

RIVER MOLE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION REPORT SUMMARY



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NRA

*National Rivers Authority
Thames Region
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YOUR VIEWS

This leaflet summarises the full Consultation Report of the River Mole Catchment Management Plan. Copies of the Consultation Report are available for study in local authority offices, public libraries within the catchment and can be obtained by writing to the NRA at the address below.

We would like your comments, in particular:

- Have we identified all the issues in the River Mole Catchment ?
- Have we set out appropriate options for dealing with the issues ?
- Which option or options would you like to see implemented ?
- What additional issues and options ought to be included ?

Please write with your comments, concerns and views to:

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Catchment Manager (SE)
National Rivers Authority
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TW16 6AP

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR COMMENTS IS:
MONDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 1996**

INTRODUCTION

The NRA is the principal agency responsible for safeguarding and improving the water environment in England and Wales. We have statutory responsibilities for:

- water resources
- water quality and pollution control
- flood defence
- fisheries
- recreation and navigation
- conservation



Common Moorland Leatherhead

The National Rivers Authority will form the major part of a new organisation which will have responsibilities for the environmental protection of water, land and air. The new Environment Agency starts its work of managing the environment in England and Wales on 1st April 1996.

Managing the water environment is a complex task. Understanding how rivers, lakes and groundwaters behave is fundamental to our job. However, we must also consider the way in which the uses of water and activities potentially harmful to it, interact and are managed. Abstracting water, disposing of effluent, urban development and water-based recreation are just some of the uses and activities which we need to consider and evaluate.



Fetcham Splash

To help us work together with other interested parties in planning for the future of the water environment, we have established a process known as Catchment Management Planning. This document is a summary of the Consultation Report for the River Mole Catchment Management Plan.

RIVER MOLE CATCHMENT OVERVIEW

EXTENT AND LOCATION

Situated to the south of the River Thames the Mole catchment has a total area of 487 square kilometres and is largely rural. The River Mole rises in the hills of North Sussex near Ruspur and flows northwards to join the River Thames at Molesey. Between its source and the River Thames the fall in the river is approximately 95 metres. In dry weather the flow of the river on the surface occasionally disappears, leaving a dry bed between Dorking and Thorncroft springs at Leatherhead.

The major tributary streams are to be found above Dorking. Of these the Gatwick Stream rises in the Pease Pottage area and flows north through Crawley to its confluence with the River Mole near Horley. The Burstow Stream rises near Crawley Down and joins the River Mole at Meathgreen.

GEOLOGY AND LANDFORM

The Mole catchment covers part of the two main geological units of south-east England, the Weald and the London Basin. The landscape of the catchment has not only been influenced by ecological factors but also by human activities.

LAND USE

Approximately 25% of the catchment is urban, 8% woodland and the remainder open land and agricultural. Development over recent years on the headwaters particularly in Crawley, has had a significant impact on water quality and an increase in urban storm water run-off.

PRESSURES ON THE CATCHMENT

The area has good road and rail links with London and contains Gatwick International Airport which is located in the southern part of the catchment between Crawley and Horley. These factors have resulted in significant and constant pressures for development within the M23 Corridor. Such pressures have implications for the water environment and must be considered in the light of the need to achieve sustainable development.



Mole Gap from Box Hill

CATCHMENT MAP



RIVER MOLE CATCHMENT - VITAL STATISTICS

CATCHMENT AREA	487km ²
POPULATION (ESTIMATE)	296,000
LENGTH OF RIVER MOLE	80km
URBAN AREA (APPROXIMATELY)	25%
NUMBER OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES	12

-  Catchment Plan Boundary
-  Watercourses
-  Motorway
-  Major A Road
-  Neighbouring Catchment Boundary
-  Gatwick Airport
-  Redhill Airport



CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING

During the Spring and Summer of 1995, we collected information about the River Mole Catchment from the technical experts within the NRA and through informal consultation with local authorities, water companies, statutory bodies and local amenity groups. The Consultation Report sets out the results of this process.

Between December 1995 and February 1996, all those with an interest in the Catchment are invited to comment.

We will analyse these comments, discuss the key issues and possible options with all concerned and produce an Action Plan in the Summer of 1996.

The Action Plan will include:

- a summary of the catchment's resources, uses and activities.
- an agreed vision, strategy and detailed activity plans.
- a description of future monitoring activity.

Every year, an Annual Review will be prepared to report on the state of the catchment and the progress made by the NRA and its partners in implementing the agreed activities.

In 2000 or sooner if required, the Catchment Management Plan will be fully reviewed.



Shell Bridge

DRAFT CATCHMENT VISION

The impact of human activities, ranging from intensive development to agriculture, have varying degrees of impact on the water environment of the River Mole and its tributaries.

The NRA's vision for the Mole catchment comprises the following:

- *Secure protection of the water environment in partnership with others and, increasingly through the process of land use planning, implement the principles of sustainable development;*
- *Continue the improvements to the water environment and seek to enhance the river corridor to become a valued asset for the whole of the community;*
- *Facilitate activities by various water users in appropriate locations and balance such activities through strong links and involvement with local communities so as to promote co-operation.*



River Mole and Weir Channel

CATCHMENT ISSUES AND OPTIONS

The following 33 issues have been identified as a result of information held by the NRA and following informal consultation with Local Authorities and other organisations. Preliminary options for resolving these issues are suggested.

ISSUE 1: Poor water quality of the Gatwick Stream downstream of Crawley STW, and the River Mole downstream of Gatwick Stream.

- *Revise discharge consents and implement changes to plant.*
- *Monitor discharges against revised consents.*



Crawley STW

ISSUE 2: Intermittent poor water quality downstream of Gatwick Airport.

- *Monitor the ponds and outflows at Gatwick Airport which are not yet on-line.*
- *Monitor the phased diversion of a further two ponds to the lagoon.*

ISSUE 3: Sewage derived material discharged from STWs during storm conditions.

- *Upgrade/install additional screening at major STWs.*
- *Monitor result to consider any possible need for future action.*
- *Seek provision of storm water storage facilities.*

ISSUE 4: The impact of urban storm water run-off on the river ecosystem.

- *Investigate the use of alternative techniques to alleviate the storm water run-off from impervious areas where appropriate.*
- *Ensure that flow balancing requirements for all new developments are designed to optimise water quality.*
- *Promote suitable policies to Local Authorities for inclusion in statutory development plans.*

ISSUE 5: Conflict between the request for water contact recreational activities and public health considerations.

- *NRA and Local Authorities to inform the public of associated risks.*
- *Improve bacteriological quality by seeking removal of illegal sewer connections to the surface water system and promotion of flood storage ponds.*
- *Investigate the cost/benefit of improving bacteriological quality of treated sewage effluent.*

ISSUE 6: The presence of blue-green algae in Priory Park Lake, Reigate.

- *NRA to continue to monitor on a reactive basis and inform Local Authority of bloom conditions.*
- *Promote the use of preventative measures.*

ISSUE 7: Frequent pollution incidents cause effects on water quality and ecology.

- *Carry out publicity campaign to promote awareness of the consequences of pollution.*
- *Undertake programme of inspections of local high risk sites and advise on pollution prevention.*
- *Develop and improve methods for alleviation/containment of oil/chemical spillage's.*

ISSUE 8: Vulnerability of groundwater to pollution.

- *Promote NRA 'Policy and Practice for Protection of Groundwater'.*
- *Ensure new development/infrastructure incorporates suitable pollution mitigation measures.*
- *Give pollution prevention guidance on storage and handling to all users of oils/fuels/chemicals.*
- *Liaise with MAFF to encourage good agricultural practices.*

ISSUE 9: Potential reduction in groundwater quality in the Mickleham/Leatherhead area during low flows resulting from infiltration of poorer quality water from the River Mole.

- *Complete investigation and determine the extent of the problem and possible solutions.*

ISSUE 10: The need to identify the source of nitrate in the groundwater at Dorking.

- *Undertake a study in conjunction with East Surrey Water Company.*

ISSUE 11: The potential adverse effect on groundwater resources used for public supply resulting from extensive quarrying and landfilling in the Lower Greensand.

- *Undertake investigation to determine the potential impact.*
- *Promote suitable policies for the protection of groundwater resources for inclusion in Local Authority statutory development plans.*

ISSUE 12: Potential impact of further development on available water resources.

- *NRA to inform/advise Local Authorities to ensure new development is based on resource availability.*
- *Encourage East Surrey Water Company to continue the practice of leakage control.*

ISSUE 13: Above the upper limits of the Mole Flood Alleviation Scheme actual Standards of Service remain to be consistently defined and compared against targets.

- *Continue survey work to establish the appropriate Standard of Service.*

ISSUE 14: The need to carry out Section 105 surveys for the Mole catchment.

- *NRA to identify priority and undertake survey work.*

ISSUE 15: The potential impact of development proposals on flooding.

- *NRA to investigate and advise Local Authorities in respect of all relevant proposals for new development.*
- *Promote suitable policies to Local Authorities for inclusion in statutory development plans.*

ISSUE 16: The potential impact of additional development at Horley.

- *Carry out an assessment of the potential impact.*
- *Promote incorporation of surface water source control into the main drainage scheme, in conjunction with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.*
- *Resolve sewerage capacity problems in conjunction with Thames Water Utilities Ltd.*

ISSUE 17: The need to evaluate the efficacy of the Burstow Improvement Scheme.

- *NRA to undertake an investigation.*

ISSUE 18: The difficulty of promoting flood alleviation for properties currently receiving an unacceptable standard of service.

- *Continue monitoring the level of flood risk in relation to the opportunities to improve the level of service.*

ISSUE 19: The ecological status of the rivers cannot be assessed by one method in isolation.

- *Continue to conduct intensive surveys on an integrated basis to provide comprehensive chemical and biological data.*

ISSUE 20: The need to protect important in-stream and river corridor habitats.

- *Continue to monitor existing known important habitats.*
- *Undertake studies to evaluate and identify other areas of important habitat.*
- *Identify key areas and formulate the measures required to provide protection.*

ISSUE 21: The need to secure appropriate conservation, enhancement and restoration of key riverine landscapes as identified in the assessment.

- *Implement the recommendations set out in the 'River Mole Catchment Landscape Assessment'.*

ISSUE 22: The degradation of natural habitats.

- *Undertake appropriate enhancement works.*
- *Ensure opportunities for enhancement are included in statutory development plans and Local Authority development briefs.*
- *Seek opportunities for partnership schemes.*



Stone Groynes

ISSUE 23: The need to safeguard Reigate Heath SSSI.

- *NRA to prepare a Water Level Management Plan for the wetland component of the site.*

ISSUE 24: The flood alleviation channel of the Lower Mole Improvement Scheme has seriously damaged the ecological status of the river channel and river corridor.

- *Review existing management programme.*
- *Investigate opportunities for enhancement.*

ISSUE 25: The need to undertake flood defence maintenance works in an environmentally sensitive manner.

- *Promote maintenance guidelines.*
- *Promote NRA staff training and awareness.*

ISSUE 26: The increased demand for maintenance at Leatherhead.

- *NRA to co-ordinate flood defence, landscape, conservation and recreation management.*



Common Meadow Leatherhead

ISSUE 27: The management of Cobham Mill and adjacent land.

- *NRA to liaise with the Cobham Mill Preservation Trust and the Cobham Conservation Group to determine the management programme.*

ISSUE 28: The environmental impact of water control structures.

- *Fish passes should be built into existing structures when the opportunity arises.*

ISSUE 29: The limited opportunity for public access to and along the rivers, particularly in the urban areas.

- *Promote increased access particularly in the case of proposed development and redevelopment.*

ISSUE 30: The limited opportunities for navigation and water based recreation on the River Mole.

- *Investigate the opportunities for increased navigation and water based recreation.*

ISSUE 31: Vandalism and unauthorised occupation of National Rivers Authority owned land.

- *Prepare and implement an appropriate Management Plan for NRA TR owned land.*

ISSUE 32: The impact of rubbish and litter on the water environment.

- *Promote co-ordinated anti-litter and tidy river campaigns.*
- *Promote local pride and the concept of public ownership of the water environment.*
- *NRA to liaise with riparian owners.*
- *Work in partnership with Local Authorities.*

ISSUE 33: The need to promote water environment issues at a local level within the catchment, especially via formal education.

- *Promote NRA **RIVERWORK** teaching pack and National **RiverWATCH** scheme.*
- *Develop ecological "indicators" for the water environment with interested parties and adopt for use with local schools.*

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