

WYE NAVIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE OUTPUTS

Purpose

To advise of some outputs from the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee (WyeNAC).

FOR INFORMATION

Key Issues

- The Environment Agency, as the Navigation Authority for the River Wye produces a Calendar of events for the river, available on <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/information-to-help-boaters-on-the-river-wye>
- The Wye Navigation Advisory Committee (WyeNAC) recently endorsed a Dry weather briefing for the River Wye, which is attached.
- The Environment Agency Wye Navigation Officers co-ordinate a Summer Survey of river users, the results for 2018 are attached.

Reasons

The Environment Agency (EA) is the Navigation Authority for the River Wye and manage the public right of navigation between Hay Bridge downstream to Bigsweir Bridge. The Wye Navigation Advisory Committee (WyeNAC) meets twice a year and advises the Environment Agency about issues along the Wye. The AONB Manager represents the AONB Partnership on WyeNAC. Some other members of the JAC also sit on the WyeNAC in other capacities.

Over the winter there was increasing concern about the soil moisture content in the Wye catchment and the potential for river drought situations to emerge should there be extended dry periods.

Implications

At the last Wye NAC meeting, in April, members received the attached 'Dry weather briefing' paper and heard how continued dry weather could impact on the right of navigation. Reduced water levels in the river might prevent canoes and other vessels from using the river due to the combined factors of the lack of flow and consequent potential impact on wildlife of paddlers walking and dragging boats over shallows.

The attached Summer Survey Report gives an indication of the level of use of the river by canoeists at peak times through the Summer of 2018.

Background

The Wye Navigation Advisory Committee was established in 2003 following the Wye Navigation Order. Wye NAC has an independent chairperson and supports and advises the Environment Agency (EA) as the Navigation Authority. The secretariat for WyeNAC is provided by EA. The Gloucester Harbour Trustees are the Navigation Authority for the tidal Wye downstream of Bigsweir.