The Wissey WFD Pilot Catchment Project

Project Group meeting, Monday 23rd April 2012

Stoke Ferry Drinking Water Treatment Works, School Lane, Stoke Ferry, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE33 9QL

**Meeting Notes**

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| **Present** | |
| **Organisation** | **Name** |
| Angling Trust | Kelvin Allen |
| Anglian Water (Source Protection Manager) | Simon Eyre |
| Anglian Water (Catchment Pilot Project Officer) | Fiona Wood |
| Anglian Water (Stoke Ferry Source Manager) | David Steele |
| Anglian Water (Environmental Standards) | Emily Payne |
| Catchment Sensitive Farming | Lisa Chenery |
| Country Land and Business Association | Rob Wise |
| Dialogue by Design | Helena Poldervaart (chair) |
| Environment Agency (WFD Catchment Officer) | Lou Mayer |
| Environment Agency (Area Water Framework Directive Co-ordinator) | Helen Hunter |
| Environment Agency (Groundwater and Contaminated Land team leader) | Chris Tate |
| National Farmers Union (National) | Michael Payne |
| Natural England | Nigel Simpson CSF |
| Norfolk Rivers Trust | Mark Watson |
| Norfolk Wildlife Trust | Nick Carter |
|  | **15** |
| **Apologies** |  |
| Environment Agency (Area Catchment Delivery Manager) | Richard Bowen |
| National Farmers Union (Regional) | Alex Dinsdale |
| Norfolk County Council (Surface Water Management) | Graham Brown |
| RSPB | Simon Tonkin |

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| **Item** | **Information** |
| **Opening session** | **Introductions**  Rob Wise, Mark Watson, Lou Mayer, and Helena Poldervaart attended the group for the first time.  **Meeting notes from 1st meeting**  Approved with minor corrections  **Suggestion regarding project catchment boundary**  Kelvin suggested we include all the waters of the Wissey in the project catchment, rather than stop at Stoke Ferry.  [Ed: See Actions document circulated separately: Simon E and Fiona were tasked with taking this forward and circulating a decision. As hosts, Anglian Water suggested a project area based on their own interests. In response to stakeholder views, and unless there are objections (increased workload etc) we now propose to include all the Wissey up to the confluence with the Ouse in the project. Stopping at the drinking water intake at Stoke Ferry omitted the more heavily modified stretches downstream of there. However, including them does give us the opportunity to explore what improvements are appropriate in a heavily managed situation, involve the Internal Drainage Boards, and also include major project areas of the Wildlife Trust and RSPB, as well as the British Sugar plant at Hilgay.] |
| **Agree on an Aim for this group** | **In order to obtain a collective and agreed Aim for the group we debated three versions, in table sessions and then all together. The three versions were based on a common theme but had different styles, as per the discussion document:**  1) “Working together to improve the water environment in the Wissey”.  2) “Working together to improve the water environment in the Wissey, for wildlife, farming, drinking water, business, and the community.”  3) A longer Vision Statement  **None of the tables supported the longer Vision Statement (no. 3)**  **Views on terminology**  Discussion was held around the use of ‘wildlife’ vs ‘nature’, with queries on whether either included plants, but there was no strong view favouring one over the other. Wildlife was thought to be slightly more inclusive of fish.  ‘Improved water management’ was suggested by several people as the main aim, then discarded on further discussion, because of the point that improved water management is ‘how’ we achieve the aim, not the highest level aim per se. There was still strong attachment however to the idea that water management is a very relevant and easily grasped hook to engage people with.  ‘Catchment’ should be included to show that it is not just the river corridor that we’re interested in. ‘Valley’ didn’t seem topographically appropriate. If people don’t understand ‘catchment’, it is an opportunity to learn?  Option 1 has the advantage of being short and snappy and not excluding anyone. A detailed justification could follow on below. Option 2 has the advantage of unpacking the aim a bit, to pull in people who don’t really see that improving the water environment is anything to do with them.  ‘Working together’ perhaps also needs unpacking a bit.  For ‘wildlife and people’ is another option instead of the longer list.  **Voting**  Initially, there were two tables to one in favour of option 1.This reversed to a 9:4 vote in favour of option 2 following discussion. The 4 were content to live with that.  Further discussion followed around the order that the ‘justifications’ should come in. The existing order was subjectively chosen for PR reasons. Alphabetical would put business first and wildlife last. Rob suggested using the flow of water to determine the order, which gives us the agreed version given below.  **Agreed Aim**  *‘Working together to improve the water environment in the Wissey catchment, for farming, wildlife, drinking water, business and the community’* |
| **Governance / decision-making in the project group** | **We again used table sessions to explore the role of the ‘project group’.** (Both ‘steering group’ and ‘holding group’ were rejected as group names)  **Role of the group:**  Pull together an agreed ‘baseline’ of information about the catchment [Ed: linked to catchment appraisal report required by end of June 2012]  Act as a gateway to others who can get involved – publicising, influencing, facilitating the involvement of others  Develop a catchment plan: [Ed: Draft by end of Sep-12, Final by end of Dec-12]   * Agree priorities for action * Document clear actions, with owners for each action * Identify the resources needed to implement the plan * Set milestones for delivery * Document the development and implementation of the plan * Sign off the plan * Ensure implementation of the plan * Carry out some actions ourselves   Exploit the power of being a group e.g. in lobbying  Document for DEFRA how we achieve this collaborative approach  Think beyond Dec 2012  **How we will work:**  Share resources within the group   * Data e.g. sampling data * Meeting rooms * Best practice * Expertise * [Ed: and contacts]   **This evolved into a discussion of the roles of different members within the project group**  We have a diverse group. Some have the resources to deliver, others have the networks to influence.  [Ed: we didn’t discuss this thoroughly at the 1st meeting, but included in the meeting notes was a list of stakeholder attributes that was up on a flip chart. Notwithstanding all having the time and funding to attend regularly, core stakeholders are likely to bring very different resources to the table e.g.:   * Have knowledge * Have influence * Be affected * Have the ability to deliver environmental objectives * Have other resources (e.g. funds, volunteer groups…)]   **Decision-making in the group**  We didn’t get round to discussing this |
| **Starting to draft Outcomes** | **We used table sessions to generate Outcomes, written on strips of flip chart paper, which we then collated and discussed by sticking them up on the wall.**  We initially established 5 broad themes:  **Behaviour, Balance and Policy**  Improve peoples’ understanding of the benefits and value of the river catchment and their ability to impact on and influence it (positively and negatively)  To have sufficient profitable food production  To increase food production while reducing negative environmental impacts  To have a fair balance between the use of water for drinking and for farming (see abstraction theme below)  **Outcomes relating to collating data or identifying data gaps in the catchment**  Establish a baseline of habitats, species, and a full range of ecosystem services in the Wissey catchment.  Develop a shared quantified understanding of the issues / ecosystem services in the Wissey  For the Wissey ecosystems to function well enough to sustain the services we need now (establish what the thresholds are for collapse).  **Abstraction**  Sustainable abstraction from the catchment   * More farm reservoirs * Water use efficiency (domestic and business) * Fair balance between drinking water and farming (and balance!!) * Clarity on supply/ demand i.e. present data in a form people can understand.   Ability to increase abstraction from the catchment to meet demand (presumption of increasing demand)   * Public water supply * Agriculture * Industry   **WFD**  Achieve acceptable water quality (or at least an improvement in it) in the Wissey catchment  Meet the requirements of the WFD (Ecological and Chemical Status)  Bring about a reduction in nitrate in groundwater to below 50 mg/l by 2027  Need no additional water treatment  To meet the economic and feasibility tests of the WFD  [Ed: WFD objectives can be extended by up to 12 years from 2015 due to remediation being technical unfeasible or disproportionately expensive. The status of the water body must not deteriorate further though. Objectives can also be made less stringent (but must be reviewed every 6 years) if natural conditions are so unfavourable, or if the body is so affected by human activities, that again remediation is technically unfeasible or disproportionately expensive. The highest possible ecological and chemical status should however be achieved, and no deterioration should occur. Meeting these tests therefore means that we must do everything that is technically and economically possible]  **The future**  To put in place processes to ensure the longevity of the group (to enable the project aims to be achieved) i.e. it’s probably not just till Dec 2012? |
| **Next steps** | **We decided to collate the available catchment information first to enable us to identify any gaps and flesh out our outcomes**  Small groups were tasked to collate and present different sections of data for the group. This material will also form the catchment appraisal that is due in June.  **Abstraction / Flow**, and **Future Growth**: 2 groups with the same make-up  Simon E, Helen, Rob  NB Any additional information gathered on the Wissey can be fed into the Environmental Flow Indicator being developed by the EA. This defines individual rivers’ ecological needs in more detail than the classification used for the WFD.  **Water Quality**  Fiona, Emily, Lisa, Helen/Lou  **Habitats**  Fiona, Nick, Kelvin, NE (Nigel/Sarah Wilson) |
| **Updates on other projects and actions** | We didn’t get round to discussing this. |