

## 12 July 2022 Meeting Minutes

### Attendance

**Liz Viggars** (SusWoT), **Alastair Blackwell** (Friends of Blaise), **Bryony Cole** (Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Climate Action Group), **Zac Jones** (Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Climate Action Group), **Roger Moses** (Friends of Badock's Wood), **Di Bunniss**

### Apologies

**Alex Dunn** (SusWoT), **Frances Robertson** (Friends of Badock's Wood), Mark Thompson & Jodi Peacham (Henleaze Swimming Club)

### Henleaze Swimming Club

Henleaze Swimming Club have now joined the Trout in the Trym project and will be represented by Mark Thompson (Trustee) and Jodi Peacham (Grounds Manager). Peter has conducted a pond-dipping exercise. Leaflets were produced showing his findings. It would be good to put these on the website. **Action Liz** to source and upload the document

### Himalayan Balsam

Limited Balsam has been found so far this year. There has been remarkably little Balsam in areas where Balsam was removed early and thoroughly in 2021. Careful watch is being maintained. SusWoT are including Balsam finding in their Friday activities, Balsam removal in their Sunday activities and have held their first weekday session on a Monday evening. Now there is less Balsam in concentrated areas, the focus needs to be on reporting Balsam so that the volunteers go to the right place.

There are two areas of minor concern at the moment – 60m downstream from Stratford Mill on West Bank – areas that cannot be reached safely from above or below and the area next to the flats at the Mill House pub.

It was noted that some members of the public have complained about the Balsam being removed, particularly away from the river. Their main argument concerns the potential loss of bee habitats. We should look to address this concern. It was noted that the 'Royals' meadows (east and uphill from Stratford Mill) have become flourishing wild flower meadows. There was also a recollection of an article regarding the relatively poor quality of Himalayan Balsam nectar. We may need to consider whether specific areas are 'designated' as acceptable to leave Himalayan Balsam – we would seek undertakings that the Balsam would not be allowed to spread beyond such areas. **Action Bryony and Liz** to research the bee situation. **Liz** to circulate report received from Nikki Jones about the wildlife in Sea Mills.

The reduced level of Himalayan Balsam is very encouraging – we should look to promote our successes to encourage volunteers around other rivers to take heart and commit to an operation similar to ours. **Action Liz** to pick up with Alex

### **River Cleaning** [See map for current situation](#)

SusWoT is continuing to hold twice-weekly river cleaning – predominantly in Henbury and Brentry and Coombe Dingle. Alastair mentioned Clean up UK – an charitable organisation offering its services in Bristol – looking for litter hubs. **Action Alistair** to send details through to SusWoT for consideration.

### **Henbury and Brentry:**

Work continues in Crow Lane. There are layers and layers that need to be removed here.

### **Blaise:**

Limited Trout in the Trym cleaning work has so far been done in Blaise. There is no known significant problem. An examination will be made in the summer and any work undertaken.

### **Coombe Dingle and Sea Mills:**

Half this stretch has been done. See map, however more needs to be done when drier in the summer. As in Crow Lane there are multiple layers of old rubbish still to be uncovered.

### **Golf Course:**

No work done so far. A check will need to be done in the summer.

### **Westbury Village:**

Done. Monitor.

### **WWP:**

The Wildlife park are assumed to be keeping their section clear.

### **Badock's Wood:**

No issues.

### **Southmead Trym Valley:**

This has looked at on 6 March when it was very clear. Another clean took place on 24 April when the river and site were rendered very clean and no HB found. The cow parsley and grass was growing very well so there may be some hidden litter, but the site looked great after the work was finished. A lot of new rubbish was removed.

### **Silt Traps and Weirs**

Alastair, Alex, Liz and Roger met with Caroline Ennion (Parks) and two of the Blaise Rangers to discuss the silt problem and possible solutions in May. Issues include the anaerobic nasty dangerous state of the ponds, costs, heritage, visitor appeal, fish health, dogs, documentation. The key for the trap has been found and a plan made to explore the traps (the weather was too bad to do this on the day). If the traps are in good condition then it should be feasible to clear them at limited costs. However if they are damaged, they will need to be fenced off and a new strategy developed. The metal sheet that is used to divert the river around the silt traps (there are more than one) has been vandalised, and may be missing. It will be repaired or replaced to see what the effect on Water quality is.

Alistair provided an update that the Council has now found the drawings of the silt traps and they are not as deep as first thought. This may make the issue easier to resolve. Parks have made a request for funding to tackle the silt in the Autumn.

**Action** (suspended until we understand more about the silt traps and weirs: Alastair to contact Theo Pike and ask what are the things we might do. The report WTT provided was fishcentric, we need to manage heritage, visitors and fish. (Alex offered to contact if needed.)

### **Organised Walks**

Trout in the Trym delivered three walks as part of WalkFest in May. These were deemed successful with around a dozen people on each walk. It was felt that the first Walk (Sea Mills to Westbury Village) might have been a bit too long. The walk leaders were keen to repeat the walks next year – we may split the sections slightly differently – and there could be an opportunity to include the Wildlife Park

The Big Green Week is scheduled for the last week of September – and there may be an opportunity to organise a walk as part of this. **Action – Bryony** to investigate.

### **Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership Meeting**

Was on 26 April. Alex, Alastair and Peter attended. The following issues were raised. Balsam, River Cleaning, More support for our newer Groups, Outfall Survey, Remove Barriers. Ponds/Silt, Rebending, Community Programs, Wessex Water. Next meeting in July(?)

### **Climate and Ecological Emergency Community Grant**

The grant programme is targeted at community groups or small not-for-profit organisations based and working in Bristol. Grant opens on 9<sup>th</sup> May, closes on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022. [Details here](#). SusWoT has applied for a grant for more equipment to continue its clearing operations along the Trym and to encourage new groups to get started. SMCDCAG has applied for a grant to support its repair cafes.

## **Quartet in the community Report**

Alex has submitted a report to Quartet in respect of the grant received by SusWoT in 2021 for equipment to tackle Himalayan Balsam and the river. Meeting attendees were interested in the final report submitted.

**Action:** Liz to pick up with Alex.

## **Pollution Incidents – reporting**

Attendees were keen to encourage people across the community to report pollution incidents.

**Action All** Please continue to report pollution incidents to Peter and Liz. We are keen to track down the key pollution source so they can be followed up and fixed.

Lydia had reported pollution to Wessex but had heard nothing. **Action** Peter to chase up.

Attendees were keen to help people with reporting.

## **Yellow fish and rain in drain awareness**

We will do this, however at the moment schools are overloaded. Peter has emailed the BART project office to find out what happened with the last Yellow Fish Campaign

**Action Peter:** to chase for response

## **Trout in the Trym Stalls**

Roger, Peter, Frances and Di organised a large stall at the Blaise museum opening on 1 June. The stall had three multimedia sections: An information stand including the TitT wildlife leaflet and information cards containing QR codes with links to the website, a TV for Roger to help people recognise bird songs, and a table for children to explore what could be found in a bucket of water from the river. Around 100 families engaged with the project. This was considered a successful outreach project and we discussed the possibility of running the stall at other events – eg the Westbury Village Show. It was noted that the RSPB have a regular stall in Blaise – and we may want to team up with them.

**Action Roger** to discuss having a stall at the Westbury Village Show ([wotvs.co.uk](http://wotvs.co.uk)) on 3 September – he has the necessary contacts. **Liz** to ask for volunteers at the next SusWoT meeting (note however SusWoT will have its own stall).

## **AOB**

Di reported high tides were due at the end of the week – would be useful to see the effects at Sea Mills. Zac reported that there had previously been flooding in the vicinity.