



MINUTES OF THE BOURNE SUB CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING

HELD AT THE BOURNE VALLEY INN, ST MARY BOURNE

WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2015

PRESENT:	Pete Shaw (PS) (Chair)	-	University of Southampton
	Carrie Hutchings (Secretary)	-	Vitacress Conservation Trust
	Kim Brown (KB)		Vitacress Ltd
	William Daniel (WD)	-	Famous Fishing
	Peter Evans (PE)	-	Advisor
	Rupert Kelton (RK)	-	WCSRT
	Maxine Holden (MH)		Environment Agency
	Michael Malyon (MM)	-	Lower Wyke Farm
	Shirley Medgett (SM)	-	Environment Agency
	Tim Nevard (TN)	-	VCT
	Matthew Norris-Hill (MN)		
	Steve Rothwell (SDR)	-	Vitacress Ltd and VCT

1. APOLOGIES

	Bridget Culley (BC)	-	St Mary Bourne Parish Council
	Henry du Val de Beaulieu	-	Apsley Farms and VCT
	Alison Graham-Smith (AGS)	-	Natural England
	Ali Morse (AM)	-	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
	Clare Read (CR)	-	Hurstbourne Priors Parish Council
	Gail Taylor	-	University of Southampton
	Bob Welland		Piscatorial Society

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the Sub-Catchment Management Group Meeting held on 22 September 2014 were agreed as an accurate and true representation of proceedings.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1. **Sewer Integrity** – SM advised there are no plans for improvements to the Bourne system in the current AMP (Asset Management Plan). The six year cycle is coming to an end and any further submissions need to be started next year.
- 3.2. **Catchment Partnership Groups** – The BRI will be used as a forum for identifying issues, agreeing common approaches and gathering information. RK undertook to feedback information to the Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership.

- 3.3. **Lengthsman Scheme** – This scheme, funded by Hampshire County Council at £1,000 per parish, devolves some minor highways works to parish councils and can include the clearing of ditches. The SMB Parish Council clerk is co-ordinating activities for the Bourne Valley.
- 3.4. **Anecdotal Information on Land Use** – PS would still welcome any information on land use, changes in practice etc around 1986/87 on both the Test and Itchen. SDR advised that 1983 was the last year basic slag as a source of slow release fertiliser was available to watercress growers.
- 3.5. **Gravel** – Vitacress' gravel washer is due for delivery in the next two weeks and will enable bed cleanings to be separated into green material and gravel as they are produced, without rotting down. The clean gravel will be stock piled and the green material sent to HdvdB's anaerobic digester. Pending analysis of the sediment, it is hoped to offer the P rich organic matter to local landowners.
- 3.6. **Caged Gammarus** – Chris Matcham conducted the trials with caged gammarus, positioning some in the Vitacress factory discharge which had high mortality, but reported no deaths in the (ameliorated) outflows to the stream. His full report had been previously circulated.
- 3.7. **Flylife** – Matt Owen-Farmer (MOF) is the local co-ordinator and trainer for regular fly life sampling. Apsley Farms and Finkley Farm have each provided a set of equipment. RK has volunteered as a sampler. WD has discussed potential sampling sites with MOF.
- 3.8. **Future of the BRI and Relationship with other Groups** – RK attended the North Hampshire Downs AONB Forum in October where they announced that the focus for 2015 is the Water Environment on Chalk Streams. RK has engaged them with the Test & Itchen Catchment Partnership.
ACTION: RK will ascertain what activities / events the North Hampshire Downs AONB have planned and will send details to CH for circulation to the BRI and UII groups.
- 3.9. **Website**
ACTION: PS undertook to write a brief summary of each BRI meeting for the website.
4. **RIVER QUALITY ISSUES**
Ahead of the meeting reports of RMA's Invertebrate Monitoring and Aquascience's Biological Stress Surveys, both from Autumn 2014, had been circulated.

The RMA sampling shows that the level of gammarus in the eastern channel has progressively improved and is now similar to the west but, concerningly, through an ongoing decline on the western arm. It was agreed numbers on both streams are far

too low. SDR explained that the eastern channel is entirely discharge from the farm, whilst the western channel receives about 30% of watercress bed outflows, but that the latter is massively diluted by the incoming Bourne. Its deterioration would be more understandable if there had been drought conditions with the watercress effluent making up the majority of flow. This has not be the case for some time. WD commented that Cyril Bennett had advised gammarus are sensitive to sedimentation and low phosphorus.

The Aquascience report indicates something upstream of the Vitacress operation is contributing to increased nutrient levels. The general view was that this could be associated with the leaking sewer and past over pumping. PE suggested looking at the Spring Hill sampling point (opposite the War Memorial) which historically has had good gammarus populations.

PE raised the issue of the different scoring systems explaining that the ASPT system previously used does not take account of abundance, whilst the WHPT does but only on a log scale.

PS recognised the value of the information gathered but stressed that biological data of this nature is not an absolute measure, with a high level of variability between samples and no evidence that, over the same period, invertebrate that favour those conditions have increased

ACTIONS:

- **PS will arrange for two students to work as field buddies doing parallel projects counting gammarus on different systems, mainly focussed on the Bourne and other areas of the Upper Test.**
- **The work will comprise comparison and contrast across discrete habitats and include set area measurements and kick samples.**
- **The meeting attendees are requested to suggest locations for sampling, providing a thumbnail sketch, access details and a brief explanation as to why the specified place will be worth looking at.**

5. SOUTHERN WATER AND SEWAGE ISSUES

The manhole cover by the viaduct was recently overflowing for c. four weeks and PE explained that the sewage had been directed to a road drain. Whilst Southern Water had undertaken dye tests they had found no trace $\frac{3}{4}$ mile downstream. PS suggested that with pressure to overflow at the pump station the main could well be leaking sewage to ground further up the road. PS commented that whilst Southern Water's AMPs cannot be changed, Natural England could be lobbied to ensure the river is protected by having the correct designation.

PE commented that historic maps he had circulated ahead of the meeting showed that the stream from Upton was called the Test.

ACTION:

- **SM/RK will review the designation for the Test and seek attributes that could underpin an application for the Bourne.**

6. RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN

MH showed the attendees how to work their way through The River Basin Management Plan consultation process, highlighting the importance of contributing in order to influence spend for the next six years. The deadline is 10 April. Responses will be reviewed to see where they best fit, eg national level, river basin district or locally specific information.

Common Standards Monitoring - MH advised that the River Basin Management Consultation is also an opportunity to feedback on Common Standards Monitoring targets around water flow and quality, including phosphorus. Whilst the same modelling has been used for the River Basin Management Plan, longer term aspirational targets have been set.

ACTION:

- **MH will circulate more details on both the River Basin Management consultation and Common Standards Monitoring.**
- **SM will circulate a summary of the local category information for the Bourne.**
- **Anybody who makes an individual response by the end of next week is asked to copy PS who will also collate these into a collective BRI response.**
- **PE will copy detail to the Bright Waters Society so that they can respond.**

7. CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP

RK informed the meeting that The Test & Itchen Partnership has applied for funding to deliver the following projects:

Sediment Pathways – This project will be based on work carried out by the EA in 2010 focussing on rural sediment tracing. The proposed project will look at delivering mitigation measures to prevent sediment from entering the river using the discrete points identified by the previous work. It will be piloted on the Bourne Rivulet and Cheriton Stream.

ACTION:

- **RK will ascertain whether North Hampshire AONB might be able to offer any funding / support**

Septic Tanks – This will be an awareness raising project around septic tanks and the impacts of phosphorus from laundry and dishwashing, drawing together a number of neighbouring catchments. PE had attended the recent WWF conference at

which the EA's "Yellowfish Campaign" had been widely acclaimed.

ACTION:

- **RK will bring forward some scheme ideas.**

Rivers Week – This will take place week commencing 20 April and will comprise a series of workshops; an anglers riverfly partnership evening; a river walk combined with a wetland restoration and management session at Winnall Moors, and the TICP Annual Meeting.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1. **Wetland** – SDR had circulated Ron Allen's desk appraisal which reviewed the original concept of creating a wetland below the viaduct and PE's idea to create something upstream. However, to proceed a hydrogeological survey is required but would cost at least £100k. PE suggested a more targeted approach might suffice for just the wetland element.

PE believes it must be a constructed wetland designed to be cleaned, suggesting pea shingle might be enough to perch the wetland above the floor of the valley. SDR felt Vitacress could not justify the costs of anything more complex than a constructed and managed wetland, originally having budgeted £50k for the whole scheme.

MH outlined an EA project aiming to gather local intelligence to assist in flood water management and protection of local properties.

ACTION:

- **PS will invite Derek Clarke to the next meeting, asking him to give a presentation on the aims and principles of chalk hydrogeology and brief him for questions aligned with some of the issues RA has identified.**
- **MH will circulate a briefing note of the remit of the flood water management taskforce.**
- **This subject will be the focus of the next meeting.**

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

CH will circulate a Doodle poll for a meeting in September.