

# Inspiration and guidance for Sherwood Forest competition entries

## Sherwood Forest area



The boundaries of Sherwood Forest changed over time so this map from 1609 gives a rough outline of the areas to work within. For example, images celebrating Mansfield town centre and its residents fulfil the brief. Images of Hardwick Hall do not, as is not geographically within the historic Sherwood Forest boundaries.

## **Sherwood Forest sense of place statement**

Sherwood Forest is a hugely diverse, yet understated, landscape. Its gently rolling hills are dotted with grand ducal houses, castles ruins and abbeys, a landscape carved up by politics and power. Windswept spoil heaps and mining remnants speak of intensive human impact on the land. Growing patches of health land and woodland show recent efforts to reinstate the important habitats of its past and provide a leisure space for all, places for walking, biking, discovering wildlife and appreciating evidence of historic life and industry. It is more than expected; woodland is a small part of the patchwork of urban areas, historic settlements, ex-mining communities, arable and heathland.

### **Geology**

Its ancient Permo-Triassic Sherwood Sandstone base, formed over 200 million years ago, gives its porous and nutrient poor soils a distinctive sandy colour and beige outcrops, most visible in the National Nature Reserve and, outside of the scope of Miner2Major's funded area, Nottingham's famous Castle Rock and caves.

### **Form & design**

The industrial geometry of iconic headstocks punctuate rough pillows of heather, staggering structures made miniature by the wide vista. Angular structures rust in nature reserves yet the difficult past of coal mining remains raw in many communities.

### **Materials and substance**

Red bricks to the West give way to limestone in the East. Sandy paths wind through woodland floor littered with distinctive lobed oak leaves and thick carpets of pine needles.

### **Use & function**

The scars of World War I training trenches, spoil heaps, pits and rail tracks reveal clues to Sherwood's past use. Its crisscrossing miles of footpaths map swathes of land saved from development by coal mining.

### **Location & setting**

At the heart of the UK, Sherwood is culturally connected. Its varied viewed of open heaths, wooded skylines and enclosed spaces have inspired generations of global innovators, poets, inventors, writers and great thinkers.

### **Language & other forms of intangible heritage**

Nottinghamshire's vast coalfields generated a great deal of the nation's energy, pit talk developed from close and dangerous working conditions. Elephant's tabs, powder monkeys, Monday hammer, gobbings and snap reveal the inner lives and creativity of mining communities.

### **Spirit & feeling**

Internationally renowned home of the heroic Robin Hood, Sherwood Forest is the spirit of outlaws, of rebellion, of standing up for your rights, of fighting injustice. It is close communities, families united through mining with lines drawn across a political battlefield; diverse peoples facing the world wars and adversity together, living and dying side by side.

Human dramas unfold, unnoticed by the connected flora communities we have only just begun to understand. Sherwood Forest's spirit is in the magic of the forest; of trees that speak through chemicals, warn each other of danger, tapped into the wood wide web through ancient mycelium networks.

## Sherwood Forest interpretation plan themes

These might provide some inspiration as they are the themes we are using to develop stories of Sherwood Forest.

### Sherwood Forest as a journey of discovery:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| A physical journey          | Encouraging active participation in the landscape through walking, biking or using accessible paths  |
| A educational journey       | Facilitating individuals to discover that Sherwood Forest is larger and more nuanced than they had realised  |
| Digital customer journey    | Avoiding dead ends on digital platforms so that visitors can keep exploring, from surface level information into further engagement such as a call for action and deeper research on the topic |
| A journey of self-discovery | Encouraging deeply personal engagement with the landscape and heritage through the 5 ways to wellbeing   |

### Sherwood Forest as a place of diverse stories – much more than just Robin Hood!

|   | Theme                       | Focus                          | Impact                   |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | The depth of time and space | Geology, geography & astronomy | A sense of awe           |
| 2 | Rich habitats               | Biodiversity                   | Deeper interest          |
| 3 | The land as resource        | Land management for resources  | Local distinctiveness    |
| 4 | Power, conflict and change  | Political events               | A sense of agency        |
| 5 | Free thinking Sherwood      | Creativity and innovation      | Inspiration              |
| 6 | A place called home         | Lives of Sherwood residents    | A sense of connectedness |
| 7 | Outstanding value           | Global importance              | Sustainability           |