

# Wrekin Forest Partnership

Notes of meeting, Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Little Wenlock Village Hall

## Present:

Jayne Davidson, Little Wenlock Parish Council  
Brian Herring, Wellington LA21  
Phil Holden, Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, Manager (Chair)  
Andrew Jenkinson, Shropshire Geological Society  
Pete Lambert, Shropshire Wildlife Trust  
Dorothy Roberts, Wellington Town Council  
Jim Roberts, landowner, Upper Huntington Farm  
Robert Saunders, Wellington LA21  
Michael Vout, Telford & Wrekin Council, Team Leader Environment and Planning Policy

## 1. Apologies

George Chancellor, individual member and AONB Partnership Chair  
Bob Coalbran, Wellington Walkers Are Welcome  
Cllr Jacqui Seymour, Telford & Wrekin Council  
Harry Vane, landowner, Raby Estate

## 2. Notes of meeting 13 January 2015

These were accepted. Actions – draft of the Plan had been circulated.

Mike & Jackie White had circulated an email indicating they had moved and were stepping down from the Partnership. Their regular contribution to the Partnership over some years was noted. Michael Vout clarified one or two points regarding the Telford & Wrekin Shaping Places Local Plan. There was a discussion about five year supply of land for housing and its influence on planning decisions.

## 3. Developing the new Wrekin Forest Plan

Pete introduced the draft of the new Plan which he had circulated. He had started developing objectives and suggested actions in green boxes.

There was quite a bit of discussion about possible boundaries. The importance of the town boundary as used by TDC was emphasised. The low likelihood of getting a defined boundary into the Shaping Places Plan was again discussed. It was clarified that policies on 'setting' relating to other AONBs did not define a precise area. With options of a more tightly defined boundary there could be risks to the areas left out. It was also pointed out that a defined boundary could actually increase development pressure by making an area appear more attractive.

Michael thought it likely that a policy on setting of the AONB could be included relatively easily, but he would also look further at extending the Landscape Sensitivity studies which could also support a more detailed policy. The planning section of the new Wrekin Forest Plan would need to be taken forward with close discussion over coming months with the development of the Shaping Places plan. Policies in the Local Plan relating to rural aspects and design of development would also be relevant.

It was agreed that if a boundary were mainly to be used for defining the area in which projects to enhance the area might be pursued, it didn't matter so much exactly where it was, as projects could be flexible. A map showing the area was still useful to include however, to give clarity to the Plan. The need to continue to seek engagement with Shropshire Council was noted, regarding the southern part of the Wrekin Forest area, within Shropshire.

Access issues were discussed. Pete described a two-pronged strategic approach – of both enhancing management and visitor experience at the Wrekin itself, and encouraging dispersal of visitors to other locations too. Quiet Lanes were mentioned - Little Wenlock PC were pursuing this for Spout Lane.

Andrew mentioned the valuable geology within the area, and the different approach to managing geological sites as opposed to wildlife sites.

It was pointed out that actions in the plan might be fundable through S106 agreements relating to any planning developments.

Little Wenlock had a Parish Plan, to which links should be made, but this had limited influence in planning, as it was not a Neighbourhood Plan.

It was agreed that the draft Plan was not yet ready for any public consultation. This would be considered further at the next meeting.

**ACTION** – Pete to progress drafting of the Plan and members of the Partnership to submit any comments to Pete **by 27 March**, ahead of the next meeting.

#### **4. Date of next meeting**

**Thurs 23 April 2015**, Wellington Library, Wellington Civic Centre  
(note change from 16 April due to venue availability).