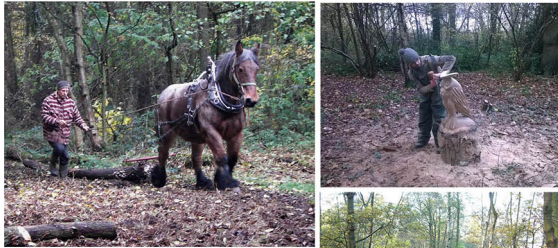


Oaks and Shires



Every year we organise a week-long event focussing on practical woodland management as part of its objective to promote and support the sustainable management of Council owned Woodlands. Local school children are invited to learn about woodland management and their local environment, and watch a heavy horse at work (a method known as horse-logging).

OAKS & SHIRES 2014
Alcote Wood
 Local Nature Reserve
 Gloucester Way, Chelmsley Wood
 B37 5DP
Saturday
22nd November
 11:00am - 3:00 pm

Traditional woodland crafts
 Working Heavy Horses
 Children's Activities & more
 Hot Food and Refreshments

Learn more about our woodlands and wildlife
 A free event for the whole family

Consultation



The Team's Urban Designer led a stakeholder event to inform the Craig Croft Neighbourhood Study. The study informed a neighbourhood action for environmental improvements.



Public consultation event to develop proposals for Dove Way Park. The Team's designer attended this event to listen to what local residents wanted to see in the new park.



Community Planting Events



The Team organises community planting events in Local Nature Reserves and open spaces, and for some of the design projects. Below is wildflower plug planting at Green Lane, and left is woodland planting at Shirley Park with the mums and toddlers group from The Bridge.

We had a great time, thank you,
Penny Simpkins,
 Mums and Toddlers Group



Conservation Volunteers



The Team develop projects, tasks and training for two groups – the Birmingham and Solihull Conservation Volunteers, and the Solihull Conservation Volunteers. Both groups mostly undertake work within Council owned parks, woodlands and Local Nature Reserves. Events take place throughout the year to promote our natural environment. We work towards the designation of new Local Nature Reserves, managing them primarily for nature conservation with special opportunities for study, research and enjoyment of nature.

This is long overdue but a huge THANK YOU to the volunteers from the Conservation Trust who came to work on the Mill Pool. They had a tremendous impact and the Group Scout Leader was thrilled with the results. It sounded as if they really enjoyed it, too, and would be quite keen to come back again in the future.
Scout Group, Mill Pool Spinney, Lode Lane

Celebrating Solihull's Parks and Open Spaces

As a Shirley resident and regular user of the park I have seen the considerable improvements which have been made including: new toddler/ smaller children's playground equipment, new large scale play equipment for older children/olds, outdoor gym, covered handstands, resurfaced tennis courts, dog agility area, resurfaced & landscaped paths. Oh and some new signs. I think they've spent the money very well and considered a wide range of users for this community space. Much better than it was before, I feel well placed to comment on the park as I have actually been there and witnessed it rather than those who choose to blindly berate any changes.
Pippa Edwards, via Solihull Council Facebook page



Shirley Park Opening Event



Chris Packham opens Lavender Hall Local Nature Reserve



Mill Croft Play Area, Smiths Wood opening event with local school children

The Team work with the North Solihull Partnership to improve the areas of public open space, woodlands and Local Nature Reserves in Smiths Wood, Chelmsley Wood, Fordbridge and Kingshurst.



The Team work with local charities such as The Rotary Club to deliver enhancements and new features to the Borough's parks. Pictured are features in Lavender Hall Park (below) and Malvern Park (right).



"I think the stones are better than good - they are really impressive. Thank you very much for your help on this. I do think it all looks innovative and several passers-by made favourable comments!"
Councillor Ian Courts

Inspiring civic pride
Creating beauty and diversity
 Beauty and delight 'in place' is part of a virtuous circle: it can make people respect an area more and, by being respected, an area can retain its beauty. Even in successful commercial areas, more protection is being required to meet increasing security needs. It is possible to create a beautiful scheme which mitigates the visual impact of security measures – provided it is handled by those developing the design and management of public realm.

Meaningful consultation
Listening to what people say
 People enjoy talking about where they live. Engaging local communities in decision-making during the evolution of a scheme's design is a central part of localism. It increases the power and influence of local residents in shaping their own environment. It is also important to know what politicians, landowners and businesses need, and be able to recognise and reconcile competing demands. A good way to start the dialogue is to draw on people's knowledge of a place, its history and its local character. Local detailed knowledge can provide the inspiration for the 'big idea' underpinning new development. The team uses a range of traditional and contemporary techniques to communicate ideas.

Collaboration
Building strong partnerships
 Good development sits within the landscape and townscape in a way which reconciles local aspirations with the wider needs of the economy, and balances the competing pressures on land. To achieve this, projects need to be delivered through strategic planning, technical assessments, masterplanning, detailed design, integrated project management and strong teamwork. The team is well placed to lead multidisciplinary project teams. It is trained to manage the full range of requirements and legislation, co-ordinating the input of technical expertise with environmental statements and green infrastructure strategies. It is also well placed to build partnerships, increasingly important as most projects are funded from multiple sources, and power and responsibility is being distributed across many organisations through the localism agenda.