

LODDON FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION CONSULTATIVE

Agenda

DATE Thursday 23rd April 2026
VENUE Swallowfield Village Hall RG7 1QX
TIME Meeting has usual 7.30 pm start, 9.30 pm finish.

Apologies: Alison Cross, Amanda Ingham

Item:

1. Welcome MM

MM welcomed members to the meeting. Moragh Stirling was nominated as a River Champion posthumously and the award will be collected by her sister at the River Restoration Centre 2026 Conference.

1. Kate Tuck Councillor for Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council

The Loddon As A Legal Entity

KT is not a legal expert. Election purdah means KT cannot say anything political. Slides will be put on LFCC website so members can see links to further information. Rights of Rivers originated in NZ. The move has been led by HIWWT for the Upper Loddon in the B&D area. It uses a standard declaration of Right of Rivers to ensure consistency of the message. Make sure there are indicators and that they are reported on. Needs help from Loddon partners to define these. Don't know what DEFRA makes of this yet. It remains to be seen how this will work out in practice and what funding will be available to support the RoR concept. Local authorities are not able to make legislation relating to RoR so this would have to come from central government. The initiative does raise community engagement and appears to be increasing parliamentary awareness through House of Commons briefing. Wider catchment collaboration / catchment action plan and aquifer water quality investigation should be encouraged.

2. LCP/SERT update Josh Bowes

EA funds are available for fish population improvements and fish passages on Whitewater. Report on main mills has shown that there may be scope for improved passage. Greywell FF and Whitewater syndicate had electro surveys. See MM report. Hope to get a good section restored to proper chalk stream habitat. SERT hoping to ease process for getting FRAP under a trusted

partner scheme. LCP want live map of issues, projects and so on which will be on Storymaps on LCP website. Needs more case studies on e.g. citizen science, habitat improvement. Need to coordinate mink trapping, meeting with all those involved. 2nd year of water vole reintroduction want to continue and spread that. MM suggested maybe brainstorm Storymap at an LFCC meeting. SERT GIS person will try to integrate water quality data from AT WQMN, Water Rangers, etc.

3. Break 20 mins

4. EA news Tom Haggert

Fish surveys are taking place around the Loddon catchment. (Loddon, Lyde, Hart, Cove Brook, Barkham Brook) See EA data explorer for results, when available. Sheepbridge survey recent. Run 1 37 fish in total. Run 2 only 3 fish. 100m runs. Chub good size. Missing year class? Not diverse. E.g. no dace this year. No barbel. Wish Stream invert sampling turned up BT alevins. RMA provides labour for projects. Looking at two more projects to improve d/s of Ade's project. The Stream has poor habitat and very impounded. Some weirs high. Where no impoundments habitat is quite good. FIPs bid outcome, projects will be notified soon. EA went to the Big One show, inc Calverton. Lots of interest from public.

5. Petty's Brook and Whitewater surveys March 26 - IW and MM

MM survey 25th March. Two sites Diple Mill and Borough Court. Diple Mill showed very poor fish population and the habitat is not good, more like a canal than a chalk stream. Site 2 looks had some recruitment of BT, but not clear if this was local, and still a rather small fish population. Rather poor habitat. 2014 electrofishing also showed low numbers of fish so is there a chronic issue at play?

IW Petty's Brook. Lowest section is the most natural but still not good habitat. Next section is the deepest section but very straight and heavily engineered. The top sections are very poor habitat with shallow water, concrete bottom and concrete sides. Despite this there are BT in the lower sections and their sizes suggest spawning and recruitment is taking place but given the hard nature of much of the Brook, just where they might spawn is unknown. There were also some small chub – where might they spawn? SERT will undertake major habitat improvements which will remove concrete. This should improve things a lot. There is a lack of submerged and emergent macrophytes which needs to be fixed somehow. Above the top section, the habitat looks better, more natural and with emergent vegetation so hopefully the restored sections will look, like that.

6. AOB –

MM can arrange a visit to Eddington Mill, Hungerford to see weir removal. Flexible on timing so long as not in main mayfly hatch. Ewhurst Estate beavers visit can be arranged in July/early August but it costs £20 each and need at

least 10 people. Would have to be an afternoon visit. LFCC will post a poll to see who is interested and possible dates/days of the week.

Mink traps Gresham AS has been paid and a few others paid. We are attempting to liaise with BBOWT and Waterlife Recovery Trust to develop and support the mink eradication measures.

TW have a fund for habitat improvement. Need support from LCP so contact Josh. Should be a recurrent fund so more applications in 6 months.

7. Date of next meeting 22nd October 2026

END