

Yealmpton Environment Group

Notes of meeting 7th October 2024, Parish Room, Bakery Square

Present: Sheila Barton, Linda Durman, Tony Hawkins, Jane Pennington, Charles Weston-Baker

1. June 12th meeting notes agreed.

2. Budgets

Projects funded for 2024/5

- all terrestrial project costs have been submitted to Parish Clerk. final budget has been agreed with Parish Clerk
- Water quality (Yealm) projects; CSI lab sample costs will be invoiced in November.

Funding requests to Parish Council for 2025/6 to be considered at next meeting.

Noted that the funding from Yealmpton Parish Council to get smaller projects funded, has been very beneficial when applying for larger grants from outside bodies.

3. Active travel.

South Hams LCWIP held a consultation event at the Watermark Ivybridge on 1st October. The consultants showed an interactive map identified cycling, walking and wheeling routes in the South Hams that identified with barriers, and suggested interventions to overcome these barriers. There is no money to enact these interventions but it could inform future planning.

The scheme proposed for routes in Yealmpton and Brixton went in and out of the A379 and cyclists, walkers and wheelers would not use it, proposing impractical gradients and use of dangerous road junctions for cyclists and walkers. It transpired that the brief for consultants meant that they had only visited towns as part of this process.



Proposed route from east to west in Yealmpton is down Orchard Hill, along the A379, right up Gypsy Hill (steep, busy and narrow), down past the allotments entering the A379 at a dangerous junction, left down New Road and right up Torr Hill (another dangerous junction). Then either up Yealmbury Hill (again steep narrow and busy) or left onto the A379. It then follows Silverbridge Way (not awarded planning permission for cyclists) to Brixton. Devon County Council have also produced a separate LCWIP where they have identified Yealmpton to Newton Ferrers as a priority route. It is not known whether there is funding for this.

Priority routes, barriers and suggested interventions can be reviewed at the link below:

[Online mapping showing priority routes, barriers and interventions suggested – please click here](#)

4. River Yealm water quality

Citizen Science Investigation (CSI) of water quality

- the Hanna phosphate monitors are now being trialled by CSI volunteers to be used when high CSI water quality measures for phosphate are observed or when pollution incidents require more in-depth investigation
- we attended a meeting with SWW to discuss the outcomes of the CSI monitoring project to date as well as potential help that SWW might be able to provide in determining the location of our pollution hotspots on the river as well as potential solutions. Representatives of Green First and Nature Based Solutions attended.

- Meeting with Westcountry Rivers Trust River Guardians attended; consultation on the structure of volunteer organisation continues. WCRT will be installing a volunteer management system called "Assemble" which it is hoped will make organisation and communication easier with groups and between groups.
- a new project called "MudSpotter" will be introduced for run off and catchment drainage.
- The CSI team will undertake the next Riverfly Survey survey in Autumn 2024. Six sites on the Yealm and its tributaries with known pollution issue are included within the survey.

Identifying and addressing sources of pollution

- average spill times for year of 2023 for all CSOs through the South Hams have been obtained from EA website. This data is being used to help prioritise future work by the South Hams Scrutiny Group (Cllrs Martin Fodder and John McKay.) Prioritisation and associated actions are currently being planned
- District and Devon County Councillor Dan Thomas has asked SHDC for a review of their response to RYWQG in Feb 2024, when SHDC stated they do not have any information on drainage from the Lee Mill Industrial Estate
- Programme to measure the effects of our planting programmes on water quality is being considered.

5. Trees.

- (INNS) invasive non-native species 5-year programme; during 2024 we have organised 9 bashing events (Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed) on five sections of the river with over 20 volunteers ParkLife professionals
- Applications submitted to FiPL for £5,000 bid and to EA for research funding (£75,000) from the EA's Water Restoration Fund.
- Autumn/winter joint projects (PSDCF, ParkLife) Ewells Wood planting completed
- Kitley woodland/Lodge Gate Field brush-cut bindweed and other weeds over with a hired ride-on cutter (£300 from YEM)
- Kitley tree nursery – polytunnel erected (£500 from YPC)
- the 2,000 trees at Kitley woodland are managed by a group of five regular watering volunteers advised by Liz Tutty (Moor Trees)
- Tree seed Sunday took place on 6th October.
- Veterans outdoors cooperation advanced; improvements to access tracks and placement of bunds planned; £400,000 bid for this development has been submitted, of which £300,000 will be for community activities.
- Woodland restoration/ash dieback replacement
- ParkLife / DWT managed volunteer plan developed
- Additional sources of funding being actively chased
- Planted holly bushes (screen for treatment plant), will be pruned during winter.

6. Biodiversity

YESS – nature restoration programme for non-farming landowners delivered by a joint steering group with EA(WEIF) and YEM funding. Actions include tree and hedge planting, fencing, ponds, bunds, leaky dams and wetland area restoration. Results to date 9 nature restoration visits leading to 5 deliveries, 36 NFL's registered interest owning circa 342-acres. 2024/25 funding – EA (WEIF) £46,000, YPC c. £4,000.

Ruby's wood surveys - Ivybridge Community College Environmental Science A-level ongoing (part funded by YPC).

Bat monitor - funding planned from a locality grant.

In discussion; bird & bat coordinators, further linking in with existing organisations.

7. Next meeting.

Thursday 29th November 7pm Little Bowden