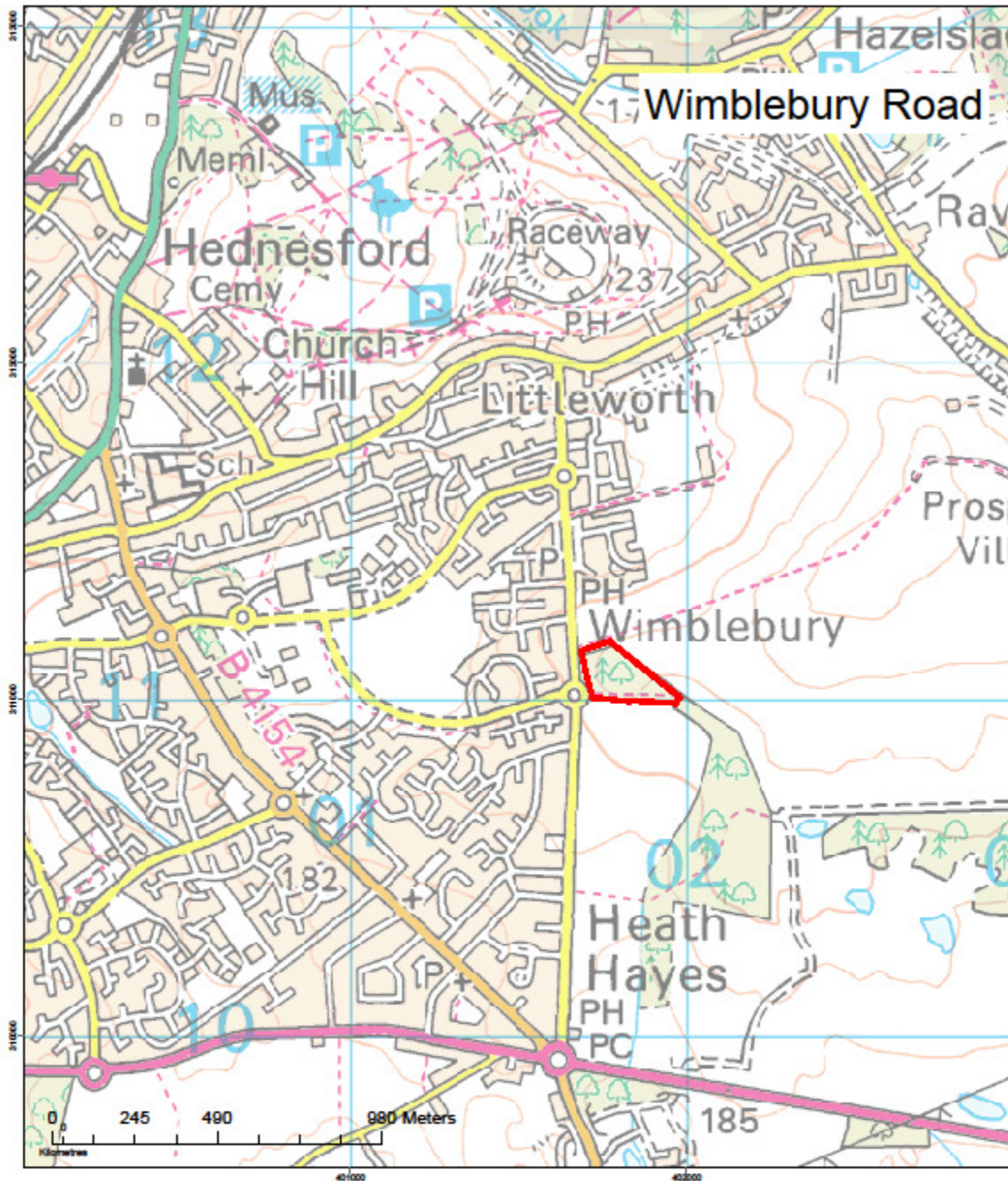
Size: 3 ha

Description

This is a small wooded mound left largely untouched since the Bleak House Opencast Site closed. It was managed by the Forest of Mercia until recently for low level informal access and minor woodland management. There are no features of interest and access to the site is difficult. It is therefore not well used.

Opportunities / Liabilities

Opportunity to develop this site is limited and there has been no interest by local people to assist with its maintenance. There are no major liabilities attached to the site..



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	3
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	No
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Low

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Branston

Electoral Ward: Needwood Forest

Member: Tim Corbett

Parish Council: Branston

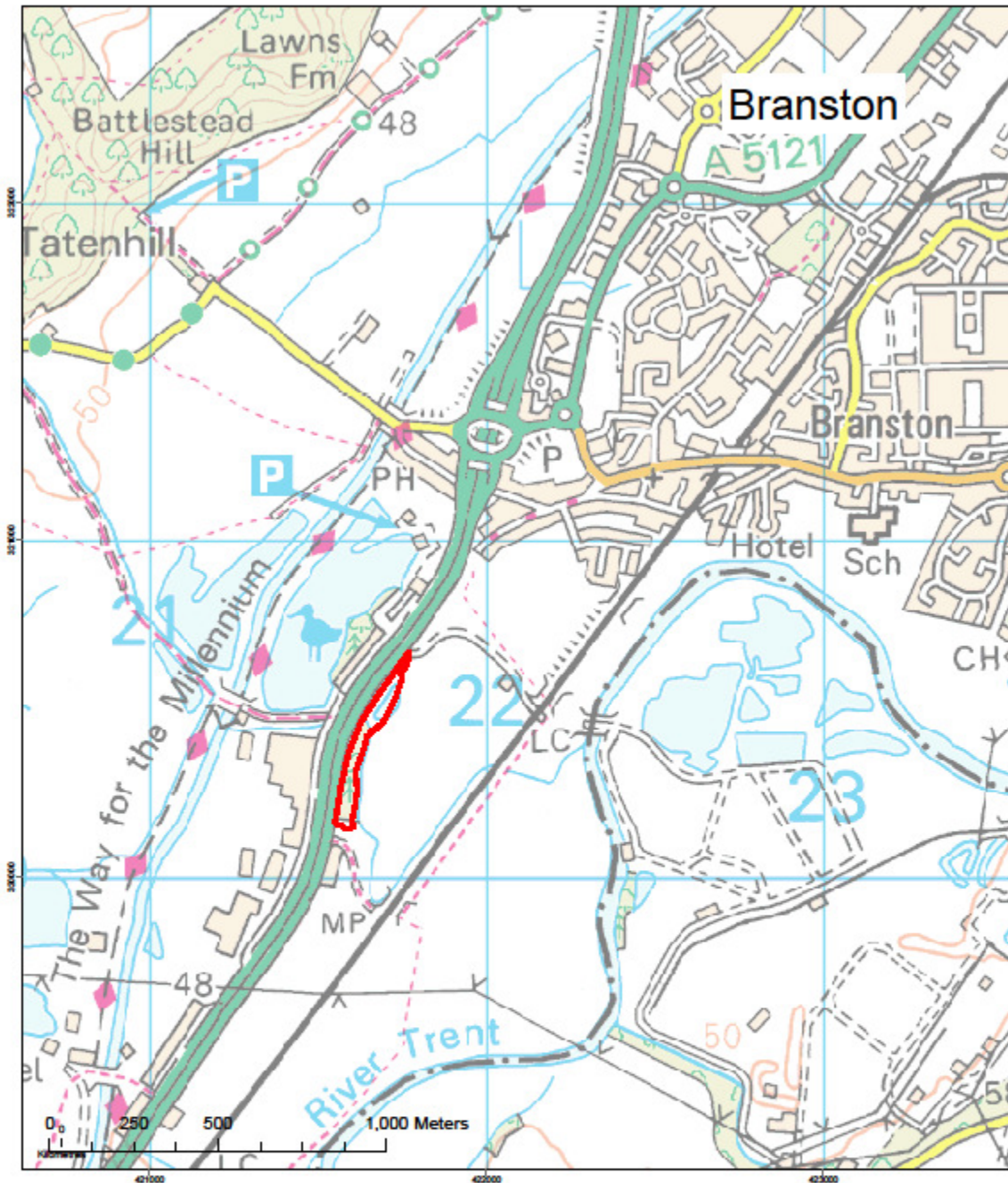
Size: 2 ha

Description

This is a very small area of land next to the busy A38 which is not accessible to the public.

Opportunities / Liabilities

No opportunities for development. No works have been required or carried out for many years.



 Site Boundary

Size in hectares	2
Structures present?	No
Waterbodies present?	No
Statutory or Planning Designations in force?	Yes
Proximity to Local Population	Low
Community Benefit	Low

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Appendix 1 – Summary Details of Countryside Sites

Page 85

Site Name	Size			Facilities							No of Visits p.a. (approx)			Main Management Aims					Volunteer group on site
	< 5ha	5 – 20ha	> 20 ha	Visitor centre	Car parks	Toilets	Information	Signs	Catering provision	Picnic area	< 50,000	50 – 250,000	> 250,000	Informal recreation	Nature conservation	Agricultural production	Forestry / Wood fuel	Other	
Cannock Chase Country Park			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Apedale Country Park			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Consall Country Park			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Deep Hayes Country Park			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓				✓
Greenway Bank Country Park			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Chasewater Country Park inc Norton Bog			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Froghall Picnic Area	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
Oakamoor Picnic Area		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
Sevens Road Picnic Area		✓			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓					
Hanbury Common Picnic Area	✓				✓			✓		✓	✓			✓	✓				✓
Brownshore Lane Picnic Area		✓			✓			✓		✓	✓			✓					✓
Chillington Picnic Area	✓				✓			✓		✓	✓			✓					
Hanchurch Hills Picnic Area		✓			✓			✓		✓	✓								
Fair Oak Picnic Area	✓							✓		✓	✓			✓					
Hatherton Reservoir		✓			✓			✓		✓	✓			✓					✓
Stafford Newport Greenway		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
Oakamoor Denstone Greenway		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
Leek to Rushton Greenway		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓					
Broad Lane, Essington		✓																✓	
Wimblebury Mound, Wimblebury	✓																	✓	
Branston	✓																	✓	

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 18 December 2014

Countryside Estate Management Review

Recommendation/s

1. That the Committee debates the proposed approach for reviewing the management arrangements for the countryside estate.
2. That the Committee agrees the adoption of the proposed critical success factors.

Report of Mark Winnington Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

3. The county council is reviewing its existing arrangements for managing the countryside estate. The Review is part of the wider vision to create a connected Staffordshire where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy. The Project is still at an early stage of development and this is an opportunity for Members to discuss the proposals and to influence and shape the Project.
4. The Select Committee's comments will be reported to Cabinet so that they can be taken into account in their consideration of any proposed new delivery options for managing the countryside estate.

Background

Overview

5. The county council owns a large diverse countryside estate. This helps to make a significant contribution to many of its priorities, including enabling people to lead a healthy lifestyle benefitting both their physical and mental well-being and providing opportunities to enhance their skills, and in some cases employment potential, through volunteering opportunities. Alongside the main country parks, the estate also comprises a number of smaller sites. While the main country parks are very popular and make a significant contribution to the county council's wider priorities, the smaller sites tend to be more of a local recreational asset. As such, these smaller sites have more limited potential to support the county council's wider priorities but they still have to be managed to meet legal liabilities and obligations.

6. The Project aims to identify and establish a range of alternative delivery models for managing the estate, ensuring its long-term sustainability and ensuring that it delivers a range of important health, social and economic outcomes for Staffordshire's residents.

The Existing Management Arrangements

7. The county council owns and manages a large countryside estate totalling about 6000 acres. This estate comprises six large country parks, nine picnic areas, a number of smaller sites and 3 disused railway lines. All of the country parks have protected habitats and sites. Cannock Chase Country Park is the largest country park and is designated a Special Area of Conservation, lying within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Please see the attached map showing the principal sites (Appendix A).

8. Most of the sites are located on the fringe of urban development and provide a significant resource for outdoor recreation. Also many sites have had a previous industrial use and considerable investment has been made to transform them and return them to the community as the valued assets that they are today.

9. Owning and managing countryside sites are discretionary. However, having assumed ownership of the sites, the county council is responsible for a wide range of statutory duties and obligations. In many cases the county council was bequeathed sites on the basis that they are held in trust on behalf of and for the use of the people of Staffordshire.

10. The management of the countryside estate is mostly delivered in-house by the Ranger Service and the Countryside Works Unit. Most of the maintenance work on the estate is carried out by the in-house Works Unit with a significant contribution from local communities and volunteers. External contractors are only employed for large-scale woodland management and engineering works.

11. The Ranger Service and Works Unit are supported by the Environmental Advice team as and when required. Their support is crucial to the successful management of some sites particularly those with protected habitats and features. Their active management of these protected sites generates about £185,000 per annum of external funding through Higher Level Stewardship schemes, helping to offset some of the estate's operating costs.

12. In light of the close working relationship between the Countryside Estate team and the Environmental Advice team any impact of any changes to the delivery of country parks on the environmental specialists will also need to be carefully considered.

13. Both activities are within the scope of the Infrastructure+ project. It is essential therefore that any decisions about the future delivery of these activities are not made in isolation and are also considered in conjunction with this Review.

Why not continue with our existing management arrangements?

14. The business drivers for reviewing our existing management arrangements are detailed below.

15. **Financial:** The funding available for managing the countryside estate has been reduced over the last few years but further savings still need to be achieved. Although every effort is made to offset some of the operating costs by income generation, the net

cost is still estimated to be in the region of £1.2m per annum. So far, the financial savings targets have been met through a range of approaches, such as re-structures, a streamlining of processes and procedures and an increasing use of volunteers. However, the ability to meet future financial pressures through equivalent changes is limited. Without a fundamental reshape of the management of the estate, future savings can only be achieved by a reduction in service quality.

16. Changing Demands and Needs: Changing visitor demands and expectations are also adding to financial pressures. Over the last few years, there has been a sustained rise in the number, and also profile, of visitors, particularly to the six main country parks. Visits are no longer seasonal. This increased all-year round use is increasing site maintenance and cleaning costs. Also because of demographic changes like the increase in the number of people aged 65 and over, more elderly and retired people are visiting country parks with different needs. This and other similar demographic changes have led to changing demands, for example more easily accessible routes, which also have budgetary implications.

17. Outcome-based Commissioning: Aside from the financial imperative, the introduction of the Commissioning Framework in early 2013 changed the county council's approach to the delivery of services, including developing new ways of providing what people want and need which may not be directly through the County Council.

18. Partnership Working & Better Outcomes: Soft market testing has indicated that there is an appetite amongst landowners such as some District Councils, the RSPB and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to collaboratively manage some sites. It is felt that better outcomes for Staffordshire's residents and nature conservation, and also savings, could be made through developing partnership management arrangements with other landowners, local communities and volunteers. Developing the green space provision across the whole of Staffordshire, particularly that close to the urban areas could make a significant contribution to the county council's priorities of better health and "well-being" and also help with prosperity.

19. Local communities and volunteers have been closely involved with the management and maintenance of the countryside estate for many years and their input is the lynchpin to the successful management of the countryside estate, particularly the smaller sites.

20. Market Changes: Market changes have seen a growth within the private sector in the delivery of public services. The County Council is currently working towards establishing a strategic partnership with AMEY for the delivery of some of its services, including the maintenance of its country parks. The management of the country parks could also be included within the scope of this project.

Existing Insight

21. The Project is still at the Initiation/ Feasibility Stage but it will be structured around the county council's commissioning principles. A proposed timeline for the Project is attached at Appendix B.

22. Some scoping work has already been carried out which will underpin the Project and in some cases, help to identify alternative delivery models for managing the countryside estate.

- A report which looked into the feasibility of transferring the ownership of countryside sites to the “Big Society” for example to charitable organisations was prepared by the county council’s Policy and Performance team in 2011. One of the key findings of the report and of particular relevance to this Review is that transferring ownership of all of the countryside estate would have significant cost implications. Most of the sites have a negative land value. Transferring ownership to a single or multiple providers would not result in any capital gain but would require the county council to provide a dowry as a necessary incentive. For those sites with liabilities such as reservoirs and dams the dowry could be significant.
- A desk top assessment of the countryside estate was carried out in 2011 (recently updated) which included a cost-benefit analysis of each site. The assessment categorised the sites into 3 main groups: those which meet the county council’s wider aims, those which provide valuable access to local green space, but are incapable of supporting other core ambitions and those which have little or no public benefit in terms of outdoor recreation and could be disposed of. Two of the sites identified within this category have been sold.
- Some insight about the countryside estate has also been gathered as part of the processes linked to the Infrastructure+ and Chasewater Country Park Projects which will also provide relevant insight for this Project. It is anticipated that further insight and consultation with stakeholders will be a major component of the overall project.

Potential Options

23. We know from recent discussions and past experience that there is an appetite amongst the private, public and third sector to collaboratively manage the green space provision county wide. This desire in some cases stems not only from a need to realise savings but also, to improve the “public offer” and capitalise on the social return on investment.

24. Alternative arrangements are likely to include collaborative management with other landowners or local community groups, a strategic partnership with a private sector company such as AMEY, transferring one or more of the sites to a third sector organisation or employment of a Community Interest Company. It is not envisaged that the delivery models will be mutually exclusive. For example, on some sites, particularly the main country parks, a combination of models could be used.

Next Steps

25. While we know from recent discussions and past experience that there is an appetite amongst partners, local communities and volunteers to become involved in the management of the countryside estate, the extent or willingness of that involvement has not yet been tested and further discussions are required. The next step is to engage with all internal and external stakeholders to obtain a more definitive response to establishing joint management arrangements and also, to develop a range of alternative delivery models for managing the countryside estate, and possibly other green space sites within the county. This formal engagement will be supported by the Customer insight team.

26. We need to ensure that any new management arrangements focus on the delivery of outcomes rather than outputs. Given that the Service area is in scope for the

Infrastructure+ Project which is outcome-focussed, it is proposed at this stage to use similar core objectives and Critical Success Factors (CSFs) as agreed for that Project, and the Connected Libraries Project. The core objectives are therefore likely to be:

- To maintain and improve the condition and usability of the country parks;
- To reduce the cost of delivering the Service;
- To involve communities in decisions and delivery of the country parks;
- To improve customer satisfaction in Staffordshire County Council and to enhance its reputation.

27. The Critical Success Factors to be used as the basis for evaluating any alternative delivery models identified for managing the countryside estate are likely to be:

- Increased value and prosperity for Staffordshire through a positive impact to SCC outcomes.
- A customer focussed service which enhances customer satisfaction and the reputation of the Council
- Financially sustainable and resilient services
- The flexibility to meet changing future demands through innovation and development

These Critical Success Factors will need to be developed in more detail at a later stage to ensure that any new management arrangements deliver the required outcomes.

28. The Select Committee's comments on this approach are sought.

29. It is anticipated that public consultation on any new delivery models for managing the countryside estate will commence at beginning of April 2015. The purpose of this exercise is to gain additional information and insight to inform the next stages and again, will be supported by the Customer Insight Team.

30. Any proposed changes to the existing management arrangements of the Countryside Estate may impact on employment. All staff affected by the Review and their Trade Union representatives have been briefed; engagement and full consultation, where required, will continue to take place on an ongoing basis as proposals are developed.

Link to Strategic Plan – The successful management of the countryside estate contributes to the county council's wider vision to create a connected Staffordshire where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy. As part of the achievement of that vision, there is a need for continual review to develop new and different ways of working to achieve outcomes with fewer resources.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity – The Select Committee has played a key role in both the Infrastructure+ and Chasewater projects.

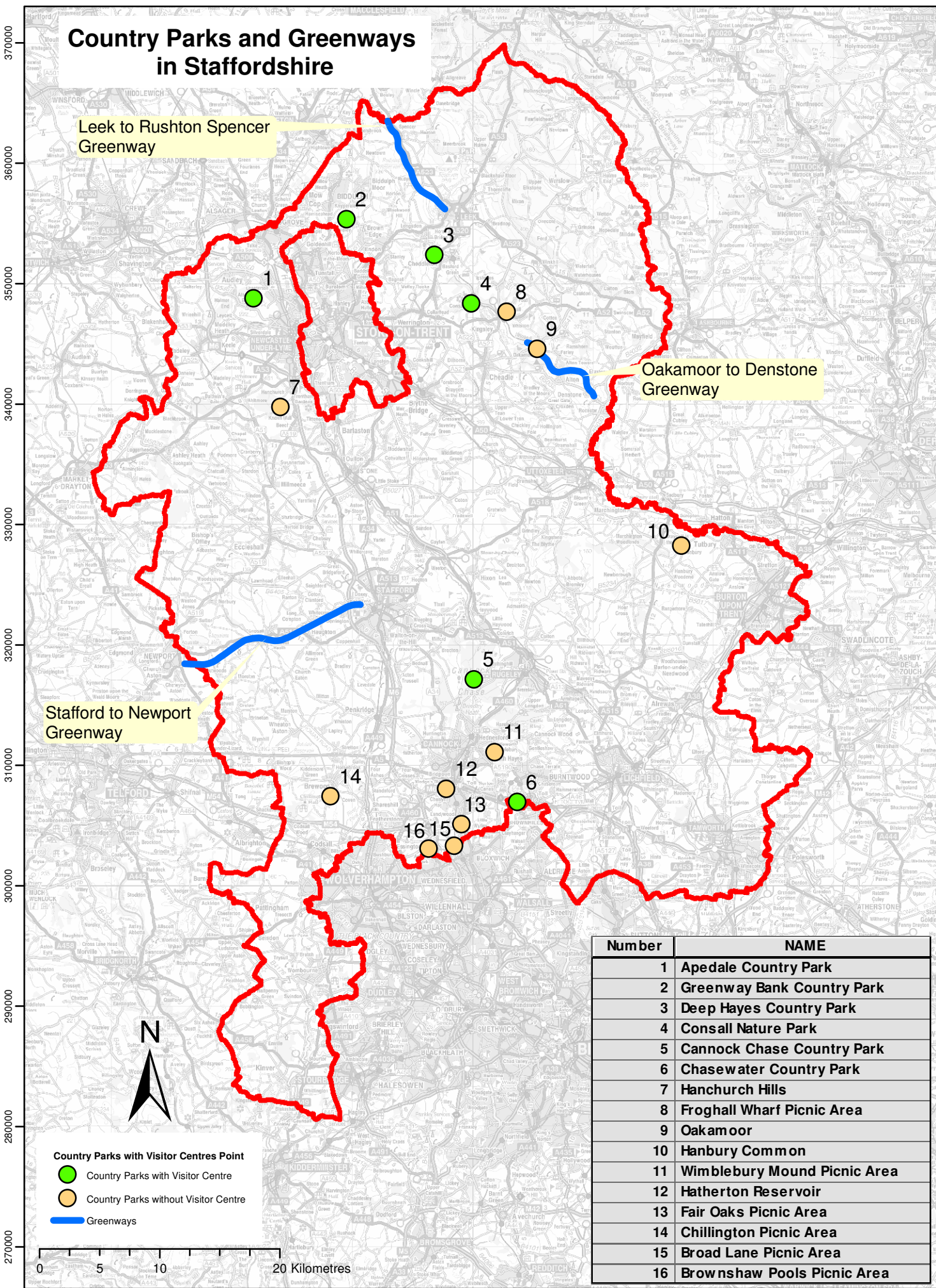
Community Impact - A full community impact assessment will be completed as part of the Project.

Contact Officer

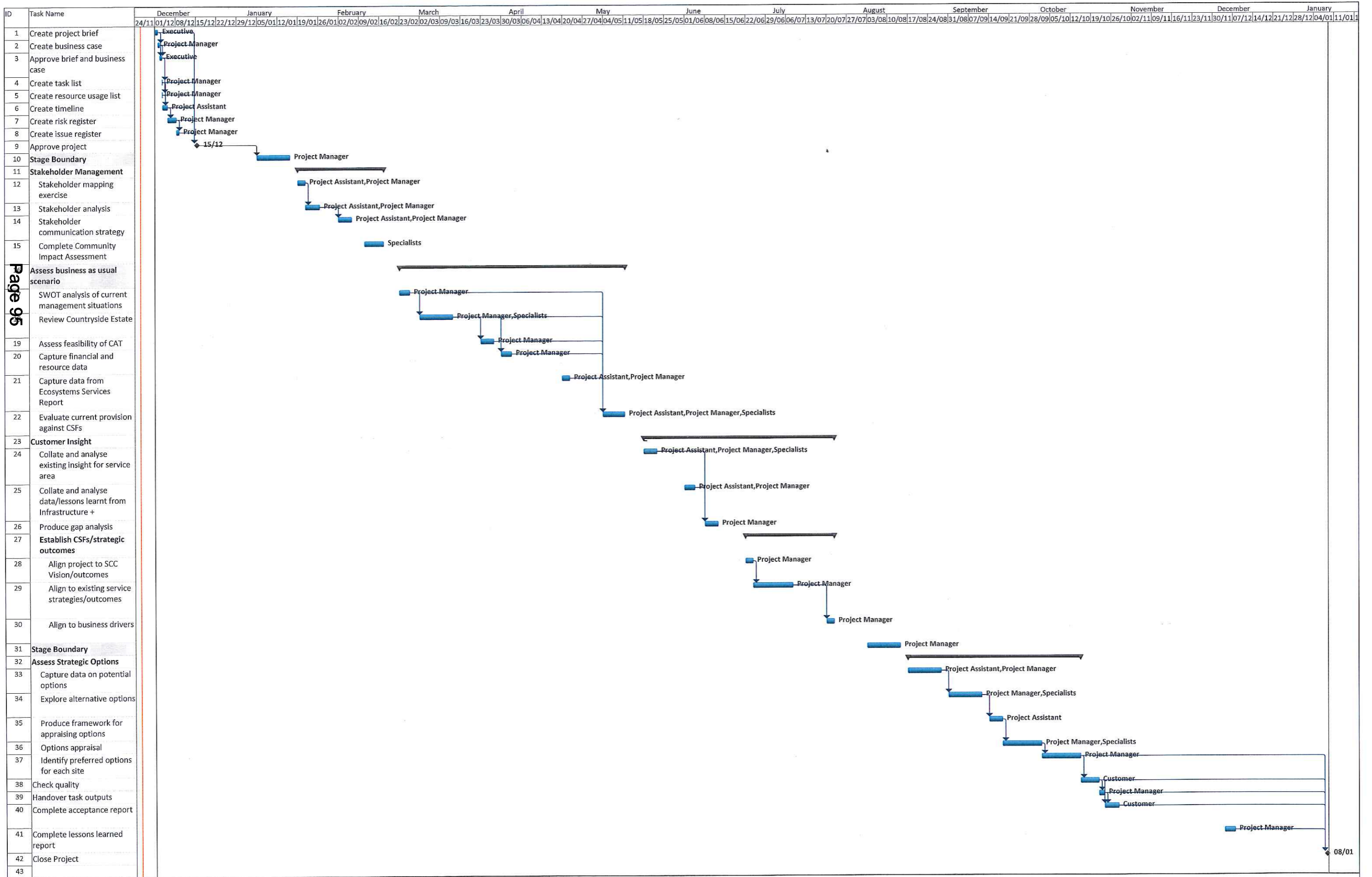
Noreen Davidson
Rural Access Manager
Comm: Ian Wykes
Telephone No.: 01785 277240
Address/e-mail: Noreen.davidson@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appendices/Background papers**Appendix A – Map of Principal Sites****Appendix B – Project Timeline**

Country Parks and Greenways in Staffordshire



Number	NAME
1	Apedale Country Park
2	Greenway Bank Country Park
3	Deep Hayes Country Park
4	Consall Nature Park
5	Cannock Chase Country Park
6	Chasewater Country Park
7	Hanchurch Hills
8	Froghall Wharf Picnic Area
9	Oakamoor
10	Hanbury Common
11	Wimblebury Mound Picnic Area
12	Hatherton Reservoir
13	Fair Oaks Picnic Area
14	Chillington Picnic Area
15	Broad Lane Picnic Area
16	Brownshaw Pools Picnic Area



Page 95

Project: msproj11
Date: Wed 26/11/14

Task	Summary	External Milestone	Inactive Summary	Manual Summary Rollup	Finish-only	
Split	Project Summary	Inactive Task	Manual Task	Manual Summary	Deadline	
Milestone	External Tasks	Inactive Milestone	Duration-only	Start-only	Progress	

Summary of Community Impact Assessment (including a Health Impact Assessment if applicable) for Countryside Estate Review

	Impact Assessment	
SCC's Priority Outcomes & Impact Areas	Impact: (positive / neutral / negative)	Provide brief detail of impact
Prosperity, knowledge, skills, aspirations	positive	The estate already makes a significant contribution to inward investment and providing green infrastructure to make Staffordshire an attractive place to live and invest. Many businesses are directly based on or use the country parks. This includes the business units at Chasewater as well as Entrust and numerous concessions. The hosting of events such as Ironman brings in additional visitors supporting the tourist economy. Many of the volunteers are looking for work experience and many go on into fulltime employment or training. Many of the options are concerned with growing the volunteer offer. The review's aim to secure a sustainable future for the estate should ensure that these impacts are maintained for the future.
Living safely	positive	The estate provides many opportunities for human connection and social interaction, not least members of the public using them for social gatherings. Many sports clubs and other interest groups utilise the estate. The Friends of Groups and volunteering opportunities provide valuable social interaction. The review seeks to co-design the future with communities and co-production can only increase the value of the estate in its contribution to social well-being and cohesion.
Supporting vulnerable people	positive	The parks provide a variety of

		<p>'managed access' opportunities such as Newcastle Countryside Project at Apedale and Forest of Mercia at Chasewater. In addition many other vulnerable groups access the estate in a private capacity or through a variety of third party enterprises. In the case of Apedale and Chasewater they offer valuable green space for some of the most deprived communities in Staffordshire. As part of the consultation views will be sought on how the benefits that the estate makes for vulnerable people can be maximised.</p>
Supporting healthier living	positive	<p>The countryside estate in total probably represents the largest area of public access and amenity land in Staffordshire. It hosts an extensive range of informal and formal recreational and sporting activities.</p> <p>Work is ongoing with colleagues in Public Health to capture the health benefits the estate provides and will be included in the CIA going forward. A sustainable future for the estate would ensure these benefits are maintained and developed.</p>
Highways and transport networks	neutral	<p>The review will not have any immediate impact on the network. Increased footfall will be mainly due to increased population which will need to be assessed more widely.</p>
Learning, education and culture	positive	<p>The countryside estate offers a valuable learning environment including Forest Schools, school visits and other activities such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards. The Outdoor Education Centre at Chasewater is situated within the park. Although due to financial pressures the county council can deliver less educational activities directly such as school visits and guided walks opportunities are still being delivered where external</p>

		<p>funding can be obtained such as the recent community archaeological excavation of the Messines Model on Cannock Chase. Many of the sites also have important remains of their industrial heritage such as the lime kilns at Froghall. The review is looking at working with partners who also offer educational activities to create additionality.</p>
Children and young people	neutral	<p>The countryside estate provides numerous recreational, social and education opportunities for young people. It is not anticipated that the transformation of the countryside offer will have any specific impact on these age groups.</p>
Citizens and decision making, improved community involvement	positive	<p>The countryside estate is very community facing and through “Friends of Groups” and other volunteers communities already play an important part in its management and maintenance. Many of the options would allow for more co design and co-production with communities. Communities have been engaged through the parish councils and any options will be subject to full public consultation.</p>
Physical environment including climate change	neutral - negative	<p>The Ecosystem Services study of the country parks has demonstrated that they provide considerable natural services such as improving air quality, carbon sequestration and flood regulation. Many of the sites provide valuable ecological habitats and are managed to enhance and protect these, such as the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) on Cannock Chase. The environmental requirements of the sites will need to be carefully considered against the different options to ensure suitable management arrangements remain in place.</p>

		Some options would deliver improvements through additional resources, while others may result in reduced specialist input. Any increase of visitor footfall will need to be carefully managed to ensure that the impact on the environment is minimised.
Maximisation of use of community property portfolio	positive	The key aspiration of the review is to look at a sustainable future for the countryside estate at less cost to the public purse whilst ensuring it still fully contributes to the outcomes.
Equalities Impact	Impact: (positive / neutral / negative)	Provide brief detail of impact
Age	neutral	The Countryside Estate is a universal asset provided for all. The critical success factors ensure that this will remain the same and many of the options involve co-design and co-production so the benefit and opportunities can be maximised
Disability	neutral	
Ethnicity	neutral	
Gender	neutral	
Religion / Belief	neutral	
Sexuality	neutral	
Impact / Implications		
Resource and value for money (in consultation with finance representatives)	Resource implications arising from the re-positioning of the countryside offer will be addressed as the review is further developed and rolled out. Due regard will need to be made to the existing savings target of £110k and an aspiration for an overall net reduction in cost for the next five years.	
Risks identified and mitigation offered (see corporate risk register categorisation)	A full Risk Assumptions Issues Dependencies (RAID) Log has been produced.	
Legal imperative to change if applicable (in consultation with legal representative)	Country Parks are not a statutory duty but their management and maintenance brings with it numerous statutory obligations. Full due diligence is being undertaken in this regard to ensure that any options would still meet statutory obligations.	



Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Work Programme 2015/16

This document sets out the work programme for the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee for 2015/16. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity, education, learning and skills. As such the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth.

We review our work programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something important comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

County Councillor Simon Tagg

Chairman of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Tina Randall, Scrutiny and Support Manager, 01785 276148 or by emailing tina.randall@staffordshire.gov.uk

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
Economy of Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers/ Steve Burrows	1 June 2015	Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire	To consider the detail of the Cabinet's "deep dive" into the economy of Staffordshire and consider what aspects should lead to further scrutiny. <i>(New item suggested by the Cabinet Member at 5/2/2015 Triangulation)</i>	Members agreed further scrutiny around the LEP as well as skills and apprenticeships which will be considered within the Education Trust item (already included on the work programme)
Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire: Part 4 Mobile and Travelling Library Review Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead Officer: Janene Fox/Catherine Mann	1 June 2015 This item will be come back to PSSC once the results of the consultation are available.	Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology.	To consider the review of the mobile and travelling library service in Staffordshire. <i>(Part of the wider Library review last considered by PSSC on 23 January 2015)</i>	Members wrote to the Cabinet Member with comments on the consultation, including extending the consultation period to 12 weeks and requesting that the outcome of the consultation be brought back to this committee.
Rail Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Clive Thomson/Clare Horton	1 June 2015 This item will come back to PSSC once the results of the consultation are available.	Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology.	Monitoring progress of delivery <i>(Carry over from 2014/15 Work Programme)</i>	Members requested more detail be included on the County's vision for more affordable rail travel and a better passenger experience. They also requested an appendix identifying the work around HS2 to support the consultation document. The results of this consultation to be brought back to the Committee.

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
Minerals Local Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Matthew Griffin	24 July 2015	Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets.	To consider the next draft of the Minerals Local Plan, as part of the consultation, following the Planning meeting of 4 June 2015. <i>(Last considered by the PSSC on 24 April 2014 – following which a working group had been established to produce the select Committee's response to the consultation)</i>	The Select Committee endorsed the Plan and congratulated the officers involved in a good piece of work
Adult and Community Learning Strategy Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Tony Baines/Theresa McKenna	24 July 2015	Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning	New item	The Select Committee agreed to build a regular opportunity for scrutiny at a point in the annual cycle that allowed for greatest influence and impact in shaping priorities for the future. Members also requested smarter targets be used to allow better self evaluation and scrutiny.
Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Forecast Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Andrew Marsden (refer to previous	24 July 2015	Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.	The Select Committee have previously looked at school organisation, school places and the development of academies. A further update on the SLIF including locality plans was requested to be brought to the Committee in summer	Members endorsed the SLIF and its approach to planning the necessary infrastructure. They also wish to see an education lead on each district and borough planning committee to ensure that when planning decisions are taken the educational

PSSC

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
consideration of School Organisation and Capital On 6 March 2015)			2015. <i>(This was last considered on 6 March 2015).</i>	implications are taken into account.
Countryside Estate Management Review Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Wykes	4 September 2015	<p>Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets.</p> <p>Enjoying Life Strengthen public confidence in the county as a great place to live with lots of opportunities to enjoy life.</p>	<p>Members requested a further update.</p> <p><i>(Last considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014)</i></p> <p>Arrangements have been made for visits to the Countryside Estate (north) on 17 August and (south) on 29 August. These visits gave an opportunity for members to gain a thorough understanding of the Estate prior to considering the review at its 4 September meeting.</p>	
School attendance, exclusions and participation Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday	4 September 2015	<p>Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.</p>	New item	
The Growth Fund including the work of the Education Trust Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington and Ben Adams Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers, Anna Halliday and Tony	12 October 2015	<p>Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire</p>	<p>To consider the development of the Growth fund projects.</p> <p><i>(Last considered by PSSC on 5 September 2014)</i></p>	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
<p>Baines</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 105</p>			<p>After discussions at the 29 July triangulation meeting it was agreed that this item would include detail of the Education Trust - previously a separate work programme item to look at the development of the Trust's work and the impact it had made to date.</p> <p>Following the PSSC meeting of 1 June 2015 Members requested detail on skills and apprenticeships to be scrutinised as part of their consideration of the Education Trust.</p>	
<p>Impact of SEND reforms Cabinet Member – Ben Adams Lead Officer – Nichola Glover-Edge</p>	<p>12 October 2015</p>	<p>Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.</p>	<p>To consider the impact of the SEND reforms for Staffordshire children.</p> <p><i>(Carried over from the 2014/15 Work Programme)</i></p> <p>Following the 29 July triangulation meeting it was agreed that an initial report be brought outlining the transfer numbers, whilst the more in-depth report come to 4 March meeting</p>	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire- Part 4 Mobile and Travelling Library Review Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead Officer - Janene Cox/Catherine Mann	12 October 2015	Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology.	To consider the results of the consultation on mobile and travelling library service in Staffordshire. <i>(Last considered on 1 June 2015 and part of the wider Library review previously considered by PSSC on 23 January 2015)</i>	
Pupil Premium Plus Policy Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Sarah Rivers Page 106	17 December 2015	Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education	One of the recommendation of the Working Group on Children Missing Out On Education was for the Select Committee to receive an account from the Virtual Headteacher of how effective the mechanisms had been in operating the Pupil Premium Plus Policy Members wish to explore the value of the Pupil Premium in making a difference. <i>(The Working Group report was considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014)</i>	
Sustainability in Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Evers	17 December 2015	Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire	To consider the sustainability work taking place county wide <i>(New item suggested by the</i>	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
			<i>Cabinet Member at 5/2/2015 Triangulation)</i>	
Education Support Services –Commissioning and Contract Performance Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead officer: Ian H Benson	22 January 2016	Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education	Monitoring progress of contract with Entrust to ensure that it is delivering intended outcomes. <i>(Previously considered on 5 September 2014)</i>	
School Improvement Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday	22 January 2016	Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.	Consideration of possible changes to the management of school improvement and the action plan for school improvement <i>(Last considered by PSSC on 5 September 2014)</i>	
School Attainment in Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday	22 January 2016	Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.	Annual item to brief members on attainment in Staffordshire schools.	
Impact of SEND reforms Cabinet Member – Ben Adams Lead Officer – Nichola Glover-Edge	4 March 2016	Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.	To consider the impact of the SEND reforms for Staffordshire children. <i>(Following the initial report taken to 15 October 2015 Select Committee)</i>	
Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Cabinet Member: Ben Adams	4 March 2016	Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long	Following consideration of ACL on 24 July the Select Committee agreed to build a regular opportunity for	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Link to the Council's Business Plan	Details	Action/Outcome
Lead Officer: Tony Baines/Theresa McKenna		learning	scrutiny at a point in the annual cycle that allowed for greatest influence and impact in shaping priorities for the future.	
Strategic Economic Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Evers	tbc	Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire.	At their meeting of 5 September 2014 Members scrutinised progress on the European Growth Deal submission and agreed to look at the best way to scrutinise the 8 projects, and whether joint scrutiny with Stoke-on-Trent City Council would be appropriate.	
Car Parking Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: James Bailey and David Walters	tbc	Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire	Following consideration of call-in of the parking strategy by the Corporate Review Committee (9 July 2015) they agreed "that implementation of the Car Parking Strategy be scrutinised following consultation by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee and that the views on implementation be sought from the relevant local district/borough council scrutiny committees"	

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Working Groups				
Infrastructure + Working Group Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: James Bailey	8 and 29 July 4 September	Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology.	Following their 6 March consideration of Infrastructure + Members agreed to set up a working group in June/July to advise on how they wish to scrutinise the governance of the Infrastructure + contract.	This group has met twice with the third and final meeting being held in September. The Working Group will then report back to the Select Committee.
Working Together to address the impact that HGVs have on Staffordshire roads and local communities Page 6109		Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology.	Following a petition presented at Annual Council the Select Committee agreed to set up a working group to consider the concerns raised around HGVs on the A515. This issue has now been widened to address all Staffordshire roads. Membership of the Working Group has been agreed	
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services Working Group Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officers: Denise Tolson and Dawn Jennens	This Working Group will start at beginning June 2015	Living Well Enable positive behaviour and support those who need it most, support independence at all ages and for those with disabilities or illness.	The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee have set up a working group to look at the issue of emotional wellbeing and mental health services following their consideration of strategies on these issues. Because of	Mike Worthington is the Select Committee's representative on this Working Group. The Group has met twice so far and has meetings scheduled throughout the

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			the crosscutting nature of these issues their Chairman has invited a member of PSSC to join the Group.	Autumn. It hopes to report back to Select Committee in December.
Briefing notes/updates and referrals				
Superfast Staffordshire (Broadband) Lead Officer: Paul Chatwin Page 110		Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. and Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire	At their October 2014 meeting Members requested a further update in six month's time.	
A 50 Growth Corridor Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Steve Burrows		Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire	To update the Committee on proposals to undertake a major improvement to the A50 in Uttoxeter. <i>(last considered by PSSC on 7 March 2014)</i> Following the triangulation meeting of 29 July it was agreed that this should be addressed via a briefing note rather than a stand alone agenda item.	

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Bradwell Lane Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Richard Harris	12 August 2015 Chairman's informal meeting with Emma Meadon and Sandra Hambleton	Included on the work programme as part of the Petition Scheme process	A petition with over 2,500 signatures requesting traffic calming measures at Bradwell Lane, Newcastle had been presented by Mrs Emma Meadon at the 25 July Select Committee. This issue will be considered again once the Coroners' report on the fatal accident that prompted the petition has been received.	Following the outcome of the Court Case, which judged that the accident had been caused by driver error, it was agreed that a meeting should be arranged between Emma Meadon, Sandra Hambleton (local member), David Greatbatch (Community Infrastructure Liaison Officer) and the Select Committee Chairman to resolve any outstanding issues. Select Committee Members will receive a briefing paper on the outcome of this meeting.

<p>Membership</p> <p>Simon Tagg (Chairman) David Loades (Vice-Chairman) George Adamson Len Bloomer Maureen Compton Tim Corbett Ian Hollinshead Geoff Martin Sheree People</p>	<p>Calendar of Committee Meetings (at 10.00 am and at County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford ST16 2LH unless otherwise stated)</p> <p>1 June 2015, 10.00 am 24 July 2015, 10.00 am 4 September 2015, 10.00 am 12 October 2015, 10.00 am 17 December 2015, 10.00 am 22 January 2016, 10.00 am 4 March 2016, 10.00 am</p>
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Mike Worthington
Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf (Co-optee)
Paul Woodhead (Co-optee)
Candice Yeomans (Co-optee)

