

Minutes for WRPS committee meeting January 19 th 2023 at 7.30 pm at Fulbourn Manor, Fulbourn.

Present. Richard Townley. Brian Jackson. David Lomas. Stephen Cory. Rebecca Lomas.

Apologies. David White. Susan Simpson. Jane Gaskell.

Minutes of last meeting and AGM. It was agreed that the WRPS should arrange to be present at the Farmers Market if possible.

Treasurers' report.

Debits: £120.46 to DJL for website fees.

£20 to RJS for Village Hall hire for the AGM.

Bank total should now be £1296.51. No statement received since 2021.No contact from Santander since paperwork returned regarding details of WRPS.

Account to be changed to one more appropriate BJ and PS still signatories on the account. BJ and RJS to liaise.

Secretaries Report. 10 New members from AGM no new volunteers for committee

Agreed to send AGM Minutes to all members (RJS). Minutes of committee meetings to be posted on the website after they have been approved at the subsequent meeting.

Presentation. Successful CVF grant application for river monitoring equipment - Stephen Cory.

Stephen explained how he will use telemetry to monitor flow, depth and chemical levels of the river water. The equipment will be positioned on or above the river at one site and is able to link with other monitors potentially up to a kilometre away.

DJL and SC will explore sites for the base station, suggestions include the Mill outlet at Hawk Mill Farm - Request DW permission- and the confluence of the New Cut and the river.

DJL to share graphs of flow with SC

DJL to contact Jennifer Meadows (EA) to discuss permission for positioning of the floating and fixed telemetry and Liam Hillam SCDC where these involve the relevant parts of the river system.

New Member. Stephen Cory was proposed as a new committee member by RT and seconded by DJL and BJ. The committee unanimously approved. RT welcomed Stephen to the committee.

Matters for discussion.

River flow TG has contacted the EA to request the commencement of augmentation.

BJ to search for historical data on Cherry Tree Stud borehole measurements.

BJ noted that the EA had ceased sending the CTS data to him? Possibly because TG was receiving updates. BJ to check with Jennifer Meadows.

Meeting with the Environment Agency on 13th October. Matt Ramscar has sent the slides from his talk DJL will recirculate.

Notice board. To be erected at Hawk Mill Farm in warmer weather. The AGM suggestion of further boards was discussed. As the boards need updating at present we will trial the first one and if successful apply for grants for a second at GW ? and a third at Fulbourn.

Basic information for the boards to be circulated to the committee before posting

River walk. Subject to approval from JG it was decided to hold the annual walk on July 16th and to accept JGs proposal to walk from The Temple to Hawk Mill.

RJS Contacted JG to seek her approval.

Website. DJL has linked the AGM talk and Nature network slides and The CABA document to the website. He encouraged the committee to add the web address to any communications.

AOB

Wilbraham Warbler submissions. DJL and RJL will provide submissions to the Wilbraham Warbler alternate editions.

Wilbrahams Environmental Group DJL attended the recent WEG meeting and will represent he WRPS on their committee. He updated them on the ongoing work of the WRPS.

WRE document DJL and RT will provide a response on behalf of the WRPS including “will the reduction in abstraction produce results for our river.

DJL noted that the “enhanced” scenario is potentially the only scenario that will definitely benefit our river – but also the most difficult to achieve.

WRE environmental report has references to the WR. It is not clear what this refers to. Figures are from Natural England.

RT and DJL to investigate.

CABA Catchment Based Approach Collaborative, Chalk Streams Restoration Strategy Implementation Plan. Document formed by multiple parties including UK gov. This document reviews ongoing work from multiple organisations and aims to collate and structure current and future plans for water resources. There are many relevant issues for the WRPS in this document – such as -

By 2025 they will have re designated all areas of chalk stream and appropriated them as high or low certainty. Note the WRPS mapping is incorrect but currently “high” certainty.

DJL to register and alter the linked map.

Catchment boundaries and monitoring points will be reviewed. Relevant as flow monitoring ignores the ephemeral streams (Our catchment monitored only at Bottisham Lode – often flowing when WR is dry) .

The only local flagship project commissioned is the Granta project – supplied by LGGS augmentation at Linton.

There is a proposal to introduce compulsory water metering in our area.

Wildlife Trust DJL/RJL to contact RH to see if the river report has yet been revised.

Cameo meeting 23rd Jan . Committee members to attend if possible.

Cambridge Water Resource Management Plan - plan not yet updated

Details of next meetings.

2023 Thursdays at 7.30 pm – some venues to be decided

April 20th at Stephen Cory's house 1 Jeeves Acre. Fulbourn. CB215DB.

July 20th

Oct 19th AGM Nov 16th

Minutes of WRPS meeting 20 April 2023 Held at The Windmill Little Wilbraham.

Present. Richard Townley, Chairman, David Lomas, Brian Jackson, Jane Gaskell, Rebecca Lomas Secretary and acting treasurer.

Apologies. Susan Simpson, David White, Stephen Cory.

Minutes of last meeting Accepted as a true record.

Treasurer's report The bank account signatories need to be changed to remove Pat Simpson (retired member) and add Rebecca Lomas (Steward). Agreed by all members present.

It was agreed to consider changing the account to a more accessible account in the future. RT suggested Metro bank and the committee agreed that this was a satisfactory arrangement.

RL agreed to continue as acting treasurer.

Secretary's report. Minutes circulated to all members from previous meeting and comments received included corrections from members a) initial website address was incorrect b) Walk date noted by some members.

Increasing email feed back from organisations to secretary continues to be circulated to committee between meetings as appropriate.

River flow update. Flow in the river in February was good due to high rainfall and augmentation This was even in the presence of drought status persisting in local area by the EA. Augmentation was ceased by the EA and flow stopped. TG appealed for re commencement of augmentation and this was agreed by Lawrence Cullen (EA). However during his temporary absence augmentation was again discontinued but was resumed after an appeal by TG. DL had received an Email from Lawrence Cullen asking the WRPS to provide a statement of its objectives regarding flow in the river.

It was agreed that we should include the following aims

1) Continuous all year round flow. If possible by decreasing abstraction but in the interim by the appropriate use of augmentation.

This would enable a more stable habitat for the ecology and botany of the river.

It would enable us to apply for grants to improve the river flow further.

It would improve the quality of the water.

2) Improved monitoring of the river flow and responsiveness of the augmentation.

Suggestions for improved monitoring include

- Telemetry

- New boreholes closer to our rivers sources.

- Webcam live monitoring of sections of the river.

- Repair of The Lanes gauging station.

DL agreed to draft and circulate an appropriate document to the committee.

River Walk.

Confirmed July 16th PM. JG will contact landowners and do a preliminary walk with RL to check feasibility of The Temple to Hawk Mill route.

WRE

Letter from RT to WRE forwarded to Stephen Tomkin he then quoted from it. This has drawn attention to the inadequacy of the Lodes-Granta Groundwater Scheme and the effects of overabstraction.

Notice Board.

This has been erected and information notices posted. It was agreed to erect another notice board near Shardelowe's Well and Fulbourn springs. Funding to be investigated/sourced RT JG

Website.

DL RL reviewed and improved some pages. Needs updating again. Check minutes posted.

Wilbraham Warbler

Deadline May 12th DL and RL in rotation agreed to draft reports

Wilbrahams Environmental Group. WEG

DL reported that he had attended several meetings and that the WEG was supportive of plans for the Wilbraham Fen SSSI. A meeting with the EA and NE had taken place regarding the Fen and included Kay Broad who had joined the EA Chalk Stream Group - a potentially useful contact in the future regarding the river.

EA Interactions

DL had circulated the more positive response email from Jennifer Meadows that outlined potential improvements regarding the online access to the Lanes gauging station data and the correct naming of the Bottisham Lode-Wilbraham River section on the government Catchment explorer.

AOB

Newmarket River. RL and DL attended a zoom presentation by Kevin Hands on the Lost Newmarket river.(Cambridge Natural History Society) KH detailed the course of the now dry and intermittently dry River course through Newmarket that links with the River Snail. They have mobilised considerable public support for the river and particularly amongst the arts community.

They will be holding a river walk on May 16th for a small group. RL and DL unable to attend. DL will enquire if WRPS may be represented by RT or JG

Cameo Meeting Jan 23rd 2023 Zoom attended by RL DL Minutes attached.

Further meeting April 27th DL

Charlotte Stannard sent via Cameo a very helpful document published by Defra on the government's plans. DEFRA strategy published on the 4th April: [Plan for Water: our integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-for-water-our-integrated-plan-for-delivering-clean-and-plentiful-water)

DL and RL attended the **Great Wilbraham Parish Council meeting** to represent the WRPS aims networking with local community groups and raising profile of society. Four new members of the society joined at the meeting.

Details of organisations affecting the WRPS.

DL is drawing up organograms on how the various legislative and regulatory bodies control the UK water system – and the numerous advisory bodies that we also interact with.

Next meeting

July 20th 2023 7.30 pm at The Windmill Little Wilbraham.

AGM OCT 19th 7.30pm

Nov 16th 2023 7.30 pm

2024

Jan18th

April 11th note meeting 2nd Thursday of month.

June 20th

Minutes for Wilbraham River Protection Society committee meeting.
20th July 2023 at 7.30 pm at The Windmill Little Wilbraham CB215LG.

Present. Richard Townley, Rebecca Lomas, Brian Jackson, Jane Gaskell, David Lomas, Susan Simpson, St John Starkie.

Apologies. David White Stephen Crory

Minutes of last meeting. Accepted as a true record

Treasurer's report. Signatories on the Santander WRPS account now Brian Jackson and Rebecca Lomas (Steward).

Account stands at £1,201.51 after deducting £90 to Jane Gaskell for providing the river walk tea.

Fund raising suggestions discussed. To hold a plant sale at the Great Wilbraham farmers market in Spring 2024. RL to book a pitch.

Secretary's report RJL The website has generated 3 new members since the last meeting and two new members through the river walk. We now have 100 members.

The committee was very pleased to welcome St John Starkie to attend the meeting. He was asked to consider joining the committee.

River Flow update. DL reported the email responses from Laurence Cullen at the EA to the WRPS Letters and emails – stating the WRPS objectives for the river and requests regarding management of the augmentation scheme.

Objective: To maintain all year round flow in the river to support the related natural environment

Provide online monitoring of both gauging stations

The EA plan to add the Lanes Gauging station to the Hydrology Data Explorer this summer and will investigate if this is possible for the Fulbourn gauging station.

Exploring the possibility of additional monitoring sites.

There is already a lot of monitoring equipment for this catchment and the EA is unlikely to be considering adding more. However no objections to us contacting the EA Hydrology and Telemetry team at Brampton to discuss external stakeholder suggestions and funding.

Improving the criteria for Augmentation Management

LC will refer the query to the new Chalk Project Group. He felt there was scope for the Wilbraham River restoration to become a project with a review of the augmentation being a part of that project.

Dungate Farm Pump upgrade

This query will be referred to the team which manages the operational assets. There is a plan for refurbishment of the Lodes Granta Scheme hardware but no timeline and no specific plans for an upgrade for the Dungate Farm pump.(which they admit is the most utilised in the whole scheme).

Review of river monitoring: In the absence of SC DL reported that there was still ongoing experimentation at the Hawk Mill site with telemetry of level and flow - and possibly a second site on the Fulbourn New Cut could be considered in the future.

River Walk The walk was again successful and twenty two people took part. Sixteen people confirmed attendance but did not come – probably due to the weather. Two new members joined. DJL gave talks along the route on the history of the river and fen. Regrettably the path was heavily overgrown and despite clearance by several volunteers over two days prior to the walk several participants found the going hard and two had to return. JG to investigate the maintenance of the Country Wildlife section of footpath with the County Council.

Next year's walk. Not in June or July because of vegetation. Investigate County Council path clearance ? Possible circular route via Herrings House. Review at next meeting with maps & suggestions.

Wilbraham's Environment Group DL Reported back. The WEG are interested to know what developments are happening in the Fen as they are involved with promoting the local nature recovery network and Coronation Wood.

Wilbraham Fen SSSI Unit 1 Project DL reported that he plans to apply to Cambridge Water's Pebble Fund for initial funding on behalf of LW&SMB PC. He has costs from a local contractor ~27k and some of the permissions from the four relevant statutory bodies (EA, NE, CCC & SCDC Flood & Drainage). The work is likely to take place in the Autumn 2024 depending on funding

Notice boards. JG and RT to seek funding from the Fulbourn Clockfund for a notice board for the Fulbourn end of the river. Could be situated outside the nature reserve? needs safety glass but otherwise should be the same as the one previously erected at Hawk Mill. RJS to forward details to JG.

Website. Funding approved from the WRPS for further annual subscription to Wix for website.

Wilbraham Warbler. WW next date August 11th contribution RJS. Submissions to the Wilbraham Warbler could also be sent to Christopher Meakin for submission to The Mill, the Fulbourn magazine. RJS

CAMEO (Cambridge Ely and Ouse catchment)

Cameo webinar April 27th DL circulated a summary by email 28/4/2023

Cameo Forum June 6th. DL RL attended. Cameo is supported by the Rivers Trust and Anglian Water. There were presentations on River Restoration by Rob Mungovan, the Strategic Pipeline Alliance for water transfer, the work on restoring the Lark and Ivel rivers and others relating to our catchment. There was discussion on WINEP, ELMS and an example of a large scale Landscape Recovery project as well as a report on the GC Chalk Streams Project – which is still open to project suggestions.

There are several sources of river project funding such as Anglian Water's "Get River Positive" and Cambridge Waters "Pebble Fund" - but as our problem is lack of water it has been difficult to define suitable projects.

Next Cameo meeting 11am to 1pm on Tuesday 26th September. They have asked for agenda items. DL and RL are away then but hopefully others will be able to attend. At some point we should present to CAMEO on the Wilbraham Rivers.

AOB

Potential River Projects: There was discussion on how best to utilise the various project funding opportunities. Given the lack of water there were proposals for improved monitoring using cameras as well as the flow and level data Stephen C is collecting. This data could be linked to the website to make the river challenges more visible. Other ideas included how to pressure the EA to upgrade their monitoring and Dungate Farm Pump systems. **Suggestions needed for the next meeting**

Planning application reports . RT noted that the EA and NE had objected to the North Cambridge housing application close to Cambridge North Station owing to the lack of available water and the environment as a major reason for its unsuitability.

Gove Proposal for Cambridge. The recent announcement of a major "levelling up" expansion of Cambridge by Michael Gove was noted. The implausibility of this given the water issues and the immediate negative response by Anthony Browne MP were also noted. It was agreed to keep these issues under review.

AGM Note Date Change

Date suggested as November 15th but Wilbraham Memorial Hall not available so changed to November 28th 2023. Tuesday

David Smith to be invited to talk at 8.15 on birds and animals of the river and Wilbraham Fen.

Plan AGM at 7.30 to 8.00 Drinks until 8.15 pm then talk from David Smith.(This is now all confirmed and advertised)

Next meeting Oct 19th at The Windmill at 7.30pm

Minutes for Wilbraham River Protection Society committee meeting.
19th October 2023 at 7.30 pm at The Windmill Little Wilbraham CB21 5LG.

Present. Richard Townley, Jane Gaskell, David White, Susan Simpson, David Lomas, Stjohn Starkie, Rebecca Lomas

Apologies. Brian Jackson, Stephen Cory

Minutes of last meeting. Accepted as a true record.

Treasurer's report. £ 1051.73 in account.

Wix website annual fee £108 paid to DJL and £20 to RJL for memorial hall booking.

Fund raising project of Plant Stall at Wilbraham Farmers Market next spring. JG to check dates of Fulbourn plant sale to ensure no clash. Book pitch when dates released.

Secretary's report RJL Five new members since last meeting . Membership numbers now 105. There are still some members whose e-mail address is incorrect despite updating at WRPS events. Minutes of July meeting to be circulated and Oct as pre AGM.

River Flow Update River flow has been maintained for most of the last year probably thanks to T Goryn's direct feedback to the EA. DW noted flow at Hawk Mill was as good as it had been for several years.

DJL noted that despite water present in most of the river there was a conspicuous dry section upstream of A1303 bridge when the levels were low and water did not get over the bridge conduit until the levels rose. He postulated that there might be benefit to lowering the concrete conduit built under the bridge as it was probably installed at a time (?1960s or earlier) when river levels were routinely higher. The dry section upstream was probably sediment related. This also likely obstructed the movement of fish upstream from under the A14 bridge pool. DL had emailed to the EA a proposed project to survey the river bed levels at this site (attachment 1)

Tony Goryn had reported that Laurence Cullen was probably no longer the main contact at the EA for augmentation issues.

Following a CAMEO meeting DJL had emailed the EA suggesting replacement of the Dungate Farm augmentation pump should be made a priority given it was used far more frequently than any of the other LGGS pumps and was clearly not sufficiently reliable.

River Monitoring SC unable to attend but sent a report of progress on the telemetry monitoring.

Quarterly Report on WRPS River Monitoring

Original Scope of the project to provide multiple measures of stream level and water flow across a number locations with the Great and Little Wilbraham stream network.

The project was due to run for at least 12 months starting in Spring 2023.

The output of the river monitoring should be ...

- a file, or set of files , that would contain data on river flow and levels capable of being imported into reports, graphs etc*
- ideally a web page would be constructed to show in near real time a graph of level and flow, this we page would be hosted on the WRPS website*
- selection of , or development of ,flow sensor possibly using ultra-sound*

Progress and Problems

A number of technical issues have slowed down progress.

- Radio coverage across the Hawk Mill Farm for low powered sensors was insufficient but by adding antennae and using increased power this has largely been resolved
- Reliable 3G/4G coverage to ensure connections to the Internet. This requirement has largely disappeared as WiFi/broadband access to the Internet has kindly been provided.
- Battery power and solar panels, the design of the sensor platform has provided significant increase to battery lifetime between charges.

Remaining issues is to deploy reliable flow sensors that are low cost and can operate in the low flow/low water level conditions within the Wilbraham streams.

Next Steps

Now the sensor platform sensor has been redesigned, and there is reliable Internet connectivity data capture of river levels can start and will continue between Oct 2023 and Oct 2024 to provide original 12 month proposed monitoring.

River Walk RL JG Proposed river walk.

Time and date. Sunday 19th May 2024 afternoon

Proposed route. Following discussion a circular walk was agreed between Herrings House to Hawk Mill Farm. Including items of interest en route namely - the old course of Great Wilbraham River, Mill Holt, Old GW river at Herrings House, and Fulbourn gauging station.

JG & RT to check possibility of tea at Herrings House and parking. Alternative site for tea the Mill room at Hawk Mill Farm. Permission to be sought from Silver trees, Herrings House and the Parish Acre for access.

JG confirmed that the county council mow the footpath to the west of the LW river through the County Wildlife Site annually but are unable to commit to a date.

Wilbraham's Environment Group update. DL noted there were plans to generate a local nature recovery plan and a grant application was being made to fund this work. DL had applied for initial funding for the Unit 1 Wilbraham Fen Improvement Project to Cambridge Water's Pebble Fund. He was aiming for the work to take place Autumn 2024.

Fulbourn Notice board. JG RT to complete application and submit to Fulbourn Clock fund. Proposed site at Fulbourn Nature Reserve south entrance close to the footbridge. Cost is the same as the original board. Plan for the Clock Fund to pay the invoice directly. Features on the board to be predominantly related to Fulbourn end of the river.

RT and DW to discuss erection of the board.

Wilbraham Notice board. Agreed to display the Cam Valley Forum "Plea for better environmental understanding in water planning" for 3 weeks and then a summary with a QR link to the website where the document will be available.

Website . DL and SSt to discuss management, simplified navigation and updating of the website.

RT suggested an annual newsletter that could be circulated and available on the website.

A QR code link to the website will be displayed on the notice boards.

Wilbraham Warbler . Advertise AGM and circulate to The Mill. RS

CAMEO (Cambridge Ely and Ouse catchment) Feedback on meetings. Sept 26th and October 16th. DJL presented a simplified diagram of the interactions between some of the various organisations involved locally in water management and the origins of some of the current legislation and directives. Our river is one of 29 water bodies within the CAM catchment. CAMEO is the local part of CABA "Catchment Based Approach" which has become the mechanism for protecting the environment and water courses on the UK . This is an inclusive civil society-led initiative that works

in partnership with government, local authorities water companies, businesses and other stakeholders to maximise the natural value of our environment.

The Oct16th meeting at Natural England (Cambridge) was an initial meeting to discuss Chalk Stream Mapping and how to proceed as a collaborative group. There was representation from Local Water groups, the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water, Affinity Water, Local Government, Ecologist and Natural England. It was noted that -

- A comprehensive chalk stream map is needed
- There is lack of knowledge on how many streams have dry periods during the year
- The next Cameo meeting will focus on Data – identifying what is needed and how to get it
- Cambridge has a major water supply problem

AGM Confirmed for Tuesday November 28th at 7.30 pm for the AGM 8pm break for refreshments 8 15 pm David Smith will talk on his experiences with the wildlife of the Wilbraham Fens Speaker confirmed title to be confirmed and then publicised.

Possible suggestion of further talks next year? Nick Balmer of Revive the River Ivel protection group. Noted the screening of Pure Clean Water an educational film about Hobson's Conduit and water supplies past present and discussion on the future. Members to try to attend the screening and review with a possibility of showing it locally organised by WRPS.

AOB Water Resources chalk partnership fund . Review possible projects.

Future quarterly meetings in 2024 to be at 7.30 pm on the second Thursday of the month:

Jan 11th

April 11th.

July 11th.

October 10th.

AGM Tuesday 26th Nov 24