



**Shire**  
Group of IDBs

# Annual Report

## Report type

Final

## Date

31 March 2023

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**Shire**  
Group of IDBs

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**Revision History**

Revision Ref/Date	Amendments	Issued to
31/03/2023	Final Report	RLIDB

**Contract**

This report describes work commissioned by JBA Consulting, on behalf of Internal Drainage Board. River Lugg IDB’s representative for the contract was Elissa Swinglehurst (Chairman of River Lugg IDB). The Shire Group Team of JBA Consulting carried out this work.

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**Purpose**

This document has been prepared as a Draft Report for River Lugg Internal Drainage Board. JBA Consulting accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than by the River Lugg IDB for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

JBA Consulting has no liability regarding the use of this report except to River Lugg IDB.

**Acknowledgements**

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JBA is aiming to reduce its per capita carbon emissions.



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**Executive summary**

The Annual Report on the activities of the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.



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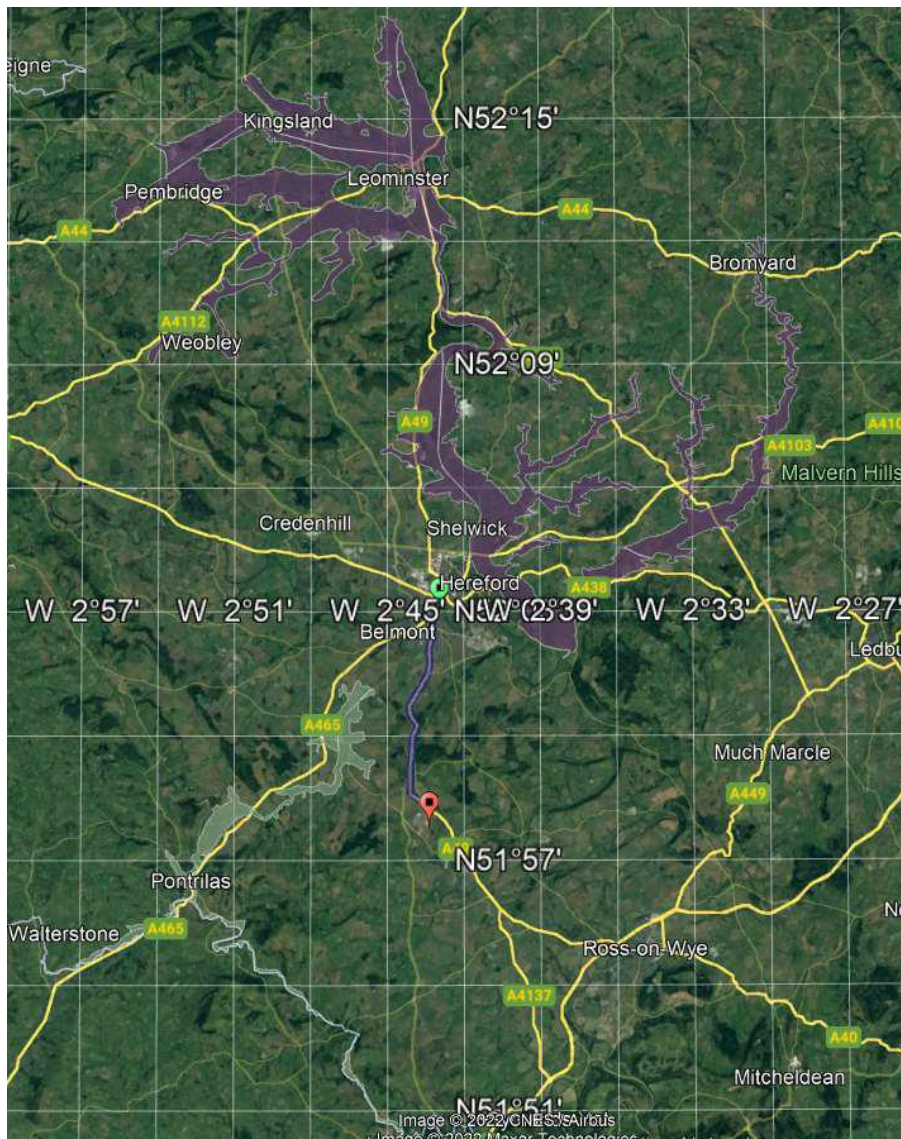
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1 Background

2 River Lugg IDB

River Lugg IDB is an independent body created under Land Drainage Statutes responsible for flood risk, drainage and water level management works, other than on main rivers, in the River Lugg IDB district. The district covers an area of 11,171 hectares of predominately agricultural land, stretching from Kingsland in the North to Pontrilas in the South. The Board, uses its powers vested to it by the Land Drainage Act to maintain 219km of ordinary watercourses in the district.



3 Board Membership

Board Members are either elected or nominated. Elected members represent the agricultural ratepayers in the area and serve for a three year term, whereas the nominated members are appointed by Herefordshire County Council. The Board consists of 10 elected members and 11 nominated members.

There is one nominated and one elected member vacancy on the Board.

#### 4 Board Member Attendance

The table below shows the attendance record of members during the year.

##### Key

Attended		Apologies Received		No Apologies	
----------	--	--------------------	--	--------------	--

Member	Type	15 Jun 22	23 Nov 22	25 Jan 23
P Andrews	Nominated			
C Bolderson	Nominated			
S Bowen	Nominated			
Z Chilman	Elected			
R Corbett	Elected			
Lord J Cawley	Elected			
M Davies	Elected			
N Davies	Elected			
J Hardwick	Nominated			
N Enyon	Elected			
J Harrington	Nominated			
J Hereford	Elected			
P Jinman	Nominated			
J Makin	Elected			
T Mitcheson	Elected		Retired	
C Pudge	Elected			
R Phillips	Nominated			
J Stone	Nominated			
D Summers	Nominated			
E Swinglehurst	Nominated			
Vacancy	Nominated			
21	Attendance	76.2%	42.3%	47.6%
10	Elected	90.0%	50.0%	60.0%
11 (1 Vacancy)	Nominated	63.6%	36.3%	36.3%



## 5 Health & Safety

There have been no accidents incidents or near misses that have been reported during the financial year by the Board's Officers, Health & Safety Advisor or contractors. It is important to ensure that all near misses are reported as these can lead directly to accidents if lessons are not learned. This point will be stressed at the Health and Safety Briefings with the Contractors. A number of site checks had been made and reported back to the Board.

## 6 Watercourse Maintenance

The Board's new maintenance contractor had undertaken the annual maintenance programme which has resulted in 93% of the flailing and 31% of the spraying completed. The total spend for the year was £139k. The contractor was unable to complete all the planned spraying programme due to access issues. It is worth noting that the Board have not received any adverse comments from landowners that the spraying activity had not been completed.

Special praise must be acknowledged for the Board Engineer who has managed the transition of contractors extremely well and worked efficiently and effectively throughout the year.

It was envisaged that there would be some "teething" issues during the first year of a new contract and these are hoped to be somewhat diminished during the life of the contract. The issues surrounding the spraying activity, such as access, equipment, time of year etc are still to be resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

## 7 Management Services

The contract has just completed its second year of the five-year contract. The Board has managed to fulfil its duties throughout the year as it came out of the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 8 Complaints

The Board has not received any formal complaints this year although there were a couple of issues raised by landowners which had been responded to during the year. Thanks go out to the Board's Engineer who has been the public face of the Board in the district.

## 9 Environment

The Board undertook specific works to Lugg Rhea which forms the south-west border of Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI. Following consultation with Natural England along with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and Plantlife, the owners of the site, a 5 year maintenance programme was agreed. There were a number of plants and habitat of conservation interest and an otter was seen on the Lugg Rhea.

The Ecologist also visited sites at Wergin Brook and Moor Brook to oversee the maintenance activities carried out on the watercourses.

It is anticipated that the Biodiversity Action Plan targets will be action during the current financial year and a report given as to the effectiveness of the works on Lugg Rhea.



There has been no recording of any invasive non-native species of plant such as Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed or Giant Hogweed within the Board's district.

10 Financial

The Board ended the year with an overall increase of reserves of £19,095. This was mainly due to the reduction in the Management Services provision and the contracted watercourse maintenance work that was planned for the year. The Board's Revenue Account ended the year with £209,405. This figure is above the Board's Reserve Policy Target of 50%.

During the financial year the Board have collected 100% of the Special Levy from Hereford County Council.

The total amount of agricultural rates collected was 93.25% which left a balance of £6,692 at the year end.

11 Tour of Inspection

The Board Members held a Tour of Inspection to look at some of the watercourses and assets that were demanded by the Environment Agency back in 2011. These included Homend Weir adjacent to the River Frome and the penstock and flap valve on Sutton Rhea.

12 Modelling

Members have discussed the benefits of creating a Hydraulic Model of the Board's drainage district. It would allow the Board to make evidence-based decisions relating to the maintenance activities, review the impact of new developments on the district, highlight key structures that have the potential to cause flooding if they were blocked.

The Environment Agency have been approached for assistance with regard to applying for Grant in Aid funding to help support the Board in acquiring the model.

13 Telemetry

Following on from the Hydraulic model. There will be an opportunity to consider the installation of remote water level sensors throughout the catchment when the hydraulic model has been completed. This will enable the Board to become proactive in their response to flood events and be able to monitor water levels throughout the district.

14 Environment Bill – Extension of Board's District

The Board have the opportunity to consider the benefits of extending their district to the full catchment area. DEFRA are looking to assist those IDBs who wish to increase their districts for the wider benefit of the community.

The process may take between 2-5 years to complete and the Board have already had tentative discussions on this subject with more planned for the coming year.

15 Environment Agency

The Board continue to develop the close working relationship with the EA officers and to offer resources wherever possible to facilitate works to main river. Steps have already been taken to produce a new Public Sector Cooperation Agreement with the Board and the EA.

16 Water Resource West

Water Resources West is a group of abstractors, their representatives, and their regulators. They have formed this collaborative group to join-up planning for water resources across the cross-border catchments between England and Wales, the Northwest of England, and the Midlands. which covers Wales and the West Midlands. WRW have held their first online workshops with stakeholders within their catchment area. The aim during the next financial year is to develop policies for a sustainable and resilient water supply in the areas mentioned.

17 Climate Change/Carbon Reduction

There is a drive for all industries to make changes to adapt to the climate changes that are forecast. If predications come true, the River Lugg catchment will have more areas susceptible to flooding and maybe permanent water bodies will be created. River levels will rise and our capacity to evacuate waters to them may well become restricted. The Board may have to consider pumping water as a solution to help sustain the Board's land drainage function.

The Board will also come under pressure to reduce its carbon footprint. Simple solutions could be to reduce the amount of paper used in producing meeting papers and rate demands by making them electronic. It might involve encouraging the use of Biofuels, hybrid or full electric vehicles for contractors.

It is felt that as a public body the Board should set an example to our partners and ratepayers throughout our district.

18 Summary

The Board are in a healthy financial position with sufficient reserves and medium term forecast to ensure that they are fit for purpose moving forward and ready to adapt to deal with climate change.

The Board are very environmentally sensitive and will continue to support the enhancement of Biodiversity throughout the district as part of its main policy duties.

The Board will continue to work collaboratively with the partner RMA's and encourage closer collaboration in the future.