

Heritage Lottery Fund Transition Project

Cheshire Sandstone Ridge: Towards a Sustainable Future



Insights Paper

Insight... “the capacity to gain an accurate and deep understanding of someone or something”

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Executive summary

This paper presents an overview of the evidence base that has been gathered by The Sandstone Ridge Trust during 2017 to better understand the state of the Sandstone Ridge landscape, the issues facing it, and people's views and priorities. It is part of the Heritage Lottery funded Transition Project – Cheshire Sandstone Ridge: Towards a Sustainable Future, that is being delivered with the support of Cheshire West and Chester Council.



Sandstone Ridge - at a glance

From the evidence, it is possible to provide a snapshot of the Ridge's many and varied special qualities (*Sandstone Ridge – at a glance*).

The Ridge is highly cherished by locals and visitors, and there is overwhelming agreement that it is an important area for natural beauty, landscape, heritage and wildlife. The panoramic and long-distance views that can be gained from its summits are particularly valued, along with its peace and quiet, walking opportunities, and accessibility.

The status of the area is not well understood, and few are aware of its history as a proposed Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or current recognition as a distinctive landscape by Natural England (National Character Area No. 62 Cheshire Sandstone Ridge). Some communities on the geographic fringes of the area do not associate themselves with the "Sandstone Ridge", and although the Ridge is

popular with visitors, many are drawn from a small catchment and the Ridge as a “place” is not a visitor destination. This, and other evidence, points to the area lacking an overall identity.

Residents, visitors and those who work on the Ridge draw considerable and multiple benefits from its rich and varied natural resources, yet the full value of its assets to society is poorly understood and goes overlooked. The area provides a living for over 400 farmers and landowners, and is the chosen location of over 1,000 businesses. More than 36,000 live in the area, whilst in excess of one million visitors a year are attracted to it, mainly from within Cheshire but also drawn from the surrounding conurbations of Greater Manchester, Merseyside and the Potteries. It also provides the essentials for life, such as, clean air and water, food, timber and raw materials, and helps to regulate our climate, stores flood waters, filters pollution, and provides opportunities for us to improve our health and happiness.

The Sandstone Ridge landscape has always been subject to change from countless and continuous influences and pressures. Exactly how, where and why it has changed has not been possible to measure due to an absence of empirical data. The state of the environmental health of the Ridge is similarly difficult to assess owing to the piecemeal nature of the evidence.

People’s perceptions of landscape change are mixed, with many of the same changes being seen as both for better as well as for worse! Clearly, however, conservation management (including tree removal in favour of open habitats), accessibility, the provision and quality of the access infrastructure (footpaths, bridleways, cycle routes, waymarking, information, refreshments and car parking), and anti-social behaviour (littering and dog fouling) are at the forefront of people’s minds.

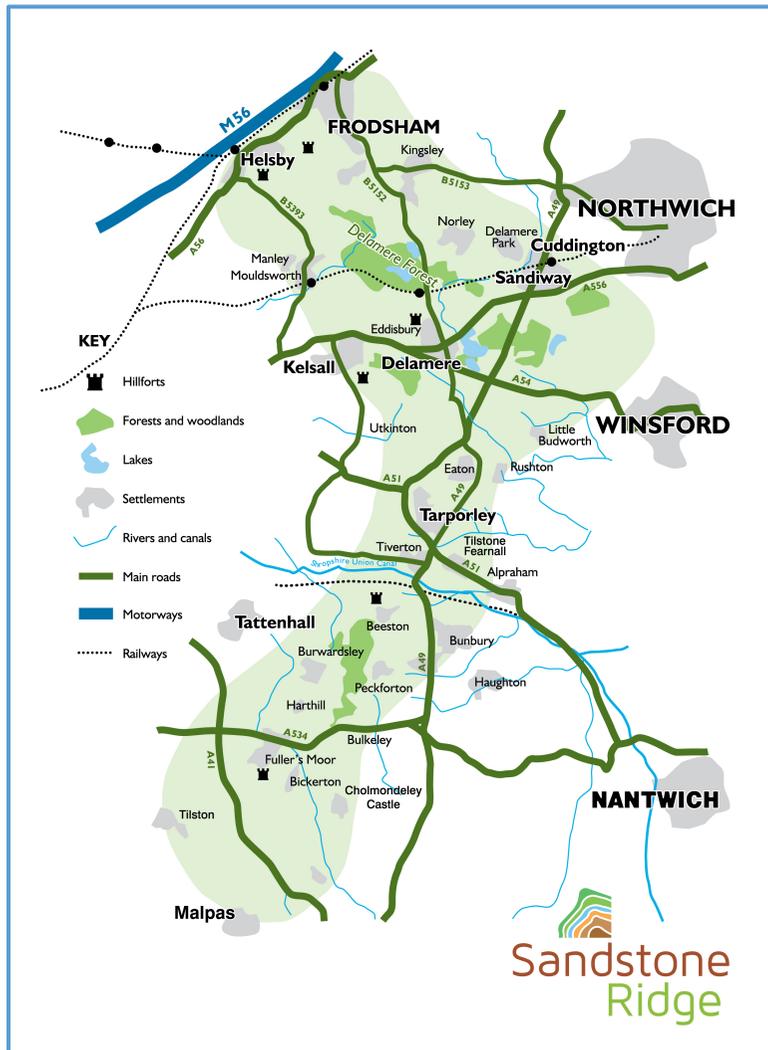
A broad range of pressures for potential landscape change have been highlighted including inappropriate development particularly for housing, mineral extraction, water abstraction, farming and forestry practices, visitor pressures, people’s values, behaviour and lifestyles, economic and market trends, declining public purse, climate change, and emerging policy. A strong feeling exists that to be better placed to manage these changes requires social, economic and environmental agendas to be brought together to develop a single voice and vision for the Sandstone Ridge, backed up by the increased protection that would be offered by a landscape designation.

Emerging future priorities include increased stakeholder engagement, access and infrastructure improvements, more conservation of natural and cultural heritage, branding and marketing of the Ridge, better scrutiny of development management, greater investment, leadership and co-ordination, and increased stakeholder engagement. Some 70 new project opportunities have been identified for the Trust alone, and the number is growing. This is a full agenda, but there is significant cause for optimism that there exists a real reservoir of interest in the Sandstone

Ridge amongst all stakeholder groups and enthusiasm to look after it. The establishment of a Sandstone Ridge Farmers' Network in February 2018 in the south of the area is evidence of this.

The gathering of evidence and its consideration represents the first step in a process to secure the long-term future of this special place for the enjoyment of present and succeeding generations, and the continuation of the multiple economic, health and environmental benefits it provides to society. This paper is, therefore, a precursor to, and informs, the accompanying Delivery Model Options Appraisal that assesses various landscape-scale delivery models that may be suitable to meet the requirements of the Sandstone Ridge.

Introduction



Map of the Sandstone Ridge project area

The Sandstone Ridge is one of the most distinctive landscapes in Cheshire – cherished and used by many people. The Sandstone Ridge Trust, with the support of its partners and the Heritage Lottery Fund, is seeking to secure the long-term future of this special place for the enjoyment of present and succeeding generations, and the continuation of the multiple economic, health and environmental benefits it provides to society.

The eventual outcome for the 24 month project (2016-18) is a long-term and sustainable delivery model that can provide the vision, foundation, and commitment for the Cheshire Sandstone Ridge family of stakeholders to achieve this goal.

An understanding of the issues facing the Ridge and people's views and priorities is fundamental to helping the Trust and its partners think about the landscape and their decision-making going forward. An evidence base has therefore been gathered from socio-economic and environmental data; what people have said; and a review of key documents – from which key insights (**highlighted in bold throughout the body of the paper**, and summarised on page 35) have been drawn and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified (page 40).

Gathering the evidence base has also provided an opportunity to gauge people's willingness to work with the Sandstone Ridge Trust in looking after the area (page 31), as well as to collect ideas for potential projects to conserve, promote and enjoy this wonderful landscape (page 34).

Some gaps in our understanding still remain (page 41), and these are highlighted in the hope that they can be filled through this project, or by other means if suitable resources can be found.

Evidence base

An evidence base about the Sandstone Ridge has been collected from the following sources:

- **Environmental and socio-economic profile** - based on Natural England's profile of National Character Area 62 published in 2014, updated and expanded with statistics gathered by Cheshire Shared Services in 2017
- **Visitor survey** - comprising face-to-face interviews at seven countryside locations, and completed by 207 people
- **Community consultation** - comprising an online questionnaire, completed by 294 respondents
- **Town and Parish Council workshop** - held on 12 September 2017 and attended by 9 councils
- **Face-to-face interviews** - with 40+ key organisations and stakeholders
- **Document review** - of key policy documents that are relevant to the future of the Sandstone Ridge landscape.

Key insights have then been drawn from this evidence base and grouped around 5 themes: awareness and values, perceptions and forces for landscape change, attitudes about the future, willingness to get involved, and project ideas.

Appendix 1 describes the methodologies used to gather the evidence base.



The evidence base

Theme 1 - Awareness and values

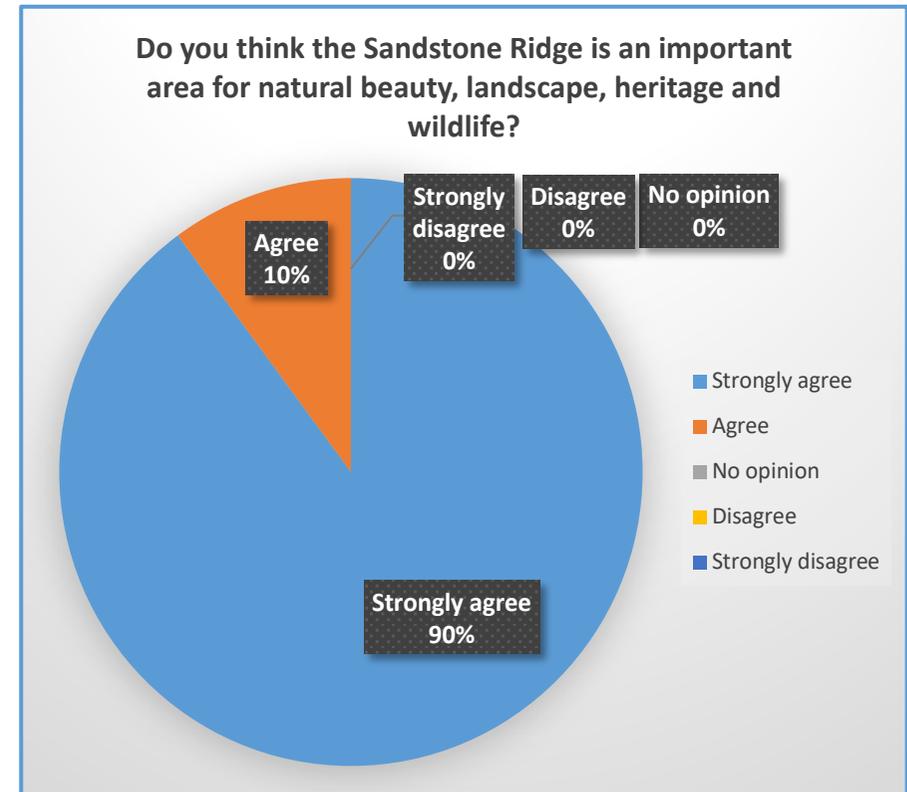
Natural beauty and special qualities

Participants taking part in the survey, consultation, interviews and workshop overwhelmingly agree that **the Sandstone Ridge is an important area for natural beauty, landscape, heritage and wildlife**. In the community consultation, for example, 90% of respondents strongly agree with this view, and the remaining 10% agree with it - no-one disagreed.

The variety and quantity of natural and heritage assets that can be found within the area bears out this strong feeling (*Key facts box – Heritage and natural assets*). A combination of geology, topography, natural resources and six thousand years of human occupation have shaped a landscape that is rich in wildlife and heritage.

Compared with the rest of Cheshire, the Sandstone Ridge still supports a concentration, abundance and diversity of natural and heritage assets. For example, it includes internationally important wetlands, the most extensive remnants of lowland heath and sessile oakwood habitats in Cheshire, picturesque market towns, villages and hamlets with vernacular half-timbered black-and-white and sandstone manor houses, farms and historic inns, an industrial heritage of copper mining and sandstone quarrying, rock graffiti, a chain of prehistoric hillforts, and four castles from varying periods.

The importance of many of these natural and heritage assets is recognised in their statutory designation, or inclusion in local registers of particular value for conservation.



Key facts: Heritage and natural assets of the Sandstone Ridge

- 8 distinctive landscape types
- 4 Areas of Special County Value for Landscape
- 6 European wildlife sites
- 90 national or Local Wildlife Sites
- 13% woodland cover, including 343 hectares ancient woodland
- Over 130 meres and mosses
- 1 medieval hunting forest
- 15 Regionally Important Geological sites (RIGs)
- 41 Scheduled monuments
- 25 Conservation areas
- 449 Listed buildings

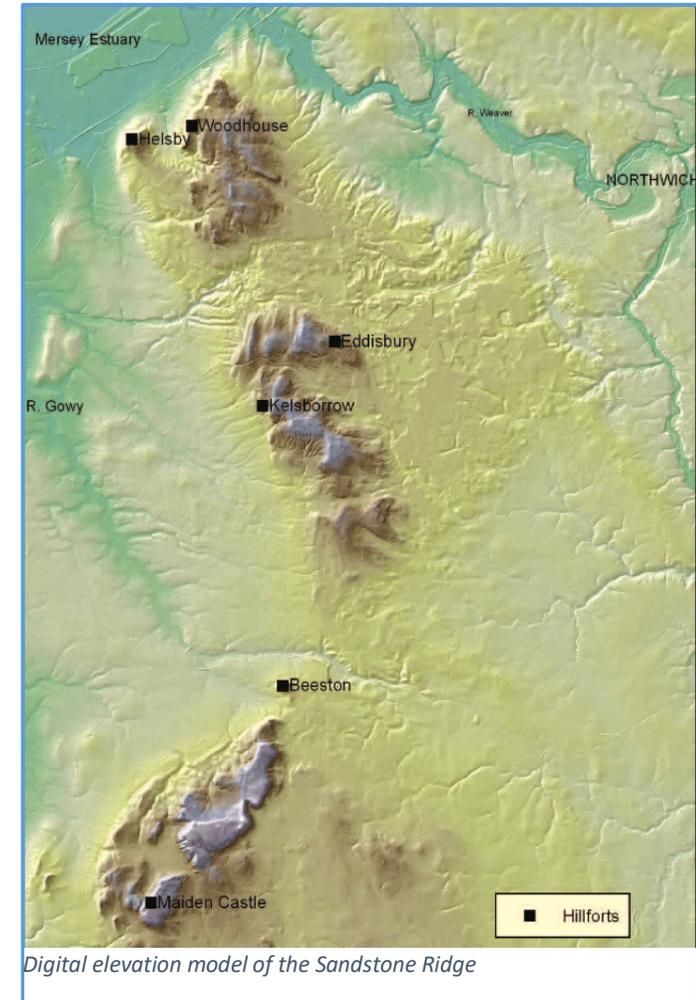
Source: Cheshire GIS Shared Service

The special landscape character and scenic value of the Sandstone Ridge is recognised by Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils, with the designation of the majority of the area as 'Areas of Special County Value for Landscape' (Beeston/Peckforton/Bolesworth; Delamere/Utkinton; Willington; and Helsby and Frodsham Hills).

Less well appreciated is the geological variety and diversity that can be found within the broad physical landform of the Ridge and the fact that geology provides a distinctive character to the National Character Area and underpins so much of what makes up the natural beauty and special qualities of the area: its diverse landscapes, land uses, industrial heritage, buildings and culture.

The Ridge itself is actually discontinuous, with northern, central and southern hills, broken by the lower-lying Mouldsworth and Beeston Gaps. The landform is convoluted with west and east-facing escarpments and dip slopes, and outcrops and bluffs.

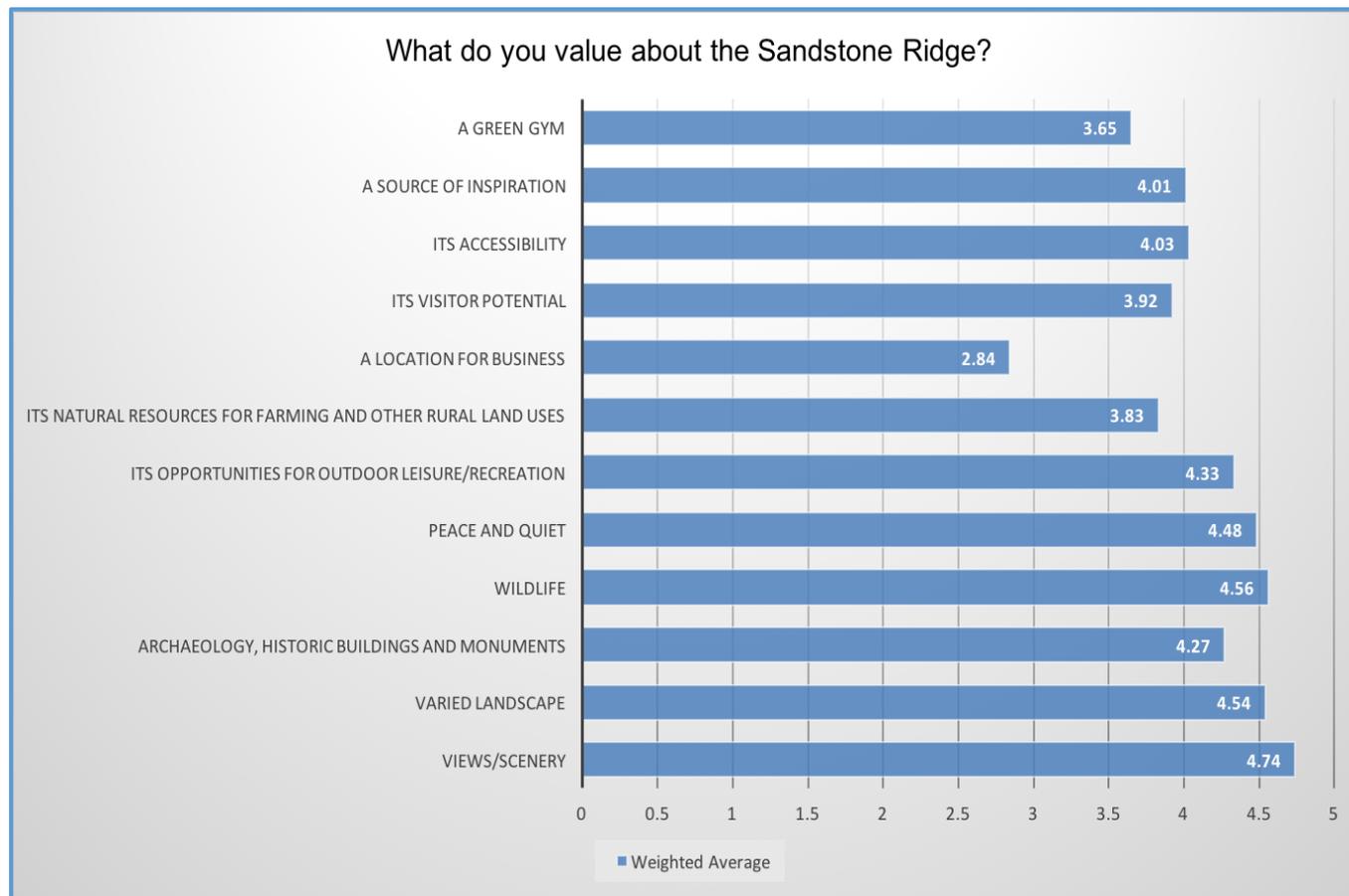
The lower slopes of the Ridge and surrounding areas have been modified by the ice sheet that during the last Ice Age deposited vast amounts of sand and gravel, now punctuated by myriad water bodies. The retreating ice has also left other evidence in the form of glacial meltwater channels, as at Urchin's Kitchen in Primrosehill Wood, Delamere parish.



Values

When asked what qualities people most value about the Ridge, **the views are considered the most important** for both residents and visitors. This is followed by wildlife, the varied landscape, peace and quiet, opportunities for outdoor leisure/recreation, archaeology, historic buildings and monuments, its accessibility, and a source of inspiration. Respondents afford the lowest premium to its value as a location for business. Additional values given by participants include geology, ecosystem services, and health and wellbeing.

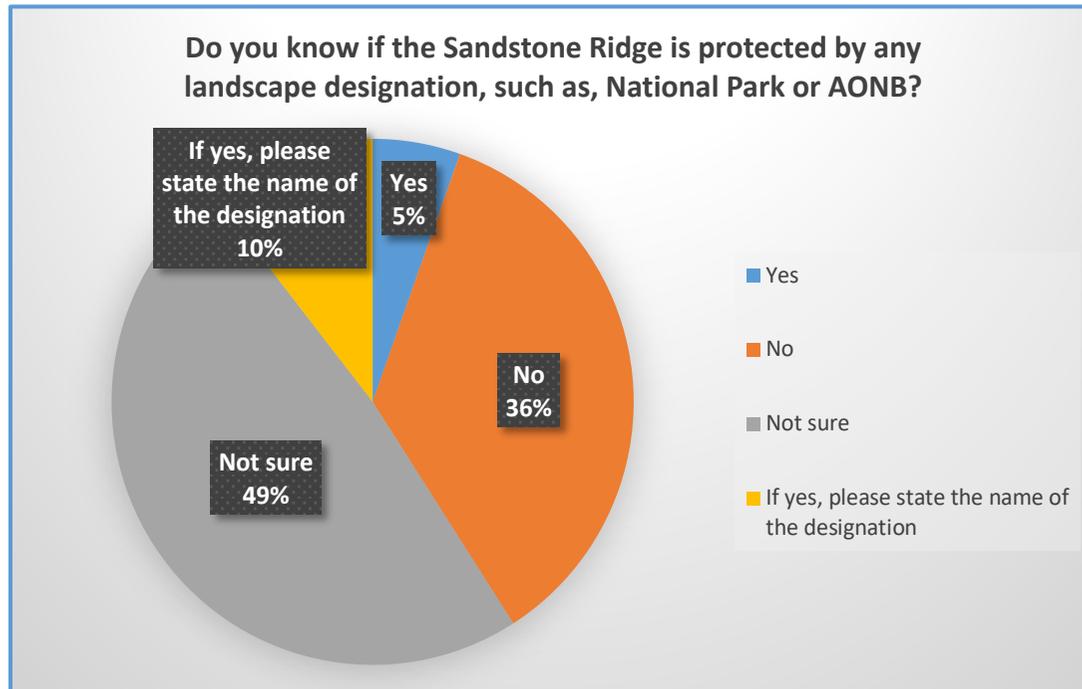
When asked to finish the sentence “The best thing about the Sandstone Ridge is...” **visitors are 2.5 times more likely to answer its “views” than any other reason. Peace and quiet, walks, local and accessibility are the next most popular descriptions.**



This is perhaps not surprising – although the hills are relatively modest in height (there are only five summits exceeding 200m above sea level, with Raw Head the highest at 227m), they are striking in their geographic context, rising abruptly from the flat expanse of the Cheshire Plain and

affording extensive and panoramic views in all directions – north to Merseyside, south to the Shropshire Hills, east to the Peak District and west to the Welsh Clwydians. At Pale Heights in Delamere Forest a feature is made of the fact that 8 shire counties can be viewed from its vantage point.

Status of the Sandstone Ridge



The majority of participants don't know or are unsure if the Sandstone Ridge has a special designation because of the quality of its designation such as a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Those who think it is, believe it already to be an AONB; whilst others refer to a range of different conservation designations, such as, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or land managed by organisations like the National Trust and, to a lesser extent, the Forestry Commission and English Heritage.

This lack of awareness about the landscape status of an area is not unique to the Sandstone Ridge and is something experienced up and down the country.

Virtually no-one is aware that the special landscape quality of the area was nationally recognised over 70 years ago, by the inclusion of the northern part of the Ridge (around Delamere) in Sir Arthur Hobhouse’s 1947 Report of the National Parks Committee for England and Wales as a Conservation Area (Key facts box – Delamere Conservation Area).

Today, the distinctive landscape character of the Sandstone Ridge is acknowledged nationally by Natural England with its classification as one of England’s 159 National Character Areas (NCA 62: Cheshire Sandstone Ridge). Again, **this classification goes largely unrecognised by participants, and is un-used by many of the agencies operating in the area.**

Sense of place

The affinity felt by locals, businesses and visitors towards the Sandstone Ridge varies considerably, depending on various factors including geography, where people live and work, and how they interact with the area. For example, residents on the higher hills and footslopes in the core of the area have a stronger relationship with the Ridge than those from villages and parishes on the periphery. Some areas like Little Budworth and Winsford on the eastern fringes do not seem to associate themselves with the Ridge at all. Others, like Tilston in the south-west of the area, see it as a setting and visual backdrop to their parish situated on the lower-lying Cheshire Plain.

Visitors to individual attractions, pubs and restaurants within the area are often unaware that the place they are visiting is part of a wider Sandstone Ridge landscape. The marketing strategies and messages of the attractions themselves do little to influence this perception - mostly focusing on the attraction itself and not communicating its place within, or relationship with, the wider Ridge. Occasionally they may mention their relationship with the Sandstone Trail, for example, the Boot Inn at Kelsall, the Bickerton Poacher, and the Pheasant Inn at Burwardsley. This contrasts with some of the countryside sites in the north of the area that promote themselves as being part of the Mersey Forest (in their signage and literature) - there is nothing similar communicating a relationship with the Sandstone Ridge. Places like Delamere Forest, the Shire

Key facts: Delamere Conservation Area

The Delamere part of the Sandstone Ridge was one of 52 “Conservation Areas” included in Appendix C of Sir Arthur Hobhouse’s 1947 Report of the National Parks Committee – England and Wales. These areas were recommended for designation for their high landscape quality, scientific interest and recreational value - the forerunners of today’s Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Delamere area covered 27 square miles, extending south-eastwards from Helsby and Frodsham to Little Budworth and Vale Royal, just short of Winsford. During the 1960s Delamere was still on the list of Conservation Areas being considered for AONB designation by the National Parks Commission. By 1973, however, the newly formed Countryside Commission viewed things differently, and deemed the area to have suffered adversely from urban pressures, and the area was officially dropped from the list – it is the only lowland Conservation Area in Northwest England on Hobhouse’s list not to have been designated an AONB. The southern part of the Sandstone Ridge has never been considered for AONB designation.

Sources: The National Parks Committee (Chairman Sir Arthur Hobhouse), “Report of the National Parks Committee – England and Wales”, Cmd 7121, HMSO, London, July 1947. National Parks Commission (various committee papers from the 1950s). Countryside Commission (various committee papers from the 1970s)

Horse centre at Cotebrook, Blakemere Crafts Centre, Bickerton Hill, Beeston Castle, Peckforton Castle as well as various hotels are, therefore, very much **individual attractions and not promoted or marketed as part of a bigger place destination**.

Those visitors who come to walk the Sandstone Trail or sections of it have a different and broader perspective of the area, however, given the linear nature of the walk and that it runs through the entire National Character Area. A noticeable feature amongst these people is the language that they use, frequently using the word “Trail” as meaning the “Ridge” – the words are often used in an interchangeable way. The same confusion is commonly encountered when talking to people about The Sandstone Ridge Trust itself – a number referring to it as the Sandstone Trail Trust. **Some participants, therefore, do not differentiate between the “Sandstone Trail”, the “Sandstone Ridge”, and “The Sandstone Ridge Trust”.**

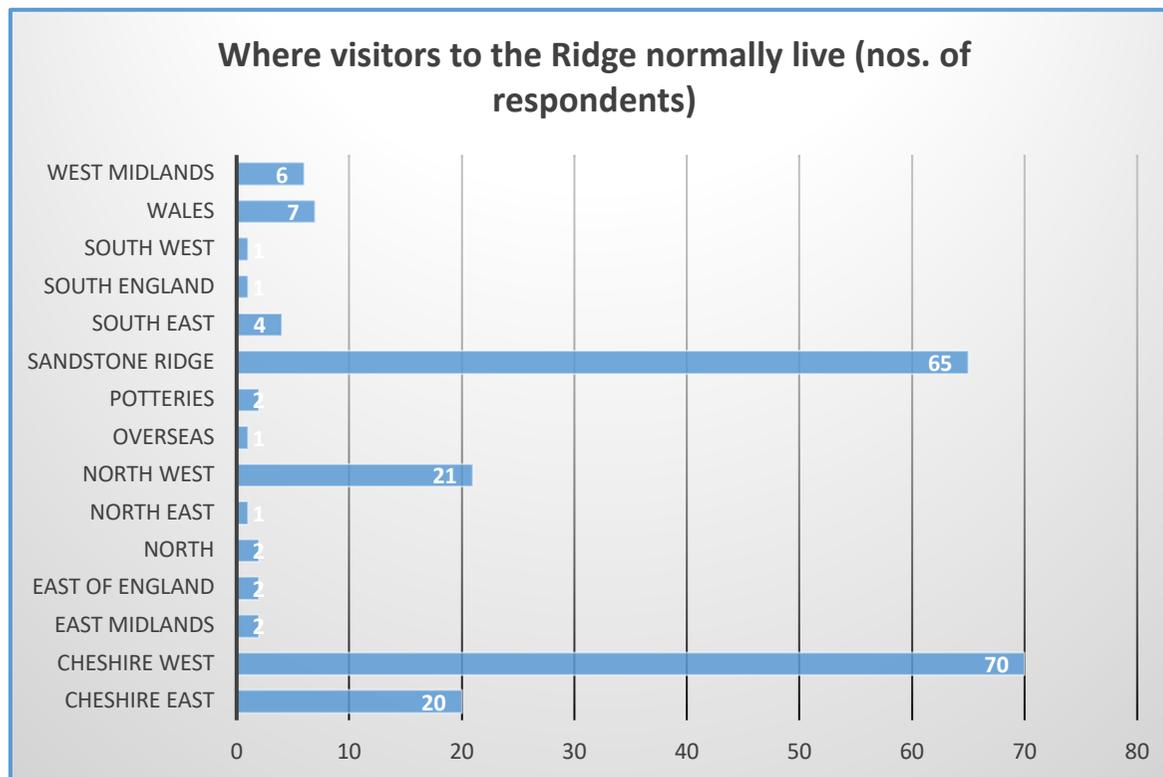
Some agencies and organisations declare a stronger affinity with other landscape-scale initiatives already operating in and beyond the Sandstone Ridge area, for example, the Mersey Forest, Meres and Mosses, and Delamere wetlands. There is, therefore, the **the potential for multiple geographically overlapping initiatives confusing local communities as well as potential funders**.

A clear message coming through time and again is that **the Sandstone Ridge does not have a clear and strong identity**.

Visitors

The total number of visitors coming to the Sandstone Ridge is unknown, but from the numbers visiting individual attractions a conservative estimate is more than one million per year (Delamere Forest alone has 750,000 visitors annually). **The core of the visitors interviewed during the 2017 survey (more than 70%) are couples or groups, coming out for short day visits (less than 3 hours). Walking and dog walking** are given as the main reasons for visiting.

By far **the majority of visitors arrive by car (90%)** - none of those interviewed at the various countryside sites had used public transport. It is not known whether they would consider using “greener” alternatives if available or known about. Respondents to the community consultation suggest that there is interest in using public transport. The north of the area, for example, is served by five train stations and has the potential to encourage visitors to leave their car and access some areas in other ways, using walking routes which link them. Although the south of the Sandstone Ridge area is crossed east-west by the Chester-Crewe railway line, there are no train stations in the area.



Some four million people live within 20 miles of the Sandstone Ridge, in Cheshire, North Wales, Merseyside, Greater Manchester, Shropshire and the Potteries. Analysis of the home locations of visitors, however, highlights that **the catchment area from which visitors are drawn to the Sandstone Ridge is very local.**

The core of visitors live within the Sandstone Ridge area itself (31%), or elsewhere in Cheshire (43%). Interestingly, the area has significantly more appeal for visitors from households living in Cheshire West than those living in Cheshire East (3.5 times more).

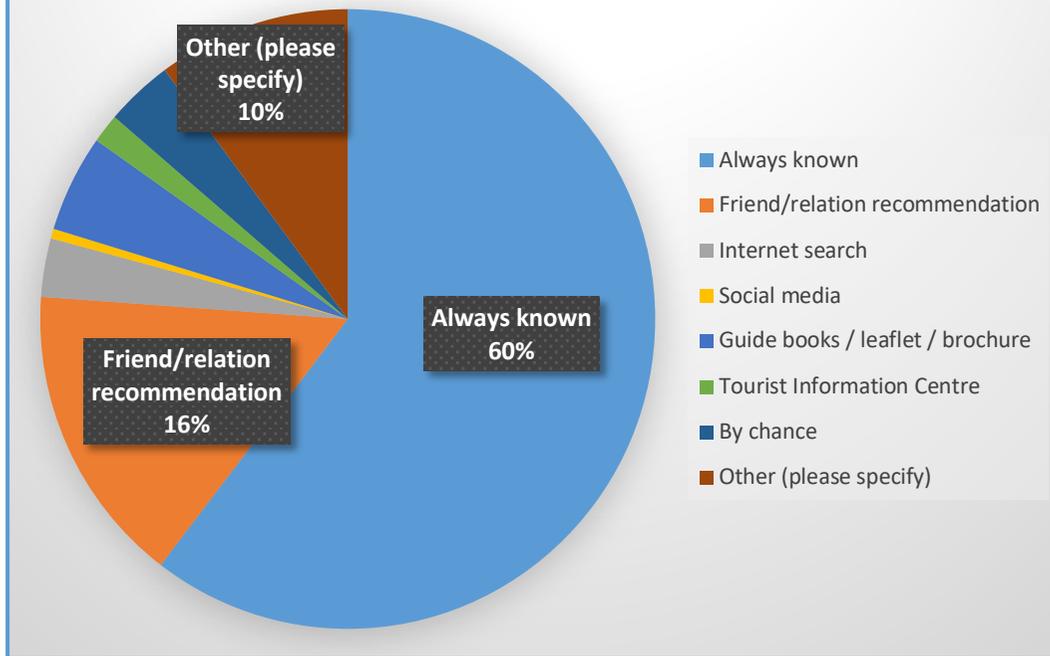
10% are drawn from the North west, and very low numbers come from other regions in England and Wales or from overseas.

The main reasons people give for visiting the Sandstone Ridge rather than another area of

countryside is because it is **local and easy to get to.**

For those living outside Cheshire, it is clear that the Sandstone Ridge is not a visitor destination. These people look elsewhere for their outdoor recreation and experience of the countryside.

How did you find out about the Sandstone Ridge?

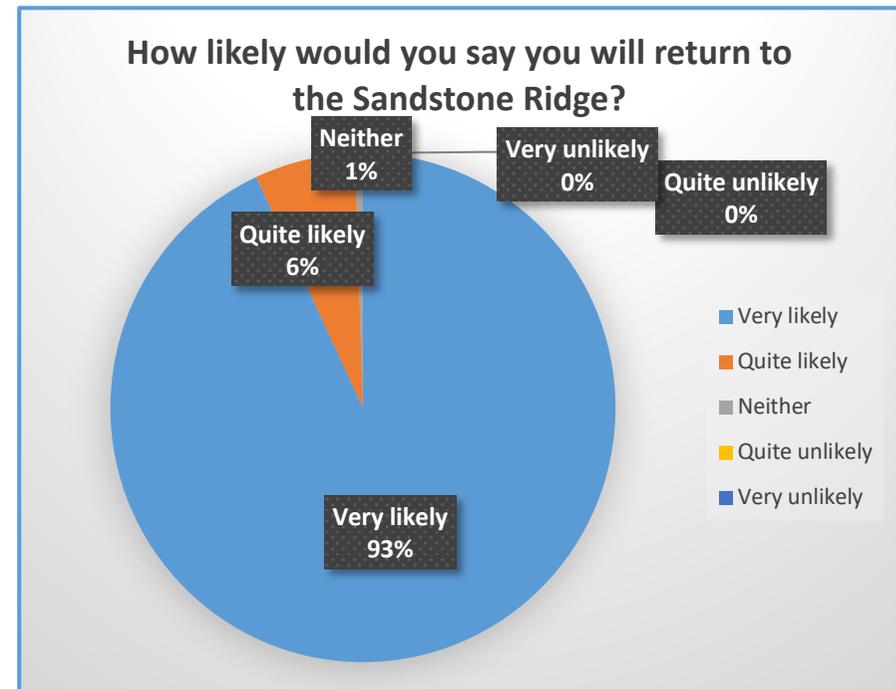
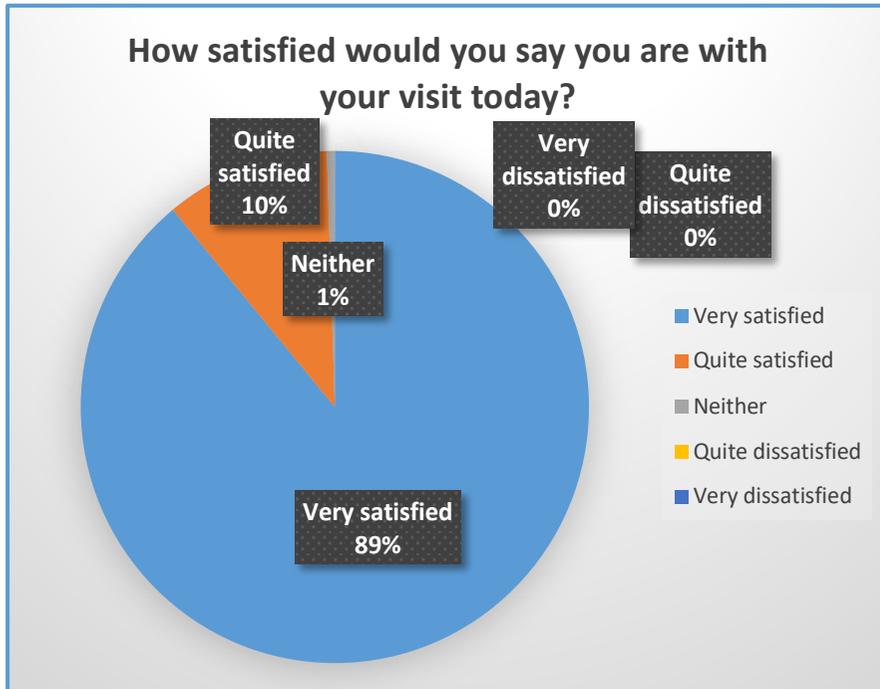


Those visitors that do come to the Ridge have always known about the area or from the recommendations of family and friends, rather than being inspired to visit through social media or organisations marketing or promoting the area as a destination. The **low marketing visibility** may partly explain why the visitor profile is so local.

On those occasions when the Ridge has received media exposure, attractions have noticed a considerable spike in visitors. For example, for several weekends following the transmission on 11 January 2017 of *Britain's Best Walks* with Julia Bradbury featuring the Sandstone Trail, both Delamere Forest and Beeston Castle noticed significant increases in visitor numbers which can be attributed to this one broadcast (*pers. comm*)

The Trail featured again in *Britain's Favourite walks: Top 100*, broadcast on ITV on 30 January 2018 (number 70).

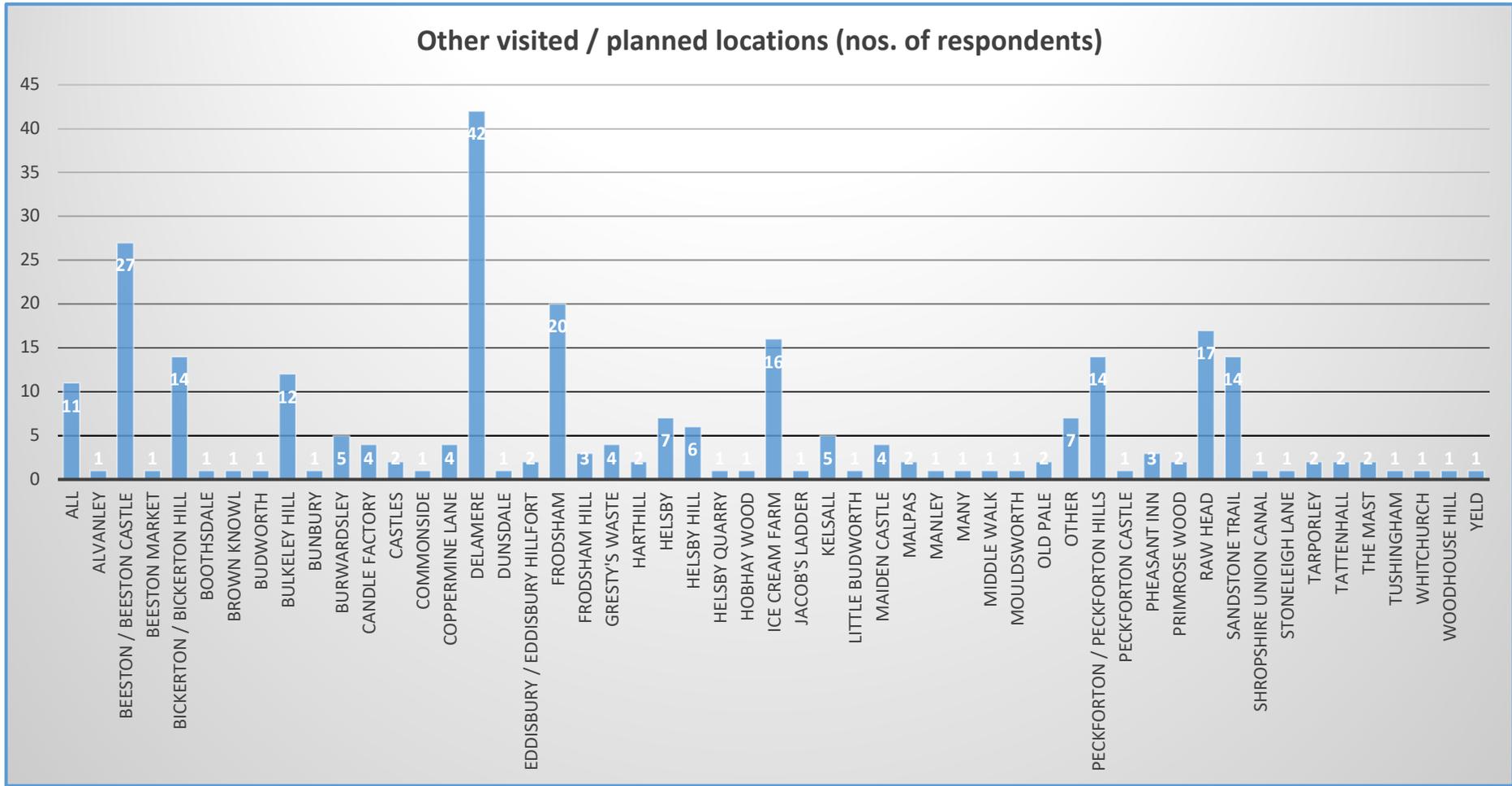
The majority of visitors (87%) have previously visited the Ridge, and many are repeat visitors returning at least once a month or more frequently. Satisfaction levels amongst visitors are very high.



Visits to the Sandstone Ridge tend to be congregated at a few specific locations, with the most popular by far being Delamere and the Ice Cream Farm, followed by Beeston/Beeston Castle, Frodsham, Raw Head, Bickerton/Bickerton Hill, and Peckforton / Peckforton Hills. **This can lead to local facilities being over-stretched at peak times, local traffic and parking congestion, erosion of access infrastructure, a general loss of the feeling of peace and tranquillity, and frustrations for local residents.**

When asked what other locations on the Ridge people had visited in the last 6 months or are intending to visit, however, over 50 different locations were mentioned, suggesting that **there is a potentially wider appeal throughout the Ridge area.**

Other visited / planned locations (nos. of respondents)



Benefits

The Sandstone Ridge is a beautiful, cherished and highly valued landscape. **Those who live, work, visit or do business on the Ridge, draw considerable and multiple benefits from its rich and varied natural resources** (sometimes referred to as natural capital) (*Key facts box: Benefits*).

There are more than 1,000 businesses located within the Sandstone Ridge, from all sectors of the economy, providing jobs for thousands of people. They are mainly small businesses and sole traders, but some national companies also operate within the area. Businesses associated with tourism and the visitor economy in particular are attracted to, and depend on, the high quality and varied natural environment that the Ridge offers.

The 36,000 residents living on the Ridge are supplemented by more than one million visitors a year attracted to enjoy the area's varied and beautiful places, natural and cultural heritage. Their spend in the local economy supports many rural jobs and businesses.

The proximity of the Sandstone Ridge to a large population (4 million live within 20 miles), its easy accessibility by car and foot, high quality and varied landscapes, rich natural and cultural heritage make it easy for people, from all backgrounds, to engage with and enjoy the outdoors in a wide variety of ways. 7% of its area is publically accessible and it has a network of some 370km of public rights of way, include the popular Sandstone Trail running along its length.

The benefit of the outdoors for our mental and physical health and wellbeing has been well documented in recent years, and the importance of connecting people with the environment is now a cornerstone of the

Key facts: Benefits

- Home for 36,000 residents
- Location for >1,000 businesses
- >1 million visitors per annum
- >60 hotels, bed and breakfasts, self-catering cottages and campsites
- c.100 transport and access groups use the Ridge for walking, cycling and horse riding
- 7% of the land is publically accessible
- The area has a network of 370km of public rights of way, including the Sandstone Trail
- 4 million people live within 20 miles
- 16,000 bed stays/annum at the 4 outdoor education centres on the Ridge
- An inspiration for art and literature
- 290 farm holdings / over 700 salaried farm employees
- 125 people employed in timber and forestry related activities
- minimum of 16 million tonnes of sand and gravel to be extracted between 2010-2030
- 17,600 million litres of water abstracted per annum by utility companies
- Average of 15,000 tonnes/annum of CO² sequestered/stored in the 2,800 hectares of woodland on the Ridge
- More than 50% of the area is classified as “undisturbed” and tranquil

Sources: Cheshire GIS Shared Service, CPRE, Environment Agency, internet search

Government's 25 year plan to improve the Environment published in 2018. Many people value the Sandstone Ridge for its peace and quiet; the CPRE's Intrusion Map for England classifies the southern 50% of the area as "undisturbed" and "tranquil" "*places which are sufficiently far away from the visual or noise intrusion of development to be considered unspoilt by urban influences*". Light pollution is also less in this area compared with the surrounding conurbations.

Numerous community groups, access groups, environmental organisations, health programmes and schools actively use the resources the Ridge offers for activities, inspiration and green prescribing. All four outdoor education centres in Cheshire are located on the Ridge, offering children from within Cheshire and across a broader catchment the opportunity to engage with nature, understand farming and rural life, and have a relationship with the outdoors. The centres are hugely popular, with a combined total of 16,000 bed stays/annum from schoolchildren within Cheshire and neighbouring counties.

The Ridge offers opportunities for all ages of volunteers to get involved and experience its natural beauty and special qualities. Many enthusiastic volunteers contribute thousands of work days each year on conservation and access tasks for organisations like the National Trust, Woodland Trust and Cheshire Wildlife Trust. These might be as part of Duke of Edinburgh award schemes, for personal development, or social reasons.

The panoramic views from the Sandstone Ridge, abundant wildlife and rich heritage have captured people's imaginations for centuries, and continue to be a great source of inspiration for artists, photographers, poets and performers. The great English artist JMW Turner, for example, sketched and painted the dramatic ruins of Beeston Castle in the early 19th century. A century later, the hills around Broxton were being visited by a young Wilfred Owen on family holidays and were the source of inspiration for his later poems. Today a number of high quality artists and craftspeople live and work along the Ridge, or exhibit at exhibitions in venues like Castle Park Art Centre in Frodsham and the Cheshire Art Hub in Burwardsley. In 2017 the southern part of the Ridge played host to a new Sandstone Ridge Festival of concerts, exhibitions, talks and guided walks, and is to be repeated in 2018.

Society also draws from the Ridge a wide range of raw materials that we need to live – food, timber, minerals, water and air. Agriculture is the major land use by area – farmland comprises 70% of the Ridge, the majority of it under grassland. In 2013, the area supported 21,000 cattle, 11,000 sheep, 8,000 pigs and 96,000 poultry. The Ridge has above the national average of woodland cover (13%, compared with 10% woodland cover in England, and 4% across the borough of Cheshire West and Chester), and timber and forestry related industries employ 125 people. The Forestry Commission also raises some 15 million trees at its nurseries in the area at Lobslack and Old Pale. The 2,800 hectares of woodland on the Ridge also sequester and store an average of 15,000 tonnes/annum of CO².

To meet national demand, Cheshire West and Chester has to provide around 16 million tonnes of sand and gravel over the period 2010-30 – all of which will come from quarries around Delamere in the heart of the Sandstone Ridge. Utility companies abstract 17,600 million litres of water annually for households and businesses from aquifers beneath the Ridge – the equivalent of filling 8,000 olympic-sized swimming pools.

All of these wide-ranging benefits underpin the economy and the health and wellbeing of society but come at little or no cost to the taxpayer. **The natural capital value to society of the Sandstone Ridge is only just beginning to be understood and goes largely unrecognised and overlooked in policy and decision-making.**

Theme 2 - Perceptions and forces for landscape change affecting the Sandstone Ridge

The landscape of the Sandstone Ridge has been subject to countless and continuous influences and pressures from outside. In the past these have ranged from the imposition of medieval forest laws, the enclosure acts of the 19th century, the drainage of the meres and mosses, the push for more home-grown trees following the First World War, the demand for sandstone to meet building needs following the industrial revolution and the arrival of the railways, and the increasing usage of water to meet the expanding needs of households, farming and businesses.

Change is the only thing that is constant, and keeping everything the same is not a realistic (or desirable) objective. Instead, it is necessary to be alert to the changes and their impacts, and respond positively to them in order that the area's special qualities are managed sustainably and remain for everyone's benefit.

Historical landscape change

Visual evidence for historic landscape change can be glimpsed by comparing photographs taken at the same point over time, as illustrated by these images capturing the same viewpoint on Frodsham Hill at the northern edge of the Ridge over an 80 year gap. The withdrawal of grazing has allowed the natural regeneration of trees, changing the ecology, landscape character and view.



Frodsham Hill, c1930



Frodsham Hill, 2012

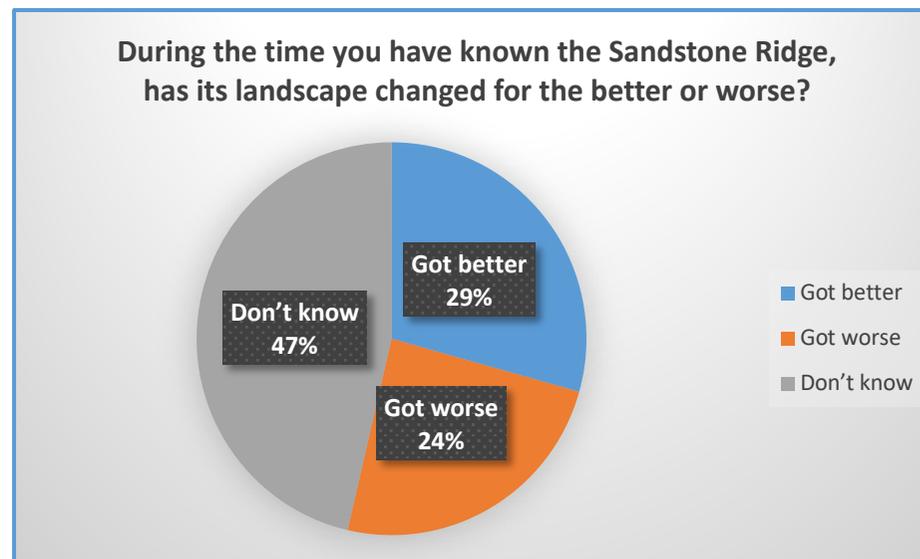
Statistical measurements of the extent of historical landscape change in the National Character Area, however, are hard to come by. In 2004 the former Countryside Agency published a database to help us understand how the Character Areas of England are changing and what change means in terms of maintaining local distinctiveness.

The Countryside Quality Counts Project was co-sponsored by DEFRA, English Heritage and English Nature and pulled together a wide range of different sources of information to track landscape changes during the period 1990-98. The findings are deposited in the National Archives. The study presented evidence for trees and woodland; boundary features; agriculture; settlement and development; semi-natural habitats; historic features and rivers and coastal. Its overall assessment for National Character Area 62 (at that time called Joint Character Area 62) concluded that: *“Although the character of the farmed landscape has been weakened, enhancement of woodland and the limited pressure from development suggest that overall landscape character is relatively stable and has been maintained”*. **Countryside Quality Counts, 2004**

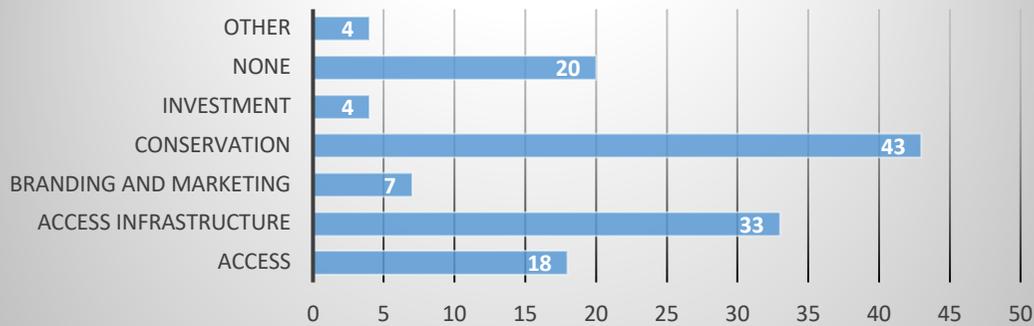
	Consistent with vision	Inconsistent with vision
Stable	Maintained <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trees & woodland ♦ ▪ Settlement & development ♦ ▪ Semi-natural habitats ♦ ▪ River & coastal 	Neglected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boundary features ▪ Agriculture ♦ ▪ Historic features
Changing	Enhancing	Diverging

Changes for the better or worse

No clear picture has emerged about people’s perception of landscape change in the area. Nearly half of participants are unsure whether or not the Sandstone Ridge landscape has changed for the better or worse during the time they have known the area. Of those who gave an opinion, slightly more think it has got better.



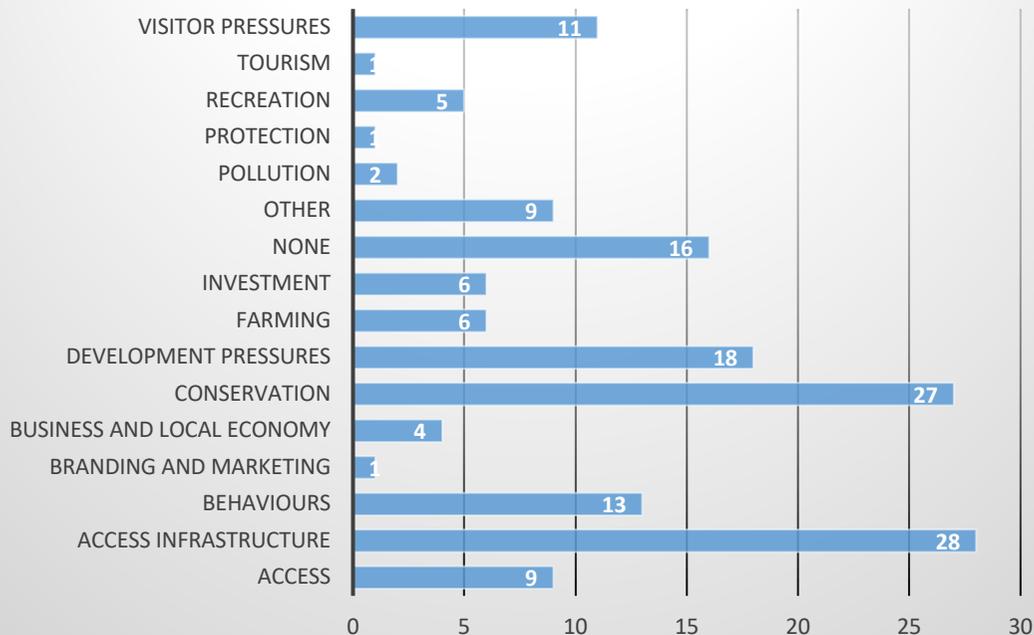
Changes for the better (nos. of respondents)



Of those changes for the better, improvements to the management of the Ridge for conservation are perceived the strongest. Measures by the National Trust to improve heathland habitat on Bickerton Hill in the south of the area are particularly emphasised, as well as wetland restoration, and archaeological enhancements at the various hillforts.

Improvements to access infrastructure such as the upkeep of footpaths, waymarking, and information also feature strongly, as do better general accessibility to the Ridge.

Changes for the worse (nos. of respondents)



A broader range of changes for the worse is mentioned by participants.

The quality of the access infrastructure (condition of footpaths and general wear and tear, and car park surfaces) is clearly of concern, as is the quantity and quality of development on the Ridge, particularly for housing.

A sizeable cohort of people view the measures to improve lowland heathland by the National Trust negatively, and that tree removal has spoilt the landscape. Although the number is fewer than those participants expressing their support for the works, it demonstrates how environmental works can divide opinion within local communities.

Visitor pressures and their effects (eg, footpath erosion, traffic congestion, over-crowding), and undesirable behaviours (eg, litter and dog fouling) are also of concern.

Potential forces for future landscape change

The Document Review and participants' comments through interviews, surveys and questionnaires have highlighted a range of pressures likely to shape and affect the future landscape of the Sandstone Ridge.

Trees and woodlands

- Planting new woodland on agricultural land within the Mersey Forest area (north of Tarporley), and the recently announced Northern Forest
- On-going decline in traditional woodland management practices leading to general deterioration and increase in the proportion of over-mature trees
- Establishment and spread of insect pests and pathogens, for example, ash dieback and acute oak decline

Boundary features

- Loss of historic field pattern due to decline in hedgerow management and disrepair of sandstone walls, with resulting increase in use of fencing and pressure to enlarge fields

Settlement and development

- Demand for land for housing and employment in Key Service Centres may lead to infill, urban fringe and ribbon development. (By 2030 at least 2,000 new homes will be accommodated in the Key Service Centres of Helsby, Frodsham, Cuddington and Sandiway, Kelsall, Tarporley, Tattenhall, Bunbury and Malpas, with smaller numbers in other, local service centres)
- Upgrading of lanes and minor roads, introduction of street lighting and signage leading to increasingly suburban character of the countryside
- Changes to traditional settlement pattern including coalescence and loss of separate identities
- Increased demand for visitor accommodation and recreational provision including holiday homes/cabins and caravan parks
- Pressure for solar PV farms
- Pressure for further communication masts and other tall structures such as wind turbines given the elevated topography and wind speeds

Recreation / visitors

- Increase in visitor numbers leading to loss of tranquillity, loss or fragmentation of habitats, erosion of soft sandstone paths and road verges, visual intrusion of car-parks or stationary vehicles and demand for additional facilities (the total population of Cheshire and the surrounding areas is forecast to continue to grow - for example, Cheshire West and Chester's population is forecast to increase by 10% to around 366,700 in 2035 - and the growth of the visitor economy continues to be encouraged)

- Further forest recreation use and promotion rather than commercial forestry in Delamere Forest – may see improvements in species mix and biodiversity through the Forest Management Plan
- Increased demand for water-based recreation in meres and flooded sandpits, leading to potential conflict with nature conservation objectives
- Increase in fishing bringing more visitors and associated signage, car parking etc.
- Pressure for more golf courses
- Pressure from increased tourism associated with the Shropshire Union Canal, for example new moorings
- Increased popularity for organised events and activities

Natural resource management

- Continued extraction of sand and gravel in the Delamere area (an extraction rate of c.800,000 tonnes per annum is required to meet national demand)
- Small-scale sandstone extraction
- Lowering of the water table
- Deterioration of water quality in ground and surface waters arising from phosphates, nitrates and diffuse agricultural pollution

Agriculture

- Changes in the pattern of land ownership with a move towards larger land holdings (the number of farm holdings in the area declined from 349 in 2000 to 289 in 2013)
- On-going increase in arable land use and production of fodder crops
- Pressure for farm extension and conversion of farm buildings for other uses including residential and commercial use, with erection of modern steel-framed portal sheds to replace the lost space
- Farm diversification including introduction of riding schools, stables and paddocks
- Lack of management of farmland on the edge of urban areas in the hope that it becomes favoured for development

Climate change

- Effects to the ecology and hydrology of waterbodies due to warmer water temperatures and flood risk
- Localised flooding along the river valleys due to more frequent storm events
- Warmer and more unpredictable weather patterns may lead to changes in agricultural crops and/or methods of cultivation

Natural environment

- Habitat reduction, fragmentation and deterioration of ancient woodland, heathland, unimproved grasslands, meres and mosses, and ponds

Built environment

- Erosion of built environment character through incremental development, the suburbanisation of rural properties and their curtilage, standardisation/upgrading of roads, signage and screen planting
- Degradation of vernacular building style through alteration
- Decline in condition and extent of 'Cheshire railings' – the black and white painted estate and crossroad railings

Other key drivers

- Brexit has created uncertainty over funding of land and access management that has hitherto come from the European Union
- The Government's new *25 year plan to improve the Environment* announced on 11 January 2018, together with keynote speeches from the Minister for Environment, has given a strong indication that in future farmers will be rewarded for public services such as restoring and improving natural capital and heritage assets, rather than agricultural production. The Plan also recognises: the need to improve soil health, encourage more woodland planting, develop a nature recovery network, reintroduce native species, reform the approach to water abstraction, review the AONB family, and connect people with the environment
- Public sector organisations with traditional responsibilities for providing access and recreation facilities have had substantial cuts in their Government funding
- Increased emphasis on economic growth in rural area
- Increasing recognition of the value of the outdoors and the natural environment to people's health, wellbeing and the quality of life
- Greater recognition of the benefits of delivering green infrastructure and ecosystem services
- Declining public understanding of the needs and requirements of the natural and cultural heritage
- Erosion of information about the natural and cultural heritage
- Limitations in the amount and type of traditional rural skills that are available

Environmental health

The state of the environmental health of the Sandstone Ridge is difficult to assess owing to the incomplete, fragmentary and dated nature of the evidence. It is possible, however, to gain an impression of the environmental condition of the Ridge by examining a selection of datasets and studies.

Ecological modelling of Cheshire (including the Sandstone Ridge) carried out during the Life EConet Project (1999-2003) by world-renowned Dutch landscape ecology experts Alterra highlighted that the distribution and extent of key semi-natural habitats within the county is limiting for some species, and recommended that **bigger and more joined-up habitats are needed in order to sustain functioning ecosystems that support viable species populations.** Inventories of key habitats collated within the past 30 years highlight their diminished and impoverished state.

Data source	Author	Published date	Key findings
Inventory of Ancient Woodland	Nature Conservancy Council	1988	29% loss of ancient semi-natural woodland in Cheshire between 1920 and 1988
Cheshire Heathland Inventory	Cheshire County Council	1995	59.85 ha of lowland heathland remaining, scattered across 45 different sites
Cheshire Grassland Inventory	Cheshire Wildlife Trust	1997	2470 ha of semi-natural unimproved grassland remaining, scattered across 297 sites
Pond Life Project	Liverpool John Moores University	1997	61% loss of pond-sites between 1870s and 1992/3

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are the most important sites for wildlife in the country, and a touchstone for the environmental health of the natural environment. National Character Area 62 includes 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) totalling some 414.4 hectares. The condition of the SSSI land in England is assessed by Natural England, using categories across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. There are six reportable condition categories: favourable; unfavourable recovering; unfavourable no change; unfavourable declining; part destroyed and destroyed.

Of those SSSI on the Sandstone Ridge, 32% are in a favourable condition, 46% unfavourable but recovering, and 22% in an adverse condition (unfavourable declining or no change). Sites in favourable condition include Dunsdale Hollow near Frodsham, Flaxmere Moss in Delamere,

and Peckforton Woods. Unfavourable but recovering sites include Bickerton Hill and Oakmere. The two SSSI in an adverse condition are Beechmill Wood and Pasture in the north of the area and Little Budworth Common in the central-east.

Condition category	Area (ha)	% of SSSI land in category condition
Favourable	140	32
Unfavourable recovering	188	46
Unfavourable declining	1	<1
Unfavourable no change	86	21

The Heritage at Risk Register compiled by Historic England provides a measure of the condition of the nation’s most important heritage assets, that is, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, places of worship, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and protected wreck sites. Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils have a combined total of 43 entries on the Register for 2017. Of these, **5 heritage assets within the Sandstone Ridge are at risk** - Utkinton Hall (Grade I listed building), Eddisbury hillfort (Scheduled Monument), Castle Cob Motte, Manley (Scheduled Monument), Glassworking remains in Glazier’s hollow, Manley (Scheduled Monument), Motte and bailey, Oakmere (Scheduled Monument). This represents less than 1% by number of the total of 517 heritage assets in the area.

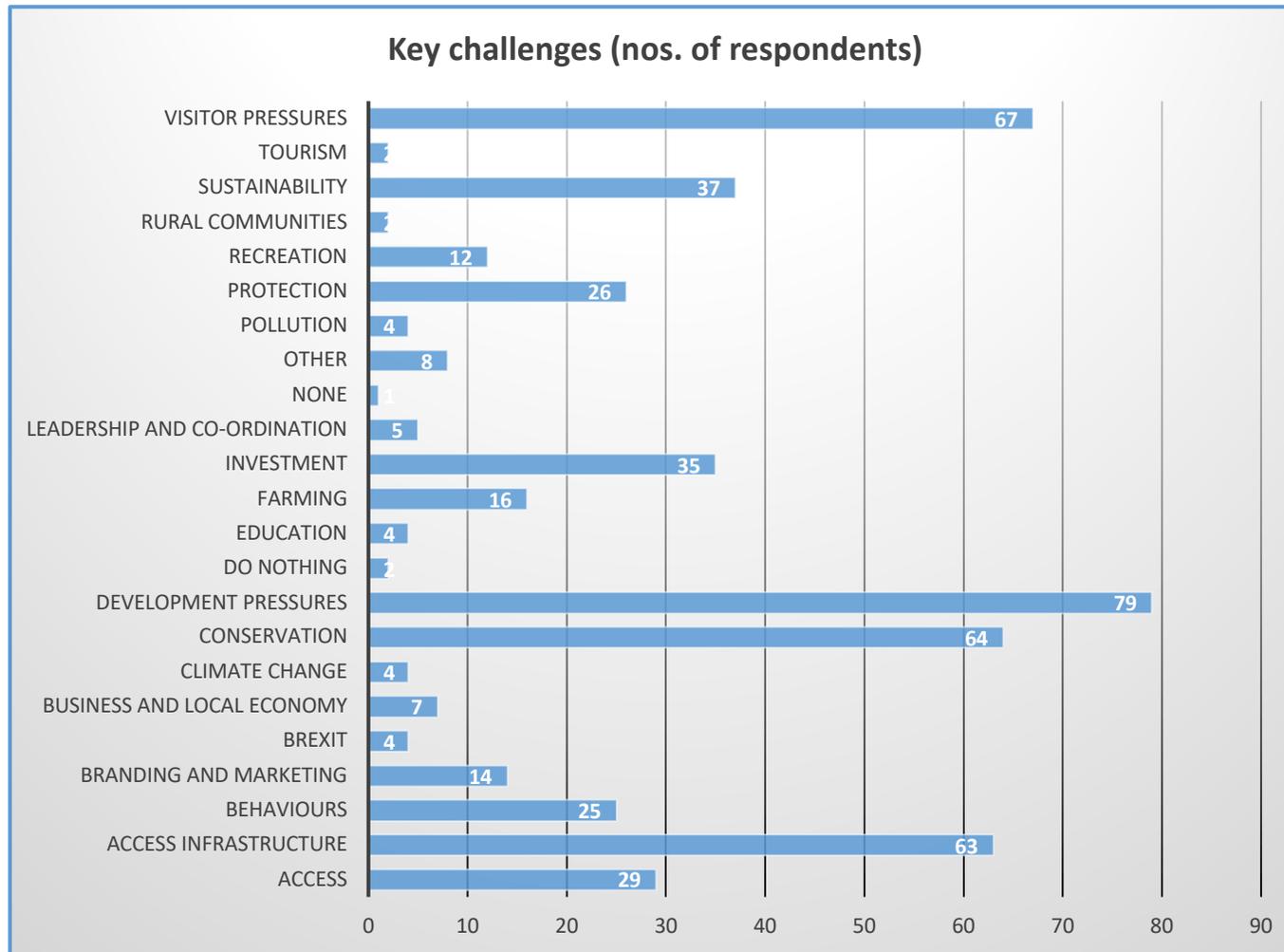
The aquifers beneath the Sandstone Ridge are an important source of water for households, business and agriculture in Cheshire, Staffordshire and the Potteries. Between them United Utilities and Severn Trent Water abstract from a number of boreholes along the Ridge an average of 17,600 million litres of water each year.

Groundwater is abstracted under licence from the Environment Agency, who monitor resource availability and abstraction permissions in the area. The Sandstone Ridge falls between two such groundwater management units. In the north of the area, in the Delamere Groundwater Management Unit groundwater is over-licensed on water balance (the relationship between the amount of water coming into the unit, and being abstracted from it). In the south of the area, in the Peckforton Groundwater Management Unit groundwater is over-abstracted on water balance. There are concerns that water abstracted from the Peckforton Groundwater Unit is causing low water flows in the Aldford Brook, and this is currently under investigation. Although there is evidence on the ground that historic water supplies (wells, springs and pumps) along the Sandstone Ridge have dried up, the Agency considers that water resources in the area are currently sufficient to meet demand without causing any adverse environmental impacts, but the situation is subject to ongoing monitoring.

Nitrates from fertilisers have built up in the groundwater over decades, and is identified by the Environment Agency as a significant water management issue. The level of nitrates in the groundwater taken by United Utilities from boreholes in the northern section of the Ridge exceeds drinking water standards. Water abstracted from this area has to be diluted, therefore, with clean water imported from Lake Vyrnwy in Wales. United Utilities is actively pursuing technical solutions with farmers to reduce further water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources.

Theme 3 - Attitudes about the future

Key challenges facing the Sandstone Ridge



Pressure for development is identified by participants as the most significant challenge facing the Ridge. This is expressed in terms of new housing, inappropriate development, over-development, as well as to a lesser extent mineral extraction, wind farms and “gentrification” of properties.

Pressures arising from the popularity of the area and increasing numbers of visitors are also flagged up as a key challenge and the effects of overcrowding and footpath erosion.

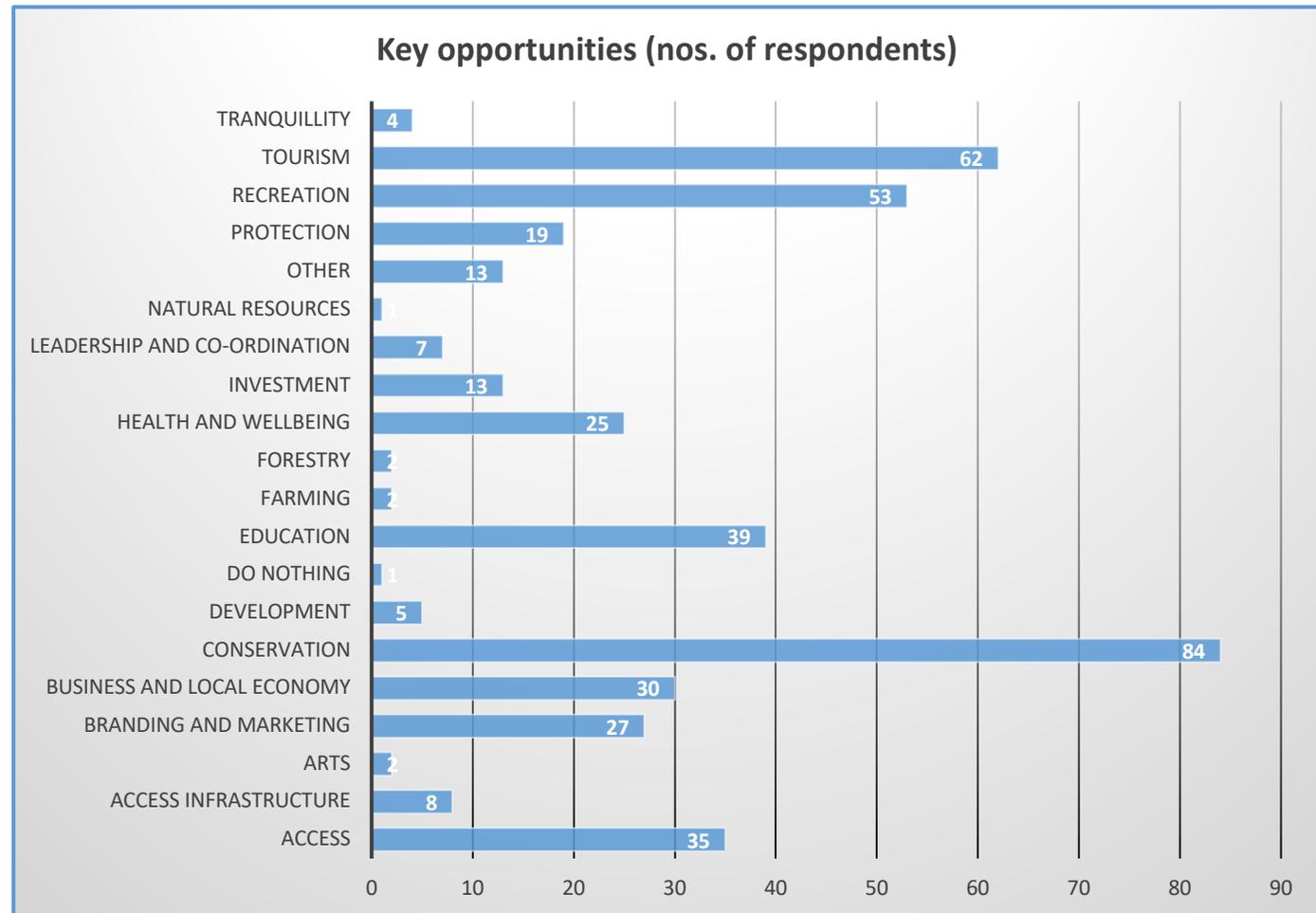
The need to actively conserve the area in order to maintain its landscape, wildlife and heritage comes a close third, together with the need to provide and maintain adequate access infrastructure (paths, car parks and signage).

Key opportunities

Participants highlight **conservation** as the key opportunity linked to the landscape of the Ridge, primarily for the enhancement and maintenance of its habitats and wildlife, but also for its landscape, views, and archaeology.

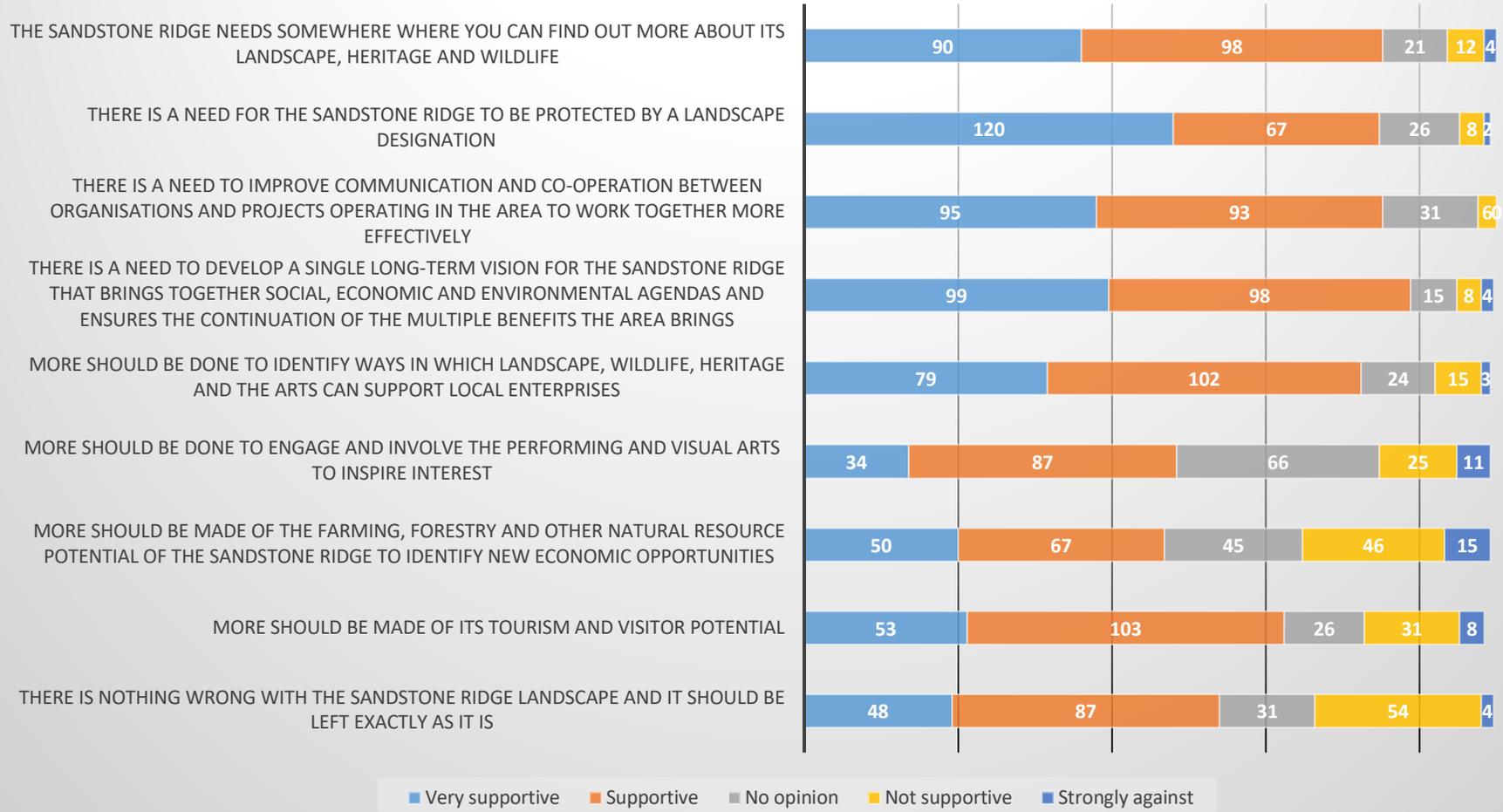
Opportunities for **tourism** (including camping, eco tourism) and **outdoor recreation pursuits** such as walking, cycling, horse-riding and other activities are also most frequently mentioned.

Several participants highlight **the need for tourism and recreation to be “sympathetic”, “sensitive” and “balanced”** with the Sandstone Ridge and the conservation of the environment.



Visions for the future

Support for statements about the future of the Sandstone Ridge landscape (nos. of respondents)



There is **strong recognition of the need to bring together social, economic and environmental agendas and develop a single long-term vision for the Sandstone Ridge**, and similarly **improving communication and co-operation between organisations and projects operating in the area in order to work together more effectively**. The need for joined-up working towards a clear single purpose is repeatedly made by participants.

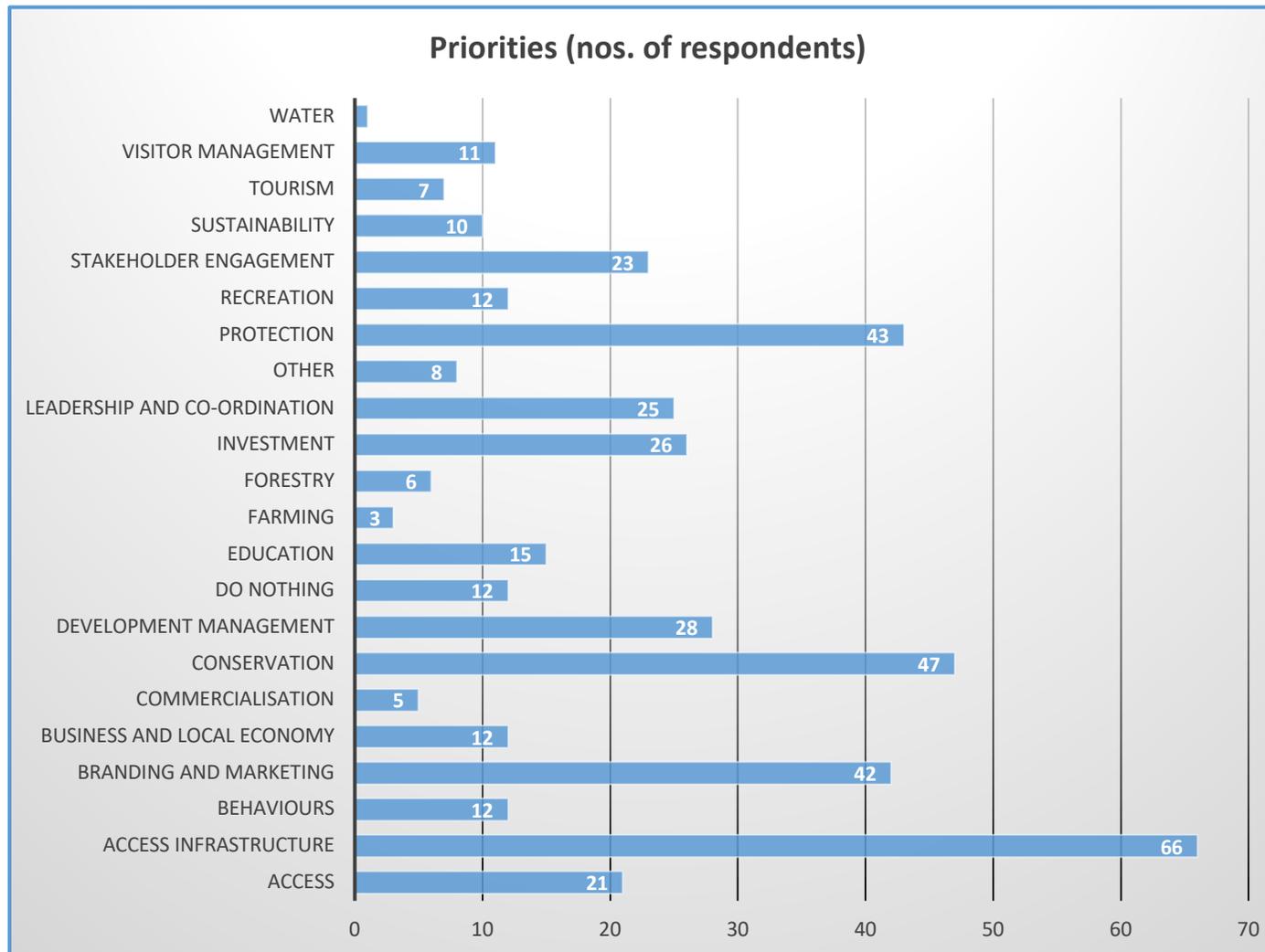
The **need for the Sandstone Ridge to be protected by a landscape designation is strongly supported**, and the designation most commonly proposed is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. **Participants feel that there should be somewhere where more could be found out about its landscape, heritage and wildlife**. The need for a dedicated visitor centre or information hubs attached to existing attractions to promote the Sandstone Ridge and inspire understanding and appreciation of its special qualities is often mentioned.

There is also **strong support for making more of the landscape’s farming, forestry and natural resource potential and identifying new economic opportunities, as well as using the landscape, wildlife heritage and the arts to support local enterprises**.

The majority of visitors to the Ridge are locals from the Ridge itself or Cheshire. Whilst the Ridge is therefore relatively well known locally within Cheshire, it is something of a **“Cinderella” landscape geographically situated between the more well-known visitor destinations of the Peak District, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB, and Shropshire Hills AONB**. **The Sandstone Ridge has tourism and visitor potential, and there is a strong feeling that more should be made of this**. However, this is often caveated with caution that this is done in a managed way in order not to spoil and over-commercialise the area and to avoid the adverse effects that visitors and tourists can bring.

Notwithstanding the widespread support and enthusiasm that clearly exists for positive change, **there is a (minority) view among some of the community to leave the Ridge as it is**. This can be observed in response to site-specific conservation measures in the area to fell trees to restore open wildlife habitats, as well as from concerns expressed about the number of visitors already using the Ridge for recreation, and the local inconvenience this causes in relation to traffic congestion, casual car parking, noise and anti-social behaviours. Conflicts between different recreational users appear to be low.

Priorities for looking after the Sandstone Ridge



Access and infrastructure improvements stand out as the main priority for participants. Better footpath maintenance, improved signage and car parking, and more information boards are all mentioned.

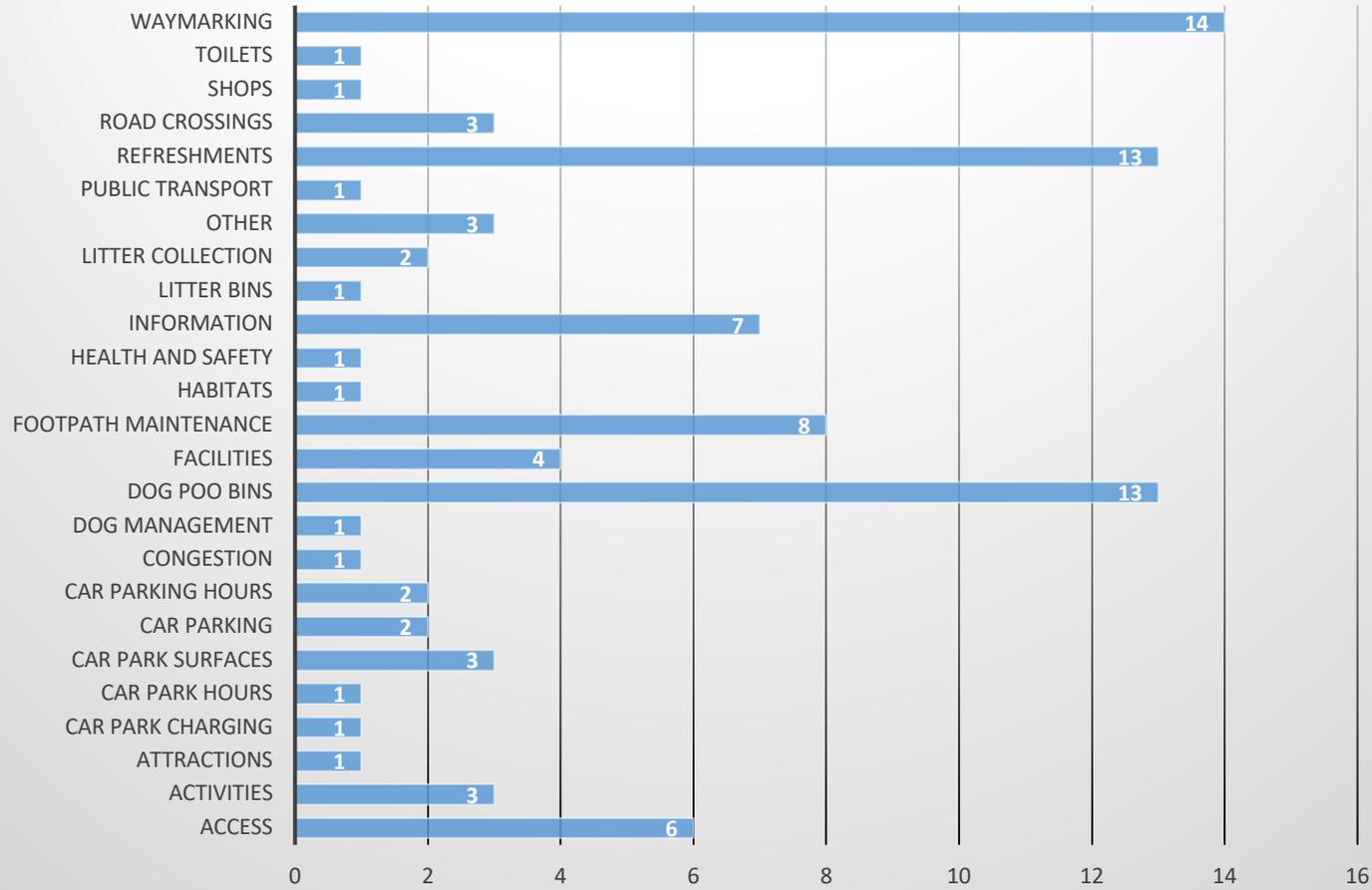
Conservation of habitats and wildlife, as well as archaeology and landscape features highly, as does **more protection for the Ridge**, particularly by affording it some kind of environmental / landscape designation.

The need to **brand and market** the Ridge is also significant for many – to give it an identity, promote its visitor offer and raise awareness through more information and interpretation.

Preventing or controlling development within the area is also a priority, as well as **more investment** for its upkeep, **more**

access opportunities, and the need for leadership/co-ordination and more stakeholder engagement and involvement.

Other things that would have made visits more enjoyable (nos. of respondents)



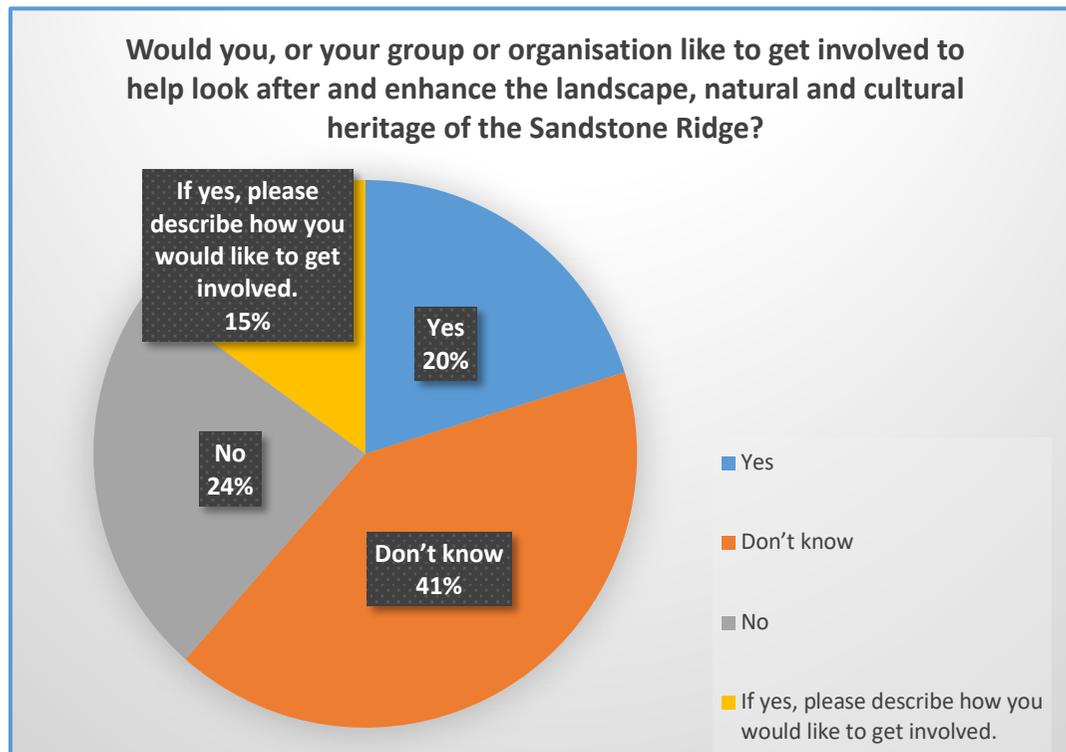
Visitors to the Sandstone Ridge express a very high level of satisfaction with their visits (89% very satisfied – see page 11).

A range of things that would make visits even more enjoyable for people include **additional and improved waymarking, more opportunities for refreshments, and dog poo bins.**

Theme 4 - Willingness to get involved

The high level of responses to the Community Consultation, and the considerable interest and support of participants during the collection of the evidence base gives **significant cause for optimism that there exists a real reservoir of interest in the Sandstone Ridge and enthusiasm to look after it**. Issues and comments have been overwhelmingly positive towards what the Sandstone Ridge Trust is trying to achieve, and negative responses are very few.

A Stakeholder Register of over 1800 individuals, businesses, agencies, organisations and community groups within the National Character Area represents a **substantial pool of talent, skills, knowledge and expertise that can be drawn on to invest in its future**. Unlocking, uniting and inspiring this resource has only just begun, but is showing promise.



43 respondents to the Community Consultation indicated positively that they would like to get involved to help look after the landscape, natural and cultural heritage of the Ridge, with a further 88 undecided.

As the lowest tier of local government serving the 36,000 residents in the area, **Parish and Town Councils are well placed to strengthen the work of any Sandstone Ridge partnership going forward**. With the support of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC), therefore, during the second half of 2017 the Sandstone Ridge Trust has begun to work with the 39 town and parish councils/meetings that cover the National Character Area. Frodsham Town Council is the first to respond to the call to action, and hopefully this will be the catalyst for others to follow its example.

Similarly, there are real **opportunities to work more closely with the two local authorities administering the area – Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council, to tap into the push for people doing things at a very local level.**

In November 2017 some 40 farmers agreed to collaborate in a Farmers' Network in the southern section of the Ridge and bid for Countryside Stewardship Facilitation funding. Led by Reaseheath Farm Environmental Services and partnered by The Sandstone Ridge Trust the application was successful and will run for 3 years from January 2018-21. By working collectively across farms at a landscape-scale, the Group aims to deliver multiple environmental improvements, improve farming efficiency, and increase diversification opportunities. **The Sandstone Ridge Farmers Network has the potential to create a stronger sense of place on the Ridge amongst the farming community.**

A number of voluntary and community organisations operate in the area and already make a significant contribution to the conservation of the landscape, encouraging access for recreation and enjoyment, and connecting communities with the area through volunteering opportunities.

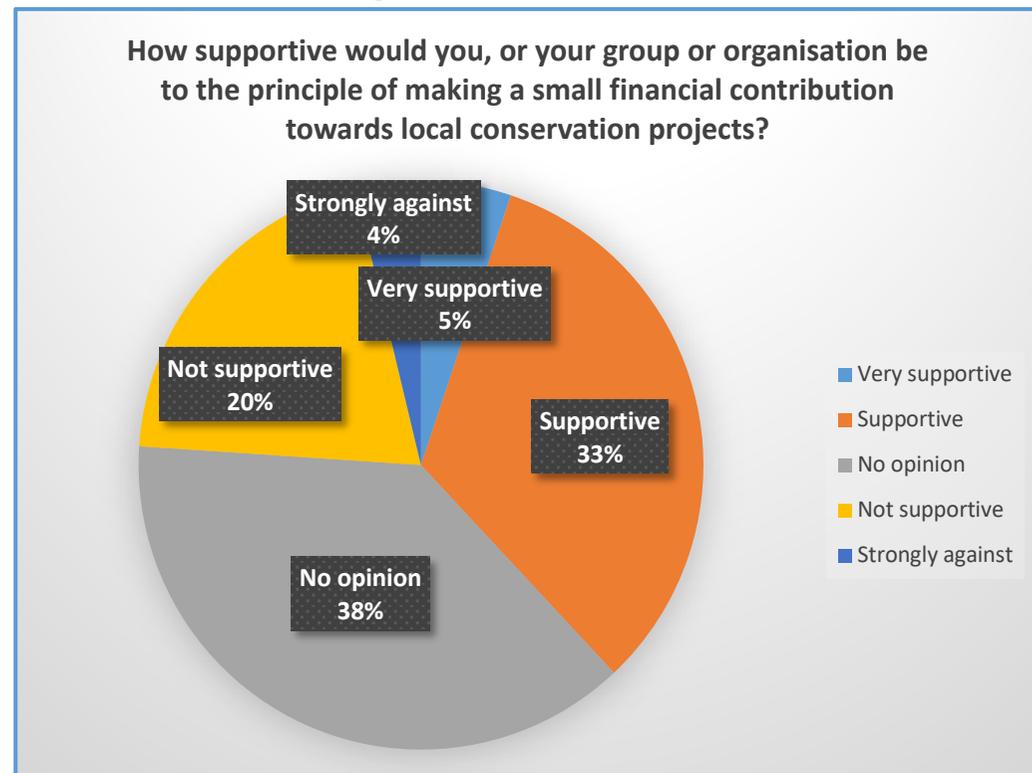
These include the National Trust, Woodland Trust, Cheshire Wildlife Trust, English Heritage, Cheshire Gardens Trust, numerous access groups, the Sandstone Ridge Trust itself, as well as the various Friends Groups that look after individual sites, such as, Little Budworth Country Park, Helsby Quarry, and Hobhey Wood. These groups represent a wide range of interests, but largely operate independently of one another. Their collective contribution is significant, however, and there is **real merit in getting people together to pursue common causes and interests, encourage joint working and share resources and best practice.**

One of the most important insights whilst gathering the evidence base has been the **very strong support given by organisations and agencies across the board for a cross sector partnership to look after the area and drive forward a single and co-ordinated vision.**

The countryside is largely a free resource for people to enjoy, yet requires investment for its upkeep and to sustain and enhance people's experiences. The Ridge has been very successful over the past 15 or so years in attracting significant investments for landscape-scale conservation and enhancement in the area, for example, the Sandstone Ridge EConet Partnership (2005-09), Habitats and Hillforts Landscape Partnership Scheme (2008-12), Meres and Mosses Nature Improvement Area (2012-15), and Delamere Lost Mosses Project. Even so, austerity and the effects of a declining public purse are being noticed, for example, in the condition of access infrastructure, such as, footpath condition, non-repair of waymarking signage, and the withdrawal of a dedicated Sandstone Trail ranger.

The need for new, and innovative, investment is a recurring observation, and a number of opportunities for income generation have been put forward. These include voluntary donations from visitors through automated contactless devices at countryside locations and attractions, a voluntary bed tax from those staying in hotels within the area, adopt a footpath schemes, a penny levy on each pint sold in the area, the sale of Sandstone Ridge merchandise, the introduction of car park charges, corporate partnerships, product sponsorship, and raising a parish council precept.

Any incomes generated could be ring-fenced to a Sustainable Conservation Fund dedicated for conservation, access and educational projects on the Ridge



Theme 5 - Projects

Nearly 70 new project opportunities have been identified by participants during the course of meetings and consultations, and as follow-ons from previous Sandstone Ridge projects. **The quantity of ideas and the breadth of their scope further illustrates the active interest in the Ridge and the enthusiasm for conserving and improving its landscape.**

The projects can be grouped into seven broad themes:

Theme	Scope of project ideas
Access and infrastructure	Access infrastructure improvements; creation of leisure routes; new walking, cycling, horseriding and jogging routes; access to and maintenance of viewpoints; car parking strategy; improvements to car parking provision; improved visitor facilities; more seating; improved access for disadvantaged groups; bus service; mobile adventure technology
Arts	Signature art installations; artist in residence; historical plays; improving people's access to the arts
Branding and marketing	Branding and marketing strategy; more circular walk leaflets; interactive walking and cycle trails; visitor guide; guided walks; cycling and walking events; official guides; interpretation/visitor centre
Cultural heritage	Age of the metal workers; gardens of the Ridge; caves; potential sites of early human occupation; Cheshire's ancient forest; conflicts on the Ridge; historic reconstructions; interpretation of historic/archaeological sites; old tracks and roads; ancient stiles, gates, stones and crosses; graffiti hunt
Local economy	Local breeds of livestock; locally produced/ artisan foods; eco-friendly campsites
Natural heritage	Landscape watch; wildlife corridor creation; woodland planting and management; natural flood management; sandstone wall repair and restoration; hedgerow restoration; lowland heathland expansion; species re-introduction; meres and mosses; geodiversity awareness; bat audit.
Social history	A day in the life; community/volunteer days; dog waste management

Summary of Key Insights

Consideration of the evidence base has generated the following Key Insights, grouped around 5 themes, and a number of sub-themes.

Theme	Sub-theme	Key Insight
1. Awareness and values	Natural beauty and special qualities	<p>1. The Sandstone Ridge is recognised as an important area for natural beauty, landscape, heritage and wildlife</p> <p>2. Compared with the rest of Cheshire, the Sandstone Ridge still supports a concentration, abundance and diversity of natural and heritage assets</p> <p>3. The geological variety and diversity of the Ridge is less well appreciated</p>
	Values	<p>4. The views from the Sandstone Ridge is the quality most valued by people</p> <p>5. Peace and quiet, walks, and accessibility are the next most highly valued</p>
	Status of the Sandstone Ridge	<p>6. The majority of participants don't know, or are unsure, if the Sandstone Ridge is protected by any landscape designation</p> <p>7. Virtually no-one is aware that the northern part of the Ridge (Delamere) was included as a "Conservation Area" (the equivalent of today's AONB) in the Hobhouse Report to Government of 1947</p> <p>8. The classification of the Sandstone Ridge as one of 159 National Character Areas in England goes largely unrecognised</p>
	Sense of place	<p>9. Communities on the geographic fringes of the National Character Area do not associate themselves with the Sandstone Ridge</p> <p>10. The Sandstone Ridge is not a place destination, but a series of individual and unco-ordinated attractions</p> <p>11. Some participants have difficulty differentiating between the "Sandstone Trail", the "Sandstone Ridge", and "The Sandstone Ridge Trust"</p> <p>12. There is potential for confusion between geographically overlapping initiatives operating within the National Character Area</p> <p>13. The Sandstone Ridge does not have a clear and strong identity</p>
	Visitors	<p>14. The Sandstone Ridge is a popular destination with couples and groups for short, day visits, accessed by car</p>

		<p>15. Many are repeat visitors and have very high satisfaction levels from their visits</p> <p>16. The catchment area from which visitors are drawn to the Sandstone Ridge is very local</p> <p>17. The Ridge is not a recreation/countryside destination of choice for those living outside Cheshire</p> <p>18. The Sandstone Ridge does not feature in social media or place marketing campaigns</p> <p>19. Visitor usage is concentrated at a few major attractions. This can cause pressures on facilities at peak times, local traffic and parking congestion, erosion of access infrastructure, a general loss of the feeling of peace and tranquillity, and frustrations for local residents</p> <p>20. There is potential for spreading visitor interest on the Ridge across a wider area</p>
	Benefits	<p>21. Those who live, work, visit or do business on the Sandstone Ridge, draw considerable and multiple benefits from its rich and varied natural resources</p> <p>22. The natural capital value of the Sandstone Ridge to society is only just beginning to be understood and often goes unrecognised and overlooked in policy and decision-making</p>
2. Perceptions and forces for landscape change affecting the Sandstone Ridge	Historical landscape change	<p>23. Visual evidence for landscape change at specific sites can be glimpsed from old photographs, but statistical measurements of the nature and extent of historical landscape change in the National Character Area are unavailable</p>
	Changes for the better or worse	<p>24. There is no clear perception whether or not the landscape has changed for the better or worse</p> <p>25. Of those changes for the better, improvements to the management of the Ridge for conservation are perceived the strongest, followed by improvements to access infrastructure, such as, the upkeep of footpaths, waymarking, and information, and better general accessibility</p> <p>26. Changes for the worse that are of concern include the deteriorating quality of the access infrastructure (condition of footpaths and general wear and tear, and car park surfaces); the quantity and quality of development on the Ridge, particularly for housing; and tree</p>

		removal for the conservation of lowland heathland. Visitor pressures and their effects (eg, footpath erosion, traffic congestion, over-crowding), and undesirable behaviours (eg, litter and dog fouling) are also of concern
	Potential forces for future landscape change	27. A broad range of key pressures have been highlighted with the potential to shape and affect the future landscape of the Sandstone Ridge
	Environmental health	<p>28. The state of the environmental health of the Sandstone Ridge is difficult to assess owing to the incomplete, fragmentary and dated nature of the evidence</p> <p>29. Bigger and more joined up habitats are needed in order to sustain functioning ecosystems capable of supporting viable populations of species</p> <p>30. Of those SSSI on the Sandstone Ridge, 32% are in a favourable condition, 45% unfavourable but recovering, and 22% in an adverse condition (unfavourable recovering or no change)</p> <p>31. 1 listed building and 4 scheduled monuments are included on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register 2017</p> <p>32. Nitrates from fertilisers have built up in the groundwater over decades, and is identified as a significant water management issue</p>
3. Attitudes about the future	Key challenges	<p>33. Pressure for development is highlighted as the most significant challenge facing the Ridge</p> <p>34. This is followed by: pressures arising from the popularity of the area and increasing numbers of visitors; the need to actively conserve the area; and the need to provide and maintain adequate access infrastructure</p>
	Key opportunities	<p>35. Conservation is highlighted as the key opportunity linked to the landscape of the Ridge, primarily for the enhancement and maintenance of its habitats and wildlife, but also for its landscape, views, and archaeology</p> <p>36. Opportunities for tourism (including camping, eco tourism) and outdoor recreation pursuits such as walking, cycling, horse-riding and other activities are also most frequently mentioned</p> <p>37. There is recognition that the need for tourism and recreation must be “sympathetic”, “sensitive” and “balanced” with the Sandstone Ridge and the conservation of the environment</p>

	Visions for the future	<p>38. There is strong recognition of the need to bring together social, economic and environmental agendas and develop a single long-term vision for the Sandstone Ridge</p> <p>39. Improving communication and co-operation between organisations and projects operating in the area in order to work together more effectively is strongly supported</p> <p>40. There is strong support to protect the Sandstone Ridge through a landscape designation</p> <p>41. Participants feel that there should be somewhere where more could be found out about the landscape, heritage and wildlife of the Ridge</p> <p>42. There is strong support for making more of the landscape’s farming, forestry and natural resource potential and identifying new economic opportunities, as well as using the landscape, wildlife heritage and the arts to support local enterprises</p> <p>43. The Sandstone Ridge has tourism and visitor potential, and there is a strong feeling that more should be made of this, but in ways that don’t over-commercialise the area</p> <p>44. Notwithstanding the widespread enthusiasm that clearly exists for positive change, there is a (minority) view among some of the community to leave the Ridge as it is</p>
	Priorities	<p>45. Access and infrastructure improvements stand out as the main priority for participants</p> <p>46. Conservation of habitats and wildlife, as well as archaeology and landscape feature highly, as does more protection for the Ridge</p> <p>47. The need to brand and market the Ridge is also significant – to give it an identity, promote its visitor offer and raise awareness through more information and interpretation</p> <p>48. Preventing or controlling development within the area is highlighted, as well as more investment for its upkeep, more access opportunities, and the need for leadership/co-ordination and more stakeholder engagement and involvement</p>
4. Willingness to get involved		<p>49. There is significant cause for optimism that there exists a real reservoir of interest in the Sandstone Ridge and enthusiasm to look after it</p> <p>50. A substantial pool of talent, skills, knowledge and expertise exists in the area that can be drawn on to invest in its future</p> <p>51. 43 respondents to the Community Consultation indicated positively that that they would like to help look after the Ridge, with a further 88 undecided</p> <p>52. Parish and Town Councils are well placed to strengthen the work of any Sandstone Ridge partnership going forward</p>

		<p>53. There are real opportunities to work more closely with the two local authorities administering the area to tap into the push for people doing things at a very local level</p> <p>54. The Sandstone Ridge Farmers Network has the potential to create a stronger sense of place on the Ridge amongst the farming community</p> <p>55. A number of voluntary and community organisations operate in the area and there is real merit in getting people together to pursue common causes and interests, encourage joint working and sharing resources and best practice</p> <p>56. Very strong support is given by organisations and agencies across the board to co-operate in a cross sector partnership to look after the area and drive forward a single and co-ordinated vision</p> <p>57. The need for new and innovative investment is a recurring observation, and a number of opportunities for income generation have been put forward</p>
5. Project ideas		<p>58. Nearly 70 project opportunities have been identified</p> <p>59. The quantity of ideas and the breadth of their scope is further illustration of the active interest in the Ridge and the enthusiasm for conserving and improving its landscape</p>

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been drawn from the evidence base collected during 2017.

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National and public recognition of its special qualities ▪ Diversity and quality of landscape, scenery and views are the area's greatest strengths ▪ The area supports a concentration, diversity and abundance of natural/heritage assets ▪ Track record of landscape-scale investments ▪ There is a reservoir of interest and enthusiasm to look after the Ridge ▪ Accessibility – four million people live within 20 miles ▪ Policy framework, including local protection for the landscape character 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of clear and strong identity of the Sandstone Ridge as a place ▪ No overarching vision for the area's conservation, enhancement and enjoyment ▪ Lack of a national accolade, such as, a landscape designation ▪ Absence of management and governance to champion, lead and co-ordinate ▪ Cinderella landscape, not widely known outside Cheshire ▪ Lack of appreciation and understanding of full range of multiple benefits of natural assets ▪ Negative attitudes to change in some local communities
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A wide range of special qualities that may broaden its appeal ▪ Significant investment potential – social and financial capital ▪ c.70 community-led new project opportunities ▪ Tourism and visitor potential to enjoy the area's qualities and support the local economy ▪ Opportunities for health improvements through increased access / participation ▪ Recreation and arts – increasing and improving opportunities for walking, cycling, horse-riding and the visual and performing arts ▪ Conservation – landscape scale improvements of key features, such as, walls and hedgerows, waterbodies, woodlands, grasslands and heathlands, and historic features ▪ Development of markets – local food and drink / eco-tourism ▪ Outdoor education – increasing contact with nature 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substantial and wide range of potential forces for change, such as, farming and forestry practices, inappropriate development, mineral extraction, water abstraction, visitor pressures, declining public purse, economic and market trends, climate change, emerging policy, and changing values, behaviours and lifestyles ▪ Fragmented political cohesion / structures ▪ Divergent organisations and ways of working ▪ Habitat quality (68% SSSI in unfavourable condition) ▪ Lack of awareness of value of local heritage assets ▪ Local access infrastructure unable to cope at peak demands ▪ Water supply and quality concerns

Next steps

Gaps in our understanding

The evidence base collected during 2017 has considerably improved our knowledge and understanding of the Sandstone Ridge, the issues it faces, people's concerns and priorities for the future. Some gaps in our understanding remain, however, and these are highlighted below in the hope that they may be filled during the lifetime of the current HLF Transition Project, or later through other means if suitable resources can be found.

Gap	Required information	Purpose
Natural capital audit	What is the societal and economic value of the total stock of natural resources and services within the Sandstone Ridge	To understand and raise awareness of the full value of the social, environmental and economic benefits of the natural assets of the Ridge, and to better inform policy and decision-making
Visitor usage and infrastructure	A more accurate estimation of visitor numbers on the Ridge To quantify and qualify car parking provision, quality and visitor experience	To have a more informed understanding of numbers and patterns of visitors to the Sandstone Ridge and the supply and demand of car parking provision, in order to improve visitor management and visitor experience
Landscape change	Quantitative and qualitative measurements and analysis of changes in key landscape features over recent historical times	To have good information about the state of the countryside and how it is changing so that policies and decisions can be based on sound evidence
Local distinctiveness	What people believe is locally distinctive about the Sandstone Ridge and makes it different from other areas of countryside	To highlight the unique characteristics of the Ridge, inform the development of a place brand for the Sandstone Ridge, create a sense of place, build loyalty from visitors and provide social and economic benefits for residents and local businesses
Environmental health	More information on key indicators of the environmental health of the Sandstone Ridge	To maintain a healthy environment and increase quality of life.
Natural and historic assets	Compile audits of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient trees 	To inform the preparation of strategies for the conservation of key features.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandstone walls • Caves and mines • Priority species of flora and fauna, including those that were formerly present on the Ridge in the recent historical period 	
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Securing commitments

The work undertaken during 2017 has highlighted the considerable strength of feeling that exists for the Sandstone Ridge, the support for action for positive change to look after the area, and the willingness of people to get involved. The priority during 2018 must be to secure those commitments by:

- Further engaging the Sandstone Ridge family
- Creating capacity by broadening the volunteer base, as well as recruiting more Trustees to drive the Trust forward
- Unlocking the talent, skills, knowledge and expertise that exists in the area
- Exploring all options for income generation in a fund-raising strategy
- Developing community-led projects from the longlist of 70 project ideas that have been collated
- Putting in place a new partnership post 2018

Development of a place brand for the Sandstone Ridge

Running alongside these efforts, and fundamental to the long-term vision for the Sandstone Ridge, is the further development of a place brand that will:

- Create an identity for the Sandstone Ridge which will attract and connect with people at a deep level
- Provide a vision behind which local residents, businesses, agencies and councils want to come together to look after this special place
- Inspire business investment in the protection, conservation and enjoyment of the area
- Improve external funders' commitment to invest in the area
- As well as encourage more visitors to experience the Ridge and what it offers.

Options for landscape-scale delivery models

The findings from the Insights Paper will be used to inform the identification and assessment of options for a long-term and sustainable delivery model for the area that will best manage the present and future challenges facing the Ridge and people's expectations.

Appendix 1. Evidence base methodologies

Environmental and socio-economic profile

Natural England's profile for National Character Area 62: Cheshire Sandstone Ridge is a primary source of key facts and data about the area, including a description of the natural and cultural features that have shaped it, how the landscape has changed over time, the current drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of its characteristics and ecosystem services. The profile was published in 2014, however, and draws on data sources dating back, in some cases, to the mid-2000s. Whilst many of the data sources used in the profile are themselves being regularly updated, Natural England has confirmed it has no immediate plans to refresh National Character Area profiles.

In order to bring the key facts and data more up to date, Cheshire Shared Services prepared a range of statistics, gathered using a variety of methods. The majority of the information was drawn from map layers where data sets were clipped to the boundary and information like area and length were calculated using QGIS. The statistics were calculated from those maps or from other sources. Crucially, the Shared Service had access to data for both Cheshire West and Cheshire East, as NCA62 lies within both administrative areas.

The published boundaries of the National Character Areas do not always accurately reflect the natural lines in the landscape, a point acknowledged by Natural England. It is apparent that the northern boundary of NCA62 has been drawn inaccurately, omitting Helsby and Frodsham Hills and their footslopes. For data collection purposes, therefore, the boundary was extended to include the townships of Helsby and Frodsham.

Visitor Survey

During August and September 2017 visitors to the Sandstone Ridge were interviewed at seven popular countryside visitor locations spread across the Ridge:

- Frodsham Hill memorial stone (Woodland Trust)
- Delamere Forest – Barnsbridge car park (Forestry Commission)
- Gresty Waste car park, Organsdale (Cheshire West and Chester Council)
- Primrose Hill (Forestry Commission)
- Beeston Castle car park (English Heritage)

- Bickerton Hill – Pool Lane car park (National Trust)
- Cheshire Workshops car park, Burwardsley (Cheshire Workshops/Bolesworth Estate)

The purpose of the survey was to find out:

1. Who visits the Sandstone Ridge
2. Why people visit the area
3. If people enjoyed their visit, and how future visits could be improved.

People's responses were manually entered into Survey Monkey, and the information then analysed to:

- Highlight the Ridge's strengths as a visitor destination and the areas requiring improvement
- Gather a range of views and opinions of users that will be of value in shaping future management strategies for the Ridge
- Inform the development of appropriate branding, marketing and interpretation
- Provide guidance on the provision and possible improvement of the current visitor offer/facilities
- Provide information to inform future partnership and funding work in the area
- Develop a baseline data set to inform any further visitor surveys

A total of 207 face-to-face interviews were carried out on various dates by Sandstone Ridge Trust Trustees and volunteers, as well as volunteer officers from Cheshire West and Chester Council. Although this number is less than the target of 400, it nevertheless provides a useful snapshot of visitor usage, views and opinions.

The methodology used for the survey was based on the guidance note for undertaking visitor surveys prepared by the Office for National Statistics (Measuring Tourism Locally. Guidance Note Three: Undertaking Visitor Surveys. ONS, 2010), as well as internet research of visitor surveys carried out in various AONBs and by organisations, such as, the Forestry Commission.

Open ended verbatim questions (ie, those with no predefined responses) have been grouped together into categories for analysis purposes.

Community Consultation

During August and September 2017 an online survey was organized through Survey Monkey with the primary purpose of identifying and understanding:

- people's current feelings about the Sandstone Ridge landscape and what it means to them
- perceptions about changes to the Sandstone Ridge landscape
- views on the challenges and opportunities facing the landscape, and
- attitudes on future priorities for the landscape.

The consultation also offered people the opportunity to get involved in looking after the Ridge through project suggestions and volunteering.

Participation in the consultation was encouraged through:

- **Local media** – a press release was issued to all local media outlets at the start of the commencement of the consultation period. Articles inviting people to share their views and opinions were also included in local magazines distributed to local businesses and households - Frodsham Life in the north of the project area, and My Village News in the southern half.
- **Direct email** – Direct emails inviting participation in the survey were sent to 640 contacts on the Sandstone Ridge Stakeholder Register for whom email addresses were available.
- **Website** – The consultation featured on the Trust's Sandstone Ridge website, providing a link to the online questionnaire.
- **Workshop** – A workshop with Sandstone Ridge town and parish councils was organised on 12 September during the consultation period with the support of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (CHALC) (see below).

294 responses were received and the information then analysed on Survey Monkey. Open ended verbatim questions (ie, those with no predefined responses) have been grouped together into categories for analysis purposes.

Town and Parish Council Workshop

With the advice and support of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) a workshop for Town and Parish Councils/Meetings was held on Tuesday 12 September. Email invitations were sent to all 39 councils that are located wholly or partly within the NCA62, followed up by phone calls to parish clerks. In total, 11 attendees from 9 parish councils attended.

Following an introduction to the Trust's work and aspirations for the Sandstone Ridge, round table discussions took place on 3 topics:

1. How does your parish interact with the Sandstone Ridge?
2. What challenges does the Sandstone Ridge generate and what local benefits are there?
3. How might we work together to look after the Sandstone Ridge?

Key points from each table were then fed back to all attendees in a plenary session, allowing an opportunity for further general discussion. The session closed with final remarks and what happens next, including a "Call to action" suggesting what local councils can do to help protect and conserve the Sandstone Ridge.

121 interviews

A stakeholder register has been compiled of people and organisations from across a range of sectors and interest groups who will be affected by the Transition Project, who have influence or power over it, or have an interest in its conclusion.

From this list a number of key target audiences were identified for interview (Appendix 2). The discussions covered the interviewee's interest in the Sandstone Ridge, facts and figures, evidence for change and trends, relevant policies, existing initiatives or projects in the area, key players to engage, volunteer activity, key challenges and opportunities, project ideas, and potential for future involvement.

Document review

More than seventy sources and background documents have been accessed in the preparation of this paper (Appendix 2). This information, data and evidence: (a) acts as a reference point to capture information that is locally relevant and has a bearing on the landscape of the Sandstone Ridge, and (b) demonstrates how the Ridge aligns to local, regional, national and international priorities.

Appendix 2. Key interviewees (in alphabetical order)

Bolesworth Estate
Brio Leisure
Broxton Barn Owl Group
Cheshire Association of Local Councils
Cheshire East Council, Countryside Ranger Service
Cheshire East Council, Heritage and Design
Cheshire East Council, Skills and Growth Company
Cheshire Community Action
Cheshire Shared Services, Archives and Local Studies
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Arts and Festivals
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Countryside Ranger Service
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Education
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Energy and Carbon Reduction
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Health and Improvement
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Public Rights of Way
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Rural Localities
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Spatial Planning
Cheshire West and Chester Council, Total Environment
Cheshire Wildlife Trust
Chester and North Wales Cycling Touring Club
Cholmondeley Estate
Council for the Protection of Rural England, Cheshire Branch
Country Landowners and Business Association
Earthskills Project
Edsential Outdoor Education Centres
English Heritage
Environment Agency
Forestry Commission

John Street
Marketing Cheshire
Mid-Cheshire Bridleways Association
Mid-Cheshire Footpaths Society
National Farmers' Union
National Trust
Natural England
Reaseheath Farm Environmental Services
Severn Trent Water
Stephen Broadbent
Tollemache Estate
United Utilities
Woodland Trust

Appendix 3. Information sources and background documents accessed in the preparation of this paper

Author	Title	Date of publication
Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel Parish Council	Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel Neighbourhood Plan	Made 21 June 2017
Broxton and District Parish Council	Broxton and District Neighbourhood Plan	Made 30 November 2016
Bunbury Parish Council	Bunbury Neighbourhood Plan	Made 29 March 2016
Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Partnership	Cheshire and Warrington Matters. A Strategic and Economic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington	2014
Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership	Developing a quality of Place Strategy for Cheshire and Warrington	November 2017
Cheshire East Council	Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026.	Undated
Cheshire East Council	Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026. Implementation Plan 2015-2019	Undated
Cheshire East Council	Cheshire East Local Plan. Local Plan Strategy 2010 - 2030	July 2017
Cheshire East Council	Cycling. A vision for the future in Cheshire East	Undated
Cheshire East Council	Cultural Framework 2017-2022	Undated
Cheshire East Council	Cheshire East Local Plan. Evidence base: Green Space Strategy	Undated
Cheshire East Council	Visitor Economy Strategy 2016 – 2010	2016
Cheshire Shared Services	Sandstone Ridge Project Area Statistical Summary	Sept 2017
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Rural Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan	2011
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies	Undated
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies Publication Draft	November 2017
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Local Landscapes Designations: Areas of Special County Value for Landscape in Cheshire West and Chester.	June 2017
Cheshire West and Chester Council	A Landscape Strategy for Cheshire West and Chester Borough Part One and Two	2016
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Cycling Strategy	Undated

Cheshire West and Chester Council	Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2016	Undated
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Cheshire West and Chester Parking Study	2016
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Ecological Network for Cheshire West and Chester	July 2016
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Culture Strategy	February 2015
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Public Art Strategic Framework	Undated
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2020	Undated
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Cheshire West and Chester Inequalities Report	October 2015
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Compendium of health and wellbeing statistics	2016
Cheshire West and Chester Council	2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report	2016
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Proposed Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy	2017
Cheshire Wildlife Trust	The Cheshire Grassland Inventory	1997
Clarke, Stephen	Cheshire Heathland Inventory	1995
Countryside Commission	Countryside Quality Counts	2004
Countryside Landowners Association	Rural Business 2030. Unlocking Investment. Unlocking Potential.	2016
Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)	Night Blight: Mapping England's light pollution and dark skies	2016
Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)	Intrusion map of England	2007
Department for Environment, food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
Environment Agency	Lower Mersey and Alt abstraction licensing strategy	February 2013
Environment Agency	Weaver and Dane abstraction licensing strategy	February 2013
Environment Agency	North West River Basin District, Flood Risk Management Plan 2015 – 2021	March 2016
Environment Agency	North West River Basin District, River Basin Management Plan	December 2015
Forestry Commission	Delamere Forest Plan 2016-2026	Undated
Hartford Parish Council	Hartford Neighbourhood Plan	Made 8 June 2016
Helsby Parish Council	Helsby Neighbourhood Plan	Made 8 June 2016

Historic England	Heritage Counts: Heritage at Risk Register	2017
Kelsall and Willington Parish Councils	Kelsall and Willington Neighbourhood Plan	Made 15 March 2017
Liverpool John Moores University	Pond <i>Life</i> Project	1995
Malpas and Overton Parish Councils	Malpas and Overton Neighbourhood Plan	Made 8 July 2015
Marketing Cheshire	Destination Management Plan – 2015 – 2018. Discover Cheshire.	Undated
Mersey Forest	More from trees. The Mersey Forest Plan	2014
Middle Dee Catchment Partnership	Middle Dee Catchment Action Plan	2015
National Parks Committee, National Parks Commission and Countryside Commission	Report of the National Parks Committee – England and Wales”, Cmd 7121, HMSO, London, July 1947. National Parks Commission (various committee papers from the 1950s). Countryside Commission (various committee papers from the 1970s)	1947, 1950s and 1970s
Natural England	National Character Area profile: 62. Cheshire Sandstone Ridge	2014
Natural Resources Wales	Dee Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy	2015
Natural Resources Wales	Dee River Basin Management Plan 2015 – 2021	2015
Nature Conservancy Council	Inventory of Ancient Woodland	1988
Norley Parish Council	Norley Neighbourhood Plan	Made 3 February 2016
Rural Growth Board	Invest in Rural West Cheshire	2017
Severn Trent Water	Water Resources Management Plan	2014
Tarporley Parish Council	Tarporley Neighbourhood Plan	Made 8 June 2016
Tattenhall and District Parish Council	Tattenhall and District Neighbourhood Plan	Made 4 June 2014
The Environment Partnership	Green Infrastructure Framework for North East Wales, Cheshire and Wirral	2011
The Sandstone Ridge Trust	HLF Transition Project Community Consultation	Aug-Sept 2017
The Sandstone Ridge Trust	HLF Transition Project Visitor Survey	Aug-Sept 2017
The Sandstone Ridge Trust	One to one interviews with key stakeholders	Jan-Dec 2017
The Sandstone Ridge Trust and Cheshire Association of Parish Councils	Workshop for Town and Parish Councils- “What future do we want for Cheshire’s Sandstone Ridge?”	12 Sept 2017

Tiverton and Tilstone Fearnall and Beeston Parish Councils	Beeston, Tiverton and Tilstone Fearnall Neighbourhood Plan	Made 20 December 2017
United Utilities	Water Resources Management Plan	2015
Weaver Gowy Catchment Partnership	The Weaver Gowy Catchment Partnership Action Plan	October 2015
Whitegate and Marton Parish Councils	Whitegate and Marton Neighbourhood Plan	Made 3 May 2017
Winsford Town Council	Winsford Neighbourhood Plan	19 November 2014