

Wensum Working Group Meeting 9th Jul 2019 @ Great Witchingham Village Hall 18:00 – 20:30

Previous Minutes

Matters Arising

Action: all to review this current draft v10 and feedback comments to Cass Singleton by 31st April.
[Completed](#)

Action Jez offered a potential site visit to Costessey and the restoration activities. Jez to arrange with RWRS team. [Ongoing](#)

AT / BASG Update

Kelvin gave an update on the major projects being addressed by the Angling Trust and CIC. The presentation is [available here](#).

National Angling Strategy 2019-24

Summer Pike Catch & Release

Hoveton Great Broad proposals

Whitlingham Angling Development

Donations

Roger Gibbons and NFF covered tonight's £25 hire of the room. Tim Ellis and WACA has confirmed they will cover the costs of the next meeting in Oct. Kelvin thanked both of them.

Wensum Past Present Future

Kelvin highlighted the final version and its key messages.

It has been distributed around all the catchment stakeholders since May and some positive feedback has been received. No major changes or amendments have been received.

Catchment Partnership Approach

Given that much of the future contained in section 5 and 6 of the Wensum Past Present and Future reflects on adopting the Catchment Partnership Approach and its governance is contained appendix 1 of the document. Kelvin has discussed this with many of the stakeholders and again it has been well received.

The focus of all of this remains silt ingress, which we need to structure a layered approach in dealing with this, both at field level, headland / buffer level and silt trap projects.

Resultant Projects and ownership

The Wensum Past Present and Future documents will take each of the specific issues and lay out a set of recommendations on the project by project basis, thereby creating a plan of action broken into specific component elements. Combined this is a huge task, but if broken down into manageable elements with achievable outcomes, then across all the stakeholders some traction must be achievable. For the WWG there are a number of elements currently proposed as led by the group.

Diffused Pollution (Silt trapping)

Fisheries improvements

Invertebrates (scientific / monitoring)

Grants / Finance

It is planned to hold a workshop style event in September with all the stakeholders in small syndicate groups developing a set of objectives – outcomes and governance structures

Action Kelvin and Cass to convene with the aid of Rory Sanderson.

EA Update

Jez gave an update on activities across the Agency relevant to the Wensum including the latest restoration spring newsletter which is [available here](#).

Clearly things are progressing in terms of improved communication and consultation, which can only help things progress. His presentation will be available here.

Current Projects

Lyng Silt Trap

Colin reported that progress has been slow in bringing this together, as both Ed Bramham-Jones NRT Matthew Philpott IDB look to explore the wider benefits and associated costs.

Jez agreed to discuss this Matt this week, to clarify whether this needs more time and potential delivery in 2020. **Action** Jez to discuss with Matt Philpott and report back to Kelvin

Update 24th Jul, given the complexities and scale of the project and it's associated dyke network this will be carried forward into 2020 for grant submission and the £3k FIP grant from the EA will be refocussed elsewhere.

Roach Spawning Boards

Boards were installed in 4 difference locations this spring, with little success. It was felt these should be formally recorded for future records. **Action** Tim Ellis to record the locations and dates for each board.

Beaver Introduction

Dennis reported on a recent proposal from NRT to establish beavers in the Glaven.

Cormorant Predation

Roger again clarified the current position with NE on Cormorant Licencing, in that no licences are currently apply the River, only adjacent stillwaters. For any licence to be issued on the river, then we will have to demonstrate the impact on fish stocks, bird counts and damage, over a period of time.

Kelvin is currently involved in a similar process on the river Nene and there is some momentum with 15 clubs actively involved in collating bird counts, starting this September. Kelvin felt it would be best to see how this progressed, given the minimal engagement with clubs engaged with WWG.

Lack of Macrophytes in the river.

Tim had written to Kelvin prior to the meeting raising concerns that there appears a complete lack of macrophytes apart of cabbages from around Billingford through to Tavernham. Both Tim and Colin had surveyed the river by boat in recent weeks and confirmed this issue. Many felt given the river SSSI designation is for macrophytes, this issue should be raised to Natural England and the EA.

Action Kelvin to write to EA&NE on the issue with the groups concerns.

Balsham Bash

Nothing has been arranged as yet.

Royal Norwich Golf Course Water Abstraction

Concerns were raised over the pipe being installed to abstract water from the river

Action Kelvin agreed to write to EA on this matter

Update 25th Jul, received the following from the EA.

Dear Kelvin,

The licence you are referring to, ref. AN/034/0011/076, was issued to the Royal Norwich Golf Club Ltd in September 2018 and allows for the winter (i.e. when flows are greater) abstraction of water to be piped from the Wensum at Lenwade for storage in a reservoir and subsequent spray irrigation at the golf course.

The licence was issued with several Hands Off Flow (HOF) conditions designed to prevent the abstraction from having a detrimental effect upon the flows in the Wensum. There is an absolute HOF limit imposed whereby a minimum flow is maintained and no abstraction can take place. There is also another HOF condition tied to the Anglian Water drinking water abstraction point downstream at Costessey which states that the golf course can only abstract when AW have confirmed that they will not be taking their full licenced amount so there is capacity available for a specified length of time. The HOF for this condition is set higher than for the absolute HOF so there is more flow in the river available.

The new golf course licence has not yet been inspected since it was issued in September last year. If the pipeline connecting the river abstraction point and the reservoir is still being laid, then no abstraction will have taken place yet for us to inspect.

I hope this helps but please get in touch if I can help further.

Regards,

Simon

Simon Engler

Environment Officer

Norfolk Land & Water team (East Anglia Area)

Environment Agency | Dragonfly House, 2 Gilders Way, Norwich, NR3 1UB

Future Meeting Dates to be held Great Witchingham Village Hall.

8th Oct 2019

14th Jan 2020

Regards Kelvin Allen 10th April 2019