

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Telephone: March (01354) 699377

E-mail: enquiries@middlelevel.gov.uk
www.middlelevel.gov.uk

Middle Level Offices
85 Whittlesey Road
MARCH
Cambs
PE15 0AH

21st April 2023

Dear Commissioners

Meeting of Commissioners
27th April 2023

I enclose the Agenda for the Meeting of the Commissioners to be held at The Baptist Hall, Station Road, Haddenham at 5.00 pm on Thursday 27th April 2023.

Please telephone or e-mail to confirm your attendance as soon as possible.

Yours truly

P BURROWS

Clerk to the Commissioners

To the Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

The Commissioners to declare any interests relating to the agenda.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 3rd November 2022.

(Copy pages 12 - 26)

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

5. Appointment of Chairman

To appoint the Chairman of the Commissioners.
(Present Chairman – M Church Esq)

6. Appointment of Vice Chairman

To appoint the Vice Chairman of the Commissioners.
(Present Vice Chairman – J Smith Esq)

7. Appointment of New Commissioners

Further to minute C.471, The Chairman to update regarding the nomination of Sutton smallholder.

8. Bank Mandate and National Savings & Investments

The Clerk will report that it is necessary to update the signatories after April 2023.

9. Member Training Update

The Clerk to report on the training undertaken by Members in the past year.

10. Construction of Irrigation Reservoirs - Willow Hall Farm

Further to minute C.472, the Chairman to report.

11. Ouse Washes Section 10 & Ouse Washes Newsletters

Further to minute C473, the Clerk will refer to the Newsletters from the Environment Agency dated December 2022, January & March 2023

(Copy pages 27 - 30)

12. Clerk's Report

The Clerk advises:-

i) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That a ninth Chair's Meeting was held on the 13th December 2022.

The meeting covered a wide variety of matters likely to affect IDBs. A summary of the key points and resolutions follows;

David Thomas advised on the planned staffing changes being implemented due to his impending retirements. He stated that his post was being split back into Chief Executive/Clerk and Chief Engineer and that the appointments were:

Paul Burrows – to be the new CEO/Clerk - currently in post with the EA as a national Delivery Assurance Manager, and before that as Flood & Coastal Risk Manager for the East Anglia Area, then Flood Strategy Manager – Paul spearheaded Tactical Plans for the Fens which have secured the possibility of obtaining significant grant allocation on a Board by Board basis over a 15 year period, whilst at the same time defining a pathway to better understand the challenges faced and options worth considering for our lowland catchment as climate change and growth tests our current infrastructure arrangements.

Nicola Oldfield – to be the new Chief Engineer – currently in post with the EA as a Senior Project Manager. She most recently project managed the £30M Middle Level Barrier Bank scheme and had just taken over as project manager of the Cranbrook Counter Drain Strategy. She has, in the past, been employed by an IDB and has worked in close partnership with many IDBs including North Level IDB. Jonathan Brown stated how pleased the MLC Executive had been with these two candidates and how easy the choice had been given their knowledge of the area and experience to date.

An update was given on the role out of telemetry, which was receiving positive feedback from District Officers. A request was made for the login details to be provided to Chairmen as well as District Officers and it was confirmed that this would be arranged.

David Thomas confirmed that all but two Boards had stated their wish to move to the new planning and consenting charging and reporting arrangements and that the Assistant Treasurer was finalizing figures ready for the 2023 IDB/DDC meetings. A request was made for all correspondence which developers and their agents which is copied to Chairman should include the planning application references.

The protection and control of Bylaw strips was discussed at length and it was agreed that a policy document outlining the red-lines Boards should be applying to ensure that their ratepayers do not suffer as a result of development will be prepared for the Boards to consider. It was noted at the meeting that the refusal to issue any consent is subject to a reasonableness test, hence the document cannot preclude consenting everything within the 9m strip and the policy will be for guidance purposes only. It was felt that it should help developers, planning authorities and the Boards by providing some additional clarity. It was also felt that some case history examples to be circulated to members might help them understand the issues which have to be addressed.

Climate Change was discussed and it was noted that the MLC had completed its carbon audit and would now start work on carbon reduction and mitigation initiatives. It was also noted that the M&E engineer was looking at base levels of energy consumption at pumping stations, for example to see if panel heaters are left on permanently. He will be making recommendations to Boards if he identifies scope for reducing power without risking the apparatus.

WRE were mentioned and the Chief Executive stated that he was pleased that the draft water resource plan for the East included extensive reference to agriculture and its need for water to support the growing of food to feed the nation and also of the key role played by IDBs in transferring water to the point needed by abstractors. He also commented upon the newly proposed Cambridgeshire fens reservoir, north of Chatteris and advised that the MLC were responding on the need to get fill supply and draw-down arrangements right, but also that we need to seek to gain capital from the opportunities that the new reservoir will present in terms of bringing money into the area and potentially helping reduce flood risk and assist with water need balancing.

The Chief Executive advised that a decision had been made to move the MLC and IDB's electricity supply contracts from Anglian Farmers to the Green Energy Advice Bureau. This followed several years of extended poor service levels and lack of timely information coming from Anglian Farmers.

The future of IDBs and the value of potential amalgamations was once discussed and this gave rise to questions over small boards being able to secure a quorate for which this had been a particularly poor year. It was agreed that this item should remain on the agenda and that any Chairs who felt that the time was right for their Boards to look again and the advantages/disadvantages of amalgamation would contract the Clerk. It was also agreed that it may be useful to undertake an exercise around updating the original Geoff Beal report which had recommended that the number of Boards within the area administered by the MLC could reasonably be reduced to three or four.

The Clerk finally noted that the ADA Great Ouse branch AGM would be held on the 7th March at Prickwillow Hall and would be in the format of workshops in the morning and an AGM in the afternoon. The workshops theme this year would be; water resources, the new reservoir and climate change.

ii) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the 85th Annual Conference of the Association was held on Wednesday 9th November 2022 at The Hive, Nocton, Lincolnshire.

This year marked another change in the arrangements for the National Conference and AGM, with the AGM being held virtually on 28th September 2022 followed by the national conference held as a hybrid meeting at the Dyson Farming complex in Lincolnshire on 9th November. The choice of venue was to avoid the risk of being impacted by rail strikes and it also represented significant cost savings. The event had limited numbers and was fully subscribed.

Following an introduction by the President of ADA Robert Caudwell who noted the good work being done by ADA but also noted that with COP27 ahead climate change was the single biggest challenge facing everybody and that IDBs would need to play their part in delivering carbon reduction.

The opening address was given by Councillor Matthew Riddle, Chairperson, Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board and Councillor, South Gloucestershire Council who spoke on options which could be pursued to change the way Special Levy is reported and dealt with by the Councils. The challenge at the moment was perceived as the lack of transparency with Special Levy payments not being itemised on rate bills in the same way that police and ambulance services are. There is also the issue that by not disaggregating the Special Levy payments, increases in them can currently (for Councils who pay large Special Levys) trigger a local election under the current rules.

Key note speakers were Hazel Durant Waterway & Flood Water Management Policy Team, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Luzette Kroon Board member: Innovation & International, Dutch Water Authorities, Dykgraaf (chairperson), Wetterskip Fryslân. Hazel spoke of the challenges ahead and noted that it would be foolhardy to expect revenue expenditure to be increased by treasury given the current economic climate. The best we could hope for would be last years' figures to be matched. She praised the work of IDBs and noted the important role they play in delivering flood risk benefits through their direct works and also through PSCAs. Luzette spoke of the similarities and differences between IDBs and their Dutch equivalents and went on to describe the challenges faced arising from climate change.

A panel discussion followed and the MLC Chief Executive was invited to sit on this panel. He took the opportunity to outline the work of WRE but also to express his concerns that currently Land Drainage Act legislation was holding back the full potential of IDBs in terms of water resource management and investment. A review is urgently required and the support of the EA and DEFRA is needed. Hazel agreed that there was a need but hope a way forward could be found that didn't require primary legislation.

The day concluded with a field visit to showcase the Dunston Beck Improvement Project. The improvement project, completed by Dyson Farming with the Environment Agency, Wild Trout Trust and other partners, seeks to improve the biodiversity and water quality of the beck with a sensitive mosaic of wetland habitats delivered through excavations recreating a meandering river system with the retention of water providing ecological and also some modest flood risk benefits.

b) Annual Conference 2023

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities for 2023 is yet to be announced.

c) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

The Annual Conference of the River Great Ouse ADA Branch was held on Tuesday 7th March 2023

Morning workshops were re-introduced for the first time since the COVID-19 outbreak and members who attended took part in an excellent discussion focussed on three topic areas; Fens2100; Water Resources East and Climate Change. Steven Trehwella (consultant to the EA on Fens2100) and Daniel Johns (Chief Exec, WRE) took away a wide range of ideas centred around how the two topics were connected by the work of IDBs.

Within the AGM, Marc Heading was re-appointed as Chairman and Doug McMurdo as Vice Chair with approval that the secretariat of the branch be transitioned from the Middle Level Commissioners to the Bedford Group of IDBs over the coming months. Ian Moodie (Technical Manager, ADA) gave an overview of ADA's activities, including their important inputs on behalf of IDBs into the long-awaited implementation of schedule 3 of the Floods & Water Management Act. Tom Pickover introduced himself ahead of starting as Operations Manager at the Environment Agency (covering the lower Great Ouse catchment) and was joined by Darren Trumper who between them gave an overview of Environment Agency flood management activities and budgets.

iii) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2023

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2023 will be held at ExCel, London on the 22nd and 23rd November 2023.

iv) Water Resources East (WRE)

The Clerk will report that the requested contribution from this Board for 2023/2024 financial year is expected to once again be £125. Contributions from drainage boards within the East of England secure a direct stake in WRE and help to ensure their needs and opinions are taken into account.

v) Changes to Electricity Supply Contracts

The Clerk will report that Boards have encountered problems with the operation of the electricity contract by Anglia Farmers over the years. Following various meetings with them it appeared some of these problems were being addressed and the service appeared to be improving this, however, was short lived. Over the past 2 years there has again been a significant deterioration in both the quality of service and lack of account management received from Anglia Farmers.

During the summer the Middle Level Commissioners were approached by Green Energy Advice Bureau (GEAB), one of the UK's leading energy companies and buying group, whose portfolio includes numerous companies with over 200 million kwh tendered per annum. They have experience working with an estimated 60 Internal Drainage Boards, which include locally the

Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards and Downham Market Group of Internal Drainage Boards. We accordingly contacted Jean Heading of the Ely Group of Internal Drainage to enquire of the service provided by GEAB and she has confirmed she is far happier with the service received from them compared to that from Anglia Farmers and since has signed a 5-year fixed rate contract with GEAB from 1st April 2022.

A report was presented to the Middle Level Commissioners at their Board meeting on 3rd November 2022 and due to the ongoing poor performance of Anglia Farmers, together with the positive feedback given by Jean Heading of the Ely Group, the Commissioners' resolved to consider moving to alternative arrangements. The Executive Committee were delegated the final decision and having considered a report on the options and subsequently confirmed their agreement that a move would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The Clerk will report this was considered a positive move and recommended the Commissioners also move to this alternative arrangement.

The Clerk will report that this Board's Chairman had subsequently agreed for the Commissioners to serve notice to Anglia Farmers and for Green Energy Advice Bureau to handle the energy procurement process and management of the electricity contract.

The Clerk will advise that the Middle Level Commissioners and its administered Boards have entered into a fixed rate energy supply with Corona Energy for an 18-month period from 1st April 2023.

The Commissioners are asked to approve the Chairmans actions.

vi) Insurance

Historically the number of insurance companies willing to quote for the insurance requirements of the Middle Level Commissioners and administered Boards is limited.

Our insurance portfolio is complex and includes a range of policies that includes Commercial Combined (largest component), Motor Fleet, Engineering & Construction, Terrorism, Management Liability, Marine Craft and Professional Indemnity.

The overall cost of our insurance portfolio for 2023/24 will be £192,275 (£152,373 in 2022/23) a 26% increase, although increases will differ Board by Board depending on their individual insurance needs.

Key factors and changes are highlighted below:

- For Commercial Combined insurance, 2022/23 was the last year in our previous five-year agreement with AXA which included a 7% price reduction woven into the deal. For 2023/24 Towergate, our brokers, approached several companies and all bar AXA were not willing to quote given the size and complexity of our portfolio. Independently we also approached the NFU who declined to quote for the same reason.
- There has been an increase in fleet, property and marine assets included within our cover.
- In view of rising inflation most Boards agreed to index link their insured sums from 1st April 2023. AXA have increased insured sums by 15%, which has resulted in an increase within the overall premium.

- AXA have offered a 2-year stability deal, where any premium increases, subject to claims not exceeding 50% of the written premium, will be capped for 2024/25 at 2.5%. This excludes any increases in sums insured.
- AXA will not extend the stability deal as they plan a review of their whole IDB scheme in 2025.
- Commercial combined policy excess has increased from £350 to £2,500. None of our four 2022/23 claim values were above this new excess.
- Excesses are dictated by AXA's overall scheme for all IDBs and this is apparently now standard and has been imposed due to the number of lower value claims across the whole IDB industry. As other IDB/IDB Groups come out of their previous agreement with AXA the above will apply.

For future years Boards ought to consider index linking their valuations of properties and pumping stations every 3-5 years rather than annually, to mitigate annual premium increases and balancing having suitable cover without being over-insured.

It should also be noted that personal accident and sickness cover only covers employees or members up to 80 years of age. Boards may need to consider the implications of this.

vii) Delegation of signatory on consents

The Board is asked to note that under the Board's scheme of delegation, the Chief Executive has delegated the authority to sign consent on behalf of the Board to the Chief Engineer. As well as the Chief Engineer being better placed to technically assure individual consents, this will enable them to effectively take ownership over the whole planning and consenting service. This also creates a mechanism for escalation in case of any issues or complaints.

viii) Service Delivery Frameworks

The Board are asked to resolve that the Clerk, on their behalf, be authorised to enter into user and/or access agreements for public sector delivery frameworks (For example, Environment Agency Delivery Frameworks and SCAPE). This will open up access to the fees, terms and conditions of these Frameworks so our Consulting Engineers can compare and choose the most suitable procurement route for delivery of the Boards future needs. This does not tie the Board to using any Framework they then have a user/access agreement with, and Frameworks are not the only procurement route for delivery that will be considered. Having this resolution from all the Boards we administer is key if we are to package work across Boards to exploit economies of scale and become more efficient and effective in the delivery of services.

13. Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

- a) To consider the Report of the Consulting Engineers

(Copy pages 31 – 51)

- b) To consider the Supplementary Report of Capital Delivery

(Copy pages 52 - 54)

14. Capital Improvement Programme

To review and approve the Commissioners' future capital improvement programme.

(Copy page 55)

15. Environment Officer's Report

The Clerk to refer to the Environment Officer's Report.

(Copy pages 56 - 63)

16. District Labour
District Engineer's Wage Increase – 2023/2024

With reference to minute C.478, the Clerk will report that the District Engineer's wages will be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award.

17. District Work Report & Review of District Watercourses

Further to minute C.479,

- i) The Chairman to report on works undertaken and proposed works.
- ii) To consider future District work arrangements.

18. Charges for hire of plant when engaged on private work

To consider whether any revision is necessary in the Commissioners' charges for hiring plant for private work (last reviewed April 2022);

Atlas 360 Wheeled Excavator

£28 per hour in the district	)
	) Inclusive of operator's wages and travelling time
£43 per hour outside of the district	)

19. Health and Safety Report

Further to minute C.480, the Chairman will report on Cope Safety Management's site safety inspection carried out on 23rd January 2023.

(Copy pages 64 - 68)

20. Review of Internal Controls

To consider the system of Internal Controls.

21. Risk Management Assessment

- a) To give consideration to the Commissioners' Risk Management Policy.
- b) To consider the insured value of the Commissioners' buildings value for 2023.

(Copy page 69)

22. State-aided Schemes

To consider whether to undertake further State-aided Schemes and whether any future proposals should be included in the forward capital forecasts provided to the Environment Agency.

23. Environment Agency – Precept

The Clerk will report that at the Anglian (Great Ouse) Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) determined that there were exceptional circumstances to consider on the agreed 2% increase on the precepts on Internal Drainage Boards. The Committee voted for an additional 1% increase (reflecting exceptional circumstances) above the agreed 2% for the year ending 31st March 2024 – total of a 3% increase on the level of precept on Internal Drainage Boards for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The precept for 2022/2023 was £36,672

24. Claims for Highland Water Contributions – Section 57 Land Drainage Act 1991

The Clerk will report that following his submission of claims for contributions the gross sum of £10,456.13 (inclusive of supervision) has been received from the Environment Agency (£10,769.29 representing 80% of the Commissioners' estimated expenditure for the financial year 2022/23 less £313.16 overpaid in respect of the financial year 2021/22)

25. Association of Drainage Authorities Subscriptions

The Clerk will report that ADA has increased subscriptions by 4.5% for 2023 from £649 to £679.

26. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The clerk to report that following the conclusion of tendering Whittings LLP have been appointed as internal auditor for a five-year period commencing 1st April 2023 (financial years 2023/24 to 2027/28).

(Copy pages 70 - 83)

27. Annual Governance Statement – 2022/2023

To review and complete the Annual Governance Statement.

(Copy page 84)

28. Payments 2022/2023

The Clerk to report on payments made during the financial year 2022/2023.

(Schedule page 85)

29. Annual Accounts of the Commissioners - 2022/2023

To consider the Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation for the year ended on the 31st March 2023 and the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return as required in the Audit Regulations.

(Copy pages 86 - 93)

30. Expenditure estimates and special levy and drainage rate requirements 2023/2024

To consider estimates of revenue expenditure and levy and rate requirements in respect of the financial year 2023/2024.

(Copy pages 94 - 95)

31. Date & Time of next Meeting

Next meeting is on Thursday 2nd November 2023 at 5pm at the Baptist Hall, Station Road, Haddenham

32. Any other business

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

At a Meeting of the Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners
hosted at the Baptist Hall, Station Road, Haddenham at 7.30pm on Thursday 3rd November 2022

PRESENT

M Church Esq (Chairman)	R Flint Esq	T Chambers Esq
J Smith (Vice-Chairman)	W Dennis Esq	A Darby Esq
Cllr S Cheetham Esq	R Darby Esq	R Lee Esq
R Waddelow Esq	Cllr G Wilson	N Wright Esq
I Chambers Esq	P Mappedoram Esq	A Yarrow Esq

Mr David Jordan (District Engineer) was in attendance.

Ms Sam Ablett (Representing the Clerk to the Commissioners) and Gary Roberts (Consulting Engineer) were also present

As previously resolved, the meeting was recorded.

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:

C Bidwell Esq	Mrs M Darby	A Lensen Esq	K Furness Esq
H Hurrell Esq			

C.468 Declarations of Interest

Mr W Dennis declared an interest in item 6 on the agenda.

C.469 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Commissioners held on the 18th July 2022 are recorded correctly and that they be confirmed and signed.

C.470 Matters arising from the minutes.

None

C.471 Appointment of New Commissioners

The Chairman reported he had been approached by a Sutton smallholder who wished to join the Commissioners; however, he had advised him that unfortunately he did not own or occupy sufficient land in his own right to qualify as a Commissioner. The Chairman reported that the existing representative of Sutton smallholders, Kevin Robinson, had only ever attended one Commissioners meeting and he had advised the individual to approach the Sutton smallholders and ask them to nominate him as their representative in place of Kevin Robinson.

C.472 Construction of Irrigation Reservoirs - Willow Hall Farm

The Chairman reminded the Commissioners of the meeting held in July, which had been called due to an amendment to the planning application regarding year-round dewatering.

He confirmed a further meeting had been arranged with representatives of both the Commissioners and Mick George Ltd for 23rd September 2022 to see if agreement could be reached on some alternative proposals.

The Chairman reported on the meeting of 23rd September 2022, viz;

Our Ref: GR/356/PL/008

(Please quote this reference on any correspondence)

Haddenham Level District Commissioners ('the Authority')

CCC/21/235/DCON

Application for approval of details required by conditions 11 (surface water drainage scheme), 12 (construction environmental management plan) and 13 (detailed restoration & management scheme) of planning permission E/3003/18/CM Construction of irrigation reservoirs by the extraction, processing and export of sand and gravel at Willow Hall Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham

Notes of meeting 09:00-11:30hrs 23rd September 2022, AG Wright and Son (Farms) Ltd, Hermitage Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham, Cambridgeshire, CB6 3PB.

Attending:

Haddenham Drainage Commissioners – Michael Church (Chairman), Jack Smith (Vice Chairman / A.G.W. Ltd); Nick Wright (A.G.W Ltd); Toby Chambers, Raymond Waddelow, Rodney Darby

Mick George Ltd – Mick George, John Gough, Andrew Woodcock, Paul Ayres

Gary Roberts, Middle Level Commissioners

Richard Lee, P J Lee & Sons

[Notes by GJR]

Item #1 –Seasonal dewatering increasing from October/December to October/March over construction period

Seasonal dewatering refers to October to March period which planning permission is already in place. MG confirmed that the abstraction licence for dewatering from the Environment Agency is not yet in place.

Members highlighted the risk of seepage volumes being greater than estimated by hydrogeologists is quite significant. The ancient course of the River Great Ouse, pre-drainage, runs through the Commissioners' drainage area in the south-west corner near Earith Bridge. This is likely to result in significant seepage when river levels in the Hundred Foot River are high. This risk is highlighted.

The key points relating to seasonal dewatering are outlined below:

- The Commissioners are willing to accommodate additional volumes to the Haddenham Level providing all the costs for increased pumping are paid by the developer. GJR is calculating a recharge rate and will share in due course. In-principle agreement to recharge of costs was confirmed by MG. Discharge from reservoir dewatering to be pumped from a settlement pond with pumps metered at all times and charged on the £/m³ rate. **Action:** GJR to calculate recharge rate.
- Volumes of water pumped previously for the archaeological investigations is known and will be shared to allow for recharge of pumping costs already incurred. **Action:** MG Ltd to share volumes.
- Increased volumes need to go to the Haddenham Level as Haddenham has spare capacity to cope. Sutton only has 1nr pump so is already at full capacity.

- Route of watercourses was walked 21st September 2022 with William Dennis, MG Ltd, GJR, Michael Church and Jack Smith. Condition of private drain (Dennis Haddenham Ltd) is ok subject to annual maintenance to keep clear. [William Dennis confirmed on site walkover he will carry out annual clearance]. MG Ltd confirmed this would be carried out by MG Ltd if needed.
- 3nr. Dams along Back Drove present to prevent flow to Sutton level. These are currently private and operated by William Dennis. More formal structure are needed. **[Action: MG Ltd Civils engineers to meet Chairman and District Officer to confirm requirements [Post meeting note – Action complete and flap valves have been agreed and to be installed by 30th September 2022.]]**
- Access culverts along Back Drove drain. Minimum of 600mm diameter pipe required to avoid backing-up of flow. William Dennis confirmed on walkover pipes have been replaced recently and larger than 600mm **[Post meeting note – these were checked by MG staff on site visit, after meeting 23rd September 2022. Flap valves as agreed on site have been ordered and to be installed by 30th September 2022].** Exception is last culvert new confluence with Third Drain. Unsure what diameter this pipe is. Requires confirming >600mm diameter, if not replace. **[Action: MG Ltd to check/confirm culvert condition and will replace if not 600mm].**
- Commissioners regularly maintain Third Drain. Dam in place (beneath Back Drove) which prevents flows to Sutton Level. Water level monitoring to be installed at Point 36 (shown on district plan) and also at Point 32 (at Claytons Bridge). This will require telemetry to enable District Officer to receive water levels. A maximum water level will be defined which will be high level cut-off. Discharge from dewatering must stop at this trigger level. **[Action: GJR to confirm max. winter level for trigger. MG Ltd to install gauge board and telemetry].**
- Third Drain Bridge (A1123) is in good condition. There is a shallow bed level here due to concrete base, but cannot be lowered. This may create a step level but unavoidable. No works identified here as the Commissioners clear on an annual basis and will try and clear as much silt from beneath the bridge as practical.

Providing the above is implemented before dewatering commences in October the Commissioners confirmed they would support seasonal dewatering.

Item #2 – Variation to planning permission – Year Round Dewatering

MG Ltd confirmed that the variation to planning application had been put into abeyance pending the discussions. A revised application would be submitted once agreements had been reached. It is likely this would be within the next 3 months but any decision would take longer.

Discussions focused on the proposals represented by Dennis Haddenham Ltd Drawing ref: D268a Potential Groundwater Recharge Trenches (16/09/22). The key queries and comments on these proposals are outlined below:

- Question was raised why the recharge trenches do not go round all sides of the reservoir sites. MG Ltd confirmed that overburden to gravel seems to the north are deep and with shallow depth of gravel. The seepage from this direction should therefore be limited. Any recharge trench would be quite deep, therefore very large/wide so a considerable dig for little benefit.
- GJR noted concern with the South Level Barrier Bank. The Environment Agency raised significant issue with altering ground water levels during design of EA's Coveney habitat site. MG Ltd confirmed the Environment Agency had not yet raised any concerns. There would be no benefit with extending the recharge trench along the western boundary north of BH#7 as it would need to be deep, therefore very wide top width. [The risk is therefore noted.]
- The Commissioners suggested it would be beneficial to extend the recharge trench on the eastern boundary up to BH#3, rather than run it west along Back Drove. This will need a pipe

connection beneath Back Drove. This would give more reassurance to landowners to the east in Sutton Level.

- A maximum water level should be defined. GJR suggested an overflow link to the Commissioners drains. If levels reached maximum this would trigger pumping at Haddenham and would be subjected to the above under Item 1. Locations for water level boards and telemetry monitored water levels at Back Drove (Point 36) which links to discharge drainage route as described above under Item 1 and Claytons Bridge (Point 32). A maximum winter level at Claytons Bridge of 99.45 (South Level Datum) to be set. If levels reach 99.45 dewatering should cease to avoid issues with the lowest land levels in the district.
- The recharge trench along the south side [A1123] should run round the back of Dennis Haddenham Ltd sheds so there is no break.
- MG Ltd confirmed the recharge trenches would be separate to the Commissioners' drains and connect to the gravels. Levels in recharge trenches will be lower than other drains.
- MG Ltd confirmed that the 3nr Boreholes to the south two on A.G.Wright land and one on Dennis land will be included in monitoring and trigger levels. They will be fitted with telemetry [Action: MG Ltd to include on the drawing].
- Trigger levels for groundwater monitoring recorded in the groundwater boreholes will be reviewed seasonally, i.e. at the end of the winter dewatering period and summer dewatering period to confirm they are appropriate and be revised as necessary

The outcome of the discussion under Item 2 was that a revised proposal will be produced by MG Ltd and presented to the Commissioners. Subject to the above and commitment by MG Ltd to maintain communications and work with the Commissioners to manage the risks the Commissioners' representatives confirmed they could support the proposals. [Action: MG Ltd to revise proposals and circulate]. The proposals will need to be finalised for the next Commissioner's Board meeting in November (3rd November 2022) and providing satisfactory the Commissioners' representatives would make the recommendation to remove the objection to the planning variation.

MG confirmed that MG Ltd will work with the Commissioners as required. MG confirm the key contact would be Andrew Woodcock.

Michael Church thanked MG Ltd for the information and engagement provided.

at which the Commissioners initial proposals were highlighted and he referred to notes of the meeting recently received from Mr Roberts, together with his comments in the Consulting Engineer's report.

He confirmed a response had been received from Mick George Ltd today and asked Mr Roberts to update the Commissioners.

Mr Roberts reported there was not much more to add to that already reported by the Chairman or included in his notes of the September meeting. He advised the abstraction and discharge application had still not been agreed by the Environment Agency, who had given no indication of a date when this would be agreed, but it was hoped this would be resolved and issued in early November. Mr Roberts further advised that once the Environment Agency had agreed to the application the Commissioners would have to react accordingly. He added that in the meantime, Mick George Ltd had applied for a temporary abstraction licence so work could commence over the winter.

The Chairman reported an agreement had been reached with Dennis Haddenham Ltd that if any water was discharged from the reservoirs or any dewatering occurred the Commissioners would be given a week's notice to allow the District Engineer enough time to control pumping.

Mr Dennis enquired how much longer it would be before the Commissioners were able to agree to year-round dewatering.

Mr Roberts reported Mick George Ltd had confirmed the planning variation was being held in abeyance and advised once the variation was approved/revised the agreement would be based on the proposal agreed at the meeting. He added there were a few detailed changes that were discussed, to which Mick George Ltd were agreeing and advised that once the application was amended and assuming Mick George Ltd adhered to the agreement, he would be recommending that as an acceptable solution.

Mr Toby Chambers enquired of the discharge rate per m³, which Mr Roberts had calculated. Mr Roberts confirmed the rate was 3.8 pence per m³ and advised that, from the figures provided by Mick George Ltd, 1,500,000 m³ of water was expected to be discharged. He confirmed the rate took into account wear and tear of the pumps, drain maintenance works, depreciation, electricity as well as other costs.

Mr Toby Chambers enquired whether the rate could be amended if costs increased i.e., electricity. Mr Roberts advised the calculation had been based on the current electricity contract prices, but confirmed there was a caveat in that the rate could be recalculated if costs increased significantly.

Miss Ablett advised it would be necessary for a contract to be drawn up between the Commissioners and Mick George Ltd and enquired whether the Commissioners wished to authorise the Assistant Clerk to draw up a contract once a date of commencement was known. Members approved for the Assistant Clerk to draw up a contract on their behalf.

The Chairman was asked whether dewatering would cease should there be a significant rainfall event during the first dewatering period. He advised that level gauge boards and telemetry to monitor water levels would be installed and levels set. He added that once these levels were reached and the 3 pumps were operating 24 hours a day the dewatering would have to stop and he confirmed this was a condition that would be included in the agreement.

The Chairman advised that a meter would be attached to each pump used by Mick George Ltd and the District Engineer would have authority to read the meters. He further advised that Mick George Ltd would also provide the Commissioners with details of the volume of water discharged in May for which permission from the Commissioners should have been sought before work had commenced.

RESOLVED

That the Consulting Engineer continues to engage with the Chairman and the working party to allow further discussion and guidance.

That the Assistant Clerk draws up a contract between the Commissioners and Mick George Ltd relating to the discharge of water into the Commissioners system.

C.473 Ouse Washes Section 10 Reservoir Middle Level and Level South Barrier Bank works

Further to minute C439, the Clerk referred to the Newsletters from the Environment Agency dated August & October 2022.

C.474 Tree on Catchwater Bank and Review of Watercourses

Further to minute C.440, The Chairman reported that as a letter had not been sent to the land owner, as requested, the District Engineer had visited the land owner and explained that it was his responsibility to maintain the tree and not that of the Commissioners, which the landowner had accepted.

The District Engineer advised he had asked the landowner to let him know if any branches fall from the tree into the channel so these could be removed and not impact the flow of water. He confirmed the landowner had agreed to his request.

C.475 Vehicles along the banks of the Catchwater Drain

Further to minute C.442, The Chairman reported he had advised Mr Lenson to contact Cambridgeshire County Council should he wish to install more gates along the banks of the Catchwater Drains as this was not an issue for the Commissioners.

C.476 Clerk's Report

The Clerk advised: -

i) COVID-19 Actions

Normal office working has resumed with the exception of trialling a degree of flexible working, which has been shown to be effective following the previous periods of enforced home working.

ii) Middle Level Commissioners and Administered Boards Chairs Meeting

That an eighth Chair's Meeting was held on the 12th April 2022.

The meeting covered a wide variety of matters likely to affect IDBs. A summary of the key points and resolutions follows;

It was recorded that there had been a number of MLC staff changes over the period. These included the retirement of Deb Watts, Katie Hunt and Malcolm Downes. Also, Sarah Lemmon and Richard Lloyd had handed in their notice. New members of staff replacing them and linked with some restructuring of the finances and admin departments were Dave Bantoft (M&E Engineer), Sarah Bowd (Accounts Assistant), Polly Tombleson (PA Secretarial) and Claire Collings (Secretarial).

It was reported that following the successful telemetry grant bid for Local Levy £125K in grant had been secured and consequently an order had been placed for in excess of 45 new telemetry outstations. The MLC have tested the new system with the six stations they commissioned and were satisfied with its operation.

Training for Board members was covered and it was noted that ADA provide online training videos. Various methods for delivering these and recording attendance was discussed and it was finally resolved that the best way forward would be to ask all members to watch one or two

videos a year and to record when they had been viewed. A record of who had watched which video would be retained and this information recorded at Board meetings and used to support DEFRA IDB1 returns.

A proposal to move from time charges to lump sum annual fees for planning and consenting matters was discussed and it was agreed that a proposal to move to this more efficient and effective way of working would be put to each Board. For similar reasons it was resolved that a proposal should be put forward which would reduce the scale of content reported to Boards under planning matters.

Inflationary pressures were touched upon and it was recognised that if this continues there will be pressure placed upon Boards to raise their rates more than has occurred in recent years. It was also recognised that along with these inflationary pressures there were increasing demands (with legal backing) evolving in relation to environmental gains and Boards should be aware of the costs of delivering on these. Examples are the government's commitment to protect 30% of all land by 2030 for the environment and of the Doubling Nature initiative in Cambridgeshire.

An update on work in relation to climate change and carbon reduction was given. Work currently in hand comprises of production of a carbon baseline for the MLC. Once complete the scale of the challenge to target carbon neutrality will be known and work will be undertaken to identify possible opportunities for reduction and mitigation, prior to production of a policy statement. During these next stages it is expected that Boards associated with the MLC will be similarly assessed and plan proposals made for them.

iii) Application(s) for byelaw consent

That the following application(s) for consent to undertake works in and around watercourses has/have been approved and granted since the last general meeting of the Board/Commissioners: -

<u>Name of Applicant</u>	<u>Description of Works</u>	<u>Date Consent Granted</u>
Mr William Dennis	Removal of private (non IDB) watercourse due to construction of water supply reservoir and create of replacement drainage channels.	12/07/2022

iv) Association of Drainage Authorities

a) Annual Conference

That the Annual Conference of the Association of Drainage Authorities will be held on Wednesday the 9th November 2022, The Hive, Nocton, Lincolnshire, LN4 2AY.

b) Meeting of the River Great Ouse Branch

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 7th March 2023.

v) National Drainage Show & Floodex 2022

That the National Drainage Show & Floodex 2022 will be held at ExCel, London on the 23rd and 24th November 2022.

vi) Planning and Consenting Fees

Proposed changes to planning and consenting service supply charging

Two changes are proposed. The current arrangements and the proposed changes are outlined below.

1. The current arrangements for charging for Technical Services advice and support, for planning and consenting matters, is based upon a direct cost recovery arrangement. To achieve this all time spent on every item of work undertaken has to be logged and recorded in detail. This information is then pulled together and invoices prepared and checked before being passed to the Board Chairs for sign-off. This requires a considerable amount of time and effort and this time is of course included in the eventual fees paid. It is considered that a more efficient model would be to mirror the one used for charging for Clerking services which is based upon a lump sum annual fee. This has a number of advantages. It reduces internal workload which in turn releases time to carry out productive work. It also allows Boards to budget for the fees knowing at the time of rate setting what the annual fees will be.

To ensure that a fair assessment is made it is suggested that the last five years of fees are looked at and an average taken. If there is clearly one or two years where one or two planning matters have impacted heavily upon the figures then an appropriate adjustment will be made. The final fee will be converted into a fraction of the costs of overall cost of supplying planning and consenting services for all Boards including the MLC and this percentage will become fixed until such time that a review is called for.

In addition, we will still actively encourage developers and their agents to enter into Pre/Post application contracts. This will help keep the overall planning costs to a minimum. We will also be looking to move more and more to lump sum charges for developers for the same reasons outlined above, i.e., to reduce internal administration work and costs where possible.

It is not proposed that this change will extend to other Technical Services work, such as surveys, catchment analysis, and refurbishment/replacement/improvement scheme work or associated advice which will continue to be logged and charged on a “hours spent” basis.

2. Many members have noted that the reporting in relation to planning application comments and responses is comprehensive. Again, it often takes many hours to produce such detailed reports for which the Board is charged. This time could be spent in dealing with and taking action on planning and consenting matters. There is also the issue of the potential time lapse between any planning/byelaw issue raising its head and the meeting of the Board. It is of course normally advantageous to take action as soon as possible after any issue had become apparent. It is therefore proposed that going forward the Board nominate who they wish to be copied in on all planning correspondence, for example the Chair and Vice-Chair. They will then be able to liaise with the Planning Engineer if they wish to and will be conversant with discussions being undertaken. The Board may also wish to delegate decision making for initial actions for bylaw infringements to the Board nominee/s.

To ensure that the Board is consulted on the most important matters it is proposed that when it is wished for a matter to be raised within the Board report then a request from the Chair can be made and a detailed report would follow. This would normally be the case where significant costs might be associated with enforcement, including perhaps incurring legal fees or where an unusually large or significant development is proposed.

Should the above change be agreed to, then going forward the Engineer's report will provide a list of all planning applications of interest to the Board and consents applied for/approved but unless requested by the Chair no detail will be provided.

RESOLVED

- i) That a lump sum fee arrangement be agreed in principle, but figures to be presented to the Board at their April 2023 meeting.
- ii) That no further detailed reports on individual planning matters to be included in the Consulting Engineer's Report unless requested by the Chairman.

C.477 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters

The Commissioners considered the Report of the Consulting Engineers.

The Chairman reported the Xylem telemetry had been installed within the last month and appeared to be working well. He added the Consulting Engineer had enquired whether the Commissioners wished to attach two rain gauges to the telemetry which would assist with the monitoring of rainfall. The Chairman enquired whether the Commissioners wished to purchase the gauges, which would each cost in the region of £570 each plus fitting. Members agreed for two rain gauges to be ordered and fitted.

The Chairman referred to the pump bolt replacements at Sutton Gault pumping station and advised that it had not been possible to replace these in the summer. He reported the District Engineer had met with the Consulting Engineer as he had been able to pump the drain to a low level. Unfortunately, they were not able to pump the well dry as they were unable to fit the dam door due to tapering of the stop log grooves.

The Chairman reported the consulting engineer entered the wet well to inspect the pump bolts and confirmed the bolts did not require replacing and would last a few years. The Chairman advised he had asked the Consulting Engineer to give a report on the wet well because the pump only had metal piles as a pump chamber, whereas the new ones built at Haddenham pumping station were also metal, but were lined with concrete.

The Chairman reported the Consulting Engineer had drilled through the pile above the water line and found there was a pile thickness of 6mm remaining, so in his opinion the piles should be assessed by a structural engineer to ascertain their condition and useful life.

The Chairman reported that although the Consulting Engineer had advised a new pumping station at Sutton Gault was required, he did not agree and considered the present pumping station was satisfactory. He advised that in his opinion the only time he would propose the Commissioners build a new pumping station was if the cost was fully funded by grant in aid and added this was unlikely as the pumping station did not protect sufficient properties.

The Chairman proposed that the Commissioners instruct a structural engineer to carry out a survey the steel piles and base of the pumping station.

NB. Members approved for the Consulting Engineer to arrange for a survey to be undertaken. The Chairman reported on the planning applications set out in the Consulting Engineers' report and referred to the Planning Engineer's comments.

Linden Ltd (MLC Ref No 001) & Vistry Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 012)

The Chairman referred to the application and considered the Commissioners should request more details as concerns had been highlighted in relation to the condition and capacity of the culverted watercourse through Mepal Road and "The Brook".

Members agreed more details should be requested and considered the Commissioners' objection should be minuted, even though it had previously been ignored, so should any problems arise in the future they would not be considered responsible.

Abbey Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 002, 004 & 014)

Mr Roberts reported that of particular concern was that the discharge rate to the two discharge locations had increased from that previously advised in the initial application for which outline planning permission had been received. He advised that it appeared the developer had not taken into account the previous comments and concerns raised by the Commissioners. Mr Roberts reported the LLFA had objected to the application on the basis that the drainage proposals had changed and had requested more detailed information be provided.

Members agreed the Consulting Engineer should further object to this application on their behalf.

Mr Kevin Johnson – CB Groundworks & Construction Ltd (MLC Ref No 006)

The Chairman reported the farm buildings were being converted to storage and a contractor's yard and considered the Commissioners required more information regarding the application due to the likelihood of oil spillage reaching the Commissioners' drains. He advised the application had been ongoing for 2 to 3 years and no decision had yet been made. The Chairman also considered the applicant should be made aware of the Commissioners' concerns regarding the potential for oil spillage from the site.

Mr Roberts advised this was a retrospective planning permission application so there was a risk the applicant may already be discharging more surface water without consent.

Members agreed the applicant should be advised of the Commissioners' concerns and of the requirement for consent.

Comments were made with reference to the flooding caused by the rainfall event in 2020 and advised that further development would increase the risk of flooding should there be a similar event in the future. He enquired whether the Commissioners should write to the leader of Cambridge District Council, Anna Bailey, advising her of the problems encountered within the District at such times. Members agreed that a letter should be sent voicing their concerns.

RESOLVED

- i) That the Report and the actions referred to therein be approved.
- ii) That the Consulting Engineer arranges for the purchase and fitting of two rain gauges.
- iii) That the Consulting Engineer arranges for a structural survey be undertaken of the piles at Sutton Gault pumping station.
- iv) Linden Ltd (MLC Ref No 001) & Vistry Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 012)
That the Consulting Engineer responds to the applicant advising of the Commissioners concerns.
- v) Abbey Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 002, 004 & 014)
That the Consulting Engineer raises further objection to the application.
- vi) Mr Kevin Johnson – CB Groundworks & Construction Ltd (MLC Ref No 006)
That the Consulting Engineer writes to the applicant regarding the consent requirements highlighted by the Commissioners.
- vii) That the Consulting Engineer writes to Anna Bailey, the leader of Cambridgeshire District Council, concerning issues arising from continued development, referring to the problems encountered during the rainfall event in December 2020.

C478. District Labour - District Engineer's Wage Increase – 2022/2023

With reference to minute C.426, Miss Ablett reported the District Engineer's wages would be increased in accordance with the Middle Level Commissioners' pay award of 3%, as previously resolved.

C.479 District Work Report & Review of District Watercourses

Further to minute C.441, The Chairman reported it had been another difficult year with water level management. He further reported that in anticipation of another dry summer the District Engineer had maintained the summer levels and with his efforts in keeping the river inlets clear it had been possible to keep the drain levels up so sufficient water was available for every licenced abstractor, as well as keeping the sock level up for the benefit of the farmers, including non-irrigators.

The Chairman advised that when the Environment Agency order the river inlets to be closed at weekends, supplying water became a greater problem.

He expressed his concern to the Environment Agency regarding them only applying voluntary restrictions as in the past when the Environment Agency needed to restrict water use it was compulsory on abstractors. He advised that in response to his concerns the Environment Agency had advised they were unable to carry out enforcement on the Ely reaches, however there were able to do so on the level at Denver.

The Chairman reported that the normal drain maintenance programme was being carried out although this has been held up on a couple of occasions due to small problems with the excavator. He also reported that the height level restrictor had now been fitted to the excavator and the telemetry at both pumping stations was working satisfactorily.

The Chairman asked Members to contact either him or the District Engineer should they become aware of any problems within the district.

Members thanked the District Engineer for his services over the preceding year.

Mr Toby Chambers referred to previous discussions had by the Members regarding culverts between Hoghill Drove and Church Fen Corner and the need for these to be lowered and enquired of the current position.

The Chairman confirmed he had contacted Fen Group on several occasions in the past and requested a quote, but they had never responded.

Mr Chambers reported the road over the culverts was a public road and was in terrible condition and enquired whether the County Council owned the concrete road and the land beneath it and advised that if this was the case the Commissioners may be able to obtain some contribution to the cost of lowering the culverts, from the Council, as the flow of water was being restricted.

He added the difference in the water levels at some of the culverts was quite significant and considered the Commissioners should obtain further quotes for the work to be undertaken.

The Chairman advised he thought the landowners either side of the road each owned half the land underneath the road and the road belonged to the Council. Some of the Members were not sure whether this was the case.

Members discussed this further and requested the Chairman to obtain further quotes for at least two of the culverts to be lowered and the Assistant Clerk investigates who owns the land under the concrete road.

RESOLVED

That the Report and the actions therein be approved.

That the Clerk investigates who owns the land under the concrete road between Aldreth and Hoghill Drove.

That the Chairman obtain quotes for lowering at least 2 of the culverts under the concrete road between Aldreth and Hoghill Drove.

C480 Health and Safety Report

Further to minute C.454, The Chairman reported there had been no meetings with Cope Safety Management, the health & safety consultants since the last meeting and advised he had no matters of concern to report.

The Chairman reported the annual inspection had been moved to the winter months and had been arranged for 23rd January 2023.

C.481 Risk Management Assessment

The Board considered & approved index-linking the insured value of the Commissioners' buildings value from 2023.

RESOLVED

That the insured sum of the pumping stations and bungalow be index linked as from 1st April 2023.

C.482 Completion of the Annual Return of the Commissioners – 2021/2022

- a) The Board considered and approved the comments of the Auditors on the Annual Return for the year ended on the 31st March 2022.
- b) The Board considered and approved the Audit Report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended on the 31st March 2022.

C.483 Defra IDB1 Returns

The Clerk referred to the completed IDB1 form for 2021/2022 which the Board noted and approved.

C.484 Expenditure/Estimate Update

The Chairman advised the Commissioners of how estimated expenditure for 2022/2023 compares with actual expenditure to date.

C.485 Dates & Times of next Meetings

The Vice Chairman enquired whether Members would object to future meetings commencing earlier than at present and proposed a time of 5pm instead of 7pm, considering some Members had further to travel than others

After discussion, Members agreed that future meetings would commence at 5pm.

The Chairman enquired whether the Baptist Hall would be available at 5pm and Mr Wilson confirmed he would check and inform the chairman if it wasn't.

Thursday 27th April at 5pm
Thursday 2nd November at 5pm.

C.486 Any Other Business

The Chairman asked Miss Ablett to report on the electricity contract.

Miss Ablett reported on the increase in rates during the current electricity contract, together with the energy price cap and the significant deterioration in both the quality of service and lack of account management received from Anglia Farmers over the past few years. She advised members she was in discussion with another buying group, Green Energy Advice Bureau, regarding a new contract as from 1st April 2023.

Miss Ablett enquired whether the Commissioners would consider moving to the new brokers and commit to a competitive 18-month fixed term contract as from 1st April 2023. Members considered this should be investigated and authorised the Chairman to take any action considered necessary.

The Chairman referred to the Good Governance training videos, which had been released, and enquired whether members had been able to watch them. All members present confirmed they had watched the videos for training purposes.

It was brought to the Chairman's attention that maintenance work was required at Twin Ditches Drove at Sutton and he agreed to add this to the maintenance programme for the coming year.

The Chairman asked Miss Ablett to update the Commissioners on the staff changes at the Middle Level Commissioners.

The Chairman enquired whether Members would have any objection to him requesting that Miss Ablett clerk the Commissioners meetings in the future. Members agreed they would be happy with this.

RESOLVED

That the Chairman be authorised to approve a change in energy provider and a new electricity contract if considered appropriate.

That the Chairman contact the Clerk and request for Miss Ablett to clerk future meetings of the Commissioners.

Ouse Washes Middle Level Barrier Bank raising works

December 2022

Project completion

The Middle Level Barrier Bank (MLBB) is the bank of the Ouse Washes reservoir extending from Earith to Welmore Lake Sluice. The work we have carried out is to comply with recommendations made by the Reservoir Inspecting Engineer to complete the works under the Reservoirs Act 1975.

Great news!

We are delighted to tell you that the Ouse Washes bank raising works finished in October 2022. We started construction in 2017 and the work has taken 6 years to complete.

We have raised the crest level of the MLBB between Welmore Lake Sluice and Earith and as part of the bank raising, we have provided a robust demountable flood barrier on the Welney Wash Road (A1101) where it crosses the Middle Level Barrier Bank and creates a low spot. We have also raised a low section of the South Level Barrier Bank between Sutton Gault and Chain Corner.

During October we completed the earthworks, the haul road raising, and we carried out the trialling and testing of the Welney demountable flood barrier. On the 14 October 2022 together with our contractor Jackson Civil Engineering and our supply chain partner Flood Control International Ltd, we held a training day for the Environment Agency field staff in how to install the barrier across the road in the event of flooding. The demountable flood barrier forms part of the 30km length of the Ouse Washes.



Due to the environmental constraints of the Ouse Washes work can only be carried out during the summer months, between 15 July and 31 October each year. This is to avoid disturbing the over wintering and ground nesting birds. Each year we have worked with Natural England to negotiate a longer working window to carry out winter repairs and haul road work.

We will continue to carry out regular inspections of the bank and monitor the grass growth for the next 2 years until the reservoir engineer gives a final sign-off in autumn 2024. This will include regular grass cuts, ecological surveys and repairs to damage that may happen over the winter months.

The footpath of the Middle Level Barrier Bank re-opened to the public on 1 November 2022. Although the bank is now open, the grass still needs to grow. We would appreciate if you would be careful when accessing and walking on the bank and stay away from the patches of grass that haven't grown fully yet.



What we have done

Raised 30km of Middle Level Barrier Bank from Earith to Welmore Lake Sluice	Raised 2.5km of South Level Barrier Bank from Sutton Gault to Chain Corner
Decommissioned Black Sluice	Decommissioned disused telemetry hut at Earith
Tree and shrub planting at Earith	Improved bridleway access in Earith
Flood wall extension at Sutton Gault	Haul road widening between Welches Dam & Mepal
Raised 7.1km of the haul road from Earith to Welney	Works to increase bridge capacity at Welches Dam
Replaced the existing flood wall at Welches Dam	Installed 5 new bird hides at the RSPB reserve
Installed temporary bridges direct to the bank at Earith & Mepal to reduce traffic on local roads	Installed erosion protection along sections of the bank between Mepal & Welches Dam
Installed hardstanding at Mepal for temporary high-volume pumps	Constructed demountable flood barrier at Welney

Throughout the project we have engaged with the public, schools and organisations adding value in local communities; visits, activities, local noticeboards, public drop-in's, surgeries, newsletters, briefings, questionnaires, press releases, online information page, virtual exhibition rooms, online consultations & meetings, social media.

Completion event

Representatives from local organisations, Ouse Washes user groups, Internal Drainage Boards, Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire, and Norfolk County Councils joined us at the Wildfowl Wetland Trust in Welney on Friday 18 November to celebrate the end of the works. The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP for Northeast Cambridgeshire represented local constituents.

The Environment Agency and the project team, we would like to thank you for all the co-operation and support you have given us over the last 6 years.

How to stay in contact with us

Our Public Liaison Officers will continue to keep you updated during the maintenance period of the project. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Public Liaison Officers: Monica Stonham or Yazmin Parry via email ousewashesprojectea@gmail.com



Ouse Washes Flood Storage Reservoir

Update

January 2023

Middle Level Barrier Bank

During the autumn reservoir inspection, our engineers identified cracks in the embankment between Welney and the A142 Mepal, following the prolonged period of hot, dry weather.

The reservoir bank remains in operation as normal although we do need to carry out repairs as soon as possible.

We will be installing equipment in the areas of the cracking over the coming days to monitor them. Operatives will also be carrying out weekly surveys during the winter months.

Our contractor, Jackson Civil Engineering, has started work between Welney and railway bridge. As you know this work will be dependent on weather and flood conditions.

There will be an occasional lorry delivery of materials to the access at Welney using the haul road where an excavator will load the materials onto a tracked dumper or similar for transport along the haul road.

We have liaised with Natural England and RSPB before going ahead with this work.

Public footpath

The Middle Level Barrier Bank will remain open.

Please continue to be careful when accessing and walking on the bank and stay away from the patches of grass that haven't grown fully yet.

We will continue to monitor the bank and grass growth.

Keeping your community up to date

We would like to thank you for your co-operation and patience, and we will continue to work with you and the community to minimise disruption.

Please contact our Public Liaison Officers, Monica Stonham or Yazmin Parry at ousewashesprojectea@gmail.com or on 07534 457348 for more information.



Ouse Washes Flood Storage Reservoir

Update

March 2023

Middle Level Barrier Bank

Following our update in January 2023.

During the autumn reservoir inspection, our engineers identified cracks in the embankment between Welney and the A142 Mepal, following the prolonged period of hot, dry weather.

We undertook repair work throughout January and February and has now been complete. We will continue monitoring of the repaired cracks monthly until December 2023.

Our contractor Jackson Civil Engineering will start demobilising from the site and compound area in Welney from Monday 6 March, this will take approximately 1 week.

We will continue to carry out regular inspections and maintenance of the bank and monitor the grass growth for the next 2 years until the reservoir engineer gives a final sign-off in autumn 2024. This will include regular grass cuts, surveys and repairs to damage that may happen over the winter months.

Public footpath

The Middle Level Barrier Bank will remain open.

Please continue to be careful when accessing and walking on the bank and stay away from the patches of grass that haven't grown fully yet.

Keeping your community up to date

We would like to thank you for your co-operation and patience, and we will continue to work with you and the community to minimise disruption.

Our Public Liaison Officers will continue to keep you updated during the maintenance period of the project. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Public Liaison Officers: Monica Stonham or Yazmin Parry via email ousewashesprojectea@gmail.com



Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

Consulting Engineers Report – April 2023

Pumping Stations

Other than the matters described below, only routine maintenance has been carried out since the last meeting and the pumping plant at each of the stations is mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

Sutton Gault

During October 2022 the pump bolts were assessed and although corroded do not require replacement yet. The corroded steps and handrail were removed to prevent damage to the pump. Pump station structural survey to be planned and funded with GiA if possible.

The rain gauges have been on a long lead time and are due in April 2023.

Planning Applications

In addition to matters concerning previous applications, the following new development related matters have been received and, where appropriate, dealt with since the last meeting:

<i>MLC Ref.</i>	<i>Council Ref.</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Type of Development</i>	<i>Location</i>
012	22/00507/RM	Vistry Homes Ltd	Residential (164 plots)	Mepal Road, Sutton*
013	21/01329/FUL & 21/01031/FUL	Paul Hutchinson	Proposed lake and associated works	The Row, Sutton
014	22/00057/RMM	Abbey Developments Ltd	Residential (46 plots)	Garden Close, Sutton*
015	CCC/22/075/VAR	Dennis (Haddenham) Ltd	Irrigation Reservoirs	Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham*

Planning applications ending 'RM', 'REM' or 'RMM' relate to reserved matters

Planning applications ending 'VAR' relate to Variation of condition

Developments that are known to propose direct discharge are indicated with an asterisk. The remainder propose, where applicable and where known, disposal to soakaways, infiltration devices and/or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The applicants have been notified of the Board's requirements.

No applications for Infiltration Device Self Certification or the Checking Service have been received since the last meeting report.

District Wide

Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant Relocation in the Snout Corner/Honey Hill/Poplar Hall Farm area, Fen Ditton - Anglian Water Services Ltd (MLC Ref No 009)

As this proposal is outside of the Commissioners' interests it will be removed from future reports.

Haddenham

Approval of the details for reserved matters for appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale of planning application 18/01041/OUM erection of 33 dwellings, associated public open space and landscaping, with all matters reserved except for access on site east of 12 - 18 Metcalfe Way Haddenham, 20/01766/RMM – Castlemore Homes (MLC Ref No 005)

The Reserved Matters application for the above development was approved on the 23rd July. Construction has since commenced on site.

No further correspondence has been received in relation to the above development and as a consequence no further action has been taken on the Commissioners' behalf.

Change of use of (1) an existing open-sided agricultural shed from agriculture to a mixed use of agriculture and B8 storage, (2) an existing agricultural building from agriculture to a mixed use of agriculture and B8 storage, and (3) (part retrospective) an area of hardstanding from open agricultural storage to open storage of contractor's plant and machinery (sui generis) at Tree Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham, 21/00044/FUL - Mr Kevin Johnson – CB Groundworks & Construction Ltd (MLC Ref No 006)

Further to the entry in the previous report the planning application was refused by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) on the 4th November. An appeal against this decision has been made to the Secretary of State, dated 30th March. The notification of the appeal received from ECDC does highlight that additional comments, or amendments/modifications to previous representations, can be made should the Commissioners wish to do so.

The Commissioners are asked for their opinion on the amendments and to confirm if they wish a response to the appeal to be submitted.

Proposal to demolish the existing buildings on site and replace with two barn structures at Forest School Camps Stores, Bungalow Farm, Hill Row Causeway, Haddenham – Forest School Camps (MLC Ref No 007)

Further to the entry in the last report no further correspondence has been received in relation to the above development and as a consequence no further action has been carried out on the Commissioners' behalf.

Construction of irrigation reservoirs by the extraction, processing and export of sand and gravel at Willow Hall Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham (MLC Ref No 008)

Further to the entry in the previous report the Consulting Engineer and the Commissioners' working group have continued to liaise with the quarry operator, MG Ltd, in respect of the above development.

Dewatering of the working area and first of the reservoirs to the Commissioners' drainage system commenced on the 18th November and continued until 8th February. Following this date dewatering of the site has been to the first of the recharge trenches installed within the site boundary alongside the A1123. The water level monitoring system was in place and working and no issues with the Commissioners' pumping of excess discharge were observed during the period. The invoice for payment of discharge volumes has been raised and passed to MG Ltd for payment.

With respect to the proposed variation to planning permission (CCC ref: CCC/22/075/VAR, MLC Ref No 015) to year-round dewatering, this application is still in abeyance pending discussions and agreements with the Commissioners. A meeting was held between the Commissioners' working group, the Consulting Engineer and MG Ltd on the 10th March 2023. A copy of the meeting notes is available at Appendix 1.

The meeting confirmed that MG Ltd are in the process of constructing the recharge trenches, to the agreed location, line and depth. An issue relating to archaeology had delayed the works to the western recharge trench installation. Inspection of the trenches once in place has been agreed and the Consulting Engineer will liaise with MG Ltd to carry out the inspections.

A key issue relating to the year-round dewatering proposals relates to the groundwater monitoring trigger levels. MG Ltd was advised that the current trigger levels for groundwater monitoring and cessation of pumping are winter levels only. The meeting, held on 10th March, confirmed that summer trigger levels are required and the Consulting Engineer will liaise with MG Ltd's appointed hydrogeologist to confirm and agree the summer ground water trigger levels.

The meeting confirmed that a suitable agreement or consent from the Commissioners is needed for the objection to summer dewatering to be removed. The Consulting Engineer is working with the Assistant Clerk to prepare this agreement. The key requirements the Commissioners have outlined for the agreement are that the summer groundwater trigger levels and the recharge trenches are installed and operational as per the agreed alignments and depths, before summer dewatering can commence.

It is assumed that any further instructions will be via the working group and the Consulting Engineer will continue to liaise with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and working party members in respect of this development.

The Commissioners are requested to approve the removal of the objection to summer dewatering subject to the agreement being in place.

Mepal

Erection of 55 new dwellings, new access, estate roads, driveways, parking areas, open space, external lighting, substation and associated infrastructure at site south and west of The Bungalow, Brick Lane, Mepal - Havebury Housing Partnership (MLC Ref No 011)

Further to the last meeting an email was sent to ECDC in December advising that the Commissioners' main concern "relates to the condition and capacity of the receiving culverted watercourses in Mepal Road and subsequently "The Brook". The capacity, condition and ongoing maintenance of these is unknown therefore it is not clear whether there are any risks associated with accommodating the proposed 18.3l/s discharge rates from the development, whether they require improvement to accommodate the additional flows, or whether any maintenance of these receiving culverts is required to ensure no future issues arise."

Sutton

Outline planning application (ECDC ref 19/01707/OUM) for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of up to 173 dwellings and provision of land for community facilities (sports pitches and burial ground), including access (not internal roads), open space, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated landscaping. All matters reserved apart from access on land adjacent to 43 Mepal Road, Sutton – Linden Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 001 & 011)

Further to item iv) Linden Ltd (MLC Ref No 001) & Vistry Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 012) of Minute C.477 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters a response was submitted on behalf of the Commissioners in December highlighting the Commissioners' concerns with respect of surface water drainage.

According to the District Council's Public Access webpage the decision on this discharge of conditions application (ECDC Ref No 19/01707/DISB) is still pending consideration. It is noted that the response from the LLFA in September 2022 states they are unable to approve discharge of conditions relating to surface water drainage. No further correspondence from the LLFA has been submitted.

Reserved matters for Outline planning application 17/01445/OUM for erection of up to 53 houses to include public open space and details relating to access on land rear of Garden Close Sutton – Abbey Developments Ltd (MLC Ref Nos 002, 004 & 014)

Further to item iv) Linden Ltd (MLC Ref No 001) & Vistry Homes Ltd (MLC Ref No 012) of Minute C.477 Consulting Engineers' Report, including planning and consenting matters a response was submitted on behalf of the Commissioners to raise further objection to the application in December 2022.

According to the District Council's Public Access webpage the decision on the Reserved Matters application, ECDC Ref No 22/00057/RMM (MLC Ref No 014), is still pending consideration.

Whilst a detailed review of the submitted planning application has not been carried out the response from the County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), is noted. The LLFA has objected to the application on the basis that the drainage proposals have changed from the outline planning permission and more detailed information is required. Of particular concern is the discharge rates to the two discharge locations have increased from the previous combined total of 2l/s rate to 8l/s. An initial review of the

Drainage Strategy plan would suggest that the system utilises the previous drainage routing, whilst increasing the discharge rates. It is therefore assumed that the developer has not taken into account the previous comments and concerns raised.

A subsequent response from the LLFA, dated 17th March 2023, noted the condition placed on the Outline Planning Permission, (ECDC Ref No 18/01053/OUM, MLC Ref No 002), and that the LLFA is happy to await the details of the discharge of conditions application to request the detailed calculations they require.

Local representations continue to object to the planning application. Specifically, the Sutton Poor's Charity "strongly object" due to the risk from flooding of land immediately to the south of the development and the response from Sutton Parish Council is "Outright refusal".

The Commissioners are asked for their opinion and further instructions on the planning application to inform further discussion.

Wilburton

Outline application comprising access and landscaping to provide up to 115 dwellings comprising 35 CLT houses and 80 market houses (including 5no. self-build plots), commercial units - (Use Class B1(Business) and/or D1 (Non-residential Institutions - day nursery) - in the alternative), substation, multi-functional community building and football pitch, together with landscaping (including public open space) and associated infrastructure (with all other matters reserved) on land at Camp's Field south of Stretham Road, Wilburton – Stretham & Wilburton Community Land Trust & Laragh Homes Developments Ltd (MLC Ref No 003)

Further to the entry in the last report no further correspondence has been received in relation to the above development and as a consequence no further action has been carried out on the Commissioners' behalf.

The Planning Officer wrote to the applicant requesting an extension of time until 11th November 2022 to allow for a "full assessment of the application". According to the District Council's Public Access webpage a decision on this planning application is pending.

Haddenham and Aldreth Neighbourhood Plan (HANP)

Following the end of the six week consultation period the plan was submitted to an Independent Examiner who concluded that the HANP was suitable to be put to Referendum.

The content of the Examiner's Report has not been considered in detail but it is noted that entries on Policy HAD 15: Flooding and sustainable drainage specifically refers to the LLFA but not the Commissioners.

The Referendum took place at the end of September with over 90% of voters in favour of its adoption which occurred during October.

Planning Updates & Consultations

The "Strategic Planning Consultation Responses" document can be found on www.middlelevel.gov.uk via the following link [Strategic Planning Consultation](#). Please note that this document was prepared for the previous reporting period; an update is currently being prepared and will be available on the website at some point after the meeting.

All responses to consultation documents were made on behalf of both the Middle Level Commissioners and its associated Boards.

High Rainfall Event and Flooding Incident – December 2020

When attending meetings of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Flood and Water (FloW) Partnership, the Middle Level Commissioners' Planning Engineer has raised concerns about the issues experienced within Cambridgeshire during or following high rainfall and/or exceptional circumstance type events and has enquired of other partners whether given the time that has elapsed any progress is being made to resolve some of the issues. To date the response has been limited.

In view of the above it is considered appropriate to advise the relevant RMA, where relevant, on areas which experience problems, particularly within the urban environment, and requires protection, intervention and/or investment.

Initially, three areas of designation are proposed:

- A. Business as usual - Areas where there are no known problems that cannot be solved through the Boards "day-to-day activities".

- B. Areas of concern - An area subject to flooding which is unlikely to be solved through the Boards “day-to-day activities” and may require protection, intervention and/or investment by the relevant RMA(s).
- C. Acute drainage areas – A geographical area with multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk where there is a need for a higher standard of water level management than normal to ensure that any new development will not increase flood risk that affects people, properties and local infrastructure and may require protection, intervention and/or investment by the relevant RMA(s).

This is not the same as a “critical drainage area” which has a specific meaning in flood risk terms i.e “A Critical Drainage Area (CDA) is an area that has critical drainage problems and which has been notified to the local planning authority as such by the Environment Agency in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).”

A review of the potential extents of either an “area of concern” and/or “Acute drainage areas” within the Commissioners’ catchment is currently being prepared with the intention of it being available for the next Meeting.

The intention is to highlight this area to the relevant RMA eg planning authorities, LLFA, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency etc., as an area which requires more involved management and will assist in protecting the local flood and water management systems including the Commissioners’ system.

As a result, apart from in the most exceptional circumstances, an initial request is that all water discharges within this area must be attenuated to current volumes and/or greenfield rates of run off, where practicable.

Following discussions, colleagues within the Middle Level Commissioners’ Works Department advise that following the December 2020 event the MLC system took up to ten days, and IDB systems up to five days, to return to normal.

It is also considered that current surface water design practices do not allow for the weather conditions experienced prior to the December 2020 event or the complex network of water level and flood risk management systems within the Fens. Therefore, consideration is being given to requiring designs to:

- A. Incorporate a higher Standard of Protection (SoP), possibly up to 0.5% AEP (1 in 200 year) event

- B. Include a greater allowance for Climate Change, in excess of 40%, and
- C. Be able to “store” water on site for several days until the peak flows have passed.

Strategic Drainage and Wastewater Consultation and Issues

The Right to Connect

Members will recall that during the passage of the Environment Act through the House of Lords an amendment was sought which aimed to minimise the impact of new housing development on levels of local flood risk and the likelihood of storm discharges of untreated sewerage effluent into the water environment. It aimed to ensure housing developers design systems according to a hierarchy of drainage options that seek to reduce to a minimum the volume of rainwater entering combined sewerage systems removing the current “right to connect” to public sewers.

On the basis that the various RMA involved could have been asked to consider taking the opportunity to write to the government and voice their concerns over the right to connect for new developments the views of the Boards administered by the Middle Level Commissioners were sought.

The amendment was not moved and the House of Lords were not invited to take a decision on it. The Environment Act received Royal Assent in November 2021.

However, the results of the Boards who provided a positive response is as follows:

For the removal of the Right To Connect	54%
Against the removal of the Right To Connect	23%
Neither for or against the Right To Connect	18%
Not an issue for the Board	5%

The discharge from sewers can cause several challenges including increased flood risk, pollution and water quality issues, the solution of which are often at the rate payers’ expense. Unsurprisingly the majority, but not all, of the Boards supporting the removal of the right either served or were detrimentally affected by areas of urban development.

Of those Boards against the removal some only served small urban areas with a limited number of sewers. Others served urban areas but only one received significant “benefit”.

The Board that neither opposes nor supports the removal served a significant urban area but the remainder served a limited number of or have no adopted sewers within their catchments.

Other comments received expressed:

- A. Concerns about the lack of investment and the need for improvement to the existing adopted infrastructure and;
- B. Suggested that the permission to connect should be on an approval basis so that it can be controlled and any impacts managed and;
- C. Required the Clerk to promote and lobby the Board's position.

Some Boards are more rural whilst others feature a larger urban area. Similarly, a larger individual Board which may be predominantly rural but include a sub-catchment(s) which is largely, and increasingly, an urban environment which has to accommodate the resultant flows.

Therefore, it is considered that it would be difficult to have a simple yes/no solution within a complex system such as The Fens.

Anglian Water Drainage & Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)

Draft DWMP

A more detailed review of the DWMP will be included in the updated version of the Strategic Planning Consultation Responses document currently being prepared. However, it is considered appropriate to include specific entries for the relevant WRCs of interest in the local area.

1. Draft DWMP Consultation

The draft DWMP document has been the subject of a consultation which provided an opportunity to comment on the document and included the following specific points:

Groundwater infiltration & surface water removal

The problems associated with groundwater infiltration and surface water within the sewer system, particularly within combined systems, are known and are a problem for all RMAs involved. Particularly when the water table is high and/or during the winter months.

The removal of groundwater infiltration and surface water from the sewerage system, to reduce the number of flood events, pollutions and storm overflow spills is considered to be an appropriate option in the correct circumstances and location.

The question that will need to be resolved in these situations is where will the surface water go instead? Most other surface water systems are approaching their finite capacity and will require the installation of significant infrastructure to deal with the flows. Who will pay and be responsible for

this? Care will also need to be taken to ensure that flood risk is not being increased elsewhere within the WRCs catchment for another RMA to deal with as a result.

As the approval and consent of other RMAs may also be required, prior detailed consultation with the parties involved **MUST** be undertaken and agreed **BEFORE** work commences.

(NB: In respect of this document, infiltration refers to groundwater entering the sewer system which **increases hydraulic loadings and threatens wastewater treatment efficiency.**)

Water level Management Solutions

The use of SuDS, wetlands and other green structures is considered to be an appropriate option in the correct circumstances and location.

The management of SuDS and other water level management systems is an ongoing challenge for many RMAs. Without suitable arrangements being imposed these could simply become potential liabilities for the various rate/bill payers. Therefore, adequate arrangements **MUST** be made to ensure that the long-term ownership funding, management, and maintenance for the upkeep of any green infrastructure, whether on or off site, in perpetuity is achieved.

Consideration also needs to be given to any restrictions upon maintenance of the drainage “facility” due to the presence of protected habitats and species.

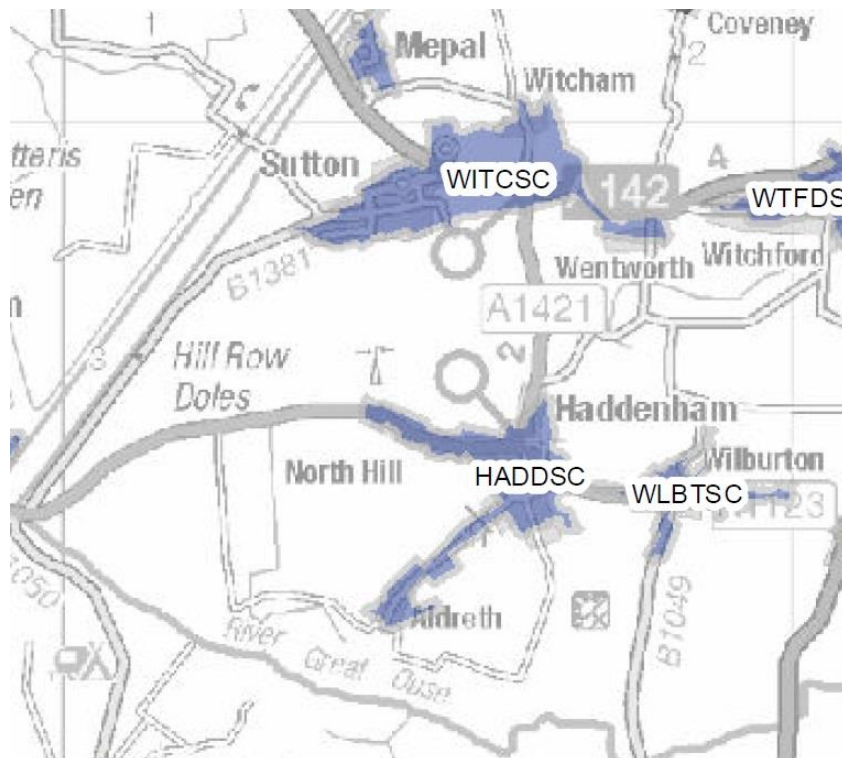
As the approval and consent of other RMAs may also be required, prior detailed consultation with the parties involved **MUST** be undertaken and agreed **BEFORE** work commences.

Partnership Working

The Commissioners and associated Boards are prepared to work in partnership with the local community, private and public partners to contribute to and deliver schemes for conservation, navigation, water resources, water level & flood risk management where there is a mutual benefit to the partners concerned.

However, to what extent they are prepared to contribute would be the subject of a decision for the respective authority and this may vary dependent upon their views.

2. Programme outputs



Extract from Anglian Water's Risk Based Catchment Screening (RBCS) Map showing the extent of the WRC catchments adjacent to the Commissioners' area

L3 water recycling catchment	2021 population	2035 population	2050 population	Passed RBCS	Resilience risk score
HADDENHAM	3153	3680	3810	Yes	0

Extracts from Anglian Water's draft Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan showing the results and proposed plans for March WRC

Planning objective themes reviewed	Stakeholder concerns/ comments	Medium term strategy	2050 Strategy
Escape from sewers WRC compliance Environment and wellbeing	Flood risk implications.	Wait and see.	50% surface water runoff removal.

Haddenham WRC

This WRC currently serves a population of 3153. An increase in population across the catchment of 3810 (21%) by 2050 was used in the BRAVA/RBCS process.

Despite concerns being raised no risk has been identified and a “wait and see” (monitor) approach has been suggested by Anglian Water in the medium term.

The long-term strategy is to reduce surface water run-off removal by 50%.

WRC Compliance

The quality of the discharge does not appear to be a cause for concern. However, members will be aware of Natural England’s concerns about nutrients affecting the aquatic environment.

3. Storm Overflow Consultation

A consultation exercise on Storm Overflow Discharges was held during February. In view of the concerns discussed above it was considered appropriate to consult all the administered Boards even though many would not be directly affected.

The main means of providing a response was to provide answers to five specific questions and, whilst responses were provided, in view of the nature of the matter, the responses received from the Boards consulted and given that the issue is rising up the political agenda it was considered that a more detailed and focused response was required.

The following are the headlines or a brief resume of the response.

A. Existing sewer systems and problems

1. The Right to Connect – As discussed elsewhere in this Report.
2. Other issues – On going pollution problems, the surcharging of or high discharges during or following high rainfall events, the lack of capacity within WRC’s.

B. General

It is considered that all the current targets are too vague and will take too long to achieve any meaningful results and that the consultation was not open and transparent as the locations of the points of discharge are not readily identified within the document therefore, making it difficult to provide a meaningful comment.

Advice was given that:

Most of our systems are pumped often remaining stationary for extended periods thus dilution may not occur as expected; water is abstracted for various purposes – see High Priority Sites – Public Health below; the adverse impact on areas of interest including designated environmental sites; and that no “compensation” is provided for having to receive, transfer and dispose of the discharges from the overflows.

C. Storm Flow Technical Overview

High Priority Sites

1. Ecology

a. Environment targets:

It is considered that these targets should apply to **all** sites not just high priority ones, with solutions implemented much sooner than identified if the Government's targets of halting biodiversity decline is to be achieved and the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the 25 year environment plan are to be achieved

b. Sensitive Inland Water

Reference was made to the proximity of trigger points.

2. Public Health

The document refers to Designated Shellfish Water and Designated Bathing Water as trigger points which is understood but it is not appreciated that vast quantities of water are abstracted from Fenland water level management systems for agricultural use, whether this is washing or irrigating crops for consumption within the food chain.

It was suggested that it would be prudent for the trigger points to be reviewed to include those other items which could affect public health on a wider scale.

Potable Water

Reference was made concerning the use of excess water from both the Commissioners' and surrounding systems to fill the proposed Fens Reservoir and the potential benefits of improving water quality from the discharges into these watercourses.

3. Amenity

Emphasis is given to Bathing waters but no reference is made to other wider but perhaps smaller benefits on the Commissioners' largely navigable systems and the disposal of sewage into these watercourses may have an adverse impact on wider issues, for example, tourism, angling etc or if these wider "costs" are considered when assessing the adverse impacts of overflows on the local area.

4. Assessing spill frequency

Event data Monitors

- a. From a closer review it was identified that some of the discharges of interest including Doddington, Nightlayers and Ramsey WRCs are not fitted with Event Data Monitors. Therefore, it is not known how the number of spills can be fully assessed.

Event Duration Monitors will be installed on all of Anglian Water's overflows during Asset Management Plan (AMP) period 7 (2020-2025) and this will, hopefully, reduce the level of uncertainty during AMP 8 (2025-2030) and AMP 9 (2030-2035) by producing "real" data.

- b. Rainfall target: Storm overflows will not be permitted to discharge above an average of 10 rainfall events per year by 2050 but this target should be more defined including restriction on the duration of spills and the volume discharged. This may be difficult to achieve. The Standard of Protection (SoP) provided, the use of "typical" rather than excessive rainfall events and modelling of the various systems to identify potential problem overflows rather than actual data – the number of spills, duration of the spills etc was questioned.

Growth

The growth that has occurred in the last fifty years has contributed to the increased number and length of spills and this will only become more severe as further growth continues unless adequate steps are taken now to resolve these as a matter of urgency.

Climate Change

It would be appropriate for all RMAs to prepare for the worst-case scenario and there is an aspiration to achieve this but this could be expensive, may prove unnecessary and wasteful leading to criticism. It was suggested that the most economic and environmentally acceptable standard should be achieved.

Screening

It would be beneficial to know where these initial overflows are located.

D. Storm Overflow Consultation

Performance Guide

It appears that priority is given to the number of spills rather than the length of time of the discharge, the volume of flow being discharged or the cumulative effects of the overflows due to their close proximity to each other.

Preferred Plan

It would be beneficial if the “headlines” from assessments and guidance on suggested solutions could be provided to identify and instigate any early engagement with the parties concerned, for example, land owners, developers etc.

Customer Support

Reference was made in the document to continual engagement with customers but there appears to be limited engagement with those RMA who have to receive the flows from the storm overflows.

It was suggested that such engagement commences and both the Commissioners and associated Boards look forward to continual engagement and transparency on storm overflows and networks in the future.

E. Consultation Questionnaire

The answers to the questionnaire were generally included in the response but in reply to the question *How confident are you that this strategy aligns with our Purpose?* A very low confidence comment was provided adding that some of the systems cannot be managed without significant investment and improvement works being required on several networks.

F. Summary

Whilst it is pleasing that the issue of sewage overflows is being progressed this appears to be primarily due to political pressure rather than at the instigation of the water industry.

There are concerns that priority will be given to resolving issues associated with storm overflows rather than those existing problems associated with WRCs and associated systems.

Greater transparency, early engagement and further discussions should be undertaken to any issues related to adoptable sewer systems and storm overflows if the current problems are to be resolved.

The final DWMP document is currently being prepared and is due to be published this spring.

Review for implementation of Schedule 3 to The Flood and Water Management Act 2010

(F&WMA)

The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) details the provision of comprehensive flood management to protect people, homes, and businesses. It is written to protect water supplies to the consumer and helps safeguard community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges. The Act introduces into law the concept of flood risk management as the preferred approach rather than reliance on flood defences (existing or proposed) for protection of sites.

1. Schedule 3

Schedule 3 of the FWMA was introduced to establish a SuDS approving body (SAB) at the county/unitary level for the regulation of new development and compliance with The Act. It was intended that this Schedule would be introduced into law around 2015/2016, following the original Act that achieved royal ascent in 2010 but this did not happen and Schedule 3 did not achieve approval due to concerns that it would restrict housing delivery and growth.

Instead, the Government made amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to stipulate those decisions on planning applications relating to major developments (over 10 dwellings, or equivalent non-residential developments) should ensure that SuDS are put in place, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) currently need to approve drainage schemes and ensure they are appropriately maintained.

Currently the maintenance of a development typically falls under the responsibility of a Private Maintenance Company (PMC) which is usually paid for using service charge agreements with the owners of the new properties and often selling residential properties as leasehold rather than freehold.

2. Review

In early December industry experts sent an open letter to the Prime Minister which “strongly urged” the implementation of Schedule 3.

Following a review Defra announced in January 2023, the Government’s decision to implement Schedule 3 which will provide a framework for the approval and adoption of high quality SuDS and is expected to occur at a yet to be determined date in 2024. As a result, the Government is giving consideration to how this will be implemented subject to final decisions on scope, threshold and process whilst being mindful of the cumulative impact of new regulatory burdens on the development sector and water industry. Defra recently undertook a consultation survey with LPAs and LLFAs but not with IDBs and other relevant parties. However, there are several issues and challenges that require resolution before progressing further.

3. Changes to existing laws

The implementation of Schedule 3 will introduce some small changes to three existing laws.

a) Building Act 1984

Section 59 which gives local authorities the power to request that sustainable drainage systems in an unsatisfactory condition be renewed, repaired or cleansed is to be amended.

Section 84 which stipulates that local authorities withhold the right to request that impermeable surfaces around a building which do not allow for the satisfactory drainage of its surface or subsoil be remedied requires amendment to specify that surfaces need to remove water in a satisfactory manner.

b) New Roads and Street Works Act 1991

Section 63 of the Act will include a small change should Schedule 3 be enacted.

c) Water Industry Act 1991

Section 106 to remove the right to connect. Following Schedule 3's commencement, a person may only exercise this right if their drainage system was approved by an SAB before construction and if a proposal for their drainage system to communicate with a sewer was included in their application for approval.

The NPPF and the associated PPG will require amending to reflect any changes.

4. Implementation

Whilst there will be some changes to current procedures it is considered that there are several potential benefits including better working practices, better integration with other RMA, the removal of the automatic right to connect, potential revenue streams etc but there are several potential problems that need to be resolved including funding mechanisms; potential increased costs on the rate payer; lack of resources, skills and capabilities; the need for more timely responses possibly taking staff members from other work.

The proposal is the subject of on-going discussions and a meeting with the LLFAs and other partners has been requested to discuss the issues in order to maximise any opportunities and minimise any adverse impacts on both the Middle Level Commissioners and the Boards to whom they provide a planning consultancy service.

These discussions will include, as a minimum:

a) The suggested change in surface water design practice, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

- b) Ensuring that adequate arrangements are made for long term ownership funding, management and maintenance arrangements for the upkeep of any water level and flood risk management system, whether on or off site, in perpetuity including details of the works to be carried out by the occupier/land owner, adopting authority, the Management Company or other responsible person/authority, together with the costs attached, are included in the “Homeowners Pack” and the Deed of Sale.
- c) The right to connect needs to be on an approval basis to ensure that it can be controlled and any adverse impacts managed.
- d) That any incurred costs on the rate payer are kept to a minimum.

Consulting Engineer

11 April 2023

e:\ES\Word\Reports\Haddenham\April 2023

Notes of meeting held on Friday 10th March 2023

Our Ref: GR/356/PL/008 (Please quote this reference on any correspondence)

Haddenham Level District Commissioners ('the Authority')

E/3003/18/CM & CCC/21/235/DCON

Construction of irrigation reservoirs by the extraction, processing and export of sand and gravel at Willow Hall Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham

Notes of meeting 14:00-15:30hrs 10th March 2023, AG Wright and Son (Farms) Ltd, Hermitage Farm, Hillrow Causeway, Haddenham, Cambridgeshire, CB6 3PB.

Attending:

Haddenham Drainage Commissioners – Michael Church (Chairman), Jack Smith (Vice Chairman/A.G.W. Ltd); Nick Wright (A.G.W Ltd) Toby Chambers, Raymond Waddelow, Darby

Mick George Ltd – Mick George, Andrew Woodcock

Gary Roberts, Middle Level Commissioners [Notes by GJR]

Item #1 – Proposed Recharge Trenches

The key points relating to seasonal dewatering are outlined below:

- Mick George confirmed that they have stopped excavating the recharge trench to the west of the site due to issues associated with the archaeologist. This trench is therefore not to the required depth and will recommence once the issue resolved.
- The recharge trenches are not ditches. They are being excavated to discourage any water voles so there are no issues later when it comes to reinstatement.
- The recharge trenches will remain separate to the field drains around the site. The initial idea of using existing drains has been superseded. there will be a minimum of 5-6m offset from any existing drain
- The requirement for inspection of the recharges to confirm levels was reiterated. Inspections would be agreed at suitable points as/when trenches are installed to required depths (Action; GR/AW)
- Recharge trenches will be to the agreed lengths shown on the plan and previously agreed at the mtg 23rd September 2022.

Providing the recharge trenches are implemented and functioning before dewatering continues after March 2023 the Commissioners confirmed they would support the dewatering. It was agreed that a formal agreement is required for this.

Item #2 Groundwater levels, particularly boreholes 13,14,15 and cessation levels

- Monitoring of groundwater levels is ongoing. Andrew Woodcock shared the monitoring data along with graphs showing levels. Groundwater levels in BH 13, 14 & 15 have been approximately 300-500mm above the target trigger level during dewatering. Levels are starting to rise now dewatering to the Commissioner's system has stopped and pumping is to the first recharge trench, along the roadside boundary within the site.
- Discussion was had over the trigger levels, how these have been set and how these trigger levels would impact on summer water levels.

- It was noted that the trigger levels relate to seasonal dewatering, as per existing planning permission, and therefore relate to the impacts on winter groundwater levels. These levels were defined by Enzygo.
- To agree year round dewatering further agreement is necessary on suitable trigger levels for summer period (April to September).
- MG suggested that he would employ Tetra-Tek (formerly WYG) consultants to review the work Enzygo produced. A meeting with MG Ltd's consultant would be set up to identify suitable trigger levels. (Action: AW)

Item #3 – Status of planning permission for all year-round dewatering/working under engineering derogation

- The variation to planning application E/3003/18/CM still in abeyance with a revised application still to be submitted.
- Works could therefore continue at risk whilst the necessary permissions and consents are obtained.
- MG advised that a new agreement between the Commissioners and MG Ltd would be needed to support the planning application. GR will discuss this with the Clerk to the Commissioners to progress a suitable agreement (Action – GR)

Post meeting note – A planning application for the excavation of additional peripheral drains to aid with the management of water on the site has been submitted to East Cambridgeshire District Council. This was noted 17th March 2023, although the application was submitted 28th February 2023. The application drawings align with the proposed recharge trenches as agreed.

Item #4 – Notification of pumping into the district

- Commissioners' Chairman requested suitable notification from MG Ltd when they will recommence pumping to the Commissioners' system

Item #5 – Any other Business

- MG noted that he had completed on the sale to Hanson Ltd, although this was still with the Competition Commission to confirm. it would likely be May 2023 when this would formally complete subject to the outcome of the Competition Commission review.

Haddenham Level DC

Consulting Engineers' Supplementary Report - April 2023

Improving Capital Delivery

Introduction

Since being in post I have been getting to grips with a number of things in the Engineering/Technical Services Department. I've made a number of observations: officers are knowledgeable, dedicated and committed to delivering a service to the Commissioners and IDBs; working in partnership with the Environment Agency and local planning authorities/LLFAs is clearly evident; the operations team do an excellent job managing water resources in an extremely complex system; our capital delivery programme is growing as assets come to the end of design life; we have some significant changes and challenges ahead (biodiversity net gain requirements, the climate emergency and Fens Reservoir amongst others) which need careful planning and resourcing if we are to properly represent members and local communities and secure the best outcomes for the catchment.

We have an increasing capital delivery programme, with a number of ongoing projects and many identified for future delivery. I have identified areas where improvements are needed to deliver these projects better and to improve communications between the consulting engineer and the Boards.

Resources

Staff in MLC's Technical Services are currently stretched in terms of capacity and capability. There is a significant lack of suitable people across the engineering and project delivery profession generally, which impacts not only MLC's ability to recruit, but also the availability of consultant and contractor resources.

As well as our services to IDBs, and the Bank Raising Scheme over the next 4-5 years, and delivery of the pumping station refurbishment programme, there is an immediate need to provide resources to support MLC input to developing plans for Anglian Water's Fens Reservoir. This will have a significant and profound impact on water management in the catchment, and MLC officers need to ensure we secure the very best outcomes for our Board members, ratepayers, customers and the environment. We will be working very hard over the next 6 months to achieve this before the project passes its next 'gate'.

Now that MLC receives revenue through navigation licences, we have to ensure that we deliver on the requirements set out in the Navigation Byelaws 2020. This is a work in progress, but again sets additional demands on our internal resources and our ability to be proactive.

MLC were unsuccessful in recruiting a new planning engineer in 2022 and the existing team is under continued pressure to resolve ongoing and new applications, let alone adequately accommodate new demands. We are now looking at alternative resource solutions to support the wider engineering department.

IDB Projects

I am already aware of a number of projects that have been in progress for some time. There is lack of a clear programme of delivery and/project management discipline for these; there are no specific timescales and other agreed tolerances with the IDB as 'client', and this makes it difficult to plan and prioritise resources and workloads.

I am compiling a programme of all the projects being delivered by MLC and determining the resources needed to complete them. I will work with the Boards in question to progress delivery as quickly and efficiently as possible.

For new project requests, I am implementing a simple process with a 'Project Initiation Form' to capture key information and undertake an initial assessment of the project. I will prioritise work requested based on urgency and availability of resources. Unless otherwise instructed by an IDB, our default approach will be to seek to maximise FCRM Grant in Aid funding for eligible projects. I will implement a process of reporting progress regularly to the Boards/key contacts. As part of this process, I'll be asking each Board to agree how they delegate decision making, as projects can't be effectively delivered when governed through annual meetings, and how we manage better, more frequent, communications between the Boards' delegates and officers in Technical Services.

I am looking at the possibility of 'packaging' some works together for delivery by consultants, e.g. Pumping Station Refurbishment Projects rather than delivering each one individually. This has the advantage of securing a team of suitable resources who can focus on the work and deliver it as efficiently as possible (economies of scale). This will be a change of approach for individual IDBs and will need further work to determine how we manage this approach practically when each Board is its own individual entity with maybe a once per annum meeting. I hope to provide you with more detail about this, and the benefits it will give the Boards, in the coming months.

It may take some time to deliver the backlog of projects, which in turn might delay the start of new projects. However, I'm hopeful my approach will eventually lead to a more effective and efficient delivery process.

MLC Bank Raising Scheme

This is currently the largest IDB led project in the national flood investment programme and gives us the opportunity to develop capacity and capability in the organisation and share best practice across all our work. The scheme will be under the spot-light and have a focus from the Environment Agency in terms of grant assurance.

Works are progressing on a number of fronts but were lacking leadership and direction and there was no delivery programme. I have implemented some standard project management tools to control, manage and deliver the project: An 'exception report' was raised to the Project Board/MLC Executive Board outlining the existing situation and mitigation measures being put in place; A project plan and outline programme is now in place; Clear project governance has been identified; A data management plan is being drafted; Risks and issues are being identified; Project and delivery manager resources have been appointed and they will start in April.

Most of the project work was being carried out by MLC staff putting a strain on their already stretched ability to delivery other commitments, especially to the IDBs. The Technical Services team does not currently have the capacity or capability to deliver major projects.

There was a lack of clarity around environmental impact and risk assessments for activities which are considerably more than 'business as usual.'

Resources are in place/are being identified to complete environmental impact assessment required before wholesale desilting works can be undertaken, including significant input from the MLC Environment Officer.

The Independent Technical Advisor has prepared a scope for tender to secure a consultant to develop outline design and prepare Full Business Case (for MLC Project Board approval). The consultant will provide all technical input needed for developing and planning the project and ensuring consents and approvals are identified and in place. MLC staff will continue to act in a lead client capacity, providing their specific technical expertise and knowledge of the catchment as necessary. I will lead the project as Project Executive, working closely with the Project and Delivery Managers and providing regular updates to the Project Sponsor (Chief Executive) and MLC Executive Committee.

MLC's H&S advisor, Cope, visited and assessed the provisions in place and provided advice on additional requirements. Risk assessments/methods statements are being developed for physical work activities alongside a full review of the MLC H&S policies.

A Communications & Engagement team is in place and is planning engagement in parallel with Chief Executive's proposed MLC engagement and branding improvements.

A robust forecast of project costs needs developing. It is likely that the total project costs will exceed the current approval limit of £23million from the Outline Business Case. There are also some risks to the delivery programme that need to be investigated further and mitigated as necessary. All of these will be considered in more detail over the next 6 months, appraised and included in the Full Business Case, before the end of the financial year 2023/24.

Contractors are currently being identified for the various work phases: desilting; material import; bank raising works and hard defences (including detailed design).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. R. H.', is positioned above the title 'Consulting Engineer'.

Consulting Engineer

5 April 2023

Haddenham Drainage Commissioners

Capital Improvement Programme (2023/2024)

		PREVIOUS YEARS	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	FUTURE YEARS	ALL YEARS
		Pre Yr 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Post Year 10	Total Expenditure
Haddenham p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	4.6	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	45.0	49.6
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sutton p/s	Pumping station replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	750.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	750.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	8.4	0	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	118.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	35.0
	Pumping station Control building refurbishment/replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Pumping station compound/surrounds improvements	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Plant	Ford Ranger Truck	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
	Terex excavator	4.7	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	54.7
Structures	Slackers (x6)	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drainage Channels		0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		17.7	0	15	30	0	15	750	15	0	0	0	205	1,048



Haddenham Level DDC

Environmental Update – April 2023

Introduction

As I took up post in mid-October, unfortunately I am not in a position to provide a full biodiversity action plan update yet, but have compiled the following update of environmental activities and key points relevant to the Board, which I hope you find useful.

I have been familiarising myself with the IDB area, its approaches and plans as well as I can, over winter, but from now onwards I would like to plan some further visits to the IDB area to develop a much better understanding of the area and your priorities, so will be in touch to do organise this. I have driven through the area many times and recognise that the area is surrounded by many high-value biodiversity sites, and has many within its boundary also. The also note that the landscape is quite different to other local IDB areas, which presents great opportunities for the Board, and something I would like to explore more with you.

1. Biodiversity Action Plan Review

The Biodiversity Action Plan has traditionally been the key document which sets out the IDBs' planned contributions towards conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Although the BAP remains vital, the objectives are unlikely to be reached unless there is a process in place to ensure that the incremental steps that need to be taken to achieve the BAP objectives are incorporated into regular operations and are reviewed regularly. Otherwise, the BAP simply becomes a document that is reviewed once or twice a year. It is the review of this vital process that I will be focussing on, rather than reviewing the objectives in the BAP, because the objectives themselves still remain valid.

2. Process and Compliance Review

I am well into a thorough process and compliance review of all our environmental approaches across all boards. This will help to ensure that IDBs are operating in line with all new legislative and regulatory requirements, updated guidance and best practice, and are better prepared for any changes we expect to be introduced in the next year. This will include the impacts and opportunities brought forward by the Environment Act 2021, including biodiversity net gain and delivering biodiversity enhancement. The outcomes of this review will feed into the BAP refresh for each IDB.

I also plan to review the currently-available pre-application environmental advice for consents and standard responses with the planning office.

3. GIS System Development

To support the activities mentioned above, an improved environmental GIS system is being developed and work is well underway to digitise all available environmental data. Lots of data exists due to all the good work already undertaken by IDBs but it exists in different states in different places. There is also a great deal of information held by the Local Environmental Records Centres, for which I am pleased to say, we now have a contract in place to receive regularly. This will be a vital data source that we must consult when planning our work to help us identify any protected and priority species which may be impacted or enhanced by our work. We are merging all these data sets to develop a more complete picture of what we have, in order to define and preserve the baseline from which to progress. This, more complete picture is also necessary to enable us to identify opportunities for environmental enhancement. Developing the GIS system this way will deliver efficiencies in environmental data collection, analysis and reporting, allowing more time to undertake practical conservation work on the ground. It will also enable us to share our data more easily with the local environmental records centres, contributing to the understanding of the local and national status of many species and help to raise the profile of the IDB and the valuable work they do to support biodiversity. You can see an example of how some of the digitised data is coming together in the attached IDB map.

4. Work Package Ecological Screening Document

We have developed the template named above for IDBs to complete when planning any ad hoc/non-routine works that will “break ground” on the any of the banks. The information is needed in order to evidence that we have correctly considered the ecological impacts of the work, and to identify opportunities for enhancement, as we are mandated to do, by law. Activities for which the form would be relevant include bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling, filling in a ditch, moving an access culvert etc.

Only the first page needs completing by the IDB (not a lot of info needed) and the rest by me. I undertake the assessment as far as possible, and then return the second part of the document to the IDB, setting out what surveys etc. will be needed, if any. I may be able to undertake some of the practical surveys but in some cases, an ecological consultant with a specialist licence may be needed. In some cases, there may not be a need for any surveys and the recommendations will be that the work can proceed with some adaptations to the proposed approach, such as altered timings or establishment of “no-work” buffers around sensitive areas.

When all desk and fieldwork is complete, the form is “signed off” from an ecological perspective, and returned to the IDB with recommendations for the approaches to be taken. This means the IDB and the operatives undertaking the work have full sight of the ecological constraints, mitigations and approaches required to remain compliant. It is recommended that this form is completed and sent as early as possible to prevent delays, even up to 1 year in advance of the [proposed works. The form is available by emailing sofi.lloyd@middlelevel.gov.uk and is also available from the MLC website.

5. Protected Species

a) *Water Vole*

As always, any work that plans to “break ground” on the any of the banks, so bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling etc, **OR the removal of any marginal vegetation, please let me know ASAP by completing the above ecological screening document** so we can plan the appropriate surveys and mitigations in plenty of time, to avoid any delays and ensure compliance with wildlife legislation. This is particularly relevant for water voles. We know that there are some known, valuable water-vole ditches in the district, and some which could be enhanced to better support the local population, but the accepted approach is to always assume water voles are present in all ditches, and plan work around their assumed presence, in order to avoid committing an offence in terms of wildlife legislation. There is a lot of good, pragmatic and practical guidance on how to properly consider water voles during IDB works contained in the Environmental Good Governance Guide for IDBs.

b) Badgers

A reminder that badgers and their setts are protected by law and care must be taken not to disturb setts during routine channel management. Sett interference requires a licence under all circumstances. Please contact us should you have any queries regarding activities taking place around any known badger sett. Please also let me know asap if there are any setts which are presenting a flood risk due to any burrowing which is destabilising banks etc. More detailed information and refresher training on approaches to be taken around badger setts will be organised in the coming months. In the meantime, please refer to the relevant chapter in the Environmental Good Governance Guide (available on the ADA website) for more detailed information on badgers.

c) Birds

Please be reminded of the legislation around the disturbance of breeding birds, particularly when cutting vegetation or bank-side trees, between March and September and where kingfishers are known to hunt. Please see the relevant chapter in the Environmental Good Governance Guide (available on the ADA website) to refresh your understanding of mitigation and survey requirements and get in touch should you have any questions.

i. Barn owls

I have met with our barn owl conservation delivery partners and we had defined a schedule of checking and refreshing barn owl boxes over winter but have unfortunately been unable to commence due to the restrictions imposed by BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) due to avian flu. We continue to monitor the guidance and act accordingly and have been able to commence some box checking by following strict biosecurity measures. Please do let us know therefore if there are any boxes that you feel need some maintenance ASAP so we can plan to visit them before the start of the breeding season. It is even more important during these times that you please help us with the following:

- Tell ASAP us if any work on pumping stations is planned in 2023 so boxes can be relocated before the breeding season (March-Aug)
- Tell us if you spot a box needing repair
- Tell us if you see a box being regularly visited in nesting season
- Tell us if you'd like a barn owl box
- Establish and maintain un-cropped field margins for foraging

i. Avian Flu

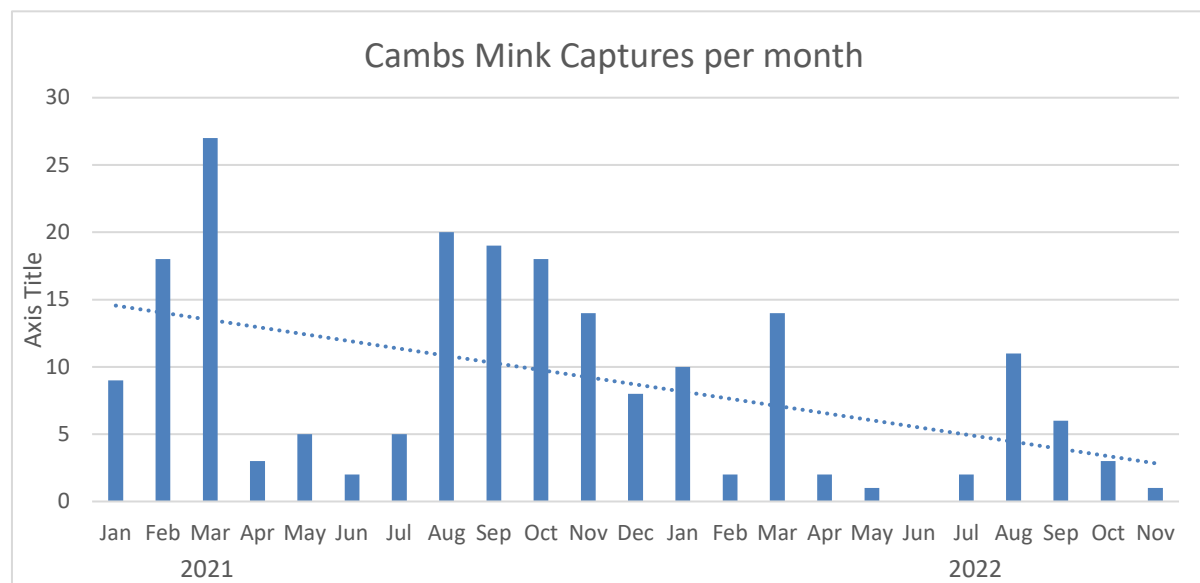
Please ensure that you are familiar with, **and promote the knowledge of** the DEFRA guidelines on avian flu, in particular those for reporting suspected cases: Bird flu (avian influenza): latest situation in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). If any dead birds are spotted, please do let us know and either we can come and collect and dispose of them in a safe manner to minimise the risk of the disease spreading to other wildlife, or we can arrange for the collection.

d) Mink & Water Voles

I am now part of the co-ordination team for the mink control strategy for the MLC area. The mink control project has been hugely successful so the vision of full eradication of mink is becoming much closer to being realised than was ever thought possible. A strategy refresh meeting took place on the 9th January where we reviewed the data to date to help us devise an updated trapping regime for the coming months. The key outcomes of which are that we are very much in **need of further volunteers** to respond to mink raft activation alerts in the area. Any activation would need to be attended promptly within a few hours but the need to respond is likely to be very occasional. Please let me know of any interest.

The following chart shows the number of mink caught each month, suggesting a declining population. However there have been a number of mink caught in recent weeks in the local area, probably due to the breeding season

being underway and their increased travel to find a mate, so trapping is still very valuable and reporting any sightings is key to ensure that traps are ideally placed.



The following table shows the number of Mink caught in 2022 and their locations, compared to 62 mink captures or kills in 2021.

Middle Level mink 2022_List

List of mink captures around the Middle Level in 2022

	Animal Code	Station/Location	Date	Sex
1	WRE/0761	Upwell & Outwell: Laddus Drove holt	09 Jan 2022	Male
2	WRE/0789		11 Jan 2022	Unrecorded
3	WRE/0917	Stonea Bridge	24 Jan 2022	Female
4	WRE/0786	Ramsey: PS Ramsey Hollow	24 Jan 2022	Female
5	WRE/0924	Welches Dam PS bridge SW side	10 Mar 2022	Male
6	WRE/0950	Conington Fen Bridge	13 Mar 2022	Female
7	WRE/0944	Ransonmoor: Staffurth's Bridge PS outfall, Old ...	16 Mar 2022	Male
8	WRE/0946	Ramsey Saint Mary's: Speed the Plough Bridge	17 Mar 2022	Male
9	WRE/0951	Twenty Foot, Coldham Bank	22 Mar 2022	Male
10	WRE/0957	Crooked Drain, Sutton Gault	05 Apr 2022	Female
11	WRE/0966	Crooked Drain, Sutton Gault	26 Apr 2022	Female
12	WRE/1046	Great Fen: Charterhouse Farm Bridge	16 Sep 2022	Female
13	WRE/1047	Woodwalton Fen: south	18 Sep 2022	Male
14	WRE/1081	Pingles Pit, Mepal B	21 Oct 2022	Female
15	WRE/1140	Welches Dam PS bridge SW side	27 Nov 2022	Unrecorded

This progress with mink control will positively impact on the abundance of water voles in the area. Previous water vole survey data will be reviewed over winter and added to the GIS system and further surveys will be planned to take place in spring and summer.

As above, any planned work that will “break ground” on the bank top or face, so anything other than grass cutting, i.e., bank reformation, mooring construction, culverting, head walls, piling etc, **please let me know ASAP** so we can plan the appropriate water vole surveys and mitigations in plenty of time, to avoid any delays and ensure compliance with water vole legislation.

6. Invasive species

When any non-native species (particularly the following) are spotted, please record the location using the what3words app ([what3words /// The simplest way to talk about location](#)) if possible (if not postcode or grid ref) and inform us ASAP. Useful identification guides and information can be found online at [ID sheets » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](#)

- Floating Pennywort
- Mink
- Himalayan Balsam
- Parrot's feather
- New Zealand pigmyweed (Australian swamp stonecrop - Crassula)

a) Floating Pennywort

Floating Pennywort continues to be an issue in other watercourses just outside the area, so we urge you to remain vigilant, refresh your identification skills and act promptly by notifying us if you think you may have spotted any in the districts drains. Strong adherence to biosecurity procedures is vital as per the boards policy (available from the website).

There has been good progress in trialling the use of an imported weevil to control the plant so we hope that if the success continues, it may be made available nationally at some point in the future.

b) Azolla

Previously reported as common across the IDB area. Please record and notify us as above of any instance. There may be an opportunity to use an approved weevil to control badly affected stretches so please advise if there are any particular areas of concern as there are only limited stocks of the weevils nationally so I will have to apply early to be in with a chance of some of the stock.

c) Chinese Mitten Crabs

Chinese mitten crabs and their apparent rapidly increasing population continue to be a concern. There are reports of some banks in some areas being damaged by their extensive burrowing but it is always difficult to pin this on the crabs alone with there being so many other factors which affect the stability of banks.

We liaise closely with the EA and follow their lead with the management of this species and many others to ensure that nothing we do contradicts their approach, regulation or legislation. Defra has no intention currently of developing policy which would allow the crabs to be caught and removed for commercial or conservation reasons. In particular there was some concern that they were found to carry a gill fluke in other counties which had the potential of being transmitted to humans if they were to be consumed. As Defra isn't planning to change their stance, the EA's approach remains that any crabs which are caught as by-catch must be killed on-site and not removed. The fishing for the crabs specifically is not lawful. There is no recommended or authorised approach to deal with rising populations unfortunately. A commonly held view is that removing mature individuals from the population creates a vacuum that immature individuals then tussle to fill, driving greater movement within the local population and perhaps increased burrowing as a result.

We will continue to monitor the recommended approaches and will adapt ours promptly to follow when necessary.

d) Turkish Crayfish

We have received reliable reports of the presence of Turkish crayfish in some MLC drains. Turkish Crayfish are a schedule 9 listed species listed in the Wildlife & Countryside Act meaning that it is an offence to release them or allow them to escape into the wild. Their impact is not widely understood but it is said that that they are known to reside alongside Signal Crayfish, rather than displace them or be displaced by them. Where populations of our native and protected white-clawed crayfish are still present, they are likely to outcompete them but they do not carry crayfish plague which does impact native crayfish. There is no evidence that Turkish crayfish burrow so it is unlikely that they would cause extensive damage to riverbanks but they could reduce fishery profits by competing

with fish for food, stealing baits or causing declines in fish recruitment through loss of macrophyte habitat, according to the non-native species secretariat. Please be vigilant and report sightings of the species and maintain strong biosecurity procedures. They can be distinguished from other crayfish species by their long narrow claws, as shown in the pictures below.



Turkish Crayfish

Claws: claws normally same colour as body but underside lightly coloured. Fingers long, straight and narrow



White-clawed crayfish

Claws: are noticeably granular and are whitish to light pink on the underside, never red.



American Signal Crayfish

Claws white or turquoise patch at junction between fixed and moveable finger. Underside of claws are red.



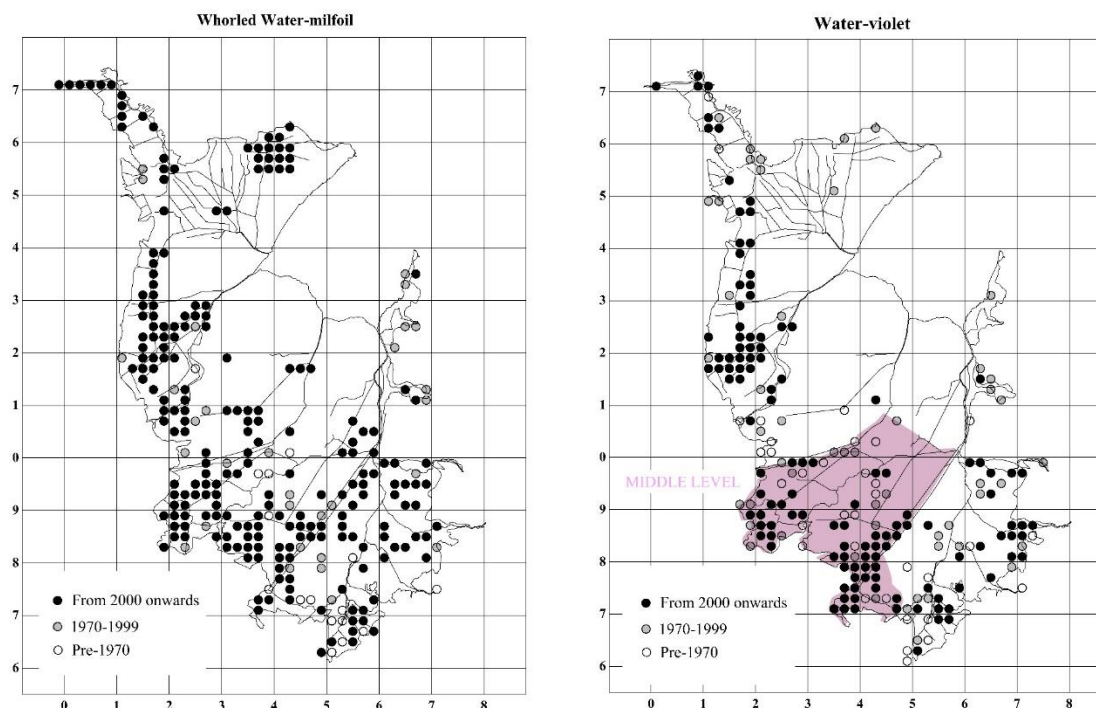
If it is necessary to dispatch a Turkish crayfish, American signal crayfish, or any other non-native crayfish, because it has been removed from the channel accidentally, please ensure that you are familiar with its distinguishing features and can confidently tell it apart from particularly white clawed crayfish. This will ensure no offence against a protected species occurs. There are very few records of the native white-clawed crayfish remaining in the MLC area but care should still be taken and no assumption made. More information can be found at: <https://www.nonnativespecies.org/non-native-species/information-portal/view/381>

7. Fenland Flora Project

The long-running fenland flora project, headed up by botanist Jonathan Graham, to identify and record the presence of rare, threatened and notable aquatic plants in the fens, is nearing completion. The results highlight:

- There are lots of nationally significant aquatic plants in fens, many of which are only found in IDB drains and are present because of the way the drain is being managed.
- Water quality is important for many aquatic plants and a good proportion of IDB drains have good water quality.
- A summer-maintained water level is good for many plants.
- Non-IDB field drains are important too so where possible, aim to always hold some water and cut periodically.

The diagrams below show how the presence of 2 England red data plants that are frequent in local drains.



The plant location data will be added to the GIS system and made available so it can be reviewed ahead of any planned works, and will be added to BAPs. The data will also be useful in identifying any opportunities to enhance these valuable plant populations.

8. Environmental Stewardship.

You will most likely be aware that environmental stewardship schemes and farming subsidies are changing. If you would like to discuss existing stewardship provisions within the district, or you or another rate payer is thinking of applying for a stewardship agreement or establishing new stewardship measures, please do get in touch.

9. Carbon & Climate

There are increasingly a number of low-carbon, sustainable alternatives available for many of the common materials and equipment used in flood risk management, such as low-carbon concrete and steel, solar powered mechanical and electrical equipment and coir roll for bank stabilisation. Please get in touch to discuss any projects which involve these or similar materials or equipment to understand if any are suitable for you to consider.

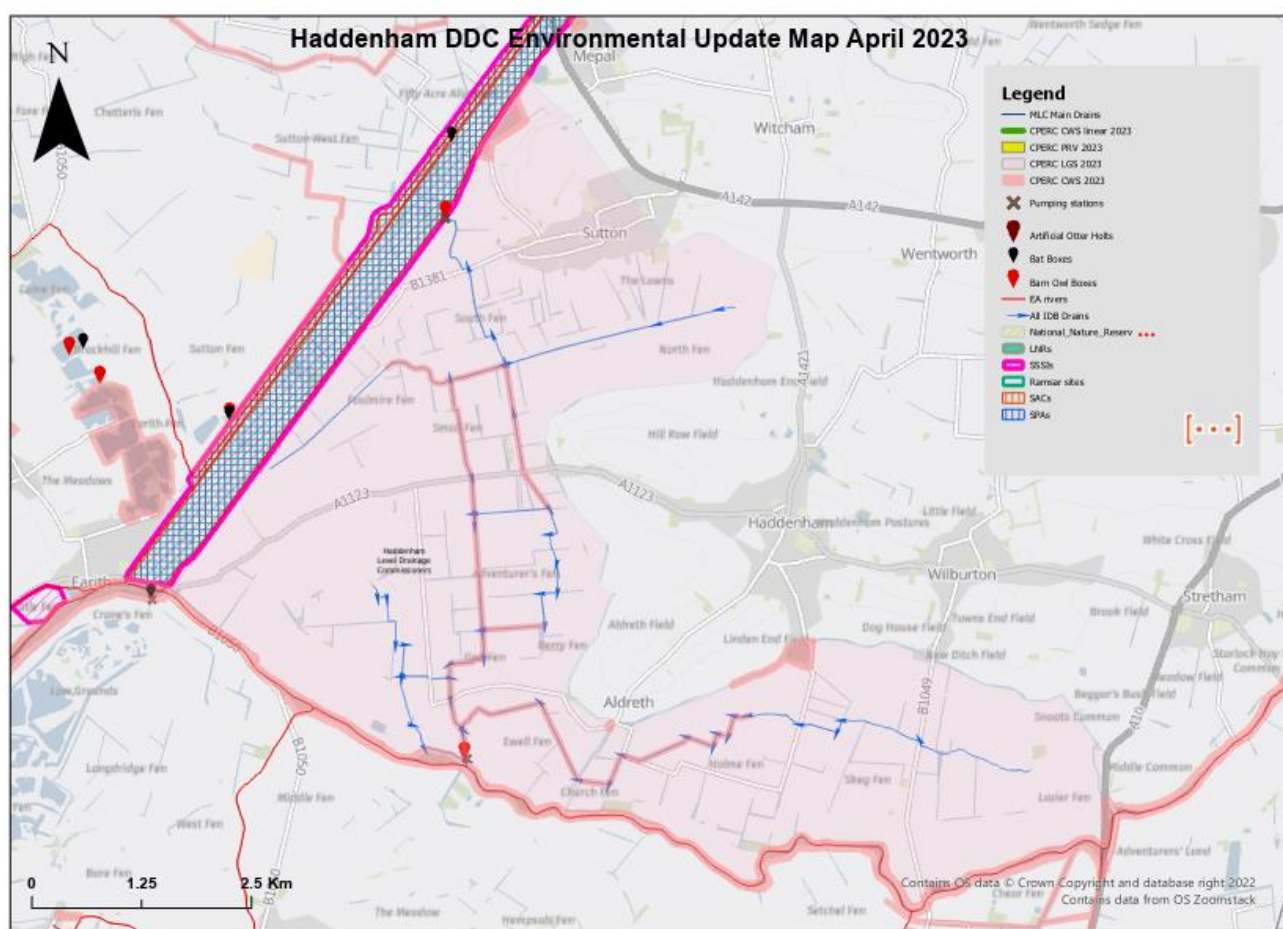
Last year ADA published a Carbon Accounting Guide for IDBs, which is available from their website. The process of calculating carbon emissions does not have to be as complicated as some may think. If you have reviewed the guide and would like some help to progress with calculating your carbon emissions, please get in touch.

10. Paludiculture

I attended a workshop in Cambridge to discuss the progress of knowledge acquisition and trials around growing commercial crops, associated with wetlands in lowland areas, where the water level has been raised to reduce or eliminate CO₂ emissions from degraded peat. This is known as paludiculture. This includes the potential for receiving an income for carbon sequestration from such approaches. As you would expect, there is a focus on the Cambridgeshire fens as a key area for development of this approach along with Somerset, Lancashire and the Lincs fens. If you would like to know more about how this topic is progressing, would like to get involved in some trials or would like to have a go at growing a paludiculture crop such as *Typha latifolia* (Bullrush or cattail) or Sphagnum moss yourself commercially, then please do get in touch.

11. Environmental Good Governance Guide for IDBs

I have a copy of the above guide, published by ADA last September, for each Chairman and District Officer which I can hand to you when I visit if you don't have a copy already. Until then, an on-line version is available from [here](#) and you can also request copies from ADA directly admin@ada.org.uk.





Site Safety Inspection Record

Haddenham Level DC SSI 230123

Complete

Name of organisation:	Haddenham Level DC
Date of site visit	23.01.2023 09:00 GMT
Address of inspected premises	Haddenham Pumping Station Sutton Gault Pumping Station
Name of Advisor	Simon Cross
Time of arrival at site:	23.01.2023 09:00 GMT
Audit Name	Haddenham Level DC SSI 230123

Audit

An opening meeting was held with

Michael Church and David Jordan

Have there been any accidents since our last visit?

No

Have there been any new starters since our last visit?

No

1

Introduction. During the opening meeting a number of topics were discussed including previous observations and progress made on previous recommendations. It was reported that there had been no health and safety issues or concerns since the previous visit in Oct 2021. It is understood that telemetry is available at both pumping stations to enable monitoring to be undertaken remotely without having to visit the sites, this is a benefit as it reduces any periods of lone working. It was also observed that hazard warning signage had been refreshed at both sites to indicate both electrical and automatic machinery hazards.

2

Overhead powerlines. It was pleasing to note that since the previous visit, the wheeled 360 excavator owned and used by the Board had been fitted with an automatic height limiter, controllable from a panel in the cab. This should provide added safety when operating near overhead powerlines.

3

Haddenham Pumping Station.

* Electrical safety. A fixed electrical inspection had been undertaken 19 Mar 21, with a re-inspection frequency of 5 yearly, as indicated by a label on the panel. It should be ensured that a copy of the electrical installation condition report is available either in hard copy or electronic, to confirm the inspection and identify any remedial actions. An assumption was made that the whole panel had been inspected, including that for the weedscreen cleaner, it is recommended that this is confirmed.

* Weedscreen cleaner. At the time of the visit the weedscreen cleaner was not working as a result of the cold weather freezing the weed pile and obstructing the weed grab. It was reported that the cleaner had been powered down. It should be ensured that any remedial works are undertaken with the power off to prevent any inadvertent movement.

4

Sutton Gault Pumping Station.

* Floor tiles. Following the previous visit, it was pleasing to note that the tiled floor surface had been painted and sealed to prevent any inadvertent disturbance to the tiles, which may contain asbestos. It is recommended that the condition is monitored and any persons undertaking work that could disturb the tiles is informed the possible hazard.

* Electrical safety. Similar to the comment above, a fixed electrical inspection had been undertaken Mar 2019 with a re-inspection frequency of 5 yearly, as indicated by a label on the panel. It should be ensured that a copy of the electrical installation condition report is available either in hard copy or electronic, to confirm the inspection and identify any remedial actions. An

assumption was made that the whole panel had been inspected, including that for the weedscreen cleaner, it is recommended that this is confirmed.

* Fall from height.

- Ladders. A set of metal extendable ladders were noted in the building, it was reported that these are used for occasional access to the carriage of the weedscreen cleaner for checking or topping up oil, once moved to over the weed trailer away from the water. It should be ensured that during use the ladders are suitably secured to prevent them falling or slipping.

- Raised platform. The access to the building is raised above the access to the weedscreen platform area, with a small retaining wall dividing the two levels. See photo 1 below. Although the risk of a fall is considered low, it is recommended that measures are taken to provide a suitable method of preventing a potential fall, such as fencing or barrier.



Photo 1

5

* Fire safety. Annual inspection of the fire extinguishers undertaken by Fenland Fire Services during Apr 2022, as indicated by label and coloured tag.

Photographic Risk Assessment

Signature of person informed

Signature of person informed 1

Signature of person informed



Michael Church
23.01.2023 12:13 GMT

Advisor's signature



Simon Cross
23.01.2023 15:40 GMT

Departure time

23.01.2023 12:45 GMT

Photographic Risk Assessments closed out during the visit.

No PRAs

Number of outstanding Photographic Risk Assessments

0
From 0 to 99

Appendix



Photo 1

Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

SUMMARY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

No Outstanding PRA's

HADDENHAM LEVEL DC

FIXED ASSETS - PUMPING STATIONS & BUNGALOW

	As At 31st March 2023
Haddenham Pumping Station	1,420,000.00
Sutton Gault Pumping Station	805,000.00
Bungalow	114,920.00
	2,339,920.00



middle level
commissioners

**Internal Audit Tender Proposal to
Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage
Commissioners under the administration of the
Middle Level Commissioners**

November 2022



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Executive Summary

Whittings LLP are a regional firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers, based in 11 locations throughout East Anglia.

The firm has broad range of experience in dealing with internal and external audits, serving a range of local organisations operating with the private and public sector.

On review of your invitation to tender we understand that the following requirements need to be met:

- Subject the financial statements to internal audit in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Upon conclusion of the internal audit prepare of a management letter to the board detailing any deficiencies in the internal systems, recommending improvements in addition to communicating whether in our opinion the organisation are ensuring value for money is being achieved.
- Completion of the Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

We have had the pleasure as serving as your internal auditors for several years and have demonstrated our ability to meet the statutory deadlines set. We will strive to deliver this whilst also providing the following benefits:

- Ensuring staff continuity from year to year
- Quoting and sticking to an agreed fee for the duration of the five year appointment
- Providing a comprehensive and personable service, building on the strong working relationships that we already have with your organisation
- Pro-active in our approach to the engagement, seeking out ways to streamline the internal audit process to ensure minimal disruption to your day-to-day operations

Our fees for the first year ended 31 March 2024, excluding VAT, will be £21,250 (exc. VAT) for the Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners administered by the Middle Level Commissioners, a detailed breakdown of our fee structure for the five year appointment can be found on page 10 of this document.

Our clients rightly demand a service that provides high quality, specialist expertise, timeliness and cost effectiveness combined with local knowledge, an appreciation of local Fenland circumstances and district needs. Whittings LLP, having been established in the local area since 1928, have a proven track record of being able to meet these demands and continue to review and develop its business practices to ensure that this remains the case for many years to come.



Your Requirements

You have asked us to quote for providing the following services for the Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners administered by the Middle Level Commissioners:

- Subject the financial statements to internal audit in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Upon conclusion of the internal audit prepare of a management letter to the board detailing any deficiencies in the internal systems, recommending improvements in addition to communicating whether in our opinion the organisation are ensuring value for money is being achieved.
- Completion of the Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

In order to obtain best value from our service, it is essential that our audit work is directed towards areas of greatest risk. You have indicated that you will maintain the accounting records, presenting our firm with accurate completed financial statements together with relevant and supporting schedules and reconciliations as required in a timely fashion.

The first accounts to be internally audited shall be for the year ended 31 March 2024. We will be able to carry out our work on these in accordance with your completion timetable which we provisionally understand to be 30 June 2024.



Our Audit Approach

Before the boards' year end, we would anticipate a pre-planning meeting between the audit team and members of the Middle Level Commissioners' finance team. At this meeting various formalities such as the timing of our procedures will be agreed, together with the identification of key audit areas. We would also at this stage confirm our understanding of the company's accounting systems and structure of internal controls.

This enables us to adopt an efficient and structured approach to risk assessment, analytical appraisal of results and the tailoring of audit testing to ensure that your accounts comply with all relevant legislation and regulations. The below internal audit strategy has been designed to be a high level statement of how our audit approach will be delivered and developed during the proposed engagement period.

Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and pro-active consulting services designed to add value and improve the Board's operations. It provides an independent and objective opinion to the Board on the control environment that comprises risk management, control and governance.

All internal audit work will be undertaken with due regard to the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations having cognition of the Practitioners Guide.

It covers aspects of all financial systems annually, rather than just on a strict 3 year cyclical basis which is a fairly common alternative for Internal Audit functions. The plan is for minimal 'systems review' days as the financial systems are undertaken on a common basis due to the administration of the boards by the Middle Level Commissioners, so using a risk based audit approach these only require to be audited on a sample basis across the IDBs on an annual basis. The normal level of both System confirmation and Transaction testing is set to ensure that some transactions of all individual boards within the Middle Level Commissioners' administered area are covered each year such as will be appropriate to the Board's level of activity and/or strength of assessed internal controls; nonetheless all Boards will be covered in all areas across a 3 year period.

Even so, where issues are identified, major internal control systems/personnel changes occur, or problems are encountered in conduct or results of the internal audit then the scheduled rota may be amended on year by year basis.

In addition, substantial work is carried each year on every Board on certain areas to ensure compliance and correctness of the Annual Return form.



The following list summarises the main work done and frequency, taking into account the objectives set out in the Annual Internal Audit Report within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return:

A -Return, Accounts & Completion (Annually)

- Ensure IDB/DDC cashbook kept up to date
- Ensure that monthly bank reconciliations are carried out
- Check that verification of bank reconciliations has been carried out
- Ensure that the annual return and accounting record opening and comparative figures agree to prior years records
- Ensure that figures stated on the annual return agree to underlying accounting records
- Checking casting and arithmetic of schedules
- Review variance report and investigate reasons excessive variances
- Ensure that the IDB/DDC publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit
- Ensure that the IDB/DDC has complied with the publication requirements as set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

B - Purchases (Cyclically)

- Ensure that the IDB/DDC has complied with its financial regulations and these are reviewed with sufficient regularity by the board
- Check proper purchase authority is recorded by the board in relation to IDB/DDC payments
- Carry out walkthrough testing in relation to IDB/DDC purchase system
- Agreement of purchase ledger balances to trial balance
- Ensuring payment of principal and interest in respect of loans is in accordance with agreed terms
- Confirm list of payments issued agrees to minutes
- Ensure that individual purchases are authorised by a relevant person



C - Minutes, Value for Money, Risk Management, Ethical Standard and Sustainability (Annually)

Minutes

- Review of minutes to check that risks relating to the boards are discussed
- Ensure that a formal risk assessment is carried out by the board
- Review the budget setting process
- Review minutes for unusual or extraordinary activities
- Check insurance review

Value for Money

- Ensure that value for money principles are being observed
- Obtain relevant tenders for capital purchases to ensure VFM principles are being considered.

Risk Management

- Ensure that the boards risk register is kept up to date and adequately covers potential areas of risk facing the board.
- Ensure that risk factors are taken into account in the board's decision making and implementation processes

Ethical Standards and Sustainability

- Ensure that decisions are made in an ethical manner by the board, bearing in mind environmental and other socioeconomic circumstances/responsibilities within the local community.
- Ensure that ethics is taken into account within the boards defined policies
- Ensure that long term sustainability is being taken into account in operational decisions.

D - Budget and Variance Analysis (Cyclically)

- Review variance analysis issued by the board
- Check that progress against budgets are regularly monitored
- Check that budgets are used for determining rates for the following year
- Review accruals for reasonableness and completeness

E - Sales (Cyclically)

- Perform walkthrough testing on the IDB/DDC rates system, including the treatment of special levies
- Review any rates write offs and ensure received board approval
- Perform walkthrough testing of other sales made by IDB/DDCs
- Review minutes to ensure all expected other income has been received and banked



F - Petty Cash (Cyclically)

- Not applicable at present, no petty cash function for any IDB/DDCs currently administered.

G - Wages (Cyclically)

- Performance of wages walkthrough
- Ensure that authorisation granted for overtime paid
- Review of P11Ds (where applicable)
- Ensure that non-pay rolled staff have been correctly taxed
- Confirm contractor expenses to invoices and that pay rates and payments are authorised within the minutes by the board

H - Assets (Cyclically)

- Vouch additions and review sales of fixed assets in the year
- Ensure assets are adequately covered by IDB/DDC insurance policies
- Ensure that asset movements in the year are reasonable and consistent with prior years
- Review fixed assets for indicators or impairment, both through physical review and by reference to the minutes

I - Bank (Annually)

- Ensure that regular reconciliations have occurred in the year and that these are reviewed by a senior individual within the finance department
- Recalculation of interim and year end bank reconciliations, ensuring clearance of any outstanding payments or lodgements following the reconciliation date
- Ensure that cashbook entries are based on transactions as made rather than in order of appearance on the bank statements
- Consideration of treasury management, including returns where significant bank balances are held by IDB/DDCs

J - Trial Balance & Nominal (Cyclically)

- Ensure Opera trial balance transferred to the accounts correctly
- Scrutinise creditors, accruals, debtors and prepayments
- Identify any transactions that are held within the audited figures that relate to prior or future periods
- Review and scrutiny of adjustment journals posting during the year and as part of the year end accounts process

All financial systems are to be documented and reviewed on an annual basis to provide the required level of assurance. Where appropriate probity audit work will be undertaken and the propriety, accuracy and recording of transactions sample tested.



In addition to the main work carried out on each board, the below areas are also considered to be valuable components in delivering a high quality and well-rounded internal audit service.

Consultancy and Advice

Internal Audit will be available to assist the Board with control or operational issues. During the year there might be emerging risks or issues that need an independent view or review. In addition, internal audit will be pro-active with suggestions and advice to management from information gained through experience, other organisations and networking groups.

Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption

Internal Audit will be pro-active in counter fraud work. Although it is not a function of Internal Audit to detect fraud, bribery and corruption (this is a responsibility of management and good system control) work will be undertaken to help ensure there are adequate systems and procedures to highlight potential instances.

Value for Money (VFM), Risk Management, Ethical Standards and Sustainability

As a part of the internal audit review, systems and controls established by management to secure VFM, risk management, ethical standards and sustainability will be examined and evaluated. Matters of an overall nature are also addressed within the annual work programme. Auditors may initiate, conduct or participate additionally in special reviews in these areas where need arises.

The above covers Boards administered throughout the year by MLC but where a new Board is added to the group administration facility, a special additional / fuller review will occur in the first year of involvement.

At the completion of each audit a report will be produced and released to the Middle Level Commissioners for distribution to the Boards. This report details the terms of reference and scope of the audit, findings, recommendations and a management action plan. An executive summary that includes an audit opinion on controls will also be included.

An annual internal audit report shall be produced to the Board to provide an overall opinion on controls and detail the audit work for the year.



About Whitings LLP

Whitings LLP are a regional firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers. At the time of writing, the firm has 12 partners and 7 associates who are supported by approximately 165 staff. The firm operates from 11 offices within the East Anglia counties of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. We are registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales to undertake audit work.

Due to the size of the firm we are able to offer our clients with a comprehensive range of services whilst also providing specific insights into industry sectors which represent the key sectors that our client base operates within, these are detailed below:

Service Offerings

- Audit and Assurance
- Business Support
- Business Tax
- General Practice
- IT Services
- Payroll
- Private Client Tax
- Probate and Estate Administration
- Start Ups
- Tax Enquiry and Investigation Service
- Wealth Management

Sector Specialisms

- Agriculture and related industries
- Construction
- Contractors
- Creative Industries
- Manufacturing
- Not for Profit
- Property
- Retail
- Road Haulage
- Technology

More comprehensive information on the firm, its services, specialisms and culture can be found on the website www.whitingsllp.co.uk



Our Fees

We believe the fee scales we propose for this assignment are competitive and reflective of the work required to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations. We do not compromise on quality by issuing tenders for audit assignments that are clearly uneconomic.

Our fees for the year ended 31 March 2024 will be £21,250 (exc. VAT) for the Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners administered by the Middle Level Commissioners.

With regard to fees for future years, we would expect, on the assumption that the level of activities and quality of accounting records do not alter significantly that our fees would rise by no more than in line with our wage rate inflation, assumed to be 5% per annum. If, through efficiencies that we can introduce, we can provide the same services at a lower guide fee, then we shall pass on this discount to you.

On this premise, we quote the following four years' fees, excluding VAT, as: -

2024-25	£22,300
2025-26	£23,400
2026-27	£24,600
2027-28	£25,800

For normal ongoing continuous supply services, the initial payment request issued will not be a tax invoice for VAT purposes but will include a notional amount for VAT. On receipt of your payment a tax invoice will be issued to enable you to recover input tax where applicable. However, please note that a VAT invoice will be issued in certain rare circumstances for exceptional "non-continuous" work only.

You will be billed at appropriate intervals during the course of the year. We would expect most of the fees to be billed in a single fee note raised soon after the completion of the Internal Audit Report and issue of our management letter to the board. We would also propose to raise fee notes for any further specially agreed work on a quarterly basis. Payment of fees will be due within 30 days of the date of the payment request.



Key Personnel and Career Summaries

Our philosophy is to provide each client with a dedicated team responsible for their affairs, thus ensuring that we can provide both expertise and continuity of service.

All our audit staff are either qualified or studying for professional qualifications in either AAT, ACCA, or ACA. Our partners, associates and staff undertake a vigorous ongoing programme of continuing professional development, to maintain high technical standards.

Over many years we have experienced extremely high levels of staff retention, enabling us to staff audits with the same individual's year on year. This allows us to accumulate high levels of background understanding of your organisation and these mature relationships with clients makes two way communication both easy and friendly.

The proposed core audit team will be:

Your Audit Principle

It is intended that the audit principle responsible for this assignment will be Ben Beech, an Associate of the firm who is based at our March office. Ben began working for Whittings in 2011, qualifying as a Chartered Accountant in 2016. He is in charge of the firm's audit and assurance offering within the Fenland and surrounding areas, dealing with many of the firm's larger clients operating in a range of sectors. He is also involved in the monitoring and development of the firm's professional standards and compliance procedures.

Your Relationship Manager

Your designated relationship manager for this assignment will be Aston Hinson who is also based at our March office. Aston has worked with Ben for many years supporting him in the provision of high quality audits to some of the firm's largest clients. Aston is also part of the firm's Not for Profit team, assisting these organisations with their accounting and tax requirements.

Your Audit Team

The audit team will include a range of staff appropriate to the varying tasks involved ranging from qualified accountants to junior accounts technicians.



Appendix A - Internal Audit Plan - Year Ending 31 March 2024

The below is an indication of the number of working days required to carry out the internal audit of the 29 Internal Drainage Boards and District Drainage Commissioners under the administration of the Middle Level Commissioners. As a result, and taking into account the engagement timeframe, we are confident that we will be able to meet the deadlines set.

Audit Areas	Planned Days
Planning - discussions, clarification, summarising, AGAR requirement review	4
Systems - review and confirmation work	20
Transactions - testing and verification	20
Completion - collation of issues and recommendations, enquiries of management, reporting via the AGAR and management letter	6
TOTAL	50



Appendix B - List of Administered Boards

Benwick Internal Drainage Board
Bluntisham Internal Drainage Board
Churchfield and Plawfield Internal Drainage Board
Conington and Holme Internal Drainage Board
Curf and Wimblington Combined Internal Drainage Board
Euximoor Internal Drainage Board
Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners
Hundred Foot Washes Internal Drainage Board
Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board
Manea and Welney District Drainage Commissioners
March West and White Fen Internal Drainage Board
March East Internal Drainage Board
March Fifth District Drainage Commissioners
March Sixth District Drainage Commissioners
March Third District Drainage Commissioners
Needham and Laddus Internal Drainage Board
Nightlayers Internal Drainage Board
Nordelph Internal Drainage Board
Over and Willingham IDB
Ramsey First (Hollow) Internal Drainage Board
Ramsey Fourth (Middlemoor) Internal Drainage Board
Ramsey Upwood and Great Raveley Internal Drainage Board
Ransonmoor District Drainage Commissioners
Sawtry Internal Drainage Board
Sutton and Mepal Internal Drainage Board
Swavesey Internal Drainage Board
Upwell Internal Drainage Board
Waldersey Internal Drainage Board
Warboys, Somersham and Pidley Internal Drainage Board



Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year and if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DATE

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLIC ADDRESS WWW.MIDDLELEVEL.GOV.UK

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

Payments 2022/2023 (1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023)

	<u>NET</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>GROSS</u>
East Cambridgeshire District Council - Council tax for 2022/2023	1,581.25	0.00	1,581.25
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Planning & development applications)	293.25	58.65	351.90
Middle Level Commissioners - Court Fees	0.50	0.00	0.50
British Telecom - Telephone charges	135.18	27.03	162.21
E-On Energy - Meter operator agreement	195.00	39.00	234.00
Cottenham Sawmills Limited - Larch Miscellaneous	140.83	28.17	169.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	137.71	27.54	165.25
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	502.52	100.50	603.02
Water Resources East - Contribution to operating costs for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023	250.00	50.00	300.00
Association of Drainage Authorities - Subscription 2022	649.00	129.80	778.80
Rampton Motors - MOT and service of AK16 WNC	348.08	58.66	406.74
Environment Agency - Precept	18,336.23	0.00	18,336.23
NL Hydraulics - Supply of 20 litres of hydraulic oil	45.00	9.00	54.00
Haddenham Baptist Church - Room hire	40.00	0.00	40.00
Fenland Fire Appliance LLP - Servicing of fire extinguishers	39.35	7.87	47.22
Ken Skeels - Repairs to roof on workshop at Haddenham pumping station	260.00	52.00	312.00
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - 2 pairs of rigger gloves	7.00	1.40	8.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	150.26	30.05	180.31
British Telecom - Telephone charges	159.83	31.96	191.79
Public Works Loan Board - Loan Repayment	21,481.93	0.00	21,481.93
Mitchell & Mayle Ltd - Empty septic tank	140.00	0.00	140.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Road fund licences, AK16 WNC & AO19 OJO	455.00	0.00	455.00
A G Wright & Son - Diesel	584.60	116.92	701.52
British Telecom - Telephone charges	135.63	27.12	162.75
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - Remove old shaft bracket from rake and manufacture one	65.00	13.00	78.00
David Harrison Handling Solutions Limited - Jubilee clips, grease gun jaw and 2 pairs of rigger gloves	11.39	2.28	13.67
Haddenham Baptist Church - Room hire	40.00	0.00	40.00
645 Services Ltd - 2,263 litres gas oil	2,240.37	448.07	2,688.44
TDL Equipment - Service Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	958.93	191.79	1,150.72
Middle Level Commissioners - Renewal of insurances	3,384.52	12.73	3,397.25
L A Burton - Flail mowing	5,100.00	1,020.00	6,120.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	149.07	29.81	178.88
PKF Littlejohn LLP - Audit Fee (2021-2022 accounts)	600.00	120.00	720.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Internal audit fees (Whiting & Partners, 2021-2022 accounts)	775.00	155.00	930.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	502.52	100.50	603.02
Middle Level Commissioners - Administration charge, postages and telephone charges	5,113.40	1,022.68	6,136.08
Middle Level Commissioners - Contribution (Environmental Officer)	467.50	0.00	467.50
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning & development applications)	402.75	80.55	483.30
Michael Church - District Officer's Fees for 6 months to 30th September 2022	1,250.00	0.00	1,250.00
Bush Tyres - Fitting of 2 new tyre and wheel balancing to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	2,041.50	408.30	2,449.80
British Telecom - Telephone charges	135.63	27.12	162.75
Environment Agency - Precept	18,336.24	0.00	18,336.24
TDL Equipment - Repairs to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	764.22	152.84	917.06
TDL Equipment - Parts for repairs to Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator	381.72	76.34	458.06
Haddenham Baptist Church - Room hire	40.00	0.00	40.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of Lithium Complex, 2,355 litres of gas oil and 25 litres of WB70 oil	2,524.97	505.00	3,029.97
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	502.52	100.50	603.02
M D Contracting and Farming Ltd - Flail mowing	1,708.75	341.75	2,050.50
A G Wright & Son - Diesel	1,054.49	210.90	1,265.39
Public Works Loan Board - Loan Repayment	21,481.93	0.00	21,481.93
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	1,141.94	228.39	1,370.33
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, planning & development applications)	2,438.24	487.67	2,925.90
Association of Drainage Authorities (River Great Ouse branch) - Subscription 2022-2023	30.00	6.00	36.00
British Telecom - Telephone charges	147.70	29.54	177.24
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	304.79	60.96	365.75
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of Adblue and work carried out on Atlas 140W Wheeled Excavator (Accounts from K & W Mechanical and Watsons)	5,085.80	1,017.16	6,102.96
G & J Pecks Ltd - Rodent traps	13.43	2.69	16.12
British Telecom - Telephone charges	115.63	27.12	142.75
Wave - Water supply charges 9th February 2021 to 8th May 2021	17.16	0.00	17.16
Middle Level Commissioners - Fees (Production of Board report, attendance at board meeting. planning & development applications)	1,672.00	334.40	2,006.40
Middle Level Commissioners - Supply of floor paint (Account from Witham Oils)	105.86	21.17	127.03
Middle Level Commissioners - Pumping station maintenance	502.52	100.50	603.02
J C Beasley Plumbing - Service of boiler at bungalow	85.00	17.00	102.00
Information Commissioners - Renewal of Data Protection registration	40.00	0.00	40.00
Middle Level Commissioners - Preparation of highland water claims	70.49	14.10	84.59
District labour	36,965.10	0.00	36,965.10
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply - (Haddenham pumping station) <i>inclusive of VAT</i>	28,556.71	0.00	28,556.71
Anglia Farmers - Electricity supply - (Sutton Gault pumping station) <i>inclusive of VAT</i>	16,763.81	0.00	16,763.81
Anglia Farmers - Electricity data collection charges - (Sutton Gault pumping station) <i>inclusive of VAT</i>	146.84	0.00	146.84
Anglia Farmers - Electricity data collection charges - (Haddenham pumping station) <i>inclusive of VAT</i>	146.84	0.00	146.84
Anglia Farmers - Electricity metering charges - (Haddenham pumping station) <i>inclusive of VAT</i>	210.47	0.00	210.47
Input VAT on Electricity	-6,903.91	6,903.91	0.00
	203,756.99	15,065.44	218,822.42

(NB - Amounts shown include Value Added Tax)

<u>HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS</u>										
<u>ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022</u>										
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>										
2022					2021					
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year				Apr-01	Balance brought forward				190,565.27
	Precept			35,953.40						
	Rates, insurances, telephones	9,883.69			2022	Rate income & Special levy				187,462.53
	Repairs & Renewals	10,135.29			Mar-31	Interest on Deposit Account				183.52
	Fuel	34,127.83				Highland water contributions				9,599.33
	Contractors Charges	2,318.00				Consents				100.00
	District Labour	36,720.41				Water recharge				3,219.78
	Drainworks	13,139.72				Private works				11,658.00
	Administration charge, printing, stationery					Development Charges				66.00
	advertising, Association of Drainage					Telephone charges				28.00
	Authorities subscription	13,147.08		119,472.02						
	Funds raised 2020/2021			7,500.00						
	Public Works Loan Repayment -									
	Principal	31,942.68								
	Interest	11,021.18		42,963.86						
	Balance carried forward			196,993.15						
				402,882.43						402,882.43

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

BALANCE SHEET

<u>Capital Section</u>											
	<u>Liabilities</u>						<u>Assets</u>				
	Capital Provisions				2,131,013.07		Pumping Stations				2,225,000.00
	Public Works Loan Board -						Bungalow				114,920.00
	Loan outstanding				270,013.92		Heavy Plant				58,187.50
							Motor Vehicles				2,845.42
							Computer Equipment				74.07
					2,401,026.99						2,401,026.99
<u>Revenue Section</u>											
	General Fund				196,993.15		Ratepayers' Account - Arrears				0.00
							Sundry Debtors				6,910.86
	Asset Replacement Fund				53,601.93		Value added Tax - Refunds due				4,384.34
							Stock				2,244.00
	Development Contribution Fund				3,609.75		Balance in hand -				
							Barclays Account		237,239.64		
	Sundry Creditors				15,885.35		Lloyds Accounts		19,311.34		256,550.98
					2,671,117.17						2,671,117.17

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023
GENERAL FUND

2023			2022		
Mar-31	Expenditure during the year		Apr-01	Balance brought forward	195,729.29
	Precept	36,672.47			
	Rates, insurances, telephones	5,649.31	2023	Rate income & Special levy	192,882.33
	Repairs & Renewals	9,320.23	Mar-31		
	Fuel	41,804.85		Highland water contributions	10,385.64
	Contractors Charges	2,711.05		Consents	50.00
	District Labour	37,016.26		Water recharge	567.09
	Drainworks	23,901.64		Private works	9,116.00
	Administration charge, printing, stationery			Development Charges	180.00
	advertising, Association of Drainage			Telephone charges	27.70
	Authorities subscription	13,566.62		Metered discharge	14,173.43
		133,969.96		Grant-in-aid	4,625.83
	Improvement works:				
	Funds raised 2022/2023	7,500.00			
	Telemetry installation	9,251.66			
	Height restrictor - Atlas excavator	4,775.00			
	Write bsck of prior year provisions	935.00			
				Asset replacement fund:	
	Public Works Loan Repayment -			Height restrictor - Atlas excavatr	4,775.00
	Principal	33,020.54		Wet well bolts - Sutton Gault p/s	3,857.70
	Interest	9,943.32		telemetry installation	4,625.83
		42,963.86			13,258.53
	Balance carried forward	204,927.89			
		440,995.84			440,995.84

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023
BALANCE SHEET

<u>Liabilities</u>		<u>Capital Section</u>		<u>Assets</u>	
Capital Provisions	2,153,034.46			Pumping Stations	2,225,000.00
Public Works Loan Board -				Bungalow	114,920.00
Loan outstanding	236,993.38			Heavy Plant	47,918.23
				Motor Vehicles	2,134.06
				Computer Equipment	55.55
	<u>2,390,027.84</u>				<u>2,390,027.84</u>
 <u>Revenue Section</u>					
General Fund	204,927.89			Ratepayers' Account - Arrears	0.00
				Sundry Debtors	1,018.09
Asset Replacement Fund	47,843.40			Value added Tax - Refunds due	8,476.35
				Stock	1,886.40
Development Contribution Fund	3,429.75			Balance in hand -	
				Barclays Account	260,816.81
Sundry Creditors	39,038.95			Lloyds Accounts	23,042.34
	<u>2,685,267.83</u>				<u>283,859.15</u>
					<u>2,685,267.83</u>

Haddenham Level DC**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2023****Per Annual
Return**

Line 1	Balances brought forward General Fund Asset replacement fund Development charges	195,729.29 53,601.93 3,609.75 252,940.97	252,941
Line 2	Rates and Special Levies Agricultural rates Special Levies Penalty Costs Write-off	123,715.46 68,735.00 356.87 75.00 0.00 192,882.33	192,882
Line 3	Total other receipts Interest General fund Asset replacement fund Development charges Discharge contribution Consent Telephone Charges Recoverable Highland Water Hire of Excavator Re-charge of expenses Grant in Aid	 0.00 0.00 0.00 14,173.43 50.00 27.70 10,385.64 9,116.00 567.09 4,625.83 38,945.69	38,946
Line 4	Staff costs Wages/salaries National insurance contributions Pension costs Travelling expenses	 27,963.75 3,040.30 6,012.21 0.00 37,016.26	37,016
Line 5	Loan repayments PWLB - Principal PWLB - Interest	33,020.54 9,943.32 42,963.86	42,964

Haddenham Level DC**Reconciliation between statement of accounts and Annual Return****Financial year ended 31st March 2023****Per Annual
Return****Line 6****All other payments**

Precept	36,672.47
Rates, insurances, telephones	5,649.31
Repairs and renewals	9,320.23
Fuel	41,804.85
Drainworks	23,901.64
Administration	13,566.62
Contractors charges	2,711.05
Write back of provisions	935.00
Improvements	9,251.66
Purchase of asset	4,775.00

148,587.83**148,588****Line 7****Balances carried forward**

General Fund	204,927.89
Asset replacement fund	47,843.40
Development charges	3,429.75

256,201.04**256,201**

Reconciliation

Line 1 + Line 2 + Line 3 - Line 4 - Line 5 - Line 6

256,201.04

Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

Treasurers Account 2022/2023

1st April 2022		31st March 2023	
Balance brought forward	256,550.98	Payments made during the year	218,822.42
31st March 2023			
Receipts during the year			
Clerk's collection account	246,130.59		
Interest on deposit accounts	0.00	Balance carried forward	283,859.15
	<u>502,681.57</u>		<u>502,681.57</u>

Summary of Bank Reconciliations as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank Plc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	260,816.81
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u>260,816.81</u>

Lloyds Bank Plc

Current Account

Balance per Statement as at 31st March 2023	23,042.34
Less unpresented cheques	0.00
Add outstanding lodgements	0.00
Balance per Trial Balance	<u>23,042.34</u>

Cash balances as at 31st March 2023

Barclays Bank PLC

Current Account	260,816.81
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Lloyds Bank Plc

Current Account	23,042.34
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<u>Total reconciled cash balances per accounts</u>	<u>283,859.15</u>
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Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	237,463	252,941	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	187,463	192,882	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	27,668	38,946	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	36,720	37,016	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	42,964	42,964	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	119,969	148,588	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	252,941	256,201	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).

8. Total value of cash and short term investments	256,551	283,859	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	2,489,030	2,493,805	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	270,014	236,993	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Date 15th April 2023

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

HADDENHAM LEVEL DRAINAGE COMMISSIONERS

BUDGET 2023/2024

	<u>Approved Budget</u> <u>2022/2023</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2022/2023</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>2023/2024</u>	
1 <u>CHANNEL MAINTENANCE</u>	14,500	23,902 ^A	16,500	A - Includes for: Flail mowing 5,674 Planning & development consultancy fees 4,972 10,646
2 <u>LABOUR</u>	41,800 ^B	39,727 ^B	43,000 ^B	B - Provision for District labour and District Officer
3 <u>REPAIRS AND RENEWALS</u>	18,000 ^C	9,320	12,000	C - Includes provision to replace wet well bolts - Sutton Gault pumping station 6,000
4 <u>FUEL</u>	43,000	41,805	72,000 ^D	D - New supply contract with increased unit rates - estimated medium term provision increased for 2023/24
5 <u>RATES, INSURANCES & TELEPHONES</u>	11,300 ^E	5,649 ^E	11,850 ^E	E - Includes gross water charges (re-charged to 3rd party)
6 <u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	13,900 ^F	13,567 ^F	14,250 ^F	F - Includes for new Health & safety arrangements
7 <u>ASSET REPLACEMENT</u>	7,500 ^G	16,752 ^G	7,500 ^G	G - Funds raised for asset replacement fund <u>Asset replacement fund:</u> Balance at 01.04.22 53,602 Funds raised 2022/2023 7,500 Expenditure 2022/2023 -13,259 Estimated balance at 31.03.2023 47,843
8 <u>E. A. PRECEPT</u>	36,672	36,672	37,773	
9 <u>LOAN REPAYMENT</u>	42,964	42,964	42,964	
10 <u>REPLACEMENT EXCAVATOR</u>	0	0	0	
	229,636	230,358	257,837	
<u>INCOME</u>	29,590 ^H	47,609 ^I	35,000 ^H	H - Includes for average highland water, re-charge of water usage, metered discharge & and private works
Net Expenditure	200,047	182,749	222,837	I - Includes calculated highland water claims, re-charge of water usage, metered discharge & private works Includes asset funding for: Sutton Gault p/s wet well bolts 3,858 Grant-in-aid - telemetry 4,626 asset fund - telemetry 4,626 Asset fund - height restrictor for excavator 4,775
Rate Requirement	39.50 p		44.00 p	
Rate set				
AV 506,448				
Gen. Fund balance open	195,729	195,729	204,928	
Rates raised 38.00p	192,450	192,882	222,837	
net expenditure	200,047	182,749	222,837	
adj. balances	-6,425	-935	0	
closing balance	181,707	204,928	204,928	

Haddenham Level Drainage Commissioners

Rate and levy requirements 2022/2023

Under Section 37 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, the appropriate proportions in which the net expenditure of the Board must be borne for 2023//2024 are:-

- a) Proportion to be borne by the Agricultural Sector – 64.28%
- b) Proportion to be borne by Special levy issued to East Cambridgeshire District Council - 35.72%

The product of a rate of 1p in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings is £3,256

In 2023/2024 a rate of 1p together with corresponding Special levy would raise £5,064.

Revenue cash balance in hand at 31st March 2023 is - £204,928

Asset replacement fund at 31st March 2023 is £47,843.

The estimated net expenditure of £222,837 in 2023/2024 is equivalent to:-

- a) a rate in the £ on Agricultural land and buildings of 44.00p
- b) a Special levy on the East Cambridgeshire District Council of £79,588

In 2022/2023 a rate of 38.00p in the £ was set together with a Special levy of £68,735 on East Cambridgeshire District Council.

P BURROWS, FCIWEM C.WEM CEnv

Clerk to the Commissioners

April 2023