

2024

Cannock Chase Special
Area of Conservation
Partnership

Georgina Sharp, Cannock
Chase SAC Project Officer



Cannock Chase
SAC Partnership

2024 VISITOR SURVEY

INTRODUCTION:

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation Partnership seek to commission a consultancy to carry out the 2024 visitor survey. This face-to-face survey is a repeat of a survey carried out in 2018, the locations and methodology of the survey will be a repeat of the initial survey to provide comparable data.

BRIEF

Survey Period

5 locations to be surveyed in August and then the 'main' survey is undertaken during September.

The main survey would repeat those August survey points and survey a wider selection of locations across Cannock Chase.

Survey Locations - please see Map 1

5 locations to be surveyed (8 hours at each) during August (prev survey 20 - 24th Aug 2018)

Sessions should be spread out between 7am to 7pm, within the periods of 0700-0900; 1030-1230; 1400-1600; 1700-1900.

Birches Valley
Marquis Drive Triangle
Penkridge Bank Road Car Park

Punchbowl
Glacial Boulder Car Park

The above locations as well as the 15 locations (below) to be surveyed in September & October, 8 hours on a weekday, 8 hours on a weekend (16 hours at each) 7am to 6pm within the periods of 0700-0900; 1000-1200; 1300-1500; 1600-1800.

Seven Springs
Moors Gorse
Whitehouse
Castle Ring
Chase Road Corner
Pull in after Stile Cop
Milford Common
Duffields

Pull into Coppice Hill
Aspens first bay
Gentleshaw Common main car park
Pull in Freda's Grave footpath
Pull in 2 after Bendnall Belt car park
Brocton Lane Corner
West Cannock Farm

Survey days should avoid any major local events, sporting events or similar that may influence people's access.

Effort should be made to avoid adverse weather conditions (continuous heavy rain, severe weather warnings, storms etc.) or reduce the impact by conducting half days at different locations.

This should total 360 hours of survey work.

Approach

Each surveyor should carry a photo ID badge, wear a branded hi-vis jacket and provide information cards for members of the public wishing to verify that they are bona fide. No unaccompanied minors are to be approached or interviewed.

Surveyor to maintain a tally of all people passing, recording groups and individuals (to allow calculation of group size) and note the number of dogs, minors, horses and bicycles. This will not be required at Marquis Drive and Birches Valley which are busy sites.

Interviews to be conducted by means of a face-to-face questionnaire. The survey format, content and prompts will be as laid out in the 2018 survey.

Potential interviewees to be selected at random, based on the next person seen by the surveyor.

The interviewee's route should be plotted on a map as part of the interview, this should be cross referenced to the questionnaire data by a unique number/identifier.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

Analysis & Report

A full analysis and report of the results of the visitor survey should be produced including a comparison of the results to the 2018 survey (Appendix 1).

The successful consultant will be responsible for liaising with landowners for permission to operate on their land and for the health & safety of their activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE CANNOCK CHASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

The Cannock Chase SAC is an area of European designated lowland heathland which lies within the Cannock Chase national Landscape) and is afforded separate statutory protection under the Habitats Regulations. In particular, the SAC requires careful management due to the pressures for visitor recreation from existing and new residents in the surrounding area.

A suite of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures have been identified and are funded through financial contributions from new housing developments within 15km of the SAC.

The citation for designation of the SAC reads...

"The area of lowland heathland at Cannock Chase is the most extensive in the Midlands. The character of the vegetation is intermediate between the upland or northern heaths of England and Wales and those of southern counties. Dry heathland communities are of the heather – western gorse *Calluna vulgaris* – *Ulex gallii* and heather – wavy hairgrass *Calluna vulgaris* – *Deschampsia flexuosa* types. Within the heathland, species of northern latitudes occur, such as cowberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* and crowberry *Empetrum nigrum*. Cannock Chase has the main British population of the hybrid bilberry *Vaccinium intermedium*, a plant of restricted occurrence. The scarcity of water over much of the Chase effectively confines wetland flora and fauna to the stream valley systems and a scatter of natural and artificial pools and damp depressions. The Oldacre and Sherbrook valleys have small-scale mosaics of spring-fed mire and wet heath vegetation, a result of complex water chemistry. Where acidic conditions prevail the mires are mostly formed of bog mosses *Sphagnum* spp. with cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus*, cotton grasses *Eriophorum* spp. and cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix*."

Additional to the SAC designation for European Dry Heath and Northern Atlantic Wet Heath, ancient woodland is a valuable habitat within the SAC area. Cannock Chase National Landscape holds populations of nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler.

SITES AND OWNERSHIP

The ownership of Cannock Chase falls under several of public bodies, charitable trusts, as well as private ownership by both businesses and individuals.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

This project will be led and managed by the SAC Project Officer (George Sharp) being overseen by the SAC Partnership.

PROJECT TIMETABLE

Consultants intending to submit a quote for the works specified should make themselves aware of the timetable and submission deadline:

Task	Complete By / Estimated Timescale
Invitation to quote	22/04/2024
Quotation return date	13/04/2024
Appointment of consultants	May 2024
Consultants commence work	August 2024
Consultants complete survey	November 2024
Consultants produce 1 st draft report for SAC team comments	31 Jan 2025
Working Group review 1 st draft report	28 th Feb 2025
Consultants produce Final report	31 st March 2025
Publication of Final Report	April 2025

This commission is being led by Stafford Borough Council; a member of the SAC Partnership that hosts the SAC team and budget holders for the SAC Partnership. The proposal will only be considered if it is received by 12:00 on 13th May 2024. No proposal can be accepted if it is received after this specified time. Proposals must be submitted electronically to gsharp@staffordbc.gov.uk clearly titled as Quotations for the Visitor Survey Contract.

In submitting an expression of interest, the consultant will be required to:

- Demonstrate that the work detailed in this brief can be achieved and provide a timetable of when it is considered that the various stages will be completed.
- Provide details of the methodology for each stage of the project and any data sources / data collection methods which will be used.
- Provide details of previous similar projects from the last three years, with contacts for reference to be included.
- Demonstrate any added value the consultants can bring to the project.
- Submit full details of the total cost net of VAT to Stafford Borough Council of the work at each stage including itemised breakdown of expenditure and itemised time spent, differentiating between senior and junior staff. The cost will include all professional fees, disbursements, travelling expenses, all report material and any other associated costs; and
- Include details of qualifications of the staff who will be working on the project together with their specialisms and the roles they will play in the work. The appointed consultants must nominate a member of staff to be a single and consistent point of contact.

Selection of the Consultant

The process is designed to be as open and fair as possible and demonstrate the council's commitment to procurement processes.

The Consultant will be selected on the basis and evaluation of their quote using **price at 40%** and **quality at 60%** weighting.

The quality weighting (total of 60%) will be made up of value for money (8%), relevant experience (22%), and methodology and analysis (30%) in undertaking this form of consultancy and in this subject field. Consultants should be prepared for an interview and / or to give a presentation of their submission (although this will only take place if required).

The selection criteria to be applied in finalising the appointed consultant will include the following and will apply both to written submissions and shortlist interviews, if necessary:

Value for Money (8%)

Quotes will be evaluated as to financial acceptability including:

- Approach to pricing for the contract
- Transparency and coherence of pricing schedule
- Proposals for dealing with changes in pricing assumptions
- Appropriate use of staff and time resources

The following information is required from bidders:

- Submit full details of the total cost net of VAT to Stafford Borough Council of the work at each stage including itemised breakdown of expenditure and itemised time spent, differentiating between senior and junior staff. The cost will include all professional fees, disbursements, travelling expenses, display and graphic material, all report material and any other associated costs.

In providing your response above please detail any assumptions you have made and detail your proposals for variations to the fees in the event that any of these assumptions were to change.

Relevant Experience (22%)

Quotations will be evaluated as to the quality of relevant experience for completing the Contract including:

- Demonstration of relevant experience and knowledge
- Demonstration of an understanding of local circumstances.

The following information will be required from bidders:

- Provide details of at least three previous similar projects from the last three years (with contacts for reference).
- An understanding of the local characteristics of the area and key issues.
- Include details of qualifications of the staff who will be working on the project together with their specialisms and the roles they will play in the work. The appointed consultants must nominate a senior member of staff at Director or Partner level to be a single and consistent point of contact.

Methodology and Analysis (30%)

Quotations will be evaluated as to the proposed method of delivery of the contract, the proposed approach to working with the Council and the ability of consultants to deliver the required outputs, including:

- Overall approach proposed for providing the Contract including methods of working.
- Proposed involvement of, and arrangement for managing working relationships.
- Proposed method for monitoring of performance and quality assurance.

The following information will be required from bidders:

- Details of how you intend to provide the requirements in accordance with the contract including how each stage of the assessment will be undertaken and provide details of any data sources / data collection methods which will be used.
- Demonstrate that the work proposed can be completed within the timeframe laid out and provide a timetable of when the various stages will be completed.
- Details of the way in which you propose to manage performance monitoring of the Contract and managing effective working relationships.
- A description of your proposed approach to partnering and working together with the SAC Partnership, and other relevant organisations over the Contract Period.
- Details of any enhancements, at no extra cost, which it is believed will add value to the project.

When scoring quotations against each individual evaluation criteria, the following scoring rationale and table will be used, based on the graduated approach. Any quote scoring below 60% in any of the individual selection criteria at this stage will not be considered any further.

SCORE	CLASSIFICATION
100%	Exceptional
80%	Above expectations
60%	Meets expectations
40%	Below expectations
20%	Well below expectations
0%	Unacceptable

Responses to this invitation to provide a quotation should be concise. It is anticipated that responses would be no longer than 15 sides of A4 in length plus (if necessary) CVs no longer than one side of A4 each as attachments.

Please note that the terms and conditions contained within the accompanying Contract shall govern this appointment and therefore should be read in conjunction with this brief. The successful candidate will be expected to contract with the Council in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the Contract and will therefore be deemed to have accepted the Contract as drafted, subject to any amendments agreed prior to the quotation return date.

To ensure compliance with procurement legislation, no material variations or amendments to the Contract will be accepted after the return date for quotations. Conditional quotations shall be deemed non-compliant and will not be accepted.

Conditions

The conditions attached to this project are as follows:

1. The appointment of the Consultant will be at the discretion of the Council on behalf of the SAC Partnership. Whilst the Council has every intention to progress with these works, no guarantee is given that any appointment will be made, or that any commission will be completed as intended.
2. Candidates will be notified of the outcome of the quotation evaluation. The appointment will be made through the completion of a consultancy agreement between Stafford Borough Council (SBC) and the consultant.
3. The Council may withdraw from using the services of the Consultant at any time during the project if it is not satisfied with the standard or quality of the work.
4. SBC reserves the right to request and view the research at any time during its progression.
5. Any work outside the specification of this brief which is regarded as 'additional' or 'further' work must be first agreed (in terms of content and costs) by the Council and the Consultant before it is undertaken.
6. The terms of employment of any consultant engaged by the Council must provide that they shall comply with the Council's Standing Orders and the Council's Financial Regulations and European Community Regulations or the requirements of any principal for whom this Council is acting as agent as if they were a Corporate Director of the Council. All their records relating to the supervision of a contract shall be open to inspection by authorised Officers of the Council - this shall include availability for review by the Council's Internal Audit team. All such records together with the final account shall be sent to the appropriate Corporate Director at least twenty-one days before the Final Certificate is issued.
7. The Council may terminate the appointment at any time upon payment of fees and expenses incurred to the date of termination.
8. It is a condition of appointment that the consultant will hold the client indemnified against any claims, whether caused by negligence or otherwise. The consultant will be asked to exhibit their Professional Indemnity

Insurance (minimum £1m valid for 6 years), Public Liability (minimum £5m), and Employer's Liability Insurances (minimum £5m) prior to the commencement of the commission.

9. All documents, plans and illustrative material will pass into the ownership of the client on completion of the study or sign-off of agreed phases.
10. Where evaluation processes personal information it must comply with DPA principles and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which are detailed at www.ico.gov.uk. The consultant will be acting as data processor on behalf of Stafford Borough Council, and thus all processing of personal data must be in compliance with the requirements of the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

Please also note that a copy of the Consultancy Agreement of Stafford Borough Council's General Conditions of Contract can be viewed on the Stafford Borough Council website: <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/>

PAYMENT

Payment will be provided by Stafford Borough Council on behalf of the SAC Partnership.

Payment will be draft report stage (50%), final report stage (40%) and then sign off (10%).

The consultant shall submit an invoice to Stafford Borough Council which will then be paid within thirty (30) days of receipt.

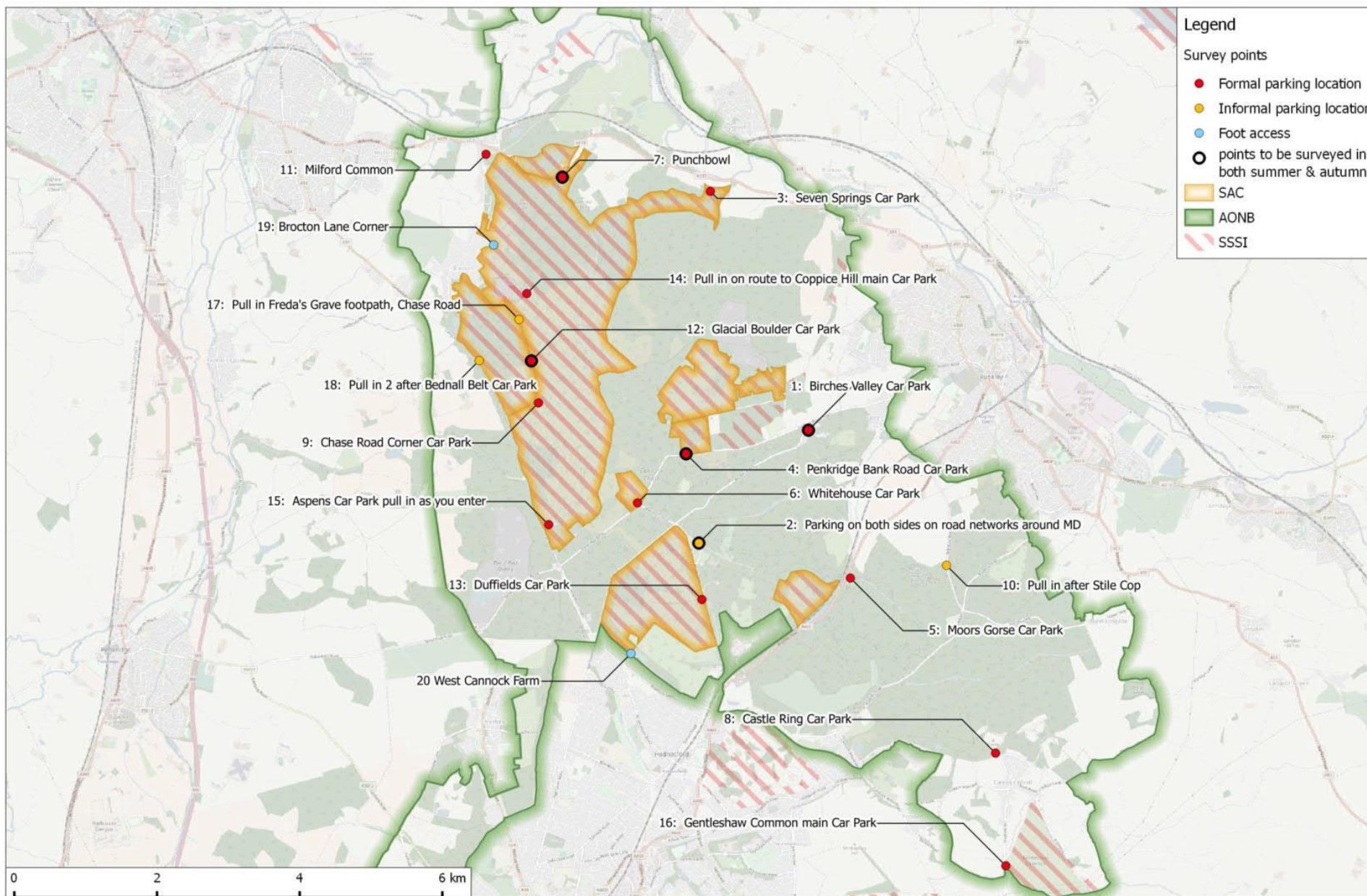
CONTACT DETAILS

All enquiries regarding this brief, and Proposal Submissions should be directed to:

GEORGE SHARP
Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Project Officer
07971031493
gsharp@staffordbc.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - [Link to the 2018 Survey Report & Questionnaire](#)

Map 1 : Location of survey points.



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