

What are the lengthsmen and P3 schemes?

The lengthsmen scheme allows parishes to undertake low risk maintenance works, for example to verges, ditches, village greens or C and U roads. The P3 scheme (Parish Paths Partnership) allows parishes to maintain the public rights of way within their community, maintaining footpath furniture as well as the footpaths themselves.

How do the lengthsmen and P3 schemes benefit the parishes?

The schemes enable parishes to identify areas where works are required and address these directly, either through local contractors, volunteers, or community groups, encouraging the community to work together. It is recognised that where Herefordshire Council work to a risk based approach, this may not allocate the same level of priority to a job that the local community would, therefore the community are able to undertake such work sooner than the council would be able to.

How are the schemes funded?

Where funding is required, this is generated from the parish precept, however community groups can come together to collaborate towards community maintenance on a voluntary basis, either identifying and reporting where council works are required, or carrying out low risk maintenance tasks themselves.

Why should volunteers get involved?

Where volunteers are willing and able to work together for the benefit of the community, this is strongly encouraged to strengthen community leadership and self-reliance, and at times being able to undertake works that the parish may otherwise pay for.

Do I need to tell the council if we are using the lengthsmen?

Yes, the council needs to know which parishes intend to work on the network in order to provide a contract to the parish, giving permission for this and outlining what works may be undertaken.

To participate in the 2020/2021 Lengthsmen or P3 scheme, please return a completed Expression of Interest form by the 9th March 2020 and return to herefordshireparishes@bblivingplaces.com or call 01432 261800 for further information.

What work can be done by the parish?

Under the lengthsmen scheme, parishes can maintain the following:

- Drainage - ditching, gully, grips, rodding, culverts.
- Signs (unlit) - cleaning, repairing etc.
- Highway minor works – removal of detritus, debris, cutting back vegetation etc.
- Filling of minor potholes
- Verge and rights of way cutting and strimming
- Maintenance of street furniture, such as benches
- General community upkeep and assistance
- Agreed tasks for the benefit of the parish
- Repairing gates, stile, cross steps, ditch crossings etc.
- Maintaining sign posts, marker post and way markers

What will the council do if we are in the schemes? Will they stop maintaining the area?

No, the networks will continue to be maintained by Balfour Beatty Living Places and parishes are encouraged to report defects for inspection using the online reporting tool at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/report-it> or speaking to a member of the Customer Services Team on 01432 261800. The council will inspect reported defects and allocate a priority for repair using a risk based approach. The time given for the council to repair defects is based on the level of risk that a defect is allocated. Therefore, for low risk issues such as an overgrown Public Right of Way, this may be responded to and remedied sooner by the parish council than it could be otherwise.

Why should we spend our precept on work the council should do anyway?

Parishes do not have to participate in the scheme, but they may choose to. Where parishes do participate in the scheme, this allows the parish council an element of control of maintenance within the community and enables the parish to have the decision over which works they may choose to undertake and how they wish to maintain and improve their community in a way that may not otherwise be achieved by Herefordshire Council.