

Telford (formerly Dawley)

Shropshire

'Mark Two' New Town – Designated 16 January 1963

Telford was originally designated as Dawley, changing its name to Telford (with an increase in designated area) in 1968. As well as accommodating overspill from congested existing urban centres, it was intended to regenerate the waning East Shropshire coalfield area. Telford has a rich heritage offer, including the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site. Conservation and tourism have played an important role in the New Town's development. The Development Corporation faced severe difficulties and expense in reclaiming derelict land associated with mine-workings, and until the mid-1980s Telford had high levels of unemployment and problems in attracting industrial firms to the town. Today, Telford is a Primary Urban Area – one of the 64 largest urban centres in the UK – and has expanded through several urban extensions.



Key facts:

- **Location:** 37 kilometres north west of Birmingham.
- **2011 Census population:** 166,641, in 56,135 households.¹
- **Local authority:** Telford & Wrekin Council.
- **Local Plan status:** Wrekin Local Plan (adopted 2000), Telford & Wrekin Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted 2007).

New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 16 January 1963 as Dawley New Town – renamed Telford in 1968.
- **Designated area:** 3,683 hectares, revised to 7,793 hectares in 1968.
- **Intended population:** 168,000, rising (by natural growth) to 220,000 in the late 1980s (population at designation: 70,000).
- **Development Corporation:** Aimed for a balance between industrial and residential development, and utilised a large amount of despoiled and contaminated land, formerly used by extractive industries, to integrate the market town of Wellington and a number of former townships with new, low-density, single-use development areas, linked by an extensive road network enabling congestion-free car travel. Development Corporation wound up 30 September 1991.

Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Telford that are owner-occupied (62%) is slightly less than the UK average and slightly higher than the UK New Towns average. 22% of households are in social rent – 3.4% higher than the UK average and consistent with the UK New Towns average. 15% of households are in private rent – 1% lower than the UK average and 2.4% higher than the UK New Towns average.
- Telford has a slightly higher proportion of households deprived in two or three dimensions than the English New Towns and England averages. Around 2% fewer than the English New Towns and England averages are not deprived in any dimension.

- The 2011 Census reported that the 'general health' of Telford's residents is fairly consistent with the UK New Towns and UK averages. 45.3% declared themselves to be in 'very good' health – 1.2% and 2.3% lower than the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively.

Employment/economic profile:

- Telford is the area's principal economic and social centre. It contains the majority of employment, services, facilities and transport infrastructure, and serves a wider sub-regional catchment within the West Midlands.
- There are around 5,525 active businesses in the local authority area, contributing £3.2 billion to the UK economy.
- The majority of employment in Telford is in manufacturing and retail. The proportion of those in manufacturing is 6% higher than the English and Welsh New Towns average, and 10% higher than the UK average.
- Telford claims the largest supply of serviced, 'ready-to-go' land in the West Midlands, but also has a higher-than-average number of young people not in education, work or training.
- Within The Marches LEP.

Development Corporation legacy:

- There is a strong landscape and open space framework.
- Current development plans are consistent with and are continuing the strategy adopted from the New Town period.
- There is a large landholding now owned by the HCA, for which Telford & Wrekin Council provides stewardship and planning advice.
- The infrastructure legacy provides Telford with significant physical capacity for future development.

Key issues for the future:

- Preparing a new Local Plan; and managing unplanned development in the absence of a five-year housing land supply to protect the integrity of the new Local Plan.
- Encouraging and helping developers to build at a faster rate.

¹ Local authority area total, minus the following wards: Newport North, Newport South, Newport East, Newport West, Edgmond, Ercall Magna, Church Aston and Lilleshall, Wrockwardine. In 2012 the Centre for Cities (<http://www.citiesoutlook.org/summary/telford>) noted Telford's population as 167,700

Did you know?

In May 2014 a property website Rightmove survey of 50,000 people found Telford to be the 'tenth happiest place to live in Britain'.