

## **Wye Technical Advisory Group (TAG) update to Board 28/09/22**

The TAG met on 7 September 2022. Our next meeting is 21 October 2022.

Present – Hayley Fleming NE, Jenny Gamble EA, Sam Thomas EA, Liz Duberley HC, Kate Stinchcombe MCC, Jenny Grubb DCWW, Jeremy Tanner NRW, Emma Guy PCC, Jenny Phillips NRW, Alex Escott BBNPA, Jonathan Gilpin NRW, Martin Williams FH – with guests Merry Albright HCILG, Elissa Swinglehurst NMB.

### Working groups

The focus of the meeting was agreeing working groups, the purpose of which is to push into on some of the most meaningful and difficult issues identified in the action plan. These are:

- Evidence
- Regulation
- Farm advice
- Poultry
- Innovation & projects.

The working groups will have two purposes. Firstly, to identify practical actions and projects that can go into the action plan, and to bring those to the TAG or Board. Secondly the working groups will identify gaps and issues beyond ability of TAG groups to progress and bring these to the Board.

The scope of each group is currently being developed, led by the group chair. The group chair is responsible for updating the Action Plan sheets with actions and progress, and reporting to TAG. TAG will oversee the working groups, ensuring they cross over as needed, and keep to agreed aims.

**The TAG requests that Board ensure the resourcing of these working groups.**

### Vision

TAG discussed the value of an agreed vision for the Wye, describing what it would be like in 10, 20, 50yrs and setting out what favourable condition looks like.

**The TAG requests that Board considers this.**

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## **Further information on the working groups**

### **Evidence**

Chair: Sam Thomas EA - [Sam.Thomas@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.Thomas@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Scope:

- Watching brief over SAGIS Autumn 2022, PR244 Autumn 2022, Farmscoper March 2023
- Evaluate advice and regulation.
- Put figures to P reduction measures.
- Identify the pollution gap.
- Predict lag time in terms of achieving favourable conservation status.

Who is needed:

- NE (Vicki or Daisy?)
- NRW (Dave Johnston or Tristan Hatton-Ellis?)
- DCWW ?
- Catchment Partnership (WUF - Haydn?)
- Citizen Scientists (one from each group?)
- Agriculture – soil test data, spreading records, measure adoption (NFU? Agronomists?)
- Local Authorities? – developments and plans in pipeline to understand headroom requirements (Planners? Ecologists?)

## **Regulation**

Chair: David Lee NRW - [David.Lee@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](mailto:David.Lee@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk),  
Jenny Gamble EA - [jenny.gamble@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:jenny.gamble@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Scope: TBC.

Here is an indication based on what's in the Action Plan sheets:

- High level cross border review of whether a single set of regulations are required. This should be cross sector (i.e. planning/agriculture/water)
- Review the use of Management Orders (existing powers) under HD to implement compulsory buffers on failing waterbodies
- We need a clearly communicated penalty system. When farm visits etc demonstrate farm budgets/soil indices are exceeded we need more than just advice. Do we need to develop a position?
- Adopt a River Axe type model to regulatory enforcement. High level of enforcement action against over application of nutrients, watercourse poaching, soil loss and slurry/manure spills.
- Role of a Water Protection Zone?

Who is needed? TBC.

## **Farm advice**

Chair: Martin Williams FH - [martinwilliams402@gmail.com](mailto:martinwilliams402@gmail.com)

Scope: TBC

Here is an indication based on what's in the Action Plan sheets:

- Set targets / benchmarks for farm advice.
- Identify issues / shortcomings / positives with farm advice, is it the right advice, in the right place, with the right incentive and finance?
- Implementation of farming rules of water
- Soil sampling
- How to make on farm nutrient budgets work
- Relationship with regulation
- Whole Wye approach

Who is needed? TBC.

## **Poultry**

Chair: Kate Speke-Adams WUF - [Kate@wyeuskfoundation.org](mailto:Kate@wyeuskfoundation.org)

Scope: The TAG poultry subgroup works to secure reductions from this sector as it has been identified by the REPHOKUS study as having the largest P footprint in the catchment. It will achieve this by:

- Engaging relevant businesses (producers, processors and retailers) to secure reductions at all levels of the supply chain.
- Quantifying interventions in kg or tonnage of P
- Securing the necessary regulatory baseline to ensure poultry producers do not lose nutrients during or as a result of their operation both on farm and off.
- Identify and rectify “gaps” in regulation, planning, permitting, farm assurance, etc that have led to the current situation.

Who is needed?

- Wye & Usk Foundation
- Major poultry businesses including Avara, Noble and Stonegate – Convened via the Wye Agri Food Partnership
- Support from retailers sourcing from the Wye including Tesco, Sainsburys, Coop, M&S, Lidl - Convened via the Wye Agri Food Partnership
- Local Authorities; Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, Powys
- EA; regulatory teams, permitting teams
- NRW; regulatory teams, permitting teams
- NE & CSF

## **Innovation and projects**

Chair: Liz Duberley HC - [Elizabeth.Duberley@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.Duberley@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Scope: TBC

It is anticipated that the group will engender partnership working on projects such as wetlands, ELMS bids and projects like Go wild in the Curl.

Draft scope regarding wetlands:

- HCC will complete the remaining programmed integrated wetlands within the Lugg catchment, through our internal project structure.
- HCC will undertake feasibility studies in order to develop a plan for integrated wetlands within the Wye catchment seeking approval and financing through our established project governance structure.
- HCC will establish its own trading scheme through our planning service processes.
- HCC will continue to disseminate knowledge gained from above project led work through PAS to partners and private providers.
- To bring together regulatory partners NE, EA and NRW to support and develop private mitigation schemes which will take place through the Cabinet Commission.
- Develop a business case for a joint delivery project with Powys Council

Who is needed? TBC.