

Exe Estuary Management Group Meeting Minutes

10:30 – 12:30 Wednesday 21 March 2018
Location: Fortescue Room, Committee Suite, County Hall



Present:

Representatives

Devon County Council:
Teignbridge District Council:

Peter Chamberlain (PC)
Chair of meeting (Vice Chair of
Partnership): Cllr Ted Hockin (TH)
Graeme Smith (GS)

East Devon District Council:

Cllr Michael Howe (MH)
Nathan Robinson (NR)

Exeter City Council:

Steve Carnell (StC)
Colin Acton (CA)

Exmouth Town Council:

Cllr Bill Nash (BN)

Starcross Parish Council:

Cllr Andrew Cadbury (AC)

Bishops Clyst Parish Council:

Cllr Christopher Scanes (CS)

Forum Chair:

Lynn Trout (LT)

RSPB:

Gavin Bloomfield (GB)

Natural England:

Andrew Stanger (AS)

RYA:

Alan Wood (AW)

British Canoeing:

Jane Evans (JE)

Exe Estuary Officer:

Stephanie Clark (SC)

Minute Taker

Rowena Garne (RG)

Specialist Advisors

South East Devon Habitat Regulations
Partnership (SEDHRP):

Neil Harris (NH)

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence – TH

Apologies for Absence

Devon County Council:	Councillor Jeffrey Trail BEM (JT)
British Canoeing:	Peter Thorn (PT)
Exeter City Council:	Cllr Margaret Baldwin MBE (MB)
East Devon District Council:	James Chubb (JC)
Devon & Severn IFCA:	Sarah Clark (SaC)
Forum Vice Chair:	Jeremy Rawlings (JR)
Clyst St George Parish Council:	Cllr Maureen Ackland-Smith (MAS)
Exeter City Council:	Dave Bartram (DB)
Dawlish Town Council:	Cllr Terry Lowther (TL)
Dawlish Town Council:	Cllr Martin Wrigley (MW)
Woodbury Parish Council:	Cllr Graham Murrin (GM)
Lympstone Fishery & Harbour Association:	Neil Downes (ND)
Powderham Estate:	Lord Charles Courtenay (CC)
Environment Agency:	Hugh Davy (HD)

Introduction to new Representatives:

- Cllr Bill Nash: ETC
- Lynn Trout: new Forum Chair (previously Forum Vice Chair)
- Jeremy Rawlings: new Forum Vice Chair
- Neil Downes: now represents LFHA

2. Minutes and Action Log of Previous Meeting – TH

AGREED: Minutes of last meeting agreed as accurate by Management Group.

- Addition of two interest group representatives have now been included on the Executive group.
- Natural England and D&SIFCA have had a meeting with Myles Blood-Smith and are looking at the relocation of mussel seed onto Bull Hill in order to improve stocks, these mussels will not be farmed. Waiting for Myles to submit a formal proposal.

ACTION: AW to organise Starcross Yacht Club as meeting venue for September meeting.

3. Adoption of Memorandum of Agreement – PC

- At a previous Management Group meeting the contents of the MoA were agreed in principle.
- Nothing of any significant concern has been brought up in final checks of document.
- One amendment proposed by MH: to clarify Partnership Committee is responsible for agreeing the budget whilst the executive will oversee/monitor the budget.

AGREED: MG agreed the above amendment and formally adopted the amended MoA.

ACTION: SC to send out final version of the MoA.

ACTION: All funding and statutory Partners to sign adopted MoA and return before Easter.

- As of the next meeting we will be adopting that structure

4. Budget Monitoring 2017-18 and Budget Preparation 2018-19 – PC

Monitoring

- £9330 surplus. This was a planned underspend. Very slightly greater than anticipated due to other income this financial year.

Preparation

- Situation has changed to some degree, due to actions being taken via funding strategy.
- First table indicates cost anticipated for 18-19. Additional essential partnership expenditure and additional basic project budget for the partnership to run successfully £49578.
- Partner contributions: bring in £26375. Only just over half of what we need.
- With proposed 3% increase (not all partners have agreed or are able to fund this increase) the outlook is slightly better but does not solve the issue.
- There is a significant shortfall -of approximately £20,000.
- We will be carrying forward £9330 (planned underspend).
- We have future planned work through SEDHRP via a signage review.
- We have received contributions from DCC Cllrs via their locality budget of £2300.
- Tentative additional income - 3 funding requests relating to activities, supported by SC. Through Parishes Together Fund, SEDHRP, Exe Estuary Trail signage.
- Likely that we will be able to bridge the gap for 18-19 – we are hopeful not certain.
- Currently we are in an unsustainable position with regard to core funding not meeting budget meaning we need to work hard to bridge gap.
- We will have a confirmation of Parishes Together Fund by end of this month and will let MG know the outcome.
- Constant review of budget is ongoing.

5. Delivery Plan Highlight Report – SC

- Winter Forum –
Presentations were all successful. There were 93 attendees in total. Feedback from the forum has been collated, 10 people completed feedback. 100% said the forum was worth attending. In regard to the sectoral balance, there was a large representation from recreational sector.
Concern from MG that the Forum was fully booked, yet there appeared to be seats still available. SC agreed, and said that this was in part to people not turning up on the day, even though the event was purposefully overbooked. SC was advised that the Council Chambers accommodated 100 people but will check for next Forum.

ACTION: SC to check full capacity of Council Chambers for next Forum and rethink amount to overbook places by to ensure seats are filled.

- Codes of Conduct – The codes have been drafted and will be discussed later in the agenda. The draft codes have been discussed at the OWG. (See agenda item 7).
- Looking into future work on redesigning and reprinting the Exe leaflets, with further promotion.
- Clean Up Events – 12th May Clean Up is already fully booked. Involvement of local business and east Devon. RSPB providing tractor. The date of the second clean up event has yet to be confirmed.
- The EEMP will be undertaking a review of the signage around the Exe Estuary. (See agenda item 8).
- The EEMP will be continuing to promote the flood and coastal risk management on the Exe, which is being undertaken by the Environment Agency.

6. Adoption of 2018/19 Annual Delivery Plan – SC

- Most up to date draft of the Delivery Plan presented. Mainly includes actions which SC aims to undertake, however, some additional items are still to be included from Partners. Final Delivery Plan will be completed at the beginning of April.

Key items included:

- Core work including the management of EEMP website, organisation of Winter Forum, etc.
- Formation of Friends of the Exe Estuary group
- Unable to organise the Spirit of the Exe festival this year due to funding limitations a other work priorities - however we are looking to attend other events to represent the Exe Estuary Management Partnership.
- Delivering 10 education sessions. Will be Charging £100 for 2018 education sessions. An additional 8-10 sessions have been booked and will be led by EDDC.
- Continuing to look at new funding streams in order to plug the gap.

7. Agreement on amendments to draft Codes of Conduct – SC

- Document presented summarising public feedback received on codes.
- Comments relating to wildlife refuges were outside the scope of this review of codes and therefore were not addressed in this document.
- General feedback received indicates majority of detail within codes is accurate and correct and seems fairly positive. The overall feedback suggests that most people like the general format of the codes.
- SC responded to those who offered feedback to advise on next steps.

Section 1:

- Phone number for SEDHRP mitigation officers - no public phone number.
- Starcross launch point is further north - by Powderham Church

ACTION: GS & SC to check and amend Starcross launch point on codes map.

- AW - Launch point near SYC remains blocked.
- Lympstone - launch point is unsafe as users have to cross railway
- PWC - safe water mark?
- CA - Not technically safe water.
- Out to sea - work with ECC to include right text.

ACTION: LT & CA to discuss further and agree wording for “out to sea” on Water Users Code.

- Devon Wildlife Trust no longer lease the area. Need to clarify area with them.
- LT - Think some of it is privately leased.
- Leaflets - A4 printing
- JE - Font size increase - try and print on A4 and see if is readable.
- PC - Trying to make it accessible in all formats if possible. In the format that it is intended at, it will follow best practice guidelines.
- Potential of looking at making printable version that break the A3 into A4 printable pages. This will split the map.

ACTION: SC to look at developing an A4 printable version of codes.

- Remove apostrophe in title of Bait Collectors Code.
- To include how good Exe is for recreation
- GB - Wording - promotion of recreational activities - think it should just be recognising that the Exe is a good place and indicate legitimate activities that can be undertaken.
- JE - If you want people to read this - you need to include promotion of recreational users. Need to look at Pool Harbour code.
- NR - Think the codes don't need to be a promotional aid, just need to get the message across.
- JE – The Exe is frequently used for entry level activity.
- GS - Working in parallel with Exe Explorer, don't want to replicate information.
- GB - Are these messages consistent as one leaflet encourages use whilst the other encourages less disturbance.
- PC - I don't see them as being contradictory - one is promotional one, the other isn't, it simply gives best practice guidelines about how to safely and responsibly use the estuary.
- GB - Probably check over the leaflets.

Section 2: requires feedback and agreement from MG

- Checking of colour of text. Looking at the text being black instead of blue.
- Need to follow legal guidelines.

AGREED: Ensure colour contrast within codes follow legal guidelines.

- Text sizes - DCC guidance suggested 12-point.
- OWG suggested 11-point. Currently working with SEDHRP on reducing text. Suggestion to reducing size of headings which will feed back to designer.
- GB key issue is how much text are you going to need to lose in order to gain font size.

- PC – Naomi Harnett suggested she could help with reducing text to help with increase in size.

AGREED: 11-point and reduced text.

- Shading on map - looking into with designer.

AGREED: Take designer recommendations on shading on map.

- Water Users section
- Looking at altering layout - clear intro, keep wildlife information as one. To avoid confusion of message.
- Additional information happy to include as long as it fits on map.
- Responsibility of individuals to find parking.
- GS - Exe Water Users Code - consistency.

- GS - How many copies printing?
- SC - 3000 of each
- GS - How much of the EEMP project funding?
- SC - Funded through different source (SEDHRP)

- AW - How often will these be reviewed.
- SC - That will fall with SEDHRP - probably as and when needed.
- AW - Annual or one of print?
- NH - One off
- LT - Distribution?
- SC - Habitat mitigation officers and local clubs. They will also be available on both the EEMP and SEDHRP websites.
- SEDHRP to potentially look into future printing and reviews of codes.

- Slipways:
- Issues with all slipways - none are ideal for all conditions or all uses.
- Not keen to see powered craft using beach launch points
- Not promoting those that don't have water / safe access.
- Promotion of Mamhead and Imperial. Not Belshers and Beach.
- Need to make sure access points are promoted but are promoted correctly.
- AW - I think the last thing you want to do is remove access points for Exe.
- JE - Can I suggest it remains as a little red line but is not overly advertised in the wording. As a safety point.
- GS - Can we have a red line by Starcross just above the car parking sign.

AGREED: Access points at Belshers and Starcross to be added as red lines on map.

AGREED: Include pop-out box for Exmouth.

AGREED: Not to promote access on Shore Code.

AGREED: Wildlife Refuge Text - "Avoid wildlife refuges where safe to do so"

- JE - Would like to make clear that groups should not be put off from going on trips due to the possible need to use refuges if safety issue is raised.
- Water Users -
- Clarification that those are guidelines not rules.

- GS - Web link to tide times?

AGREED: Include tide times link on shore guide.

AGREED: Hovercraft - can't cover everything, sufficiently covered under powered craft.

- Shore and Dog Walking codes
- Requested reference to wildfowling in codes - OWG agreed. Wording to be kept general around wildfowling.

ACTION: SC to check wildfowling text with AS (Natural England).

- Good level of positivity used in wording? Tried to get a balance.

AGREED: Good balance of positive language used in codes.

- Water Users:
- Disturbance distance - 100m follows Green Blue guidance. Come to a compromise over distances. Meeting with users suggest they wanted a clear distance to avoid confusion.
- AW - Consistency across all three is better.

AGREED: Consistent guidance of 100m distance to wildlife to be used.

8. Review of Signage – SC

- Full review of all signage on Exe. This will be a coordinated approach.
- 3 stages for this process -
 1. Inventory of signage - early April.
 2. Rationalisation of signage - completed by 7th May. Working with land owners to update and coordinate, recommendations for location of new signage, recommendations for installation of signage.
 3. Update of Signage. Exe Estuary Trail, new Partner signage, new SEDHRP signage.
- JE - Do you need planning permission?
- SC - Need permission from land owner.

ACTION: SC to check with planners as to whether permissions are required for installation of signage, when signage has been rationalised.

9. Exe Fisheries Scoping Report: Discussion on future projects – SC

- Completed an economic plan and commissioned a "Love Your Local Catch" scoping report.
- 2 aims - establish baseline and to examine local food retailer practices.
- Three key species: Whelks, scallops, cuttlefish
- Short discussion on how to progress project and any potential funding sources?
- PC - Looks to be a good source of work for partnership, need advice on funding sources.

ACTION: MG to feedback on suggestions for funding opportunities to further Exe local fisheries work.

- NR - Any barriers to selling locally landed fish here?
- SC - Easier to take fish to Brixham and sell off rather than sort and ice etc.
- BN - any dates?
- SC - Ongoing project - incomplete as of yet.
- ETC suggestions:
 - Greendales involvement.
 - Restaurants – Rockfish, shipped down frozen – good opportunity.
 - “Caught by Bill” initiative.
 - Involve Cockwood.

10. Presentation: Coastal Byelaws at Dawlish Warren – GS

- Looking at minor amendments - exclusion zones - extending to include the coastal frontage at Dawlish Warren. Proposal to increase number of zones - from May to September. Powered leisure craft only. 200m from high water mark. From slipway at Dawlish warren.
- AW - is it 31st May to 1st September or 1st May to 30th September?
- GS - 1st May to 30th September.

11. Any other business (please submit to SC before meeting) – TH

- Update on Harbour Authority?
- StC - Initial report included employment of Harbour Master and staff on estuary on behalf of ECC to fulfil HA function. Due to go to Committee, end of May/beginning of June will have more clarity.
- GS - Useful Myles Blood-Smith presentation. Proposal that this group receives a cut down version of TSC presentation from John Goss-Custard to see what others are receiving from him.
- PC - Will come back with thoughts on this.

12. Agreement on Dates of next Meetings:

- 20 September 2018 (Starcross Yacht Club - TBC)
- 14 March 2019 (venue TBC)