



South Devon Catchments Partnership

Terms of Reference

Aim

The aim of the South Devon Catchments Partnership is to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to secure better outcomes for the environment throughout the group of river catchments.

The Host Partners

The South Devon Catchments Partnership is hosted jointly by the South Devon AONB Unit and the Westcountry Rivers Trust, supported by the Environment Agency.

Geographical Scope

- The South Devon Catchments Partnership covers the hydrological catchments of the Yealm, Erme, Avon, Salcombe, Dart and Teign river systems.
- The Westcountry Rivers Trust alone covers delivery on the hydrological catchment of the Teign river.

Project Drivers

- The primary driver for the Catchment Based Approach is the need for the UK to meet its water quality obligations under the Water Framework Directive.
- The programme is also driven by Defra's *Catchment Based Approach Policy Framework* (May 2013) and the *Guide to Collaborative Catchment Management* (August 2013).

Thematic Scope

- Water quality improvement is the principle thematic focus.
- The Partnership's scope also embraces the whole range of benefits derived from the river catchments including:
 - Food production
 - Drinking water
 - Wildlife habitats
 - Flood regulation

- Recreation & sport
- Culture & heritage

Operating Principles

- **Local:** We are committed to supporting local initiatives, actions and collaboration operating at the lowest appropriate level, and only to address issues at a river catchment or operational catchment scale where this is needed to secure better outcomes.
- **Honest:** We are committed to building trust and confidence between the partners and the wider community and stakeholders, through openness and honesty in our dealings.
- **Inclusive:** We work in a way that is community-led, and promote a "bottom-up" approach to identifying issues and solutions.
- **Realistic:** We are committed to making clear what we can and cannot do, both within the partnership and in our external relationships, in order to avoid raising expectations that cannot be fulfilled.
- **Fair:** We act impartially, in an "honest broker" role, when seeking solutions to problems and conflicts.
- **Adaptive:** We promote the exchange of learning and good practice both at a local level and with other catchment partnerships.
- **Effective:** We avoid creating duplication and bureaucracy and strive to promote tangible benefits for the environment.

Organisation

- **Host Partners Partnership Agreement:** We maintain a host partnership agreement and review it annually.
- **Lead contacts:** Each host partner has nominated a principle contact for project management purposes. These are:
 - South Devon AONB: Nigel Mortimer
 - Westcountry Rivers Trust: Nick Paling
- The Environment Agency catchment co-ordinator is Trevor Cronin.
- **Structure of the Partnership:**
 - **Working group:** taking a leading role in the partnership and the development of the action plan
 - **Active group:** involved in carrying out work on the ground
 - **Informed group:** on mailing list to keep informed about the project, with a view to possible future involvement

- Work Programme: We agree an annual work programme, which may be reviewed and amended as required.
- Partnership communications:
 - Meetings for each group take place on a regular basis, in line with their level of involvement with the Partnership.
 - Regular emails are sent out to update and engage all Partners with the work of the Partnership.
 - A website (south-devon.org) is available as an engagement tool to recruit new Partners and raise interest in the Partnership. It is also a hub for sharing information on upcoming events, the action plan, and technical documents.
 - We adopt set of agreed communications, 'scripts' and format to be used in external communications such as publications, leaflets, press releases, website content etc. This ensures we present a consistent and coherent message about the Catchment Partnership and its work.
 - Press releases are subject to prior agreement between the Host Partners.

Finances

- We agree and adopt a programme budget annually, setting out the resources (staff and money) that each Host Partner will contribute to the work and how any external funding will be distributed and used.
- Where an arrangement is made to transfer funding between us, this is formally set out in writing as a separate binding contractual agreement.

Duration

It is a clear aspiration that we seek to maintain the South Devon Catchment Partnership for the long term. However, given the rapidly changing financial, legislative and organisational environment we operate in, we provide a clear framework of phases and review points within which we can give commitments.

Succession Strategy

To maximise the durability of the catchment partnership, and to minimise its vulnerability to loss of external funding, we aim to build the skills, knowledge and capacity within the communities and stakeholder groups we engage with, that will help to sustain the catchment-based approach in the long term.

06/04/2017

