

Catchment Partnerships in Dorset

Terms of Reference

Objective: to work in partnership to improve the water environment across Dorset

1. Background

The Poole Harbour Catchment Initiative was formed in 2012 and the Stour in 2014, both comprise a range of organisations, groups, authorities and individuals dedicated to working together. The aim is to improve the water environment and provide wider benefits for people and nature at a catchment scale - known as a [Catchment Based Approach](#) (CaBA).

This Terms of Reference sets out the ways of working in Partnership within Dorset, identifying the different roles and responsibilities, the appropriate communication links within the partnership and more widely.

2. Aims of Catchment Partnerships

- 1. Collate** local evidence/data to develop a shared understanding of the catchment, its uses, status and benefits
- Collectively **identify** the key water based issues within the catchment and agree future targets and objectives, which are outlined in our plans
- Summarise the agreed issues into a strategic **Catchment Plan**, co-ordinating and integrating both current and future plans to secure better, more effective working and outcomes integrated into all plans to champion river and environmental health
- Agree the relevant actions that are required and develop a collaborative **Action Plan** to help coordinate and facilitate delivery to improve the water based issues in the catchment
- Cooperate and communicate** to maximise the use of existing resources and seek to attract additional funding where appropriate, to deliver the Action Plan.
- Demonstrate successes**, share findings and best practice with Defra and communicate widely with surrounding catchments/partnerships and local community groups to provide a mandate to improve the water and land environment

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder Network

This is a wide reaching network of interested organisations and individuals, representing the water environment, who are engaged in encouraging and delivering improvements. The Network will:

- run an invitational event held on an annual basis to a wide range of stakeholders across Dorset
- seek to gather views from Stakeholders on performance and priorities for catchment working within Dorset.
- aim to disseminate feedback, progress and evidence from the Partnership as widely as possible through newsletters, e-mail circulation and events

Strategy Catchment Group

Represents all catchments and sub-catchments in Dorset on water issues to ensure an integrated approach to the management and improvements to achieve Water Framework Directive and biodiversity targets

- Comprising senior level representatives from key organisations across Dorset who are empowered to make strategic decisions and have budgetary influence that will facilitate the catchment objectives
- Liaise with and seek to influence related steering groups such as CaBA, Local Enterprise Partnership, Local Nature Partnership and the River Basin Liaison Panel to share best practice, opportunities and ensure efficient delivery of mutual goals
- Advocate and provide strategic direction to meet agreed targets and national legislation, to provide a Governance function to ensure accountability to the wider Network
- Audit and review the progress of the Delivery Groups and wider actions within the catchment and remove blockages to progress and identify opportunities
- To prioritise resource and financial needs, identify funding streams and to develop new funding opportunities
- Meet six monthly or as required to achieve strategic join up on policies, plans and development
- The Group will have support and guidance from an Independent Chair, who will provide steer and advice to help progress the delivery of the Catchment Plan/ Action Plan

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Delivery Groups

These can be geographically or thematically based groups to ensure delivery of improvements to the water environment, identify and communicate best practice and issues across the partnership

- Will comprise representatives from a variety of relevant organisations including: environmental NGOs; local government; community groups, agricultural sector; water companies and Defra agencies who have the capacity to plan and deliver projects
- Will provide and cascade information appropriately from and within their organisations
- Will help to facilitate sustainable land/river management and development across the political boundaries
- Will maintain and use the catchment and action plans to promote delivery of cooperative projects
- Will focus on the development and delivery of projects that bring benefits to the water and land environment, people and society
- All projects/delivery will be based on the most up to date data/evidence
- Will communicate with the Strategy Group, wider Network and other partnerships and working groups, as well as national CaBA groups
- The delivery groups include, but are not limited to: the PHCI delivery group, SCI delivery group (formerly steering groups), PHCI Agricultural Group, Urban Group, Monitoring Group, Dorset Wild Rivers Partnership and proposed sub-catchment level Fisheries Plan

Poole Harbour and Stour Catchment Steering Groups

These Steering Groups, which were formed in 2012 and 2014 respectively, will become Delivery Groups within the wider Partnership. As detailed above, these groups will comprise relevant officers from the organisations who are actively delivering improvement, liaison and education projects on the ground

Task and Finish Groups will form as and when required to support specific project delivery within specific geographical areas or along key themes

For more information please see the **Governance Structure** on the next page or visit our website.

West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams

There is currently no catchment partnership within the management catchment. The approach moving forward needs to be confirmed by the Strategy Group, however early discussions have suggested that a parish based approach would be more appropriate due to the short river lengths and more disparate nature of the management area.

To date, there are partnership projects within this area which could be enhanced or used to focus the Catchment Based Approach, using the Poole and Stour Catchment Co-ordinator as a further point of contact to maintain consistency in messaging and enable funding discussions where appropriate.

Catchment Host

Wessex Water provides the full-time Catchment Co-ordinator and Technician to support the Poole Harbour and Stour Partnerships across Dorset in addition to providing a central point of contact for the community based approach within the West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams management catchment. Funding will also be provided for an Independent Chair to support the Governance and Delivery Groups.

Wessex Water is also able to provide web/communication support as required.

Individual project funding will be held by the organisation who secured or were awarded the funding.

Contact Information

For more information please contact: Nicola Hopkins, Catchment Co-ordinator, Telephone: 01225524354 | Email:

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Or visit our websites:

pooleharbourcatchment.co.uk

stourcatchment.co.uk

5. Governance Structure

