



Sow & Penk

Internal Drainage Board

**Tonge Suite
County Showground
Weston Road
Stafford
ST18 0BD**

Meeting *Papers*

Wednesday 21 November 2018

Meeting at 11:00am



Shire

Group of IDBs

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Meeting Papers

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Purpose

These meeting papers have been prepared solely as a record for the Internal Drainage Board. JBA Consulting accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than by the Drainage Board for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

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1. Governance

1.1 Apologies

1.2 Declaration of Interest

1.3 Complaints and FOI

1.4 Minutes of Meeting 29 May 2018

Present

Ray Sutherland (RS)
John Hilderley (JH)
Neil Brown (NB)
Ralph Cooke (RC)
Andrew Harp (AH)
Anthony Parrott (AP)
Geoff Rowlands (GR)
Frances Beatty (FB)

Also in attendance Rory Middleton (RM) Staffordshire Wildlife Trust

In attendance on behalf of JBA Consulting, Clerk, Engineer and Environmental Adviser:

Ian Benn (Clerk to the Board)
Paul Jones (Engineer to the Board)
Craig Benson (Finance Officer to the Board)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Alan Perkins, Lucy Hogarth and Phil Bates.

Declaration of Interest

2018.27 The Clerk declared an interest in Agenda item 4.1.1.

Complaints and Freedom of Information Requests

2018.28 None had been received.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

2018.29 Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 February 2018 copies of which had been previously circulated to members with the meeting papers were taken as read, proposed by RC, seconded by GR, approved by the Board and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Clerks Report

- 2018.30** The Clerks Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

Matters Arising

- 2018.31** **Legislation- General Data Protection Regulation Policy** – The Clerk advised members of this legislation which came into force on the 25 May 2018. The Board were required to have a policy covering it's actions as Data Controller and Data Processor of information. A policy had been prepared and circulated with the papers for formal approval and adoption by the Board. FB proposed that the Board should adopt this policy and contribute £500 to the Clerk for producing the document. This was seconded by RW and approved unanimously by the Board.
- 2018.32** **Legislation- Policy Statement on Water Level and Flood Risk Management** – Members were informed that ADA had produced a new model Policy Statement for IDBs, a copy of which was circulated with the papers. The Clerk advised the Board that the document required amending before it should be approved by the Board. Members agreed to defer any decision to adopt the Policy Statement until the next meeting.
- 2018.33** **Stafford County Show** – the Clerk advised members that the Board would have a stand at the County Show and that the JBA Trust Hydraulic Flume would be demonstrated.
- 2018.34** **Annual Site Visit** – Members agreed that organising annual site visits around the district would be beneficial to all. The Clerk agreed to bring details to the Board at future meetings.

Financial Report

- 2018.35** The Financial Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

Matters Arising

- 2018.36** **Banking** – The FO confirmed that the bank account with Lloyds Bank has been opened and he suggested that the Board transfer monies from their current account into the Lloyds account to earn more interest. The Board agreed unanimously to transfer £50,000 to the new account for this purpose.
- 2018.37** **Rating** – The FO informed members that the Board obtained liability orders following the court hearing and after serving of them, one of the two debts had been settled. For the outstanding debt, the next stage in the process is to arrange for bailiffs to visit the ratepayer to obtain payment. The FO then gave an update on the rates collected to date and confirmed that 56.9% drainage rates had been received and 51.7% of the Special Levies.
- 2018.38** **Schedule of Payments** – The Board approved payments totalling £28,885.53, of which £885.00 were approved by the Officers only. The Board also approved payments made direct from the bank account totalling £396.41 all of which were approved by the Officers.

- 2018.39 Audit – Internal Audit** – The internal audit of the Board's financial statements and procedures had been completed and the report, which had been circulated with the meeting papers, was considered, reviewed and noted
- 2018.40 Annual Return – Section 1 Annual Governance Statement** – The FO advised members of the requirement to approve Section 1 of the Annual Return which was circulated with the meeting papers. This was considered, reviewed and approved by the Board.
- 2018.41 Accounts for the Year Ending 31 March 2018.** – The FO presented the accounts that had been previously circulated with the meeting papers. Members were satisfied with the current financial position of the Board. Members requested more detail on some of the items of expenditure and the FO confirmed that this would be provided at the next meeting. RW proposed that the Accounts should be approved as presented, this was seconded by JH and unanimously approved by the Board.
- 2018.42 Budget Comparison for the Year Ending 31 March 2018.**
- Members noted the graph contained with the meeting papers that depicted the budgeted and actual expenditure figures for the year.
- 2018.43 Annual Return – Section 2 – Accounting Statements -** The FO advised members of the requirement to approve Section 2 of the Annual Return which was circulated with the meeting papers. This was considered, reviewed and approved by the Board.
- 2018.44 Five Year Budget Estimate** – the Board noted the five-year forecast. FB enquired whether any future development in the district would impact on the figures shown. The FO confirmed that this would be the case.

Engineers Report

- 2018.45** The Engineer's Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.

Matters Arising

- 2018.46 Asset Management – Hydraulic Modelling** – The Engineer delivered an update on the progress and requested that the Board seek to receive three quotations for the modelling phase. This was approved by the Board. FB asked how sure were the Board that they would engage the right contractor. The Engineer confirmed that the process would be managed by an independent procurement specialist and the Board would be guided through the process to eventually the awarding of the contract. The Engineer also indicated that the EA had offered their technical services to help IDBs assess hydraulic model tenders in other areas and they may form part of the evaluation panel. The Engineer confirmed that Officers would be looking for third party contributions through Local Levy and Environment Agency Grant in Aid.
- 2018.47 Watercourse Maintenance** – The Engineer advised members that the contractor would be informing him of any changes in their costs for undertaking the maintenance works this year, as stated in the contract document, but that Littlehales Plant Hire Ltd. had been notified of the 2 x 12-month extensions to the Contract.
- 2018.48 Main River** – As part of the PSCA, the Environment Agency had identified a number of screens that they have approached the Board for a cost to maintain them on their behalf should they require assistance. The Board's contractor will provide a quotation to the Board, which will be submitted to the EA for their consideration.
- 2018.49 Planning** – Members noted that there were two planning applications received but did not require comment between 23 January 2018 and 30 April 2018.

- 2018.50** **Consents** – Three consents had been issued on behalf of the Board during the same period.

Health and Safety Report

- 2018.51** The Health and Safety Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted with no accidents or incidents to report since the last meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the Board's contractor received and complied with all the information that was disseminated.

Environmental Adviser's Report

- 2018.52** The Environmental Adviser's Report, copies of which had been circulated to members with the last meeting papers, was considered and adopted.
- 2018.53** **Policy** – The Clerk requested that members approve and adopt the Biosecurity Policy that had been circulated with the meeting papers. RW proposed, FB seconded and all approved that the Board would adopt the Biosecurity Policy as presented.

Any Other Business

- 2018.54** BAP Monitoring Results – Members requested that Staffordshire Wildlife Trust provide an update on the figures for this year at the next meeting of the Board. RM confirmed that he would pass the message on to Jeff Sim.

Date of Next Meeting

- 2018.55** The next meeting will be held on 21 November 2018, Tonge Suite, County Showground, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 0BD

1.5 Matters arising there from not elsewhere on the Agenda

2. Clerk's Report

Recommendation:

- Members note information contained in the Report
- Adoption of Policy Statement (Item 2.1.1)

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 Policy on Water Level and Flood Risk Management

Following resolution reached at the May meeting, a new draft Policy has been produced, available at Appendix A.

2.1.2 Demaining and Asset Transfer

The Boards attention is drawn to the current consultation in the Black Sluice Catchment.

The briefing note gives an update on the outcome of work to transfer Black Sluice Pumping Station to Black Sluice IDB. It also provides an update on the wider catchment, and continued partnership working to manage flood risk in the South Forty Foot area. (See the Shiregroup website for more detail)

The consultation highlights the direction of travel the Environment Agency are taking with regards to assets and low consequence systems that are perceived to offer no flood risk management benefit.

(review of Shiregroup Demain and Asset Transfer and potential PSCA opportunities flow chart for guidance)

2.1.3 GDPR - ADA

Management produced a consent form where Members agree for the Board to share postal address with ADA. Information has been issued to ADA however it has not signed the Board's Data Sharing Agreement and ADA is now requesting IDBs issue its consenting form direct to Members for signature and return. These will be emailed to Members which please return directly to ADA.

ADA should specifically seek Member consent to share personal data with any other parties.

2.2 Staffordshire County Show

The show stand was manned by the Clerk, the Finance Officer and Engineer



Comments from members of the public included:

'You should take this (River Flume) around schools'

'a great educational tool'

'Demonstration was fantastic'

'Best stall at the show'

'An excellent presentation'

'You have now clarified my understanding of riparian responsibilities!'

'Thank you, it's been a pleasure talking to you'

'I never appreciated the impact that culverting rivers could have'

'Visually impressive'

'Very informative, thank you so much'

Officers had repeat visitors on both days with children returning with more of their friends to see the demonstration, film and take pictures. It was encouraging to see parents, grandparents and guardians acknowledging the work the Sow and Penk IDB undertakes within the Boards district and the dovetail with the EA and LLFA

We estimate (based on pens handed out and averaging the number of people seen in an hour) that we engaged with upward of 500 individuals over the two days with children being the largest proportion. Groups formed quickly (up to 12 people) on several occasions which then led to adults taking a greater interest in the maps on display.

Officers spoke to; land owners, farmers, hydrologists, ambulance service, health and safety practitioners, IDB Board members, IDB contractor and family, as well as members of the public that had been impacted by flooding.

It was a great opportunity to raise awareness of, what the Sow and Penk IDB is/does, its internal drainage district and its role and responsibility and the annual watercourse maintenance that is undertaken. Also, hydraulics of river systems and weirs, impacts of culverts and blockages, water safety, avoiding culverting and vertical grids wherever possible. Several people commented on planning issues and the historic building in river flood plains which now compounded flooding issues. Comments also covered land management practices and leaving buffer strips next to drains and watercourses.

Officers considered it a great opportunity to encourage future Engineers and riparian owners to take greater responsibility for their actions.

With regards to the flume, because it encompasses kinaesthetic (hands on), visual and auditory learning this ensures it reaches the widest spectrum of learning requirements to cover most individuals particularly children.

2.3 Board Key Performance Indicators

		Key Performance Indicators				
		Inadequate	Work to be done	Adequate	Good	Very Good
SOW & PENK INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	Management of the Board	Compliance with Audit Requirements				
		Health & Safety				
		Partnership Working				
		Overall				
	Reduction of waterlogging & Flood risk to assets	Asset Management				
		Flood Risk management strategy				
		Flooding- Learning Outcomes				
		Overall				
	Environment	Water Framework Directive				
		Invasive Species/Designated Sites				
		Conservation & Biodiversity				
		Biodiversity Action Plan				
		Overall				
	Supporting	Financial Statements				
		Receipt of Drainage Rates				
		Governance Documentation				
		Overall				
	Overall Performance					

3. Financial Report

Recommendation:

- To note the information contained in this report
- To approve the schedules of payments

3.1 Rating Report

Details of the Rates and Special Levies issued, and payments received up to and including 29th October 2018: -

	£	£
Balance Brought forward at 1 April 2018		1,047.41
2018/2019 Drainage Rates and Special Levies		
Drainage Rates		10,915.37
Special Levies		
Stafford Borough Council	101,472.00	
South Staffordshire District Council	3,704.00	105,176.00
Total Drainage Rates Due		<u>117,138.78</u>
Less Paid: -		
Drainage Rates		10,586.60
Special Levies		
Stafford Borough Council	50,736.00	
South Staffordshire District Council	3,704.00	54,440.00
Total Drainage Rates Paid		<u>65,026.60</u>
Balance Outstanding as at 29 October 2018		<u>52,112.18</u>
Court Costs & Interest Due		<u>276.40</u>
Court Costs & Interest Paid		<u>99.81</u>
Court Costs & Interest Outstanding		<u>176.59</u>

3.2 Schedule of Payments

3.2.1 List of Cheques

DATE		CHEQUE NO.	REF	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	
						CHEQUE	
2018						£	
May	29th	000845	5-6	Derrington Social Club	Meeting Expenses	130.00	*
Jun	13th	000846	7	Towergate Insurance	Insurances	2,299.60	
Jul	25th	000848	9	JBA Consulting	Management Services	6,757.28	
		000849	10	Littlehales Plant Hire Ltd	Maintenance	300.00	
Oct	18th	000850	13	Staffordshire Showground Ltd	Meeting Expenses	180.00	*
				Total Amount of all Cheques		9,666.88	
				* Total Amount of Cheques sent out signed by the Clerk Only		310.00	

3.2.2 Other payments

DATE		REF	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	
					VALUE	
2018					£	
Apr	16th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.45	*
	30th	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	5.00	*
May	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.00	*
	31st	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	36.40	*
Jun	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.00	*
	21st	4	4imprint Direct Ltd	Stafford County Show	181.74	*
		3	Brodericks GBC	Internal Audit Fee 2017/18	774.00	*
	29th	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	17.15	*
Jul	16th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.90	*
	31st	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	6.65	*
Aug	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.00	*
	31st	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	8.05	*
Sep	17th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.00	*
	28th	-	NatWest	Bank Fees	8.05	*
Oct	11th	8	Environment Agency	Flood Defence Levy	640.50	*
		11	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Fee 2017/18	480.00	*
	15th	-	NatWest	Bankline Fees	20.00	*
			Total Amount of all Payments		2,298.89	
			* Total Amount of Cheques sent out signed by the Clerk Only		2,298.89	

3.3 Audit

3.3.1 External Audit

The meeting of the Internal Audit Review Panel will take place at 10:00am on Monday, 26th November 2018. The venue will be the offices of JBA Consulting in Doncaster.

3.3.2 External Audit

The audit of the Board's accounts for the year ended 31 March 2018 is complete, with no issues raised. The completed Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR), including the external auditor comments, can be viewed at:

<https://www.shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk/idbs/sow-penk/asset-management/financial-documents/annual-return/>

3.4 Expenditure Budget Comparison for the year Ending 31 March 2019

	2018/19				2018/19	
Approved Estimate		Actual Todate				
£	£	£	£	06 November 2018		
				INCOME		
				Drainage Rates on Agricultural Land:-		
10,915		10,566		6.24p in £ on AV of £173,729	96.80%	
				Special Levy:-		
			50,736	Stafford Borough Council		
101,472		50,736		6.24p in £ on AV of £1,565,683	50.00%	
				South Staffs District Council		
3,704		3,704		6.24p in £ on AV of £56,159	100.00%	
5,000		0		EA Grant - Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	0.00%	
<u>150</u>	121,241	<u>433</u>	65,439	Interest etc	288.89%	53.97%
				EXPENDITURE		
8,900		6,476		Flood Defence Levy	72.77%	
				Conservation Budget:		
3,000		0		Biodiversity Action Plan	0.00%	
5,000		0		Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	0.00%	
5,000		1,768		County Show	35.35%	
76,220		41,332		Maintenance	54.23%	
<u>24,403</u>	<u>122,523</u>	<u>9,953</u>	<u>59,529</u>	Administration	40.79%	48.59%
	(1,282)		5,910	Surplus - (Deficit)	-461.15%	
	<u>123,911</u>		<u>128,653</u>	Balance Brought Forward	103.83%	
	<u>6,000</u>		<u>0</u>	Transfer to Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP ACC		
	<u>116,629</u>		<u>134,563</u>	Balance Carried Forward	115.38%	
Penny Rate : £17,956						
DOXEY & TILLINGTON MARSHES SSSI WLMP ACCOUNT						
Approved Estimate	2018/19	Actual Todate			2018/19	Estimate
£	£	£	£		£	£
				INCOME		
6,000		0		Transfer From Revenue	0.00%	
0		0		EA Grant - Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	0.00%	
<u>30</u>	6,030	<u>0</u>	0	Interest etc	0.00%	0
				EXPENDITURE		
				Maintenance:		
1,230		0		Maintenance	0.00%	
				Capital Expenditure:		
<u>0</u>	<u>1,230</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	Capital Expenditure:	<u>0.00%</u>	<u>0</u>
	4,800		0	Surplus - (Deficit)		0
	<u>34,870</u>		<u>36,094</u>	Balance Brought Forward		<u>36,094</u>
	<u>39,670</u>		<u>36,094</u>	Balance Carried Forward		<u>36,094</u>

3.5 Five Year Budget Estimate

Sow And Penk IDB	0	0	1	2	3	4	5
Revenue Account	2018/19	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	App	Estimated Out-turn					
	Budget						
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income							
Drainage Rates	10,915	10,915	11,156	11,413	11,671	12,014	12,443
Special Levies	105,176	105,176	107,492	109,972	112,453	115,760	119,894
Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant In Aid- Catchment Modelling							
Bank Interest, Other Contributions	150	150	200	200	850	900	930
Total Income	121,241	116,242	118,847	121,585	124,973	128,674	133,267
Expenditure							
Flood Defence Levy	8,900	8,635	8,894	9,161	9,436	9,719	10,010
Administration	24,403	24,403	24,647	24,894	25,142	25,394	25,648
Maintenance of Drains	58,220	58,220	59,967	61,766	63,619	65,527	67,493
Additional Maintenance	18,000	10,000	18,000	18,540	18,000	18,540	19,096
Catchment Modelling		1,770	32,500	32,500	-		
Biodiversity Action Plan	3,000	3,000	3,090	3,183	3,278	3,377	3,478
Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI WLMP	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
County Show Budget	5,000	1,768	2,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Expenditure	122,523	107,796	149,098	151,043	120,475	123,556	126,725
Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,282)	8,446	(30,251)	(29,457)	4,498	5,118	6,542
Balance Brought Forward	123,911	128,652	131,097	94,847	59,389	57,888	57,005
Balance	122,629	137,097	100,847	65,389	63,888	63,005	63,547
Transfer to Doxey & Till Marshes Account	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Balance Carried Forward	116,629	131,097	94,847	59,389	57,888	57,005	57,547
Doxey & Tillington Marshes Acc	39,670	40,893	45,693	50,493	55,293	60,093	64,913
Penny Rate in £	6.36p	6.36p	6.50p	6.65p	6.80p	7.00p	7.25p
Penny Rate £18,253	95%	122%	61%	38%	46%	44%	43%
Rate Av £171,625	6.43p	6.23p	8.49p	8.59p	6.88p	7.05p	7.22p
Levy Av £1,653,716							
	2018/19	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Doxey & Tillington Marshes Acc	App	Estimated Out-turn					
	Budget						
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income							
Transfer from I&E	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Interest	30	30	30	30	30	30	50
Contribution to Scheme							
Total Income	6,030	6,030	6,030	6,030	6,030	6,030	6,050
Expenditure							
Capital Expenditure							
Maintenance	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230
Total Expenditure	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230	1,230
Surplus/(Deficit)	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,820
Balance Brought Forward	34,870	36,093	40,893	45,693	50,493	55,293	60,093
Balance Carried Forward	39,670	40,893	45,693	50,493	55,293	60,093	64,913

4. Engineer's Report

Recommendation(s):

- To note the information contained in this report

4.1 Asset Management

4.1.1 Hydraulic Modelling

North Lincolnshire Council Procurement Team were appointed as 3rd Party Procurement Agents on 30th August 2018 to manage the procurement process for hydraulic modelling and we have provided a Specification for Tender.

NLC are working towards a Contract commencement date of 1st April 2019 as per the illustrative timescales below and the contacts at NLC are Debbie Dales (Head of Procurement) and Rachel Credland (Strategic Category Lead).

Stage	Activity	Target Date	Action By
1.Quotation/Tender documentation			
a	Initial drafting of Specification provided to NLC	17 July 2018	S&PIDB/NLC
b	Initial scoping of market	5 November 2018	NLC
c	Preparation of ITT (Invitation to Tender) and Evaluation Model	5 November 2018 – 30 November 2018	NLC
d	<u>Checkpoint Report</u> : ITT Shared and agreed with panel	30 November 2018	NLC
2.Quotation/Tender Stage			
e	Issue of ITT via YOBTender and contract notices placed in OJEU/Contracts Finder as appropriate	7 th January 2019	NLC
f	Management of Bidder Clarification Process	Tender Period	NLC
g	Closing Date for Receipt of Tenders	12noon 19 January 2019	NLC
h	Evaluation of Tenders & Clarification including shortlisted bidder presentations and interviews (if applicable)	19 – 31 January 2019	NLC/ S&PIDB
i	<u>Checkpoint Report</u> : Tender Evaluation Findings & Recommendation	31 January 2019	NLC
3.Award Procedure			
j	Approval obtained for Award by S&PIDB	1 February 2019	S&PIDB
k	Award confirmed	4 February 2019	NLC
l	<u>Checkpoint Report</u> : Award process.	5 February 2019	NLC
m	Implementation and mobilisation	4 March 2019	Providers
n	Service provision commences	1 st April 2019	S&PIDB

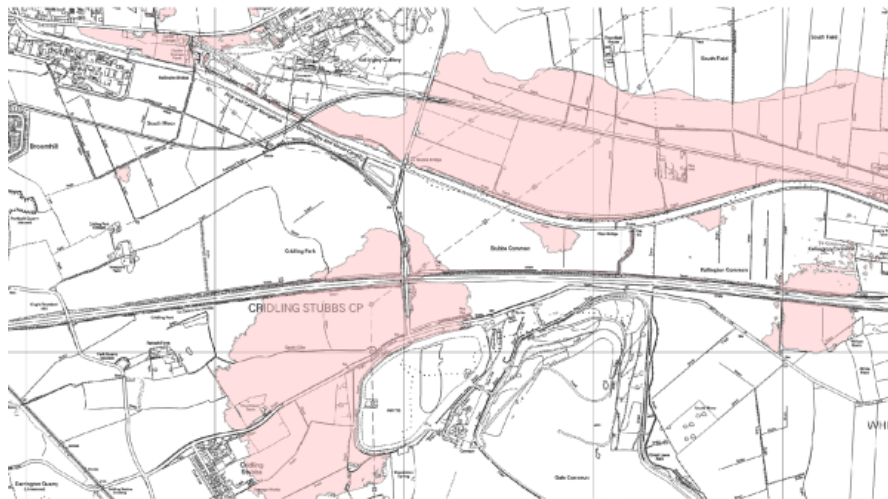
We have also submitted a bid on behalf of the Board for Local Levy funding through the Environment Agency (**Appendix B**). However, the Environment Agency has advised that this type of project may be more suited to FCERM Grant in Aid funding which will require a FCERM 7 Form completing and submitting via the EA PAFS (Project Appraisal Funding Service). This would seek contributions from the EA / DEFRA of c.£35,000 dependant on Tender Returns.

To further support the need for modelling for Sow & Penk IDB we have recently reviewed outputs from another Shire Group of IDBs model that demonstrates the differences between the Do Nothing (Walk Away) and Saturated (sheer runoff from rainfall event) scenarios which may change the way in which we consider damages/benefits within our industry.

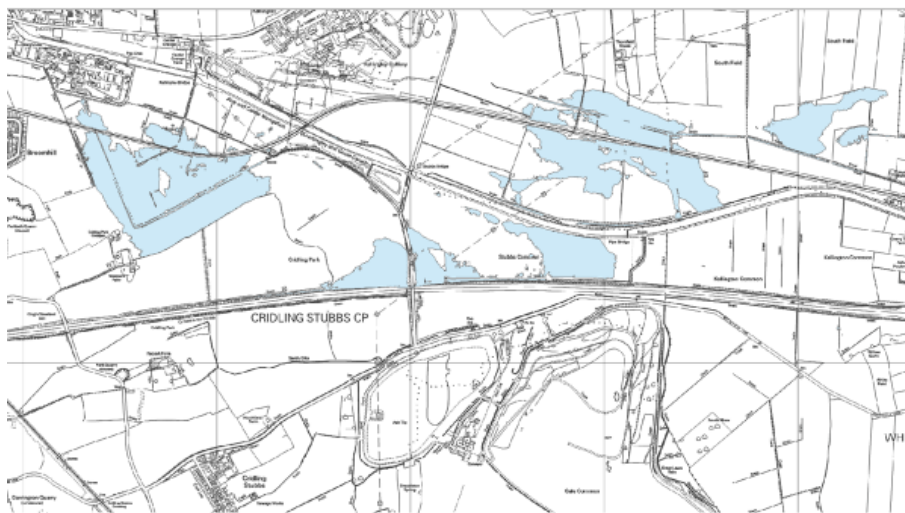
We are also exploring infrastructure benefits directly with Network Rail and Highways England with regards to disruption costs due to water impounded on one side of embanked infrastructure (piping effect) and closures due to flooding of the highway.

As part of Sow & Penk IDBs model it will also be of interest to see how blockages during certain rainfall events also changes the risk and therefore damages/benefits within the catchment.

Outputs: Do Nothing (9.2m AOD)



Outputs: 1in10yr Saturated (7.5m AOD)



4.1.2 Ordinary Watercourses

Maintenance Service Contract

Littlehale Plant Hire Ltd. are approaching 90% complete for this season with handwork remaining.

Access challenges as noted below have been resolved apart from a long-standing issue with parked cars off Fairway on the entrance road to Stafford Cricket Club. We understand that Stafford Borough Council has and continues to issue enforcement notes on cars.

Castle Works Modwen Homes

We have been liaising with Modwen Homes at their development at Castlefields, Stafford as access to Doxey Drain has been obstructed.

The obstruction to access is not directly adjacent the watercourse but the development obstructs access from Castle Street.



The alternative access is via Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) No 37 Stafford, managed by Staffordshire County Council Highways (labelled 55 on the map above).

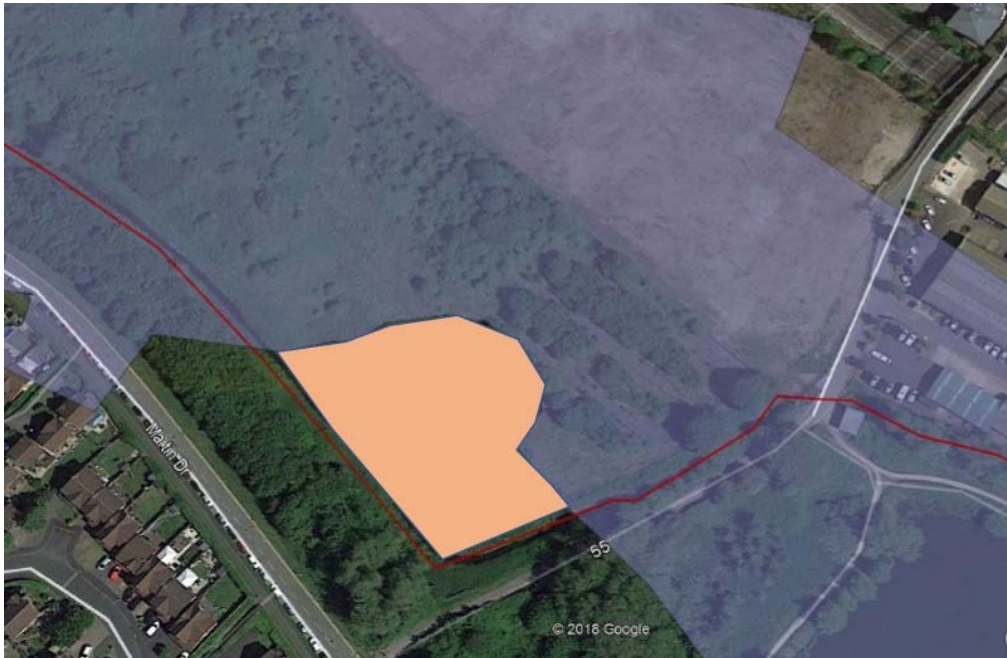


Modwen Homes have worked with ourselves and the IDB Contractor to provide access and contact was made with SCC Highways.

Maintenance has been completed this season.

Future maintenance will require the following to be addressed:

- Liaison with Modwen Homes regarding the proposed Greenspace adjacent Doxey Drain (in progress)



- Agreement from SCC Highways to remove removable bollards on BOAT No.37 for future access



Blackberry Lane Rugby Club

We have liaised on site with developers for the new rugby club regarding obstructions to access to Broad Meadow Drain and Doxey Drain.

The obstructions at present are scrapes off Broad Meadow Drain and fencing along side Doxey Drain.



Our comments to the planners and therefore the developers on 4th September 2015 were:

The proposed discharge of surface water is via sustainable drainage systems and soakaway and therefore would not require consent from the IDB.

Consent from the IDB would be required for any works within 9 metres of the edge of the Broad Meadow or Doxey Drain Ordinary Watercourses as described in the attachments and as noted in the Flood Risks Assessment. No development or obstruction, whether temporary or permanent, shall be permitted within 9 metres without Consent from the IDB in addition to Planning Permission.

No applications for Consent for any works within 9 metres were received.

Following a site meeting on 21st September 2018 we agreed the following with the Developers and IDB Contractor:

- IDB agree to forego maintenance this season subject to Developers agreement to remove any obstructions to flow to prevent injury to upstream owners – riparian responsibility
- Scrapes adjacent Broad Meadow Drain – developers agreed to reshape scrapes to permit IDB access over them – likely April 2019
- Fence adjacent Doxey Drain to be moved away from the bank top of the watercourse by at least 5 metres meaning realignment of 100-150 metres of fencing by the developer.

Stafford Cricket Club and Stafford Town Football Club

We have contacted Stafford CC and Stafford Town FC with regards to a locked vehicle barrier obstructing maintenance of Forebridge Drain East accessible from Fairway and Riverway.



We understand that they referred the matter to Stafford Borough Council who has provided access and a key for future access.

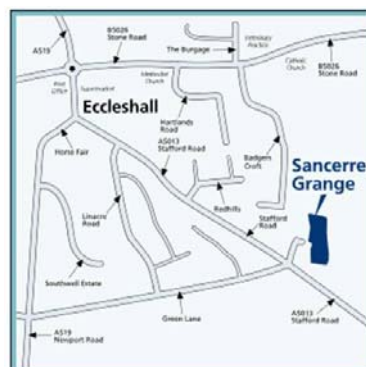
Private vehicles parked off Fairway are preventing maintenance of Forebridge Drain East and any assistance Stafford Borough Council may offer with this will be benefit for the wider catchment.

Forebridge Drain East permits surface water drainage from the areas around Doxey and Stafford and the risks to the catchment without maintenance will be understood from the hydraulic modelling.

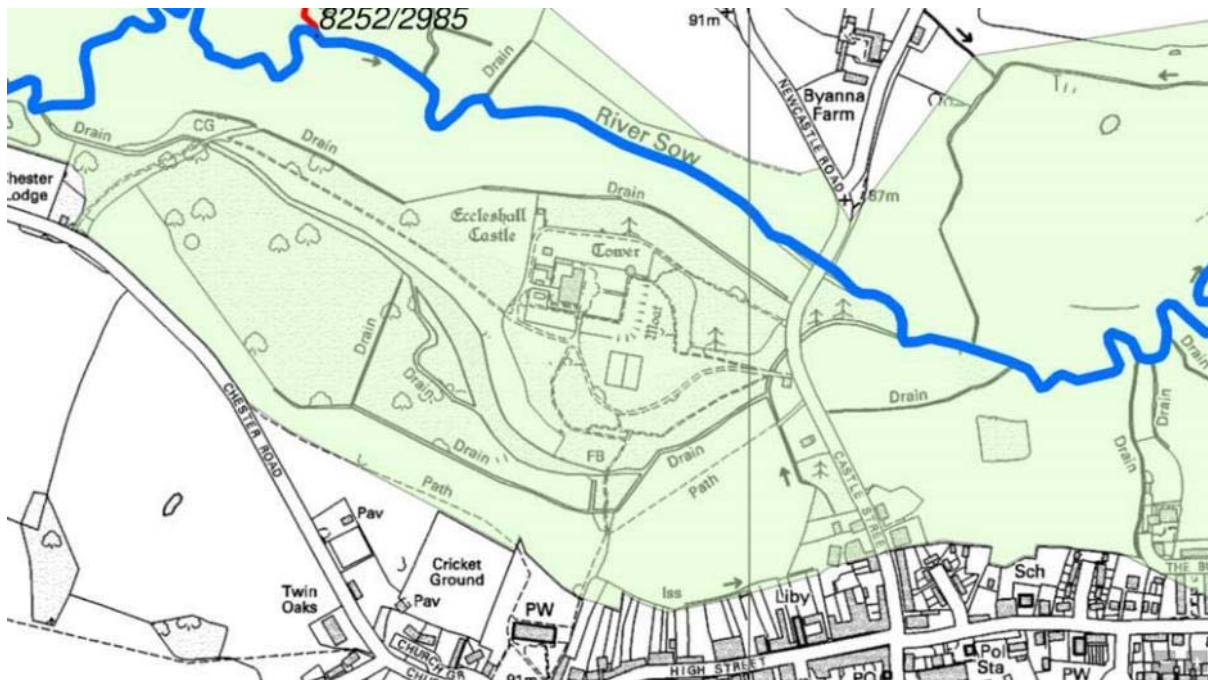
Eccleshall Flood Action Group

We have been in communication with the Chairman of the Flood Action Group Mr Chris Archer regarding Sancerre Grange (Bovis Homes) and flooding from the River Sow south of the Castle.

The Sancerre Grange development lies outside the District but does eventually discharge into the District. The Group have been advised to contact the LLFA as it appears from 15/22533/REM that the SBC Officers Report (25th November 2015) notes the LLFA did not object but were awaiting details of the discharge of surface water drainage design condition.



The Group are working with the EA and SCC to reduce flooding from the River Sow



We agreed with the Group about asking SCC to cleanse/clear the road culverts/bridge for the River Sow and riparian watercourse just to the south of the river bridge, and advised those watercourses to the south of the castle would be the responsibility of riparian owner/occupiers and maintenance of those watercourse would not need Consent from the IDB.

Although maintenance of the watercourses will not eliminate or reduce flooding from the River Sow as such; if they were maintained by owners then conveyance would be improved as and when the River Sow river levels permitted discharge; and would therefore improve the 'return to river' from the area.

4.1.3 Main River

The IDB Contractors rates have been submitted to the Environment Agency for grid / trash screen clearance around Stafford.

The LLFA have been contacted with regards to updated contacts for their Flood Risk Managers.

4.2 Planning, pre-application advice and consents

4.2.1 Planning applications

Our email address for planning enquiries is planning@shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

5 No Planning applications have been reviewed and 5 no applications have required comment on behalf of the Board between 1 May 2018 and 23 October 2018

4.2.2 Land Drainage Act 1991 Section 23 and 66 (Byelaw) Consents

Our email address for consent applications is consents@shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

4 No consents have been issued on behalf of the Board between 1 May 2018 and 23 October 2018.

5. Health and Safety Report

Recommendation:

- Members note information contained in the Report

5.1 Health and Safety Boards Contractor

5.1.1 Accidents and Incidents

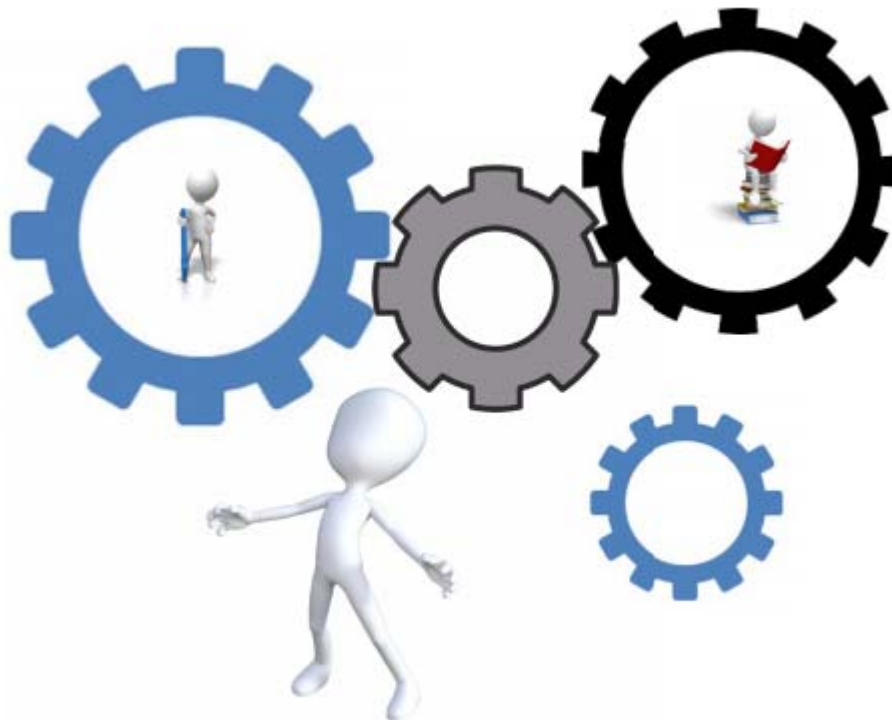
There have been no accidents or incidents to report. This is invariably a quieter period regarding work activity.

5.1.2 Article written for ADA re Mental Health and Wellbeing

Dealing with problems related to Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHW) in the workplace provide unique challenges for management. It is an area that requires careful attention and professional support which may initially prove costly causing some to question its value. However, in depth investigation and review at the outset will inevitably prove to be more cost effective and reduce difficulties and further problems later. Employers legal requirements in terms of their duty of care are often pigeonholed and deal with hazards that are physically tangible and more easily identifiable. Mental health still has a stigma attached which is often mis-reported in the media who either trivialise, generalise or scandalise news items linked directly to an individual or groups of people. There is also still a tendency to report the high profile or the most shocking cases. Developing an understanding of employee needs, providing health care and support when required, will help staff remain effective in the work environment. Recognising that an employee's personal circumstances can drastically affect their workplace performance, personal health, self-esteem and how they treat others is the first step toward active health care. What can an employer do to improve the health and wellbeing of their staff? Whereas there are several opportunities to improve an employee's wellbeing at work these are not always easily defined due to lack of information. In the first instance an employer could benchmark where they currently are in managing their employee wellbeing. This does not have to take the form of an intrusive interrogation of an individual's private life but to try and understand how they perceive the work environment and possibly how they manage outside of the workplace. An anonymous employee survey would be a usual starting point. However, be warned, whereas some employees will welcome this sharing of information others will be vehemently against sharing anything and may cite invasion of privacy so tread carefully!

Taking care to design questionnaires appropriately may require external assistance if it is the intention to elicit particular information in order to review or attempt to deal with specific areas of concern. Understanding an employee is not embarking on a quest to become best friends but trying to ensure that communication channels within the work place are clear, give the opportunity for consultation and highlight issues of concern promptly. Unfortunately, if this communication is delivered by untrained staff the message can be confusing, be wide of the mark and create mistrust. An employer's team leaders and managers may not recognise employee wellbeing or the correlation between personal, work life and a content workforce. Poor delivery may undermine an employer's recognition or initiatives to improve the individual's wellbeing. This is a complex area of people management especially as individuals can be incredibly diverse in views on items such as politics, religion, etc. It is therefore vital that middle management receive support and training and are able to present a neutral view on items that an employee feels strongly about. By providing basic health and welfare standards, information, instruction, training and supervision will set solid foundations to build upon. However, as the human element generally demands more input to address an individual's specific and unique needs, to be a successful employer requires proactive communication and consultation with employees (or their nominated representative(s)) on a regular basis. The management structure should seek to utilise managers that are not only trained in identifying potential issues but are then supported by suitable health and welfare professionals as and when required. For further information on up to date statistics on Health and Well-Being at Work, the Chartered

Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in partnership with Simplyhealth has recently published its eighteenth annual survey. The analysis is based on replies from over 1,000 organisations in the UK covering 4.6 million employees. Mental Health and Wellbeing In the Public Sector key challenges for HR were identified as; 1. Identify and tackle root causes of ill health, 2. build a more robust framework to promote good mental health, 3. strengthen the capability of line managers and 4. ensure a holist approach.¹ There is also a lot of free information available on the HSE website covering Stress, Anxiety and Depression as well as several books that offer in depth views and guidance. For example; Mental Health and Productivity in the Workplace – ISBN 978-0-7879-6215-9 Happiness at Work – ISBN 978-0-470-74946-3



Ian Benn – Dip Nebosh Grad IOSH Dip H&S and Env Law MCI CQP

¹ <https://www.cipd.co.uk/>

6. Environmental Adviser's Report

Recommendation:

- Members note information contained in the Report

6.1 Policy

6.2 Legislation

6.2.1 Biodiversity Action Plan

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust has again undertaken implementation of Board BAP actions this year. A copy of its Monitoring Survey Results report is available at Appendix C.

7. Any Other Business

8. Date of Next Meeting

All commencing 11:30:

The Tonge Suite, County Showground, Weston Road, Stafford ST18 0BD

6 February 2019

29 May 2019

20 November 2019

9. APPENDIX A: Policy on Flood Risk and WLM

Introduction

Purpose

1.1. The Sow & Penk Internal Drainage Board (the Board) has produced this policy determining the Board's approach to management of water levels and flood risk within its Internal Drainage District (the District). The Board is constituted by order of Parliament operating under the terms of the Land Drainage Act 1991 and is designated as a Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Authority (RMA) under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010.

1.2. On behalf of stakeholders, the Board chooses to manage water levels and other infrastructure within its District to mitigate risks from flooding and drought. In delivering function, the Board will meet its environmental obligations and commitments and seek opportunities to enhance the environment where possible. The Board recognises its responsibility for good governance, local accountability and financial security, achieving value for money from all its activities. As an independent public body, the Board is committed to the pursuit of economy efficiency and effectiveness.

Background

1.3. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has policy responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England. The Environment Agency is responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. Lead Local Flood Authorities (unitary authorities or county councils) are responsible for developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management in their areas. Delivery is the responsibility of a number of flood risk and coastal erosion 'Risk Management Authorities' (RMA), which includes the Board.

1.4. This Policy sets out the Board's approach to meeting the national policy aims and objectives in this area, as stated in the National flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England 2011 (the National Strategy); the statement will be revised to reflect future revisions of the National Strategy. It summarises what plans the Board has in place to manage water levels and mitigate flood risk, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment.

2. Delivering the National Strategy's policy aim and objectives

Aim

2.1. The overall aim of the National Strategy is to ensure the risk of flooding and coastal erosion is properly managed by using the full range of options in a co-ordinated way. The Strategy states that communities, individuals, voluntary groups and private and public-sector organisations will work together to manage the risk to people and their property; facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level; and achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

Objectives

2.2. The National Strategy sets out five objectives in pursuance of the overall aim as follows:

- understand the risks of flooding and coastal erosion, working together to put in place long-term sustainable plans to manage these risks and making sure that other plans take account of them;
- avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood and coastal erosion risk and being careful to manage land elsewhere to avoid increasing risks;
- build, maintain and improve flood and coastal erosion management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and damage to the economy, environment and society as well as achieving wider environmental benefits;
- increase public awareness of the risk that remains and engaging with people at risk to encourage them to act to manage the risks they face and to make their property more resilient; and

- improving the detection, forecasting and issue of warnings of flooding, co-ordinating a rapid response to flood emergencies and promoting faster recovery from flooding.

2.3. The Board supports the national aim and objectives for the management of flood risk and water levels and the Board's policy and approach will be consistent with them.

3. Flood risk and water level management in the Board's District

3.1. The District has been determined as an area of special drainage need and to derive benefit from drainage operations. As such the District is at some risk from several types of flooding including pluvial, fluvial and ground water, but that risk is managed wherever it is practically, environmentally and financially viable.

3.2. The Board makes decisions regarding flood risk within the District considering the following:

- assets in place considering design standard and life;
- Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority flood risk strategies plans and maps;
- other information such as the history of flooding and land use impacts.

3.3. The following outlines the key details of the District:

- Total area of the drainage district: 2,235 ha
- Area of agricultural land: 1,649 ha
- Area of other (non-agricultural) land: 586 ha

3.4. Assets for which the Board has operational responsibility:

- Watercourses the Board chooses to maintain based on need: 40.67 km

4. Building, maintaining and improving flood and coastal erosion risk management systems

4.1. Through the operation, maintenance and improvement of pump stations and watercourse assets within the District, the Board seeks to achieve a general balance of water level management that enables the drainage and irrigation of agricultural land, reduce the risk of flooding to developed areas, and sustain environmental features within the District.

4.2. The Board monitors and reviews the condition of assets within its District, and a planned programme of maintenance is in place to ensure asset condition remains appropriate.

4.3. Where condition is not at the desired level, improvement works will be sought where considered by the Board to be practical and financially viable. Where improvement works meet the criteria set by Defra, financial support will be sought from the Government's Flood and Coastal Resilience Partnership Funding. Where possible, works will be undertaken in partnership with other Risk Management Authorities and the opportunity taken to work with natural processes.

4.4. Maintenance work for and by the Board will be carried out in accordance with environmental best practice taking regard of local flood risk management requirements and strategies, opportunities for partnership working, environmental obligations and guidance available from Defra, the Environment Agency, and other organisations.

4.5. The Board's power to carry out water level and flood risk management works are permissive, and resources are limited.

4.6. All watercourses are the responsibility of riparian owners or other parties and the Board operates permissive powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991.

4.7. The Board has a supervisory duty, under section 1(2)(d) of the Land Drainage Act 1991 over all matters relating to the drainage of land in its District and will, where appropriate, advise others regarding the undertaking of works where it is inappropriate for the Board to exercise its powers.

4.8. The Board will also seek to ensure, where possible, that assets which reduce flood risk to the District, managed by other RMAs are maintained. Where those other RMAs do not have

sufficient resource to provide maintenance, the Board will consider entering into a Public-Sector Co-operation Agreement to undertake that work on behalf of other RMAs.

5. Regulation of activities - Avoiding inappropriate development and land management

5.1. The Board will take appropriate steps to help riparian owners understand their responsibilities for maintenance, byelaw compliance and environmental regulation.

5.2. The Board will regulate as necessary, using available legislative powers and byelaws, the activity of others to ensure actions within, alongside, and otherwise impacting the maintained drainage system, do not increase flood risk by prevent the efficient working of drainage systems, or adversely impact the environment.

5.3. The potential impact on flood risk from future development, both within the District and the wider catchment draining into the District, is fully recognised by the Board. The Board will take an active role in the assessment of local plans, major development, and planning applications, to prevent inappropriate development and land use within the District ensuring that flood risk is not increased.

5.4. The Board will where appropriate designate structures or features affecting flood risk under section 30 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

6. Communication and transparency

6.1. The Board will publicise the local risks from flooding, the reasons for managing water levels within the District and articulate the efforts being undertaken by the Board to manage water levels and mitigate flood risk. The Board will be open and transparent in its actions and decisions and will publish on its website

- A map of the watercourses it periodically maintains;
- Its Annual Report to Defra (IDB1 Form)
- Board Agenda, meeting papers and Minutes

6.2. The Board will work with local partners to build a culture within which water level management is seen as vital to managing flood risk and enhancing habitat and amenity. Every effort will be made to dissuade abuse of watercourses.

7. Working together

7.1. The Board will co-operate and share information with other relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood and coastal erosion risk management functions. The Board will contribute to local strategies, plans and consultations relevant to its catchment and functions.

7.2. The Board will assist other Risk Management Authorities where possible during flood emergencies however the Board is neither a Category I or Category II responder in these situations. The Board will participate as necessary in exercises to develop and test emergency response procedures.

8. Environmental measures

8.1. The Board's watercourse maintenance work constitutes vegetative control of submerged, emergent, and floating aquatic plants and will control bankside vegetation to ensure shrub successional growth is tempered. Inevitably some short-term impacts may arise, however herbaceous growth re-establishes over the next growing season.

8.2. When carrying out maintenance work the Board works in accordance with environmental best practice guidelines.

8.3. When undertaking improvement work consistent with the need to maintain satisfactory flood protection, the Board aims to:

- Avoid any unnecessary or long-term damage to natural habitats and species;
- Take appropriate opportunities to achieve multiple environmental outcomes and work with natural processes, wherever possible, including the enhancement of habitats and water bodies within the District.

- 8.4. The District contains two sites of biological interest at Doxey & Tillington Marshes SSSI and Baswich Meadows SSSI:

9. Approval and Review of this Policy Statement

- 9.1. This Policy is adopted by the Board on dd mm yyyy

The Board will review and update this document as and when required

10. APPENDIX B: Local Levy Proposal

A copy of the proposal can be found over the following pages.

Project Title: Sow & Penk IDB Drainage District Model
Submitted by: Paul Jones paul.jones@shiregroup-idbs.gov.uk

Request

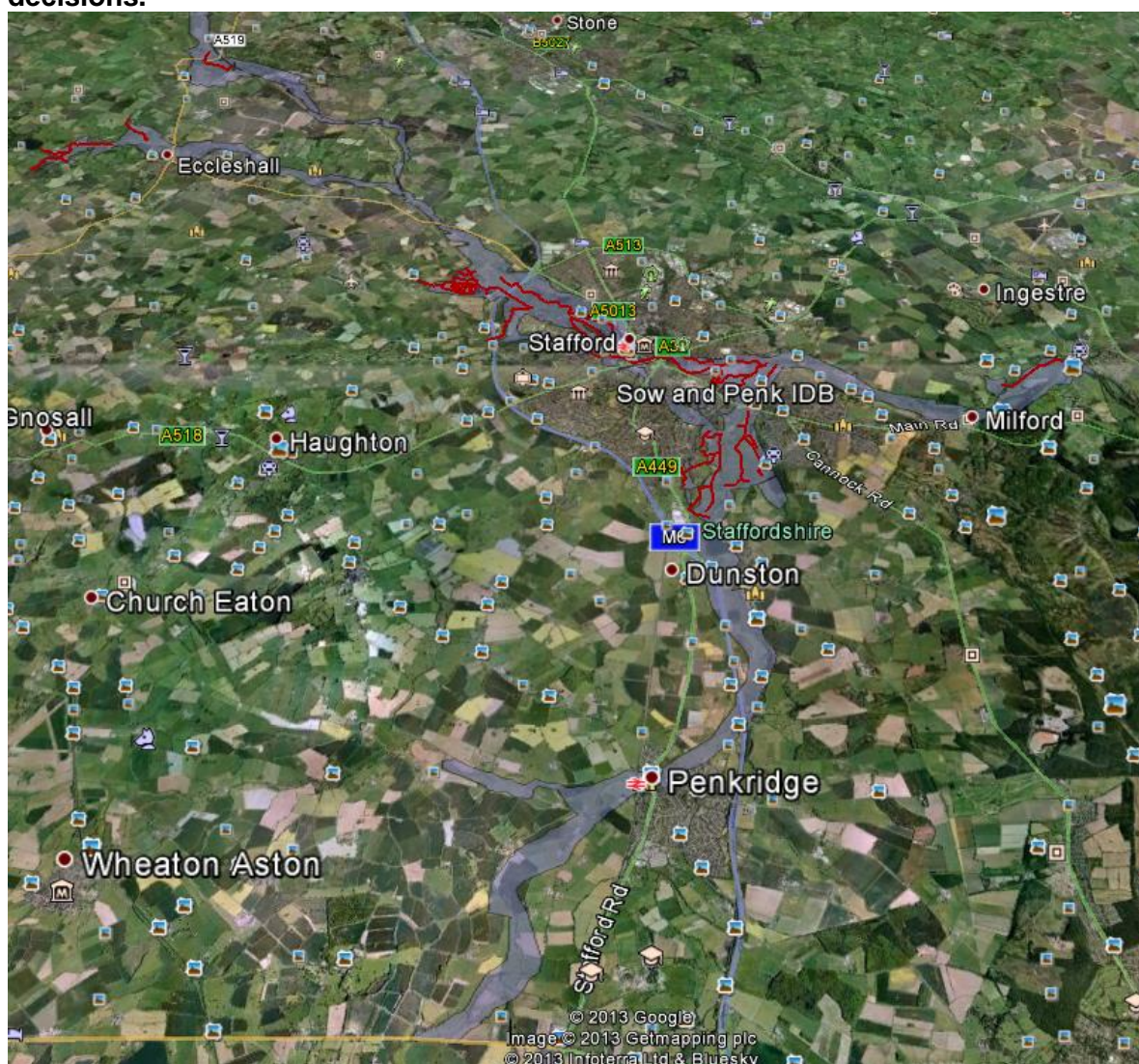
The *Sow & Penk IDB* request an investment of £35k from Local Levy funding in 2019/20

Background

The Sow & Penk IDB Drainage District permits flow by gravity through ordinary watercourses discharging into River Sow and River Penk in Stafford and Penkridge, Staffordshire using powers within the Land Drainage Act 1991 (as amended) and in accordance with the Flood & Water Management Act 2010.

Proposal

The IDB currently choose to maintain 40 km of ordinary watercourses and wishes to understand the value and benefit of these catchments, explore opportunities for catchment improvements/rationalisation as well as providing the necessary evidence base to support future Capital Works schemes, identifying critical locations for maintenance, and providing improved Surface Water Flood Mapping to share with RMAs; **better information = better decisions.**



The District is wholly reliant upon gravity and Main River systems and it is critical to work with the Environment Agency to take into account the Main Rivers in any modelling as boundary conditions in an IDB model as well as Staffordshire Wildlife Trust who are also a Member of the IDB. We understand that data will be available for River Sow, River Penk, Rising Brook, Kingston Brook, Otherton and Bell Brooks (Penk tributaries).

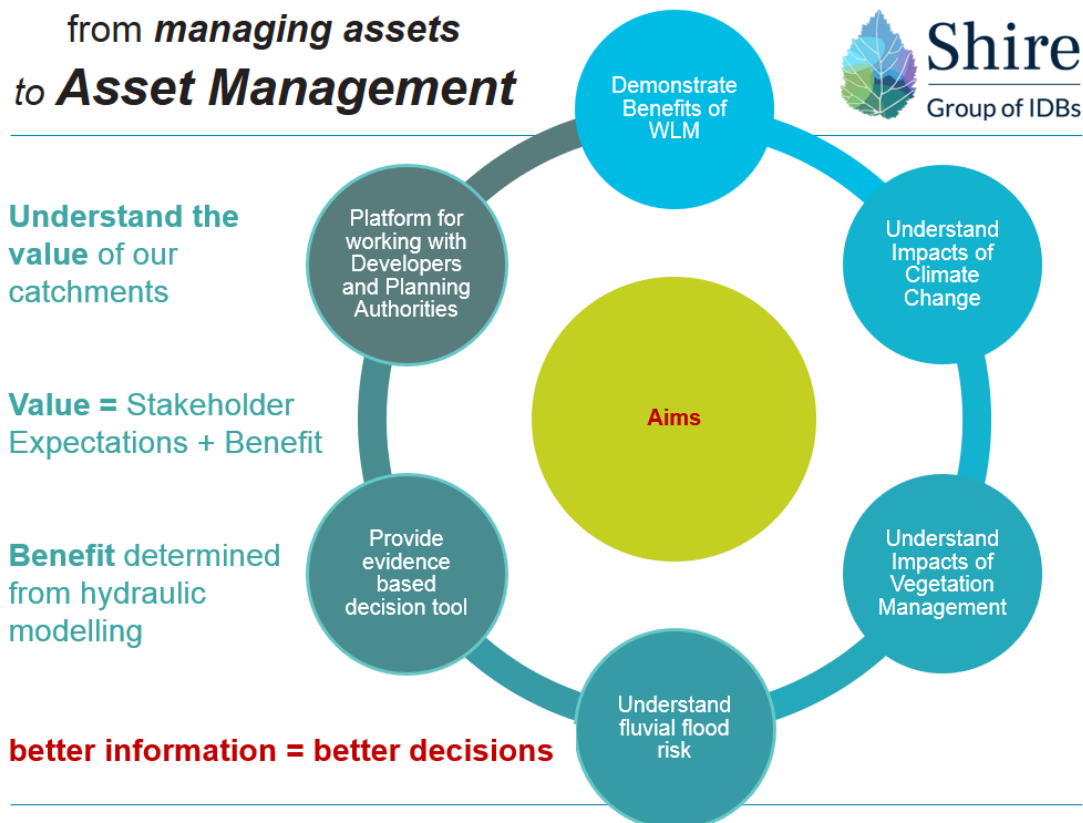
The model will include topographic survey, hydrological analysis; rainfall events will include the 1in2,10,20,30,50,100,200,500,1000 + cc year; options testing will include Blockage Scenarios, Saturated Catchments, Do Nothing Scenario.

Invitations to Tender are currently being prepared with a planned start of Contract from April 2019. Programme of Services is to be determined but we estimate 12 months to allow for survey and modelling.

Costs and Benefits

Estimated Cost based upon other IDBs completed modelling is £65k with £30k to be funded by the IDB. As this is a Catchment study/feasibility this will determine the cost/benefit of future schemes. The benefits of the modelling are:

- Improved surface water flood risk mapping
- Up to date condition photographs and topographic channel survey data
- Sharing improved evidence information with LLFA, LPA and EA
- Improved understanding of impact on development & reliance on maintained systems
- Assist in the identification of critical locations
- Flood maps will assist in evidenced based prioritisation for maintenance
- Visually demonstrate to Partners the benefits of sustaining IDB operations
- Evidenced based decision-making



	Project Title	Sow & Penk IDB Drainage District Model		
	Applicant	Sow & Penk IDB, Paul Jones (Engineer to the Board)		
	Local Levy Required £k	2019/20	£	35,000
	Is FDGiA applicable? If Y how much?	No	£	0
	Other contributions (IDB)	Yes	£	30,000
	Total Project Cost £k		£	65,000
	Benefit cost ratio			(please see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fcrm-partnership-funding-calculator)
TOM No	TOM Title	Unit		Brief description of how TOMs are achieved
TOM 1	Households/businesses with reduced flood risk following improvement work	Number of Properties	TBC	To be assessed through study
TOM 2	Deprived communities	Number of Homes	TBC	To be assessed through study
TOM 3	Small community suffering from recent repeat flooding.	Yes/No	No	To be assessed through study
TOM 4	Environmental Improvements	Yes/No	No	Study will provide basis to consider future improvements
TOM 5	Facilitating Sustainable Management	Yes/No	Yes	Improved surface water flood maps
TOM 6	Community Resilience	Number of Properties	TBC	Improved surface water flood maps
TOM 7	Catchment Measures	Number of Properties	TBC	Evidenced based decision-making
TOM 8	Study/ Getting Better Information	Yes/No	Yes	Evidenced based decision-making
TOM 9	Partnership Funding & Contributions	Yes/No	Yes	IDB contributions

11. APPENDIX C: BAP Monitoring Report

A copy of the report can be found over the following pages.

Sow and Penk IDB BAP monitoring

Survey Results 2018



Flowering Rush in the River Penk south of Radford Bank - © SWT



Introduction

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) carried out surveys of watercourses within the Sow and Penk IDB BAP area in August and September 2018 to monitor the population of Flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) and Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*). The surveys set out to contribute toward the current baseline to provide an update and re-visit areas where there is already data to monitor change. The area of focus in 2018 was the water courses and ditches around Radford and south of Rickerscote, to the west of Stafford along the Doxey brook and north of Seighford and also to the east of Stafford through Rawbones SSSI.

In total, 13.3km of watercourse was surveyed in 2018 throughout the IDB area, all via terrestrial bankside surveys where surveyors walked along the banks of the watercourse and visually scanned for signs of *A. amphibius* and *B. umbellatus*. No in-channel surveys on canoes were carried out this year due to limited access to canoes in the remaining ditches and watercourses to be surveyed (See map 1). Particularly through the centre of Stafford parts of the IDB watercourses were inaccessible due to being culverted however where this is the case the conditions are considered unsuitable for either of the target species and will be discounted from future surveys.

At the time of writing we are looking into funding opportunities through ERDF for a “Stafford Brooks” project in collaboration with Stafford Borough Council and the Environment Agency. Scoping surveys were carried out within the centre of Stafford to make a preliminary assessment of opportunities which would address water quality issues identified using Natural Flood Management (NFM) and rural Sustainable Drainage Systems (RSuDS) principals.



Flooding in Stafford September 2018 - © SWT

Survey scope

Surveys were carried out in August - September 2018, both *B. umbellatus* and *A. amphibius* would both still be present and visible at this time.

The surveys this year primarily focused on the presence of *B. umbellatus* which flowers between July and September and is easily spotted during the survey period. The ditches were also scanned for signs of *A. amphibious* which would also be present at this time of year however it is anticipated that spring surveys would also be beneficial before the growing season when vegetation is less dense.

Survey results

No evidence of *A. amphibius* was seen throughout surveys despite conditions being suitable on all days. Spring surveys recommended will be scheduled firstly looking at scheduling a meeting with the Staffordshire Mammal Group with the aim of drawing up a plan indicating areas of interest to further investigate the presence of *A. amphibious*.

These target areas will take into account habitat suitability as well as historic records of *A. amphibious* distribution.

B. umbellatus was not recorded within any of the IDB managed ditches that were surveyed in 2018, however the scoping surveys for potential projects within Stafford town found that *B. umbellatus* had colonised a significant stretch of the River Sow from the Sow to the east of Riverway through to the Sow running through Victoria Park, to the north of South Street. It seemed to be colonising the shallower stretches of the Sow and previous surveys in 2017 did not indicate the presence of *B. umbellatus*, indicating a rapid colonisation.

B. umbellatus was also discovered along the Penk which runs along the western edge of the Radford Meadows Nature Reserve, this was also a location which had previously been surveyed in 2016. This demonstrates the importance in the survey work carried out to capture the fluctuations in *B. umbellatus* coverage.

The last reports of *B. umbellatus* within both of these areas are from the 1972 Edees Flora with no recent records since.

An overall summary of the key species regularly recorded in the ditches showed the following;

Within the Radford Meadows Nature Reserve the ditches supported abundant Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*) with other regular occurrences of Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Nodding Bur-marigold (*Bidens cernua*), Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*), Water Mint (*Myosotis scorpioides*), Fool's Water-cress (*Apium nodifolium*) and Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Common Duckweed (*Lemna minor*) and a Water Starwort (*Callitriche* sp.) were frequent within the water column. Although *B. Umbellatus* was not found within any of the ditches it was found within the River Penk at **SJ93695,21011**.

South of Rickerscote the ditches were less diverse and several of them were dry at the time of survey. In the drier areas aquatic vegetation was sparse or absent with species remaining consisting of occasional patches of *G. maxima*, localised Common Nettle

(*Urtica dioica*) common as well as stretches of bare ground. In the ditches that retained water commonly recorded species included *G. maxima*, *L. minor*, *F. ulmaria*, *P. arundinacea*, Hairy Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), *U. dioica*, Floating Sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*) and *A. nodifolium*.

The drains around the Rawbones Meadows SSSI and to the east had abundant *G. maxima* with frequent Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*). *E. hirsutum*, *P. arundinacea*, *L. minor*, Soft-rush (*Juncus effusus*), *M. scorpioides*, *A. nodifolium*, Water Pepper (*Persicaria hydropiper*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), *Callitriche* sp. and localised Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*).

The Tillington Drain north of the M6 had recently been dredged. Species recorded along this drain included *F. ulmaria*, *G. maxima*, *T. latifolia*, *L. minor*, Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), *P. arundinacea* and Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*). *B. umbellatus* was not seen also this section of drain although as it was recorded 600m away along the connecting drain “The Darling” through Doxey Marshes in 2017 it would be worth revisiting this drain before it is dredged next year.

The Doxey Brook supports *S. erectum*, *G. maxima*, *A. nodifolium*, *L. minor*, *P. arundinacea*, *P. australis*, *U. dioica*, *Callitriche* sp. *F. ulmaria*, Lesser Pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*) in the drain running adjacent to the railway and locally abundant stretches of the invasive species *I. glandulifera* along the brook’s length.



The Doxey Brook where it passes under the railway to join the River Sow - © SWT

The drains to the north of Seighford Meadows around Moor Covert were surveyed. The ditches supported a diverse range of species including *U. dioica*, *T. latifolia*, Waterplantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), *A. nodifolium*, Common Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), Water Dock (*Rumex hydrolapathum*), *F. ulmaria*, *A. sylvatica*, *L. minor*, *C. acutiformis*, *P. arundinacea*, Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudocorus*), *J. effusus*, *U. Dioica* and Hard Rush (*Juncus inflexus*).

The drain running between Queensway and Riverway was wooded and did not support aquatic macrophytes but instead had woodland associated ground flora up to its edges.

The drains through Doxey Marsh SSSI north of Castletown and east of Grey Friars were inaccessible due to high water levels and tall vegetation.

Rickerscote Marsh Local Wildlife Site designation

Updating from last year's survey work Rickerscote Marsh (site reference 92/30/38) met the requirements for designation as a Local Wildlife Site and was formally designated at the LWS grading committee held on the 25th January 2018. Local Wildlife Sites have two levels of designation in Staffordshire; 'Sites of Biological Importance' (SBI) are sites considered to be of county importance. 'Biodiversity Alert Sites' (BAS) are of district or borough importance but they still form a significant part of the county's nature conservation resource. LWS status is a non-statutory designation. The site was designated at the Site of Biological Importance level for its Fen and Swamp habitats and also has the Priority habitat; Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh.



Rickerscote Marsh (2014) - © SWT

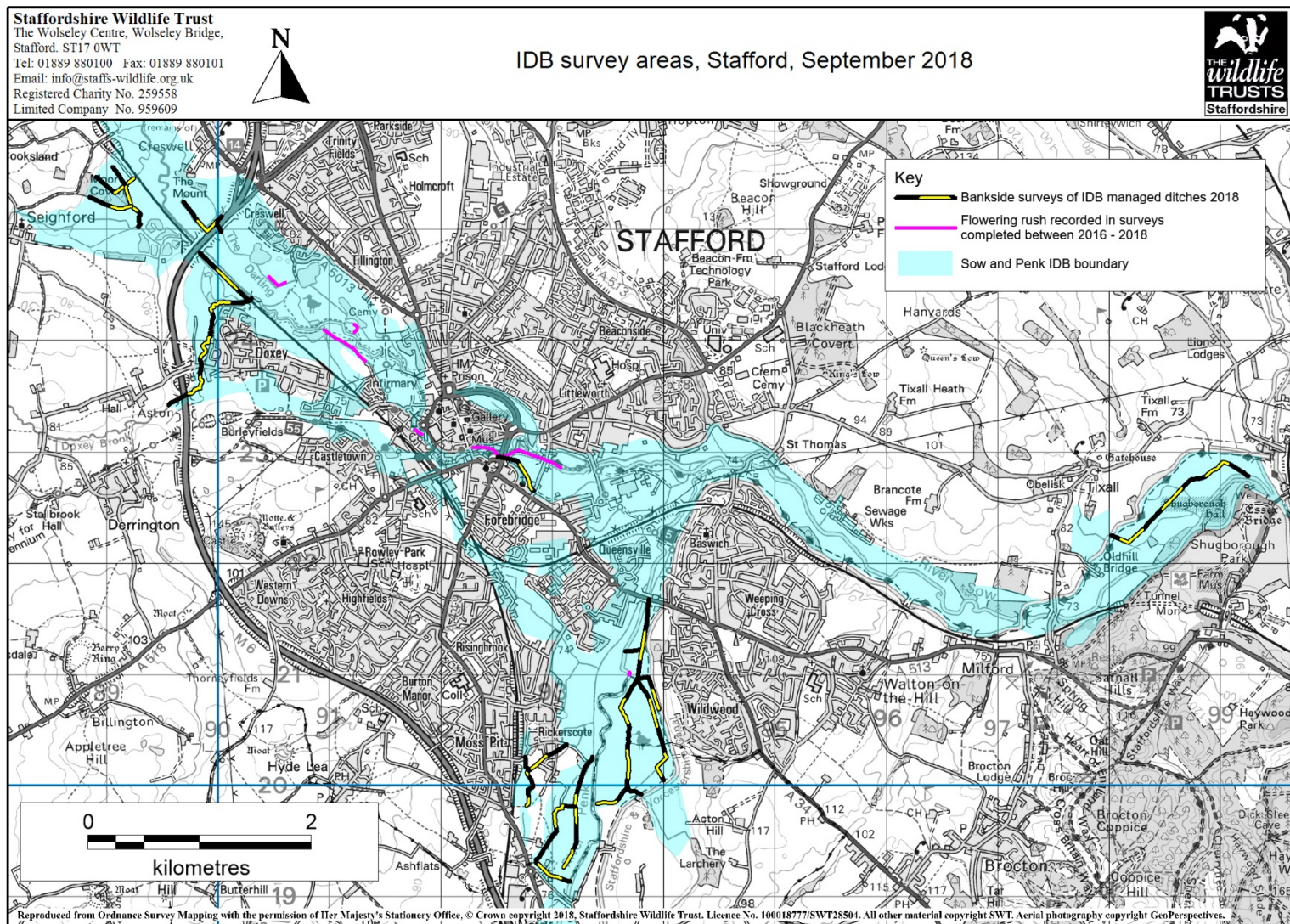
Three drains managed by the IDB cross Rickerscote Marsh including Pen Pleck Drain, Rickerscote Lakes Drain and Rickerscote Drain, additional drains on site which are not IDB managed include the Silkmore Lane Drain and a couple of un-named drains. The drains support marginal vegetation with the swamp community often spreading out further than the drains. The site has been grazed in the south by cattle where the

swamp transitions to marshy grassland. Species of interest on the site include included rare occurrences of Slender Tufted-sedge (*Carex acuta*) (rare in Staffordshire) Buttonweed (*Cotula coronopifolia*) (a neophyte species which is very rare in Staffordshire), Water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), Common Sedge (*Carex nigra*), *F. ulmaria*, Marsh Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), *M. scorpioides*, *S. lacustris* (which is uncommon in Staffordshire) and *V. officinalis*. Additionally the ditches support abundant *G. maxima* with locally frequent patches of *P. arundinacea*, *S. lacustris*, *S. erectum* and *T. latifolia*. Floating on the water surface in the ditches was occasional *L. minor* and rarely Common Water-starwort (*Callitriche stagnalis*). Further details and maps of the designation area can be found in the attached report.

Next steps

So far the total area of surveyed water course within the IDB managed network between 2016 and 2018 is 57km of a total of 63 km. The remaining un-surveyed areas are considered inaccessible due to infrastructure such as culverting or where the vegetation is too dense to allow access and in a few places where permission to survey has not been granted by landowners. This completes the first cycle of the survey of the Sow and Penk IDB area. 2019 surveys will see the restart of the survey program in particular looking at detailed surveys of drains or watercourses which support habitat suitable for *A. amphibious*, which will be visited during the spring which will enable a clearer view of the banksides as well as focusing on a couple of areas that were surveyed soon after they had been dredged and would benefit from a follow up assessment to ensure that *B. umbellatus* had not been missed.

The potential for projects looking at water quality and flood storage in Stafford town will benefit from having the IDB's support and involvement as a collaborative scheme involving a number of organisations. Ideas and potential funding opportunities are being considered this Autumn 2018.



Map 1: Sections of watercourse surveyed as part of Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board (IDB) 2018



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