

## UK Urban Ecology Forum (UKUEF)

### Draft minutes of the meeting held at University of Manchester Tuesday April 30th 2019

#### Present

Ian Douglas (ID)	University of Manchester
Paul Evans (PE)	Freelance writer and broadcaster
Pete Frost (PF)	Natural Resources Wales
David Haley (DH)	Artist and Educator
John Handley (JH)	University of Manchester
Nigel Lawson (NL) (Hon. Sec.)	University of Manchester
Judy Ling Wong (JLW)	Black Environment Network
Alison Millward (AM)	Alison Millward Associates
Richard Scott (RS) (Chair)	Eden Project

#### Apologies

John Box, Mark Champion, Mathew Frith, Nick Grayson, Jane Houghton, Philip James, Sarah Lindley, Kerry Morrison, Julie Proctor, Joe Ravetz, Terry Robinson, Elizabeth Rollinson, Alan Scott, Joanne Tippett.

#### Minutes of meeting held January 8<sup>th</sup> 2019

The minutes were accepted

#### Actions from the meeting held January 8<sup>th</sup> 2019

Dealt with in agenda items below.

#### Link to UN-Habitat Urban Agenda

RS advised that our application for affiliation to UN-Habitat has been successful and that UN-Habitat has invited UKUEF to send a delegate to their First Global Stakeholder Forum to be held in Nairobi May 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2019.

**Discussion** focused on the potential advantages this offered UKUEF, on how members might contribute, on how through the arts UKUEF provides a link between science and the general public and in engaging people (PF and DH), on providing evidence such as through 'Discover Yourself Outdoors' and similar publications (AM). JLW suggested that there is a bankruptcy of ideas on the urban agenda and that it is important to engage with people in cities and in localities and also to link to non-environmental and other voluntary groups in order to bring people together to find solutions. PE and RS spoke of the need to find ways to make people connect with nature and JH spoke about the importance of knowing how to make this happen. JH also pointed out the need to protect the quality greenspaces where people live, and in particular gardens. ID pointed out the needs to a) promote ecology for the city and

b) for interconnected policies such as linking SUDS with urban ecology and for a UKUEF delegate to go to the Nairobi Forum with an idea, with something to offer. The need to define the Forum's past outputs and current/future actions, including its unique selling point, was now an imperative.

The meeting felt unanimously that attendance at this event provides UKUEF with a unique opportunity and that spending an estimated £800 to fund a member to attend in Nairobi would be a very worthwhile investment for the future of UKUEF. Our delegate might become a member of the International Stakeholder Advisory Board. Active participation by the Forum in UN-Habitat could become a catalyst for future Forum outputs so raising our profile and perhaps impressing potential funders. JLW kindly agreed to attend on behalf of UKUEF.

Building on the experience and expertise of our members the meeting felt that UKUEF was in a unique position to make a meaningful contribution to the debate on volunteer, general public and local stakeholder participation in the promulgation of urban ecology; e.g. of a 'bottom up' approach to improving urban ecology on the general theme of ***"Public Engagement in Urban Ecology?"***.

The meeting decided that to best make an impact in Nairobi (and in the future) all members should immediately provide JLW with some brief from their experience of such actions and AM agreed to prepare a framework and PF agreed to prepare a template for a power-point slide.

#### **IMPORTANT ACTION BY ALL MEMBERS BY MAY 14<sup>TH</sup> 2019**

- **Provide examples of Public Engagement in Urban Ecology using AM's framework (appendix 1) and PF's template (attached). Copies to JLW, RS and NL please.**
- **Provide a brief approximately 3 line CV stating institution/affiliation and expertise/experience. Copies to JLW, RS and NL please.**

## **Work Programme**

The discussion following the announcement of our affiliation to UN-Habitat (see above) led to the meeting agreeing to the need for members to again become engaged in a project/projects with a deliverable and thus to the re-establishment of a work programme. Given the expertise and experience of members, the points raised in the discussion and the challenges in promoting public participation in urban ecology it was decided that the Forum would create a portfolio of case studies of public engagement initiatives. Using AM's framework (Appendix 1) as general guidance the initial aim is to produce a minimum of 12 examples supported by about 1,000 words each. Additional outputs envisaged are listed below.

Outputs:

1. Produce a position report entitled ***"Public Engagement in Urban Ecology?"***
2. Create an annual opportunity for Urban Forum Award for Excellence sites to enable them to exchange experience and encourage public engagement – to be known as National Urban Ecology Week.

3. Establish “**National Urban Ecology Week**” possibly starting in October 2019. PF offered to “badge” the Wales Green Infrastructure Forum annual meeting as a contribution to NUEW.

**Actions:**

- **All members to comment and to provide details of their anticipated contribution(s), including timing to RS (copy NL) as soon as possible but latest in advance of the next meeting planned for September 2019.**
- **PF to provide further suggestions on establishing and running NUEW.**

## **Urban Ecology Manifesto/Charter/ Principles**

DH has received feedback from several members although additional contributions will be welcome. He intends to circulate first draft by May 12<sup>th</sup> 2019.

**Action: Members are invited to provide DH with additional contributions.**

## **London National Parks City**

JLW advised that the London National Parks City will be formally launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 (see <http://www.nationalparkcity.london/>). The Mayor of London is fully committed to the initiative and funding for community action has already increased from £9 million to £12 million. The initiative applies a ‘bottom-up’ approach as well as interaction with experts. Outputs include the training of ‘champions’ to communicate with local groups, teams of local rangers and an international working group promoting an event on the establishment of National City Parks elsewhere.

## **Awards**

It was decided to send a newsletter to all past recipients of the MAB Urban Forum Award for Excellence about our affiliation to UN-Habitat and our proposed market place opportunity. Also the awards system should now be re-instated. NL advised that John Box had in the past given thought to the Awards system and that he would liaise with him.

**Action:**

- **RS/NL to prepare a newsletter to award recipients**
- **NL to liaise with John Box, and others, on reinstating the Awards for Excellence.**

## **Membership**

The need for the Forum to attract new younger members and to increase the diversity of the Forum was again emphasised.

Approaches for membership of the Forum are being made by DH to Vincent Walsh and Phil Wheeler, by ID to Danielle Sinnett, by AM to people at Birmingham University with experience in public engagement. All applicants for membership will be invited to submit a CV along with details of what they hope to contribute to UKUEF for member’s consideration at the next meeting.

The current process of re-constituting the Forum following affiliation to UN-Habitat is a good time for all members to consider new ways of assisting the Forum and whether their

other commitments are such that they may wish to reduce their involvement. Please let Richard Scott/Nigel Lawson know of your position with regard to the Forum.

**Action: all members to respond to the above.**

## **Web site**

NL reported that he has received instruction from Graham Bowden (GB) on how to operate and update the site post GB's retirement in June but that he is most uncertain of his ability to do so. However NL also reported that whilst GB would not commit himself to continued maintenance of the site once retired from University of Manchester he did not completely rule out his continued assistance. Maintenance of the site is of vital importance, not least following our affiliation to UN-Habitat and it is imperative that we find a more reliable longer term solution than the above as soon as possible.

**Action: Any member with the potential expertise to operate the site, or the connection to someone able to do so, to report to NL.**

## **Treasurer's report**

NL reported that the current bank balance is £3398.08. Expenditure per meeting, if held at University of Manchester which seems to be the most cost-effective and easiest accessible venue for most members, is costing between £100 and £200 per meeting dependant on members' travel expenses. There are no current income opportunities but this could possible change with UN-Habitat affiliation.

## **Any other business**

ID reported that the 81 chapters of the Routledge Handbook of Urban Ecology (Second edition) are complete and undergoing final editing.

PF and JLW are members of the International Union of Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Urban Conservation Strategies specialist group which is now engaged with IUCN's new Urban Nature Index project. RS and PF will attend the Nature of Cities summit in Paris in June 2019. This will provide an excellent opportunity for them to network on behalf of UKUEF (Appendix 2).

RS highlighted the NWC and CIEEM 'Wildflowering' for natural and social gain event to be held in Liverpool on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at which he and AM will be speaking and which has now also been flagged as UKUEF event.

DH reported on his work with CIWEM's Art and Environment Network and Greening the Arts Programme and his appointment as Guest Producer to contribute to Art Gene's four day Think Tank event in Barrow-in-Furness involving local people to become engaged in urban ecology and the creative development of a self-determined, ecologically resilient community in a town ranked No1 English Borough for quality of its natural heritage and 5<sup>th</sup> worst for health and well-being. He also reported on his input into the Viewpoint project in Cocker mouth to creatively consider how the local community may live with the risk of flooding. The project involves the community installing twelve 2 ton rocks at the confluence of the rivers Cocker and Derwent to reduce the risk and a letter carver is chiselling DH's poetic texts onto the rocks.

JLW reported on her involvement on the steering group of the Royal Society's Living Landscapes programme which aims to provide a long-term vision for how the UK should manage its land post-Brexit by combining food production with the need to deliver positive environmental outcomes and other public goods.

ID advised about the Co-op's initiative to understand more about the difference the Co-op can make to the mental health and well-being of communities through bringing people together in shared spaces- from parks and woodlands to internal spaces. ID proposed inviting the Co-op to provide a presentation at a future meeting.

**Actions: ID to follow up with the Co-op on presenting their shared spaces initiative.**

## **Date of next meeting**

September 2019 at a date and location to be advised.

Elizabeth Rollinson (ER) had previously suggested a possible joint event with the Linnean Society in London with the Society hosting a launch event to celebrate the Forum's affiliation to UN-Habitat and that the treasurer of the Linnean Society is very supportive of such an event.

**Action: RS and ER to explore taking this forward.**

# **Appendix 1**

## **UK Urban Ecology Forum**

### **Guidance on mini case studies of examples of Public Engagement in Urban Ecology**

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The UK Urban Ecology Forum (UKUEF) wishes to create a portfolio of mini case studies of public engagement initiatives that generated successful outcomes for people and biodiversity in the UK. The format for these mini case studies will be a text of 500 – 1000 word and one powerpoint slide with 5 key messages and a picture.

The intention is that any member of UEF could select a number of the texts and powerpoint slides to describe the nuts and bolts of successful examples of public engagement in urban ecology and what UEF does to promote and reward these initiatives.

Pete Frost will supply the powerpoint slide template.

For the text, we suggest you use something like the following structure:

- 1 Reason/driver for the initiative
- 2 Key objectives
- 3 Strategic and policy significance
- 4 Main protagonists and how they worked together
- 5 What worked well
- 6 What has happened since.

The key words that describe the answers to points 1 – 6 above can be used as the bullet points to illustrate the picture on the powerpoint slide.

Presentations of these mini case studies are most likely to be made to international, national and regional audiences so in the text, we need to reflect on the strategic and policy context for the initiatives as well as matters around design, process, practical delivery and impacts. Impacts on people's well-being and biodiversity should be the primary focus.

It would be excellent to have a variety of examples that reflect:

- a different scales of initiative – local, regional and national
- b examples from around the UK

Please send you mini case studies to: [judy@ben-network.org.uk](mailto:judy@ben-network.org.uk) with copies to [rscott@EdenProject.com](mailto:rscott@EdenProject.com) and [nigel.lawson@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:nigel.lawson@manchester.ac.uk)

## Appendix 2

### **Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group**

**World Commission on Protected Areas**

**IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)**



### **AN UPDATE ON THE SPECIALIST GROUP**

#### **The IUCN Urban Alliance is coming together**

The IUCN WCPA Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group has become a member of the new IUCN Urban Alliance. Called for in a Resolution passed by the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawai'i in 2016, the Alliance brings together IUCN member organizations, partners, and units of IUCN's Commissions and Secretariat active in urban aspects of conservation. The idea came out of our specialist group's work. From when we started in 2004, our

priorities have always included encouraging IUCN as a whole to pay more attention to urban people, urban places, and urban institutions.

Urban CSSG Co-Chair David Goldstein will represent us in the Alliance. David is in charge of cultural and tribal affairs in the Northeast Region of the United States National Park Service, and has been an NPS Urban Fellow. He is an anthropologist and will bring a social-science perspective to the task. Email: david\_goldstein @nps.gov

The Alliance's Director, Russell Galt, came on board in January and is based in the offices of the Scottish Wildlife Trust: 110 Commercial Street, Edinburgh, Scotland EH6 6NF, UK. Telephone +44 756 681 9578. Email: [russell.galt@iucn.org.uk](mailto:russell.galt@iucn.org.uk).

**Pete Frost appointed a Deputy Chair, will represent us on urban nature index group**

Pete Frost has agreed to serve as a Deputy Chair of the Urban CSSG and represent us on the technical advisory committee for the first project of the IUCN Urban Alliance, which will develop an urban nature index. In this role, Pete will be on the IUCN delegation to the first summit of the organization called The Nature of Cities, to be held in Paris on 4-7 June 2019. TNOC is an international platform for sharing ideas about "cities as ecosystems of people, nature, and infrastructure" (we are a partner).

Pete is Senior Urban Advisor at Natural Resources Wales, an agency of the Welsh Government in the UK. He has been actively involved in

our work since we started, and has served previously as a Deputy Chair. Email: [peter.frost@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk](mailto:peter.frost@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk).

### **Call for proposals to open soon for IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020**

IUCN's World Conservation Congresses are major gatherings held every four years. The next WCC will be held in Marseille, France on 11-19 June 2020. A call for proposals to hold events during the Forum part of the Congress will open on 2 May and close on 17 July. More information: <https://www.iucncongress2020.org/>.

At the WCC, Urban CSSG Deputy Chair Louise Lézy-Bruno will organize a series of events on management of urban protected areas and urban conservation strategies more generally. This will be done in partnership with two national parks in the Marseille area, Calanques and Port Cros. Please get in touch with Louise to submit proposals and ask questions. She will also be putting together a photographic exhibition on urban protected areas. Email: [louise.bruno@yahoo.fr](mailto:louise.bruno@yahoo.fr).

Best wishes,

Ted Trzyna, Chair

IUCN WCPA Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group

[Ted\\_Trzyna@InterEnvironment.org](mailto:Ted_Trzyna@InterEnvironment.org)

[www.Trzyna.info](http://www.Trzyna.info)

**IUCN WCPA Urban Conservation Strategies Specialist Group**

[Specialist Group Website](#) [IUCN](#) [WCPA](#)

**Chair: Ted Trzyna, [www.Trzyna.info](http://www.Trzyna.info),**

**[Ted\\_Trzyna@InterEnvironment.org](mailto:Ted_Trzyna@InterEnvironment.org)**

**Co-Chair: David Goldstein, [david\\_goldstein@nps.gov](mailto:david_goldstein@nps.gov)**

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