

River Wye Statutory Officers Group (RWSOG) update

March 2024

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.

Action 3: RWSOG meeting / 6 February 2024

Request for a summary of the WESSEX Area meeting on the Nitrate Leaching Tool

On 31 January 2024, our West Midlands Agricultural Account Manager met with partners and stakeholders involved with the delivery and implementation of a Nitrate Leaching Tool in Pool Harbour. The meeting was represented by farming groups, WESSEX Water, Natural England, Dorset Council, National Farmers Union, Countryside Landowners and Business Association and Pool Harbour Nutrient Management Scheme.

The purpose of the visit was to understand how the tool works in practice considering the nitrogen reduction targets in Pool Harbour and the associated catchment. The constraints of this tool largely relate to the time required by a farmer to input data and the realisation of benefits when using it.

A visit took place in Poole Harbour to understand the source apportionment of nutrients, which mainly relate to nitrogen from the water industry. This was followed by a visit to a water treatment works that were implementing nitrogen stripping measures.

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