

Proposed Terms of Reference January 2025

Proposed Policy EN18 National Trust Working Group

1. **Purpose**

The Sherborne National Trust Working Group ("the Group") is established to review, discuss, and provide recommendations regarding the National Trust's plan for land and visitor management in and around Sherborne, Gloucestershire, as part of the Trust's "Big Nature, Better Access" project. The Working Group is mandated by the Cotswold District Council ("CDC") who will observe and receive reports from the Group. The Group will serve as a collaborative forum to ensure local interests (including those of neighbouring Parishes) are fully represented and considered in the development and implementation of the National Trust's plan. An independent chairperson will be appointed for the Group.

2. **Objectives**

- To review and provide structured feedback on the National Trust's plans for Sherborne, in the context of the "Big Nature, Better Access" project.
- To ensure effective communication between the National Trust, local stakeholders, and the wider community.
- To promote transparent decision making and inclusive consultation processes.
- To identify and address potential impacts of a plan on the local community and environment.
- To develop recommendations that balance conservation and recreational access objectives, with community needs.

3. **Membership**

The Working Group shall comprise:

- 1 Independent chairperson.
- 2 representatives from the National Trust.
- 2 representatives from Sherborne Parish Council.
- 1 representative from each participating neighbouring Parish Council (Aldsworth, Windrush, Clapton, Farmington).
- 6 representatives from local resident groups and businesses.
- 1 Observer from CDC.

4. **Roles and Responsibilities**

4.1 Chair

- An independent Chair will be appointed.
- The Chair will be responsible for:
 - Facilitating meetings.
 - Ensuring balanced discussion.
 - Managing the agenda.
 - Maintaining focus on objectives.

4.2 Members

- Attend scheduled meetings regularly.
- Review materials in advance of meetings.
- Contribute expertise and local knowledge.
- Represent their respective stakeholder.
- Act in good faith and in the best interests of the community.

5. Meetings

- The Group shall meet quarterly, or at intervals to be decided by the Chair.
- A quorum of 50% of members must be present for decision making.
- Meeting dates shall be set at least two weeks in advance.
- Minutes will be taken and distributed to the Group within two weeks of each meeting.
- Meetings will be held in an accessible location in Sherborne.

6. Decision Making

- The Group will operate on a consensus basis where possible.
- Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made by majority vote.
- The Observer from Cotswold District Council will not have voting rights.
- All decisions will be recorded in the meeting minutes.

7. Reporting

- The Group shall provide quarterly progress reports to the Cotswold District Council.
- Quarterly updates will be shared with the wider community through the Parish Council's communication channels and elsewhere.
- An annual review of the Group's activities will be prepared and made publicly available.

8. Duration and Review

- The Group is established for an initial period of 24 months.
- Terms of Reference will be reviewed after 6 months and annually thereafter.
- The Group's mandate may be extended or modified based on progress and requirements.

9. Resources and Support

- Administrative support will be provided by [TBC].
- Members serve on a voluntary basis.
- Meeting venues will be arranged by Sherborne Parish Council.

10. Modification

- These Terms of Reference may be modified by agreement of Group members and approval from the Cotswold District Council.

Date of Adoption: [Insert Date]

Next Review Date: [Insert Date + 6 months]