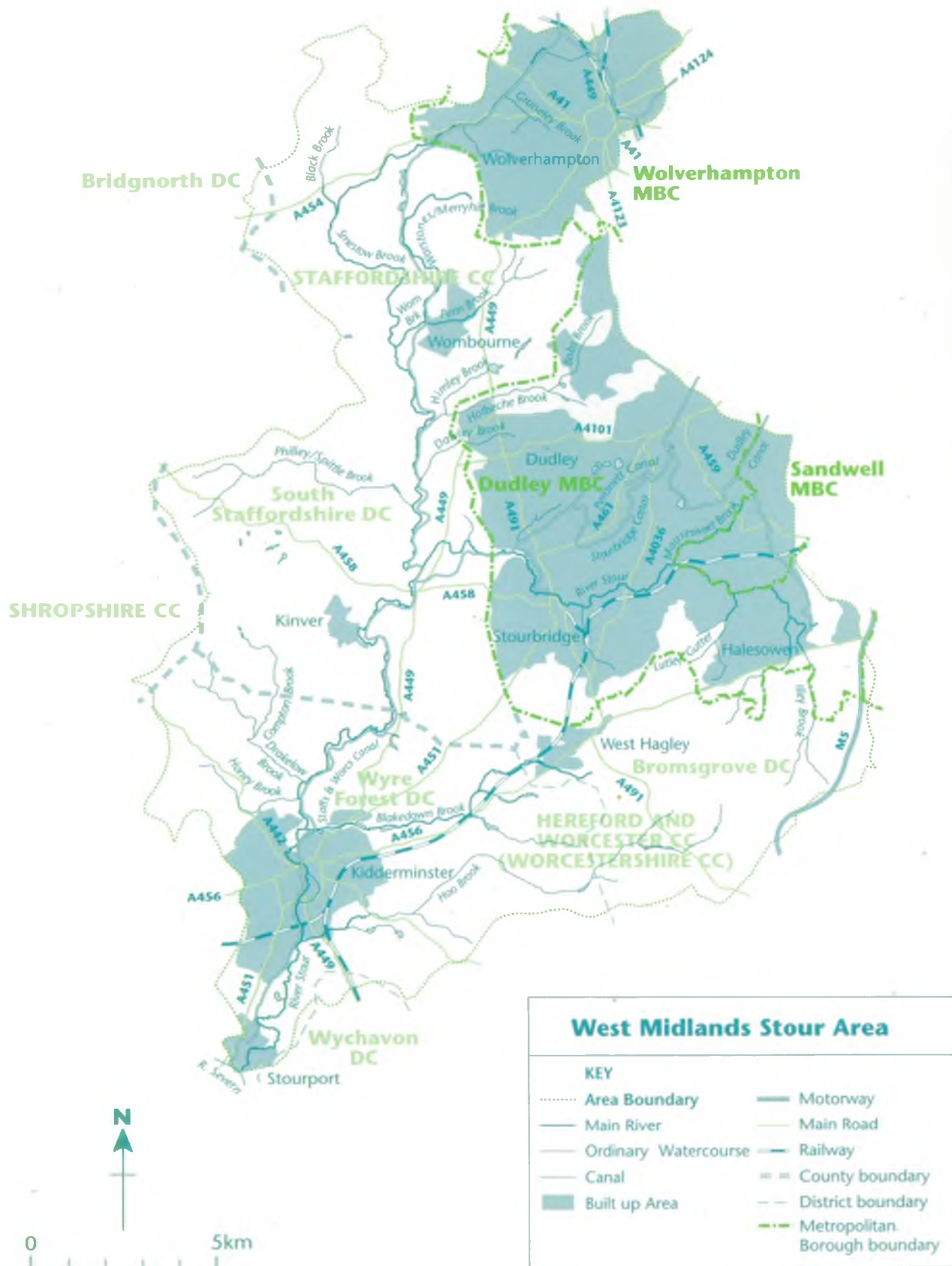


local environment agency plan

WEST MIDLANDS STOUR SECOND ANNUAL REVIEW DECEMBER 2000



ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY



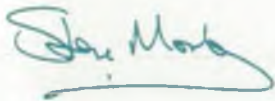
Foreword

The Environment Agency was established to protect, monitor and improve the environment in its broadest sense – ultimately contributing to the worldwide goal of sustainable development. One way of achieving this aim is through the production of Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs), which provide a framework for protecting and improving our local environment.

The West Midlands Stour LEAP aims to provide integrated environmental management of this important area of the West Midlands. This is the second Annual Review of the West Midlands Stour LEAP since its publication in October 1998. Its purpose is to highlight the progress that has been made by the Agency and others during the past year, in tackling the issues and problems identified in the Action Plan.

The progress that has been made over the last twelve months reflects the commitment of all those involved in the plan, and highlights the importance of the partnership approach developed through the LEAP process. As the demand upon limited funds continues to increase, it is even more vital that the momentum of environmental improvement is kept going through partnerships and collaborative ventures.

I look forward to developing further the positive achievements made so far with our partners, as we work together to safeguard and improve our local environment in the coming year.



Steve Morley
Area Manager – Upper Severn Midlands Region

Previous West Midlands Stour
Local Environment Agency Plan
(LEAP) documents:

- West Midlands Stour LEAP
Consultation Report
March 1998
- West Midlands Stour
Consultation Report Summary
March 1998
- West Midlands Stour LEAP
Statement of Public Consultation
October 1998
- West Midlands Stour LEAP
Action Plan
October 1998

For further information or copies
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1. Vision for the West Midland Stour area

Our vision is...

"...To develop a better local environment in which people can live and work and maintain this, by sustainable management, for future generations."

The West Midland Stour environment is subject to considerable pressures, most of these are addressed throughout this document. The impact of urban development, including housing, industry and infrastructure has resulted in, pressures on water resources, air and water quality; problems resulting from waste production, and the loss of wildlife and habitat. It is, of course, important that the economic and housing needs of the area are met, but at the same time for the impacts of this development to be minimised. The challenge is to ensure that the needs of all users and the environment are balanced and we aim to do this through integrated and sustainable environmental management.

It is important that we realise and develop the full environmental potential of the West Midlands Stour area. By promoting involvement with the local environment and raising people's awareness, we will work towards a healthy and diverse environment that is valued by, and of benefit to, its residents and visitors alike.

The Environment Agency needs the help of others to make this vision a reality and to effectively carry out the objectives set out below. We will therefore seek to work in partnership with local authorities, industry, environmental groups, other organisations and individuals who share an interest in the area.

To achieve this vision we will:

- Educate and raise awareness of the local environment and environmental issues
- Work in partnership with local people and organisations to realise the potential of the area and encourage involvement with the local environment
- Maintain and improve the water quality of rivers, canals and groundwater

- Manage water resources in an environmentally sustainable way by balancing the needs of legitimate users with those of the environment
- Reduce the impact of flooding on existing developments, where possible, and resist development where it would be at risk from flooding or may cause flooding elsewhere
- Improve air quality by developing a programme, in partnership with local authorities, to assess air quality and the impact of Integrated Pollution Control (IPC) processes on it and enable improvements to be made
- Promote waste minimisation, encourage the achievement of national targets where appropriate and ensure the effective regulation of waste
- Protect and enhance watercourse/green corridors, and support biodiversity through the protection and enhancement of species and habitats
- Develop the recreational and amenity value of watercourses and protect the varied cultural heritage that exists within the area as a whole.

1.1 Working in partnership

Several key partnerships and collaborative initiatives are under way. These include:

- The Black Country Waste Minimisation Group – a partnership between the Environment Agency and Black Country Business Environment Association.
- Spennells Valley Local Nature Reserve – a collaborative project with Wyre Forest District Council to improve the management of this important wetland complex in Kidderminster
- Improving canal and river corridors for otters – a collaborative project with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, Severn Trent Water Ltd, British Waterways and local authorities
- Kidderminster – joint working with developers and Wyre Forest District Council to redevelop the town centre.

In partnership with others, the Agency is keen to maximise the amount of external



funding which is spent on the environment in general. Like other organisations, there are many worthy initiatives that we would like to progress but we are constrained by the ever-increasing competing priorities on our budgets. Working in partnership with those who share similar objectives should hopefully increase our and other organisations' chances of securing funding to the benefit of the environment. We will be looking at ways to progress this in the West Midlands Stour area next year.

The tables in Section 4.0 form an integral part of this review, and should be referred to for a summary of progress on each action.

2. Introduction

2.1 Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs)

For the Agency to fulfil its role and responsibilities, it needs to manage the environment effectively and to work in partnership with others. LEAPs are an important tool in this process. The plans are non-statutory, integrated action plans based on local river catchments, which aim to identify, prioritise and address local environmental issues relating to our functions, taking into account the views of our local customers. They provide a focus for those concerned with the future of the local area. All of the river catchments in England and Wales are now covered by LEAPs.

LEAPs help to contribute to the principle of sustainable development through integrated environmental management and improvement. They also play a key role in:

- Promoting openness and accountability
- Developing closer links with the public and key partners
- Educating the public on local environmental issues
- Prioritising the Agency's work through an action plan for managing and improving the local area over the next five years
- Realising the environmental potential of the area
- Forming joint actions and partnerships for environmental improvement

2.1.1 The West Midlands Stour LEAP

The West Midlands Stour LEAP is part of a national programme to ensure that the whole of England and Wales is covered by LEAPs. There are 131 LEAP areas in all, with four in the Upper Severn Area.

The West Midlands Stour LEAP Consultation Report was produced in March 1998. This outlined environmental issues within the area, and options for their solution. Following a three month period of consultation, the Action Plan was published in October 1998. This includes a five year programme of actions for improvements to the local environment, and outlines areas of

work and investment proposed by the Environment Agency and others. The Agency reported progress during the year 1998/1999 in the First Annual Review published in December 1999.

2.2 A brief description of the West Midlands Stour area

The West Midlands Stour catchment comprises an area of just over 374 square kilometres. The plan area mostly falls within the counties of Staffordshire and Worcestershire, and the West Midlands area which includes the Metropolitan Boroughs of Wolverhampton, Dudley and Sandwell. These three boroughs, historically known as the Black Country, constitute the urbanised part of the plan area.

The area is dominated in the north-east and east by the urban area of the West Midlands conurbation and by Kidderminster in the south west. The urbanised area has a significant impact on the character of the river and the state of the area in general, a fact which is particularly evident in the issues raised. The West Midlands Stour area has a history of industrial usage stretching back to before the industrial revolution. Much industrial heritage remains, particularly in the form of canals which were built to replace the packhorse as a better means of moving raw materials and finished goods.

The remainder of the plan area to the south and west is largely rural in character, with the exception of Kidderminster and Stourport. Much of this is Green Belt, the urban/sub-urban fringes are mainly pasture land and the rest is utilised for intensive arable agriculture.

2.3 Update on events relevant to the West Midlands Stour area

This section provides an update on matters taking place at a national or regional level, which may have a bearing on actions within the West Midlands Stour LEAP.



These include legislative changes and new initiatives or strategies. It also discusses events that have taken place in the Stour area over the last year, and some events planned for the coming year.

Flood events

The Bye Report into the Easter floods highlighted the need for good maintenance of watercourses, flood defence schemes or flood warning schemes where these can be justified, and the need to reduce building on floodplains. An action plan was published in November 1998, addressing those recommendations. Much work has already been done by the Agency to achieve some of the targets set and improving operations and public understanding. For instance, the Agency has provided all local authorities with updated maps of floodplains and emergency response has been improved.

Changes to the national flood warning system

Changes to the national flood warning system were introduced in September 2000. The changes seek to provide early awareness of potential floods, based on Met Office data for predicted rainfall and on catchment conditions. Flood warnings have now changed from the colour based scheme to a word based scheme. A major public awareness campaign was carried out prior to the changes, including extensive regional (and some national) TV, radio and press coverage achieved through use of Advans, key poster sites, boats, human interest stories and case studies.

Participation of MPs also sustained media interest. For help and advice about how to protect homes or to find out what flood warnings are in force in the area call **Floodline 0845 988 1188**.

Flood estimation handbook

A new flood estimation handbook has been produced nationally by the Agency and the Institute of Hydrology bringing together all the latest technological advances and knowledge on flooding so that problems can be assessed in a consistent way across the country. It will provide a standard approach to estimating run-off and will aid in all areas of flood defence.

Kidderminster flood alleviation scheme

Planning permission has been granted for a flood alleviation scheme which will reduce the risk of flooding in Kidderminster. This scheme for Kidderminster was included in

the region's capital plan but could not be funded for some years. The Agency has successfully used an opportunity to get £1.5m funding from a developer but to the Agency's specification. The flood risk to the Kidderminster urban centre will not be eliminated but will be reduced.

Other benefits are;

- the re-wetting of Puxton Marsh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI is currently drying out and its conservation value being reduced – the flood alleviation scheme may allow the Agency to re-wet the area
- the development of a brownfield site can go ahead, rather than greenfield alternatives
- the local council will separately be developing an associated urban centre wildlife park

Policy regarding culverts

The Agency's policy on this was published in March 1999. The Agency is in general opposed to the culverting of watercourses because of the adverse ecological, flood defence and other effects that are likely to arise. We will therefore only approve an application to culvert a watercourse if there is no reasonably practicable alternative or if the detrimental effects of culverting are so minor that they would not justify a more costly alternative. In all cases where it is appropriate to do so, adequate mitigation must be provided for the damage caused. Wherever practical, the Agency will seek to have culverted watercourses restored to open channels.

Managing our water resources Asset Management Plan (AMP)

Over the last year, the Midlands Region completed negotiations with Severn Trent Water regarding the details of the company's environmental investment programme for the next five years. Known as AMP3, this programme addresses both water quality and water quantity issues in the region and represents the largest ever initiative to protect and improve the quality of the environment in the Midlands. To address water quality issues, improvements to sewage treatment works and combined sewer overflows need to be made. Unfortunately, OFWAT's decision to reduce funding to Severn Trent Water Limited in this area, for improvements to be made under the AMP3 scheme, restricts

the amount of work that will be achieved. To address water quantity issues in the catchment includes the need to identify areas for low flow alleviation schemes. One such scheme has been agreed to alleviate low flows in the Blakedown Brook. Negotiations with South Staffordshire Water Plc, following OFWAT's decision on their AMP3 proposal, have been completed and the drilling of a third compensation borehole in Blakedown Brook catchment has been agreed.

'Taking Water Responsibly' and Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS)

Following public consultation during 1998, the Government has set out steps in 'Taking Water Responsibly' that it wishes the Agency to take within current legislation and also legislative changes that it plans to make. One initiative resulting from the document is the development of CAMS, which will allow the Agency to prioritise abstraction requirements for local catchments and will guide licensing decisions.

National and regional water resources strategies

The Agency will be producing one national and eight regional water resources strategies at the beginning of 2001, following the recent consultation 'Sustainable Water Resources for the Future: Values and Challenges'. The strategies will guide water resources over a 25 year planning period.

Water resources/abstraction licensing

Most abstraction licences issued in the catchment are now subject to a time limit. At the end of this period, any environmental effects of the abstractions will be reviewed by the Agency. A licence will only be re-issued (for a further time-limited period) providing no unacceptable environmental impact has occurred in the meantime or is likely to occur as circumstances change.

To ensure that water is controlled in a sustainable manner, the Agency encourages measures which reduce the demand for water, particularly in those areas such as the Stour catchment where existing water resources are under pressure. These measures include water use minimisation, the capture and re-use of rainwater, encouragement for the new technology involved in 'grey water' recycling schemes and sustainable surface water drainage for new developments. As well as producing environmental benefits these practices can result in significant cost savings for industrial,

agricultural and domestic water users.

Implementation of Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) scheme

The Agency has defined NVZs around public water supply abstractions, where nitrate concentrations in groundwater have been found to exceed or are likely to exceed 50mg/l. The Government's Action Programme for NVZs was implemented in December 1998 (The Action Programme for Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (England and Wales) Regulations 1998). This sets rules, which must be followed by farmers in NVZs and requires careful management of fertilisers and manure, including keeping records of their use. The programme measures are based on good agricultural practice and will help protect surface and groundwaters against pollution from nitrates. This is particularly relevant to the West Midlands Stour area (see Issue 8), where there are 4 NVZs – at Tom Hill, Hinksford, Kinver and Wildmoor.

Source protection zones

Maps that show groundwater source protection zones around all public supply and other sensitive abstractions were published in spring 2000. The maps have been produced to support the Agency's 'Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater', and in conjunction with groundwater vulnerability maps, complete an eight year programme of work. The zones are available electronically from the Agency's web site, or as paper copies from Agency offices.

The Groundwater Regulations 1998

The Groundwater Regulations have been issued to implement the EC Groundwater Directive (Protection of Groundwater Against Pollution caused by certain substances – 80/68/EEC). Implementation of these regulations prevents pollution of groundwater by controlling discharges or disposals of certain dangerous substances where they are not already covered by existing legislation. Anyone who disposes listed substances onto or into land has to apply to the Agency for an authorisation, if they wish to legally continue with that disposal. It is illegal to dispose of any listed substance to land without an authorisation.

Managing waste

National waste strategy

The Government's waste strategy was published in the summer 2000. This



strategy will build on the draft waste strategy 'A Way with Waste' published on 1 July 1999, which emphasised the importance of managing our waste in a more sustainable manner. Some of the key issues thought to be included in the new strategy include an integrated approach to waste management, higher levels of re-use, increased recycling and composting, increased energy recovery and further development of alternative recovery technologies. It is the intention that the data collated from the Agency's national waste production survey will be used to assist in finalising the strategy.

Strategic waste

Management assessments

The Agency is currently collating information on the types and quantities of wastes accepted by all licensed facilities across the country. This information is due to be published (in an aggregated format) in the first ever Environment Agency Strategic Waste Management Assessments (SWMAs). These reports will be based on planning regions and will also include aggregated information on licensed capacities of treatment and transfer sites and the remaining void capacity at operational landfill sites. The data collated from the Agency's national waste production survey will be used to assist in finalising the strategy.

Metal Recycling Sites (MRS)

The issue of unregulated metal recycling sites is of particular relevance in the West Midlands Stour area (see Issue 19). The national metal recycling sites project started in Spring 1999. The project has aimed to help operators of MRS's obtain the necessary waste management licence or registration as exempt from the need for a licence, and thus enable the achievement of a level playing field across the industry. It has concentrated on better regulation thus avoiding enforcement action.

Introduction of Operator and Pollution Risk Appraisal (OPRA)

Since May 1999 the frequency of inspections of licensed waste management facilities in Upper Severn has been determined by the Operator and Pollution Risk Appraisal (OPRA) methodology. This ensures that the Agency's resources are better targeted and focused on those sites that present the greatest risk of pollution or harm.

Oil in Your Local Environment (OIYLE) campaign

Building on the success of the national oil care campaign, Oil in Your Local Environment (OIYLE) is a Midlands regional campaign which aims to work in partnership with oil distributors. The campaign will target users of oil to raise awareness of the problems caused by oil pollution and encourage good practice in the storage, use and disposal of oil products. Advice will be disseminated through oil distribution companies invoicing procedures and during deliveries. Training in best practice will also be provided to oil distributors, along with 'grab packs' of absorbents, etc. to deal with any spillage during delivery. OIYLE was launched in December 1999.

Conserving the land

The Contaminated Land (England) Regulations 2000

These regulations came into force on 1 April 2000. Primary responsibility for their implementation lies with the local authorities. They have to identify land that falls within the regulation's definition of contaminated land. Local authorities will need to seek the remediation of these sites through the landowners or those responsible for causing the contamination. The Agency's role is to provide guidance to local authorities and deal with sites defined as 'special sites' (which by their nature are more complex).

The Town & Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999

New regulations relating to the environmental assessment of development proposals requiring planning permissions came into force in March 1999. The regulations substantially extend the range of applications for which an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required, and place a duty on the Agency to provide information and scoping advice to relevant applications for planning permission. The Agency is a statutory consultee for all planning applications requiring an EIA.

Better Town Planning

The 'Better Town Planning' project is a national project aimed at delivering substantial improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's role in town planning over a three year period.

The project gives a much higher priority to improving the Agency's response to local authority development plans and a target risk-based approach to dealing with planning application consultations. Implementation of this new strategic approach to planning will increase the involvement of the Agency's planning and technical functions in the development planning process. It will result in greater efficiency and consistency and provide a targeted approach to planning application consultation. It will also increase the Agency's capacity to deliver competent responses to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) at all necessary stages.

Review of Dudley Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

The Agency is working closely with Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council on the review of their UDP, which has meant that there have been relatively few objections to the deposit plan. Negotiation is continuing to ensure that the Agency's views are reflected in the plan.

Review of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan

The Agency has been extremely involved in the early stages of the local plan review, supplying constraints information and commenting on the aims and objections to ensure that appropriate weight is given to environmental considerations.

Enhancing biodiversity

Prize for 'Rivers and Wetlands Best Practices Guidelines'

The region won a major award for its 'Rivers and Wetlands Best Practices Guidelines'. The document won first place in the communication category of the 1999 Landscape Institute Awards. The Right Honourable Nick Rainsford MP Minister of State presented the award on 18 November 1999, at a ceremony at London's Café Royal. The guidelines were targeted at riparian owners, developers and planning authorities.

Increasing public awareness

Environment Matters CD-ROM

As part of our efforts to make the public more aware of the environment and the role of the Agency, a multi-media CD was produced last year. 'Environment Matters: A Midlands Perspective' was launched at the

1999 regional AGM's. The CD, produced by the Regional Scientist's section, covers the nine key themes from the Agency's Environment Strategy. Plain language and attractive contents were the main objectives. Success was acknowledged when the CD won the 1999 Chairman's

Award and response from users has been positive. The CD has been incorporated into the Education Section's resources. An entry in the 1999 Communicators in Business Awards Scheme has been made and the results are imminent.

Trading estates initiative

A 'Guide to good Environmental Practice for Trading Estates and Industrial Parks' was launched to major investors at the British Library, London on 24 February by the Chief Executive. This helps companies who invest in, own and operate such sites, to understand how they can protect and increase the return on their investment by demonstrating how tenants can minimise their negative impacts on the environment.

A large proportion of the UK's industrial base is located on trading estates and, over the years, the environment of many of these business parks has deteriorated, due to crime, neglect and poor environmental performance. Many of the companies operating on these estates are small or medium-sized, and may not have ready access to information on environmental legislation or regulation. They are under increasing pressure to meet the environmental demands of not only legislation but also their customers. To help them meet these differing demands, the Agency, Staffordshire University and Business in the Environment, have worked together to produce the Guide to Good Practice.

This direct national approach to clearly defined sector proved a very effective and efficient way of promoting the benefits of good environmental practice and the consequences if the message is not taken on board. The area is now looking for opportunities to further promote this locally.

Midlands Region's Fire Service Initiative

featured on BBC1's 'Countryfile' on 30 May 1999. The programme included footage of the Fire Service responding to incidents that have potential to pollute the environment, using emergency equipment that the Agency supplies. Midlands Region has now assumed the national lead in this area to



provide a stable basis for the partnership nationally. The Fire Service does not have statutory responsibility to provide a pollution prevention service and is therefore unable to fund the provision of equipment. It is proposed to obtain an agreement to secure funding for the initial provision of equipment to bring all brigades to a minimum standard and for ongoing support and maintenance within three years.

Regulating major industries

Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations

The Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 came into force on 27 July 1999 and sets out the legislative framework for a new environmentally holistic regulatory regime, Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC). IPPC will cover the process industries currently regulated under Part 1 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as well as biodegradable waste landfills, hazardous waste sites, some sewage works, intensive pig and poultry farming, and some types of food processing. New measures may be imposed to control energy and raw material usage, the prevention of accidents, noise, odour, restoration of sites and emissions released to all environmental media (air, land and water). The regulations that will bring the new regime came into force on 1 August 2000. It is anticipated that implementation of the regulations will be phased in over the next seven years.

3. Summary of progress

3

Summary of Progress

Of 80 actions planned for this year, progress has been made on all but eight actions and a further eight actions have been completed. Many of the actions have involved organisations working in collaboration with others. However, competing priorities and the increased demands upon limited funds this year have meant that progress on some actions has not been as good as we would have hoped. This means that working in partnership to maximise the amount of external funding that is spent on the environment will become increasingly important in the West Midlands Stour area.

For details of progress for each action, please refer to the 'progress' column in the tables in Section 4.0. Should you wish to contact us for more information on the actions and progress made, please refer to the contact details inside the back cover.

3.1 Notable achievements

Issue 5

An adult salmon was caught in the Wilden area of the River Stour during late Spring. This is the first record on the Stour for at least 150 years.

Issue 6

Initial results from the monitoring of water quality show dramatic improvements on the River Stour following completion of AMP2 Schemes.

Issue 12

Planning permission has been obtained for the Kidderminster Flood Alleviation Scheme, which will reduce the risk of flooding in Kidderminster.

Issue 14

The Green Oases Project has secured £10k towards environmental work to increase the potential of the Wom, Himley and Mousesweet Brooks (which are tributaries of the West Midlands Stour) to attract and retain biodiversity and to improve the ecological corridors along the brooks which are presently deserts for wildlife.

Issue 20.2

There have been a number of excellent initiatives in the West Midlands Stour area for the promotion of sustainable management of household waste during this review period. Worcester County Council and Herefordshire Council have a 25 year campaign to increase the level of recycled/recovered waste by 40%. Part of this campaign included the launch, in June 2000, of the 'Face Up To Waste Campaign,' a joint waste minimisation strategy with Severn Waste Services, Bromsgrove District Councils, Malvern Hills District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council and Wyre Forest District Council. The aim of the strategy is to reduce the amount of waste generated, change behaviour and attitudes to waste, increase re-use to the highest possible level, increase recycling to the highest possible level and create an understanding of the value of energy recovery. To achieve this the partners have run a 'Slim Your Bin' campaign, (in partnership with the Environment Agency), supported the 'Buy Recycled' campaign, arranged a site open day, launched a web site, run home composting bin sale days in Worcester, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, introduced a mail order service for compost bins in Herefordshire, supported local events and national theme weeks/months and created an A-Z guide to recycling/reuse.

Issue 20.3

The Black Country Waste Minimisation Groups set up by the Agency in partnership with the Black Country Business Environment Association have assisted companies to achieve reductions in raw material use, energy use and water use. A total of 30 companies have to date identified annual cost savings of £257,000. In addition, a number of projects have been undertaken where improvements in efficiency have been made but it has not been possible to quantify the savings. A report on the results of the group is available.



3.2 Disappointments

Issue 13

Plans to build a footbridge over the Mousesweet Brook at Mushroom Green have been abandoned due to excessive engineering costs and temporary flooding problems at the site.

Issue 7

There has been no progress on the assessment of the current status of the Pensnett Canal due to lack of resources.

3.3 Conclusions

There have been some successes during the year 1999/2000 but some of the actions have not progressed due to resource constraints. The issues highlighted in the LEAP still need to be addressed and the Agency must work closely with other organisations to ensure that the vision for the West Midlands Stour area becomes a reality. During the next few years we aim to pursue partnerships and external funding sources with increased vigour so that the actions highlighted are achieved and the environment throughout the Stour area is improved further.

Although the Agency must do what it can to encourage a partnership approach in tackling some of the issues highlighted in the West Midlands Stour LEAP, we would welcome comments and offers of assistance from other organisations. The LEAP is a fluid document and if you have ideas or suggestions for additional actions or issues that your organisation can help us address then please write to Jennie Comerford (Team Leader – LEAPS) at the Agency's Shrewsbury office.

4. Actions update

4

4.1 Removed actions

11 actions have been removed for the reasons given below

REMOVED ACTION	REASON
4.8 Re-survey wetland special Wildlife Sites in Worcestershire	The survey was completed in 1998.
6(i).1 List 2 failures: a River Stour at Stourport. Investigate results, check error inherent in this type of sampling. b Wom Brook, Smestow confluence. Pipe Wombourne STW effluent to Smestow Brook to reduce localised impact.	Recent results show no failures following reduction of pesticide use at carpet factories and improvement work at Kidderminster STW. No positive results for Cyfluthrin since 1998. The Agency will continue to take routine samples but this issue will no longer be included as a specific action. Work completed. Routine samples will continue to be taken as part of the Agency's duties.
6(iii).1 Investigate to identify/confirm the cause of failure. Lutley Gutter Merryhill/Warstones Brook Hoo Brook Staffs/Worcs Canal	Lutley Gutter is now compliant with its river classification target of RE2. Routine samples will continue to be taken as part of the Agency's duties. Marginal pH failure. The Agency will continue to monitor this situation but this issue will no longer be included as a specific action. Marginal Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) failure. The Agency will continue to monitor this situation but this issue will no longer be included as a specific action. Marginal BOD failure. The Agency will continue to monitor this situation but this issue will no longer be included as a specific action.
11.2 Implement use of coin operated shopping trolleys.	Some progress has been made as a result of national initiatives. This action will not appear in future Annual Reviews as it is dependent on national, rather than local initiatives.
14.2 Encourage the development of riparian buffer zones by use of agri-environment schemes.	Ongoing through the Agency's day to day duties.
17.1 Develop a joint and consistent approach between all those involved with new developments and other changes in land use in the area.	Ongoing through the Agency's day to day duties.

Actions Update



REMOVED ACTION	REASON
17.3 Continue to raise awareness of cultural heritage.	Ongoing through the Agency's day to day duties.
18.3 Hold discussions with responsible parties to tackle flytipping/littering in the Mushroom Green Area.	Action complete.
19.2 Licensed sites: a) enforce licence conditions b) improve operating standards where necessary through a review of licence conditions.	Ongoing through the Agency's day to day duties.
19.4 Flytipped waste: Require landowners/local authorities to remove flytipped waste as appropriate.	Ongoing through the Agency's day to day duties.
19.5 Regularly review the situation and monitoring progress at Metal Recycling Sites (MRS). Undertake appropriate enforcement action if land occupiers/licence holders are not making improvements in accordance with agreed timetables.	Ongoing through the Agency's day to day duties.

4.2 List of issues

Issue 1: The current level of air quality monitoring	Issue 13: Lack of recreation and amenity facilities
Issue 2: The sustainability of water resources	Issue 14: Protection and expansion of watercourses and other green corridors and associated wildlife
Issue 3: Impacts of over-abstraction within the Blakedown Valley	Issue 15: Development of flood warning system
Issue 4: Low conservation value and poor biodiversity	Issue 16: Flooding resulting from urban development
Issue 5: Poor fish stocks	Issue 17: The effects of development on wildlife, cultural heritage and the landscape
Issue 6: Compliance with River Quality Objectives and EC Directives	Issue 18: Flytipping and litter
Issue 7: The need for assessment of the current status of the Pensnett Canal	Issue 19: Metal recycling sites
Issue 8: Nitrate contamination of groundwater	Issue 20: Sustainable waste management
Issue 9: Pollution from industrial estates and the construction sector	Issue 21: Environmental monitoring of Integrated Pollution Control Authorisations
Issue 10: The impact of culverted watercourses	Issue 22: The need to raise and promote environmental awareness and education
Issue 11: Shopping trolleys in watercourses	
Issue 12: Kidderminster town centre redevelopment	

4.3 Action Tables

This section provides a brief summary of the progress made on each action within the West Midlands Stour area. The issues are presented with a number of actions, a target timetable and the identification of responsible parties. Where possible, costs have been outlined for the period covered by the plan. This does not necessarily reflect the total cost of the schemes and is sometimes an estimate to be more accurately costed later. This document is produced in good faith, recognising current priorities, both within the Agency and in other organisations.

Key

- R Recurring – no additional costs to annual budgetary provision
- U Unknown costs at this time
- + Action added, or added to, as a result of consultation
- K £1,000

Abbreviations and acronyms

AMP ¹	Asset Management Plan	NFU	National Farmers Union
CC	County Council	NVZ	Nitrate Vulnerable Zone
BCBEA	Black Country Business Environment Association	OFWAT	Office of Water Industry's Financial Regulator of Water Service Companies
BCU	British Canoe Union	RA	Ramblers Association
BOD	Biochemical Oxygen Demand	SME	Small to Medium sized Enterprise
BTCV	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers	SSW plc	South Staffordshire Water plc
BW	British Waterways	STW	Sewage Treatment Works
DC	District Council	STW Ltd	Severn Trent Water Ltd
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions	TBG	Tidy Britain Group
EN	English Nature	UDP	Unitary Development Plan
FC	Forestry Commission	UWT	Urban Wildlife Trust
FWAG	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	VOs	Voluntary Organisations
IWA	Inland Waterways Association	WFDC	Wyre Forest District Council
LA	Local Authority	WMBC	Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food	WT	Wildlife Trust
MBC	Metropolitan Borough Council	WWT	Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

Note¹ AMP3 (Asset Management Plan No 3)

Every five years the Water Industry Companies must agree their investment programme with the Director General of OFWAT. We are now in the third review, AMP3 (Asset Management Plan 3) which will cover the period 2000 to 2005. The Agency is anxious to ensure that full consideration is given to securing environmental improvements.

Issue 1: The current level of air quality monitoring

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ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
1.1 Work with local authorities to assess air quality monitoring needs for the area.	LAs Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/01	The Environment Agency's regional office continuing to liaise with LAs and providing advice regarding IPC sites.
1.2 Agree common data sets.	LAs Agency	DETR	R	01/11/98		The Environment Agency's regional office continuing to liaise with LAs and providing advice regarding IPC sites.
1.3 Estimate the impact of IPC processes.	Agency		U	01/11/98	31/10/01	Dispersion modelling work has been undertaken by regional office where appropriate, and this has been supplemented by dispersion modelling work carried out by the area team.

Issue 2: The sustainability of water resources

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
2.1 Develop groundwater model.	Agency		216.5	01/11/98	31/10/00	Model completion anticipated by March 2001. £216.5k now committed.
2.2 No new licences and negotiate options for reduced abstraction, using model above.	Agency Water Company		U/CS	01/11/98	31/10/03	Memorandum of Understanding signed with South Staffordshire Water Pic (SSW). To be implemented this year in terms of compensation and hence cut backs, on receipt of the West Midlands and Worfe Groundwater Model.
2.3 Enhance Swindon gauging station for low flow measurements.	Agency		U	01/11/98	31/10/02	Station enhancements proposed for 2000-2002.
2.4 Encourage winter abstraction and storage.	Agency		U/R	01/11/98	31/10/03	Ongoing consideration of three further winter storage licences in the LEAP area.
2.5+ Investigate possible low flow problem on Spittle Brook.	Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/01	Ongoing.

Issue 3: Impacts of over-abstraction within the Blakedown Valley

4

ACTIONS Long term measures see Issue 2	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
3.1 Quantify impacts: a) Install observation wells and water level monitoring equipment b) Determine effects on (i) ecological and (ii) archeological environment.	Agency	EN LA	8 11.5 U	01/11/98 01/11/98	31/10/00 31/10/03	Installation COMPLETE. Monitoring ongoing. Awaiting results of water level monitoring in 3.1(a).
3.2 Complete project to augment of water levels in Swan Pool, Forge Pool and Ladies Pool in 1998 using groundwater.	Agency		25	01/11/98	31/10/01	Project now complete. Operating rules to be updated to include Ladies Pool. Monitoring is continuing.
3.3 Review trial releases of water to Blakedown Brook in 1998/99 and assess the benefit to Hurcott/Podmore SSSI.	Agency STW Ltd SSW plc		3	01/11/98		Trial releases now planned before March 2001. Assessment to include benefit of current and future releases from Hagley STW.
3.4 Reduce groundwater licences to a sustainable volume as indicated by groundwater modelling (Issue 2).	Agency STW Ltd SSW plc		U	01/11/98	31/10/03	Awaiting completion of the West Midlands and Worfe groundwater model (see 2.1).
3.5 Review the possibility of restoring dried pools higher up system in Blakedown using groundwater from new and/or existing sources.	STW Ltd SSW plc Agency		U	01/11/98	31/10/01	Memorandum of Understanding signed with SSW plc. To be implemented this year in terms of compensation and licence cutbacks, on receipt of West Midlands and Worfe groundwater model.

Actions Update

Issue 4: Low conservation value and poor biodiversity

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ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
4.1 Develop and implement appropriate guidelines for the protection of riparian habitats for water voles.	Agency UWT LAs	WTs IWA	6	01/11/98	31/10/00	Survey of Water Vole populations undertaken in Worcestershire shows decline. Training carried out for office and operational staff. Sites protected through planning.
4.2 Monitor otter distribution and undertake habitat improvements.	WTs LAs Agency STW BW		15	01/11/98	31/10/03	Stour Otter Project Group established and is bidding for HLF Funding.
4.3 Determine the current status of native brown trout and investigate the degree of genetic diversity in these relict populations in line with the Wild Brown Trout Strategies.	Agency		4	01/11/98	31/10/00	The population has been found to be genetically diverse. It has been recommended that stocks be protected from decline.
4.4 Implement planting and management schemes to ensure the continued presence of native black poplar in the catchment.	Agency	FC WTs	6	01/11/98	31/10/00	Planting advice ongoing.
4.5 +Seek opportunities for reed bed creation, lowland wet grassland and floodplain woodland.	Agency Developers LAs	FRCA MAFF STW Ltd	13	01/11/98	31/10/03	Management improvement at Puxton and Stourvale through grazing of marshes.
4.6 a) Restore wetlands and develop management plans at Puxton, Stourvale, Wilden and Spennells Valley in Kidderminster and develop a Country park and Local Nature Reserve. +b) Investigate similar possibilities on Stanklyn Pool and Barnet Brook.	Agency WFDC WWT Landowners EN		50?	01/11/98	31/10/03	See 4.5 and 4.9.
				01/11/98	31/10/02	No action so far this reporting year.
4.7 +Carry out baseline survey of great crested newts and potential habitats in key parts of the catchment and support development of species action plan.	Agency LAs EN WTs		R	01/11/98	31/10/02	Existing records being collected to determine survey requirements.
4.9 +Work with others to identify targets for national Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species/habitats for which the Agency is the lead.	Agency EN WTs LAs		5	01/11/98	31/10/02	Input into Birmingham and Black Country BAP (now published).

Issue 5: Poor fish stocks

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
5.1 Develop and implement a strategy for the creation of instream habitat and riparian buffer zones.	Agency	Landowners Anglers FRCA	35	01/11/98	31/10/03	Being considered as part of the Kidderminster Flood Alleviation Scheme.
5.2 Selective fish stocking.	Agency		5	01/11/98	31/10/03	1000 Chub and Dace stocked at Wolverley.

Issue 6: Compliance with River Quality Objectives and EC Directives

Issue 6(ii): Failures involving specific discharges

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
6(ii).1 Monitor the improvements made under AMP2 to Roundhill STW, Wombourne STW, and West Hagley STW; and the effects of transferring sewage from Freehold and Caledonian STWs to Roundhill STW.	Agency STW Ltd		R	01/11/98	31/10/02	Monitoring continuing. Improvements at STW's have taken place with Freehold & Caledonian closing. Initial results show a dramatic improvement in the River Stour's Water Quality.
6(ii).2 Pipe Wombourne STW effluent to Smestow Brook to improve dilution (see Issue 6 (i)).	STW Ltd Agency		CS	01/11/98	31/10/00	It is anticipated that Wombourne Brook will comply with its RQO this year. No further action proposed although monitoring and analysis of data will continue. This will no longer be included as a specific issue in the LEAP.
6(ii).3 Promote the inclusion of funding under AMP3 for possible improvement work at the following STWs: Trescott; Gospel End; Blakedown and Belbroughton.	Agency STW Ltd		R	01/11/98	31/10/01	Blakedown and Belbroughton have been included in the AMP3 Scheme. Awaiting decision from the Secretary of State to see if Trescott and Gospel End STWs will be included in the AMP3 scheme.
			CS	01/11/98		

Issue 6(iii): Failures requiring investigation by the Agency

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
6(iii).1 Investigate to identify/confirm cause of failure: Smestow Brook Dudley Canal	Agency		R			Investigation complete, showing various surface water sewer and industrial estate run-off problems. The next stage is for the Agency and Severn Trent Water Ltd to follow up with site visits to eliminate discharges. No investigation undertaken as yet. Monitoring is ongoing to determine whether the failure could be algal-related.
	Agency	WMBC		01/11/98	31/10/01	
	Agency	BW		01/11/98	21/10/01	
6(iii).2 +Encourage the removal of contaminated sediments from Staffs and Worcs Canal bed.	Agency	BW STW Ltd	U	01/11/98	31/10/00	Investigation into heavy metal contamination of the canal sediment has been completed. Canal dredging has now taken place (late 1999).

Issue 6(iv): Problems associated with unsatisfactory combined sewer overflows

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ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
6(iv).1 Assess the improvements to the 10 Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in the AMP2 scheme.	Agency STW Ltd		R CS	01/11/98	31/10/01	Monitoring has shown that the water quality of the River Stour has dramatically improved downstream of the CSOs.
6(iv).2 Identify further CSOs for improvement.	Agency STW Ltd		R CS	01/11/98	31/10/03	A further 23 CSO's have been allocated funding for improvements under AMP3.
6(iv).3 Undertake UPM (Urban Pollution Management) study at Barnhurst STW to ascertain the effects of storm discharges to the Smestow Brook and Staffs and Worcs Canal.	STW Ltd	Agency	CS	01/11/99	31/10/01	A final report is now being produced

Issue 7: The need for assessment of the current status of the Pensnett Canal

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
7.1 Discuss current status and future proposals for canal with Dudley MBC and local wildlife groups.	Agency Dudley MBC Wildlife Groups BW IWA		U	01/11/98	31/10/01	There has been no progress on this action.
7.2 Assess water quality of canal.	Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/02	The Agency has dealt with a number of pollution incidents on the canal. No specific surveys have been undertaken.
7.3 Assess polluting inputs to canal. (also see Issue 17)	Agency		U	01/11/98	31/10/02	
7.4 Assess importance/potential importance of canal to local conservation.	Agency Dudley MBC Wildlife Groups BW IWA		U	01/11/98	31/10/02	There has been no progress on this action.

Issue 8: Nitrate contamination of groundwater

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
8.1 Implement and extend NVZ ¹ scheme within the LEAP area.	Action plan agreed between Environment Agency & DETR		U	01/11/98	31/10/03	Implementation of the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) scheme was completed in December 1998. Visits are still being undertaken to farmers in the area to assess compliance with relevant legislation.

¹Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) An area where nitrate concentrations exceed, or are at risk of exceeding, the limit of 50mg/l laid down in the 1991 EC Nitrate Directive, and where compulsory, uncompensated measures came into force of 19 December 1998 as a means of reducing those levels.

Issue 9: Pollution from industrial estates and the construction sector

4

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
9.1 Hold 'roadshow' style seminars and/or undertake on-site visits for SMEs on industrial estates where a) pollution incidents are a problem, or b) diffuse pollution is believed to be significant.	Agency	LAs Partners	R	01/11/98	31/10/02	No further progress this year due to priorities for resources.
9.2 Visit new construction sites located in sensitive areas prior to commencement of operations.	Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/00	New construction sites in some areas continue to be sent pollution prevention guidance. This approach is to be extended to cover the whole of the Stour LEAP area.

Issue 10: The impact of culverted watercourses

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
10.1 + Identify significant lengths of culverting for potential removal and identify possible areas for river corridor appraisals.	Agency		3	01/11/01		Work postponed on this particular action, and will now commence in 2001.
10.2 Remove culverts, where possible.	Riparian owner		U	01/11/98	31/10/00	De-culverting of river secured in Kidderminster as part of the Kidderminster Town Centre 1 (KTC1) development (see Issue 14.3). No other opportunities have arisen during this reporting period.
10.3+ Produce display and educational material to highlight issues in the LEAP area.	Agency		2	01/11/01	31/10/01	Work postponed on this particular action, and will now commence in 2001.

In addition to the above actions, the Agency will address this issue through its routine activities by undertaking enforcement action on illegal culverting works. This will be reported in the Annual Reviews as appropriate.

Issue 11: Shopping trolleys in watercourses

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
11.1 Seek solutions in partnership with others to resolve the problem.	Supermarkets Wyre Forest DC Agency		U	01/11/98	31/10/01	Liaison has taken place with a number of supermarkets. They are now on board to recover their trolleys, and some employ a contractor. The action will continue into next year as some more work is needed.

In addition to the above actions, the Agency will address this issue through its routine activities by taking action against offenders under Land Drainage Byelaw 11 for permitting an obstruction to a main river (and under its Enforcement Policy). This will be reported in the Annual Reviews as appropriate.

Issue 12: Kidderminster town centre redevelopment

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ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
12.1 Continue to provide advice at feasibility stage of the town centre development on the improvement of flood defence standards and ecological quality.	Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/02	The Agency has successfully used an opportunity to get a £1.5m flood alleviation scheme for Kidderminster Town Centre to be funded by the developer. The Agency will continue to work with the developer to ensure flood defences and ecological concerns are addressed.
12.2 Improve "off-site" flood defences.	Agency		R*/ U(i)	01/11/98	31/10/02	Planning permission has been granted for the Flood Alleviation Scheme) as described above). This will reduce the risk of flooding in Kidderminster.

R* Revenue costs only at present to Agency, awaiting outcome of negotiations

Issue 13: Lack of recreation and amenity facilities

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
13.1 Increase the opportunities for angling on the rivers, canals and other water bodies.	Agency Angling Clubs LAS	IWA BW Landowners	15	01/11/98	31/10/03	A 'Learn to Fish' event was held at Leasowes Park in August 2000.
13.2 Improve the opportunities for disabled angling.	Agency Angling Clubs LAS	IWA BW Landowners	15	01/11/98	31/10/02	No Action this year.
13.3 Promote and support access initiatives.	LAs Groundwork Sustrans BW RA	Agency Landowners MAFF	R	01/11/98	31/10/03	Initiatives at Stourbridge and Halesowen are being explored through the planning process.
13.4 Improve public access at Mushroom Green.	Agency Sandwell MBC Dudley MBC	UWT BTCV	5	01/11/98	31/10/01	Planning permission for the foot bridge has been abandoned due to excess engineering costs and temporary flooding problems at the site.
13.5 +Consider opportunities for greater canoeing as water quality improves.	BCU	Agency BW IWA WTs	4	01/11/98	31/10/03	No action this year.

Issue 14: Protection and expansion of watercourses and other green corridors and associated wildlife

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
14.1 Continue to implement and promote collaborative schemes that enhance areas of urban green desert adjacent to watercourses and wetland e.g. Worn Brook Walk.	Agency LAs	WTs Local community groups and forums	15	01/11/98	31/10/03	Continued promotion of Community Pride. £10 k has been secured for the Green Oases Project.
14.3 +Develop a closer liaison with those involved with the restoration and/or creation of wildlife corridors e.g. river corridor in Halesowen town centre as highlighted in Dudley UDP review; restoration of section of Dudley No.2 Canal.	Agency LAs BW IWA EN Canal Trusts		R	01/11/98	31/10/00	Discussions ongoing regarding habitat improvement associated with development at Stourbridge.

Issue 15: Development of flood warning system

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
15.1 Investigate the feasibility of improving/extending the flood warning system	Agency	LAs	10	01/11/98	31/10/01	Following the code changes to the flood warning system, investigations into extending/improving the system have begun. Improvements are to be made in the Stour area.

Issue 16: Flooding from urban development

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
16.1 Alleviate risk of flooding to property at locations identified in S105 survey: a) Construct flood defences to protect property at risk b) Reduce flood levels by increasing watercourse capacity to protect property at risk c) Reduce flood flows by upstream surface water balancing.	Agency	Property Owners/ developers	EA assessing costs where works worthwhile	01/11/98	31/10/03	Cost/Benefit assessment delayed by Easter 1998 flood/ Bye Report action. Actions (a), (b) and (c) are dependent on completion of this. Source control techniques advised through the planning liaison process.
16.2 Remove obstructions/ developments which increase flood levels (also see Issue 10).	Agency LAs Property Owners/ developers		U	01/11/98	31/10/02	No opportunities occurred in this review period.
16.3 Map floodplain, provide maps for local authorities and highlight areas where restoration of floodplain capacity is advantageous.	Agency	LAs	5	01/11/98	31/10/00	Floodplain maps provided to local authorities.
16.4 Model effects of urbanisation on flooding regime and devise long-term strategy to reduce detrimental effects.	Agency		25	01/11/98	31/10/03	No work programmed for this review period.
16.5 Ensure proposed new development does not add to existing flooding problems.	LAs	Agency	R		31/10/03	Development in flood risk areas objected to on 8 sites during the review period. Sustainable Urban Drainage techniques advised through the planning liaison process.

Issue 17: The effects of development on wildlife, cultural heritage, recreation and the landscape

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ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
17.2 Actively seek greater publicity for examples of best practice in development and engineering.	Agency LAs Developers	STW Ltd WTs	4	01/11/98	31/10/03	See 14.3

Issue 18: Flytipping and litter

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
18.1 Develop a strategy to control flytipping/litter at specific locations.	LAs Agency	Groundwork Trust TBC VOs	R	01/11/98	31/10/00	A National Flytipping Stakeholders Forum has been set up whereby a number of organisations, including the Environment Agency, are collaborating to develop a co-ordinated approach to the problem of flytipping. The Forum has produced guidance to help landowners, managers and members of the public combat flytipping. Regular liaison with LAs has been established to roll out the flytipping protocol locally. The use of remote CCTV equipment in targeted hotspots is being looked at, however, cost, maintenance and health & safety obstacles have yet to be overcome.
18.2 Remove the 'build up' of litter at certain locations.	LAs	Groundwork Trust TBC Agency VOs	U	01/11/98	31/10/03	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) has continued throughout the year to organise spring clean events around the borough. During National Spring Clean month in April the Environment Agency and Territorial Army assisted in a clean-up of a playing field and pond in Kingswinford.

Issue 19: Metal recycling sites

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
19.1 Unlicensed sites: a) ensure that all operations are licensed or registered as exempt b) take enforcement action as appropriate.	Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/00	a) 59 sites identified as requiring regulation. All have been visited and assessed resulting in 20 requiring registration as exempt activities. 13 operators have submitted exemption applications with action plans to the end of October 1999. b) 7 sites are likely to require enforcement action as they have not attempted to carry out any works to enable compliance with the exemption criteria.
19.2 Exempt sites: a) ensure sites are registered and complying with criteria. Take enforcement action where necessary. b) improve operating standards where necessary.	Agency	LAs Landowners	R	01/11/98	31/10/00	Currently registered exempt sites should be routinely visited.

Note: As the MRS project is now complete this work will be routine in future. Any new unauthorised MRS identified will be dealt with the same way as any other unauthorised waste site in accordance with Agency policy.

Issue 20: Sustainable waste management

4

Actions Update

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
20.1 Set up waste minimisation initiatives.	BCBEA Agency	Partners	U(i)	01/11/98	31/10/00	The Waste Minimisation Groups set up during the previous year in the Black Country have completed their training sessions. Thirty local companies were involved and have identified initial annual cost savings of more than £257,000. A further group in the Black Country is currently working with ten companies.
20.2+ Develop local initiatives to promote the sustainable management of household waste.	LAs	Agency	U	01/11/98	31/10/03	See note* below for a summary of some of the work done by LAs during the review period.
20.3 Promote waste minimisation to companies during routine industrial visits.	Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/03	Waste minimisation has been promoted to companies visited i) as part of the national waste survey ii) in connection with the Packaging Waste Regulations, and iii) to provide pollution prevention advice.

Note* 20.2

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council is continuing with the green waste composting at civic amenity sites, with material being processed by contractor for land remediation. A buy-back option exists for the council to acquire the compost and sell on to householders at £2 per bag. Kerbside collection for glass, cans, paper, textiles, and white goods are ongoing and now serve a wider area within the borough.

Wolverhampton Metropolitan Borough Council – green waste collected separately at the borough's two civic amenity sites (one of which is within the LEAP area), and passed to a variety of contractors who process it for different end-uses. The compost has been sold on during three publicised sale days. Inert household waste from CA sites (e.g. rubble) is also being segregated and used by contractors for civil engineering use. On a weekly basis around 630 containers of domestic recyclables are collected from a customer base of 1200 premises. In addition, a weekly kerbside service collects and recycles newspapers, glass, textiles, shoes, cardboard and cans.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council increased the number of bring sites over the last year. It is reviewing its waste strategy and recycling plan in November, which will be concentrating on reviewing recycling markets and plastic/green waste recycling. The Community Recycling Scheme (CRV, -an environmental body) serves 50,000 households across the borough with kerbside collection of paper, textiles, cans and furniture. Sandwell have also just obtained a grant via the landfill tax system to fund 3,500 home composters for spring next year. If the take-up is successful the district will subsidise additional composters thereafter.

Bridgnorth District Council have started collecting green waste at CA sites for processing at Himley Wood landfill site. Material is to be used as final cover in the restoration of the site. Also looking to supply subsidised composters in March 2000 to certain collection rounds.

Herefordshire Council Promoted the National Biorecycling campaign and Biorecycling week. Worked with the Agency's Envirobus at Sainsbury's in Hereford during "Waste Week". A "Slim your bin" campaign is being run jointly with Worcestershire County Council as part of the 25 year waste set to greatly increase the levels of waste recovered/recycled (40% by the year 2005).

Wyre Forest District Council to introduce kerbside collection where feasible.

South Staffordshire District Council have launched a major waste awareness campaign "Watch your Waste" which will run from May 2000 to May 2001. The scheme, which targets households, aims to highlight recycling, home-composting, reduction and re-use.

Wychavon District Council are awaiting the building of the new Metal recycling Site (MRS) at Hilland Moor Landfill (Planning permission has been granted) before a kerbside collection of recyclables can begin.

Worcestershire County Council household waste sites will offer an increased range of recycling containers. Introduced kerbside collections for recyclables and are expecting Severn Waste Services to submit a planning application for an Energy from Waste plant at Kidderminster. Running the "Slim Your Bin" project as part of the "Face Up To Waste" campaign.

Issue 21: Environmental monitoring of Integrated Pollution Control Authorisations

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ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
21.1 Develop a joint and consistent approach on environmental monitoring where necessary with local authorities	LAs Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/00	COMPLETED Liaison with Dudley MBC on soil quality issues has achieved a consistent approach.
21.2 Identify sites for environmental monitoring.	LAs Agency		R	01/11/98	31/10/01	COMPLETED Air quality monitoring has now been carried out in Kidderminster and Stourport to assess impact from IPC processes.
21.3 Undertake monitoring at agreed sites.	LAs Agency	Site Operators	40	01/11/98	31/10/00	COMPLETED Monitoring work completed and report "A Baseline Soil Survey in the South Dudley Area" has been produced. Meeting held with Dudley MBC to discuss report. Report to be on the agenda for the next Council Environment Committee.

Issue 22: The need to raise and promote environmental awareness and education

ACTIONS	PARTNERS		TOTAL COST (£K)	TIMESCALE		PROGRESS
	LEAD	OTHER		START	END	
22.1 Develop a local education strategy and establish partnerships to deliver it. ¹	Agency	LAs Community Groups WTs STW Ltd TBG and other partners	U	01/11/98	31/10/01	Local needs are yet to be established. Area Education Strategy is relevant to this area and reactive visits and events will continue.
21.2 +Continue to support the Community Pride initiative in Dudley and investigate expanding to other parts of the LEAP area (see Section 5.3.3 of Action Plan).	Agency	LAs Community Groups	4	01/11/98	31/10/03	The second Dudley Community Pride Contest, coordinated jointly by the Agency and Dudley MBC was won by the 'Friends of Mousesweet Brook' for their environmental improvement work at the Mousesweet Brook Nature Reserve.

Note¹

Topics being investigated include: the promotion of environmental education material to schools and colleges (including evaluation of needs for Key Stage material/packs); promotion of the Eco-schools project; targeted environmental awareness and pollution prevention campaigns and roadshows for industry and local businesses; supporting Local Agenda 21 initiatives; participation in local community events to raise public awareness about environmental issues.

Note²

The Community Pride initiative is an annual competition which provides local groups with the opportunity to get involved in community based environmental improvement projects.

We will use the LEAP Annual Review process to report on the developing local education strategy, and will include specific actions and more detail in the next Annual Review.

5. Future reviews

5

We will be reviewing and reporting on the progress of these actions in the third annual review which is due in December 2001. It is our intention to review the format in which the annual reviews are produced and would welcome your suggestions and ideas.

Appendix one

Summary of the Environment Agency's routine activities in the West Midlands Stour area

The strategic nature of the LEAP as a long-term planning tool, directing manpower and financial resources to resolving environmental problems, means that the plan is not designed to reflect fully on routine activity within the LEAP area. Our everyday work, of which examples are given below, commits substantial resources to managing the environment.

Education, raising environmental awareness, routine monitoring work and enforcement are all important in achieving the Agency's objective to protect and improve the environment. These activities and regulatory responsibilities form the basis of our work. Our routine activities include:

- regulation of discharges to controlled waters through the issue and enforcement of discharge consents, responding to pollution incidents, prosecuting polluters, sampling water quality, carrying out surveys, setting water quality targets, and protecting groundwater quality
- regulation of industrial processes with the greatest pollution potential
- regulation of the disposal, keeping and use of radioactive waste
- regulation of the keeping, treating, movement and disposal of controlled waste
- regulation of the remediation of contaminated land designated as special sites
- the responsibility for water resources includes licence determination, charging, policing and enforcement
- fisheries – fish surveys, fish rescues, restocking, regulation of fisheries by licences
- flood defence activities include regulation (including issuing of land drainage consents), enforcement, maintenance and

improvement works, and issuing of flood warnings

- the Agency works closely with local planning authorities through its planning liaison function, commenting on planning application consultations and promoting policies to protect and enhance the environment in development plans

The Agency educates industry through consultation, collaborative activity and focussed campaigns to promote the culture of prevention rather than cure. However where this fails or if the offence is of a serious nature, the Agency will use available powers, including legal action, to prevent or to rectify the situation. During 1999/2000 in the West Midlands Stour area there were 3 waste prosecutions for offences. There was one formal caution issued to water polluters in the area. Formal cautions are given where it is deemed inappropriate to prosecute but it was clear that a significant offence had been committed. Other pollutions are dealt with by warning letters. We responded to 192 reported water pollution incidents in total in the West Midlands Stour area, of which 176 were substantiated on investigation. Of the 176 substantiated pollutions, one was a Category 1 incident.

Routine monitoring work includes site inspections throughout the area at sewage works (private and water company), sewerage systems, industrial sites, contaminated land sites, farm sites, licensed waste management facilities, and landspreading sites. During 1999/2000 there were 1205 water samples taken for chemical analysis.

During 1999/2000 a total of four abstraction licences were issued in the West Midlands Stour area, three were for surface water abstraction, one for groundwater abstraction. In addition, 64 routine enforcement visits to licence holders were carried out. A total of 18 Land Drainage Consents were granted in the West Midlands Stour area during the reporting year (November 1999-October 2000), and one consent application was refused.

Appendix 2

Current Status of Local Authority Development Plans in the West Midlands Stour area

LOCAL ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY PLAN

**WEST MIDLANDS
STOUR**



LOCAL AUTHORITY	% OF AREA	DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND CURRENT STATUS
West Midlands	35.0	RPG 11 – Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands, September 1995 (updated 1998) covering the counties of Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire in addition to the West Midland Metropolitan Boroughs.
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC)	24.1	Dudley Unitary Development Plan adopted November 1993. Review commenced Summer 1999. 1st deposit version completed. 2nd deposit version expected by summer 2001 and enquiry by summer 2002, possibly adoption by 2003.
Sandwell MBC	2.8	Sandwell Unitary Development Plan adopted January 1995 (republished June 1996). Review 1st deposit November 1999.
Wolverhampton MBC	8.1	Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan adopted September 1993. Review – Issues Report June 2000.
Staffordshire County Council	31.3	Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 Consultation Draft, October 1997. Now in deposit draft, examination in public October 1999. Minerals Local Plan adoption November 1999. Waste Local Plan 1st deposit Spring 2000.
South Staffordshire District Council	31.3	South Staffordshire District Local Plan adopted December 1996.
Worcestershire County Council	33.7	Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011, Consultation Draft May 1999. Initial deposit January 2000. EIP panel report expected by end of October 2000. Possible adoption by June 2001. Minerals Local Plan adopted April 1997.
Bromsgrove District Council	11.0	Bromsgrove District Local Plan Deposit Draft November 1993, Inspector's report following Public Enquiry February 1997. 1st deposit of new plan Summer 2000. Consultation period ending Oct 2000. Progression towards adoption depends on outcome of consultation period.
Wychavon District Council	<1	Wychavon District Local Plan adopted January 1998. Issues Report on Revised Plan 2000.
Wyre Forest District Council	22.0	Wyre Forest District Local Plan adopted May 1996. Pre-deposit draft out until 6 October 2000. Deposit version out by May 2001.

Appendix 3

Pollution Incident Reports by Type and Cause – June 1999 to June 2000

		CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3	CUMULATIVE TOTAL
TYPE	Agriculture	0	0	4	4
	Oil	0	1	36	37
	Chemical	0	0	3	3
	Sewage	0	0	3	3
	Other	1	3	15	19
	TOTAL	1	4	61	66
SOURCE	Industry & Commercial	0	1	40	41
	Agriculture	0	0	4	4
	Water Utility Company	1	3	2	6
	Other	0	0	15	15
	TOTAL	1	4	61	66

Category 1 – Major incident Category 2 – Significant incident Category 3 – Minor incident

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