

NEWSLETTER

November 2005

www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk



Happy Birthday Shire Group!

By Bruce Gelsthorpe

On the 1st November, the Shire Group reached its first birthday. Where did that year go? Did someone turn the pages of the calendar when we weren't looking?!! And what a year it has been for Internal Drainage Boards.

David Noble retires from the Association of Drainage Authorities; IDBs have to supply information to the National Flood and Coastal Defence Database (NFCDD), get to grips with Asset Management Plans, COW's are resurrected by the Environment Agency and we are told that the future allocation of grant aid for schemes for Boards may be controlled by the Environment Agency.

Last, but not least, JBA is awarded the contract from Defra to review the way Internal Drainage Boards operate, which brings us to what is to be the first item of this Newsletter No.2, "*Review of Internal Drainage Boards*", with comments from our Managing Director, Jeremy Benn.

The environment still features heavily in the life of IDBs. Legislation is still being issued, but hopefully we have all now got the message that our environment matters, good management is a statutory duty, and neither will manage themselves. We have certainly got the message here at the Shire Group with a team of six environmental scientists headed by David Patrick busy on providing advice, baseline surveys and impact assessment. And that brings me nicely to our second article.

IDB Review

By Jeremy Benn

JBA has been appointed by Defra's Flood Risk Management Division to undertake an Independent Review of the industry and to produce a report with recommendations. The report is to be submitted to Defra by January 2006.

The terms of reference of the review are:

To consider the current institutional and administrative arrangements of IDBs in England; to advise on a suitable model arrangement for such boards that will ensure that, in delivering their flood management responsibilities, boards are efficient, accountable and representative of the interests of both drainage ratepayers and wider interests; and to assess existing boards against this model.

In consultation with Boards, Defra, EA, ADA and English Nature optimal arrangements for IDBs to achieve the following are to be identified:

1. **Organisation** – Boards that are organised optimally in terms of their boundaries, size and turnover, to ensure they are efficient, effective and deliver value for money. Defra seek recommendations on whether there are size and/or turnover thresholds below which IDBs cannot be considered viable to continue as separate entities. Defra also seek recommendations on whether any regional differences in the organisation of IDBs can be justified to reflect the varying land use in the drainage district and hence the focus of the IDB operations.
2. **Representation** – Boards that properly reflect the needs of all relevant stakeholders, reflecting modern expectations on public bodies. The Land Drainage Act 1991 confines IDB membership to elected members from among the drainage ratepayers and special levy paying council nominees. Changes in legislation to provide for a broader membership are unlikely in the short term but JBA has been asked to advise on the feasibility of IDBs accessing, and taking account of, stakeholder views by other means. This might involve setting up and regularly consulting panels of relevant interests; and ensuring that arrangements for meetings are such that members of the public have genuine access. The review is also to consider engagement with levy paying councils, in particular to ensure that their work programmes are affordable.
3. **Delivery of wider Government Objectives** – Boards are required to take sufficient account of wider Government objectives, in particular those relating to environmental issues (one of which is to

NEWSLETTER

November 2005

www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk



bring 95% of SSSIs into favourable condition by 2010). Boards need to have a clear vision of the service they are providing, and systems in place to monitor service standards.

4. **Access to specialist advice.** IDBs have to comply with a growing body of legislation, including that relating to environment and conservation, health and safety, contractual and employment law. Defra would like JBA to draw up a model arrangement setting out the specialist advice to which IDBs need access and the different arrangements that there are for achieving this (for example through direct employment, consortia, contracting in, use of ADA).

5. **Optimal internal organisation and management including financial arrangements** – Boards to demonstrate they are organised optimally in terms of the way they do business. This covers issues such as:

- ensuring that the clerk's office is staffed throughout the year during normal working hours with out of hours contacts in the event of an emergency;
- benefiting from economies in scale in respect of using contractors, procuring work, making payments, accounting and financial arrangements.

JBA will be starting with a major consultation exercise to all IDBs this month. The JBA project team consists of Gary Deakin as Project Manager and myself, Jonathan Cooper and Zoe Whiteman. The knowledge of Bruce Gelsthorpe, Riley South and Jennifer Cooke will be used to draft replies to the consultation on behalf of Shire Group members. Your views are particularly welcome – please speak to either Bruce, Riley or Jennifer or one of the project team.

Environmental Work

By David Patrick, Senior Environmental Consultant

Since the last Newsletter the focus on environmental issues in the widest sense has not lessened. We have had a number of Acts of Parliament, regulations, and policy directions published which we have had to assess and interpret.

The usual suspects – nitrates and waste – continue to be of concern and these are added to with the transposition of the Water Framework Directive into UK law and the implementation by the Environment Agency.

In addition to this, High Level Targets have been amended to both be more specific and more wide ranging in its remit.

Telemetry Update

By Chris Wright, Principal Engineer

The contract with Controlstar Systems Ltd. for telemetry installation at the Dun Drainage pumping stations commenced in June 2005. The Coal Authority is once again a major contributor to the costs, as a result of their liabilities under the Doncaster Drainage Act. The contract covers all the 23 stations with the base computer being shared with Went IDB.

The Ancholme, Scunthorpe and Messingham Boards were the pioneers of the telemetry system in Yorkshire/North Lincolnshire, back in the year 2000. As a result their base computer and software had fallen behind the current standard, or in other words, the systems being installed in other Boards benefited from improvements in the technology available. The base computer at Cadney has therefore been replaced and the Linux software installed. This is more reliable than Windows and allows Controlstar to access the computer remotely to assess problems and check operation.

We are now running User Group meetings at JBA's Denison House office on an approximately 6 month basis. All operators are invited and representatives

NEWSLETTER

November 2005



www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

from Controlstar and JBA attend. The agenda includes current issues affecting one or all operators, suggestions for improvements and proposed updates by Controlstar. An example of a recent suggestion is to include a notepad for each station, accessible by all users, on which current recurring problems can be noted, together with operational information, such as pumps removed for maintenance. All attending the meetings have indicated that they wish the meetings to continue.

A summary of the current telemetry installations of the Shire Group is given below for information:-

Board	No. of Pumping Stations	Other Installations
Ancholme	15	2
Black Drain	2	
Dearne and Dove	1	
Dun	23	
Finningley	4	
Hatfield Chase	9	
Knottingley to Gowdall	5	
Laneham	10	
Messingham	2	
Scunthorpe	3	
Tween Bridge	2	
Went	14	
Total	90	2

The remaining Boards within the Shire Group which run pumping stations (but which are not on telemetry) are:-

1. Ashfields & West Moor
2. Everton
3. Gainsborough
4. Potteric Carr
5. Reedness & Swinefleet
6. River Wiske
7. Selby Area

Website Update

By Stuart Wallace, Webmaster

Two new sections have been added to the website recently for each member Board. Provision has

been made for reporting, recording and notifying 'Public Consultations' as required by the Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) Regulations 1999. The site allows a statutory consultation period of 28 days before the consultation is automatically closed. 'Environmental News' has also been added.

The most frequently updated sections are the Public Consultations pages - this demonstrates the benefit of making these data available centrally.

Although we are averaging 150 hits per week, use of the other facilities remains limited to date and we would encourage everyone involved in the collation, presentation and dissemination of reports and associated data to revisit the site and identify how it can best serve them.



Annual Chairmen's Meeting 11 October 2005

By Bruce Gelsthorpe

The seventh annual meeting of the Shire Group Chairmen took place on Tuesday 11 October 2005 at the Mount Pleasant Hotel, Bawtry Road, Doncaster. It was attended by twenty representatives from the member Boards.

There was a full agenda for the morning meeting as shown below.

NEWSLETTER

November 2005



www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

1. Environmental matters
2. Asset Management/NFCDD
3. Drain inspection by helicopter
4. Telemetry/automatic operation of pumping stations, sluices and data collection
5. Internal Drainage Board review
6. Flood and Coastal Defence Funding review
7. A presentation by David Noble of ADA on current IDB issues.

Considerable discussion took place on all of the above time with all these in attendance on enjoying another fruitful meeting. Further, but nonetheless, interesting discussions took place over lunch.

The date for the next Chairmen's meeting was fixed for Tuesday 10 October 2006.

Asset Management Study Update

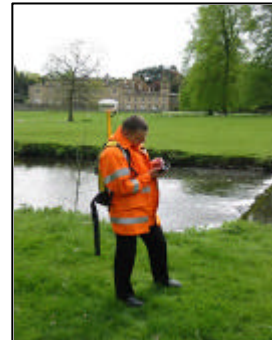
By Andrew Longster

Following the support of the constituent members of the Shire Group, work on an Asset Management Study (AMS) is well underway.

We are pleased that we were able to obtain Defra grant aid at 45% for the costs of this work.

An AMS in brief, involves:

- Making an inventory of all current assets.
- Assessing the condition of those assets (physical, environmental, health & safety).
- Assessing current assets against the required level of service.
- Developing a long-term plan of renewals and maintenance.

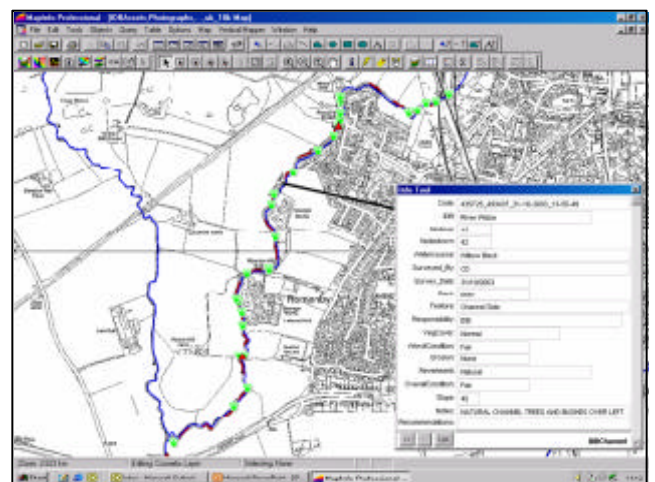


For most members of the Shire Group much of the information is already available. However new site work is required to establish an equal 'baseline' for condition. JBA staff are using mobile computers and GPS (see photo).

In order to undertake the above tasks in the most efficient manner and also to allow future updating, information is stored in a geo-referenced database.

Benefits of an AMP:

- It is a clear demonstration that IDBs are following modern practice.
- It allows long-term planning which will aid in securing future grant aid.
- It allows data to be provided to Defra, EA, EN and other bodies in an efficient manner.



- An IDB can demonstrate the assets it has. More assets = more leverage in securing income and grant.

NEWSLETTER

November 2005



www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

There is no statutory requirement to undertake an AMP. However, there can be no doubt that at some stage in the future, an asset management database will be required.

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

Hydrogeology

By Susan Wagstaff, Senior Hydrogeologist, JBA

JBA undertake groundwater assessments, providing a full hydrogeological investigation of sites at the level of detail required: from assessment of individual sites to the wider setting and interaction with regional groundwaters and aquifers. Services include:

- Site investigations: water levels, discharges of groundwater and springs, water quality, sediment and soil properties, hydraulic tests, groundwater dependent ecology (e.g. in relation to the Water Framework Directive);
- Water balance calculations and conceptual models: including surface and groundwater interaction, dominant processes and controls;
- Numerical models: including river-aquifer-wetland interactions, prediction of impacts of management options, mitigation measures;
- Monitoring of sites: installation of monitoring points, collection of data, and instrumentation of sites for on-going collection of data.

Bruce Gelsthorpe
JBA Consulting
Denison House
Hexthorpe Road
Doncaster
DN4 0BF
UK

t: 01302 342055
f: 01302 329887
e: bruce.gelsthorpe@jbaconsulting.co.uk

Future Issues

I hope you have again found our Newsletter interesting, and we would as usual be pleased to receive any feedback, questions and articles that could be dealt with in future issues.

I had better start giving our third issue some thought!

Bruce Gelsthorpe
Technical Director, JBA Consulting

NEWSLETTER

November 2005

www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

Shire Group
of IDBs



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.

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