

THE VITACRESS
CONSERVATION
TRUST



**KEY POINTS AND ACTIONS ARISING FROM
BOURNE SUB CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING**

4 November 2009

PRESENT:	Pete Shaw (Chair)	-	University of Southampton
	Bob Wellard	-	Piscatorial Society
	Bridgett Culley	-	SMB Parish Council (SMPC)
	David Bone	-	Southern Water (SW)
	Michael Widen	-	SMB Parish Council (SMPC)
	Peter Evans	-	Adviser to SMB Parish Council
	Richard Sankey	-	Piscatorial Society
	Shirley Medgett	-	EA
	Steve Rothwell	-	Vitacress Salads

APOLOGIES:	Prof Gail Taylor (Chair)	-	VCT/University of Southampton
	Alison Graham-Smith	-	Natural England
	Graham Roberts	-	VCT / H&IOW Wildlife Trust
	Henry du Val de Beaulieu	-	Apsley Estate / Riparian Owner
	Michael Malyon	-	Riparian Owner
	Tim Nevard	-	VCT
	William Daniel	-	Famous Fishing
	Tom Davis	-	Test and Itchen Assn

INTRODUCTION

PS explained he intended to use the meeting primarily to debate Southern Water's (SW) recently publicised plans, but reminded the meeting it had no formal representative remit in this regard - this lay primarily with the Parish Council.

MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING OF 19 JUNE

PS advised an application has been made to the University for £68k to augment a commitment of £30k by VCT toward a 4 year PhD tasked with investigating source apportionment and bioavailability of phosphorus in upper chalk stream headwaters, focusing primarily on the Bourne and Upper Itchen.

PS advised he was summarising the output from a 96 sample point survey of invertebrate populations on the Bourne, looking at a range of habitats. Once complete this will be uploaded to the shared site.

Action: PS

SM advised she will publish EA invert survey results for Nov 2008 and Nov 2009 before the year end.

Action: SM

SM corrected the wording re: application of WFD to the “heavily modified” Bourne (19th June 2009 meeting actions). Heavily modified rivers are not exempt due to modification, but of lower priority.

PE advised he has a copy of draft EA (desk top) Hydrogeological Survey of the Bourne. EA to make the draft available for comment.

Action: SM

SDR undertook to invite an EA Resources representative to next meeting to discuss the report.

Action: SDR

GT to be asked to invite Councillor Thacker to the next meeting.

Action: GT

SMB FOUL SEWER ISSUES

MW summarised the history of the issue:

- 1965: Sewer laid and householders invited to pay for Council to connect them.
Work was of a poor standard.
Asbestos cement pipes used.
Evidence that some properties were connected as combined vs simply foul discharge.
- 1995/6: First severe issue of inundation with over pumping to Bourne.
Repeated in 1997, 2001, 2003 and 2007.
- 2003: SMBPC called upon SW to remedy the situation by sealing the system.
- 2007: SW claimed survey showed the main sewer was sealed but after media pressure agreed it required sealing.
- 2008: Main lined all bar last 700m up from pump station.
But over 70 laterals identified as leaking, still capable of overwhelming the system.
15 properties particularly impacted.
SW proposed remedy of installing permanent pipe line and pump station to service the 15 impacted properties at times of flooding by a screened discharge to the Bourne.

SMBPC rejected scheme on 13th October 2009.

SM advised the EA had not approved nor issued a consent for the discharge.

MW advised EA had written to assure they sought to protect the Bourne.

SR advised Simon Moodly had advised the EA did not welcome the proposal but had no statutory power to prevent it in times of flood risk.

MW advised planning permission would be needed for some aspects and that SMBPC would oppose the grant of same.

DB agreed a fully sealed system was the ideal and that this could be achieved. But he stressed this was not within SW remit which is currently limited to the main.

In 2011 SW may assume responsibility for laterals from residential curtilage.

OFWAT control SW budget and will not authorise repairs beyond SW responsibility.

DB advised the Borough Council has the power to require householders to remedy leaking laterals. They had used these powers in 2003 to ensure repair to all laterals then identified as leaking.

It was generally agreed replacement vs repair is needed.

Comment was made that asbestos cement pipes in saturated ground are reaching the end of their rated life

PE asked whether SW could adopt the laterals. DB thought not.

DB advised a meeting was shortly to be called between EA, the Borough, District and Parish Councils and SW. This meeting would attempt to agree the way forward. DB stressed the OFWAT funds of £1m to provide remedy to the 15 houses would be lost if not committed to works before April 2010.

SR felt that if the temporary solution were implemented, and properties were no longer impacted by the flooded sewer, there would be no likelihood of any further funds to alleviate the resultant diffuse impact on the Bourne, nor to address the exfiltration issue in dry conditions.

PE stressed the need for a hydrogeological survey to better understand the risk posed by the laterals leaking to surface gravels at times of low groundwater.

BC and MW felt the problem, a leaking sewage system, and not the symptom, should be addressed.

RS stressed the need to agree the remedy, cost the works, and then to seek funding. He cautioned against a short term fix that could be costly in the long term.

PS concluded the discussion by summarising the meeting's agreement that a permanent solution is needed; that it is likely to involve the installation of a sealed system and that progress will only be made through SW, the Borough Council and the EA meeting, together with the Parish and Borough Councils.

GOOD ECOLOGICAL STATUS

PS advised the recent Chalk Headwaters Forum had welcomed and endorsed the “Good Ecological Status” descriptors developed by SM and himself.

SR advised they are an excellent tool to enable the Upper Itchen Group to identify deficits. More fishery data were needed.

PS reported 4 years of funding for biannual electro fishing surveys of the Bourne secured via the VCT.

Debate followed re length of sections to be netted for electrofishing. SM agreed to send PS the EA protocol. **Action: SM**

UPPER ITCHEN GROUP

In GR’s absence PS advised the group had been formed and had identified several issues of concern, specifically the lack of *Ranunculus* spp; and low *Gammarus* populations.

The impact of impounded bodies of water such as Alresford Pond upon the upper tributaries needs investigationthe proposed PhD research programme would undertake this if funded.

PE advised The Watercress Company had recently been granted planning permission to expand above Alresford Pond. He was concerned their P data were inconsistent and was concerned the permission had been granted without better scrutiny of potential impact.

PE advised the sediments cleared from ponds require proper disposal...evidence of some dredged to side of stream where they will re-contaminate. One case on a VSL farm in Dorset SR under took to investigate and ensure appropriate protocols are in place for VSL.

Action: SDR

THE CHALK HEADWATERS FORUM

SR advised this had been a success. Approx 80 attendees. The focus had been primarily on P impacts.

In feedback the bringing together of all key stakeholders in chalk headwater protection was seen as valuable.

The Forum reaffirmed the need for focussed local action to achieve meaningful results, such as the BRI and UII.

Full proceedings will be published to the VCT website (www.vitacress-conservation.org)

AOB

SM advised the EA have recommenced a PhD researching *Ranunculus* communities on the Itchen.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 25th March 2010 @ 2pm at Vitacress Salads, Lower Link Farm, St Mary Bourne.