

Notes from the 7th Meeting of the Oak Processionary Moth Outbreak Management Team

12:30pm, 4 November 2010
Riverwalk House, London

Present:

Stewart Snape, Deputy Head of Plant Health (Chair)
Ron Melville, Regional Director, London
Christine Tilbury, Forest Research
Ralph Parks, Consultant Ecologist
Ben Clutterbuck, London Borough of Ealing
Shaun Case, London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
Craig Ruddick, London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
Gary Rimmer, London Borough of Brent
Richard Gill, Community Tree Officer, Sheffield County Council
Tony Kirkham, Head of the Arboretum and Horticultural Services, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
Mike Turner, The Royal Parks
Gillian Jonusas, The Royal Parks
David Lofthouse, London Tree Officers Association
Mike Robinson, Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, Fera

Apologies:

Nigel Straw, Forest Research; Charlton Clark, Forestry Commission; and
Matthew Oates, National Trust.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome

Stewart Snape thanked everyone for attending and welcomed them to the meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2010 were agreed.

Agenda Item 3: Matters arising

Stewart reminded those members that had not submitted action plans and indicative costs to Roddie Burgess to do so when they became available. All other action points had been addressed. Stewart referred to the Standard Operating Procedures for the Removal of Oak Processionary Moth material by vacuum cleaner. He explained that the Forestry Commission would amend the title of the paper to include reference to the word "Industrial" to avoid any

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implication that domestic vacuums could be used. Following subsequent discussion within FC we intend to include the word “professional” rather than industrial.

Action: Stewart to amend the paper and recirculate.

Agenda Item 4: Season update and review

Updates were provided by members from Kew, Ealing, Richmond Borough and the Forestry Commission.

Ralph Parks presented his report. Ralph reported that further larvae had been observed on *Quercus ilex* and that these appeared to have completed their development. This contrasts with an earlier report from Kew that the organism only reached 3rd instar on *Q. ilex*.

Richmond Royal Park reported that a draft action plan had been prepared.

Agenda Item 5: Research Update

Christine Tilbury reported on this year’s trapping programme. Pheromone traps were most successful in open, non-urban areas. This suggested that there is a need to understand what it was about urban areas that is causing problems. Disruption of pheromone plumes was a likely candidate. Stewart asked whether pheromone traps could be used en-mass to trap males and reduce populations. Christine replied that not all males are attracted to traps.

Tony Kirkham reported that the pheromone traps in Kew had been unsuccessful. He explained that when they analysed the chemical contents of the lures they identified differences compared to previous lures and suggested that this may be worthy of further investigation. Christine replied that the same type of lure had been used elsewhere and had been successful.

Tony also reported that the light traps used in Kew had caught both males and females.

Stewart asked whether light traps were likely to be affected by light pollution in urban areas. Christine confirmed that this was likely.

Action: Stewart will discuss next steps with Christine and Nigel.

Agenda Item 6: Update on Statutory controls

Stewart Snape referred to the submission made to the EU. He explained that the proposal had received a favourable response and that the working group had asked that the area to be excluded from the Protected Zone be based on a 10km buffer zone (all administrative areas within a 10km radius) of known infested sites. The EU also asked that pheromone traps be located in the permanent oak sample plots across GB. Stewart added that the proposal was for a UK PZ and as such Northern Ireland would need to be included in the monitoring

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proposal. In response to Stewart's request for comments, David Lofthouse asked what the implications would be for the London Boroughs. Stewart explained that as the external boundary would now be significantly extended he anticipated that all of the FC resource would be directed to monitoring the buffer area at the boundary between the PZ and the area excluded from it. He also explained that nurseries within the outbreak zone, but intending to trade oak plants outside the outbreak zone, would need to be registered and inspected at least annually to ensure they and any oaks in the immediate vicinity remained free from the pest.

In response to a question about the implications for FC resources to police the core area Stewart moved on to the next item, Strategy Update.

Agenda Item 7: Strategy Update

Stewart referred to Nigel's paper and explained that the Forestry Commission intended to recommend that eradication was now impossible and that we should adopt a containment strategy. In response to a question from Dave Lofthouse Stewart explained that before a final decision could be confirmed it was likely that the Minister would need to be consulted.

Stewart explained that he was assuming that there would be no new resources made available. Therefore, diverting FC resources to monitoring and other action within the buffer zones would have implications for enforcement within the core area. There was an extensive discussion following which Stewart asked whether members wanted FC to continue to issue Statutory notices. He explained that notices could only be issued where signs of infestation had been found or where inspectors had grounds for suspecting that the pest would be present. There was unanimous support for FC to continue to issue notices. Stewart would investigate the options for doing so and report at the next meeting.

Action: Stewart to investigate implications and options for continuing to serve notice and give an update at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business

Tony Kirkham mentioned the different strains of *Bacillus thuringiensis* and asked which ones had been approved for use in the UK. Stewart agreed to follow this up.

Action: Stewart to investigate and report to the next meeting.

Tony also mentioned some work being done in the Netherlands on nematodes and some work being done in Kew in partnership with Syngenta on tree injection using chemicals that are toxic to feeding caterpillars.

Action: Stewart to investigate and report to the next meeting.

Dave Lofthouse highlighted the fact that members of the OMT had tried to raise awareness about the potential public health risk that OPM poses.

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Agenda Item 9: Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that we should meet again in late February or early March. Mike Turner offered the facilities of Richmond Park for the next meeting.

Action: Stewart to suggest dates for the next meeting.