



The UK Man and the Biosphere Committee Urban Forum

Minutes of the UK MAB Urban Forum meeting held on 11 December 2002 at the Greater London Authority, London.

Present

Ian Angus	(IA)	Scottish Natural Heritage
John Box	(JB)	(Chair) Wardell Armstrong
Peter Cush	(PC)	Environment & Heritage Service
Gerald Dawe	(GD)	Faculty of Science, Kingston University
Dave Dawson	(DD)	Greater London Authority
Mathew Frith	(MF)	Peabody Trust
Pete Frost	(PF)	Countryside Council for Wales
David Goode	(DG)	Greater London Authority (part of meeting)
Chris Gordon	(CG)	East Midlands Region, Countryside Agency
Graham Leeks	(GJLL)	CEH Wallingford
David Nicholson-Lord	(DNL)	Environmental Journalist
Susan Renn	(SR)	(Secretary) CEH Wallingford

Visitors

Prof. Chris Baines	(CB)	Freelance Environmental Advisor (part of meeting)
Simon Hughes	(SH)	Urban Policy Adviser, Environment Agency
David Knight	(DK)	English Nature

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies

Penny Angold	(PA)	Grant Luscombe	(GL)
Ian Douglas	(ID)	John Robbins	(JR)
John Handley	(JH)	Richard Sharland	(RS)
Carolyn Harrison	(CH)	Peter Shirley	(PS)
Peter Jarvis	(PJ)	Matthew Wilkinson	(MW)

JB welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Greater London Authority for hosting it.

JB reported the resignation of Celia Spouncer and Matthew Thomas, both due to work pressures. JB recorded the Forum's thanks to them.

He also passed on Richard Sharland's apologies for his infrequent attendance at the meetings, coupled with his wish to remain involved with the work of the Forum.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were signed as an accurate record.

3. Flood, Urban Drainage & SUDS – presentation by guest speaker, Professor Chris Baines

Prof. Chris Baines gave a fascinating presentation which stimulated much discussion and interaction between CB and the members.

The Forum recorded its sincere appreciation of the presentation and that CB had made the time to come and talk to the Forum.

4. Further Discussion of the Work Programme for 2003/04

PF briefly recapped the progress made in developing the future work programme at the previous meeting, inviting those present to consider any potential gaps in the previous SWOT analysis. (Items added at the meeting are shown in italics.)

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-disciplinary ○ UNESCO - <i>care</i> ○ Linkage between members ○ <i>Publications</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Poorly known – obscure ○ Relies on ‘stolen’ time ○ Lacks link to politicians ○ <i>SI(G)AR (Security of Inter-generational Access to Resources)</i>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brownfield & regeneration ○ Environmental solutions must start in cities ○ <i>Implementation from Johannesburg</i> ○ Linking with health agenda ○ <i>Tip of iceberg</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of loot ○ Policy-makers unwilling to understand/grasp the issues ○ Vulnerability to losing key members

Attendees then split into pairs, each pair considering leadership, aims and objectives, outputs, potential participants and resources for one of the suggested topics:

- Climate change impacts (& the future urban ecology of public health) (PF & JB)
- Practical benefits of designing in & managing for nature (GJLL & DK)
- Planning & multi-functional green networks (MF & IA)
- Human dimensions of urban life (culture, spirituality) (CG & DNL)
- Health (PC & SR)
- City metabolism – resources & flows (SH & DD)

Due to shortage of time, it was not possible to review the detail for each topic at the meeting. Therefore the topic descriptions will be reviewed and refined by the originators via e-mail. PF/JB will then convert these to a common format for finalisation at the February 2003 meeting and inclusion in the new Work Programme.

Action 4.1 SR to transcribe & distribute draft topic descriptions to originators.

Action 4.2 PF/JB to format work programme topics to common format.

5. Urban Forum Finances

Due to lack of time, this item will be dealt with at the next meeting.

6. Progress reports on Topics in the Work Programme

Due to lack of time, and lack of reporting from topic leaders, this item will be dealt with at the next meeting and in conjunction with the Annual Report 02/03.

7. Matters arising

Due to lack of time, status of outstanding actions will be dealt with by e-mail. Any other items will be dealt with at the next meeting.

Action 7.1 SR to ascertain status of outstanding actions and append to the Minutes.

8. Any Other Business

- a) GD distributed a briefing document entitled "Sustainability in Urban Forests". An electronic copy will be circulated with the minutes. Feedback from members is requested.
- b) MF advised members of a forthcoming conference: "Rural Scene Urban Setting" to be held in Bath on 19 February 2003. Further details are available from Martin Duffy on 0118 946 9060 or at <http://www.urbanparksforum.co.uk/>.
- c) MF also advised members regarding a CIRIA website consultation: "Developing biodiversity benchmarks for construction projects". Feedback and comments are sought. (Secretary's note: *This can be found at http://www.ciria.org.uk/environment_rp662.htm. Note the closing date of 24 December 2002.*)
- d) GJLL stated that the URGENT program was reaching its end and that there would be a number of communication events over the coming year. These are set (provisionally) as:
 - o 24 Feb 2003 Contaminated land
 - o May/June Water & ecology
 - o Nov Atmospheric science & overall round-up
- e) JB emphasised that the February 2003 meeting will need to:
 - o finalise the draft Work Programme for 2003/04
 - o agree budget spend / look at finance allocations
 - o consider the draft Annual Report for 2002/03

These items will all need to be finalised by the end of March 2003.

9. Dates of Next Meetings

- 25 February 2003 – CURE, Manchester
- 27 May 2003 – Swansea (provisional)
- 16 September 2003 – Scotland (provisional)
- 9 December 2003 – Location to be confirmed

Annexes

Briefing on Sustainability in Urban Forests - to be circulated with the Minutes

Action List

Action 4.1 SR to transcribe & distribute draft topic descriptions to originators.

Action 4.2 PF to format work programme topics to common format.

Action 7.1 SR to ascertain status of outstanding actions and append to the Minutes.

Review of All Previous Outstanding Actions

Review of Outstanding Actions from February 2002 meeting:	
<u>Incomplete:</u>	<u>Status as at 11 Dec 2002</u>
11.1 Potential Groundwork representative on the Urban Forum. This option remains open, awaiting response from Richard Sharland.	Ongoing discussion in hand. This action point can be closed.
12.2 Peter Cush & Celia Spouncer – communication ongoing re establishing Northern Ireland representation on the Forum.	Action point can be closed.

Review of Outstanding Actions from May 2002 meeting:	
<u>Incomplete:</u>	
4.1 Follow-up on Award for Excellence - in hand with CG.	Ongoing
4.2 Follow-up on Award for Excellence - in hand with CG.	Ongoing
5.7 ID to supply information on Identification of benefits for mental health & well-being from Urban Greenspace to SD & IA.	Action point remains open.
5.10 GJLL to provide write-up on workshop from URGENT Science week. (<i>Secretary's note: GJLL advises that all presentations and rapporteurs' reports from the European Workshop supported by the Urban Forum have been placed on the Forum Website. It is hoped that a further combined summary report will be produced during October.</i>)	Action point can be closed

Annexes to Minutes of September 2002 meeting	
Letter from DEFRA re proposed workshop - to be circulated separately	Circulated (SR)
Revised Urban Forum pamphlet - to be circulated separately	Circulated at the meeting. Copies are being sent to non-attendees (SR)
Info from Ian Douglas re Paris to be circulated when available	Information awaited.

Action List from September 2002 meeting:	
Action 1.1 JB to write to GB to formally express the Forum's thanks and appreciation.	Done
Action 4.1 PF/SR to distribute outputs from this session separately.	Done.
Action 5.1 SR to load September Work Programme progress update onto the website.	Done.
Action 6.1 JB to invite Jon Rouse (CABE) to address a future meeting.	JB wrote but Jon Rouse could not make date. On hold pending review of work programme. Action point can be closed.
Action 6.2 DEFRA letter re proposed workshop to be circulated to members.	Done
Action 6.3 PF/JB to pursue the running of a workshop, as appropriate.	Action point can be closed.
Action 6.4 PS to liaise with CG re publishers to whom article should be submitted.	Done
Action 7.1 JB to discuss continuity and national coverage of Urbio with MF's former line manager.	Ongoing. Action point can be closed.
Action 7.2 SR to supply hard copies of the revised brochure to all members.	Done
Action 7.3 PS to report back to next meeting on the Urban Summit.	Report from PS to be circulated with the Minutes.
Action 7.4 SR/PS to invite Simon Hughes to the Forum's next meeting as an observer.	Done
Action 8.1 IA (& SNH) to seek funding to support the holding of a future meeting in Scotland	Ongoing. This is part of the current work programme and will be captured in report for 2002/03. This Action Point can be closed.