

Wensum Working Group Meeting 8th Jan 2019 @ Great Witchingham Village Hall.

Attending

Kelvin Allen, Tim Ellis, Colin Howlett, Cass Singleton, Terry Houseago, Bob Chambers, Tim Venes & Roger Gibbons

Apologies

Nick Cheeseman, Jez Wood, Phil Humm

Kelvin welcomed the group and wished everyone a happy 2019.

Matters Arising

Action Jez Wood to distribute the existing EA report on point source siltation. Completed and for discussion later.

Action Colin to liaise with Cass on a suitable site visit. Completed and discussion later

Action Kelvin to write to NRT and inform them of the position with Sonde deployments. Completed

BASG Update

Kelvin gave an overview of the wider projects and outcomes of a Directors meeting held in December. The minutes of this meeting have recently been shared with the wider BASG CIC members.

Donations

Kelvin explained the current position with WWG and its current costs which are limited to room hire at GWVH of 4 x £25 annually. The wider governance overheads for WWG would be provided by BASG, but he felt these fixed costs would need some form of membership donation. BASG is in the process of setting up a scheme to enable donations and obtaining gift aid on such donations. So this would be the preferred solution for sustaining such costs of WWG. Kelvin asked if members would take this away to their respective clubs for discussion and agreement.

Action: All members to discuss with their respective clubs the possible adoption of a small membership donation to WWG to cover its fixed costs and report back at the next meeting.

EA Update

Jez sent his apologies, but had discussed issues with Kelvin the previous day.

In terms of the Billingford pollution incident a large tanker containing 50,000 litres of ammonium nitrate. Kelvin reported that the wider incidents of ammonium nitrate pollutions has now being picked up by the Angling Trust and a FOA request is being sought to gauge the scale nationally.

A paper on abstraction across the Wensum has been made available by the EA [here](#).

Both Colin and Terry highlighted the ongoing issue with reduced water levels in some mill sections of the river. It was thought the most likely cause was the underlying management of mill structures by private landowners.

Action: Colin agreed to capture some images of the impact, so we have evidence of the impact and cause and something to highlight within the wider roach improvement plan.

Kelvin highlighted the ongoing discussions within the EA management team on the perceived poor levels of communications and co-operation within the Norwich based Fishery, Biodiversity and Geomorphology team compared to that seen in the Cambs and Bedford Office.

Evidence of this has been seen right across the Wensum, in terms of various projects seemingly delivered within silos without little fisheries input. This must be addressed if we are to address many of the fisheries related issues facing the Wensum. WWG/BASG must be appraised of planned works and projects so that these can be addressed as a partnership with the resultant wider benefits.

Moving forward in how to address this, we agreed to create a new section within the developing WRP paper on working together and best practice. Building on evidence from both ARP and more local Brampton based FBG teams.

Kelvin is awaiting feedback following discussion and actions with senior area management team on this prior to Christmas and wants to see a best practice approach adopted across the East Anglia area.

A great example of the seemingly poor communications is the state of some fishery investment agreed to be completed at the Kingfisher Lakes site in 2018. This river habitat and predation protection project was not known by either WWG or WACA and it also appears to have not been installed. This is a core project for WWG and its ambition to enhance the fishery, but it was not discussed and seemingly left with an embarrassing outcome for all.

Action: Tim to discuss with Phil Humm and John Bailey on the way forward with Manor Estates.

Action: Kelvin to discuss further with Jez Wood.

Action: Tim to explore with Steve Lane the potential for this location to host spawning boards this spring.

Roach Project

Tim has joined forces with Cass Singleton as the complexity of the paper and its depth of issues needs a much more advanced approach with its creation and delivery. We now have a workable draft format agreed, but the depth of the issues and evidence means this is very much work in progress.

Siltation

Colin met with Ed Bramham-Jones from NRT the morning of this meeting, where they explored and confirmed that the location does have some key issues with silt ingress coming down Cadders Hill near Lyng. They have agreed the next steps in taking this forward.

A study paper by APEM undertaken in 2010 on silt ingress across the Wensum has been found by Jez. [It is available here.](#) This paper prioritises both locations and causes at a number of locations and clearly provides a sound working base to move forward.

Actions: Kelvin to discuss the recommendations from this paper with Rory Sanderson EA Catchment Manager to understand what progress, if any has occurred at these locations.

Action: Cass Singleton has agreed to attend a farming event looking at these sort of issues with the wider partners on the 17th Jan at Bradenham Estates, to explore building partnerships and traction on the Wensum.

Cormorant Predation

Roger Gibbons reported that he has written to NE seeking clarity as he believes the current licencing provision only covers the lakes adjacent to the river and not the actual river itself. He will report back to Jake Davoile the response from NE on this matter. Roger has now approached 5 new fisheries and landowners with regard to holding new licences. The consensus is that these people would prefer to hold their own licence rather than adopting the area licence approach. It was felt it better to build on obtaining more licences first, then readdress the need for an area licence later. Roger also agreed to continue his role as leading and working with Jake Davoile to set up these new licences. Members felt some great progress has been made by Roger and thanked him for his continued drive in moving this forward.

Balsham Bash

Following a request from Norfolk CC Joe Kenworthy on whether the group would assist in the management of this invasive species along the Wensum. A number of members have expressed an

interest in volunteering their services. Colin Howlett agreed to take on the group's co-ordination role liaising with Joe Kenworthy. Action: Kelvin to update Norfolk CC.

Norwich Western Link consultation

Kelvin asked the group if it wanted to respond to the recent consultation of the Western Link road. All felt this was being covered elsewhere and didn't require our attention.

Future Meeting Dates to be held Great Witchingham Village Hall.

9th Apr 2019

9th Jul 2019

8th Oct 2019

14th Jan 2020

Regards

Kelvin Allen

11th Jan 2019