

Community Governance Review  
Electoral Services  
Darby House  
Telford & Wrekin Council  
Lawn Central  
Telford  
TF3 4JA

**Via Email: [reviews@telford.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@telford.gov.uk)**

14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Dear Sirs

**Community Governance Review  
Review of Town and Parish Councils.**

Thank you for this further opportunity to feed into the community governance review consultation. As the Borough Councillor for Wrockwardine Wood & Trench my Ward is split between two councils Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish and Oakengates Town Council. This causes confusion for residents and difficulties for myself as residents do not understand why these boundaries are not co-terminus with the Borough Ward and subsequently residents receive different services and facilities, to those available to their neighbour over the road, this seems neither fair nor equitable.

It would enhance Community cohesion as there are strong, historical and community links between Wrockwardine Wood, Trench and Oakengates. Families living in Wrockwardine Wood & Trench use services in Oakengates, Doctors, Schools, Dentists, Shopping, Market, Library and Leisure Facilities.

Many of the residents already use the Wakes community building taking part in Senior Socials and find it difficult to understand why they can't go on the Senior Citizens outings and this is further compounded when individual roads are served by two different councils, roads such as Teagues Crescent and Wombridge Road, this evidences the fact there is a natural flow from the one parish council to the other town council. There are actual next-door neighbours who cannot benefit from the same services, not only social and community services but also the Neighbourhood Environmental Team and Enforcement. By merging the two councils of Oakengates and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench there would be a natural synergy which reflects the former Oakengates Urban District Council.

The Wakes is the only Community Centre that serves both councils. The Community Centre provides provision for HHAH, Senior Socials, Family Hub, and many other activities of which there is no provision in Wrockwardine Wood and Trench. It is Oakengates that residents attend not Donnington or St Georges as they have no natural affiliation to those areas.

I believe the current number of councillors for these two councils totalling 24 (13+11) is too many and they should be sufficient in number to ensure each ward has representation across the new boundary. Many of the existing Borough Councillors for Oakengates & Ketley Bank and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench currently sit on both Town and Parish Councils to ensure representation of their residents, this is an anomaly between these two councils. Amalgamating the two town and parish councils would save on the number of councillors required and therefore save on running costs.



These savings would enable the combined council to provide new services and activities for the residents and these savings relating to staff, buildings, running costs and meetings together with an improvement in the Community Action Team which would be the same for both areas and a reduction in precept that can be passed onto the residents.

This new enlarged Oakengates Town Council (renamed Greater Oakengates & District Town Council ) will provide better representation for the community and provide parity of services for all residents across the area. If the merger of Oakengates Town Council and Wrockwardine Wood Parish Council were not to be considered I would urge that Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council is left as a single parish and not merged as suggested with Donnington & St Georges. Currently my borough ward is split between a Town and Parish Council, as the boundaries do not correlate with the borough ward. the merger of Oakengates Town Council and Wrockwardine Wood Parish Council therefore would provide clearer and more equitable services under one council. I would ask most strongly that you consider following the existing parish boundary of Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council when merging the two councils. I currently have a substantial amount of ward work from residents who live near the Cockshutt, the Summer Crescent/Mafeking Drive area, who naturally assume that they belong to the Wrockwardine Wood ward and not St Georges, this area was formerly in the Wrockwardine Wood Borough ward and should remain within the new boundaries after the governance review.

Further to the former draft proposals that were published, I continue to object to the proposed new Central Parish Ward through the merging of St Georges, Donnington, and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Councils. Donnington and St Georges could still be considered for a merger if this were felt suitable for the residents in those areas.

There are areas within my Borough Ward which are very deprived, families without access to transport who walk the short distance to Oakengates to use the nursery and schools for their children and use the community centre (The Wakes) which offers many social activities which support wellbeing and reduce isolation. These families would find it exceedingly difficult if the proposed changes went ahead. They would not be able to access community services in Donnington or St Georges as there are no transport links, there is not a regular bus services available for families to use, unlike the current bus service between Wrockwardine Wood & Trench and Oakengates.

Whilst there may be some merit in the merging of Donnington and St Georges, this does not apply to the inclusion of Wrockwardine Wood and Trench. Wrockwardine Wood and St George's are not natural bedfellows with the area cut in two by Moss Road and St Georges Road itself.

The merging of Donnington, St Georges, and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench, rather than simplifying the ward and parish boundaries, would make matters more complex, not only is there no community cohesion, but they are also distinctly different areas and within different borough ward and parliamentary constituencies. The suggested proposed Central Parish would be taking from areas across 3 different borough wards, separating communities even further.

I also want to respond to the proposals around the Trench Lock. Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council have suggested that this area moves into their parish, I can only stress that this area should remain within the Oakengates Town Council area and that the boundary should reflect the borough ward boundaries. Considering this, we also ask that the other part of Trench Lock which is currently in Hadley & Leegomery Parish should in fact move into Oakengates Town Council like their neighbours, so the whole of the Trench Lock estate is in Oakengates Town Council mirroring the borough ward, the current situation for residents again causes confusion, Residents of the whole of Trench Lock are

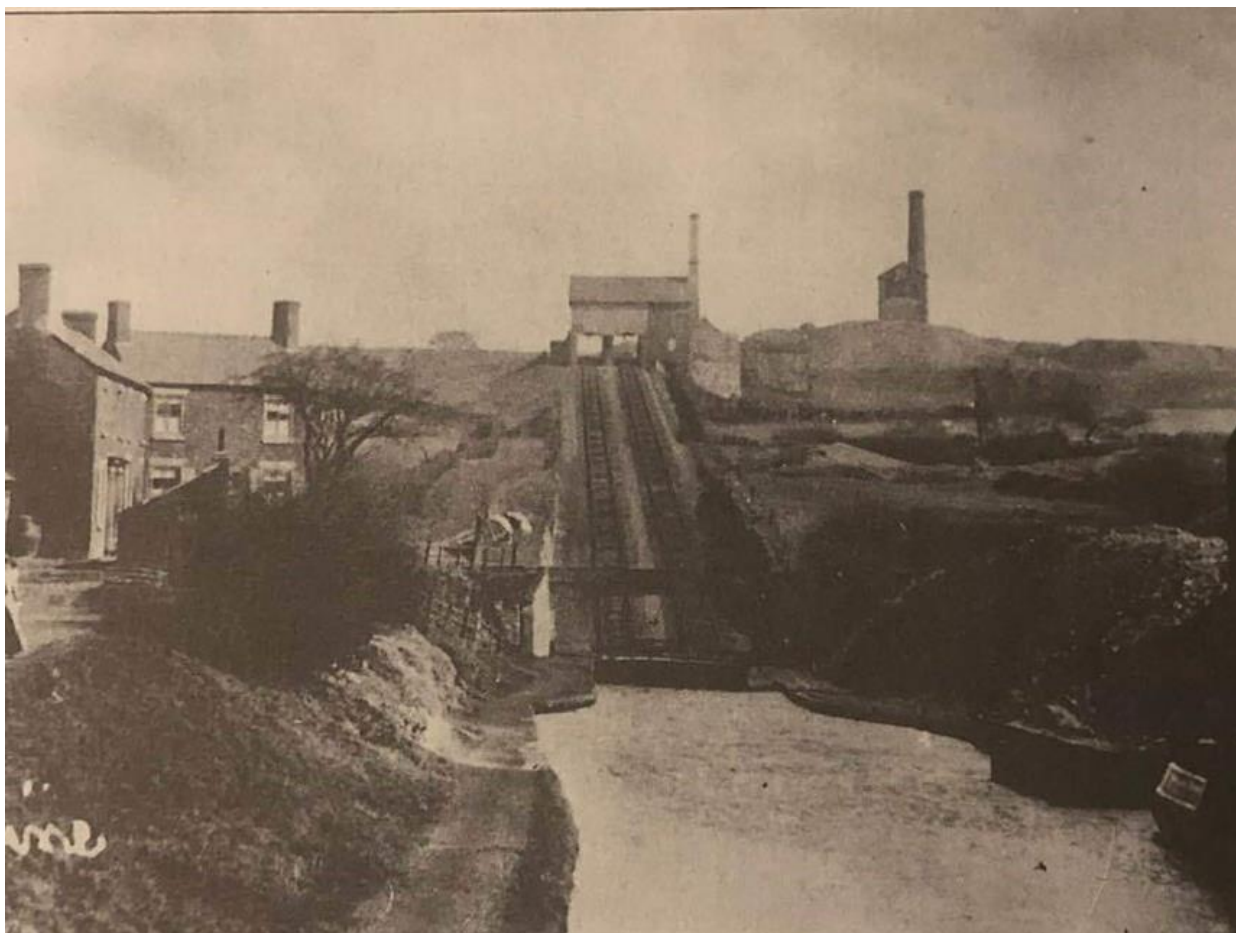


within the borough ward of Oakengates & Ketley Bank and the constituency of Telford, but the area is split at parish level, residents can be within Oakengates Town Council and the Telford Constituency but their neighbour is under Hadley & Leegomery Parish and in the constituency of the Wrekin. This inconsistency of boundaries is wrong. Trench Lock historically has always been part of Trench, with the incline plane, the locks, canal as can be seen in the old map below, the L.N.W.R. the Wellington and Coalport branch line being the natural boundary between Trench and Hadley. The Trench Lock housing area is now built on this area within the Trench boundary.



The photograph below shows the area with the incline plane and canal in situ within Trench, this community has always been aligned to Oakengates and Trench and was part of the former Oakengates Urban District Council rather than the Hadley and Leegomery area, which was part of the Wellington Urban District Council.





Looking further to the Community Governance Review, whilst I have initially recommended the merger of Oakengates Town Council and Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish Council, there are difficulties with boundaries for residents. The Millenium Village is already in the Oakengates & Ketley Bank borough ward but not in the Oakengates Town Council ward, this I believe should be rectified during this governance review. Much of Ketley has natural synergy with Oakengates, again this is where residents use services and facilities in Oakengates such as Doctors, Schools, Dentists, Shopping, Market, Library and Leisure Facilities. Many of the residents already use the Wakes community building taking part in Senior Socials and find it difficult to understand why they don't qualify for Senior Citizens outings etc.

The benefits of amalgamating the parishes of Oakengates Town Council, Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Parish and to also consider Ketley Parish are:

*Greater Efficiency and Effectiveness:* By combining resources, the three parish councils can streamline administrative processes, reduce duplication of efforts, and enhance service delivery. This will lead to cost savings and more efficient use of residents' money.

*Enhanced Representation:* Larger, combined councils will have a stronger voice in Telford & Wrekin Council. This increased influence can help them secure support for local projects that might have been overlooked if they were acting alone.

*Broader Skill Sets:* The new Greater Oakengates & District Town Council can benefit from a wider range of skills and expertise among its members. This diversity can lead to more innovative and effective solutions to community issues.



*Improved Services:* By pooling resources, the new council can offer a broader range of services and improve existing ones. This can include better maintenance of public spaces, enhanced recreational facilities, and more robust support for local events and initiatives.

*Cost Savings:* Shared administrative functions can lead to significant cost reductions, freeing up funds for community projects and services.

*Stronger Community Engagement:* Larger councils can foster a greater sense of community by bringing together diverse groups and encouraging more active participation in local governance.

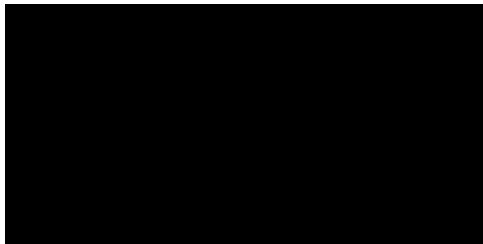
*Increased Resilience:* A larger council can better withstand external pressures such as funding cuts or changes in legislation, ensuring continued service delivery to residents.

The new Greater Oakengates & District Town Council should be restructured, with new councillors to be elected in May 2027 representing the new community. This unified approach will enhance the voice of residents, ensuring that all areas work together to address shared challenges. This will also allow for more cohesive planning and development efforts, ensuring that all areas continue to grow and thrive as interconnected communities.

Looking around the borough, I see natural connection and distinctiveness for areas, Priorslee with its recent growth should have its own Parish council, this would allow St Georges to merge with Donnington, they both have many characteristics in common. Muxton having split from Donnington could be considered for merger with Lilleshall, they are both distinct and have geographical connections.

The Gorge should be considered for merger with Madeley, historically the old 'Madeley Wood' included the Ironbridge area, and both areas share a uniqueness being within the World Heritage area which is not present anywhere else in the borough.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the author.

Wrockwardine Wood & Trench Ward