Ravensbourne Catchment Improvement Group:
Terms of Reference

Agreed: 08/08/2023
Review due: August 2024

Please note, this document has no formal legal status

Version Control

Version	Name	Notes	Date
V1	Philippa Nicholls	First draft shared with partnership (based on previous RCIG ToR)	02/11/2022
V2	Philippa Nicholls	Second version shared with partnership after amendments were made based on member feedback and a discussion at an RCIG meeting	27/03/2023
V3	Philippa Nicholls	Two small amendments (addition of informal members and a brief annual review)	11/08/2023

Name of the Group:
Ravensbourne Catchment Improvement Group (RCIG)

1. Purpose and Scope of the RCIG:

1.1 The CIG is an invited panel of people, representing groups and organisations that have a direct relationship with the Ravensbourne Catchment and its issues, who are working collaboratively through a Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) to achieve the Catchment Vision:

'Improve the health of the rivers across the catchment and provide wider benefits to people and nature at the catchment scale'

1.2 The Catchment Action Plan (CAP) for the Ravensbourne Catchment provides the framework for achieving the Vision. The CAP sets out key contextual information, catchment priorities and catchment priority objectives and is developed through a process of collaborative working that involves individuals, groups and organisations who have an interest in the water environment and achieving the Vision. The overall process is managed and coordinated by the Host, who is currently employed by Thames21, working jointly with and being guided by the Environment Agency and a broad-based CIG of key stakeholders (herein referred to as RCIG members). Note, the RCIG has no statutory powers or responsibilities.
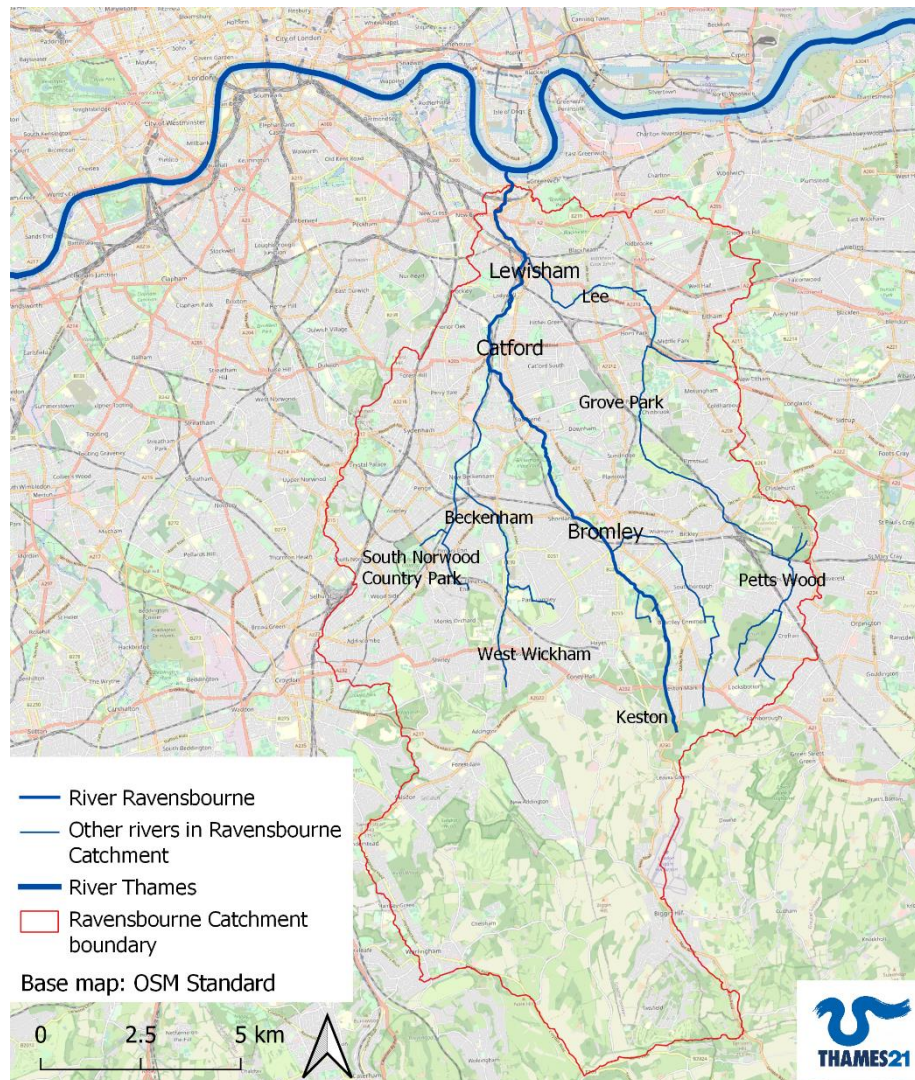
1.3 Area:

Figure 1: The Ravensbourne Catchment (Created by Philly Nicholls, Thames21, 1st November 2022, QGIS3, Basemap: OS Map)

2. Aims of the CIG:

- To assist and guide RCIG members' initiatives to deliver work that will contribute to achieving the Catchment Action Plan objectives
- To review the CAP and the progress made towards achieving its objectives
- To make strategic decisions on priorities within the Catchment Action Plan to help deliver the Catchment Vision through a more locally focused decision-making process
- For each stakeholder to provide guidance, support, information, data and advice to achieving CAP objectives by:
  - drawing on their own experience, resources and constituencies; and
  - making sure the right people are consulted in the right way about the right issues and have the most up-to-date information available.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The RCIG consists of the Host, the Environment Agency Catchment Coordinator and the RCIG members.

3.1 The role of the Host involves:

- Coordinating and assisting the RCIG in its development and keeping the Catchment Action Plan up to date

- Administration of the RCIG meetings, including coordinating the agenda, distributing the minutes and actions and ensuring actions are progressing towards completion
- Chairing RCIG meetings
- Completing reports for CaBA and Thames Water to fulfil funding requirements and evaluate progress of RCIG development

3.2 The Environment Agency Catchment Coordinator role involves:
- Sharing the statutory objectives for water bodies in the catchment, in order for the RCIG to develop a strategic overview of the catchment
- Being the lead for EA communication, except where specific project leads have been identified, e.g. for flood defence works, and so the relevant EA officer will take responsibility
- Exercising the EA statutory duties and powers and providing access to regulatory resources where relevant

3.3 The role of RCIG members involves:
- Attending quarterly RCIG meetings and contributing to discussions
- Helping to identify catchment priorities
- Helping to plan, deliver, review and update the CAP to work towards those catchment priorities by, for example, circulating the CAP to their own networks to aid constructive additions and participation from as wide a range of stakeholders as possible
- Helping to identify project opportunities that align with CAP objectives
- Helping to identify appropriate grants to fund projects
- Offering advice, resources (such as time, data, information, access to other groups) and practical support to initiatives that contribute to catchment priorities

3.3.1 Membership of the RCIG will be by invitation from the Host. The Host will also welcome suggestions for new membership from RCIG members, which will subsequently be opened up for discussion by all current RCIG members. The aim is to bring together a broad cross section of key stakeholders to the RCIG to maximise knowledge breadth, influence and access to different sectors in order to deliver successful projects and initiatives that contribute to CAP objectives. This ToR must be read and signed by new members.

3.3.2 Attributes that CIG members have are as follows:
- Able to commit time to attend RCIG meetings
- If representing a certain wider sector, they are
    - knowledgeable about that sector;
    - respected and trusted by their sector to represent their views at meetings and engage wider if desired; and
    - willing to actively speak about the interests of their stakeholder sector in discussions and engage positively in the process
- Awareness, understanding and respect for other sectors represented at RCIG meetings
- Awareness, understanding and respect for those sectors that are not represented at RCIG meetings but are still engaged with wider catchment activities (e.g., the wider community) so that, when applicable, RCIG members can represent their views

3.3.3 Informal members of the RCIG are stakeholders who fulfil many of the role requirements of RCIG members (Section 3.3) but who do not have to meet the same expectations of attending quarterly RCIG meetings. They will still need to read and sign the ToR in order to join and have access to the RCIG's online private data-sharing platform. Including informal members in discussions and relevant work will mean the RCIG is a multi-tiered, inclusive and well-represented partnership.

4. Operation

4.1 Operation of Meetings

The expectations and commitments for the effective running of meetings are listed below. Members must be willing to listen, understand, communicate and respect other members.

- Meetings will take place on a quarterly basis, depending on need, and will operate in a 'hybrid' format where at least 1 per year will be held in person, and the rest will be held online through meeting platforms like Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
- Dates, times and locations of meetings will be organised as fully as possible with the agreement of members and appropriate notice will be given.
- The agenda will be linked to the RCIG's objectives and priorities, which are created from the CAP.
- Members are expected to have read any documents circulated before a meeting and be appropriately prepared. This will be complemented by meeting materials being circulated with appropriate time for reading and preparing.
- Where an RCIG member cannot attend a meeting, they may nominate a deputy to attend in their place, but it is the responsibility of that member to fully brief the deputy on background information and progress from their sector (if applicable) prior to the meeting.
- Deputies must operate within these Terms of Reference.
- All present will contribute as fully and openly as possible (while respecting, for example, commercial confidentiality).
- To encourage free expression in meetings, participants can request that their views are not attributed.
- Decisions will be reached by consensus. When insurmountable differences of view arise, they will be clarified and recorded (including attribution where necessary). The issue will then be taken to a simple majority vote, where as many members representing different sectors will vote as possible. An online vote after an RCIG meeting can be created for example to help achieve this goal.
- Full notes will be made from each meeting and circulated to all participants (and any sending apologies) as soon as possible after meetings. It is the responsibility of each member to check these meeting minutes for accuracy and raise any concerns as soon as possible with the Host.
- The meeting minutes will not normally attribute comments unless requested in a specific instance, e.g. where agreed and necessary for clarity in the record.
- If additional information is requested to be included within the minutes after a meeting has occurred, it will be included but clearly differentiated as 'post event'.
- Final, agreed minutes and any circulated documents will be available to all RCIG members via the Ravensbourne Catchment Improvement Group's online private data-sharing platform (for example, Google Group and Google Drive). Other documents, such as those relating to projects, funding information and strategies, will also be available via this online platform. knowledge hub and/or on request.

4.2 Operation of Working Groups and Sub-Groups

4.2.1 Working groups and sub-groups are composed of subsets of the RCIG members and/or the group of wider stakeholders of the Ravensbourne Catchment. They are needed from time to time to progress work set by the RCIG. These groups do not have specific guidelines; instead, they should follow the applicable guidance set out in this ToR.

4.2.2 Working groups address specific catchment objectives and issues, for example the RCIG has a Water Quality Working Group and an Engagement Working Group as of late 2022. Sub-groups address specific tasks or the delivery of projects. Updates will be given to the RCIG by representatives from these working groups and sub-groups at RCIG quarterly meetings.

5. Reviews

5.1 Membership

5.1.1   The Host will contact any RCIG member who has not attended 4 consecutive meetings, and who has not sent their apologies, to confirm whether they would still like to be an RCIG member and to encourage their attendance at future meetings.

5.1.2   If at least 4 RCIG meetings are held in a year, the Host could alternatively review attendance of the members at the end of the year and contact those who did not attend any meetings and did not send their apologies.

5.2 Terms of Reference

5.2.1   There will be a brief annual review of the ToR and a more detailed full review every 3 years. The Host will remind the RCIG members of these reviews either by emailing them or setting it as an agenda item during an RCIG meeting.

5.2.2   During a ToR review, changes to the ToR may be suggested by any RCIG member and subsequently taken to all RCIG members to reach a consensus. If significant changes are made to the ToR, all members will need to read and sign the updated ToR. If few or no changes are proposed, signatures from RCIG members from the previous ToR review still stand and no updated signatures are required.

5.2.3   Changes to the ToR may also be suggested by any RCIG member outside of the ToR annual and 3-year reviews. The Host should then take these changes to all RCIG members to reach a consensus. RCIG members should be reminded of these changes at the subsequent ToR review.

5.2.4   If multiple people from one organisation are members of the RCIG, one signature on behalf of that organisation will suffice.

5.3 Host role

5.3.1   The person(s)/organisation(s) occupying the Host role will be reviewed every 3 years, at the same time as the full review of the ToR document. Alternatively, a member of the RCIG may raise this point as an agenda item for any RCIG meeting within the 3-year period.

5.3.2   The Host will ask RCIG members whether they would like to suggest an alternative person/organisation to take up the Host role, and if there are suggestions, discussions will then be had at the next RCIG meeting.

6. Communications:

6.1 All members agree to work together to ensure that communication of the RCIG's business is clear, consistent and accurate. In this spirit, all members agree:

- Not to talk or release external messages on behalf of the RCIG unless mandated to do so by the group. This role will predominantly be fulfilled by the Host, with support and coordination from the RCIG members.
- Not to use the RCIG's logo or produce press releases or other publications in the name of the RCIG without first obtaining permission from the RCIG.
- Where possible, to notify the Host and any relevant members in advance of any intention to communicate widely about the RCIG's initiatives so that communication opportunities can be coordinated and maximised.
- To use existing forms of words or other agreed text where possible to describe the groups' business in their own communications.
- To make the Host aware of inaccurate communication or reporting by others, so that the group's view(s) can be clarified and so that rumours and false information are not spread.
- The Host has the mandate to manage urgent communication issues on behalf of the group, for example responding to media requests, and may call upon members of the group for further information or support.

6.2 The CAP will be publicly available through an online ArcGIS StoryMap and will be a 'living', non-statutory document that provides the opportunity to enhance understanding and build partnerships within the RCIG and wider community, which can ultimately drive local action. A shorter PDF printer-friendly document of the CAP may be produced to provide an alternative format/version for people with difficulties accessing the internet.

6.3 A separate social media strategy will be created, which will define the tone of voice and content type that will be shared through the RCIG's social media channels. When referring to partnership working or initiatives, the members should reference the RCIG's social media account. The RCIG currently has one social media account (a Twitter account).

7. General Data Protection Regulations

7.1 Signing of members' consent to the ToR and GDPR statement happens through an online form. When a member signs and agrees to the ToR and GDPR statement:

- the Host's organisation will be able to collect and store names, job titles and email addresses of members for the purpose of organising meetings and sharing information relevant to the partnership's objectives (and to better facilitate discussions and collaboration, the Host may wish to share the email addresses of members with other members);
- the name of the member, or member's organisation where applicable, will be publicly displayed in the ToR; and
- they will be added to the online private data-sharing platform, which as of May 2023 is a Google Group and Google Drive. Through this platform, member contact details will be visible to other members in this online group.

7.2 Members agree to only using email addresses gained from RCIG communications to contribute to partnership objectives or for wider professional purposes. Permission must be obtained from the relevant member before sharing their details outside of the RCIG.

7.3 If a member does not sign the ToR and GDPR statement access to online meetings and information sharing may be limited.

8. Definitions

Member(s): People who are in the RCIG either representing an organisation or group or not representing anyone and instead representing wider catchment issues.
Representatives from organisations/groups etc that sit on the RCIG.

Stakeholder(s): Individuals, groups, organisations and/or businesses who affect or can be affected by the development and delivery of actions set out within the Catchment Action Plan.

Host: Thames21 has been funded by Defra to develop and deliver the Catchment Action Plan. Thames21 is also funded by Thames Water to create a more effective catchment partnership that can successfully deliver improvements within the catchment that are set out in the CAP.

Catchment: The area of land from which surface water drains.

9. Further Reading

Thames21 & The Rivers Trust (2021) *Ravensbourne Catchment Partnership & Action Plan*, ArcGIS StoryMap Collection, Esri.
https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/f2f8d115e113400aa0f8165e762a6321

Defra (2013) *Catchment Based Approach: Improving the quality of our water environment,* 32pp.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204231/pb13934-water-environment-catchment-based-approach.pdf

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Membership List (as of December 2023)

- Thames21 (Host)
- Environment Agency
- Thames Water
- Lewisham Council
- Bromley Council
- Greenwich Council
- Friends of Bromley Town Parks & Gardens
- Jess Kyle (Lewisham Council and Nature's Gym)
- Quaggy Waterways Action Group (QWAG)
- Glendale (Lewisham Council)
- idverde
- Friends of Chinbrook Meadows
- Bromley Friends of the Earth
- Lewisham Council (Beckenham Place Park)
- Waterlink Way of Life
- James Wright (SEA LIFE London Aquarium)
- Maria Mercedes Kuri (Thames Rivers Trust)
- Creekside Education Trust
- Friends of the River Pool
- Ravensbourne RMI – informal member

Appendix 2: Working Groups and Sub-Groups (as of May 2023)

Engagement Working Group
Water Quality Working Group