



The UK Man and the Biosphere Committee Urban Forum

Minutes of the UK MAB Urban Forum meeting held 19th February 2008 at University of Manchester

1. Present

Gerald Dawe	(GD)	Independent consultant (Chair)
Ambra Burls	(AB)	Anglia Ruskin University
Ian Douglas	(ID)	University of Manchester
Nigel Lawson	(NL)	University of Manchester (Acting Secretary for this meeting)

2. Apologies

Ian Angus, Peter Frost, John Handley, Peter Jarvis, Grant Luscombe, Alison Millward, Peter Morgan, Joe Ravetz. Several members were unable to attend due to the late circulation of the agenda.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were approved.

4 Matters arising

- Outstanding actions from the last meeting were reviewed:
 - o A1 circulation of Guidance Framework and Audits and Strategy on Greenspace- no news. Secretary to act on this **A1**
 - o A2 E-mail to group to ask for publications- no news. Secretary to act on this **A2**
 - o A3 Logging system. GD has still to attend to this **A3**
 - o A4 and A5 Handbook of Urban Ecology: see 9 below
 - o A6 Secretary to chase David Goode regarding the outstanding RCEP papers: no news and still to be done **A4**
 - o A7 Offer from SNH to possibly provide some funding if Urban Forum organises a conference for them. A wide ranging theme on the sustainability of Street Trees, including ethical and economic issues, was proposed as a conference topic. GD to circulate ideas in advance of the next meeting **A5**
 - o A9 and A10 have been done.
 - o A11 Shirley paper: no news. AM to chase Pete and let secretary know **A6**
 - o A12 Conference on Human Ecology in Manchester is on progress by ID. Urban Forum should consider inviting a key speaker **A7**
 - o A13 New BDAP action plan. PF still to circulate this to UK members **A8**
 - o A14 CABE space- GD to contact Mathew Frith- still to be done **A9**

- A15 EJ paper. GD to chase **A10**
- A16 done
- A17 dropped through lack of time
- A18 Pre-printed PDF version of the forward research agenda: still to be done **A11**
- A19 done.
- A 20 and A21 Secretariat: see item 5 below
- A22 visit to Meanwhile Gardens attended to. GD to visit on March 4th
- A23 ID still to produce the assessment form
- A24 GD/David Goode still need to consider the Landlife publication for an award **A12**
- A 25 Done by ID. Paper will be circulated with these minutes (see below under AOB)
- A26 Call for Proposal to EU FP7. PF to introduce? Attempt to secure funding for an urban green-space toolkit that deals with everything from human health, hydrology to climate change: still outstanding **A13**
- A27 NJ to forward CO₂ audit to GD for inclusion in conference proceedings: still outstanding **A14**.
- A28 dates of future meetings- see below.

5. Retendering of Secretariat

- Retendering should commence now and a tender document will be prepared based on Natural England's form of contract. The tender document will be advertised on the MAB Urban Forum web site and will be sent to all members with a request that it be circulated by word of mouth. The tenders will be considered by the Chair, Peter Frost and David Knight **A15**
- The objective of the secretariat is to efficiently administer the Urban Forum. The tasks of the secretariat are:
 - To monitor work programmes and to report progress to each meeting
 - To produce minutes of Urban Forum meetings
 - To organise the smooth running of these meetings, including providing members with adequate advance notice
 - To forward plan for future meetings
 - To get involved in conference administration
 - To monitor and update the UK MAB Urban Forum web site (after each meeting)
 - To present clear financial information to each meeting, including the breakdown of monies spent
 - Secretariat function
 - Travel
 - Meetings
 - Catering and room hire
 - To have a role in monitoring equal opportunity/equal advantage
 - To maintain the archive and list of publications
 - To satisfactorily support the Urban Forum

Duration of the tender: 1 year, with annual renewal and with termination subject to 2 months notice by either party

Standard required: Experience in taking minutes and in web design

- Vetting procedure:
 - o Is it economically advantageous?
 - o Quality of the tender
 - o Experience of the applicant
 - o Interest in, and commitment to, the aims of the Urban Forum
- GD to clarify whether the basis of the tender is fixed price or open **A16**
- The budget will be held by the secretariat and auditing will be by the parent organisation.

IMPORTANT: Two outstanding tasks to be undertaken by the present secretariat (Nick Jackson of CEH) immediately are:

- o E-mail group to ask for publications **A17**
- o Ensure reporting to Natural England and CCW by 15/03/2008 **A18**
- GD to write and thank Nick Jackson for his work and to provide him with a present **A19**

6. Finance

- GD reported a surplus of approximately £4,000 plus £2,208 for the 2007/8 work programme.
- GD recommended the inclusion of a financial report showing separate accounts for each specific project at each meeting, backdated to include the meeting held on December 4th 2007 in Lancaster. **A20**

7. Appointment of Deputy Chair

Agreed to seek nominations and to be discussed at next meetings. Nominations should be made by March 31st. **A21**

8. ‘Statins and Greenspaces’: Health and the Urban Environment

GD undertook, in view of the timing, to edit and to fill in gaps and to deliver the text to the printers. A quotation for printing costs was judged to be appropriate. **A22**

9. A Handbook of Urban Ecology

- ID circulated proposals. He has received 2 requests:
 1. Peter Morgan of Groundwork regarding
 - a. Climate Change
 - b. Environmental Justice
 2. Peter Jarvis
 - a. Who will be the publisher and whether it will also be web based
 - b. Need for a chapter on urban animal ecology (he volunteered himself and a colleague for contributions)
- AB commented that Chapter 28 should address “green-space as a venue of therapeutic value” and that Chapters 41 and 42 should include “recovery of a

physical condition". She also proposed the addition of something on Human Psychology and Mental Health.

- GD commented on:
 - o The need to give greater coverage to social, philosophical and political aspects. These would not generate or summarise scientific evidence, but would rather, lead into (necessarily controversial) areas of personal value judgements.
 - o E.g.
 - o Do street trees have standing? (After the famous book 'do trees have standing')
 - o Economic imperialism versus consideration of 'externalities'
 - o Victorian paternalism and current non-planning for the future, despite sustainability's notion of 'intergenerational equity': AB mentioned the perception of green-space and barriers leading to social exclusion
- ID is still awaiting feedback from other members.
- AB undertook to contribute to editing the book
- The first publisher contacted had declined the offer to publish and ID is contacting alternative publishers A23

10. Work Programme

This item was deferred due to the small attendance at the meeting

11. AOB

1. AB requested circulation of paper: Ten Common 'Mistakes' to Avoid and 'Needs' to Meet, when Seeking to Create a Better World, which is attached hereto.
2. AB brought the work of Cultivations to the attention of members. The charity now exists and further information about their work will be posted on the Forum's web site when it is available.
3. ID has produced an outline of the requirements for the Urban Wildlife Award for Excellence, including past awards, which is attached hereto.
4. AB would like to advise members of a conference hosted by MIND on June 2nd on Eco-therapy, the Green Agenda and Mental Health
5. GD is particularly anxious to ensure a good attendance by colleagues in the South of England at UF meetings and it was agreed to change the venue of the December meeting from Belfast NI to London, particularly to make it possible for Forum members in the south-east to attend a meeting easily. It was hoped that a Belfast meeting could be held in 2009.- see below.

12. Date and location of UF meetings in 2008

- Wednesday 7th May Bangor location to be confirmed
- Wednesday 24th September Edinburgh location to be confirmed
- Wednesday 3rd December London location to be confirmed