

## 9 August 2022 Meeting Minutes

### Attendance

**Alex Dunn** (SusWoT), **Liz Viggars** (SusWoT), **Alastair Blackwell** (Friends of Blaise), **Roger Moses** (Friends of Badock's Wood), **Mark Thompson** (Henleaze Swimming Club)

### Apologies

**Bryony Cole** (Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Climate Action Group)

### 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 (carried forwards)

### 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. There is not enough Balsam to justify a Monday evening Balsam session.

**Action – Alex/Liz** to send note to all Balsam-listers celebrating our success and asking for focus on reporting .

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. Bryony and Liz have researched this argument – while bees do indeed 'love' Himalayan Balsam, it is not good for them and the presence of Himalayan Balsam can reduce the pollination of native species. See for example [Lancaster University research](#) and [Ribble Trust factsheet](#).

### 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. Alex has contacted them to find out more. We wait to hear – Bristol Waste already actively manages volunteer litter pickers.

### Henbury and Brentry:

Work continues in Crow Lane. There are layers and layers that need to be removed here. We are now filling 1-2 council trucks per session largely with bricks and rubble.

**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. Mesh found under the bridge at the Coombe Dingle car park – Alastair and Alex have contacted the council to check if this has a purpose. We will look to remove at one of the river cleaning sessions.

**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:**

SusWoT carried out a clean on 31 July – 3 months after the last exercise. Disappointingly a lot of rubbish had been dumped. It was cleared. While Sustainable Southmead is inactive we need to monitor this area to make sure it doesn't get this bad again. Alex has asked SS for volunteers to monitor. Action Roger to monitor until other volunteers come forward.

**Henleaze Lake**

Currently clearing weeds and lily pads from Northern end of Lake. Uncovering some old rubbish (including carrier bags from 1974).

**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.

Guttersuckers may be a possible solution depending on how compacted the silt is. Caroline Ennion is reviewing. A guttersucker could also be useful elsewhere in Blaise where there are blocked drains.

**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 24th September – 2nd October <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>. SMCD CAG will be participating. As part of this they will organise a walk/litter pick along their tree trail on 4th October

### **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. SMCD CAG has applied for a grant to support its repair cafes. Update 9/8 – we have not heard back about the grant allocations yet.

### **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 remain keen to encourage people across the community to report pollution incidents.

Beehive Brook dry at the moment. However 2 new pollution incidents around Badocks Wood, Henleaze Lake – 1 reported to Wessex (who attended immediately) and 1 not. Need to encourage people to report as per instructions on TroutintheTrym website- **Action Roger** to ask for this information to be included in FOBW newsletter.

Please continue to notify Peter and Liz of pollution incidents to help with long-term monitoring.

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

### **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**

The ideal TitT stall comprises 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.

We understand it's now too late to organise a separate TroutintheTrym stall for Westbury Village Show. SusWoT is already sharing its stall with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, but could make some space for available for TroutintheTrym – **Action Roger** to liaise with Liz/Peter CS about requirements

There would be space to have the stall at the SMCD repair cafe on the 24th August or at the Sea Mills Flower & Craft show on the 10th of September. Bryony would be available to help out at the Flower show.

**AOB**

Roger reported that FOBW were holding a small amount of cash earmarked for Trout in the Trym from the Blaise Museum event on 1 June 2022.

Bats had been found at Coombe Dingle Car Park Bridge – it would be good to know what they were. Roger has a bat detector. FOBW have a Bat Walk in September, Henleaze Lake have identified 6-7 varieties.