

WREKIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Remit and Status

- 1.1. The Wrekin Forest Partnership aims to bring together relevant partners to work together for the sustainable natural, cultural and economic future of the 'Wrekin Forest' (described below), in the administrative areas of Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council.
- 1.2. The Partnership will oversee the implementation of the Wrekin Forest Plan. It will help to develop and deliver actions, and provide a forum for discussion of issues and co-ordination of activity.
- 1.3. The Partnership is unincorporated and is not a legal entity.
- 1.4. The core of the Wrekin Forest area is within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a national designation with a dedicated structure and staff to coordinate action through strategy and projects. The Wrekin Forest Partnership will formally be a Working Group of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, which is the body formed by two local authorities to fulfil their legal duty to co-ordinate management of the AONB. Work of the Wrekin Forest Partnership will be reported to the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and related closely to the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan. The Wrekin Forest Partnership is essentially a local structure retaining a strong link to the AONB, and fulfilling some of its co-ordinating roles at a local level.
- 1.5. The Partnership will not initially hold or expend funds itself, but its work will be supported through key partners including Shropshire Wildlife Trust, the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership and the local authorities. The Partnership will examine possible structures for the best long-term benefit of the area, such as a free-standing charitable trust.

2. The Wrekin Forest area

- 2.1. The Wrekin Forest area is broadly defined in the Wrekin Forest Plan. It is centred on the Wrekin hill, and bounded to the north by the M54, to the south by the River Severn floodplain, to the east by the edge of Telford at Horsehay and to the west by the minor road running through Upper Longwood and Rushton.

3. Working principles for the Wrekin Forest Partnership

- 3.1. The Wrekin Forest Partnership seeks to:
- 3.2. support voluntary initiatives aimed at working together that contribute to the landscape conservation of the Wrekin Forest.
- 3.3. be a representative group with a strong advisory role offering a consensus building function for the future landscape conservation of the Wrekin Forest.
- 3.4. support the continued protection of the designated landscape elements, to enhance and extend where possible and promote complementary research and monitoring throughout the Wrekin Forest.
- 3.5. support the review and monitoring of geological conservation, seek opportunities to enhance the management arrangements for the geological resource and promote wider understanding of the geodiversity of the Wrekin Forest.
- 3.6. support the positive management of wildlife throughout the Wrekin Forest.

- 3.7. work to support the aims of the Shropshire Biodiversity Action Plan in regard to protecting threatened habitats, seeking opportunities to restore or create wildlife habitats, support appropriate management and promote public understanding.
- 3.8. support and promote environmentally sustainable agriculture through the development of beneficial collaborations, information sharing and advice and public education.
- 3.9. support the active conservation of the archaeological and industrial heritage of the Wrekin Forest.
- 3.10. promote, support and enhance relationships between the Wrekin Forest and the surrounding urban communities of Wellington and Telford.
- 3.11. support the development of an integrated high quality multi-user network of trails that supports positive exploration and enjoyment of the Wrekin Forest, while conserving the natural character of the area.
- 3.12. support community wide initiatives to promote a cleaner, safer natural environment, seek to develop projects that contribute to raising public awareness of environmental issues, and provide a forum for Wrekin Forest-wide debate.
- 3.13. promote public understanding and appreciation of the natural, cultural and historical resources of the Wrekin Forest through supporting new research, literature and educational initiatives.
- 3.14. promote the positive use of the Wrekin Forest for the purposes of health, leisure and recreation.
- 3.15. promote and support opportunities positively to engage and involve the general public in the conservation of the Wrekin Forest.

4. Membership

- 4.1. The Group currently comprises representatives of:

Shropshire Wildlife Trust
 Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership
 Telford & Wrekin Council
 Shropshire Council
 Forestry Commission
 All Friends Round the Wrekin
 Wellington Town Council
 Parish Councils in the Wrekin Forest area
 Small Woods Association
 Shropshire Geological Society
 Walkabout Wrekin
 Telford West Wildlife Group
 Wellington LA21
 Wellington 'Walkers Are Welcome' initiative
 Up to 3 individual community members
 Up to 7 farmers/ landowners

Organisations listed above will nominate their representative to attend meetings. Additional representatives from the organisations listed may be kept on a mailing list and attend meetings where this will be of value.

- 4.2. The Partnership may invite guests to attend meetings for a particular topic. Members of the Partnership will undertake to promote the conservation and sustainable management of the Wrekin Forest, attend meetings whenever possible and, if no longer able to attend meetings on a regular basis, to step down or to seek another

representative. Organisational members must have a significant material or operational interest in the area and have adequate resources to support effective membership. Individual members must demonstrate commitment in an area of interest relevant to the remit of the Partnership, and be resident in or near to the area.

- 4.3. The Partnership will review its membership every two years, and may co-opt new members.

5. Operation

- 5.1. It is intended that the Partnership be given adequate structure without being burdened by formality. The Group will endeavour to operate by communication and consensus, reflecting its main role of co-ordination and consultation rather than as a decision-making body.
- 5.2. The Partnership will meet three times a year, or as agreed by the membership. A Chair and Vice-Chair will be nominated annually or as necessary by the members of the Partnership.
- 5.3. The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership will provide administrative support. Agendas and any papers will be circulated at least a week before meetings. Members wishing to include items on the Agenda should try to give adequate notice to the Chair or responsible Officer. Organisations may send alternative or additional representatives to meetings, with the agreement of the Partnership's Chair.
- 5.4. Updates on activity of the Group will be given periodically to the AONB Partnership. Minutes and papers of the Group will be made available on the Shropshire Hills AONB website.

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