

## River Team sub-catchment Partnership Notes

**10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 virtual meeting on Teams**

**Attendees** Ceri Gibson - Chair(TRT), Peter Shield(GMBC), Jimmy Young(GC), Liz Walters(TRT), Zoe Lewin (DCC), Brian Weatherall(DCC), Richard Wilson (WT), Gayle Wilson (GMBC), Lee Wyatt(CA), Phil Morrin (UK Land), Amanda McKeivitt(EA), Sally Gallagher(EA), Sian Atkinson(WT), David Finnigan(UK Land), Rob Carr(EA), Lucy Mo(EA), Peter Thorn(CA), Stephen Thompson(NWG), Geoff Parkin(NU), Kirsty Pollard (DWT).

Apologies: Mark Dinning DWT, Neil Wilkinson GMBC, Michelle McCallam Groundwork and others.

1. **Welcome** CG TRT
2. **Team Catchment Vision and Adoption** EW TRT

The Vision has been in progress for some time, Gateshead and Durham councils have both been a major part of the process. One of the suggestions from the LAs was to include a projects spreadsheet, I have adapted the TCP Activity Log but added a 'future projects' tab, to record partners activity in the catchment.

One minor comment on the Vision was received from Mark Dinning via email, partners were asked to bring general comments to this meeting.

KP In the 'biodiversity and land management' objective there was a lack of reference to the connectivity of the habitats and green spaces that the partnership would like to restore. There should be a reference to nature recovery networks which need to operate across LA boundaries.

PS Gateshead has an existing wildlife corridor network which includes much of the Team catchment. The existing network is being reviewed which will lead to some opportunity mapping and then to the NRN.

RC The Vision is a much improved document thanks for all the work.

EW Thanks especially to GW, PS and ZL.

General comments on the Project Spreadsheet were requested. None were received.

CG Commented that the spreadsheet will be an evolving document.

GW Volunteered to fill in the project spreadsheet for GMBC

EW Asked partners if they had any comments on their willingness to adopt the Vision. She also reported that Groundwork are now happy to sign up to the document.

AMcK wanted more time to comment before a final draft was agreed and said she would email EW directly.

There was general agreement that the partnership should adopt the Vision which was shown by a raising of hands by those attending the meeting.

### **ACTIONS**

GW Fill in Team project spreadsheet

AMcK Comment on Vision

ALL to speak to colleagues regarding the Vision if required before your organisation can adopt it.

### **3. Rowlatch Burn EW TRT**

EW Last years WEIF project details were included in the updates sent out before the meeting. There is some money allocated for the Team this year to carry out some Land Management, Habitat improvement and fish obstruction work, however this has not yet been finalised.

RC Expressed his apologies for the delay in finalising the RB WEIF Business Case. It is now almost finished and delivery should be possible through this second period of lockdown. There have been internal changes to EA guidance to make WEIF Business Cases more aspirational. Once the BC has been signed off delivery will begin.

The WEIF allocations for next year's projects are also being looked at.

Discussions took place about last year's WEIF project, unfortunately Covid has delayed visits to key industrial sites for the foreseeable future. The high risk industrial estate units prioritised by Groundwork, have not been visited by EA.

### **4. Team Valley FAS AMcK EA**

This project has now received funding from central government and consultants have been appointed. There is an expectation that the process will move more quickly now, Amanda is reviewing the NFM potential at Hedley Hall as a part of this progress and site visits are planned for the near future.

PS Gateshead Council has completed a preliminary Surface Water Management Plan for Team Valley Trading Estate. The LLFA (Carl Hodgson and Peter Burrows) has recently been working with the Environment Agency (Amanda McKeivitt) to identify some early 'quick win' SuDS features within highways on TVTE which could be delivered as part of the main flood alleviation scheme. The Council was also hoping to access some climate change funding to progress the SWMP to a detailed action plan. Amanda requested further discussions with the Council to co-ordinate the SuDS schemes. A meeting is scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> December.

**ACTION** AMcK to update Team partnership afterwards.

### **5. Kibblesworth RA and Newcastle University Minewater model GP NU**

The purpose of this project was to get quantitative estimates of where groundwater would emerge if pumping was reduced or stopped and of the likely location of impacts on surface water and the environment in the Lower Team and Derwent.

The first question was regarding connections between all mine workings. The project looked at all the mining blocks across the network. Central Durham North is under the Team Valley area and this location became a pilot project for understanding of the dynamics of minewater responses to the change in pumping.

Second question was about the emergence at historical mine openings. There are 960 points on the CA GIs layer. The project looked at ponds at lower elevations. A simple computer model has been created to simplify the complexity of reality, there is a lack of data about the location of active connections between systems and where recharge from groundwater will take place. There was also a gap in data from 2013 to 2015.

Geoff sent out an example output from this model with the updates, some reality checks need to take place and after this the model will be available to use.

PT (CA Sustainability Manager) CA have an aspiration in their Annual Report to reach zero carbon by 2030. Eighty percent of CAs carbon footprint results from pumping and Kibblesworth is near the top of the list. Ten years is not a long time to reach this goal, the CA are looking at using less energy and using renewable energy and the solution will probably include both. All solutions are still being considered, any option to raise the levels or pump less water would help.

NWL works with phosphates will still need to pump controlled discharge down the catchment. This could provide multiple-wins, less water upstream could have potential for flood alleviation and could lower the carbon footprint. Need more information about the best course of action financially and environmentally.

RC Is the CA looking to reduce or stop pumping at Kibblesworth? Would they consider still pumping? Need locations to treat water from gravity-fed discharges.

PT Yes CA would consider still pumping at Kibblesworth, the best BC needs to be identified, no options have yet been ruled out.

SG Concern about loading pollutants into the estuary when so much money has been spent removing metals. Is doesn't make sense to add to this problem, we need the environmental best option and to strive for high standards.

CG partnership agrees that needs to be considered.

GP The pilot study on groundwater emergence and flooding can help with understanding the sources of pollution. There is potential to develop the minewater as a source of green energy – ground source heat energy.

RC Ground source energy is a good point. Tyne estuary project ties in with this and South Tyneside are looking at this as a source of energy. Discussions needed.

SG Crucial to think properly about keeping the water at the right level to manage flooding and pollution. Is one single discharge or a number of controlled, managed discharges better, finding locations for these discharges is key?

PS Gateshead MBC energy team are developing a minewater energy scheme at Kibblesworth borehole, Lamesley treatment works.

Renewable energy is a more sustainable means of pumping, there are solar panels in the area near the treatment works but there are significant challenges with locating them in the greenbelt.

SG In most cases using minewater to produce energy will involve the water being removed and then replaced. If there is any historical stratification, this removal activity will create mixing and so have the potential to make pollution worse, this risk needs to be managed.

CG Need a holistic solution which takes everything into account.

**ACTION** All Share information and progress on this project.

## 6. Hedley Hall project and feasibility AMcK EA

This project is being developed, the FAS consultants are reviewing all the options and Amanda has spoken to RW. The timeframe for the full scheme is 23/24. This year a review and detailed design

will be done and the build will start in 2021. Hedley Hall is just one element being included in the Team Valley scheme, there is a site meeting taking place with ARUP and the Woodland Trust shortly. Visits with other organisations will take place at a later date.

#### 7. **Horsiculture** EW TRT

Update provided prior to the meeting.

RC Regulation not carried out well in relation to Rowletch site. TRT has brought this issue to a wide, even national audience, so more attention being given to it.

PS The ecologist is not automatically consulted on horsiculture planning applications.

GW If there are flooding and water quality issues it goes to PS ecology. Could have internal discussions, as to who to consult in the future. Would TRT like to be consulted?

ZL Adopted surface and groundwater drainage if not already completed.

GW We could run a training session with development management colleagues to remind them of policies and best practice so issues are flagged up.

CG Great idea

PS There used to be a Horsiculture policy but it is not in the new core strategy or local development plan

RC This is also an issue in the Don.

CG This issue could be discussed at a future TCP meeting.

GW This should be enforceable through the general policy or through water quality.

#### 8. **Culverts** RC EA

The Wild Trout Trust walkover report was shared via email. Rob would like to know which are owned by LAs and which are privately owned and to come up with a plan to improve fish passage for the future. Please read the report and send comments to RC for discussion at a future meeting. Further money is allocated to complete a walkover of the Team and its tributaries later this year. In addition, water quality improvements are required and there are many land management issues to be addressed including dredging, poaching and moto-cross.

**ACTION** All Please read WTT walkover report and send comments to Rob before end of year.

#### 9. **Woodlands and local nature recovery strategies** PS GMBC

Gateshead MBC like many LAs has announced a climate emergency. Some have also announced a biodiversity emergency. There are a couple of strategic spatial planning pieces of work taking place on woodlands and GMBC have committed to increasing tree cover from 15% to 17% by 2050. This will result in 250 hectares of new woodland. Currently Gateshead is reviewing its own land holdings(500ha) and is also looking to bring existing woodlands into better management. There will be a consultation and a focus on multi functionality and putting the right tree in the right location.

In addition, Gateshead is working on a local nature recovery strategy with South Tyneside and Sunderland City Councils. They are currently undertaking a review of existing corridor networks which will lead into opportunity mapping of areas where ecological recovery net gain can and should be delivered. It is hoped that these will lay the groundwork for a substantial network for nature.

Either regional or sub-regional opportunities will feed into the process and workshops are planned to facilitate this.

Discussions followed about various opportunity mapping exercises happening currently:

- Abi Mansley is doing some work on woodlands for Northumberland CC
- S. Thompson on secondment to NWL from DWT to carry out an opportunity mapping exercise on the water environment.
- Peter Thorn looking at biodiversity net gain and nature recovery partnerships

There is a need to work together to share information, centralise the process and get advice on the best way forward.

**ACTION** All to contact Peter Thorn to work together and share information for these projects.

#### **10. AOB**

##### 1) EA Water Strategy Review - 'Rethinking Water'

RC is currently working with the national team on the above project. Citizen juries are being asked what they would like EA to do. Often consultation primarily reach organisations rather than individuals so this project is targeting individuals. EA are working with Seven Stories to discuss the Ouseburn catchment, this will then be replicated in other catchments. The workshops are happening in late January, invites are being sent out to people in the Ouseburn and surrounding areas. Local 'experts' will be on hand during the event to assist the participants.

There are two national questions:

- a. How to connect with water?
- b. What should be improved for nature?

There will also be local questions asked.

**ACTIONS** All Send Rob your ideas for local Ouseburn questions by the end of November.

All If you want to be a 'water expert' email Rob.

##### 2) A1 PS

Regular meetings are taking place with A1 widening contractors and Highways England including discussions about water and biodiversity issues. These meetings include discussions about the large SUDS feature to one side of the carriageway and the details of its visually and maximising its value and potential, for water quality and biodiversity. Culverts are also a topic of discussions including the realignment of the Allerdene culvert.

**ACTION** All If you have any specific questions please email PB, GW or PS.

RC discussions with HE regarding similar issues in the Ouseburn came to nothing but once the money for the project passed to their contractors Costain, Rob was able to negotiate and come to agreement with them.

##### 3) Next meeting in 6 months – early May

**ACTION** EW to send out a Doodlepoll beforehand