Meeting Notes

Title of meeting:	**Wales Water Management Forum**
Location:	**Face to face in Abergavenny**
Date of meeting:	10/07/2025
Attendees present:	Steve Ormerod (Chair), Rhian Thomas (NRW), Ceri Jones (NRW), Ruth Johnston (NRW), Dominic Driver (NRW), Jeremy Tanner (NRW), Rhodri Powell (NRW), Gail Davies-Walsh (WEL rep – Afonydd Cymru), Dennis Matheson (TFA), Richard Waggett (NRW), Bethan Davies (WG), Shaun Dowen (UU), Sharon Ellwood (DCWW), Rhodri Powell (NRW), For field trip (NRW) - Leila Thornton, Sophie Gott, Suzie Kinghan
Apologies:	Rachel Lewis Davies (NFU), Lia Murphy (Ofwat), Fraser McAuley (CLA), David James (WLGA) David MacCallum (NRW), Elizabeth Franks (HD), Gemma Haines (FUW), Richard Blackwell (WRW), Inoka Manatunga (NRW), Gareth Parry (FUW), Elaine Harrison (Confor), Laura Moss (DWI), Kate Evans (Ofwat), Lia Moutselou (CCW)
Secretariat:	Ceri Jones

Item 1 Welcome – Professor Steve Ormerod (Chair)

As Chair, Professor Steve Ormerod opened the day and welcomed attendees. Details of the Four Rivers for LIFE Project was then shared prior to the site visit in Abergavenny.

WWMF then left as a group down to the river Usk. The group returned to the venue for 12:00 and the afternoon meeting started at 13:00.

Item 2 Apologies, new members, agree meeting notes and review action Log - Professor Steve Ormerod (Chair) and Ceri Jones (NRW)

Apologies were noted and captured for the meeting note. New members were welcomed, including Sharon Ellwood DCWW, Shaun Dowen (UU) and Bethan Davies (WG). Rhodri Powell and Richard Waggett from NRW were also welcomed who were contributing to the agenda for the day.

Members considered and confirmed that the meeting notes from the previous meeting (14 November 2024) were accurate, these will now be added to the WWMF webpage.

The action log was reviewed. There were a few ongoing actions which were closed. Currently there are no ongoing actions for the forum.

Item 3 Water Updates (All)

RBMP T&F group

CJ provided as verbal update of the RBMP work including the work of the RBMP T&F group. Usually, the RBMP update is include in a supporting paper for WWMF but for todays session this was verbal. A written update will be shared across WWMF later in the summer.

ACTION: CJ circulate RBMP update to WWMF by 10 September

The RBMP T&F group have been meeting every two months and will continue to meet. Their current focus is the Cycle 3 RBMP programme of measures progress review report and also the Cycle 4 RBMP next statutory consultation 'Challenges and Choices – The Significant Water Management Issues'. The T&F groups input has been invaluable and helped to shape both areas of work. Future approaches to RBMP on the back of the Independent Water Commission work and future approaches to the programme of measures are proposed tasks for this group.

Discussion points noted:

- Indicators used to show progress and or action and how these are reflected in the C3 RBMP report. A point was also raised about the proposed recommendations within the report and who these are aimed for, are they recommendations for NRW or others such as Welsh Government
- Classification and how we report quality including elemental change
- The implications of both the Independent Water Commission work and the Costa Beck JR in England

The River Restoration Portal

An overview and screen shots of the River Restoration Portal was shared. This was an informative presentation and was well received as a positive step to bring NRW and partner data together. Within NRW the portal has been used to inform future projects, and similarly AC are also using this data. There is potential here to build on this in particular with RBMP local actions (Opportunity Catchments) and the fisheries work (both NRW and AC) and the portal is seen as a real positive step to bring together this work.

Discussion points noted:

- Current status of the Fresh Water Gateway project. This has currently stopped
- Biological benefits of geomorphological restoration
- Benefits work – what are the benefits at the completion of a project. Including some comparison of the approaches used by the water industry
- Sharing this work with the WEL network through the Water group

The Water Capital Programme

An overview of the Nature and Climate Emergency (NaCE) fund was shared with a focus on the water quality element which included water quality, fisheries and the metal mine programme. The programme is now planning at the multiyear scale which is a positive shift away from annual budgets and projects.

Discussion points noted:

- Mapping outcomes alongside interventions would be useful and reporting this
- New projects for the marine opportunity catchment including the marine SACs
- SFS funding options for rivers and shade

Members Contributions

Written contribution from Water Resources West, the WRW 2025 final regional plan was published on the 12 June.

SFS and the implications for tenant farmers was raised, noting the challenges for tenant farmers when they do not own the land and they are bound by their tenancy agreement. In particular in relation to longer term farm improvements.

Water Companies are now focused on the delivery of the Asset Management Plan period 8 (AMP8). Members agreed to bring regular updates and share the annual progress review of this programme.

ACTION: Water Company members to bring programme updates to WWMF and also share their annual progress review findings

Better Water Quality Task Force was raised alongside the WG review of governance and the first WG river summit that took place in May. The potential wider remit of the Task Force was highlighted looking at highways and septic tanks.

Item 4 AOB and date of next meeting

No AOB. Future meeting dates will be circulated for November and March.

The meeting closed at 14:30.