



Title of Meeting: Wales Land Management Forum (WLMF) Sub-Group on Agricultural Pollution

Date of Meeting: 8th July 2019

Venue: Site visit to Cemaes Bay, Anglesey

Meeting at:
NRW Office
Bangor
LL57 2DW
& via Skype

Present: Zoe Henderson (NRW Board member & Chairperson)
Bob Vaughan (NRW)
Dennis Matheson (Tenant Farmers Association)
Creighton Harvey (Carmarthenshire Fishermen's Federation)
Bernard Griffiths (FUW)
Helen Haider (NRW)
Marc Williams (NRW)
Sarah Hetherington (NRW)
Andrew Chambers (WG)
Betsan John (WG)
Ceri Davies (FUW)
Liz Franks (Hafren Dyfrydwy)
Kate Snow (United Utilities)
Geraint Davies (NRW Board Member)
Euryn Roberts (NRW)
Daniel Grant (NRW)

Via Skype at NRW Office: Steven Bradley (Welsh Water)
Stephen Marsh-Smith (Wales Environment Link)
Jamie McCoy (AHDB)

Apologies: Matt Lowe (NRW)
Rachel Lewis-Davies (NFU Cymru)
Meinir Wigley (NRW)
James Dowling (WG)
Kirsten Hughes (HCC)
Lorna Davis (NFU Cymru)

Sara Jenkins (Menter a Busnes)
Rhianne Jones (CLA)
Geraint Weber (NRW)

**Also, in
attendance:**

Gareth Browning (WG) item 3 only

No: Item

1. Site Visit at Cemaes Bay, Anglesey

The site visit to Cemaes Bay and the lower Wygyr catchment was led by Euryrn Roberts and Daniel Grant, NRW. Euryrn provided a background on Bathing Water standards and explained that Cemaes Bay was sufficient in 2016 but then dropped to poor for 2 years. This year the bathing water status has gone back to sufficient.

When Cemaes Bay was classified as Poor a number of public meetings were held and a working group was set up. Professor David Kay, Aberystwyth University, undertook monitoring of bacteria in the area and developed a modelling system to predict the risks to bathing waters. In June 2018, Isle of Anglesey County Council started using the new prediction model developed by Aberystwyth University for Cemaes Bay. Their modelling showed that the levels of bacteria in the water had the greatest correlation to river discharge, followed by rainfall, then other factors such as air temperature, relative humidity and tidal height. The new model is more sophisticated than the old one which only took rainfall into account and will improve the information provided to the public. The prediction is updated daily during the week and twice on the weekend and Bank Holidays.

Each time the beach is sampled an additional bottle will be collected that can be analysed for DNA if the bacterial results of the sample are high, to determine the source of the faecal pollution.

The Wygyr is the main river in the catchment which is predominately influenced by agriculture. Also, Llanfechell Sewage Treatment Works discharges into the river that can also have an impact. A bacterial monitoring programme is being carried out on the Afon Wygyr which will show where the main bacterial loads are coming from within the catchment.

Daniel Grant explained that work has been undertaken in the catchment to improve the water quality and reduce the bacterial load which affects the Bathing Water beach at Cemaes Bay. NRW has worked with DCWW, Local Authorities, landowners and homeowners within the catchment. Areas of the watercourse have been fenced off to prevent livestock entering the river. Drinking bays have been installed for smaller schemes but for larger farms water troughs via mains water connection will be given as an alternative water supply. Key areas were identified

where the fencing should take place after catchment walks were undertaken. Further work will commence in 2019 as well as 2020 and will be carried out across the whole of the catchment.

The members were shown the Bathing Water beach in Cemaes before walking upriver. There are a number of man-made weirs on the Wygyr which acts as a barrier to migratory fish but can also effectively act as a silt trap. It was explained that notches have been cut out on some weirs by the Rivers Trust for the easy movement of fish. The members were shown a bridge that had been installed over the Wygyr as an alternative to a crossing point and prevent livestock entering the river. Currently adjacent to the bridge is a drinking bay to restrict the amount of livestock entering the watercourse. However, this will be closed off soon as this farm will have an alternative water source from a borehole which NRW recently paid for.

Pollution Prevention work and collaborative engagement in the catchment will continue to further improve the water quality status of Cemaes Bay Bathing Water beach.



WLMF Sub-Group members site visit to Cemaes

2. Welcome and Apologies

Zoe Henderson thanked everyone who attended the site visit to Cemaes Bay in the morning, travelling to the most northerly point in Wales. The site visit was very useful, and Zoe thanked Euryng Roberts and Daniel Grant for the talk during the site visit. Zoe welcomed everyone to the meeting at the NRW Office in Bangor and thanked Gareth Browning, WG, for attending the meeting to discuss innovation with the group.

3. SBRI – driving innovation within the public sector

Gareth Browning, WG, provided a presentation on the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) which helps to connect public sector organisations with companies to develop innovative solutions. SBRI is a competitive process delivered by Innovate UK which uses business innovation to solve problems and challenges facing the public sector. It leads to better public services and economic development. Funding can also be provided towards the projects. Innovate UK is pushing for more sectors to use this process as more projects that are run in Wales creates further links with Welsh businesses and encourages cross boundary working.

The benefit of the SBRI process is that it helps the public sector to tap into new ideas and technologies that would not be available to them through the normal channels. New ideas can be explored which is managed through a phased development programme running a portfolio of the most promising projects.

Gareth Browning provided some examples of projects that have been successful through the SBRI. These included the All Wales Coast Path, NRW metal Mines challenge, portable renewable energy, and Monmouthshire GovTech Challenge. The SBRI has not currently created jobs in Wales as the scheme is still in the early stages. It is hoped that as the SBRI develops jobs will be created, which will contribute to the Welsh economy.

The main part of the presentation was for the members to have a discussion and identify a range of concerns on agricultural pollution. From the concerns a list of challenges can be drafted and circulated to the members, along with providing them to Gareth Browning to review. These challenges will be broad in order for organisations to suggest and develop innovative solutions. Another meeting to discuss these challenges further will be arranged. A portfolio will be created for the key challenges to be taken forward. Gareth Browning offered to provide template portfolios to help with the application.

AP1: Collate all the WLMF Concerns and identify the Challenges to be shared with the Sub-Group and with Gareth Browning (Bob Vaughan/Marc Williams, NRW)

AP2: Arrange another meeting to discuss the challenges further and create a competition brief (Marc Williams, NRW)

AP3: Circulate SBRI presentation to the Sub-Group (Helen Haider/Marc Williams, NRW)

AP4: Provide portfolio templates to help with application (Gareth Browning, WG)

4. Arrangements for future WLMF Sub-Group meetings

The Task & Finish Group on Regulation meeting will be held on 16th July 2019 at Temple of Peace, Cathays Park, Cardiff where ADAS will discuss the RIA report that has recently been submitted to the Minister.

AP5: Circulate RIA Report by ADAS to the Sub-Group in plenty of time prior to the T&F Group Meeting (Andrew Chambers, NRW)

NRW will be hosting a Nutrient Management Event on the NRW Stand at the RWAS starting at 2pm, to promote the safe use and application of slurry. Guest speakers include Kevin Thomas, LANTRA, and Chris Duller.

5. Minutes from the meeting on 13 June & outstanding action points

The minutes of the 13th June meeting were provided to the members and it was requested that they were checked for accuracy. Zoe Henderson requested that all the outstanding action points from previous meetings must be completed as soon as possible.

AP6: Review the minutes from 13th June meeting and send comments/amendments to Marc Williams by 9th August (All)

AP7: Circulate the outstanding actions to the Sub-Group (Marc Williams, NRW).

AP8: Ensure outstanding actions from previous Sub-Group meetings are completed (All).

6. Update on relevant diary activities

Zoe Henderson attended the AHDB first Strategic dairy farm event in Flintshire. It was encouraging to see a number of young people at the event sharing information and their knowledge.

Bob Vaughan and Zoe Henderson met with Philip Hughes, Director of EKOGEA UK, to discuss the various techniques developed to treat slurry, to reduce ammonia emissions, and a plastic disposal unit to break down plastic to its original components. They discussed what support was needed to help deliver these items to the market.

Nichola Taylor, NRW, provided an update on Area Statements to the Sub-Group and made members aware of a series of workshops that have been organised across Wales. The workshops will take a place-based approach and NRW would like to encourage as many farmers to

attend.

AP9: Circulate dates of the Area Statement workshops to the Sub-Group members (Nichola Taylor, NRW)

7. AOB

Nothing raised under AOB.
