

# Arun Valley Vision Steering Group - Meeting Notes

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 – 14.00 to 16.30

White Swan, 16 Chichester Road, Arundel, BN18 0AD

## **Attendees**

Dr John Godfrey (Chair)  
Gill Farquharson (Chair)  
Sara Denton (AVVG Project Officer) – Environment Agency  
Dave Robinson – Environment Agency  
John Archer – Arun and Rother Rivers Trust  
Mat Jackson - WSCC  
Adrian Waller – Amberley Landowners  
Claire Kerr – RSPB  
Peter Knight – Duke of Norfolk Estate  
Derek Waller – Arundel Town Council  
Jeremy Burgess – South Downs National Park Authority  
Tom Ormesher – NFU  
Jim Seymour – Natural England

## **Apologies**

Martin Brightwell – Horsham District Council  
Mark Maclaughlin – Horsham District Council  
Matthew Woodcock – Forestry Services  
Jack Marriott – Network Rail  
Gordon Wilson - Environment Agency  
Steve Gilbert – RSPB  
Henri Brocklebank - Sussex Wildlife Trust  
Kate Rice – Southern Water  
Roger Spencer – Arun District Council  
Fran Southgate – Sussex Wildlife Trust

## **Welcome and Introduction to the Meeting**

1. Introduction and welcome to all members of the steering group (See attendee list above).
2. Minutes and actions from the previous meeting were agreed by members of the steering group.

## **Arun Vision Progress Report (See presentation)**

3. John Godfrey and Gill Farquharson presented a progress report (see full report) on the Arun Vision:

Key points:

### **Context and Strategy**

- Maps and Visuals
- National and local policy context
- Natural Capital
- Land use planning
- Arundel By-pass

### Sustainable Catchment Management

- Natural Capital
- NFM Initiatives
- Changes in land use
- National and Internationally Designated Sites
- Water Quality

### Delivery Mechanisms

- Roles and Responsibilities
- SU4
- Flood Defences in Arundel
- IDB
- Legacy of the Arun Valley Vision Group

### Community Engagement

- Engagement of all relevant stakeholders
- Wider stakeholder engagement
- Identification of funding opportunities

The Group were asked to discuss the contents of the report and the three sub-groups (sustainable catchment management, delivery mechanisms and community engagement) to take forward the actions indicated in the relevant sections of this report and to report to the Group at our next meeting on 20 June.

### Discussion

4. Tom Ormesher - several of his members had raised concerns about the contents of the progress report.
5. Mat Jackson - there needs to be benefit to all residents in the Arun rather than just those located in the Lower Arun.
6. Gill Farquharson asked Tom Ormesher if his members had read the progress report? Tom responded by saying that the NFU and CLA were part of the AVVG to represent their members views.
7. Tom Ormesher –nobody is expecting the Environment Agency to change Treasury rules but that farmers and growers need support to be able to deliver a profitable business as well as deliver for conservation.
8. Adrian Waller - the people who live and work in the catchment need a more efficient system.
9. Tom Ormesher - there is a need for a managed structure to be put in place. Need to ensure management continuity - what steps in when a void is created?
10. John Godfrey - if the AVVG we able to come up with an option for delivering long term maintenance in the Arun valley then we need to establish a mechanism to fund this into the future.
11. Dave Robinson - if we want to establish a new way of delivering ongoing maintenance in the Arun Valley then collectively we need to establish a mechanism to deliver this and we need buy-in from the communities.
12. Jim Seymour - access to funding is getting tighter. He asked in light of the National Planning Policy Framework, if there was an opportunity to deliver net gain. As an example, in Kent they are looking at a strategy to deliver net gain.
13. Tom Ormesher - we need to understand the context in how that term is use. There are policy statements around flood risk and catchment management.
14. Mat Jackson - landowners are the lynchpin for delivery and we need to work to that end. Examples of good practice – Binstead Nursery. We need to focus on what works and explore alternative options such as how to utilise the funding offer on the table from the Norfolk Estate.
15. Tom Ormesher - felt that the group was in danger of drifting away from LTRAS and there was currently not enough focus on flood risk and community engagement.

16. Derek Waller raised 6 point:
  - a. Not enough information from NE regarding the protected sites
  - b. No view from Southern Water on climate change
  - c. No evidence on the state of the river and the rate of silting up
  - d. Not enough views from the farming community
  - e. LTRAS - £85million for Arundel – Where is this cost coming from?
  - f. Connected community – even if they were interested – it's a myth.

He feels that the report supports EA LTRAS recommendations. In a 100 years' time the valley will be salty, the protected sites will be salty and Arundel will be flooded.

17. Peter Knight – Not enough being done to protect farmers. Will not accept that LTRAS has been put to bed. A proposal has been put forward that the EA needs to consider. Maintenance is needed at Offham and South Stoke. A 3<sup>rd</sup> report has highlighted bank erosion.
18. Dave Robinson – The recommendation in SU4 is to no longer maintain. We need to follow up with Network Rail as we may need them to install protection to the assets. The key is to understand what we want the valley to look like in the future.
19. Adrian Waller – Whatever the direction of travel we need the Arun Valley to be a managed environment.
20. Tom Ormesher – it needs to be somewhere in between managed/naturalised. We need to be able to proactively respond to change. There needs to be continuity to the management.
21. Peter Knight – If the EA no longer maintain SU4 they will not be handing the assets over in a fair condition. For example we need the sluice gate to be handed over in fair/good condition.
22. Claire Kerr – The public sector are withdrawing their support. The community does not have the capacity to deal with this.
23. John Godfrey – we need to be mindful of the direction of public policy.
24. Tom Ormesher – we need to establish some options from the group.
25. Mat Jackson – For example, a Maintenance Management Board?
26. Tom Ormesher – suggest that we develop the art of the possible – scenarios for the Arun Valley.
27. Mat Jackson – Flood defence should be about risk management. Need to put this in context with communities. The EA have moved away from flood defence to flood risk management.
28. Jim Seymour – NE looking at designated sites in other parts of the country. Need to understand how community consensus is working in other parts of the country.
29. Adrian Waller – Confidence is a big question particularly with the landowners. We need continued management in a positive way. How do we build confidence?
30. John Godfrey – we need to develop options and scenarios which need further investigation.
31. Dave Robinson – We need to understand what the end point would be. Could there be local community management or is it a re-naturalised valley?
32. John Godfrey – there seems to be two polarised views which are as we are or a re-naturalised valley. Is there some middle ground where we could have elements which are maintained and areas which are re-naturalised?
33. Claire Kerr – There needs to be a piece of work to engage with landowners regarding the scenarios.
34. Tom Ormesher – Need to establish the evidence and confidence in the middle ground options, as many members will want to continue to hold the line.
35. Adrian Waller – Not just about the flood banks. We need data and evidence on the areas causing issues on the river as small interventions can have a great effect. An example is Houghton Causeway has silted up. Is there evidence/data to suggest that de-silting would help?
36. Peter Knight – Burpham loop has also silted up over the past 40 years which has resulted in more volume of water in the main river. As stated in our position statement 1) land on the Norfolk Estate to explore if this could be used for flood storage 2) partnership money to deliver ongoing maintenance.
37. Tom Ormesher – people recognise there needs to be change. We can have a conversation about middle ground.
38. Jim Seymour – we need to understand what people in the valley want – create habitat, in-channel work, embankment, conservation?
39. Claire Kerr – the economic viability of the valley is critical.
40. Tom Ormesher – what is the business model for delivering natural capital?

41. John Godfrey – If there is a middle ground – can we map out what this would look like?
42. Claire Kerr – We also need to map willingness to engage.
43. Jim Seymour – Build on the consensus owned by the people in the Arun Valley.
44. Derek Waller – The Norfolk Estate have offer land which could be used for periodic flood alleviation. LTRAS has suggested that this would cost £2million.
45. Mat Jackson – Alleviation pond might not be the most viable use for this land. Should explore what options are available for this land.
46. Tom Ormesher – maybe the vision project has come too early and should have followed the conclusion of the SU3 investigation.
47. John Godfrey – suggest that we do a piece of work to spatially map opportunities and scenarios for the Arun Valley.
48. Claire Kerr – we also need to consider NFM opportunities in the Arun Valley.
49. Dave Robinson – we need to stich all of these things together to produce scenarios and a report which looks at timescales for delivery, views of the land management community. The EA has red lines and cannot fund the existing status quo. Need to understand what the farming community want.
50. Tom Ormesher – the group needs to develop needs to develop 4 of 5 scenarios for the Arun Valley.
51. Jim Seymour – All the scenarios need to be achievable with different levels of consensus.
52. Adrian Waller – LTRAS is now an old document. Do we have current data for the river? Can the SU3 investigation be extended to the rest of the river?
53. Dave Robinson – It would be difficult to justify extending the SU3 investigation. A balance between spending money on an investigation or to continue maintaining.
54. Matt Jackson – Need to consider the interconnections between the surface water, groundwater and coast.
55. Claire Kerr – SU3 should give an insight into the rest of the valley.
56. John Godfrey – the group needs to produce a report which points to middle ground options and outlines the more time and resource is needed. There needs to be an ongoing structure for delivery.
57. Dave Robinson – the report needs to demonstrate an end point. We need to have a vision of what comes next. For example if the EA continued to maintain for 5 years could a charity be set up to continue ongoing maintenance beyond this point?
58. John Godfrey – would you be confident in getting this approved?
59. Dave Robinson – I have some control over local funding but would need to be able to justify the end point.
60. John Godfrey – like the concept of the Arun and Western Streams Catchment Partnership. Could constitute a framework for the future.
61. Tom Ormesher – Concerned that the catchment partnerships are not focussed on flood risk management. Needs to be a positive move towards developing scenarios. They do not necessarily need to be data rich but high level.
62. Mat Jackson – Sub-groups need to work together to develop the scenario.
63. Adrian Waller – there are a spread of views from the landowners in terms of scenarios and redlines.
64. Tom Ormesher – some landowners will need convincing.
65. John Godfrey – the 3 subgroups will work to develop a series of scenarios which will be reported back to the group at the next meeting on 20 June 2018.
66. Tom Ormesher – will write to the chairs to outline concerns on the draft paper by end of May.
67. Dave Robinson will report back to James Humphrys.

Action	Date
3 subgroups will work to develop a series of scenarios which will be reported back to the group at the next meeting on 20 June 2018.	20 June 2018.
Tom Ormesher – will write to the chairs to outline concerns on the draft paper.	End of May
Dave Robinson will report back to James Humphrys.	Next Meeting

## Maintenance in the Arun Valley

68. Dave Robinson – now an online map on the .gov showing the maintenance programme for 18/19. An excel spreadsheet has been developed internally which shows a costed breakdown of main river and IDB maintenance for 18/19. This can be circulated to the group.

Action	Date
Sara Denton to circulate maintenance spreadsheet to the steering group members.	End of May

## Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill

69. John Godfrey updated the group on the Rivers Authority and Land Drainage Private Members Bill. The second reading has been delayed until 11May 2018. Nick Herbert has been in touch and has suggested that its chances of success are low. We will keep a watching brief.

### Dates of future meetings 2018:

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2pm to 4.30pm

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2pm to 4.30pm

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2pm to 4.30pm