

## Water Leaders Group meeting 16 October 2019

### Attendees:

| Organisation   | Representative    |
|--|-------------------|
| Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) | Phil Jones        |
| Business in the Community  | Rachel Dyson      |
| Canal and River Trust  | Peter Birch       |
| Catchment Based Approach   | Arlin Rickard     |
| Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)                | Alistair Chisholm |
| Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)                | Sarah Anderton    |
| Committee for Climate Change   | Brendan Freeman   |
| Coal Authority   | James Lowth       |
| Committee for Climate Change   | Brendan Freeman   |
| Consumer Council for Water   | Sarah Thomas      |
| Country Land and Business Association  | Rachel Brooks     |
| Defra  | Ashley Holt       |
| Energy UK  | Andy Limbrick     |
| Environment Agency   | Anne Dacey        |
| Environment Agency   | Pete Fox          |
| Environment Agency   | Dave Martin       |
| Forestry Commission  | Mike Render       |
| National Farmers Union (NFU)   | Ian Ludgate       |
| National Trust   | Stewart Clarke    |
| Natural England  | Rachel Crabbe     |
| Rivers Trust   | Mark Lloyd        |
| Royal Yachting Association   | Kate Forman       |

### Apologies:

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| Associated British Ports                                    | Alan Tinline           |
| Association of Drainage Authorities                         | Innes Thomson          |
| Association of Inshore Fisheries Conservation & Authorities | Stephen Bolt           |
| Coastal Partnerships Network                                | Amy Pryor              |
| Defra   | Jan Dixon              |
| Highways England  | Michael Whitehead      |
| International Navigation Association (PIANC)                | Jan Brooke             |
| Marine Management Organisation                              | Victoria Pointer       |
| Mineral Products Association                                | Nicola Owen            |
| Ofwat   | Colin Green            |
| Regional Flood and Coastal Committees                       | Robert Van De Noort    |
| Renewable UK  | Oankar Birdi           |
| Angling Trust - Rivers Trust                                | Mark Lloyd             |
| Royal Yachting Association                                  | Phil Horton            |
| Salmon and Trout Conservation UK                            | Janina Gray            |
| Shellfish Association of Great Britain                      | Sarah Horsfall         |
| Water UK  | Alice Carrington-Windo |
| Waterwise UK  | Nathan Richardson      |
| Wildfowl & Wetland Trust (WWT)                              | Rob Shore              |
| Wildlife Trusts   | Ali Morse              |
| World Wide Fund for Nature                                  | Catherine Moncrieff    |

## Agenda

- Welcome and introductions to new members
- Session 1: Reflections on outputs from July meeting
- Session 2: River basin planning 'Challenges and Choices' consultation and videos
- Session 3: Generating sector perspectives

## Meeting Notes

### Welcome and introductions to new members

Rachel Dyson - Business in the Community (BITC), outlined the purpose and objectives of BITC and highlighted three BITC programmes <https://www.bitc.org.uk/environment/>: Net Zero Carbon; Water and Healthy Eco Systems; Circular Economy and Resource Productivity. BITC is also working closely with government and partners to develop its Water Task Force strategy.

Alastair Chisholm - Chartered Institution for Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) - <https://www.ciwem.org/> outlined a number of areas with scope for collaborative working, including: integrated land and water management; the new agricultural regime; the Catchment Academy; resilience; Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) advocacy, micro plastics, and CIWEM's recently published report on delivering 25 Year Environment Plan <https://www.ciwem.org/policy-reports/25-year-environment-plan-ambition-to-realisation>

Brendan Freeman - Committee on Climate Change (CCC) summarised how CCC is a non-departmental public body offering independent advice to government on building a low-carbon economy and preparing for climate change <https://www.theccc.org.uk/>. CCC assesses the main climate change risks to the UK on a 5 year basis and has reviewed the existing measures from the July WLG meeting.

### Reflections on July meeting

Water leaders considered measures to address the main water environment pressures.

In summary:

| <b>Pressure</b>       | <b>Measure</b>                           |
|-----------------------|--|
| Waste Water           | Increased infrastructure investment      |
| Urban                 | systems approach to planning             |
| Physical modification | Review role of statutory undertakers     |
| Rural                 | Better coordinated advice and incentives |
| Flow                  | Change attitudes to water use.           |

The following additions were raised to the above issues:

- **Awareness campaigns** for behaviour change regarding in water efficiency and home design. Use 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) targets to drive behaviour change.
- **Information packs** on the impact of small scale package plants also needs to be considered, not just the large plants
- **Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)**: more strict requirements from planning policy to build and maintain them.
- **Product design** and use of smart meters to improve water efficiency.
- **Catchment Based Approach**: need more projects and to drive more innovation
- **Collaboration** more sectors working together, for example water companies and farmers. More would help, for example water company funding in agriculture.

- **Landscape Enterprise Networks (LENS):** BITC creating business value from healthy landscapes provide much scope for expansion. Excellent examples from Nestle and United Utilities on natural flood management; work in Northants on Payments for Ecosystems Services (PES) brokerage.
- **Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS)** – could include nature based solutions such as constructed wetlands.
- **Innovative Finance** – for example carbon offsetting using constructed wetlands.
- **Climate change adaptation and mitigation** using water
- **Metal removal** consider cost-benefit ratio of removing metals from mine waters
- **Reservoirs** increased investment in new reservoirs
- Phosphorus: largest reason for not achieving good in lakes and rivers is phosphorus – this should be a higher priority.
- **Water infrastructure** should include soft infrastructure not just hard: for example natural flood management. More mainstreamed water storage such as water butts. Also need to consider marine sewage discharges with more pump-out facilities in inland coastal waters (less than 3 m out to sea).

## Challenges and Choices consultation

Dave Martin (Environment Agency) outlined how the Challenges and Choices consultation runs from 24 October 2019 to 24 April 2020. Videos outlining various issues are available at:

- Small Changes, Big Picture Trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KdVoxs2SSM>
- Managing Water in Our Environment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA6gqonQLOQ>
- Climate Crisis [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbs7Ci3nF\\_c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbs7Ci3nF_c)
- Changes to Water Levels and Flows [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1\\_ktVTM4Mrw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_ktVTM4Mrw)
- Chemicals in the Water Environment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wP493JsiukM>
- Invasive Non-Native Species [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q\\_OiGvphEBw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_OiGvphEBw)
- Physical Modifications <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2c03-wJj9Jl>
- Plastics Pollution <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cDo2gMa0-o>
- Pollution from Abandoned Mines <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQofsec-HMo>
- Pollution from Agriculture and Rural Areas <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFaVYsOjea4>
- Pollution from Towns, Cities and Transport <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAReJm6RKFU>
- Pollution from Wastewater <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBcPb0g2tZg>

## Generating Sector Perspectives

Water Leaders were asked to spend time considering how organisations can collectively work together to minimise impacts from the following sector:

- **Agriculture:**
  - The Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) will be an important influencing opportunity for agriculture
  - Water Leaders Group could help to co-ordinate and increase the profile of water in ELMS
  - WLG through its own member networks could promote regulation and especially advice and guidance
  - The Environment Agency needs to be clear on its regulatory baseline
  - WLG could be more integrated about complementary measures in catchments - for example a systems approach.
- **Urban development:**
  - New construction was seen to be the biggest opportunity for influence:
  - New homes, through the NPPF and building regulations – ensure this is a requirement and not optional activity
  - Misconnections – address via the EPC packs which are now part of house sales
  - Building regulations: one standard, with compliance enforced

- SuDS: multifunctional – not just runoff but meeting water quality, amenity, biodiversity needs
- Flood risk: actions to take account of projected 2 and 4 degree temperature rise.
- **Water company activity**
  - Key areas: Systems approach, SuDS, Misconnections and changing attitudes: CIWEM will work with us to co-ordinate and amplify campaign activity such as soil, Love Water, Riverlands by sharing them with their audiences. For example Outfall Safaris led by Thames Water have raised awareness.
  - Better labelling and learning and capacity building is needed
- **Other Business and Industries**
  - Water Leaders seek guidance on who best to approach in order to influence
  - Challenges and Choices: its impact will be greater through our collaboration with other government departments on issues such as energy and water effectiveness
  - Aspiration – to work towards a net zero impact.
- **General public** (individuals and communities) by supporting behaviour change:
  - The Challenges and Choices consultation can be used by Water Leaders to reach their audiences, and via social media.
  - Increasing awareness of persistent issues such as septic tank leakage
  - Building in efficiency from the start will always be preferable to retrofitting – through increased working with house building organisations
  - Flow: start changing attitudes to water use: make water saving a normal every day activity through incentives and raising awareness.

## Next Steps

- The Environment Agency is keen to work with all sectors to get early feedback on the Challenges and Choices consultation (open from October 24 2019 to 24 April 2020)
- Water Leaders Group members were urged to make a pledge to respond to the Challenges and Choices consultation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/river-basin-planning-challenges-and-choices>

**Forward Look** - Water Leaders Group meetings will be held on the following dates and locations:

- 6 February 2020: Mary Ward House 5-7 Tavistock Place London WC1H 9SN
- 7 July 2020: Skills for Care 7-12 Tavistock Square, Lynton House, London WC1H 9LT