

## Terms of Reference Cherwell and Ray Catchment Partnership

Version	Changes	Agreed Date	Review Date
V1	Version 1 shared with partnership	18/09/2023	September 2024

### 1. Purpose and scope

1.1. The purpose of the Partnership is to encourage a logical approach to conserving, protecting, and improving the River Cherwell and Ray catchment. The Partnership aims to develop and coordinate activities and projects (collectively referred to as workstreams) that will help to deliver the vision and desired outcomes.

1.2. The Partnership will provide a forum for discussion of issues and the coordination of workstreams within.

#### 1.3. Catchment area map

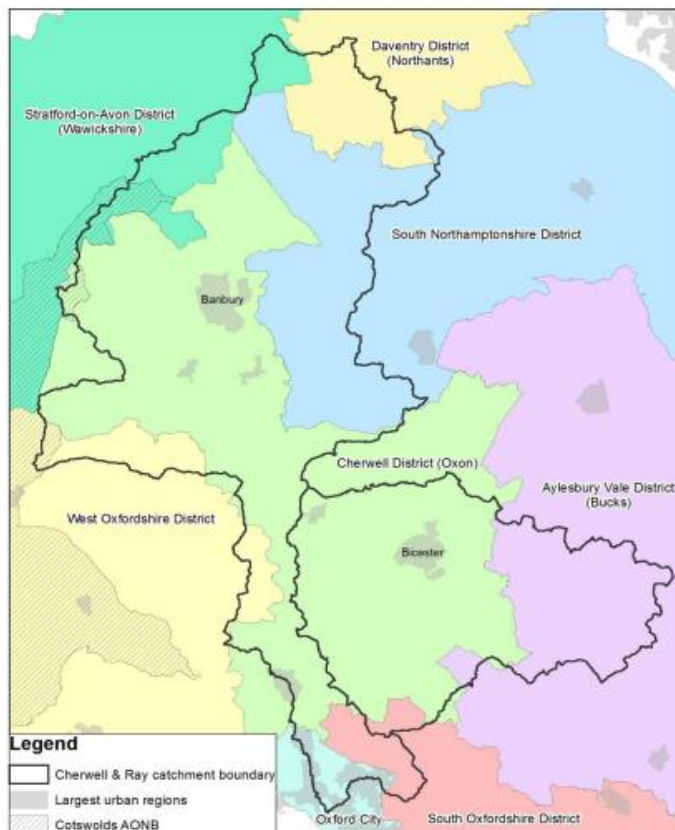


Figure 1: Map of Cherwell and Ray catchment as depicted by the Environment Agency.

1.4. These Terms of Reference are intended to give the Partnership the necessary structure for effective delivery without being over-prescriptive. The Partnership will endeavour to operate by consensus, in line with its scope and remit.

## **2. Vision**

- 2.1. To conserve, protect and improve river health and biodiversity within the River Cherwell and Ray catchment with the aim that all waters within the catchment should achieve Good Ecological Status by 2027.
- 2.2. To take a collaborative approach to workstreams being developed and delivered by members and other stakeholders in the catchment that will encourage collaborative working to complement and/or enhance the outcomes.
- 2.3. To increase awareness of the importance of good water quality, sustainable water use, and the benefits of a healthy river system.

## **3. Approach**

- 3.1. The objectives of the Partnership will be achieved by the collective and collaborative effort of its members.
- 3.2. The Partnership will seek to avoid any duplication of existing mechanisms or schemes but will utilise these where possible, at the same time as developing new workstreams.
- 3.3. Any individual member representing an organisation or not can take the lead on a workstream with the support of the Partnership.
- 3.4. To contribute to the development and planning key environmental policies and plans.
- 3.5. The Partnership will endeavour to use existing resources available to support catchment priorities.
- 3.6. Projects and activities recommended or supported by the Partnership will be delivered by the member organisations most appropriate to do so as agreed by the steering group.

## **4. Steering Group**

- 4.1. The Steering Group is the overall decision-making body for the Partnership. It will make decisions about the Partnership's governance, strategy, priorities, communications, and other related matters.
- 4.2. The Steering Group will be formed by the hosting (and co-hosting) organisation(s) who will be reviewed on an annual basis or as necessary by the Partnership. The purpose of this group is to champion a collaborative partnership approach, energise members and stakeholders, act as a project manager, and facilitate contributions.
- 4.3. The Steering Group will organise Partnership meetings and other meetings as necessary. They will take forward agreed actions and will assist in the development of project business cases and funding bids to a point of delivery.
- 4.4. The members of the Steering Group are the signatories to the Strategic Agreement, they currently include (but are not limited to):

[Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust \(BBOWT\)](#)  
[Thames21](#)

4.5. The Steering Group will seek to make decisions by consensus whenever possible. Any issue not resolvable by consensus may be taken to a simple majority vote at the request of any two members. Each member will have a single vote and a third of the membership will constitute a quorum.

## **5. Partnership members**

5.1. The members of the Partnership currently include (but are not limited to):

[Banbury Community Action Group](#)  
[Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust \(BBOWT\)](#)  
[Buckinghamshire Council](#)  
[Canal and Rivers Trust](#)  
[Cherwell District Council](#)  
[Cotswolds Rivers Trust](#)  
[Environment Agency](#)  
[#endsewagepollution Mid-Thames Group](#)  
[Freshwater Habitats Trust](#)  
[Forestry Commission](#)  
Islip Wildlife Group  
[Launton Parish Council](#)  
[Natural England](#)  
[NFU](#)  
[Oxford University Conservation Society](#)  
[Oxford University Wild Swimmers](#)  
[RSPB](#)  
[Thames Rivers Trust](#)  
[Thames Water](#)  
[Thames21](#)  
Upper Thames Fisheries Consultative (UTFC)  
[Wendlebury Parish Council](#)  
[Wild Oxfordshire](#)

5.2. A new member to the partnership may be admitted by consensus of the current members.

5.3. A member may resign from the Partnership and appoint an appropriate new person to represent their geographical area or organisation. All that is asked is a notification to end their involvement by sending an email to the Steering Group.

5.4. Each member from an organisation will nominate one or more representatives who will attend Partnership meetings, represent the views of their organisation, and have delegated authority to make decisions on the organisation's behalf. They will represent the Partnership to their organisation and will seek input from relevant colleagues and departments as necessary and appropriate.

## **6. Stakeholder Group**

6.1. The Steering Group recognises the importance and benefits of planning, communicating and working collaboratively with wider stakeholders in the Cherwell and Ray catchment. Wider stakeholders are other organisations, community groups or individuals operating in the Cherwell and Ray Catchment that have an interest in contributing to the partnership's vision or an interest in the River Corridor but not necessarily active members.

6.2. The Partnership will seek to identify and establish a coherent wider Stakeholder Group.

6.3. The views of the stakeholder group will be considered by the Steering Group but are not binding on them.

## **7. Working Groups**

7.1. The Partnership may work through Working Groups to address specific issues, tasks or projects. Working Groups will include a member of the Steering Group who will report back to the Partnership. Working Group members may be drawn from the Partnership or wider Stakeholder Group.

7.2. Working Groups may occasionally change depending on issues, opportunities, funding streams and priorities.

## **8. Meetings**

8.1. Catchment Partnership meetings will be held at least quarterly and announced at least two months in advance. Any member failing to attend five consecutive meetings without sending apologies will be deemed to have resigned from the Partnership.

8.2. Working Group meetings will be organised every six months or as otherwise agreed.

8.3. The host(s) will provide the secretariat via the Catchment Partnerships Officer, who will maintain a list of members in the form of an email distribution list; co-ordinate the timings and venues for Partnership meetings; issue agendas and circulate notes from meetings; and circulate relevant updates from CaBA or other sources.

8.4. Any member can add an agenda item(s) by contacting the secretariat prior to the meeting.

## **9. Communications**

9.1. The use of the Partnership's name for press releases or other publications must be agreed by the Steering Group.

9.2. Minutes of the Catchment Partnership Meetings and Working Groups will be circulated to the email list within a reasonable time.

## **10. Finances**

10.1. The Partnership is not a separate legal entity and does not hold funds.

10.2. The Steering Group will agree the terms on which the host organisation holds and uses funds on behalf of the Partnership.

## **11. Amendments**

11.1 Amendments to these Terms of Reference may be proposed by any two members in reasonable time in advance of a meeting.