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River Wye Statutory Officers Group Meeting Slide Deck



26 March 2025

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 Headlines

Date of latest meeting: 26 March 2025

Headlines

- Constructive meeting that provided updates on key issues, including work to support development of Wye NMP and latest water quality evidence.

Date of next Meeting

25 June 2025

River Wye SOG – September Updates

Updates from:

- Bannau Brycheiniog Brecon Beacons National Park
- Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
- Environment Agency
- Monmouthshire County Council
- Natural England

- Ffermio Bro – to explore potential for sustainable farming projects within Designated Landscapes to support freshwater habitats, including nutrients reductions
- Nutrient Statement published on BBNPA website - to be updated following recent water quality compliance data from NRW
- BBNPA Replacement LDP (up to 2045) – the NPA is about to consider proposal to consult on the draft delivery agreement. If approved the aim is for September 2029 adoption.
- Collaborative working:
 - DWCC AMP8 programme – development at multiple WwTW /WTW sites
 - All Wales SAC Rivers Planning Sub-Group
 - Usk Catchment Partnership

From Ofwat's Final Determination over £2 billion has been confirmed for environmental improvements in AMP8 (20205 – 2030) across Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's operating area.

In AMP8, we expect our Wye phosphorus removal programme to achieve a reduction of approximately 13kg/day as part of our fair share commitments, this builds on the P load removed over the current AMP 7 period.

Work is underway to calculate estimation of P reduction on schemes completed thus far. Also once available, an updated programme will be shared with the Nutrient Management Board.

Highlights

Herefordshire and Forest of Dean

- WWTW improvement under WFD - Permit values 13 sites
- Upgrade septic tank works to secondary treatment at 3 sites
- Increase storm capacity at Eign WwTW in Hereford
- Investigation into 47 named Storm Overflows

Powys and Monmouthshire

- Phosphorus reduction at 5 WWTWs with further 4 sites added in Final Determination.
- Increase Storm Tank Capacity at Builth Wells WWTW
- Sanitary Detrimands improvements at 12 WWTWs
- Investigation into all remaining storm overflows in the catchment not included in AMP7
- Growth scheme at Monmouth WwTW and surface water separation in catchment



River Quality Drop-In sessions

Sessions are being held across our operating area where the River Quality team will set up at a café or central location to have discussions around river quality.

De Koffie Pot, Hereford 15th March 2025

Hay-on-wye Venue TBC 13th May 2025

Leominster 4th June 2025



We are co-hosting an event on 10th April 2025 looking specifically at codelivery opportunities for schemes in the next 5 years.

Visit to Newland Wastewater Treatment works – in March 2025 we hosted Councillors from Forest of Dean Council to discuss water quality, our operational challenges and investments in the catchment.



Diffuse Water Pollution Plan (DWPP)

- We expect to share key findings of the DWPP with partners by the end of June 2025.
- Working with National Resources Wales and Herefordshire Council on alignment of Welsh evidence.

Communication and Engagement

Promotion and updates to Wye specific blogs on algae and nutrient planning

[Understanding algal blooms in the River Wye – Creating a better place](#)

[Nutrient planning is not small potatoes – Creating a better place](#)

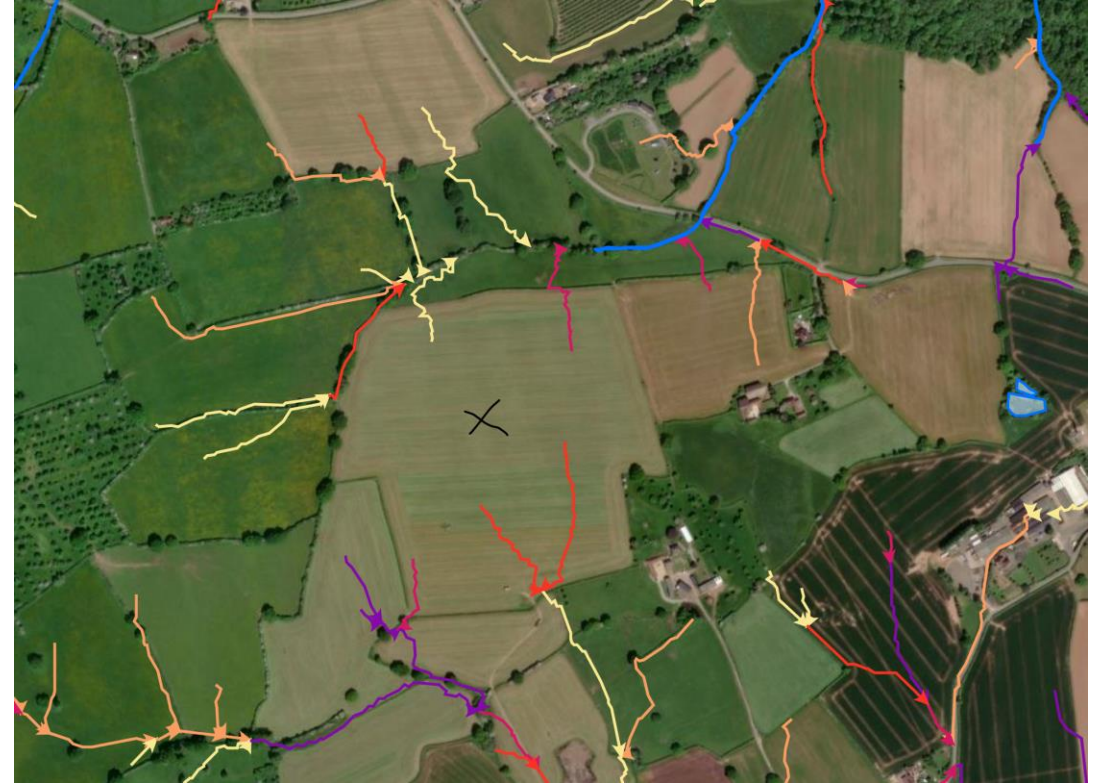
Farm inspections in the Wye Catchment (01/04/24 to 19/03/25)

- 153 farm inspections completed 24/25
- 34 Intensive Farming Inspections
- 379 actions from 125 farms inspected
- Most common non-compliance Nutrient Management Planning, soil testing and manure storage
- 173 actions completed to date
- 206 actions still in progress
- 57 enforcement responses



Remote sensing satellite data case study

- Using satellite data to verify pollution reports and potential non-compliance (March 2025)
- Soil erosion pathways to identify risk to watercourses and verification of land management practices
- No immediate risk of pollution, but further auditing of farm records planned



Environment Programme Delivery

Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) partnership projects April 2024 - March 2025

- Restoring our Rivers – Herefordshire Wildlife Trust (£82,000)
- Soils, Nutrients and Compliance – Herefordshire Rural Rub (£40,000)
- Arrow Project – Wye and Usk Foundation (£40,000)
- Wye Lugg Agroforestry – Wye and Usk Foundation (£49,999)
- Sustaining Soils – Wye and Usk Foundation (£15,000)
- Rooting for Better Soils – Herefordshire Meadows (£30,000)
- CaBA Wye Catchment Partnership (£15,000)

Total Funding £271,999

These projects have supported improving the water environment through a variety of measures, including:

- Nature-based solutions to reduce diffuse pollution and the impact of climate change
- Supporting Herefordshire farming compliance through education and farm nutrient balances
- Supporting land use change to reduce diffuse pollution, sediment loss and enhance natural capital for future farming
- Increasing infiltration rates and riparian shading through tree planting and increasing meadows in the catchment
- Develop an innovative approach through a risk-based mapping approach

Projects proposed for 2025/26

Partnership projects proposed (not currently partnered and subject to funding)

- Power for soils (Magnificent meadows, tremendous trees and wonderful wetlands) - Wye Valley National Landscapes (£44,700)
- Soils, Nutrients and Compliance - Herefordshire Rural Rub (£40,000)
- Arrow Project - Wye and Usk Foundation (£40,000)
- CaBA Wye Catchment Partnership (£15,000)

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- **Welsh Catchment Evidence for Nutrient Management Plan**

Working in partnership with NRW, EA, DCWW and Powys Council to steer the delivery of the Welsh catchment evidence for the NMP. Seeking to ensure alignment with the DWPP and develop an engagement plan for the whole catchment Nutrient Management Plan.

- **Voice of the River**

Participating in the selection process for the Voice of the River.

- **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

Collaborating with farmers to run engagement workshops across the county on the opportunities mapping for Nature Recovery.

- **Strategic Mitigation**

Preparing to publish further guidance to support developers bringing forward private mitigation measures.
Preparing a review of strategic mitigation for proposed growth in the Local Plan.

- **Monmouthshire Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy 2024** adopted:-
[Cabinet Decision 15th May 2024](#)



Rivers and Ocean Action Plan objectives : -

- Reduce sewage, phosphate and other chemical pollution in our rivers
- Reduce plastic and other litter pollution in rivers and coast areas
- Protect natural habitats along our rivers, estuaries and coast
- Protect communities from flooding
- Raise awareness of the importance of our rivers and coasts

Key Activities

Catchment-wide nature-based solutions and Natural Flood Management

Targeting litter campaigns and working with schools on litter

River Gavenny Catchment : Community Action Plan

Promoting Regenerative Farming through the Sustainable Food Partnership

Coastal Capacity Building project delivery: Severn Vison

Continued Partnership working

Natural England Update

Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier

- Initial discussions with small number of landowners, and with Rivers Trusts and Lugg IDB to discuss new river restoration options. This has significant potential over long term to restore natural function within the catchment, improving water quality, flood mitigation and biodiversity.
- Targeting key farmers for river restoration works in the Arrow catchment.

Catchment Sensitive Farming Audit

- 23 farms re-visited this year as part of annual audit process to check recommendation uptake. So far this year 122 out of 174 actions are either done or planned, with 30 re-recommended.

Catchment Sensitive Farming Advice

- Since Jan 2024 NE farm advisers have provided 121 advice to 204 holdings within the Wye catchment. 1,457 practices have been recommended since 2024
- A further 128 holdings contacted via farmer events. 10 farmer events throughout the year on subjects from best practice maize management and maximising soil health
- 2 land agent events at Ledbury and Harper Adams for 90 delegates.
- Joint working with Wye and Usk foundation to set up a farmer led trial on undersowing tender stem broccoli, which is now grown extensively in the catchment.

Landscape Recovery

- Ongoing support for the development of Ridge to River and Wyescapes projects including bespoke advice on farm infrastructure, water quality and options for river restoration options at the Flits.

LNRS

- Working with Herefordshire Council on raising awareness and supporting landowner engagement via promotional communications, attendance at bespoke landowner events to review initial mapping and complete mapping survey.



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