

**Minutes from the Havant Thicket Reservoir
Community Advisory Group**

Meeting presentations / discussions	Actions
<p>Attendees from Portsmouth Water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruari Maybank (RM), Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Director, Portsmouth Water • Rebecca Holmes (RH), Environmental Lead, Agilia • Jim Barker (JB), Head of Water Resources, Portsmouth Water • Eleanor Shipton (ES), Communications & Engagement Lead, Portsmouth Water, • Joel Hufford (JH), Senior Communications Consultant, Create 51 <p>Other attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ingrid Strawson (IS), Independent Chair of Havant Thicket Reservoir Strategic Advisory Group and Community Advisory Group <p>Stakeholder attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Anders, Park Community School • Mike Ashton, Cycling UK • Catherine Billam, Community First • Cllr Jackie Branson, Havant Borough Council / Hampshire County Council • Gary Davis, Community First • Jim Farrell, Friends of Staunton Country Park • Cllr Beryl Francis, Havant Borough Council • Ron Hammerton, Horndean Protection Group • Laon Hulme, Horndean Protection Group • Father Jon Jeffrey • Linda Jewell, British Horse Society • Cllr Malcolm Johnson, East Hampshire District Council • Susan Parish, Park Community School • Shelley Saunders, Havant Green Party • Jane Smith, Forestry England • Tim Speller, Hampshire County Council (Staunton Country Park) • Chris Stanley, Rowlands Castle Parish Council • Dee Tupper, Friends of Hermitage Stream • Sam Underwood (SU), Southern Water • Peter Westron, Ramblers Association • Mark Wintringham, Southern Water • Stan Wright, Horndean Protection Group. • Helen Young, Stop the Chop. 	

Apologies

- Andrew Biltcliffe, Havant Borough Council Regeneration team
- Cllr Ann Briggs, Hampshire County Council
- Ann Buckley, Havant Residents Associations
- Cllr Tony Denton, Havant Borough Council
- Cllr Liz Fairhurst, Hampshire County Council
- Sally Foster, Havant Borough Council Communications team
- Simon James, Forestry England
- Petronella Natrass, British Horse Society
- Beverley Palmer, Community First
- Carole Samuda, Havant Borough Council Community team
- Jon Stuart, Havant CAB.

Welcome and Introductions

Ingrid Strawson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself as the Independent Chair of the Community Advisory Group (CAG).

She thanked everyone who was able to attend the Havant Thicket Reservoir project site visits that were held during August, to show people around the main reservoir site and along the route of the reservoir pipeline.

She then gave a brief update about the interim advisory groups meeting held on 9 September and thanked people for the queries and issues raised at the session, which are being responded to by the reservoir project team. The next interim meeting will be held in early November, with the next main advisory groups meetings taking place at the end of November / early December.

Next, Ingrid ran through the agenda for the meeting (as set out on slide 2 of the attached meeting presentation pack).

Each of the attendees then introduced themselves and outlined their role and organisation.

The minutes from the previous meeting in late June were reviewed, including each of the recorded actions. This included an update to the group's Terms of Reference, based on feedback from group members. A copy of the updated Terms is attached to these minutes. In the section on the role of the Strategic Advisory Group, changes to the text include replacing the phrase 'environmental impact' with the term 'sustainability'. The strategic group is focusing on environmental, social and economic mitigation strategies, for example, minimisation of carbon emissions. The role of the Community Advisory Group has not changed. An escalation process for issues raised, and managed through the Havant Thicket Reservoir Stakeholder Issues and Actions log, is included for both groups.

There were no further comments from the group about the minutes from the previous meeting, with then Ingrid confirming that the minutes had been accepted.

Agenda Item 1: Havant Thicket Reservoir project update

Please also see slides 3-12 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.

Project Director Ruari Maybank introduced himself and spoke about his background and career, prior to joining Portsmouth Water and the reservoir scheme in the summer. His previous roles include senior leadership positions on major infrastructure projects

such as the O2 Arena, London 2012 Olympics, the redevelopment of Colchester Barracks and a number of projects overseas.

Ruari explained that the high-level programme for the Havant Thicket Reservoir scheme (see slide 4) is unchanged from the one that was presented at the last CAG meeting in late June. However, he added that the project team are looking to bring forward the timing for some aspects of the project, such as the access routes for the site. Ruari also thanked everyone who has been involved in the group and has helped to shape the project so far, plus he shared the management structure (see slide 5) for the reservoir scheme.

Next, Ruari provided an update on planning permission for the reservoir and its pipeline. In June, both Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council's planning committees resolved to grant planning permission. This was subject to final legal agreements (Section 106 agreements) being completed and those documents are currently being prepared / progressed. He clarified that there can be no construction activity until final planning permission has been formally granted, with the Section 106 agreements including a number of commitments, such as improving pathways and access points for non-motorised users to the reservoir site and a range of environmental mitigation and compensation measures.

Ruari updated that the reservoir project team have been working with the Stop the Chop group, including a proposal for the relocation of additional trees from the reservoir site ahead of the construction work. The team are working on making a further announcement on this soon.

Work to secure a site for 80 hectares of woodland creation / restoration, as part of the overall 200 hectares total under the reservoir project's environmental mitigation and compensation plan, is progressing well, with a site identified and terms being negotiated for a long-term agreement.

As part of ongoing environmental work, ecologists and tree climbing specialists have been out on site, with 200 bat boxes and over 100 dormice boxes installed to help wildlife translocate in the future and wildlife 'corridors' being create to for wildlife to move from the reservoir site to other nearby areas.

Ruari stressed that any tree removal on the reservoir site will not start until final planning permission has been granted, with European Protected Species Licences (for bats and dormice) to be issued also for work to get underway. There has been close liaison with Natural England over a number of months on the licences. Traffic management plans also need to be finalised with Forestry England, Hampshire County Council and the local highways authority.

There is a narrow time window this autumn to carry out the tree removal activity and it is dependent on the weather. There could be further tree removal activity needed next year and some of this could take place in Spring 2022 if weather permits.

Tree removal will take place at around five different locations at any one time, with the North / South pathway through the Avenue closed during removal activity for safety reasons.

Portsmouth Water is currently in the latter stages of procurement for the contractors to work on the reservoir scheme – one contract for construction of the reservoir pipeline and one for building the reservoir itself. Ruari explained that the procurement process would be progressed in the coming months so that contracts can be awarded in March 2022.

Finally, Ruari shared a map (see slide 12) showing the future route for walkers and cyclists which will go all the way around the reservoir site. This will help improve access for the public to the reservoir site.

Q&A section

Question: Are the three access points to the east of the reservoir for horse-riders, as well as cyclists and walkers? The need is to have access from the northeast as a 'bridleway', where it just shows 'cycle and pedestrian access' on the Outline Masterplan. This is to cater for horse riders coming from Castle Road, so they don't have to ride all the way down the B2149 Manor Lodge Road. This is recognised in para. 5.55 of the Reservoir Design & Access Statement and needs to be included in further, more detailed plans.

Answer: To be confirmed following the meeting

Question: Is anyone looking at the cumulative impact of traffic in the area, as there are other projects / developments in the area which will involve construction traffic?

Answer: This role falls to the local planning and highways authorities, which have an overview of planned / potential activity across the area. The planning applications submitted (for the reservoir and its pipeline) included an outline Traffic Management Plan about the routes which construction traffic would be permitted and not permitted to take. As the project progresses, more detailed Traffic Management Plans will need to be provided as part of the planning process. For example, the project team are currently providing a Traffic Management Plan for the tree harvesting phase of the project and there is a strict regulatory process for this.

Question: Could you explain more about the Farlington to Nelson pipeline you mentioned in your presentation?

Answer: This is separate to the main pipeline that will run from Bedhampton Springs to the reservoir, which will allow water to be pumped to the reservoir and taken out when required. The Farlington to Nelson pipeline will enable water from the reservoir that's then been treated, to be conveyed to a service reservoir, ready for distribution to Portsmouth Water customers via the Portsmouth Water network. In turn, this will free up water further west in Portsmouth Water's system, so that additional water can be supplied to Southern Water, meaning Southern can take less water from the River Test and River Itchen, protecting these rare chalk streams.

Question: Are the ancient yew trees with tags on them (in Havant Thicket, along the route for the reservoir's northern access route) being felled?

Answer: Some tags are trees which are being retained, some are for bat roosts and others are from trees being felled.

Question: Points raised about the cycle routes on the roads near to the reservoir.

Answer: This area is the responsibility of the local highways authority, Hampshire County Council, rather than Portsmouth Water, as it falls outside the reservoir boundary.

Question: When the wider area is developed it would be useful to link the reservoir site up to the crossing under the motorway (A3M).

Answer: Portsmouth Water is monitoring this, however, it's not something that's within our control, as this falls outside of the reservoir site. We do want to make sure that the

**ACTION (GRH):
Confirm detail on access points to east of reservoir**

**ACTION (ES):
Confirm detail around tree tags on yew trees in Havant Thicket**

site is easily accessible by non-motorised traffic (walkers, cyclists and horse-riders) from across the local area.

Question: Could Portsmouth Water make a distinction between permissive paths and public rights of way on the maps it provides?

Answer: There are more detailed designs (than those included in the presentation slides) which show individual paths. Members of the project team are discussing this issue with the Countryside Team at Hampshire County Council.

Question: Large development projects, such as new housing, need to pay an infrastructure levy, is this same system applied to projects like the reservoir?

Answer: This can be applied to projects of this kind, but in this case, the local planning authorities have elected to develop a Section 106 agreement which specifically states what Portsmouth Water will need to fund and deliver / provide funding for.

Question: How will carbon be reduced as part of the project?

Answer: We take this issue very seriously, in the context of the climate emergency we are facing. We will report back to both advisory groups about how this is being considered as the project progresses.

Question: What will happen to the 'left-overs' from the felled timber from the reservoir site, are they going to be used as biomass fuel, as this would result in carbon emissions?

Answer: Wood from the site will be used for a variety of different purposes and Portsmouth Water is looking at the detail of this.

Question: Points raised about access to the reservoir site off Swanmore Road during construction and for operational traffic

Answer: Construction traffic is due to use the northern access route to the reservoir site, off the B2149. Operational traffic, once the reservoir is completed, will use the access off Swanmore Road, but the amount of such traffic will be very limited.

Agenda Item 2: Future Water Resources planning

Please also see slides 13-21 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.

Jim Barker, Head of Water Resources at Portsmouth Water and representatives from Southern Water provided an update on planning for future water resources in Hampshire.

Jim explained the context for this agenda item, starting with the fact that water companies, like Portsmouth and Southern, have each developed a Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP), setting out how they will make sure there is enough water for all in the years and decades ahead.

These plans are reviewed every five years, with companies preparing to update their WRMPs for 2024. The draft WRMPs will be published for consultation and will, ultimately, be signed off by the Government. The WRMPs will be based on a new regional water resources plan for the South East, which is being developed currently and will be published for consultation in early 2022, before being finalised in 2023.

The Government has asked water companies to plan 75 years in advance and to plan for more severe dry weather events. Water companies must also work regionally, with companies in the South East of England, including Portsmouth Water and Southern

**ACTION
(GRH):
Provide
updates on
reducing
carbon
under the
reservoir
scheme**

Water, having been working together since 1996. This process is about water companies ensuring there is a sustainable supply of water for the region.

Jim also discussed Strategic Water Resource Options (SROs), which are different potential schemes for providing enough water for the region. For example, Havant Thicket Reservoir is an SRO that was selected for the current regional plan for the South East and was then included in both Portsmouth Water and Southern Water's WRMPs.

As part of the normal cycle of planning for the future (as set out above), potential enhanced uses of Havant Thicket Reservoir, to provide additional water supplies, are being looked at, although these ideas are at an early stage of development, with no firm plans in place. As with any proposals for the future, should these ideas progress further, they would be subject to public consultation and scrutiny / approval from regulators and Government. They would also require planning permission in their own right.

Sam Underwood, Stakeholder Lead for Southern Water's Water for Life Hampshire programme, and Mark Wintringham, Head of Delivery for the programme, provided an update on their work to explore new ways of supplying water to customers. This is to cater for a growing population and the impact of climate change, while protecting and enhancing the environment – most notably the River Test and River Itchen in Hampshire, two rare chalk streams.

Further detail is set out in Sam and Mark's presentation slides (13-21 in the attached pack), with the update focusing on a wide-ranging assessment of the options, involving regulators and other statutory consultees, stakeholders and customers, that has recently been completed.

The proposals that were assessed (see slide 15 in the attached pack) include a desalination plant (see slide 16) and several different configurations of water recycling - using advanced treatment techniques to turn what was previously regarded as wastewater into drinking water (see slide 17). One option could be to top up Havant Thicket Reservoir with recycled water to provide greater resilience to drought. The option of building a new pipeline, to transport more water from Havant Thicket Reservoir to Southern Water's Otterbourne Water Supply Works, is also being explored, in consultation with Portsmouth Water.

From the options appraisal process, water recycling and water transfers were assessed as preferable, particularly when impacts on the environment were considered. Desalination ranked lower than these options.

As a result, Southern Water has written to its regulators informing them that it is continuing to explore its proposals for water recycling and water transfer solutions and is not intending to further develop plans for desalination.

Southern Water is now progressing further investigations and development of the remaining options ahead of its next submission to regulators in December 2021, where it will select its preferred solution, before carrying out further engagement and consultation, and starting the planning process.

For further information, please visit [Southern Water's website](#).

Q&A section

Question: Will the (recycled) water be cleansed before it goes to Havant Thicket Reservoir?

ACTION (SU): Southern Water to share updates about the new preferred solution at

Answer: Wastewater which has already been highly treated and cleansed would then be treated and purified further before it arrives, as recycled water, at Havant Thicket Reservoir. More detail on the water recycling process can be found at:

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-story/water-for-life-hampshire/our-strategic-solutions/water-recycling>

Question: Where would the water recycling plant (to further purify treated wastewater) be built? Would it be built at the reservoir site? Will there be a pipeline going from Havant Thicket Reservoir (western side) to Southern Water's Otterbourne Water Supply Works?

Answer: Southern Water are looking at potential sites for the water recycling plant that could be required. It would not be located at Southern Water's local wastewater treatment works or the reservoir site.

Yes, an option for a new pipeline to convey water from the reservoir to Otterbourne supply works is being explored, with stakeholders and the wider public being consulted on this in due course.

Question: What effect would the use of recycled water have on the types of recreation being looked at for the reservoir, such as swimming, boating and fishing?

Answer: Any recycled water would only be a small percentage of the overall water in the reservoir. Recycling water is about stripping out all the impurities, making it cleaner than any other type of water. Any topping up of the reservoir would be with this highly treated and purified water, so water quality would not be affected.

The level of recreation at the reservoir has been agreed with the Havant Thicket Stakeholder group after many years of discussions, surveys with local communities and learning from other reservoir sites and public parks.

Overall, the consensus has been to provide a 'middle' level of activity, to preserve the focus on maintaining quiet areas for wildlife, particularly around the wetland. The focus will be on amenities for local people, rather than the development of a 'honeypot' site which would appeal to a large number of visitors and potentially cause congestion and parking problems. It will be 2028-29 before the reservoir is built and filled with water and we intend to continue discussions with local communities about what activities they would like to see in the future.

In terms of swimming, it is not considered safe to allow swimming in a cold, deep and unsupervised reservoir, where water can be pumped in or out at short notice. Current plans do not include large-scale public water sports at the reservoir, following the overwhelming feedback from the stakeholder group and local surveys. This was because it would feel like a much busier place, attract more people and put greater strain on the environment, facilities and local communities. However, the project team are open to conversations with stakeholders and specialist partners about providing activities on a small scale in non-public sessions, e.g. for schools or youth groups.

With angling, it will be quite some time before the reservoir is built, filled, operational and suitable for a fishery to be developed. However, we are exploring the potential for a low-intensity trout fishery, and possibly a small predator fishery, for example, for pike or perch. This includes discussions with the Angling Trust and a local angling group to get their expert input.

future meetings.

Question: Recycled water - can you clarify - is this in addition to spring water from Bedhampton and not instead of?

Answer: Correct any use of recycled water would be in addition to water from Bedhampton Springs.

Question: Is the likelihood that there will be limiting conditions on this (recycled water going into the reservoir) – i.e. just during drought - or will you go for ‘blanket’ use? So, will the priority be keeping recycled water out of Langstone Harbour, or keeping the reservoir level up in times of drought? I think you need to be clear on the intent here as the plan changes.

Answer: The water recycling top up proposal is fundamentally different and totally separate to the current system of stormwater releases that we (Southern Water) operate in and around Langstone Harbour and across the rest of our region.

Stormwater is wastewater that has been heavily diluted by rain and is sometimes released to the environment as part of a separate process to protect homes from flooding.

Recycled water is essentially purified water that has gone through a series of advanced treatment techniques. These include reverse osmosis, where water is forced through tiny membranes 50,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair to remove dissolved salts and impurities.

It is this purified, recycled water that would be released into Havant Thicket Reservoir under the proposal we are investigating.

The recycled water would be treated at a new recycling plant before being released into the reservoir. This would be a completely separate process that was fully under our control and not linked in any way to the stormwater releases elsewhere on Southern Water’s network.

Potential locations for the recycling plant are currently being looked at, with further details to be shared in due course.

The water recycling top up proposal is being developed for drought, but could be used more frequently in the future to further reduce the reliance on chalk water sources (aquifers and rivers) and maintain levels in the reservoir. This will be the subject of further investigations and assessment.

Question: Will throwlines be part of the Section 106 agreement to prevent drownings? They are not a legal requirement at the moment.

Answer: A condition of the planning application is that we will provide appropriate measures to promote and support safety in and around the reservoir. There will be a combination of different measures which will achieve this. The design has not reached the level of detail about whether throwlines will be included. However, we will look at this further and come back to you.

Agenda Item 3: Issues Register

Please also see slide 22 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.

The Issues & Actions Log, recording queries and concerns from stakeholder advisory group members for response by Portsmouth Water, was shown to attendees, with a copy of the log also circulated separately to all advisory group members. The log is designed to act as a ‘one stop shop’ for any questions or issues raised by stakeholders.

**ACTION (AF):
Confirm water safety detail, including around throwlines**

**ACTION (ES):
Present an updated and clearer version of**

Ingrid explained how each member of the group could quickly find the issues they had raised and whether they had been responded to. She added that the wording for issues could be changed if needed and explained the process for issues being signed off / closed.

Agenda Item 4: Sub-Groups

Please also see slides 23-24 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.

Ingrid explained that a number of different topics have been raised by stakeholders via the Havant Thicket Reservoir Issues & Actions log, for example, access, environment and recreation. She briefly ran through the different topics on the register to show the sort of concerns and questions which have been raised and the most common themes / topics.

Ingrid then reminded attendees of the idea (discussed at previous meetings) of having topic-based subgroups, enabling people to focus on a particular issue or area of interest. She highlighted the benefits of such an approach and proposed that the groups should be set up and led by volunteers from the main advisory groups. The running of the subgroups would be supported by Ingrid and Portsmouth Water.

A list of potential subgroups was proposed by Ingrid (see slide 24) and Ingrid invited comments on potentially establishing these subgroups.

Q&A section

Question: Who will be supervising the many contractors and subcontractors engaged on the reservoir project?

Answer: There will be a manager within Portsmouth Water to look after and oversee the various contracts, in conjunction with the project team. The contracts will all have clear terms and conditions to ensure all contractors working on the scheme are delivering what's required in the right way.

Question: I wondered if Portsmouth Water plan to have direct engagement with community members that may not be involved with the community groups represented here? I think you might be missing certain community groups.

Answer: We are currently revising and updating our communications and engagement strategy and plan, to reflect the new phase the project is moving into. As before, we want to reach and engage with as many people as possible, particularly those living locally to the reservoir site and pipeline route. We will share further details at future meetings, but would welcome any ideas and suggestions group members may have in the meantime.

Agenda Item 5: AOB

Ruari explained that Portsmouth Water will be carrying out some further remedial work, near to the Gypsies Plain access point. The footpath will not be closed at this time.

Meeting close

Ingrid Strawson closed the session by thanking everyone for attending and for their contributions.

Joel Hufford asked for feedback on the meeting and how it was run, to help make any improvements for the future.

PLEASE SEE SUMMARY OF ACTIONS FROM MEETING BELOW

the Issues & Actions log, showing priorities and milestones for longer-term issues.

ACTION (ALL): Advisory group members to consider joining a subgroup or subgroups focused on particular areas of interest

Meeting actions

<u>Action</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Date to be completed</u>
Confirm detail on access points to east of reservoir	Gareth Russell-Hughes	By next advisory group meeting on 2 December 2021
Confirm detail around tree tags on yew trees in Havant Thicket	Eleanor Shipton	By next advisory group meeting on 2 December 2021
Provide updates on reducing carbon under the reservoir scheme	Gareth Russell-Hughes	By next advisory group meeting on 2 December 2021
Future updates about Water for Life – Hampshire to be provided at future meetings, including which option is taken forward as the “preferred option” as part of the regulatory assessment process.	Sam Underwood	Via email following next submission to regulators in December 2021
Confirm water safety detail, including around throwlines	Andy Forestiero	By next advisory group meeting on 2 December 2021
Present an updated and clearer version of the Issues & Actions log, showing priorities and milestones for longer-term issues.	Eleanor Shipton	By next advisory group meeting on 2 December 2021
Advisory group members to consider joining a subgroup or subgroups focused on particular areas of interest	ALL	By next advisory group meeting on 2 December 2021