



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Lincolnshire Area Environment Group - Second Annual Report April 98 - March 99

Introduction

During the period the AEG have focused very much on advising the Northern Area Manager and his team on all aspects of the Agency's business. Identification of issues within LEAPs and debate on compilation, implementation and progress of action plans has assisted the Northern Area greatly. A good balance to protect and enhance the local environment has been struck, leading towards a more sustainable environment.

LEAP production has been in line with the National timetable and in accordance with standards and procedures laid down.

AEG link members with other Agency Area and Regional committees/groups have played an important role in communicating key issues and areas of environmental concern, helping a wider understanding and appreciation by all members.

Links with Local Authorities and other key customer groups has been particularly good.

A resume of each LEAP follows, along with tables showing the main topics covered at meetings, membership and members attendance at meetings.



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Louth Coastal LEAP

The Louth Coastal CMP was reviewed and re-issued during 1998 as a LEAP, now including 'new' issues associated with waste management and the need for us to improve flood warning to the town of Louth. Most of the remaining issues are similar to the Louth CMP. There are several issues where notable progress has been made.

- ◆ Discharges to the River Lud and Louth Canal have been improved by investment in the sewerage infrastructure through the town and construction of a 1 million gallon storm tank to accommodate flows during periods of heavy rainfall. This will reduce the frequency with which storm overflows discharge and improve downstream water quality.
- ◆ The Lincshire flood defence scheme was completed last year on schedule to provide the East Lincolnshire Coast with a standard of flood defence equating to the 1:200 year return period. Although completed, the scheme will require ongoing maintenance in the future. Work to improve the defences of Skegness at Lagoon Walk has also been undertaken.
- ◆ A collaborative project, involving ourselves, has been initiated to improve a 2km section of the River Steeping. It seeks to improve the recreational value of the river in association with flood defence and conservation improvements.
- ◆ Progress is also being made with respect to the development of Biodiversity Action Plans with a draft Plan imminent.
- ◆ General habitat enhancement work associated with river maintenance is ongoing. A recent otter survey has noted their spread in the catchment - they are now present on rivers including the Great Eau, Steeping and Lymn.
- ◆ Major progress has been achieved with the development of the LIFE methodology which links river flows and ecology. This methodology is creating interest both inside and outside the Agency and will help in the development of river flow objectives, river abstraction management strategies and abstraction consents.

Upper Witham LEAP & Lower Witham CMP

The Upper Witham LEAP and Lower Witham CMP were produced in 1997 and 1996 respectively. The two are currently being combined and a Draft LEAP will be published in August 1999.

There has been some major progress against issues including:

- ◆ A strategy has been agreed to improve the standard of flood defence for the Wash between Hobhole and Freiston which involves the managed re-alignment of defences behind 60 hectares of previously farmed land. This initiative will, in time, lead to the creation of saltmarsh with its associated benefits for flora and fauna.
- ◆ A river restoration project has been undertaken at Barkston with the creation of a series of riffles and placement of flow deflectors. Sand martin cliffs have been created in association with river maintenance works on the Carr Dyke at Thurlby.
- ◆ Our proposals for the River Witham to be designated as a Sensitive Area (Eutrophic) have been accepted by the DETR. As a consequence of this Anglian Water Services have until the end of 2004 to treat their sewage for phosphates at the following sewage treatment works - Lincoln, Marston, Anwick and Sleaford.
- ◆ Anti-seepage works on the River Witham upstream of Bardney have been undertaken in advance of the Lower Witham Flood Defence Scheme (currently awaiting the approval of MAFF). These works were necessary due to the poor condition of river banks. Urgent works have also been undertaken on the Billingborough Ouse Mere Lode where a breach occurred during March.
- ◆ The final phase of the Trent/Witham/Ancholme refurbishment has been completed; this will help in the provision and management of water resources in both the Witham and Ancholme catchment areas.

Grimsby & Ancholme CMPs

The Grimsby and Ancholme CMPs were published in 1995 and 1996 respectively. Work over the past year has been undertaken to combine these into one, the resultant Draft LEAP was published in June 1999.

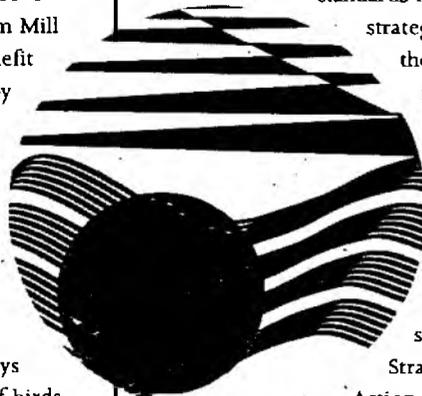
Notable progress for these issues identified in these CMPs are as follows.

- ◆ Urgent flood defence works have been completed at Winteringham.
- ◆ The 3 year project to improve South Ferriby Lock, improve sanitary facilities in Brigg and the restoration of Harlam Mill Lock has been concluded. Apart from the obvious benefit to navigation and recreation, the work on South Ferriby Lock has also reduced the level of saline intrusion to the River Ancholme. As part of the project several kilometres of bank have been restored, to increase wetland habitat and several hundred fishing platforms have been constructed.
- ◆ A lot of work has been carried out at Reeds Island over the years. This has led to the more effective management of water levels. Recently completed surveys have justified those works, for example the numbers of birds breeding have significantly increased including avocets, ringed plovers and oystercatchers.
- ◆ Discharges to the Humber from Grimsby have been significantly improved with the introduction of secondary treatment of sewage at Pyewipe STW. Sewage had previously been discharged, after only preliminary treatment, via a long sea outfall.
- ◆ A significant reduction in discharges to the environment has been achieved as a result of improvement conditions associated with IPC authorisation. These include large reductions in pollutants including acrylonitrile, methyl acrylate, propyl alcohol, butadiene and other volatile organic compounds.

Wash LEAP

The Wash LEAP Action Plan was published in March 1998 and the first Annual Review has been carried out. The Wash LEAP is unusual in that, unlike other LEAP areas, which cover fluvial river catchments, the Wash is an estuary plan. Progress with regard to the key issues is as follows.

- ◆ Survey work concerning the siltation of those rivers which outfall into the Wash indicate that there will be no need to raise the training walls for the Great Ouse and Welland. This is of great relief to conservation interests who were concerned of the potential impacts on the flora and fauna of the Wash.
- ◆ A significant decision has been reached regarding the methodology of providing appropriate flood defence standards for tidal defences at Freiston. A strategy has been agreed which will involve the re-alignment of the defence line inland of the existing line involving an area of 60 hectares. The scheme will raise the flood defence standards, and also yield conservation benefits by ultimately creating a similar area of saltmarsh.
- ◆ A group has been set up by a sub-group of the Wash Estuary Strategy Group to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan for the Wash.
- ◆ Water quality surveys have confirmed that the sources of elevated levels of coliforms impacting on Heacham River are from a number of septic tanks and foul drains. This is a factor influencing the bathing water quality at Heacham. Improvement works to resolve these discharges have been introduced.



REVIEW OF ACTIVITY – LINCOLNSHIRE AREA ENVIRONMENT GROUP

Meetings 1998/99

	MAY 13 1998	SEPT 16 1998	JAN 27 1999	MAY 12 1999
TOPICS DISCUSSED				
Area Environment Groups				
Area Managers Report	x	x	x	x
Agency Public Face Boundaries	x			
Representatives Report	x	x	x	x
Joint Planning Conference	x			
Operational Matters	x			
Customer Services Managers Report	x	x	x	
Wash LEAP Interim Report		x		
Louth Coastal LEAP Action Plan	x	x		
Sustainable Development	x			
AEG Annual Report	x			
Annual Field Visit	x			
Future Membership of the AEG	x			
Agency Priorities and Objectives 98/99	x			
Humber Estuary Action Plan		x		
Ancholme And Grimsby CMPs				
Date Report & Annual Review	x			
"A Price Worth Paying"		x		
Grimsby CMP Annual Review & Data Report				
Meeting Dates		x		
Witham LEAP			x	
FUTURE OPERATION OF WASTE				
Management Sites		x		
Grimsby/Ancholme Leap Draft Issues And Options			x	x
Witham LEAP Draft Issues And Options			x	x
Proposed Capital/Revenue Works Programme			x	
Work Of The Regional Estates Office			x	
AEG Meeting Format			x	
Wash Annual Review				x
National Air Quality Strategy				x
Lincolnshire AEG Annual Field Visit				x
Flood Risk Maps				x
Louth Coastal LEAP Action Plan	x			
Transport White Paper		x		
Update on Plan Progress		x		
Joint AEG/LFDC Field Visit			x	
LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY FEEDBACK				
Survey			x	
UK Climate Change Programme			x	
AEG Workplan		x		