

NEWSLETTER

April 2005

www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk



Creation of the Shire Group

On 1 November 2004 the Shire Group of IDBs was created following the merger of two civil engineering firms. The oldest, Grantham Brundell & Farran of Doncaster, had enjoyed its 160th birthday before it merged with JBA Consulting of Skipton on the latter's 9th Birthday. Both firms are heavily involved in the disciplines of drainage, flooding and water level management.

The merger brought together twenty five Internal Drainage Boards where Grantham Brundell & Farran provided management or engineering services (or both) and three IDBs being managed by JBA Consulting. The group of twenty eight Boards receives a number of services from the merged company (known as JBA Consulting (incorporating Grantham Brundell & Farran)): these being Clerk, Engineer, Environmental Officer and Health and Safety Officer.

The current 28 Boards in the Shire Group (in alphabetical order) are:-

- Ancholme IDB
- Armthorpe IDB Board
- Ashfields and West Moor IDB
- Bedale and Upper Swale IDB
- Black Drain Drainage Board
- Cod Beck IDB
- Deane and Dove IDB
- Dun Drainage Commissioners
- Everton Drainage Board
- Fairham Brook IDB
- Finningley IDB
- Gainsborough IDB
- Garthorpe Drainage Board
- Goole and Airmyn IDB
- Corporation of the Level of Hatfield Chase

IDB

- Knottingley to Gowdall IDB
- Laneham IDB
- Lower Swale IDB
- Messingham IDB
- Potteric Carr IDB
- Reedness and Swinefleet Drainage Board
- River Lugg IDB
- River Wiske IDB
- Scunthorpe IDB
- Selby Area IDB
- Sow and Penk IDB
- Tween Bridge IDB
- Went IDB

New Offices

The Boards have re-located to larger premises at Denison House on Hexthorpe Road, Doncaster (adjacent to the main railway station). The telephone and fax numbers remain unchanged, i.e. 01302 342055 and 01302 329887. The email address is info@shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk and the Group's website may be found at www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk.



There is also an area office for the Thirsk group of three Boards, managed by Tony Hardwick, at 19 Market Place, Thirsk, North Yorkshire YO7 1HD, telephone 01845 522724, fax 01845 522724 and email tony.hardwick@jbaconsulting.co.uk.

The Doncaster office is managed by Richard Annable BSc MSc CEng MICE MCIWEM, formerly from JBA's Skipton office which leaves Riley South, Bruce Gelsthorpe and Jennifer Cooke (the former partners of Grantham Brundell



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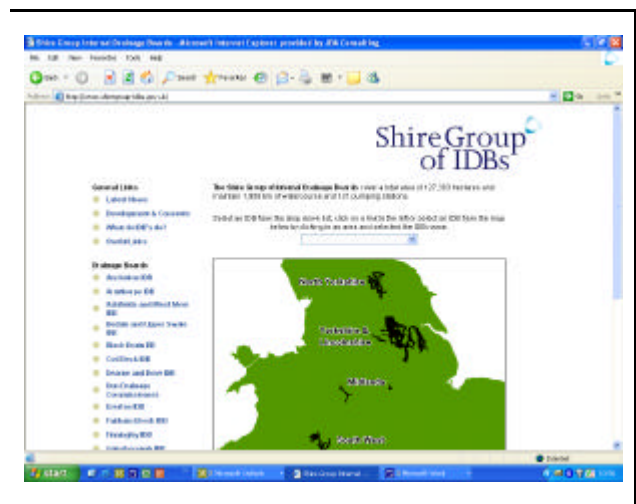


and Farran) to manage the Internal Drainage Boards at the Shire Group Head Office as in the past.



The Doncaster office (shown above) is a modern open plan office, fully IT-enabled to promote the modern, professional future all Internal Drainage Boards must have.

Each Board has its own Policy Statements, complaints procedure; capital works programme, maintenance programme and Internal Auditors. These may be viewed on the Shire Group website.



Benefits of the Grouping

The Shire Group of Boards will be able to meet all of the new criteria now being put in place by Defra: these being efficiency, effectiveness, simplicity and transparency, accountability, local democratic input and autonomy.

The Shire Group of Boards covers 127,303 hectares, maintain 2,133 km of watercourses and manage 125 pumping stations.

In the last two or three years the Boards have been busily involved in refurbishing pumping stations and outfalls in addition to completing their annual maintenance programme, but more on this, telemetry, environmental issues and Asset Management Plans in future issues of this News Sheet.

Each Board manages its own affairs with its own full compliment of Board members, but as a group they have the representation to match any larger Boards in the country. It also means they have a full compliment of staff covering their affairs every day, both inside and outside of office hours. This includes Clerk services, Engineering services, Health and Safety advice and of course a full compliment of Environmental Scientists to meet the whole new raft of legislation now required of Internal Drainage Boards. The Boards have varying methods of completing their programmes. Some use contractors and others have their own workforce and plant. However, they all support each other in a crisis period and various groups of Boards share each other's skills and foreman/pump attendants.

The Boards have an annual meeting of Chairmen, arranged by JBA Consulting, at which a variety of topics are covered and a great deal of information and experiences are exchanged. It was at one of these meetings that the experiences of the Ancholme, Scunthorpe and Messingham group of Boards with telemetry was related to the rest of the

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consortium and sparked a trend for all Boards with pumping plant and operations that need monitoring to move into using telemetry. To date eleven Boards are now benefiting from these systems, which are monitored at Doncaster and remotely at various sites. Full control of each station is available from Doncaster and the remote sites.

Scientific Interest are monitored and the needs reported on to Boards when necessary. This is an area where Boards are having to be proactive and not reactive. All the Boards' maintenance has to be agreed with English Nature, as does that of any capital works, and all necessary advertising and consent obtained. Boards can no longer survive by "brushing these matters under the carpet."

Environmental Work

Environmental work has covered the surveying and recording of the current state of all watercourses in all Internal Drainage Board districts so that the Boards can report on their habitat losses and gains etc.

Asset Management

All the records of the Boards are added to an up-to-date GIS system which is again continuously monitored and updated by the staff at Doncaster.

Asset management plans have been around for many years, but Internal Drainage Boards have been slow to put them in place. However, three of the group (the Thirsk Boards) have already adopted asset management plans and the rest of the Shire Group is now looking towards taking the same route. Such plans will improve the Boards' administration and efficiency.

Weed control in drains & watercourses



David Patrick, Senior Environmental Consultant with JBA and member of the Association of Drainage Authorities Technical & Environmental Sub-committee writes:

The case for aquatic use of Diquat was considered at the Advisory Committee on Pesticides (ACP) in March. European Ministers have agreed to an emergency authorisation. This will be issued as a Specific Off-Label Approval (SOLA) for 'Reglone' in the next few days. Copies will be sent to the Environment Agency and English Nature. Full details will be linked to an item appearing under 'Latest News' on the PSD website (www.pesticides.gov.uk). This looks like a brief success for the work GBF/JBA undertook with Witham Fourth IDB last summer and the submission was well supported by our sampling and analysis work on the effects of Diquat (Midstream) on the aquatic communities.

Future Issues

If you have any articles for future editions of this newsletter or any comments please send them to:

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Pollution occurrences are monitored and advice is given to the Boards on the full range of legislation now affecting the industry. Sites of Special