

# **BLACK SLUICE**

## **INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**



## **Environment Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 2:00pm**

**Station Road, Swineshead, Lincolnshire. PE20 3PW**



# BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

I M Warsap  
Chief Executive

Station Road, Swineshead  
Boston, Lincs, PE20 3PW

Tel: 01205 821440  
Fax: 01205 820671

General Email: mailbox@blacksluiceidb.gov.uk

Website: www.blacksluiceidb.gov.uk

Our Ref: IMW/DPW/B10

Your Ref:

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014

## To all Members of the Environment Committee

Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Environment Committee will be held at the Offices of the Board on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 2pm at which your attendance is requested.



Chief Executive

## A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence and welcome guests.
2. To receive and if correct sign the Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013 (pages 1 – 7).
3. Matters arising.
4. To receive a report on Environmental Work completed in 2013/14 and recommendations for proposed works for 2014/15 (pages 8 – 17).
5. To receive and review the revised Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) via power point.
6. To receive and review the Bourne North Fen Borrow Pits Management Plans via power point.
7. Heck Fen Wind Park Ltd – Environmental Impact Assessment (pages 18-19).
8. To receive verbal reports/presentations from:
  - (a) Amy Bouic, Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP)
  - (b) Louisa Hoyes, Lincs ADA Environment Committee Review (pages 20-25)
  - (c) Alan Ball, Wildlife Conservation Partnership
  - (d) Helen Scarborough, Ian Nixon & Clare Schofield, Scarborough Nixon Associates.
9. Any Other Business.



## **BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the  
Environment Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at 2:30pm

#### **Members**

Chairman - \* Mr J R Wray

Mr R Leggott	* Mr R Welberry
* Mr M J Scott	* Mr P Robinson
* Cllr D R Dickinson	* Mr P Holmes
Mr J F Atkinson	* Mr V A Barker
Mr K C Casswell	* Mr C A Fretwell

(\* Member Present)

In attendance: Mr I Warsap (Chief Executive)  
Mr P Nicholson (Operations Manager)  
Mr M Redding (Environmental Officer Witham 4<sup>th</sup> IDB)  
Mrs Helen Scarborough (Scarborough Nixon Assoc)  
Mr Ian Nixon (Scarborough Nixon Assoc)  
Miss Claire Schofield (Scarborough Nixon Assoc)  
Miss Amy Robinson (Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership)

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Helen Scarborough, Ian Nixon and Claire Schofield from Scarborough Nixon Associates along with Amy Robinson from the Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP).

#### 377 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr J Atkinson, Mr K C Casswell and Mr R Leggott.  
Mr M J Scott attended but had to leave early.

#### 378 MINUTES OF LAST ENVIRONMENT MEETING

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Environment Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was agreed that the Minutes should be signed as a true record with the following amendment;

##### Minute No 310(i)

National important species of bee – “bombus terrestris” should be “bombus ruderatus”;

379 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Alternative Energy Sources - Minute No 309(b)

The Chief Executive reviewed ROCS are for 50kw and above and would require a major investment by the Board for solar panels at the Swineshead offices.

(b) Fish Refuge Shelters - Minute No 310(g)

The Chief Executive outlined at Black Hole Drove pumping station all three pumps have been set to have a slower phased start, this initial stage should allow fish to vacate the pumping sumps and move up-stream prior to the pumps attaining maximum capacity. The South Forty Foot Drain outfall will be monitored over the following months for any further fish kills.

380 REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS COMPLETED 2012/13 – Agenda Item 4

Details of the environmental works completed were circulated within the agenda the Chief Executive highlighted the following areas;

(a) Owl Boxes

The Chief Executive reported that three pole mounted owl boxes were erected in 2012 by the Wildlife Conservation Partnership, this makes a total of thirty boxes financed by the Board. A copy of the 2012 annual check of BSIDB nest boxes was circulated in the agenda papers.

The Wildlife Conservation Partnership has agreed to attend and report on all nest boxes within the Boards catchments at the next Environmental Committee Meeting.

(b) Tom Tom Data Recording of Environmental Sightings

The Chief Executive reported that the Tom-Tom device in the JS130, that is due to be sold, will be transferred into the new Hitachi once delivered in June/July 2013.

The Operations Manager outlined that these devices have preset channels and any out of the ordinary activity can be notified by phone and the work force are encouraged to report these. These procedures will be reinforced at the 2013 pre-cutting brief.

(c) High Profile Watercourse Assets

The Chief Executive reported that the outside of the sharp bend on the North Forty Foot Drain at Punchbowl Lane was reed cut with a weed boat in March 2013 to deter nesting birds moving into the reed bed prior to the construction works taking place.

380 (c) Cont.....

The Chief Executive responded to a question with regard to the bend where debris collects, expenditure on this scheme has come in below budget and the bend will be re profiled.

(d) Fish & Eel CCTV Monitoring within the South Forty Foot Drain outfall and the Hammond Beck at Chain Bridge PS

The Chief Executive presented a slide of still pictures from the cameras, the fish shown are believed to be looking for food coming through the gravity pipe from the Hammond Beck. All information obtained will be passed to the EA.

(e) North Forty Foot Fishing Platforms

The three existing fishing platforms will have gabion mattresses laid over them whilst the revetment improvement works are currently taking place. At the same time, negotiations are taking place with the EA and the Boston & District Angling Association with regards to the possible funding and construction of a disabled fishing access and platform. If no funding is available the earth banks will be profiled accordingly.

(f) Kingfisher Nesting Sites

The Chief Executive presented a slide of the constructed site at Chain Bridge pumping station. Mr Holmes stated that bored holes would give them a start and has been proven to be successful.

(g) Biodiversity Action Plan

The Committee AGREED that the Chief Executive should further review the current BAP and present at the next meeting.

381 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY AND DRAIN WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT 2013/14

(a) Water Vole Surveys

Water vole surveys will continue to be carried out prior to desilting and following the works where water voles had been identified. Environmental mitigation works may be required should results give evidence of disturbance.

(b) Owl Boxes

It was AGREED to recommend that a further three pole mounted owl boxes be erected at suitable locations alongside the Boards drains. Mr Holmes offered sites for two owl boxes.

(d) Recording by Machine Drivers

The workmen will continue to monitor and record sightings using the Tom Tom units fitted in the machines.

(e) Eel and Fish Passes

The Board will continue to investigate thoughts that to slow start pumps will have the effect of frightening fish and eels away from the sumps of pumps, investigations are ongoing whether we would be able to do this at minimal cost.

(f) Improvements to Risegate Eau

The Chief Executive reported there is a proposal to add environmental features to the western end of Risegate Eau. An environmentally-friendly improvement scheme is also being prepared for essential works along the open length of watercourse further west of the habitat enhanced site where the presence of *Bombus ruderatus* (large garden bumblebee), a national BAP species has been recorded. The area is also documented as an established toad breeding site.

(g) High Profile Watercourse Assets

The Chief Executive presented a slide showing the enhancement works on Bicker Eau through the village centre.

A correction to the Agenda the Frampton Towns Drain from London Road to weir is (5/14 not 5/1).

(h) Grass Snake Breeding Sites

The Chief Executive reported that a technical advice note has been produced by Scarborough Nixon Associates and this will be acted upon.

(i) Tongue End Environmental Site

The Chief Executive reported that the Board has, at Tongue End pond, enough reed bed to offer a safe wintering stop over location for Bittern's. It is recommended as requested by Lincolnshire ADA that the Board contact Charlie Barnes at the GLNP and inform him of this site along with the two smaller sites. Miss Robinson will produce a Lincolnshire Bittern report for distribution.



(j) Fens for the Future

Martin Redding outlined the background to the setting up of the Fens for the Future Partnership and that he has joined the steering group and attended the Workshop in Lincoln. All IDB's will be contacted to be involved.

(k) Invasive Species

Information relating to Lincolnshire Fens aquatic invasive species will be handed out to the workforce at the 2013 pre-cutting brief.

It was RESOLVED that the Report on Environmental Works should be received and adopted.

382 REPORTS – Agenda Item 5

(a) Amy Robinson – Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP)

Miss Robinson introduced herself as the Nature Policy Officer, following the re-launch in November 2012, to the accredited Defra scheme to form a Local Nature Partnership which would be 1 of 50 in England.

Miss Robinson offered to help develop and provide some simple ID guides for Lincolnshire aquatic invasive species that can be provided to the workforce for quick and easy identification in the field.

(b) Helen Scarborough – Scarborough Nixon Associates

We are continuing with the water vole surveys and this spring early reports are encouraging, identified areas like Bourne and Heckington in having a good population of voles. Nice reed fringe have been left in places and it was requested if the excavator operators could not scrape the opposite side bank along the bottom which means the voles have difficulty evacuating the water once their holes are sealed. There has been good evidence of water vole latrines with high population clusters.

There are quite a few mink signs especially Bourne area which is not so good for the water vole population.

In association with an environmentally minded local resident, discussions have taken place to help create a management plan for Gosberton Siltside/Risegate Eau to promote and protect the *Bombus ruderatus* bee which has been identified on site and is a rare bee to Lincolnshire. The area further west would benefit from some opening of the tree foliage to lighten the area.

382 (b) Cont.....

The assessment of the site at Tongue End, Twenty is quite a remote area and meets wildlife site criteria for wet areas and grassland. Marsh harriers have been sighted and might be breeding in the reeds. A detailed assessment of invertebrates is required before any form of a management plan could be provided.

(c) Martin Redding - Lincolnshire ADA Environment Committee

- (i) Anglian eel and fish prioritisation - No enforcement notices have been served, ADA news has made available the EA's new guide "Eel passes and Eel screens – safe passage for eel".
- (ii) Fens for the Future - Jo Finlow is hoping to attend the ADA Demo in July and meet members to get a better feel for what IDB's do regarding their land management practices and flood defence and environmental obligations.
- (iii) Lincolnshire Rivers Trust - Trust formation is currently being finalised and IDB's are seen as key regarding the delivering of the Water Framework Directive objectives and eel & fish pass regulations.
- (iv) Water Framework Directive (WFD) Lincolnshire - The EA's Dr Helen Barber, WFD Catchment Delivery Manager for the Witham, Ancholme, and East Coast & Humber has a keen interest in IDB operations and looking at ways to resolve WFD issues or seeking gains in positive schemes and management.
- (v) Operation Fly Swat - 335 tonnes so far in 18 months and 6.3 tonnes recovered during the Big Boston Cleanup between 8 -11 April 2013.
- (vi) Illegal fish/eel nets - A large number of illegal fishing nets have been found one measuring 25 meters' long and 1.5m depth in a very fine mesh which is almost invisible - please make your workforce aware and inform Rachel Woodcock Fisheries Enforcement Officer based in Lincoln 01522 785816 or 07831 455517 (Kettering office). These new synthetic nets are much trickier to spot than fykes.
- (vii) Lincolnshire County Council Environment Grants - Up to 75% funding can be awarded for community wildlife grants between £50-£500, applications close on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013. This encourages local community involvement with nature conservation projects, promote, improve and protect bio-diversity, promote access to and enjoyment of the countryside.

382 (c) (vii) Cont.....

While 50% match funding up to £1,000 can be awarded for native British hedges and small woodland schemes, the closing date is 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Other LCC grants are available for other projects, so if you have any scheme ideas do contact them and see if they can assist.

383 MINUTES FOR THE ADA LINCOLNSHIRE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2012 – Agenda Item 6

Copies of the ADA Environment Committee Meeting were circulated with the Agenda for information.

384 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Badgers in EA, BSIDB & Riparian Drain Banks

Mr Barker raised the issue of the numbers of Badgers living in setts in drain banks which could cause a breach, collapse or blockage. He reminded the Committee that in 1999 the South Forty Foot Drain breached due to bank erosion due to rabbit holes. Badgers also have a detrimental effect on other forms of wildlife; i.e. hedge hogs, bees etc. The drains become blocked with the residue spoil which comes from their setts being dug out in drain sides and the workforce could be at risk if a machine travelled along the bank and collapsed the top of the set and overturned the machine.

The Committee AGREED that ADA, NFU, Defra, Natural England and local MP's should be lobbied to understand the issues of IDB's and the high risk of flooding due to badgers.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5pm.



**BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**  
**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – 14<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014**

**AGENDA ITEM No 4**

**REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS**

**Completed Works in 2013/14**

1. **Owl Boxes**

Three pole mounted owl boxes were financed, and the Wildlife Conservation Partnership erected these with help from the Board. This makes a total of thirty three boxes erected and financed by BSIDB.

The scheme first started in 1987 and the Boards boxes supported 8 pairs of nesting Barn Owls, 2 pairs of nesting Kestrels, 1 pair of nesting Tawny Owls and numerous pairs of Jackdaws in 2012.

Whilst inspecting suitable sites for the 2013 owl boxes three little owls were witnessed in the same vicinities.

2. **Tom-Tom Data Recording of Environmental Sightings**

This information is forwarded to the Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre (LERC). Tom-Tom devices are recording data from all eight of the Boards machines.

3. **High Profile Watercourse Assets**

Early season cutting of Wyberton Marsh Drain, Washdyke Lane, NFF (Cooks Lock to Punchbowl Lane) and New Hammond Beck (Chain Bridge to Tesco) was carried out.

The RSPB expressed concern with reference to the early and continuous cutting along the Wyberton Marsh Drain but unfortunately this is such a high profile watercourse taking water away from the Marsh Lane Industrial estate the banks and channel must be cut to a greater frequency.

4. **Water Vole Surveys**

Scarborough Nixon Associates (SNA) have carried out pre and post surveys for water vole evidence on the pre-agreed watercourses that have been de-silted. This information is currently being evaluated relating to machine disturbance and possible future mitigation works prior to de-silting in future year's programmes.

SNA have once again indicated strong evidence of water voles throughout our area.

5. Control of Mink

The Board have liaised with agricultural land owners with regards to the correct setting up and inspection of the Boards traps and the dispatching of mink throughout 2013 and into 2014. Various sightings have been reported to the Board and advice sought regarding their removal.

6. Environmental Sites in Bourne North Fen

As recommended by SNA the three sites have been left to their own accord throughout 2013 with a Management Plan produced in order to safeguard their future, this will be presented in agenda item 6.

7. Fish/Eel CCTV Monitoring within the Gravity Channel at Chain Bridge PS

The two underwater cameras, one within the pumping station gravity channel and one facing the outlet pipe into the South Forty Foot Drain, have been monitored for fish and/or eel movements (mammal movements will also be recorded, i.e. mink, water vole, otter etc). This information has been used to assist in obtaining funding for eel and fish friendly flap valves to be positioned on the gravity channels at the Chain Bridge and Cooks Lock PS in 2014.

8. Environmental surveys of larger hedge rows in our Bushing programme

Surveys were carried out by SNA and/or the Boards officers on any significant hedgerows that were felt could offer a form of environmental enhancement prior to any bushing works. No environmental enhancements or protected species were identified during the 2013 works.

9. Burning of Hedgerow Bushes

All bushes were either chipped (90%) on site or burnt (10%) using wooden pallets and straw bales as the core heat source.

10. Swineshead PS Solar Panels

There has been a recorded CO2 saving of 4,203kg following the installation in December 2011 an average of 156kg per month.

11. Risegate Eau Bank Works

The two lengths of bank have recently been re-treated and Hydro seeded with wild flower seed, we are currently waiting for germination.

12. NFF Fishing Platforms

The three fishing platforms were enhanced during the scheme works in 2013, suitable pedestrian/anglers ramps have been constructed into the existing banks forming safe entry points.

13. RSPB water abstraction for Frampton Marsh

Permission has again been granted by the EA and the Board for the RSPB to abstract 400,000m<sup>3</sup> of water per annum from the Wyberton Marsh pumping drain to assist with water management levels in the Frampton Marsh Nature Reserve.

14. Kingfisher Nesting Site

The site on the Hammond Beck fronting Chain Bridge pumping station is now established and being observed, numerous spring 2014 Kingfishers sightings have been recorded around Wyberton, Kirton, Kirton End and Kirton Holme.

15. Big Boston Clean Up

The Board's workforce were once again involved with the Big Boston Clean Up in April, over 70 tonnes of rubbish has been collected over the past seven years.

16. Fly Swat Team

The Board remains a partner within the Operation Fly Swat team and contributes towards its funding, which in turn offers financial benefits to the Board in relation to the amount the Board previously spent on fly tipping clearance. In 2013 a total number of 941 incidents were actioned around the Boston area, 119 of these affecting water courses/banks.

17. Grass Snake Breeding Sites

A Technical Advice Note has been produced by SNA and their recommendations have been followed on selected isolated Pumping Stations (Hacconby and Morton). Grass Snakes have been recorded in this area during 2013 by staff members.

18. December 2013, Tidal Surge

There are no visible environmental detrimental affects to the watercourses within the Wyberton Marsh catchment following the Slippery Gowt sea defence breach, the situation will be continuously monitored.

RSPB officers at Frampton Marsh commented they suspected that all the plant and insect life would suffer and could the catchment be 'flushed with normal non brackish water'? This is not possible although there has been approximately 150mm of rainfall since the event that has helped to flush the channels.

## 19. Invasive Species

Invasive species identification guides were produced by the GLNP for Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, New Zealand Pigmyweed and Floating Pennywort. The guides were introduced and handed to the operational workforce at the 2013 pre-cutting brief.

Japanese Knotweed has been recorded on several occasions and reported to the EA.

## 20. Schemes

### Environmental Improvements to Gosberton Clough West of Allen's Bridge

Site meetings took place with [REDACTED], an environmentally-minded resident, along with SNA. An improvement scheme including sustainable timbers, the reintroduction of excavated soils, broken kerbed headwall and pollen and nectar seed has been completed on the essential works along the open length of watercourse immediately west of the habitat enhanced site. The site staff worked closely with [REDACTED] whilst on site to cause as little environmental disturbance as possible.

A management plan has been prepared for the small area of land owned by the Board adjacent to Allen's Bridge. This area is currently being voluntarily managed as a small nature conservation area which continues to fulfil the Boards policies to improve and enhance biodiversity.

The northern bank is particularly rich in wild flowers and supports a more diverse flora than in other areas. By being managed by local volunteers the presence of *Bombus rudereatus* (large garden bumblebee), a national BAP species has been recorded.

### Horbling Fen PS Weed Screen Cleaner

As detailed within the EA submission documents these works have no affect on the SSSI within the Horbling Fen catchment.

### North Forty Foot De-Silting

Large quantities of coarse fish were carefully removed prior to the water levels being reduced in order to aid the de-silting works.



## **Proposed Works in 2014/15**

### **1. Water Vole Surveys**

Committee approval is requested to employ SNA to undertake surveys for water voles prior to desilting and any significant capital works. In addition, post desilting surveys will be carried out following the works where water vole activity has been found to confirm whether or not our works have had any effect on these populations. Environmental mitigation works may be required should results give evidence of disturbance.

### **2. Bat Surveys**

Committee approval is requested to undertake surveys for bats by SNA at several of the Boards larger pumping stations, there is a thought that bats are roosting within the inlet channels behind the weed screen bars.

### **3. Winter Bushing and Cleansing**

Bushing works will commence in November along with the cleansing works, all bushes will be chipped onsite, all excavated silt will be deposited on adjacent fields, left to dry then spread and levelled across the land. Where required water levels will be lowered by damming lengths of the water course and the water over-pumped, if fish are evident they will be carefully removed whilst the water is being lowered and transferred over the dams.

### **4. Summer Cutting and Vegetation Clearance**

The Boards summer cutting programme will commence on the 14th July, the mechanical flails will go out a few days beforehand in order to 'get in front' of the excavators. The workforce will be presented with a Pre-Cutting brief which will cover channel management in relation to balancing the benefits of flood risk management, agriculture and the biodiversity values.

### **5. Vegetation Spraying**

The Boards hand spraying weed programme commenced in April and can be viewed on the Board's web site, the only lengths being sprayed in 2014 are the historical hand mowing lengths.

### **6. Owl Boxes**

Committee approval is requested for the Board to pay for the erection of three pole mounted Barn Owl boxes in 2014, similar to last year.

The Board paid a contribution of £1,540 for the work last year.

The Committee should be reminded that Barn Owls very rarely target Water Voles as their prey, due to the high risk of becoming wet following a strike. Barn Owls are not waterproof and cannot afford to get their flight feathers wet.

7. Recording by Machine Drivers

The eight machine drivers will continue to record sightings on the Tom-Tom units in the machines; environmental sightings such as badger or fox holes in banks, water voles, newts, eels, grass snakes, frogs and toad sightings along with other specialist environmental sighting will be recorded.

8. Eel and Fish Passes

The Board with other Lincolnshire Board's have entered into an agreement with the EA for them to carry out our Eel Regulation Compliance for 'Pumping Station Passability', this is being funded through DERFA Grant in Aid to levels of £5,000 per pumping station.

The EA are responsible for making sure compliance with these regulations is achieved. A report by the EA in September 2012 prioritised pumping stations in the Anglian Northern region for facilities for the passage of Eels and other fish, overall 442 land drainage pumping stations were identified (391 owned by IDB's and 51 owned by the EA).

We have ten pumping stations ( the highest number for any Board) categories within the High Priority list:-

Black Hole Drove, Chain Bridge, Cooks Lock, Donington North Ings, Gosberton, Great Hale, Holland Fen, South Kyme, Swineshead and Wyberton Marsh. All ten pumping stations need to be assessed before 1st January 2015 and provide appraisal studies and surveys relating to Eel passes, outline designs and cost benefit analysis along with investigations into addressing the problems associated with cost effectiveness towards their delivery.

A further 34 pumping stations within the EA Anglian Northern region have been identified on the Medium Priority list and we have seven pumping stations on this list:-

Bicker Fen, Heckington, Helpringham, Swaton, Trinity College, Billingborough and Kirton Marsh. At this time we need to assume all will require works, we will plan for further EA investigations in financial year 2015/16 at say £7,000 a pumping station, again being funded through DEFRA Grant in Aid.

Grant in Aid money is being allocated to every pumping station for future 'safe passage works' where works on any of the pumping stations is being planned to go ahead within the next five years and these 'safe passage' works should be included.

A £80,000 Grant in Aid allocation has been secured for works in 2014 to fit new eel and fish friendly flap valves to the gravity channels at Chain Bridge and Cooks Lock Pumping Station following our CCTV trials, these works are currently being planned.

## 9. High Profile Watercourse Assets

Early season cutting of Wyberton Marsh Drain, Washdyke Lane, NFF (Cooks Lock to Punchbowl Lane) and New Hammond Beck (Chain Bridge to Tesco) will continue to be carried out.

Other notable watercourses that have enhanced maintenance are Endeavour Park (12/4&5), Kirton, Drainside North (5/30), Frampton Towns Drain, from London Road to weir (5/1), Gosberton, Risegate Eau (22/14), Bicker Eau, through the village (4/67), the Drain alongside the park at Donington (2/26).

A total of c67Km of further high profile watercourse assets (generally our larger watercourses) have been identified that require additional late summer inspections to determine whether a second flail and/or cut is required.

## 10. Water Levels

Water levels will continue to be controlled via the Boards 34 pumping station and/or the gravity channels associated with them, the South Forty Foot Drain (SFF) summer water levels were raised by the EA in mid April and will be lowered back to winter levels in November, this obviously affects the gravity flows from the catchments into the SFF. Water levels within the catchments will be held back where requested, this will help to enhance the biodiversity associated with the watercourses.

## 11. The 2014 Lincolnshire Show Schools Challenge

The Education Business Partnership (EBP) have with the aid of ADA Lincolnshire set a schools challenge in 2014. One of the seven challenges is 'Lincolnshire's Hidden Water World' with curriculum links to Geography, Science, Design and Technology and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

Through the use of ICT, creating models or carrying out investigations, students will explore one or more areas from the following:

- Ways of protecting people, property and land from the risk of flooding.
- The importance of ensuring sustainable food production by protecting the most productive and valuable land.
- Strategic importance of drainage in protecting national assets – such as power stations.
- Balancing drainage and flood protection with conservation and the environment.
- Use of Drainage Channels for biodiversity and preservation of habitats.

A very topical challenge, support by the Association of Drainage Authorities in which students are invited to consider all the different aspects involved in water level management.

The competition is open to four categories, primary schools with more than 150 pupils, primary schools with less than 150 pupils, secondary schools and special

schools, we have written to 43 schools within or adjacent to our catchments offering assistance and guidance should they wish to enter the competition or would like to know more about the role of an IDB.

To date we have received limited interest possibly due to the time scale and this Committee may wish to explore re-introducing this challenge to local schools within the Boards catchments for next year?

12. Fenlands Waterway Link (FWL)

As previously reported this is a long term project and Halcrow, the EA consultants, are currently investigating the widening of the southern end of the South Forty Foot Drain near Guthram Gowt before connecting into the River Glen.

Following a request we have recently received the following update from Halcrow;

'Uncertainties on the FWL means there is no project budget to progress the project with. Our original proposal for this route relied on the cooperation of the occupiers of Horeshoe House. Since they have asked us not to use that route we can confirm that we have no existing plans to take forward a Fens Waterway Link Scheme which would directly affect Horseshoe House without the agreement of the property owners. We would, therefore, only reconsider this position if a future owner (the house is currently on the market) of Horseshoe House express interest in such a scheme. The EA remains prepared to speak to potential purchasers or other interested parties regarding this scheme'.

13. Fens for the Future

The Fens for the Future Vision is to see sustainable wetlands restored, re-created and reconnected across the Fens for the benefit of people, our natural and historic heritage and the rural economy. Sustainable wetlands will help reduce storm effects, make available clean water and retain peat land soils so helping mitigate the effects of climate change, while at the same time offering a haven for wildlife, protecting our historic heritage and providing exciting areas for people to visit. Recreational access and tourism increases with more people taking exercise in the countryside. The diversity of the local economy widens and opportunities for employment in local communities are created.

The Fens for the Future Partnership Mission Statement is to make the Fens one of the main UK landscape scale wetland complexes by 2020, within a matrix of sustainable agriculture.

The Fens remain nationally important for modern productive farming. The provision for wildlife in the farmed landscape increases significantly with the uptake of environmentally friendly farming practices and sensitive ditch and drain management, thus creating a network of wildlife habitats extending throughout Fenland. The variety and abundance of farmland wildlife increases and iconic Fenland species thrive.

14. Water Framework Directive (WFD)

Meetings are being scheduled with the WFD EA Officers over the forthcoming months and we have the following agenda items penciled in:-

- What actions do we undertake within our maintenance regime that can affect the water quality within our catchments (good/bad)?
- What levels of water quality information do the EA hold and what catchments does this cover?
- What longer term plans can we start to jointly investigate to further enhance our catchments working within the WFD guidelines?
- What records do you hold on the 148km of EA main river within our catchments?
- What funding is there available to assist with future enhancements works?

15. Badgers.

The Boards workforce have the necessary approval to work adjacent to Badger sets whilst carrying out their duties, however they do not have permission to remove or destroy Badgers.

Natural England have recently released the following TB badger control guidance should any ratepayers be interested in pursuing this option:-

TB badger control licence Expression of Interest process, potential applicants for badger control licences in 2015 onwards may submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) forms to Natural England.

Following recommendations from the Independent Expert Panel that assessed the badger cull pilots last year, a series of changes will be made to improve the effectiveness, humaneness and safety of culling. These changes will be monitored to assess their impact before further decisions are taken on more badger cull licenses next year.

If an extension of licensing is confirmed, the first stage of the licensing process would require potential new application areas to submit an Expression of Interest Form. Submissions for 2015 would then be screened by Natural England to determine which candidates should be invited to apply for a licence to control badgers to prevent the spread of bovine TB.

It is important to stress that this guidance to potential applicants is solely aimed at ensuring an efficient licensing process and in no way pre-empts any decision on an extension of licensing by the Government.

Criteria for applicants may be subject to change in accordance with the Government's decision on the policy, but Expressions of Interest should show that an application is likely to meet the following current criteria:

- application area must be at least 150 square km
- area must be composed wholly of land within the annual routine TB testing area
- there must be a reasonable expectation that the applicant will obtain access for culling to at least 70% of the land within the bounds of the application area
- there must be a good state of general readiness (e.g. acceptable level of farmer interest in participating)
- the conservation of other protected species and sites which may be affected should be carefully considered to avoid negative impacts.

Any preparatory work is done on a 'without prejudice' basis and at the applicant's own risk, pending any decision on future roll-out by the Secretary of State.

#### 16. The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site

The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site (WNNC EMS) management scheme has been running since 2002 with the aim to safeguard marine wildlife and habitats designated under EU and UK law, while encouraging sustainable use of the European marine site. The management objectives are broken down into time scaled actions which were drawn up in consultation with the various relevant authorities and stakeholders.

Being one of the relevant authorities we have a statutory duty under the UK Habitats Regulations to report on progress against these management actions on an annual basis, and the information is presented in the Action Plan.

We report on subjects such as land drainage, shoreline management (if applicable), coastal oil spills, water framework directives, chemical weed control, non-native invasive species and water abstraction.



3/18 Eagle Wing  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000  
e-mail: [environmentalservices@infrastructure.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalservices@infrastructure.gsi.gov.uk)

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Chief Executive  
Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board  
Station Road  
Swineshead  
Boston  
Lincolnshire  
PE20 3PW

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN020020

Date: 1 May 2014

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and The Infrastructure Planning  
(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended) –  
Regulations 8 and 9**

**Application by Heck Fen Wind Park Ltd for an Order Granting Development  
Consent for the Heckington Fen Wind Park Grid Connection**

**Scoping consultation and notification of the applicant's contact details and  
duty to make available information to the applicant if requested**

The applicant has asked the Secretary of State for its opinion (a scoping opinion) as to the information to be provided in an environmental statement relating to the project. You can access the request and the report from the National Infrastructure pages of the Planning Portal: [www.planningportal.gov.uk/infrastructure](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/infrastructure). Alternatively, you can use the following direct link:

<http://infrastructure.planningportal.gov.uk/Document/2450825>

The Secretary of State has identified you as a consultation body which must be consulted by the Secretary of State before adopting its scoping opinion. The Secretary of State would be grateful therefore if you would:

- inform the Secretary of State of the information you consider should be provided in the environmental statement, or
- confirm that you do not have any comments.

If you consider that you are not a consultation body as defined in the EIA Regulations please let us know.

The Secretary of State is entitled to assume under Regulation 8(11) that you do not have any comments to make on the information to be provided in the environmental statement, if you have not responded to this letter by 29 May 2014. The deadline for

consultation responses is a statutory requirement and cannot be extended. Responses received after this deadline will not be included within the scoping opinion but will be forwarded to the applicant for information.

Responses to the Secretary of State regarding the scoping report should be sent preferably electronically to [environmentalservices@infrastructure.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalservices@infrastructure.gsi.gov.uk) or by post marked for the attention of Jenny Colfer.

As the Secretary of State has been notified by the applicant that it intends to prepare an environmental statement, the Secretary of State is also informing you of the applicant's name and address:

Heck Fen Wind Park Limited  
Beaumont House  
172 Southgate Street  
Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
GL1 2EZ

You should also be aware of your duty under Regulation 9(3), if so requested by the applicant, to make available information in your possession which is considered relevant to the preparation of the environmental statement.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

*Jenny Colfer*

**Jenny Colfer**  
**Senior EIA and Land Rights Advisor**  
**on behalf of the Secretary of State**



# Association of Drainage Authorities Lincolnshire Branch

## Environment Committee

*Committee Chairman: B. Bowles (exiting), P. Lundgren (incoming)*  
*Committee Secretary: M. Redding (exiting), S. Ireland (incoming)*

### Minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the committee, held on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 at Black Sluice Offices, Swineshead Bridge

#### **Present:**

Bob Ballerini (BBa)	Upper Witham IDB ( <i>Board Member</i> )
Bryan Bowles (BBo)	Witham Fourth District IDB ( <i>Board Member</i> )
Jo Finlow (JF)	Fens for the Future ( <i>Project Officer</i> )
Louisa Hoyes (LH)	Witham First District, Witham Third District & Upper Witham IDBs ( <i>Environmental Intern</i> )
David Hutchinson (DH)	Environment Agency ( <i>Catchment Co-ordinator (Witham and Ancholme)</i> )
Mike Hutchinson (MH)	Atkins ( <i>Hydrologist</i> )
Sam Ireland (SI)	Witham First District, Witham Third District & Upper Witham IDBs ( <i>GIS &amp; Ratings Officer</i> )
Peter Lundgren (PL)	Witham First District IDB ( <i>Ratepayer</i> )
Chris Manning (CM)	Lindsey Marsh IDB ( <i>Environmental Officer</i> )
Paul Nicholson (PN)	Black Sluice IDB ( <i>Operational Manager</i> )
Ken Pratt (KP)	Upper Witham IDB ( <i>Engineer</i> )
Martin Redding (MR)	Witham Fourth District IDB ( <i>Assistant Engineering Manager &amp; Environment Officer</i> )
Dinah Smith (DS)	University of Leicester Geology Department
Karl Vines (KV)	South Holland IDB ( <i>District Engineer</i> )
Ian Warsap (IW)	Black Sluice IDB ( <i>Chief Executive</i> )
Richard Wray (RW)	Black Sluice IDB ( <i>Board Member</i> )

#### **Apologies:**

Amy Bouic (ABo)	Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership ( <i>Nature Policy Officer</i> )
Julian Boden (JB)	Welland & Deepings IDB ( <i>Engineer</i> )
Alison Briggs (ABr)	Shire Group of IDBs ( <i>Environment Officer</i> )
Fran Hitchinson (FH)	Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership ( <i>Nature Partnership Manager</i> )
Martin Shilling (MS)	Witham First District, Witham Third District & Upper Witham IDBs ( <i>Director of Operations</i> )
Lauren Tewson (LT)	Lincolnshire Rivers Trust ( <i>Director</i> )
Nicholas Watts (NW)	Welland & Deepings IDB ( <i>Board Member</i> )



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ian Cappitt (EA) has distributed a document detailing a 'proposed staged approach' with EA as the consultants undertaking the studies.</li> <li>- There is a meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March at EA offices in Peterborough to discuss this further.</li> <li>- B &amp; C categorisations have now been released for 2016/2017.</li> <li>- EA Anglian Region to be congratulated for taking the lead on this- they are the only region with categorisations in place. If anyone has any examples, please send to Tim/Sam at ADA.</li> </ul>	IW  IDB staff
8	<p><b>Fens for the Future update-MR &amp; JF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Snorkelling studies undertaken by Richard Lansdown on IDB drains, EA Main River &amp; farmers' land drains to look at abundance of rare plants.</li> <li>- IDB drains were found to have the highest number of rare species. There were calls for these drains to be made SSSIs, however these were quickly silenced by Richard as he stated that it is the maintenance regimes that are undertaken that allow the species to thrive.</li> </ul>	
9	<p><b>Lincolnshire Rivers Trust (LRT) update-MR &amp; DH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lincolnshire Rivers Trust has had some changes to membership, and currently consists of Dr Lauren Tewson, Reuben Page &amp; Jonathan Bolland. They all perform their roles for LRT alongside their 'day to-day' jobs, and they are therefore advertising for a 'Project Officer'. The previous advert for this role did not have a salary attached and did not receive much interest. The revised position however is salaried, and is currently being advertised.</li> <li>- LRT are aiming to deliver a CaBA (catchment based approach) and are therefore trying to identify projects, partners and funding.</li> </ul>	
10	<p><b>Water Framework Directive (WFD) update-MR &amp; DH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CaBA leads have been identified for each catchment-the leads for the Witham Catchment are Lincs Rivers Trust &amp; Canal &amp; Rivers Trust.</li> <li>- The Witham Partnership has produced a document detailing the aims of the partnership. DH will circulate to relevant IDBs.</li> </ul>	DH
11	<p><b>CDUG and CaBA IDB GIS forum update-SI &amp; MR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CaBA consists of EA, Rivers Trusts, National Trust, Natural England, FWAG, Wildlife Trusts, Academic Institutions, consultancies, water companies &amp; IDBs.</li> <li>- CaBA being led at a national level, however lead/host organisations are developing a 'vision' for each catchment.</li> <li>- EA Catchment Data Explorer Tool is being developed. This is a web-based platform for users to access, extract and visualise data, to facilitate catchment thinking. This would also reduce duplication of work.</li> <li>- CaBA will shortly be calling for bids for projects with a national benefit.</li> <li>- FWAG developing a 'water where you live' guide to inform, and encourage people to undertake watercourse surveys.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ADA interested in maintaining representation on CDUG (Catchment Data User Group) meeting (this is a sub-group of CaBA). ADA is looking to train some of their staff in the use of GIS. SI to contact Tim Vickers to ensure representation.</li> </ul>	SI
(17)	<p><b>‘Witham Pumped Catchments’ modelling presentation-MH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MH presented the Lincolnshire Limestone Groundwater Model Atkins have projects for the EA.</li> <li>- The model takes into account rainfall, runoff, recharge to aquifers, baseflow, spring discharges, evapotranspiration, abstraction, geology, topography and soils.</li> <li>- If anyone has any studies which might benefit from the running of the model, they are encouraged to approach Mike Leeson at the EA.</li> </ul>	IDB staff
12	<p><b>Operation Fly Swot update-MR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following the storm surge, the team were taken off their normal duties to clear up flood debris. They have now resumed normal duties.</li> </ul>	
13	<p><b>Illegal fish/eel net update- MR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rachel Woodcock is to be moved onto another team within the EA, and as yet there is no one in post to replace her.</li> <li>- It was suggested that the Police Wildlife Crime Officer could also be contacted.</li> </ul>	
14	<p><b>The Wash European Marine Site (EMS) update-MR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waiting to see if they are granted funding for EMS officers.</li> <li>- MR expressed concern that if the funding is not granted, a number of designations might get lifted-there would be no one to ensure implementation or policing of policies safeguarding the Wash.</li> </ul>	
15	<p><b>Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) Update-MR &amp; CM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People are encouraged to use the Invasive Non Native Species guides produced by the GLNP.</li> <li>- CM distributed a document detailing information on the presence of invasive species within the Water Management Consortium’s watercourses.</li> </ul>	
16	<p><b>Witham Opportunities Study-DH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Witham Opportunities Study has identified potential locations.</li> <li>- KP voiced concerns that the only people not invited to the meetings were the landowners themselves.</li> <li>- DH suggested that they would be invited to the next meeting once locations were decided.</li> </ul>	
17	(see above)	
18	<p><b>Environmental News from other committees and organisations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GLNP (see above)</li> <li>Natural England</li> <li>Environment Agency</li> <li>ADA Technical &amp; Environmental Committee</li> <li>Humber Head Levels Nature Improvement Area (NIA)</li> <li>Other relevant committees/organisations</li> </ol>	
19	<b>Open forum (time permitting)</b>	

	<p><b>i. Badger licences for working. Everyone got them?</b> CM stated that class licences are now needed-it is advisable to look at the accompanying guidance for the class licence (regardless if you currently have one or not).</p> <p><b>ii. Water vole increase in the county and in particular IDB drains.</b> Please keep reporting via Charlie Barnes at GLNP</p> <p><b>iii. New environmental land management schemes (NELMS)</b></p> <p><b>iv. Rare large garden bumble bee-BSIDB?</b> No update from Black Sluice IDB as yet.</p> <p><b>v. Saline lagoons, drains, ditches and borrow pits seen as very important habitat that harbour significant species about the Humber, Lincs Marshes and The Wash. Please let Amy at GLNP know if you are interested in assisting with research here</b> KV said that they have some saline ditches in their district. They cannot however be classified as saline lagoons as the salinity in the ditches is not at a constant level-it is variable due to the tides. They have however been acknowledged as valuable habitat.</p>	<p>IDB staff</p> <p>IDB staff</p> <p>IDB staff</p>
20	<p><b>Forthcoming events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Middle Level IDB are holding environmental training sessions focussing on water vole and otter identification on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 19.00-20.30. and Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 10-12.30</li> <li>- CaBA GIS workshop 31<sup>st</sup> March-4<sup>th</sup> April</li> <li>- CaBA end user group meeting Cheltenham, 25<sup>th</sup> March</li> </ul>	
21	<p><b>Date &amp; venue of next meeting</b> TBC</p>	
22	<p><b>Any other business</b> None</p>	

Please note the new contact details for the Chairman, Vice Chairman & Secretary:

**Sam Ireland (Secretary)**

Office: +44 (0) 1522 697123  
Mobile: +44 (0) 7796 058238  
Fax: +44 (0) 1522 697064  
E-mail: [environmentcommittee@witham-3rd-idb.gov.uk](mailto:environmentcommittee@witham-3rd-idb.gov.uk)  
Address: Witham House  
J1 The Point  
Weaver Road  
Lincoln  
LN6 3QN

**Peter Lundgren (Chair)**

E-mail: [peter@peterlundgren.co.uk](mailto:peter@peterlundgren.co.uk)

**Nicholas Watts (Vice Chair)**

E-mail: [nicholas@vinehousefarm.co.uk](mailto:nicholas@vinehousefarm.co.uk)

**Proposed dates and potential locations for 2014/15 meetings:**

- 4<sup>th</sup> June (Lincoln)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> September (Louth/Ulceby)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> December (Boston/Spalding)
- 4<sup>th</sup> March (Lincoln)

## **BLACK SLUICE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD**

### **MINUTES**

of the proceedings of a Meeting of the  
Environment Committee

held at the Offices of the Board on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 2pm

#### **Members**

Chairman - \* Mr J R Wray

Mr R Leggott	* Mr R Welberry
Mr M J Scott	* Mr P Robinson
* Cllr D R Dickinson	* Mr P Holmes
* Mr J F Atkinson	* Mr V A Barker
* Mr K C Casswell	Mr C A Fretwell

(\* Member Present)

In attendance: Mr I Warsap (Chief Executive)  
Mr P Nicholson (Operations Manager)  
Louisa Hoyes (Environmental Intern Witham 3<sup>rd</sup> IDB)  
Alan Ball (Wildlife Conservation Partnership)  
Helen Scarborough (Scarborough Nixon Assoc)  
Ian Nixon (Scarborough Nixon Assoc)  
Claire Schofield (Scarborough Nixon Assoc)  
Amy Bouic (Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership)  
Leslie Hebdon (Risegate Environmentalist)

The Chairman introduced and welcomed the representatives above and thanked them for their attendance.

#### 534 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr M J Scott, Mr R Leggott and Mr C Fretwell.

#### 535 MINUTES OF LAST ENVIRONMENT MEETING

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Environment Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013, copies of which had been circulated, were considered and it was agreed that the Minutes should be signed as a true record.

#### 536 MATTERS ARISING

##### (a) Fish Refuge Shelters - Minute No 379(b)

The Chief Executive responded to a question regarding the number of fish kills since the introduction of a phased start of the pumps at Black Hole Drove





536 (a) Cont.....

Pumping Station. The pumps are generally run at night and no fish kills have been observed or reported.

Mr Welberry informed the Committee that more than 336,000 elvers had died in an incident at the hydro electric power station in Ballyshannon over the Easter weekend it was understood that no one was checking the two traps at Cathleen's Fall due to staff holidays and over the weekend a major run of eels up the River Erne resulted in the traps becoming full and the elves having nowhere to go and were starved of oxygen.

537 REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS COMPLETED 2013/14 - Agenda Item 4

Details of the environmental works completed were circulated with the agenda the Chief Executive highlighted the following areas;

(a) Owl Boxes

The Chief Executive reported that three pole mounted owl boxes were erected last year at Kirton Meeres and Kirton Marsh, this makes a total of thirty three boxes financed by the Board.

(b) Tom Tom Data Recording of Environmental Sightings

The Chief Executive presented a slide of the data inputting received from the Tom Toms devices in all eight of the Boards machines.

Amy Bouic thanked the Board for the data being received by Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre (LERC). A map detailing the water vole cluster in our area was circulated and a link will be supplied for the website.

(c) Risegate Eau Bank Works

The Chief Executive presented a slide picturing the hydro seed sprayed onto the banks. The Chairman reported that he had gone to the bank this morning and that the seed had germinated. The Committee discussed how this bank was to be managed, the Operations Manager stated that guidelines had been followed in preparing the area and that it should be self managed.

The arisings cut in late summer will become a seed gathering and will be put on the other bank.

With reference to the Derwent Cottage Scheme the Chief Executive stated that to complete the works some fencing and hedging is to be put back and with any budget left a hydro mixture will be put on the banks near Derwent Cottage.



(d) North Forty Foot Fishing Platforms

The Chief Executive presented a slide showing the disabled ramps to the fishing platforms. Mr Robinson enquired about the mass of rape on the opposite side bank, the Chief Executive stated that the Energreen will be cutting this down.

(e) Kingfisher Nesting Sites

The Chief Executive presented a slide of the completed site at Chain Bridge pumping station now that it has reeded up. Alan Ball commented that there have been reports of an increase in numbers of Kingfishers due to the mild winter.

(f) Grass Snake Breeding Sites

The Chief Executive presented a slide showing a large grass snake in the South Forty Foot Drain. The weed dump sites are to remain undisturbed.

(g) Boston Clean Up

The Chief Executive presented a slide of the Boards' Workmen cleaning out a dyke during the Boston Clean Up and this was featured in the Boston Daily on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

(h) Invasive Species

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that GNLP have produced detailed documents identifying a range of invasive species. The Workmen have been given laminated A5 copies, he offered copies for the members to take away.

(i) Bombus Ruderatus Bee

The Chief Executive presented a slide picturing the development of a site near Allen's Bridge. He then introduced Leslie Hebdon to the Committee who has helped to encourage the bees by planting several species of flower to promote and protect the bee's habitat.

The Board has completed a scheme there to open the area up which has released the water system. The Bombus ruderatus bee which has been identified on site is a rare bee to Lincolnshire.

(j) North Forty Foot Drain

The Chief Executive presented a slide picturing the temporary works dam erected on the North Forty Foot Drain. Large quantities of eels and fish were carefully removed prior to the water levels being reduced in order to aid the desilting works.



538 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY AND DRAIN WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT 2014/15

(a) Water Vole Surveys

The Chief Executive proposed that the water vole surveys continue to be carried out by Scarborough Nixon prior to desilting and following the works where water voles had been identified. The Committee AGREED.

(b) Bats

The Chief Executive explained that during the Board's works it was realised that we had roosting bats noticeably around pumping stations, believed to be roosting in the gravity/suction bays. Helen Scarborough added that bats are legally protected and once surveyed you can plan ahead to do works at times of the year according to the species. She concluded there is a possibility that the bats are Daubenton's.

The Committee AGREED to recommend to the Board that a survey should be carried out on the bat population by Scarborough Nixon.

(c) Summer Cutting and Vegetation Clearance

The Chief Executive stated that the initial programme of works has been posted on the website and will be reviewed on a weekly basis. The workforce will be briefed regarding channel management in relation to balancing the benefits of flood risk, agriculture and the biodiversity values.

(d) Owl Boxes

The Chief Executive requested approval for three pole mounted barn owl boxes. The Committee discussed whether a programme for repair and replacement was needed.

Alan Ball responded that he and Bob Sheppard who check the boxes do ongoing maintenance and repair therefore there is no need to replace any. The Committee AGREED to recommend to the Board a contribution to erect three pole mounted owl boxes.

(e) Eel and Fish Passes

The Chief Executive had gone into great detail in the Agenda papers outlining the agreement and procurement of surveys for the ten pumping stations within the Black Sluice IDB on the High Priority list.

(f) Water Levels

The Chief Executive reported that water levels are continually required to remain higher in the summer months in order to assist trickle feed irrigation onto the land.



(g) The 2014 Lincolnshire Show Schools Challenge

The Chief Executive stated that during the Tour of Italy an idea was to offer a Schools Challenge which would be themed towards local education to create models and investigations in the format of a topical challenge supported by ADA. Students were invited to look into water level management. The Black Sluice has 43 schools in and around our district, the Chief Executive wrote to these schools offering assistance but unfortunately we did not get a single response.

Mr K Casswell responded that the school schedule is set out a year in advance and the approach should be made through the Head of Geography at Secondary Schools and Chairman of Governors at Primary Schools. The Committee felt this format should be encouraged and taken into next year.

(h) Fens Waterway Link

The Chief Executive stated that information relating to the sale of Horseshoe House, Bourne Road, Guthrum Gowt gave an indication to the preferred route.

(i) Fens for the Future

The Chief Executive stated that an introduction to this initiative is detailed in the agenda papers.

(j) Water Framework Directive

The Chief Executive and Operations Manager have attended a meeting with the EA Officers and outlined a number of questions to be looked into.

(k) Badgers

The Chief Executive stated that the Board only has licences to work adjacent to Badgers. The Committee discussed the damage badgers have on the ecology with them having no predator they are digging out bees, and grubs. Killing pheasants and hedgehogs, a badger will kill anything. Alan Ball added that any ground nesting bird will be falling prey to badgers. There are no surveys of numbers of badgers and nothing to control them.

(l) The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site

The Chief Executive stated that we are one of the authorities which have a statutory duty under the UK Habitats Regulations to report on progress against these management actions on an annual basis.

It was RESOLVED that the Report on Environmental Works should be received and adopted.





#### 539 BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (BAP) - Agenda Item 5

The Chief Executive stated that due to the size of the document the BAP would be presented on screen and introduced Clare Schofield who had worked on production of this document to go through the changes.

Clare Schofield from Scarborough Nixon then highlighted the updates, some tables were made easier to read, with realistic and achievable targets.

Alan Ball commented that some of the birds were not Lincolnshire birds. The Chief Executive will email Alan to confirm and amend the section containing marsh warbler and curlew bunting.

The Committee AGREED to recommend approval by the Board at the next meeting.

#### 540 REVIEW OF THE BOURNE NORTH FEN BORROW PITS - Agenda Item 6

The Chief Executive stated to the Committee that the Board owns three environmental sites "borrow pit sites" which have been identified as significant sites with high environmental potential. Scarborough Nixon were approached to survey these sites with the view to presenting a 5 to 10 year management plan.

Clare Schofield presented a powerpoint management plan:

##### Borrow Pit 1 at Wherry's Farm, Twenty

This triangular Pit measuring approximately 1.37 hectares, is close to the River Glen and a railway line that was dismantled in the 1950s. A drainage ditch runs parallel with the eastern boundary of the site.

The site is surrounded, on its other two sides, by arable land. The Pit can be divided into two distinct parts, excavated into two levels.

One level is open in character but has been planted with hazel and alder at some point in its recent history. Common reed is abundant in this area, supported by sedge and rush species associated with a wetland habitat, and suggests at least seasonal retention of water. The more enclosed area could be described as wet woodland and comprises mostly of a mixed age stand, including standing and lying dead wood, of species of willow.

Management objectives for the site are:

- Allow woodland habitat to develop naturally
- Increase roosting opportunities for bat species
- Maintain and enhance the reedbed habitat
- Review the management plan after five years



Borrow Pit 2 at Bourne North Fen, Twenty

The site comprises two standing water bodies, a large lake and a smaller pit to the north separated by a grassy tree lined bund. There are wide fringes of common reed and the banks are tree lined with a variety of species. The site supports fish and abundant waterfowl, it comprises of a mosaic of wetland, woodland and grassland habitats.

Management objectives for the site are:

- Manage the wet woodland habitat appropriately
- Maintain and enhance the reedbed habitat
- Enhance and protect the site for specially protected bird species (marsh harrier and bittern)
- Review the management plan after five years

Borrow Pit 3 at Cooke's Farm, Twenty

This rectangular Pit, measuring approximately 3.26 hectares, is close to Bourne Eau. A drainage ditch runs parallel with the southern boundary of the site. The site is surrounded, on its other three sides, by arable land.

The Pit can be divided almost equally into two distinct parts, plantation woodland and willow carr.

Management objectives for the site are:

- Allow willow carr woodland to develop naturally
- Selectively thin trees in the plantation woodland
- Improve the ground flora in the plantation woodland
- Lay the hawthorn boundary hedgerow
- Increase roosting opportunities for bat species
- Review the management plan after five years

The Committee discussed that any environment budget surplus could be used, the Chief Executive was requested to assess costings for some of the works required.

541 HECKINGTON FEN WIND PARK GRID CONNECTION - Agenda Item 7

The Chief Executive stated that the Secretary of State, Planning Inspectorate has written to the Board requesting information in an environmental statement relating to the project. The deadline for receipt of our report is 29<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

The Chief Executive proposed a request to use experts to help the Officers produce a statement to the government regarding the sites at Heckington and Bicker for sub stations and the proposed two routes. The Committee AGREED to recommend that funding be provided for Scarborough Nixon to assist.



## 542 REPORTS – Agenda Item 8

### (a) Amy Bouic - Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership (GLNP)

This is the second full reporting year and the latest Lincolnshire BAP 2013/14 is now complete. The Annual Review will be published shortly and copies will be sent to the Black Sluice IDB. The Black Sluice has contributed data from the Tom Tom to LERC which has enabled a BAP map with location, species data which has been requested by other organisations, many thanks to Black Sluice for submitting your records.

The GLNP are issuing a Position on Agriculture statement once endorsed these statements will give everyone in the Partnership a clear idea of what we stand for and why.

[Amy.bouic@glnp.org.uk](mailto:Amy.bouic@glnp.org.uk)   [www.glnp.org.uk](http://www.glnp.org.uk)

### (b) Louisa Hoyes - Lincs ADA Environment Committee Review

The draft ADA Lincs Environment Committee minutes were enclosed in the agenda for information. Louisa Hoyes highlighted a few points to the Committee;

- (i) Anglian eel and fish prioritisation – All pumping stations designated category A or B must have a solution in place for eel screening by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, or they will be in breach of EU Law.

### (c) Alan Ball - Wildlife Conservation Partnership

Only three pairs of Barn Owls bred in the Black Sluice Board's boxes in 2013 raising broods of just 3, 1 and 2. It was also a very poor year for Kestrels but one pair raised a brood of 6, the largest successful brood recorded in 2013.

Barn Owl experts across the UK have regarded 2013 as the worst breeding year in living memory, caused mainly by high mortality of adults in the exceptionally cold March at the end of a very severe winter and a resultant lack of mice/voles as prey. However Lincolnshire seems to have fared much better than other areas in the UK, thanks to high levels of prey and a later breeding season followed by a mild 2013/14 winter. The prospects for 2014 are looking very good indeed. If pairs double brood in 2014 it is likely to be the best year on record in Lincolnshire.

Thanks to the efforts of landowners, the EA and all of the Drainage Boards in Lincolnshire (remembering that Black Sluice was the first Drainage Board in 1987 to erect owl boxes), Lincolnshire now has more Barn Owls than any other county in the UK. It is important to maintain this stronghold as Barn Owls reared in Lincolnshire can move into neighbouring areas and help maintain the British population, especially following poor years such as 2013.



542 (c) Cont.....

Three new pole boxes were installed in early 2014 bring a total of 33 boxes. The boxes have started to be checked for 2014 so far the new box at Kirton Meeres on land owned by Paul Holmes, has been taken up by Barn Owls and already have five owlets. Whilst inspecting locations for new sites Little Owls were sighted so a little owl box was installed in a nearby building. All boxes will be checked by the end of June 2014 and we are expecting much better results.

Bob Sheppard and Alan Ball on behalf of the Wildlife Conservation Partnership would like to thank the Black Sluice Board for their unwavering support and enthusiasm for maintaining the Barn Owl nest box scheme.

(d) Helen Scarborough - Scarborough Nixon Associates

Helen felt that all matters had been discussed during the meeting; she stated that if any members had any questions or queries then please let her know.

543 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Vice Chairman

The Chairman recommended to the Members of the Committee to nominate Paul Homes as Vice Chairman of this Committee. Seconded by Cllr D Dickinson and all AGREED.

(b) Environmental Committee Meetings

A question was raised regarding the number of meetings each year. The Chief Executive stated that if there were pressing issues which needed to be reviewed then an additional meeting would be called.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5pm.

