

**DEVON AVON WATER QUALITY GROUP**  
**Notes of meeting at Follaton House, Totnes**  
**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

Attendance:	Representing
<b>Stuart Watts – Chair (SW)</b>	Chair, Aune Conservation Association (ACA)
<b>Kelvin Broad (KB)</b>	Environment Agency - Fisheries Technical Specialist
<b>Glenis Pewsey (GP)</b>	South West Water (SWW) – Resources Strategist
<b>Roger Furniss (RF)</b>	South West Rivers Association
<b>Nigel Mortimer (NM)</b>	South Devon AONB Manager
<b>Bruce Stockley (BS)</b>	Head of Fisheries WRT
<b>Chris Klee (CK)</b>	Formerly of SW Fisheries Advisory Committee
<b>Scott West (SCW)</b>	SHRimP Project Manager (WRT)
<b>Emma-Rose Herrera</b>	Environment Agency (EA) Catchment Coordinator – South Devon
<b>John Roberts (JR)</b>	Chair, Avon Fishing Association (AFA)
<b>Peter Marsh (PM)</b>	ACA
Apologies	
<b>Mike Blackmore</b>	Wild Trout Trust
<b>John Peters</b>	ACA
<b>Bruce Stockley (BS)</b>	Head of Fisheries WRT
<b>Robin Toogood</b>	South Devon AONB Manager
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence.
2 & 3	<p><b>Notes of meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> May and matters arising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes were agreed</li> <li>• Matters arising: covered below</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>DAG, SHRimP &amp; South Devon Catchment Partnership (SDCP) – avoiding overlap</b></p> <p>SW expressed concern about overlap between these three groups. However, SHRimP will only last one more year (March 2015) and the membership and purpose of the SDCP have yet to be defined. The consensus of the meeting was that the DAG could serve a useful role by its focus of the Avon but perhaps with one meeting per year .</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: SW</p>
5	<p><b>SHRimP - Minimising obstacles to fish movement</b></p> <p>Venn Weir</p> <p>Work on the eel pass and fish trap will start within a week or so. The EA own the pass but do not intend use it. The interest lies in its potential for scientific use in monitoring fish movements and in its historical significance. The fish trap will remain bolted shut but could be a temptation for poachers.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: SCW to check security</p> <p>The main body of the weir will be repaired as part of SHRimP – timing uncertain.</p> <p>Brent Island Weir</p> <p>Repairs started last week in consultation with local community interest</p>

	<p>groups who have raised £15K in matched funding. Open Day on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Crackhill Weir Repairs are required on flood damage to the sill.</p>	
6	<p><b>SHRImP - Fish/River Monitoring Programme</b></p> <p>Electro-fishing has received minimal effort and needs to increase in respect of water release trials. Data exchange with the EA has improved but is limited by available resources and, possibly, by different methodologies employed. RF pointed out the need for effective reporting to DEFRA will depend on sound data. GP emphasised that reliable data storage and availability is essential. RF stated that 5years of data from 40 sites are available for the Exe and Fowey rivers.</p> <p>WRT Nutrient Budget Model. SW asked how this model will benefit the programme as much of the data seemed anecdotal and of questionable reliability.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ACTION: SCW to check</p> <p>Tagging: A contractor had been appointed for smolt tagging but the timing was wrong. Now, adult trout will be tagged in autumn and smolts next year – NB the March 2015 programme termination!</p>	<b>Action</b>
	<p><b>Water Releases from Avon Dam</b></p> <p>The use of water releases from the dam to assist downstream migration of smolts rather than upstream migration of adult fish is considered to be a more effective use of the available water.</p> <p>The EA, SWW and WRT have met three times to develop a trial protocol for use April/ May but no release was made due to a natural spate. There is still legal confusion about the volume of water that should be released under the terms of the original license.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ACTION: KB to issue the agreed water release protocol</p>	
8	<p><b>SHRImP - Gravel augmentation</b></p> <p>600 tons of gravel purchased for the 3 SHRImP rivers and storage arranged. Gravel (granite) is poor quality and needs processing to render suitable for purpose. Peter Downes (U of P) will be involved in tagging gravel at 5 or 6 sites upstream of South Brent. SWW may fund future work on augmentation and monitoring but effect on spawning will be beyond SHRImP's duration.</p>	
9	<p><b>Illegal Netting &amp; Estuary Byelaws</b></p> <p>Illegal estuary netting continues to be a problem on the Avon, as elsewhere in the South Hams, and threatens to undermine any</p> <p>The netting byelaws are awaiting revision by IFCA</p>	
10	<p><b>Next Meeting</b> TBA</p>	SW