



Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Steering Group

SGCT HQ, Coalbrookdale

Tuesday 16th April 2024, 13.00 – 15.00

Present:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Marion Blockley (MB) – Chair | Ian West (IW) – Broseley Town Council |
| Cllr Carolyn Healy (CH) – Telford & Wrekin Council | JP Brayford (JB) – Severn Gorge Countryside Trust |
| Valerie Hulme (VH) - Telford & Wrekin Council | Peter Boland (PB) – Historic England |
| Andrew Gittins (AG) - Telford & Wrekin Council | Ed McGregor (EMcG) – English Heritage |
| Barbara Johnson (BaJ) – Telford and Wrekin Council | Daniel Trewin (DT) – Environment Agency |
| Catherine Worrall (CW) – Telford & Wrekin Council | Angela Bainbridge (AB) (Ironbridge Business Consortium) |
| Andy Wigley (AW) – Shropshire Council | |
| Becky Jones (BeJ) – Shropshire Council | |
| Ioanna Katapidi (IK) (University of Birmingham) | |

1.	Introductions and apologies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome from MB. • Apologies received from: Brandi Hall Crossgrove (TWC), Cllr Eileen Callear (TWC) Alison Hinks (Madeley Town Council), Ironbridge Gorge Parish Council; Caroline Bagnall (SC Cllr), Nick Ralls (IGMT), Rory Hunter (IGMT) Psyche Hudson (TWC) Helle Jorgensen (UOB); Sarah Simmonds (ICOMOS UK)
2.	Minutes of last meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed
3.	Matters arising
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGA site: had moved forward – and note will be discussed in later item • WHS Mapping provided to Historic England to bring the current base layer up date • Following MBs letter of support for the bathing water river quality group, this has been acknowledged and confirmed status • Work has been completed on Jiggers Bank.
4.	New Chair
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TWC Successfully interviewed and the role has been accepted by Ken Sloan (KS), Vice-Chancellor and CEO Harper Adams University • VH to arrange handover between MB and KS; and arrange earlier Steering Group Meeting (beginning of July suggested)
5.	Report from WHS Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS Co-ordinator Brandi (Hall-Crossgrove) is on long-term sickness absence. Therefore in terms of other recruitment to cover the sickness absence TWC are seeking to appoint a temporary co-ordinator to fulfil the role during absence. TWC will update the Group accordingly. • Due to absence no work on Management Plan has been undertaken.

- TWC circulated an email (09/04/24) regarding WH Day or 'International Day of Monuments and Sites 2024: Disasters & Conflicts through the Lens of the Venice Charter' – Thurs 18th April 2024, and asked Organisations to prepare own relevant content and promote accordingly.
- UK Spring Conference in Bangor focusing on Industrial World Heritage – took place on Wednesday 10th & Thursday 11th April 2024
- World Heritage UK are running a series of World Heritage webinars in 2024 with Marion providing a webinar on the Gorge on Thurs 2nd May at 7pm. Tickets available on WH UK web site (£5)
- The UK National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC) is developing a resilient network for UNESCO Designated Sites in the UK through 'Local to Global' project, made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Local to Global will convene UNESCO site coordinators and external consultants to generate a community of practice that promote skills, confidence and capacity-building in the following key areas:
 - ▶ Audience development, stakeholder mapping and inclusion
 - ▶ Fundraising and financial sustainability
 - ▶ Digital transformation and web development
 3 pilot sites will be chosen for stakeholder mapping exercises. MB noted in the absence of BHC the IGWHS had not volunteered to be involved.

5. Partner Updates

Telford & Wrekin Council

- The Destination Management Plan and the Economic Development Strategy have now been approved by TWC Cabinet
- Aga:

Noted the application is undetermined the applicants have appealed for non- determination; and therefore the LPA committee members will consider the application on 24th April 24, and consider what recommendation would be made had an appeal not been made; the details of this are all set out in the committee report. This will form the basis of the LPA's statement of case, and statement of common ground. Discussion was had over the process; involvement of Shropshire Council and Historic England.

MB provided detailed observations of matters relating to Archaeology and raised concerns, furthermore links on the portal were not working

VH confirmed the WHS SG comments are reported to LPA committee, as detailed in the report; no further representation to LPA are necessary; bit any further comments to be made directly to PINs.

CH informed the group of the outcome of the public meeting held on the 13/04/24, and that representations will be made from CH/MB and Parish Council to PINs on behalf of local considerations.

Discussion was had on the risks to the WHS Status, and the potential first stage risk – 'Statement of Conservation'

MB asked whether ICOMOS had been informed about the planning appeal and invited to comment, given their previous comments (ICOMOS Technical Review 22/9/22) on the planning application. VH responded 'No as they are not a statutory consultee'.

ACTION : AG to review links on Planning System and send information direct to MB to prepare WHS SG comments.

ACTION : CH requested Steering Group needs clearly defined parameters around conflict with planning; requesting the group should make comments to important matters as the WHS SG; it was agreed the matter should be addressed by the incoming chair; reviewing the terms of reference with the SG.

ACTION: MB to write a summary of concerns on the application and submit to PINs on behalf of the WHS SG.



- Highways, Engineering and Project Delivery (Adam Brookes) – No major schemes planned in The Gorge this year. There may be some small scale schemes and potentially surfacing works along Jiggers Bank down to Dale End but this is still up for review. The de-silting of Upper Furnace Pool is expected to take place late summer now / early autumn.
- Members were pleased to hear there were no major highways works planned within the WHS for the next year.
- Built Heritage - BAJ outlined that she'd been onsite with Lucy Oldnall and her architect, looking at the upcoming repair and refurbishment plans for Long Warehouse, Northern Lights, Museum of Iron and a warehouse that we believe is associated with the tile works at Blists Hill. All of the Coalbrookdale sites will require scaffolding and they're planning to start works circa May, depending on weather. The Blists Hill warehouse is not open to the public, and one of the warehouses has an internal workshop facing the back which is used for painting ironwork. It needs a proper extractor fan and flue installed to bring it up to a safety standard. These works have a separate funding stream and will be done as soon as practicable, after the Coalbrookdale projects. BAJ also discussed the need to remove the vegetation from the Grade II listed brick drying sheds and perform repairs to the roofs and brickwork. These works are recognised as important, but yet to be scheduled. In others matters an untidy land notice has been served on a private property on the Wharfage.
- Historic England (HE) released guidance on solar panels for heritage assets - CH requested TWC review SPD to ensure in line with recent guidance. HE also hosting a Climate Change Hazards for Heritage Webinar on the 28th May. PB confirmed this was part of HE's Technical Tuesdays, and open to the public.
- Local Plans - The draft plan consultation concluded at the end of January. The next step will be the 'Regulation 19' version of the Local Plan which will be the Council's final version of the document that will go back out for stakeholders (including the steering group) and the public to comment on. Following this the plan and any final comments will go to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. This is scheduled for later this year.
- Psyche Hudson (Culture & Wellbeing Services Manager) is leaving TWC IN April so Jon Bielstein who will be Group Manager for Culture going forward, is now invited to these meetings. The team don't have any specific update for the meeting in regard to events and activities – the details of festival in September are not sorted as yet.
- Planning Surgeries continue to be held in the Gorge on a bi-monthly basis. These are held in different locations across the Gorge with the next Surgery to be held at Maws Craft Centre on Wednesday 15th May (11-2pm) with the subsequent Surgery to be held at The Furnace Kitchen on Tuesday 16th July (11-2pm).
- The review of the boundary of the Severn Gorge Conservation Area has been approved, with some additional areas taken into the CA and some removed
- Up to date base layer for WHS SG on GIS provided by SC to HE;
ACTION: MB asked for map to be circulated.
- Re-planting in the Galleon Gardens is underway. Dale End Park has recently had tree planting and due to the ground affected by flooding we are reviewing the rose beds and considering different planting options.
- Public consultation for Dale End play area will be launched by TWC shortly to improve these facilities, utilising S106 monies.



- Historical trails will also be launched in the Park, with historical interpretation.
- WWII event under review due to condition of the ground.

Shropshire Council

- **Power station:**
The LPA approved a site wide design code in July 23; however an application made for phase 1A submitted by David Wilson Homes, failed to reflect the approved details, among other concerns and was refused in December 23. Since this time there has been continued dialogue for a new application under a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) and includes a review process by Design Midlands, an independent body.
Taylor Wimpey have begun public engagement and seeking LPA advice for Phase 2A; and involving Design Midlands before formal submission of their reserved matters application.
No update to Albert Edward Bridge works
CH questioned the sand and gravel extraction, noting decline in the market; AW confirmed no current adaptation of plans.
The SG noted the Shropshire stakeholders group in relation to highway matters and requested a copy of the terms of reference; and the wider appropriate organisations being involved in any Construction state holder group.
ACTION: AW to provide TWC with Terms of reference for Shropshire Stakeholders Group.
- Group welcomed Becky Jones, who replaces Joy Tetsill having retired at Shropshire Council
- SC Cabinet to consider additional material that supports the Local Plan, and approve a further consultation; this will seek to address Inspectorates interim findings, and matters of soundness. Anticipated LP will be submitted to PINS in late autumn.

English Heritage

- Following the car accident which caused significant damage to the Ironbridge Gates in front of the Toll House on the 28th February 24; some temporary measures have been put in place to ensure public remain safe; repairs are costed and plan to commence imminently. The Gates will be removed from site and repaired; water filled barriers will be installed for the duration of the works.
- During EH Members week, EH had conducted 4 x events on the bridge; these were well attended.
- Utility provided has requested cables to be ran across the bridge; EH currently investigating and working through details.

Broseley Town Council

- Decision on the current appeal at Calcutts is awaited; currently the site raises concerns on its visual appearance.

Madeley Parish Council no partner updates available.

MB notes no updates from IGMT; some discussion was had over the works to the Incline Plane; noting HE had given Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent; however an application was received by the LPA to consider full planning permission for development works.

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

- Highlighted the current review of operation tangent; and current land management issues for SGCT, which are a result of climate change, and wet conditions.
- Woodland management underway throughout the gorge, combined by Ash die back changes; note works in Coalport by power company and Idverde, which SGCT will need to complete.
- Security in the area continues to be an issue
- Involvement in the Walking Festival in May; and running a series of outdoor learning program in the summer.

	<p>IG Business Consortium nothing to report.</p> <p>University of Birmingham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in collaboration with the University of Ferrara (Italy) to produce a paper on Holistic Heritage Management. <p>Historic England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally the Heritage Action Zones have been announced: Nearest is Oswestry – providing up to £100k of grant funding ; bringing buildings back into use; Cultural custodian. To oversee and celebrate highstreet; CH – suggest lobbying for direct WHS grant funding <p>Environment Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at long term flood risk for Severn up to 2100 for the area upstream of Shrewsbury ‘Severn Valley Catchment’ will involve consultation , review, further consultation or more detailed projects. The benefits won’t be scene for 20 years plus whilst being designed and funded. A hydraulic model of the current and future risks to the Severn, including levels and flows should be available within the next year. ACTION : DT to share consultation with Group.
	<p>AOB</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH noted the interpretation board installed at the ‘Jackfield Halt’; on Severn Valley way Other interpretation matters to be installed in Dale End – rowing club; Albert Edward bridge Resident looking at a memorial for the Coalport ferry disaster. IW raised concerns over car parking on the bridge as summer approaches; CH confirmed legal order SG raised a vote of thanks to Marion; noting professional expertise as well as local insight brought to the group
<p>9.</p>	<p>Date of next meetings</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange a handover meeting between MB and KS July meeting – 1st week October 15th, 2024 from 12-3pm (Microsoft Teams) April 16th, 2025 from 12-3pm (in person @SGCT)