



Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Steering Group

On MSTeams

Tuesday 22nd October 2024, 13:00 – 15:00

Attendance and Apologies: See Appendix 1

1.	Introductions and apologies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome from KS. Survey on Future Ways of Working (including initial priorities) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1s with the Chair & Coordinator (KS managed to meet with some members with the remainder to be arranged and held before Christmas). Cllr Carolyn Healy and Adrian Corney respectively advised they would had to leave the meeting at 2pm for other pre-arranged meetings. *The Steering Group meeting had to be moved to the 22nd from the pre-arranged date of the 15th Oct. AG advised about that Brandi Hall-Crossgrove had left TWC and the Coordinator Role. TWC will be advertising with a view to filling the post asap. In the meantime AG will be monitoring the WHCoordinator inbox. Chair wished to formally Minute thanks from the Group for the work that Brandi undertook. KS suggested that we host a half-day away day to review the Management Plan including Actions in the New Year following Chair's 121, in order to reset. Cllr Healy confirmed that her primary objective was to get a new Management Plan adopted asap. RH was supportive subject to a Coordinator being in post to provide a clear steer. VH confirmed that subject to having the Coordinator in post this should be possible. PB was also supportive to ensure we are all clear on what the purpose and objectives we are seeking to achieve.
2.	Minutes of last meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KS advised on some of the Actions from the last Minutes and confirmed that the further information will be provided in due course in respect of Harper Adams potential assistance to WHS SG partners in hosting student Placements. Will be agreed at this meeting and Cllr Healy's comments around planning and Steering Groups ToR will be discussed. Helle (HJ) has highlighted an issue with the Draft Minutes in respect of the circulation of the chapter on UNESCO's World Heritage Convention by PDF and with regard her departure from the University, where Helle will retain an affiliation as honorary research fellow and is therefore happy to remain engaged in the steering group remotely. On the basis of the above it was proposed and agreed that the amended minutes were a true record.
3.	Matters arising
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No matters arising
4.	Partner Updates
	<p>a. Telford & Wrekin Council</p> <p>i) Coordinator Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 121's with Chair will now be booked in shortly by Exec Assistance to VC.

- TWC will be looking to advertise the Coordinator role. When in post they will be provided with a full brief with the priority the actions required to update the Management Plan.
- Historic England World Heritage Sites Governance and Financial Resilience Study response submitted with input from IGMT/SGCT and TWC Visitor Economy.
- Historic England due to issue WHS Management Plan Guidance / Policy in Autumn 2024 (still awaited) as well as a new Historic Environment Advisory Note in Jan 2025 for WH.

ii) Other Updates

- **Planning** TWC have been consulted on an Application for the approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for Phase 2A (the Cooling Towers phase) residential development pursuant to outline planning permission 19/05560/OUT 19/05560/OUT.
- **Development Plans** Local Plan Update: The local plan regulation 19 version, updated SCI and Local Development Scheme are due go to cabinet in December. It will then proceed to full council followed by a final chance for public and stakeholders to comment on the soundness of the plan. Further detail will be set out in updated Local Development Scheme. The WHS policy has been slightly updated based on comments received through the consultation process, but details are yet to be finalised.
- **Highways, Engineering & Project Delivery** Scheduled works are limited at the moment other than the de-silt of Upper Furnace Pool this is starting in the next week for 4-6 weeks.
- **Environmental and Neighbourhood Services (AC)** – Dale End Play Area refurbishment progressing well, it was hoped to be open in time for half term, all being well the area will be open by the end of next week. The flower beds in Dale End and Galleon / Jockey Bank parks have been replanted to refresh and adaptive to climate change.
- **Culture (JB)** suggested that Sarah Bird may be able to provide a comment in respect joint push for tourism between SC and TWC. World Heritage Festival back in Sept. Annual Coracle Regatta during August Bank Holiday. Secret7 art trail events at Fusion Gallery. Annual Ironbridge Open Day with Morris Team, Dog Show etc. Cultural Ambitions funded by Arts Council.

Cllr Healy – Community Projects – meeting a group looking to erect a memorial in respect of the Coalport Ferry Disaster and the campaign to relocate the Bartlett Memorial Fountain back into The Square.

Shropshire Council

- **(CB)** Planning App to erect a bungalow on edge of woodland in Broseley. Outside WHS but visible from the WHS.
- **(LE)** Officer predominately dealing with the Power Station applications, happy to answer any specific questions. CH on behalf of PC recognised that applications all sit within SC following the grant of the Outline but requested continued engagement as scheme has significant implications on The Gorge and TWC. LE confirmed that a Newsletter / Website is being produced by Harworth. VH flagged that Ward Member/ PC engagement / Liaison is a condition of the consent. VH/LE to have further conversation.

Broseley Town Council

- **(IW)** update on a tricky planning application in Jackfield (SCouncil). Likely that a new planning application may be submitted following previous application being allowed at Appeal. IW asked about the potential reinstatement of the railway. LE advised that SC and developer had met NE. Use of Albert Edward Bridge to carry mineral out of the site would cost £15-18m. Therefore there is a current variation of application under consideration to allow egress of mineral by road. Potential for use as a passenger railway are still under

consideration. KS wrote regarding this matter in the summer. CB highlighted issues on highways and tourism which KS noted he did include in his comments, although did note the number of road trips were not significantly higher and adherence to routing agreement fundamental.

The Gorge Parish Council

- **(MB)** Sent apologies Cllr Healy provided the following updates. PC particularly pleased that the Roberts Rd planning appeal was dismissed (20 affordable dwellings sitting just outside the WHS). PC has two operatives who maintain the public realm in addition to TWC. Red BT telephone box purchased and retained in Coalford to potentially be used as an Interpretation facility.

Madeley Parish Council

- **(RE)** sent apologies.

Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

- **(RH)** National Heritage Memorial Project continues at pace with scaffolding around The Toll House be removed with full completion soon. Moving on to Museum of Iron including the Clock Tower next. Blists Hill fencing (2.1km fence along Legges Way / Coalport Rd). Local exhausts project at Blists Hill undertake to allow continued demonstrations. The Inclined Plane is the most exciting project with work to The Engineer House, tree removal and landscape improvements. Flooding – the overarching point is that visitor numbers are down and RH questioned if this was consistent across the piste. Number of temporary traffic speed limits along Buildwas Rd would benefit from a review. LE advised that these issues have been raised with the developer with a view to being rectified. VH advised that some works will take place as part of s278 around the access as well as other works secured within the s106 closer to Ironbridge.

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

- **(JB)** Financial means is the biggest driver at the moment and fundraising is their major focus as well as independent contracting.

IG Business Consortium

- **(AB)** no comments to report for this meeting.

Coracle Trust

- **(ML)** no

Birmingham University

- **(HJ)** following departure University will be looking to recruit, notwithstanding departure Helle will continue as an active member of the Steering Group and will continue to work on promoting Ironbridge.

English Heritage

- **(EM)** Heritage Open Days in Sept very successful. A new book for the Tour Guide has been produced and improved. The replacement gate on the Toll House with measures being explored to mitigate any future issues.

Historic England

- **(PB)** Awaiting confirmation on Government Funding for the organisation as a whole. Whatever the decision this will not detract from the WH commitment.

Environment Agency

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (DE) flood barriers deployed in Ironbridge, a scene experienced too often sadly, this particular event was shorter and river levels thankfully lower than previous events. Severn Valley Water Management Scheme a long term project looking at the storage of a significant amount of flood water to hopefully alleviate flood issues downstream. Bathing Water data collected (May – Sept) to gain clarification on water quality published on SwimFo website. Not just of interest to bathers but dog walkers, and water based activities (canoeing, paddle boarding) etc. <p>ICOMOS UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (SS) no update available.
	AOB
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RH welcomed the de-silting of Upper Furnace Pool. Questioned whether there is any update on the Former AGA site. VH confirmed that the LPA/TWC have not received any communications from the Developer who are presumably considering their options following the Appeal. Asked if TWC were supportive of the Interactive Map proposal for Coalbrookdale from the University. AG advised that TWC's understanding was that this was a University project who were seeking some input from ourselves but not necessarily a project being led by TWC. Any project that assisted with the Interpretation of the Gorge would be welcomed in advance of a potential Interpretation Strategy subject to funding.
9.	Date of next meetings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 16th, 2025 from 12-3pm (in person @SGCT) • September 16th, 2025 from 12-3pm (on MSTeams)



Appendix 1: Attendance and Apologies

Ken Sloan	Chair
Valerie Hulme	Telford & Wrekin Council
Andrew Gittins	
Barbara Johnson	
Adrian Corney	
Sarah Bird	
Cllr Carolyn Healy	
Becky Jones	Shropshire Council
Louise Evans	
Cllr Caroline Bagnall	
Ian West	Broseley Town Council
Ed McGregor	English Heritage
Peter Boland	Historic England
Daniel Trewin	Environment Agency
Rory Hunter	Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
Angela Bainbridge	Ironbridge Business Consortium
Helle Jorgensen	University of Birmingham

Apologies:

Cllr Angela McClements	Telford & Wrekin Council
Andy Wigley	Shropshire Council
Maureen Bragg	The Gorge Parish Council
Cllr Rae Evans	Madeley Town Council
JP Brayford	Severn Gorge Countryside Trust
Mary Lewis	Coracle Trust
Ioanna Katapidi	University of Birmingham