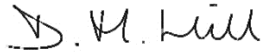


**TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**SEVERN HAM COMMITTEE**  
**11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

To: Councillors P Brookes (Chair), C Danter, J Raywood, C Cody, E Ash, Mr J Bagg, Ms K Andrews, Mr T Perry, Ms C Corsie.

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Severn Ham Committee to be held in the Town Hall, High Street, Tewkesbury on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 10:00 am.**

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend.



Debbie Hill  
Town Clerk  
4<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of interests
3. Dispensations
4. To approve the minutes of the Severn Ham committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024
5. Public Participation *(to provide members of the public/press with the opportunity to comment on items on the agenda or raise items for future consideration. In accordance with Standing Orders this will not exceed 12 minutes in total and 3 minutes per person.)*
6. Correspondence
7. Matters arising from the previous minutes – for information only
8. To receive an update from Severn Trent and agree any actions
9. To receive an update from Caroline Corsie, Environmental Adviser
10. To receive an update from Karen Andrews, Environment Agency
11. To receive an update from Tewkesbury Popular Anglers Association
12. To receive an update from the Deputy Town Clerk and agree any actions including:
  - i. Grazing 2024
  - ii. Hay Sale 2025
  - iii. To approve the next phase of the Eelscapes Project
  - iv. To support Safe Avon with the purchase of test consumables for the forthcoming year at a cost of £188
13. To receive the committee budget report and earmarked reserve report

**TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**SEVERN HAM COMMITTEE**  
**11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

- 14.** To agree the virement of £4,000 from Ancillary Management (500/4880) to Staffing Professional (110/4100)
- 15.** To agree the release of £3750 from EMR 344 to 500/4875 for tree works on the Ham
- 16.** To consider and agree the committee budget for 2025/26
- 17.** To approve the payments list



**TEWKESBURY  
TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

*of the*

**Severn Ham Committee meeting**

**Held at Town Hall, Tewkesbury on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 10.00am**

**Present:** Cllrs P Brookes (Chair), E Ash, C Cody, C Danter, J Raywood, Ms C Corsie, Mr Perry, Mr Baggs (Clerk to the Commoners), Ms Andrews (Environment Agency), Mr P Jones, Ms A Martyn-Smith (Dalcour McLaren), Mr M Jones (ST), Mr A Pagel (GEDA)

**In attendance:** Ms J King (Deputy Town Clerk)

**SH 24/013 To receive apologies for absence**  
There were no apologies for absence.

**SH 24/014 To record declarations of interest**  
Mr Baggs – Clerk to the Commoners.

**SH 24/015 To consider requests for dispensations**  
None received.

**SH 24/016 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024**  
It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024.  
Proposed by Cllr J Raywood, seconded by Cllr Danter.

**SH 24/017 Public Participation**  
There was no public participation.

**SH 24/018 Correspondence**  
No correspondence.

**SH 24/019 Matters arising from the previous minutes – for information only**  
SH20/024 ELMS Model for the Severn Ham – ongoing  
SH22/058 Eel Pass monitoring details – ongoing  
SH22/070 Legacy proposal – circulated – now with Severn Trent (ST)  
SH23/026 Bird boxes – being installed - ongoing  
SH25/039 Pennywort – with Environment Agency – ongoing  
SH23/058 Apply to Natural England to harrow an area – ongoing  
SH23/058 Engagement with local schools – with Cllr Cody – closed  
SH24/010 Clearing river at same time as pipeline repair – raised with ST  
SH24/011 Swan support options - ongoing



## TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**SH 24/020**

**To receive an update from Severn Trent and to agree any actions**

The following update was provided by Severn Trent:

Following the catastrophic burst on the Severn Ham, it was noted that the pipe bridge had moved on the northern bank but the new pipe had not moved, however with the nature of the burst it has been difficult to ascertain the exact cause. There are pressure spikes out of the treatment works and that may have contributed to it. The joints that were installed between the new pipeline and the bridge were fit for purpose but were put under load and the works are now addressing the symptoms. The pipe bridge is being continually monitored and it has not moved since the monitoring has been installed and is stable. The pipe bridge has been extensively surveyed and it is in good condition, reports indicate a further lifespan of 60-70 years. Structural models have been built of the bridge and even with the spikes, the tolerances are good.

Initial repairs were done to the collars (where the new pipeline and the pipe bridge meet) to stop the leak and subsequent strength calculations have shown additional weld is required. This should mitigate any future failures in this area.

The pipe bridge is held in place by the pipe and the ground around it, the concrete that can be seen does not support the bridge at all, rather the fence that was installed around it. Current plan to stabilise the whole area, is to inject a 'state of the art' resin together with pea gravel around the underneath of the new pipe and around the base of the pipe bridge. This resin has been approved by Natural England and the Environment Agency for use near watercourses. The anticipated start date for these works is 7<sup>th</sup> October, followed by backfilling the site from 28<sup>th</sup> October.

The reinstatement works and riverbank stabilisation works will then take place in 2025. Where possible these will be soft engineering, potentially including willow root balls. Hard engineering in the form of large boulders may also be required to stop the erosion of the bank. Potential models are being investigated and will be shared as soon as available. All works will require approval by Natural England and the Environment Agency. A Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) will be required for these works, and it has a lead time of two months.

**SH 24/021**

**To receive an update from Caroline Corsie, Environmental Advisor and to agree any actions**

Ms Corsie provided the following update:

Hay spreading has taken place this year. Ben Perry has asked if we could provide details about the site regarding the hay he has purchased (e.g. from a SSSI)

**Action:** Ms Corsie & Deputy Town Clerk to agree suitable words.

Emma Rothero (leader of Floodplain Meadows Partnership) visited the site and is going to provide some suggestions for the ongoing management.



## TEWKESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Looking ahead to the spring, it may be worth considering a botanical survey. Deputy Town Clerk suggested that the results of the Eelscapes surveys are seen first and then a decision can be made on where the gaps potentially might be.

The new higher tier details for the Countryside Stewardship will be available shortly and in conjunction with the options from Eelscapes, decisions can then be made on which route to take.

Wild birds have been fed over the winter. The swans have had a really tough season and it looks like they lost their last cygnets.

**Action:** Birdboxes will need numbering and results recorded.

Ms Corsie also provided details of a number of other projects in the area. Eelscapes, Treescapes – 60 mile corridor from Chepstow to the Wyre, FWAG and CaBa (Catchment Basin Partnerships). Rainforest Corridor – multi agency corridor up to the west coast of Scotland.

**SH 24/022**

**To receive an update from the Deputy Town Clerk and agree any actions**

### **Docks working group**

The Severn Ham working group met in July to discuss the dock issues, the following are the findings:

- It was felt that weedkillers should not be used on the site
- Scrapes – could be placed where the docks are. Need advice on location. Natural England have agreed in principle but would need formal assent.
- Dip wells are the first step to check hydrology for appropriate locations for the scrapes – Deputy Town Clerk has subsequently spoken with Eelscape project and GWT are coming out to survey and then install to map hydrology across the winter.
- Laser zapping of weeds – post meeting note, the small robot company has gone into administration.
- Could the docks be topped and what would the frequency look like?
- Would spring grazing with a regenerative farmer be a possibility, with electric collars for the cattle?
- What is the proposal from Severn Trent to treat the docks that are coming through on the reinstatement strip?

### **Pennywort**

Karen Andrews provided an update on the floating pennywort. The Environment Agency (EA) are currently surveying 45km by boat and land along the Avon and producing a map of the location of the pennywort. There is a lot down by the Abbey Mill. The EA Operations team are working with ANT about how to clear it, as it needs to be tackled on a catchment wide basis. The draft strategy will be presented to an internal EA meeting in a couple of weeks, and they will discuss how they can involve external parties. Resource is an issue, but conversations are taking place.



**TEWKESBURY  
TOWN COUNCIL**

**Eelscape Project**

The Deputy Town Clerk and Ms Corsie attended a briefing for the Eelscape Project. The Ham is uniquely placed in the project in that it does not provide a livelihood for a farmer, so potentially could be more flexible about options moving forward.

**Legacy issues**

Severn Trent have not responded to the Rootwave proposal or provided an alternative approach. Deputy Town Clerk asked Ms Martyn-Smith if she could raise this with Severn Trent.

**EDF project to support migratory fish**

EDF have proved difficult to engage with and a new contact name has been given for the project. Ms Andrews advised that the business case is still going through assurance, if EDF agree to it, it will take about a year to be approved. If EDF do not wish to take it forward, the Environment Agency will bring the project back in house.

**Tree Works**

To note the emergency tree works that were carried out on the southern Ham at a cost of £3200. The works were carried out for health and safety reasons due to dead trees and proximity to the watercourse.

**Swans**

Concerns were raised over the future of the swans in Tewkesbury.

**Action:** Deputy Town Clerk to speak to ANT about signage about boat speed to protect the swans.

Biomatrix have a solution for floating swan platforms, which would be suitable for the location. Further investigations are required regarding funding and logistics.

**SH 24/023 To receive the committee budget report and earmarked reserve report**

The reports were received.

The meeting closed at 10.55am

Next meeting: Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 10am.

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes .....

## **Eelscapes briefing document for Severn Ham Committee and Councillors**

### **Project Background**

In their natural condition, the floodplains along the River Severn can support a rich mosaic of habitats including pools, reedbed, fen, wet woodland and grazing marsh. These habitats filter and store water, provide natural flood protection, and support healthy river ecosystems and biodiversity. However, the area has been drastically altered by hundreds of years of human activity and no longer performs these functions.

The vision of Eelscapes is to return these floodplains to a more natural condition by developing a range of carefully targeted conservation actions. Examples include changes to flood defences and ditch networks, creating ponds and water features, and making changes to farming practices and tree planting.

The project will support the recovery of iconic and threatened species which depend on naturally functioning floodplains, including the European eel and true fox-sedge. Communities along the Severn Vale will also benefit, as restoration work will support climate adaptation and create new opportunities for recreation and connections with nature.

### **Current status**

The Eelscapes project is currently in the development phase, which involves engaging with land holders and other stakeholders along the River Severn around Gloucester and Tewkesbury, of which the Severn Ham is one. The team are also carrying out a range of feasibility studies and baseline surveys to understand the current condition of the floodplain, and the wildlife that lives there. This evidence will help the project to develop a range of suitable actions to restore wetland habitats in the project area, before moving on to the next phase.

The development phase is scheduled to end in June 2025. If successful, the project will then move into the implementation phase when physical works can begin. Long-term agreements will be agreed with land holders in this phase, for the delivery of conservation works over 20+ years.

Below are some computer-generated images of what restoration may look like in both an urban and rural environment – obviously not all interventions are suitable for all sites.







### **What does this mean for the Severn Ham?**

With the funding for the site decreasing all the time (with Basic Payments due to end in 2025 and the Higher-Level Stewardship agreement ending in 2028) the Committee have been investigating all options for new funding for the site. Large scale Landscape Recovery projects, such as this, are expected to receive the highest level of funding and have the greatest positive environmental impact, so this is the option that the Committee are currently focussing on.

The Committee remain keenly aware that there is a balancing act between any new interventions and ensuring that historical rights, such as those belonging to the Commoners for the aftermath grazing, and the timing of the annual hay cut, are maintained.

Each site has been examined to see what interventions may be possible to help restore the wetland habitat. With the Ham, the proposal is to install scrapes and possibly a pond, totalling approximately 7 hectares at the southern end of the site, in the area that is currently held for the benefit of wintering waders. These scrapes / ponds would hold water for a longer time over the year, whilst the scrapes would dry out during the summer months, to allow these areas to be grazed. This would mean that less than 2 hectares would be removed from the available grazing, and it would actually benefit the livestock, as they would no longer be restricted to the trough in the north of the site or accessing the river to gain access to fresh water. The total area of the site is just under 70 hectares.

The proposed locations are in the areas with the densest dock infestations, but also avoid placing a scrape or pond over the pipeline or across a footpath.

### **Timescales**

To go through to the implementation phase of the project, the Committee will need to sign an agreement to this effect, based on the high-level intervention plan. This will need to be done in principle in December and then the final wording agreed in March.

In between these two dates, the Commoners will be asked to agree to the proposed interventions.

It is proposed that the Annual Town Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> April, will be used as an opportunity for the plans to be discussed in detail.



## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 26/11/2024

Month No: 8

## Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>500 Severn Ham</u>						
1620 Hay Auction	732	500	(232)			
1630 Basic Payment Scheme	7,350	7,245	(105)			
1640 Wayleaves	384	390	6			
1700 Fishing Rights	1,800	1,800	0			
1710 HLS Payment	0	22,248	22,248			
1715 Reinstatement Compensation	2,800	0	(2,800)			
	<u>13,067</u>	<u>32,183</u>	<u>19,116</u>			<u>0</u>
Severn Ham :- Income						
4450 Maintenance	111	1,500	1,389		1,389	
4550 Water	63	265	202		202	
4850 Commoners Grazing Compensation	0	3,500	3,500		3,500	
4855 Hay Sowing Project	3,613	4,000	387		387	
4860 Volunteers (Rec & Prom)	508	1,000	492		492	
4865 Auction Fees	400	500	100		100	
4870 Weeding	0	2,575	2,575		2,575	
4875 Tree Conservation	6,750	3,000	(3,750)		(3,750)	
4880 Ancillary Management	0	4,000	4,000		4,000	
4885 Nesting Project	198	1,000	802		802	
4890 Land Agent	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	
4895 Cross Compliance Consultant	0	530	530		530	
4900 Conservation Advisor	2,850	5,738	2,888		2,888	
4905 Footpath Repairs	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	
	<u>14,493</u>	<u>31,608</u>	<u>17,115</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>17,115</u>	<u>0</u>
Severn Ham :- Indirect Expenditure						
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<u>(1,425)</u>	<u>575</u>	<u>2,000</u>			
Grand Totals:- Income	<u>13,067</u>	<u>32,183</u>	<u>19,116</u>			
Expenditure	<u>14,493</u>	<u>31,608</u>	<u>17,115</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>17,115</u>	
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<u>(1,425)</u>	<u>575</u>	<u>2,000</u>			
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<u>(1,425)</u>					

Account	Opening Balance	Net Transfers	Closing Balance
320 EMR BUILD 64 BS Maintenance	66,935.00		66,935.00
321 EMR BUILD Town Hall Gardens	250.00		250.00
322 EMR MOOR Prior's Court	19,894.23		19,894.23
324 EMR E&A Noticeboards & Swapbox	1,708.00		1,708.00
325 EMR E&A Playground Projects	24,003.00		24,003.00
326 EMR E&A Youth	4,105.00		4,105.00
328 EMR BUILD War Memorial	7,875.73		7,875.73
329 EMR SH Severn Ham	34,133.00		34,133.00
330 EMR E&A CCTV	4,125.00		4,125.00
331 EMR E&A Tree Maintenance	5,650.00		5,650.00
332 EMR E&A Street Furniture	6,014.00		6,014.00
333 EMR E&A Toilet Block Project	13,145.00		13,145.00
335 EMR E&A Bus Shelters	10,773.25		10,773.25
336 EMR FIN Regalia	209.00		209.00
337 EMR FIN Website	2,520.00		2,520.00
338 EMR FIN Professional Fees	5,237.00		5,237.00
339 EMR FIN Legal	17,467.00		17,467.00
340 EMR FIN Elections	5,000.00		5,000.00
341 EMR FIN Tourism & Marketing	1,757.00		1,757.00
342 EMR FIN Newsletter	2,148.00		2,148.00
343 EMR SH Weeding	22,679.00		22,679.00
344 EMR SH Severn Ham Tree Maint	8,000.00		8,000.00
345 EMR SH Hay Sowing Project	8,675.00		8,675.00
346 EMR SH Footpath Repairs	3,253.00		3,253.00
349 EMR MOOR Projects	14,051.00		14,051.00
350 EMR BUILD Watson Hall Lease *	20,000.00		20,000.00
351 EMR BUILD 64 BS Grant Income	144,321.00	-144,321.00	0.00
354 EMR BUILD TH Maintenance	18,029.00		18,029.00
355 EMR BUILD WH Projects	19,319.00		19,319.00
356 EMR BUILD WH Bar Equipment	2,062.00		2,062.00
357 EMR BUILD 64 BS Projects	11,219.00		11,219.00
359 EMR PLA Community Devel Planni	5,856.00		5,856.00
360 EMR BUILD TH Projects	33,362.00		33,362.00
361 EMR FIN Community Grants	600.00		600.00
362 EMR FIN Tewkes Live Music Fest	2,199.00	-2,199.00	0.00
364 EMR Buildings Fundraising	720.00		720.00
365 EMR FIN Events and Services	2,439.00		2,439.00
366 EMR BUILD TH Equipment	870.00		870.00
367 EMR E&A Toilet Block Utilities	1,429.00		1,429.00
369 EMR STA Training	2,087.00		2,087.00
370 EMR PLA CIL	2,252.00		2,252.00
371 EMR PLA Planning Consultancy	1,415.00		1,415.00
372 EMR STA Professional Fees	3,792.00		3,792.00
373 EMR E&A Defibrillators	1,500.00	-1,500.00	0.00
375 EMR BUILD WH Go Fund Me	76.00		76.00
	<u>563,154.21</u>	<u>-148,020.00</u>	<u>415,134.21</u>

## Forward Budget Detail - By Centre

	Current Year Budget	Next Year Budget	Year 2 Budget	Year 3 Budget	Year 4 Budget	Year 5 Budget
500 Severn Ham						
1620 Hay Auction	500	0	0	0	0	0
1630 Basic Payment Scheme	7,245	3,528	0	0	0	0
1640 Wayleaves	390	390	0	0	0	0
1700 Fishing Rights	1,800	1,800	0	0	0	0
1710 HLS Payment	22,248	22,248	0	0	0	0
Total Income	32,183	27,966	0	0	0	0
4450 Maintenance	1,500	1,000	0	0	0	0
4550 Water	265	265	0	0	0	0
4850 Commoners Grazing	3,500	3,500	0	0	0	0
4855 Hay Sowing Project	4,000	4,000	0	0	0	0
4860 Volunteers (Rec & Prom)	1,000	500	0	0	0	0
4865 Auction Fees	500	500	0	0	0	0
4870 Weeding	2,575	2,575	0	0	0	0
4875 Tree Conservation	3,000	3,000	0	0	0	0
4880 Ancillary Management	4,000	4,000	0	0	0	0
4885 Nesting Project	1,000	500	0	0	0	0
4890 Land Agent	2,000	1,500	0	0	0	0
4895 Cross Compliance Consultant	530	550	0	0	0	0
4900 Conservation Advisor	5,738	5,967	0	0	0	0
4905 Footpath Repairs	2,000	1,000	0	0	0	0
Total Overhead Expenditure	31,608	28,857	0	0	0	0
Net Income over Expenditure	575	(891)	0	0	0	0
Total Budget Income	32,183	27,966	0	0	0	0
Expenditure	31,608	28,857	0	0	0	0
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	575	(891)	0	0	0	0