

Land Forum Meeting

Meeting Notes

22nd March 2018, 11.00am – 4.00pm

Location: Jacobs, New City Court, 20 St Thomas Street, London, SE1 9RS



FINAL

Present:

Lucy Thomas	Chair
Nicola Harries (<i>Secretariat</i>)	CL:AIRE
Jane Thrasher	Environmental Industries Commission (EIC)
Angela Haslam	Environment Agency (EA)
Julia Reynolds	Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Pollution Advisory Group (YALPAG)
Paul Sheehan	Chair of Land Stewardship/Natural Capital Working Group
Doug Laidler	Soil and Groundwater Technology Association (SAGTA)
Richard Boyle	Homes England (HE)
David Waterhouse	Ministry of Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (until 2pm)
Paul Burden	Specialist in Land Condition (SiLC)
Christopher Fry	Environmental Protection UK
Vivien Dent	Association of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Specialists (AGS)

By telephone:

Alex Lee	Society of Brownfield Risk Assessment (SoBRA)
Andrew Williams & Richard Clark	Welsh Government
Matthew Llewellyn & Trystan James	Natural Resources Wales
Paul Nathanail	Geological Society (until 2pm)
David Middleton	Defra
Rachel Thomas	Pembrokeshire County Council & Welsh Contaminated Land Working Group
Hallan Sambrooke	Newcastle under Lyme Council, Staffordshire Contaminated Land Working Gp

Apologies:

Euan Hall	Land Trust
Andrew Wiseman	UKELA
Mark Edwards	Lancaster City Council
Seamus Lefroy Brooks	Chair of NQMS Steering Group
Theresa Kearney	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

Caroline Thornton
Lisa Hathway
Steve Manning
Rob Ivens
Peter Witherington

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
National House Building Council (NHBC)
Wiltshire Council
Mole Valley Council
Home Builders Federation (HBF)

Corresponding Members:

Tony Lewis
Julia Thrift
Peter Johnson
John Silvester

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)
Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)
UK Build/UK Strategic Forum for Construction
Planning Officers Society

Agenda

Agenda

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Introductions of represented organisations
3. Review of previous minutes & actions
 - a. Results of survey monkey for forum name
 - b. Deputy position
4. Update from Government Departments and Environment Agencies
 - Welsh Government
 - Natural Resources Wales
 - Scottish Government & Scottish Environment Protection Agency
 - Department of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs & Environment Agency Northern Ireland
 - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
 - Defra Soil and Contaminated Land Team
 - Environment Agency
 - Homes England
5. Discussion topic:
 - NPPF for consultation – Q&A session with Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
6. Update from Industry Groups including but not limited to:
 - AGS
 - SiLC
 - NHBC
 - SoBRA

- EPUK
 - HBF
 - UKELA
 - CL:AIRE
 - EIC
 - SAGTA
 - Contaminated Land Fora
 - RICS
 - CIEH
7. ISO/BSI Standards update: what's new
 8. NQMS Steering Group – update
 9. Discussion Topics
 - NPPF post Q & A session with Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
 - Future direction of Land Forum to continue its work to promote sustainable development
 - Natural capital
 - Visibility
 - Resource challenge for implementation of contaminated land regulations in EA and LPA
 - Others that come out of Q&A above.
 10. AOB
 11. Date and location of next meeting

Meeting Notes

1) Welcome & Apologies

Lucy Thomas (LT) welcomed everyone and apologies were given. LT confirmed that she is the new chair and would like to convey the Land Forum's thanks for Paul Sheehan's chairmanship over the last two years. Housekeeping and a health and safety awareness briefing was provided along with thanks to Jane Thrasher and Jacobs for hosting us.

2) Introductions of represented organisations

Introductions were performed around the table and on the phone.

3) Review of Previous Minutes & Outstanding Actions

All actions were completed or are to be discussed as part of the meeting.

a. Results of survey monkey for forum name

There was a unanimous vote to change the Land Forum name back to National Brownfield Forum.

b. Deputy position

Paul Nathanail was nominated as Deputy Chair of the Land Forum.

4) Update from Government Departments and Environment Agencies

Welsh Government

Andy Williams (AW) and Richard Clark (RC) provided an update on behalf of Welsh Government (WG). AW confirmed the projects funded as part of the 2017/2018 Welsh Government Contaminated Land Capital Fund are nearing completion. WG are currently looking at developing a new fund for 2018/2019 but this is yet to be finalized.

RC confirmed that the Planning Policy Guidance in Wales is also out for consultation with closing date for comments of May 10th 2018.

<https://beta.gov.wales/planning-policy-wales-edition-10>

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

Matthew Llewellyn (ML) and Trystan James (TJ) provided an update on the activities of NRW. TJ confirmed that they are currently working on the three projects that they received funding for from the Capital Funding Programme and ML confirmed that they have fed into the recently produced Development of Land Affected by Contamination: A Guide for Developers. Up until now this has not been publicly available, just sent on request. ML has requested that this document is uploaded on WALL. It can now be accessed here:

<https://www.clare.co.uk/component/phocadownload/category/27-wall-documents?download=630:development-of-land-affected-by-contamination-a-guide-for-developers>

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Theresa Kearney was unable to attend in person but sent the following report.

The risk assessment for Northern Ireland not having a specific contaminated land regime in Northern Ireland (similar to Part 2a) is still in preparation and is expected to be completed by Summer 2018.

Work is under way to develop a consultation on the regulation of hazardous substances in groundwater that will be in line with the JAGDAG methodology for the determination of hazardous substances in groundwater

The Department and Agency have established a number of priority BREXIT teams that include waste and water.

TK also had a query for the other agencies with regard to the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in particular, Article 15 – Contaminated sites requires

- c. The Commission shall organise an exchange of information with the Member States regarding the measures taken at national level to identify and assess sites contaminated by mercury and mercury compounds and to address the significant risks such contamination may pose to human health and the environment.
 - d. By 1 January 2021, the Commission shall make the information gathered pursuant to paragraph a, including an inventory of sites contaminated by mercury and mercury compounds, publicly available on the internet.

TK wondered what is being done in the other parts of the UK in relation to having an inventory of sites contaminated by Mercury by 1 Jan 2021? SEPA and EA will respond separately to TK.

Scottish Government & Scottish Environment Protection Agency

Caroline Thornton (CT) was unable to attend in person and sent an update post meeting.

SEPA has undergone an organisational restructure over the last few months and the new location for contaminated land staff within the organisation has just been agreed. They all now sit (CT as policy and the 3 contaminated land specialists) within the Circular Economy Directorate. They will be part of a cross cutting function along with their planning colleagues and will work on a national basis (the specialists were previously regional).

CT confirmed that much of the work being carried out at the moment is in relation to forthcoming groundwater (hazardous) substances directives which will be consulted upon by Scottish Government. This is proving to be a long, fairly complex process. Scottish Government is working in close liaison with SEPA in order to draft the consultation itself and in addition there has been a raft of work carried out by SEPA in terms of assessing the impacts on waste, radioactive substances, PPC and contaminated land regimes and re-drafting a number of pieces of SEPA guidance accordingly. These include the Groundwater Policy Statement WAT-PS-10-01 and their existing guidance on 'Water Pollution Arising from Land Containing Chemical Contaminants'. The intention is to consult on these guidance documents in tandem with the Groundwater Standards Consultation - the aim being to provide stakeholders with additional information on what the implications will be for various regimes.

Scottish Government and SEPA have also established a number of Brexit teams and this work is taking precedence at the moment, particularly within the Scottish Government Legal Department.

Defra Soil and Contaminated Land Team

David Middleton (DM) provided an update on behalf of Defra. He confirmed that much of their time has been feeding into how to deliver the 25 year Environment Plan, focusing mainly on agricultural soils. DM feels that the Land Forum are well placed to feed into the Environment Plan through Defra's Housing and Planning team, to help provide valuable feedback how best to approach to obtain environmental net gains. SuRF-UK Steering group has also offered assistance.

DM will ask his Defra colleagues who are delivering on Environment Plan to present at the next Land Forum meeting, explain their role and where the Land Forum can help. DM felt it may be better if Defra hosts the next meeting and will confirm if rooms are available.

ACTION: DM to discuss with Defra colleagues who are delivering on Environment Plan to present at the next Land Forum meeting.

ACTION: DM to confirm if Defra will host the next Land Forum meeting.

Environment Agency (EA)

Angela Haslam (AH) from Environment Agency attended and provided an update of their activities. She confirmed that there has been a wholesale review of permitting and associated charges following a consultation and the new charges come into effect on 1st April 2018.

NQMS

AH confirmed that they continue to support the NQMS and participate in the Steering Group. They are starting to see more reports with the NQMS declaration on and are supporting staff internally. AH explained that they are raising awareness of the scheme across EA staff not just land contamination practitioners. AH confirmed that they are supporting their staff internally with regards the NQMS and have updated internal guidance. AH confirmed that she has spoken at the Janet Watson conference about the scheme and at the SoBRA Christmas event. She jointly wrote an article in the AGS magazine supporting the scheme. The EA will be looking to use the NQMS on their Part 2A capital works projects going forward.

Post Meeting Note

EA attended the SiLC NQMS panel discussion in April.

Part 2A Capital Works

EA are busy working on five Part 2A Capital Works Sites. EA is currently developing the work programme of sites for next year 2019/2020.

@GeoscienceEA is the the new twitter account for the Environment Agency's Groundwater and Contaminated Land teams to provide information about the work they are doing on groundwater resources, groundwater quality and contaminated land.

Homes England (HE)

Richard Boyle (RB) highlighted that Homes England was officially launched on 11th January 2018 after initially being mentioned in the Housing White Paper, with responsibility for:

- increasing the number of new homes that are built in England, including affordable homes and homes for market, sale or rent
- improving existing affordable homes and bringing empty homes back into use as affordable housing
- increasing the supply of public land and speeding up the rate that it can be built on
- helping to stimulate local economic growth by using our land and investment, and attracting private sector investment in local areas.

Their priorities can be read in full in the corporate plan, but are to:

- invest over £4 billion in building new homes, helping around 70,000 families and individuals to own or rent their own home
- sell land that will be suitable for building around 6,000 more homes in the future
- build over 315,000 square metres of new business floorspace
- bring over 450 hectares of derelict land back into use for local people
- make sure our organisation continues to develop so we are ready to respond to the things government asks us to do in the future.

RB explained that the corporate plan demonstrates that they are changing into a new organisation to help to deliver the government's target of an average of 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s. RB explained that HE are developing a "new commercial approach to acquiring, preparing, managing and developing land in areas of high demand and strategic importance" and will support SME builders and lead the market on modern methods of construction (mmc).

5) Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

David Waterhouse (DW) of MHCLG attended and provided a presentation on the draft National Planning Policy Framework that is currently out for consultation. He explained that the aim of the framework is to make it shorter with a clearer structure and to address interpretation issues that have been flagged and to strengthen core planning principles. The full presentation is available by following the link:

<https://www.clare.co.uk/component/phocadownload/category/26-landforum?download=634:mhclg-draft-nppf-presentation-march-2018>

DW confirmed that the consultation closes on the 10th May 2018 and MHCLG are aiming to publish the final NPPF in Summer 2018. DW encouraged all to participate in the consultation online, and to be as succinct in their responses. Furthermore, DW asked that where amendments were proposed, the reason for the amendment was given concisely along with what the implications would be of leaving the text unaltered.

DW confirmed that a series of presentations across the country have been organised in partnership with the Planning Advisory Service which are all sold out and topic specific sessions would also be organised towards the end of April for specific industry groups.

DW thought the Land Forum members would also be interested in the independent review being undertaken by Sir Oliver Letwin – Building Out to “*explain the significant gap between housing completions and the amount of land allocated or permissioned in areas of high housing demand, and to make recommendations for closing it*”. Land Forum members may have examples that they wish to share with the independent review especially as land remediation is cited as a constraint. Initial draft analysis will be published at the end of June 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/689430/Build_Out_Review_letter_to_Cx_and_Housing_SoS.pdf

DW confirmed that the government is strongly in favour of brownfield development, this is emphasised with the mandating that local authorities in England are required to prepare brownfield registers.

It was explained to DW that it was felt that some of the definitions in the Glossary of Terms were incorrect. MHCLG defines “Previously Developed Land” and this results in a different definition of “Brownfield Land” to what many of us would define as contaminated land. DW felt that Land Forum members could help greatly by assisting with correct definitions and to feed these through in their consultation responses.

Land Forum members also flagged the issue with the relatively generic term “competent person” in relation to contaminated land. They wished to flag to DW that the NQMS now helps to address what industry sees as competent. DW welcomed this and again suggested that this is explained in the Land Forum members consultation responses.

A Land Forum member also flagged the wording of paragraph 176b, as it was felt that this can cause confusion because it can be interpreted as meaning that remediation is a pre-requisite to meeting the requirement. DW encouraged this feedback in the consultation and suggested alternative clearer text.

DW would specifically welcome responses focussing on Chapter 2, 11 and 15 as he sees these as most relevant to Land Forum members.

ACTION: All Land Forum Members to circulate the presentation to their members and to respond to the NPPF consultation

LT thanked DW for his time attending the Land Forum. All felt his presentation was extremely informative and helpful.

6) Update from Industry Groups

AGS

Vivien Dent (VD) introduced herself as the new chair of the AGS-Contaminated Land Working Group. She confirmed that the AGS is currently working on updating several documents including:

- Asbestos Guidance
- Interpreting WM3

- AGS Guidelines to Good Practice in Geo-environmental Ground Investigation
- Guidance on the description of Made Ground
- Environmental Sampling Guidance
- AGS Cover Systems

She also confirmed that they have starting delivering an e-newsletter to their members and have recently issued their second edition. And in the Autumn will be launching a Ground Risk Seminar for Geoenvironmental and Geotechnical practitioners.

SAGTA

Doug Laidler (DL) provided an update on behalf of SAGTA on their current activities, this includes:

- SAGTA Collaborative Workshop - Guiding Principles for Land Contamination: Lessons and Approaches for a Second Generation and Beyond. SAGTA is in the process of convening a workshop on 25th April 2018 in collaboration with the Environment Agency at its offices in York. With the Agency's Guiding Principles document now some 7 years old, the day is being planned to cover not only the practical means to move the document forward, but also both the benefits as well as the challenges of extending its potential reach to local authority interest areas, radiological issues and the coverage of jurisdictional variations. Invitations have now been issued to practitioners via organisations across the land community and the day's programme is at an advanced stage.
- SAGTA's collaborative industry project to develop C4SLs was formally initiated on 22nd January 2018. Introductory briefing workshops were successfully convened in November 2017 for the proposed C4SL project team members. Since January, work on the project has been progressing and contaminants are split into batches of four contaminants. In summary, the project's status reported to end of February comprises: Overall progress to date is good. The team is working well together. An outline approach for one contaminant is with Public Health England (PHE) for review, as scheduled. The schedule has been extended for two of the contaminants due to short term logistics eg unexpected illness, interfaces with volunteers and the volume of material to review / consider. This is not viewed as significant. The first expected deliverable for submission to the project's review processes remains on programme for 25th June 2018. Contaminants being considered for batch one are TCE, PCE, Vinyl Chloride and Naphthalene. The C4SLs being developed are available on the dedicated website www.claire.co.uk/c4sl

EIC

Jane Thrasher confirmed that EIC's contaminated land working group met recently but unfortunately she did not attend so will provide notes shortly.

Post Meeting Notes

At their last meeting EIC welcomed a presentation from David Middleton of Defra who provided a general update as well as further information on the 25 year Environmental Plan and its implications on land issues. There was discussion of the proposed soil health index, and the scope of the associated requirements for testing.

EIC continue their 'Contaminated Land Campaign' gathering evidence to demonstrate the general feedback there has been from members that enforcement is not working correctly, with inadequate involvement of relevant specialists from the EA and the Las. The Land Campaign would consist of a combination of Freedom of Information requests and anonymous case studies from members.

EIC have set up a sub-group looking at Japanese Knotweed, addressing member concerns that the EA are no longer providing validated guidance but are looking to a private trade association (INSA) to provide guidance, which is only available to members.

EIC welcomed updates from members of other groups, including the Asbestos in Soil JIWG, CL:AIRE DoWCoP, C4SL2 and others.

EPUK

Christopher Fry (CF) introduced himself as the chairman of EPUK and explained that EPUK has a Land Quality Policy Committee that comprises representatives from local authorities, universities and private consultants. The committee is currently commenting on the recently issued revised NPPF, supporting brownfield first. Regarding pre-commencement conditions whereby developers are required to undertake remediation prior to building, EPUK think LPAs should only be required to vary these conditions where there are significant objections raised by developers. CF confirmed that EPUK also have representation on C4SL steering group.

CF highlighted of interest to Land Forum members the recently published planning inspectorate decision regarding the refused appeal of a proposed bakery company being situated on a disused car wash on an active petrol filling station forecourt. This appears to be a rare occurrence where a decision to refuse the appeal is based entirely on contaminated land issues. Further information is available:

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3185927>

CF confirmed that EPUK run regular seminars for its members and will be running an autumn conference across all aspects of land and air issues for its members. CF also explained that EPUK responds to consultations such as draft BS10175 and industry guidance when requested.

SiLC

Paul Burden (PB) introduced himself as the chair of the Professional Technical Panel taking over from Phil Crowcroft. PB explained that the PTP is starting to plan progression and ensuring that each member of the PTP has an assigned deputy to help with transition of roles. He explained that SiLC is currently organizing their annual forum meeting which is to be held on April 19th where they are discussing key industry topics such as asbestos in soil, brownfield registers and debating the NQMS one year on since its launch. PB confirmed that SiLC has changed their exam and now there is no reference to the land condition record at all. Numbers of SiLCs & SQPs is still rising. PB confirmed that they are currently drafting a note on the NQMS to go to their members to help them promote the scheme to their clients, identifying the benefits.

NHBC

Lisa Hathway (LH) unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting but sent a report. The highlights are below:

NHBC Initiatives

NHBC has been running their pride in the job 2017 awards along with their health and safety awards 2018.

Standards Update

Standards 2018 is now available. The 2018 NHBC Standards has come into force for every new home registered with NHBC where foundations are begun on or after 1 January 2018. Standards 2018 will be the first printed edition in two years and includes:

- A new clause 7.2.24 'Spandrel panels'
- Chapter 6.11 'Render and rendering systems', which became effective in 2017, now incorporated into the printed version.

Hard copies are available to purchase from their online shop (www.nhbc.co.uk/shop) Standards Plus 2018 is freely available online (www.nhbc.co.uk)

NHBC are running a series of events around the country focusing on "Future skills, Future Standards, Future Quality" and will feature a number of sessions from both industry and NHBC speakers offering information and support and guidance on the latest technical advances and the key issues in house building.

SoBRA

Alex Lee (AL) provided an update on behalf of SoBRA. He confirmed that they have just completed an accreditation window of 20 people. SoBRA is also pressing ahead with applying for their charitable status.

SoBRA has just announced their Summer Workshop on June 18th on Controlled Waters. This will be followed by an early careers workshop in partnership with GeolSoc and RemSoc on 19th June 2018.

Due to delays in getting reports out as up until now SoBRA has been reliant on volunteers, they have recently appointed Naomi Earl as an administrator to assist in moving some of the outstanding reports forward for publication.

SoBRA has recently set up a new technical review panel to act on behalf of SoBRA members to respond in a timely manner to consultations. The terms of reference of this panel are currently being prepared. In addition, terms of reference are being prepared for vapour intrusion working group and asbestos in soil working group.

SoBRA is currently planning their Christmas conference with the Royal Society of Chemistry in early December, date still to be confirmed.

AL confirmed that representatives of SoBRA are sitting on BSI Water Quality Working Group, NQMS Steering Group and Land Forum.

Home Builders Federation (Post meeting Note)

The HBF has a new Technical Director, Craig Ferrans, who is actively setting up sub-groups to focus on house builder topics such as sustainability, water and waste. Lucy Thomas has updated him on the Land Forum activities including its general purpose and specific industry topics such as the NQMS to help address competency in the industry and expedite planning matters and the C4SL project. Craig Ferrans is keen to engage with the Land Forum and also his members more details about the NQMS and general land contamination matters. In addition, he has recently set up a Contaminated Land sub-group for which a call is due to take place later this month and the minutes will subsequently be available on the HBF website.

Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Pollution Advisory Group (YALPAG)

Julia Reynolds (JR) confirmed that she made enquiries to their membership regarding issuing a position statement regarding the NQMS, however they felt it was not appropriate as they have already issued support in their letter of February 2017 which they still have not had a reply to.

JR confirmed that YALPAG discussed the role of Brownfield Registers and whether they have shown a significant impact in brownfield development. She confirmed that members have not noticed any change as yet. JR confirmed that the Open Data Institute has decided to map all brownfield site in Yorkshire, but she was unsure why. JR confirmed that they was very little emphasis on Part 2A work in the region due to funding not being available.

YALPAG members are represented on BSI Consultation Group, NQMS Steering Group, Land Forum and C4SL Steering Group.

Staffordshire Contaminated Land Working Gp

Hallan Sandbrooke (HS) introduced himself. He confirmed that Staffordshire Contaminated Land Working Group is made up of local authorities in Staffordshire. It is a relatively small group that meet regularly to discuss various land contamination issues. They have recently signed up to the CL:AIRE free membership which they welcomed.

Lancashire Contaminated Land Officer Group (CLOG)

Mark Edwards (ME) was unable to attend and no report was provided.

Welsh Contaminated Land Working Group (WCLWG)

Rachel Thomas (RT) joined by phone, she is the new Chair of WCLWG for 2018.

She confirmed that the local authorities continue to work on their sites that received funding from Welsh government.

CL:AIRE

NH confirmed the following CL:AIRE activities were being undertaken.

Definition of Waste Code of Practice (DoW CoP)

Version 3 Draft remains with the EA & NRW legal teams. CL:AIRE still does not have a time frame for publication. CL:AIRE is currently looking at raising standards of existing Qualified Persons. A number of options are being considered including the introduction of

an exam, more auditing and supporting the EA and NRW. In addition, they have developed disciplinary procedures and have started to use them. With the rise of queries by QPs and the wish to develop frequently asked questions (FAQs), all queries are now to go through the CL:AIRE Help Desk function on the website.

Statistics Guidance

Guidance on Comparing Soil Contamination Data with a Critical Concentration is moving forward with a first draft document almost ready to be circulated to the steering group.

Asbestos in Soil

Continuing to work on the code of practice elements not covered by other guidance such as waste and transport. In addition, CL:AIRE recently launched Asbestos Awareness for soil as an elearning module. This is proving to be quite popular as it is flexible for practitioners. CAR-SOIL continues to be popular and has been downloaded >16,500 times.

SuRF-UK

SuRF-UK steering group is now moving forward working on a number of peer reviewed publications and industry journals to raise the awareness of SuRF-UK products. It is also discussing with Defra regarding the 25 year Environment Plan and linking to this to show net gains by using the SuRF-UK framework. It is also working on the possibility of developing an animation.

International SuRFs

CL:AIRE continues to support SuRF international where three times a year the different foras have a teleconference to share activities. SuRF Brazil is supporting the next SustRem 2018 conference.

Training

CL:AIRE is continuing to develop classroom based training such as asbestos in soil, Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice and Verification of Gas Protection membranes. Along with online elearning modules including soil and groundwater risk assessment, remediation technologies,, sustainable remediation, asbestos awareness and the latest currently in development is introduction to site investigation.

C4SL

CL:AIRE is project managing the C4SL project on behalf of SAGTA.

Bulletins

CL:AIRE continues to publish bulletins, the last published in December “Continuous Gas Monitoring in Underfloor Voids” which has had >700 downloads so far.

7) Standards

Mike Smith (MS) had sent details about the number of standards that are currently in preparation through British Standard. A summary list of these documents can be found here:

<https://www.claire.co.uk/component/phocadownload/category/26-landforum?download=633:land-forum-standards-update-march-2018>

There was discussion about the significant number of standards that are currently being prepared and the potential consequence for industry if they are not followed. It was not understood why so many are being created and whether there is truly a need for them all. Many of the Land Forum members try to keep up and provide comment but people struggle to keep abreast of the number. It was asked whether Mike Smith could be invited to attend the next Land Forum meeting to help the members understand better.

ACTION: NH to ask Mike Smith to attend the next land Forum meeting.

8) National Quality Mark Scheme for Management of Land Contamination (NQMS)

NH provided an update on the NQMS scheme. She confirmed that the NQMS Steering Group met and confirmed that there are 89 SQPs now registered and 33 declarations. The EA has prepared an auditing template for internal use and will be looking to use to get feedback. The steering group is also trying to raise awareness of the scheme through presentations at events and publication in industry journals. EA is raising the awareness internally with other teams such as permitting and sustainable places teams. CL:AIRE regularly asks SQPs for feedback on the scheme and whether they have received feedback from regulators. There is still limited feedback but what feedback has been received is positive.

9) Future direction of Land Forum to continue its work to promote sustainable development

a. Natural Capital

Paul Sheehan (PS) provided an update from a meeting that he recently attended at NICOLE that is looking at Land Stewardship. PS sees that there is great synergy between the two working groups and therefore has been supporting the NICOLE group that is looking to prepare a small booklet for June 2018. PS sees the NICOLE work mapping against the UN Sustainable Development goals as particularly useful and which could assist with the scoping of the Natural Capital Working Group. PS is happy to continue to formulate a plan to what the Natural Capital Sub Group can look to deliver. Others will need to provide support and get involved once a plan has been developed.

ACTION: PS to formulate a plan for the Natural Capital Sub group

b. Visibility

It was agreed that the Land Forum is not terribly visible to people outside of the land contamination sector and therefore may need to improve this. Perhaps topics such as Land Stewardship are more rounded and therefore more appealing to a wider audience. This was agreed however the majority of members are from land contamination backgrounds and therefore you risk not maintaining these organisations support. The Land Forum has been very successful in raising the profile of quality, perhaps this is where its strength lies particularly knowing the members that are on the Land Forum all share these values. Would changing the name affect the message? It was agreed that the achievements of the Land Forum are not promoted sufficiently. If the Land Forum could come out with some simple

statements that are “non political” it should be relatively easy for all members of the Land Forum to agree. This could be helpful to raise its profile.

ACTION: Lucy Thomas (LT) to think of some simple statements that could be prepared to help raise the Land Forum’s profile.

c. Resource challenge for implementation of contaminated land regulations in EA and LPA

It was agreed to discuss this item at the next meeting as there was insufficient time. It was acknowledged that other industry groups are also flagging issues about resources within regulators.

d. Outcomes from Q&A with MHCLG.

It was agreed the key areas to feedback on the NPPF consultation is:

- Defining competency and definition of brownfield
- Viability assessments
- Provide feedback on Brownfield Registers
- State how the Land Forum supports brownfield development through ensuring land contamination is addressed by competent professionals and ensuring standards are met.

ACTION: LT to prepare some simple words for the Land Form members to use and adapt where appropriate for the NPPF consultation.

10) AOB

There was no further business

11) Date and location of next meeting

NH confirmed the next meeting will be held on July 10th 2018 in Central London. Exact venue to be confirmed.