

UK Urban Forum Meeting
December 14th 2016 12.30pm for 1.00pm
Defra, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, Westminster,
London SW1P 3JR

Present

Jane Houghton	Natural England
Judy Lee Wong.	BEN
David Goode	Independent
Terry Robinson	Independent
Alison Millward	Independent
David Haley	Independent
Alan Scott	Env Consultant
Richard Scott (Chair)	Landlife/NWC
Pete Frost - by phone	NRW
Elizabeth Rollinson	Linnean Society

Apologies

John Box
Paul Nolan
Philip James
Mathew Frith
Nick
Ian Douglas
Ambra Burls

Matters Arising, Minutes January 26th 2016

Previous Minutes Agreed as correct.

Routledge Urban Ecology Reader update/ideas

Ian Douglas is inviting ideas for new chapters to his approach to this new edition, and would welcome ideas from Forum Members. Actions: Member to contact Ian directly, with chapter ideas etc.

UNESCO – Status and Future Relationship Feedback

RS reported Unesco in Paris has requested the group to refrain using MaB logo but the UK maintain contact,with the main UKMaB Committee, to which we can remain affiliated, as a kind of steering group for urban issues. A better route maybe by invitation to other Unesco programmes where we have overlap eg. their Creative Cities programme. Other very useful international connections should be explored, or other urban ecology networks in Europe and US. UK MAB requested draft remit of Urban Forum/ RS to follow up.

The group agreed should it not be weighed down by the Unesco connection, maintain contact, but keep options open, given the rich range of connections and diversity of group interests, which should be explored fully.

John Rodwell has spoken of a “Tyranny of Typologies”, and there is the danger of getting trapped in Biosphere group which unlike IUCN and other groups does not currently recognise the urban element, or what a Biosphere could be at different scales at micro-macro level, linking citizen science and public participation. It remains important for us to have our own clear role for, which retains a broad range of interests, spanning ecology science arts and culture. We should recognise the success of Art of Nature in generating income, with cost effective events.

The group were challenged to think about the name for the group, cryptic or otherwise, or

clever acronyms for consideration as a Christmas game perhaps.

Links to other Urban nature groups such as Nature of Cities network, was highlighted, this has impressive range of topics and contributions. David Goode particularly noted the recent review of Urban Nature best book list, which was a very positive and informative example of passing on interest and factual information in the subject. See Natureofcities.org.

Action: To playfully consider a new Forum name, and how this can play to funding strength to groups like Esmee Fairbairn interested in arts culture and the environment.

Meeting event ideas

Kerry Morrison's Todmorden flood focus idea and interest sustainable flood control meeting was highlighted. DH mentioned CIEEM/Arup Exeter 2 day Charette style Event on flood alleviation and the possibility to do something similar.

PS reported opportunity for staging Ken Thompson event in 2018, perhaps at the Linnean Society?

World Urban Parks Congress – Europe chapter in Birkenhead this coming October 2017

Art of Nature Ideas Update

Judy Lee Wong reported that the Eden Project event now was not an opportunity due to change in staff responsibilities.

Limited Company Status

On Hold awaiting clarification on status and group name.

Financial report

Peter reported that as stands is £4,864.

Awards for Excellence presentation.

Mersey Forest award presented to Mersey Forest Board by Richard in September 2016.

Website

Peter confirmed he would ensure the Unesco MAB was removed from website, our title now currently stands as Urban Forum. PS highlighted the need to manage the website

Any Other Business

Jane Houghton offered updates for the next meeting on Env Agency and Natural England 25 year environment plan and more focused urban policy work, and reported comments from the group would be welcome.

Richard explained Landlife was in trouble, and was in the process of being wound up for February 2017, but legacy options were urgently being explored, and there was still hope of a solution.

Thanks to Jane for organising the venue and room.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

February 2017 to be confirmed. Suggestions Birmingham/Manchester.