



**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE**

Agenda No

5(iii)

29 May 2019

Responsible Officer: Matt Wilcoxon – Countryside & Greenspace Team Leader

STC Footpath Capital project 2019

Summary

The footpath network in Shrewsbury is large and complicated, with a wide range of owners, designations, maintenance levels and usage. £100,000 has been assigned to improve footpaths around Shrewsbury in STC's 2019/2020 capital plan. Matt Wilcoxon and Jim Goldsmith (STC) have been tasked with drawing up a plan for potential improvements, starting with areas on Countryside Sites. It may be that improvements on other areas are suggested by members/officers, which can be investigated in the same way.

Survey

MW and JG will carry out an appraisal of existing paths on Countryside Sites. The following features can be identified using GIS systems:

- Site
- Type of path (permissive, public footpath, bridleway etc.)
- Obstacles (gates, steps, bollards etc.)
- Total length
- Ward and responsible councillor

The following features will be assessed on site:

Surface type:

- Informal/trodden dirt
- Grassed
- Tarmac
- Compacted gravel with edging
- Compacted gravel without edging
- Woodchip
- Other (make note)

Conditions (during normal winter):

- 1: Difficult to use without boots/wellies due to mud/water, or very uneven surface
- 2: Passable but slippery/muddy during winter, or rough surface
- 3: Passable in normal shoes throughout year or with some potholes
- 4: Suitable for wheelchair users



Public usage (opinion of officers working on site):

- 5: Rare
- 4: Occasional
- 3: Moderate
- 2: Frequent
- 1: Heavy

Outputs

Maps will be produced of each site with permissive and designated paths marked on to assist the surveyor.

A database/spreadsheet can then be produced for all pathways once the survey has been completed.

Considerations

The appearance of upgraded paths should be in keeping with the surrounding area, especially if it is within a planning conservation area.

Underground services may be in place where work is suggested. Full service maps are available through Shropshire Council. Some services may require special measures during works which may significantly increase costs.

Protected species/habitats may occur on site. This may mean that work can only be carried out at a certain time of year, or ecological surveys/licences may need to be held before work can start.

Improved paths may encourage unauthorised access (eg. Motorbikes).

Costs of future maintenance may increase if changes are made (eg. The need to spray/resurface a gravel path where it was once dirt)

Rationale for improvements

A steer will be needed from councillors on key areas and priorities for their ward and how improvements can contribute to these. The path network should be considered at a wide scale, to ensure that improvements are compatible with the Big Town Plan. Improvements should be spread geographically evenly across Shrewsbury as far as possible.

By assigning a score for usage x condition from the appraisal exercise, it should be possible to see which paths are in the poorest condition with high public use.

Specifications for upgrade

Several options are available for improvements. The costs are outline estimates and assume that the path is on a flat gradient with no obstacles, drainage or access issues for plant machinery.

- Spec A
Woodchip laid directly on ground, no edging or digging out
Dimensions: 1.2m wide, approx. 10cm depth in path centre when compressed
Eg: Meole Brace off Church Road
Cost per m: £5.00 +VAT
Longevity: 1-3 years depending on ground conditions and usage



- Spec B (as above but using stone)
Crushed stone laid directly on ground, no edging or digging out
Dimensions: 1.2m wide, approx. 5cm depth in path centre when compressed
Eg: Old Potts Way next to cinema
Cost per m: £10.00 +VAT
Longevity: 4-6 years depending on ground conditions and usage
- Spec C
Crushed stone path/compacted dust dug into dug out recess with geotextile membrane but without timber edges
Dimensions: 1.2m wide, approx. 15cm deep, with 1cm dust top.
Cost per m: £18 +VAT
Longevity: 8-10 years depending on ground conditions and usage
- Spec D (As above but 2m wide)
Crushed stone path/compacted dust dug into dug out recess with geotextile membrane but without timber edges
Dimensions: 2m wide, approx. 15cm deep, with 1cm dust top.
Cost per m: £35 +VAT
Longevity: 8-10 years depending on ground conditions and usage
- Spec E (As above but timber edged)
Crushed stone path/compacted dust dug into dug out recess with geotextile membrane and timber edging
Crushed stone path/compacted dust dug into dug out recess with geotextile membrane but without timber edges
Dimensions: 2m wide, approx. 15cm deep, with 1cm dust top.
Cost per m: £45 +VAT
Longevity: 15-20 years depending on ground conditions and usage

There may be other unique specifications relevant for individual sites.

Other works which may require additional quotes from specialist contractors:

- Building up of ground (importing)
- Step set replacements
- Additional Drainage
- Hand rails

Timescales

The appraisal will be completed by the end of May and the results presented to members for consideration at the following meeting.