State of the Shropshire Hills Report 2025

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Photographs owned by the Shropshire Hills National Landscape Team.

Craggatak Consulting acknowledges the support given by the National Landscape team; they have supplied materials and given access to research and survey resources. We set out the sources of data with each of our maps and tables.

Shropshire Hills National Landscape Team published a draft Nature Recovery Plan in 2021[1]. This is a separate but complimentary study. Though we use that report for cross-checking data, we do not duplicate its work in this report.

[1] Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership (2021): Shropshire Hills AONB Nature Recovery Plan March 2021

Location of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape

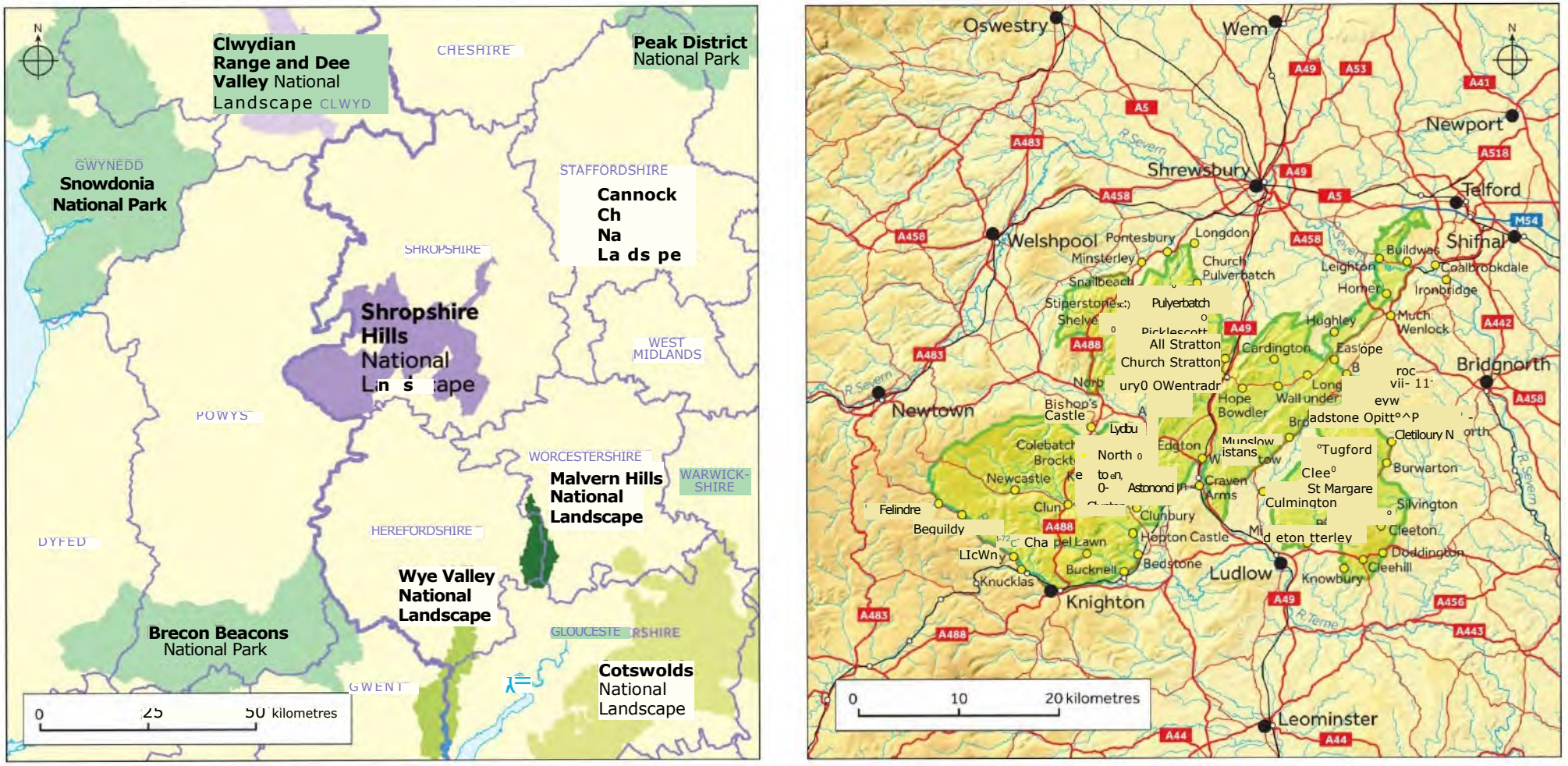


Figure 1: National Landscape and location: Source GIS data obtained from OS Open data and www.data.gov.uk – October 2024.

Headline indicators

Key to trend symbols:

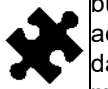

New baseline


Informative data


Condition improving


Condition declining


Not clear

Topic	Notes	Baseline	Trend
Nature			
Percentage of SSSI features in a favourable condition (PLTOF Target Indicator 2)	2025 - 48 SSSIs occupying 4,626 ha (5.7% of the National Landscape (NL)). **59.3%** of the SSSI features in favourable condition	2025 	Metric cannot be compared to previous data sets
Percentage of SSSI features assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition (PLTOF Target Indicator 3)	**14%** of SSSI features have 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition The average across the NLs is 15.3%; and for all England it is 14.1%	2024 	
Area of priority habitats	2025 - 10,281ha **12.7%** of the NL. 2013 – 12,887 ha covering **16%** of the NL	2013 	
Area of ancient woodland	2024 - 3,942 ha covering **4.9%** of the NL 2013 – 4,166 ha covering **5.2%** of the NL	2013 	
Locally protected sites LNRs etc	2024 – 1 Local Nature reserve @ 4.8 ha; 214 local wildlife sites - 4,850 ha covering **6%** of the NL; 16 Wildlife Trust Reserves - 598 ha covering **0.7%** of the NL 2019 - 1 Local Nature reserve @ 4.8 ha; 214 local wildlife sites - 4,850 ha covering **6%** of the NL	2019 	All sites mapped but no access to data, no measure of condition.
Length of hedgerows and other traditional field boundaries (PLTOF)	2024 - 6,800 km of hedgerows and/or other traditional field boundaries	2024 	

Air quality	2022 – Particulate matter - PM2.5 levels are relatively low in the area but with hotspots around settlements and along the busier roads. There are high concentrations along the length of A49, around Cleehill (A4117), Clun (A488) and at Rushbury (B4371) but only 4 grids have annual emissions of more than 1 tonnes 2022 – Sulphur Dioxide - SO_2 levels are low in the area but there are hotspots close to Church Stretton, Knighton, Craven Arms and Cleehill but only 3 grids have annual emissions of more than 0.8 tonnes 2022 – Ammonia - NH_3 levels are high related to intensive poultry units (annual emissions of more than 4 tonnes)	2022		
Climate				
Greenhouse gases (PLTOF Target Indicator 6)	There has been a **31.7% reduction** in total greenhouse gas emissions (includes a **17% increase** in the storage of carbon in vegetation and soils) between 2005 and 2022. • Agriculture is the highest producer of greenhouse gases in both years. It produced 245.5 kt CO2e in 2012 and 212.9 kt CO2e in 2022 (**13% reduction**). • Domestic was the next highest producer of greenhouse gases in 2012, producing 56.4 kt CO2e, this fell to 32.4 kt CO2e in 2022 (**43% reduction**). • Transport was a similar source of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012 at 54.8 kt CO2e, this rose to 57.7 kt CO2e in 2022 (**5% increase**). • There has been a **42% reduction** in emissions from waste management, a **38% reduction** from industrial, a **63% reduction** from commercial operations, and a **53% reduction** by the public sector between 2012 and 2022.	2005		First year this data set cut to NL boundary
	Carbon dioxide (CO_2) - transport produced 46% of emissions, domestic 26% and agriculture 21%. The highest concentrations (1995+ kt CO2e) are along the trunk roads and in the larger settlements. Methane (CH_4) - 95% of emissions are associated with agriculture (probably from livestock). Nitrous oxide (N_2O) is generally very low - 95% of local emissions are associated with agriculture	2022		
Carbon flux	The organic carbon flux from habitats present within the NL was set at -295,451 t CO2e or -3.7 t CO2e / ha. 93% of the stored carbon is below ground.	2024		

	6% increase in carbon stored in the local soils and vegetation between 2012 and 2022	2012		
Soil carbon	Much of the soils in the NL hold the equivalent of 150 tonnes of carbon per hectare but there are areas holding considerably more mainly in the 'Upland Heathland' and 'Fragmented Heath' Priority Habitats. There are two hot-spots between Knighton and Clunton that are not associated with biodiversity rich areas; they are large swathes of coniferous plantation on organic rich/former peat soil.	2022		
Renewable energy generation	There are four renewable energy generation sites operating within the NL (there are two awaiting construction).	2016		
Change in weather patterns	There is a 24.1-millimetre increase in annual rainfall and a rise of 0.9°C in annual mean temperature over the last 60 years. Recent years are wetter, but the overall average number of annual days of rainfall is stable over the period (overall annual average is 127.4 days).	1961		Getting wetter and warmer
Water				
Ecological status of rivers	2024 - **3.7%** of river length, **50%** of groundwater bodies and **3.9%** of water catchments have a good ecological status; none have a high status. % of river length with good status has **fallen by 9.5%** since 2020. 2020 – **13.2%** of rivers & **75%** of groundwater bodies have a good ecological status; none have a high status. 2013 – **64.3%** of rivers & **75%** of groundwater bodies have a good ecological status; none have a high status. Note: waterbody catchment data added in 2024; river length 35.7 shorter in 2013.	2020		Declining water quality
Area at risk of flooding	Generally, there is a very low flood risk within the NL between 2036 to 2069 but a high risk of localised flooding where the River Severn passes through the area and along the banks of the River Clun and its tributaries; and to a lesser extent along the River Corve.	2024		
Surface water flood risk	Most of the NL is at very low risk of flooding from surface water between 2040 and 2060. There is a high risk in the Severn Valley and medium to low risk of localised surface water flooding associated with the River Clun and its tributaries. Pockets of flooding are found along the Onny and Corve river systems.	2024		
Surface water velocity	High velocity flood water is possible in the upper reaches of the River Corve and Byne Brook but it is confined.	2024		

Land				
Peaty soils cover	3,519.8ha (4.4%) of the NL.	2025		
Land-use change	There has been little change since 2016. Some coniferous woodland has been converted to broadleaf and there has been a marginal increase in settlement size.	2016		
Agricultural land-use	There has been a small increase in the total area of agricultural land during the last ten years. In 2021, there were 64,917 ha of land under agriculture. This is an **increase of 2%** from 2010 (63,518 ha) and a **decline of 3%** since 2016 (67,026 ha). In 2021, 63% is down to permanent grass (40,851 ha).	2010		
Agricultural tenure	In 2021, 79% of the agricultural tenured land was owner occupied and 21% rented. In 2010, 74% and, in 2016, 77% of the agricultural tenured land was owner occupied.	2010		
Agricultural holdings	The number of holdings has risen from 812 in 2010 to 887 in 2021 (an **increase of 9%**). There is an increase in the smaller units (less than 50 ha) and a fall in the larger units.	2010		
Livestock numbers	Poultry is the largest group of livestock (1,691,376 animals), a **54% increase** in numbers since 2016 (the trend from 2010 is an **increase of just over 118%).** There are 160,470 breeding ewes 27,654 cattle. There is an **11% decline** in sheep and cattle numbers since 2016.	2010		Poultry numbers increasing leading to an increase in ammonia emission
Land in agri-environment schemes (PLTOF Target Indicator 5)	In 2021, 27% of the NL was in Entry-Level Stewardship, and 0.01% (7 ha at Snailbeach Mine) was in Higher-Level Stewardship. The total annual values of agri-environment agreements in the NL is £3,750,000 (2024), down from £6,606,152 (2021) but up from £3,533.849 in 2019. The area in agri- environment schemes has decreased from 43,053 ha in 2019 (53% of the NL) to 34,200 ha in 2024 (42% of the NL).	2019		Official data does not match anecdotal evidence
Area of woodland (PLTOF Target Indicator 8)	2023 - 11,352 ha of woodland covering 14% of the NL. Up from 11,291 ha in 2013.	2013		

Percentage of woodland in active management	In 2020, 66% of woodland was in active management (7,576 ha) (up from 63% in 2013) (MEOPL). In 2024, 64% of woodland is in active management (7,255 ha) (PLTOF), a fall of 2% since 2020	2013		
People				
Population	The estimated total population on census day 2021 for the NL was 19,900	2024		Note Defra round to nearest 100
Average age	The average age in the NL was 51 (41 in England). In 2021, most of the population is over 50 years of age (61% - up from 52% in 2011).	census		Aging population
% of population of working age (16-64)	53.7% in 2021 (58.2% in 2011)	census		
Number of pupils on school roll	1,900 pupils on school role in 2021 (the area is at **89%** of its capacity, the average for rural areas in England is 85%.)	2024		Will link to PLTOF Target Indicator 9
Ethnicity of resident population (%)	98.3% of the NL's resident population were white in 2021 / 98.8% in 2011	census		
Gender of resident population (%)	51.1% of the NL's resident population were female in 2021 / 50.8% female in 2011	census		
General health of the resident population (%)	In 2021, 45% of the resident population enjoy very good health; only 1% suffer very bad health. There is no material difference with the 2011 data.	census		
Disability status of resident population (%)	In 2021, 81% of the resident population suffered no long-term health conditions. The 18.7% who did have long-term health condition are disabled under the Equality Act.	census		
Relative wealth of the resident population	The average earnings per month were £2,100 in 2021 (for rural areas in England, it was £2,300). Full-time employees in the NL could expect to spend 10 times their earnings on purchasing a home. Full-time employees in rural England could expect to spend	2024		

	around 9 times their annual earnings buying a home, making the NL a less affordable area.			
Levels of deprivation (deciles)	Across the NL, the average decile of deprivation is 4 (covers 45% of the population). Church Stretton and the area between Pontesford and Habberley are in the 8th decile.	2024		
Registered businesses by size	In 2021, 93% of businesses employed less than 9 employees.	2024		
Registered businesses by number and type	In 2021, there were 1,740 business units registered within the NL. The dominant business type is agriculture, forestry and fishing. This represents 41% of business types in the Shropshire Hills, compared to only 14% across rural England.	2024		
Employment profile by occupation	2011 to 2021: • Increase in managerial and senior roles (+4%) • Decrease in skilled trades (-1.5%)	census		
Employment profile by industry	2011 to 2021: • Increase in agriculture and forestry and health (+1.5%); and administration (+0.8%) • Decrease in manufacturing (-1.6%), wholesale/repair (-1.4%) and education (-1%)	census		
Employment status	2011 to 2021: • 14% reduction in the level of registered employment • 15% swing from those residents wanting to work to those not seeking work; perhaps reflecting the increasing retired population	census		
Employment in farming	Employment in farming has increased by 7% during the last 10 years. In 2021, 10% of the resident population (2,019 people) were employed in farming.	2010		
Rights of Way (PLTOF Target Indicator 9)	In 2024, there are 4,042 kilometres of rights of way recorded in the NL (there is no report on the condition of these routes). 3,834 km were recorded in 2009.	2009		Full set of 'Access for All' metrics not collected
Recreational routes (PLTOF Target Indicator 9)	There are many well documented recreational trails in the National Landscape (six stand out). There are three national cycling routes in the National Landscape.	2024		

Access to a car or van	In 2021, 92% of the resident population had access to at least one car or van, up from 91% in 2011.	census		
Travel to work	In 2021, 38% of employed residents worked from home, up from 18% in 2011. In 2011, 64% of employed residents drove a car to work; this reduced to 50% in 2021.	census		
Traffic counts	The A489 near Snead recorded the biggest increase in flow between 2000 – 2022 (+60%); the A488, passing through the Clun, recorded the smallest increase in flow (+7%).	2000		
Public transport	No Sunday bus services but otherwise generally good; some limited single journeys on market days and schools' services. Good train services through the area.	2024		
Travel areas to the NL	The 30-minute trip-time catchment for Church Stretton lies mainly within the northern part of the NL and reaches Shrewsbury. There are also strong central links that reach down to Ludlow in the south. Clun links to the southwestern parts of the area. Broadstone's catchment covers the western side of the NL and reaches as far as Bridgnorth. The 60-minute trip-time catchment for Church Stretton brings in the outskirts of Wrexham to the north, and the outskirts of Birmingham to the east. Hereford and Llandrindod Wells are on the boundary to the south.	2024		
Access land	In 2021, 11.5% of the NL is accessible (up from 11% in 2013).	2013		
Place				
Number and condition of heritage assets (PLTOF Target Indicator 10)	There are 1,075 Listed Buildings, 175 Scheduled Monuments and 4 Registered Parks and Gardens. Of these, **24 assets are at risk**; as there were in 2020.	2012		
Number and condition of conservation areas (PLTOF Target Indicator 10)	There are 31 conservation areas, each with a published appraisal (up from 28 in 2009).	2009		Condition not reported
Number of development plans with Spatial Strategy and allocations; and reference the NL	2 (100% of relevant plans)	2024		Impact on the NL not recorded

Number of made Neighbourhood Plans	There are 10 ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans in the NL and 2 in preparation.	2024		
Light pollution	There is significant brightness from the conurbations to the north, east and south of the NL; and this is increasing. The Wrekin lost its dark night skies in 2023. The rest of NL retains predominantly dark night skies though there may be a minor expansion of light spillage along the A49 corridor. Light pollution from the conurbations was less during 2020 and 2021. This is most likely due to the lockdowns during the Covid pandemic. However, there has been a noticeable expansion of light pollution from these areas since 2022. Without management, the amenity of Wenlock Edge may slowly degrade.	2018		
Noise pollution	There are only low levels of traffic noise in the National Landscape except along the A49, which cuts through the Shropshire Hills. The M54 passes very close to the northern point of the area. This brings some higher levels of noise into the Little Wenlock Parish area.	2017		

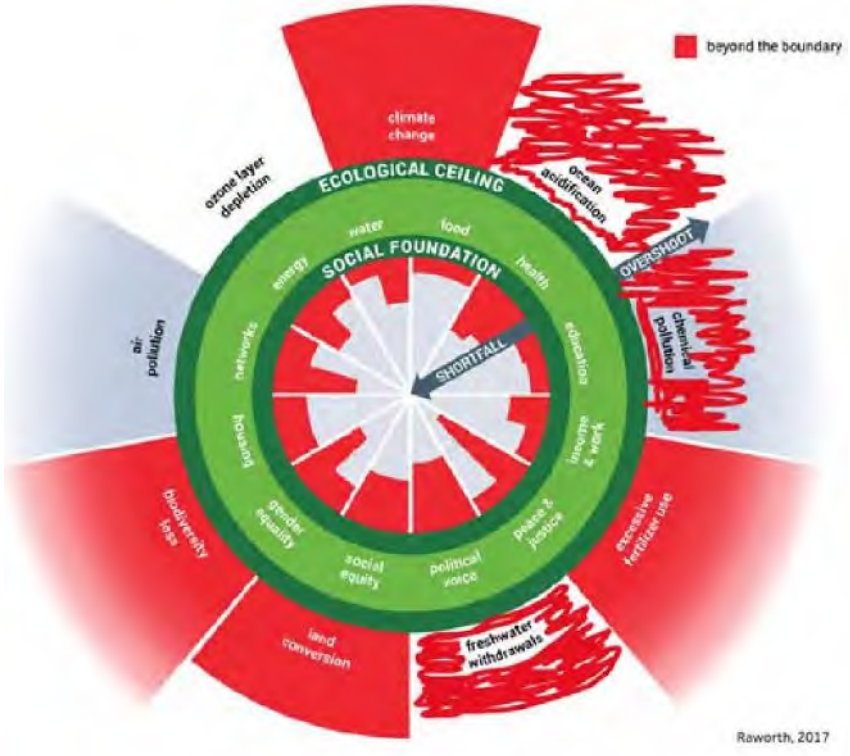
The Doughnut Economics model as a framework

The Shropshire Hills Management Plan 2025-2030 ‘Thriving in Balance with Nature’ uses the Doughnut Economics model as a framework.

The Doughnut is a visual model[2] of how we can meet the needs of all people within the means of the living planet.

In-balance doughnut

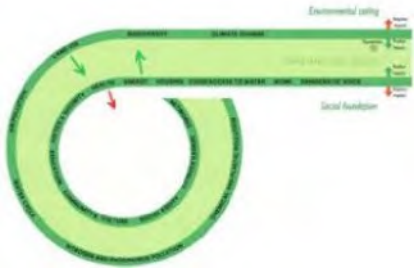
An “in balance” doughnut shows where no one is left falling short on life’s essentials (i.e. inside the inner ring or ‘social foundation’), and humanity is not overshooting the planetary boundaries that protect Earth’s life-support systems (i.e. outside the outer ring or ‘ecological ceiling’). This tool helps us to consider future choices balancing multiple factors, and to make the crucial choices about <u>how</u> we do things, to lead to a sustainable future.



Out of balance doughnut

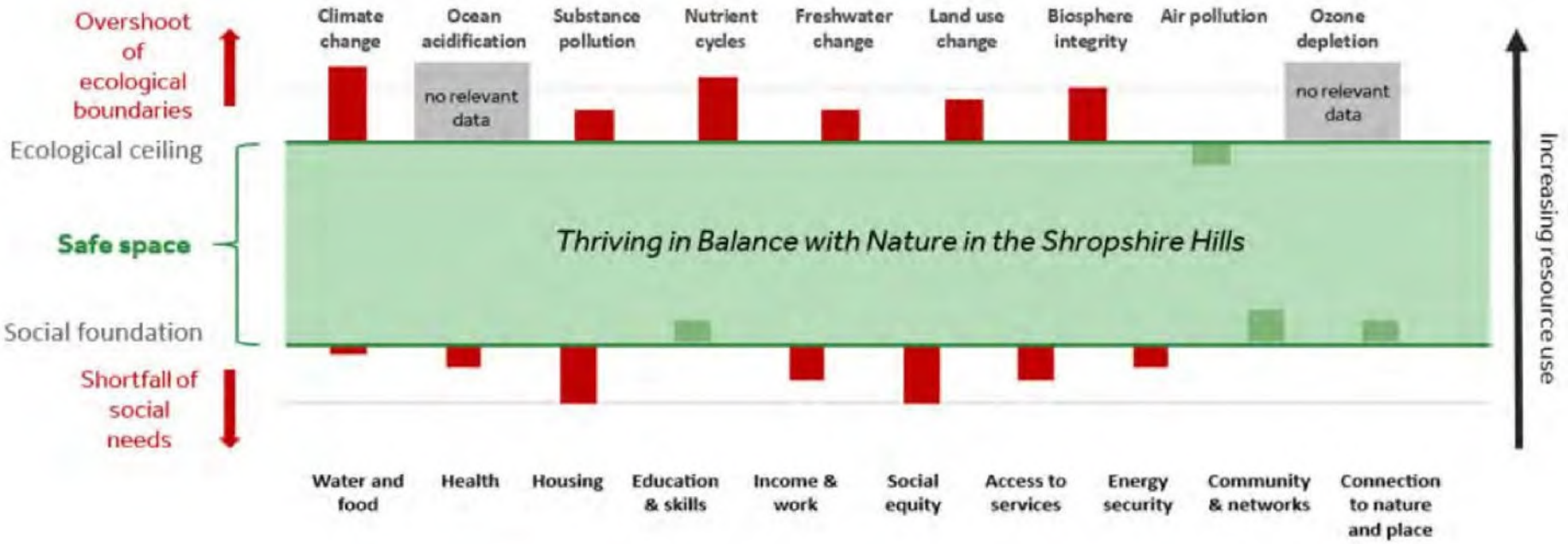
The “out of balance” Doughnut shows a snapshot of where we are considered to be now globally - the length of the red segments shows by how much people are falling short on life’s essentials, and by how much we are overshooting the planetary boundaries, based on measurable indicators. (The extra rough red shading is for recent assessment of further boundaries crossed since the model was drawn in 2017).

The ‘doughnut’ can be unrolled to show the plotted data more clearly.



[2] For more on this see https://doughnuteconomics.org/about-doughnut-economics

Simple 'Doughnut Unrolled' data portrait of the Shropshire Hills



The purpose of the data portrait is to reinforce the concept that we should use the earth's resources sufficiently to meet people's needs, but without exceeding ecological boundaries which will endanger future life. This is 'thriving in balance' - staying within the 'safe space' green zone (in circular form = the doughnut). The size of the red bars indicates approximately the scale of problem or imbalance. Projects and interventions should aim to reduce the red bars by reducing overshoot of ecological boundaries and shortfall of social needs. A fully 'in balance' desired state will have no red bars at all.

Ecological Ceiling headings are as used in the standard doughnut model, and the wording version chosen is the most relevant to our area. The Social Foundation headings are also based on the standard doughnut, but with some local variations. Building on the data collected to produce the National Landscape's Management Plan, including that shown in this State of the National Landscape report, data has been collated for each heading. There is no single indicator that works as an overall measure for a heading, so a score from -10 (worst) to +10 (best) has been given for each heading, based on a rounded assessment of all available data.

Headline points from the data portrait in text form:

- Top ecological challenges are climate, nutrients and the healthy functioning of nature (integrity of the biosphere).
- Greenhouse gas emissions are higher than the national average, 3x the recommended carbon budget and only reducing at about half the speed necessary to reach net zero by 2050.
- Carbon storage within land and soils in the area is high, but some of this is being lost and these emissions need to be reduced as well as increasing sequestration
- Levels of key nutrients in water and air are higher than needed to maintain important ecological features. A lot of effort is going into this, but it is not yet solved, and the trend is not positive everywhere.
- Good quality habitats are fragmented.
- A higher proportion of land could be in woodland and in agro-ecological farming.
- There is scope to further reduce chemical pollution, including plastics.
- Top social challenges are housing, social equity, income and work and access to services.
- This reflects what the statistics show - that the area is reasonable prosperous on average but there are pockets of deprivation, and some people face real challenges, sometimes across intersecting multiple issues.

Introduction

The Shropshire Hills National Landscape

A National Landscape is an area that is so precious that it is safeguarded for the nation. It is the everyday name for what is set out in legislation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Designation of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was in 1958. It extends over 802 square kilometres, extending from the Wrekin to the Clun Forest and from the Stiperstones across to the Clee Hills.

With a variety of geology unequalled in any area of comparable size in Britain, the Shropshire Hills have no single dominant feature or landform. The area's landscape character is one of variety and of transition, between the lowland plains of the English Midlands and the uplands of Wales, and between north and south of Britain.

The rocky Stiperstones, the dissected plateau of the Long Mynd, the craggy volcanic Stretton Hills and Wrekin, the harsh quarried landscape of the Clee Hills, the wooded scarp of Wenlock Edge, and the rolling enclosed hills of the Clun Forest all have their own distinctive character. They contain commons, heath, moorland and rough grasslands, and are home to a variety of upland birds including curlew, red grouse and merlin.

The patchwork of fields bounded by hedges results from generations of farming. Pasture grazed by livestock is the largest land use but arable cultivation is also significant, mainly on lower ground. Hedgerow and field trees, including many veteran trees, give the landscape a maturity. Remnants of valuable grassland and hay meadow habitats survive.

The area has higher than the national average cover of ancient and semi-natural woodland. There are also larger predominantly conifer plantations, many small farm woodlands, scattered valuable areas of wet woodland, parkland, wood pasture, and small, often remnant orchards.

The rivers and streams are relatively clean and natural in form, and of high quality. Many are lined with alder and home to important species like the dipper, white-clawed crayfish and otter. Valleys vary from the steep-sided batches and dingles of the Long Mynd and Stiperstones, to larger expanses with some flood meadows, and the broad dales such as Corve Dale and Ape Dale which divide up the area. There are few large water bodies but many ponds, marshes and flushes.

Many ancient features survive in a landscape that has seen less change than many parts of the country. Defences such as Offa's Dyke, Iron Age hillforts, medieval castles and fortified houses tell of centuries of turbulent Marches history. The Shropshire Hills have the greatest concentration of medieval castle earthworks anywhere in Britain. Much of the field and settlement pattern is very ancient with tiny lanes, villages and scattered hamlets and farms.

It is a sparsely populated area and a haven of tranquillity. Opportunities for enjoyment and wellbeing abound; the area has some of the best rights of way networks in Shropshire, along with most of the county's open access land.

Purpose of document

This is a timely update of the state of the area and many of its special qualities, and will help to inform the statutory review of the current Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan (2019-24) and support the preparation of a new plan.

This report pulls together the data and information gathered by the National Landscape team, with its partners including Natural England, for the Shropshire Hills National Landscape; and from other sources as indicated. It presents data collated in 2024 alongside comparable data from annual reviews and reports, where such exists, or to alternative baselines against which there are comparisons and trends.

Data considerations

There were difficulties in securing some trend data for this report. In the past, Defra and its agencies has provided some environmental data cut to the National Landscape boundary. This was through the national framework for monitoring environmental outcomes in National Parks and National Landscapes (MEOPL). Natural England led in this work, in close partnership with Defra, the English National Park Authorities Association, Historic England and the National Landscapes Association.

Defra has just published its new Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF). In May 2024, it released its first set of national data, though several data sets are to follow. The framework includes 10 indicators supported by 24 additional statistic sheets. We set out the new indicators in Appendix 1 and have include the released data in the body of this report. These data sets are similar, but not identical, to MEOPL. Some metrics vary. As it is difficult to compare PLTOF to MEOPL, the trends set out in this report are based on the MEOPL data.

The Defra June Survey of Agriculture is a large sample survey sent to a representative sample of holdings across England. Defra publishes results cut to the National Landscape boundary. As the results are based on a sample survey, they are subject to a degree of sampling error and do not consider other sources of survey errors, such as non-response bias or administrative data errors. This can lead to differences between annual returns that are not related to trend changes.

No new studies were commissioned for this report and not all data can be disaggregated to the National Landscape boundary. Furthermore, it is recognised that many partners take actions that secure the Management Plan's objectives but do not necessarily report these to the National Landscape.

Census statistics help paint a picture of the nation and how we live. They provide a detailed snapshot of the population and its characteristics. Census data is not cut to the National Landscape boundary. Defra is now releasing social data as a part of PLTOF based on the Office for National Statistics Output Area population estimates. Output Areas (OAs) are the lowest level of geographical area for census statistics. These are allocated to the national landscape on a 'best fit' basis and they are to be the baseline for the National Landscape. Being a 'best fit' model means that the census presentations are estimates of the likely position. Defra round their population data to the nearest 100.

To show the changes between the 2011 and 2021 Census, we use the same (or equivalent) OAs. However, to make the comparison more accurate, we use the ONS population numbers without the rounding adjustment.

The ONS also warn that where there are small sample sizes, it swops records between different geographic areas, and adjusts counts by small amounts, to protect against disclosure of personal information. The official Census figures are also estimates because there is not a 100% response (Maximising the quality of Census 2021 population estimates - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)). As the data are estimates, we do not show the numeric values recorded in the census, rather, we use the percentage scores for each topic.

Nature

The Shropshire Hills contain a high concentration of the Shropshire's priority habitats. These are connected in stronger networks than compared to some areas, though much reduced and fragmented. The hills have heathlands and grasslands which are the largest areas of good habitat and, along with the rivers, define the landscape. Small meadows, species-rich grasslands and wetlands are often without protection and especially vulnerable. Woodland, trees and hedges are vital elements in the landscape we need to protect and manage carefully what we have while expanding tree cover further. The range of habitats and wildlife found in the Shropshire Hills reflects its transitional position between upland and lowland. The mix of heathland, grassland, woodland and rivers habitats have a history of relatively sympathetic land management.

Flower-rich hay meadow

Heath and moorland are found in significant blocks on the Long Mynd, Stiperstones and Clee Hills. In the Upper Onny Valley and the Clun Forest, heathland has become fragmented through agricultural improvement and now only survives as vestiges. Species-rich grasslands have also become much reduced since the Second World War and generally only remain where farming is marginal. Many of these sites are recognised by the Shropshire Wildlife Trust as Wildlife Sites.

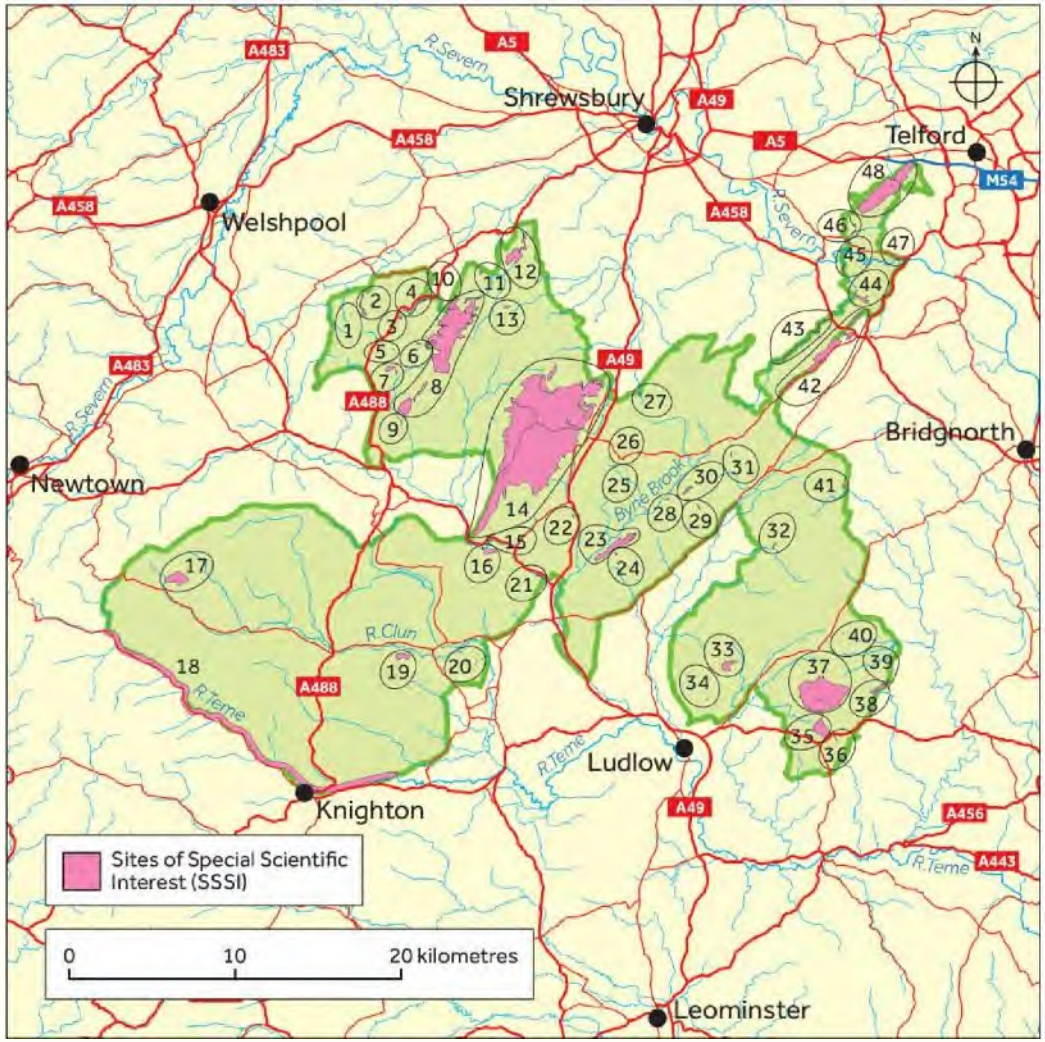
The area is important in a regional context for upland and farmland birds, including Curlew, Dipper, Snipe and Lapwing, though breeding populations of some of these are down to critically low levels. These species act to some extent as indicators of the health of the environment in general, and as elsewhere, this longer-term decline is linked to loss of habitat quality.

Rivers are the principal freshwater habitat, and though the Shropshire Hills excludes the lower reaches of several rivers, the Rivers Teme, Clun, Onny and Corve are very important. Notable species include White-Clawed Crayfish and Freshwater Pearl Mussel. The latter is found in the River Clun just outside the National Landscape, but is completely dependent on the quality of the river further upstream, and is declining rapidly. Dippers have also declined rapidly over recent years in all our rivers. Larger water bodies and wetlands are not found in the Shropshire Hills, but ponds are important and support species including Great Crested Newt.

The area holds some national rarities and is very significant in a regional and county context for upland plants and animals. The Shropshire Hills has one of only seven sites known in the UK for Marsh Flapwort (*Jamesoniella undulifolia*), a globally vulnerable species. Wenlock Edge and the Clun Valley woodlands are county strongholds for Dormice, a European protected species. Upland plants such as Mountain Pansy are known to have declined significantly. Marsh Gentian is found nowhere else in the West Midlands apart from one site in the Clee Hills. The area is a stronghold of Black Poplar. Invertebrates include upland species such as Grayling, Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, and specialised species associated with veteran trees.

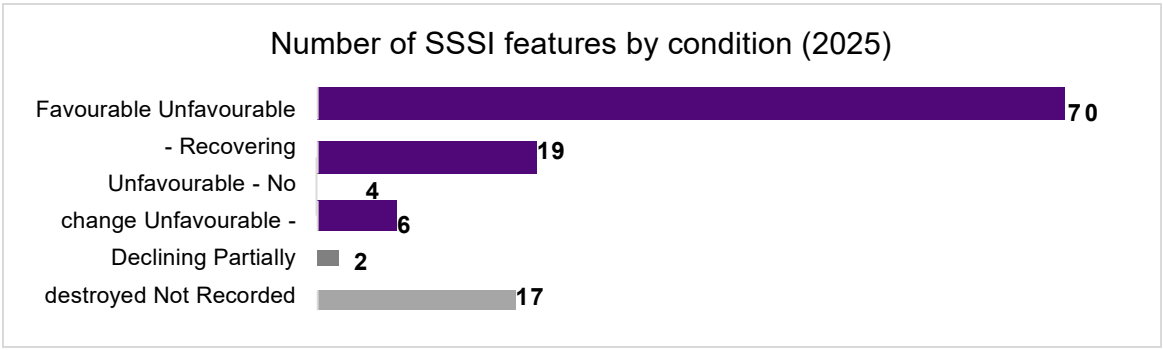
Location of SSSIs and condition by features

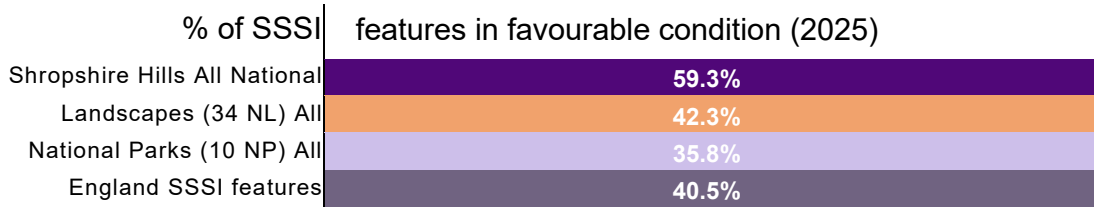
In 2025, there are 48 designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the National Landscape, occupying 4,626 ha (5.7%) of its area. 59.3% of the SSSI features are in favourable condition. Only 16.1% of SSSI features have actions on track to achieve favourable condition by 2028.



Legend

1 Meadowtown Quarry
2 Betton Dingle and Gulley Green
3 Hope Valley Meadows
4 Hope Valley
5 Shelve Church Section
6 Pennerley Meadows
7 Shelve Pool
8 The Stiperstones & The Hollies
9 Linley Big Wood
10 Snailbeach Mine
11 Granham's Moor Quarry
12 Earl's Hill & Habberley Valley
13 Huglith Mine
14 Long Mynd
15 Hillend Quarry
16 Flat Coppice
17 Rhos Fiddle
18 River Teme
19 Clunton Coppice
20 Coston Farm Quarries
21 Onny River Section
22 Marsh Wood Quarry
23 Wolverton Wood and Alcaston Coppice
24 Prince's Rough
25 Soudley Quarry
26 Hope Bowdler Outcrops
27 Comley Quarry
28 Eaton Track
29 Upper Millichope Stream Section
30 Marked Ash Meadows
31 Longville to Stanway Road Section
32 Oak Dingle
33 Cuckoopen Coppice
34 Tar Grove Quarry
35 Clee Hill Quarries
36 Cornbrook Dingle
37 Titterstone Clee
38 Catherton Common
39 Hill Houses & Crumpsbrook Meadows
40 Green Farm Quarry
41 Derrington Meadow
42 Wenlock Edge
43 Hughley Brook
44 Whitwell Coppice
45 Sheinton Brook
46 Chermes Dingle
47 Buildwas River Section
48 The Wrekin & The Ercall





Condition of SSSI features is the new indicator in PLTOF. It sets a baseline, there is no trend data available.

PLTOF sets a target to bring **80%** of SSSI features within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition **by 2042** (**Target Indicator 2**).

The chart shows that the National Landscape has **59.3%** of its SSSI features in a favourable condition. This may rise once the status of the features not recorded is known.

Shropshire Hills is above the average position when compared with the other National Landscapes (average is 42.3%), and with all England's SSSIs (average is 40.5%).

There are 93 geological SSSI features in the National Landscape. 79 are in a favourable condition and 2 are unfavourable and declining.

PLTOF **Target Indicator 3** is the percentage of SSSI features within Protected Landscapes assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition.

Shropshire Hills receives a score of **16.1%** under this indicator. The average for the National Landscapes is 20.7%, and for all England it is 20.9%.

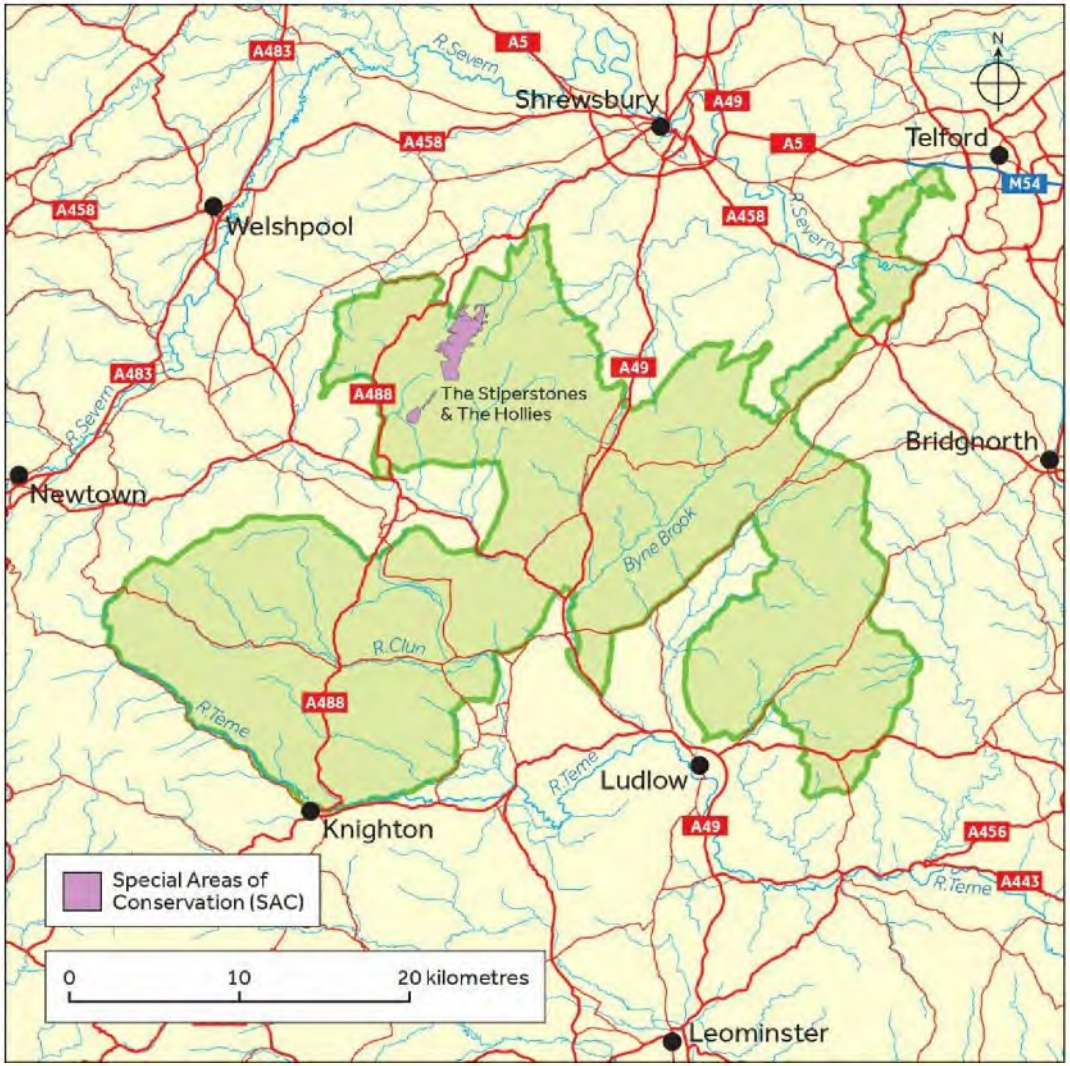
Condition by sites

SSSI NAME	Condition worst compartment	Condition best compartment	Year last assessed	Main habitat type
Betton Dingle & Gulley Green	Unfavourable no Change	Favourable	2019	Neutral grassland - lowland, Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland, Earth heritage
Buildwas River Section	Favourable		2016	Earth heritage
Catherton Common	Unfavourable recovering		2019	Dwarf shrub heath - upland
Chermes Dingle	Favourable		2014	Earth heritage
Clee Hill Quarries	Favourable		2019	Earth heritage
Clunton Coppice	Unfavourable recovering		2011	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland
Comley Quarry	Favourable		2018	Earth heritage
Cornbrook Dingle	Unfavourable no change		2017	Earth heritage
Coston Farm Quarries	Favourable		2021	Earth heritage
Cuckoopen Coppice	Unfavourable recovering		2009	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland
Derrington Meadow	Favourable		2017	Neutral grassland - lowland
Earl's Hill & Habberley Valley	Unfavourable recovering	Favourable	2013	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland, Earth heritage
Eaton Track	Favourable		2015	Earth heritage
Flat Coppice	Favourable		2019	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland
Granham's Moor Quarry	Favourable		2019	Earth heritage
Green Farm Quarry	Favourable		2017	Earth heritage
Hill Houses & Crumpsbrook Meadows	Unfavourable no change		2015	Neutral grassland - lowland
Hillend Quarry	Favourable		2015	Earth heritage
Hope Bowdler Outcrops	Unfavourable no change	Favourable	2015	Earth heritage
Hope Valley	Favourable		2017	Earth heritage
Hope Valley Meadows	Unfavourable declining	Unfavourable recovering	2015	Neutral grassland - lowland
Hughley Brook	Favourable		2016	Earth heritage
Huglith Mine	Favourable		2017	Earth heritage

Linley Big Wood	Favourable		2018	Earth heritage
Long Mynd	Unfavourable recovering		2021	Dwarf shrub heath - upland, Earth heritage
Longville to Stanway Road Section	Favourable		2015	Earth heritage
Marked Ash Meadows	Favourable		2017	Neutral grassland - lowland
Marsh Wood Quarry	Favourable		2019	Earth heritage
Meadowtown Quarry	Unfavourable recovering		2012	Earth heritage
Oak Dingle	Favourable		2017	Earth heritage
Onny River Section	Favourable		2012	Earth heritage
Pennerley Meadows	Unfavourable no change	Favourable	2011	Neutral grassland - lowland
Prince's Rough	Favourable		2014	Neutral grassland - lowland
Rhos Fiddle	Unfavourable recovering		2018	Dwarf shrub heath - upland
River Teme	Unfavourable no change		2012	Rivers and streams
Sheinton Brook	Favourable		2015	Earth heritage
Shelve Church Section	Favourable		2016	Earth heritage
Shelve Pool	Favourable		2019	Fen, marsh and swamp/Neutral grassland - lowland
Snailbeach Mine	Favourable		2020	Earth heritage
Soudley Quarry	Unfavourable no change		2009	Earth heritage
Tar Grove Quarry	Favourable		2017	Earth heritage
The Stiperstones & The Hollies	Unfavourable declining	Favourable	2022	Dwarf shrub heath - upland, Earth heritage
The Wrekin & The Ercall	Favourable		2013	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland, Earth heritage
Titterstone Clee	Favourable		2018	Dwarf shrub heath - upland, Acid grassland - upland, Earth heritage
Upper Millichope Stream Section	Favourable		2015	Earth heritage
Wenlock Edge	Unfavourable declining	Favourable	2022	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland
Whitwell Coppice	Unfavourable declining		2011	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland, Earth heritage
Wolverton Wood & Alcaston Coppice	Unfavourable recovering	Favourable	2021	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - lowland

Location of SAC

In 2024, there is one designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in the National Landscape, occupying 602 ha (0.7%) of its area.



The Stiperstones & The Hollies SAC (602 ha) An example of dry heath that contains features transitional between lowland heathland and upland heather moorland. The most extensive vegetation type present is *Calluna vulgaris – Vaccinium myrtillus* dry heath, which is characteristic of the uplands. South-facing slopes support stands of Calluna *vulgaris – Ulex gallii* heath, a predominantly lowland vegetation community of southwest Britain. The site also includes some elements of old sessile oak woods with holly and hard fern.

Threats to the integrity of the site:

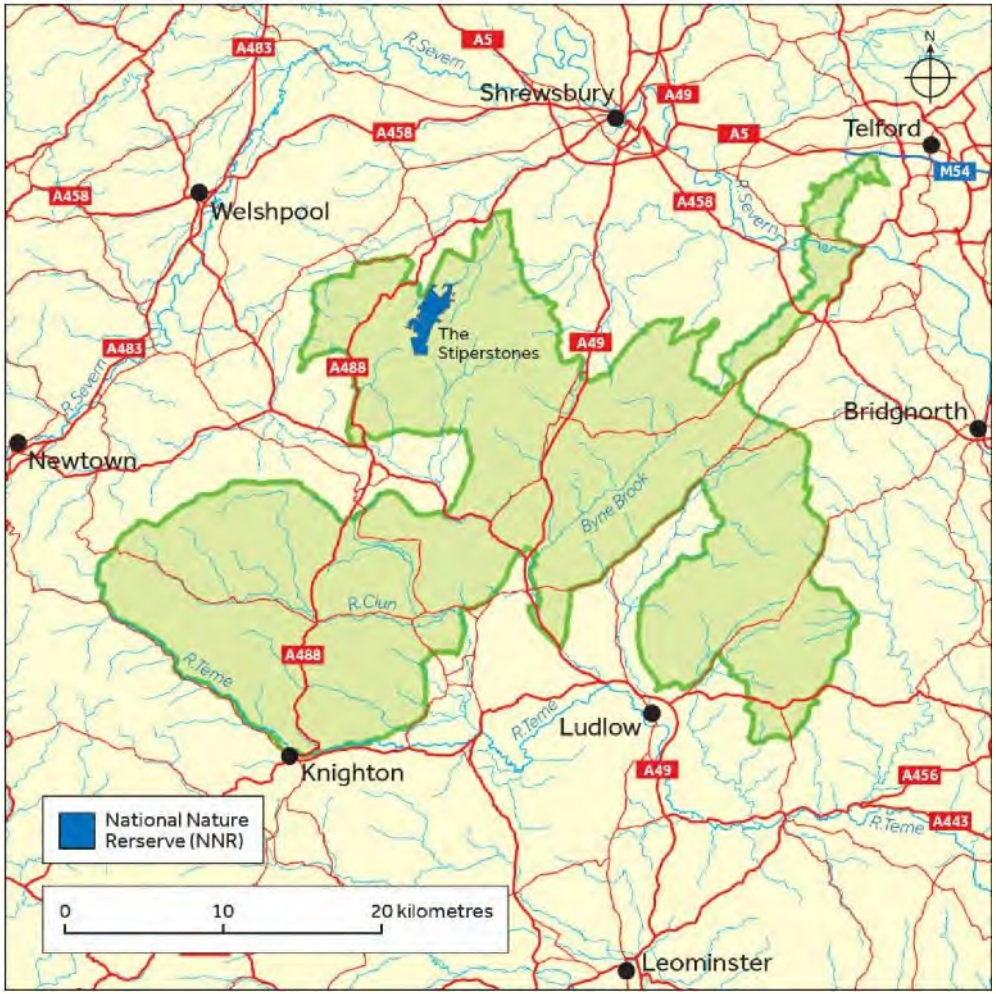
- changes in land management;
- a lack of habitat connectivity;
- disease (*Phytophthora ramorum* on Bilberry);
- deer in the oak woods; and
- wildfires and arson.

Pressures affecting the integrity of the site:

- invasive species on the dry heaths (bracken, brambles and Japanese knotweed); and
- air pollution (deposition of atmospheric nitrogen).

Source: Natural England Site Improvement Plans

Location of NNRs



In 2024, there is one designated National Nature Reserve (NNR) in the National Landscape, occupying 488 ha (0.6%) of its area.

The Stiperstones NNR – The Stiperstones is a 10-kilometre ridge rising to 536 metres above sea level. Its unmistakable rugged outline is visible from points throughout the area. Much of The Stiperstones is a National Nature Reserve. It provides an outstanding combination of geological, landscape and wildlife features; wild, dramatic scenery; a fund of myth, folklore and literary connections; and a history of mining and farming.

This is a wild and atmospheric landscape, with a geology of national significance. The Ordovician ‘Stiperstones Quartzite’, which makes up the ridge was shattered during the last ice age to create the jagged, boulder-strewn landscape seen today.

The upland birds include: red grouse, red kite, skylark, raven, wheatear, whinchat and stonechat, while cuckoo and snipe breed lower down the hill. The woodlands are home to pied flycatchers, redstarts and tree pipits.

Invertebrates range from armies of hairy wood ants, to magnificent green hairstreak and small pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies and emperor moths. A range of moths and bumblebees benefit from the bilberry and heather nectar including emperor moths and the bilberry bumblebee.

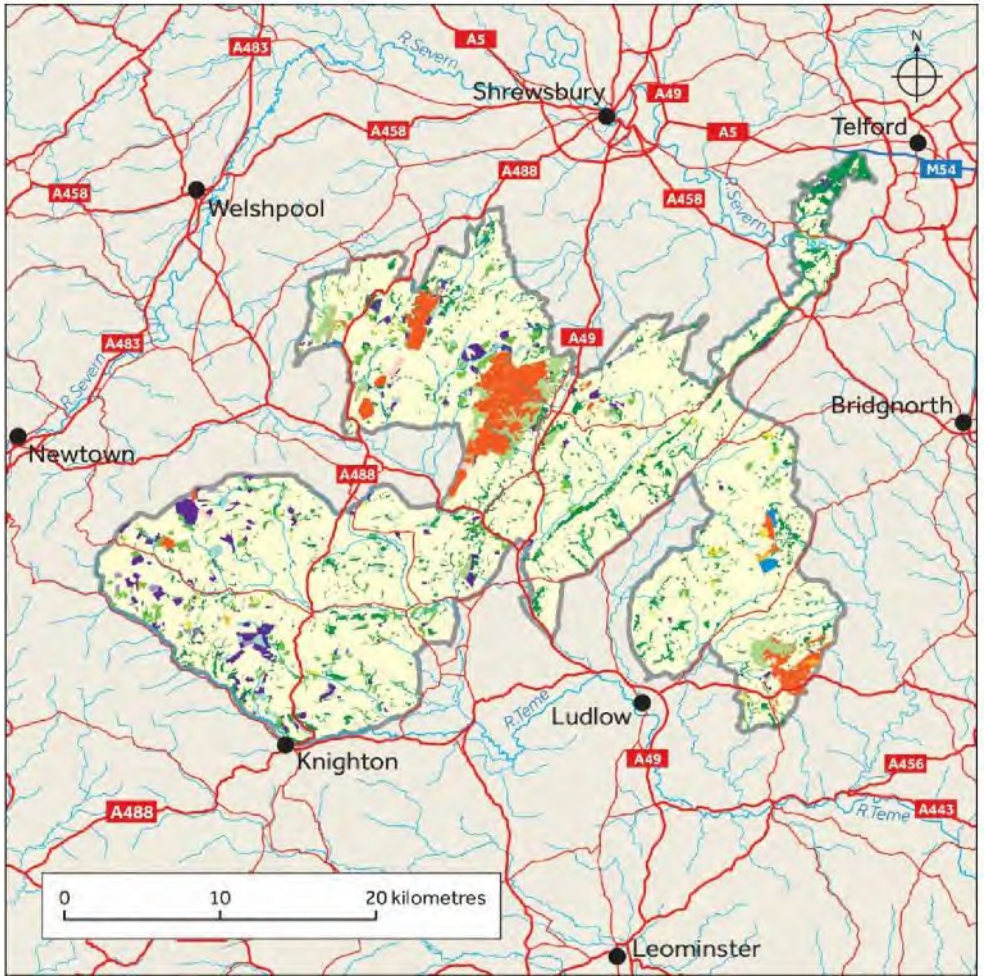
The plant life varies from the dwarf shrubs of the heath, where cowberry and crowberry are common, to the acid grasslands where in late spring mountain pansies bloom and in the winter a wealth of grassland fungi can be found.

There is open and well-used public access to the reserve.

Source: Natural England 2024 https://www.gov.uk/environment/parks-trails-nature-reserves

Area of priority habitats

In 2025, there are 10,281ha of priority habitats covering 12.7% of the National Landscape.



Source Data: MEOPL Priority Habitat Inventory v2.3 2020, SSSI Condition April 2021, © Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2021. PLTOF © Natural England copyright 2024; © Cumbria Biodiversity Centre 2024.

There are several habitat data sets and they differ. National data sets do not match local Biodiversity Record Centre data sets; and neither are accurate. Not all priority habits are listed. There are also hedgerows, arable field margins and ponds. MEOPL picks these up under no main habitat. They are not in the PLTOF priority habitats list. It is difficult to compare the three data sets. . The 2024 data should reset the ts within the highest level of organic

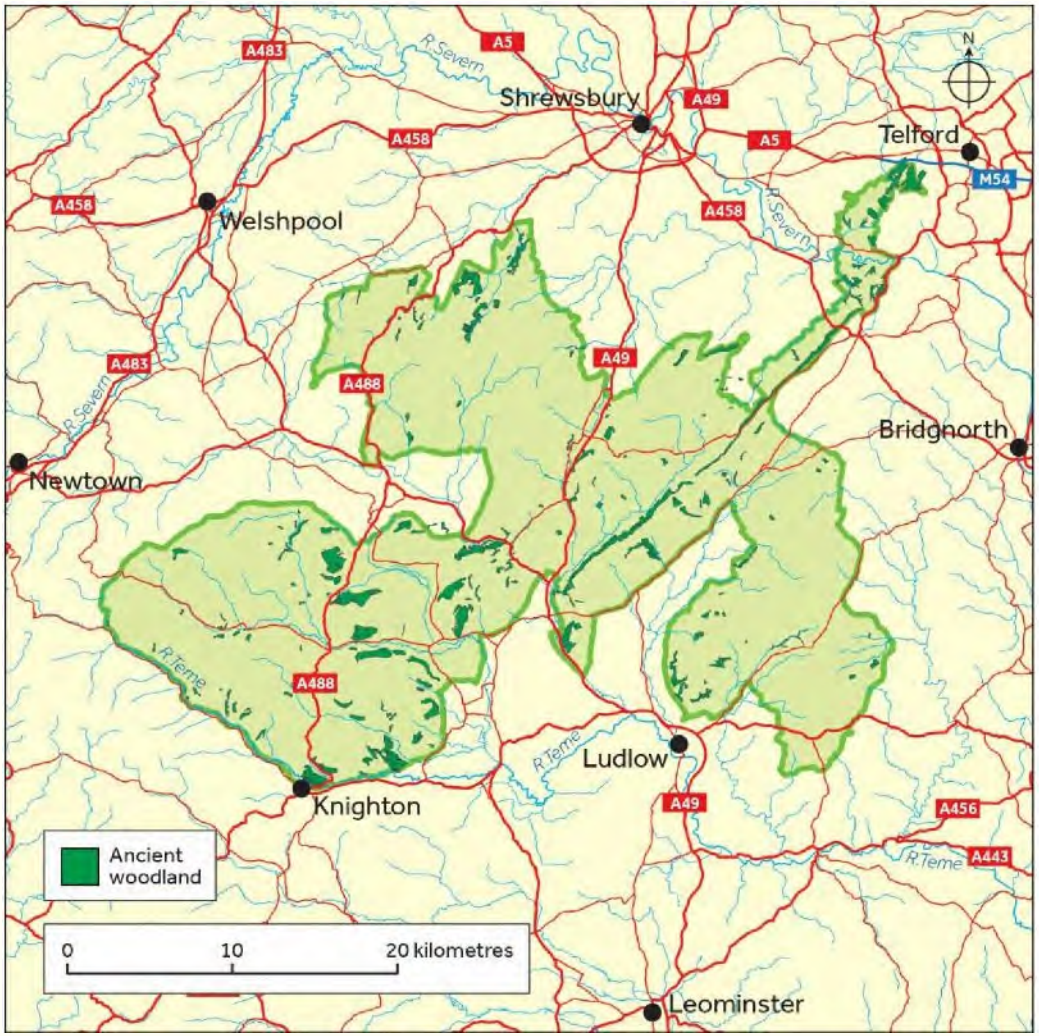
Priority Habitat in ha	2013	MEOPL 2021	PLTOF 2024
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	42	47	49
Deciduous woodland	5,201	5,071	5,253
*Fragmented heath	189		*131**
*Good quality semi-improved grassland /	962		*2,087**
*No main habitat but additional habitats present		1,968*	
*Grass moorland	325		*1,310**
Lowland calcareous grassland	57	15	16
Lowland dry acid grassland	215	560	620

Lowland fens	68	2	5
Lowland heathland	147	186	227
Lowland meadows	285	330	342
Ponds			1
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	71	209	195
Traditional orchard	99	76	73
Upland flushes fens and swamps	86	112	234
Upland hay meadow		5	5
Upland heathland	3,127	3,275	3,261
Total	**12,887**	**11,856**	**13,809**

*** =** a type that is not technically priority habitat but is included as it has significant potential conservation importance or restoration potential.

Area of ancient woodland

In 2024, there are 3,942 ha of ancient woodland covering 4.9% of the National Landscape.



Ancient woodland has two parts, ancient and semi-natural ancient woodland (ASNW), and plantations on ancient woodland Sites (PAWS):

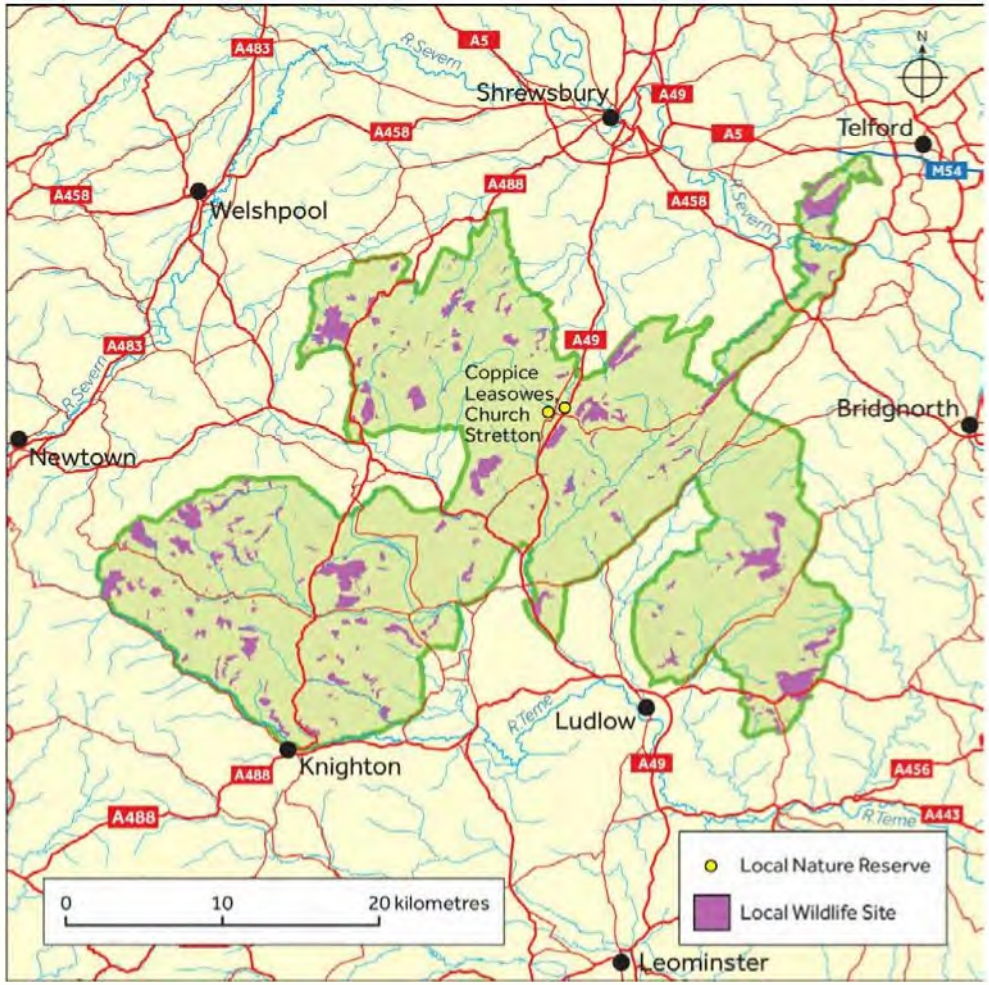
Ancient woodland by theme		Area in Ha		
		2013	2022	2024
Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland	ASNW	1,478	1,485	1,485
Ancient Replanted Woodland	PAWS	2,689	2,457	2,457
		4,166	**3,942**	**3,942**

There appears to be a loss of 224 ha since 2013 but this is likely due to changes in the recording model.

Source: MEOPL Natural England-OS Open Government Licence July 2022. M:\Geo-Data\Habitats_Species\Habitats\Habitat_Inventories_Ancient_Woodland\Ancient_Woodland_NE\Ancient_Woodland.gdb\Ancient_Woodland (June 2022). PLTOF

Locally protected sites

One statutory Local Nature Reserve and 214 non-statutory designated local wildlife sites cover around 6% of the National Landscape.



Coppice Leasowes Local Nature Reserve

A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is a statutory designated site, featuring locally important wildlife and/or geological interests. There is one LNR in the National Landscape, occupying 4.8 hectares. Coppice Leasowes (East and West) was designated in 1998. The Reserve is separated into two by the A49, with the eastern side also designated as a County Wildlife Site.

The reserve contains a mosaic of habitats including grasslands with wet flushes, streams, mature deciduous woodland, hedges and a wetland area. Both areas are grazed by cattle during the late summer months as part of the management of the site.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust Sites (0.7% of the area):

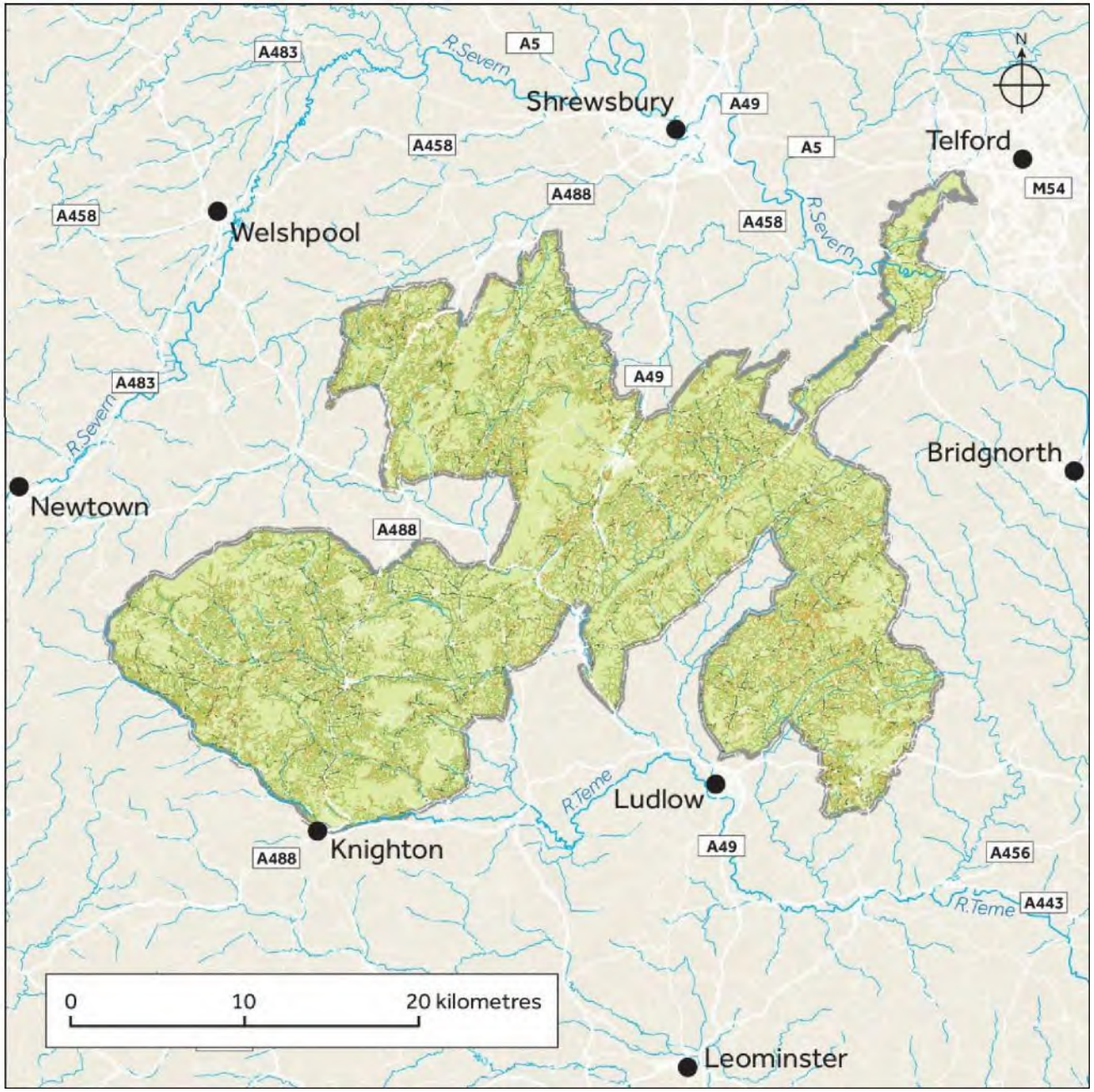
Earl's and Pontesford Hill (46 ha)	Harton Hollow (3 ha)
Hope Valley (19 ha)	Betchcott Hill (50 ha)
Brook Vessons (18 ha)	Rhos Fiddle (75 ha)
The Hollies (37 ha)	Lower Shortditch Turbary (17 ha)
Nipstone Rock (33 ha)	Clunton Coppice (23 ha)
The Ercall (51 ha)	Lurkenhope (6 ha)
Smalley Hill (4 ha)	Catherton Common (213 ha)
Comley Quarry (<1 ha)	Farfields Meadows (2 ha)

Note: In addition, there are other local sites (such as wildflower rich road verges There is sparse accessible and mappable data relating to the condition of Local Wildlife Sites or priority habitats at the National Landscape or finer scale.

Source: Shropshire Environmental Network (SEN) map, layered under Core Areas - https://shropshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e9283bcf9c4146d3a3c0a9cc0aee37ef Local Wildlife Reserves - Coppice Leasowes East and West - https://www.churchstretton-tc.gov.uk/town-council-services/coppice-leasowes/ Shropshire Wildlife Trust https://www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves

Hedgerows

In 2024, 6,800 km of h
traditional field bounda
Shropshire Hills.



Sources: PLTOF ©
Rural Payments Agency
database rights 2024 O
Natural England 2024. (
data © Crown copyright
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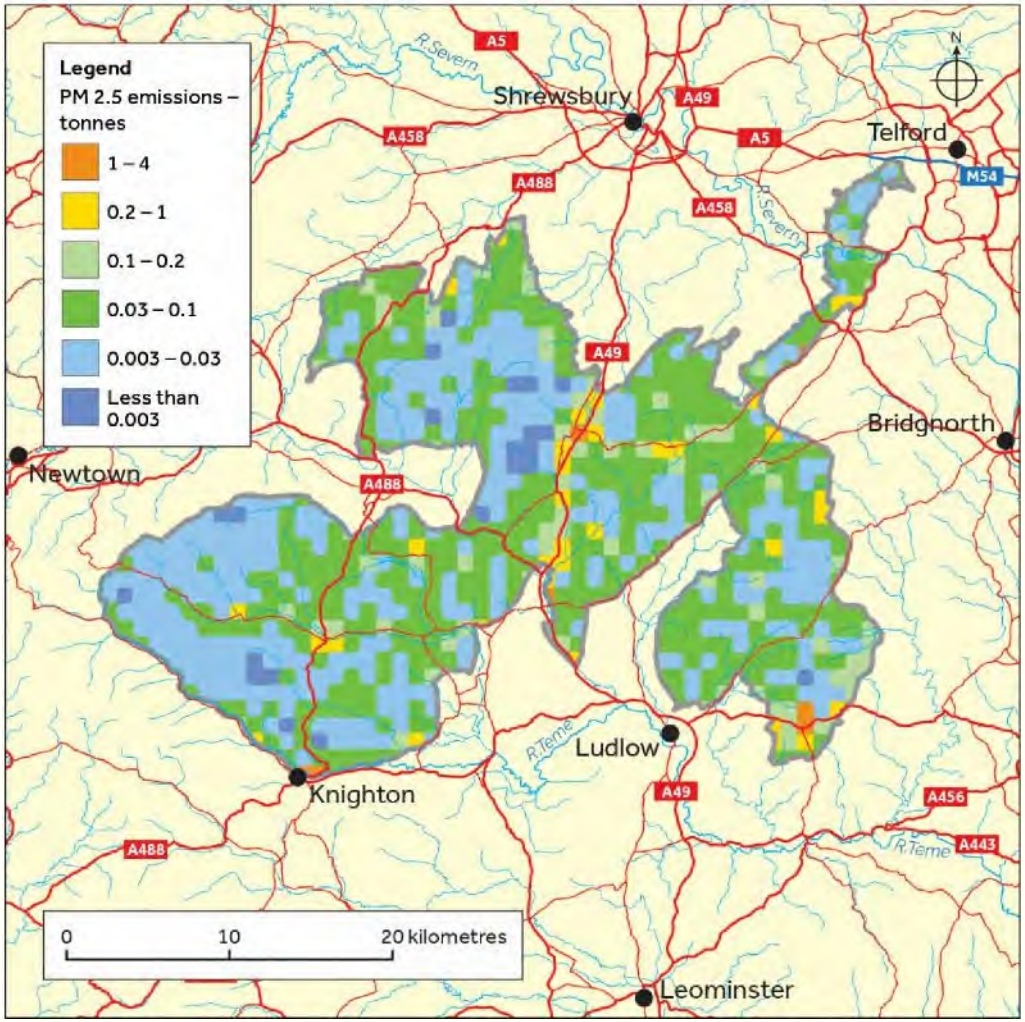
Hedgerow mapping data
R.; McCracken, M.; Mits
Pallett, D.W.; Patton, J.;
Wood, C.M.; Pywell, R.F
Plus: Hedgerows 2016-2
Environmental Informatic

https://doi.org/10.5285/c
a88aef8699be

Air quality

Particulate matter in the National Landscape

Showing PM2.5 levels in 2022. Levels are relatively low in the area but with hotspots around settlements and along the busier roads. There are high concentrations along the length of A49, around Cleehill (A4117), Clun (A488) and at Rushbury (B4371).



The areas with the higher emissions are generally associated with the road network. There are now increasing levels due to increased use of wood as a fuel for homes. Industrial use of biomass fuels is also increasing and has become a more significant contributor to UK emissions.

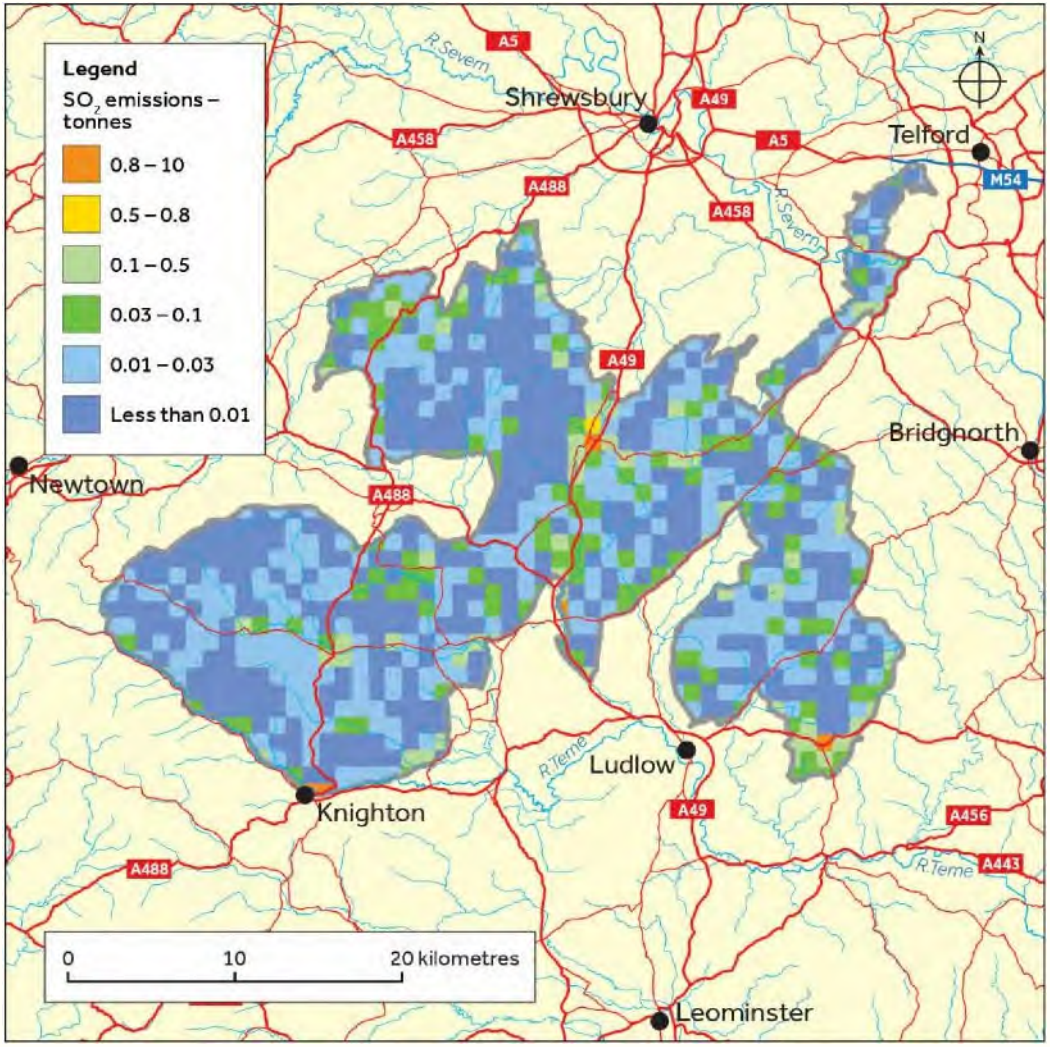
Particulate matter (PM) is everything in the air that is not a gas and consists of a huge variety of chemical compounds and materials, some of which can be toxic. PM2.5 is matter that is less than 2.5 micro gram in diameter. Due to the small size, some of these toxins may enter the bloodstream and be transported around the body, lodging in the heart, brain and other organs.

Note on UK emissions: Because of measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, PM2.5 emissions from road transport, aviation and railways in 2020 were 23%, 61% and 28% lower than they had been in 2019 respectively.

Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) 2022 (https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/mapping). The NAEI receives detailed data on individual point sources regulated by the Environment Agency and Local Authority Pollution Control. Emissions of PM10 and PM2.5 from agricultural sources are distributed using agricultural census data 2014.

Sulphur dioxide in the National Landscape

Showing sulphur dioxide (SO_2) in 2022. Levels are low in the area but there are hotspots close to Church Stretton, Knighton, Craven Arms and Cleehill.



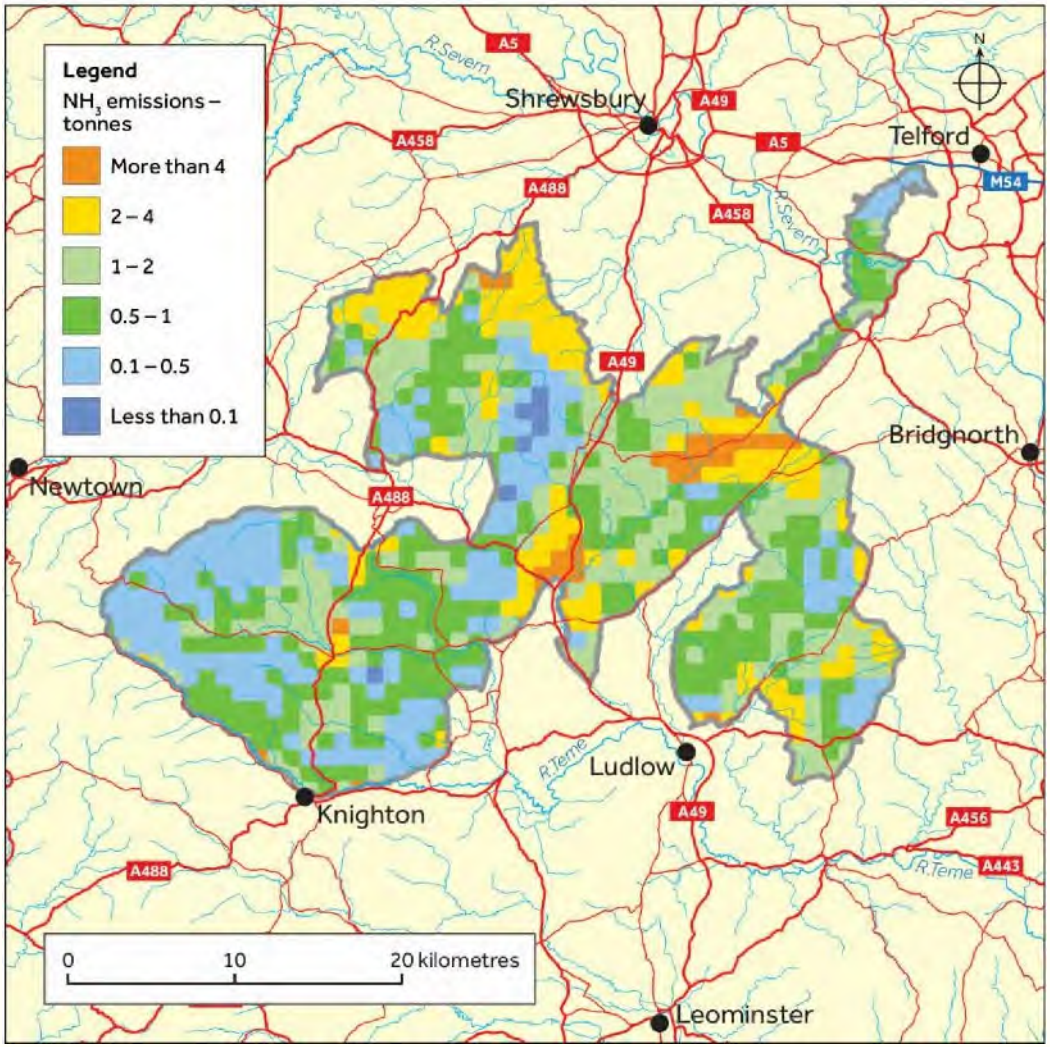
The principal man-made source of sulphur dioxide is the combustion of fossil fuels.

Sulphur dioxide contributes to aerosol formation which can either warm (through absorption of solar radiation on dark particles) or cool (from forming cloud droplets and reflecting radiation) the atmosphere.

Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) 2022 (https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/mapping). The NAEI receives detailed data on individual point sources regulated by the Environment Agency and Local Authority Pollution Control.

Ammonia in the National Landscape

Showing ammonia (NH_3) in 2022. There are significant hotspots related to intensive poultry units.



Ammonia (NH_3) is a highly reactive and soluble alkaline gas. It originates from both natural and anthropogenic sources, with the main source being agriculture (manures, slurries and fertiliser application). Other agriculture-related emissions include biomass burning or fertiliser manufacture. Non-agricultural sources, such as catalytic converters in internal combustion engines, landfill sites, sewage works, composting of organic materials, combustion, industry and wild mammals and birds can also emit ammonia.

As well as impacting air quality, high ammonia concentrations can disturb the natural balance of ecosystems and endanger native flora, fauna and water sources:

- Eutrophication
- Shift in dominance from mosses, lichens and ericoids towards grasses like Deschampsia flexuosa, Molinia caerulea and ruderal species.
- Increased risk of frost damage in spring
- Increased winter desiccation levels in Calluna and summer drought stress
- Increased incidence of pest and pathogen attack, e.g. heather beetle outbreaks.
- Direct damage and death of sensitive species, e.g. lichens and mosses.
- Reduced root growth and mycorrhizal infection
- Increase in soil pH follows acidification

Click to see **Location of intensive poultry units**

Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) 2022 (https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/mapping). The NAEI receives detailed data on individual point sources regulated by the Environment Agency and Local Authority Pollution Control; APIS https://www.apis.ac.uk/overview/pollutants/overview_nh3.htm#

Climate

Human civilisation has flourished during a period of relatively stable climate, but we are now within an accelerating Climate Emergency. Fossil fuel combustion, deforestation and land use change have resulted in damaging emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. There is a scientific consensus that we need to take faster action to reduce emissions to avoid the catastrophic effects of runaway climate change. Adaptation and mitigation need to go hand in hand and are not alternatives. The social science evidence also indicates that most people are concerned about climate change and are prepared to act. The National Landscape Partnership has been championing shifting to low carbon and better care for nature for some time and has also championed the need to consider nature and the ecological emergency as integrally connected with climate, both in terms of the problems and of solutions.

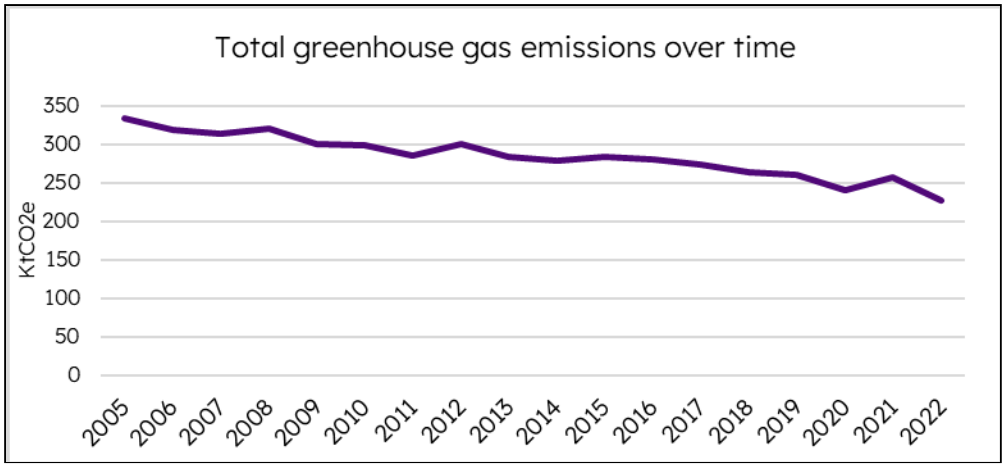
Some impacts on the National Landscape will arise as a direct result of changing weather patterns and seasons. For example, changing levels of sunlight, temperatures and soil moisture will affect the growth of plants. Increased rainfall may lead to flooding. Other impacts will result from the actions taken to adapt to the impacts of climate change, such as planting different crops, or to reduce the impact on climate change, such as planting trees or installing renewable energy technologies. Climate change will also increasingly affect global economies and geopolitics, and these are likely to have much bigger impacts than local direct effects.

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero publish UK Protected Landscapes greenhouse gas emissions statistics (2005-2022); and reports on renewable energy installations. Its Renewable Energy Planning Database map tracks the progress of renewable electricity over 150kW through the planning system across the UK. The Metrological Office collects weather data at Preston Montford that enables the plotting of local trends. The Environment Agency seeks to predict flood risks.

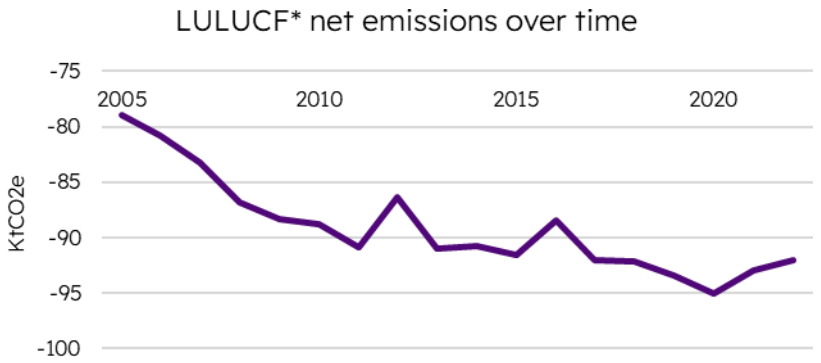
Greenhouse gases

Trend data for the Shropshire Hills National Landscape

A series of charts showing levels of greenhouse gas emissions for the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. There has been a **31.7%** reduction in total greenhouse gas emissions between 2005 and 2022.

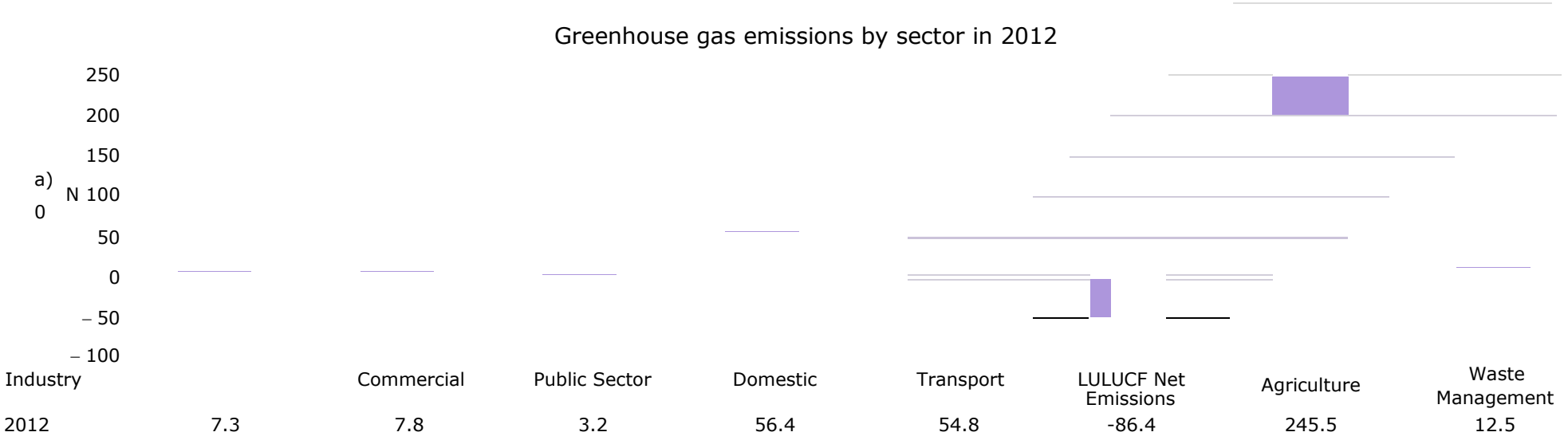


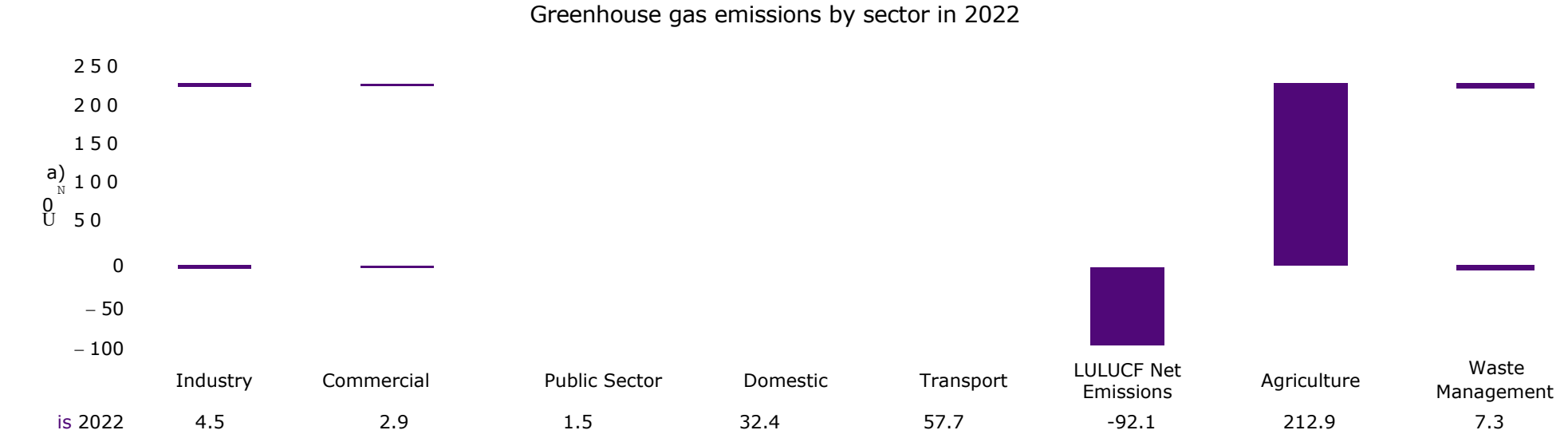
The greenhouse gases covered in this data are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. Each of these gases is weighted by its global warming potential (GWP), so that total greenhouse gas emissions can be reported on a consistent basis. The GWP for each gas is defined as its warming influence relative to that of carbon dioxide. Reporting is in kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO2e) unless otherwise stated.



There has been a **17% increase** in the storage of carbon in the National Landscape's vegetation and soils between 2005 and 2022.

* **LULUCF = Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry**. The rate of build-up of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in the atmosphere can be reduced by taking advantage of the fact that atmospheric CO_2 can accumulate as carbon in vegetation and soils in terrestrial ecosystems. Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change any process, activity or mechanism that removes a greenhouse gas from the atmosphere is referred to as a "sink". Human activities impact terrestrial sinks, through land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF). Consequently, there is an alteration in the exchange of CO_2 between the terrestrial biosphere and the atmosphere.


Greenhouse gas emissions by sector in 2012
250
200
150
100
50
0
– 50
– 100
Industry
Commercial
Public Sector
Domestic
Transport
LULUCF Net Emissions
Agriculture
Waste Management
2012
7.3
7.8
3.2
56.4
54.8
-86.4
245.5
12.5


Greenhouse gas emissions by sector in 2022
250
200
150
100
50
0
– 50
– 100
Industry
Commercial
Public Sector
Domestic
Transport
LULUCF Net Emissions
Agriculture
Waste Management
is 2022
4.5
2.9
1.5
32.4
57.7
-92.1
212.9
7.3

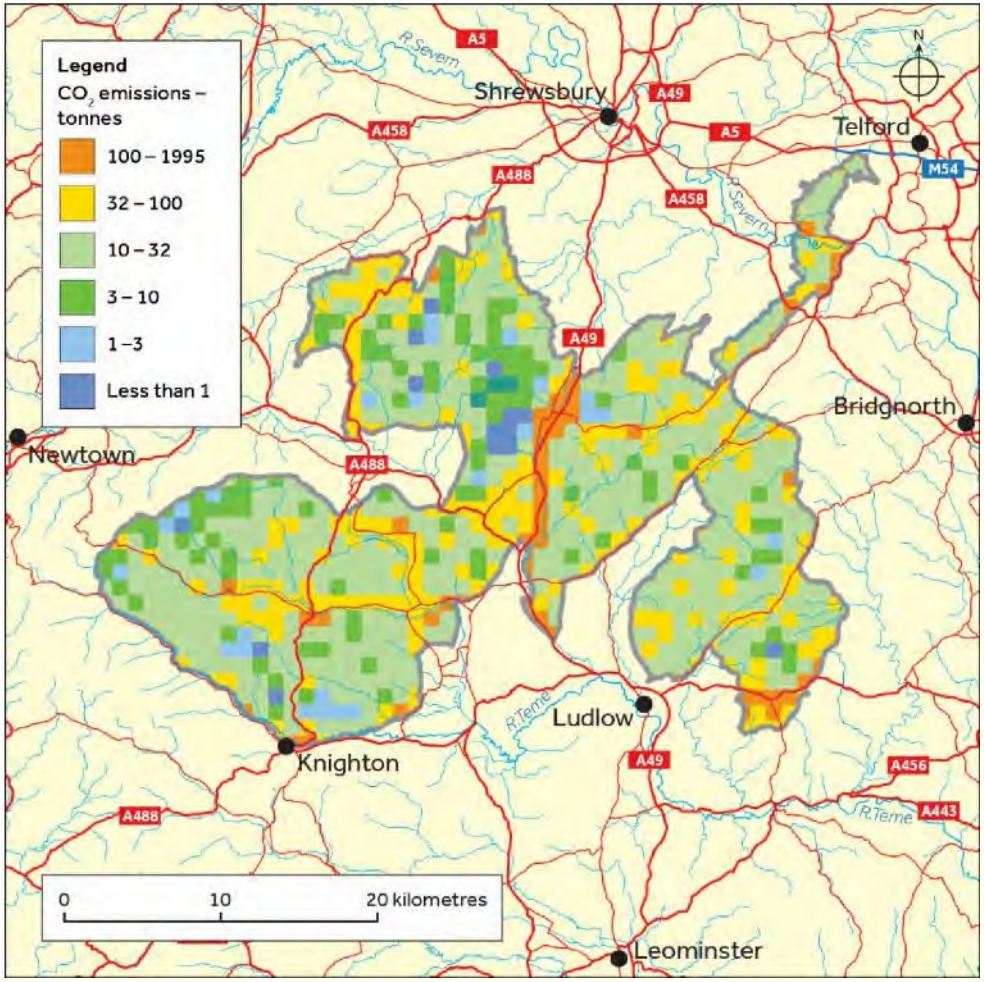
- Agriculture is the highest producer of greenhouse gases in both years. It produced 245.5 kt CO2e in 2012 and 212.9 kt CO2e in 2022 (**13% reduction**).
- Domestic was the next highest producer of greenhouse gases in 2012, producing 56.4 kt CO2e, this fell to 32.4 kt CO2e in 2022 (**43% reduction**).
- Transport was a similar source of greenhouse gas emissions in 2012 at 54.8 kt CO2e, this rose to 57.7 kt CO2e in 2022 (**5% increase**).
- There has been a **42% reduction** in emissions from waste management, a **38% reduction** from industrial, a **63% reduction** from commercial operations, and a **53% reduction** by the public sector between 2012 and 2022.
- The amount of carbon stored in the soils and vegetation **increased by 7%** between 2012 and 2022.

Source: Department for Energy Security & Net Zero; UK Protected Landscapes greenhouse gas emissions statistics: 2005-2022, published 27th June 2024. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-2005-to-2022

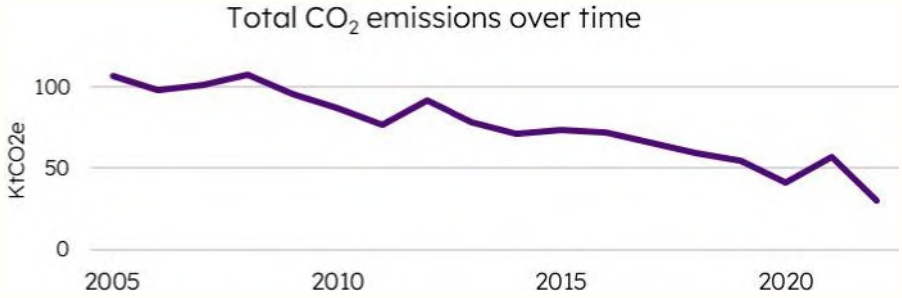
The maps that follow show the presence of emissions within the National Landscape during 2022. Refer to the **Land-cover map** to match emissions to land-use activity.

Carbon dioxide in the National Landscape

Showing carbon dioxide (CO_2) levels in 2022. Transport produced 46% of emissions, domestic 26% and agriculture 21%. The highest concentrations (1995+ kt CO2e) are along the trunk roads and in the larger settlements.



Carbon dioxide (CO_2) enters the atmosphere through burning fossil fuels (coal, natural gas, and oil), solid waste, trees and other biological materials, and also as a result of certain chemical reactions (e.g., cement production). Carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere (or "sequestered") when it is absorbed by plants as part of the biological carbon cycle.

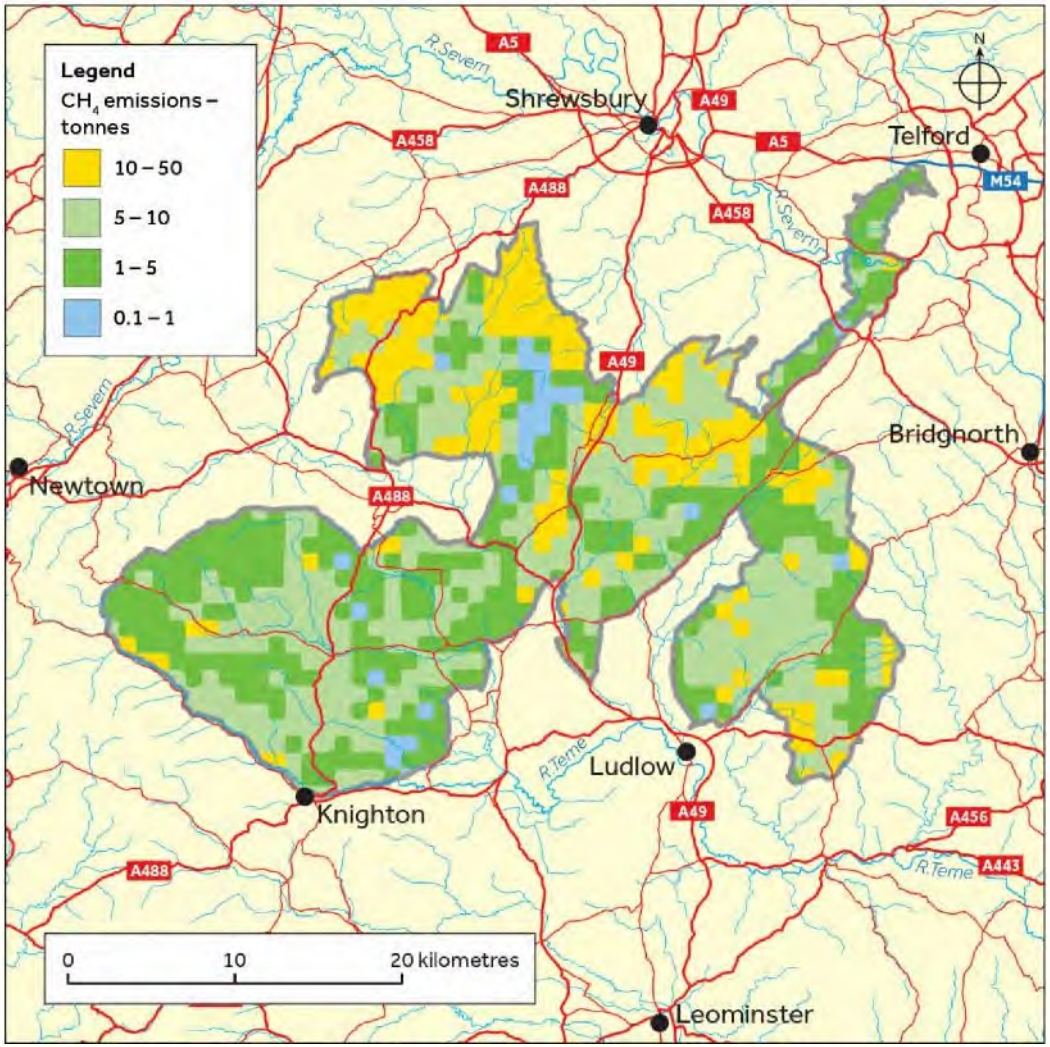


The main human activity that emits CO_2 is the combustion of fossil fuels (coal, natural gas, and oil) for energy and transportation. Certain industrial processes and land-use changes also emit CO_2.

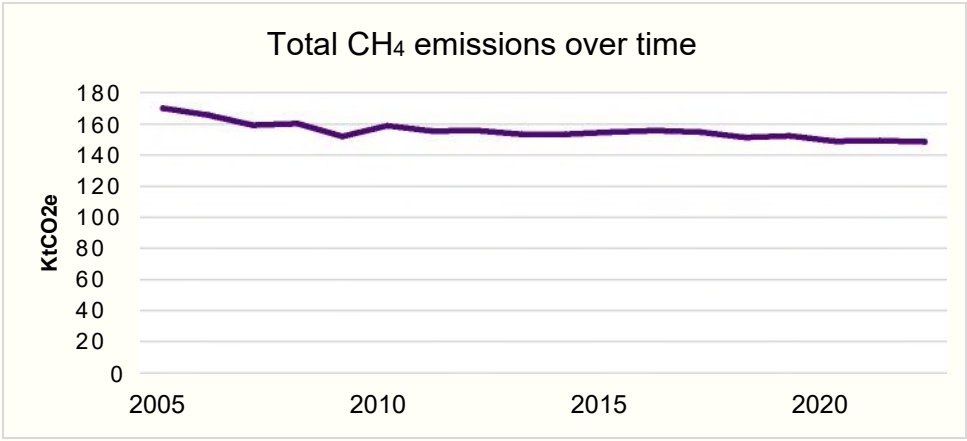
Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) 2022 (https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/mapping). The NAEI receives detailed data on individual point sources regulated by the Environment Agency and Local Authority Pollution Control.

Methane in the National Landscape

Showing methane (CH_4) levels in 2022. 95% of emissions are associated with agriculture (probably from livestock).



Methane (CH_4) is emitted during the production and transport of coal, natural gas, and oil. Methane emissions also result from livestock and other agricultural practices, land use, and by the decay of organic waste in municipal solid waste landfills.

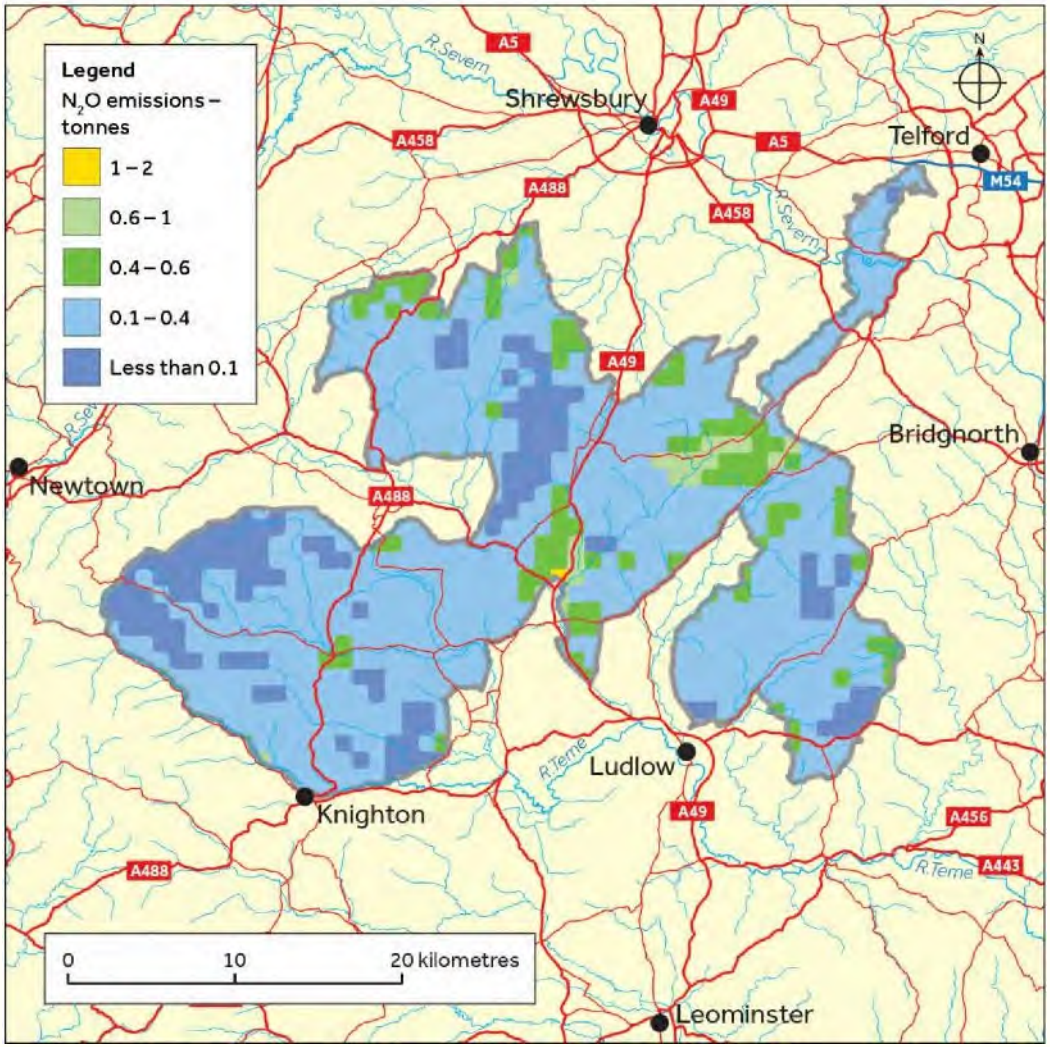


Reference to the **Land-use map** (click) shows that the areas showing greater than 10 kt CO2e of methane are generally where the pasture lands merge into lowlands. Land used for arable and woodland generally emit less than 10 kt CO2e of methane.

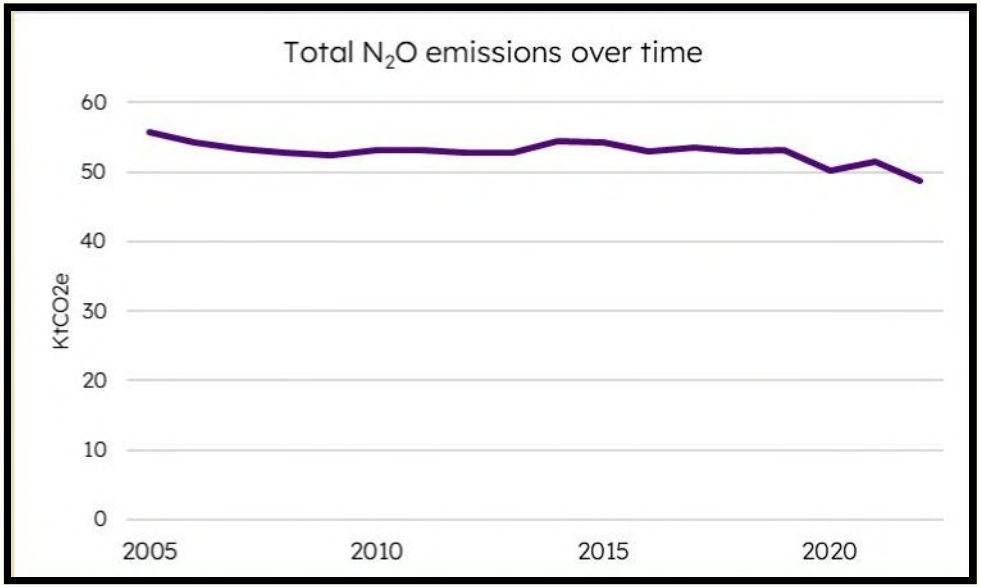
Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) 2022 (https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/mapping). The NAEI receives detailed data on individual point sources regulated by the Environment Agency and Local Authority Pollution Control.

Nitrous oxide in the National Landscape

Showing nitrous oxide (N_2O) levels in 2022, which is generally very low; 95% of local emissions are associated with agriculture.



Nitrous oxide (N_2O) is emitted during agricultural, land use, and industrial activities; combustion of fossil fuels and solid waste; as well as during treatment of wastewater. It is associated with vehicle engines.



Reference to the **Land-use map** (click) shows that the lowest rates are in areas of woodland, grassland and pasture.

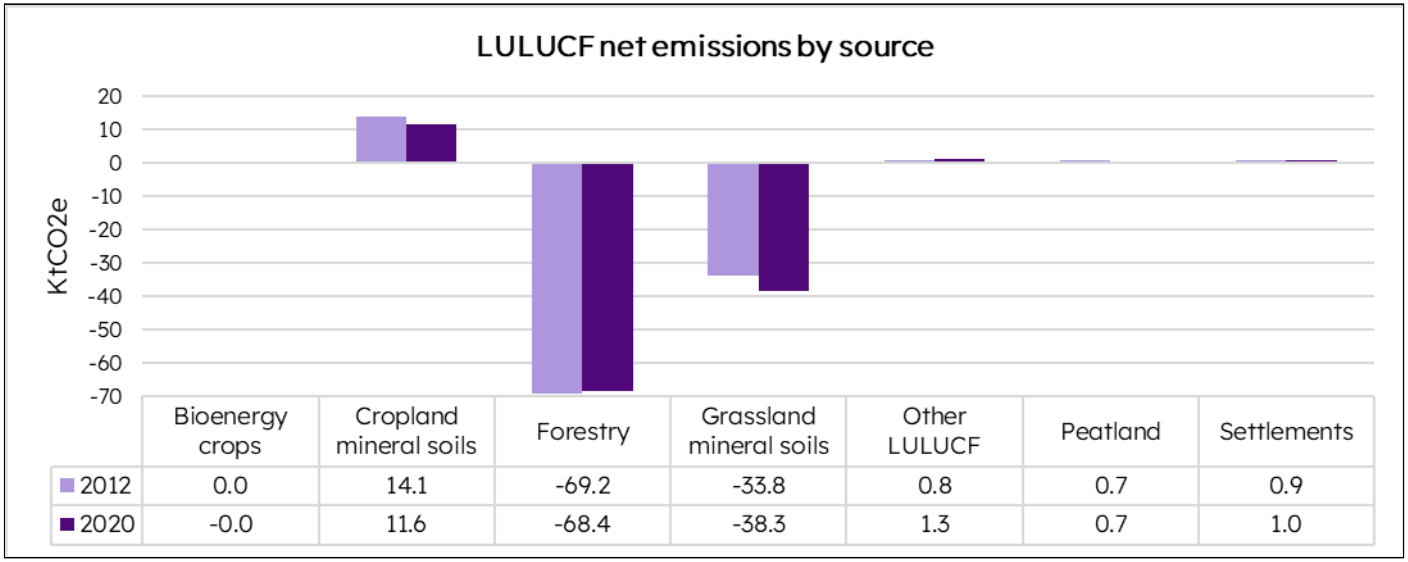
Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (NAEI) 2022 (https://naei.beis.gov.uk/data/mapping). The NAEI receives detailed data on individual point sources regulated by the Environment Agency and Local Authority Pollution Control.

Carbon flux

In 2024, a baseline assessment of the organic carbon flux from habitats present within the National Landscape was set at -295,451 t CO2e or -3.7 t CO2e / ha. 93% of the stored carbon is below ground.

Estimate of the amount of carbon stored and sequestered by habitats within the Shropshire Hills							
Above ground carbon storage, tonnes (t)	Below ground carbon storage, tonnes (t)	Total carbon storage, tonnes (t)	Sequestration (carbon flux), tonnes (t co^2 equivalent Yr-1)	Above ground carbon storage, tonnes per hectare (t/ha)	Below ground carbon, tonnes per hectare (t/ha)	Total carbon, tonnes per hectare (t/ha)	Sequestration, tonnes per hectare (t co^2 equivalent /ha)
1,745,123	24,645,986	26,391,109	-295,451	22	305	326	-3.7

The greenhouse gas data shows a 6% increase in carbon stored in the local soils and vegetation between 2012 and 2022. The LULUCF chart identifies forestry and grassland soils as the only carbon stores.



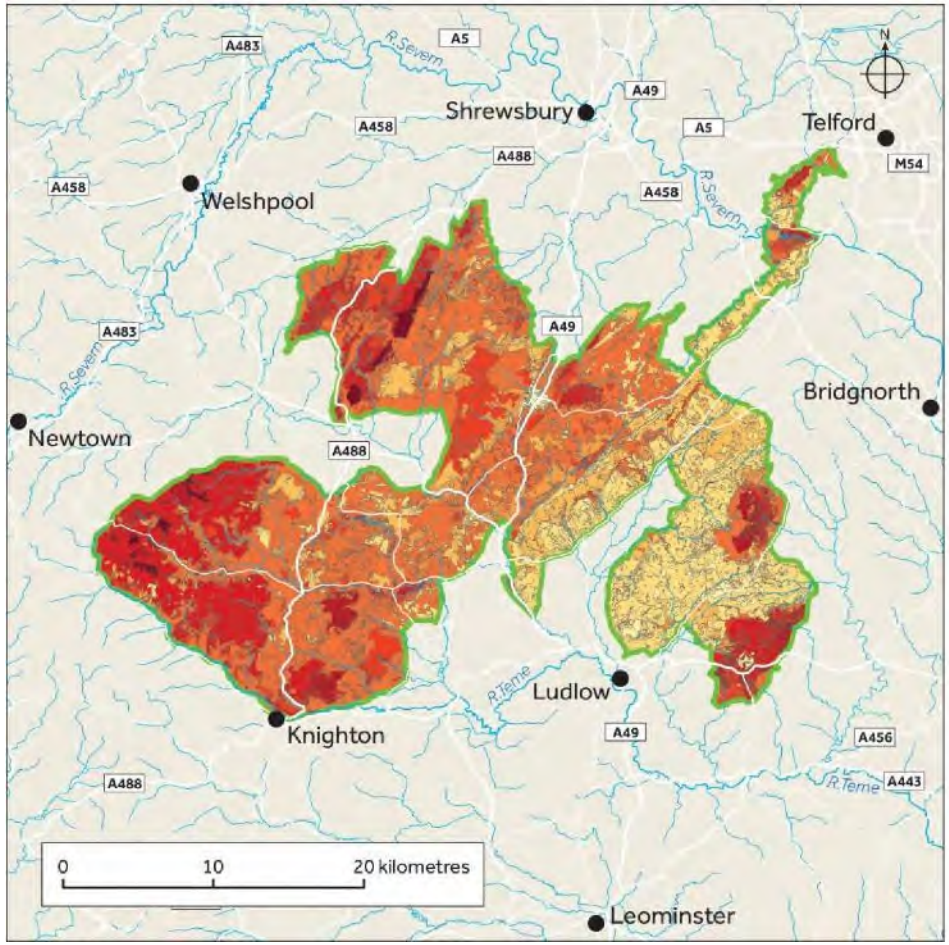
	Bioenergy crops	Cropland mineral soils	Forestry	Grassland mineral soils	Other LULUCF	Peatland	Settlements
2012	0.0	14.1	-69.2	-33.8	0.8	0.7	0.9
2020	-0.0	11.6	-68.4	-38.3	1.3	0.7	1.0

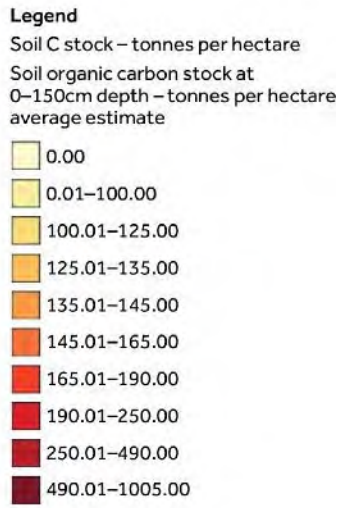
The term carbon flux refers to the transfer of carbon (mass) to and from a habitat expressed as tonnes of carbon equivalent (t CO2e)

Source: PLTOF aditional statistic 7: Estimate of the amount of carbon stored and sequestered by habitats within Protected Landscapes © Natural England [2024], reproduced with the permission of Natural England, www.gov.uk/natural-england. © Crown Copyright and database right [2024]. Ordnance Survey licence number AC0000851168.

Soil organic carbon stock

A baseline assessment of organic carbon storage capacity of habitats present within the National Landscape.





Derived from the National Landscapes Association's (suported by Natural England) National Landscape Carbon Audit and Metric project delivered by Cranfield University.

The term **carbon stock** refers to the amount of carbon contained within soils or biomass at a given time described in terms of mass per standardised unit area (tonnes per hectare) and are often referred to as carbon density (see Zawadzka, J.E., et al 2022).

Soil has a critical role to play in climate change mitigation by regulating atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs). Global soils are the dominant natural land-based carbon sink, holding more carbon than all terrestrial habitats combined (soil carbon stock). There are opportunities to increase soil carbon stocks and reduce GHG emissions from many agricultural soils by changing management practices and how land is used.

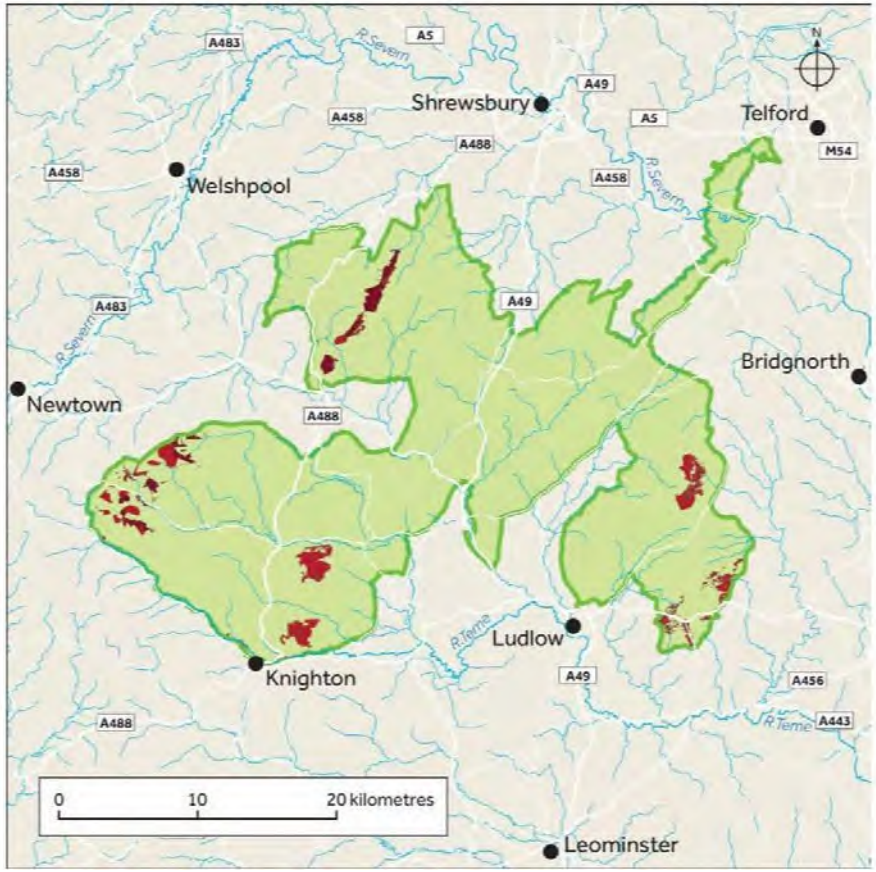
Much of the soils in the National Landscape hold the equivalent of 150 tonnes of carbon per hectare but there are areas holding considerably more. These equate to the areas of Priority Habitat, **as shown on the next map**.

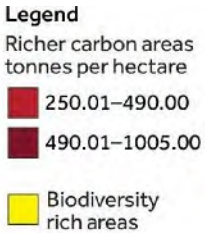
Source: Non-priority habitats: data owned by UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology © Database Right/Copyright UKEH; Priority habitats: Ordancy Survey MasterMaps ® (OSMM); Natural England; Soil data: © Cranfield University (NSRI) and for the Controller of HMSO (2022). Backdrop: © Crown copyright and/or database right 2022 OS.

Area of priority habitats within the richer level of organic carbon stocks

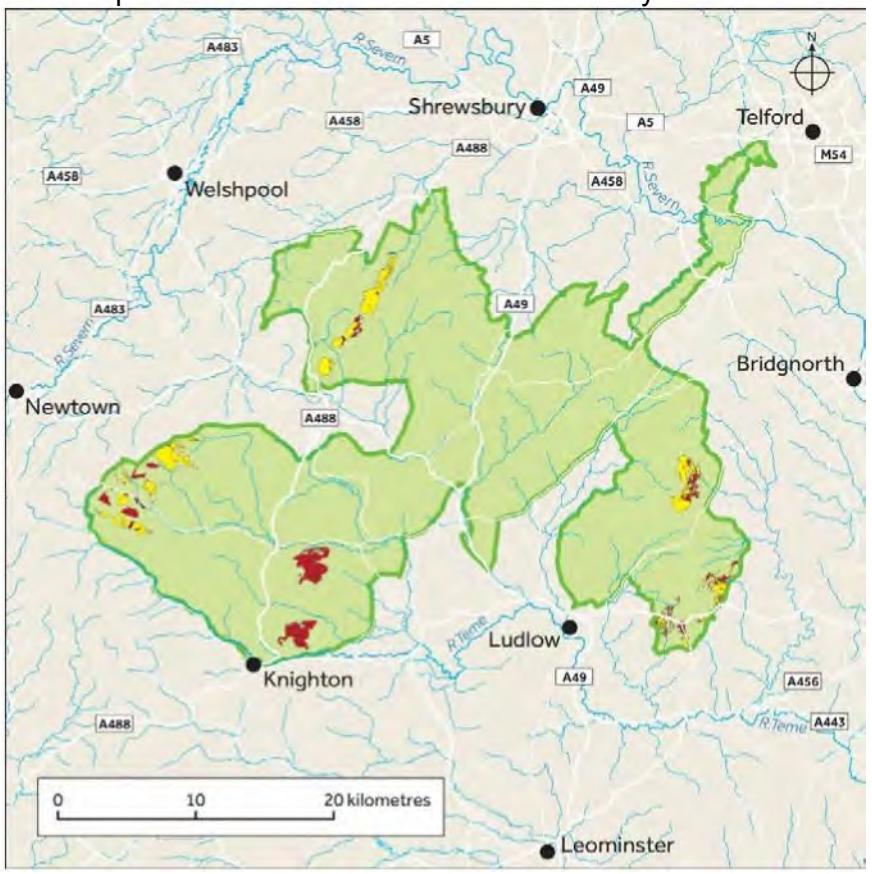
There is a match between the area's richer stocks of organic carbon and the 'Upland Heathland' and 'Fragmented Heath' Priority Habitats. There are two hot-spots between Knighton and Clunton that are not associated with biodiversity rich areas; they are large swathes of coniferous plantation on organic rich/former peat soil.

Location of the richest carbon areas:





Relationship between richest carbon and biodiversity rich areas:

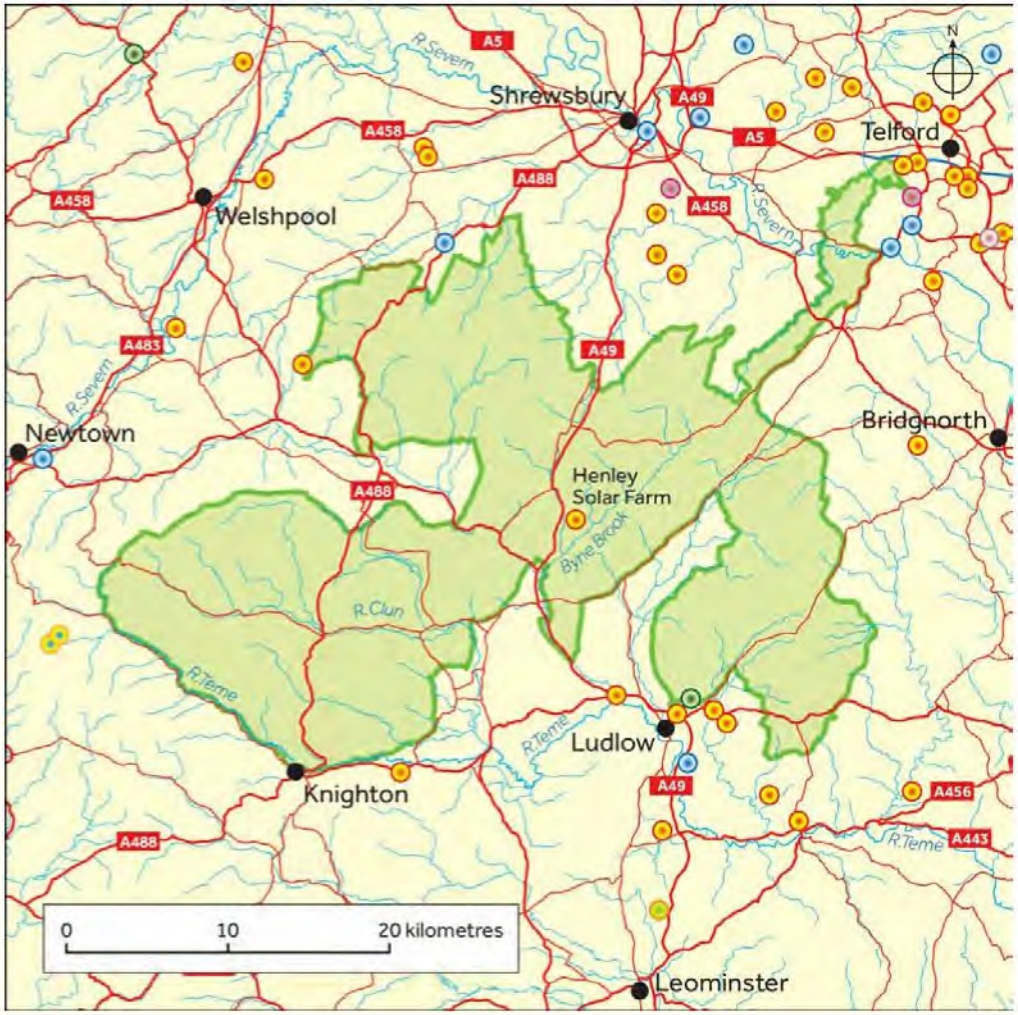


The biodiversity rich areas (**in yellow**) refer to the combined areas of priority habitat (click to go to **Area of priority habitats** map) that fall within the higher levels of organic carbon stocks (490.01 – 1,005.00 tonnes/ha at a depth of 0-150 cm).

Reference: Zawadzka, J.E., Keay, C., Hannam, J., Burgess, P.J, Corstanje, R. (2022). AONB Carbon Audit & Metric (land management), Bedfordshire: Cranfield University

Renewable energy

There are four renewable energy generation sites operating within the National Landscape, there are two awaiting construction.



Operating renewable energy generation sites:

- Henley Solar Farm, Greencoat/ Renesola, Solar Photovoltaics (6.5MW)
- Priest Weston, Mellington Farm, Solar Photovoltaics (1MW)
- Wigley Farm, R Gough & Son Ltd, Anaerobic Digestion (1.1MW)
- Candles/Coalmoor Landfill, Onyx Landfill Ltd, Landfill Gas (2.9MW)

Awaiting construction:

- Hollydale, Buildwas Road, Telford Four Limited- Battery Storage (40MW)
- Steeraway Farm - Solar Farm, RE Projects Development, Solar Photovoltaics (30MW)

There are several sites close to the boundary, and in the setting, of the National Landscape. Only one is operational, close to Henley Hall - operated by NESF (formerly Kronos Solar) (a 5MW Solar Photovoltaics plant).

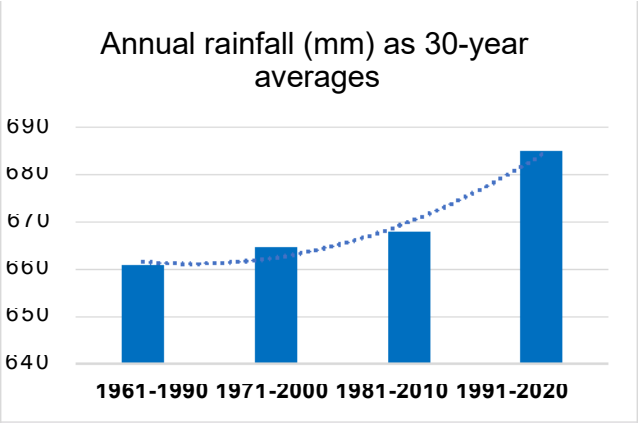
There are three sites awaiting construction, two close to Ludlow (at Rock Farm and Sainsburys Dun Cow Road) and one at Heartease Farm, Knighton.

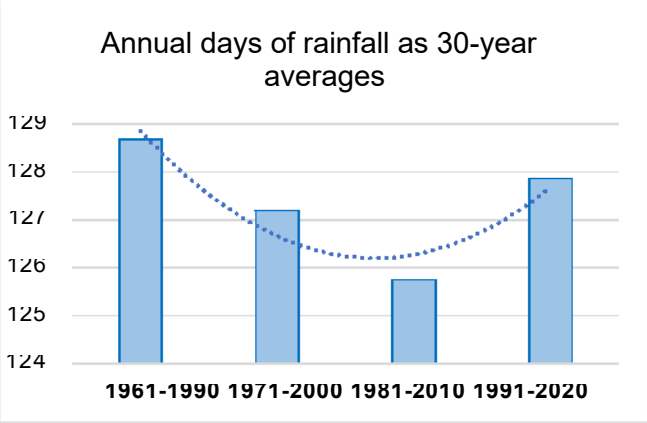
The Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) map tracks the progress of renewable electricity over 150kW through the planning system across the UK. It provides as accurate and comprehensive a snapshot as possible of projects. The information in this Renewable Energy Planning Database is gathered from the separate planning authority databases throughout the UK.

Source: Department for Energy Security & Net Zero https://data.barbour-abi.com/smart-map/repd/desnz/?type=repd

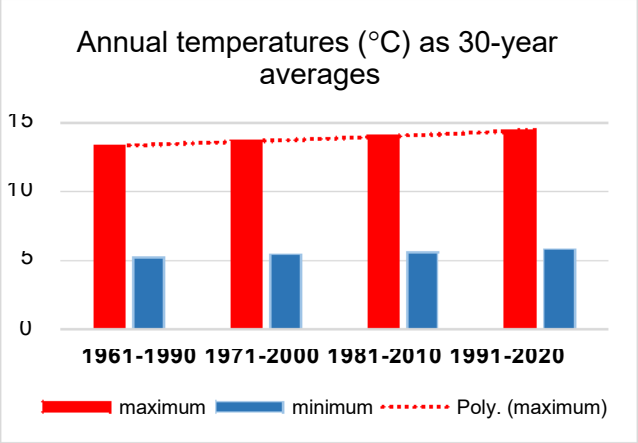
Changes in weather patterns

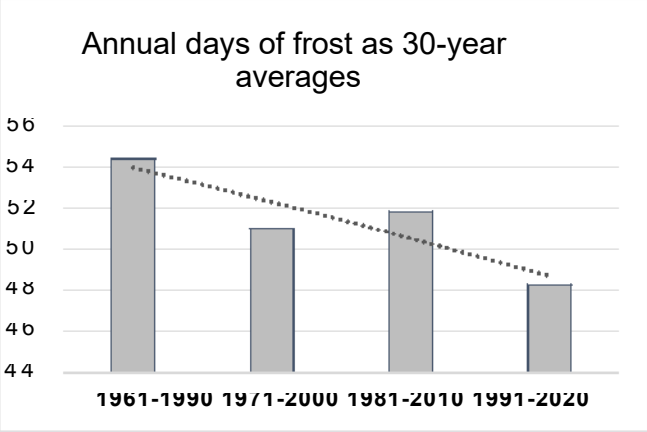
Charts showing a series of 30-year climate averages between 1961 and 2020 based on Metrological Office data for Preston Montford. There is a 24.1-millimetre increase in annual rainfall and a rise of 0.9°C in annual mean temperature over the last 60 years. Recent years are wetter, but the overall average number of annual days of rainfall is stable over the period (overall annual average is 127.4 days).

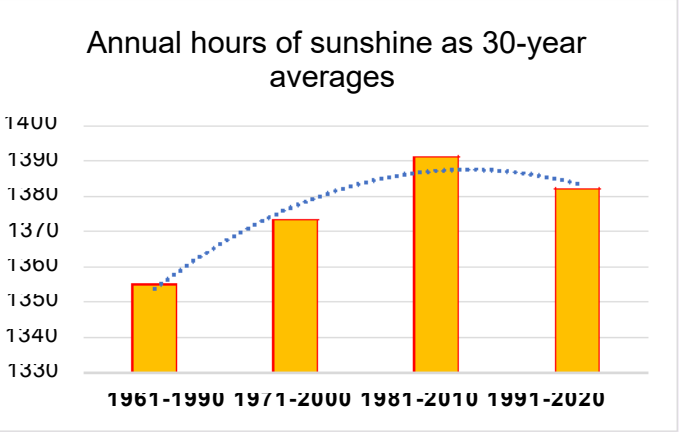




Note: The charts use a polynomial trendline to show how the data fluctuates.







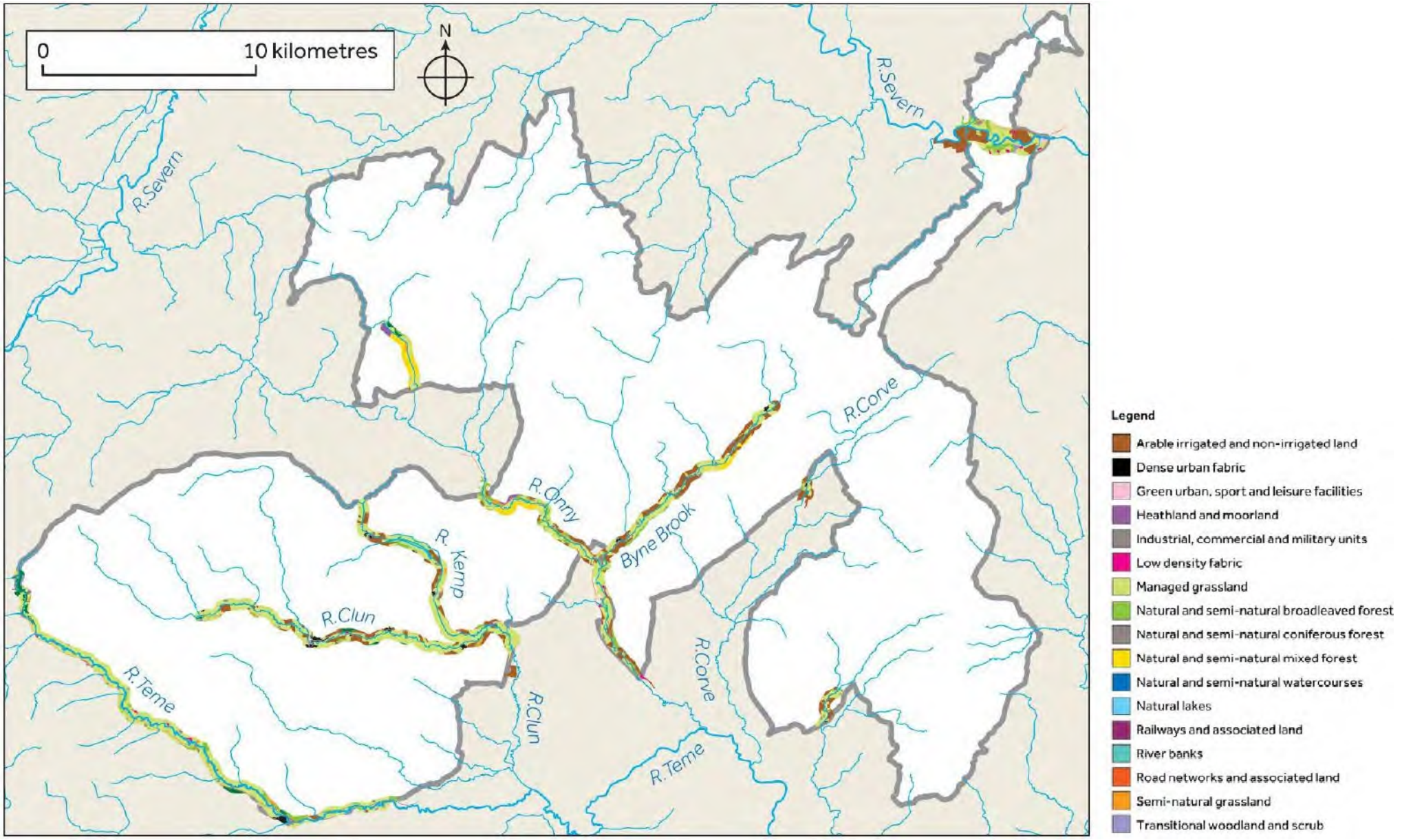
Source: Information provided by the National Meteorological Office, UK climate averages (MIDAS Open data 2024)
https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-climate-averages/gcn3y738h

Water

The Rivers Clun, Teme and Onny, along with many smaller rivers and streams, are relatively clean and natural in form, and of high quality. Many are lined with Alder, and home to important species such as Dipper, White-clawed Crayfish and Otter. Freshwater Pearl Mussel is found in the River Clun just outside the Shropshire Hills. Valleys vary from the steep-sided batches and dingles of the Long Mynd and Stiperstones, to larger valleys with some flood meadows, and the broad dales such as Corve Dale and Ape Dale which divide up the area. A short stretch of the River Severn within the Shropshire Hills divides the Wrekin from Wenlock Edge. There are no large water bodies but many small ponds, marshes and flushes. The northern and eastern parts of the Shropshire Hills drain into the River Severn, a short stretch of which runs through the National Landscape near the Wrekin.

There is almost 2,000km of riparian woodland in the Shropshire Hills as trees line most of our water-courses, and typically composed of Alder and Willow. The condition of Alder along riverbanks, and effects of livestock access, also have a big effect. Traditional coppicing of Alder for clog making and charcoal production stopped decades ago, and over-mature trees tend to shade out field layer vegetation, which supports invertebrates and in turn fish. Alder is also suffering badly from water-borne Phytophthora disease, and loss of trees leads to bank instability. Unrestricted stock access compounds poor development of bankside vegetation and instability, as well as leading to siltation of gravel beds used by spawning fish.

Riparian Zones Land Cover



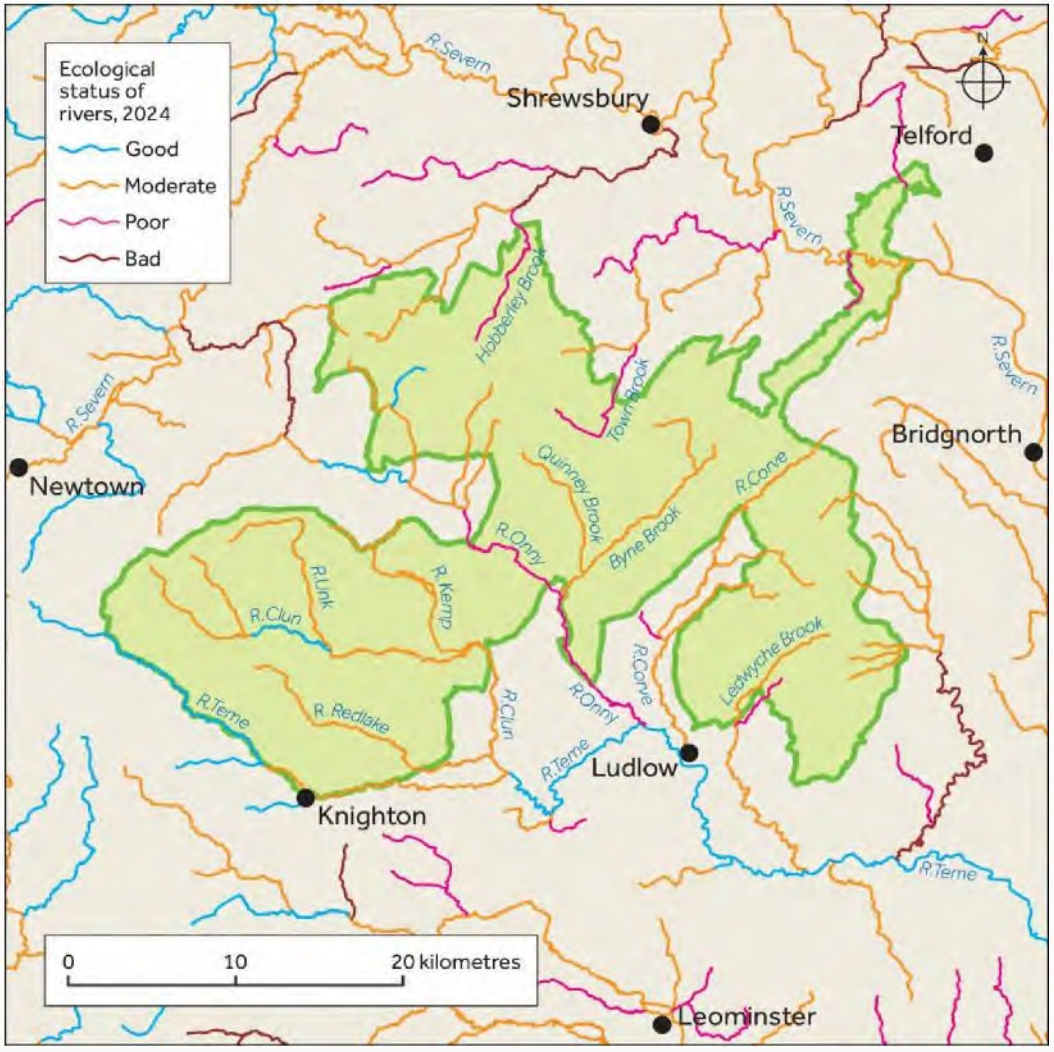
Riparian zones represent transitional areas occurring between land and freshwater ecosystems, characterised by distinctive hydrology, soil and biotic conditions and strongly influenced by the stream water. They provide a wide range of riparian functions (e.g. chemical filtration, flood control, bank stabilization, aquatic life and riparian wildlife support, etc.) and ecosystem services.

The European Union's Copernicus Land Monitoring Service provides information on land cover and land use changes for 55 thematic classes in a variable buffer zone of selected rivers across Europe between the 2012 and 2018 reference years.

Source: https://land.copernicus.eu/en/products/corine-land-cover Dataset title. European Union's Copernicus Land Monitoring Service information, Riparian Zones land cover 2018 https://land.copernicus.eu/en/map-viewer?product=130299ac96e54c30a12edd575eff80f7 (Accessed on 14.02.2025). The production of the Riparian Zones products was coordinated by the European Environment Agency in the frame of the EU Copernicus programme.

Ecological status of rivers

In 2024, 3.7% of rivers, 50% of groundwater bodies and 3.9% of water catchments have a good ecological status; none have a high status.



The UK Water Framework Directive are an important mechanism for monitoring waterbodies for a range of issues, including pollution from chemicals and excess nutrients, as well as the health of wildlife communities such as plants and fish. Waterbodies are rated as high, good, moderate, poor or bad status. Only the waterbodies that are described as 'good' or 'high' are in a sustainable and healthy condition; the rest all need a greater level of protection and management if they are to improve to a good level of health.

The overall ecological quality of rivers and water bodies in the National Landscape is **moderate** though short stretches of the rivers Clun and Onny are **good**, as is the River Teme as it flows along the south western boundary. However, a long length of the River Onny has a poor status, as do the Hobberley and Town Brooks. Half the groundwater bodies are all in a **poor** condition.

	Length of rivers (Km)			Nº ground water bodies			Nº waterbody catchments
	2013	**2020**	**2024**	**2013**	**2020**	**2024**	**2024**
High	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Good	126.3	28.2	8.5	3	3	2	2
Moderate	68.8	171.8	188.1	0	0	0	37
Poor	1.4	13.5	35.5	1	1	2	11
Bad	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	**196.4**	**232.1**	**232.1**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**51**
% with High or Good status	64.3%	13.2 %	**3.7%**	75%	75%	**50%**	**3.9%**

Source: PLTOF © Environment Agency copyright and database rights 2024.

Nutrient status of the River Clun

The River Clun Catchment is designated as a 'Nutrient Neutrality Catchment' where new developments must demonstrate that they will not increase nutrient pollution to the surrounding water bodies, specifically those in protected areas like Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). A part of the River Clun downstream from the Shropshire Hills is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Although the River Clun is important for wildlife such as otter, salmon and trout, the sole feature for which the area is notified is the presence of the freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*). The River Clun has one of the few lowland populations left in the UK. Freshwater pearl mussels are very sensitive to water quality, with juvenile mussels being particularly susceptible to pollution. An assessment of the SAC shows that it is in an **unfavourable and declining** condition, caused by high levels of phosphate, nitrogen and silt.

River Clun attributes with water quality targets:

Monitoring ID point	**WQ Target**		**WQ Monitoring Data**		**Compliance with target & % reduction needed to achieve the WQ target**	
	SRP (g/l), annual mean	TON (mg/l)	OP, reactive as P (g/l), mean	TON (mg/l)	SRP	TON
Confluence with R. Teme at Leintwardine	10	1.5	39.6	4.01	FAIL 75% reduction needed	FAIL 63% reduction needed

List of abbreviations: OP – Orthophosphate*; SRP – Soluble Reactive Phosphorus; TON – Total Oxidised Nitrogen; WQ – Water Quality

*Orthophosphate is a simple form of phosphate, known as reactive phosphate. It is the most readily used form of phosphorus and is a vital nutrient for bacteria, plants, and algae in aquatic environments. Orthophosphate is often added to municipal water supplies as a corrosion inhibitor.

Recent water quality monitoring shows nutrient concentrations within the River Clun SAC to be exceeding the targets for Soluble Reactive Phosphorus (SRP) and Total Oxidised Nitrogen (TON). Any nutrients entering the catchment upstream of the monitoring point that is exceeding the nutrient targets, will make their way downstream and have the potential to further add to the current exceedance.

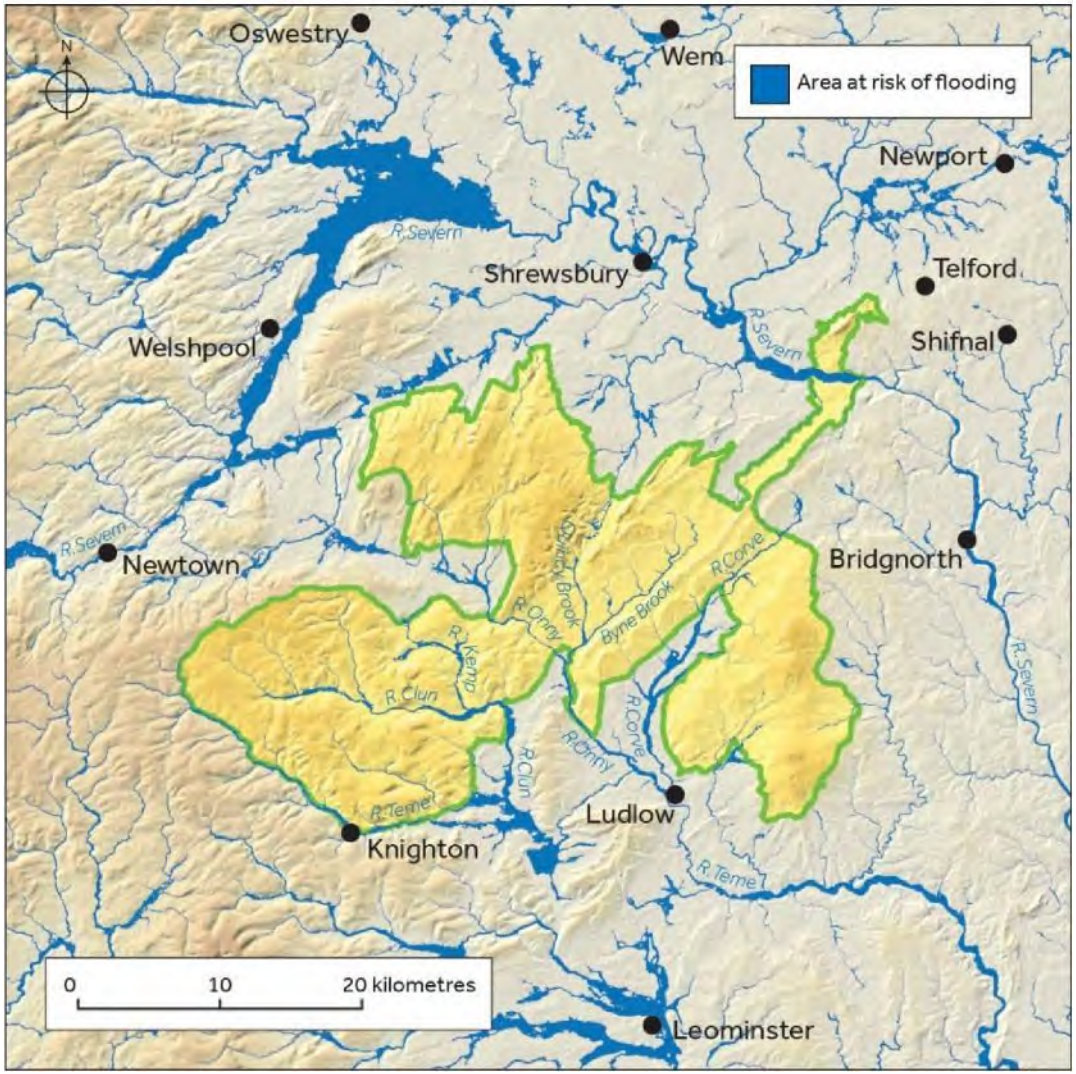
Source and references:

Wood, A., Wake, H. & Mckendrick-Smith, K. (2024): River Clun Special Area of Conservation – Evidence Pack Third Edition. Natural England Technical Information Note TIN194.

Royal HaskoningDHV UK LTD. (2023): River Clun SAC Nutrient Mitigation Solutions. Report for Shropshire Council December 2023

Area at risk of flooding

Generally, there is a very low flood risk within the National Landscape but a high risk of localised flooding where the River Severn passes through the area and along the banks of the River Clun and its tributaries; and to a lesser extent along the River Corve. There is reporting of an increase in flooding incidents affecting property and infrastructure.



The Risk of Flooding from Rivers and the Sea (RoFRS) map shows the chance of flooding considering the presence and condition of flood defences. While flood defences reduce the level of risk, they do not completely remove it. For example, water can flow over the top of the defence, or they can fail in extreme weather conditions or if they are in poor condition. As a result, the RoFRS maps may show that there is risk to areas behind some flood defences.

Flood risk data shows the yearly chance of rivers (and sea) flooding between **2036 to 2069**:

Low risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of between 0.1% and 1% each year.

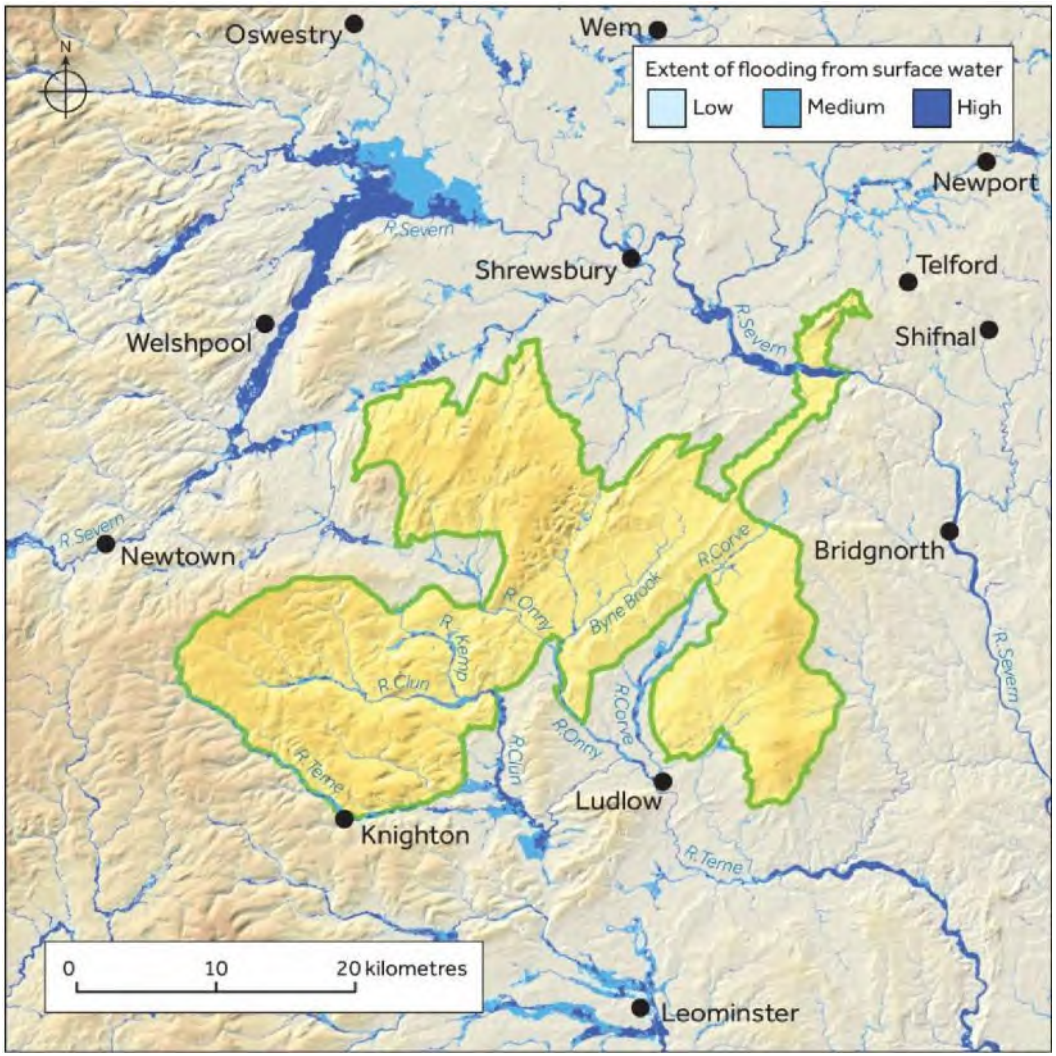
Medium risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of between 1% and 3.3% each year.

High risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of greater than 3.3% each year.

Source: Environment Agency © Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS 100024198. https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/risk
Natural Resources Wals
https://naturalresources.wales/flooding/check-your-flood-risk-on-a-map-flood-risk-assessment-wales-map/?lang=en

Area at risk of flooding from surface water

The large majority of the National Landscape is at very low risk of flooding from surface water. There is a high risk in the Severn Valley and medium to low risk of localised surface water flooding associated with the River Clun and its tributaries. Pockets of flooding are found along the Onny and Corve river systems. There is reporting of an increase in flooding incidents affecting property and infrastructure.



The Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) map is an assessment of where surface water flooding may occur when rainwater does not drain away through the normal drainage systems or soak into the ground, but lies on or flows over the ground instead. It includes information about flooding extents and depths. Surface water flooding is sometimes known as flash flooding. Flooding from surface water is difficult to predict as rainfall location and volume are difficult to forecast.

Flood risk data shows the yearly chance of surface water flooding between **2040 to 2060:**

Low risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of between 0.1% and 1% each year.

Medium risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of between 1% and 3.3% each year.

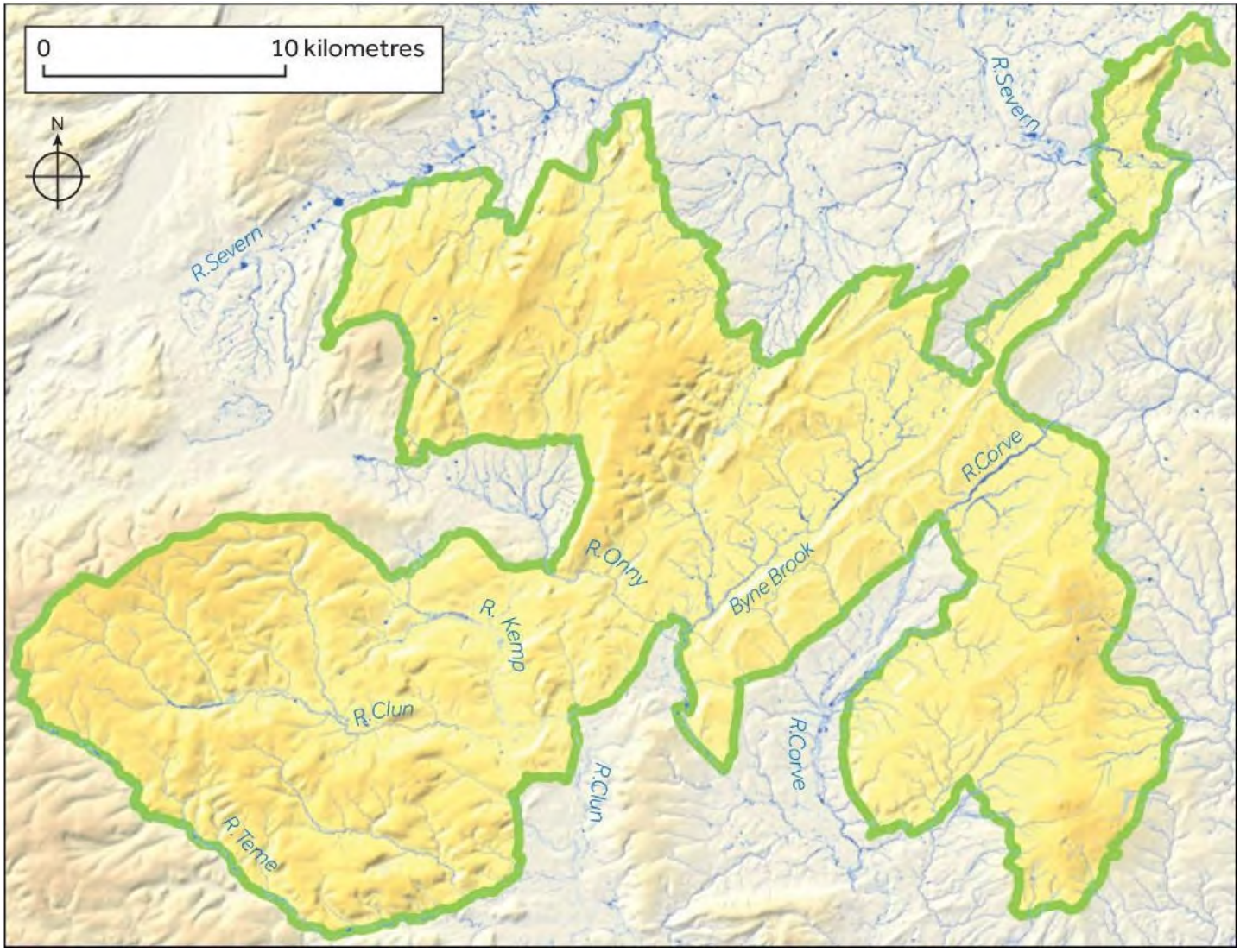
High risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of greater than 3.3% each year.

Source: Environment Agency © Crown copyright and database rights 2019 OS 100024198. https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/risk

Natural Resources Wals https://naturalresources.wales/flooding/check-your-flood-risk-on-a-map-flood-risk-assessment-wales-map/?lang=en

Surface water velocity

High velocity flood water is possible in the upper reaches of the River Corve and Byne Brook but it is confined.



Surface water velocity refers to the speed at which rainwater flows across the surface of the land, typically measured in meters per second. Higher surface water velocity can lead to more rapid and severe flooding, as a greater volume of water moves quickly through the drainage system.

Surface water flood risk: water velocity in a high-risk scenario.

High risk means that this area has a chance of flooding of greater than 3.3% each year.

Low risk means less than 0.1% each year

Land

The Long Mynd, Stiperstones, Wenlock Edge, Wrekin, Clun and Clee Hills all owe their distinctive character to the rock type. The underlying geology also determines land use, patterns of settlement, and exploitation of minerals. The area has a strong south-west to north-east trend in faulting and folding of the rocks, with many ridges being aligned in this direction. There is also evidence of glacial and periglacial processes, such as moraines, stone stripes and river capture, along with more recent features such as river terraces.

The variety of parent materials, in combination with climate and relief, have led to a wide range of soil types. Soils are the result of weathering processes that occur on the Earth's surface where the atmosphere meets the geosphere and hydrosphere. The Shropshire Hills have a wide range of soil types. Podsolised soils have developed over hard sandstones, siltstones, grits and volcanic rocks, supporting heathland and rough grassland. In the Clee Hills, leached brown soils over Silurian, Devonian and Carboniferous rocks support pastoral farming. In the Clun Forest, the free-draining acid brown soils that have formed over Silurian siltstones are mostly grazed, but capable of arable production in some areas. Richer alluvial silts and clays have a limited extent in the river valleys.

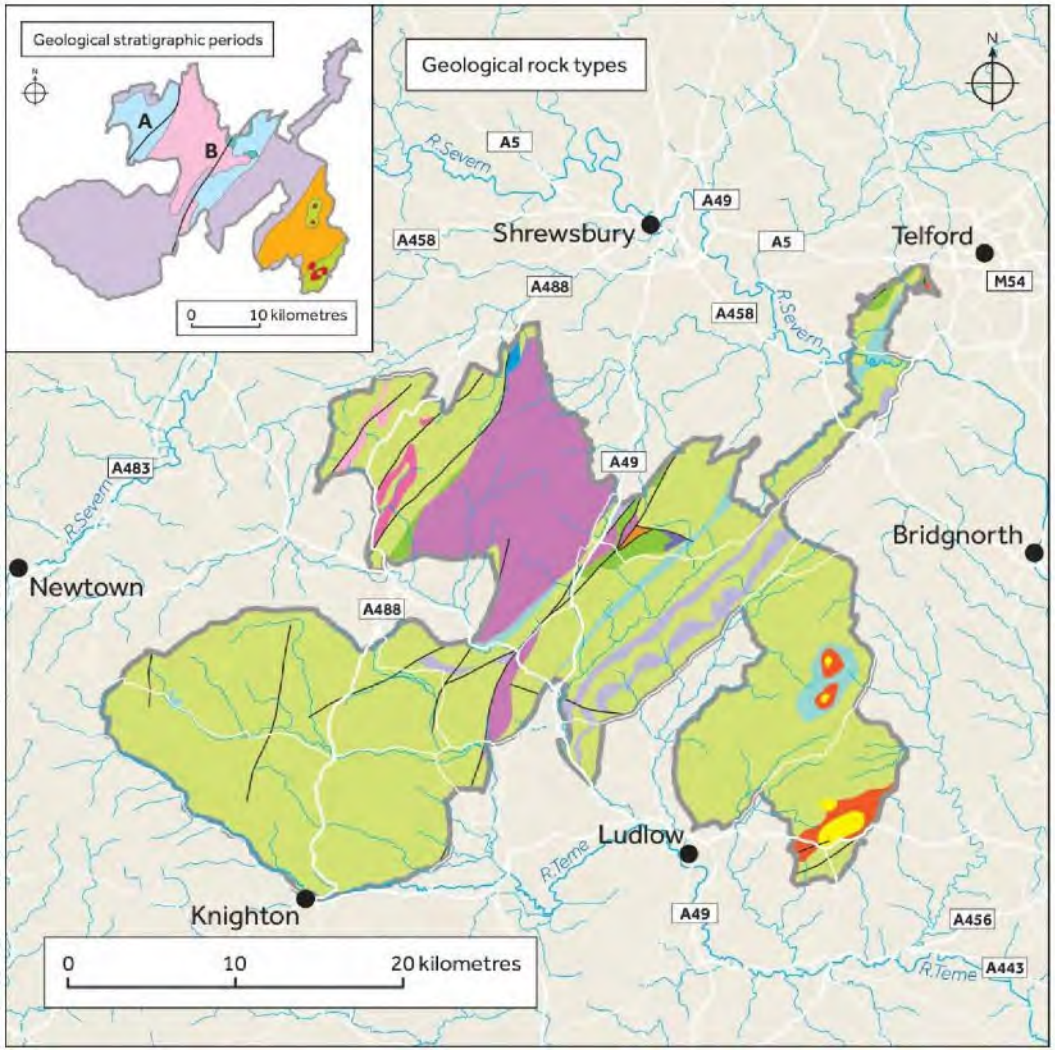
Wild ponies on the Long Mynd (Phil King)

Loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage often supporting pasture are easily compacted when wet, and are prone to capping and slaking, increasing the risks of erosion, especially on steeper slopes. When wet, these soils are easily poached by livestock and compacted by machinery, and the risks of diffuse pollution and flooding are increased. More freely draining, loamy soils typically in arable cultivation are at risk of erosion on slopes where exposed or compacted.

Farming is the main land use in the National Landscape and maintains many valuable features such as moorland and grassland habitats and archaeological monuments, and the patchwork of fields, hedgerows and trees. Sheep and beef are the main enterprises in the Shropshire Hills, with smaller amounts of arable, dairy, pigs and poultry. In common with other hill farming areas in the United Kingdom, the Shropshire Hills is seeing significant structural changes in farming, which have implications for land management.

Geology

Maps showing the stratigraphic periods and rock types.



Legend - Geological stratigraphic periods

- Carboniferous
- Devonian
- Silurian
- Ordovician
- Cambrian
- Precambrian
- Igneous
- A Pontesford/Linley fault line
- B Church Stretton fault line

Legend - Geological rock types

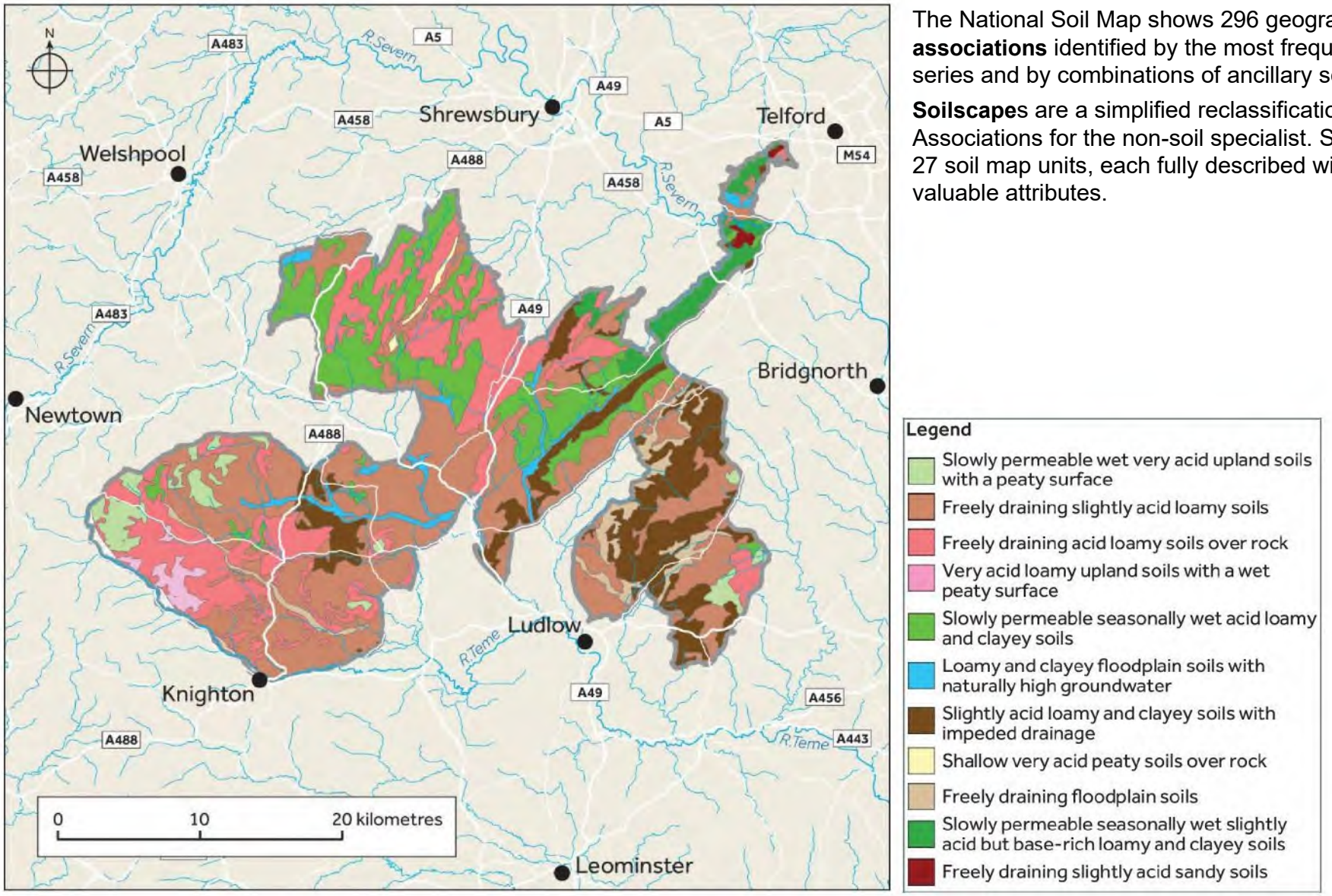
- Acid/felsic Lava
- Acid/felsic Tuff
- Acid/felsic Rock
- Limestone, Mudstone and Calcareous Mudstone
- Basic/mafic Igneous-Rock
- Basic/mafic Lava
- Basic/mafic Lava and Mafic Tuff
- Basic/mafic Tuff
- Mudstone, Sandstone and Conglomerate
- Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone
- Mudstone, Siltstone, Sandstone, Coal, Ironstone and Ferricrete
- Sandstone and Conglomerate, Interbedded
- Sandstone, Limestone and Argillaceous Rocks
- Siltstone and Sandstone with Subordinate Mudstone
- Fault line

The Shropshire Hills have great geological variety, with bedrock dating from the Precambrian almost continuously through to the Permian, and the influence of different rock types and structures on the landscape are clearly visible. There is a widespread mantle of more recent Quaternary deposits and along with landforms on the lower ground, these reflect the complex geological history of the last Ice Age. The area is important in the history of geological science – Murchison's study of the Silurian (including the Wenlock limestone) and its fossils being notable.

The Ercall quarry has a well-recognised example of the sudden transition from metamorphosed and barren rocks to sediments containing the earliest known hard-shelled fossils from the Cambrian period.

Soils

The Shropshire Hills contain 11 soil types, shown on the map and described in the table that follows. Peaty soils cover 3,519.8ha (**4.4%**) of the NL.



The National Soil Map shows 296 geographic **soil associations** identified by the most frequently occurring soil series and by combinations of ancillary series.

Soilscapes are a simplified reclassification of the Soil Associations for the non-soil specialist. Soilscapes defines 27 soil map units, each fully described with a range of valuable attributes.

Soilscape classifications:

No	Name	Texture	Drainage	Fertility	Landcover	Habitats	Carbon	General cropping
19	Slowly permeable wet very acid upland soils with a peaty surface	Peaty or humose loamy	Impeded drainage	Low	Moorland rough grazing and forestry	Grass moor and some heather with flush and bog communities in wetter parts	High	Some soils are capable of improvement to grassland but most only support rough grazing of low or moderate grazing value.
6	Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils	Loamy	Freely draining	Low	Arable and grassland	Neutral and acid pastures and deciduous woodlands; acid communities such as bracken and gorse in the uplands	Low	Suitable for range of spring and autumn sown crops; under grass the soils have a long grazing season.
13	Freely draining acid loamy soils over rock	Loamy	Freely draining	Low	Grassland and rough grazing	Steep acid upland pastures dry heath and moor; bracken gorse and oak woodlands	Medium	Land mostly steeply sloping and with restricted mechanised access; suited to grassland with potential for year-round grazing
16	Very acid loamy upland soils with a wet peaty surface	Peaty	Surface wetness	Very low	Moorland rough grazing forestry and grassland	Grass moor and heather moor with flush and bog communities in wetter parts	High	Some soils are capable of improvement to grassland but most only support rough grazing of low or moderate grazing value.
17	Slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils	Loamy and clayey	Impeded drainage	Low	Grassland with some arable and forestry	Seasonally wet pastures and woodlands	Medium	Mostly suited to grass production for dairying or beef; some cereal production often for feed.
20	Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater	Loamy and clayey	Naturally wet	Moderate	Grassland some arable	Wet flood meadows with wet carr woodlands in old river meanders	Medium	Productive grassland provided drainage is maintained.
8	Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage	Loamy some clayey	Slightly impeded drainage	Moderate to high	Arable and grassland	Wide range of pasture and woodland types	Low	Reasonably flexible but more suited to autumn sown crops and grassland.
2	Shallow very acid peaty soils over rock	Peaty	Variable	Very low	Open moor	Rugged wet heather and grass moor with bare rock,	High	Suitable for rough grazing only

						and bog vegetation in hollows		
12	Freely draining floodplain soils	Loamy	Freely draining	Moderate to high	Grassland some arable	Grassland; wet carr woodlands in old river meanders	Low	Potential for a wide range of crops including cereals, roots and potatoes but flooding can limit land to grass.
18	Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils	Loamy and clayey	Impeded drainage	Moderate	Grassland and arable some woodland	Seasonally wet pastures and woodlands	Low	Mostly suited to grass production for dairying or beef; some cereal production often for feed.
10	Freely draining slightly acid sandy soils	Sandy	Freely draining	Low	Arable	Acid dry pastures; acid deciduous and coniferous woodland; potential for lowland heath	Low	Suitable for wide range of spring and autumn sown crops including irrigated roots, potatoes and field vegetables.

Natural England's England Peat Map, 2025

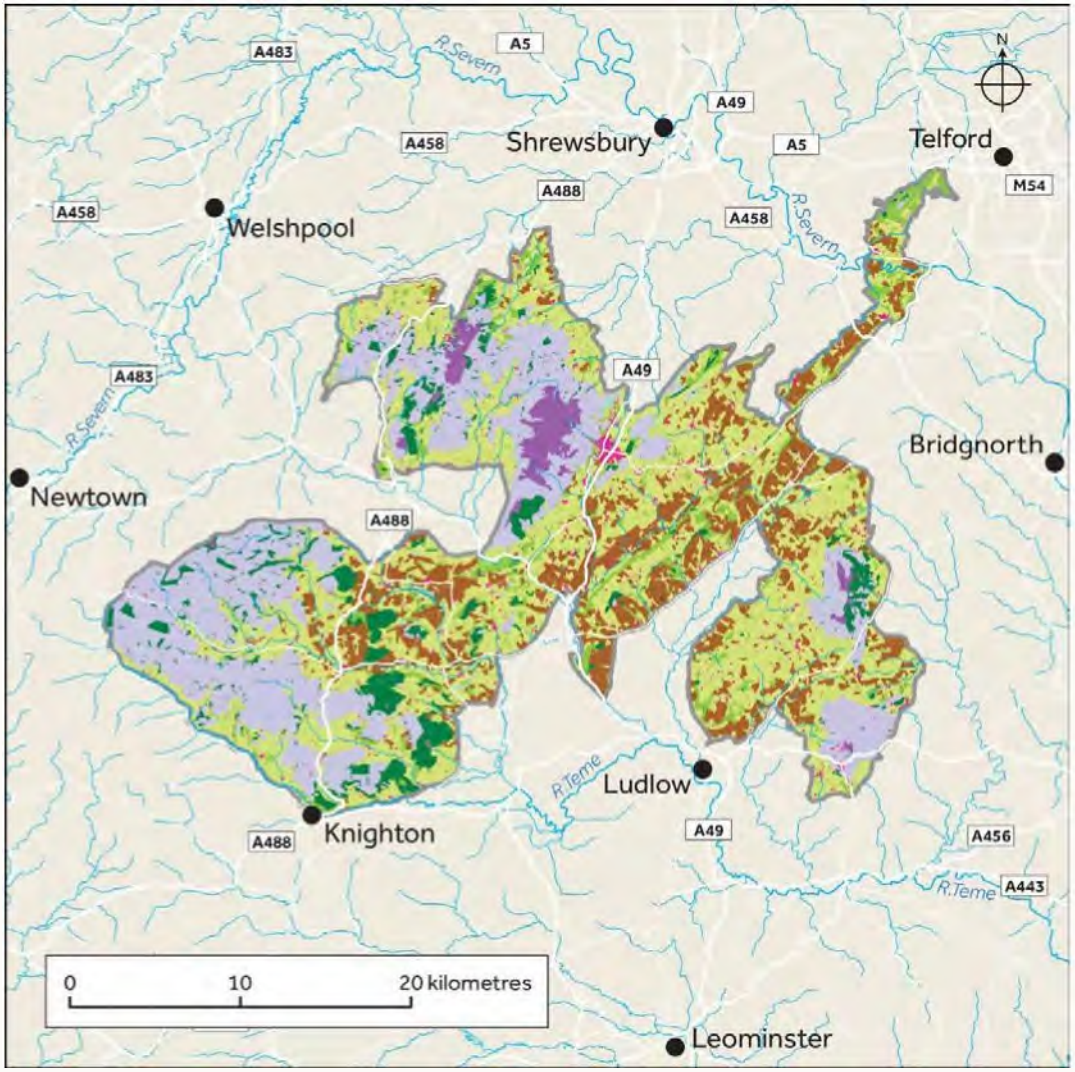
Peaty soil covers 3,519.8ha (4.4%) of area. Made up of:

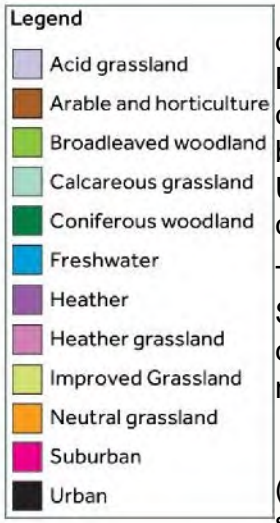
- 10-30cm peaty soil depth 140.8ha
- 30-40cm peaty soil depth 321ha
- 40+cm peaty soil depth 3,058ha

Source: https://osdatahub.os.uk/downloads/open/Soil_Parent_Material_Model_1km Contains British Geological Survey materials © 2025 Soilscapes classifications https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/

Land-cover map

Agriculture is the dominant land use within the National Landscape.





The map shows the land cover data from a data set representing the land surface of Great Britain, classified into 21 UKCEH land cover classes, based upon Biodiversity Action Plan broad habitats. The map was produced at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology by classifying satellite images from 2023.

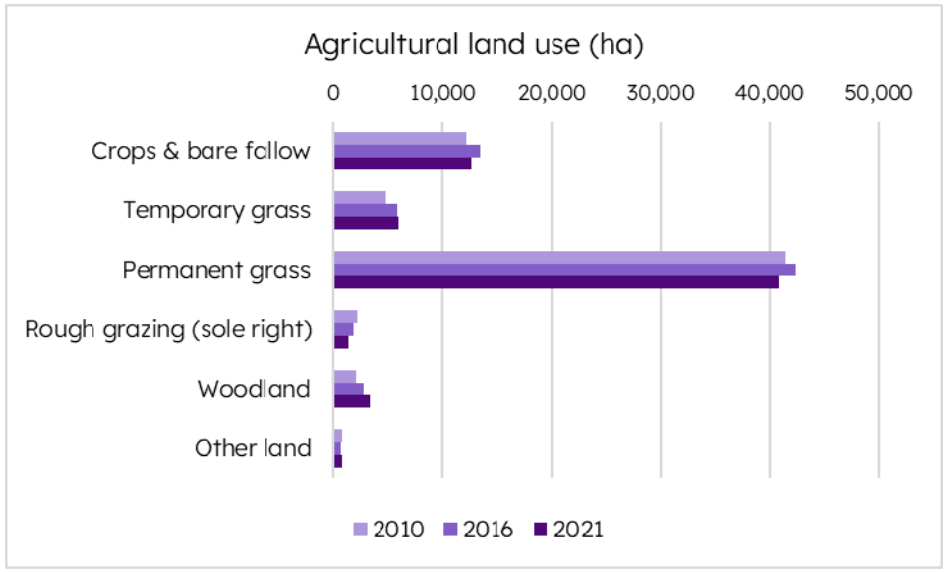
There has been little change since 2016. Some coniferous woodland has been converted to broadleaf and there has been a marginal increase in settlement size.

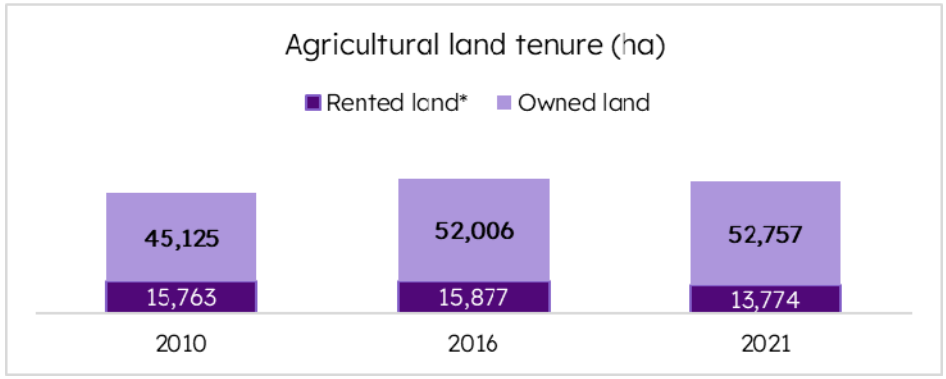
(Click **Methane in the National Landscape** to see link between land-use and emissions)

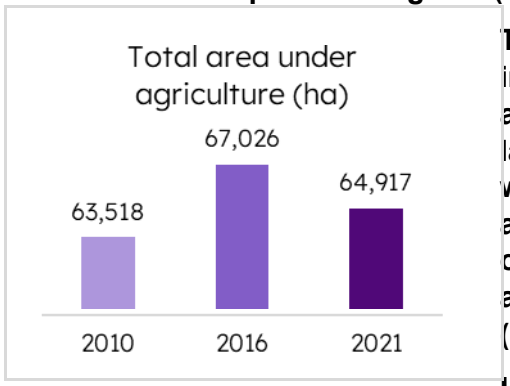
Marston, C.G.; O'Neil, A.W.; Rowland, C.S. (2024). (land parcels, GB). NERC EDS Environmental e. https://doi.org/10.5285/50b344eb-8343-423b- lote: There are previous versions for 1990, 2000, 8, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 but they are not

Agricultural land-use

Currently, 80% of the National Landscape is under agriculture (64.917 ha), of which 63% is down to permanent grass (40,851 ha).







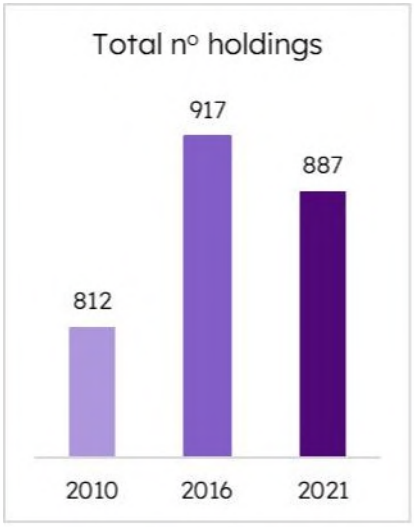
There has been a small increase in the total area of agricultural land during the last ten years. In 2021, there were 64,917 ha of land under agriculture. This is an increase of 2% from 2010 (63,518 ha) and a decline of 3% since 2016 (67,026 ha).

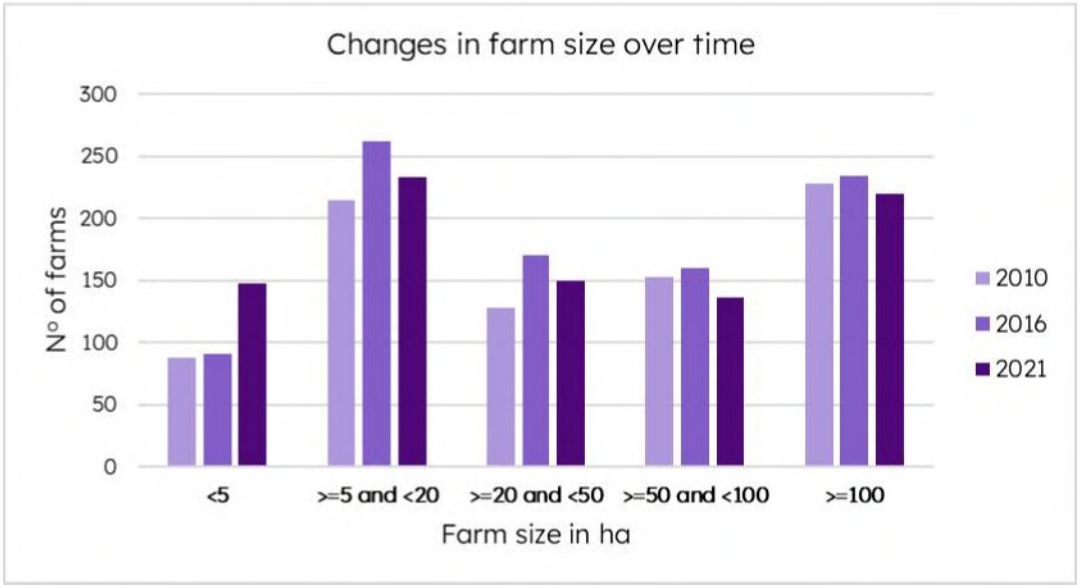
In 2021, 79% of the agricultural tenured land was owner occupied, 21% rented (note that the area of total land use does not equate with the area of total tenure; some land is either not actively managed or is common land). In 2010, 74% and, in 2016, 77% of the agricultural tenured land was owner occupied.

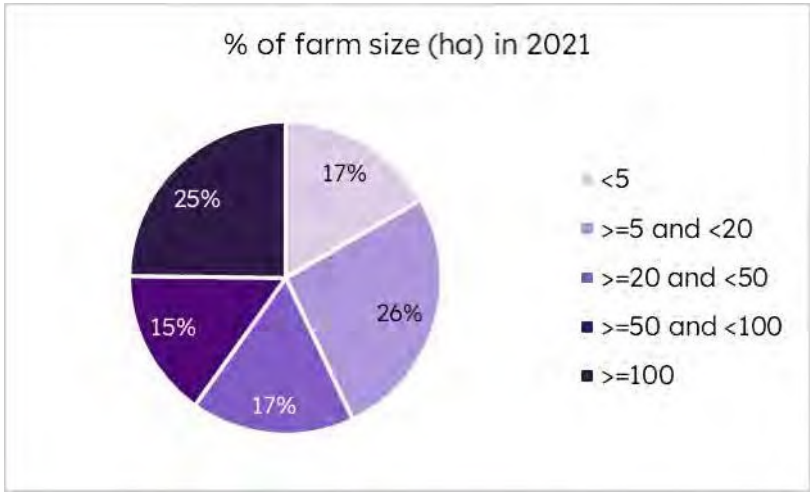
*** Rented land means land rented for at least 365 days on either a Full Agricultural Tenancy, Farm Business Tenancy, or other long-term agreement.**

Note: The Defra June Survey of Agriculture is a large sample survey sent to a representative sample of holdings across England. As the results are based on a sample survey, they are subject to a degree of sampling error and do not consider other sources of survey errors, such as non-response bias or administrative data errors.
Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june

Agricultural holdings

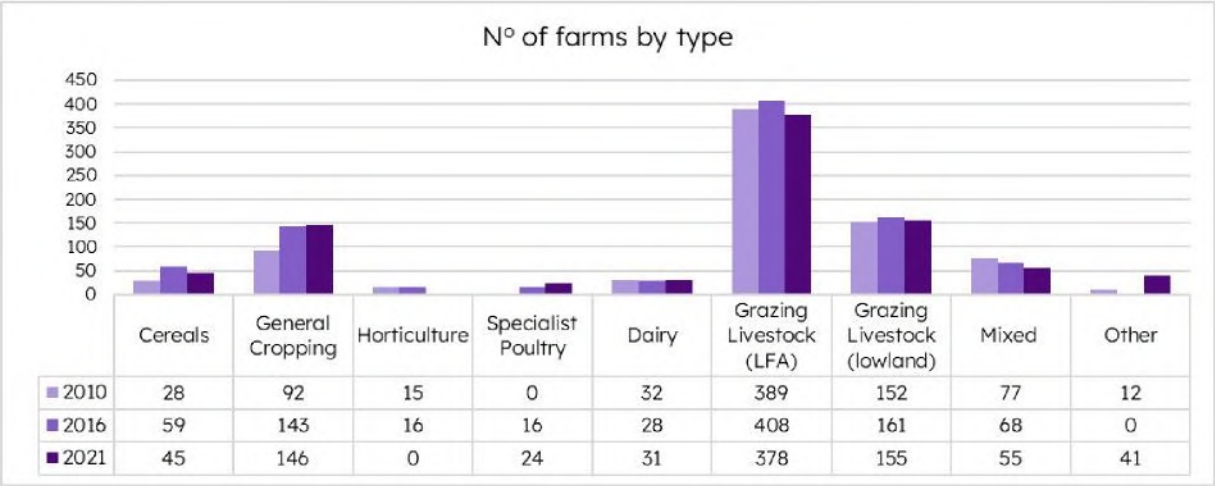




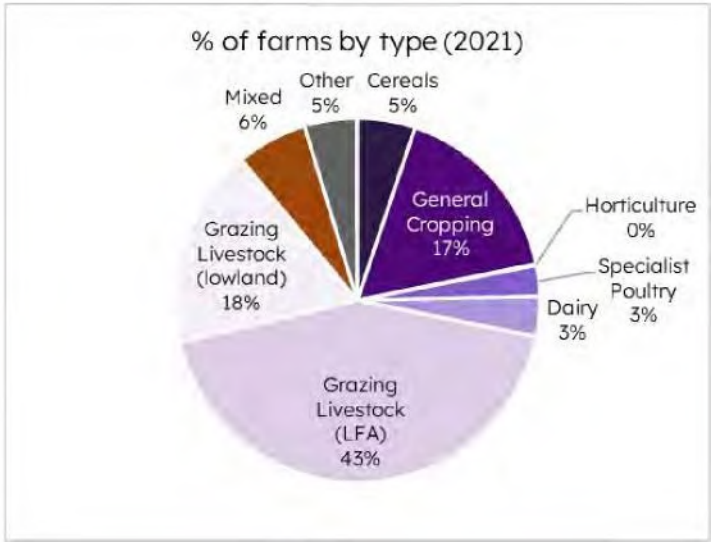


The number of holdings has risen from 812 in 2010 to 887 in 2021 (an increase of 9%). There is an increase in the smaller units (less than 50 ha) and a fall in the larger units.

Details of the agricultural labour force are set out in the 'People' section – click **Employment in farming** to see the table.



	Cereals	General Cropping	Horticulture	Specialist Poultry	Dairy	Grazing Livestock (LFA)	Grazing Livestock (lowland)	Mixed	Other
2010	28	92	15	0	32	389	152	77	12
2016	59	143	16	16	28	408	161	68	0
2021	45	146	0	24	31	378	155	55	41

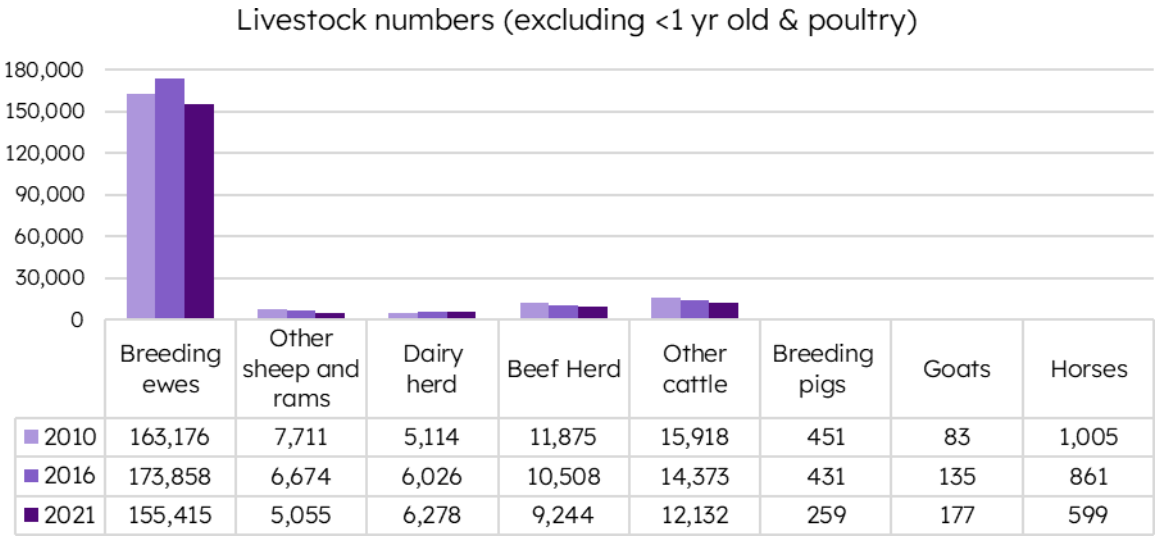


Grazing livestock is, and has constantly been, the predominant holding type. In the last ten years, there has been a 2% decrease in the number of such holdings. There has also been a 29% reduction in mixed holdings. During the same period, there has been an increase in cereals (+61%) general cropping (+57%) and 'other' (+242%).

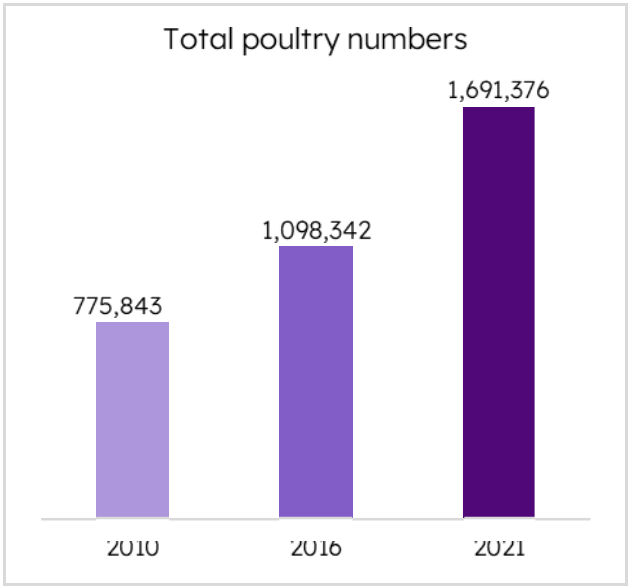
Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june

Livestock numbers

Poultry is the largest group of livestock (1,691,376 animals), a 54% increase in numbers since 2016 (the trend from 2010 is an increase of just over 118%). However, sheep (160,470 breeding ewes) and cattle (27,654 animals) are the most dominant livestock in the landscape. There is an 11% decline in sheep and cattle numbers since 2016.



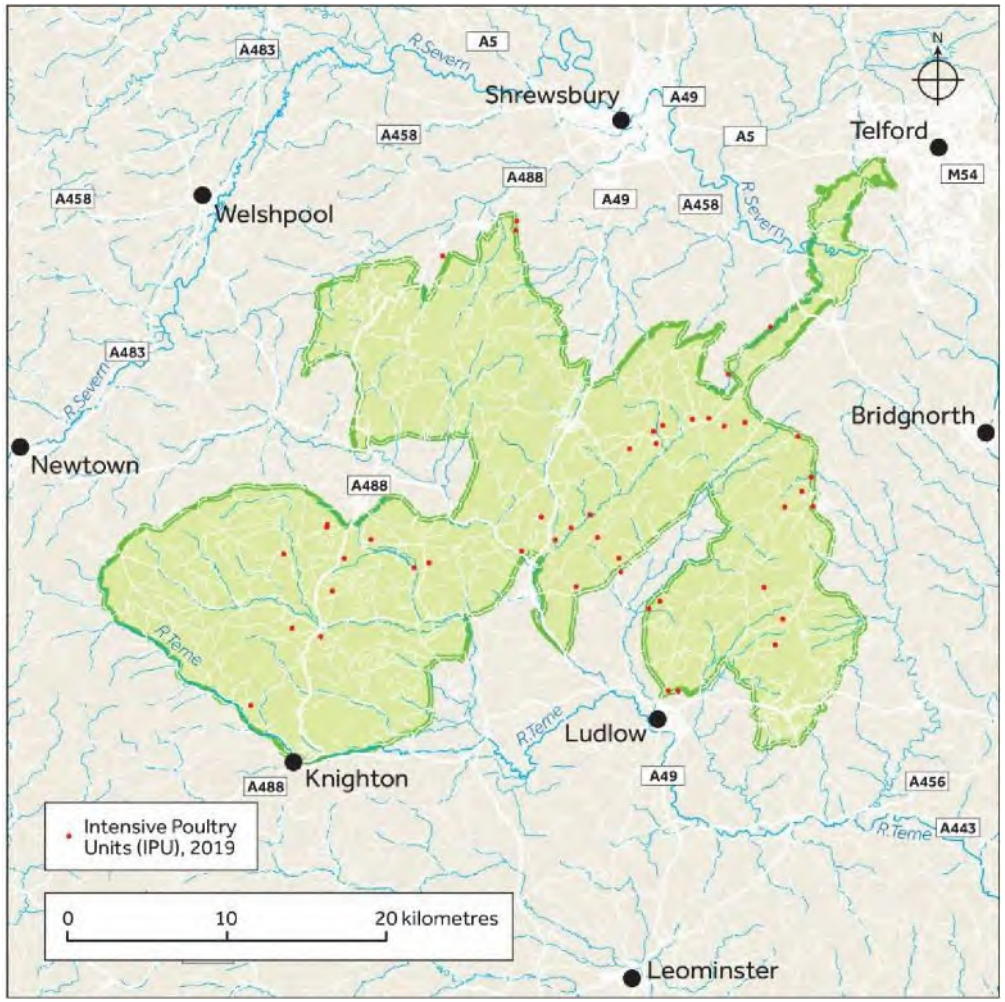
	Breeding ewes	Other sheep and rams	Dairy herd	Beef Herd	Other cattle	Breeding pigs	Goats	Horses
2010	163,176	7,711	5,114	11,875	15,918	451	83	1,005
2016	173,858	6,674	6,026	10,508	14,373	431	135	861
2021	155,415	5,055	6,278	9,244	12,132	259	177	599



Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june.

Location of intensive poultry units

A map showing the location of 45 intensive poultry units in the Shropshire Hills (plotted in 2019).



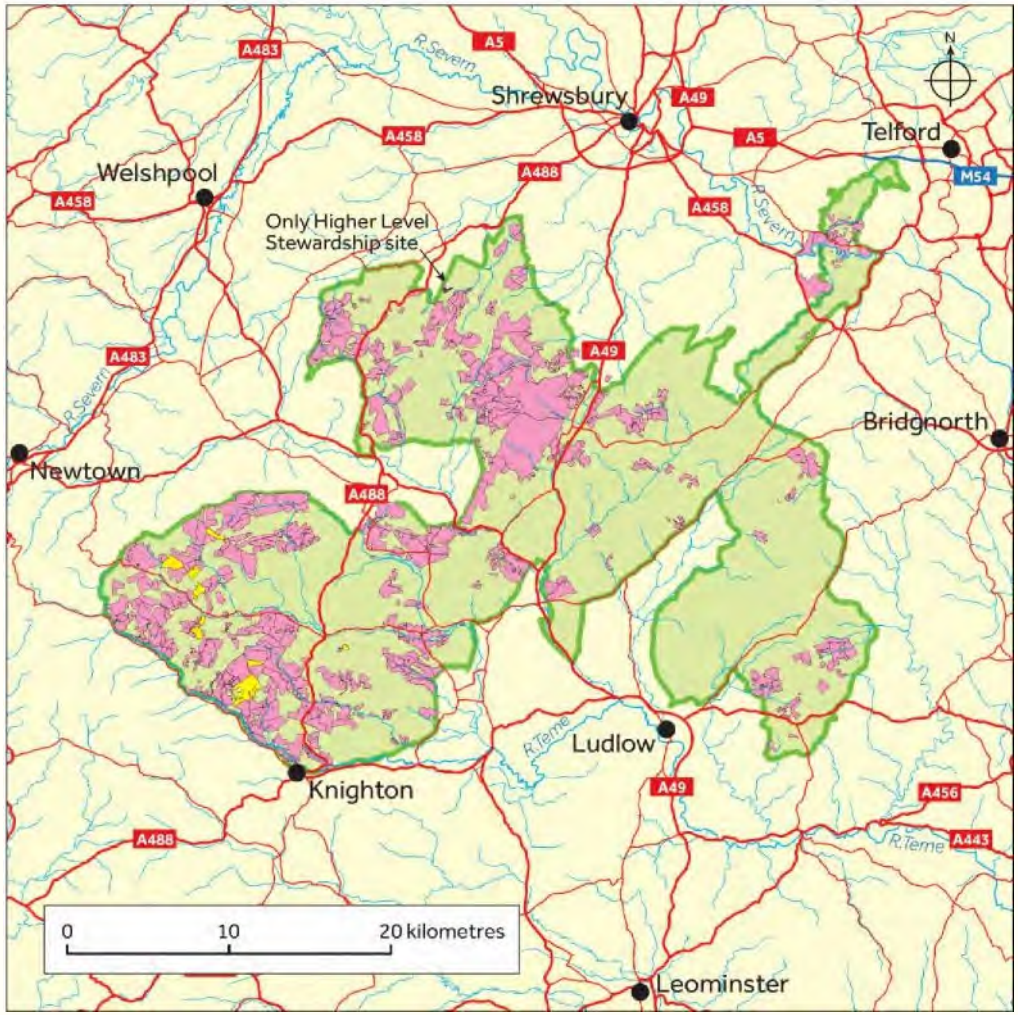
During the last ten years, the numbers of poultry reared in the Shropshire Hills have doubled. There are concerns that the develoment of intensive poultry units may lead to:

- Pollution of water such as streams, rivers and ponds, affecting freshwater ecosystems
- Impacts of ammonia emissions on lower plants and plant diversity, and the resulting damage to ecosystems including those within Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Woodland and other designated nature sites
- Air pollution affecting human health
- Foul odours
- Heavy traffic on narrow rural lanes
- The impacts of industrial-scale development in the national landscape

Source: CPRE Intensive Poultry Units cpreshropshire.org.uk Herefordshire, Shropshire and Powys - Intensive Chicken Units – Google My Maps

Land in agri-environment schemes

In 2024, there were 34,200 ha entered into agri-environment schemes, covering 42% of the National Landscape, at a value of £3,750,000.00.



The stewardship scheme, which replaces the older Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Area schemes, has two levels:

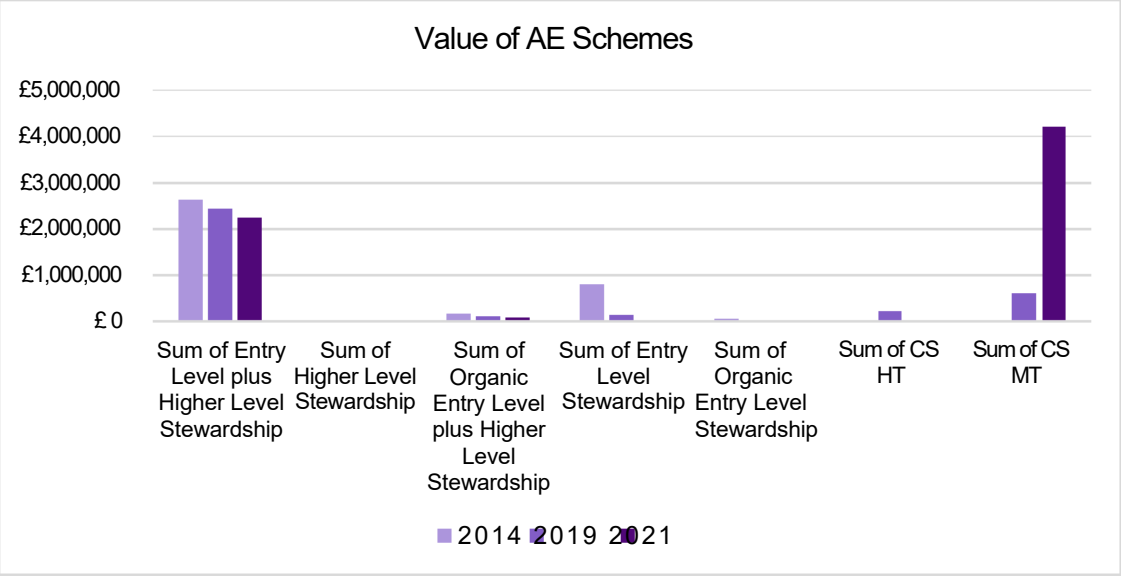
- Entry-Level Stewardship; and
- Higher-Level Stewardship.

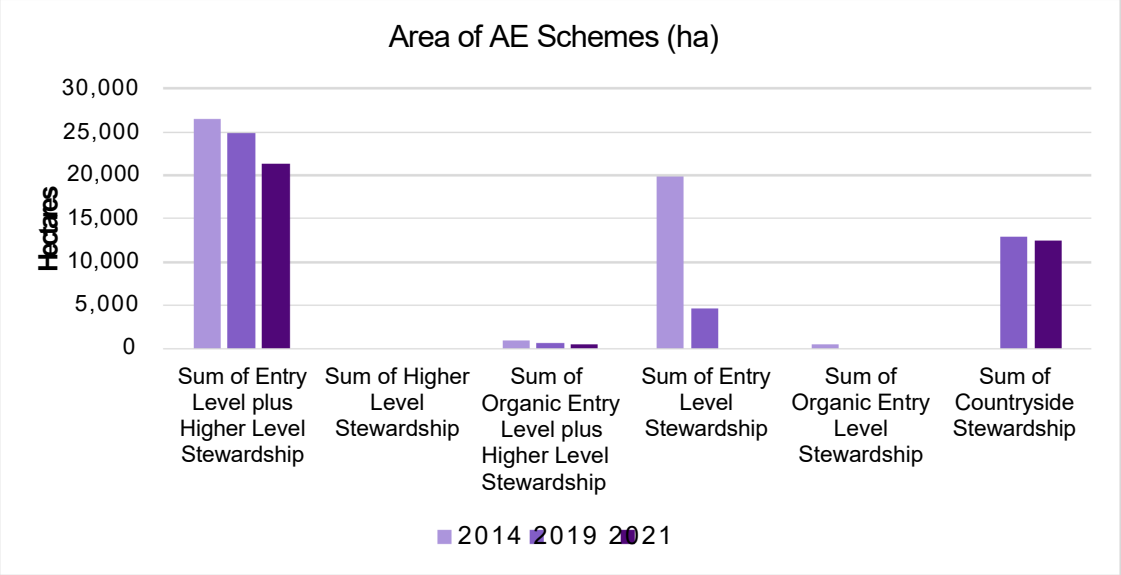
In 2021, 27% of the National Landscape was in Entry-Level Stewardship, and 0.01% (7 ha at Snailbeach Mine) was in Higher-Level Stewardship.

The total annual values of agri-environment agreements in the National Landscape is £3,750,000 (2024), down from £6,606,152 (2021) but up from £3,533.849 in 2019. The area in agri-environment schemes has decreased from 43,053 ha in 2019 (53% of the National Landscape) to 34,200 ha in 2024 (42% of the National Landscape). The cost and area of the various schemes are set out in the tables below.

Note: Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) data is not yet available. So, the overall % cover is not comparable with previous 'all schemes' figures. It is understood that coverage has decreased.

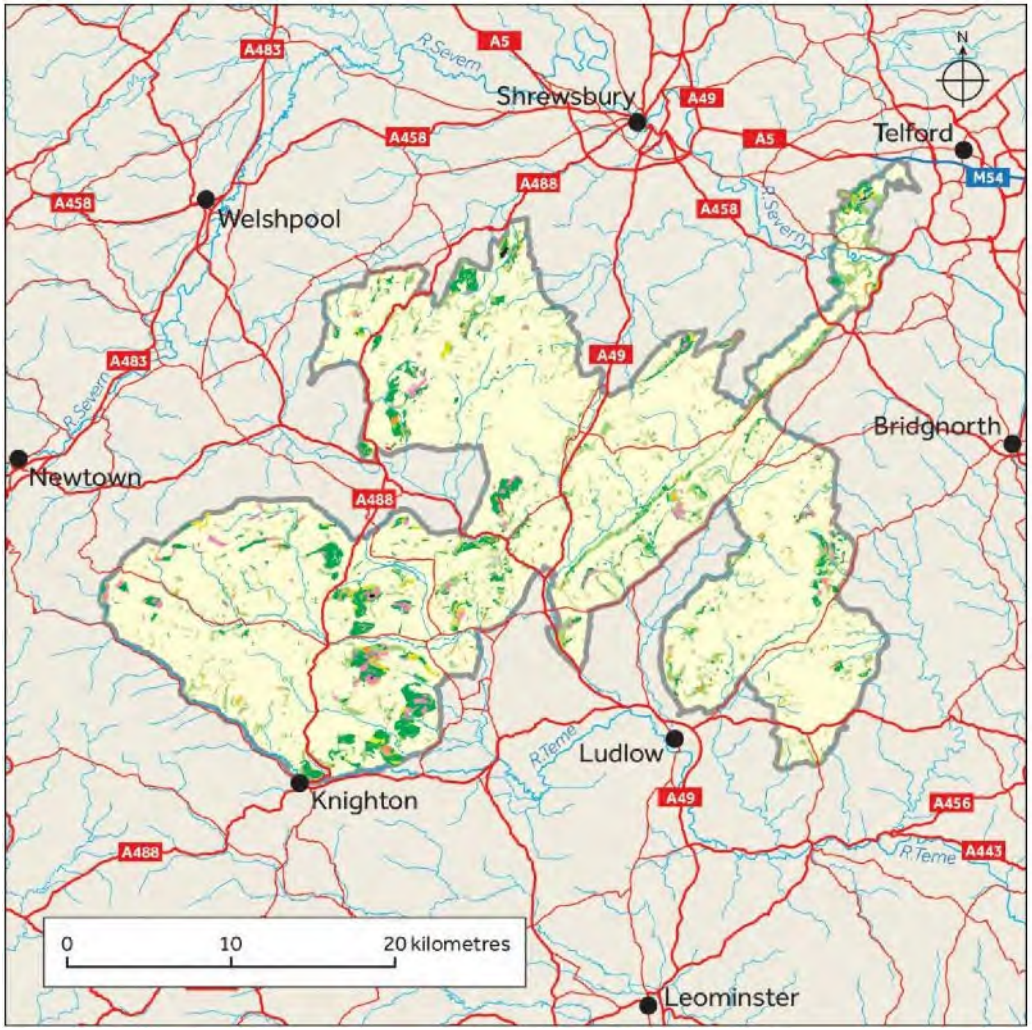
Source: © Natural England copyright. Environmental Stewardship Scheme holdings agreement polygons (includes farm business and payment info) Attribution Statement: © Rural Payments Agency. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2023. https://data.gov.uk/dataset/df5e865d-51a0-4d24-9dfc-6540b959c26c/environmental-stewardship-scheme-agreements-england /


Value of AE Schemes
£5,000,000
£4,000,000
£3,000,000
£2,000,000
£1,000,000
£0
Sum of Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
Sum of Higher Level Stewardship
Sum of Organic Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
Sum of Entry Level Stewardship
Sum of Organic Entry Level Stewardship
Sum of CS HT
Sum of CS MT
2014 2019 2021


Area of AE Schemes (ha)
Hectares
30,000
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
Sum of Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
Sum of Higher Level Stewardship
Sum of Organic Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
Sum of Entry Level Stewardship
Sum of Organic Entry Level Stewardship
Sum of Countryside Stewardship
2014 2019 2021

Area of woodland (by National Forest Inventory types)

In 2023, there are 11,352 ha of woodland covering 14% of the National Landscape with the distribution of National Forest Inventory types



Legend

- Agricultural land
- Assumed woodland
- Bare
- Broadleaved woodland
- Conifer
- Felled
- Grassland
- Ground prep
- Low density
- Mixed mainly broadleaved
- Mixed mainly conifer
- Shrub
- Windblown
- Young trees

Inventory type	2013	2020	2023
Broadleaved	5,236	5,313	5,309
Conifer	4,347	3,992	3,797
Felled	291	721	931
Prepared for planting	10	15	15
Mixed	654	662	645

Shrub	21	20	20
Windblow	0	3	7
Young trees	732	629	629
Totals	**11,291**	**11,353**	**11,352**

In 2020, 66% of woodland was in active management (7,576 ha) (up from 63% in 2013) (MEOPL). In 2024, 64% of woodland is in active management (7,255 ha) (PLTOF).

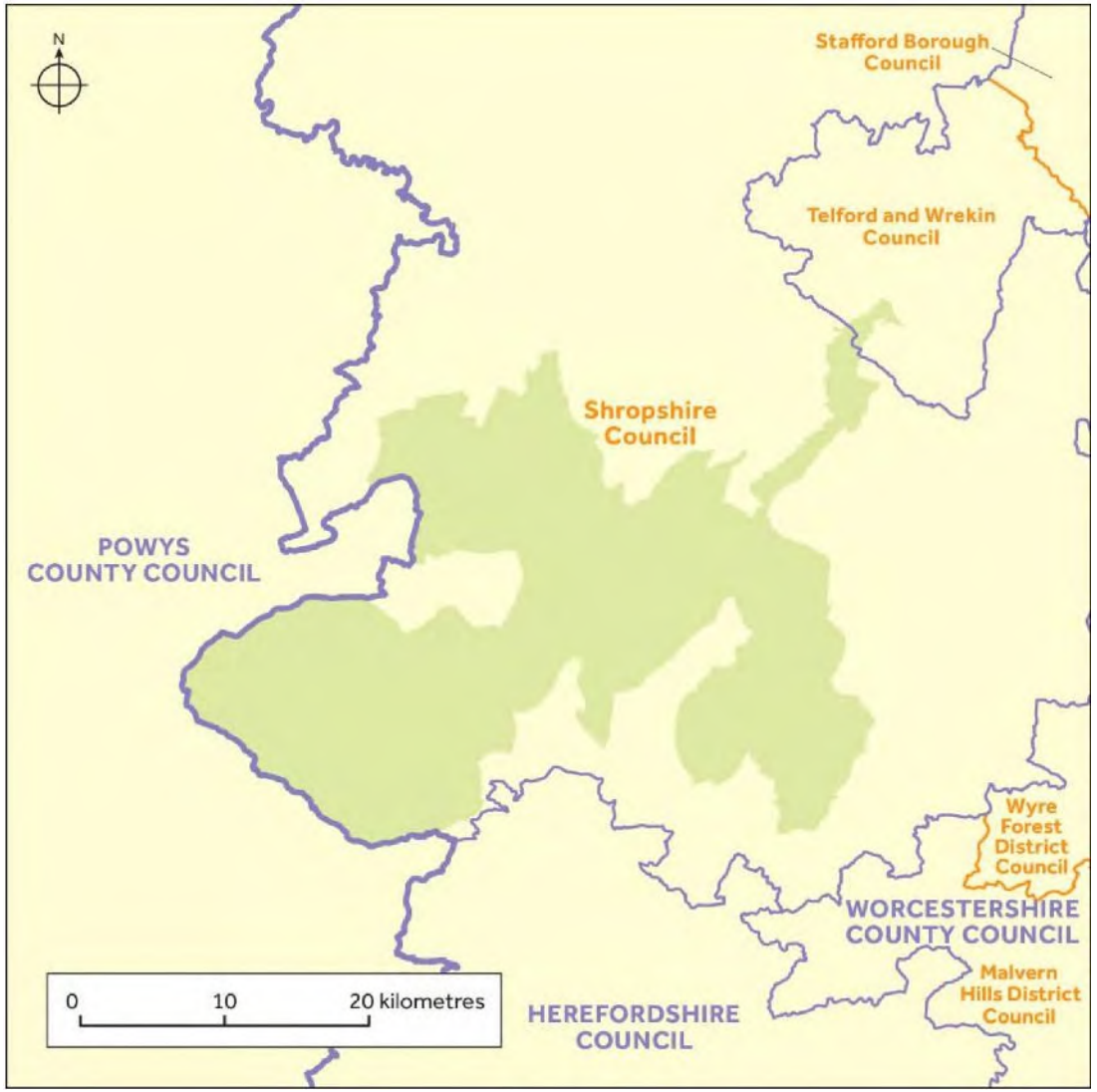
Source: MEOPL © Forestry Commission copyright (2022). Taken from the Natural England Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England) dataset, dated September 2020.; and the FC National Forest Inventory dated March 2019. PLTOF © Forestry Commission copyright (2023). Contains Ordnance Survey Data © Crown Copyright 2023.

People

The Office for National Statistics undertakes a census every 10 years that gives a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales. All information is anonymised and the actual census records are secure for 100 years. Output Areas are the lowest level of geographical area for census statistics. The last census was in 2021. For the 2021 Census, there were some changes made to the 2011 Output Areas, because of population and household changes since 2011. We have carefully plotted the two data sets to ensure that, overall, the same area of land is reported (see Appendix 2). Census data is not cut to the National Landscape boundary. Defra is now releasing social data as a part of Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF), based on the Office for National Statistics Output Area population estimates. These are allocated to the national landscape on a best fit basis and they are to be the baseline for the National Landscape. For this report, we compare changes between the 2011 and 2021 Output Areas.

The Shropshire Hills spread from the fringes of Telford and Ironbridge through to the rural hinterlands of market towns such as Ludlow, Bishop's Castle and Much Wenlock. They have some of the sparsest areas of population in England along the Welsh border. Church Stretton, the only town within the area, has a unique location in the heart of the hills and a strong Edwardian character. The hills have been a cultural inspiration for writers such as A E Housman, Mary Webb and Malcolm Saville. Opportunities for enjoyment and well-being are open to both locals and visitors through walks and outdoor activities that respect the area’s qualities. The area has some of the best rights of way networks in Shropshire, most of it is open access land, and a wide variety of sites, features and promoted routes.

Administrative boundaries



The National Landscape lies within the areas of Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council

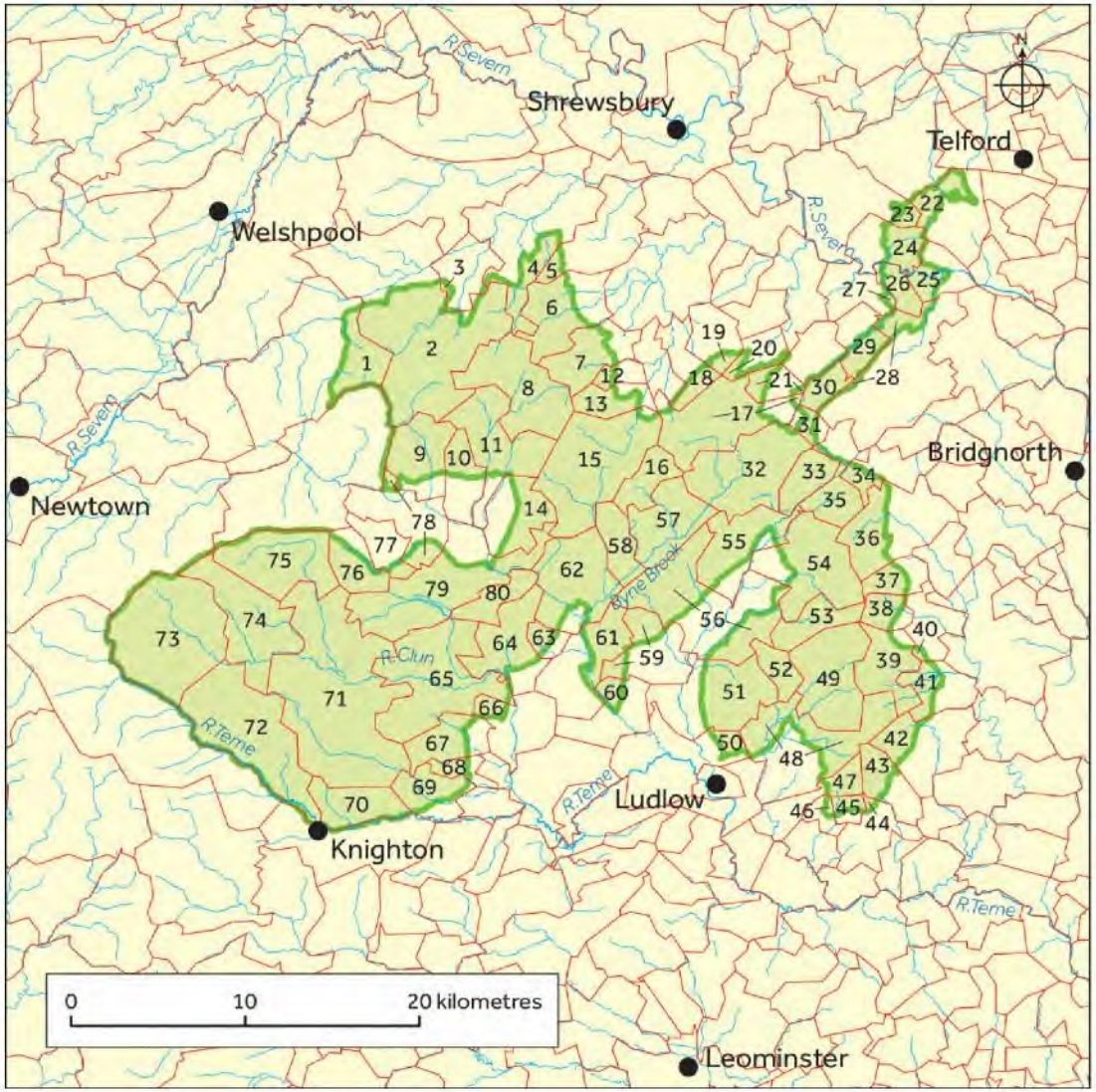
From the 2021 Census, the regional population was:

Shropshire Council area	323,606
Telford & Wrekin Council area	185,541
West Midlands region	5,950,757

Source: GIS data obtained from www.data.gov.uk

Parish boundaries

There are 80 parish councils, town councils and parish meetings.



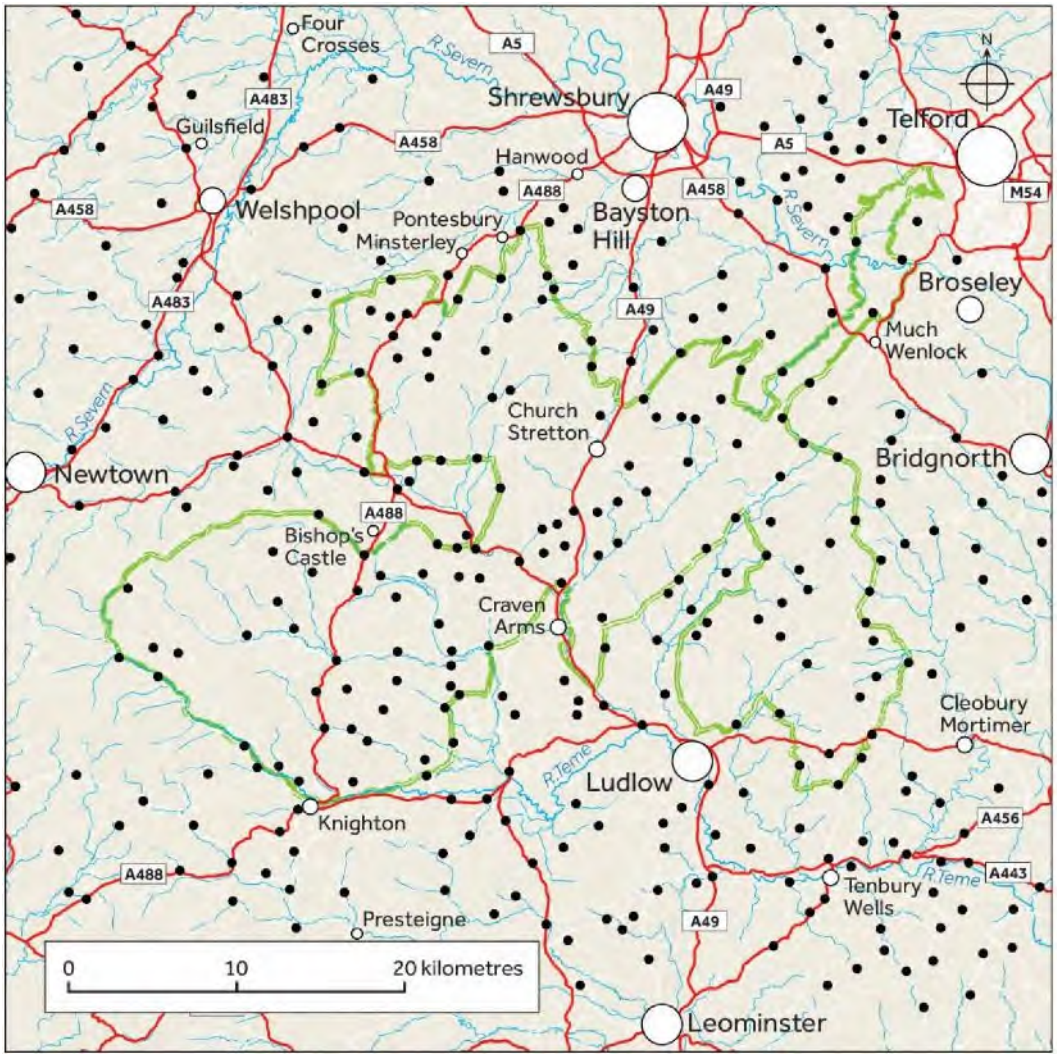
Legend – Parish Councils, Town Councils and Parish meetings

1 Chirbury with Brompton
2 Worthen with Shelve
3 Minsterley
4 Pontesbury
5 Longden
6 Church Pulverbatch
7 Smethcott
8 Ratlinghope
9 More
10 Norbury
11 Wentnor
12 Woolstaston
13 All Stretton
14 Myndtown
15 Church Stretton
16 Hope Bowdler
17 Cardington
18 Longnor
19 Frodesley
20 Ruckley and Langley
21 Church Preen
22 Little Wenlock
23 Wroxeter and Uppington
24 Leighton and Eaton Constantine
25 Buildwas
26 Sheinton
27 Cressage
28 Much Wenlock
29 Harley
30 Hughley
31 Easthope
32 Rushbury
33 Shipton
34 Monkhopton
35 Stanton Long
36 Ditton Priors
37 Cleobury North
38 Burwarton
39 Wheathill
40 Aston Bottterell
41 Farlow
42 Hopton Wafers
43 Coreley
44 Nash
45 Hope Bagot
46 Whitton
47 Caynham
48 Bitterley
49 Stoke St. Milborough
50 Bromfield
51 Stanton Lacy
52 Hopton Cangeford
53 Clee St. Margaret
54 Abdon and Heath
55 Munslow
56 Diddlebury
57 Eaton-under-Heywood
58 Acton Scott
59 Culmington
60 Onibury
61 Craven Arms
62 Wistanstow
63 Sibdon Carwood
64 Hopesay
65 Clunbury
66 Clungunford
67 Hopton Castle
68 Bedstone
69 Bucknell
70 Stowe
71 Clun
72 Llanfair Waterdine
73 Bettws-y-Crwyn
74 Newcastle on Clun
75 Mainstone
76 Colebatch
77 Bishop's Castle
78 Lydham
79 Lydbury North
80 Edgton

Source: GIS data obtained from www.data.gov.uk

Comparative size of settlements

The largest settlement within the National Landscape is Church Stretton. It has 3,576 residents, all other settlements have less than 1,000 residents.



Legend

Size of population

- 50,000+
- 10,000–50,000
- 5,000–10,000
- 2,000–5,000
- 1,000–2,000
- Under 1,000

The estimated total resident population for the National Landscape is 19,900 people.

Most settlements within the National Landscape have a population of less than 1,000 people. Only one settlement is larger, Church Stretton with 3,576 residents.

There are some larger settlements close to boundary:

- Bishop's Castle 1,847
- Craven Arms 2,565
- Knighton 2,422
- Minsterley 1,721
- Much Wenlock 1,765
- Pontesbury 1,966
- Ludlow 10,039

In addition, there are larger settlements close to the area:

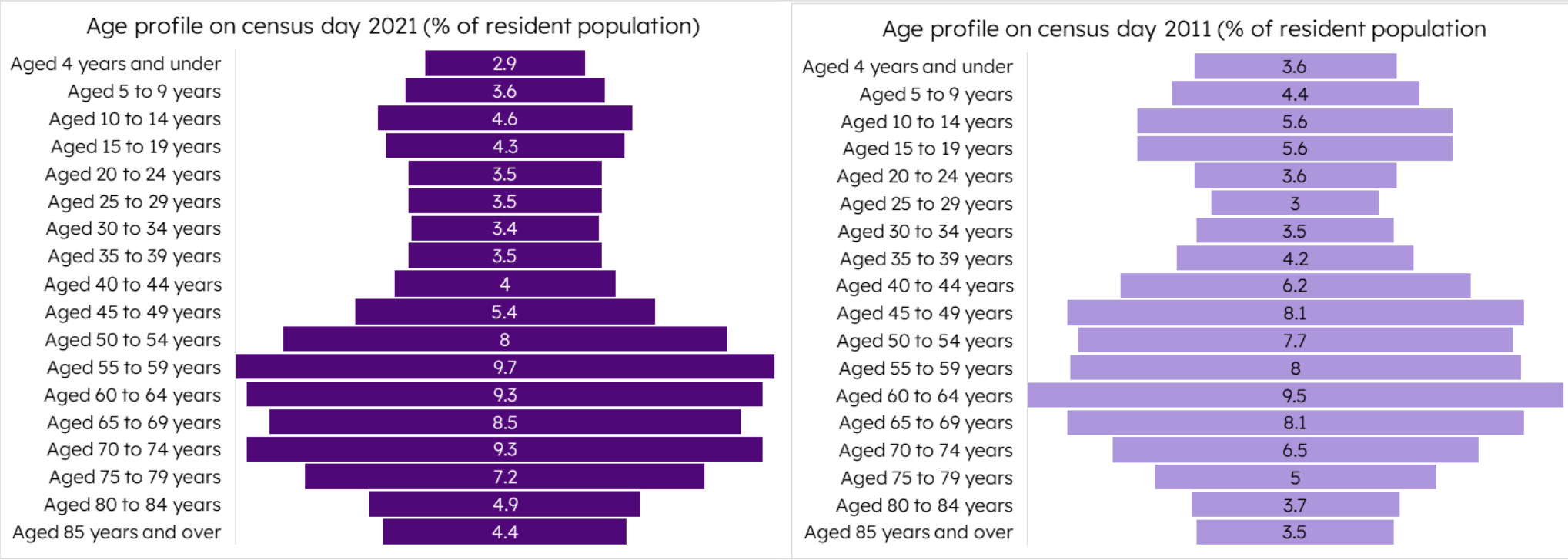
- Bayston Hill 5,226
- Newtown 10,882
- Oswestry 17,509
- Shrewsbury 75,992
- Telford 156,896
- Welshpool 5,450

All these settlements lie within one of the 30-minute travel areas for the National Landscape. (Click here to see the **Travel areas to the Shropshire Hills** maps). Population has increased (or measures have changed) since earlier plans

Source: City populations (https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/southwestengland/); OpenStreetMap data is available under the Open Database License

Population numbers and age profile

From PLTOF data: The estimated total population on census day 2021 for the National Landscape was **19,900** and the average age in the National Landscape was **51** (41 in England).



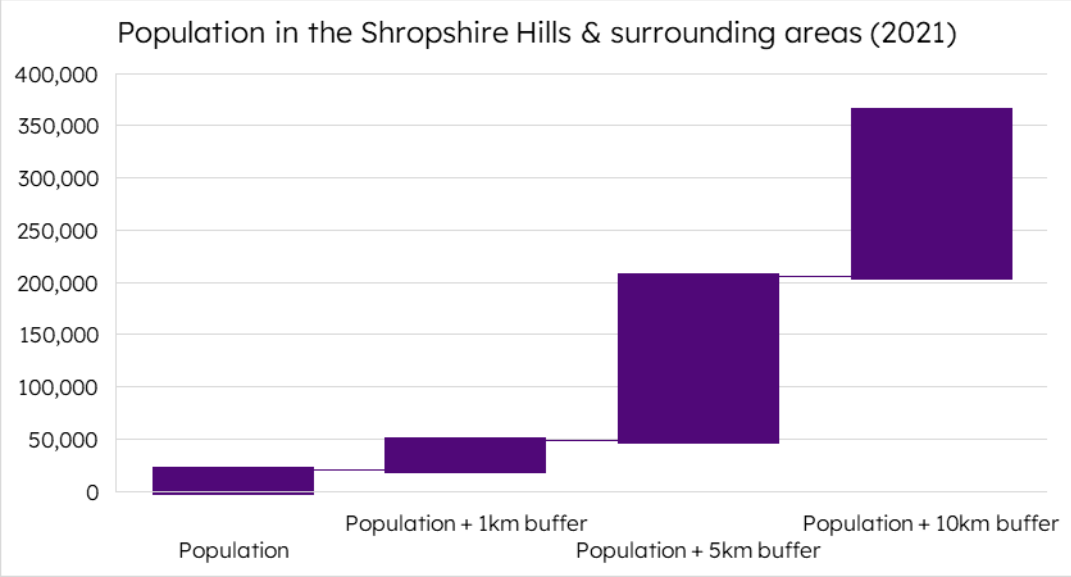
Population numbers have remained stable since 2011 but there are now fewer people under 20 (down from 22% in 2011 to 19% in 2021). In 2021, most of the population is over 50 years of age (61% - up from 52% in 2011). In 2011, the largest band was the 60-64 age range; in 2021 it was the 55-59 age range. This may be the result of early retirees moving into the area. In 2011, ONS defined working age as 16-64 and this was 58.2% of the population; in 2021 it fell to 53.7% of the population[3]. The working age population has declined and retired numbers has risen.

Source: Based on allocation of Output Areas, Census 2021. These estimates are based on National Landscape boundaries as of 2022. Output area population estimates have been allocated to National Landscapes on a best fit basis. ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 25 July 2024] Tables PP012, QS103EW and TS007B

[3] Note: ONS no longer produces specific working age tables; this may reflect changing work patterns.

Population estimates for the Protected Landscape buffer regions

Data for the Shropshire Hills plus 1km, 5km, and 10km buffers around the boundary.



Catchment population

Resident population in the National Landscape	Population + 1km buffer	Population + 5km buffer	Population + 10km buffer
19,900	48,035	205,246	363,814

Source: Based on allocation of Output Areas, Census 2021.

Note: These figures use a different best-fit method to the 2024 PLTOF data releases as they include Welsh data.

Number of pupils on the school roll

For pupils in the National Landscape, there are 2,100 spaces. Of these, 1,900 are in use. This means that the area is at **89%** of its capacity, the average for rural areas in England is 85%.

Proportion of school capacity reached

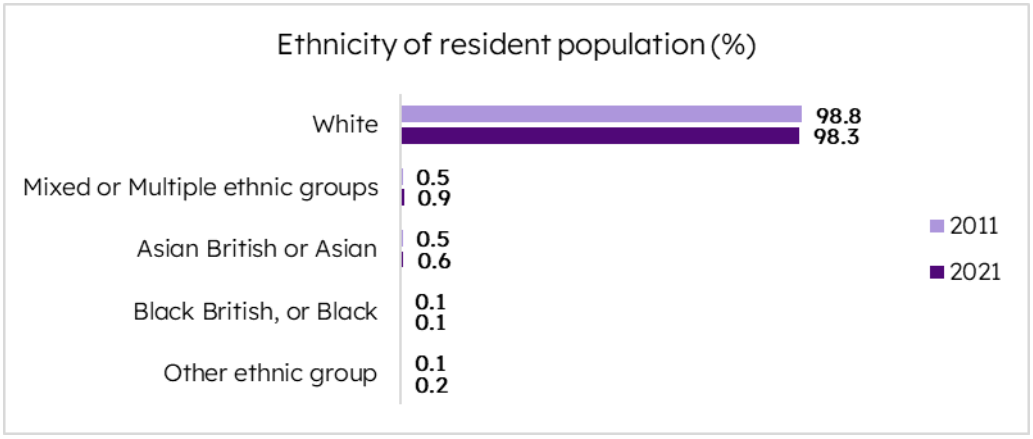
	Total capacity	Number of pupils on the school role	Capacity reached
Shropshire Hills	2,100	1,900	**89%**
All National Landscapes	173,900	152,800	**88%**
All Protected Landscapes	228,600	200,500	**88%**
Rural areas in England	1,502,400	1,270,400	**85%**

Note: School capacity is the number of pupils that a school can accommodate. The school roll is the number of pupils attending a specific school. The roll is the list of students who should be present in school.

Source: PLTOF based on apportioning of Upper Tier Local Authorities

Ethnicity and gender resident population

There has been little change in either ethnicity or gender between 2011 and 2021. In 2021, around 98% of the resident population class as 'white' (for England as a whole, it is 81%) and just over 50% of the population is female.



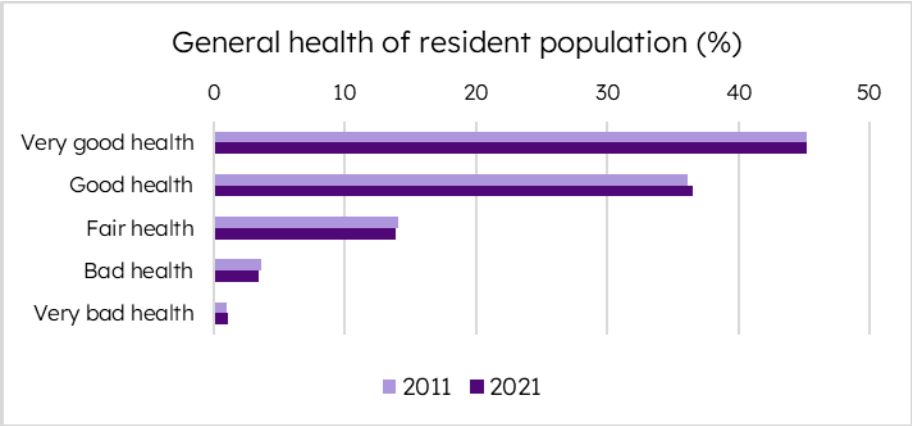
Gender of resident population

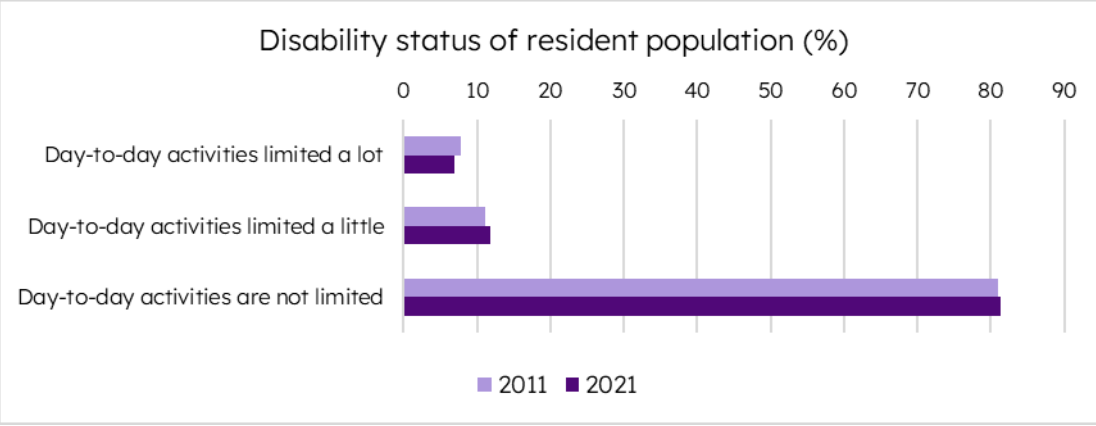
	2011	2021
Female	50.8%	51.1%
Male	49.2%	48.9%

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 25 July 2024] Tables 2011: QS104EW & QS201EW, 2021: TS008 & TS021

Health of resident population

In 2021, 45% of the resident population enjoy very good health; only 1% suffer very bad health. There is no material difference with the 2011 data. In 2021, 81% of the resident population suffered no long-term health conditions. The 18.7% who did have long-term health condition were listed as disabled under the Equality Act.





Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 25 July 2024] Tables 2011: QS302EW & QS303EW, 2021: TS037 & TS038

Relative wealth of the resident population

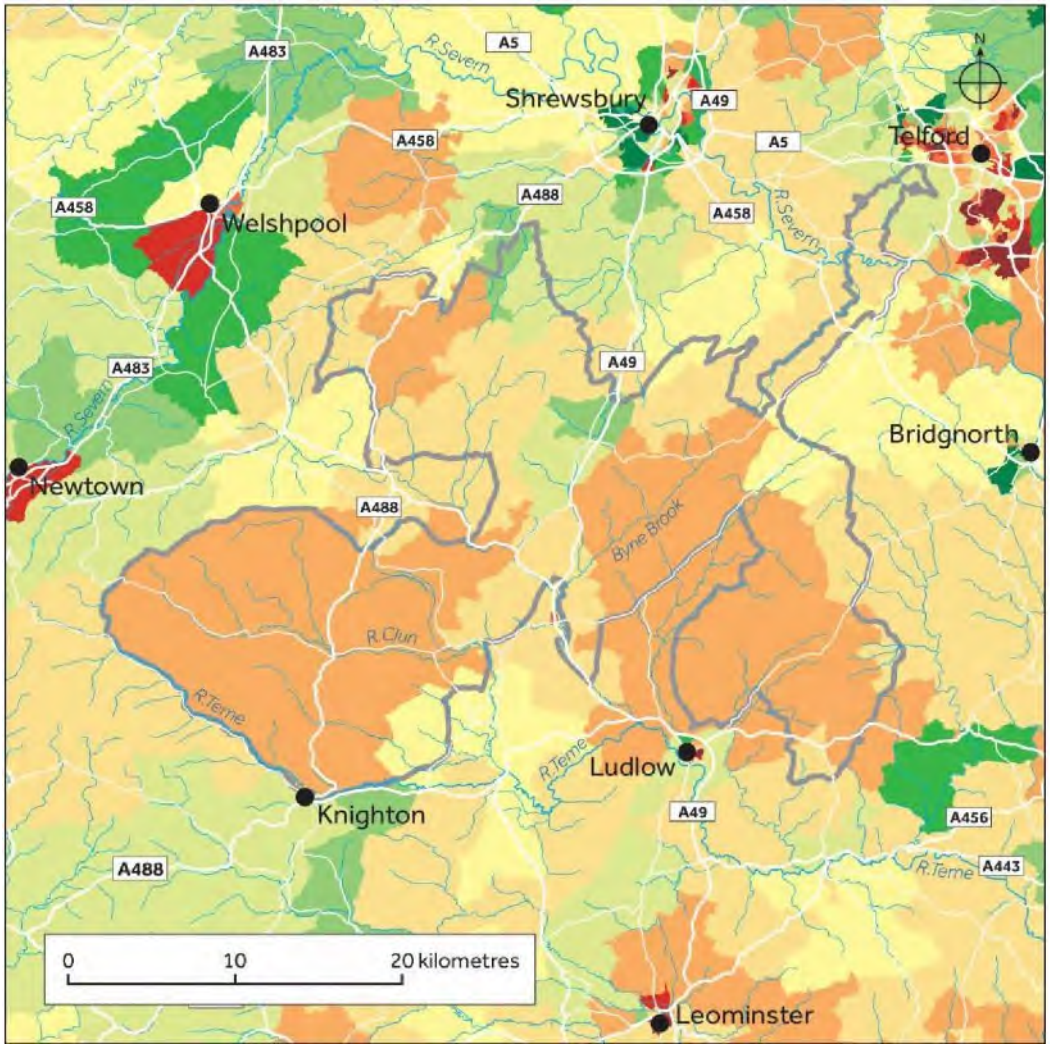
From PLTOF data, the average earnings per month were £2,100 in 2021. For rural areas in England, it was £2,300.

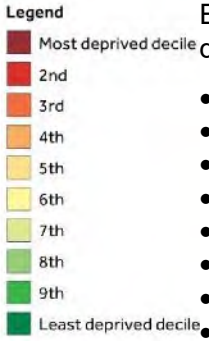
Dividing house prices by annual earnings creates a housing affordability ratio. In 2023, the National Landscape house-price affordability ratio was 10 (the average for all the National Landscapes was 11). This means that full-time employees could expect to spend 10 times their earnings on purchasing a home in the National Landscape. Full-time employees in rural England could expect to spend around 9 times their annual earnings buying a home, making the National Landscape a less affordable area.

Source: Based on apportioning of Middle-layer Super Output Areas, Census 2021. ONS Crown Copyright Reserved

Nearby populations with significant levels of deprivation

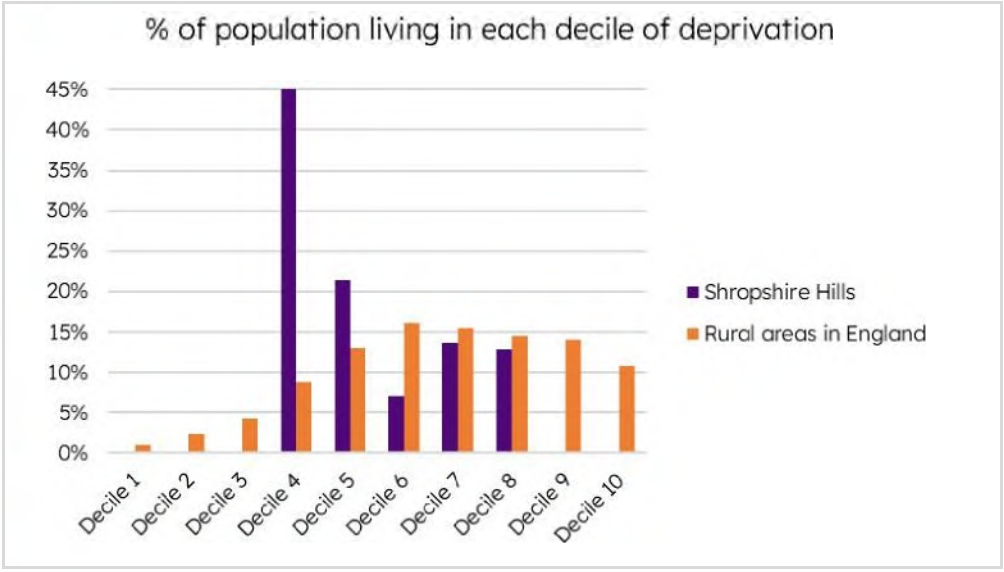
From PLTOF data, communities within the National Landscape are not particularly deprived. Across the area, the average decile of deprivation is 4 (covers 45% of the population). Church Stretton and the area between Pontesford and Habberley is in the 8th decile.





rivation provide a set of relative measures of
ll areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) across England, based on seven different fields of deprivation:

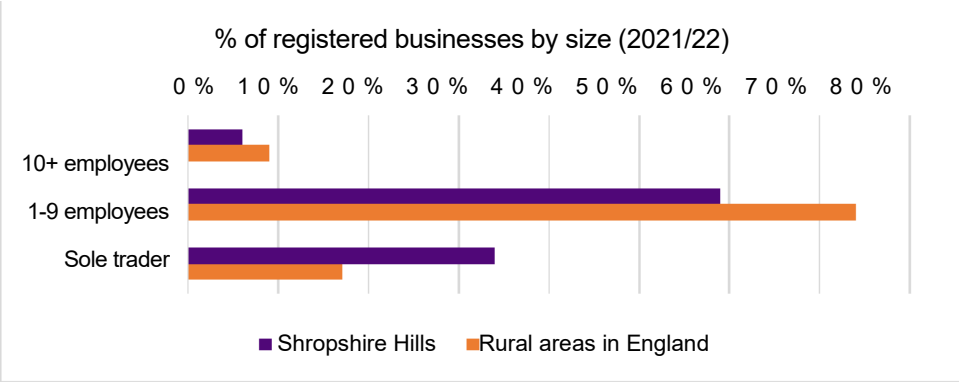
- Income Deprivation;
- Employment Deprivation;
- Education;
- Skills and Training Deprivation;
- Health Deprivation and Disability;
- Crime;
- Barriers to Housing and Services; and
- Living Environment Deprivation.



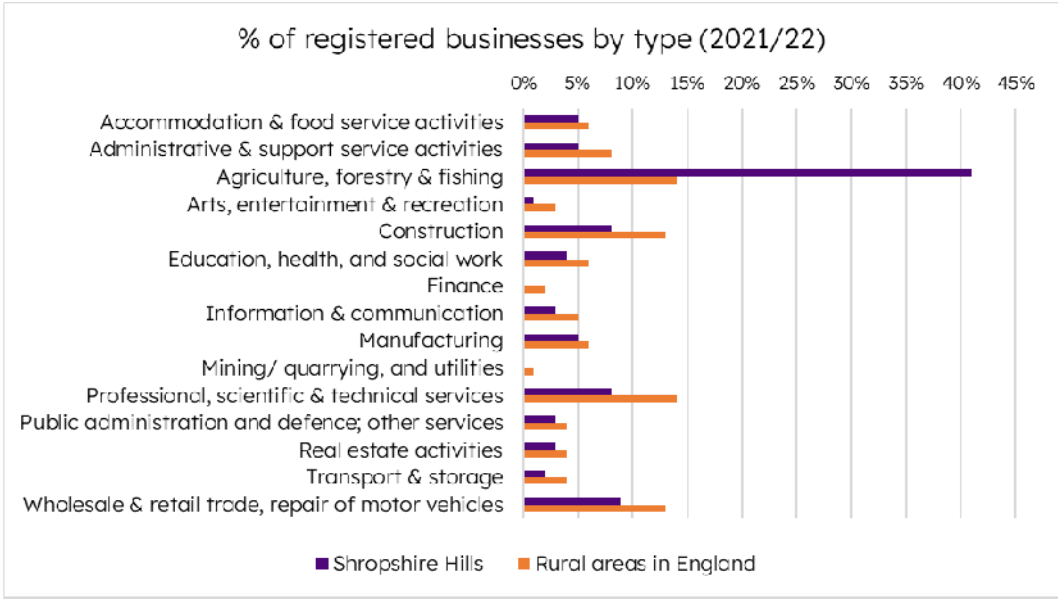
Source: https://data.cdrc.ac.uk/dataset/index-multiple-deprivation-imd and PLTOF Based on apportioning of Lower-layer Super Output Areas, Census 2021

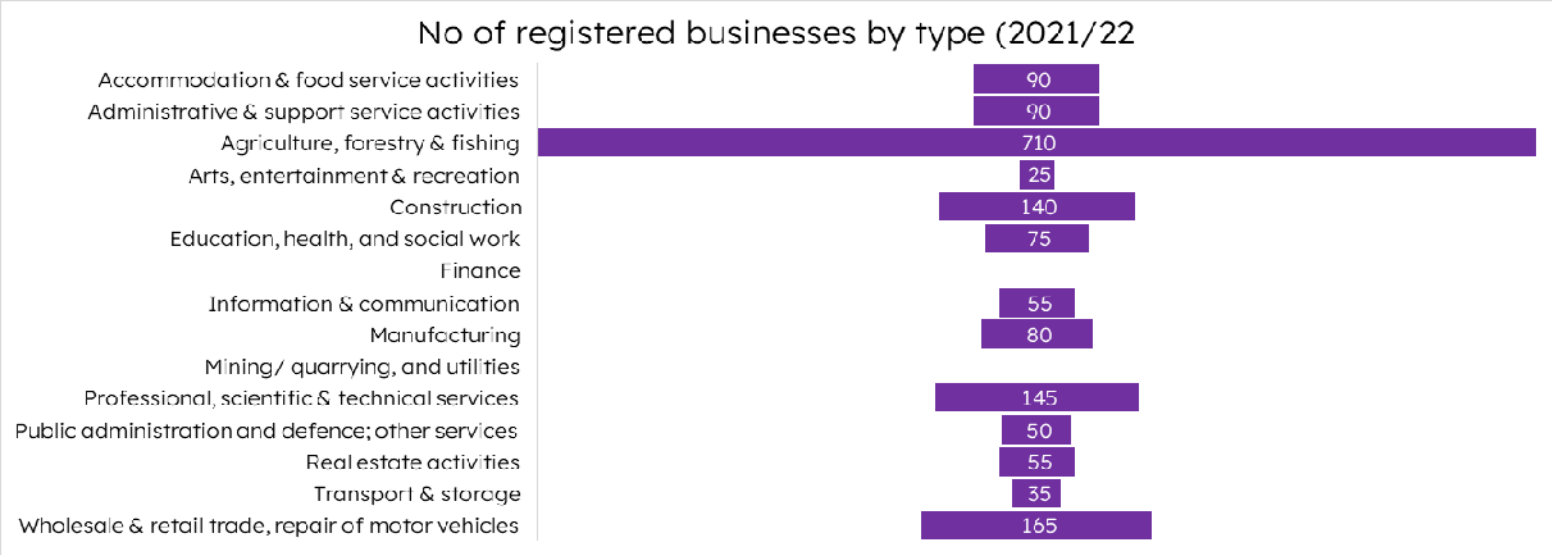
Registered businesses by size and type

From PLTOF data, there are 1,740 business units registered within the national landscape.



Most businesses employ less than nine employees. The dominant business type is agriculture, forestry and fishing. This represents 41% of business types in the Shropshire Hills, compared to only 14% across rural England.

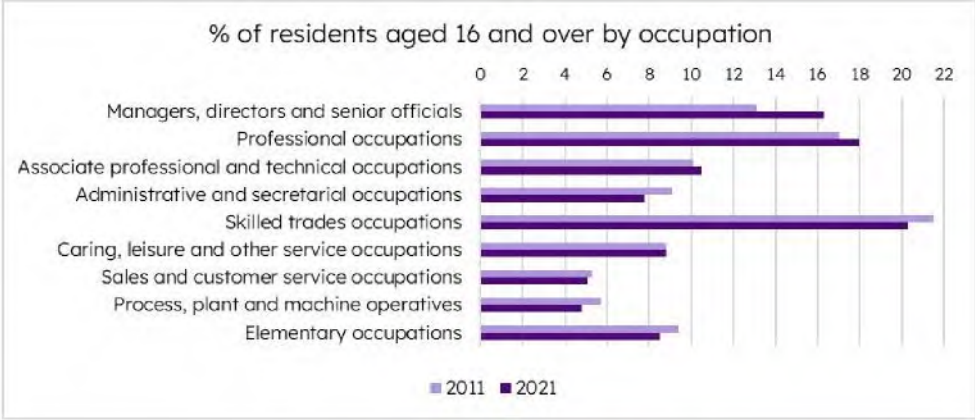


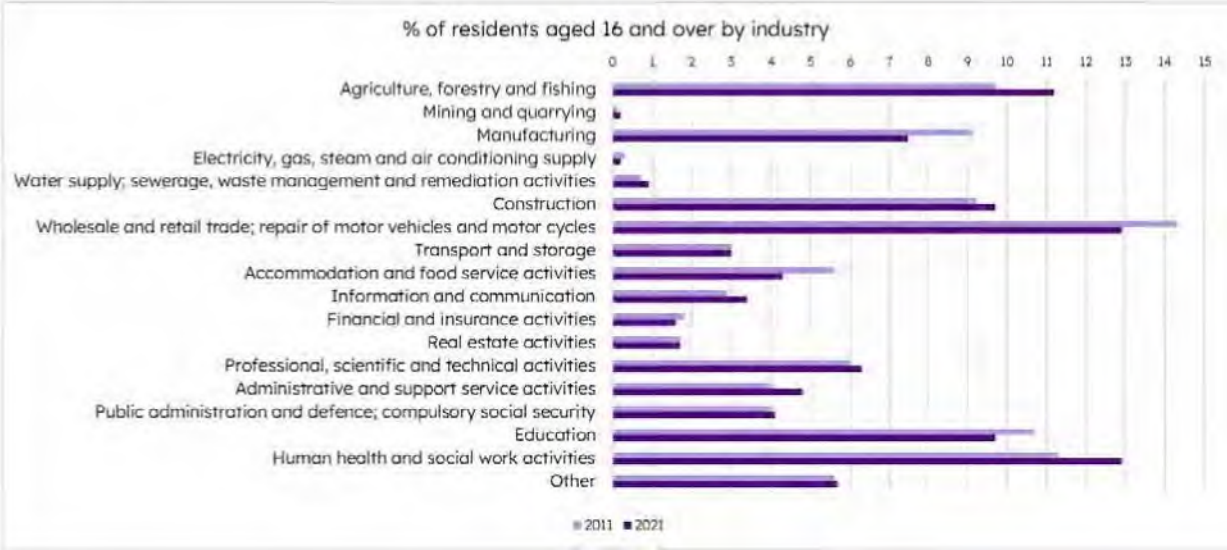


Source: PLTOF Based on allocation of Output Areas.

Employment profiles of resident population

Between 2011 & 2021: there has been a 14% reduction in the level of registered employment and a 15% swing from those residents wanting to work to those not seeking work; perhaps reflecting the increasing retired population. The spread of occupations has shifted from the skilled trades towards managerial roles; but industries have shown an increase in land-based industries, administrative and health sectors. There has been a decrease in educational, manufacturing employment and wholesale/repair.





Employment status

	2011	2021
Employed	66.3%	52.4%
Seeking work	2.3%	1.3%
Not seeking work	31.4%	46.3%

Occupation

- Increase in managerial and senior roles (+4%)
- Decrease in skilled trades (-1.5%)

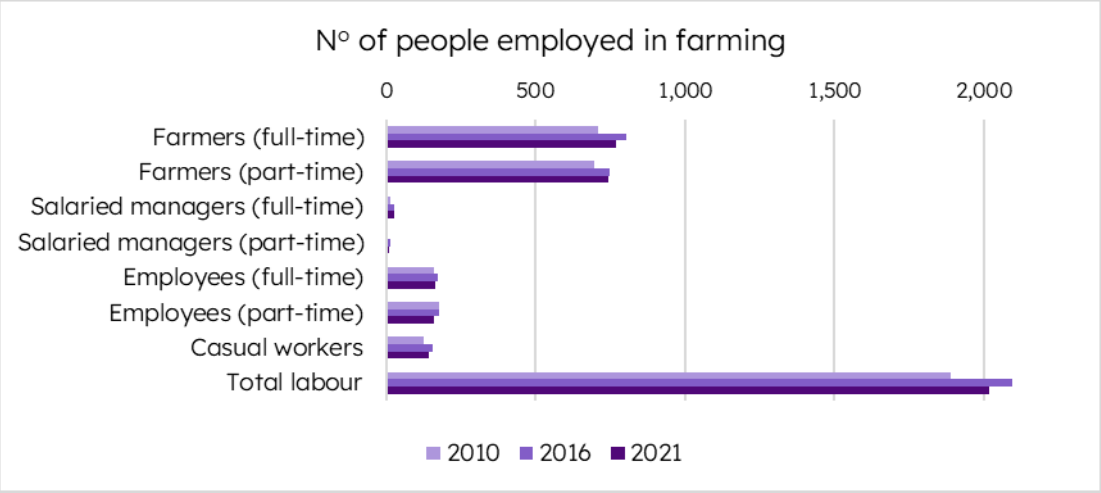
Industry

- Increase in agriculture and forestry and health (+1.5%); and administration (+0.8%)
- Decrease in manufacturing (-1.6%), wholesale/repair (-1.4%) and education (-1%)

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 25 July 2024] Tables 2011: QS601EW, QS605EW, KS608EW & KS610EW: 2021: TS060A, TSO63 & TS066

Employment in farming

Employment in farming has increased by 7% during the last 10 years. In 2021, 10% of the resident population (2,019 people) were employed in farming. (Click **Agricultural land-use** to see more about agriculture)



The number of full-time farmers in 2021 was 771, an increase of 9% since 2010. The number of part-time farmers has risen by 7% during the same period.

Though a small group, full-time salaried managers rose from 14 in 2010 to 26 in 2021, an increase of 64%. The number of part-time employees fell by 10% between 2010 and 2021.

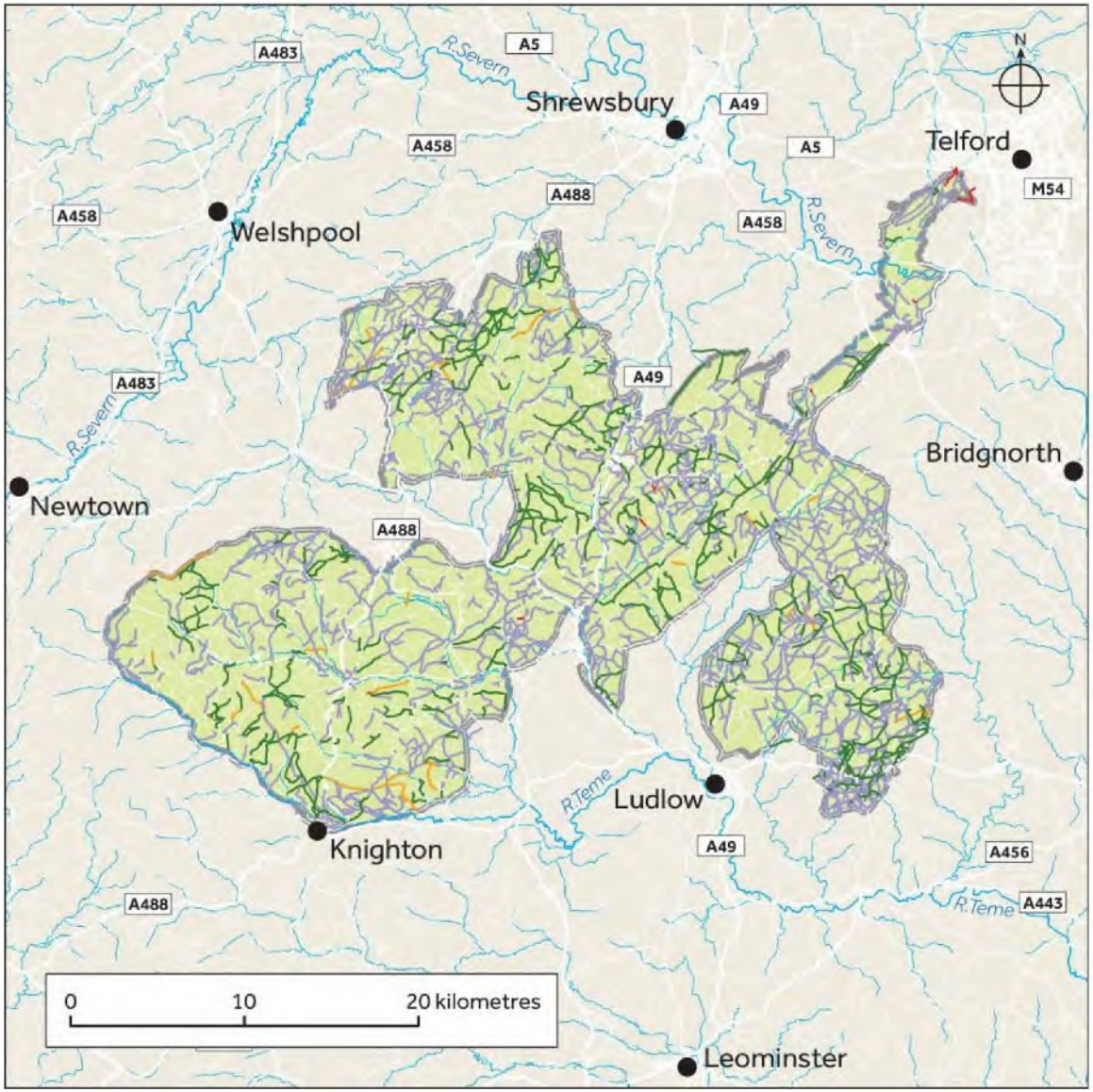
Casual workers increased by 16 people (+13%) between 2010 and 2021.

2021 saw 74 fewer people employed in farming than 2012 (a fall of 4%). 2012 represented a rise of 11% from 2010.

Source: Defra June Survey of Agriculture https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june

Rights of Way

In 2024, there are 4,042 kilometres of rights of way recorded in the National Landscape. There is no report on the condition of these routes.

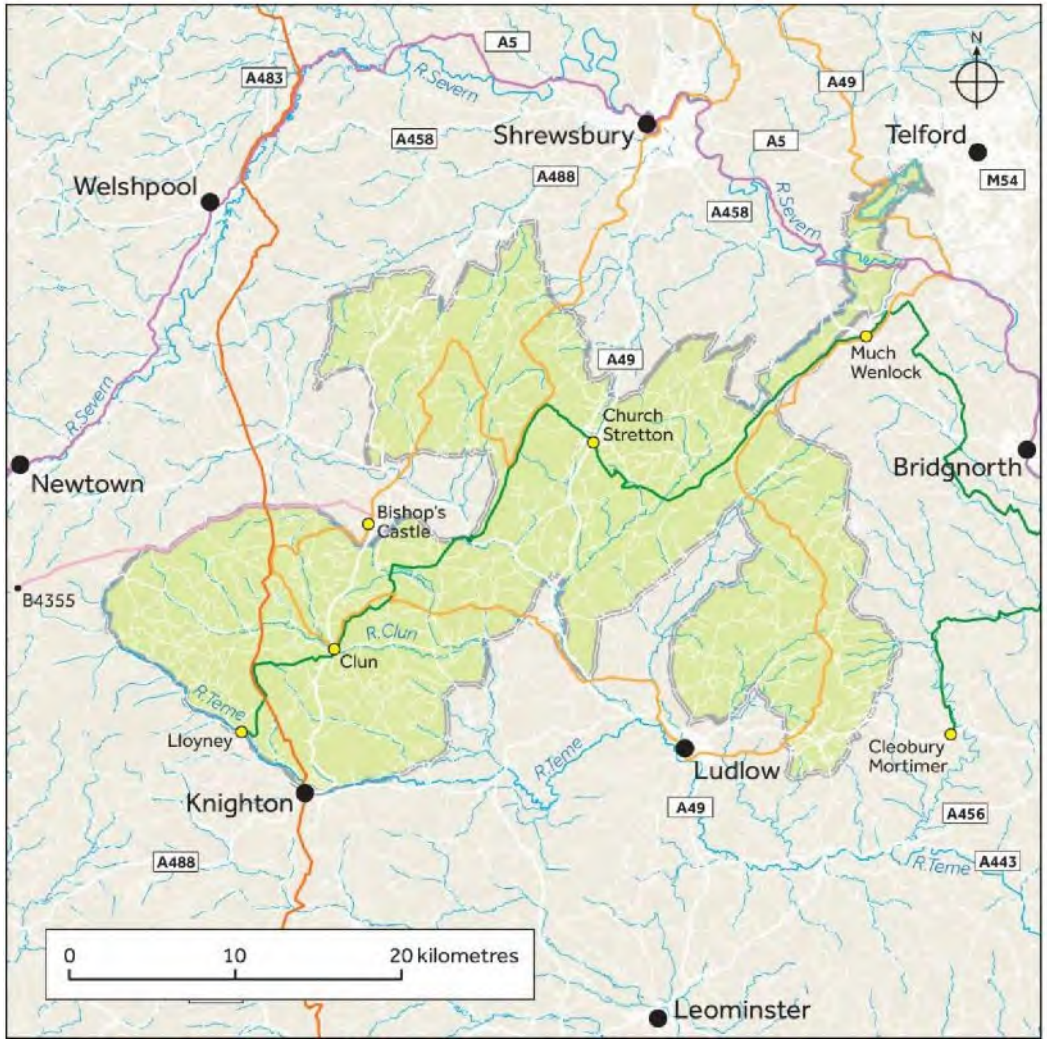


Type	Length (km)	
	2009	2024
Footpaths	1,275	1,459.8
Bridleways	448	495.3
Byway (BOAT byway open to all traffic)	97	57.3
Restricted byway		5.6
Total rights of way in the National Landscape	**3,834 km**	**4,042 km**

Source: Each of the local authorities, with links provided through https://www.rowmaps.com and Magic Map https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx

Recreational routes

There are many recreational trials in the National Landscape but six stand out. There are three national cycling routes in the National Landscape.



Legend

- Offa's Dyke Path
- Shropshire Way
- Severn Way
- Jack Mytton Way
- Kerry Ridgeway
- The Wrekin and The Ercall

Offa's Dyke National Trail runs for 19 km in the National Landscape from Knighton across the Clun Forest

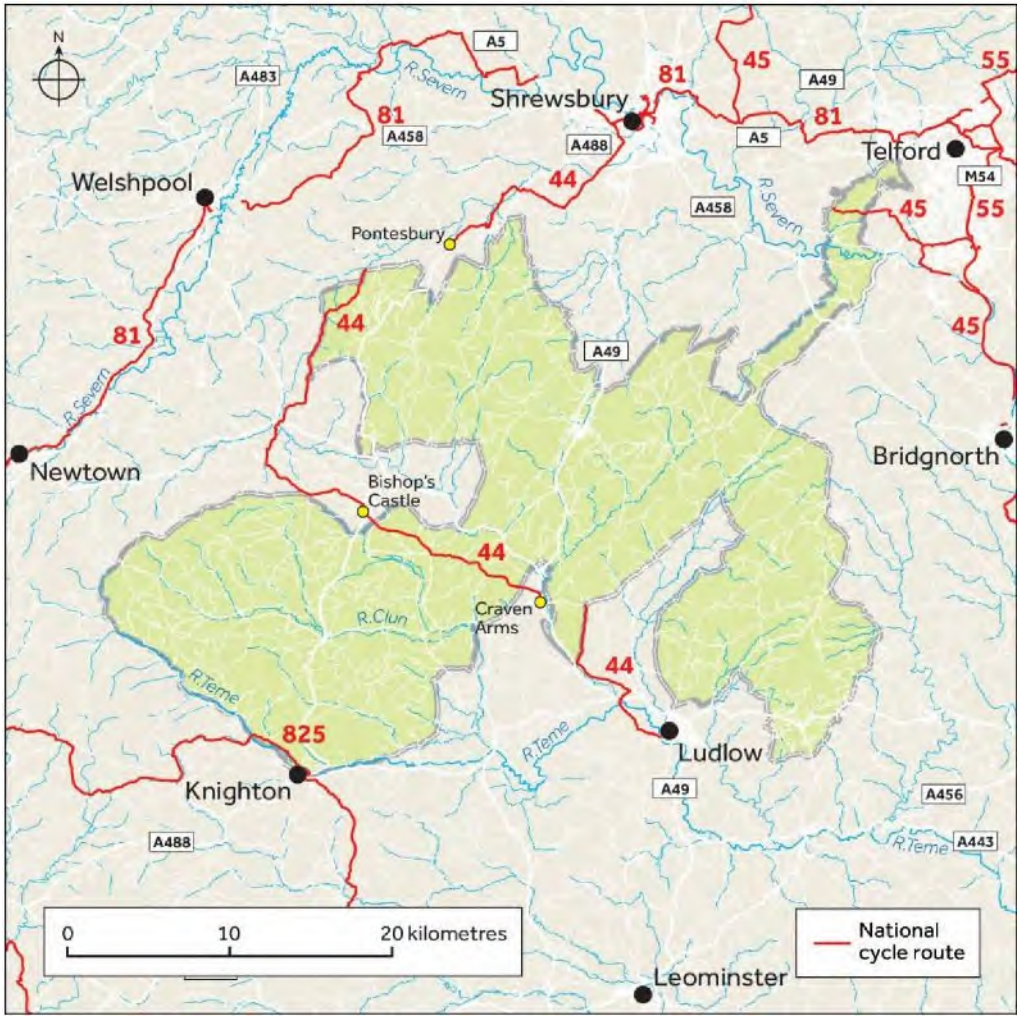
Shropshire Way (south route) runs for 195 km from the Stiperstones to the Clee Hills and Wenlock Edge before descending to Ironbridge Gorge.

Severn Way runs along the entire Severn e sea; a 5.5 km section passes through the s.

17 km from the northern edge of Wyre lock where it then follows the escarpment Ape Dale and descend to Church Stretton. It reach Plowden and Clun Forest. It runs for yke before finishing on the

km, journeying from Cider House Farm, Bishop's Castle. It holds a long tradition as om Wales to the lowland English markets.

ns 14.6 km circular route that visits nekiln Wood, Black Hayes, Gibbon's The Wrekin, and Little Hill.



National Cycle Route 44 is 50 km route open in sections between Shrewsbury and Ludlow, of which about 21.5 km pass through the National Landscape, it then runs on to Hereford.

National Cycle Route 45 is a 353 km route that runs from Salisbury to Chester, approximately 1 km passes over the Wrekin as a part of a local 58 km circuit.

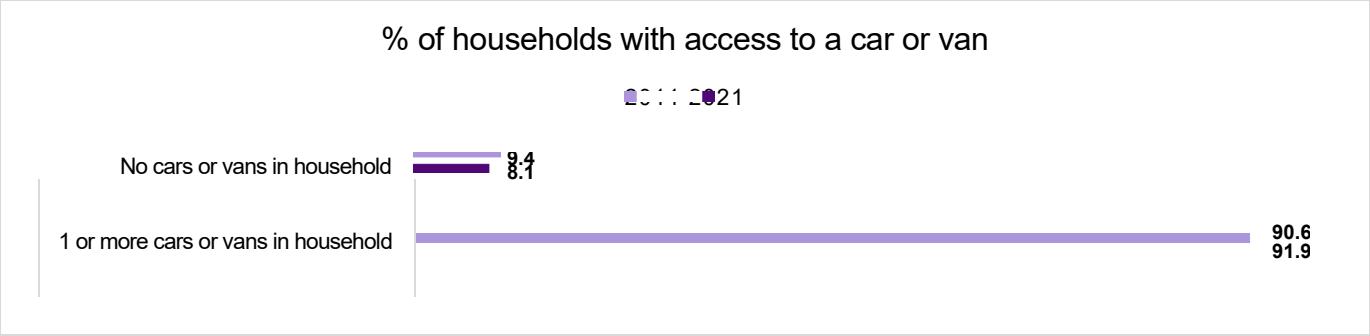
National Cycle Route 825 is a 107 km circular route that runs around the old county of Radnorshire, 4.5 km passes through Knucklas and Knighton.

Source: Sustrans and the Long Distance Walkers Association websites, with links provided through https://www.rowmaps.com and Magic Map https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx

Means of travel

Access to car or van

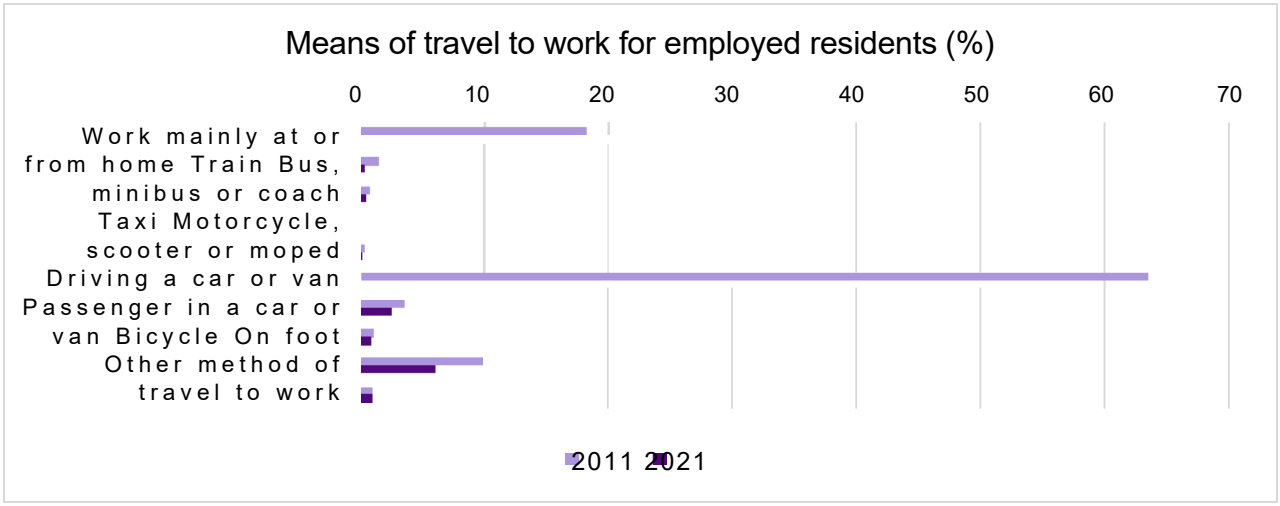
In 2021, 92% of the resident population had access to at least one car or van, up from 91% in 2011.



Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 25 July 2024] Tables QS416EW & TS045

Travel to work

In 2021, 38% of employed residents worked from home, up from 18% in 2011. In 2011, 64% of employed residents drove a car to work; this reduced to 50% in 2021.



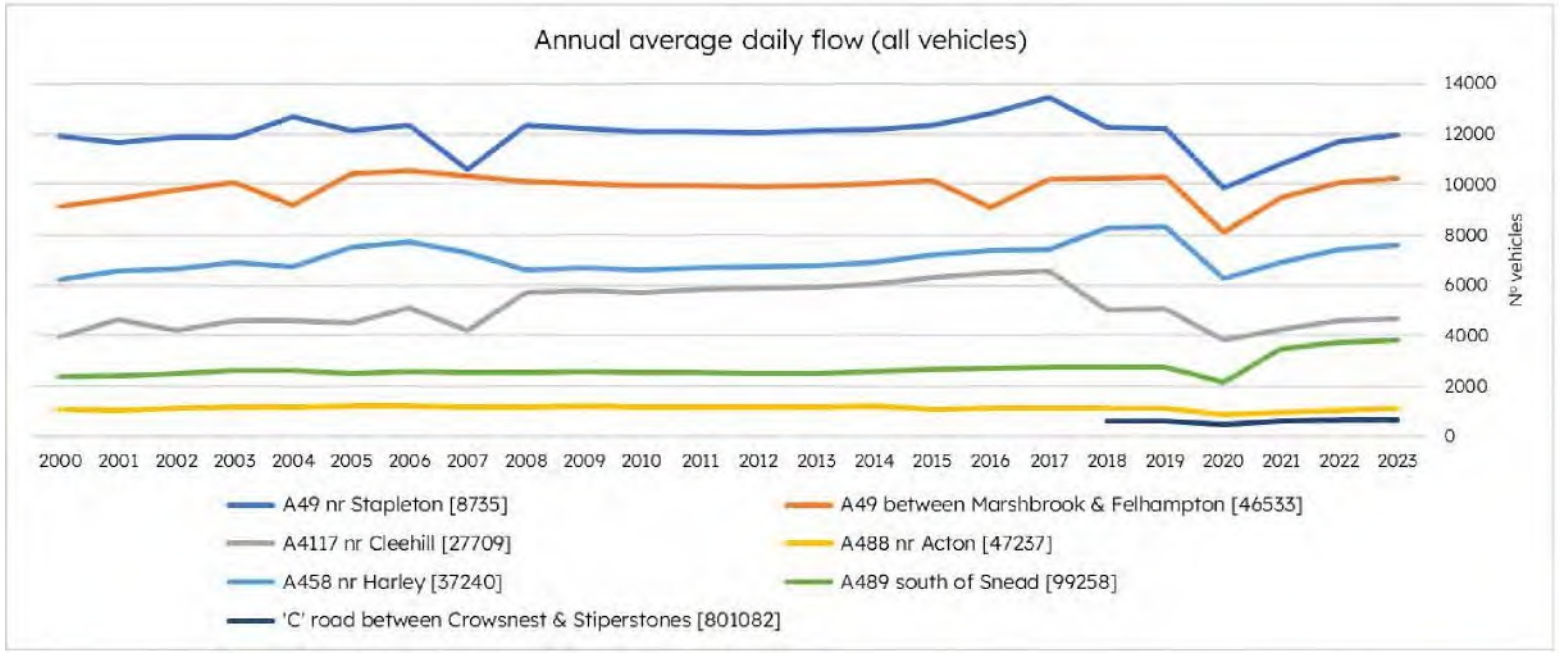
The most striking change between 2011 and 2021 is the significant increase in the number of people working mainly at or from their home.

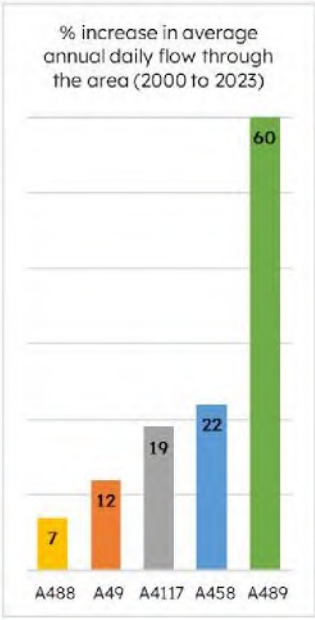
Consequently, the use of all forms of transport (apart from a taxi) has fallen.

Source: ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 25 July2024] Tables QS701EW & TS061

Road traffic counts

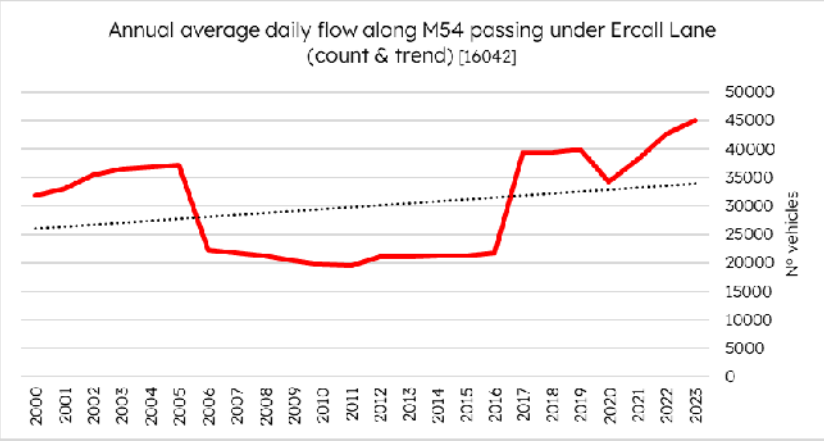
Combined daily traffic flows for 2000-2023 show the busiest monitoring points are along the A49, passing through the centre of the Shropshire Hills. The quietest A Road monitoring point is on the A488, in the Clun area. The greatest growth of traffic is along the A489 (60% increase in traffic over the period but with most of that growth since 2020). The effects of Covid-19 show with a dip for the 2020 figures on all roads.





The Department for Transport reports on many traffic count monitoring points on roads within the National Landscape but only a few have long data trends. Combined daily traffic flows for 2000-2023 show the busiest monitoring points along the A49, with Stapleton (just to the north of the Shropshire Hills) showing an average daily flow of 11,986 vehicles and between Marshbrook and Felhampton (in the middle of the area), showing 9,869 vehicles. The quietest A Road monitoring point is on the A488 near Acton to the south west of the area (1,132 vehicles). This is only a little busier than the C Road that passes between Crowsnest and Stiperstones (604 vehicles) on the western boundary.

Within the area, the A489 near Snead recorded the biggest increase in flow between 2000 – 2022 (60%); the A488, passing through the Clun, recorded the smallest increase in flow (7%). (Note: the A49 at Stapleton only recorded a 0.5% rise in traffic but this relates to commuter flows north, which have remained stable).



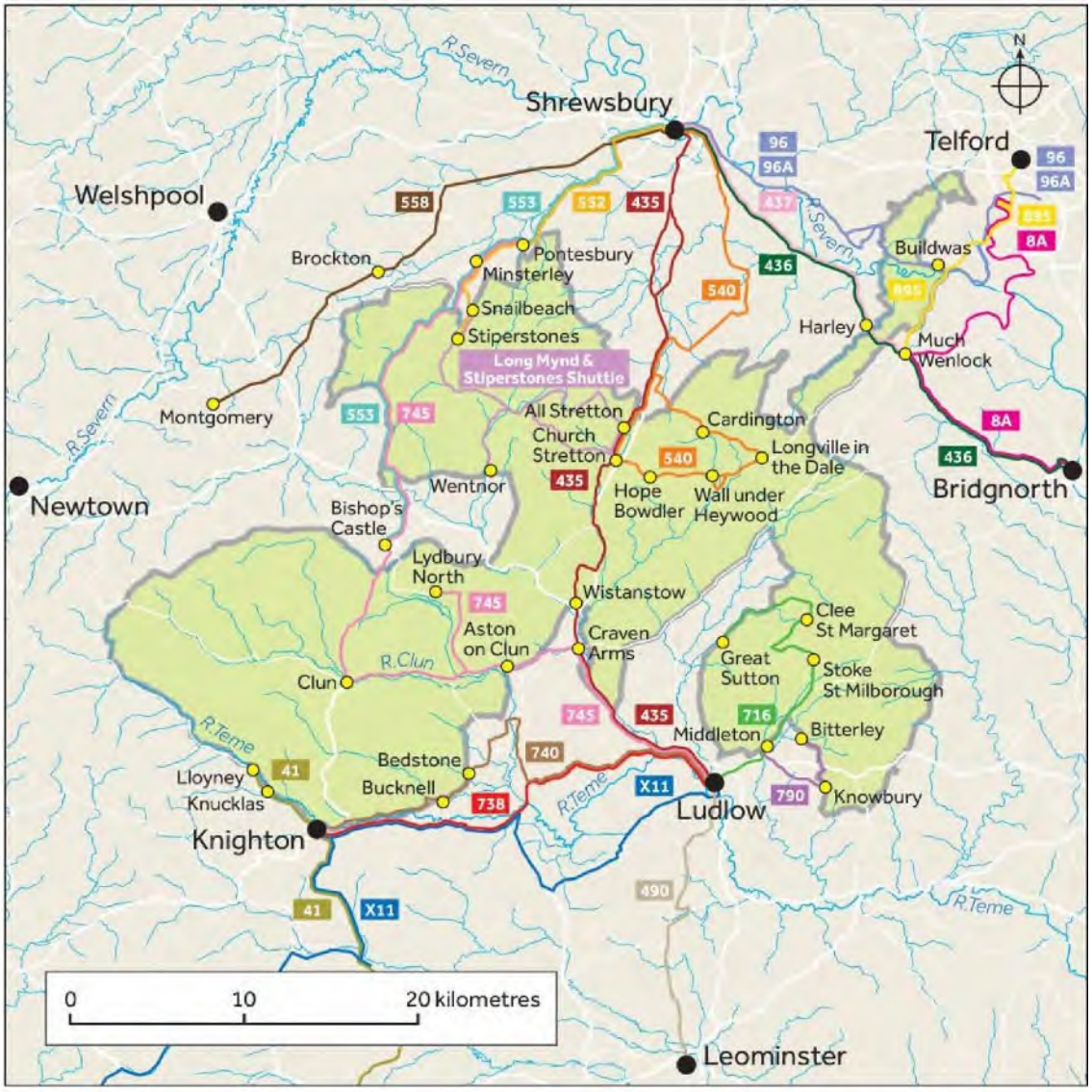
For reference, we show the data for the M54. This passes very close to the northern boundary of the Shropshire Hills, at Ercall Wood. There has been a 46% growth in traffic flows between 2000 and 2023. Clearly, something curtailed traffic flows between 2006 and 2016.

Note: Dept for Transport monitoring point reference numbers are shown in square brackets [**xxxx**].

Source: Dept for Transport Road traffic statistics
https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/#6/55.254/-6.053/basemap-regions-countpoints

Access to public transport

No Sunday bus services but otherwise generally good; some limited single journeys on market days and schools' services. Good train services through the area.



Routes in the National Landscape:

6 days a week – regular service

96 Telford-Shrewsbury via Buildwas (Select Bus Services)

435 Ludlow-Craven Arms-Winstantow-Church Stretton-Dorrington-Shrewsbury (Minsterley Motors)

436 Shrewsbury-Bridgnorth via Harley and Much Wenlock (Select Bus Services)

437 Shrewsbury-Much Wenlock via Harley (Tanat Valley Coaches)

552 Stiperstones-Snailbeach-Minsterley-Pontesbury-Shrewsbury (Minsterley Motors)

553 Bishops Castle-Shrewsbury via Minsterley (Minsterley Motors)

41 Kington-Knighton–Lloyney-Knucklas (Sargeants Brothers)

6 days a week – limited service

8A Telford-Much Wenlock (Arriva Midland North)

740 Knighton–Ludlow (Minsterley Motors)

6 days a week – one return journey

540 Cardington-Shrewsbury via Church Stretton (Minsterley Motors)

738 Knighton–Ludlow (Minsterley Motors)

5 days a week – one return journey

745 Ludlow-Pontesbury via Craven Arms & Bishop's Castle (Minsterley Motors)

790 Middleton–Knowbury-Bitterley (R&B Travel) Shropshire School Holidays days

716 Great Sutton-Clee St Margaret–Stoke St Milborough-Ludlow (Caradoc Coaches) Shropshire School Holidays days

School service

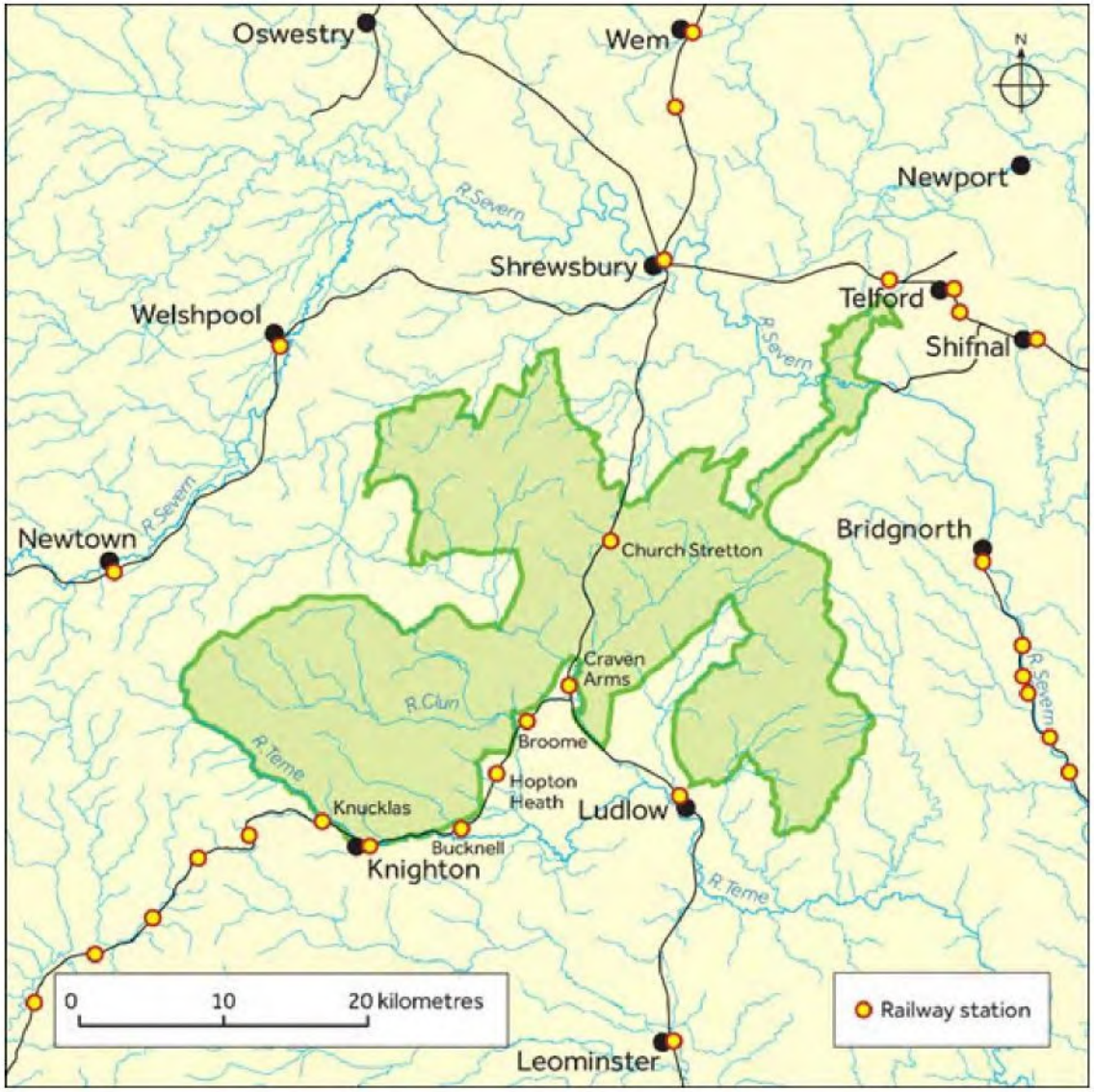
895 The Rock-William Brookes School (Arriva Midland North) one return trip on school days

41A Presteigne–Knighton-Knucklas–Newtown (Celtic Travel) one return trip on Powys College days

One return journey on Mondays

X11 Builth Wells-Presteigne-Knighton–Ludlow (Celtic Travel)

Route outside the National Landscape



6 days a week – regular service

558 Montgomery–Shrewsbury (Tanat Valley Coaches)

Train services

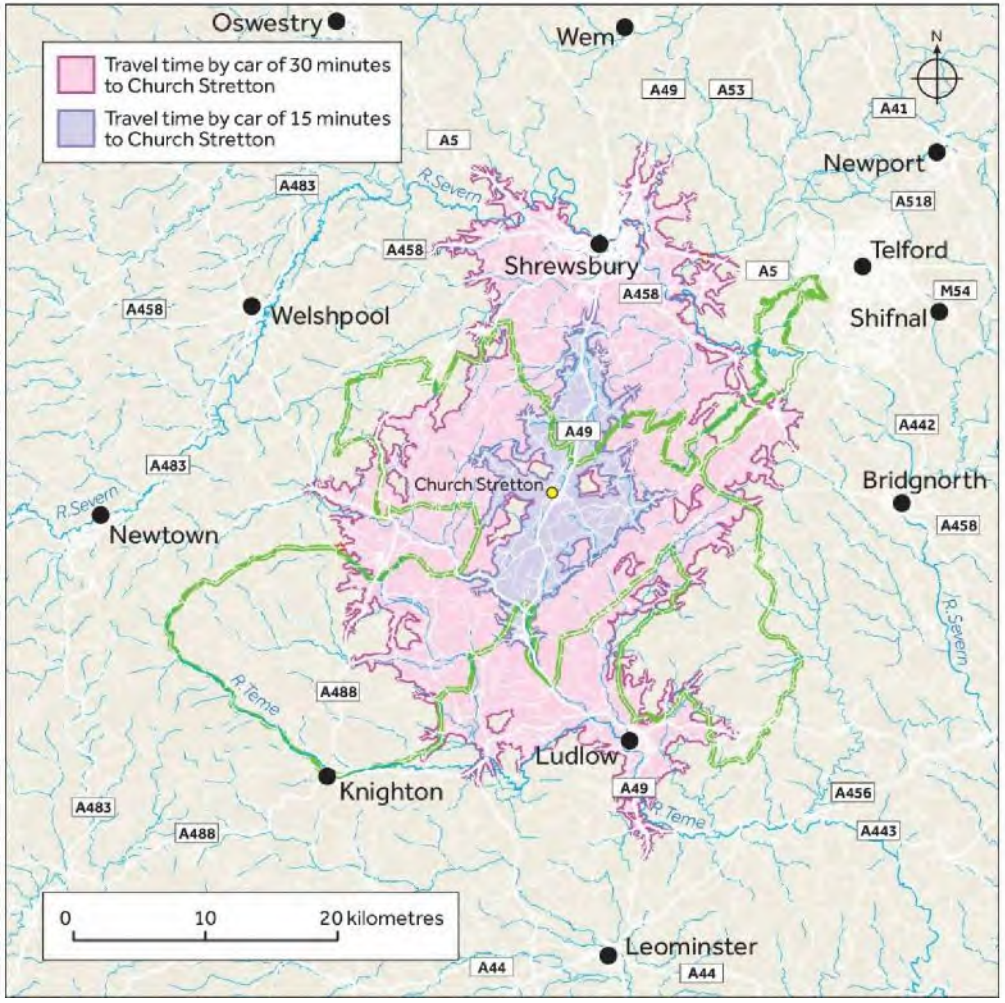
Shrewsbury-Ludlow (Transport for Wales)
Shrewsbury-Knighton (Transport for Wales)
Shrewsbury-Telford (Transport for Wales) Bridgnorth-Bewdley-Kidderminster (Severn Valley Railway)

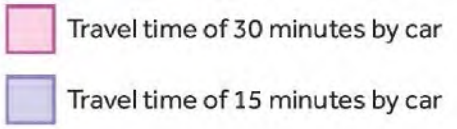
Source http://www.busatlas.uk/ checked against the latest timetables October 2023 https://bustimes.org/

Travel areas to the Shropshire Hills

The Department for Transport states that the average trip-time for a day trip is 33 minutes. Three maps showing the 15 and 30-minute travel times by car to Church Stretton, Clun and Broadstone. A fourth map shows the 60-minute travel times by car to Church Stretton.

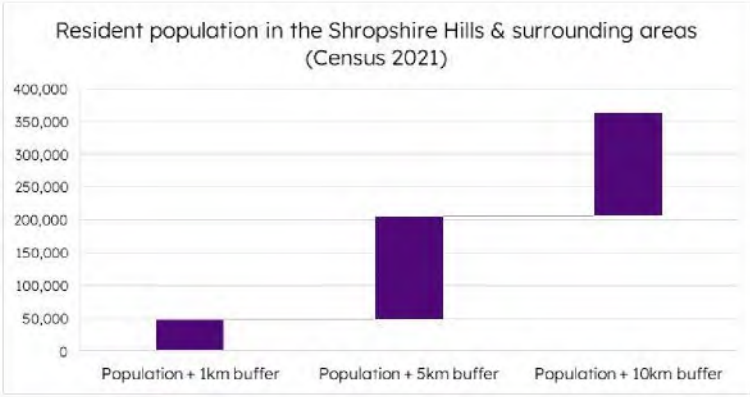
To Church Stretton





The maps show the approximate boundary of the **15-minute** and **30-minute** car journey areas for Church Stretton, Clun and Broadstone.

The catchment for Church Stretton lies mainly within the northern part of the National Landscape and reaches Shrewsbury. There are also strong central links that reach down to Ludlow in the south. Clun links to the south western parts of the area. Broadstone's catchment covers the western side of the National Landscape and reaches as far as Bridgnorth.



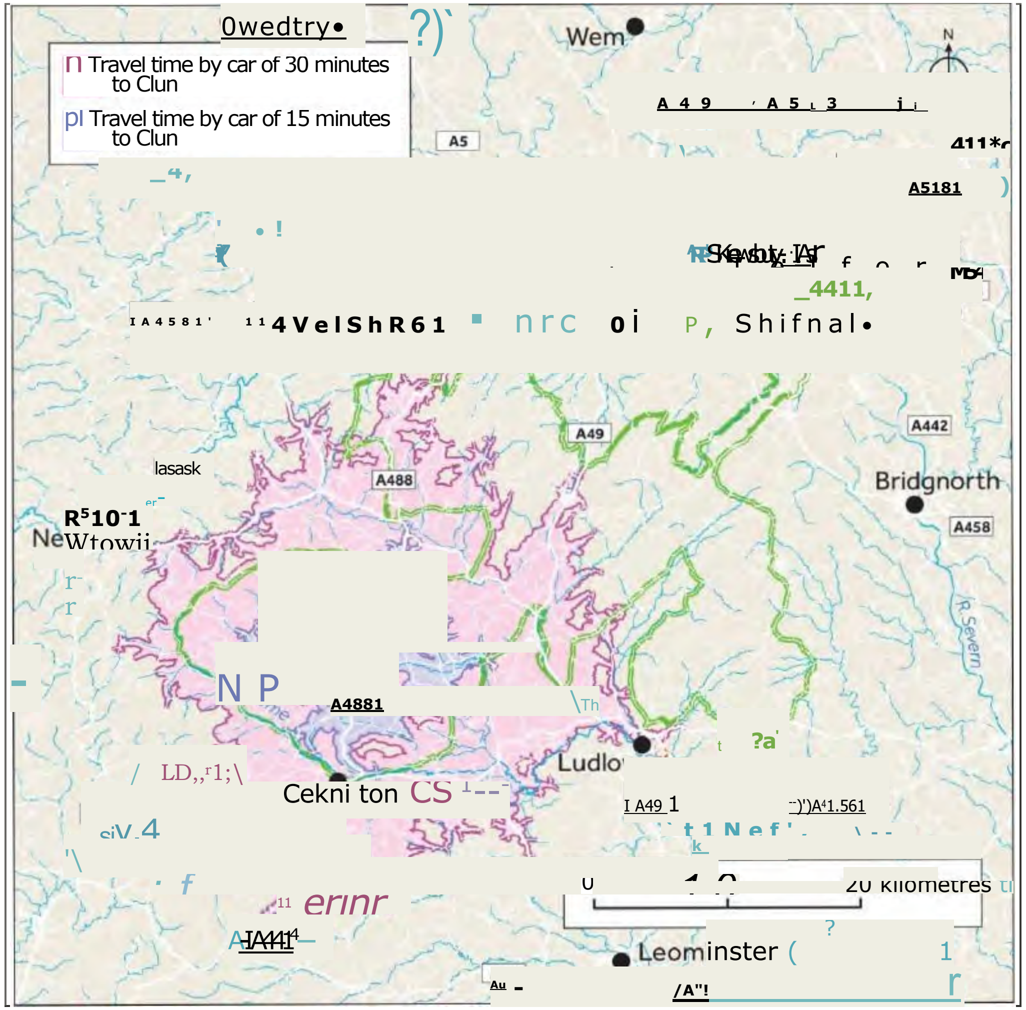
(Click here to see the **Comparative size of settlements** map)

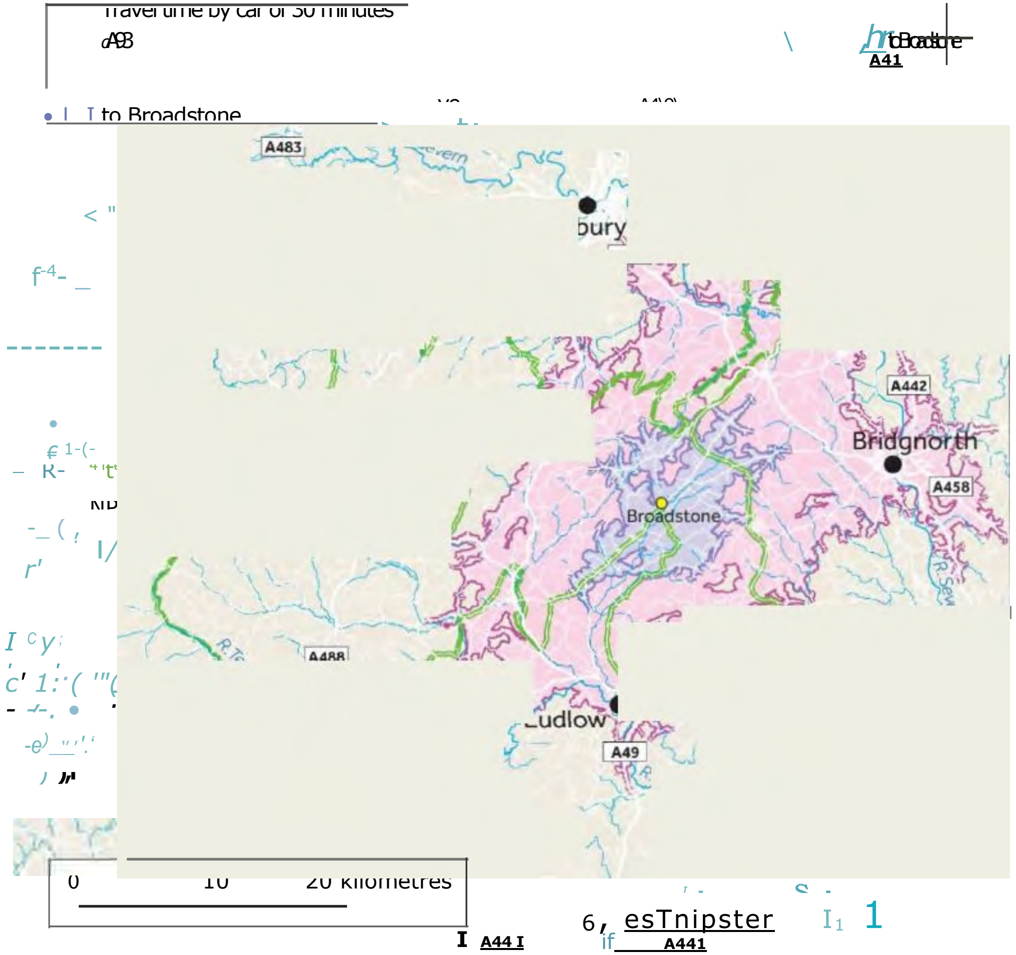
To Clun

T

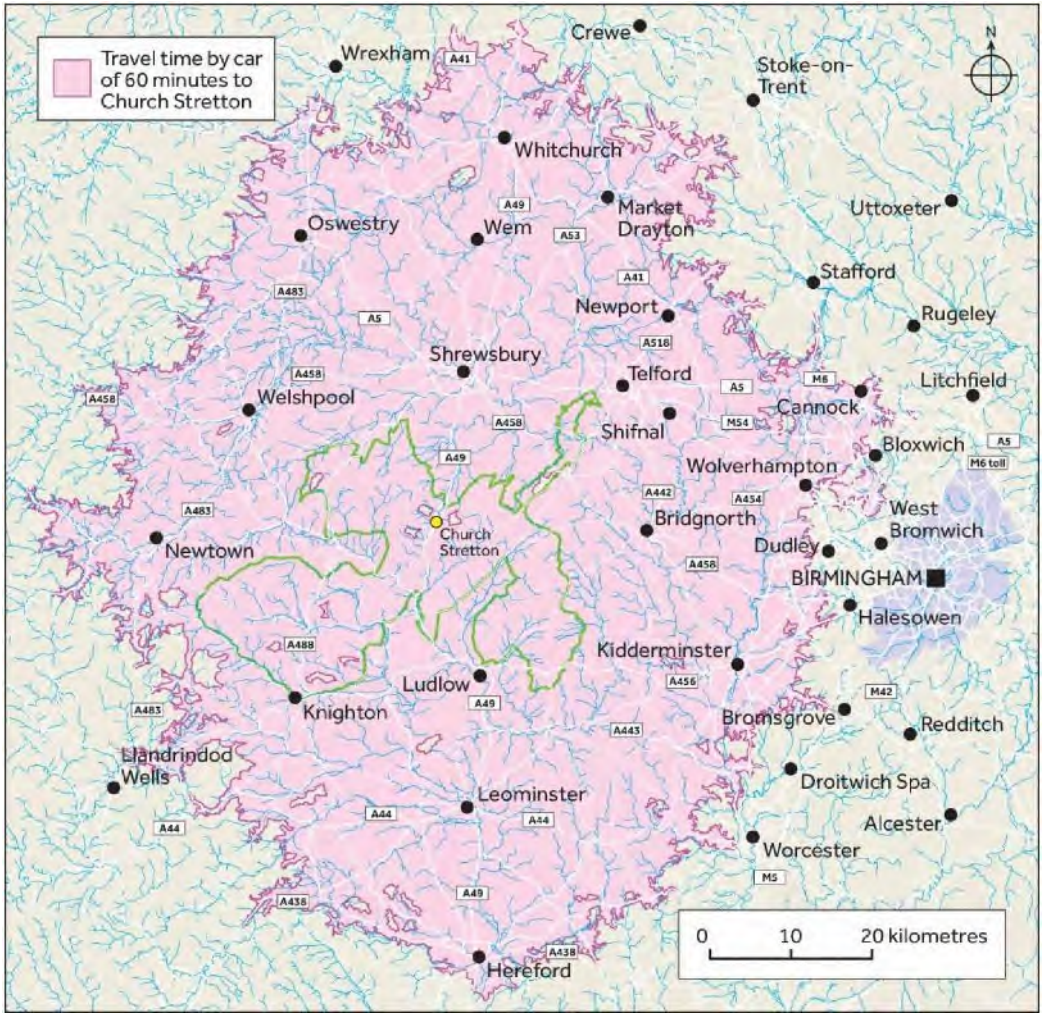
, OsSestry• 7k

oBroadstone


Travel time by car of 30 minutes to Clun
Travel time by car of 15 minutes to Clun
Wem
N
A5
A5181
A49
A488
A442
Bridgnorth
A458
R. Severn
A4881
Leominster


A483
Broadstone
Bridgnorth
A442
A458
A488
A49
0
10

Regional



The Shropshire Hills are a regional destination. The 60 minute catchment for Church Stretton brings in the outskirts of Wrexham to the north, and the outskirts of Birmingham to the east. Hereford and Llandrindod Wells are on the boundary to the south.

National Travel Survey 2022 - Published 30 August 2023 - The National Travel Survey is a household survey of personal travel by residents of England travelling within Great Britain, from data collected via interviews and a seven-day travel diary, which enables analysis of patterns and trends.

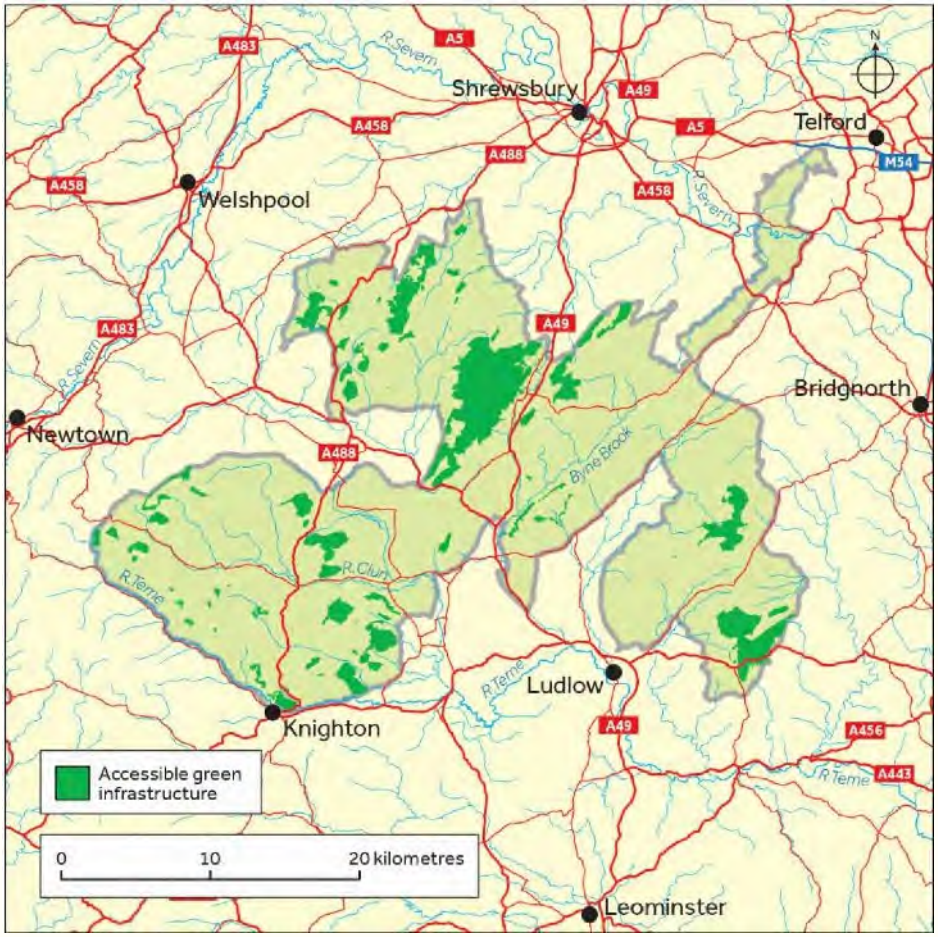
Nationally, people made 862 trips on average in 2022, or 17 trips a week. This includes 24 minutes per cycling trip, 21 minutes per car driver trip and 18 minutes per walking trip. In 2022, the average trip length for a day trip in England was 19.5 kms (12.1 miles) (20.5 km 12.8 in 2017 but only 16.7 in 2021); and the average trip time for a day trip was 33 minutes (33 mins in 2017, 31 mins in 2021).

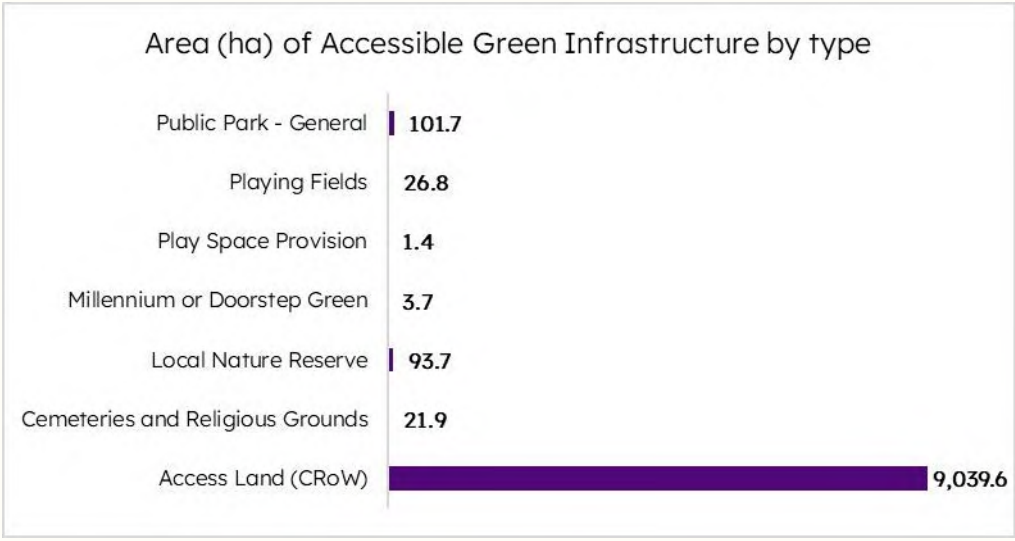
The Department for Transport states that the basic unit of travel in the National Travel Survey is a trip, defined as a one-way course of travel with a single main purpose. Outward and return halves of a return journey are two separate trips.

Source: Travel Time areas created using the Open Route Service plugin on QGIS based on Open Street Map data. Day trip intelligence from National Travel Survey Table NTS0403 , Department for Transport 2022
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2022/national-travel-survey-2022-introduction-and-main-findings

Open Access Land and Accessible green infrastructure

The map shows the location of 'Accessible Green Infrastructure', as defined by Natural England, covering 9,288.8 ha (11.5%) of the National Landscape (up from 11% in 2013).





There are many more accessible sites within the National Landscape and a future project could assess accessibility for a range of visitor attributes.

Source: Data extracted from the England Green Infrastructure Mapping Database GIS data. © Natural England 2021. Contains, or is derived from, information supplied by Ordnance Survey. © Crown copyright and database rights 2021. Ordnance Survey 100022021. The typology includes double counting of areas in the data. Some land will lie in more than one category. https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/UserGuide/Section01.aspx

Place

The Shropshire Hills landscape character is one of variety and of transition – between the lowland plains of the English Midlands and the uplands of Wales. Its hills, crags, scarps and valleys form a distinctive character. The underlying geology also determines land use, patterns of settlement, and exploitation of minerals. The rocky Stiperstones, the dissected plateau of the Long Mynd, the craggy volcanic Stretton Hills and Wrekin, the harsh quarried landscape of the Clee Hills, the long wooded scarp of Wenlock Edge, and the rolling enclosed hills of the Clun Forest all have their own distinctive character. There are contrasts from relatively wild hills and valleys to softer, settled landscapes, as well as between varying seasonal colours of heather, grass, bracken and broadleaved trees.

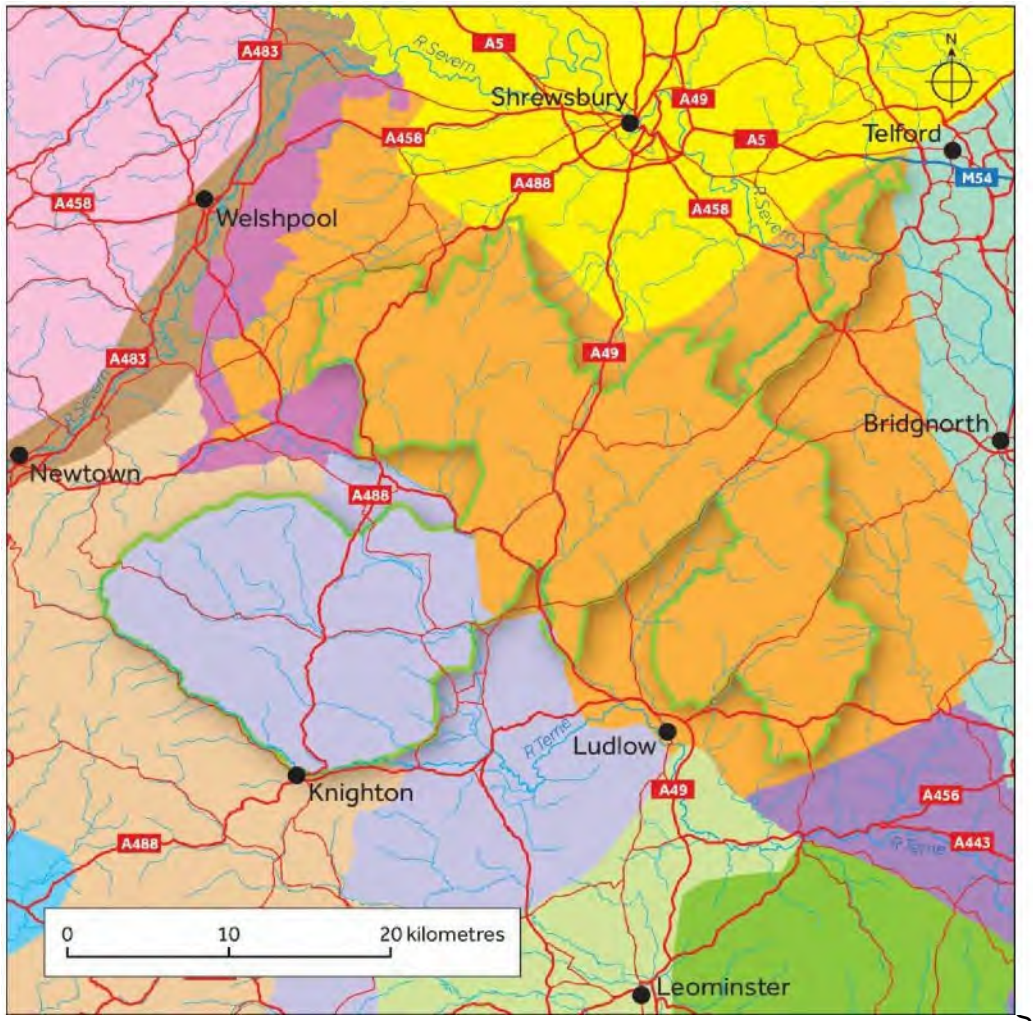
Hillforts crown most of the prominent hilltops and reflect a time when people felt the need to live in fortified communities. After the Norman Conquest, our proximity to Wales saw centuries of unrest and cross-border raiding. Offa's Dyke and the earthworks of medieval motte and bailey castles serve as a reminder to these unsettled times.

The patchwork of fields, mostly pasture bounded by hedges, results from generations of farming. Some small scale arable cultivation mostly for feed crops is found, with larger scale cropping in the valleys which extend down outside the Shropshire Hills. Hedgerow and field trees, including many veteran trees, give the landscape a maturity.

Off the beaten track and remote in the context of the West Midlands, the Shropshire Hills are a haven of tranquillity – peace and quiet, dark skies and unspoilt views. Relatively low levels of noise and inappropriate development combine with modest visitor numbers to create an unspoilt quality that is greatly valued throughout the area.

Landscape Character

National Character Areas (NCAs) - defined by Natural England. The National Landscape lies in two NCAs.



Legend

- Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain
- Shropshire Hills
- Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau
- Clun and North West Herefordshire Hills
- Herefordshire Lowlands
- Herefordshire Plateau
- Teme Valley
- Bryniau a Dyffrynnoedd Trefaldwyn / Montgomeryshire Hills and Vales
- Dyffryn Hafren / Severn Valley
- Bryniau Swydd Amwythig (allgreigiau) / Shropshire Hills (outliers)
- Bryniau Sir Faesyfed / Radnorshire Hills
- Dyffrynnoedd Irfon ac Ieithon / The Vales of Irfon and Ithon

Natural Character Areas (NCAs) are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.

Shropshire Hills

A landscape of rugged and mostly bare-topped hills, contrasting with mixed agriculture in intervening valleys and dales. This tranquil landscape of national importance flows almost seamlessly into the neighbouring hills of Clun and North West Herefordshire Hills NCA to the south. The Shropshire Hills are characterised most
hills and ridges that lend the area its name.
south, with the settlements of Craven Arms
in the centre of the area.

ills

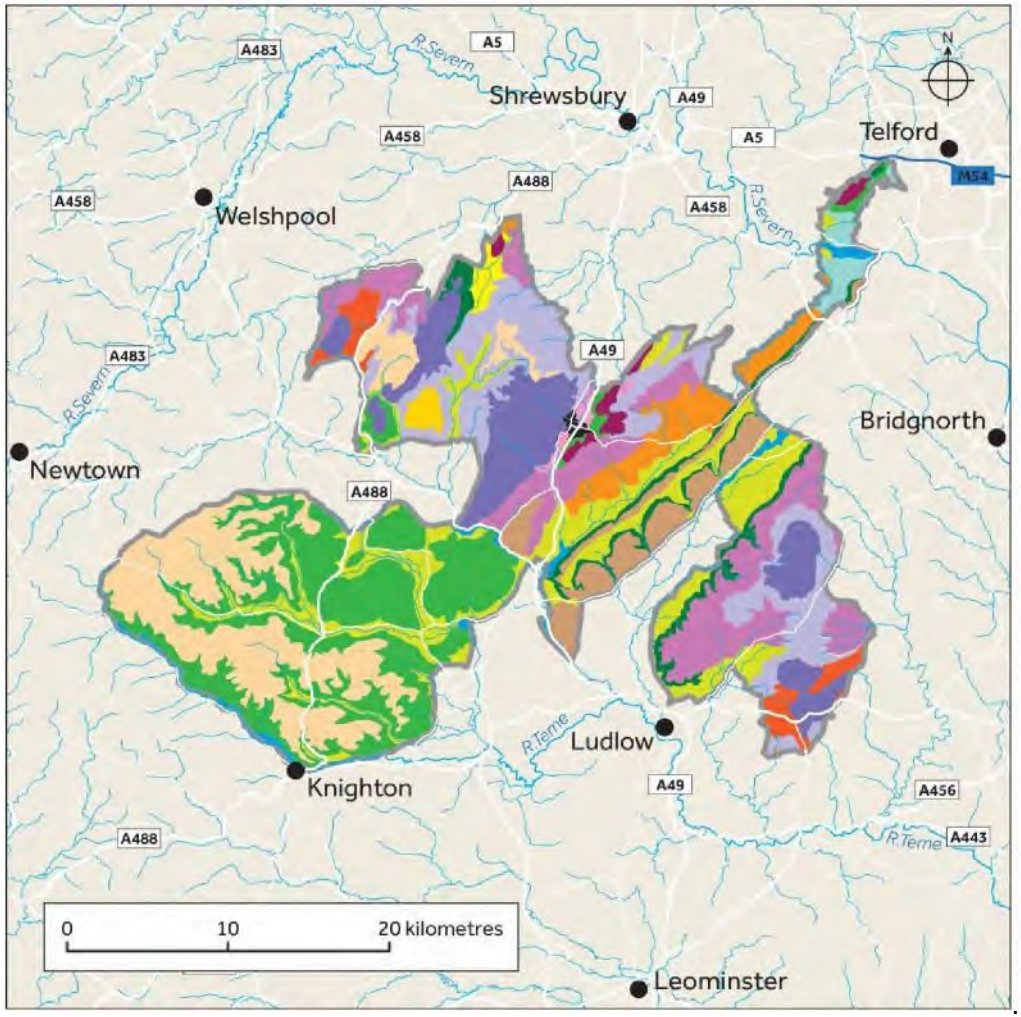
sely populated area, divided by the river
her land is typically wind-swept heath and
scale, irregular enclosure and slopes down
outh-east, typically with plantation and
pper valley slopes.

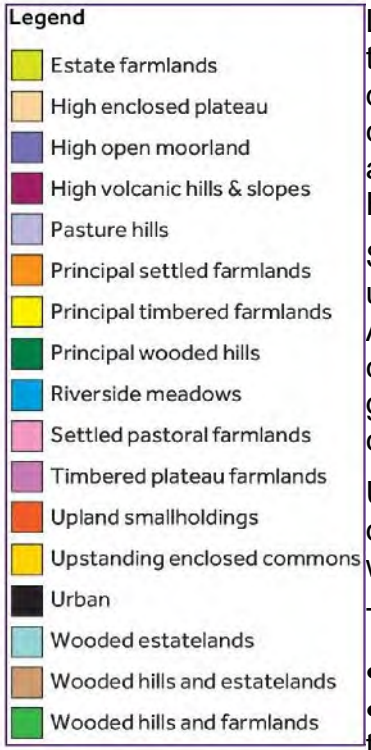
other NCAs: the **Shropshire, Cheshire &**
n Sandstone Plateau.

Source: For the National Character Areas visit - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles#ncas-in-west-midlands and https://datamap.gov.wales/layers/inspire-nrw:NRW_LANDSCAPE_CHARACTER_AREAS)

Landscape Character Types

Map that sets out the landscape context by showing the seventeen generic Landscape Character Types found within the National Landscape.





Landscape Character Types are generic types of landscape that can occur in different places. They have similar characteristics wherever they occur, and are called by a descriptive name (e.g. High open moorland etc.).

Shropshire County Council published an updated Landscape Character Assessment in 2006. Landscape character is determined by six elements: geology, landform, soils, settlement, tree cover and land use.

Using these elements, the assessment describes 27 different landscape types of which 17 are found in the Shropshire Hills.

The landscape type descriptions:

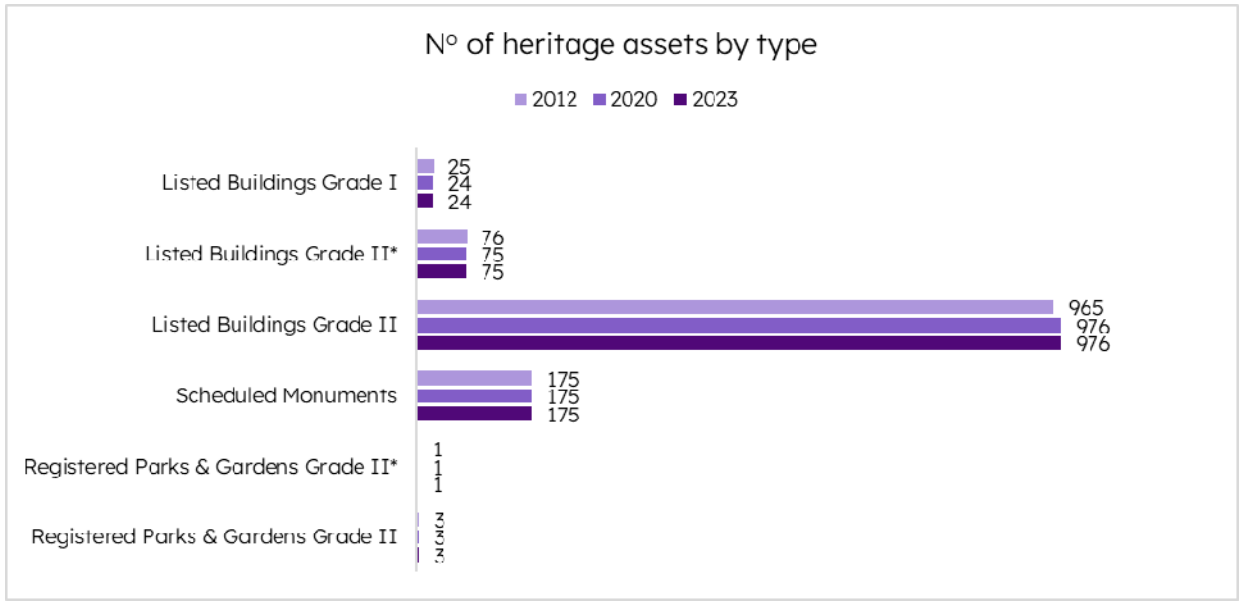
- set out the key characteristics;
- describe the broad character of the

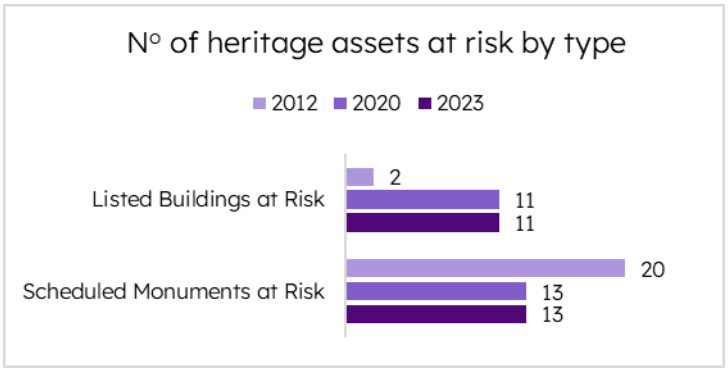
type;
Shropshire; and
otograph.

uncil (2006): The Shropshire Landscape Typology https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/media/1803/the-shropshire-landscape-typology.pdf

Number and condition of heritage assets

There are 1,075 Listed Buildings, 175 Scheduled Monuments and 4 Registered Parks and Gardens. Of these, 24 assets are at risk; as there were in 2020.





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English Heritage 'list' the most important historic assets in England. 'Listing' is the term given to the practice of identifying historic assets of national importance (including buildings, scheduling monuments, registering parks, gardens and battlefields, and marine wreck sites). This allows Historic England to highlight what is significant about a building or site, and helps to make sure that any future changes to it do not result in the loss of its significance.

Percentage of Heritage Assets at risk in the National Landscape

Listed Buildings	Scheduled Monuments	Registered Park and Gardens
0.9%	1%	0%

The condition and trend of Heritage Assets at risk in the National Landscape

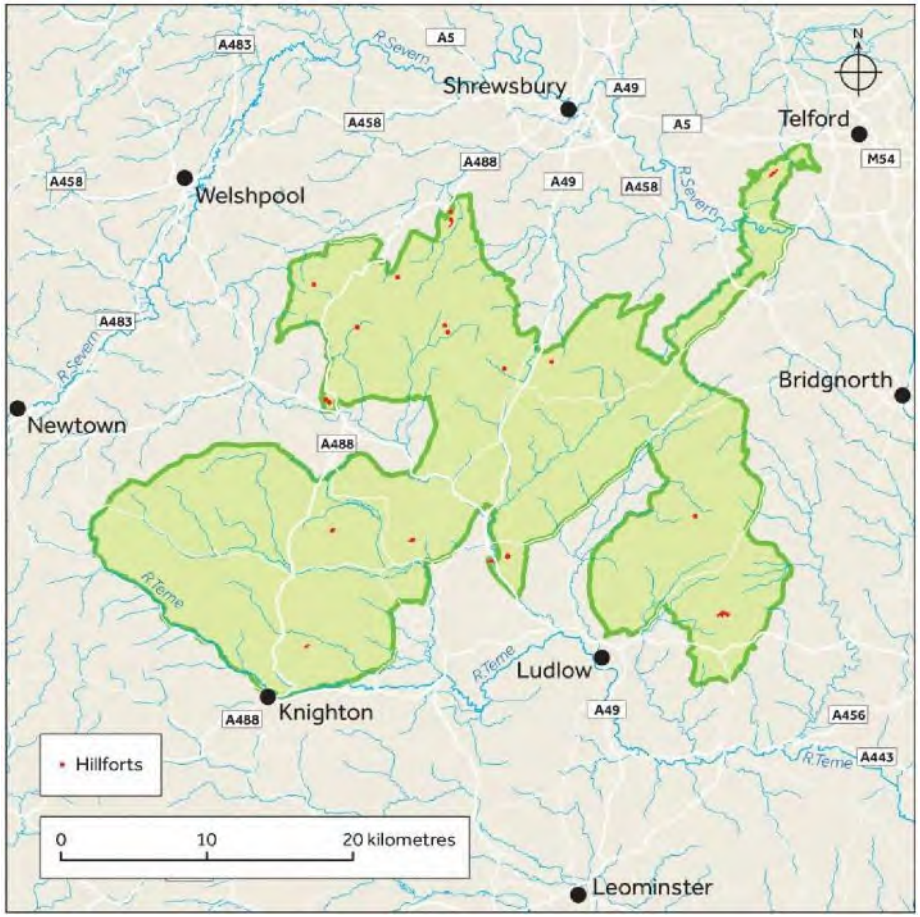
List nº	Asset	Site type	Condition	Vulnerability	Trend	Place
Listed Building at risk:						
1054540	Church of St Michael and All Angels, Lydbury North	Grade I Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	No solution agreed	Slow decay	Lydbury North
1055017	Church of St Mary	Grade II* Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	No solution agreed	Slow decay	Bedstone
1269775	Range Approximately 20 metres south east of Castle Farmhouse	Grade II* Agriculture and subsistence > Farm building	Very bad	Solution agreed but not yet implemented	Slow decay	Wistanstow
1367257	Church of St George, Church Street	Grade II* Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	Solution agreed but not yet implemented	Slow decay	Clun
1383652	Church of St Mary	Grade II* Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	No solution agreed	Slow decay	Bitterley
1383760	Church of St Michael, Silvington	Grade II* Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	No solution agreed	Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric	Wheathill
1014866	Candle House, Snailbeach Lead Mine	Grade II Industrial > Mining industry site	Very bad	No solution agreed	Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric	Worthen with Shelve
1054466	Church of St John, Church Road	Grade II Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	No solution agreed	Slow decay	Newcastle on Clun
1055026	Church of All Saints	Grade II Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Solution agreed but Poor	not yet implemented	Slow decay	Worthen with Shelve

1383354	Broadstone Chapel, Broadstone	Grade II Religious ritual and funerary > Chapel	Poor	No solution agreed	Slow decay	Munslow
1383665	Church of St Mary, Cleeton St Mary	Grade II Religious ritual and funerary > Church	Poor	Solution agreed but not yet implemented	Slow decay	Bitterley
Scheduled Monuments at risk:						
1020901	Offa's Dyke: section 400 metres south west of Springhill Farm	Barrier	Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems	Stock erosion - extensive	Declining	Llanfair Waterdine / Newcastle on Clun / Clun
1003246	Offa's Dyke: section 1600yds (1460m) long, N from St John the Baptist's Church to River Unk	Defence	Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems	Stock erosion - localised/limited	Improving	Mainstone
1020904	Offa's Dyke: section 400m north and 170m east of Selley Hall	Defence	Generally satisfactory but with minor localised problems	Scrub/tree growth	Declining	Llanfair Waterdine
1020900	Offa's Dyke: section 730m south east of The Yew Tree	Defence	Generally satisfactory but with minor localised problems	Other	Improving	Clun / Newcastle on Clun
1008396	Motte castle 80 metres north east of Home Farm	Defence > Castle	Extensive significant problems	Scrub/tree growth	Declining	Church Stretton
1021064	Remains of Lea Castle at Lower Lea Farm, Lea	Defence > Castle	Poor	No solution agreed	Slow decay	Lydham
1021073	Norton Camp: a large multivallate hillfort	Defence > Hillfort	Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems	Animal burrowing - extensive	Craven Arms / Stable	Culmington
1010496	Lower Cleeton moat, a moat and fishponds 380 metres south east of Cleeton Court	Domestic > Fortified house	Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems	Scrub/tree growth	Stable	Bitterley

1006253	Roman villa at Linley Hall	Domestic > Residential building	Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems	Arable ploughing	Declining	More
1021072	Robury Ring: a small enclosed settlement on Wentnor Prolley Moor	Domestic > Settlement	Unknown	Other	Unknown	Wentnor
1021069	Small enclosed settlement on Fron, 340 metres west of St John's Church	Domestic > Settlement	Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems	Scrub/tree growth	Declining	Newcastle on Clun
1017347	Bowl barrow at The Napp	Religious ritual and funerary > Barrow	Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems	Animal burrowing - extensive	Declining	Worthen with Shelve
1012455	Upper Barn moat	Scheduled Monument	Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems	Scrub/tree growth	Declining	Wistanstow

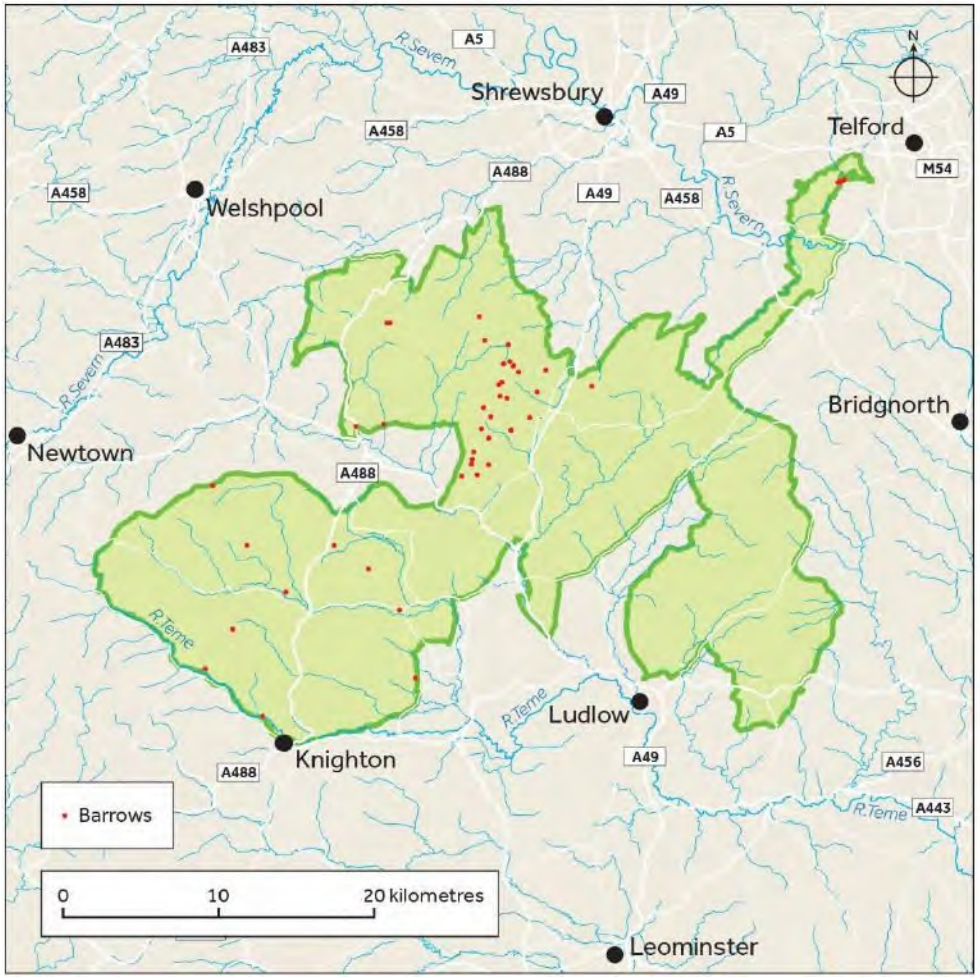
Source: MEOPL Historic England (2023), Historic England web search (May 2024)
https://historicengland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=815a987a32314305b54c00e15c7bb37c PLTOF © Historic England (2024). Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right (2024). The Historic England GIS Data on which this material is based was obtained on the dates shown above. The most publicly available up-to-date Historic England GIS Data can be obtained from HistoricEngland.org.uk.

Location of scheduled monuments



There are 402 scheduled monuments in the National Landscape; the maps show the locations for 10 different types of monuments.

The cultural history of the Shropshire Hills has been written into the The Bronze Age burial barrows, prehistoric enclosures and Iron Age hillforts that crown many of its prominent hilltops testify to the occupation of this rich agricultural hill country by farming communities for over 4,000 years. This archaeological heritage includes ritual stone circles from the late Neolithic and Bronze Ages, Iron Age settlements, Roman roads and villas, medieval churches, deserted medieval settlements and the remains of their open field systems evidenced by ridge and furrow cultivation strips. After the Norman Conquest, the close proximity of the Shropshire Hills to Wales resulted in many centuries of unrest and cross-border raiding and the Welsh influence is reflected in many place names in the west. The unsettled history of the border area also gives rise to the greatest concentration of medieval motte and bailey earthworks and castle remains anywhere in Britain. Jewels in the crown include the recently restored Hopton Castle, the ruined Clun Castle which was the seat of a significant marcher lordship, along with Stokesay Castle, one of the finest fortified manor houses in England.


A483
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Shrewsbury
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Telford
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Welshpool
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A483
R.Severn
Bridgnorth
Newtown
A488
R.Teme
R.Teme
Ludlow
Knighton
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A456
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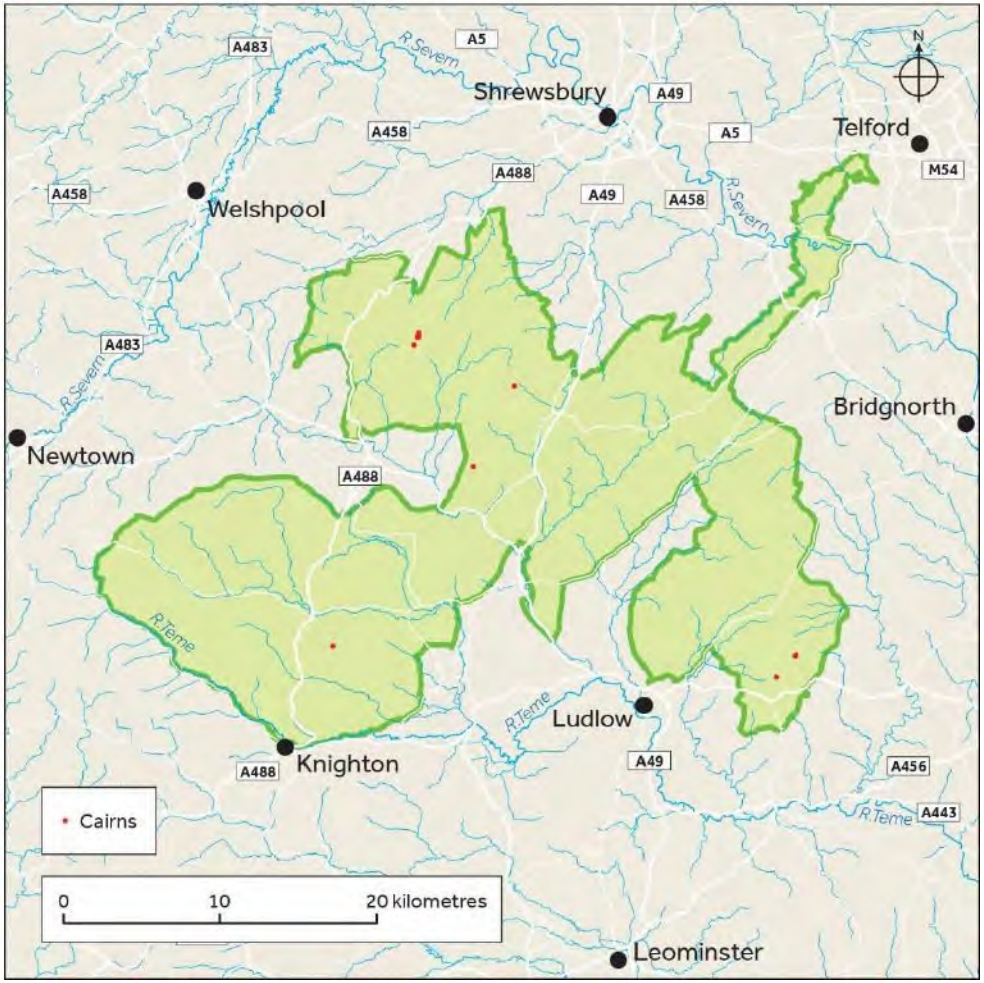
R.Teme
A443
Barrows
0
10
20 kilometres
Leominster
N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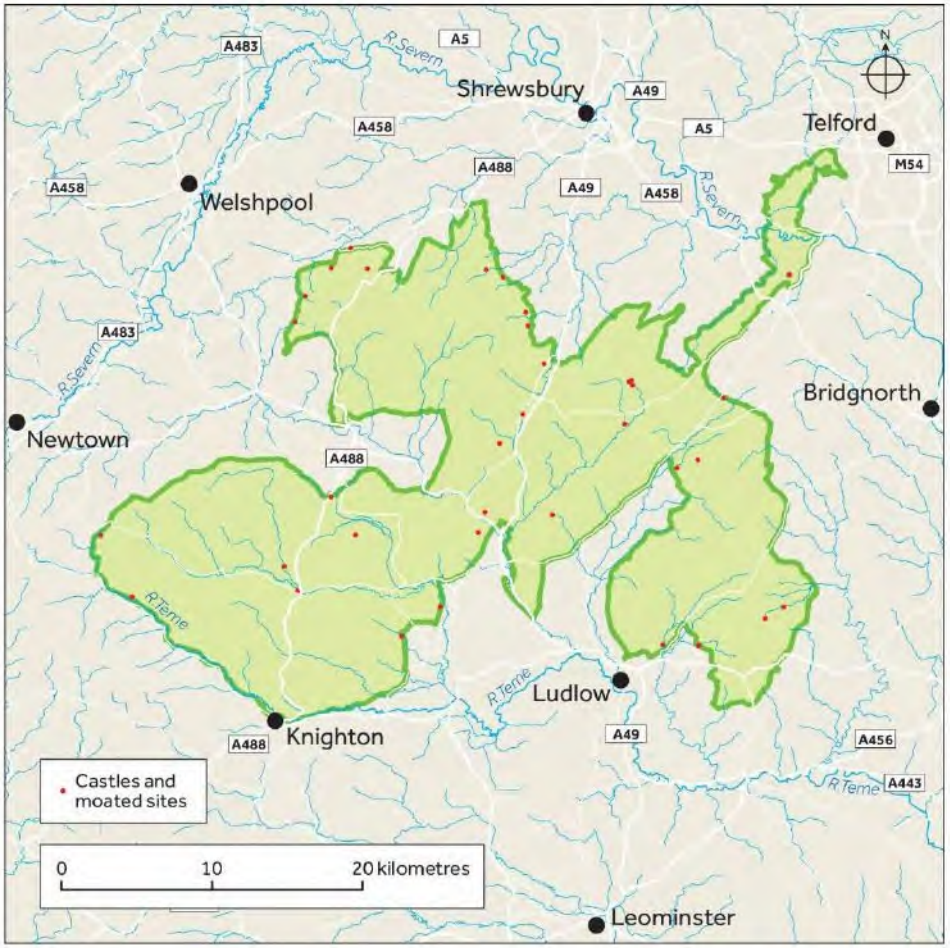
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Bridgnorth
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R.Teme
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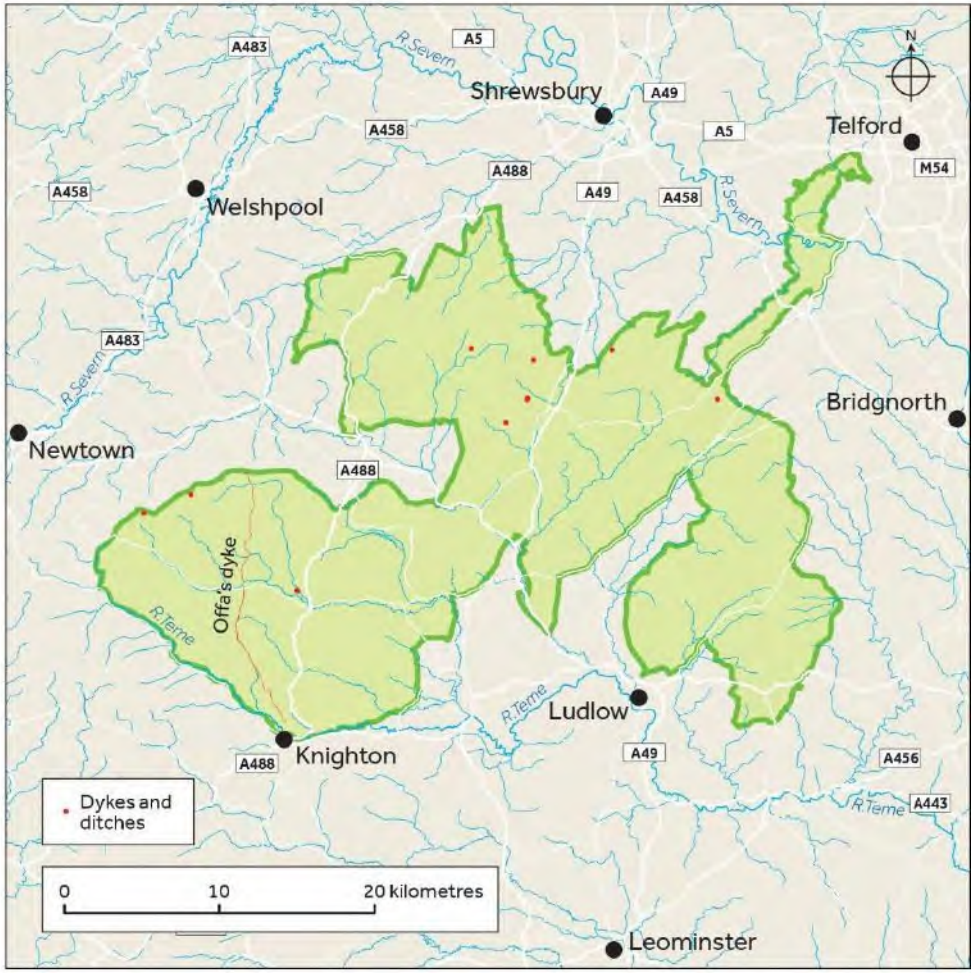
Castles and moated sites
0
10
20 kilometres
Leominster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Bridgnorth
Newtown
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Offa's dyke
R.Teme
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Knighton
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R.Teme
A443
Dykes and ditches
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10
20 kilometres
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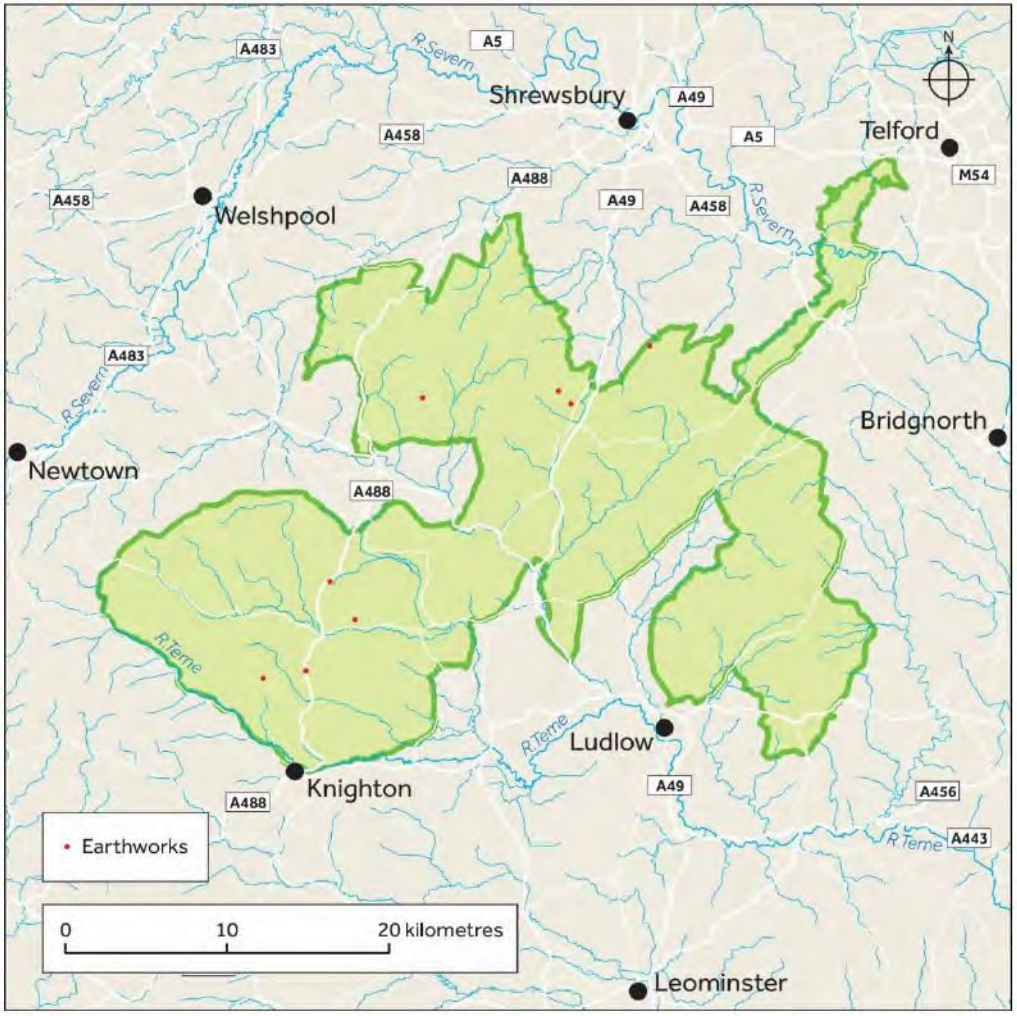
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R.Teme
A443
Earthworks
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20 kilometres
Leominster
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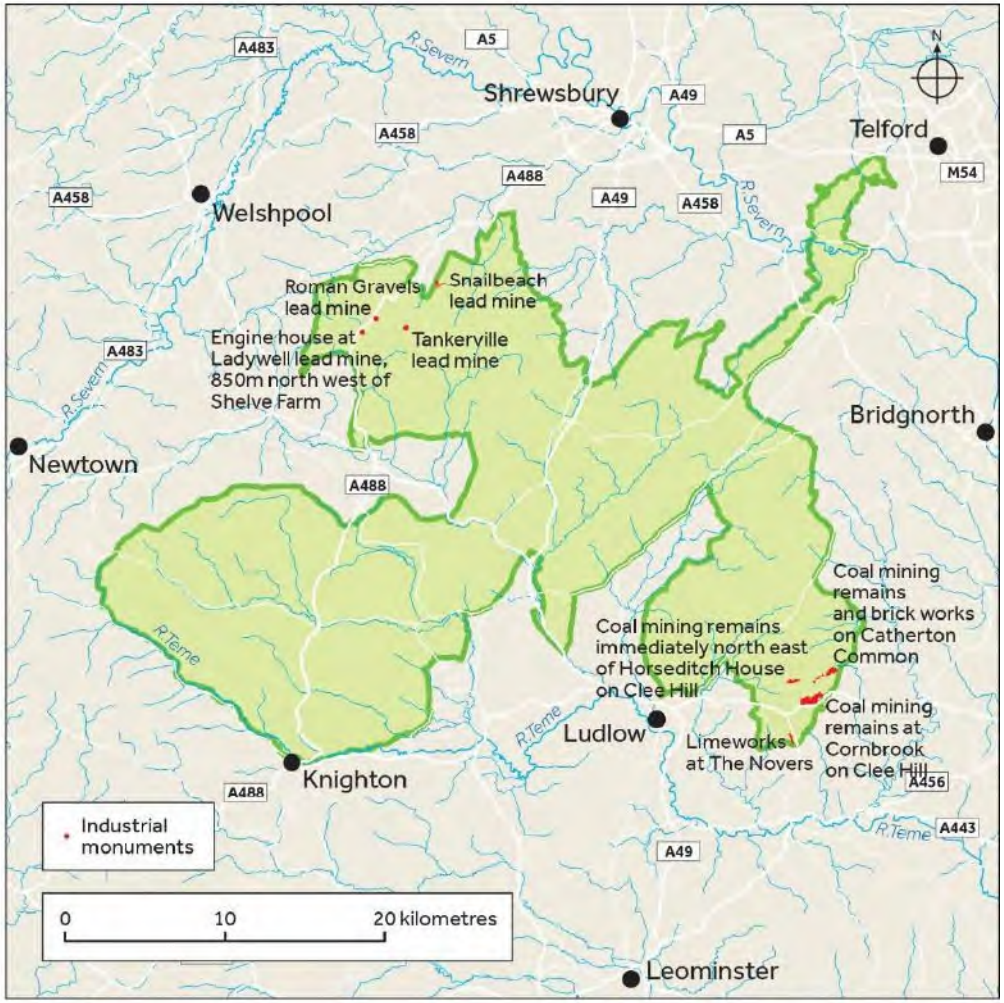
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Welshpool
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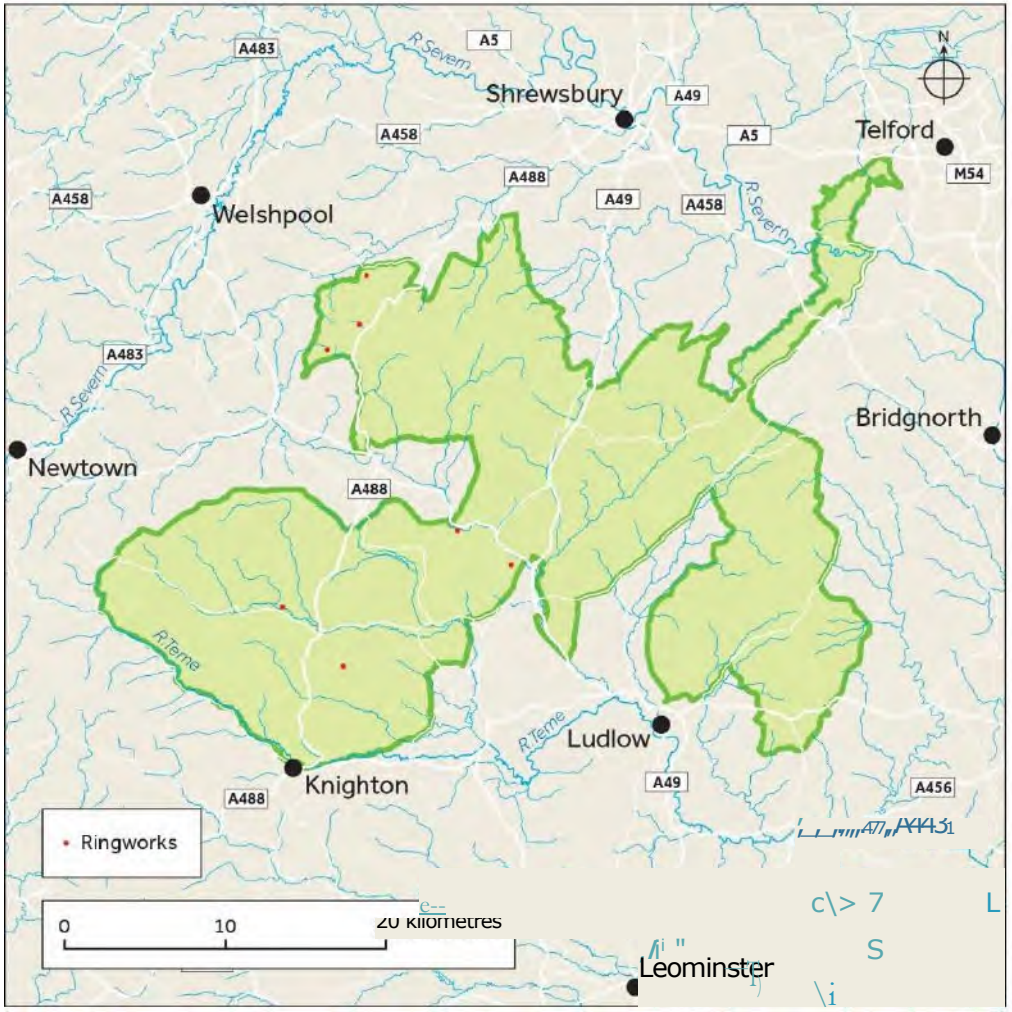
A458
R.Severn
Roman Gravels lead mine
Snailbeach lead mine
Engine house at Ladywell lead mine, 850m north west of Shelve Farm
Tankerville lead mine
A483
R.Severn
Bridgnorth
Newtown
A488
Coal mining remains and brick works on Catherton Common
Coal mining remains immediately north east of Horseditch House on Clee Hill
R.Teme
Ludlow
Limeworks at The Novers
Coal mining remains at Cornbrook on Clee Hill
A456
Knighton
A488
Industrial monuments
R.Teme
A443
A49
0
10
20 kilometres
Leominster
N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R.Severn
Bridgnorth
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R.Teme
Ludlow
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A456
Ringworks
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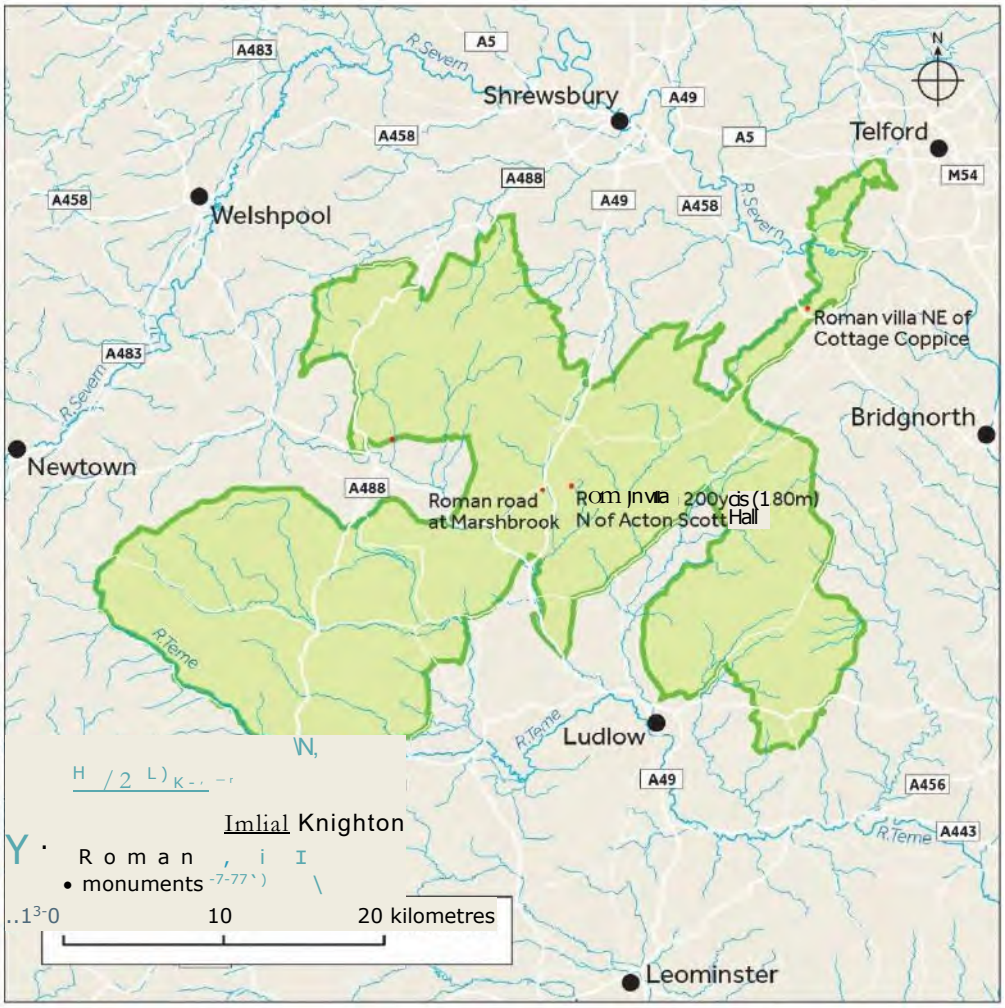
10
20 kilometres
Leominster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Telford
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Welshpool
A488
A49
A458
R.Severn
Roman villa NE of
Cottage Coppice
A483
R.Severn
Bridgnorth
Newtown
A488
Roman road
at Marshbrook
Roman villa 200yds (180m)
N of Acton Scott Hall
R.Teme
Ludlow
R.Teme
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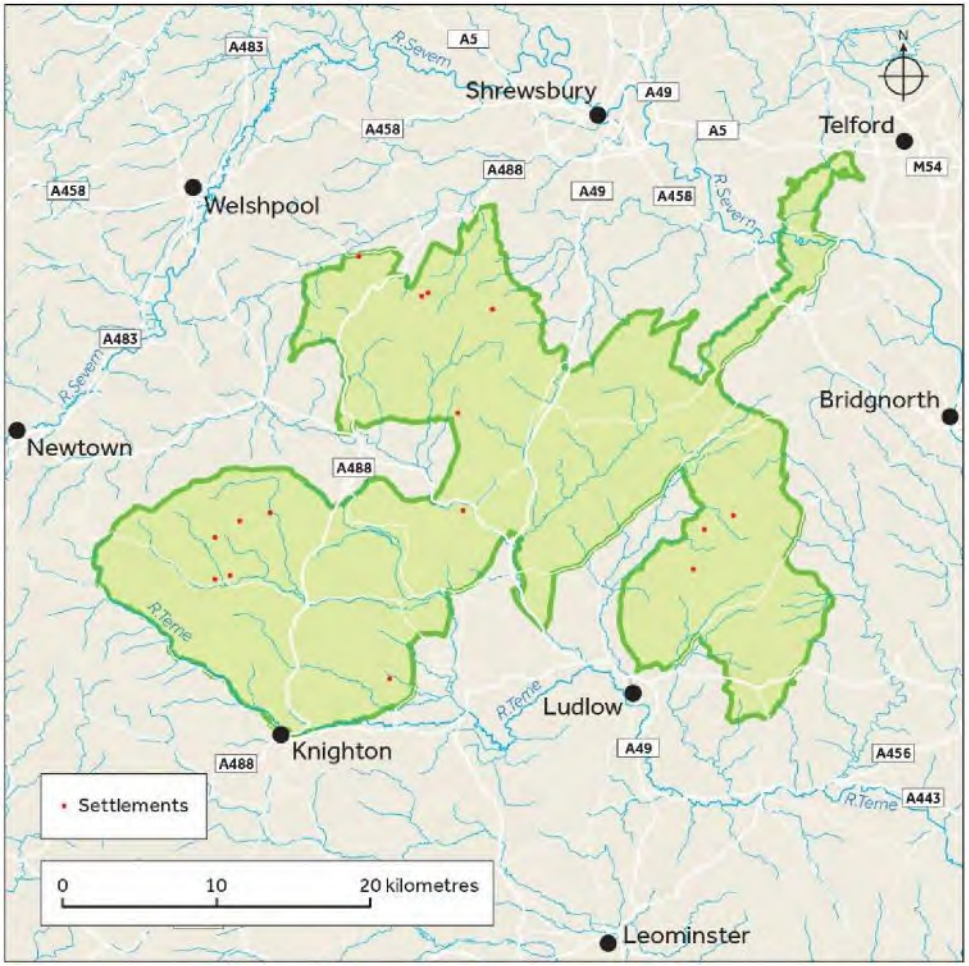
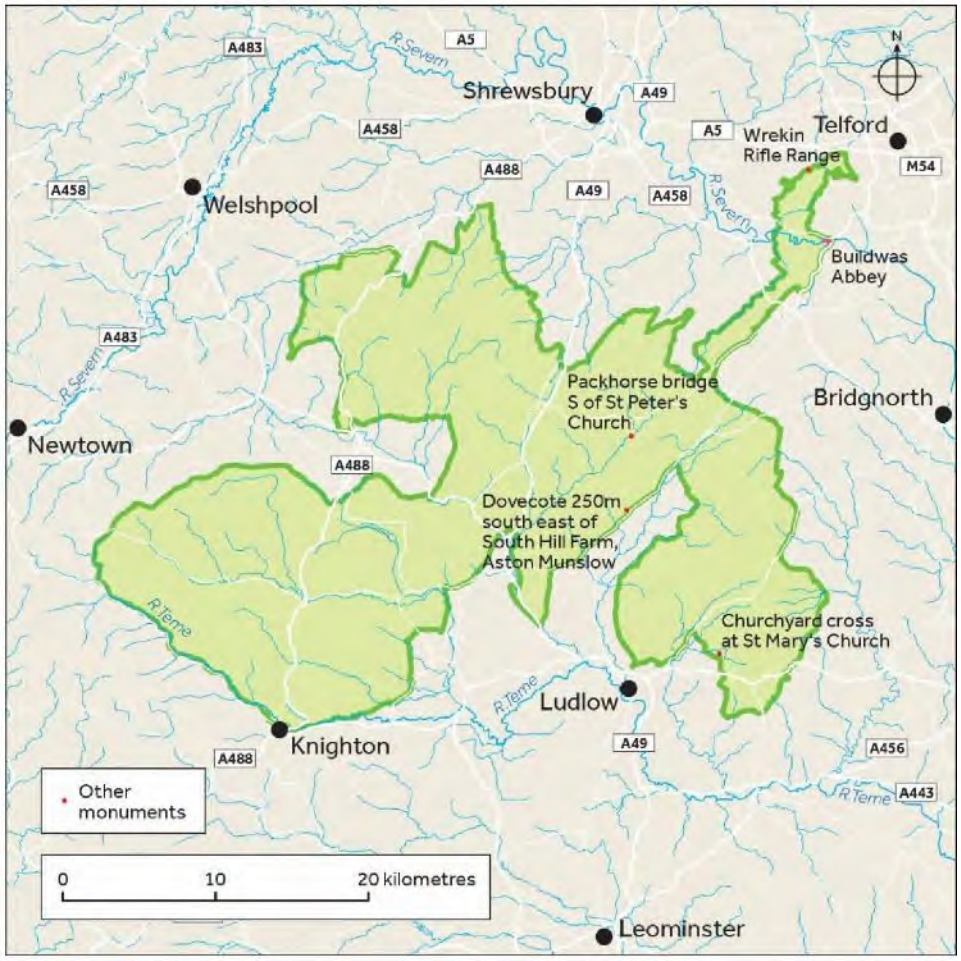
A456
R.Teme
A443
Imlial Knighton
Roman
monuments
10
20 kilometres
Leominster





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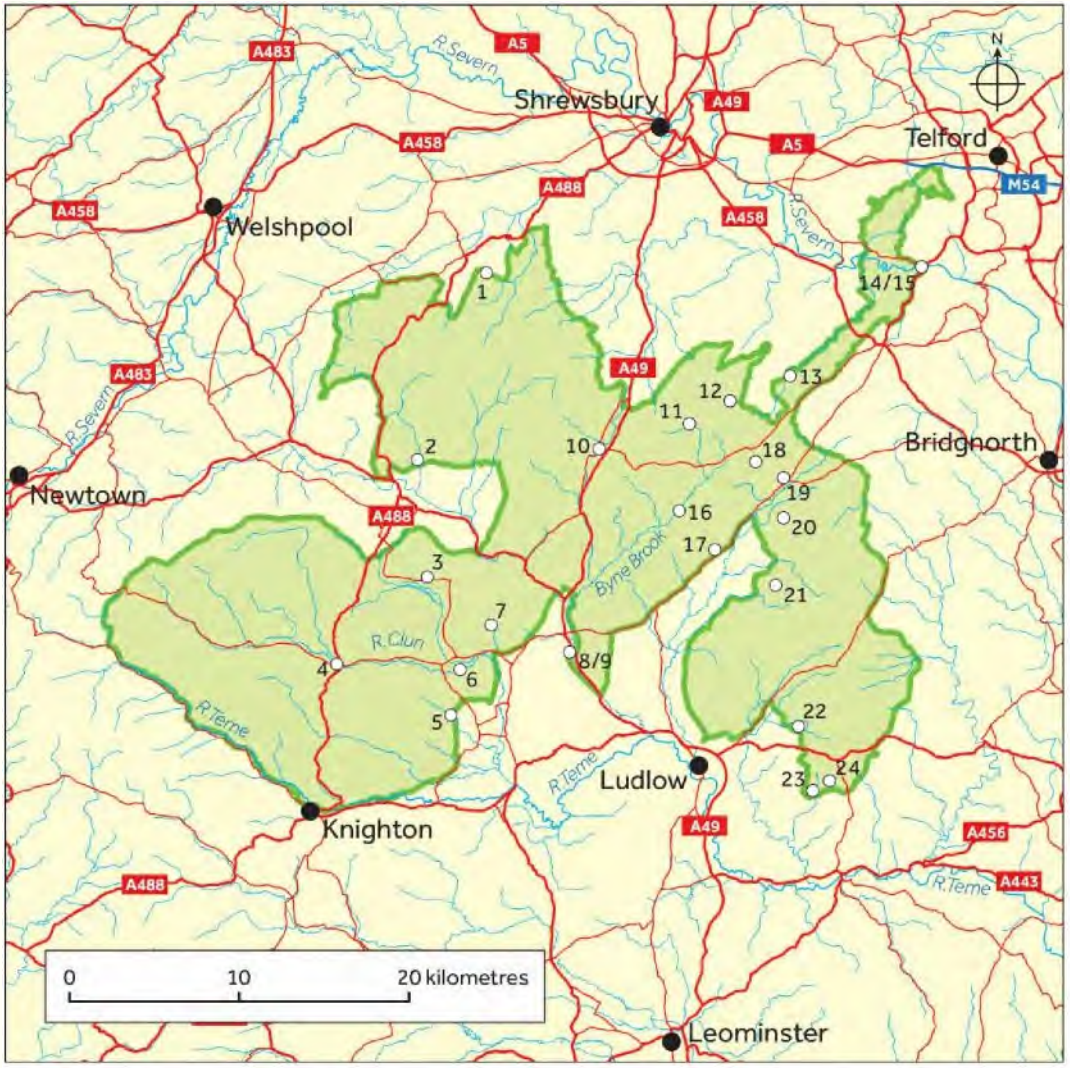
Location of Grade I listed buildings

There are 24 Grade I listed buildings in the National Landscape.

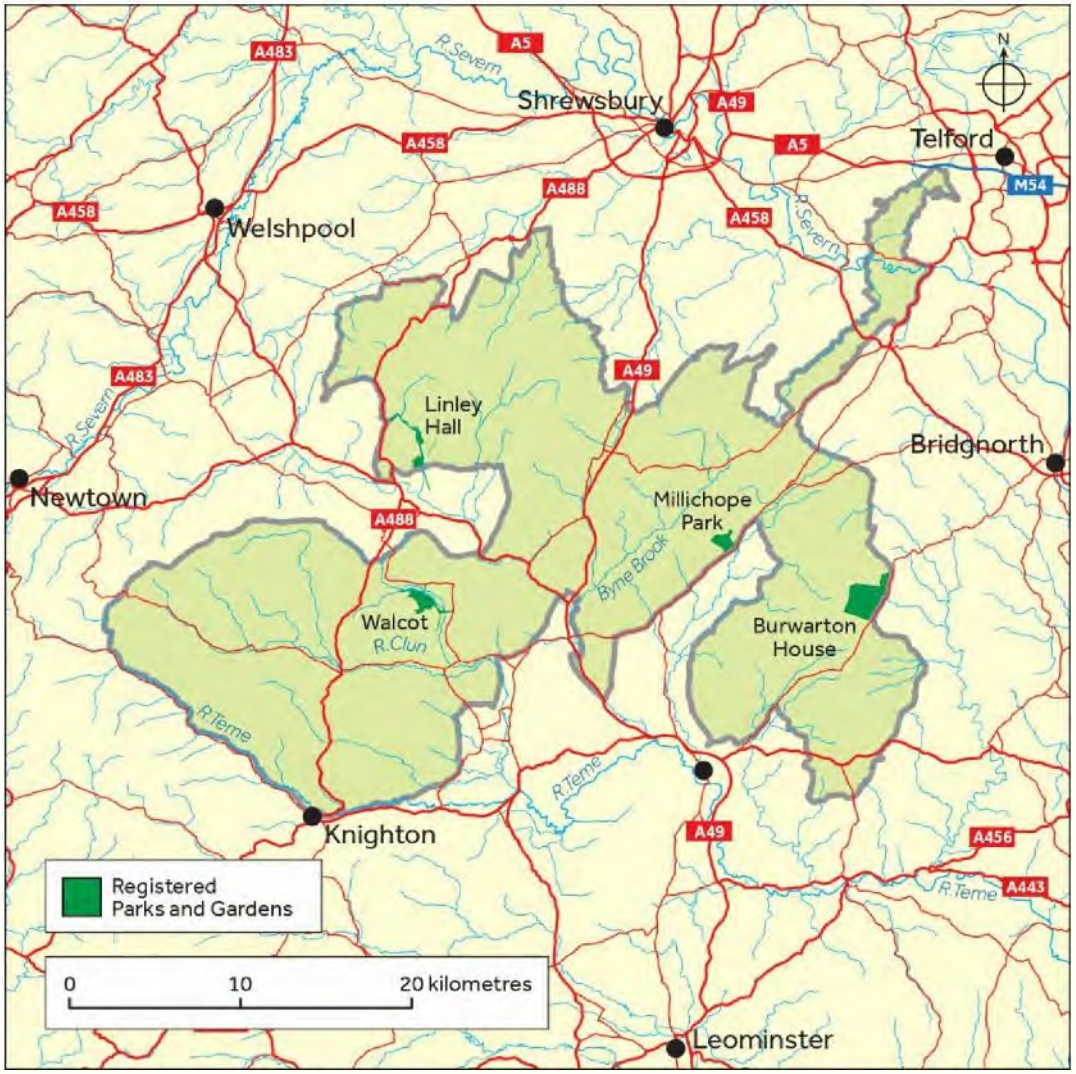


Legend

1 Barn approximately 20m south west of Bank Farmhouse
2 Linley Hall
3 Church of St Michael and All Angels
4 Remains of Clun Castle
5 Remains of Castle, Hopton Castle
6 Church of St Swithun
7 Church of St Mary
8 Church of St John The Baptist
9 Stokesay Castle and Gatehouse including Moat Retaining Walls
10 Church of St Lawrence
11 Church of St James
12 Plaish Hall
13 Church of St John the Baptist
14 Buildwas Abbey comprising Guardianship Monument and part of Claustral Ranges in Grounds of Abbey House
15 Abbey House with attached 5 Bay Arcade, incorporating Dovecote
16 Church of St Edith
17 Church of St Michael
18 Wilderhope Manor
19 Shipton Hall
20 Church of The Holy Trinity
21 Heath Chapel
22 Cross in Churchyard of Church of St Mary
23 Whitton Court
24 Church of St John The Baptist

Location of Registered Parks and Gardens

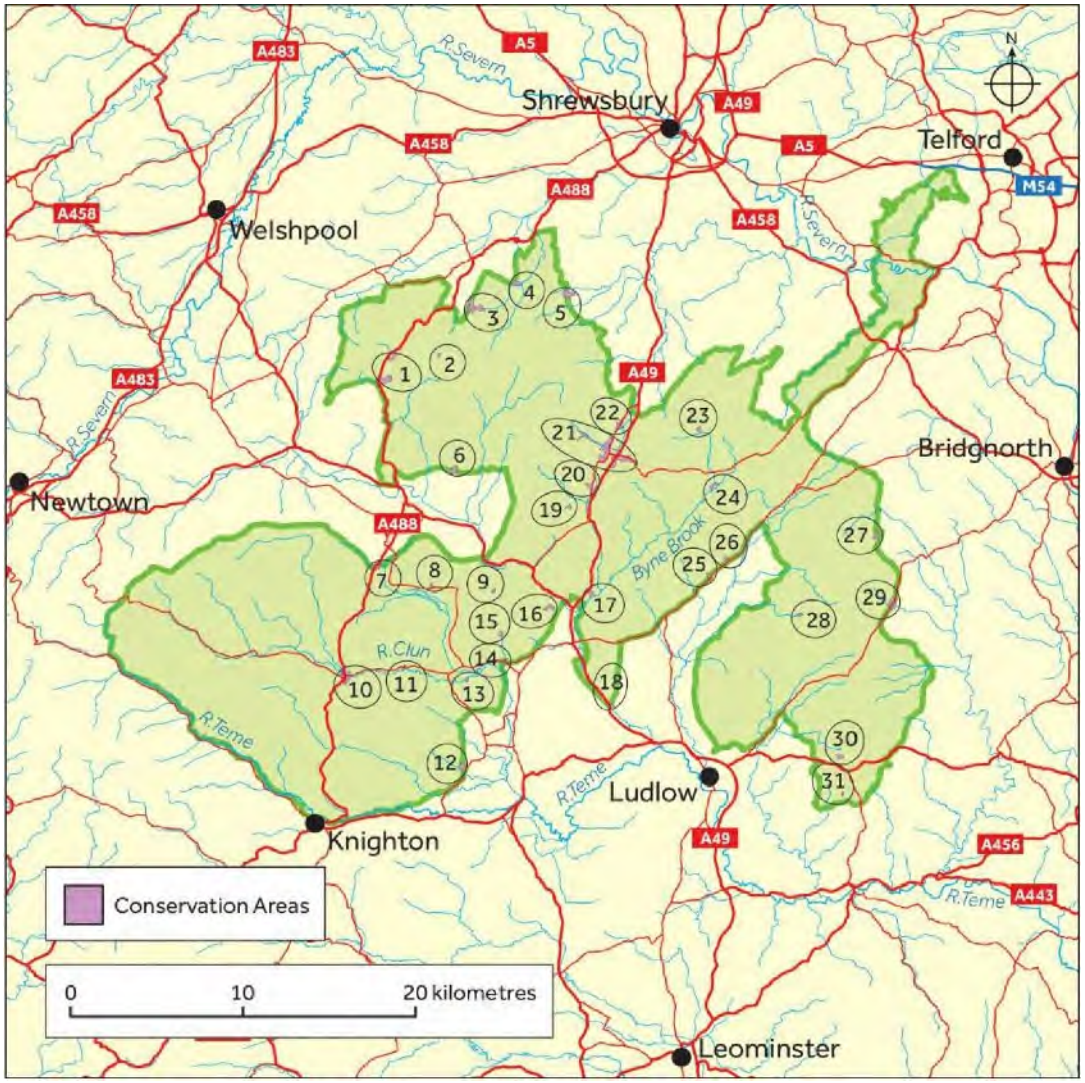
In 2024, there are 4 Registered Parks and Gardens in the National Landscape, as there were 2020; none are at risk.



The emphasis of the Register is on gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces, such as town squares. They are 'designed' landscapes, rather than of planting or botanical importance.

Location and condition of conservation areas

There are 31 Conservation Areas within the National Landscape, each has a published appraisal report. None of the conservation areas are at risk.



Legend

1 Grit and Ladywell
2 Tankerville
3 Snailbeach
4 Habberley
5 Church Pulverbatch
6 Norbury
7 Colebatch
8 Lydbury North
9 Edgton
10 Clun
11 Clunton
12 Bedstone
13 Clunbury
14 Aston on Clun
15 Hopesay
16 Cheney Longville
17 Strefford
18 Onibury
19 Minton
20 Little Stretton
21 Church Stretton
22 All Stretton
23 Cardington
24 Rushbury
25 Aston Munslow
26 Munslow
27 Ditton Priors
28 Clee St Margaret
29 Burwarton
30 Dhustone
31 Hope Bagot

The local planning authorities designate most conservation areas. A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest; preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of these areas is an important part of local planning policy. Change in conservation areas can be negative either through poor quality new development, neglect, or even deliberate damage.

The best way to define the local character is through the production of a conservation area appraisal. This provides an understanding of the history of an area and its special qualities. There are published Conservation Area Appraisals for all of the Conservation Areas in the National Landscape.

	Date designated	Appraisal published		Date designated	Appraisal published
Cardington	1977	Updated 2012	Munslow	1993	Updated 2012
Burwarton	1981	March 2008	Bedstone	1994	Updated 2012
Cheney Longville	1982	Updated 2012	Clee St Margaret	1994	Updated 2012
Ditton Priors	1982	Updated 2012	Clunbury	1994	Updated 2012
Snailbeach	1983	Updated 2012	Clunton	1994	Updated 2012
Church Stretton	1986	2013	Colebatch	1994	Updated 2012
Clun	1986	Updated 2012	Dhustone	1994	1994
Little Stretton	1986	Updated 2012	Hope Bagot	1994	Updated 2012
Rushbury	1986	Updated 2012	Lydbury North	1994	Updated 2012
Habberly	1987	Updated 2012	Minton	1994	Updated 2012
Church Pulverbatch	1990	Updated 2012	Onibury	1994	Updated 2012
Strefford	1990	Updated 2012	Grit & Ladywell	1995	Updated 2012
Aston Munslow	1993	Updated 2012	Tankerville	1995	Updated 2012
Aston on Clun	1993	Updated 2012	All Stretton	2005	Updated 2012
Edgton	1993	Updated 2012	Norbury	1994 / extended 2009	Updated 2012
Hopesay	1993	Updated 2012			

Source: Local Authority websites accessed September 2024; © Historic England 2022. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2022. The most publicly available up-to-date Historic England GIS Data can be obtained from www.HistoricEngland.org.uk

Future development pressure

Working to ensure that local planning policy fully recognises the National Landscape's purpose and objectives.

Local Plans

Planning Authority & status of plan	Date adopted	Spatial Strategy and allocations
Shropshire Council March 2011 Adopted Local Plan 2010-2020		Strategic Objective 11 - Ensure that the character, quality and diversity of Shropshire's built, natural and historic environment is protected, enhanced and, where possible, restored, in a way that respects landscape character, biodiversity, heritage values, and local distinctiveness, and contributes to wider environmental networks. CS17: Environmental Networks Development will identify, protect, enhance, expand and connect Shropshire's environmental assets, to create a multifunctional network of natural and historic resources. This will be achieved by ensuring that all development: • Protects and enhances the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural, built and historic environment, and does not adversely affect the visual, ecological, geological, heritage or recreational values and functions of these assets, their immediate surroundings or their connecting corridors; • Contributes to local distinctiveness, having regard to the quality of Shropshire's environment, including landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets, such as the Shropshire Hills AONB, the Meres and Mosses and the World Heritage Sites at Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal and Ironbridge Gorge; • Does not have a significant adverse impact on Shropshire's environmental assets and does not create barriers or sever links between dependant sites; • Secures financial contributions, in accordance with Policies CS8 and CS9, towards the creation of new, and improvement to existing, environmental sites and corridors, the removal of barriers between sites, and provision for long term management and maintenance. Sites and corridors are identified in the LDF evidence base and will be regularly monitored and updated.
Housing site allocations Telford and Wrekin Council Adopted Local Plan 2011-2031	January 2018	**Policy NE 7 Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Strategic Landscapes** The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be given the highest level of protection. The Council will protect the borough's Strategic Landscapes from development which would cause detrimental change to the quality of the landscape. This policy contributes towards achieving objectives 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 22, 25, 27, 31 and 33.

Housing site allocations		The plan allocates 2,264 houses but none are in the National Landscape.

Plans in preparation

Shropshire Council DRAFT PLAN 2016-2038	December 2020	**DP24. Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** Great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) by limiting the scale and extent of development in the designated area. 1. Planning proposals affecting the Shropshire Hills AONB are encouraged to positively and appropriately contribute towards conserving and enhancing its natural beauty, in accordance with the AONB Management Plan. In particular, opportunities to deliver the highest quality design (in accordance with Policies SP5 and DP16) which respects the natural beauty and built heritage of the Shropshire Hills AONB; enhances the sense of place and local character; and enables better management of wildlife sites, heritage assets or the wider countryside; should be maximised. 2. Proposals for major development (as defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF) within the Shropshire Hills AONB should be accompanied by a proportionate assessment setting out: a. The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations and the impact of permitting or refusing it on the local economy; b. The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for that development in some other way; and c. Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape (see Policy DP17 also) and recreational opportunities and the extent to which that could be moderated. Permission will be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest based on a consideration of issues a to c above. 3. Where major development is permitted in the Shropshire Hills AONB, mitigation and compensation measures to offset any residual environmental, landscape or recreational impacts will be required in line with policies DP12, DP14, DP15, DP16, DP17, DP18, DP19 and DP22. These measures should be compatible with the conservation of the designated area and the priorities set out in Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan and must be demonstrably capable of being implemented to ensure that harm is minimised. 4. Planning proposals for minor development in the Shropshire Hills AONB and all development proposals outside the designated area which are likely to have a significant adverse effect on the special qualities of the AONB (as set out in the AONB Management Plan) will be resisted in the interests of conserving the area's natural beauty.
Telford and Wrekin Council	October 2023	**Policy Strategic S1 Protecting and Enhancing the Boroughs Green Spaces** 1. Development should support the councils to the protection and enhancement of green spaces by: a. Protecting existing green spaces set out in the Local Plan;

b. Delivering new green space and enhancing and diversifying existing green spaces, that are accessible to local communities;

a. Protecting and enhancing woodland and trees to build high quality, resilient woodlands and green space;

b. Prioritising nature recovery; and

c. Helping to address the climate change and biodiversity crisis.

2. Individuals and communities who are taking sustainable action on the causes and impacts of climate change will be supported.

Policy NE6 Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and strategic landscapes

1. The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will be given the highest level of protection and development will be required to give great weight to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB.
2. Planning proposals for development in the Shropshire Hills AONB and all development proposals outside the designated area which are likely to have a significant adverse effect on the special qualities of the AONB (as set out in the AONB Management Plan) will be resisted in the interests of conserving the area's natural beauty.
3. The council will protect the borough's Strategic Landscapes from development which would cause detrimental change to the quality of the landscape including the appearance and intrinsic landscape quality

Neighbourhood Plans

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document that guides and shapes development in the local area. The local planning authority continues to determine planning applications but, once 'made' (adopted by the planning authority), a Neighbourhood Plan forms a part of the development plan for the area. Decisions are then in accordance with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

There are three 'made' Neighbourhood Plans in the national landscape:

Parish	Date made
Much Wenlock	July 2014
Pontesbury	December 2023
Bishop's Castle	July 2024

There are two Neighbourhood Plans in preparation:

Parish
Church Stretton
Longden

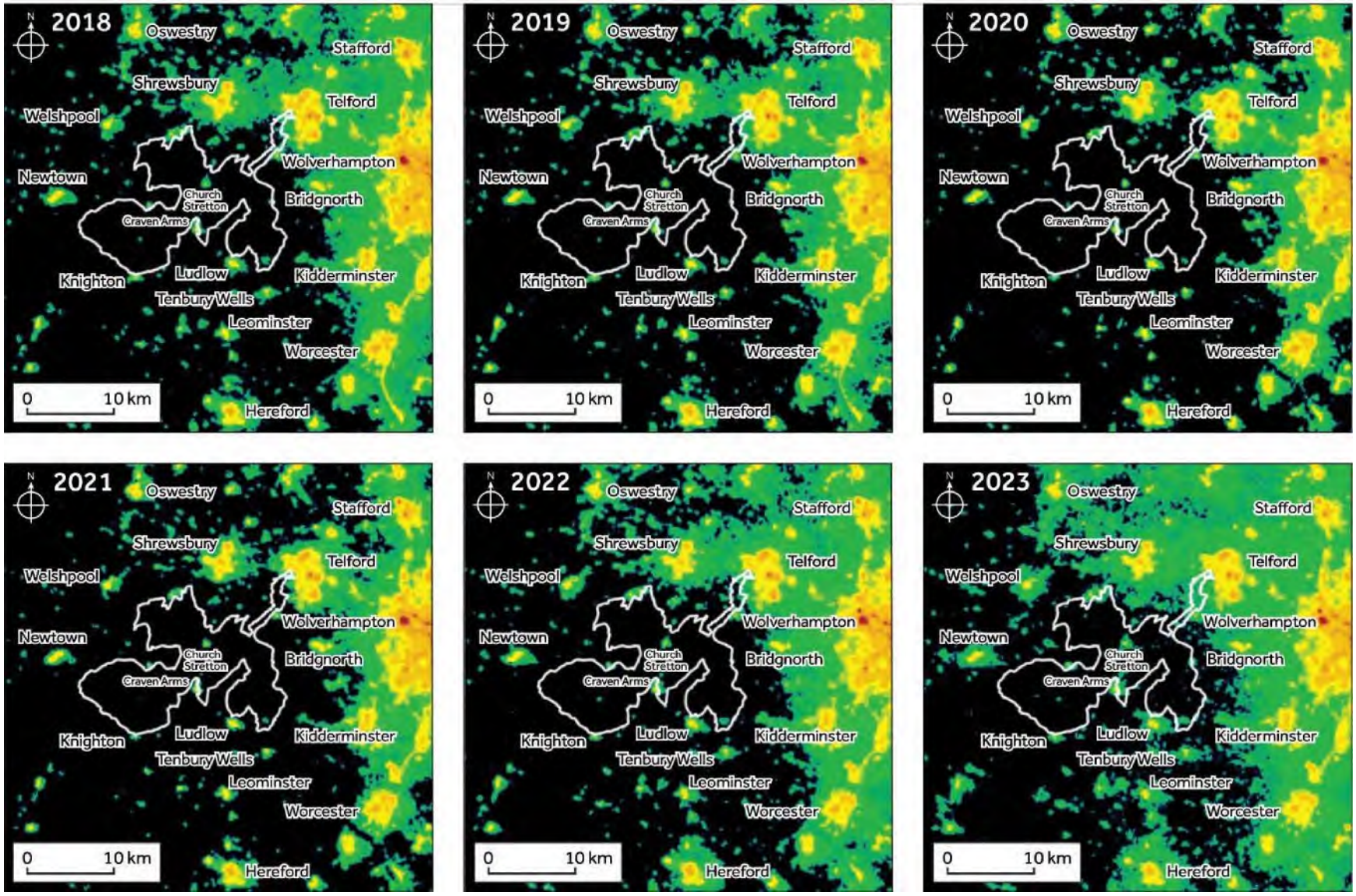
Community-led plans

A community-led plan does not form part of the Development Plan but they contain policies and proposals that are relevant to the decision-making process for planning applications. They can represent a material consideration, given that they are prepared by the local community following community consultation.

	Minsterley	1997
	Culmingtom	2005
	Stoke St Milborough	2013
	Bishop’s Castle	2016
	Cressage, Harley & Sheinton	2017

Light pollution

Six satellite images showing light radiance since 2018. There is little change over the years; the area retains its dark night skies but urban expansion round the area is just beginning to spill light across the edges of the Shropshire Hills.



Natural England used to measure tranquillity based on analysis of the 2006 Council for Protection for Rural England Tranquillity Mapping study. The data has not been updated. We replace the ‘tranquillity’ reporting with data for light and noise pollution.

Radiance ($nWcm^{-2}sr^{-1}$)	**2023**	**2018**	
Church Streton	3.10	3.40	□
Craven Arms	5.30	7.40	□
Shrewsbury	25.20	36.30	□
Telford	60.90	56.80	**1'**
London	130.20	126.50	**1'**
No light	0.00		
Comparing energy radiating from the surface (watts/steradian/cm^2)			

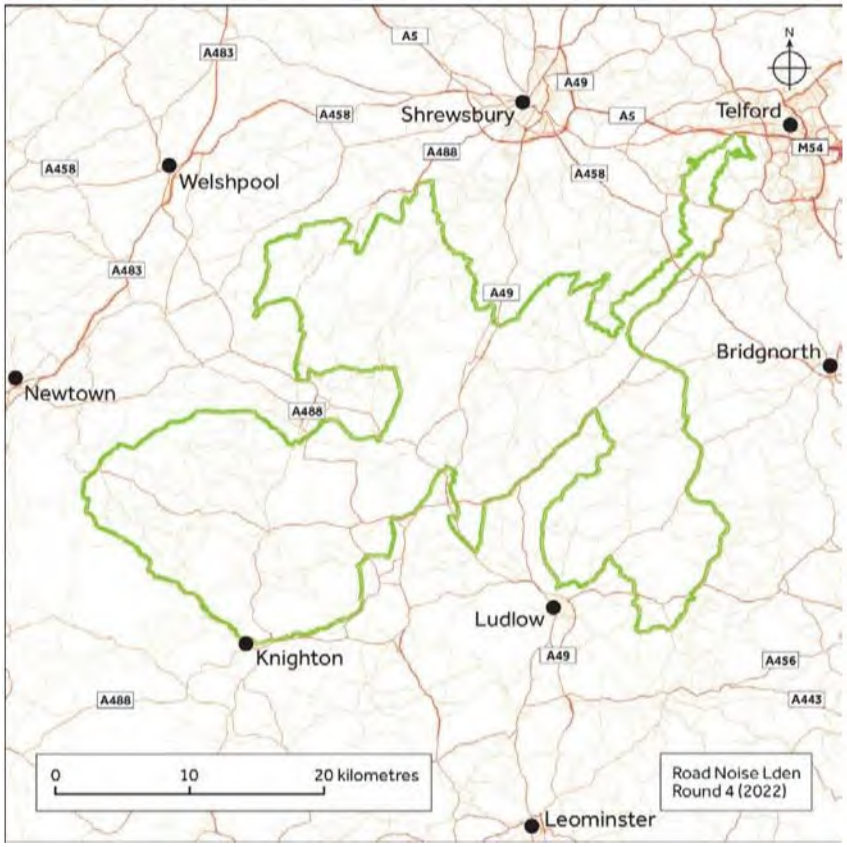
There is significant brightness from the conurbations to the north, east and south of the national landscape; and this is increasing. The Wrekin lost its dark night skies in 2023. The rest of the national landscape retains predominantly dark night skies though there may be a minor expansion of light spillage along the A49 corridor.

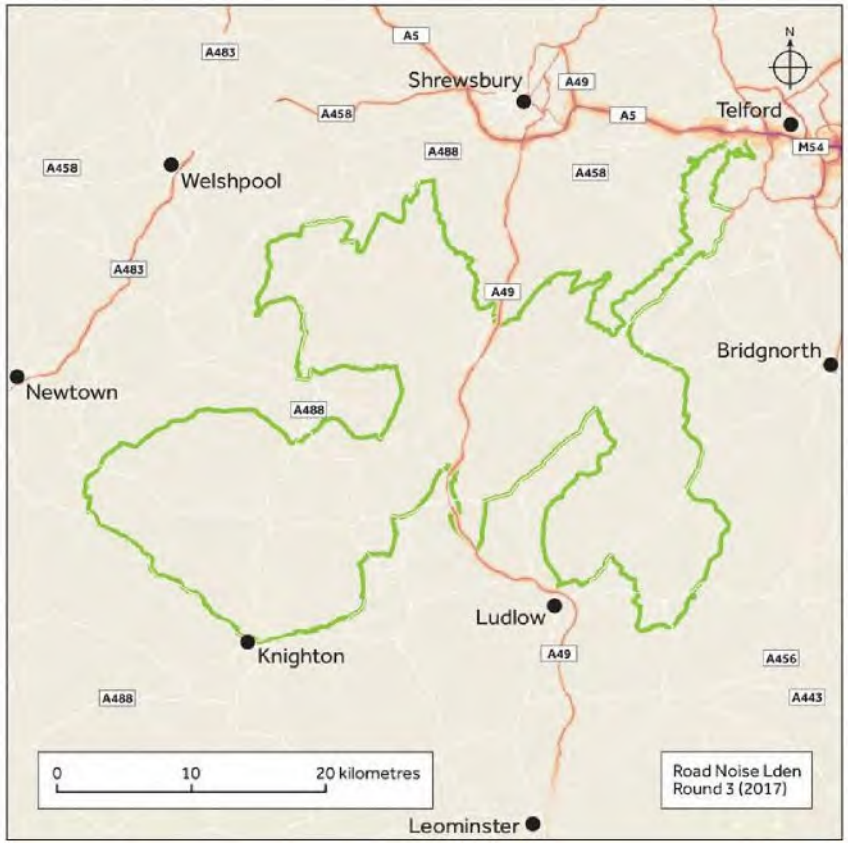
Light pollution from the conurbations was less during 2020 and 2021. This is most likely due to the lockdowns during the Covid pandemic. However, there has been a noticeable expansion of light pollution from these areas since 2022. Without management, the amenity of Wenlock Edge may slowly degrade.

Source: The maps come from www.lightpollutionmap.info and the data is NASA Earth Data shown is VNP46A4 - VIIRS/NPP Lunar BRDF-Adjusted Nighttime Lights Yearly L3 Global 15 arc second Linear Lat Lon Grid – for the years 2018 -2023
Citation - Román, M.O., Wang, Z., Sun, Q., Kalb, V., Miller, S.D., Molthan, A., Schultz, L., Bell, J., Stokes, E.C., Pandey, B. and Seto, K.C., et al. (2018). NASA's Black Marble nighttime lights product suite. Remote Sensing of Environment 210, 113-143. doi:10.1016/j.rse.2018.03.017.

Noise pollution

There are only low levels of traffic noise in the National Landscape except along the A49, which cuts through the Shropshire Hills. The M54 passes very close to the northern point of the area. This brings some higher levels of noise into the Little Wenlock Parish area.





Environmental noise mainly consists of noise from transport sources such as road, rail and aviation. Every 5 years, Defra adopts noise maps that show people's exposure to environmental noise; we show the third and fourth rounds of these 5 yearly cycles (referred to as "Rounds") (Round 3 uses 2017 data and Round 4 uses 2022).

Lden indicates a 24-hour annual average noise level with separate weightings for the evening and night periods.

Source: Defra Noise management https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/noise-management Round 3 - https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/fd1c6327-ad77-42ae-a761-7c6a0866523d Round 4 - https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/562c9d56-7c2d-4d42-83bb-578d6e97a517 Note: Round 3 data maps major roads, major railways and agglomerations. Round 4 data consider all public roads and railways (including light rail) in England (major Roads are defined as regional or national sections of road which have a bi-directional flow of 3 million vehicle passages or more per year).

Glossary

Access land

Any land that is shown as open country on a map issued by Natural England for the purposes of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; is shown on such a map as registered common land; is registered common land in any area outside Inner London for which no such map relating to registered common land has been issued; is situated more than 600 metres above sea level in any area for which no such map relating to open country has been issued; or is dedicated as access land under the Act.

Accessible Natural Environment

Natural England define it as all Green Infrastructure (GI) (see below) assets identified as accessible green spaces for the development of the England GI Mapping database. It includes places that are available for the public to use free of charge and without time restrictions and includes:

a) Play space provision

b) Millennium or Doorstep Green

c) Cemeteries and religious grounds

d) Playing fields

e) Local Nature Reserve

f) Public park – general

g) Country Park

h) Access Land

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

(Also known as a National Landscape) An area of landscape that is of such outstanding natural beauty that it merits designation under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. Together, AONBs represent 18% of the finest countryside in England and Wales. The designation helps to protect their special character, for example, through enhanced planning regulations.

Agri-environment schemes

Provided by Natural England, these schemes offer payment to farmers who give an undertaking, or enter into an agreement, to manage their land for biodiversity, landscape, the historic environment, public access or amenity objectives.

Authenticity

Those characteristics that most truthfully reflect and embody the cultural heritage interests of a heritage asset.

Biodiversity

The term given to the variety of life and the natural processes of which living things are a part. The term includes living organisms, the genetic differences between them and the communities in which they occur.

Built heritage

A collective term for heritage assets of local, regional or international significance because of their heritage value(s).

Climate change

Change in global climate patterns apparent from the mid- to late 20th century onwards, attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced using fossil fuels.

Common land

Areas where people who do not own the land have rights to use it for livestock grazing or other purposes. See also registered common land.

Conservation

The process of managing change to an asset in its setting in ways that will best sustain its values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

Conservation Area

Designated by the local planning authority as an area which they consider has special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which they consider is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Context

Any relationship between an asset and its setting, including other places and its past, relevant to the values of that asset.

Cultural heritage

Inherited assets that people identify and value as a reflection and expression of their evolving knowledge, beliefs and traditions, and of their understanding of the beliefs and traditions of others

Designation

The recognition of particular interest(s) of an asset by giving it formal status under legislation or policy intended to sustain its significance.

Designated heritage asset

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Registered Battlefield, Registered Historic Landscape, Registered Park and Garden, Listed Building, Conservation Area, Area of Townscape/Village Character, Local Landscape Policy Area or Protected Wreck Site.

Distinctive Characteristics

The unique components that give an area its sense of place.

Earth heritage

The rocks, soils and landforms that reveal our geological history, determine the diverse habitats in which wildlife can thrive and create the rich landscapes that we all enjoy.

Earth heritage site

See Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Ecosystem

Natural unit consisting of all plants, animals and micro-organisms (biotic factors) in an area functioning together with all the non-living physical (abiotic) factors of the environment.

Ecosystem services

Ecosystem services (sometimes called environmental services) are the essential services and benefits that are derived from a fully functioning natural environment, including the management of basic resources such as water, and the sequestration of carbon.

Enhancement

Increase the quality, value or attractiveness of an area or asset.

Environmental capital

Environmental capital is the environmental assets, such as soils, from which beneficial services flow supplying resources to the economy. Four basic categories of environmental capital are generally recognised: air, water (fresh, groundwater and marine), land (including soil, space and landscape) and habitats (including the ecosystems, flora and fauna which they both comprise and support).

Environmental services

See ecosystem services.

Geodiversity

The term geodiversity incorporates the variety of rocks, minerals and landforms, and the processes that have formed them through geological time. The breadth of geodiversity gives insight to past climates, earlier environments and life on earth.

Green infrastructure

Strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high-quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multi-functional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality-of-life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability.

Heritage

All inherited resources that people value for reasons beyond mere utility.

Heritage Asset

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having cultural significance. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic environment

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed flora.

Integrity

A measure of the wholeness and intactness of an asset and the survival and condition of those elements that contribute to its significance.

Intervention

Any action that has a physical effect on the fabric or appreciation of a place or feature.

Invasive species

Plants, animals and microbes not native to a region which, when introduced either accidentally or intentionally, are harmful to the environment by out-competing native species for available resources, reproducing prolifically or dominating regions and ecosystems.

Joint Advisory Committee

This is a formally constituted body made up of representatives from a wide range of public, private and voluntary groups. Its main roles are to coordinate management of the National Landscape and implementation of the National Landscape management plan.

Key Features

The landmarks, locations or landscape features that are regionally distinctive.

Landscape

An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

The LCA is a method for identifying, understanding and expressing the different patterns and elements of the landscape. These elements include the woodlands, hedgerows, building styles and historic artefacts that give a place a distinctive character.

Listed building

Listed buildings are structures considered to be of high architectural or historic interest that are placed on a statutory list to help protect their important features. The list is compiled by the secretary of state for Culture, Media and sport on advice from Historic England.

List of locally important features

Each local authority produces an informal list of locally important features, recommended by the draft Heritage Protection Bill. These represent assets of local special interest as defined by councils.

Local Development Frameworks (LDFs)

Since 2004, LDFs are part of the new two-tier structure of the planning system (the higher tier is the regional spatial strategy – see below). The LDF replaces the structure Plan and the Local Plan. It consists of several Local Development Documents (LDDs) including a Core strategy, site-specific Allocations of Land, and a Proposals Map. It may also contain additional optional development documents such as Area Action Plans. Production of the LDF must be accompanied by a statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Local Enterprise Partnerships

Partnerships led by local authorities and businesses across natural economic areas. They aim to provide the vision, knowledge and strategic leadership needed to drive sustainable private sector growth and job creation in their area.

Local Geological Sites

Previously known as Regionally Important Geological Sites, sites that are selected by voluntary geo-conservation groups, according to nationally agreed criteria.

Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs)

LNPs are partnerships of a broad range of local organisations, businesses and people who aim to help bring about improvements in their local natural environment. They work strategically to help their local area manage the natural environment.

Local Sites

Local Sites are non-statutory areas of local importance for conservation that complement nationally and internationally designated geological and wildlife sites.

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

LSPs are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships that match local authority boundaries. They are a crucial part of the participation process in local development planning and implementation, bringing together public, private, community and voluntary sectors. They help to deliver joint working at the local level to improve public services and meet the needs of local communities.

Local Wildlife Sites

There are several different terms in use to describe Local Wildlife Sites, including Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and County Wildlife Sites. National advice is to use the term, Local Wildlife Sites. Local Wildlife Sites are usually selected within a local authority area through Local Nature Partnerships. They support both locally and nationally threatened wildlife, and many sites will contain English priority habitats and species.

Maintenance

Routine work necessary to keep the fabric of a place, feature or asset, including its setting, in good order.

Monitoring environmental outcomes in protected landscapes (MEOPL)

A national framework for monitoring environmental outcomes in National Parks and National Landscapes. Natural England leads in this work, in close partnership with Defra, the English National Park Authorities Association, Historic England and the National Landscapes Association.

National Heritage List

The National Heritage List for England is the only official and up to date database of all nationally designated heritage assets including: Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, World Heritage Sites, applications for Certificates of Immunity, current Building Preservation Notices.

National Landscapes

The new name for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (see Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

Natural Capital

Those elements of the natural environment that provide valuable goods and services to people, such as the stock of forests, water, land, minerals and oceans.

Natural Character Areas (NCAs)

Areas defined at the national level, which describe the geographical, ecological and historical variations in landscape character that make one area different from another. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.

Natural Character Area (NCA) profiles

Total of 159 distinct profiles produced by Natural England to make environmental evidence and information easily available to a wider audience.

National Cycle Network (NCN)

The National Cycle Network is a UK-wide network of signed paths and routes for walking, wheeling, cycling and exploring outdoors. Ideally, the rout, will be traffic-free. If it is not, it should either be on a quiet-way section of road or be fully separated from the adjacent carriageway.

Natural beauty

A combination of distinctive characteristics and key features. The National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949 states that natural beauty includes ‘flora, fauna, and geological and physiographical features. Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 confirms that land can be of natural beauty because of human intervention.

Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs)

NIAs operate over large areas within which significant enhancements of ecological networks are achieved, by enhancing existing wildlife sites, improving ecological connections and restoring ecological processes. A consortium of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and voluntary conservation organisations, supported by national agencies, manages them. Following a national competition, England’s first NIAs started work on the 1 April 2012. Government can designate additional NIAs on the recommendation of Local Nature Partnerships.

Nature recovery

Local Nature Recovery is the successor to the Countryside Stewardship scheme in England. It will pay for locally-targeted actions to make space for nature in the farmed landscape and the wider countryside, alongside food production.

Nature Recovery Network (NRN)

A national network of wildlife-rich places intended to expand, improve and connect these places across our cities, towns, countryside and coast.

Preserve

To keep safe from harm.

Proportionality

The quality of being appropriately related to something else in size, degree, or other measurable characteristics.

Protected landscape area

Defined by the IUCN as a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

Public

Of or concerning the people.

Renewable energy

Natural energy that can be used repeatedly and will not run out. Sources of renewable energy include wind, water and solar power.

Restoration

To return an asset to a known earlier state, based on compelling evidence, without conjecture.

Scheduled Monument

A Scheduled Monument is defined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the National Heritage Act 1983 as a protected archaeological site or historic building of national importance. Nationally, they range from prehistoric standing stones and burial mounds to more recent structures such as collieries and wartime pill-boxes. The scheduling of a monument means that permission is required for works affecting that monument.

Setting

The immediate and extended environment that is part of – and contributes to – the significance and distinctive character of an asset, and through which an asset is understood, seen, experienced and enjoyed.

Significance

The value of an asset to past, present and future generations because of the sum of its embodied interests. Significance also derives from its setting.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

SSSIs are the best examples of our natural heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. An SSSI is an area that has been notified as being of special interest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Social capital

Social capital describes the pattern and intensity of networks among people and the shared values that arise from those networks. While definitions of social capital vary, the main aspects are citizenship, neighbourliness, trust and shared values, community involvement, volunteering, social networks and civic participation.

Special Characteristics

The unique components that give the area its sense of place.

Special Features

The physical elements in the landscape that are regionally distinctive.

Special Qualities

The combination of distinctive characteristics and key features that make an area important and valued (see Distinctive Characteristics and Key Features).

Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs)

SNAs are areas of Devon's countryside that contain higher than average concentrations of existing wildlife habitats such as native woodlands, flower-rich grasslands, bogs and heathland (many of these habitats will have an international, national or local designation).

Sustain

Maintain, treasure and affirm significance.

Sustainable

Capable of meeting present needs without compromising ability to meet future needs.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development means meeting four objectives at the same time: social progress that meets the needs of everyone; effective protection of the environment; prudent use of natural resources; and maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Sustainable communities

Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future, that meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life.

Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism is tourism that attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment and the conservation of local ecosystem services. It is responsible tourism that is both ecologically and culturally sensitive.

Transparent

Open to public scrutiny.

Value-based judgement

An assessment that reflects the values of the person or group making the assessment.

Appendix 1: Protected Landscape Targets and Outcomes Framework 2024

Target indicators

TI 1	Extent of wildlife rich habitat created or restored within Protected Landscapes, outside of protected sites	
TI 2	Percentage of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes in favourable condition	
TI 3	Percentage of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition	
TI 4	Extent of priority habitat within Protected Landscapes, outside of protected sites, in favourable management through agri-environment schemes	
TI 5	Percentage of land managers adopting nature friendly farming on a percentage of their land	
TI 6	Level of greenhouse gas emissions within Protected Landscapes	
TI 7	Extent of peat under restoration in Protected Landscapes	
TI 8	Extent of tree canopy and woodland cover in Protected Landscapes	
TI 9	Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all using existing metrics in our Access for All programme:	
	TI 9a	Metres of accessible path as a % of total path
	TI 9b	Number of accessible toilets and rest stops
	TI 9c	Number of disability accessible parking spaces
	TI 9d	Number of accessible gates and gaps
	TI 9f	Number of visits and volunteer days facilitated by new equipment
	TI 9g	Number of schools engaged (primary and secondary) both inside and outside the Protected Landscape boundary
	TI 9h	Number of volunteer days
	TI 9i	Number of accessible or easy access routes for which wayfinding has been created or improved
TI 10 Number and percentage of nationally designated heritage assets in Protected Landscapes to be deemed at risk		

Appendix 2: Census Output Areas for 2021 and 2011

Shropshire		
E00147475	E00147674	E00147717
E00147476	E00147675	E00147718
E00147483	E00147676	E00147719
E00147563	E00147677	E00147764
E00147580	E00147678	E00147765
E00147633	E00147679	E00147768
E00147634	E00147680	E00147770
E00146896	E001476 81	E00147771
E00146898	E001476 82	E00147774
E00146942	E00147683	E00147776
E00146949	E001476 84	E00147777
E00147418	E001476 85	E00174586
E00147635	E00147686	
E00147636	E00147689	
E00147637	E00147690	
E00147645	E00147693	
E00147647	E00147704	
E00147649	E00147705	
E00147652	E00147706	
E00147653	E00147707	
E00147655	E00147708	
E00147657	E00147709	
E00147665	E00147710	
E00147670	E00147711	
E00147671	E00147712	
E00147672	E00147715	
E00147673	E00147716	

State of the Shropshire Hills Report 2025

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