



The UK Man and the Biosphere Committee Urban Forum

Minutes of the UK MAB Urban Forum meeting held 22 May 2007 at Groundwork UK Birmingham.

Present

Gerald Dawe	(GD)	Independent consultant (Chair)
Alison Milward	(AM)	Environmental Consultant
Nick Jackson	(NJ)	CEH Wallingford (Secretary)
Eilidh Johnston	(EJ)	Greenspace Scotland
Ian Angus	(IA)	SNH
Peter Frost	(PF)	CCW
Alan Scott	(AJ)	Environmental Consultant
David Goode	(DG)	UCL

1. Apologies and Welcome

Apologies have been received from:

John Box, Peter Cush, Peter Jarvis, Grant Luscombe, Peter Morgan, David Nicholson-Lord, Joe Ravetz, John Handley and Graham Leeks

- Gerald Dawe welcomed those attending to the meeting.
- John Handley has a new paper in the Built Environment winning top paper of the year on Urban Greenspace.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

- Approved as true and accurate record.

3. Matters arising

- PDFs are still to be added to new website
- Questions in advance for S&G conference – GD expressed thanks to those who submitted these but in the end they were not needed on the day.

4. Annual Report

- The annual report was agreed to be of good quality.
- Peter Frost and Alan Scott are to be involved with GD in developing the MaB Award.
- List of publications – not clear what counts as a UF pub. e.g. David Goode report to Royal Commission. Another from DG – chapter on ecology & nature conservation – dedicated to Richard Manson (?). DG to email details to NJ and GD. **A1**
- All other UF members to send suggestions that should be included. **A2**
- **D1:** All authors to include some reference to the UF in forthcoming papers, reports, biogs etc. – this adds weight to Forum when seeking funding etc.
- Some sort of logging system to document decisions UF has made etc. would be helpful. This might comprise the adoption of some form of operating principles? This could then be added as constantly updating list to website. All UF members should try and bring any such decisions to the notice of the secretary to be added to the list. **A3**
- The Forum expressed their thanks to NJ for compiling the annual report so quickly.

- EJ to talk about quantitative and qualitative aspects of greenspace to next UF meeting in Edinburgh.

5. Financial Report

- There is a financial surplus accruing – we need to make sure this is spent as it affects future funding levels.
- Should consider conferences – DG’s conference will not happen this year. The Forum should consider focussing one on Biodiversity and Climate Change in Urban Areas.
- International Biodiversity Conference mains as an item to be discussed. Possibly with a two year lead-in timetable.
- Is anyone doing a review of urban ecology in the UK? – this would provide a good basis for the conference. Anyone who knows of any such review (in the last 10 years) should let the Forum know a.s.a.p. **A4**
- DG: There is a small set of papers from one of the panel from RCEP. Would be worth looking at these. DG will send these to GD. **A5**
- Could use some of our funds to commission such a review. GD to check with John Handley to see if there are any students who would undertake this. **A6**

6. Report on ‘Statins and Greenspaces’ conference: 27 March 2007

- GD draft circulated.
- Next steps section – should address future for Forum as well as for Government in this direction.
- Still need to address the health professional sector – there was a poor representation at conference.
- It was agreed that it would be worth printing a few hundred versions of the conference proceedings hardcopy in yellow booklet format. GD to investigate getting some additional illustrations for these. **A7** NJ to update Lucy Ball’s previous quote for production. **A8**
- DG: open-land post industrial habitat. Govt steering committee JNCC – priority habitats etc. Agreed a post-industrial urban habitat as priority habitat – subject to agreement with devolved authorities. Thanks to David Knight for all his work towards achieving this.
- Thanks to GD and NJ for getting the conference off the ground.
- NJ’s report – add contacting greenspace, and arb association(s)? Add David Goode to list of attendees. **A9**
- Possible conference next year on street trees? Combining physical and ethical aspects of street tree provision (inc. pros and cons). Mid-may 2008 at UCL. Agreed.
- Include veteran trees – possibly touching on H&S instances. GD will work up. **A10**

7. Website redesign

- NJ demonstrated the new look website. There are still problems migrating the old site to the externally hosted ISP but this is moving slowly.
- NJ to look into purchasing MaB-related URLs. **A11**

8. Work Programme and Subgroups

- Need a working group to actually look at work programme. This should prepare a paper as a basis for discussion at the next UF meeting.
- GD, David Knight, Pete Frost, Ian Angus and NJ (CEH) should all be involved from funding/supporting point of view. NJ to try and sort out possible date for teleconference a.s.a.p. **A12**

- NJ to convert workprog into excel format and include columns to ask: Is the topic still relevant? Delivery date (not year). **A13** This should include an area for new topics for consideration.
- Urban habitat mapping and evaluation - Peter Jarvis. This has been published and GD will find out details and pass on to GD. **A14**

9. Membership of the Urban Forum

- GD and PF to look into DEFRA representation at parent committee. **A15**
- A replacement is needed for Dave Dawson (GLA)
- Somebody from the green infrastructure side would be useful as a member.
- All Forum members are to think about possible suggestions. GD will approach John Handley about possible members from the north west.

10. AOB

- Maidstone Prison – AS and GD still to visit. NJ to check back through minutes to find details of original contact (about 2005).
- PF to speak at conference in N. Spain with George Barker – wants to circulate forum members for suggestions for his presentation. 3 – 6 July.

11. Date of next meeting

- Wednesday **26th September** at Scottish Natural Heritage, Edinburgh.
- The meeting will start at **9:30 am** in order to finish by **14:00 pm**. If Forum members wish NJ to book overnight accommodation in Edinburgh the night before, please contact him no later than the 29th August. (NJ will be on annual leave and out of reach for the first two weeks of September).