

Notes from Tree Safety Meeting – 14th January 2009
Forestry Commission, 340 Bristol Business Park, Bristol

Attendees:

Harry Studholme	Caroline Harrison	Neville Fay
Mark Daniels	Simon Wallis	Rebecca Haskell
John Watt	Simon Richmond	Mick Boddy
Rachael Edwards		
(minutes)		

Apologies were received from Emily Ramsay (Forestry Commission GB), John Lockhart (RICS), Shireen Chambers (ICF), Andy Tipping (LTOA)

Welcomes were extended to Mark Daniels (National Trust) who has now joined the management committee.

Notes from last meeting

The notes were agreed as a correct record.

Richard Stead welcomed comments from the meeting regarding the legal paper. The updated version should be available by mid February 2009. A meeting with David Ball to discuss the risk philosophy may be useful after the second draft.

DARM Research Project Update (Paper)

Progress to date

Some data has been added as a result of survey distribution. Preliminary analysis shows 60 deaths over 10-year period, reinforcing the number of deaths figure used by the industry of 6 deaths per year. Some further investigation is needed to ensure there is no duplication of entries.

The criteria for classification of tree related deaths for this study were clarified. If people have driven in to a fallen tree keep the record, not if person veers off road and hits a static object (tree).

The SurveyMonkey survey will be left open while this work continues. The information gathered will be held by one organisation, to be decided.

The hosting of the database should be discussed again near the end of the year. We will also need to assess the way people are informed about the database and encouraged to enter any data they have.

Many failures are associated with severe weather events i.e. Lady killed in Corfe Castle was deemed an act of God because there was a tornado. Information of this sort can be used to inform the risk communication work.

The data will be interpreted referring to other risks to the public, as well as within the tolerability of risk framework. Phase 2 includes the public perception of risk and societal concern.

AP: JW to circulate document about..... as well as the Play England document which is endorsed by the HSE to see how thinking is progressing.

Please note Prof. David Ball's document (handed out at meeting) is confidential and in draft format. Please pass on comments to DB or JW.

Governance/Steering Group for this project

Neville Fay to act as contact for JW for NTSG. NF to co-opt other members as necessary.

Finance

Current financial position

Funds available for ongoing works commissioned. Some other avenues to explore for other possible funding when required.

£7000 from Ancient Tree Forum has been committed but not yet forwarded to AA.

Appointment of Treasurer

Caroline Harrison was appointed Treasurer for the NTSG. The Arboricultural Association will continue to hold the funds on behalf of the NTSG.

Terms of Reference

HS to talk to Matt Searle regarding the make up management committee.

Membership is open to all. Members will be put added to a distribution list and sent minutes, information and other relevant updates. At the moment no fee will be attached to joining. Members will be people who have actively asked to be members of the NTSG, not simply those who replied to conference letter.

Framework for Progression/Structure of NTSG (paper)

The guidance document produced needs to be able to be used by all the interested parties, including large organisations with their own guidance as well as those without any formal guidance at present.

The forum meeting will set a timeline but prior to this there is a need to ensure everyone is clear what the NTSG is aiming for.

HS went through the comments put forward by RICS. These were also noted during the subsequent discussion.

The suggestion option 2 (a short guidance leaflet) was the way to progress started the discussion. The preferred model by RICS was option 1 (an all-encompassing published document). Others suggested a compromise of both. Something more than a leaflet without being an all encompassing document. The inclusion of case studies and examples of best practise was thought to be important to give real life situations and context to the guidance.

Mick Boddy suggested the NTSG could learn from the responses to the recent BSI consultation. A possible structure could be to provide some sort of less formal material and a British Standard.

AP: MB will send comments from BS consultation to SR.

JW presented a framework. This will be circulated to the group to assist with deciding what is the best way forward.

It was agreed to look at the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group guidance and see how well this meets the vision of the NTSG. This could be used as a starting point for the NTSG document or to inform the discussion.

FC Role within NTSG

It was proposed that Gareth Price, Forestry Commission, should be invited to become involved in the NTSG. This would be to specifically take control of the non-management committee roles. He would act as Champion for the NTSG to outside bodies. His current job involves liaising both internally within FC and outside organisations and so already has the network of contacts that will be useful for roll out of policy documents etc.

AP: HS to meet with Gareth about this role

Communication

Website

It was agreed to buy a domain name which redirects to pages hosted by the Forestry Commission.

HS will further this discussion with Gareth Price.

The plan is for a simple website which will be used primarily for communication needs. It would include Terms of Reference, minute of meetings, membership lists, other documents etc. There are no plans for a forum to be included in the first instance.

NTSG Forum meeting

There is a need to discuss the Risk work and legal document with the wider industry. This is what NTSG said it would commission and do at the conference.

Planning for June as sensible time frame. AA hold their trade fair at end June so would limit time of SR/NE. This is a year after the initial conference. Favoured dates are 11/12 June. Probably a London venue again, although the agenda would be deliberately shorter so delegates can travel there and back in a day.

The purpose of this meeting is to present to members the NTSG's progress so far, what we're thinking, propose the next step of process and endorse the continuation of this. This needs to be a discussion forum rather than another conference.

Dates of Future Meetings

26th March 2009

14th July 2009

22nd October 2009