

RIVER DOUR

— Jeremy Cope —

We hold a meeting of the River Steering Group this October - I am afraid too late to include in this issue of the Newsletter. But should anyone have concerns or ideas please do not hesitate to contact me. Either email me on jeremyclope@willersley.plus.com or phone 01304 211348.

I, of course, cannot promise action - only that the comments will be passed on. In the Society we have to accept that we have to lobby doggedly, often unsuccessfully, if anything is to get done. One constructive action members are able to take is to volunteer for the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership working parties. Too late for 2012 - but 2013?

Phone 01304 241806 or email mail@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk

The Dour Steering Group held a meeting in April at which interested groups could exchange views and news. It was an ideal opportunity to lobby the Environment Agency which is the body that carries the underlying responsibility for the river. The principal issues that arose were:-

The Environment Agency has only minimal funding but they are working to do the best they can. I always get the impression of people trying their very best to make the most of what is available. There is a concern that Crabble Corn Mill pond is silting up and

will, in the near future, cease to hold water, but again there appears to be no funding available to deal with dredging. There was a call for deterrent fines against litter dumping - something we could well do with throughout the town.

A sewage leak into the river at Morrison's had been reported and subsequent to the meeting litter clearance work had stopped in the river lower down as being too dangerous. I understand the leak has been located and trust that it is now mended.

Of course the drought measures were discussed at the time when we were in the middle of a very wet April. The rain has to fall at the right time of the year (winter) if it is to replenish the aquifers but that's our British weather. I notice a healthy flow in the Dour - long may it continue.

Finally White Cliffs Countryside Project has started the litter clearance of the river following the end of the spawning season - if you wish to help I can supply details or you can contact the Project on 01304 241806. On a personal note I think arthritis will limit my involvement for which I am very sorry. The river is such a worthwhile project.

We are also losing Derek Leach as our Chairman, unsurprisingly due to the manifold demands on his time. Derek is always an effective Chairman and will be missed.