



Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Steering Group

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, Coalbrookdale

Thursday 17th September 2026, 14:00 – 16:00

1.	Introductions, apologies and minutes of last meeting
	• Welcome and introduction of new members from KS. • KS provided apologies from those unable to attend. • Confirmation that following no objections from LF's email, minutes from the last meeting have been uploaded to WHS website. • Chair would like to record thanks to both of the previous members, Andy Wigley and Rory Hunter, who have since moved on from their positions and welcomed new member Paul Gossage.
2.	Update on Progress of Management Plan Project
	• LF provided an update on Management Plan progress, confirming that consultation and data gathering processes are complete. Drafting has commenced, and presentations were given on sections completed to date. LF noted the WHS is the first to use HEs toolkit. • LF advised Chapter 1 and 2 are currently awaiting agreement with HE, with all 6 chapters to be presented together to Steering group once agreed. LF outlined next steps including Focus Group review, Steering Group consideration and endorsement from HE to ICOMOS. • LF informed Broseley representative that the plan would be taken to cabinet at both TWC and Shropshire Council. • Timescales are TBC, it is anticipated the plan will be presented to Steering Group in November. • The Chair reiterated that the aim of the plan is to provide a more transparent, accessible document and noted that this is a new process for the WHS and thanked all those involved.
3.	National Trust – A New Chapter for Ironbridge Gorge
	• MA thanked those involved in the reopening programme- highlighting importance of long term planning, backlog remains in some areas, work continuing on the MVP Version 2 upgrade. • MA provided update on visitor engagement, noting survey feedback has been positive, satisfaction levels of around 80%. Discussed managing visitor capacity across sites as reopening progresses. • MA advised that the framework for the 2027 opening programme is being developed, including confirmation of which sites will be open, booking system continues to operate successfully. • The Chair thanked MA for the trusts action and support in addressing behavioural and cultural issues and the measures being implemented to mitigate. CCB thanked MA and the wider team for the reopening of Pipe museum, noting positive local community engagement and great impact on highstreet. • Discussion of additional parking measures, MA thanked the Council for its support in utilising parking options. • Request was made for any available data relating to visitor pressures on water services. It was confirmed that pressures have been experienced within the Gorge areas, further information was confirmed to be sought where available.

4.	Severn Trent Water and Dalcour Maclaren – Ironbridge Wastewater Presentation
	• MW provided update on project, introduction to Comms team and an overview was provided on the ongoing programme and its objectives. • MW current data collection and surveys have informed implementation works. Disruption is expected over next two months, dates were provided of temporary road closures. Conformation to minimise disruption where possible, with additional teams employed to mitigate • MB representative requested comms on dale end road closure to be circulated. • Concerns were raised regarding noise, STW confirmed mitigation measures and neighbour notifications are being implemented. Members requested improved comms of road closures to local residents. • STW provided update on wastewater network improvements particularly to designated bathing water area. Overview as provided of catchment area, network priorities and the decision to pursue enhancements to existing network. STW confirmed collaboration with TWC including data sharing arrangements. • STW outlined technical solutions, new storage facilities and pipework upgrades to locations. STW confirmed that the feasibility, GI and survey phases are now complete, the protect will progress into the formal design phase. Works at remote areas are to commence in 2027 with major works in Gorge expected from 2028. STW advised comms will be circulated regarding road closures and disruption to tourist areas. • Issues of misconnected properties and sewage discharges were raised, STW confirmed ongoing surveys and flow monitoring. • ML representative welcomed commitment to improvement of river quality. Members requested whether water quality data will be made available to the public for bathing area. • Chair suggested exploring opportunities to incorporate water quality and management into educational programmes.
5	Telford and Wrekin Council - Ironbridge WHS 40th Anniversary
	• LF introduced proposals for 40th celebrations. Update was provided on both national and local commemorations including join collaboration with WHUK partners, shared visitor engagement initiatives, anniversary branding, commemorative postcards, webinars and mascot distribution. • LF stated at local levels, plans are being developed for a yearlong programmed of events and activities with dates provided. Members shared positive engagement to strengthen visitor offer across WHS and associated areas. • CCB requested signage be communicated to them for events. STW also requested Calendar dates to be circulated in order to align with wastewater work programming. • Discussion took place regarding opportunities for collaboration with Severn Trent Water as part of future engagement and activities.
5.	Partner Updates
	a. Telford & Wrekin Council Jon Belstien and Cllr Carolyn Healy - Local Plan out for consultation. Travel plan is live and in the process of finalising culture strategy. The bridge will be closed on 20th October. Highways team survey around parking will be undertaken that will feed into management plan b. Shropshire Council Becky Jones - Instigation of new Local Plan and value destination management plan is also lining up. c. Broseley Town Council

	Cllr Caroline Bagnall– Neighbourhood Plan to be updated. d. The Gorge Parish Council Maureen Bragg – light switch on involvement request of assistance e. Severn Gorge Countryside Trust JP Brayford - Commission for Lincoln steps after Christmas, tree works at Benthall, Haywood and Saltswood expected to be more works required. F. English Heritage Ed McGregor requested potential volunteer collaboration with national trust G. Coracle Trust Mary Lewis – New members recruited to board and regatta expected to return next year Harper Adams University Chair – Gave thanks to the members for updates and reiterated those who could not be in attendance and shared their apologies
9.	Date of next meetings
	Thursday 11th February 2027 1.30-3.30pm

Appendix 1: Attendance and Apologies

Ken Sloan (KS)	Chair
Laura Fildes (LF)	TWC WHS Coordinator
Cllr Carolyn Healy (CCH)	Telford & Wrekin Council
Jon Bielstein (JB)	Telford & Wrekin Council
Caitlin Harper (CH)	Telford & Wrekin Council
Cllr Caroline Bagnall (CCB)	Shropshire Council
Becky Jones (BJ)	Shropshire Council
Ben Williscroft (BW)	Historic England
Tom Pattinson (TP)	Forestry Commission
JP Brayford (JPB)	Severn Gorge Countryside Trust
Maureen Bragg (MB)	The Gorge Parish Council
Cllr Rae Evans (RE)	Madeley Town Council
Mark Agnew (MA)	National Trust
Mary Lewis (ML)	Coracle Trust
Ed McGregor (EM)	English Heritage
Matt Taylor	Dalcour Maclaren
Stephen Finch	Severn Trent Water (STW)
Marcus Willday	Severn Trent Water



Laura Greaves	Severn Trent Water
Matt Priestley	Severn Trent Water

Apologies

Helle Jorgensen (HJ)	University of Birmingham
Gary Ashby (GA)	English Heritage
Barbara Johnson (BJ)	Telford and Wrekin Council
Andy Gittins (AG)	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Angela McClements	Telford and Wrekin Council