

River Wye Statutory Officers Group

April Meeting Slide Deck



10 April 2024

River Wye SOG

Purpose

A collaboration of the statutorily responsible organisations operating within the catchment to restore the Conservation Status for the River Wye Special Area of Conservation.

The group as a whole does not have any formal powers or resources and as such cannot make any decisions collectively but it's members can on behalf of their individual organisations and Government. The purpose of this group is for members to reach agreement (subject to ratification within their own organisations as necessary) on how they will collectively use their powers and resources to improve the catchment condition. The SOG will share this via a revised Nutrient Management Plan.

Operating Principles

- Meetings will be held quarterly (monthly initially) in order to allow the SOG to task work resulting from its discussions. Ad-hoc meetings can be called if needed.
- Meetings will be held privately with updates and progress against the plan being shared publicly – this will be reviewed after 6 months.
- The group will work openly and collaboratively with the NMB, seeking and taking into account the NMBs views in its decision making and seeking collaboratively discussion.
- Individual officers will make decisions on behalf of their organisations in line with delegated powers for specified remits and spend.

River Wye SOG

Membership

Voluntary forum made up of officers from the bodies with relevant statutory responsibilities within the catchment.

- Bannau Brycheiniog Brecon Beacons National Park
- Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales
- Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
- Environment Agency
- Forest of Dean District Council
- Herefordshire Council
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Natural England
- Powys County Council

SOG - Meeting Summary

Date of latest meeting: 27 March 2024

Headlines

1. Nutrient loss task & finish update: no obvious tools that can transfer to Wye. Work paused while await outcome of Defra study. Paper attached.
2. Outline timetable for DWPP – see EA update
3. Using Welsh Government funding to support update f NMP. Herefordshire Council to develop ideas and bring to the next meeting
4. Progress update of NMP. Support for SOG to carry out a progress update of NMP. This will identify how well the actions have been progressed, it will not update these

Date of next Meeting

13th May 2024

River Wye SOG – Month Update

Updates from:

- Bannau Brycheiniog Brecon Beacons National Park
- Dwr Cymru
- Environment Agency
- Herefordshire Council
- Natural England
- Powys County Council

- Introduction to Nia Thomas who has recently started at BBNP as Place Co-ordinator and will be leading on the Usk Catchment Partnership going forward
- Swap of lead officers attending River Wye SOG from Tom Johnstone to Nia Thomas
- Usk Catchment Partnership is progressing and continuing to look to share resources and expertise across the catchment boundary

Things are progressing well with our AMP 7 investment. Work at large sites such as Leominster, Rotherwas and Eign WWTW are progressing

More detailed information in the agenda pack

Task & Finish – Nutrient Management Planning Tools (NMPT)

- The NMPT Task and Finish Group met on 13 February 2024 to discuss the development of a nutrient management planning tool for the Wye. The consensus of the group was that a trading scheme like Poole Harbour would not be viable in the Wye due to the scale and complexities with implementation.
- The tool developed and implemented in WESSEX Area requires a higher level of farmer input and a simplified version of a tool would be required to encourage uptake.
- WESSEX Area are working with the Environment Agency's national team to develop the tool further and are seeking additional funding. Defra are also developing a nutrient loss tool and are working with the Environment Agency to ensure a joined-up approach.
- Based upon the above, the NMPT Task and Finish Group will pause until we receive a progress update.

Diffuse Water Pollution Plan (DWPP) / Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)

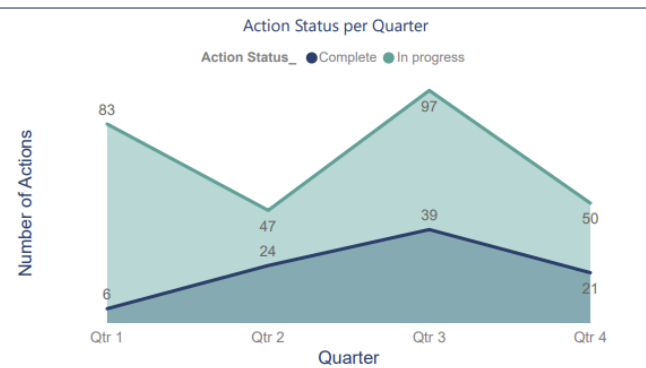
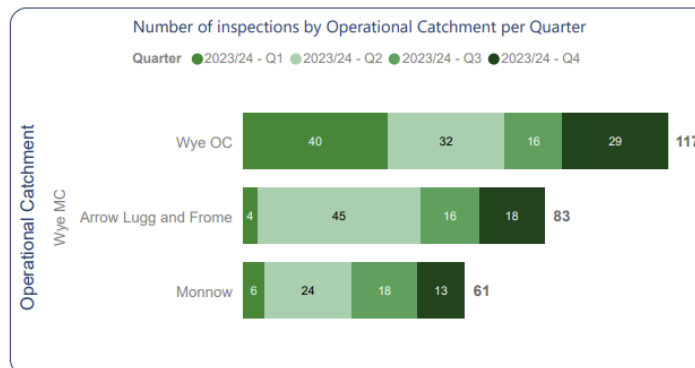
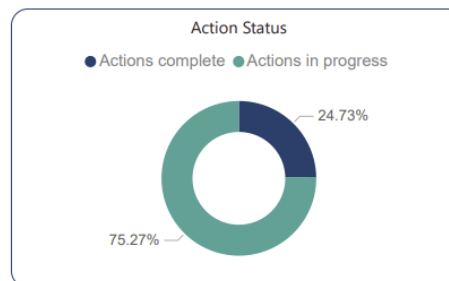
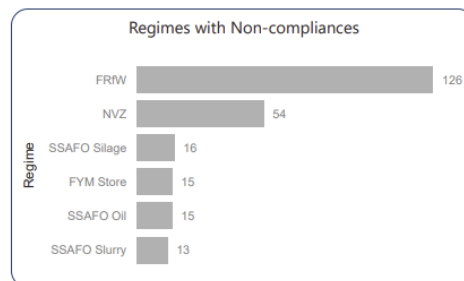
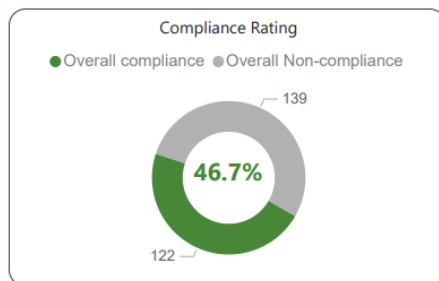
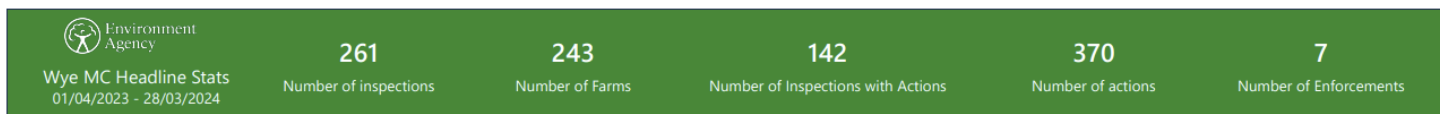
We continue to make progress with the development of the DWPP, which will replace/update the NMP for the English Wye. Indicative timescales are provided below:

Task	Indicative timescale
Modelling (source apportionment update)	Winter – Spring 2024
Modelling of current work/measures within catchment*	Spring – Summer 2024
Review of model outputs	Summer 2024
Options appraisal of phosphate reductions	Summer - Autumn 2024
Updated Action Plan	Winter 2024 – Spring 2025
Sign-off of DWPP	Spring 2025

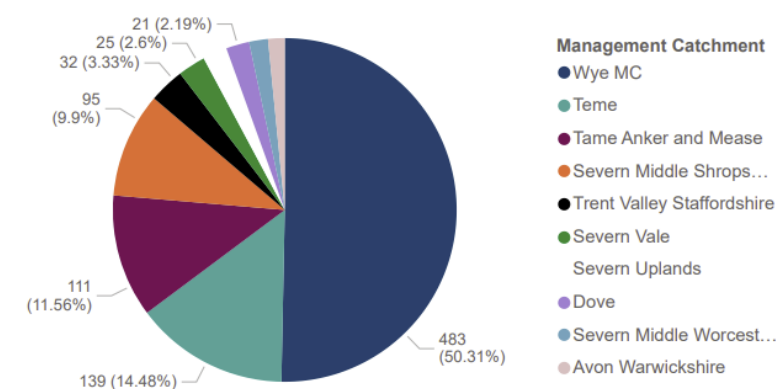
*England only

Farm Inspections prioritised on:

- Designated Waterbodies failing to achieve Good Ecological Status / conservation targets e.g. Water Framework / Habitats Directive
- Previous poor compliance / ongoing issues e.g. Incident reports
- GIS data (slope, soil / crop type) resulting in high erosion / runoff risk
- Sector engagement eg dairy, poultry, arable, energy etc where pollution risks are considered highest
- Statutory compliance against Environmental Permitting (Poultry 1 in 3 year visits) and other legislative drivers eg FRfW, NVZ etc
- Citizen Science and Local Knowledge!



Number of Farms by Management Catchment



Latest Update:

- DLUHC funding of 1.76 million awarded to HC to progress Strategic Phosphate Mitigation.
- Cabinet has authorised the draw down of s106 monies from the sale of Luston Phosphate Credits to progress mitigation
- Phase 2 Phosphate Mitigation is now underway, it comprises:
 - Tarrington Wetland Design & Build
 - The purchase of a third wetland site within the Lugg catchment.
 - The upgrade of Package Treatment Plants at schools within the north of the county.
- A New Environmental Advice Service to provide advice to developers on private mitigation schemes is now live: [Environmental Advice Service – Herefordshire Council](#)
- The Luston Wetland is shortlisted for LGC and the MGC Awards.
- A Luston launch event is proposed for May 2024

Catchment Sensitive Farming

- 48 one to one farm visits this quarter covering riverside management, wetland creation, slurry advice and grant approvals.
- Two well successful farmer events with WUF on Maize attended by some of the larger Maize growers
- Attendance at very Successful SFI event highlighting options of reduce diffuse pollution extremely positive feedback
- The CSF funded SFI/ Soils events collaborative project with Farm Herefordshire has been completed – 96% (of 109 farmers) said they would be likely to apply for soil items in SFI as a result of the events
- Carried out 19 proactive visits to farms along the main Lugg and Wye SSSI's as part of ongoing campaign. Will share results as more visit are done – this is reaching some farmers not previously engaged.

Landscape Recovery

- Both Wye schemes progressing through final sign off and commencement of 2 year project development phase

Input to partnership working

- NE part of T&F group to develop Mott MacDonald - Systems Mapping Approach Wye Catchment - Phase 1& 2
- WCP Catchment management Plan – NE part of Metrics T & F sub group.
- NE input to progress update on the 2021 Wye and Lugg NMP action plan as requested by the NMP Board. NE is also putting resources into the DWPP.

Protected Sites

- Condition assessment: gap analysis of existing data identified macrophyte surveys and River Habitat Surveys (RHS) as most important monitoring required for a condition assessment. NE looking to carry out RHS in 2024 subject to resource
- Updated Farmscoper report will be available to share with Board members in next 2 weeks

LNRS – continued support through our Senior Advisor with HC having appointed LNRS lead in March

Latest Information

- Facilitation of Farm Cymru, in partnership with Herefordshire Rural Hub.
- “Demonstrator Project” – scoping out potential projects to mitigate phosphate and support development e.g. package treatment plants managed by the Council and other public sector organisations. This is informed by data mapping. £30k funding available in 2045/25 from Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Updating Powys PCC website (to be published soon) – will include links to all-Wales P calculator developed by Welsh Government and a menu mitigation measures.
- Partnership / collaborative working – e.g. All-Wales SAC Rivers Planning Sub-Group, Nutrient Management Officers Meetings, HRA Working Group.
- Also supporting River Usk Partnership