

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	BENWICK IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: CHIEF ENGINEER'S SUMMARY & CAPITAL PROGRAMME
Date:	Wednesday 17th June 2026	Officer Responsible:	Nicola Oldfield

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

- A. Authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board with advice from MLC.**
- B. Liaise with the Consulting Engineer to agree project scope and timescales for a capital refurbishment project.**
- C. Consider the recommendations for the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and grant funding and to confirm acceptance of recommendations to the Consulting Engineer.**
- D. Arrange weed pile clearance for the upcoming pumping season**

1. Enforcement & Compliance Overview

Our Enforcement and Compliance Officers Dave Coles and Tony Payne joined us on the 23 June 2025 as a job share. They are currently investigating cases across 22 boards plus Middle Level Commissioners.

We have a total of 102 investigations of which 47 are currently active including:

- 29 surface water or surface water and foul discharges,
- 12 byelaw cases.

The Officers will also be taking over some aspects of Navigation Enforcement.

Since joining they have successfully recovered £445,000 of outstanding discharge contributions across IDBs and the MLC.

It is recommended that the Board authorise the Chairman and Vice Chairman to take decisions on enforcement action on behalf of the Board, having taken advice from MLC Officers. They will engage other Board Members as they see appropriate and determine whether a Special Meeting of the Board is needed on a risk and complexity basis.

2. Summary of Key Planning Issues

We will, when possible, seek the Board's input, rather than wait for Board meetings. This will be done via correspondence with the Chair, Vice Chair, District Officer and any appropriate sub-committees.

Refer to Appendix 2 for more details.

3. Technical Services Overview

The team was joined by Project Manager, Ellie Edwards at the end of April. She will be assisting the Engineer in planning and delivering capital projects, significantly increasing our capacity to deliver the developing works programme.

4. IDB Recovery Fund T2B

Following the initial, unsuccessful bid for funding, the Environment Agency subsequently awarded funding for the 'Asset Resilience Pumps & Channels' package in June 2025. These works were completed by March 2026.

Works delivered for this district include the following:

- Weedscreen and pump overhauls
- Control panel replacements
- Culvert improvements

5. New FCERM grant funding guidance

The Government published new FCERM funding guidance on 3 March 2026.

To be eligible for funding a project must deliver strategic objectives and government policy. Governments' objectives most relevant to IDBs include:

- value for money (Net Present Value)
- reducing flood risk
- focusing on deprived areas
- prioritising projects with contributions from others (this would include funding provide by IDBs themselves)
- a percentage investment in Natural Flood Management (NFM) across the programme

Project types that are eligible for grant funding include:

- refurbishing or replacing existing assets
- building new assets
- NFM projects
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Asset Refurbishment Projects

Asset refurbishment is a significant renewal to one or more components in an existing asset that is not covered by routine maintenance.

It includes work to mitigate for the loss of asset performance. This covers issues that asset maintenance cannot manage and that would be significant and permanent if not fixed.

It does not include asset replacement projects where an existing asset at the end of its life is replaced with another like for like asset which sustains the standard of service.

Under the new FCERM funding policy existing FCERM assets are eligible for 100% of funding for refurbishment.

New or Improved Asset Projects

Projects that are not refurbishment are eligible for 100% for the first £3 million, and 90% for costs above £3 million.

These include:

- projects replacing existing assets with a like for like replacement
- projects building new or improved assets
- projects with combined asset interventions

Projects cannot be artificially split into smaller components to fall below the £3 million fully funded threshold.

Applying for funding

It should be noted that there will be more projects that are eligible for investment than funding available. Projects will need to be prioritised to meet government targets and achieve best value for money.

Therefore, it is recommended that should the Board wish to apply for FCERM grant funding, they consider part-funding projects. This is similar to the funding rules that were in place prior to 2011 when IDBs only received 45% of project costs.

Should the Board wish to submit a new project to be considered for funding, the first step is to collate relevant cost and benefit data to submit to the Environment Agency from 1 July 2026. This requires collating costs and benefits and other relevant data required by the EA to determine a project's eligibility and prioritise the programme. The Consulting Engineer can provide resources to do this and this will be recharged to the Board.

If a project already appears on the FCERM investment programme with an allocation for future years, an application for grant funding approval/business case will need to be submitted. The Consulting Engineer can provide resources to do this.

Timescales

The Consulting Engineer currently has limited resources to develop and deliver projects, although recruitment is currently in progress to address this. The likely timescales for project delivery are:

- submit for funding consideration July 2026 onwards
- prepare and submit applications for subsequent funding approval onwards
- delivery 2027/28 onwards

The Consulting Engineer will prioritise workload based primarily on Key Health Indicators.

The Board has a project "Benwick System Study" identified on the FCERM investment programme with an indicative allocation of £30k for 26/27. The Engineer will review and scope this project which is most likely to lead to an asset refurbishment project that can be funded by GiA when further allocations are secured.

The Board is asked to liaise with the Consulting Engineer to agree project scope and timescales for a capital refurbishment project.

6. Capital Programme

The Board's Capital Programme is shown as Appendix 1.

It is recommended that the Board considers the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. Pumping station replacement costs are included on the capital programme. Further investment will be needed in the interim and will be developed further in line with the Key Health Indicators.

The Board is asked to consider the development of a capital investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement and instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

Having a well-developed asset investment plan may improve the priority of future funding allocations.

Author Name: Nicola Oldfield

Role: Chief Engineer

- Appendix 1: Capital Programme**
- Appendix 2: List of applications since last meeting**
- Appendix 3: Operational Services Report**
- Appendix 4: M&E Report**

Appendix 1

Benwick Internal Drainage Board		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
Capital Improvement Programme (2026/2027)		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
Beezlings 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	1,285.0	1285.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.9
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	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 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
Benwick Mere 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	12,750.0	12750.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	65.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	67.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0
	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
Bettys Nose 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	2,550.0	2550.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	65.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	65.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	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 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
Broadalls 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	2,125.0	2125.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	2.4	0.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	64.4
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	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 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
Copalder 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	6,250.0	6250.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0
	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
Ramsey Mere 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	1,625.0	1625.0
	Pumping station pumping and control equipment replacement	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
	Pumping station automatic weedscreen cleaning equipmet	0	0	0.0	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0
	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	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0
Drainage Channels	Refurbishment of inlets/outfalls	4	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0
		0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
		6.4	2.0	0	97	0	210	125	13	0	0	0	26,585	27,038

There have been 15 planning applications responded to since the last meeting.

There have been no applications for Byelaw Consent (to undertake works in and around watercourses) or (to discharge to a watercourse) or infiltration device applications processed since the last meeting.

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	BENWICK IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: OPERATIONAL SERVICES
Date:	Wednesday 17th June 2026	Officer Responsible:	Morgan Lakey

1. Weed Control & Drain Maintenance

The maintenance works carried out last year generally accorded with the recommendations approved by the Board at the last Annual Meeting.

Advanced notices of this year's machine cleansing programme (approved by the Board at its 2007 meeting) have been sent out.



Point 52, Culvert Replacement. New 1800mm pipe in the bottom of picture & old silted up 900mm pipe in the top.

The Board was successful in securing funding for improvement works from the DEFRA IDB assets resilience grant and the mobile pumps package. This allowed for fully funded culvert replacement at point 52 on the Ramsey Road to the West of Benwick village. Historically Bettys Nose pumping station has struggled to evacuate the water from the village of Benwick, with long delays at the pumping station, before the water levels equalled the same as the ones in the village. Once the works commenced, it was evident the 900mm culvert was not only too small, but it was almost full with silt as water depths at the culvert would have required the drain to be dammed off and de-watered, to allow the old culvert to be cleaned out. The replacement 1800mm twin-wall plastic pipe, will provide a much greater water conveyance and suffer less from silting up in the future due to the greater diameter and part of the pipe being above water level.



Works carried out under the mobile pumps package included improvements to 4 of the Board's Pumping Stations. Hard standings were installed at each station to allow the deployment of mobile pumping equipment in the event of a pump breakdown.

A recent inspection of the Board's system has been undertaken. The inspection revealed that most watercourses are generally in a satisfactory condition and being maintained to a good standard. The self-sown willow saplings, in the Lilyholt drain area, were treated with herbicide and forestry flailed during the machine cleansing works. They will be monitored for any future regrowth and managed as required.

Sporadic stands of reed and emergent aquatic vegetation are also evident throughout the district. It is recommended that Roundup herbicide is applied to drains within this year's phased machine cleansing works, and to any other Board's drains where it is deemed necessary to control the emergent aquatic weed growth and any self-sown saplings. A sum for the cost of Roundup treatment has been included within the estimated costs.

Flail mowing in advance of the machine cleansing works will be required to afford the machine operator maximum visibility. The Board's previous flail mowing contractor, Mr Ashman will no longer be available due to retiring at the end of last year. For the previous 3 seasons, Mr Ashman has been assisted by M&C Agricultural services and they are available to undertake the flail mowing requirements this year, if the Board wish to proceed with them. A sum for the completion of flail mowing of Board's drains for the ensuing year has been included in the estimated costs.

A provisional sum has also been included within the Board's estimated costs for any emergency cleansing, culvert clearance or bank reinstatement works that may be required later in the year.

2. Estimated Costs of Anticipated Drain Maintenance and Weed Control Programme

2.1 The estimated costs of this year's recommended maintenance works are as follows, see following plan for locations:

1 Machine Cleansing (Phased Programmed Works)

Broadalls Area

Reach 53-54-55-67-68	1100	m	@	1.40	1540.00
Reach 61-62-63-64-65-66-67	1250	m	@	1.40	1750.00

Betty's Nose Area

Reach 46-47	450	m	@	1.40	630.00
Reach 50-52-53-56	1200	m	@	1.40	1680.00

Ramsey Mere Area

Reach 47-84	450	m	@	1.30	630.00
-------------	-----	---	---	------	--------

2 Allow sum for Roundup application to control reed and emergent aquatic weed growth

Item	Sum	1500.00
------	-----	---------

3 Flail mowing in advance of machine cleansing works

Item	Sum	7000.00
------	-----	---------

4 Provisional Sum

Allow sum for emergency Machine cleansing, culvert

	Clearance or bank Reinstatement works	Item	Sum	2000.00
5	Fees for the inspection, Preparation & submission of report to the Board. Arrangement & supervision of herbicide applications & maintenance works	Item	Sum	2500.00
				£19,230.00

Orders for the application of herbicides are accepted on condition that they are weather dependant and the Middle Level Commissioners will not be held responsible for the efficacy of any treatments.

Author Name: Morgan Lakey
Role: Operations Manager

RATEABLE AREA 2215ha

REPRODUCED FROM OR BASED UPON THE
ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION
OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE
CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED



BROADALLS
PUMPING STATION

COPALDER
PUMPING STATION

RAMSEY MERE
PUMPING STATION

BEEZLINGS
PUMPING STATION

BETTYS NOSE
PUMPING STATION

IBBERSONS
PUMPING STATION

KEY

-  RATEABLE BOUNDARY
-  BOARDS DRAINS/
DIRECTION OF FLOW
-  HIGHLAND CATCHMENT
-  PUMPING STATIONS
-  OTHER STRUCTURES

KEY

-  PROGRAMMED MACHINE CLEANSING 2026

BENWICK I.D.B.

MACHINE CLEANSING WORK 2026

N.T.S

Provided by the Middle Level Commissioners		Item No:	8
Meeting:	BENWICK IDB (Hereafter referred to as the Board)	Subject:	CONSULTING ENGINEERS REPORT: MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL
Date:	Wednesday 17 th June 2026	Officer Responsible:	Dave Bantoft

1. M&E key messages and advice

Other than the matters previously reported or 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. The stations and pumps are at an age where reliability is a concern and a plan should be put in place to overhaul or replace items as necessary to ensure ongoing reliability.

The Board is strongly advised to consider the development of an investment plan for asset refurbishment/replacement. The Board is asked to instruct the Consulting Engineer accordingly.

1.1 M&E Equipment Key Health Indicators

Over the past 2 years we have been compiling and verifying Pumping Station Key Date to allow easier identification of equipment age and the need for refurbishment to assist in developing an investment plan for asset refurbishment or replacement. The details below include any works already scheduled and funded to be completed this year. For example, Ramsey Mere Pump & Motor Overhaul plus Bosker Bandit Overhaul & Panel. Copalder Bosker Weedscreen Trolley & Grab Overhaul and New Panel. Pump Control Panels at Broadalls and Bettys Nose. To ensure reliability, resilience and longevity of the pumping equipment it needs to be refurbished or replaced at suitable intervals. We have experienced examples lately of pumps being left too long and failing, or when they are removed for overhaul the condition is very poor and the pump overall lifetime has been reduced significantly, which is not cost-effective use of the asset. The same is true for control panels, component failures often damage other components incurring costly repairs and machine downtime. Overall, it is more cost effective to run well maintained equipment.

The pictures below are of pump bolts at Ramsey Mere that have been in situ for 20 years and have corroded to the point of failure as shown by the gap between the flanges. Although now rebuilt with stainless steel bolts they were not in the past. The pump tubes are also heavily corroded which reduces pump life considerably. Ideally pumps should be refurbished every 10 years because by the time they reach 15 to 20 years it is likely the corrosion will heavily impact their overall residual life.



Table 1: Key Health Indicators

Station	Station			Motor O/H	Controls	Weedscreen			
	Built	Pump	Pump Overhaul			Weedscreen Bars	WSC	WSC O/H	Controls
Beezlings	1964	1964	2011	2011	1992	2019	2019	2019	2019
Benwick Mere/Ibbersons	1954	1954	1987	1987	1988	1954	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bettys Nose	1977	2009	2009	2009	2026	2009	2009	2009	2009
Broadalls	1974	2022	2022	2022	2026	2011	2011	2011	2011
Copalder	1953	1954	2006	2023	1982	2003	2003	2026	2026
Ramsey Mere	1969	1969	2026	2026	1993	1999	1999	2026	2026

The Key Health Indicators table above shows the critical area for concern and improvement is the pumps. The pumps range from 4 to 72 years old with last refurbishments ranging from 5 to 39 years ago. The Board is advised to develop and start a pump and control panel refurbishment/replacement plan for the pumps and controls that are overdue refurbishment. Having a plan in place and underway helps to secure further grant funding when it comes available, such as the recent IDB Recovery Fund.

Submersible pumps are often not cost effective to repair and lead time on new pumps can be upto a year. Standard pumps are normally cost effective to repair and lead times can be as short as 4 weeks or can be over a year if impellers are damaged and have to be reverse engineered. Costs can be in the range £30k to £100k depending on pump condition.

1.2 Weed Pile Clearance

MLC are currently unable to offer weed pile clearance.

Please arrange weed pile clearance for the upcoming pumping season.

High build-up of weed causes both weed screen and pump issues. When the weed is allowed to build up too high it can fall back into drain causing frequent pump starts which heavily increases wear and electricity costs.

1.3 Pumping Stations

Broadalls

The pump control panel and level probes have been replaced and the lighting replaced with LED at the station.

The siphon breaker needs to be overhauled and the siphon breaker drainpipe replaced as it is leaking within the station.

Ramsey Mere

The pump and motor have been overhauled. The pump casing and bolts were heavily corroded and close to failing. The weedscreen cleaner has had a full overhaul complete with new control panel.

Benwick Mere

The station pumping plant appears to be mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition. The screen here needs to be cleaned regularly as if not the pump will hunt causing unnecessary wear. The pump, weed screen and control panel are all overdue replacement and should be included in future investment plan.

Bettys Nose

The pump control panel and level probes have been replaced and the lighting replaced with LED at the station.

Copalder

The weedscreen cleaner has had a full overhaul complete with new control panel.

There have been some intermittent faults with the pump control panel phase failure system and the supply electricity meter has failed.

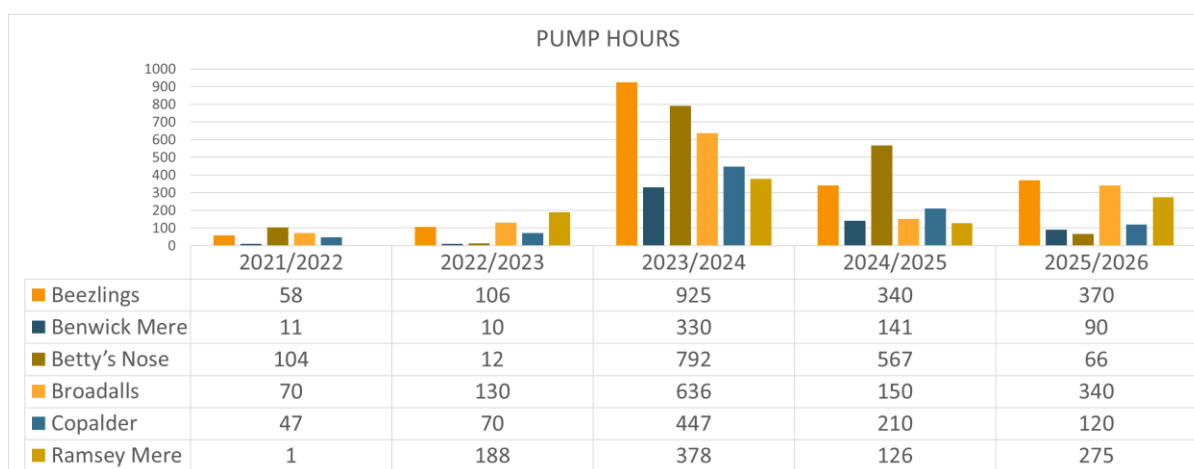
The electricity meter exchange at Copalder is booked in with energy assets for 9th June 2026 at 11am after meter fault was reported on last inspection.

Beezlings

There was a small control panel repair this period, otherwise the station pumping plant appears to be mechanically and electrically in a satisfactory condition.

The last routine inspection at Beezlings Pump Station took place 9th February 2026. Recommendations / remarks include: 1) The weed pile needs clearing. 2) PFC Capacitor has failed and blown the fuses. 3) Probes corroded require new stainless. 4) Recommend siphon strip & clean.

2. Pumping summary



3. Inspections

3.1 HSB Engineering annual inspections for insurance were carried out during September 2025.

3.2 The mandatory site Electrical Installation Condition Reports (due every 5 years) are in date.

Station	EICR Date	EICR Due
Beezlings	29-Mar-2024	29-Mar-2029
Benwick Mere/ Ibbersons	29-Mar-2024	29-Mar-2029
Bettys Nose	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030
Broadalls	22-May-2024	22-May-2029
Copalder	29-Mar-2024	29-Mar-2029
Ramsey Mere	17-Jan-2025	17-Jan-2030

4. Water level Management

The pumping stations have summer and winter pump level references based on historic values which serve as very good reference points. I would actively encourage pump attendants to vary these to suit their current catchment conditions. For example, running pump start and stop levels at intermediate settings above the base winter settings during times of high Soil Moisture Deficit and then reducing towards winter level setpoints as the SMD reduces or if there is heavy rainfall forecast. This needs to be balanced with ensuring the pump has a good operating range so it is never short cycling (hunting). This can also be used to ensure maximum benefit of the lower night electricity rate.

Ultimately this takes more operator time but will produce more efficient running and reduce costs. We can advise on this if needed and show some good and bad examples to help with setting and monitoring your pumps.

Author Name: Dave Bantoft

Role: M&E Engineer