

LAMBOURN VALLEY FLOOD FORUM MINUTES

20th October 2025

On-Line Conference

		Action
•	<p>Attendees</p> <p>Howard Woollaston – WBC / Lambourn / Boxford Paula Saunderson – Newbury Clay Hill Chris – Lambourn Martyn Wright - East Garston Nick Voysey - Great Shefford James Potter - Eastbury Jon Wynstanley - WBC Linda Bowden – Great Shefford Emily Merritt - WBC Oliver Steed – Lambourn Dan Rampton – Weston Glyn Thomas – Shaw + Donnington Fiona Brewer – Project Groundwater Rachel Carden – Upper Lambourn Vicky Rieunier – Lambourn Denise Kinsella – Thames Water Saffron – Thames Water Jenny Pearson – Thames Water Sami Gabriel LJ Bow H Booth</p> <p>Apologies</p> <p>Clive Hooker - WBC / Downlands Richard Hancock – Environment Agency Luke New- Thames Water</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Minutes from Previous meeting</p> <p>No comments</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Matters Arising From Last Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not discussed 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Role Of Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vicky Rieunier has taken over as Chair, with Howard continuing as Vice Chair, and will continue to host the meetings. • These minutes provide an opportunity to give grateful thanks on behalf of everyone in the LVFF to Howard for so successfully filling the role of Chairman during what turned out to be some difficult years, but during which a number of important projects took place which should lead to significant improvement in resilience in the upper Lambourn. We look forward to Howards continuing valuable contribution as Vice Chair. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Lower Lambourn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paula had circulated a list issues that she wished to raise prior to the meeting. • Richard who had been unable to attend the meeting sent the following relevant information in advance of the meeting: <p><i>1. Project Sponge (email 13/10/2025)</i></p> <p><i>This is a Flood and Coastal Risk Innovation Project, funded by DEFRA in the same way as Project GW. Outputs from this project may well feed into options for future solutions in places like the lower Lambourn but it is very much a pilot project at present to install and evaluate the effectiveness of potential urban flood risk mitigation options.</i></p> <p><i>2. Planning application you emailed about (15/10/25)</i></p> <p><i>My teams have been consulted but not my ecology or contaminated land colleagues. I do not yet know who in my teams has been assigned this one but I will find out our comments and reply to your email.</i></p>	<p>EA</p> <p>EA</p>

	<p>3. LVFF email (19/10/2025)</p> <p><i>Overall management of the River Lambourn. In terms of operations and how water flows through the catchment, as always my answer on this is the responsibility lies with the riparian owners, including the operation and maintenance of any sluices, weirs or other flow control assets.</i></p> <p><i>Nutrient neutrality has gone very quiet since the previous government tried to scrap it. I haven't heard anything since but will have a chat with my planning colleagues and let you know.</i></p> <p><i>I cannot speak for Project GW. Last I heard for the Lambourn was the last time a representative joined this call.</i></p> <p>Lower Lambourn Flood Management Discussion</p> <p>The group discussed flooding issues in Lower Lambourn, with Paula raising concerns about the management of the River Lambourn and the impact of upstream flood alleviation schemes. Jon explained that identifying all riparian owners would be costly and complex, but offered to provide some existing information. The group agreed that a briefing session was needed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of various organizations involved in managing the Lower Lambourn catchment, including ARK and DEFRA. Vicky, who has taken over as chairman, suggested setting up a task force to address these issues, but Paula preferred the idea of a briefing session to gather more information before making decisions.</p> <p>Lower Lambourn Area Briefing</p> <p>The meeting then focused on discussing a briefing from West Berkshire Council regarding the Lower Lambourn area from Bagnor to the A4. Paula clarified the scope of the briefing, which includes past studies, the logic of new study work, and how to improve representation in the area. James provided insights on riparian ownership and flood alleviation schemes, emphasizing that upstream actions can help downstream positions. Jon mentioned the £2.4 million nutrient neutrality funding received, which is being used to replace smaller sewage treatment plants to reduce nutrient pollution in the River Lambourn. The group discussed the potential for the funding to address both nutrient neutrality and flood alleviation, with Jon suggesting this could be a double win for the catchment. Paula agreed to speak with Sami to identify any missing information for the lower reaches of</p>	<p>EA</p> <p>Vicky / Paula / WBC</p> <p>WBC</p> <p>Sami</p>
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	<p>the Lambourn.</p> <p>Flood Assets and River Breach</p> <p>The meeting then discussed two main issues: flood assets visualization and a river bank breach. Paula requested to have flood assets like trash screens added to West Berkshire Council GIS for better visibility and maintenance, which Jon agreed to follow up on. Glyn, a Parish Councillor and Flood Warden, raised concerns about a growing breach in the north bank of the Lambourn River affecting residents of Shaw cum Donnington. Jon explained that while the breach repair was being considered, the cost would be significant due to access issues and the need for certainty of effectiveness. Glyn requested an update on the repair timeline and costs, which Jon promised to provide after consulting with Paul Bacchus. The meeting also touched on the upgrade of the Dene Way sewage pumping station, with Glyn inquiring about the timeline and acoustic barriers for the generators, which Jon said he would investigate further.</p> <p>Ljbow explained that bank erosion had occurred over the past two years, with silt potentially blocking water flow. Jon suggested discussing the issue with local board members, mentioning a £5,000 funding option for members' bids, though Howard clarified this would require matching funds.</p> <p>Park Safety and Infrastructure Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denise agreed to follow up with the project team regarding local residents' concerns about a compound and vehicle presence in the park, promising to provide more information about fencing and safety measures. 	<p>WBC</p> <p>WBC</p> <p>WBC</p> <p>WBC / Parishes</p> <p>TW</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>Environment Agency Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Richard was unable to attend the meeting, he provided the following update in advance: <p><i>General update</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Autumn has been mixed so far, September was wetter than normal = 121% of long term average rainfall, October (up to 15th) = only 21%.</i> <i>We need to be seeing somewhere in the region of 140% or more than average rainfall to see aquifer recharge, otherwise we risk full drought conditions next spring and summer.</i> 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Still technically in what is known as Prolonged Dry Weather, following one of the driest spring and summer periods on record.</i> <p>Great Shefford FAS celebration evening</p> <p><i>11 November 2025 @1715hrs</i></p> <p><i>Shefford C of E Primary School, RG17 7DB</i></p> <p>James Potter's questions (email 01/09/2025)</p> <p>1. <i>Eastbury FAS trash screen</i></p> <p><i>I spoke to my AP colleagues and as suspected, the answer remains the same. There is not any funding to install a screen on the upstream face of the throttle.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Lambourn catchment modelling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Outputs from our consultant have been delayed again. I missed the last meeting due to personal reasons but will get you an update when I am able to speak to my project manager.</i> • <i>When my team have the draft outputs, I would like to arrange to meet a few of you to make use of your local knowledge to make sure the outputs match your experience of flooding.</i> • <i>I have a team member preparing to do this and we will be in touch when we have something to show you.</i> <p>3. <i>Flood Risk Activity Permits</i></p> <p><i>This work has been curtailed by the centralisation of permits to our National Permitting Service. My team can still provide advice and guidance, regarding requirements and can help steer national colleagues regarding what activities and charges apply.</i></p> <p>4. <i>River Survey</i></p> <p><i>I was hoping my team would take the initiative and get in contact to arrange this but it has circled back to me so I would like to propose we transfer this when we meet to review the modelling outputs (from 2 above)?</i></p>	<p>EA / Residents</p> <p>EA</p> <p>EA</p> <p>EA</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Upper Lambourn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vicky updated the group on Upper Lambourn and Lambourn issues, including Thames Water's investigations, ditch clearance efforts, and ongoing flooding problems. • Linda Bowden raised continuing concerns about the Winterbourne stream running parallel with the A338 in Great Shefford, due to water originating in Spring meadows which is not covered by the recently completed flood alleviation scheme, highlighting potential blockages and erosion issues, and expressed uncertainty about funding for necessary solutions. • In relation to Eastbury, James reported no progress on the trash screen issue, and Jon estimated costs could be in the tens of thousands. The Environment Agency declined to fund the trash screen as it was deemed the responsibility of riparian owners. However, Nick clarified that a trash screens have been fitted at the north end of the Great Shefford flood relief scheme by the Environment Agency. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Sewage Infrastructure Improvement Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting discussed ongoing efforts to improve sewage infrastructure in the Lambourn Upper Valley, led by the Sewage Action Group for Lambourn Upper Valley (SAGLUV). Martyn provided an update on SAGLUV's work, highlighting successful collaboration with Thames Water, which has resulted in significant relining, manhole sealing, and repairs in the area's villages. The group has established regular meetings with Thames Water's senior directors and operational teams, leading to improvements in sewage systems and reduced groundwater infiltration. Martyn expressed optimism about achieving the goal of clear sewers and a clean river, hoping that high groundwater this winter will further validate the effectiveness of recent efforts. <p>Winter Water Management Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenny Pearson, the Regional Manager for the Waste Network at Thames Water, provided an update on the company's efforts to manage the water system in the area. She noted that last winter was less impactful than the previous year, with reduced usage of ATAC units and 	<p>SAGLUV / TW</p>

	<p>fewer issues with infiltration and blockages. Further investigations identified new infiltration areas, and additional lining work has been completed to address these issues. Jenny also mentioned plans to deploy ATAC units again this year and expressed concerns about potential groundwater levels during winter work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> James provided an update on Environment Agency permits, suggesting that small charitable works may no longer require permits due to changes in the national scheme. Jon Winstanley from West Berkshire Council highlighted the focus on highway assets and discussed potential modifications to the Winterbourne Flood Alleviation scheme above Bagnor, noting the need for careful consideration due to its classification as a reservoir. <p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emily announced the annual Flood Wardens meeting scheduled for November 25th and requested any missing flood wardens to contact the emergency planning inbox Paula inquired about a briefing on the Clay Hill flood alleviation scheme, which Jon agreed to arrange for all affected parish councils. Chris raised concerns about the delayed response to unblocking gullies in Lambourn, and Jon explained the maintenance regime and budget constraints. Paula also asked about the status of drainage issues on Newport Road, which Jon said he would follow up with Ashley. Martyn inquired about progress on regular meetings between EA, Westberks, and Thames Water, which Jon acknowledged hadn't happened regularly but would take away as an action item. Howard clarified that the Scrutiny Commission had not been disbanded and would be requesting appearances from Thames Water and the Environment Agency in the spring. 	<p>TW</p> <p>WBC</p> <p>WBC / Wardens</p> <p>WBC</p> <p>WBC</p> <p>WBC</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website The meeting addressed the need to update the website, with Vicky mentioning potential seed funding from Project Groundwater to improve its structure 	<p>Vicky / Nick</p>

	<p>Date, Time and location of next meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• February 2nd, 2026 <p><u>By On-Line Conference</u></p>	<p>All</p>
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