



IRMP 21-25 Risk Review; Tourism.

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Executive Summary

Shropshire tourism is expanding, more people are travelling into the County. This means that in populated areas such as Telford and Shrewsbury life risk is found in a hotel system that is frequently at capacity. The tourism related life risk in the rural areas is also increasing, this is supported by high levels of diversification in farming. Camp sites, Caravan parks, Static Caravans, Timber lodges, Fisheries, Glamping pods are evolving across even the sparsest areas.

The resources and logistics that supports tourism are increasing the activities and life risk profiles in these rural areas. This increase might not be matched by a growth in local infrastructure.

Population data does not reflect this growth or the resulting life risk as it is not resident in the county. Santorini (Greek Island) has a population of 30k but has a life risk in summer tourism months of 400,000 plus, this is not comparable to Shropshire, but it does show the challenge of exclusively using resident population data.

Regulation of life risk in commercial activities (tourism) will inevitably increase the workload of the Protection Team. The activities that are incorporated into tourism also create risks. The river economy is yet to really take off in Shropshire but other areas such as Hereford and Worcester FRS have seen growth in river activities. It would be reasonable to assume this will grow in Shropshire.

Walking, Mountain biking and other outdoor pursuits will place more people in remote areas. We already assist Partners with extricating injured people from challenging terrain. Church Stretton Fire Station covers the Longmynd Hill and is often required to assist the west midland ambulance service.

People have tragically died from carbon monoxide poisoning whilst camping in Shropshire. The expansion of this style of tourism will increase the likelihood of this happening again.

The tourism in south Shropshire is a recruitment tool for pensioner migration to the County. The next generation of pensioners from around the UK continue to visit Shropshire and then re-locate to the county for retirement living.

£1 of every £10 spent on tourism in the West Midlands region is spent in Shropshire Over half of all visitors come for the countryside, rather than the towns.¹

Risk Summary.

- Tourism brings in large numbers of people to often remote rural areas increasing the life risk without necessarily increasing the population.
- Diversification in farming (see IRMP risk review Diversification Farming) is creating life risk through tourist activities; walking, orienteering, mountain biking, canoeing, rowing, abseiling, climbing and barge holidays.
- Increasing development of accommodation especially in previously agricultural settings will continue to increase the regulatory requirements of our Protection Team.
- Financial needs of the local economy will ensure that Tourism is further developed and encouraged. This trend is set to continue especially in agriculture.
- The socio-economic profile of visitors to Shropshire Hills may lead to further growth in people retiring to the county. South Shropshire (Shropshire Hills) already has a higher percentage of over 65's.
- More tourism will bring more vehicles to minor A and B roads. Drivers may be unfamiliar with such roads increasing the risk of RTC.
- The popularity of outdoor pursuits in rural locations coupled with the impact of climate change may increase the risk of wildfires even in the remote areas of Shropshire.
- The loss of a UNESCO world heritage site such as Telford's Ironbridge would have a severe economic and social impact on the county
- Carbon monoxide risk for campers and glampers.
- Adventure related tourism in Shropshire Hills. Businesses offering SAS style boot camps and activities are utilising rural areas such as Shropshire Hills.

Shropshire Tourism.

Shrewsbury is a medieval town full of heritage. It has an abundance of black and white buildings, the River Severn, a large amount of history including the birthplace of Charles Darwin. Shrewsbury has a large nighttime economy with a multitude of bars,

¹ britevents.com. Tourism in Shropshire is £561 million, contributing nine percent of the total West Midlands tourism spend.

restaurants, clubs and hotels. The town is becoming more popular with stag and hen parties which brings its own challenges. Shrewsbury has the only football league club in Shropshire with a capacity of just under 10,000. Shrewsbury has yet to really develop its river tourism, however this is an area likely to develop in the next decade.

In Telford the Ironbridge is the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. The town's Ironbridge is one of two World Heritage Sites in the county - you will also find the Severn Valley with 10 museums.

Telford, is named after Thomas Telford the renowned civil engineer and is one of the UK's fastest growing and most successful new towns - it contrasts with its historic neighbour Ironbridge the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution.

Telford has the biggest shopping centre in all of Shropshire. Open seven days a week, with parking for over 4000 cars. The amount of fuel in such a carpark could be compared to that categorised as a COMAH site. The impact of such a fire was seen in Liverpool at the Echo Arena Car Park where 1400 vehicles were destroyed in January 2018.

Telford has the award winning 450-acre Telford Town Park. This especially attractive to children with numerous activities

Telford has a Ski Centre and the Telford Steam Railway.

Telford has an Ice Rink and 2 cinemas including IMAX at Cineworld all walking distance from Telford Town Centre Shopping Mall and Southwater's Cafes and restaurants.

The Telford International Centre is the 6th largest exhibition centre in the UK and hosted the Conservative Party Election Manifesto launch in 2019. The nearby Racquet Centre hosts many prestigious sporting events.

Ludlow is based on the River Theme and is widely seen as Shropshire's gastronomic capital. The town sits within the Shropshire Hills AONB.

Much Wenlock, whose local games inspired the creation of the modern Olympics, offers an Olympic trail to explain this achievement.

North Shropshire is dominated by meres, canals and moss areas.²

The importance of tourism in Shropshire.

A study in 2011 stated that tourism was worth over £501³ million to Shropshire's economy and provided over 15,000 jobs. A further study⁴ indicated that over £211 million of this was spent by visitors in southern Shropshire alone⁵. This is 28% of all employment in tourism in the county and equal to 4,403 jobs⁶.

² shropshiretourism.co.uk

³ Shropshire Tourism data

⁴ Shropshire Tourism the Research Solution.

⁵ Including Severn Valley Railway

⁶ FTE Full time equivalent.

Tourism is vital to the economy of Shropshire. Many small businesses and farms depend on the opportunity tourism brings. Tourism is the lifeblood of many market towns. Money spent by visitors helps keep the communities together.

Who visits Shropshire?

Research into visitor profiles in the Shropshire Hills (AONB), over the last 12 years has consistently shown that the core visitor market fits the 'rest and relaxation traditional' profile.

They are typically post family, couples, aged 46-64, in the ABC1 socio-economic brackets. However, the raise in activity holidays and day trips also shows the Shropshire Hills as relevant to what was described as the 'Discoverer' market profile. These were ABC1 adults who were as likely to visit a museum as a wildlife attraction, enjoy outdoor leisure activities and are attracted to the countryside and small towns.⁷

In 2016, Visit England's Project Lion redefined their domestic visitor segmentation into five groups. These were based on gender, age, lifestyle, social class and region.

Using this updated approach audience segment can be described as 'Regular short breakers, day walkers, cyclists and outdoor enthusiasts, cultural tourists, skill, crafts and new experience seekers, nature enthusiasts and foodies'

The 2012-17 Tourism strategy also recognised two further market segments described as "Discoverers" and "Cosmopolitans." These two audience segments are have similar life profiles to "Traditional" but with a bias to the environment technology, organisation (i.e. the FRS), national and regional stakeholder plans.

The demography of visitors to the south of the county is quite affluent and approaching retirement years. The area has the highest residential population over 65 years, approximately 30%.

South Shropshire tourism is recruiting retiring pensioners to the area.

Data Graphs and Diagrams

Shropshire Council Data

Visitor numbers to Shropshire owned facilities (2016/17 to date):

- 890,000 to outdoor recreation visitor centres
- 146,000 to museums and archives
- 180,000 to Theatre Severn

⁷ Shropshire Hills Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2017-2022

- 64,500 to Old Market Hall (cinema)
- 1.9 million to leisure centres
- Attingham Park in top 5 paid visitor attractions in West Mids. (just under 500,000 visitors 2018)
- RAF Museum Cosford in top 3 unpaid visitor attractions in West Midlands (355,000 visitors 2015)

Telford and Wrekin Data

- 1 million plus visitors per annum to the Ironbridge Gorge

National Tourism Data

- There are 241,000 businesses in the UK tourism industry.
- Almost 90% of tourism and hospitality businesses employ fewer than 25 people.
- The tourism industry has created more than 400,000 new jobs over the last 10 years.⁸
- Foreign nations comprise 24% of the workforce, including 11% from the EU.
- Tourism businesses have 39% of their staff aged under 30, compared to an average of 21% for other businesses
- Over 26% of employees in the Tourism sector have GCE, A Level or equivalent qualification compared to 23% for non-tourism businesses.⁹
- Projections suggest that the sector will need to recruit an additional 1.3m more staff by the end of 2024.¹⁰

⁸ Office for National Statistics 2019

⁹ Employment Characteristics of Tourism Industries, Office for National Statistics, 2014

¹⁰ Tourism Alliance. Skills and workforce profile - hospitality and tourism, People 1st

Tourist Map of Shropshire

