

GB & NI Tree Health Advisory Group Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2016

Dale Suites, Monkbar Hotel, York

Present:

Jane Barbrook - APHA
Anna Brown – FC Scotland
David Brown - HTA
Roger Coppock – FC X Border (Chair)
Jon Heuch - Arboricultural Association/ICF
Chris Jones – NRW (telecom)
John Morgan – FC X Border
Diane Stevenson - DEARA NI
Duncan Stone - SNH
Adrian Jowitt – Natural England
Jon Stokes – Tree Council (telecom)
Joan Webber - FR
Nicola Spence – Defra
Pat Hunter-Blair – Confor
Paul Woodcock – JNCC
Andrew Smith – FE England
Martin Williams – Welsh Government
Jamie Dewhurst – Confor
Matt Elliot – Woodland Trust

Apologies:

David Sulman – UKFPA
John Speirs - SG
Andy Hall – FC England
Chris Cheffings – JNCC
Christine Reid – Woodland Trust
John Dye – TIMCON
Harry Frew – Confor NPG
Jon Heuch – Arboricultural Association
Caroline Harrison - Confor
Ray Hawes – National Trust
Lorna Baillie – FC X Border

1. Welcome and Introductions

Roger welcomed everyone to the meeting and the members introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and actions

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising

<p>Action – Group to be used for feedback for the portal at future meeting. Nicola to provide update.</p>	<p>The link had been circulated to members. Progress was being made. Any feedback and comments were welcome. Action: Discharged</p>
<p>Action – John M to discuss with Jamie how communication with the trade on notifications can be improved.</p>	<p>General agreement that there had been a big improvement in communication with PHSI and that this should continue. Action: Discharged</p>
<p>Action- Roger to plan for inclusion of update from James Morison on Climate Change Risk Assessment in future agenda. James advised there was not enough work on this at present to provide an update but that he is happy to do this at a later meeting.</p>	<p>The CCRA paper is due to be published shortly, but there is not a lot of forestry and plant health related content to make a presentation worthwhile. See Synthesis report Chapter 3 https://www.theccc.org.uk/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017/synthesis-report/ Action: Discharged.</p>
<p>Action – Jane to circulate the general ALB finalised leaflet once available. David Brown can help circulate to some members. Leaflet was circulated for the meeting. This specific ALB Kent outbreak leaflet was now going to households.</p>	<p>Jane had circulated the leaflet and advised there had been positive feedback. Action: David Brown to flag to HTA members.</p>
<p>Action: For a future meeting – look across full research landscape.</p>	<p>On agenda - discharged</p>
<p>Action: Chris R to arrange a meeting/training for Tree Alert. The Woodland trust is fully booked up across the UK. Chris to email Kate to arrange a meeting with the relevant parties.</p>	<p>Chris to provide an update at the next meeting on the progress of the meeting/training for Tree Alert. Action carried forward.</p>
<p>Action: Chris J to get in touch with Consortium or York</p>	<p>When Chris attended the site the disease had</p>

GB&NI Tree Health Advisory Group

<p>University who are completing work in relation to Chalara and may be interested in the site in Wales.</p>	<p>actually spread rapidly and a lot of regrowth was affected too. The planned management of the site was in discussion with the owner and was an ongoing situation. It was worth discussing how this site could be used for research.</p> <p>Action: Chris to see if York wish to continue to take this forward.</p>
<p>Modelling the spread of P Ramorum in oak in the US.</p>	<p>Action: Joan to circulate climex data. Done and discharged.</p>
<p>It was thought that air quality may affect the spread of a disease. There was an LWEC project considering air quality which the FC was part of and so may be able to feed in to this regarding plant health.</p>	<p>Action: Joan to follow up with James Morison.</p>
<p>Northern Ireland tree health policy review</p>	<p>Action: NI report on agenda. Discharged</p>
<p>Resilience discussion</p>	<p>Action: Nicola to feedback what is happening in the Defra groups working on resilience to get a GB wide perspective, which the GB&NI Group can comment on. Done.</p>
<p>Plant health risk group</p>	<p>Action: Lorna to circulate presentation to the group. Done.</p> <p>Action: Nicola to speak to Richard to look in to developing guidance on legislation for plants, similar to that which the FC GB team produced on timber. Ongoing.</p> <p>Action: Nicola to make sure Caroline is sighted on this information.</p>
<p>Legislative options for further devolution</p>	<p>Action: Lorna to circulate presentation to the group. Done</p> <p>Action: John to provide update at a future meeting. On agenda</p>
<p>The response from the FVO Mission was very positive and was a good reflection of what was trying to be achieved.</p>	<p>Action: John to send conclusions from the FVO Mission to Lorna to circulate to the group. Done.</p>
<p>It was requested if there was likely to be a pest alert issued soon for pine processionary moth. It was advised that FR already had a pest alert in preparation.</p>	<p>Action: Andrew to follow up pest alert with Joan. PA published.</p> <p>Action: Roger to get group members added to the FC publications email list. Done.</p>

As per a previous action a representative was sought from Bali. Roger advised that the representative had now left the organisation and so a replacement had been requested. Roger was awaiting a response.

3. Plant Health Service updates

Updates to the meeting were provided by each plant health service from the papers circulated.

The NI Plant Health strategy is due to be published soon. **Action: Diane will alert Lorna when this is available.**

A new Defra strategy is being prepared for the end of the year to coincide with the release of the 25 year environment plan.

Action: Roger to provide contact list to Andrea Deol.

Wales is developing its own PH risk register, gaps were seen as grassland crops and pesticide management, to share the RR with the group. **Action Martin.**

Jane indicated that Pr and Pk maps are available and can be distributed. **Action: Jane**

4. Organisational changes

Roger and Nicola provided an up to date picture of changes happening within FC and Defra. Due to other activity, progress was fairly slow, and a further update would be provided at the next meeting. DARD had merged the NI environmental body and was now DEARA.

5. Research overview

Roger gave a short presentation, prepared by Stewart Snape CFS, on the broad scope of research currently underway on plant health in GB.

Action: Lorna to circulate to the group.

6. Observatree, EPPO, and TreeAlert

Peter Crow (FR) gave a presentation to the meeting on the Observatree project, the recent EPPO meeting at Kew, and the updated version of TreeAlert.

Action: Lorna to circulate presentation

7. Plant health policy reviews

Andrea Deol (Defra) gave a presentation to the group on the recent policy reviews of actions to address Oak Processionary moth, and Phytophthora ramorum.

Action: Lorna to circulate presentation to the group.

8. EU Plant health regime review

James Smith (Defra) provided the group with a presentation on steps towards implementation of the new EU Plant Health regime. As this is still subject to final agreement, James' presentation will not be circulated. It was agreed that the group would be used as a key forum for advice on implementation of the new regime, and this item may be addressed again at the next meeting.

9. Legislative and regulatory changes

John Morgan gave a presentation to the group on recent changes to legislation. Of particular interest is the new EU plant health Regulation which will extend plant passporting to controlled wood and bark movement within the UK. This was not welcomed by the industry representatives present, and the negotiating team asked to push back on this in the implementation discussions. Legislation to introduce a new import notification scheme for firewood had been drafted and was about to go to Ministers for agreement, and this will strengthen UK controls against pests like Emerald ash borer.

Action: Martin Williams to feedback comments on firewood to Wales.

Action: John to provide update at a future meeting.

10. Industry perspectives

David Brown and Sir Pat Hunter-Blair provided the meeting with perspectives from industry on the main issues of concern. David stressed the major concern about Xylella, and the need to ensure it does not get into the UK, as this would be a major problem for nurseries and plant producers.

Pat looked at things from a forest owner perspective, and identified the four key risks of fir, windblow, climate change and pests and diseases. The key issues from these are what species should be used for restocking in a variety of situations, and when is the optimum time to fell uninfected larch? He also stressed the need for more research on a more diverse silviculture to provide greater resilience against these threats.

11. AOB

Duncan Stone highlighted a recent policy change from SNH, where sycamore is now considered to be an acceptable component of woodland features, as it provides a similar contribution to ecosystem services to ash, which is threatened by Chalara. The new approach is provisional and will be reviewed in the light of new evidence. The change was welcomed by the meeting.

12. Date and location of future meetings

Action: Next meeting on December 16th. Lorna to find a suitable location and circulate details to group members.