

15 October 2025

Havant Thicket Reservoir interim stakeholder advisory group meeting

Meeting notes

Anne Elkington, Independent Chair of the Havant Thicket Reservoir Stakeholder Advisory Group, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone on the video call.

Attendees were reminded that the interim reservoir stakeholder meetings are an opportunity to raise issues and questions, to help shape the agenda and content for the main stakeholder group sessions.

Anne noted that apologies had been received from the following stakeholder contacts:

1. Keith Betton, Hampshire Ornithological Society
2. Cllr Andrew Briggs, Havant Borough Council
3. Natalia Byer, Community First
4. Cllr Gillian Harris, Havant Borough Council
5. Jenni Harding, Havant Borough Council (Democratic Services)
6. Jo Heath, Hampshire County Council (Countryside Service)
7. Stef Nienaltowski, Portsmouth Water Customer Scrutiny Panel
8. Cllr Robert Mocatta, East Hampshire District Council
9. Cllr Phil Munday, Havant Borough Council
10. Carole Samuda, Havant Borough Council (Community team)
11. Sam Underwood, Southern Water
12. Jo Utting, East Hampshire District Council (Economic Development team)

Draft agenda for next main stakeholder group meeting

Joel Hufford from the reservoir project Communications team then presented the draft agenda and content list for the 2 December 2025 main reservoir Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting. These were as below:

- 10:00 Welcome and introductions.
- 10:10 Apologies / Minutes / Actions from last meeting.
- 10:20 Reservoir project update.

Update to cover:

- *A look back to 2019 (Sharing photos from project archives to show far scheme has come)*
- *Latest reservoir site drone footage (To show start and finish of first earthworks season, plus indication of main areas of work during winter and through 2026)*
- *Reservoir culvert drone video / photos (To show completed culvert in detail, including from inside)*
- *Other updates from reservoir site*
- *Reservoir site planning updates (Southern Access Route, Reservoir Control House, Wetland detailed design, Reservoir valve tower safety measures)*
- *Reservoir site viewing areas (Photos of completed north-east viewing area)*
- *Engaging with you (Overview of upcoming planned stakeholder engagement)*
- *Employment & Skills update (Updated figures to show number of people living locally employed on HTR)*
- *Reservoir pipelines update (Update on latest news / progress)*
- *Environment update (Main highlights from 12 November 2025 Environment Subgroup presentation)*

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- *Reservoir Site visits & Community engagement*
- *2026 stakeholder group meeting dates.*
- 11:00 Q&A.
- 11:25 Stakeholder subgroups updates.
- 11:40 AOB (Discussion on reservoir site security and stakeholder ideas / suggestions, Signposting development of PW ESG strategy and scope for input from HTR SAG).

There were no major comments on the draft agenda / content list, which people felt provided a good round-up of updates on key areas. However, an overview of what winter preparations have been made at the reservoir site was requested, such as further improvements to site drainage.

Annual reservoir stakeholder group / subgroups survey

Joel also highlighted the forthcoming annual survey of reservoir stakeholder group and subgroups members. This is to gather people's views on how well the group / subgroups are working, as well as allow people to put forward ideas and suggestions about how things could be improved further.

The survey link will be sent out via email during October 2025, with the initial results to be shared at the 2 December 2025 Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting.

Anne then led a 'round robin' of updates from those attending the meeting, starting with the available chairs of the reservoir stakeholder subgroups.

Cllr Jackie Branson, Hampshire County Council & Chair of Reservoir Recreation subgroup

Jackie advised that Jim Farrell, Friends of Staunton Country Park, has agreed to become vice-chair of the Recreation subgroup. She is looking forward to the further stakeholder briefing later in 2025 on the updated reservoir visitor centre design, as well as the session planned on broader recreation planning for the reservoir site. This will be help in the opening part of next year.

Ella Capaldi, Park Community School & Chair of Reservoir Education & Local Economy subgroup

Ella reported that the Education & Local Economy subgroup had met last week (w/c 6 October 2025).

Group members are keen for a further update on local employment figures for the reservoir project, including getting further clarity on how many people living locally to the reservoir site are working on the scheme.

Planning is progressing well for a 'Girls into STEM' event in March 2026, which will be hosted at Park Community School in Leigh Park. It will be for girls in Year 6 / Year 7 girls at local schools, with range of keynote speakers being arranged, along with a 'speed dating' style careers event.

The next session for Havant Thicket Reservoir Young Ambassadors is happening w/c 20 October 2025.

Local schools will each be designing artwork for a panel in the perimeter fencing at the reservoir site.

Ella and other subgroup members are very keen to use the latest drone footage from the reservoir site for schools engagement. This is being arranged by the reservoir project Communications team.

Jo Tester from Warren Park School has agreed to be vice-chair of the group.

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Finally, schools from Horndean are now involved in the group, including Horndean Secondary.

Dee Tupper, Friends of Hermitage Stream & Chair of Reservoir pipelines subgroup

Dee had no update, but it was reiterated that the pipelines group will be formally convened following the detailed stakeholder briefing on the confirmed pipelines construction plan. This meeting will be held in early 2026, ahead of the pipelines main installation phase getting underway around Spring 2026.

Anne Elkington, Independent Chair of Reservoir Stakeholder Advisory Group and Environment Subgroup

Anne signposted the next Environment Subgroup meeting being held on 12 November 2025.

She also reported how much everyone taking part had enjoyed the volunteer day in Havant Thicket woodland 19 September 2025 to plant macrophytes (aquatic plants).

Sharon Darcy, Portsmouth Water board

Sharon confirmed that Mark Jessup, Portsmouth Water's Environment Manager for the reservoir scheme, is sitting on Portsmouth Water's new Environment, Social and Governance committee.

This is helping make sure that discussions at the reservoir stakeholder group / subgroups are feeding into the committee's planning and oversight.

Jim Farrell, Friends of Staunton Country Park

Jim stated that he is pleased with latest proposed reservoir control house design, which he feels will mean it will fit in well with the architecture of buildings at Staunton Country Park and across the wider local area.

Chris Stanley, Rowlands Castle Parish Council

Chris raised the need for further discussion on traffic management for the reservoir site, particularly during peak periods for visitors once the reservoir is completed and open to the public.

Joel Hufford highlighted the ongoing recreation planning work for the reservoir, including the development of a detailed Site Management Plan, covering a wide range of issues, such as traffic management. As mentioned earlier, there will be stakeholder engagement on this to help get people's input.

Terea Attlee, Horndean Parish Council

Teresa's principal interest is in the reservoir Visitor Centre. She agrees with Cllr Stanley about concerns over traffic, particularly on the B2149 and with new housing to be built for the Land East of Horndean development.

Doug Yelland, Hampshire Ornithological Society

No update on this occasion.

Cllr James Hogan, East Hampshire District Council

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James said it would be helpful to have more detail and updates on heavy vehicle movements to and from the reservoir site, as recently highlighted via a Portsmouth Water social media post.

Amy Rushton from the reservoir Communications team advised that they share as much detail as they can. However, with multiple vehicle movements and times for movements that can change late on, it's not feasible to provide further detail without risking confusing / overwhelming people.

James also expressed concern about recent flooding at the Dell Piece roundabout on the B2149, in the context of this being used by reservoir construction traffic, as part of the officially designated route.

Nik Knight, Hampshire Bat Recorder

Nik is looking forward to the further planned briefing on the reservoir Visitor Centre and the forthcoming update on reservoir site Southern Access Route design.

He is also preparing to provide a briefing on bats at the reservoir site office on 17 October 2025, as part of an ongoing series of 'tool box talks' for reservoir project staff and contractors on a range of topics.

Sally Adams, Havant Borough Council (Communications team)

No update on this occasion, other than she would like to know more about the reservoir pipelines Community Liaison Plan.

Joel Hufford will send Sally a copy.

Marcus Stroud, Forestry England

Marcus gave an update on the latest environmental work being delivered in Havant Thicket woodland, as part of the reservoir scheme mitigation and compensation plan.

The annual works programme has re-started, with spraying of invasive Laurel and Rhododendron in the south east of woodland to remove these species that can cause harm to native species.

Logs have been translocated from the reservoir site construction compound to glades in the woodland. This is to create new habitats for insects and other invertebrates.

Work will be carried out to improve the Willow hedge work on the boundary between the reservoir site and the woodland (North-east corner of reservoir site).

Marcus and his team are managing the rides (green areas) either side of tracks in the woodland, to help support / improve biodiversity e.g. butterflies.

Birch felling in woodland glades is taking place, to create more open areas and support tree growth. The harvested wood is to be used for dead-hedging around ponds in the woodland e.g. to prevent dog access.

300+ macrophytes (aquatic plants) planted in woodland ponds during volunteer day on 19 September 2025.

Pat Brooks, Havant Climate Alliance / Friends of the Earth

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Like others, Pat is keen to attend the further briefing on the reservoir Visitor Centre and get an update on the draft plans for reservoir Control House and Southern Access Route.

She is also wanting to be kept updated on planning applications for the reservoir project, with Joel Hufford re-iterating that such applications are highlighted to stakeholders via email updates, once the documents are live on the local councils' planning webpages.

Looking ahead to the next Environment Subgroup meeting in November 2025, Pat would like updates on the detailed wetland design and work to create rush pasture in the north-east of the reservoir site.

Amy Rushton, Havant Thicket Reservoir Communications & Engagement team

Amy said that reservoir site visits are ramping down over the winter, with much reduced work taking place.

She is forward planning for more public open days at the reservoir site in 2026, as well as 'road shows' at community events. For the public open days, it's planned to use the new visitor room being installed at the site offices.

Anne Elkington raised the idea of a future reservoir stakeholder group meeting being held in the site visitor room, a suggestion which the reservoir Communications team were happy to look at.

ClIr Grainne Rason, Havant Borough Council

Grainne is looking forward to the November 2025 Environment Subgroup meeting, including getting an update on woodland restoration work at Southleigh Forest, as part of the reservoir's overall environment plan.

She raised the issue of further ways of keeping community representatives, who are not able to attend stakeholder meetings, updated. This included the option to send them recordings of meetings, as well as having some evening meetings. Again, the reservoir Communication team will look at this, with the team stressing they're always happy to provide 121 briefings and site visits for stakeholders such as ward councillors.

Sophie Vagg, British Horse Society

No update on this occasion.

Pip Doherty, Hampshire County Council (Countryside Service)

No update on this occasion, other than his ongoing interest in the reservoir visitor centre.

Jamie Biltcliffe, East Hampshire District Council (Economic Development team)

Jamie raised the topic of active travel (walking and cycling) connections from the Land East of Horndean development and the reservoir site. Marcus Stroud said there had been limited contact from the developers with Forestry England, with Joel Hufford stating that Portsmouth Water are keen to work with the developments and Forestry England to find an appropriate way forward.

Jamie also flagged that Havant Borough Council has won £20 million in government funding to support the Leigh Park area. The money is from the Pride of Place scheme.

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The meeting then ended, with the next event being a main stakeholder advisory group session from 10am to 12pm on 2 December 2025. An Outlook invite for this is being sent out.

Anne requested that people attend in person if they can on 2 December 2025, to allow as many people as possible to come together before the Christmas break to enjoy mince pies and other festive refreshments.

List of actions

- Overview of what winter preparations have been made at the reservoir site to be included in project update at 2 December 2025 Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting.
- Confirmation to be provided for latest drone footage from the reservoir site to be used for schools engagement.
- Copy of reservoir pipelines Community Liaison Plan to be sent to Sally Adams at Havant Borough Council.
- Reservoir Communications team to look at the idea of a future reservoir stakeholder group meeting being held in the new reservoir site visitor room at the site offices.
- Reservoir Communications team to look at options for further updating / engaging stakeholders who can't attend stakeholder meetings (e.g. due to work commitments).