

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

**Meeting presentations / discussions**

**Actions**

**Attendees from Portsmouth Water:**

- Ruari Maybank (RM), Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Director, Portsmouth Water
- Jonathan Clark (JC), Project Manager for Havant Thicket Reservoir scheme, Portsmouth Water
- Eleanor Shipton (ES), Havant Thicket Reservoir Communications & Engagement Lead, Portsmouth Water
- Mark Jeffery (MJ), Havant Thicket Reservoir Communications Executive, Portsmouth Water
- Joel Hufford (JH), Senior Communications Consultant, Create 51
- Jenny Griffiths, Communications Executive, Create 51.

**Stakeholder attendees:**

- Mike Ashton, Cycling UK
- Cllr Jackie Branson, Hampshire County Council
- Ella Capaldi, Park Community School
- Dave Childs, Havant Thicket for Nature
- Sally Foster, Havant Borough Council (Communications team)
- Beryl Francis, Warren Park School
- Ron Hammerton, Horndean Protection Group
- Chris Janes, Southern Water
- Linda Jewell, British Horse Society
- Tim Speller, Staunton Country Park
- Chris Stanley, Rowlands Castle Parish Council
- Ingrid Strawson, Independent Chair
- Marcus Stroud, Forestry England
- Dee Tupper, Friends of Hermitage Stream
- Sam Underwood, Southern Water
- Peter Westron, Ramblers Association.

**Apologies:**

- Cllr Ann Briggs, Hampshire County Council
- Gary Davis, Community First
- Jim Farrell, Friends of Staunton Country Park
- Debbie Grace, Community First
- Carole Samuda, Havant Borough Council

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Independent Chair Ingrid Strawson opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and led a round of introductions.

Ingrid then ran through the minutes and actions from the previous group meeting on 25 May 2022, as per the below updates:

<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Status</u></b>
<b>Stakeholders to be offered a briefing / reservoir site visit.</b>	COMPLETED.
<b>Reservoir project team to share bridleway proposals with stakeholder subgroups.</b>	COMPLETED.
<b>Stakeholder group members to feedback on new reservoir project website.</b>	IN PROGRESS – Link to new website to be reshared with stakeholders for feedback.
<b>HTR Project team to follow up with council to clarify on potential funding for non-motorised access between Horndean and the reservoir site.</b>	IN PROGRESS – HTR Project team to follow up with Hampshire County Council Highways for update by next stakeholder group meeting on 30 November 2022.

Ingrid asked attendees whether anyone had any comments or questions about the minutes from the 25 May 2022 meeting. No-one raised anything and Ingrid confirmed that the minutes had been accepted.

Next, Ingrid put forward a proposal to merge the Havant Thicket Reservoir Community Advisory Group and the Strategic Advisory Group meetings. This would mean there would be one main stakeholder meeting every three months, with an interim meeting in between each main catch up.

This suggested change has been prompted by there now being six stakeholder subgroups, where more detailed discussions on particular topics are taking place. As a result, the Reservoir project team's updates to the Community Advisory Group and the Strategic Advisory Group sessions have become very largely the same, meaning they could be delivered to a single main stakeholder meeting that still allows people to ask questions, raise issues and for related topics to be explored, such updates on the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project.

Following Ingrid's proposal, a question / concern was raised about the higher number of attendees there would for one main stakeholder meeting. Ingrid explained that the stakeholder subgroups are

picking up the majority of questions and concerns, so fewer queries and actions are coming out of the main meetings. It was agreed that the change would be made to have a single main stakeholder meeting moving forward, with the situation monitored to see how this worked in practice. The first meeting under the new format would be from 10am to 12pm on 30 November 2022.

Finally, Ingrid updated attendees that Mark Jeffery from the Havant Thicket Reservoir Communications Team would be taking the minutes at each of the stakeholder subgroups meetings and supporting the subgroups chairs more broadly. He will also be looking after managing / updating the Havant Thicket Reservoir Stakeholder Issues and Actions Log

Ingrid then handed over to Ruari Maybank, Havant Thicket Reservoir Project Director, for his project update.

#### **Agenda Item: Havant Thicket Reservoir project update**

**Please also see slides 5-28 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.**

#### **Summary programme schedule**

Ruari explained that during the last three months, the project has appointed an independent Construction Engineer, in line with the requirements set out in the 1975 Reservoirs Act. The engineer will be overseeing, reviewing and approving the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the reservoir.

Ruari also confirmed that, while this is a critical phase for the project in terms of risks and issues, the scheme remains on schedule. He thanked meeting attendees and wider stakeholders for their continued engagement and support.

Finally, he updated the meeting that Portsmouth Water has awarded the contract for the Bedhampton Springs to Havant Thicket Reservoir pipeline, which will enable the reservoir to be filled with water, as well as allow water to be taken out when it's required.

Irish firm Ward and Burke has been appointed as the contractor and its team is now focused on the outline pipeline route and any potential improvements that could be made. Ruari reiterated that construction work on the pipeline is not due to get underway until next year and he is looking forward to sharing a more detailed update at future stakeholder meetings.

#### **Recruitment to project team**

Recruitment to the reservoir project team has continued

This includes Mark Jeffery joining as Communications Executive, reporting to Eleanor Shipton, Communications & Engagement Lead for Havant Thicket Reservoir.

Plus, Andy Trott, our new Programme Planner, who is helping look after the forward planning for the reservoir scheme overall.

#### **Key environmental milestones**

Ruari said he was delighted to share some great news with attendees, with local planning authorities having now approved the reservoir scheme's Detailed Biodiversity Mitigation and Compensation Strategy.

This sets out how the project is protecting and supporting a wide variety of wildlife, as Havant Thicket Reservoir is delivered.

Furthermore, the project's first Landscape Ecological Management Plan, or LEMP, detailing the long-term management of habitat creation and enhancement has also been given the thumbs up.

Ruari commented that these are fantastic achievements for the project, that had to be delivered prior to main construction for the reservoir getting underway next year (as part of the Section 106 agreement Portsmouth Water is working to).

The LEMP has to be updated and submitted alongside each of the Reserved Matters Applications, such as the reservoir's Northern Access Route.

### **Ecological works on site**

Grass cutting was carried out on the reservoir site (late May) as part of the programme of environmental work.

This was to encourage reptiles to move into new habitats that have already been created in Havant Thicket woodland to the north.

The reservoir project's ecologists inspected the site for reptiles before any grass cutting began and also checked for any nesting birds, so that they would not be disturbed.

Further reptile translocation work has been carried out at The Avenue and this is covered later in the update.

Beetles, freshwater shrimp and even a water scorpion are just some of the macroinvertebrates found on site by ecologists.

They used a net to carefully remove these creatures from a watercourse on site at Middle Clearing, before rehoming them in a similar habitat in Southleigh Forest.

Channel material (soil / silt) from the watercourse has also been transported to Southleigh Forest. This will help the beetles settle in more quickly and get established.

### **Archaeology surveys**

Archaeologists were out on site during the early summer, supervising the removal of topsoil from areas in the south west corner of the reservoir site – off Swanmore Road

In the picture, on slide 10, a flint core can be seen, which has been flaked off and turned into a flint tool – both of these were found on site.

This archaeological survey work is a really important step in the project.

Portsmouth Water is committed to making sure it respects the history of the site and is carrying out thorough investigations before it starts the main construction work.

It's really exciting to learn more about the history of the site and any discoveries will be carefully recorded.

### **Trial embankment**

Work is progressing well to build a trial embankment in the south western section of the Havant Thicket Reservoir site.

The reservoir's main embankment will run along its southern edge, enabling it to hold 8.7 billion litres of water. It's planned to build the embankment from natural materials found on site including clay and soil. As well as reducing carbon emissions for the project (as lots of heavy building materials won't need to be imported), it will also help to minimise disruption for local people by reducing the number of vehicles coming onto site.

Before going ahead with constructing the reservoir, Portsmouth Water needs to make absolutely sure these plans will work. So, it's building a trial embankment to test how different types of clay and other materials found on site perform and validate the design for the embankment. This follows detailed design work by engineers, taking into account the findings of ground investigation work on

the reservoir site. The design process has also been overseen by an independent reservoir engineer from a Government-appointed panel of experts.

The trial embankment will be a totally standalone structure that will be around 140 metres long, 70 metres wide and 8 metres high. Furthermore, it will not form part of the final reservoir.

The materials used for the trial embankment are being dug out from 'borrow pits' at different locations within the Havant Thicket Reservoir site. Once excavated, the materials have been transported by dump trucks, built up in layers using bulldozers, and then compacted using heavy rollers drawn by vehicles.

The trial embankment will remain in place for six months to be studied and assessed by the Havant Thicket Reservoir team.

### **Temporary closure of Forestry England car park**

It was necessary to close the Forestry England car park off Manor Lodge Road on weekdays from 18 July 2022 for approximately five weeks. It remained open at weekends.

The car park was closed for safety reasons while essential upgrades were carried out to the adjacent track which runs through Havant Thicket woodland from the Castle Road junction on the B2149.

The track needed to be upgraded for access for preparatory work for the reservoir, including building the trial embankment. The track remained open throughout. However, in order to reduce footfall and allow this work to be completed as safely and efficiently as possible, people were asked to avoid using the track at this time.

While it was closed, the opportunity was taken to improve the car park's surface.

Portsmouth Water would like to thank the local community and car park users for their understanding and apologise for any inconvenience caused.

### **The Avenue**

The footpath running from north to south through The Avenue closed from Monday 25 July 2022 and won't be reopening.

This is so that environmental work can be completed safely, ahead of the main construction phase for the reservoir getting started in 2023.

Work to remove trees from the Avenue and other areas of woodland will get underway soon and further information is covered shortly in this update.

### **The Avenue and wider reservoir site – Environmental works**

As part of the environmental work in The Avenue, the reservoir scheme's team of ecologists have been using reptile fencing and mats to safely collect and relocate over 180 reptiles, such as slow-worms, lizards, grass snakes and even an Adder, to the new habitats we have created for them close to the reservoir site – in Havant Thicket woodland.

The barriers pictured on slide 14 are to stop reptiles getting into the area that's fenced off, as well as to stop any reptiles inside the barriers getting out.

This is all part of the detailed environmental plan for the reservoir project, that's been approved by regulators Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Surveys conducted as part of our planning application for the reservoir site did not find smooth snakes or sand lizards, species that are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Reptile species that were found on site are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

### **Tree removal work**

Work to remove trees, including from the Avenue, Middle Clearing and half of Round Wood, is due to get underway on 14 September 2022 and continue for six weeks.

Ruari emphasised that Portsmouth Water very much appreciates and understands that this could be a difficult and upsetting time for some members of the community.

Whilst the company is looking forward to the environmental and community benefits that Havant Thicket Reservoir will bring for the long term, it very much regrets that The Avenue and the other areas of woodland have to be removed – having made extensive efforts to look at ways in which these areas could possibly be left in place, something that proved not to be viable.

Portsmouth Water remains committed to maintaining public access to other areas of site during construction.

Signage will be in place to let people visiting the site know what is going on and to provide safety advice. All the areas being worked on will be fenced off, with a banksman on duty to manage access through the Avenue via the bridleway that runs through it.

As there will be noise from the tree removal work, horse-riders are asked to take extra care and caution if they're using the reservoir site, to help make sure their animals are not disturbed. If people can use alternative bridleway routes, that would be much appreciated / recommended.

As much of the wood as possible will be used locally, such as providing oak wood for the restoration of HMS Victory in Portsmouth.

### **Additional note of explanation on detail shown on the map on slide 15 of the updated presentation pack:**

The areas marked in red show locations where trees are being removed.

No trees will be removed in the triangular area marked in yellow at the north of the site. This area will become wet woodland, once the reservoir and its new wetland area are in place.

The area outlined in bright green on the map is the Corsican Pine Plantation, where evergreen / non-broadleaf trees are being removed as part of the current phase of work, as per the approved environmental mitigation and compensation plan.

The zone marked in yellow, that largely sits within the green outline, will become wet woodland, again, once the reservoir and wetland have been built. The areas within the bright green outline and not marked in yellow will be planted with new broadleaf trees in due course.

### **Parrots Feather – Treatment and removal**

From early August, work took place to treat and remove Parrots Feather plants from a pond within Havant Thicket woodland – the pond is located in the south eastern section of the woodland, just north of the Forestry England car park off Manor Lodge Road in Rowlands Castle.

The picture (on slide 16) shows the bright green Parrots Feather on the right of the pond.

This activity is part of wider environmental work for the Havant Thicket Reservoir scheme.

Parrots Feather is an Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) which can grow in water, such as ponds, lakes or streams, covering the surface with a thick blanket of feather-shaped leaves. This can severely affect light and oxygen levels in the water, impeding growth and survival of native plants and wildlife.

Parrots Feather can be easily spread – for example, by dogs entering ponds and transporting it elsewhere. So, it's vital that it's treated and removed to stop it becoming more widespread in Havant

Thicket woodland (which is managed by Forestry England) and on the reservoir site next door, both in the short and longer term.

The necessary work is being carried out with the agreement of the Environment Agency and under a licence to treat the Parrots Feather. Once the Parrots Feather is treated and removed, regular monitoring will be carried out to make sure it has not returned.

### **B2149 improvement works**

From late August 2022, temporary two-way traffic lights have been in place on the B2149 between Horndean and Rowlands Castle. This has been to enable a new junction to be constructed as part of the reservoir scheme.

The junction will form part of the new northern access route onto the reservoir site. This route will be used by construction vehicles while the reservoir is being built, keeping the majority of this traffic away from residential areas in Havant and Rowlands Castle. It will also become the main access point for visitors from outside the local area to Havant Thicket Reservoir, once the reservoir is completed in 2029.

The temporary traffic lights will allow vehicles to move along the B2149, while one half of the carriageway is closed for work to take place safely. However, a full road closure will be needed once the new junction is finished, to allow for resurfacing and re-profiling of the B2149 carriageway. The full closure will be necessary for safety reasons, with further details of the timings and duration to be issued closer to the time.

Portsmouth Water is incredibly grateful for people's patience and understanding as these improvements to the B2149 begin and sincerely apologises for any inconvenience caused by the works. It is continuing to work closely with all stakeholders to minimise disruption as the Havant Thicket Reservoir project moves forward and take local views into account.

All of the works to the B2149 have been agreed with Hampshire County Council, as the local highways authority.

### **Looking ahead**

Portsmouth Water is working with Southern Water to ensure that the already approved reservoir scheme and, should it progress, the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project can both be delivered safely and with minimal disruption

The Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project, should it go ahead, would involve building a further pipeline from a new water recycling plant south of the A27 in Havant to transport recycled water to Havant Thicket Reservoir. There would also be a new pipeline to take water from the reservoir to Southern Water's supply works at Otterbourne.

This issue is being looked at now, as it's important to avoid the need for potential work on the reservoir embankment after it's been completed – something that would be challenging, complex and costly.

It's important to note that this should in no way be seen as pre-judging the consultation and approval process for the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project.

### **Recreation strategy**

The Havant Thicket Reservoir Recreation Strategy sets out the aims for recreation on the reservoir site during construction and operation, with the document evolving over time.

Ruari said that Portsmouth Water is very grateful for stakeholder feedback on the draft strategy, including via the 20 June 2022 workshop and 5 July 2022 follow-up Q&A session that were held.

The updated strategy will be published and shared in late September along with a “You said, we did” feedback report.

### **Reducing nitrates pollution of the Solent**

Langstone Harbour and the wider Solent are being adversely impacted by nitrates pollution

This is affecting the Solent’s ecology, as it can lead to algal blooms forming in warmer weather, which can cause harm to a wide variety of species

This nitrates pollution stems from a number of sources - like run-off (containing animal waste and fertiliser) from local farmland and flows of water from Bedhampton Springs, which contains nitrates, as fertiliser used on land locally over decades has gradually made its way into underground water sources.

It’s important to stress that the nitrates in the spring water are removed as part of the drinking water treatment process before any of that water is supplied to customers

Portsmouth Water has completed an initial study on how Havant Thicket Reservoir could reduce nitrates getting into the Solent – by water from Bedhampton Springs, that would otherwise flow into the Solent, being pumped into the reservoir instead

Further work is needed, but the study has found that the operation of reservoir could save 2,588 kilos of nitrates per year from ending up in the Solent

Plus, as the reservoir being in place would mean much reduced use of the reservoir site for grazing, if at all, that would mean a further 428 kilos of nitrates per hectare per year could also be saved

### **Bridleways – Havant 120 / Rowlands Castle 29**

This bridleway runs east / west across the reservoir site.

A temporary bridleway diversion to the north of reservoir is being provided - prior to closing the permanent bridleway for reservoir construction

The bridleway diversion design is progressing in consultation with Hampshire County Council and Forestry England colleagues

Work should start by Autumn this year on widening / surfacing

The permanent bridleway diversion will be along the toe (bottom edge) of the completed reservoir embankment.

### **Bridleways – Havant 121**

A permanent diversion needs to be provided for the bridleway which runs from the western edge of the reservoir site.

Liaison has been taking place with stakeholders, including the British Horse Society, the Ramblers Association and Hampshire County Council Public Rights of Way team

Portsmouth Water’s preferred option is to provide diverted access onto Havant 121 at the corner of Swanmore Road. This would formalise the current access, which is already used by equestrians, cyclists and pedestrians

However, visibility standards for equestrians can’t be achieved at this point (or anywhere in an urban area) and a departure from standard will need to be applied for.

A design for this area is now being prepared, which will consider safety and the environment, and will be consulted on prior to the preparation of a departure from standard.

### **Land acquisition**

Portsmouth Water has completed all land acquisition associated with the reservoir's new Northern Access Route, including a small parcel of land from a private landowner.

### **80-hectare woodland site**

Portsmouth Water has also been progressing securing the site for 80 hectares of woodland and wood pasture creation / restoration, as part of the reservoir's schemes overall 200 hectares total.

The proposed delivery plan for the 80 hectares scheme has been agreed with statutory consultees including the Forestry Commission, Natural England and Hampshire County Council's Ecologist.

The next step is to finalise the delivery plan into Specification of works that the selected landowner can then deliver against.

The contract should be awarded later this year (to one of two shortlisted landowners) and an update will be shared with stakeholders

### **Southleigh Forest**

Portsmouth Water is planning to bring Southleigh Forest, which it owns, into sustainable forest management, with a planning application being submitted for track repairs that are needed to the existing track leading to Woodberry Lane.

The proposed Woodland Management Plan is set to be signed off by the Forestry Commission during September. Heads of Terms have also been drafted for a charity to manage Southleigh Forest and these are currently being finalised.

As above, this is part of the commitment to create / restore up to 200 hectares of woodland / wood pasture via the reservoir scheme.

### **Advanced planting aftercare**

Ruari thanked Dave Childs and other members of the Havant Thicket for Nature group and Environment Stakeholder Subgroup for their support in clearing ragwort from Memory Park, the area planted with new trees on the western side of the reservoir site.

Advanced planting of trees has also taken place at Gipsies Plain on the eastern flank of the site.

An aftercare plan has now been finalised for the advanced planting areas, which is being used to develop a Scope of works to enable a contractor to be appointed to manage and maintain the areas.

During the recent extended dry period, trees at Memory Park and Gipsies Plain were watered to make sure they survived

Saplings rescued from woodland on the reservoir site are currently being housed at Gipsies Plain. They will be mature enough to plant during next year's planting season.

### **Site visits**

It has been a busy time for visits to the reservoir site by a variety of stakeholders, giving people a chance to see the site at first hand.

Recently, tours have been completed for:

- The Leader & CEO of Havant Borough Council
- Members of Rowlands Castle Parish Council
- Teachers from Park Community School in Leigh Park
- Staff from Portsmouth City Council.

Tours for staff from Staunton Country Park team and Forestry England are to follow.

Stakeholders are encouraged to contact Joel Hufford to arrange a site visit, via [joel@create51.com](mailto:joel@create51.com).

The reservoir project team also welcomed six local schools to the reservoir site earlier in the summer and more tours are planned for local pupils / students.

Schools are encouraged to contact Eleanor Shipton via [Eleanor.shipton@portsmouthwater.co.uk](mailto:Eleanor.shipton@portsmouthwater.co.uk) for more information.

### **Q&A section**

**Question: Will stakeholders be told the diversion route for the B2149 when the full road closure is put in place?**

Answer: Yes, stakeholders and residents will be told, with an update issued well in advance via social media, the reservoir scheme's e-newsletter and other communications channels. The diversion route has been agreed with Hampshire County Council, as the local highways authority, so this can be shared with stakeholder group members.

**Question: In terms of reducing nitrates in the Solent (by spring water that would otherwise flow out to sea being stored in the reservoir), can you explain how this would work when the reservoir water was being called upon during a drought and the water level was changing?**

Answer: There is a layer of water at the bottom of the reservoir, which allows nitrates in the water to be absorbed by the ground below it - due to this layer of water not moving and being under pressure from the weight of water above it. This issue is being looked at in further detail to better understand how it could work in practice. However, one issue we need to examine further is the need to avoid algal blooms (areas of green plant growth that can be caused by nitrates and warm weather) on the surface of the water, by, potentially, making sure there is movement of water to aerate it.

**Question: What would be the impact on recreation of recycled water being added to the reservoir, something that is being proposed under the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project?**

Answer: There would be no impact on recreation at the reservoir. Portsmouth Water would not support this change, if this would cause an issue.

**Question: Could the timber from the felled trees be used to provide recreational features like benches and raised plant beds around the reservoir site?**

Answer: Yes, Portsmouth Water has agreed that a portion of the timber will be retained on site and this will be used for recreational facilities. This detail can form part of future discussions on the detailed design for the reservoir site and its recreational facilities.

**Question: When will the final design for the steps (up to the viewing platform on top of the reservoir embankment) be completed?**

Answer: The detailed design of the reservoir will be completed by the main reservoir works contractor. This contract is due to be awarded later this year. We will liaise with stakeholders, including via the main groups and subgroups, to get people's input into the design, especially around issues such as safety, environment and the overall costs of the project.

### **Agenda Item 2: Subgroup update**

Attendees heard an update on work by each of the six reservoir stakeholder subgroups, as per below:

#### **Access**

Ron Hammerton (Horndean Protection Group) provided an update as group chair.

The group had its first meeting with Jonathan Clark and Mark Jeffery from the reservoir project team in late August and reviewed progress with the draft schedule and map of all the present access points. It's hoped to have this in its final form before the end of September and then issue it to all the subgroups.

This can be used to help to finalise the three draft maps issued by Atkins, showing access points before construction, during construction and on completion of construction. The group is also identifying other aspects of access - for example, how future gates, styles etc link up with external existing (and future) sustainable routes, to provide connectivity with the reservoir's network of site paths.

The group submitted their comments to the local councils about the Northern Access Route reserved matters planning application and would like more notice of these types of applications in future, for example, around the Southern Access Route.

Ron ran through a summary of the group's comments, including the safety of the access route's road junction as a result of housing developments in the area. Another point was on the management of traffic. Such as, if the car park is full, it could be necessary to prevent people turning down the Northern Access Route. Questions were also raised about footpath closures, fly-tipping, preventing motorcycle access and having more eye-catching features at the entrance.

Finally, one of the important requirements identified early on in the project was to try, as far as possible, to eliminate the anti-social behaviour generally associated with off road motorcycling. The Access subgroup will not lose sight of this requirement.

Meeting chair Ingrid Strawson updated that Portsmouth Water would lay out a timetable at the next main stakeholder meeting showing when each of the reserved matters applications would be addressed and stakeholders would have the chance to input ahead of each application being submitted.

### **Education**

**Please also see slide 32-33 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.**

Ella Capaldi (Park Community School), who is group co-chair, stressed that one of the key points for the group is opportunities for local adults and pupils / students to visit the reservoir site to learn about the project.

She explained that the site visits so far have been very helpful, including by a group of senior teachers from Park Community School to see how the reservoir scheme can be included in curriculum plans.

A broad timeline of possible education opportunities has been shared with the subgroup to allow schools to see how they can build the reservoir into their curriculums.

### **Environment**

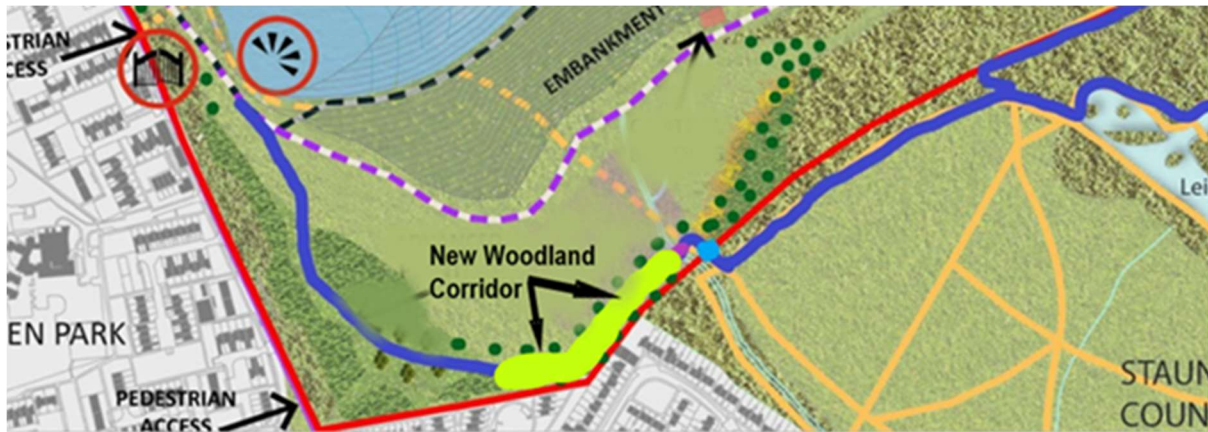
Joel Hufford delivered an update on behalf of subgroup chair John Goodspeed (Hampshire Ornithological Society), who was unable to attend the meeting.

The group is meeting at regular intervals and has had a number of site visits. It also welcomes assurance from Forestry England that there will be no tarmac paths in Havant Thicket woodland, where part of the new 5-km network of paths around the reservoir site will be.

The group is still concerned about the issue of wildlife corridors around the reservoir site and is liaising with Caroline Parker, Environment Lead for Havant Thicket Reservoir, on this. It also remains concerned about the proposals set out under the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling

Environment subgroup member Dave Childs (Havant Thicket for Nature) then provided an additional update about the group's work to help translocate a further 80 trees on the reservoir site. This is

progressing really well and will help enhance the wildlife corridor that runs from the south west corner of the reservoir site (Memory Park) along to the Hermitage Stream, as shown on the map below.



### Local Economy

Again, Joel Hufford delivered a brief update on behalf of group chair Andrew Biltcliffe (Havant Borough Council), who was not present at the meeting.

Andrew is keen to move forward on agreeing how to effectively measure what the economic and social benefits of the reservoir project could be. This is an action for Portsmouth Water to progress with contacts at the University of Portsmouth.

Joel also advised that a draft Havant Thicket Reservoir Employment and Skills Report will also be shared with Andrew and the subgroup for their comment, as well as with wider stakeholders. This report looks at the job and training opportunities that could be created through the reservoir scheme.

### Recreation

Group chair Cllr Jackie Branson (Hampshire County Council) explained that they are waiting for the updated Recreation Strategy to be published, following their feedback on it, before meeting further.

Joel Hufford thanked everyone who attended the Recreation Strategy engagement events in June and July to provide their comments.

### Pipeline

There were no major updates from group chair Dee Tupper (Friends of Hermitage Stream), as the group will start meeting once the detailed design for the reservoir pipeline is more progressed. Dee did, however, say that she was very pleased that the pipeline contractor has been appointed.

### Agenda Item: Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Resources Project update

**Please also see slide 35 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.**

Meeting chair Ingrid Strawson handed over to Sam Underwood from Southern Water for an update on progress with proposals for potential enhanced future uses of Havant Thicket Reservoir.

Sam thanked everyone who took part in the recent consultation on the proposals, which are known as the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project.

During the six-week consultation period (July 5 – August 16):

- 9,169 people visited the consultation web pages

- 878 people visited one of six drop-in sessions (this was the “clicked” figure, but one of the sessions was so busy, the actual figure may be more)
- 69 people attended one of the public webinars
- 570 consultation responses were received (these are being worked through so that individual queries can be responded to).

The next public consultation on the proposals is expected to be held in summer 2023. This is a change of date from what was originally shared with the stakeholder group. Previously, February 2023 was the expected date. The change in schedule is needed because more time is required to undertake various ground investigation work before further consultation.

Sam confirmed he is working with colleagues to agree what further information can be shared with stakeholders as various investigations and studies are completed in the months ahead. He recognises that there is a lot of interest in the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project and information will be shared as soon as possible in the period before the next consultation.

#### **Q&A section**

**Question: (Under the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project proposals), what percentage of the reservoir water would be recycled water?**

Answer (from Sam Underwood): We’re confident that the recycled water that would enter the reservoir would be cleaner than the reservoir water itself.

The current proposed plan is for up to 15 million litres of recycled water per day to be pumped into the reservoir, although there is scope for this to increase to up to 60 million litres per day.

To put that in context, the reservoir has an overall capacity of 8.7 billion litres.

Further detailed modelling needs to be completed to provide a full picture, taking into account all the different scenarios, such variations in the amount of water that would be in the reservoir as recycled water was added. This detail will be shared as part of continuing engagement and consultation.

**Question: The recycling plant (that’s being proposed under the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project) has to run 24 hours a day. Has the carbon impact of this been calculated? Will the proposed direct pipeline (from the reservoir to Otterbourne Water Supply Works) also need to operate 24 hours a day?**

Answer (from Sam Underwood): The carbon calculation is being worked on. As with the recycling plant, the pipeline would need to run 24 hours a day to make sure it remained operationally ready. The water from the plant and that which would pass via the pipeline would all be used, so it wouldn’t be wasted.

**Question: It’s really important to present information (on the Hampshire Water Transfer and Water Recycling Project) in an easy way for people to be able to understand the scheme fully.**

Answer (from Sam Underwood): This is a key area of focus for the communications teams at Portsmouth Water and Southern Water, who are working together to refresh their engagement plans and make sure information on the proposals is easy for everyone to understand and comment on.

**Question: Are you aware that (during your recent consultation) people were put off by problems in using the consultation website, which kept crashing?**

Answer (from Sam Underwood): Thank you for flagging this, although it’s something we received no reports about at all. All the consultation information is still available on our website – see [Water for](#)

[Life – Hampshire \(southernwater.co.uk\)](https://southernwater.co.uk) – but no further consultation responses are being accepted now.

**Question: Why is there not a pipeline going directly to Otterbourne from the recycling plant in Havant, avoiding the need for recycled water to enter Havant Thicket Reservoir?**

Answer (from Sam Underwood): The issue is storage capacity, with Havant Thicket Reservoir providing the opportunity to store the recycled water, something that wouldn't be feasible near to Otterbourne. It's important to say that under the proposals, Portsmouth Water would also be able to benefit from the recycled water being used to top up the reservoir, to help meet its needs in the long-term.

Chair Ingrid Strawson thanked Sam for attending the reservoir stakeholder meetings to keep group members updated.

**Agenda Item: Issues & Action Log – Assessing priority**

**Please also see slide 38 in the attached presentation pack from the meeting.**

Ingrid explained that work is being carried out to improve the Havant Thicket Reservoir Stakeholder Issues and Actions Log. A new system for prioritising actions has been suggested (see slide 38). She asked if there were any comments on this and none were put forward

Mark Jeffery will be taking over responsibility for the log, including doing an initial round of prioritisation for stakeholders to review and comment on.

**Agenda Item: Any other business (AOB)**

Ingrid asked if anyone had any further questions or feedback.

**Question: Earlier in the meeting, it was said that there would be no tarmac on paths to the north of the site, something that's better for local wildlife. If tarmac isn't an option, there are good alternative materials that can be used.**

Answer: The design of the tracks needs to be considered in relation to their environmental impact. This will be looked at as the detailed design progresses, with input from stakeholders.

**Question: You mentioned noise on site (during tree felling from mid-September) could cause disturbance to horses. How is this being communicated to horse-riders using the site?**

Answer: This is being communicated via all the usual channels including signage on site, Facebook posts, the reservoir scheme e-newsletter and links with local horse-riding groups including TROT, which uses local Forestry England tracks.

Joel Hufford confirmed that the minutes and slides from the meeting would be circulated, as well as the Detailed Biodiversity Mitigation Strategy and LEMP documents discussed earlier, plus information on the Northern Access Route reserved matters application.

Chair Ingrid Strawson confirmed that the next interim stakeholder meeting would be on 19 October 2022 and that the next main stakeholder meeting would be 30 November 2022. A key agenda item for the November session will be a detailed update on the future schedule for reserved planning matters and when stakeholders will be able to input on each of these prior to applications being submitted to the local planning authorities.

Ingrid then closed the meeting.

**PLEASE SEE SUMMARY OF ACTIONS FROM MEETING BELOW**

**Meeting actions**

	<u>Action</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Date to be completed</u>		
	<b>Share links to the Detailed Biodiversity Mitigation Strategy and LEMP documents plus information on the Northern Access Route reserved matters application.</b>	Joel Hufford	COMPLETED (immediately following meeting)		