

## Upper Itchen Initiative (UII) meetings

### Membership

Graham Roberts (GR) (Chair)	VCT Trustee
Carrie Hutchings (Secretary) (CH)	Vitacress Conservation Trust
Tom Amery (TA)	The Watercress Company
Jen Ball (JB)	University of Southampton
Mark Baring (MBa)	Itchen Stoke Estate
Zam Baring (ZB)	Wessex Rivers Trust
Charles Barter (CB)	NFU Watercress Association
Adam Bates (Aba)	Natural England
Ollie Bedford (OB)	The Watercress Company
Andy Blincow (ABI)	Wessex Rivers Trust
Kathryn Bolter (KB)	Hampshire & IOW Wildlife
Martin Burton (MAB)	Water Specialist, Consultant and VCT Trustee
Alex Deacon (AD)	Wessex Rivers Trust
Simon Ffennell (SF)	Riparian Owner
Roger Harrison (RH)	Riparian Owner
Jeremy Legge (JL)	Test & Itchen Association
Leah Mathias-Collins	Vitacress Ltd
Nick Measham (NM)	Salmon & Trout Conservation
Aldous Rees (AR)	Natural England
Martin de Retuerto (MdR)	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Steve Rothwell (SDR)	Vitacress Ltd and VCT
David Rumble (DR)	Wessex Rivers Trust
Ben Rushbrook (BR)	Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Pete Shaw (PS)	University of Southampton
Maggie Shelton (MSh)	Hampshire & IOW Wildlife
Kerry Sims (KS)	Environment Agency
Tim Sykes (TS)	Environment Agency
Tony Swindell (TSw)	Bakkavor Alresford Salads
Bob Wellard (BW)	Piscatorial Society
Ben Yaxley (BY)	Natural England

### Meeting notes

Date:	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
Location:	Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams
Notes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Southern Water</b> – SW's recent update in relation to their RAPID application and the Candover pipeline planning application. Concerns over SW's ability to deliver extra sources of water and lack of communication around the planning process. Southern Water should be reminded about demand management as well as supply. This link was posted:  <a href="https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/default/pdfs/WRMP-technical-report.pdf">https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/default/pdfs/WRMP-technical-report.pdf</a>. The importance of maintaining the Water Efficiency Programme should also be stressed to Southern Water.</li> <li>● <b>Watercress and Winterbournes Project</b> – Updates provided on progress with its 20 initiatives.</li> <li>● <b>Research</b> – EA, T&amp;I, S&amp;T and H&amp;IWWT co-sponsoring PhD student, Hannah Markham, at Nottingham University researching spikes in</li> </ul>

phosphates in chalk streams. There are now several PhD students working on the Test and Itchen.

- **Test & Itchen Association** – Autumn samples arrived and will be reviewed. Invertebrate numbers appear to be better on the Lower Itchen than the Upper.
- **Micro-Plastics** – Alex Deacon leading a project with Earthwatch to investigate whether there is an issue with micro-plastics in chalk streams. Greenpeace are working with Exeter University on this topic. University of Southampton is also interested in this area of research.
- **Bakkovar** – The Alresford Salads site is closing as the result of the loss of business from a major customer. The facility is being decommissioned and the company is working closely with the EA to ensure it is left in an environmentally sound state. The watercress beds will continue to be operated by TWC along with their other farms.
- **The Watercress Company** – An update was circulated with the meeting papers. The meeting was updated on latest macroinvertebrate surveys which show healthy Gammarus levels. Results can be seen on the TWC website:  
<https://www.thewatercresscompany.com/working-with-water-and-ecology>
- **Vitacress** – The only site where any monitoring has been possible is at St Mary Bourne (SMB) in relation to the wetland development. A public consultation in relation to these wetlands will be online in January. Details will be circulated when it is open.
- **University of Southampton** • The group was invited to submit ideas for MSc projects. Outline subjects will be proposed early in December. Discussions are ongoing re a potential project at SMB looking at the impact of sewage works on chalk streams.
- **Septic Tanks** – The impact of septic tanks in the Alresford area and lack of mains drainage in Cheriton was raised. The meeting was advised Southern Water are obligated to put a certain amount of first-time sewage in each year. The meeting was reminded of the process which needs to be followed in that a concerted approach is required from the NGOs, possibly through the Parish Council, to formally request that Southern Water undertake this work. It was suggested the W&W might act as a conduit to highlight the issue with the communities. It was reported that the Cheriton community are not greatly in favour of going onto mains drainage having raised the following concerns: (a) the cost versus what they currently pay; (b) the potential for mains drainage opening up the village for development; (c) they are already pumping out of the Cheriton, there is a worry that mains drainage will make this worse. A suggestion was made to monitor the discharge from a traditional septic tank in Cheriton for a period (3 months) and then replace the tank with an improved form of waste processing. Villagers could participate in the study and would hopefully see the impact and benefits of upgrading their systems.
- **Chalk Stream Headwaters Forum** – The 2021 Forum is planned for 26 November. GR invited ideas as work is starting on formulating the programme. Similarly, any nominations for the Conservation and Dissertation awards would be welcomed.

