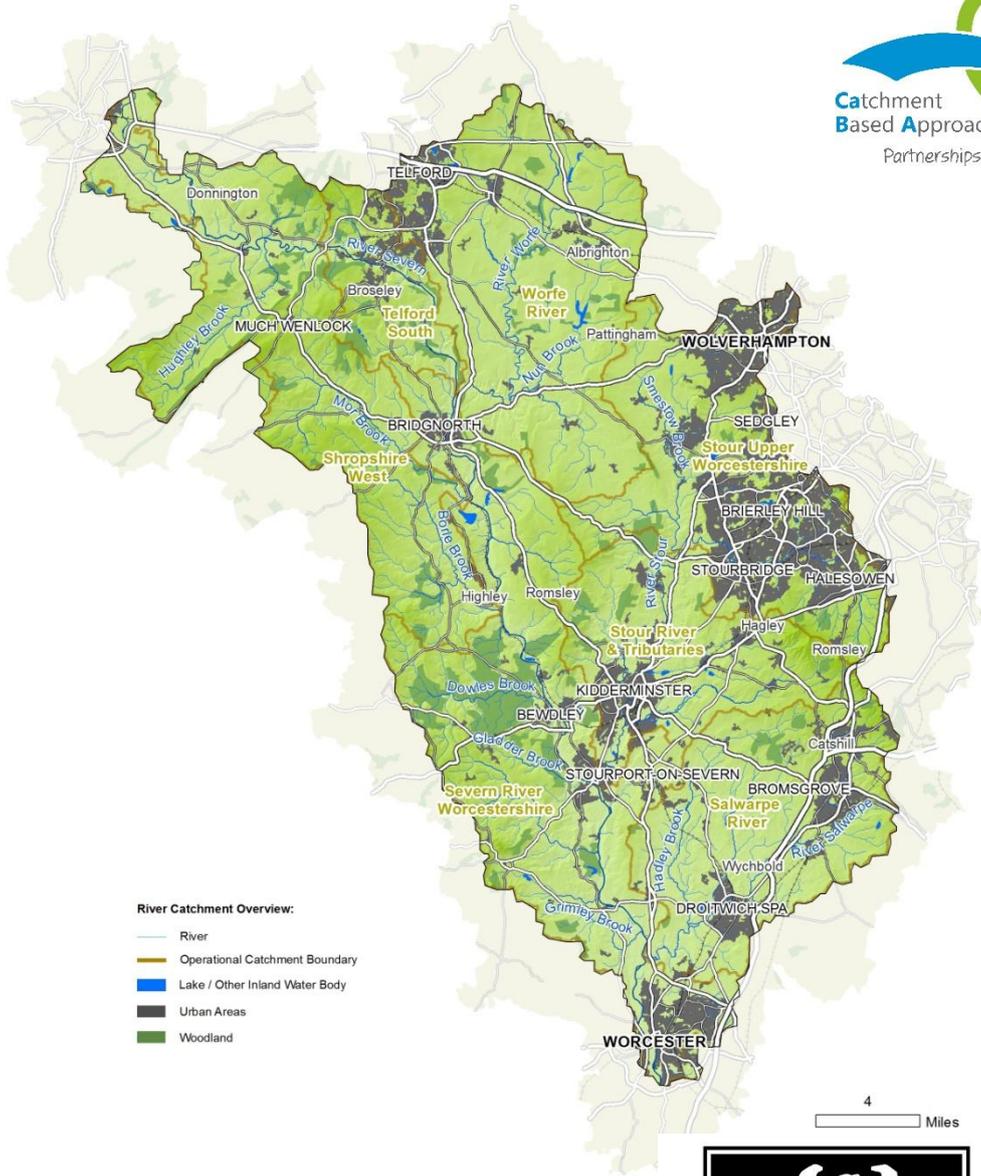


Worcestershire Middle Severn CaBA Catchment Management Plan

2017



4 Miles

Severn
Rivers Trust
Preserving and Caring
for the Severn Catchment



Worcestershire

Alex Clark
March 2017

Worcestershire Middle Severn
Catchment Management Plan

Project: **Worcestershire Middle Severn Catchment Based Approach**

Hosts: **Severn Rivers Trust and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust**

Address: **Lower Smite Farm
Smite Hill
Hindlip
Worcestershire
WR3 8SZ**

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Project Director: **Tony Bostock MBE, MIFM, CEnv**

Project Managers: **Alex Clark, M.Sc. B.Sc.**

David Dench (Worcestershire Wildlife Trust)

Ed Noyes (Worcestershire Wildlife Trust)

Report Authors: **Alex Clark, Ed Noyes**

Severn Rivers Trust
Unit 5
Hope House Farm Barns
Hope House Lane
Martley
Worcestershire
WR6 6QF
Tel: 01886 888394
E-Mail: admin@severnriverstrust.com
Website: www.severnriverstrust.com
Registered Charity No: 1134096

Registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee. Company registration No: 6642409

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1. Catchment Vision and Terms of Reference

1.1. Catchment Vision

For the Worcestershire Middle Severn Catchment Partnership, the overall outcome is to enhance and maintain the water environment within the catchment to the highest possible standard for the benefit of wildlife and communities.

By working collaboratively and identifying priority sites within the catchment, the partnership aims to:

- Identify and remedy issues with water quality
- Collate flood impact information and take a catchment wide, holistic approach to alleviating problems in specific areas
- Actively seek opportunities for wildlife and general biodiversity and implement changes to benefit habitats and species
- Seek to engage communities in the area to increase awareness and enjoyment of the water environment
- Improve access for all and encourage participation in maintaining a healthy river catchment.

Building on projects included in the partnership's Reporting & Evaluation Form, and using project ideas put into the Project Ideas Live-Map online, the partnership will select and prioritise projects that are deliverable within the remit of the Catchment Based Approach. The Catchment Partnership aims to maintain and regularly update a Catchment Plan as a 'living document' that will summarise catchment status, key catchment issues, partnership vision, planning, projects and activities.

1.2. Terms of Reference

Please see Appendix 1 for the Worcestershire Middle Severn Terms of Reference.

1.3. Partners

Bromsgrove and Redditch District Council, Canal and Rivers Trust, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Malvern Hills District Council, Natural England, North Worcestershire Water Management, Severn Rivers Trust, Severn Trent Water, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, South Staffs Water, Wychavon District Council, Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust

2. Data & Evidence

2.1. CaBA Data & GIS

The partnership has access to, and regularly utilises the CaBA Data & GIS package for the catchment, and uses the plethora of data available as evidence to establish where work is needed and highlight priority areas/sub-catchments. In addition, the partnership uses data from the Environment Agency's sharing platforms, such as the

Catchment Planning Portal, along with other sources such as Scimap. This data is combined with the WFD Priority Water Bodies from the Environment Agency Environment Programme.

2.2. Environmental Services Evidence Review

An Environmental Services Evidence Review of the Worcestershire Middle Severn Catchment has been produced and is available to the partnership. This can highlight potential projects through the wide variety of maps included such as Landcover, Agricultural Practices and Livestock Farming, Population, Water Quality, WFD Criteria, and importantly, Point Sources of Pollution and Opportunities for Enhancement. A link to this document can be found [HERE](#). This document also categorises potential issues and benefits, such as drought, flooding, habitat and wildlife, carbon regulation, and recreation and leisure; all are criteria important to the partnership, and considered during any project work.

2.3. Catchment Partnership Meetings

Regular attendance of stakeholder representatives at partnership meetings and subsequent discussions will provide up-to-date information on catchment status and where project work is required. The partnership will regularly update the catchments live, online project map with existing, developing or conceptual projects; this can be viewed [HERE](#).

3. Project Plan

3.1. Current Projects

In 2014, a steering group was created with the aim of supporting interest in the Worcestershire Middle Severn catchment area and generating project ideas for potential future work. This led to an open event in 2015 where up to 100 people were consulted about their views on the catchment, what it meant to them and where improvements could be made. Using large scale Environmental Service Evidence Review maps, each person was asked questions such as 'what do you enjoy most about the catchment', 'your first memory' and 'what don't you like'? Answers were placed on the maps and collated to generate an overview, leading to the development of projects such as 'Love Your River Bromsgrove' and focus on the River Stour catchment.

Since the inception of the partnership in 2014, a wide range of project work in the Worcestershire Middle Severn catchment has been delivered on a regular basis. Once again, partnership work has been fundamental to success in both planning and delivering these projects. The Partnership has endorsed a 'bottom up' approach to project development and maintained support for public meetings, bringing all users of the catchment together in a neutral environment to develop ideas and projects that benefit the catchment as a whole.

The Catchment Based Approach has directly funded projects across the catchment, such as 'Love Your River Bromsgrove' (LYR Bromsgrove) and aided the development and delivery of many others including the River Worfe Catchment Restoration Project, the River Stour Catchment Restoration Project and work within the Battlefield Brook and Duck Brook sub-catchments.

3.1.1. River Worfe

The River Worfe Catchment Restoration Project ended in 2015, but following consultation and project development aid from the partnership, this will be revived for 18 months to continue work in the catchment under the name River Worfe Habitat Improvement Project (HIP). Both projects within the Worfe catchment focus on water quality improvements, driven by poor WFD status across the catchment. During the initial project, over 65 farms were engaged, over 50 of which had farm infrastructure improvements installed. The project also delivered 10km+ of stock fencing along the watercourse, 8km+ of in-stream habitat and bank revetment works, remediated 18 fish migration issues, and involved 27 volunteers and 6 community groups.

3.1.2. Lyr Bromsgrove

'Love Your River Bromsgrove' was the first 'LYR' project in the Worcestershire Middle Severn, and followed the same format as the 'LYR Telford' project set-up through the Shropshire Middle Severn partnership. A partnership group was established in the area and the project was successful in the installation of SuDs schemes, habitat improvements, de-pave initiatives and Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) control measures.

This project created and continues to support a thriving volunteer group. The group has received training in water quality and riverfly sampling and now monitor nine locations on waterways around the town on a monthly basis. This has provided background data on the state of the waterways in the town, an early warning system for pollution and continuous engagement with the local community. The project has also engaged with three schools through a 'River Rangers' program, creating rain gardens to demonstrate filtration, water vole friendly plants and pollinators, along with several school wetland planting sessions in Sanders and Catshill parks.



Picture 1: LYR Bromsgrove training session for Riverfly volunteer group.

3.1.3. River Stour

Similarly, the partnership is in full support of the growing River Stour Catchment Restoration Project. During 2015/16, the partnership paid for a further Environmental Service Evidence Review and the production of several large scale maps to refine mapping of the Stour and identify key issues. This was deemed highly important, despite the cost involved, due to complications created by the catchment crossing multiple administrative borders.

During 2016/17 the EA and SRT has worked on identifying issues and barriers to fish passage across the catchment. During 2017 it is proposed that existing knowledge is built upon and a steering group for the catchment created. The project would like to use the 'LYR' format, encouraging the local community to engage more with the river network and focus on water quality issues and fish migration, across the entire Stour catchment.

The Catchment Partnership identified several project ideas to tackle key issues on the Stour such as urban point-source pollution, canalised stretches of watercourse, rubbish along the river and public open space problems.

3.2. Aspirational Projects

Projects in this section are described as either 'In Development' or 'Conceptual/Idea' and have been sourced from the live, online project map updated by the partnership. Others are included from the Partnership Reporting and Evaluation Form submitted in March 2017.

3.2.1. Projects 'In Development'

The projects listed below are currently in their development Phase with some forming a £3m ESIF (European Structural and Investment Fund) bid for the county of Worcestershire under the 'LYR Worcestershire' project title. Other projects are separate from the ESIF bid.

3.2.1.1. European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

The focus of the ESIF project is on water features and corridors that play crucial roles in providing benefits to people and wildlife. The project will work with volunteers, schools, businesses and the local community across urban areas in Worcestershire to deliver a large number of environmental benefits and provide education opportunities. Such investments will deliver further substantial benefits to support local growth through its impact on inward investment, cleaner water business benefits, flood alleviation, visitor spend, environmental cost-saving and improved health and well-being of residents.

Included in this ESIF bid are project proposals for 'Love Your River Worcestershire' which will focus on engaging communities and businesses in Worcester, Evesham, Kidderminster and Bromsgrove to improve interactions with the water environment.

3.2.1.2. Other projects

Projects listed here are separate from the ESIF bid and are important potential projects for the environmental improvement of the catchment.

- Dowles Brook - Reduce sediment runoff, improve water quality, tackle INNS
- Claverley Brook Re-Profiling - Separate from the Worfe HIP, this consists of channel modifications to re-naturalise a stretch of brook that suffered severe, regular dredging and over-widening which resulted in the over-abundance of Fools Watercress that chokes the brook.

3.2.2. Conceptual Projects/Project Ideas.

A number of conceptual project ideas have been generated through a project database, which is constantly updated then added to an online map available [HERE](#). While many of these projects are currently just a list of ideas, they provide an important framework for focusing future work. They have also been identified as viable options that can be rapidly ‘worked up’ and ready for delivery should funding become available at short notice. They will all help toward achieving bigger ‘flagship’ objectives in the catchment. Examples of these projects include tackling non-native species, diffuse pollution, degraded channels, flooding and species decline. The current distribution of these projects can be seen in the map below (this list will change and grow):



Map1: Current distribution of project ideas in the Worcestershire Middle Severn (purple markers).

4. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The monitoring and evaluation plan will provide a systematic, evidence based approach to management of the catchment area. This will also be used to prove projects are delivering benefits and enable adaptive management for positive outcomes where necessary. The plan will support:

- Establishing baseline data prior to any intervention and showing where this information was taken from (i.e. actual monitoring or extrapolation from literature) to validate its applicability.
- Use of suitable and relevant methods of monitoring and evaluation
- Generating evidence to quantify measures of success and display outcomes.

In summary, the following approaches will be used to achieve these aims:

- Citizen science programs to engage local communities; these will gather data to provide baseline information, monitoring and post-project appraisal. Sampling water quality, habitat condition and biota using current, standard methodologies will be core to this approach.
- Walkover surveys by skilled volunteers and partnership staff to evaluate catchment/ sub-catchment condition; identify opportunities, issues and impacted areas. This will target future restoration efforts and interventions.
- Documenting enhancements with fixed-point photography to show differences before, during and after each project.
- Digitise results and reports for incorporation into a shared project database and mapping, particularly for use amongst the CaBA Partnership.
- Utilise the extensive open-access resources available for planning and comparing catchment activities and monitoring. Utilise GIS information, for example, Environment Agency hydrological, LiDAR and ecological data.
- Use external specialist contractors where necessary for providing high quality data generation or project delivery to achieve the best outcomes.
- Specify/identify appropriate time scales for monitoring and evaluation pre and post project work to ensure information generated is relevant and robust.
- Keep up-to date with monitoring resources and current approaches through CaBA resources and communication with the wider industry; ensure CPD.
- Regular communication amongst catchment partners to ensure monitoring is targeted and at a sufficient scale across the catchment area as to be effective.
- Publish results of evaluation and project costs; a conduit for this is currently under development and much of this information has already been provided to CaBA through a reporting and evaluation exercise.

Appendices

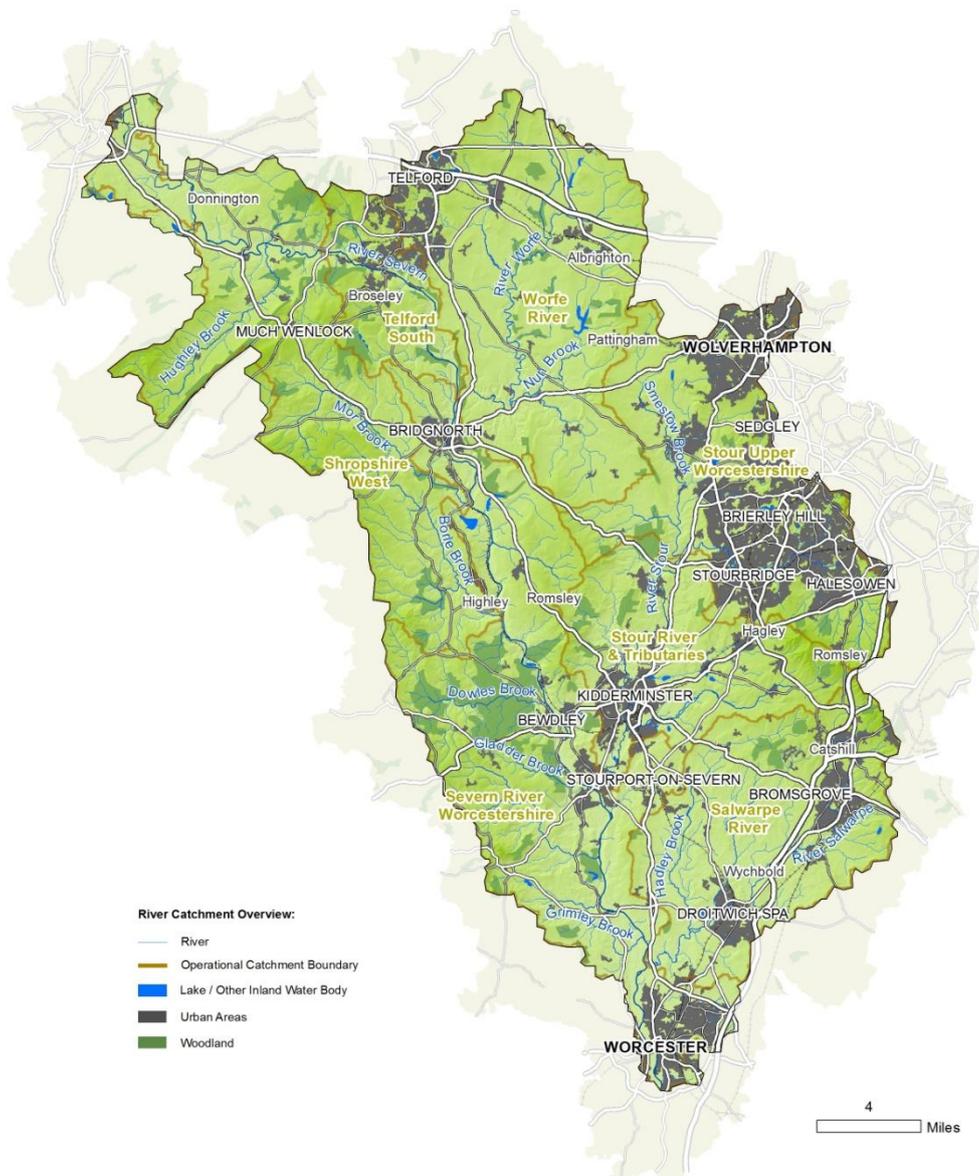
Appendix 1. Terms of Reference

1. Name

1.1 The Worcestershire Middle Severn Catchment Partnership.

2. Area

2.1 The catchment partnership will take an interest in the whole catchment of the Middle River Severn, from the southern edge of Shrewsbury to the Southern edge of Worcester and its tributaries which include the River Salwarpe, Stour, Worfe and other brooks in the catchment area.



Map.2. The Worcestershire Middle Severn Catchment area.

3. **Vision**

3.1 To enhance and maintain the water environment in the catchment to the highest possible standard for the benefit of wildlife and communities.

3.2 Identify catchment priorities and work collaboratively to:

- Identify and remedy issues with water quality.
- Collate flood impact information and take a catchment wide approach to alleviating problems in specific areas.
- Actively seek opportunities for wildlife and general biodiversity and implement changes to benefit habitats and species.
- Seek to engage communities in the area to increase awareness and enjoyment of the water environment; improve access for all and encourage participation in maintaining a healthy water environment.

4. **Remit**

4.1 The aim of the Catchment Partnership is to bring together relevant organisations to conserve and improve the health of the water environment of the Worcestershire Middle Severn catchment.

4.2 The Catchment Partnership will provide a forum for discussion of issues, coordination of activity and the opportunity for members to keep each other informed of activities relating to the catchment. This will contribute to the development of a Catchment Partnership monitoring and evaluation process.

4.3 The Catchment Partnership cannot make executive decisions about the catchment; it works at the catchment level with key stakeholder organisations to agree the strategic priorities and support delivery.

4.4 The Catchment Partnership will support the Environment Agency in developing an appropriate River Basin Management Plan, required under the Water Framework Directive.

4.5 The Catchment Partnership maintains the primary right to recommend and support actions within the Worcestershire Middle Severn catchment as per the Worcestershire Middle Severn Catchment Partnership strategic priorities.

4.6 The Catchment Partnership will support adjacent catchment partnerships through the sharing of information and activity prioritisation wherever possible.

5. **Status**

5.1 The Catchment Partnership is a voluntary, non-statutory body which is mandated by the Environment Agency [Mandate: A contract by which one party agrees to perform services for another without payment].

5.2 The Catchment Partnership is unincorporated and not a legal entity.

5.3 The Catchment Partnership does not hold or expend funds itself. Projects and activities recommended or supported by the Catchment Partnership will be led by other organisations best placed to do so.

6. Membership

6.1 Membership of the partnership will consist of individuals representing organisations that operate within the catchment area and have an interest in its management. Members will support the aims of the partnership and contribute toward effective outcomes.

6.2 The partnership requires active membership; members should attend meetings wherever possible and contribute toward achieving aims. If a member is no longer able to regularly participate within a 12 month period, they should either provide another organisational representative or rescind membership and make the partnership aware if they wish to remain on the correspondence list as a non-participant.

6.4 The catchment partnership will review its membership every year. New members representing an organisation can be invited to join at any time following simple majority vote amongst existing members.

6.5 The Catchment Hosts, Severn Rivers Trust and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, will maintain a list of members.

7. Governance

7.1 The Catchment Hosts, Severn Rivers Trust and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, will chair partnership meetings.

7.2 The Catchment hosts will maintain records of each meeting and manage correspondence following these meetings. They will also be responsible for organisation of subsequent meetings.

7.3 There will be a minimum of two partnership meetings per year to discuss governance, catchment issues and provide an opportunity to update the partnership on organisational activity toward partnership aims.

7.4 The Catchment Partnership will review its membership, governance, Terms of Reference and aims on an annual basis.