

West Wolds Slow the Flow: Partnership Terms of Reference

Preamble

West Wolds Slow the Flow (WWSTF) came into being in 2020 in response to flooding events in the West Wolds, during the winter of 2019-2020. It aims to reduce flooding in the West Wolds villages and surrounding areas using nature-based solutions.

WWSTF is an informal partnership comprising representatives of local authorities, parish councils, statutory agencies, non-governmental organisations and individuals. It works in partnership with local residents and businesses, landowners and farmers.

WWSTF is affiliated with the Hull and East Riding Catchment Partnership and works locally to deliver the common aims shared with the Catchment Partnership.

These Terms of Reference confirm the purposes, membership and formalities associated with the operation of WWSTF.

1. Name

1.1 The name of the organisation shall be West Wolds Slow the Flow (abbreviated to WWSTF).

2. Geographical Area

2.1 WWSTF covers the parishes of Newbald, Hotham, North Cave, South Cave, Ellerker and Brantingham, which broadly corresponds with the 'Mill Beck Catchment'.

3. Purpose

3.1 The primary purpose of WWSTF is to use nature-based solutions to reduce flooding in the West Wolds villages and surrounding areas, whilst achieving multiple benefits including enhancing biodiversity, improving amenity and raising water quality.

3.2 This will be achieved by using the following principles:-

- Slowing the Flow, not 'getting water away' - there is always someone downstream!
- Use Natural Flood Management, or 'nature-based solutions', to catch and detain water where it falls, across all parts of the catchment;
- Use low-carbon interventions and contribute to carbon sequestration through tree and other planting;
- Take opportunities to use existing infrastructure, like ditches, to both expand attenuation capacity and detain water with leaky dams (whether woody or engineered);

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- Intercept, detain and direct flow paths;
- Create controlled flow paths around groupings of property;
- Reduce surface water surcharge of combined or foul sewers;
- Implement the common aims we share with the Hull and East Riding Catchment Partnership:
 - Promote and develop sustainable drainage systems, including community engagement;
 - Restore habitats and links to natural river processes;
 - Tackle diffuse pollution from urban and agricultural sources.

3.3 The functions of WWSTF shall be to:-

- Agree core values and priorities;
- Guide and steer the actions of the partners to implement the above principles;
- Receive proposals for projects from partners;
- Oversee the production of an annual action plan;
- Seek strategic funding for the annual action plan;
- Secure and encourage widespread representation;
- Elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson;
- Adopt new member organisations or individuals into 'West Wolds Slow the Flow';
- Own and protect the 'West Wolds Slow the Flow' brand;
- Use the collective skills of the members in creative partnership;
- Maximise communication through website, social media and traditional media;
- Further develop and share our GIS data, to explain local flooding issues, the ways in which watercourses interact and potential solutions;
- Carry out design workshops with residents, farmers, landowners and key partners to create sustainable flood management and environmental improvements;

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- Implement a range of community engagement projects, for example in monitoring rainfall and river flows, which will help us to understand the factors of flooding and warn us of future events;
- Encourage and establish community responsibility to assist the authorities, for example by monitoring the state of ditches, watercourses and flow control points, in an organised fashion;
- Deliver the projects by:
 - Creating prioritised project listings, and reviewing funding or possible community activities;
 - Obtaining permits / approvals, e.g. Planning, Highway, EA watercourse;
 - Working with partners on delivery by or with them.

4. Membership

4.1 Membership of WWSTF shall be sought from all relevant organisations and individuals. Members of WWSTF shall attend as representatives of their organisation, group or area, and shall seek consensus in delivering the aims.

4.2 Core membership is by representatives from:

- East Riding of Yorkshire Council (Flood Risk),
- East Riding Ward Councillors,
- Environment Agency,
- Yorkshire Water,
- the following Parish Councils:
 - Newbald,
 - Hotham,
 - North Cave,
 - South Cave,
 - Ellerker,
 - Brantingham.
- The Chair and Vice Chair are drawn from members of the local community.

4.3 The above core membership constitutes a Steering Group for WWSTF.

4.4 It shall be the aim of WWSTF to secure a balanced representation from all communities and parishes within the catchment and from agencies and organisations which can help to further the aims of WWSTF.

4.5 WWSTF shall invite representatives to be members of the Partnership, as appropriate, and for an unlimited period of time.

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4.6 Current members of WWSTF may nominate other organisations/individuals to become new members. Other organisations/individuals may also apply to become members of WWSTF. In either case appointment to WWSTF will be conditional upon the organisation/individual endorsing the objects of WWSTF and operating within the geographical area covered by the Partnership, or being directly linked to it.

4.7 The number of representatives from each constituent organisation of WWSTF shall be determined by existing WWSTF members.

4.8 Members present at Forum meetings will be responsible for reporting the issues discussed to their respective organisations, and ensuring that the projects and activities of their respective organisations are reported to the Forum meetings.

4.9 All members should work in a spirit of mutual trust and communication. Conflicts of interest should be made known as they arise during debates.

5. WWSTF Steering Group Meetings & Procedures

5.1 The WWSTF Steering Group shall meet no less than four times a year and meetings shall take place at locations to be agreed, or virtually. Extraordinary meetings of WWSTF may be called by the Chair, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair, if required.

5.2 Should a formal vote be required on any issue, this shall be determined by a simple majority vote on the basis of one vote per organisation or individual. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

5.3 No business shall be transacted by WWSTF unless a quorum is present. A quorum shall be no less than 6 members of the WWSTF entitled to vote upon the business to be conducted at any meeting.

6. Officers

6.1 WWSTF shall have the following officers/members: -

- **Chair.** One nominated elected member shall Chair WWSTF. There shall be no restrictions on period/term of office, but alternative nominations for the role may be put forward and voted on at any meeting of WWSTF. In circumstances where there are no such nominated representatives available to undertake the role, nominations shall be sought from within WWSTF and the Chair shall be elected by means of a secret ballot on a simple majority basis.

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- **Vice-Chair.** One nominated elected member shall undertake the role of Vice-Chair WWSTF. There shall be no restrictions on period/term of office, but alternative nominations for the role may be put forward and voted on at any meeting of WWSTF. In circumstances where there are no such nominated representatives available to undertake the role, nominations shall be sought from within WWSTF and the Vice-Chair shall be elected by means of a secret ballot on a simple majority basis. Ideally, the Vice-Chair will be from a different parish than the Chair, to minimise bias towards any one area.
- **WWSTF Members:** Membership of WWSTF shall be limited to those community groups, local authorities, national and regional agencies, voluntary and environmental NGOs, businesses and key individuals with a commitment to the aims and functions outlined in paragraph 3.1 and 3.2. New members shall be co-opted on an informal invitation basis. There shall be no maximum or minimum length of terms of office for WWSTF members.

6.2 The duties of these officers shall be to: -

(a) **Chair.**

- Lead and effectively manage the business of WWSTF meetings and provide clear direction and focus in all such meetings.
- Promote effective decision-making and constructive debate during meetings.
- Ensure that any sub-committees or working groups of WWSTF are properly chaired, structured and run in accordance with agreed Terms of Reference.
- Uphold and promote the aims and objectives of WWSTF and its Terms of Reference, and to interpret the Terms of Reference whenever necessary.
- Be forward thinking and pro-active in establishing the future direction of WWSTF business.
- Deploy a casting vote in the event of tied voting.
- Take urgent action in between meetings in the best interests of WWSTF.
- Endeavour to attend all meetings.

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(b) Vice-Chair.

- Deputise fully in the absence of the Chair.
- Share and support the general activities of the Chair, as outlined in paragraph 6.2(a).
- Work actively with the Chair to coordinate the work of WWSTF and any sub-committees or working groups.
- Uphold and promote the aims and objectives of WWSTF and its Terms of Reference.
- Endeavour to attend all meetings.

(c) Steering Group members:

- Work actively with the Chair and Vice Chair to support the work of WWSTF and any sub-committees or working groups.
- Uphold and promote the aims and objectives of WWSTF, and its Terms of Reference.
- Endeavour to attend all meetings.

7. Financial Arrangements

7.1 WWSTF shall continue to seek core funding from its core partners (Yorkshire Water, Environment Agency, East Riding Council), from other groups, bodies and organisations within WWSTF and from those which join in the future. Funding for specific or generic projects shall be sought from landowners, developers, companies, external funding bodies and other organisations and groups through contributions, legal agreements, planning conditions and grant applications. Opportunities to obtain funding from other suitable sources shall also be explored.

7.2 Contributions to the running of WWSTF shall be drawn (where this is feasible) from the individual projects undertaken by WWSTF at a rate of no more than 15% of the total of the project fund. Any funds raised from such contributions shall be used to manage the activities of WWSTF and to develop new projects. Any surplus monies shall be used to fund or expand ongoing projects, as necessary.

7.3 In some cases, a suitable and agreed 'accountable body' may need to be appointed to support this process.

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8. Exit Strategy

8.1 Should WWSTF cease to exist, all extant and/or proposed project work shall continue to be pursued by existing or new partners where it is reasonable and appropriate for such partners to do so.

8.2 In circumstance where any such extant and/or proposed project work is unable to be undertaken or completed by existing or new partners, the constituent members of WWSTF shall take all reasonable measures available to ensure that any uncommitted monies held by WWSTF are returned to the original donor or donors.

8.3 Any funding committed to WWSTF by the core funding partners shall be distributed to the original donors either equally or on a *pro rata* basis as determined by the WWSTF Steering Group.

9. Amendments to the Terms of Reference

9.1 Amendments to these Terms of Reference may be proposed by means of a formal resolution made by any existing WWSTF member.

9.2 In order to adopt an amendment, the resolution must secure the support of a two-thirds majority of WWSTF, subject to confirmation by a simple majority vote on the basis of one vote per organisation or individual.

10. Ratification

10.1 These Terms of Reference were established by a simple majority vote of those attending WWSTF Steering Group meeting on Thursday, 17th September 2020.