

Project funded by Natural England's 'Natural Assets' programme

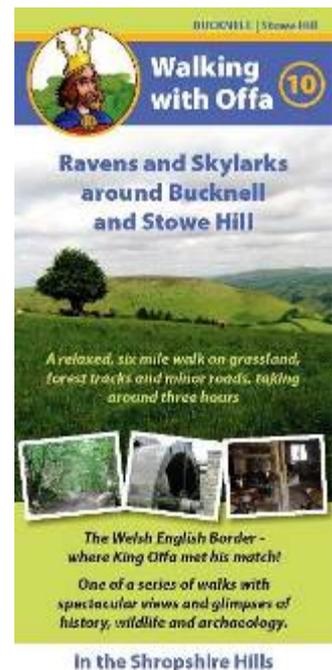
Project 1. Improving the Walking Offer

Circular walks development

Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB):

12 routes have been completed - from north to south:

- WWO1: Quarries and woodland around Pontesbury
- WWO2: Dormice and archangels in Hope Valley
- WWO3: Tranquility and tree tops at Bromlow Callow
- WWO4: Red kites and curlew on Prolley Moor
- WWO5: Myths and mines on Stapeley Common
- WWO6: Brown hares and buzzards on Oakeley Mynd
- WWO7: Ancient hill forts and woodland of Bury Ditches
- WWO8: Border country and a taste of Offa's Dyke
- WWO9: Meadows and woods to Darky Dale
- WWO10: Ravens and skylarks around Bucknell and Stowe Hill
- WWO11: Offa's Dyke and the top of the world to Bucknell
- WWO12: Riverbank and otters along the Redlake and Teme
- WWO13: The 'land of dereliction' in the shadow of the Devil's Chair
- WWO14: Forests and industry around Pontesbury
- WWO15: A Golden Valley in the foothills of the Long Mynd
- WWO16: High up on Cothercott Hill following ancient tracks
- WWO17: Battlestones and Sharpstones above Cardington Moor
- WWO18: Wenlock Edge and the farmland of the Ape Dale



The routes range from 4 to 9.5 miles in length, with most not taking more than 2 or 3 hours to complete. As they all include pubs and/or cafes, walkers are encouraged to eat and drink at the often isolated hospitality business found en route. All upgrades and waymarking have now been completed and stile counters have been fitted to enable monitoring of use in the future. The routes have been tested with help from the Friends of the Shropshire Hills members.

Downloads from www.shropshirewalking.co.uk by end of July 2013 are:

'WWO1 - Quarries and Woodland on Pontesbury Hill',	519
'WWO2 - Dormice and Archangels in Hope Valley',	851
'WWO3 - Tranquility and tree tops at Bromlow Callow',	877
'WWO4 - Red kites and Curlew on Prolley Moor',	792
'WWO5 - Myths and Mines on Stapeley Common',	630
'WWO6 - Brown Hares and Buzzards on Oakeley Mynd',	653
'WWO7 - Ancient hill forts of Bury Ditches ',	736
'WWO8 - Border Country and a Taste of Offa's Dyke',	693
'WWO9 - Meadows and Woods to Darky Dale',	468
'WWO10 - Ravens and Skylarks around Bucknell.',	503
'WWO11 - Offa's Dyke and the top of the world',	662
'WWO12 - Riverbanks along the Redlake and Teme',	633

WWO13-18 were completed in August 2013, funded through Shropshire Council by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Leaflets for each of these walks are available to download from the Shropshire Walking website; <http://www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa/> , with links from the Shropshire Hills AONB website: <http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/things-to-do/walking/>. Steve Levers helped complete these. There are also podcasts to accompany three of the walks and as an introduction. 3,000 copies of each of the leaflets have been used and more are being printed.

Podcast downloads by end July 2013 were:

• Introduction	250
• Bromlow Callow	215
• Hope Valley	222
• Stapeley Common	199

WWO1- 12 are available to download as apps from the Viewranger website onto GPS enabled smart phones, search for <http://my.viewranger.com/route/search#!52.49537402202563|-2.99778199999999156|10>. An i-pad 2 has been brought to enable these routes to be demonstrated.

The download figures for the Viewranger app in March 2013 were:

'WWO1 - Quarries and Woodland on Pontesbury Hill',	27
'WWO2 -Dormice and Archangels in Hope Valley',	21
'WWO3 -Tranquility and tree tops at Bromlow Callow',	28
'WWO4 - Red kites and Curlew on Prolley Moor',	31
'WWO5 - Myths and Mines on Stapeley Common',	26
'WWO6 - Brown Hares and Buzzards on Oakeley Mynd',	19
'WWO7 -Ancient hill forts of Bury Ditches ',	24
'WWO8 - Border Country and a Taste of Offa's Dyke',	21
'WWO9 - Meadows and Woods to Darky Dale',	19
'WWO10 -Ravens and Skylarks around Bucknell',	21
'WWO11- Offa's Dyke and the top of the world',	41
'WWO12 -Riverbanks along the Redlake and Teme',	21

In total there were

- 92 downloads Jan to July 2013
- 265 in 2012
- 6 in 2011

Feedback from the pubs has been patchy but two responses of those that have got behind the scheme answered the following to some evaluation questions:

- How many people would you estimate have used the pub as a result of the walk? ***The number of walkers is a bit of a guess but certainly a few hundred and more coming all the time.***
Difficult to say but all leaflets went. I would say anywhere between 20 to 50.
- Roughly what level of income has that generated? ***A couple of thousand +/-.***
£100 + but could be more as had organised walks which have singularly generated this amount when we have provided lunch.
- Are people using the Shropshire Link or other bus service to do the walk? ***No bus service used.***
Yes & the Ludlow to Knighton. Plus we linked in with Ludlow 21 festival on August Bank holiday weekend, 130+ people took advantage of this bus from Ludlow to visit Leintwardine & the Sun. Admittedly many were just for our beer festival, however, several took advantage to also walk one way.
- Do you think the walks are a good idea? ***Excellent idea. Yes***
- Would you like the leaflets reprinted? ***Yes I would - I don't have any left. Yes***

- Would you do another route from your business? **Yes to another route. Yes, from Ludlow.**
- If yes, would you be prepared to make a financial contribution of, say, £100? **I would make a financial contribution. Yes**
- Would you recommend other businesses get involved?
I would recommend the whole experience. Yes

You can tell anybody/everybody about my comments! It has all been excellent.

For target audiences see appendix 1.

Long Distance Paths development-

The upgrade of the section of the Shropshire Way from Church Stretton to the LEADER boundary and a new circular route around the Stiperstones have been completed including a suggested detour to Blakemoorgate Cottages. Work on the rest of the Shropshire Way to Shrewsbury and in the north of the county is ongoing and will be completed by next year. The Shropshire Way is one of the main long distance routes connecting to Offa's Dyke Path National Trail (ODPNT) in Shropshire and the completion of the route will ensure this connection can be made from any part of the county.

A new section leaflet for the Shropshire Way has been designed, along with the new circular walk. A new Harvey map of the Shropshire Way has also been completed and is now available to purchase from www.harveymaps.co.uk and local suppliers for £12.95.

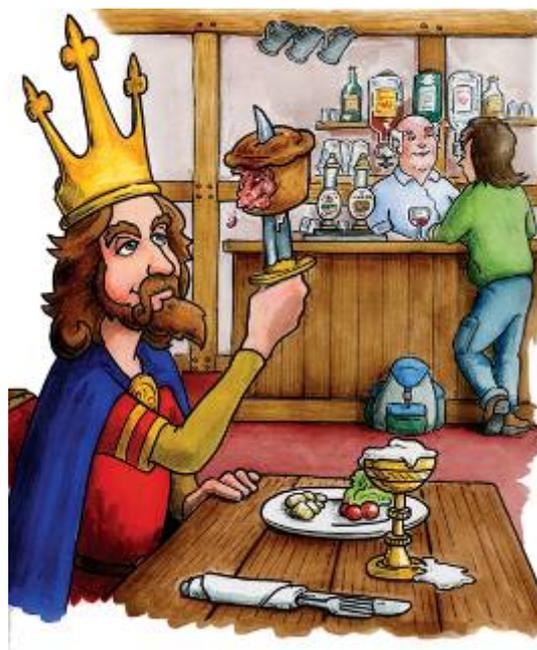
Project 2. Offa's Country Information and Interpretation

Interpretation planning and implementation

Offa's Country Artwork

Alan Duncan was commissioned to design six pictures that would introduce King Offa as a cartoon character, which would be recognizable to visitors walking throughout the Welsh English border. These have been done and circulated to other partners in the Walking with Offa LEADER Cooperation project. Alan has also created a design for some mugs, which will be sold locally to raise funds for future Walking with Offa activity.

King Offa having a bite to eat at a local pub in the Welsh English border.

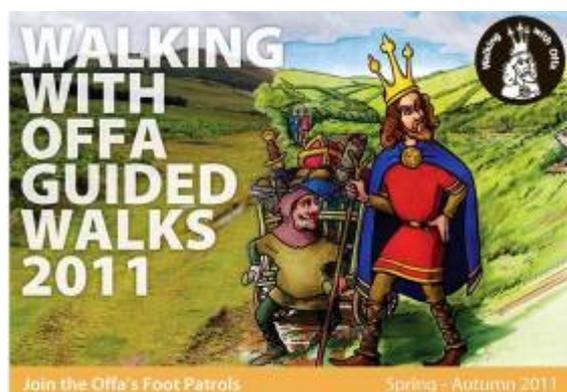


Shropshire Hills Events Guide

Walking with Offa has been included in the Shropshire Hills events guide in 2011, 2012 and 2013. This is to promote the routes and associated merchandise and to highlight the guided walks programmes.

Programme of Guided Walks

A guided walks programme has been delivered annually- Eight walks in total, using the circular routes and Days Out routes. Programmes have been delivered in 2011, 2012 and 2013.



A promotional postcard is printed each year and circulated widely, including to the pubs and other businesses included on the routes.

Feedback from the walks and attendance have been excellent and they are now self-funding, with each

participant being charged £10 per person including a pub lunch.

112 people attended guided walks in 2011 and 123 people in 2012. In 2013 there have only been 31 people attending so far, with two more walks to do (21 more booked so far). This is disappointing. It is unclear why the walks have been less popular this year.

Saxon Shropshire

Dr Ian Dormor has been researching the Saxon history of the area, and a page about King Offa and what it might have been like to live in Saxon Shropshire has been prepared. This is downloadable on the website and will be used within other interpretation.

Walks Leader Familiarisation Trips

Elizabeth Ronan has organized a Walks Leader short break over 13-15th March in Bishop's Castle. This involved 10 walks leaders from around the country experiencing the delights of the SW corner of the Shropshire Hills, with a view to encouraging them to return with their groups at a later date. Cath Murphy has run another one from 30th March based in Little Stretton, with another 10 walks leaders attending. Both were very successful and two group bookings have been taken so far for 2012 as a result. Reports on both short breaks are available.

Walking with Offa Merchandise

Beer mats, window stickers, flyers, posters and leaflet racks will be made available to all businesses on or near the Walking with Offa routes and to VICs.

Bone china Walking with Offa mugs are now available, retailing at £6.50 each. The screen printed transfers are applied by hand to the mugs in Buttercup China in Stoke on Trent. 72 mugs are produced at a time. 121 have been sold to date (£332.75 wholesale value). Proceeds from selling the mugs will go towards future events and publications.

Booklets of the first 12 walks are available for £4.95 each. 693 have been sold, with a turnover of £1,759.20.

'Up 'n' Down' bitter has been brewed by Hobsons Brewery, with 5p per pint or bottle donated to the Shropshire Hills AONB for future project work. It was launched in September 2012 and is due to finish at the end of August 2013. A donation of £1,970.85 was made from Hobsons in March and a similar amount is expected in September.

PR Contract

Ian Weightman was contracted to deliver a PR contract, promoting walking in the Shropshire Hills to the national press and on social media on the web.

This resulted in articles in the Independent on Sunday, the Daily Express, The People and the Daily Mirror. There was a visit in October from an American journalist of the magazine "British Heritage" and a resultant mention in the magazine and from the "Walks around Britain" website editor. Web articles have appeared on Virtual Shropshire, Green Traveller, Go UK, Midlands Business News and Shropshire Live.

Professional Photography

Four photographers have supplied 23 professional photographs of the Shropshire Hills AONB, including shots of Offa's Dyke and of walkers. These will be used in the Events Guides, on the website and other publications to promote walking in the area.

Days Out

Four Days Out have been developed by Steve Levers and Christina Anderson, one each from Ludlow, Craven Arms, Church Stretton and Bishop's Castle. These include self guided itineraries using public

transport to go walking and shorter walks to an attraction, hospitality and tourism businesses. Printed leaflets are available but they are also available to download from <http://www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa/>.

Castle Connect shuttle service

A new Shropshire Hills shuttle service, 'Castle Connect' was launched in 2013, funded by the local Sustainable Transport Fund and has been promoted as one of the Offa Hoppas. It runs every weekend and Bank Holiday Monday from the beginning of May until the end of September. Passenger numbers from May until end July were 1,137, an average of 41 passengers per day. Fare income is £971, excluding concessionary fares. Whilst this is less than ideal, if each one of the passengers brought a £7 Day Rover ticket, this would pay for the bus service, with an income of £287 per day. There is funding to continue this service next year, with a view to it continuing with less funding support in the future.

Bishop's Castle Town Hall improvements

Castlewood Joinery has designed and manufactured a series of bespoke furniture for the refurbishment of the Bishop's Castle Town Hall. This is being made from local woods with the motif of each leaf in the doors of the furniture. The furniture was exhibited at the Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair on 17/18th September 2011, before going into storage until the Town Hall restoration is complete.



The new counter, using nine panels of locally sourced wood, with leaf motifs.



Bench and coffee table showing the curved design of the bench back reflecting the curve of the hills.

Other IT equipment for the Town Hall has been ordered through Enterprise SW and is being stored in their offices.

Project 3. Business and community engagement and training

Training/ familiarisation for local businesses and guided walks leaders in the Shropshire Hills

Alison Caffyn has delivered a series of six 'Sense of Place' training sessions for tourism businesses around the area. Two of these complemented walks leader training being delivered by Pam Powis and will form two, two day sessions. Topics included information about the natural and cultural assets of the Shropshire Hills AONB and Offa's Country including wildlife, archaeology, history, folklore, land management and information that visitors will appreciate about regular local events, food and drink, attractions, places to visit and little known localities. Presenting and organising guided walks, health and safety and Duty of Care were also covered.

Walks Leader Training in the Shropshire Hills



2 sessions were organised in May and June 2011, with mixed feedback.

May session (Bishop's Castle) – 9 participants

June session (Ludlow) – 13 participants

Walks leaders on the walks leader training session

Day 1 (practical walks leader advice with Pam Powis) – it was felt that this session was aimed more at town guiding and not walks leading, as the participants required. Following feedback from the first session in May, the focus was changed to represent the needs of rural walks leaders, rather than town guides. Overall the feedback suggested that the content was not entirely relevant or appropriate to the type of walks the participants were leading. However, there was a lot of useful content about group management and risk assessment.

Day 2 (exploring themed walks and sense of place with Alison Caffyn) – this session was more focused on Shropshire Hills stories and themes, which the participants felt was more useful as it expanded their knowledge and generated ideas of how to theme walks. The walks leaders all felt that the session had provided them with more knowledge about theming and devising walks.

These were followed up by a practical session with Alan Garner leading a walk on the 25th August, which was attended by 10 people. This was very well received by all involved.

Business Sense of Place workshops

Four sessions were held in the Shropshire Hills to help businesses reinforce the sense of place to visitors and 31 businesses attended. The feedback was very positive, and the participants felt more able to suggest and device themed walks to their guests. There was a great variety of information provided on local walks, walking groups, walks literature and idea for theming walks.

Economic Benefit Research with Businesses

Alison Caffyn completed a survey of 99 businesses. Key conclusions from the survey include:

- There is considerable interest amongst businesses in the subject of walking generating good response rates for the survey.
- The Shropshire Hills is a popular area for walkers and its profile appears to be becoming better known.
- The majority of businesses replying see walking as an important element of their business.
- A wide range of business types value the economic impacts of walking including some not directly part of visitor economy who see how important it is to their customers or the local economy generally.
- While keen walkers may be less numerous than casual walkers they are still important and given they do more walking they must be part of the focus for walking provision and marketing.
- Walkers include both local people and visitors to the area. Visitors may spend more and want accommodation but day visitors are able to come more regularly and their economic impact could be little and often for food and drink, retail etc.
- There is a clear consensus that business from walkers is either holding up in current climate or has in fact increased in recent years.
- A high proportion of businesses make some special provisions for walkers but there is considerable scope for many to do more.
- Walkers do spend money – around a third of them spend less than average but most spend as much as other visitors – at least on accommodation and food and drink.
- Walking is a low cost activity which may be gaining appeal in difficult economic times (in comparison to other keeping fit options such as joining a gym).
- Income from walkers is important to most of businesses surveyed – whatever their size.
- There is a clear opinion that walking numbers will continue to increase and therefore become increasingly important to the local economy.

- Employment and business turnover figures demonstrate that the businesses responding are relatively small, mainly micro businesses with less than 5 employees.
- Walking generates useful extra income – for many modest amounts of less than £5,000 but for others significant sums between £10-50,000 and for a few significantly more than this.
- There is significant support for stronger promotion of walking as an important part of the offer for the Shropshire Hills and surrounding areas.

The survey was designed to be repeatable so as to enable trends and the potential impact of Walking with Offa activities to be monitored. It was also hoped that the results would inform future Walking with Offa activities.

Project 4. Walking promotion

New walking web pages/websites

The project has included upgrading of the Shropshire walking website to include map based searching. A new page has been dedicated to Walking with Offa and pdfs of the new route leaflets and podcasts are included on there, as are lists of walks leaders and walking groups:

<http://www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa/>

Google analytics shows the following:

- 2,343 page views for Walking with Offa on the Shropshire Walking website Jan to June 2013 compared to 3,831 Jan to June 2012- this demonstrates the need for continued promotion.
- The average time spent on the page was around 3 minutes- much longer than for other pages.
- The % exiting from this page was high, suggesting people were looking for Walking with Offa then moving away from the site.

A web marketing contract was let to Shropshire Tourism to help assess and better market walking in the Shropshire Hills to visitors and local people. Reports have been received from them and improvements to the Shropshire Hills AONB website have been made to increase the walking content and promote the Shropshire Walking website. Work has been completed on Search Engine Optimisation, tagging images and better links, along with improvements to content. More work is being done on social media marketing through Facebook and Twitter.

“Up ‘n’ Down”

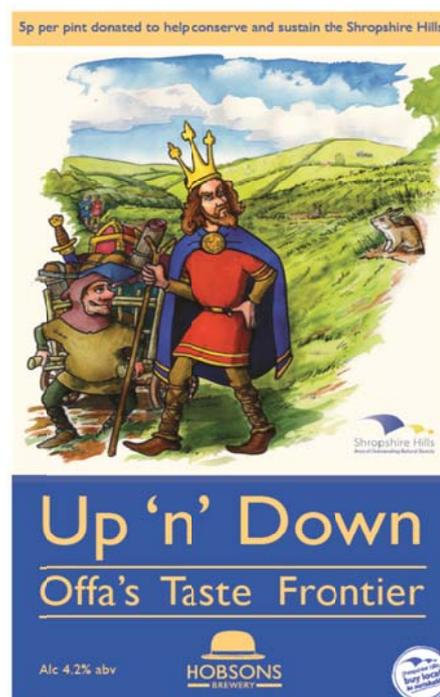
The idea:

In 2012, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership let a contract to a local brewer, Hobsons Brewery, to develop and market a new beer, which would generate an income for the Walking with Offa project.

The project:

The Walking with Offa project is a sustainable tourism project, which included improvements to circular walks from remote rural businesses, development of ‘Days Out’ from local market towns, improvements to walking websites, the production of a Harvey Map for the Shropshire Way, guided walk and business training, promotion breaks for walks leaders, information and interpretation, and business development. More details about the project can be found on the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership website:

<http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/things-to-do/walking/walking-with-offa/>



Beer mat showing design for Up 'n' Down, with the donation to the Shropshire Hills featured across the top of the mat.

Partnership working:

The initiative developed, with both partners contributing.

Hobsons Brewery:

- ▶ Produced, bottled and distributed a new 4.2% crisp pale ale called "Up 'n' Down". This was available within four weeks of agreeing the contract and was marketed throughout the West Midlands and parts of mid Wales.
- ▶ Produced labels and pump clips were designed using the Walking with Offa artwork and the Shropshire Hills AONB logo (figure 1). Flyers and posters were also produced.
- ▶ Planned a launch party at The White Horse pub in Clun at the start of the Clun Beer Festival (figure 2).
- ▶ Compiled the text for a competition to be administered in the pubs through beer mats and advertised through social media, the Shropshire Hills AONB website and to relevant groups (figure 3).
- ▶ Compiled a publican's pack, using some of the existing promotional material developed by the AONB Partnership.
- ▶ Provided a donation of 5p per pint or bottle sold to the Offa's project, which was advertised on the product and point of sale.

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership:

- ▶ Provide existing literature and artwork
- ▶ Compiled the text for the bottle label
- ▶ Developed a new Walking with Offa webpage to promote the competition and have links to Hobsons on line shop
- ▶ Promoted the launch through social media, website, the e-newsletter and the Friends of the Shropshire Hills AONB

Costs for the competition, which may include stamps, the publicans pack, beer mats and artwork, were to be equally split between the two parties.



Enjoy walking?

Try the Walking with Offa series of promoted pub walks which have been developed, along with Up 'n' Down, to support rural pubs in the English-Welsh borderlands. These walks will show you some of the spectacular views, history and wildlife of the Shropshire Hills. For more information on Walking with Offa and the competition see www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk



Collect three stamps from different pubs
Up 'n' Down the border.....

Sum up the setting of a simple word or two and send it to us (freepost) for a chance to win a fantastic prize pack. (Inspired words like muddy, peaceful, tranquil)

Write here...
Write here...
Write here...

Prize pack: containing special edition walking jacket, OS Map, VIP visit to Hobsons Brewery including a guided walk of the area, brewery tour; pub lunch and case of beers to take home.

Enter your details here and post your "stamped" beer mat to
FREEPOST SY522, The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6BR

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Tel: _____
Email: _____

T&Cs: The draw will be held on 31st March 2013. Data provided will be held by Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership in accordance with the Data Protection Act, to help deliver and publicise our work. If you do not want your details to be held please tick this box:

Photograph of the Jack and Hannah Limond, landlords of the White Horse Inn, Clun, Clare Fildes from the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and Nick Davies from Hobsons Brewery at the Up'n' Down launch event.

The back of the beer mat showing competition to get feedback.

Results:

- ▶ Final sales, over an 18 month period, were over 16,000 bottles and 64,890 pints, with a total donation of £4,159.
- ▶ Over 70 pubs and 55 retail outlets sold Up 'n' Down.
- ▶ Outlets were mostly in Shropshire but also included Malvern, Newtown and Warwick.

- ▶ Those pubs that had a Walking with Offa circular walk were not more likely to buy the beer than the brewery's usual distributors. In fact, only six of the 18 pubs involved sold the beer. Those that did were Hobsons distributors already.
- ▶ No competition entries were received.

Donation:

From launch in October 2012 to December 2013
 £1,970 from 2012/13 + £2,189.25 2013/14 = £4,159

The funding has already helped develop six new Walking with Offa walks from the following businesses:

- The Bog Centre, Pennerley
- The Bridges, Ratlinghope
- The Three Horseshoes, Pontesbury
- The Royal Oak, Cardington
- The Bottle and Glass, Picklescott
- The Plough, Wall under Heywood

Feedback from Hobsons Brewery

Breakdown of Sales:

Top 10 customers - Up n Down bottles by the case

No	CUSTOMER	QUANTITY
1	Heart Distribution Distribution hub	565
2	Harry Tuffins Churchstoke	204
3	Ludlow Food Centre Ltd Ludlow	74
4	Tuffins, Delves & Co Ltd Craven Arms	57
5	Gora Enterprises Ltd Brierley Hill	40
6	Riverside Wines Bridgnorth	34
7	Bowketts Supermarket Tenbury	22
8	Mark Writtle Photography Railway Branded Wares	18
9	TANNERS WINE Ltd Bridgnorth	16
10	Beer Direct Stoke on Trent	14

Top 10 customers - Firkin of Cask Ale

No.	CUSTOMER	QUANTITY
1	The Dukes Arms Presteigne	103
2	The Bell Inn Worcester	79
3	Kings Arm Cleobury	60
4	The Lakeside Bar Restaurant Shobdon	43
5	Nags Head Shrewsbury	36
6	White Horse Inn Clun	29
7	Compasses Inn Telford	28
8	Three Fishes Shrewsbury	26
9	Fighting Cocks Stottesdon	21
10	Sun Inn Leintwardine	18

Sales:

We are very pleased with the overall level of sales from the Up n Down project, with over 16,000 bottles sold and 64,890 pints.

There was a good level of support from a number of local retailers who regularly stocked the Up n Down bottles including Harry Tuffins Group and Ludlow Food Centre. A large number of our bottle customers outside of Shropshire also stocked the special edition bottle which I feel benefited the project by raising awareness of the Shropshire Hills in the wider Heart of England region. We were disappointed with some of the responses and support from the local pubs in the Shropshire Hills area, below was our target list and level of orders.

Pub	Level of order
The Plough Inn, Pontesbury WALK 1	
The Stables Inn WALK 2	
The Callow Inn, (Abel's Harp) WALK 3	
The Miner's Arms, WALK 5	
The Crown, WALK 4	Crown ordered 1 firkin
The White Horse, Clun WALK 7	White horse ordered 29 firkins
The Crown Inn, Newcastle on Clun WALK 8	Crowned ordered 3 firkin
The Sun Inn WALK 12	Sun Inn ordered 18 firkins
Boars Head WALK 6	
Castle Hotel WALK 6	Castle ordered 7 firkins
Horse & Jockey WALK 11	
The Baron WALK 9 AND 10	Baron ordered 1 firkin

Some pubs had difficulty in taking on a new beer due to the number of pumps on the bar or level of drinkers and tried the beer in the first month only, other pubs such as the White Horse and Sun Inn supported the promotion throughout. Feedback from publicans at the start of the promotion was that the launch of a walking beer would be better timed for spring not October.

Suggestions for another time

The following could be promoted next time:

- The bottle trade was strong, but there may have been opportunities to push the beer to a national audience through press and PR in national walking publications, tourism bodies, engage with member associations such as the Ramblers Association.
- Create a stronger tie with the pubs named on a designated walk
- Offer an incentive on the walk leaflet to enjoy a pint of Up n Down, maybe as a coupon

Walking in the Shropshire Hills Steering Group membership: The Steering Group represents two walking projects - Walking with Offa and Walking for Wellbeing.

- Chair: Geoff Grimes, Bishop's Castle Tourism Association
- Lee Chapman, Chair of Shropshire Hills Tourism
- Keith Pybus, Shropshire Way Assoc.
- Steve Levers, Bishop's Castle and Clun walking groups and Festival
- Alan Garner, Church Stretton Sustainable Tourism Group and Festival
- Tom Hunt, Ludlow Food Centre
- Mike Watkins, Priest Weston P3 Group
- Val Simpson, Cleobury Mortimer Walkers are Welcome
- Barbara Martin, Pontesbury Walking for Health
- Jim Stabler, Countryside Access Team, Shropshire Council and Shropshire Way Association
- Tim King, Economic Development, Shropshire Council
- Clare Fildes, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership

Cross-cutting themes

Equal opportunities:

Events open to all. Walks highlight number of stiles. Walks reference public transport where possible, although the cessation of the Shropshire Link demand led service this year will make access without a private vehicle more difficult. Castle Connect is being used by older people in Ludlow who don't have a car. Audio guides available.

Environmental sustainability:

Promotion of public transport where possible. Web based access to leaflets, with limited printing. Charging for booklet to reduce waste. 12 of the routes are available on www.viewranger.com to download onto mobile devices without paper copies.

Information and communication technology:

Development of www.shropshirewalking.co.uk. GPS orientated downloads from www.viewranger.com. Audio guides. QR codes on promotional literature.

Appendix 1: Target Audiences

The target audiences for this work are based on those identified through the Shropshire Hills and Ludlow Sustainable Tourism Strategy (<http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/looking-after/projects/sustainable-tourism-strategy/>), all of whom are thought to be relevant to walking.

Primary target markets

Domestic short breaks and holidays - Couples post-family

A flexible market, containing all three of the above attitudinal segments. Can be high spending and prepared to travel at all times of the year on multiple trips. Empty-nesters and early retired perhaps most active. Enjoy gentle exploring, walking, cycling, nature, gardens, cultural heritage. Quality of accommodation, food and service is important. Couples travelling together with others in small groups of friends can be important. This loyal market will make repeat visits once they find somewhere they enjoy.

Domestic short breaks - Couples pre-family

Cosmopolitans and Discoverers looking for a more active weekend break, combining outdoor activities with good food and quality accommodation. Can be high spending and looking for different experiences and alternatives to a European break. Ludlow is likely to appeal, and also some events. Enjoy active walking and cycling, aerial activities, local food and drink. The regional market will be important. May be less likely to make repeat visits but satisfied customers are highly likely to recommend to networks of friends, including use of social media.

Day visitors

A relatively stable market, important for generating year round business in local shops and places to eat. Looking for heritage attractions, events, pubs, good food, small towns with places to walk. The market includes local as well as regional residents within a travel time of up to one hour. Special emphasis should be placed on those who can arrive by train, visiting a market town with a railway station, and on group travel to visitor attractions.

Secondary target markets

Domestic short breaks and holidays – Families

A limited market currently in the Shropshire Hills, but increasingly attractive to families with younger children who enjoy spending time together in the outdoors. Self-catering and camping holidays will be important, and eco-friendly accommodation will particularly appeal to some families taking lifestyle decisions which focus on wellbeing and the environment. The regional market with shorter travel times will be important here. Attracting families is important for growing future loyalty to the destination. Adherence to school holidays is a disadvantage strategically, but families can be attracted for short breaks out of season.

Niche markets

Local specialist providers take much of the responsibility for targeting their own customers, but the destination can lend support to this activity through presentation of complementary images and messaging.

Dedicated walkers

This important niche market will enjoy several days the Shropshire Hills, with walking in as the main purpose of their visit. They may follow a long distance route, walking from place to place, or take several long walks from one base. Not all will be loyal to the Shropshire Hills, taking similar walking holidays in other locations. Satisfied clients of local walking operators may well be tempted to return for a future holiday in the area.

Young active singles and groups of friends

This is a largely weekend market driven by enthusiasm for specialist activities such as mountain biking or airsports. Growing interest, especially amongst female friends, in riding breaks. Looking for sociable places to stay overnight, including group accommodation, camping and pubs.

Singles and couples looking for active learning experiences

This is a growing market of individuals looking for opportunities to learn new skills in the company of new people. Can also be attractive to couples wanting to spend time together doing something different, or learning something that they can use in future. Largely weekend but people will make time during the week for an opportunity that they can't get elsewhere. Interest in residential courses, but nearby accommodation also attractive to couples.

The following primary targets have been identified for each product:

Product	Target market	Media choice
Circular walks and Shropshire Way improvements	Couples post family, couples pre family, day visitors	Specialist national press, local and regional press, radio, tv, website
Days Out	Families, couples post family, day visitors	Facebook, Twitter, website, press
Geocaching	Families, Geocaching enthusiasts	Web based
Guided walks	Couples post family, couples pre family,	Local press and radio. Web.

	day visitors	
Walks leader training	Dedicated walkers, singles and couples looking for active learning experiences	Specialist national press, web
Business trained in walking promotion	Couples post family, couples pre family, dedicated walkers, families	Local press and web
Walkers are Welcome	Couples post family, couples pre family, dedicated walkers, families	All

Although the above markets have been identified as the main targets with long term potential, this does not mean that other potential visitor markets should be ignored. In particular, the area should take advantage of the upcoming opportunity to seek exposure in overseas marketing linked to the promotion running into 2012 of Much Wenlock as the birthplace of the modern Olympics.