

Bristol Avon River Catchment Management Plan

Minutes from Steering Group Meeting Wednesday 7th June 2012 at 13:00hrs, Committee Room D, Lower Ground Floor, Monkton Park, Chippenham.

1. Present

Paula Spiers	Avon Frome Partnership (Chair)
Steve Micklewright	Avon Wildlife Trust
Petrina Brown	Catchment Pilot Project Officer
Kathy Derrick	Environment Team, Bristol City Council
Heather Barker	Senior Environmental Planning Officer, Environment Agency
Jon Taylor	Ecology & Conservation, Wiltshire Council
Caroline Sherrott	Bristol Avon Rivers Trust
Ruth Barden	Wessex Water
Nikki Wood	Bath Corridor Regeneration Group

2. Apologies

Lesley Nel	Swindon Programme Manager, Groundworks South West
Rosanne Broome	WFD Planning Officer, Environment Agency
Lucy Rogers	Director of Conservation Programmes Avon Wildlife Trust
Julian Greaves	Bristol Avon Rivers Trust
Karen Renshaw	Ecologist, Bath & North East Somerset Council

3. Actions from last meeting

Actions were signed off.

Group discussion came about if the North Somerset streams and other non Avon connected water courses should be included in the Management Plan.

Concerns were raised that the connected catchment is already so big and complex that including them will add a lot of unnecessary work to our already large task and because they are not connected to the Avon they are almost a separate entity. However it was also countered that as there is already a lot of management work happening on the North Somerset Streams and they are included as part of the Bristol Avon Catchment by the Environment Agency in terms of Water Framework Directive monitoring/reporting they will be then left out of the Catchment Management Process.

Action 1. Petrina to investigate further the work implications of including non Avon connected tributaries in the Management Plan.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Issues & Outcomes

Please read the BARC Issues and Outcome document before the meeting.

What are the issues?

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| 1. Abstraction | 13. Poor riparian habitat |
| 2. Sediment loading | 14. Conflicts between different user groups |
| 3. Agricultural runoff (phosphates, nitrates & biocides) | 15. Lack of strategic, co-ordinated governance & communication |
| 4. Sewage Overflow/missed connections | 16. Lack of general awareness of the catchments status and the services it provides |
| 5. Poor species range and abundance of fish | 17. Drought |
| 6. Treated Sewage Outlets | 18. Fly Tipping |
| 7. Flooding | 19. Lack of co-ordinated ambition for water environment in shaping our physical landscapes & recognising its contribution to good health |
| 8. Highly Modified Channels | |
| 9. Road Runoff | |
| 10. Invasive Non-Native Species | |
| 11. Debris (natural & synthetic) | |
| 12. One off pollution events | |

4.1.1 Issues & Evidence Base

The group discussed the list of issues, it was clear that a significant number of the issues that had been suggested were often a perception and there will probably be difficulties both convincing people that something is or isn't a problem or obtaining any objective evidence that these are genuine issues not just a personal perception. That said we should still acknowledge that some issues are really important to people even if they do not have a real significant impact on the catchment e.g shopping trolleys so these should be explored if it helps engage people.

Action 2. Ruth & Heather to send Petrina data/evidence regarding abstraction in the catchment

Many of the issues are interconnected and overlapped with a broader heading. The group decided that the long list should be merged to form a smaller number of broader heading Task & Finish Group titles.

Nikki suggested that there should be an issue reflecting the poor quality of riverside developments, so this was also incorporated into the issues list. A group discussion followed regarding who should attend a planning themed Task & Finish Group meeting.

Action 3. Steve, Nikki & Jon to send Petrina names of developers who may be willing to contribute to a T&F group workshop.

Kathy raised concerns that the list was too water quality (WFD) focused and not holistic enough and suggested some changes to the Terms of Reference.

Action 4. Kathy to send Petrina her suggested changes to the ToR

4.1.2 Task & Finish Groups (to scope SOLUTIONS/ACTIONS/MEASURES and secure buy in agreement to them)

The agreed list of Task & Finish Group titles are as follows, numbers indicate the identified issues to be included;

- Managing Flow, 1,7,17,11,8
- Rural Land Use & Pollution 2,3,9,18,11,12
- Urban Water Management & Pollution 4,6,7,9,18,11,12
- Biodiversity (incl. fish) 5,10,13,8,14
- Channel Morphology 13, (also barriers to fish/naturalisation of highly modified channels)
- Anti-Social Behaviour 11, 12
- Recreation & access 14, 19
- Strategic Planning 15, 16, 19

Action 5. Petrina to arrange workshop dates and locations

4.1.3 Budget Issues (Paper by Kären Renshaw)

- “River Story” Approach -
- Data base development-
- FWAG Landowner Engagement -

Paula explained that there was some confusion over the reason for the Public Engagement Task & Finish Group meeting, however we are now clear as to what we want and it is proposed that we use some of our budget to take the River Story Project forward as per Kären Renshaw’s brief. The group agreed that it liked the River Story idea and is happy for this work to go ahead.

Action 6. Paula to write a Tender Brief for the River Story

Paula also raised the subject of the GIS data project and asked if the group had any concerns about this proposal? Kathy is concerned about the long-term viability and ownership of the project as it will need ongoing maintenance to keep it relevant/useful and needs to be accessible. This needs to be defined before the project goes ahead.

4.2 What do we want the plan to be? e.g large physical document, online document, summary plan + full plan

The group felt that it was too early in the process to really know how or what the plan should finally look like. Petrina is happy to wait to discuss once we have better information.

4.3 Pilot Project Timeline

Paula reported that she has written a project timeline but feels it will be of better use once we have some dates for the various task & finish group meetings.

Action 7. Paula to send out project timeline once T&F group dates confirmed.

5. AOCB

Kathy asked as the WFD has priority areas will we? Group discussion followed, Ruth highlighted that it would make sense to target some easier wins during the T&F Workshops

Action 8. Everyone to send Petrina their logos for the website.

6. Location & time of next meeting Thursday 5th July 2012

Wessex Water Office, Bath 13:30-16:30