

1. Welcome and introductions – Cllr Robert MacNaughton (Chair)

Cllr Robert MacNaughton welcomed all present:

Tamzyn Long (River Warriors), Mille Strong (Public Protection Officer, WC), Rob Mercer (Calne TC), Sam Wright (Senior Engineer, WC), Connor Goddard (Head of Freshwater, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust), Jeremy Percy (Friends of Marden Valley), Celia Stevens (Sustainable Calne) and Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney (Calne TC and Calne Area Board, Chair).

2. Apologies

None received.

3. Presentation from Milly Strong (Public Protection Officer), Wiltshire Council on the Air Quality Sensor Project

Milly gave a presentation on AQ and her sensor project, please find slides attached. This was followed by a short Q&A session with Millie and Sam Wright, which covered:

Q. Is baseline AQ data being captured so that the impact of opening the high street can be monitored?

A. A number of sensors had been ordered to monitor AQ with reopening the high street. There is ongoing AQ monitoring in the area and new sensors have been ordered and will be installed as quickly as they can be (the timescale is at the mercy of manufacturing). They would be located on the edge of the carriageway. No monitoring was taking place at Phelps Parade, but a community concern was raised about this area and whether including Phelps Parade could be an option.

Action: Milly to email Connor as he was keen to be involved with the project.

Q. What is the WC position on wood burners?

A. DEFRA have a practical guide to open fires and wood burning stoves:

[Open fires and wood-burning stoves - a practical guide](#)

There is no official WC position, but messaging is around best certified products and fuel.

Q. Is there an AQ project around indoor pollution?

A. Millie's work focuses only on outdoor AQ currently.

4. Update from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust on their field run-off project in the Calne area

Connor Goddard gave an update on the Wiltshire rural run-off project, please find slides attached. This was followed by a Q&A session, which included:

Q. Which farms are involved in the Calne/Bremhill area?

A. The plan is to involve at least one farm in the community area, but Connor didn't have the named farm. This was flexible so the project could work with more than one farm potentially. A discussion was held around timescales of the project, please discuss with Connor if further information is needed.

Q. A question was raised around water quality in the community area?

A. The River Hub website has data for river health which you can explore: [RiverHub: River health dashboard](#)

5. Localised Flooding – flash flood on 23 September 2024

Cllr Robert MacNaughton spoke about the very localised flooding which had taken place in Calne on 23 September 2024. Cllr MacNaughton updated on the water rushing into Abberd Brook and into the town, forcing back the Marden River and leading to the back up of sewage/flooding into residential properties. Mill St and Horsebrook have been flooded twice this year. Wessex Water had been to remove debris and during the most recent rainstorm there seemed to be less flooding.

6. Plans for the Calne River Festival – 22nd March 2024

Please note the date, all welcome.

7. Group updates, future projects and ideas – all

Bees, Eels and the Brook

Bees – there were 257 species of bee and 255 were in decline 😞 Friends of Marden Valley were tracking otter populations and they were getting more sightings in town. Eels – engaged with sustainable eel group who were focused on reintroducing eels since species numbers had dropped dramatically. Early next year there would be a delivery of elvers. In advance of this, the group had paid for two environmental EDNA surveys – one project on eels specifically (which showed no presence) and the second being a more generic study of invertebrates to act as a baseline for future work. In many respects the river was quite healthy and this did show up an eel presence.

River Warriors – there had been a water vole study a few years ago and there is a presence of wv at Abberd Brook. Through the school holiday they did litter picking and have wreath making coming up. At the pocket park they held sessions, e.g. about what went in the drains. Had created orchard and been bulb planting.

8. AOB

Action: Sam Wright would investigate any suggestions to improve his project and road safety, e.g. zebra crossings were discussed – he would take this back and look at this.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 19 February at 9.30am.