



BAWAG Newsletter

March 31 2022

Foreword

By Steve Moncaster, Membership & Technical Advisor

Hi there - just a quick note at a very busy time of year to keep you up to date with developments at BAWAG. Most of these follow the EGM & AGM and are linked to implementation of the two propositions that were unanimously passed:

1. BAWAG should move to annual subscriptions, and
2. BAWAG should become incorporated, so that we are able to make use of grant funding to help with the running of the organisation

We also have an update on the Ant Broads and Marshes work, NFU news, irrigation prospects and propose the Membership & Committee meetings that we'll be holding this year.

Regards

Steve

Annual General Meeting

The AGM this year was held at the AF Group Offices at Honingham Thorpe on Tuesday 2 March. This followed the EGM at Fakenham Racecourse in February, with the propositions for changing BAWAG the main order of business at both. The AGM agenda comprised:

- 13.45 Tea and Coffee
- 14.00 Welcome and Chairs Report
- 14.10 EGM Report & next steps

- 14.30 Treasurers Report
- 14.40 Election of office holders
- 14.45 Election of Committee
- 14.50 WRE update (Lindsay Hargreaves)
- 15.00 Thurne IDB project (Giles Bloomfield)
- 15.30 NFU update (Kelly Hewson-Fisher)
- 15.40 AOB
- 15.50 Closing remarks
- 16.00 Meeting close

We were introduced to our new NFU National Water Resources Specialist, Kelly Hewson-Fisher, and our guest speakers were warmly thanked for their interesting presentations. Key points from the remaining agenda items included:

- Arrangements for implementing the voting propositions were confirmed, namely that BAWAG should move to annual subscriptions and become incorporated such that it can receive grant funding to support its work (*see also notes on Change Process & Subscriptions*)
- The Treasurer reported that available BAWAG funds total approximately £18k, with £14k of this to support work linked to the Ant Broads and Marshes RSA program. The remaining £4k is available for general membership activities
- Anthony Seaman was proposed as Chair and was unanimously re-elected
- It was confirmed that Will Sands & Jamie Lockhart will step down from the Committee. Jamie will remain as an observer in his capacity as NFU County Chairman. Both were thanked for their contribution to the work of BAWAG
- The 2022/23 Committee was confirmed as follows:

Anthony Seaman (Chair)

Nick Deane (Treasurer)

Steve Lawley

Tim Place

Tim Papworth

Louis Baugh

Jamie Harrison

Tony Bambridge

Toby Mermagen

Andrew Peal

Phil Gowers

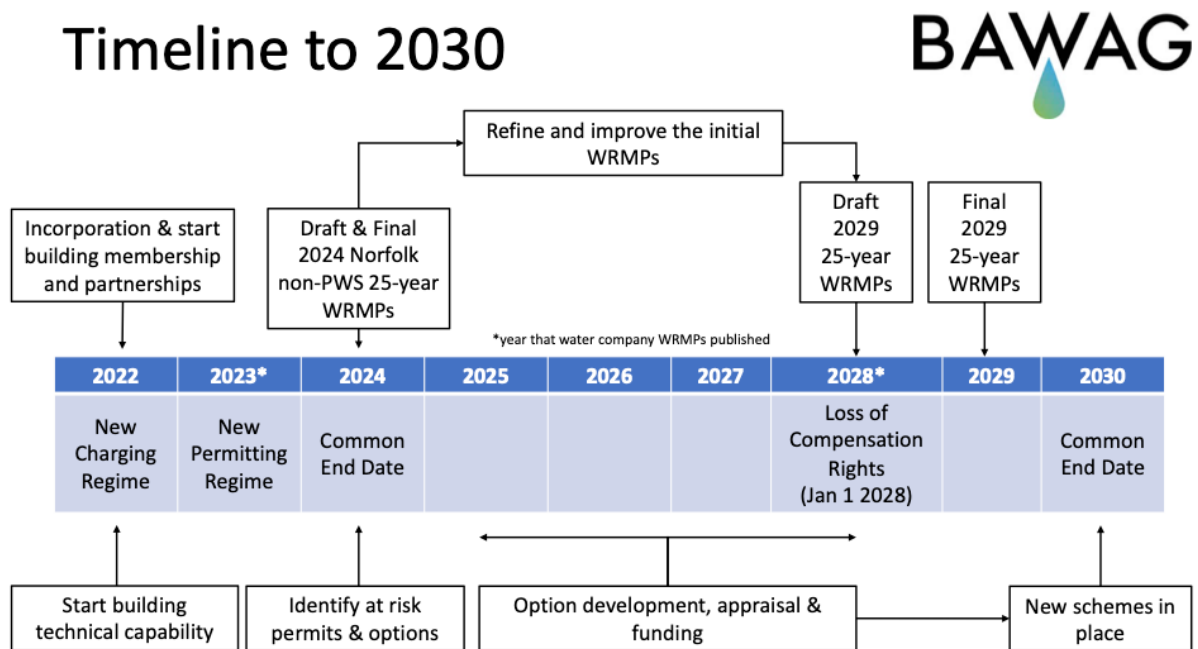
Gavin Paterson

Mark Murray

- Christopher Deane, John Newton & Kelly Hewson-Fisher will continue as NFU observers
- As AOB it was agreed that BAWAG should meet with the new NFU Deputy President and water portfolio holder Tom Bradshaw, as soon as possible.

BAWAG Change Process: Next Steps

The EGM & AGM commit BAWAG to a change process that will run through to the 2030 common-end date and the licence or permit renewals that are associated with this. A summary of key points along the timeline is given below:



Next steps in the process include the following:

1. Prepare 2022/30 Strategic Business Plan
2. Evaluate alternative forms of incorporation & recommend the best one for BAWAG
3. Change the name of BAWAG
4. Write Articles of Association, and
5. Set-up new governance structure.

Subscriptions due

The AGM approved a request to invoice the membership for the 2022/23 subscription. To account for the costs of the change process & running the new organisation, these will be based on a rate of £3.30 per 1,000 cubic metres of licenced volume abstraction with a minimum charge of £250. It was noted that most members will pay £250.

Ant Broads & Marshes Update

The EA & Natural England continue to evaluate the Rebuttal Report and have confirmed that because of this, it is unlikely that any Section 52 notices will be issued until sometime after the beginning of May. In the meantime, we are progressing work on the Ant Valley Masterplan, including exploring how this could be used as a possible alternative to the Section 52 approach, where appropriate.

In other developments:

- EA work on the Ant Broads & Marshes RSA program is subject to a legal challenge that will examine the extent of the reductions proposed in the Closure Report
- We have included in the Masterplan a section dealing with abstractors in the vicinity of the Ant Broads and Marshes who are not subject to the restrictions in the Closure Report but who may be affected by them

NFU News

New faces at the NFU include:

- Kelly Fisher-Hewson, National Water Resources Specialist & BAWAG Committee Observer, and
- Tom Bradshaw, Deputy President and holder of the water portfolio.

Irrigation Prospects

For anyone who hasn't seen them, the EA published their irrigation prospects report last month. For Norfolk the outlook is moderate (east Norfolk) to good (west Norfolk). The EA will review these again in April. A link to the reports is given below:

<https://www.farmingadvice.service.org.uk/technical-articles>

Membership & Committee Meetings

The following Committee (C) and Membership (M) meetings are proposed for 2022/23:

1. May 2022 (C): 2022/30 Strategic Business Plan
2. July 2022 (C)(M): Breakfast meeting with technical presentation based on Ant Valley Masterplan and draft Water Resource Management Plan
3. October 2022 (C): Target date for incorporation
4. December 2022 (C)(M): Target date for draft Water Resource Management Plan & Social Event
5. March 2023 (C)(M): Annual General Meeting