



Representing Drainage Water Level & Flood Risk Management Authorities

Branch Chairman: Robin Buxton
Branch Vice Chairman: Sir Edward Greenwell
Branch Honorary Secretary: Kari Nash

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ADA (Association of Drainage Authorities) Eastern Branch AGM and Meeting

Date: 20 September 2023, 10.30 – 15:00

Venue: Broads IDB Martham Depot followed by Halvergate Marshes Site Visit

MINUTES

10.30 Branch AGM

Welcome and introductions

Present:

Robin Buxton (Chair), Robert Caudwell (ADA), John Carrick (Chair NRIDB), Aaron Dixey (EA), Giles Bloomfield (WMA), Angie Fitch-Tillett (NNDL), Mark Ogden (NCC), Andrea Kelly (BA), Matthew Philpot (WMA), Henry Cator (ADA President)

Apologies for absence:

Edward Greenwell (Vice Chair), Innes Thomson (ADA), Ian Moodie (ADA), Mark Johnson (EA Coastal Manager), Graham Verrier (EA AFCRM), Simon Hawkins (EA Area Director), David Kemp (PSO Team Leader), Rob Wise (NFU), Jonathan Glerum (AW), Phil Camamile (CEO WMA), Hamish Carrie (Chair W, LY & L IDB), Matt Hullis (SCC), Karen Thomas (CPE), Sharon Bleese (CPE), Mark Ogden (NCC), Cllr Andy Grant (NCC), Andy Smith, Chris Mutton (ADA Eastern Director), Jane Marson (Chair ESWMB), Daniel Johns (WRE), Andrew St Joseph (ECO), John Patrick (Felixstowe Hydrocycle), Kari Nash (WMA)

Announcements:

Giles Bloomfield has been appointed to the board of Water Resources East

Election of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer:

Angie Fitch-Tillett proposed Robin Buxton continue as chairman, seconded by John Carrick. Edward Greenwell to remain as vice chair. Kari Nash was voted in as Secretary and Treasurer.

Election of ADA Eastern Director:

Angie Fitch-Tillett was voted in as ADA Eastern Director. Proposed Henry Cator, seconded Robin Buxton.

Minutes of previous AGM:

persons updating to provide info to KN for updating previous minutes.

Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

Approval of Branch Accounts:

An action is in process for the previous administration (Nicholsons Solicitors) to close the account and transfer the funds to the WMA to hold on behalf of these ADA meetings.

The AGM was closed

Branch Meeting

1. ADA National Update Robert Cauldwell (ADA)

- 1.1 RC gave update on the success of flood and water live at Carrington. A small financial surplus was achieved by the event with circa 1,000 people attending over 2 days. However the event took circa 6 months of planning and was very resource heavy for ADA. In addition the financial sustainability of such an event is difficult and could be a high risk for ADA in the future. It is therefore unlikely to be repeated for 2-3 years. The Duke of Gloucester visited and has been since been asked and agreed to be the Royal Patron of ADA.
- 1.2 JC attended Flood & Water Live, but fed back that it was unclear who the event was aimed at, particularly the demo's of very large machinery which are not particularly relevant to the smaller boards. Publicity was good.
- 1.3 RC explained that the feedback from previous events was what led the agenda and exhibits for this event. Stand holder feedback was good and mostly positive feedback was received from those that attended. 65% of pre-registered actually attended.
- 1.4 The Lowland & Agricultural Peat Small Infrastructure Pilot Taskforce report, published 29th June 2023, is being led by Ian Moodie, David Thomas and David Hoskins, administered through ADA. £5m of grant for IDBs/commissioners is available. The pilot will deliver small scale infrastructure projects that will enable more control of water levels for the preservation and rewetting of lowland peat whilst seeking to not increase the risk of flooding to communities, business, and infrastructure. The pilot will be managed by Defra, with ADA providing subject matter expertise. The focus will be on projects that are near shovel-ready and fully implementable by March 2025. Applicants have until the end of October 2023 to apply. Steering group chaired by RC.
- 1.5 WMA submitted 6 EOIs jointly with the Broads Authority, Broads IDB, Waveney IDB. GB expressed the importance of knowing as soon as possible if funding has been successful.
- 1.6 The pilot will allow us to understand the barriers to rolling this initiative out and allow policies to develop accordingly across many DEFRA departments.
- 1.7 AFT suggested a supplementary planning note may be beneficial, to highlight objectives. RC explained that whilst this is a good idea, the resource demand to develop that document would be difficult to achieve at the moment.
- 1.8 [ADA conference](#) Tuesday 21st November 2023. Speakers have been announced. Slightly different format with a later buffet lunch and networking followed by the conference.
- 1.9 RC concern on reallocation of grants from the EA. This is largely around pump replacement and the cost increases, which are making projects cost:benefit ratio's change.

1.10 JC has approached George Freeman with a briefing for Therese Coffey regarding IDB areas and district expansion.

2. Environment Agency/RFCC – Update from Aaron Dixey

2.1 Kari Nash is speaking to the RFCC in October regarding the funding shortfalls and the big picture mentioned above.

2.2 AD explained Philip Duffy is the new EA CEO and is taking an active interest in the capital programme. New templates for certain projects with the aim of improving assurance process. £3m local assurance now possible.

2.3 Some changes have been made to benefit accounting around different sources of flooding.

2.4 AD explained the EA are mid-refresh where local bids are submitted to national. National bid has gone up £600m largely due to inflation. Locally the allocation is £21m less than asked for. GB explained that we are under legal obligation to protect the habitats we serve and if we are not able to fix our failing assets, then we are at high risk. This is a national picture, not just eastern.

2.5 Local choices meeting 6 October in Ipswich. All RFCC members present. Richard Price & Eric Vardy.

2.6 Sea Palling ramp is about to start, Eccles to Winterton frontage Groyne improvements and beach recharge.

2.7 National Flood Risk Assessment Tool (NAFRA2) has been launched, which will now allow local models to be stitched into it, to give better accuracy where it is available. The system also takes into account the defences present, as well as the condition and therefore the probabilistic likelihood of flooding.

3. Coastal Partnership East update (no update received ahead of meeting)

3.1 [Coasts and Estuaries conference](#) – 12 October

Other Member updates:

4. Water Management Alliance – Giles Bloomfield

4.1 Capital programme of works continue. All projects have variances in costs to current approvals, largely due to inflationary pressures.

4.1.1 Norton PS replacement is starting in April 2024, with preliminaries already underway. This is an exciting project for the Waveney IDB and will see Archimedes Screw pumps installed.

- 4.1.2 The Lower Waveney Business Case is underway and should be submitted to the EA by the end of the year.
 - 4.1.3 The River Yare & Bure Pumping Station replacement Business Cases will be underway when additional funding is approved
 - 4.1.4 Detail Design on the Upper Thurne Water Level Management Improvement Project continues and work will be on site next year.
 - 4.1.5 Benacre FCERM4 was submitted to the EA in August.
 - 4.1.6 Detail Design is progressing well on the Upper Alde & Ore project.
- 4.2 East Suffolk IDB have been reconstituted to the East Suffolk Water Management Board, from 1st April 2023. The reconstitution will primarily reduce the number of Board members and will abolish the 5 current Electoral Divisions.
- 4.3 The [Alde & Ore estuary launch event](#) will take place on the 7th October at Snape Maltings. The event will seek to highlight the plans for the estuary.

5. Suffolk County Council – (no update received ahead of meeting)

6. Norfolk County Council – Mark Ogden

- 6.1 Flood Investigations have continued over the last 12 months with almost 60 properties internally flooded. This is down on the usual 100 in a typical year. A10 Corridor and Kings Lynn has been hit particularly badly this year, due to the weather patterns seen.
- 6.2 Many applications for planning coming in, including national infrastructure projects such as A47 extension and windfarm cable projects.
- 6.3 PSCA with WMA member boards have been very successful and projects have included;
- 6.3.1 River Burn whole river management assessment. This is an assessment of the whole length of river and floodplain and will link to other modelling work underway.
 - 6.3.2 Brockdish leaky dam installation, Morley Besthorpe Water attenuation feature, Beighton Road Acle pipe and watercourse improvements.
 - 6.3.3 Other projects include Property Level Protection and ponds at Dereham, as well as many other projects.
- 6.4 Reclaim the Rain project is also underway and in Norfolk is working with Watton, Wooton and other Parish councils on storing water.
- 6.5 Watercourse maintenance guidance is being updated and will be launched as part of the flood awareness week in December.

7. Water Resources East – Daniel Johns

- 7.1 Board of Directors: we were pleased to announce earlier this month that Giles Bloomfield will be joining WRE's board to represent IDBs across the region, taking over from David Thomas. We will also be welcoming two other new board directors at our next meeting; Paul Mumford from Urban & Civic and Kathryn Mackenzie from the Revlvel Association and Upper & Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership. This follows an open call for new non-executive directors launched in May.
- 7.2 Regional Water Resources Plan: we published a summary of consultation responses on our draft Regional Plan in July, and we plan to publish our final Regional Plan in December. Our water company members are in the process of publishing their revised draft Water Resource Management Plans and submitting these to the government for approval.
- 7.3 Major reservoir projects: WRE is feeding in to integrated water management studies for both the Lincolnshire and Fens Reservoir schemes. These studies will explore the potential for irrigation, flood risk and water level management benefits to be delivered from both projects, working closely with the NFU, Environment Agency and relevant IDBs.
- 7.4 New Business Plan: we plan to launch a new Business Plan for the 2024 – 2028 period at our AGM in December. We circulated a draft for comment over the summer and received lots of useful feedback which we will use to improve the plan before launch.
- 7.5 Flagship projects: we are taking stock of the Norfolk Water Strategy Programme in light of recent policy developments on nutrient neutrality. However we are being funded by WWF and the Environment Agency to evaluate the water resources benefits of nature-based solutions in the Wensum catchment, and to take forward the Nature for Norfolk demonstrator project.

8. Essex Coastal Organisation – (no update received ahead of meeting)

9. NSFA – Henry Cator

- 9.1 NSFA is concentrating on maintenance and on bringing together stakeholders to solve flooding problems. HC has expanded the groups remit to include coastal flooding.
- 9.2 JC explained that the EA's lack of basic river maintenance is a major risk and contributory factor to flood risk in the region.

10. Broadland Catchment Partnership –Andrea Kelly

- 10.1 New terms of reference are being developed. Likely the rotating chair will change.
- 10.2 Peatland Restoration Plan continues, Buttle Marsh on the Ant hopefully delivered winter 2024.
- 10.3 Rebecca Pow MP has visited Horsey Palludiculture site.

10.4 25th November Public Conference at UEA on the broads and broads future.

10.4.1 IUCN conference [2-5 October in Ely focussing on Peat](#), meeting on 2nd Oct where team are also visiting Hemstead and Horsey

Date and venue of next AGM and Branch meeting

18th September 2024, Venue TBC

AOB

It was generally felt that a report featuring updates from the different bodies should be circulated minimum 2 weeks ahead of the next meeting to allow delegates to review items and come to the meeting with any questions. The secretariat will request updates for this to be achieved.