

Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP) User Group Meeting with Cllr Jeff Trail BEM Agenda



Meeting 1:

Date: Wednesday 27 September 2017

Meeting time: 18:00-20:00

Venue: Starcross Fishing & Cruising Club, Brunel Tower, The Strand,
Starcross, Exeter EX6 8PR

Attendees

Councillor Jeff Trail BEM, Chair of Exe Estuary Management Partnership
Stephanie Clark, Exe Estuary Management Partnership
Rowena Garne, Exe Estuary Management Partnership
Iain Beaumont, Powderham Estate
Roger Bishop, Motor Boats of Topsham
Peter Burgess, Devon Wildlife Trust
Philip Burrows, Starcross Fishing and Cruising Club
Councillor Andrew Cadbury, Starcross Parish Council
Councillor Edward Hockin, Teignbridge District Council
Councillor Michael Howe, East Devon District Council
Annette Ladbrook, East Devon District Council
Simon Morrissey, Exeter Canoe Club
Jose Northey, Topsham Society
Jeremy Rawlings, Topsham Society
Chris Rogers, Topsham Sailing Club
Vanessa Ryley, DAWSLIH Chamber of Trade and Commerce
Helen Scott, Dawlish Warren Tourism
Graeme Smith, Teignbridge District Council
Jerry Tallwin, Devon Birds Society
Russel Thompson, Starcross Fishing and Cruising Club
Lynn Trout, W Trout & Son
Mike Trout, W Trout & Son
Mike Western, Dawlish Warren Anglers and Bait Diggers
Alan Wood, Royal Yachting Association
Ian Ladbrook, Exmouth Rowing Club

1. Welcome – JT

- Welcome, thank you for coming, housekeeping
- Chair introduces himself and invites all to introduce themselves
- Would like to thank Starcross Fishing and Cruising Club for the venue and refreshments.

2. Introduction from the EEMP Chair & purpose of meeting – JT

“My name is Cllr Jeff Trail BEM. Following the Devon County Council elections I have been appointed to the Exe Estuary Management Partnership (EEMP) as Chairman. As a person who has given many years of service to the military and now local government I accept the challenges ahead of me for the benefit of EEMP and all Exe Estuary users.

Over the past years Cllr Bernard Hughes MBE has, with his Officers and committee, worked hard to provide EEMP with the resources and finances to protect the River Exe and to assist with its preservation, whilst at the same time working with the assistance of all users. Yes, I have big shoes to follow but I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to fly the flag and maintain the standards set. The next couple of years are going to be challenging not only with the on-going work commitments within the committee but also the environmental responsibilities associated with EEMP. With ever decreasing financial assistance within all sectors, EEMP will need to explore ways to find the extra resources, volunteers and funds required to move forward to maintain and improve the service provided by EEMP. As a forward thinking, listening individual, I will endeavour to engage with EEMP and all user groups. All ideas are welcome for the benefit of the City of Exeter, Towns and Villages, and visitors to The River Exe." *Cllr Jeff Trail BEM DCC Exmouth.*

- My responsibilities to the Exe Estuary Management Partnership include the protection of the natural environment and historic environment which includes wildlife, heritage, history and archaeology.
- Also includes use of the estuary – farming, tourism, public transport, access and landscape.
- Promotion and understanding of the estuary.
- Protecting the estuary through pollution contingency planning, flood and coastal risk management, spatial planning and development management.
- This requires your assistance – I value your views and hope to work for the benefit of all.

Q: What are your qualifications and what prepares you for this role?

JT: Devon County Council appoint an elected member of DCC to chair the Exe Estuary Management Partnership. I spent 21+ years in the royal marines. I also have been involved in environmental work – including work on a paper on the Exmouth Pebblebed Heaths. I am a keen sea and course fisherman and also used to partake in canoeing as a K2 canoeing specialist. I have no official educational training. I have also been a sports centre manager and worked with the Red Cross.

3. Brief background of the EEMP – SC

- The Exe Estuary Management Partnership coordinates the management of the Exe Estuary on behalf of local authorities, government agencies, conservation bodies and Fundus owners of the estuary and provides a contact point for local communities.
- The role of the partnership is two-fold. It aims to deliver the Management Plan for the Estuary which covers all aspects of the Exe from conservation to recreation. As well as to work with local users and communities to find a balance of interests and work to resolve issues where they arise.
- The EEMP aims to balance the needs of humans and wildlife on the estuary.
- Partners of the EEMP:

Devon County Council	Starcross Parish Council
East Devon District Council	Woodbury Parish Council
Exeter City Council	Clyst St George Parish Council
Teignbridge District Council	Bishops Clyst Parish Council
Exmouth Town Council	Natural England
Dawlish Town Council	Environment Agency
RSPB	Devon and Severn IFCA
Powderham Castle	British Canoeing
RYA	Lymstone Fishery & Harbour Assoc.

- I (SC) am employed on behalf of the partnership to act as Estuary Officer.
- In order to avoid confusion, I will outline the role of the other partnership based around the Exe which is the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership. The 2 partnerships are separate and carry out different roles. SEDHRP was set up in 2016 with the purpose of mitigating the pressures of housing development around the Exe Estuary and Pebblebed Heaths. EEMP's purpose is to follow the Management Plan and act as a contact point.

Q: How far does the partnership extend (geographically)?

SC: It officially extends up to around the Countess Wear roundabout – however we take consideration to the whole catchment, but it is technically not within our remit.

Q: Do you cover the canal?

SC: Canal is included – Exeter City Council sits on the Partnership.

Q: Who owns the Exe Estuary?

SC: A large number of bodies are involved in the management and ownership of the Exe hence why the EEMP was set up. Crown Estate owns the majority but there are many different players on the Exe.

Q: Is there a map available which indicates the ownership?

SC: State of the Exe Estuary report, includes this, within the 'Background to the Exe Estuary' section - available on EEMP website at www.exe-estuary.org.

4. Open Floor for Discussion - JT

JT: I have called this meeting today to propose the idea of getting the user groups together and get views on what has gone right and what has gone wrong around the estuary in order to help facilitate and make improvements around the Exe. I would also like to propose setting up a committee of users each side of the Exe so that you can give your views and issues to me and SC.

Q: Is that not what PUG already is?

LT: PUG which stands for Port User Group was set up to work with Exeter City Council as the harbour authority in order to represent the users of the estuary with regard to proposed port directions. It only involves navigational users.

JT: I don't think we see much representation from several users e.g. dog walkers and gig rowers, so I'd like to get as many users involved as I can. I don't think there is a true representation of users in any group that is currently in existence.

Q: This partnership has been going for many years and nothing has happened – need to get involvement.

JT: We do want to get people involved however we can't force people to come. If they don't come – they won't get a voice. We need involvement from all users, in order to help educate people and user groups and help get across your views. We can use bylaws where

necessary but we haven't got enforcement powers in place – costs money. Education can make a difference.

Brief update on Wildlife Refuges – SC

SEDHRP led on this project, EEMP were contracted to undertake the public consultation due to their existing contact with user of the estuary.

Proposals will be decided by the SEDHR Executive Committee on 23rd October at the Civic Centre in Exeter.

EEMP will be undertaking a review of the codes of conduct, working with users and recreational bodies including RYA, The Green Blue and British Canoeing.

Q: Do SEDHRP have any statutory powers?

SC: SEDHRP is a combination of the 3 authorities around the Exe – East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council. These authorities have enforcement powers.

Q: Conflict of interest between EEMP and SEDHRP?

MH: I would agree that it is a conflict of interest at a corporate level. However, the Councillors who sit on the EEMP are not the same ones who form the Executive Committee for SEDHRP. The aim of Steph's work was to find the best compromise she could and then hand it over to them to decide whether to adopt the EEMP proposals.

LT: SEDHRP was developed to deal with planning around the Exe – mitigation through developer contributions. On the other hand, the EEMP has been historically used to manage the Exe Estuary.

Issue 1 – Mamhead Slipway

JT: An issue has been submitted prior to the meeting to hear the opinions of users on the new Mamhead Slipway and camper down carpark. Would like to hear opinions about the trailer parking etc.

AL: I don't believe the signage is particularly clear especially with regard to trailer parking; however, I have heard positives from residents.

JT: Looks successful, however I have heard there have been issues at high tide regarding how to get into craft and take away the trailer. Signage on left hand side of Camperdown terrace, more detail needs to be included due to popularity. I would also suggest that the land train stops further along as it blocks the entrance. It has also been brought up at a marina residents meeting that it is dangerous on bends. Increased signage is needed – 44 road traffic issues have been brought up for next month. We will be submitting 45 traffic orders as one in order to save £120,000 as they cost £3,000 each. I will ask the question on Friday and come back to AL with answers.

LT: There has also been an issue with the speed of the current?

JT: Will get an answer at the meeting on Friday.

AL: The locals know the usage of the slipway but visitors often don't. I think we need to make educating visitors a priority. There is no tide-table at the new slipway (used to be present at old slip).

MT: A tidal clock might be more beneficial.

SM: Tidal flow might be easier to understand.

IL: Tidal flows vary, 12 pages would be required to accurately reflect tidal flows. Tidal charts not accurate, and alter at different states of the tide.

MH: Will bring that up with officers (at East Devon District Council) and see what we can come up with.

AL: And Imperial Recreation Ground. Also need no parking sign.

Issue 2 – SEDHRP Booklet

MW : “There are 8.8 million visits to the Estuary per year by local people” taken from Sharing the Exe Estuary for the future document. Figure seems incorrect.

SC: That document was produced by SEDHRP not the EEMP. The data used in this document was taken from a report done by an external company.

JT: In which case it might be better if you contacted the other partnership.

JK: I can see that multiple users would make up that number – I can understand where it comes from

MW: Where are the SEDHRP officers tonight?

SC: They were unable to make it tonight

MW: Do you (JT) intend to come out and meet users?

JT: Yes. I have got to organise time to meet all users and come up with dates. I have already made plans to go out with Exe Sailing Club on 29th.

Issue 3 – Harbour

RB: Lack of supervision on the water due to lack of harbour master. There are more and more boats going too fast. The buoys are not maintained. There is a total lack of knowledge by some boat users, no consideration.

JT: Coming down to enforcement of bylaws.

JR: Issue with PWCs. Noise pollution, also powerboats near Turf playing loud music. Problems solved by harbour master.

LT: Exmouth Dock has Steve but the rest of the Estuary requires a harbour master from Exeter City Council.

JT: I will attempt to find out the current status of this.

ACTION: JT to contact ECC to find out status of new harbour master.

SM: Jet skis don't use that area – too far up

GS: Jet skis are not confined to one area of the estuary.

Issue 4 – Emails from EEMP

CR: When I receive emails from EEMP I don't know who the information is directed at. It needs to be dealt with appropriately.

SC: I am unable to address emails to individual people as I am often sending a mass email to approx. 1500 people from our database. I do understand that I should make it clearer to who it is relevant to but I can't address you directly.

CR: More effort is required.

SC: We are constantly updating the database. The consultation required us to be as inclusive as possible but there are limitations on resources. RG is currently updating contacts in the database.

RG: I am going through all the details we have been given at various meeting and adding them to the database, I cannot update the information unless I am told it has changed or given more detail.

JT: Everyone needs to communicate. Would it be helpful if a blank form was sent out to fill in any missing or updated details annually?

Yes

Issue 5 – Approach to zonation consultation

LT: I am critical of the approach. SEDHRP did not explain everything from the outset.

CR: It was misleading.

PB: The aim was to find ways of dealing with the pressure of thousands of people moving to the area. It is critical that we work collaboratively with users to mitigate external pressures.

GS: With regards to the database comment prior to this – if we cherry-pick who to email this can lead to accusations of leaving people out and therefore cause backlash effectively shooting the messenger who in this case would be SC. There is not a representative from ECC here to explain that side of things – messages to take back to them.

SM: Who should I contact from SEDHRP?

GS: Where are you based?

SM: Represent Exeter Canoe Club

GS: Contact the Exeter representative on the SEDHR Executive Committee – Cllr Daniel Gottschalk

AW: The Exe Estuary has very limited access around the periphery

LT: It is a fact that there is limited access but in some cases this can act as a control on too much use; however the increase in development will in turn generate an increase in smaller craft which are less affected by the limited access. I have concerns over new ad hoc groups. Need to reach newer users.

JT: Education is a running solution through most of these points. We are looking to update leaflets and signage but we need to find funding. DCC and local authorities' signage has to be aware of the where, why and how. Signage needs to be reduced and focussed.

RB: Developer issues.

MH: Designations overall – SSSIs are mapped out. Development within 10km contributes to the mitigation for it including increasing green space. Any development has to have wildlife protections in place.

JK: Limited access is beneficial in the idea that birds are very specific in where they choose to go generally speaking birds stick to the periphery of the Exe. Don't see very many kingfishers anymore due to the increased use of the canal. Need more education e.g. by doing bird education at events to raise interest and money.

JT: We are going to attempt to put the EEMP back on the map by attending more events and promotions such as at Powderham so we can help advertise this here.

JK: Suggestion for Annual Bird Fayre – bird stalls, educate people, volunteers could get involved, raise interest for area.

RB: Sea kayakers don't like mud.

SM: Small vessels such as SUP are difficult to stop, would be good idea to start education at the source such as at businesses like AS Water sports. Start educating at the source by providing businesses with relevant documents to hand out.

JK: Has anyone else had issues with paragliding? (Possibly launch at Haldon Hill).

GS: Best to contact the civil aviation authority.

JT: We'll look into that.

ACTION: JT/SC to look into paraglider issue – possibly contact civil aviation authority.

5. User Group Representation on the EEMP – JT

JT: Would you want to set up a committee each side of the estuary to feed ideas in and discuss issues?

TH: Might be best to discuss this at the Forum in February.

JT: Current reps: RYA, British Canoeing. Potential additional local representation at management committee.

Issue 6 – Budgeting issue.

JN: What is your revenue now? Why is there a deficiency?

JT: Contributions pay towards employing Estuary Officer and project work etc.

GS: The largest cost is the officer who drives the partnership. We have to be mindful of protecting the Exe – it costs money and we have to justify our expertise. Work on a year on year basis. Hand to mouth existence.

PB: Should be charging a commercial rate – seems you are undervaluing the cost of the officer.

AL: Could you go through the Coastal Community Fund?

SC: Exploring whether to apply, may not be best fit with EEMP work. We are in contact with several people about funding.

GS: CCF is aimed at specific economic prosperity of coastal communities

SC – Future Initiatives

- We plan to continue with our education programme, educating school groups about the Exe.
- Clean Up Events – Last Clean Up (Saturday 16th September) very successful. Almost 150 volunteers with support from local businesses – McDonald's provided snacks; Krispies provided free fish and chips; Stuart Line Cruises gave the volunteers a free cruise; East Devon District Council provided the skip and free parking; RSPB supplied the tractor; Railway Club supplied the venue and hot drinks; and ACE Music performed.
- Produce Exe Press and leaflets.
- Winter Forum will be held at County Hall 6th February – any suggestions of topics to be offered to me.
- Codes of Conduct review – looking to speak to local users and clubs to get opinions. Suggested 12 Codes of Conduct:

PWC/Jet Ski	Crab tiling
Kite/Windsurfing	Powerboating
Dog Walkers	Sailing
Waterskiing/Wakeboarding	Dawlish Warren
Angling	General
Paddle Sports (canoeing, kayaking, rowing, gig rowing, stand up paddle boarding.	Bait digging and cockle raking (bait collection/shellfishing)

- We would like to receive your input. We hope to get the initial draft done by 16th October
- Draft Designs and Feedback in November
- Final design by end of November
- Printed in December/January
- Have already started to set up some user meetings

JK: Would it be possible for you to reach out to paragliders?

- Roger at the lifeboat station might be able to help with that as he used to be involved in paragliding.

GS: Would just like to quickly mention a consultation being carried out by Teignbridge, with regard to our bylaws. Would like to make it clear that this is a separate consultation from the

zonation one run by SEDHRP. We are looking at a 200m exclusion area for powered vessels along Dawlish Warren to increase safety for swimmers. This will not apply to fishing boats undertaking active fishing and the RNLI/Lifeboat.

6. Goodbye and Thank You – JT

- Thank you all for coming
- Thank you again to Starcross Fishing and Cruising Club for the venue.