



## ESSEX RIVERS HUB Catchment Partnership Meeting Agenda

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024  
10:00 – 12:00

### MS Teams Meeting

**Present:** Clemmie Moule (ESRT), Helen Dangerfield (ESRT), Luke Farnish (ESRT), Jess Duckenfield (ESRT), Paul Hodgkin (HEAT), Matt Butcher (EA), Nicola Shearer (EA), Alex Moore da Luz (National Landscapes), Nicky Spurr (ECC), Gary Hodgetts (Anglian Water), Andrew Warwick (Natural England), Katherine Short (Anglian Water), Darren Tansley (Essex Wildlife Trust), Helen Jacobs (Essex and Suffolk Water), Lindsay Panton (HFLAG/HEAT), Mandi Savage (Natural England)

**Apologies:** Tom Harris, Amanda Wilkin, Becky Baines, Charlotte Palmer, Hazel Leah, Susan Mackirdy, Emma Gray, Alan Woods, and Andy Went

#### 1. Recap past meeting's actions

#### 2. Introductions and partner updates

- **Essex Wildlife Trust:** 34 pond surveys have been completed so far as part of the Essex Lost Pond Project. Another survey coming up on the river Brain will map 50 ponds for potential restoration. A survey form has been created for volunteers to use for citizen science to support this landscape scale project. EWT will be presenting on the project to the international pond convention later this year. 17,200 ponds originally mapped. Also looking at the coastal reach of the mink trapping network.
- **Essex County Council:** the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) will hopefully launch for public consultation this Friday subject to final sign off from supporting authorities. The consultation will be open until 25<sup>th</sup> October for feedback.
- **Dedham Vale and Suffolk & Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscapes:** A mink was caught in Suffolk over the weekend, it is the first mink caught in Norfolk and Suffolk in over a year. Flood plain reconnection projects in Dedham and Boxted are bedding in quite well, still holding water due to a very wet winter. Working in partnership with the EA in Long Melford, with a plan for a number of similar projects including a dyke reinstatement and building scrapes. Looking at reinstating a historic low way at an Anglian water site to reduce flooding and provide more habitat for breeding lapwing. More control of giant hogweed and a stretch of Himalayan balsam control between Shelly Bridge and Higham.
- **Environment Agency:** Almost at the end of program refresh but there is still time to submit WEIF funding bids for 2025-2026. A new natural flood management fund was approved in July, details to come out shortly. Up to 75k of funding for projects up to 500k. Local Risk management authorities can apply and then work with local organisations to deliver projects.
- **Essex and Suffolk Water:** Engaged in business planning at the moment, draft determination received in summer and response submitted. Final determination will be in December or new year and will then know what funding is available for 2025-2030.
- **Anglian Water:** still waiting for confirmation of budget for next AMP. River Colne targeted for restoration. Attended Essex roadshows in Colchester and Braintree raising awareness of using water wisely and also promoting the Essex LNRS. Farm Innovation funding now closed and lots of applications received from farmers on the Colne. CaSTCo developing a citizen science data platform hub, coming soon.



- **Natural England:** CSF has been out doing local shows in the Essex area, Tendering show in July was very successful. Figures for combined Essex show 147 requests since start of year, 60% have had approvals which is a higher conversion than previous years. Pesticide reduction work continues.
- **Hadleigh Flood Action Group:** Met with 5 members of the EA in July, very productive meeting, learnt a lot of about the management of the sluice gates at Toppesfield bridge which is a controversial subject in Hadleigh.
- **HEAT:** Still doing citizen science tests on the river for Riverfly on Brett and will be starting on the river Box soon.

### 3. A Data-Driven Catchment Plan: ERH Water Framework Directive Analysis by Luke from ESRT

- Ecological status of the waterbodies (river segments and lakes) in the Essex Combined MC: Good: 5/70, Moderate: 52/70, Poor: 13/70
- Our 5 Good rivers are the Chad Brook (Stour), Boreham Tributary (Chelmer), Pebmarsh Brook (Colne) and Domsey Brook (Blackwater).
- WFD Reasons for Not Achieving Good: roughly 1/3 are activities related to land managed and ¼ are activities related to waste discharge.
- Activities related to transport drainage are another significant RNAG, particularly in urban areas – this issue is not currently represented in the ERH.
- For the Essex Combined MC, continuous sewage discharge, livestock and nutrient managements are the 3 most common RNAG activities (aim 1c & 3a)
- The ERH's ERW project can help provide monitoring of some important chemical factors, notably phosphate levels (aim 2c)
- The transport (and urban) sector is currently missing from the ERH, engagement is needed (aim 1c)
- Considerations need to be made for tackling RNAGs with "no sector responsible"

### 4. Inclusive engagement in our Catchment Plan: ERH Area Profile by Clemmie from ESRT

- Inclusive engagement is vital to successful delivery of our vision
- A summary of our catchments area profile can be found on our draft catchment plan
- ERW feedback forms to capture diversity and inclusion data
- Forum proposal needs consultation with minority groups, engage with them where they feel comfortable, this could be a roadshow or series of events
- Need for more thinking around what EDI document the partnership wants to create and how to create this: preference towards an action plan

### 5. Delivering our Catchment Plan by Clemmie and Helen from ESRT

- Fish Migration Roadmap subgroup to be created to deliver projects, identify areas which would prove most effective, legislative issues and combining with other regions to effect change in legislation. Raising profile at a national level, linking with other organisations
- Engagement & EDI subgroup to be created to discuss community consultation, how to create an EDI action plan, the annual forum, and knowledge gaps within the partnership

### 6. Hadleigh Environmental Action Team (HEAT) on a possible project along 1km of the River Brett

- HEAT have the opportunity to do something with land owned by the Ann Beaumont's Educational Foundation along the River Brett. The plan is to improve the land for educational purposes and flood prevention, wanting to scope out what can be done, funding, etc. Two options:

1. improve biodiversity, improve flood mitigation and increase carbon capture
  2. build an environmental skills hub for young people and families
- Partners wishing to get involved should contact Paul Hodgkin
  - It was noted that Anglian Water are interest in projects on the Brett, ESRT to facilitate contact.

**Actions for the next meeting:**

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Completed by next ERH meeting?</b>
1	Ensure further clarity on what areas (the combined Essex catchment) are covered by the ERW and how to portray this	ESRT + All	Y
2	Share further details on 1 year left for funding scheme, big or small projects that will achieve water quality, biodiversity, or habitat benefits.	Tom Harris	N/A
3	Incorporate limitations into the WFD catchment plan summary	ESRT LF	Y
4	Explore capacity to incorporate analysis and summary of Suffolk County Council Riverfly Data into Catchment Plan	ESRT + HEAT	
5	Create a Fish Pass subgroup and have the first meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandi and Andrew to help communicate above sub-group with farmers</li> <li>• National landscape to help find contacts regarding the Fish Passage working group, Clemmie to remind</li> </ul>	EWT DT, EA – NS NE - AW and MS LA – AM	<i>Fish Pass subgroup created and first meeting arranged</i>
6	Set up an engagement subgroup meeting to discuss community consultation and the annual forum alongside knowledge gaps within the partnership. Include Matt Butcher, Paul Hodgkin, Lindsey Panton and Clemmie Moule – invite whole partnership	ESRT - CM	<i>Y – following this a shared workspace was created and subgroup structure discussed</i>
7	Appropriate partners to contact Paul Hodgkin at HEAT regarding the possible project along the Brett, Paul is looking for consultation and advice in this stage. ESRT to facilitate contact with Anglian Water and Paul	All	
8	Target – publish a Catchment Plan draft	ESRT	Y
9	Target – publish storymap	ESRT	<i>Postponed due to issues with the East of England NbS Hub embed</i>