



# Working together on the Rother /Doe Lea

Tuesday 2 February 2016

The purpose of the workshop was for partners to share their plans, learn what else is going on in their area and find opportunities to work with new people.

Present:

Sinead Chamberlain  
Chris Firth  
Karen Housham  
Andrew Virtue  
Anthony Downing  
Jerome Masters  
John Hancox  
Tina Bardill  
Andy Newton  
Nabil Abbas

Coal Authority  
Don Catchment Rivers Trust  
Don Network  
Environment Agency  
Environment Agency  
Environment Agency  
Environment Agency  
National Trust  
Rotherham Borough Council  
Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust

Apologies: Robin Stonebridge (Chesterfield Canal Trust), Peter Corke (Chesterfield Borough Council)

## 1. Scene setting

Jo Briddock from the Environment Agency gave a brief overview of the condition of the Rother and Doe Lea:

- **Dramatic improvement in last 10 – 20 years**
- **Physical barriers** and **diffuse pollution** remain biggest challenges
- Most stretches of river are classed as moderate; **water quality is good** but held back by the biology.
- Top issues to address the biology are sewage, physical modifications, mixed agricultural pollution and contaminated land

## 2. What's going on in the catchment? Reports from attendees.

### **Rotherham Borough Council**

Developing a climate change strategy which will balance economics and regeneration across the whole borough. Includes green transport and flood protection.

The **Rother Link** is being looked at again, connecting the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation with the Chesterfield Canal. Most of the gap is in Rotherham Borough. Funding may come from a European project promoting inland waterways transport.

No progress at present on the Rotherham Rivers II project.

### **Coal Authority**

Currently looking at three minewater treatment schemes of which the Fender, in Derbyshire, is on the Rother. In talks with Yorkshire Water about **co-treatment of sewage at Dronfield** (iron from ochre in the minewater removes phosphate). Coal Authority welcomes working with partners as it helps meet CBA (cost benefit analysis). Also considering taking on Hartington which discharges to Staveley. There are two future predicted mine water breakouts at Thorpe and Hartington (not known yet whether these will be clean or contaminated).

### **Don Catchment Rivers Trust**

Want to start looking at physical issues on the Rother/Doe Lea. DCRT have an application to YW's environmental fund for **Moss Brook** to fund a detailed study. **The area has a lot going for it**; active group,

SSSIs, four YW assets, three low cost barriers to fish which would be relatively easy to address with cooperation. **Main issues are low flow and sedimentation:**

- Road drainage
- Coarse fishery on-line dam
- Small weirs needing minor modification
- One major redundant structure
- Drainage from surrounding land

Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust have a nature reserve at the top of Moss Brook.

### **National Trust**

National Trust received funding from CPAF (catchment partnership action fund) which has been used for **wet weather walkover surveys on the Doe Lea** identifying mixed agricultural pollution. Arkwright open cast site has a redesigned contour drain with meanders etc. NT have a list of other things they want to do there, dependant on funding.

On their own property NT are restoring the duck decoy. There are two new wetlands which will drop silt at the top of the catchment. Desilting Hardwick ponds will not take place until upstream sedimentation has been tackled. A lot of silt comes in from the narrow roads in the area.

NT are applying to HLF for funding for their **Catchments in Trust project** which includes the Doe Lea and Porter. They are looking at fish barriers with the EA.

### **Environment Agency**

Yorkshire Water are carrying out a one year phosphate removal trial at Dronfield, Staveley and Bolsover.

Work is taking place at Danesmoor wastewater treatment works at the start of the Rother. Staveley sewage works would be affected by HS2 proposals but could bring funding for remediation/ habitats etc.

The EA Environment Programme includes proposals for Rother restoration and Norbriggs.

**Weirs on the Rother may be easier** than the Don and Dearne as there are fewer structures (Beighton, Rother Regulator, Killamarsh). Flood Risk Management may fund a fish pass on the regulator and the goit in Staveley may be used to draw down water for fish pass or meanders. Buffer strip fencing and woody debris has been installed in the lower area of Barlow Brook. Their effects are being monitored.

The EA is in partnership with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust on **INNS. The Rother is due to be surveyed** soon. A new channel has been created at Avenue. The works are due to be completed within the year and will include football pitches and a fishing pond.

The Flood Risk Management review of regulators on the Rother should be complete this summer.

### **Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust**

Rother Rivers I – habitat restoration and creation at 11 sites along the Rother and Don funded by WREN and EA. The flagship project involving **channel work at Catcliffe has been delayed** because of concerns over flood risk and contamination. But hopefully will be delivered this year.

Rother Rivers II – funding earmarked for a 5 year project. New scrapes and ditches at Woodhouse Washlands and a bigger project to re-meander the river. Work further up the river which could provide **opportunities for Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.**

In channel works are planned at Orgreave and Treeton. EA have earmarked funding, SRWT are looking for match funding.

### **Other issues**

Chesterfield Borough Council are looking at the feasibility of repositioning the Doe Lea at **Norbriggs Flash** to reconnect to its original course. Issues of contamination from Coalite and risk of increased flooding. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust may head up a landfill tax bid.

Chesterfield Waterfront Development is a mixed use regeneration project with a navigable canal through the centre. The canal basin has been dug but not fully taken off yet.

Derbyshire CC redevelopment at Seymour Junction- work has been done on Hawks Brook to create pools and ponds but still more to do.

Sheffield City Council are looking at tree management to slow the flow on Shire Brook, upstream of Beighton landfill.

### **3. Suggested priorities for working together**

#### **Weirs**

- Weirs on the Doe Lea – two big ones at Pollerton and Markham
- Weirs and regulator on the Rother
- Removal of Beighton Weir (washland dependent)

#### **Flood risk management**

- Washland review (EA Flood Risk Management)
- Natural flood management

#### **Species support**

- Grayling stocking
- Water vole/ otters (Pools Bridge)
- Control of mink (Doe Lea)
- Protect native crayfish (Barlow Brook)

#### **Other issues**

- YW/ Coal Authority Dronfield Co- treatment
- Moss Brook – issues here which could be addressed
- Doe Lea sediment
- Find out more about Chesterfield

### **4. What next?**

- Progress individual priorities
- Meet again in 6 months' time, Markham or Hardwick Hall

Karen Housham

18 February 2016