

# Poole Harbour Catchment Initiative

## Draft Terms of Reference

Updated January 2014

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## 1. Background

The European [Water Framework Directive](#) came into force in December 2000 and became part of UK law in December 2003. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides an opportunity to plan and deliver a better water environment, focussing on ecology. The Environment Agency is the competent authority for the WFD.

The WFD introduced a formal series of six year [River Basin Management Plans](#) (RBMP) cycles. RBMPs identify the objectives required to deliver the WFD. The first RBMP cycle will end in 2015 and the RBMP will then be updated and reissued. A South West River Basin Liaison Panel has been established to help manage the South West RBMP process and delivery.

In March 2011, the government announced the launch of the [Catchment Based Approach](#). This is a way of working at river catchment scale to improve the water environment.

The Catchment Based Approach nationally aims to:

- Develop a clear understanding of the issues in catchments
- Involve people in dialogue and decision-making by sharing evidence, listening to their ideas, and working out priorities for action
- Write plans at the river catchment scale that will deliver integrated actions that address local issues in a cost effective way and which protect local resources.

The Catchment Based Approach was officially adopted by Government in June 2013. The Poole Harbour Catchment Initiative (formerly known as the Frome & Piddle Catchment Initiative) piloted this catchment approach and during the pilot stage (November 2011-December 2012) developed the [Catchment Plan](#).

The [Catchment Plan](#) will help to support the development of a more informed River Basin Management Plan for the South West and support the actions required at the river catchment scale to meet the WFD requirements.

## 2. Aims of the PHCI

1. Collectively identify the key issues within the catchment relating to the water environment
2. Agree the relevant actions that are required to deliver improvements to the water environment at a catchment scale
3. Ensure that work to improve the water environment in the area is well informed by local evidence
4. Co-ordinate and integrate both current and future relevant plans, policies, strategies and activities of partner organisations in order to secure better, more effective working and outcomes through the PHCI
5. Summarise the agreed issues into a strategic **Catchment Plan** and coordinate delivery through the PHCI **Action Plan**
6. Maximise the use of existing resources and seek to attract additional funding where appropriate, to support the agreed outcomes of the Action Plan.
7. Identify knowledge gaps, highlight uncertainties and promote further research where necessary
8. Annually review the PHCI Action Plan to assess and evaluate if targeted actions have resulted in improvements to the state of the water environment and achieved the statutory standards.
9. Share findings and best practice to DEFRA and surrounding catchments.

## 3. Governance & Structure

The PHCI will be governed by the following structure:

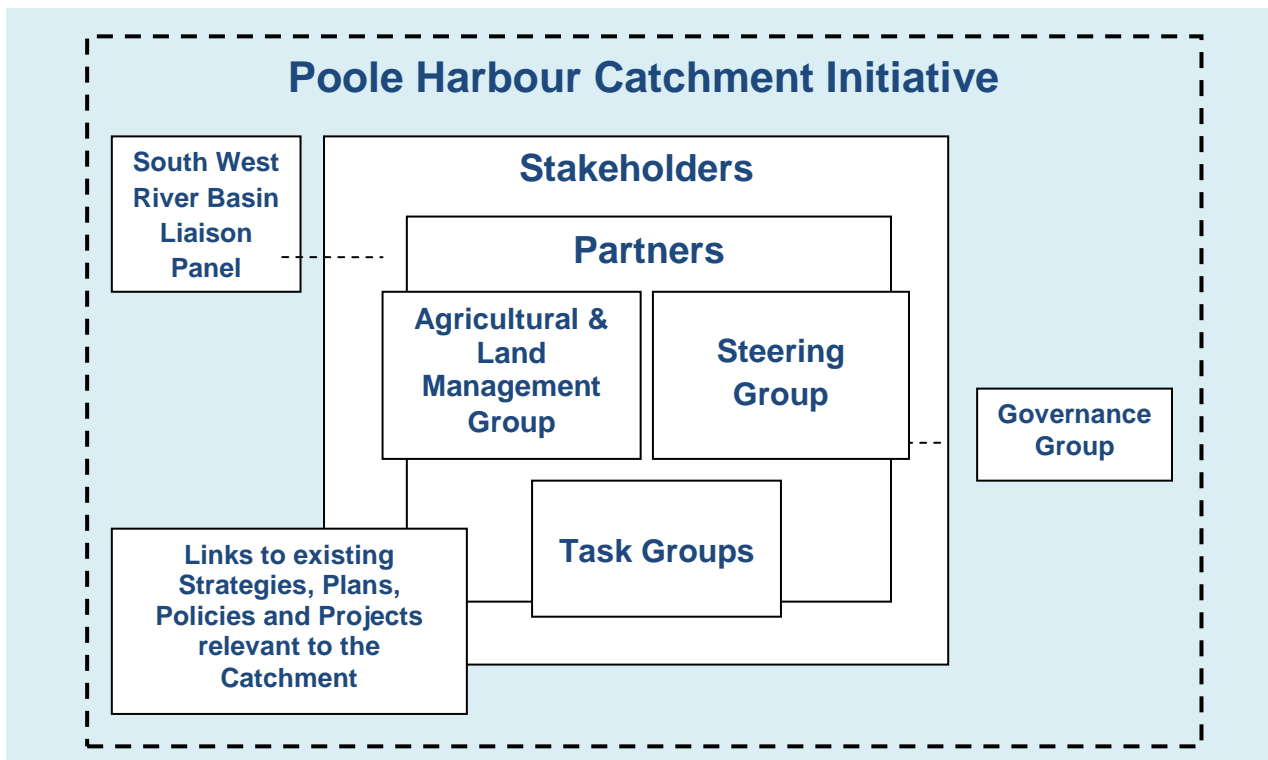


Figure 1: Illustration of the PHCI structure.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

Agreed roles and remits for the various component groups of the PHCI will ensure that the PHCI reaches as many people as possible and ideas and opinions can effectively feed into the further development and delivery of the PHCI Catchment Plan.

Set out below are the main categories of groups who will be involved in the PHCI with a brief description of who they are and their roles and responsibilities.

## 4.1 Governance Group

The Governance Group will have an overview of the Initiative to ensure everything is on track. It will mediate and, where necessary, endeavour to solve any difficulties or disagreements that may arise as part of the project delivery.

The Governance Group will not get involved in the detail of the planning process or the drafting of the plan; this will be the role of the Steering Group, Task Groups and wider stakeholders. The Governance Group will pay close attention to the Steering Group's suggestions and recommendations as the PHCI develops.

The Governance Group members currently include:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Interest Area</b>
<b>Natural England</b>	Dorset Manager
<b>Environment Agency</b>	National WFD team/Regional/Area Team Leader
<b>Wessex Water</b>	Head of Environment and Resources

The Governance Group will:

- a) comprise senior members of staff of the regulatory or funding organisations
- b) have the power to influence budgets and staff resources within their own organisations with respect to the PHCI
- c) provide a strategic overview and support the steps towards achieving the goals that have been agreed
- d) feedback the outputs to their relevant Boards and to the River Basin Liaison Panel
- e) comprise of high level representatives from the regulator and funding organisations

## 4.2 Steering Group

The Steering Group will support, refine and improve the development and delivery of the PHCI Catchment Plan. It will aim to bring together a broad cross section of partners to represent the key stakeholder organisations. Each partner will represent their interest area however will also represent other organisations who share that interest.

The Steering Group will:

- a) draw on the experience and resources of its members to provide guidance, support, information, data and advice to the PHCI Catchment Plan. Ensure the right people are consulted, in the most effective way about relevant issues
- b) discuss and recommend priorities for the Catchment Plan
- c) review the plan annually in its development and make comments and suggestions where required during Steering Group meetings
- d) be committed to achieving the aspirations of the PHCI Catchment Plan - individual Steering Group members must be able to influence and communicate relevant information back in to their own organisation
- e) delegate specialist tasks to relevant partnership groups or form Task Groups from partners and stakeholders where appropriate
- f) attempt to resolve any conflicts in the plan's contents or which may occur as the PHCI continues to develop

Steering Group members include:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Interest area</b>	<b>Sector representation</b>
<b>Natural England</b>	Catchment Sensitive Farming, SSSI, SPA, SACs, protected species	DEFRA- Governmental Body
<b>Environment Agency</b>	WFD delivery – Water Quality, Fisheries, Ecology, Flood Risk	DEFRA- Governmental Body and regulator
<b>Forestry Commission</b>	Woodland restoration, creation, improvement and resource protection	DEFRA- Governmental Body
<b>Dorset AONB</b>	Landscape, Heritage, Wild Purbeck Nature Improvement Area, Purbeck District Council	Local Authority/Local Partnership
<b>Dorset County Council</b>	Flood risk, highways, waste, development	Local Authority
<b>West Dorset District Council (Planning)</b>	Planning, Development, flood risk	Local Authority
<b>Dorset Wildlife Trust</b>	River restoration, biodiversity	NGO
<b>Farming &amp; Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) South West</b>	Diffuse Water Pollution	NGO
<b>Frome, Piddle &amp; West Dorset Fisheries Association</b>	Fisheries, riparian and recreational interests	NGO
<b>Westcountry Rivers Trust</b>	Fisheries, Catchment Sensitive Farming	NGO
<b>Game &amp; Wildlife Conservation Trust</b>	Fisheries science, academic and applied research	NGO
<b>National Farmers Union</b>	Farmers & Landowners	NGO
<b>RSPB</b>	Water Policy, Payment for Ecosystem Services, Biodiversity	NGO
<b>Wessex Water</b>	Waste treatment, raw water quality, abstraction	Water Utility
<b>Land Agent (Symonds &amp; Sampson)</b>	Tenants & Landowners	Commercial- Business

### **4.3 Agricultural & Land Management Group**

An Agriculture & Land Management Group formed in January 2014 after six months of consultation and wider stakeholder engagement. This Group will be farmer led and work with partners as required helping identify solutions to the many agricultural related actions identified via the Catchment Plan. The Group will meet on a quarterly basis and work alongside the Steering Group to support the Catchment Initiative. The Group will encompass existing Groups such as the Catchment Sensitive Farming Steering Group, aiming for there to be one farmer led Group in the Catchment.

### **4.4 Task Groups**

Task Groups will be set up by the Steering Group, on an ‘as needed’ basis, in order to carry out work that needs more detailed or specialist attention. This will include exploring and improving evidence, developing and delivering solutions, and developing funding bids. Task Groups will be made up of individuals and organisations with a particular interest, knowledge or influence in the subject of the group, and may be drawn from the partnership or from the wider stakeholders.

The Task Groups will:

- a) allow relevant individuals and organisations to come together to explore evidence, issues, and put forward ways to deliver solutions
- b) provide recommendations and regular reports to the steering group on progress and delivery of the assigned task
- c) undertake specific short term work where necessary which contributes to the aims of the Initiative
- d) utilise existing partnerships and groups where appropriate to avoid duplication and streamline delivery efforts
- e) explore and secure funding where appropriate to enable the Task to be completed

#### **4.5 Catchment Coordinator**

The Catchment Coordinator's actions and schedule will be guided by the Steering Group and approved by the Governance Group. The Coordinator will aim to support the development and delivery of the PHCI Catchment Plan.

The Catchment Coordinator will:

- a) administer support for the Steering Group; organise meetings, review reports, collate progress actions and update the Catchment Plan and Action Plan
- b) coordinate and support the Task Groups
- c) review and update communications work, including; developing and distributing partner updates, providing updates to the website and supporting the development of specific communication tools, for example, for farmers and local communities
- d) maintain a wider stakeholder list for communication and raise awareness of the PHCI with the wider community
- e) draw together collective responses from the Steering Group to enable the PHCI to respond to wider consultations and lobby national and local issues as required
- f) report to the Steering Group and Governance Group as requested regarding the PHCI budget
- g) support the development of cost benefit analysis work to help assess the deliverability of the PHCI Action Plan
- h) assist partners where appropriate with developing fundraising bids for projects that support the aims and actions identified within the PHCI Catchment Plan
- i) represent the PHCI at regional and national events, share best practice and identify potential opportunities for cross boundary working

#### **4.6 Partners**

The PHCI partners are those who have an interest in the water environment of the Poole Harbour catchment. The PHCI recognises that there are many partners working within the catchment who have an interest with the Catchment Plan, where possible these partners will be represented through members of the Steering Group. Wider Partners may also choose to engage with delivery of actions through the Task Groups.

Partners will:

- a) be prepared to sign up to the Catchment Plan
- b) contribute to the delivery of the Catchment Plan where appropriate
- c) recognise the value and importance of a collaborative approach to enable delivery of joined up actions at a catchment scale- no one organisation has the capacity, knowledge or information to achieve the desired outcomes of the Catchment Plan alone
- d) bring together scientific, technical and experiential knowledge, data and understanding and apply this to catchment issues and solutions
- e) build understanding of the connectivity of organisations' and groups' interests

## **4.7 Stakeholders**

Stakeholders are those people and organisations who influence the state of the river environment, either directly or indirectly, or have an interest in its quality.

Stakeholders may be individuals such as land owners, fishermen and residents or organisations that are not partners. Stakeholders may also include users of the water services such as recreational clubs, fishermen, both commercial and recreational, trade organisations, agents who represent a number of individuals, and abstractors of water.

Stakeholders will be invited to comment on the Catchment Plan, to further key decisions by the Steering Group and will be welcome to support Task Groups where appropriate.

## **5. Operations**

### **5.1 Governance Group**

The Governance Group will:

- a) meet on an annual basis and if necessary arrange additional meetings to respond to specific actions or queries
- b) be updated on a bi-annual basis with progress reports provided by the Coordinator on behalf of the Steering Group
- c) be responsible for auditing the proposals agreed by the Steering Group and ensuring that agreed actions, programmes and budgets are achieved

### **5.2 Steering Group**

The Steering Group will:

- a) aim to meet once every three months to ensure swift progress is made around agreed objectives
- b) commit to attend each Steering Group meeting, when this is not possible, the member shall send a suitable deputy
- c) provide progress updates on actions that individual partners are leading on
- d) estimate costs for the actions identified in the Action Plan and ensure that the outcomes are achievable
- e) review financial and technical progress reports provided by the Catchment Coordinator or Task Groups and agree subsequent action required to ensure the Initiative meets its overall objectives
- f) declare any individual or organisational interest before a discussion commences that may influence or bias any tendering or fundraising processes or activities. If appropriate, Steering Group members will be asked to leave any discussion that may question the integrity of the PHCI decision making process.

### **5.3 Agricultural & Land Management Group**

The Group will:

- a) aim to meet once every three months to ensure swift progress is made around agreed objectives
- b) commit to attend each meeting, where this is possible
- c) provide expertise and guidance on issues, methods and approaches relevant to the delivery of agricultural related projects
- d) champion the work/projects of the PHCI to the wider agricultural sector
- e) identify and support the developments of effective, viable and sustainable solutions to the agricultural related challenges facing the water environment

## **5.4 Task Groups**

Task Groups will:

- a) meet as and when required to complete their specific task(s)
- b) appoint a lead contact who will liaise regularly with the Catchment Coordinator
- c) report progress/outcomes to the Steering Group on a quarterly basis

## **5.5 Catchment Coordinator**

The Catchment Coordinator will support and help develop individual and partnership bids that align to the Catchment Plan and that will bring benefits for the key issues that have been identified within the Poole Harbour Catchment.

The Catchment Coordinator may also develop project bids or applications, on behalf of the PHCI, that deliver the outcomes of the Catchment Plan.

## **6. Resources**

The PHCI is a partnership led initiative that encourages and facilitates co-working, collaboration and synergies between the organisations and partners who have been brought together under this Initiative.

The PHCI exists to identify the key issues within the catchment that relate to the water environment. The Initiative will coordinate a strategic, sustainable and more cost beneficial approach to delivering benefits for these issues through the PHCI Action Plan. The Action Plan details how partners and individuals are currently delivering benefits for the water environment, as well as identifying actions that need further development and funding to enable progress to be made.

When funding is required to help deliver actions that have been agreed within the Action Plan, the Catchment Coordinator will help partners collaboratively identify and apply for appropriate funding. The PHCI does not have the capacity or budget to fund the direct delivery of the outlined Actions. However, the PHCI can provide resources, skills and knowledge through the Catchment Coordinator and Steering Group to help secure funding for shared actions identified as a priority within the Catchment Plan.

The PHCI is currently supported by a full time Catchment Coordinator. This position is being funded by Wessex Water and the Environment Agency. Wessex Water is also hosting a web page for the PHCI as part of their website.