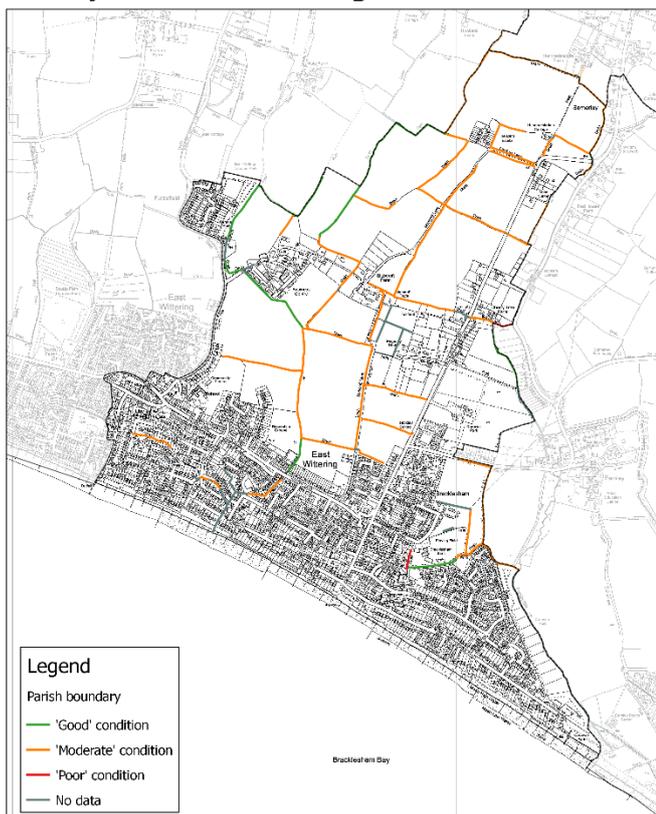


The MWHG HLF FLOW (Fixing and Linking Our Wetlands) Project update (May 2017)

Survey Work

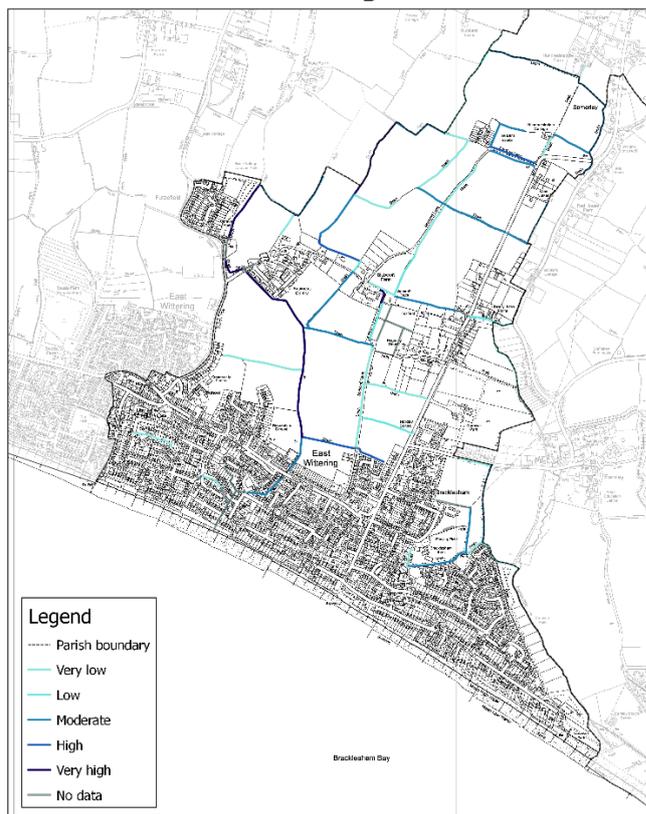
Between December 2016 and April 2017, the FLOW team surveyed the **East Wittering and Bracklesham** Parish. The Parish-wide report will be published at the start of June 2017 and there will be a FLOW information event for landowners and parish residents. Earnley residents will also be invited as we move into this parish to carry out surveying over the summer.

Condition Assessment of Ditches Surveyed in East Wittering



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Approximate Measure of Capacity of Ditches in East Wittering



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A total of 11 kilometres of ditches were surveyed and 2 kilometres of hedges. 3 areas for drainage improvement and 12 for environmental improvement have been identified and these include pond and ditch recovery, hedge management and invasive plant removal.

Wetland recovery and physical improvement work

While carrying out survey work in **East Wittering and Bracklesham** we have been working in **West Wittering**, targeting those ditches and ponds that were identified as opportunities, and either working directly with landowners who will be carrying out the work, using volunteers or engaging contractors. We worked on 4 relic ponds and wetland areas, and there are plans to dig out 2 new ponds this coming winter.

We have advised **Birdham** Parish about linking a series of ponds up to increase the holding capacity of the system that flows into Birdham Pool, and also installed pre-planted coir rolls into a pond to prevent erosion and add vegetation.

In **West Itchenor** Parish we have worked with the West Manhood Flood Group to improve drainage and the biodiversity value of the village pond.



In **Earnley** Parish two sites have been worked on to improve drainage in ditches and to create new habitat (planted new hedges, a wild flower meadow, laid a hedge and created a dead hedge).

Advised WSCC Highways about 2 sites in **Sidlesham** where recovering ponds can take water off the road - planned for this winter.

Species survey work

Multiple surveys at 4 sites across the area to monitor the impact of our improvement work and to gather baseline information - bird, reptile, amphibian, floral, and butterfly. Over the summer - bat, water vole and moth surveys will also take place.

The future surveying work schedule

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	West Wittering	E Wittering + B	Sidlesham	Hunston	Donnington
February	West Wittering	E Wittering + B	Sidlesham	Hunston	Donnington
March	West Wittering	E Wittering + B	Sidlesham	Hunston	Donnington
April	West Wittering	E Wittering + B	Sidlesham	Hunston	Donnington
May	West Wittering	E Wittering + B	Sidlesham	Hunston	Apuldram
June	-	Earnley	Sidlesham	N Mundham	Apuldram
July	-	Earnley	Selsey	N Mundham	Apuldram
August	-	Earnley	Selsey	N Mundham	Apuldram
September	-	Earnley	Selsey	N Mundham	Apuldram
October	Start up	Earnley	Selsey	N Mundham	MP summary report and an event to mark project finish
November	Start up	Sidlesham	Selsey	N Mundham	
December	E Wittering + B	Sidlesham	Hunston	Donnington	

This tight schedule represents the survey work - it will require volunteer help, especially in the bigger parishes of Sidlesham, Earnley and North Mundham. The key support in each parish is the Parish Council and identifying landowners and historic flooding and drainage information. While the surveys take place, work in other parishes carrying out identified improvement works, building relationships with new landowners, helping in drainage or biodiversity projects, advising on riparian management and publicising the FLOW project, will continue.

New FLOW staff

Kate Hampson is the part time Communications and Engagement Officer to take on volunteer recruitment and management, and publicity and social media. Christopher Drake is the new Field Officer working on the ditch and species surveying, and mapping. Paul Sadler is the new part time group fundraiser.

Grant Applications

2 x WSCC OW applications submitted: culvert work in **Sidlesham**, and tools for the physical improvement work across the area. Anticipated future application for **Selsey** levels work.

Supported 2 applications for money from the West Wittering Flood Group for drainage improvement in the parish.