

Wye Catchment Partnership

Terms of Reference

Revised version – TOR Annex 2 – Adopted at the Wye Catchment Partnership 24.1.24

1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference set out the strategic aims of the Wye Catchment Partnership (WCP) including its role, areas of work and responsibilities. They have been produced to replace the document ‘WCP Terms of Reference Annex 1 2019-2020’ and will be revisited as necessary and reviewed annually by the Steering Group.

2. Background

CaBA – Catchment Based Approach

The WCP was established in 2014. It is part of the national initiative known as the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA): an inclusive, civil society-led initiative that works in partnership with Government, Local Authorities, Water Companies, businesses and more, to maximise the natural value of our environment.

CaBA partnerships are actively working in all 100+ river catchments across England (and cross-border with Wales in the case of the WCP), directly supporting achievement of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and many of the targets under the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan.

CaBA embeds collaborative working at a river catchment scale, delivering a range of environmental, social and economic benefits and protecting water environments for all.

The process by which CaBAs operate is provided in the CaBA workflow (Figure 1.) with more detail available at the CaBA website (<https://catchmentbasedapproach.org/>).

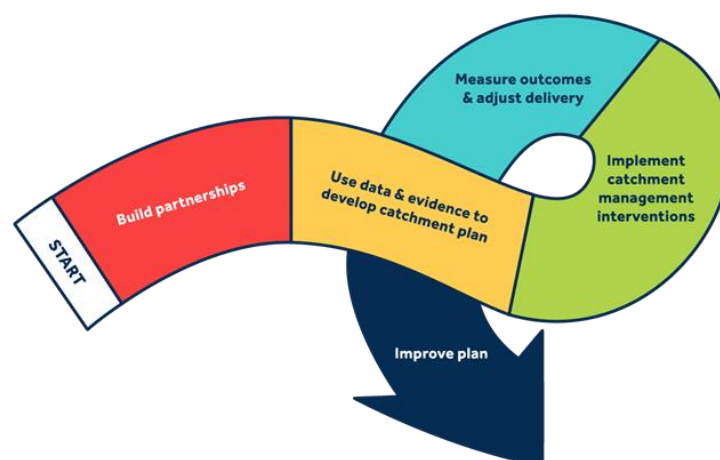


Figure 1. Catchment Partnerships - Outline of CaBA workflow

Area: The Wye Catchment

The Wye catchment covers 4,285km² spanning two countries and five counties. The river Wye stretches over 200 kilometres from its source at Plynlimon in mid-Wales to the Severn Estuary, making it the fifth longest river in the UK. For most of its length the river runs through the Welsh Marches and has many significant tributaries including the Elan, Irfon, Ithon, Lugg and Monnow.

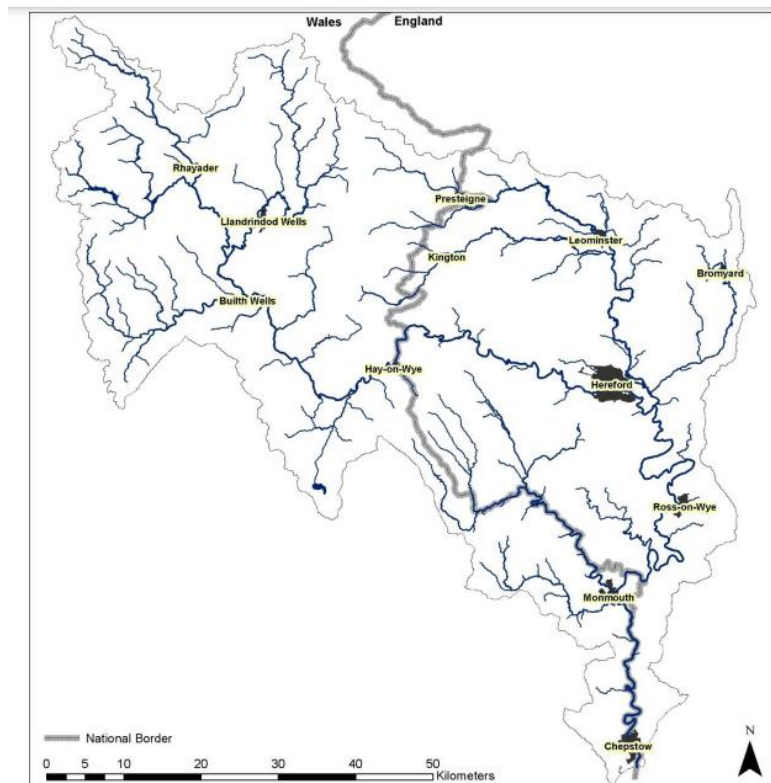


Fig 2 – Catchment map of the river Wye from source to mouth including all main tributaries

The Wye Catchment is an internationally important habitat, reflected in its multiple designations as a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The catchment is rich in wildlife and precious habitat which is recognised by its designated areas including the Wye Valley National Landscape, National Nature Reserves, and Local Nature Reserves. The Wye flows through several sizeable towns including Builth Wells, Hay-on-Wye, Hereford, Ross-on-Wye, Monmouth and Chepstow with Kington, Leominster, Llandrindod Wells and Bromyard as the main towns on its tributaries.

3. Mission and Purpose

3.1 Mission statement: To restore the catchment to a state that supports favourable conservation status of the designated features of the Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Lugg SSSI.

3.2 Purpose - The purpose of the WCP is to generate a Catchment Management Plan (CMP) and to coordinate its delivery by partners.

To do so, its members commit:

- i. To work collaboratively and transparently as a partnership to ensure a collective understanding of issues and delivery of the CMP, aligning policy, science, delivery and funding at a catchment scale.
- ii. To establish roles and responsibilities of partners in the delivery of agreed actions and interventions.
- iii. To identify, qualify and champion a pipeline of key projects.
- iv. To identify and highlight areas of efficiency or conflict between projects and partners.
- v. To ensure that the CMP informs and is informed by any other catchment-oriented planning at local or national level.
- vi. To adhere to monitoring and reporting deadlines as laid out in the catchment plan and against National Success Measures (as required by funders – **see Appendix 1**).
- vii. Take part in regular activities including partnership meetings to achieve the above.
- viii. Avoid the use of the WCP in communications and activities which may be construed as lobbying; there is no constraint on partners doing this in their own right.

The WCPs principal areas of activity will include but not be limited to:

- a. Regularly review, update and improve the catchment plan based on the latest data, delivery, evidence and any other catchment-oriented plans.
- b. Providing a forum for all efforts, plans and other forums (e.g., Nutrient Management Plan, Local Nature Recovery Strategy, etc.) in the catchment to be shared and communicated to ensure a holistic approach to the delivery of the CMP.
- c. Work as a partnership in order to:
 - i. Improve water quality and riverine habitat in the catchment.
 - ii. Enhance the condition and connectivity of local wildlife habitats and species.
 - iii. Promote water resilience to support conservation status and ensure flooding is reduced in high flows and that in low flows there is sufficient water.
 - iv. Collect, analyse and share data, learning and key outcomes identified in the catchment plan.
- d. Promoting responsible behaviour of all users of the Wye with other stakeholders.

4. Governance structure

4.1 Status



Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) partnerships are civil society-led, voluntary, non-statutory body which are run by one or more host organisations and funded by the Environment Agency. The WCP is jointly hosted by the Wye and Usk Foundation (WUF) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) as a cross-border CaBA.

WUF as a joint host hold and expend the fund to achieve the objectives of the partnership. WUF as joint host also benefits from funding from Natural Resources Wales and other funders. Funding and expenditure information will be submitted to the Steering Group by WUF and shared with the WCP within two months of the end of each financial year. Any organisation can contribute funds or resource to the WCP.

Projects and activities recommended or supported by the Catchment Partnership will be led by other organisations best placed to do so. The WCP is unincorporated and is not a legal entity.

4.2 Administration

As joint-host of the WCP, WUF provides administrative, coordination and facilitation support to the WCP. WUF works with the WCP to draw up the CMP and helps co-ordinate its delivery.

4.3 The Partnership

The WCP consists of representatives from statutory agencies, local authorities, public/private voluntary sector organisations and interested individuals with interests in the River Wye and its catchment. Interests range across farming, conservation, recreation, local business, citizen science and wider society.

Membership of the partnership is conferred to an individual or an individual who represents an organisation or sector (public, private, NGO, charity, local community group) which supports the aims of the WCP and whose goals align with the remit set out for the WCP.

All catchment partners are to contribute to the identification of activities required to enable the WCP to function, excluding those activities which fall wholly within the remit of member organisations. Such activities are to be reviewed at least annually.

WUF will keep a list of members and the Steering Group (see below) will review it annually. Members who are not active, that is, not participating in WCP meetings, actions and management processes, will be placed on a 'correspondence only' list and be informed of the change of status.

Registering with the Partnership is open to all through contact with the host: Kath Pyke Email kath@wyeuskfoundation.org

Current organisations are listed in **Appendix 3**.

4.4 Steering Group

The Steering Group of the Catchment Partnership shall consist of the host organisations, secretary, statutory body representatives and key partner representatives. To become part of the steering group you must be an active partner in the Wye Catchment Partnership. Interested parties should contact WUF with a proposal for joining which details how the individual or organization can provide additional strategic

oversight and/or guidance to the partnership. Proposals will be considered by the Steering Group at the following Steering Group meeting.

If an organization fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings or acts in a way that is contrary to the code of conduct (section 5) of the Partnership, the Steering Group can vote to remove them from either the Steering Group or the Partnership.

The Steering Group is designed to be small and made up of organisations with representatives selected for their skills and expertise. It is quorate only if attended by a half+1 of its membership.

Steering Group responsibilities:

- Oversee the development of the CMP and establish delivery responsibilities and timeframes.
- Set WCP meeting agendas with appropriate process and within appropriate timeframes.
- Identify policy and funding opportunities that the WCP can support or utilise.
- Review and approve membership of the Steering Group
- Establish chairs for Steering Group and WCP meetings
- Review and approve these Terms of Reference at least annually

The current Steering Group is listed in **Appendix 2**

4.5 Chairing of meetings

The meetings of the WCP will be chaired by an independent Chair identified and elected by the WCP following best practice regarding the selection of independent chairs for public bodies. That person will independently and impartially chair the group without voting rights. The chair will arrange, lead and conclude the meeting and as a facilitator keep the discussion and decision-making on track. The tenure of the Chair shall be for as long as the WCP considers them appropriate for the position, which will be confirmed at a WCP meeting at least annually, or as long as they are willing to continue as Chair.

If the independent chair is not available for a given meeting of the WCP, a member of the Steering Group will take on the role of Chair and involve themselves only in the impartial facilitation of the meeting; this member may appoint a deputy to represent their organisation for that meeting. The WCP Chair is required to attend all meetings of the Steering Group to ensure understanding of progress made between WCP meetings with regards to actions and issues arising from the WCP meetings.

The meetings of the Steering Group will be chaired by a member of the Steering Group identified by the secretary prior to each meeting, on a rotational basis.

4.6 Operations

It is intended that the WCP be given adequate structure without being burdened by formality.

A quorum of 15 organisations is required for any voting to be held at a Partnership meeting.



Any person who is not a member of the WCP, including representatives of other organisations, shall be entitled to attend and address a meeting by prior arrangement, unless there is an objection from an existing member. Such persons will have no voting rights.

Issue-based '**Task & Finish**' groups will be set up by agreement of the members to explore issues, identify solutions, perform activities and make recommendations to the WCP, with support from the broader Partnership. The make-up of T&F groups will be based on volunteering from WCP members and agreed by consensus at Partnership meetings.

4.7 Frequency of meetings

The Partnership will meet quarterly. Meetings should address both governance and management. Meetings will be face to face (whenever possible) and based in the catchment. Further events, and site meetings may be held as required and funding allows.

4.8 Agenda

Partnership meeting agendas will be developed by the Steering Group and circulated by WUF with supporting paperwork at least a week in advance of both Steering Group and Partnership meetings with a list of decisions required to be made/ outcomes to be achieved at the meeting.

Steering Group meeting agendas will be determined by WUF with input from the Steering Group and with consideration given to items raised by the Partnership either at meetings or otherwise.

Meeting details and supporting documents will be shared on the Partnership website.

4.9 Decision-making and resolutions

Decisions are made based on consensus both at the Partnership and Steering Group level. Where consensus is not reached, voting may be required. In the event of vote, each organisation present will have 1 vote. In the event of a tie, WUF will have the casting vote.

5. Code of conduct

Partners must treat others with dignity and fairness, listening to others points of views and working as a collaborative partnership as described in section 3.2. Questions and discussions will be limited to items being explored. Partners must not discriminate against anyone because of their employment, religion, belief, race, colour, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, social and economic status or national origin.

This is to be re-iterated at the start of each meeting.

6. Communication

WUF will host a web page to serve as an information hub and link to Partner organisations websites and newsfeeds.

Any major changes to website content will be published only once the Steering Group has had an opportunity to review and raise any concerns to be addressed.



Communication with members will be predominantly by email and links to website.

Meetings will be conducted and recorded in English but the secretary will always ask if this is acceptable.

Note: Publicity and online presence may require Welsh language options

Appendices

- Appendix 1 WEIF9801 Catchment Partnership Grant Offer Requirement to report against National Success Measures (NSM's)
- Appendix 2 WCP Steering Group (updated January 24)
- Appendix 3 Partner Organisations (updated January 24)

Appendix 1

WEIF9801 Catchment Partnership Grant Offer Requirement to report against National Success Measures (NSM's)

Extract from Environment Agency grant offer letter

All recipients of the grant will need to report against the following National Success Measures (NSM),

- *NSM A – Engagement*
 - *Review and update your Catchment Management Plan to standards given in guidance on the website, by 29 March 2024, the plan must be accessible via the CaBA website page*
 - *Use the knowledge you gained from 2021-23 and newly available census data to engage communities in your catchment and take action to improve the equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in your partnership and its activities by building trust and making space for collaboration with underrepresented groups*
- *NSM B - Monitoring - complete accurately and return the annual CaBA Monitoring and Evaluation assessment process by 1 July 2023 and the partnership grant Statement of Account by 22 May 2023*
- *NSM C - Evaluation - undertake a partnership self-evaluation exercise by 29 March 2024.*

Appendix 2

WCP Steering Group (updated November 23)

Organization

Citizen Science Wye Alliance
DCWW
Environment Agency
County Councils representative
(Herefordshire/Powys/Monmouthshire)
Farm Herefordshire
Farming Connect
Natural England
NRW
The Wildlife Trusts (Herefordshire/Radnorshire)
WCP/WUF Secretariat
WUF
Wye Valley National Landscape

Contact

Pat Stirling
*Daniel Humphreys/Sarah Jones
Emma Whitehouse/Martin Quine

Elizabeth Duberley
Steve Klenk
Nerys Hammond
Rhiannon Pierce
Gillian Perry
Jamie Audsley/James Hitchcock
Kath Pyke
Simon Evans
Andrew Blake

* Daniel Humphreys - cover for Jenny Grubb, DCWW until Oct 2024

Appendix 3 Partner Organisations

List of Wye Catchment Partnership organisations – (updated October 2023)

WCP Partnership

Afonydd Cymru
Agronomist - Agronomy Adviser
ADAS - Agricultural Consultant Rosemaund location
Avara
Bodenham Flood Group
Bannau Brycheiniog National Park
Brienton Council
Bright Space Foundation
Bugs and Beasties
British Standup Paddle Board Association
Canoe Wales
Campaign for Farmed Environment
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Campaign to Protect Rural Wales
Cardiff University
Cardiff University 'Duress' project
Catchment Sensitive Farming
Country landowners Association
Coed Cymru
Cranfield University
DCWW Welsh Water
Duchy of Cornwall
Elan Valley Trust
English Severn and Wye Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Environment Agency
Farming Connect
Farm Cymru
Field Options
Friends of the Upper Wye
Friends of the Lower Wye
FWAG Cymru
Gwent Wildlife Trust
HCILG (Herefordshire Construction Industry Lobby Group)
Hay River Wye Alliance (GH Alliance)
Hay Castle Fishery/Racquets Farm/Want to Canoe?
Hereford Local Nature Partnership
Herefordshire Council
Herefordshire Meadows
Herefordshire NFU Chairman
Herefordshire Rural Hub
Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
Keep Wales Tidy



Lafarge Tarmac
Lugg & Arrow Fisheries Association
Lugg Internal Drainage Board
Marches Planning
Monmouthshire County Council
Monnow Rivers Association
Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust
National Sheep Association
National Farmers Union
Natural England
Natural Resources Wales
NFU Cymru
Paddles and Pedals
Pasture Fed Livestock Association
Pasture for Life
Powys County Council
Powys Moorland Partnership SMS Project
Private forestry
Radnorshire Wildlife Trust
RSPB
Save the Wye Coalition
Severn Trent Water
The Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales – Brecknock
Welsh Government (GA)
Woodland Trust/Coed Cadw
Wye Alliance
Wyecliff Fishery
Wye & Usk Foundation
Wye Salmon Association
Wye Valley National Landscape