

3rd Crane Catchment Plan Workshop

8 May 2013 – Holly Lodge, Richmond Park

ATTENDEES

Bob	Barton	Friends of Cranford Park (FOCP)
Victoria	Boorman	London Borough of Hillingdon
Holly	Gillingham	Transport for London
Rob	Gray	Friends of the River Crane Environment (FORCE)
David	Harvey	Thames Anglers' Conservancy
Dragana	Knezevic	London Borough of Hillingdon
Russell	Knight	British Airports Authority (BAA)
Amanda	Maclean	Environment Agency
Justin	Pilbeam	London Borough of Ealing
Nigel	Reeve	Royal Parks
Judith	Ressler	Thames21
Chris	Slack	Laing
Ilse	Steyl	Green Corridor
Denis	Vickers	London Borough of Harrow
Tom	White	London Wildlife Trust
Sam	Wilkinson	Royal Parks
Andy	Willmore	London Wildlife Trust

APOLOGIES

David	Allistair	London Borough of Richmond
Frances	Bennett	Friends of the River Crane Environment (FORCE)
Billy	Coburn	Thames21
Helen	Cornforth	London Borough of Richmond
Andrew	Darvill	London Borough of Richmond
Jon	Freer	London Borough of Richmond
Gaye	Galvin	London Borough of Richmond
Tasha	Hunter	London Borough of Richmond
Ishbel	Murray	London Borough of Richmond
Rupert	Newby	Thames Water
Joe	Pecorelli	Zoological Society London
Alex	Robb	London Wildlife Trust
Alison	Shipley	London Borough of Hillingdon

- 1) The workshop started with everyone introducing themselves and **Ilse Steyl** noted the apologies received. Ilse also thanked Nigel Reeve and the Royal Parks for providing the venue for the event.
- 2) **Tom White** gave a short presentation on progress on the catchment plan process and introduced a short discussion on current projects. He asked those present to complete missing project information (i.e. funding, status, etc.) on forms he provided. These were given to representatives of the Environment Agency, FORCE, London Boroughs of Ealing, Harrow, Hounslow and Hillingdon, London Wildlife Trust, Thames 21, BAA.
- 3) **Rob Gray** asked for clarification between the meaning of Good Ecological Potential (GEP), which is what the Crane has been classified as for Water Framework Directive (WFD) purposes, and Good Ecological Status (GES). Rob's question was why the partnership cannot aspire for GES rather than just GEP. Amanda Maclean explained that these terms are WFD terminology, and that according to the definition of GES, the Crane River, due to it being heavily modified can currently only be classified to achieve GEP. This does not mean that the partnership cannot aspire to enhance the ecological and water quality aspects of the Crane.
- 4) The next topic on the agenda was a discussion on fulfilling the objectives of the catchment plan. The participants of the workshop were divided into groups of three and each group was given an objective worksheet with its associated catchment wide approaches and the list of projects responsible for achieving them.
- 5) The groups were asked to organise the projects under their associated headings and were asked to discuss if the projects listed were enough to fulfil the objective & catchment-wide approaches. Projects were also prioritised in terms of contribution to fulfilling their associated objective.
- 6) The results of these discussions are summarised below:

a) **A River Rich in Native Wildlife and Habitats**
(Dave Harvey, Andy Willmore, Dragana Knezevic)

The group decided that the wording of the catchment-wide approach "*reduce shading of the river channel through selected tree and scrub channel*" should be changed to "*Considered tree and scrub management and future proofing rivers to reduce drought*". This was due to concerns over canopy removal leading to increased evaporation. It was suggested that this would be more in keeping with the Environment Agency's Keeping Rivers Cool initiative.

The group thought that the wording of the catchment-wide approach "*Re-instatement of gravels using natural materials to promote natural river processes*" should be changed to "*Reducing modifications and naturalising other processes and improvements*".

The group decided that projects should be organised geographically and noted there was some cross over between projects and catchment-wide approaches.

b) **Clean Clear Water**
(Denis Vickers, Judith Ressler, Holly Gillingham)

The group decided that the projects for this objective were too localised and a wider area should be covered.

It was decided that more action was needed regarding SUDS.

Vicky Boorman raised the point that local authorities were currently developing drainage policies/plans, which could be incorporated into the Catchment Plan and offered to provide advice on this matter.

The group thought it could be a good idea to involve TFL or highway authorities regarding urban design and drainage.

The point was also raised by the group that some projects had multiple objectives/catchment-wide approaches and it was decided that these projects should be split into smaller actions that relate to a larger overarching project.

It was also noted that some of the projects listed were actually more actions that could be linked to projects.

c) **Reduced Risk of Flooding in Built up Areas**

(Bob Barton, Justin Pilbeam, Chris Slack)

The group highlighted that this objective and set of projects should tie into relevant flood risk management plans.

They also mentioned that the best way to prioritise projects was geographically.

The need for up to date maps for each objective was discussed by all the participants.

As all the other groups, this group also noted that there are significant cross over between the projects.

d) **A Celebration of The River Crane's Heritage**

(Bob Barton, Justin Pilbeam, Chris Slack)

It was clear that this objective had the least number of projects associated with it.

Bob Barton explained Friends of Cranford Park's ideas for a restoration project which would see historic features restored in the park (Chinese bridge, stables, vault, sundials etc.).

FOCP is a newly formed group and this could potentially be a first big project for them. It also means that the organisation of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid may take some time.

The group raised awareness of other historical sites on the Crane e.g. Minet Country Park and for potential sources of funding e.g. the Community Fund.

Bob also raised awareness of the work of local historian David Dale who has expressed interest in writing a book on the history of the River Crane.

e) **Awareness, Access and Appreciation**

(Amanda Maclean, Vicky Boorman, Rob Grey)

The group decided that the catchment-wide approach, "*plan to influence Sustrans networks to make links with the River Crane walk*" should be less specific and read "*plan to influence all networks to make links with the River Crane walk*".

The group raised the fact that many of the projects are aimed at cycling and walking, but not angling. There is a need to engage more actively with the angling community in the restoration of the Crane.

The group raised the same concerns over 'project crossover' as the other groups.

A need to link the River Crane with access routes to the River Colne and River Thames was discussed as well as links to the Grand Union Canal.

A lack of projects involving the River Longford was highlighted.

The need for a map that identifies where the river cannot be accessed was discussed.

It was highlighted by other outside of the group that access isn't always an advantage in respect to wildlife conservation and this will need to be taken into account.

A need for planning departments to influence developments to improve or provide access was highlighted in relation to creating a continuous River Crane Walk.

Information on toilet facilities & pubs should be marked on more maps to encourage people to take long walks along the river.

f) **Collaboration and Engagement**

(Russel Knight, Nigel Reeve, Sam Wilkinson)

The need to coordinate events/activities to ensure a coherent catchment-wide approach & working to common goals was highlighted.

It was noted that the actions listed were very site specific and that there was a need to increase collaboration and engagement in the rest of the catchment.

The need for a map to illustrate the distribution of activities was highlighted.

In regards to the catchment-wide approach "*Solve land grabbing and land abandonment alongside the river*", the idea of a survey to identify sites affecting maintenance and public access was discussed.

Russel talked about how to engage 'hard to reach groups' and gave examples of how issues such as fly tipping had been addressed elsewhere in the past.

g) **Natural looking and Functioning River with Sustainable Flow**

Group: Tom White & Ilse Steyl

The need to prioritise actions in terms of geographic order was discussed.

Maps need to be produced showing all man-made structures in the river and the removal projects associated with them.

Perhaps it may be possible to use these maps to highlight areas of the river with the worst flows and the most heavily modified morphology.

Will too many weir removals lead to low water levels/flows?

It was noted that there was an extensive list of projects and new ideas for this objective many of which are mitigation measures to be implemented by the Environment Agency.

- 7) The last topic on the agenda was a brief discussion on the catchment partnership website. This was led by Ilse.

Andy Willmore raised the point that the catchment should be put into social context. It could focus on people's relationship with the river and the type of work they are looking to contribute to, as well as being relevant to people's geographic location.

The group agreed that this information could be displayed on maps. Perhaps different symbols could be used for the type of work or catchment plan objective the project falls under.

Dave Harvey said he thought the website should unite information and act as a 'central hub' and avoid repetition of information already available on existing websites e.g. London Wildlife Trust & FORCE.

The idea of a map with links to other websites was discussed e.g. links to LWT reserves pages.

The point was raised that different stakeholders may overlap in the areas that they operate in and the provision of internal pages with links to all relevant stakeholders' websites could solve this problem.

The group discussed how different stakeholder's information would be presented on the website. A preferred idea was to give each stakeholder group the ability to update their own specific information and list of events.

It was also noted that meeting minutes as well as governance issues should be included.

The maintenance of the website was discussed. We need to confirm a lead for maintaining the website.

It was agreed that the next best step would be to come up with a basic website template/design for people to appraise at a later date.