

## **14 September 2021 Minutes**

### **River Trym and Hazel Brook Meeting 14 September 2021**

#### **Attendance**

**Alistair Backwell** (Friends of Blaise), **Alex Dunn** (SusWoT), **Liz Viggars** (SusWoT), **Roger Moses** (Friends of Badock's Wood), **Peter Coleman-Smith**, **Clarie Miles** (Sustainable Southmead) **Tim Parkinson** (Henbury Conservation), **Max Gould**,

#### **Apologies**

**Lydia Klimecki** (SMCDCAG), **Frances Robertson** (FOBW)

#### **Discussions**

##### **Balsam**

Liz presented current position on this year's activities – over 100 volunteers have taken part in organised events with over 500 man hours put in so far (estimated total around 700 hours). All areas have been tackled at least once. There are a couple of known stands (one near the Mill house pub and another in Crow Lane Open Space just up from Aldi). The Balsam is returning in areas that have been cleared, both as a result of pulled and trampled plants re-establishing themselves and new seedlings.

After a two week break, SusWoT is back to two sessions a week (Friday 10.15, Sunday 11am). Most of the work is suitable for groups of 2-3 people – although looking to hold mass events on 26 September and 17 October. SusWoT is aiming to finish formal Balsam events on 17 October. Westbury Wildlife Park have suggested they could host a get-together on the 17th October where we can celebrate our achievements. Alex to take up with Jono.

It was agreed to consider Max's suggestion of clearing brambles in known hotspots over the winter so that it would be easier to remove the Balsam next year.

Tim asked about the state of the northern section of Hazel Brook. Liz confirmed that people had walked the area and not identified any Balsam, although nobody had checked from the water (some of the Balsam has only been visible from the river)

##### **Equipment**

Alex reported that SusWoT had purchased 7 pairs of waders using the Quartet Foundation grant and several pairs of gloves. These had been tested at the weekend (waders good to 4ft deep!) and further gloves would now be ordered (pond gloves for river work, leather gauntlets for dry land). Ranger Max litter pickers (which are useful for reaching Balsam as a wading staff) and printed hi viz jackets are on order.

Max reported on the work he has been doing to extract metal from the river -using a high-powered magnet. We discussed the prioritisation of removing metal from the river – Peter to review the evidence and report back. It was accepted that the metal may be attached to more harmful materials (e.g. diesel tanks) and some is visible from the banks.

## **Water Quality**

Pete outlined two potential activities in addition to the ongoing River Fly Monitoring:

1. Yellow fish campaign (this has been run before in certain areas – useful to raise awareness)
2. Outfall Safaris. This involves mapping and monitoring all of the Outflows and other pipes into the river system.

It was agreed that we could progress with both. Pete agreed to work-up a plan for discussion at the next meeting. We discussed the possibility of ultimately assigning short lengths of the river to individuals who could monitor longer-term.

Water quality is becoming a higher priority and features in the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy. From a PR perspective it would be useful to involve Wessex Water and politicians who are/should be interested (in particular Dan Norris, Marvin Rees, Mark Weston, Darren Jones). Pete to draft suitable comms.

We looked at potential monitoring solutions. There are water quality monitors that we could purchase (eg Netilion) and there have been several reports produced by University students for different groups. It was agreed that we would approach Wessex Water for suggestions (Pete)

Issues with the building site near Cribbs were discussed – retention tanks had not been built prior to the turf being lifted resulting in excess silt flowing into the river.

## **PR**

Should aim to get some articles into local publications in November covering what we've done this year and our future plans. Alex to confirm relevant deadlines.

## **Next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 12 October. We agreed to invite Theo Pike from the Wild Trout Trust to review this year's work and discuss our future plans