

# Nutrient Management Board Meeting

## Thursday 27<sup>TH</sup> September 2021

### 1. Attendees

Name	Organisation	Voting Board Member (Y/N)
Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst (ES) (Chair)	Herefordshire Council (HC)	Y
Marc Willimont (MW)	HC	Y
Samantha Banks (SB)	HC	N
Kevin Singleton (KS)	HC	N
Bethany Lewis (BL)	HC	N
Liz Duberley (LD)	HC	N
Cllr Sid Phelps (SP)	Forest of Dean District Council	Y
Andrew Osbaldaston (AO)	Environment Agency (EA)	N
Jenny Gamble (JG)	EA	Y
Sarah Faulkner (SF)	National Farmers Union (NFU)	Y
Simon Evans (SE)	Wye and Usk Foundation (WUF)	Y
Helen Dale (HD)	Country Land and Business Association (CLA)	Y
Merry Albright (MA)	Herefordshire Construction Industry Lobby Group (HCILG)	Y
Jim Hicks (JH1)	HCILG	N
James Mardsen (JM1)	Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP)	N
Claire Minnett (CM)	Natural England (NE)	Y
Fergus O'Brien (FOB)	Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water (DCWW)	Y
Nick Read (NR)	Farm Herefordshire	Y
Ann Weedy (AW)	National Resources Wales (NRW)	N
David Lee (DL)	NRW	Y
Alex Hale (AH)	EA	N
Chris O'Brien (COB)	BBNP	
Cllr Iain Mcintosh (IM)	Powys cc	
Helen Stace (HS)	Herefordshire wildlife trust	y
Dave Throup (DT)	EA	y
Adrian Humpage (AH2)	Powys CC	
Cllr Heulwen Hulme (HH)	Powys County Council (PCC)	
Vyvyan Evans (VE)	DCWW	
Tracy Nettleton (TN)	BBNP	Y
Oda Dijksterhuis	EA	
Tristan Semple	EA	
<b>Also in attendance</b>		
Cllr Jeremy Milln (JM2)	HC	
Cllr Ellie Chowns (EC)	HC	
Cllr Jennie Hewitt (JH3)	HC	
Christine Hugh Jones (CHJ)	CPRW	
Helen Hamilton (HH)	CPRE, Marches Consultancy	
Andrew McRobb (AM)	CPRE	
Nerys Hammond		
Richard Garnett		
Margaret Tregear	CPRW	
Nigel Berry	Gamber Logistics	
ThomasP1		
Kinsey Hern (KH)		
John Reed (JR)	AVARA	

GREGGS PIT		
Harvey Davies		
Alison Caffyn		

### Apologies


## 2. Minutes of the last Board meeting of May 2021 Board meeting were agreed.

### Matters Arising

1. ES asked if the NFU presentation from the May meeting could be shared to be added to the minutes.
2. FOB confirmed that the CSO element was included in the source apportionment as part of the "other".
3. DL confirmed a response had been made of the question of TT.

## 3. Presentation by John Reed of Avara

John Reed provided a verbal presentation regarding the steps that AVARA are planning to reduce poultry manure within the catchment using a combination of CHP, AD with P stripping and Pyrolysis.

MA asked about the timescales and funding for the improvements.

JR could not give timescale but believed it would be implemented before the water companies company's programme. And third party funding was already in place.

ES – it was needed as soon as practicable.

HS – Reiterated urgency for improvements and also did not consider AD as a solution.

ES – Indicated that the intention was to strip P from the digestate.

JR – Confirmed technology existed.

MW – indicated that incineration could be a solution and asked if contractual arrangements with farmers could be used to help with demonstrating certainty.

JR – indicated this was something that they could look at.

IM – Referred to NRW advice indicating that poultry were not significantly to blame for the phosphate issue in Powys.

FOB – Asked if the intention was to re-use P and indicated that getting a better understanding of the position and amounts of phosphate that would be removed would be useful for the model.

JR – Welcomed the idea of discussions with DCWW.

Asked if legacy P was being monitored.

JR – indicated that farmers test their soils but that a change of behaviour was required.

## 4. Presentation from Nigel Berry of Gamber logistics

Nigel Berry provided a verbal overview of the Gamber logistics business followed by a Q&A.

ES – Asked how much chicken litter is exported?

NB- indicated it was not all from the catchment but they had orders for around 10,000 tonnes mostly from Herefordshire, most will go to the Cotswolds.

HS – What is required from the farmers?

NB – They need to do a manure management plan and going forward they will need to provide details to prove the litter is necessary.

MA - Asked what is the most effective solution to poultry manures?

NB – Incineration/pyrolysis is probably the best.

SF – Supported NB – the litter needs to be treated as a resource.

SP – Gamber seems to be becoming a regulator. Did not think incineration was the most sustainable approach.

HS – was concerned that wash down etc would still lead to discharges into water courses.

NB – Was not involved in the part of the business but understood that all waste water is collected and taken off site. But will ask about the process and get back to the Board.

## 5. Counting Chickens – a discussion on accuracy in reported numbers of livestock in the catchment.

MA – indicated that DEFRA figures should be available shortly.

MW – If an authority has County functions the animal health team will know the numbers.  
IM – Will take this back to Powys to check.

## 6. TAG update and progress of the Nutrient Management Plan (Jenny Gamble)



FINAL River Wye  
Phosphorus Action Plan

JG updated the detail around the final version of the action plan.

Future TAG meetings will be more focussed with the next meeting being focussed on agriculture; she confirmed that agricultural representatives would be invited.

Several Board Members had updates or amendments to include in the detail of the Plan.

SE – asked if TAG could continue to look at the big picture items rather than simply indicating they were too difficult?

CM – The document needs to be a live document it should consider big picture items for the Board to push forward. TAG could be commissioned to look at obstacles, plans and actions for the Board to take forward.

JM1 – The TAG should bring forward this work to a future TAG, including metrics and a reporting framework.

ES – The Dashboard could be used as the reporting framework.

HS – Indicated that she could not support the plan in its current state.

MA – This should be a specific agenda item at the next TAG meeting.

CM agreed with MA that this should be considered by TAG and brought back to a future Board. The Action Plan will, if successful, become the reporting framework.

JH1 – Should the voluntary measures, which cannot provide certainty, be removed from the Plan.

ES – It is for the TAG to discuss the balance between voluntary and regulated matters but this should be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

JG – The only dates and figures that are currently available for the plan are the DCWW programmed works and the wetlands plan.

SE – Agricultural solutions often come from the bottom up rather than from the top down.

SF – The actions will be delivered by many businesses, they should be encouraged to take lots of small steps.

ES – This iteration of the plan cannot offer certainty at this time but it can be improved over time.

ES – Asked whether there were any other board members against adopting the plan.

MA – Indicated that HCILG could not support it at this time.

**ES – Indicated that there was broad support for the plan with two dissenting voices (HNP and HCILG)**

## 7. Regulatory change update

SF provided a briefing on interim measures until March 2022 regarding the spreading of manures.



FR4W Brief for NMB  
SF V3.docx

HS – Was concerned and did not agree with the relaxation of the regulations.

JM1 – Commented that there could be a mismatch between Wales and England.

DL – Acknowledged it could be difficult for cross-border farmers.

## 8. Abstraction and the importance of flow

AH and AO provided a presentation on the issue of abstraction in the English Wye.



ES – Is hands-off flow the lowest point to protect the ecology of the river?

AH – Yes

MA – What is the impact of low flows and concentration of nutrients?

AO – The modellers are looking at sensitivity and flow of nutrients, so that information will be forthcoming.

SF – Agriculture accounts for only 14% of abstracted water but is still main point of conversation. Food production needs access to water.

## 9. Citizens Science Project update

AO – Provided a verbal update on the citizen’s science project.

126 sites had recently been tested and this was an ongoing process over the next few months

6 Groups had been established.

An event was being planned for October/November to bring forward key learning experiences of the project.

Funding bids were being made to continue the work.

## 10. EA and NRW update on legal position in relation to :

- i. The Lynfi pollution incident – NRW colleagues confirmed that files were now with the lawyers.
- ii. The Kingsland incident – EA colleagues confirmed that an investigation **were was** ongoing.

## 11. Updates from organisations:

### i. Wye & Usk Foundation

SE provided an update of the Wye and Usk (indicated he would circulate a copy for the minutes).

### ii. Environment Agency

EA had undertaken 280 inspections, 60 have problems and are being followed up, 6 formal warnings had been issued.

Additional resource was being made available. 50 FTE inspectors were being recruited across England. 5-6 of these were for the Wye and Lugg.

EA were also looking at the “cradle to grave” cycle of “muck”.

£50k had been made available to provide advice.

A monitoring bid had been submitted.

The citizens science data was being used to drive regulatory activity.

### iii. Natural England

CM reported that there had been an uplift in resources for catchment sensitive farming (CSF) with recruitment of 6-7 additional officers in the West Midlands.

EA and NE were still looking at the targets at a national level.

In the Lugg it would cause difficulty if the target agreed was a new neutral level (see slides).



SE – the data for Redbrook is different on either side of the border.

CM – Would look at the discrepancy and get back to the group.

MA – Considered that it was time to decide what the target should be. Was unsure whether the “gap” between the current levels of P and the target would be achievable.

CM – The “gap” is what the action plan should ultimately be providing as it develops. Not able to provide a timeline for the setting of the targets at this moment.

### iv. National Resources Wales (NRW)

AW – there are 5 failing SAC reviews in Wales. Planning and permitting advice had been issued but will change.

Water Quality Compliance Assessments would be published shortly.  
Guidance was being produced on nutrient calculators.  
Failing rivers were to have a nutrient management board.  
A new officer for the Wye had been employed.  
SAGIS work had been completed.

v. Welsh Water (DCWW)

FOB provided a presentation upon the SAGIS modelling (requested to send for the minutes)



DCWW\_UpperWyeSummary\_Wye NMB Sep

vi Herefordshire Council (HC)

MW reported that a planning application had been submitted for integrated wetland at Luston. A second site was about to complete heads terms and there were to be 4 additional sites brought forward. Staff resource was being brought in to bring the sites forward. Counsel had confirmed the approach was correct. The Council were continuing to lobby Government.

vii Powys County Council

AH2 indicated that Powys were awaiting legal advice on a number of applications. The Council were still determining planning applications on the basis of NRW advice. Discussions were on-going with other authorities across Wales. Peter Morris was a member of the oversight group led by the Welsh Government.

viii Brecon Beacons National Park

TN reported that around 60 planning applications were not being determined in the National Park area due to current advice. National Park Management Plan had been published for consultation. LDP2 progress had been put on hold after the preferred strategy stage. An internal protocol for screening applications was going to be put on the website.

ix HCILG

HCILG were continuing to lobby.

## 12. Questions from the public

HH – Made a comment that the Dutch judgement allowed for the closure of farms and asked why risk impact zones are not shown on Magic Map?

CM – Indicated she would ask the National Team as this was not a local decision.

HH – Indicated that the catchment was showing a number of chemical failures, what are the implications of these failures for ecology?

DT – There were blanket failures across rivers but this was not something that had suddenly happened.

DT agreed to try to find out what the ecological implications might be.

CHJ – Nothing had been said about intensive livestock applications.

MW indicated that HRA advice would be considered for agricultural development in the same way as for housing.

CHJ – was mystified as to where the agricultural diffuse pollution was coming from.

DL – responded that the data had not shown that chicken farms were a major part of the problem. For example there had been a bad failure in South Powys but there were few chicken units in that area.

ES – There was a need to return to this point.

KH – More data is needed to understand the problem across the catchment.

IM – Understood that data indicated we were in a period of “betterment” but we need to understand this position.

## 13. Date of next meeting

ES to set a suitable date.