



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

West Midlands
Regional Assembly
Speaking out for the region

NEWS RELEASE

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Landmark Agreement Signed Between Wales and West Midlands

Stronger cross-border collaboration between Central Wales and the West Midlands should result from a new landmark agreement between the West Midlands Regional Assembly and the Welsh Assembly Government which was launched today (Monday 5th March).

The event was held at Ludlow Race Course and attended by over 100 people from the two Assemblies and organisations, including local authorities the police and health agencies, which are charged with delivering services to local people.

Called the 'Central Wales - West Midlands Memorandum of Understanding on Cross-Border Collaboration', the document was signed by Cllr David Smith, Chairman of the West Midlands Regional Assembly and Carwyn Jones Minister for Environment, Planning and the Countryside at the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Memorandum of Understanding will act as a commitment to share information on policy and service development affecting border communities. This includes consulting each other on changes in policy which may impact on these communities and finding opportunities for joint working to benefit local people.

Commenting on the signing, Cllr David S Smith, Chairman of the West Midlands Regional Assembly said: "The Memorandum of Understanding is a new and symbolic document which will help to formalise the work that has already been undertaken on cross-border issues. Work with 'the neighbours' has been going on for years around transport, health, forestry

and agriculture. This has been informal work, which has relied on the good will and common sense of the people concerned. This Memorandum of Understanding will mean we can move forward and really build on this work. We have an excellent reputation for working in partnership to get things done and I look forward to working with the Welsh Assembly to deliver better services to our border communities.”

Carwyn Jones, Minister for Environment, Planning and the Countryside at the Welsh Assembly Government added: “Communities in rural Wales and Shropshire and Herefordshire face similar challenges and have similar needs. While we already work closely with our neighbours in the West Midlands this Memorandum of Understanding will ensure close co-operation which will benefit both our communities.”

[Picture left to right: Carwyn Jones - Minister for Environment, Planning and the Countryside at the Welsh Assembly Government, Cllr David Smith, Chairman of the West Midlands Regional Assembly]

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Notes to editors:

West Midlands Regional Assembly

1. The West Midlands Regional Assembly ('the Assembly') represents a wide range of democratic, social and economic interests throughout the West Midlands region (comprising the historic counties of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire, and including the metropolitan area centred on Birmingham).
2. The Assembly's membership consists of 100 nominated representatives, with 68 members representing the local authority, 16 representing the business sector and 16 representing other economic and social partners.
3. The Assembly provides a platform for organisations to consider matters of common concern including: regional planning, transport, economic prosperity, sustainability, culture and Europe.
4. The Assembly is the Regional Planning Body, and is also responsible for scrutinising the operation of the region's RDA, Advantage West Midlands.
5. For further information, visit our website www.wmra.gov.uk

Welsh Assembly Government

1. The National Assembly for Wales, established in 1999, is the 60 Assembly Members (AMs) elected by the people of Wales. It is responsible for most public expenditure in Wales, and has powers to make a wide range of secondary legislation.
2. The National Assembly has delegated its executive powers to nine Cabinet Ministers, led by the First Minister, who together form the Welsh Assembly Government.
3. The Government of Wales Act 2006, which will come fully into force after next May's Assembly elections, will enable the Assembly to acquire enhanced legislative powers for matters approved by Parliament.
4. For further information, visit our website www.wales.gov.uk