

## **Biodiversity Community of Practice Virtual Meeting**

**26<sup>th</sup> Oct 2017**

### **BAPS and Senior Level Commitment**

Kingston have a BAP, as do Swansea (mixed success), York St John and Leicester are currently working on their first. Oxford have a strategy with senior level buy in. They are moving away from BREEAM to Passivhaus. Academics and staff disagree over best policy and implementation, a workshop is being arranged to address this issue. Derby awaiting renewal of BAP.

BREEAM tool in general pushes through the biodiversity aims for individual buildings, but there are issues with BREEAM where some targets on lighting can have a negative impact on biodiversity like bats.

University of Manchester have Living Campus Plan looking at environment, people and nature. University of Leeds have updated BAP with actions that are realistic and achievable and links to campus landscape masterplan. They also have a new in-house performance tool. Grounds team heavily involved and upskilled to increase confidence in leading and taking ownership in delivering the plans.

Warwick to look at BAP as part of 5 year masterplan for the University.

### **Green roofs, vertical roofs and indoor planting**

Challenge keeping a neat campus while improving biodiversity. 'Neat' nature. Negative comments re appearance.

NTU try to have ecologists and landscape architects working together to ensure that conservation areas can still look attractive. Campus development programme at Brackenhurst countryside campus, and landscaping masterplan has been consulted with landscapers, ecologists, students, heritage consultants, drainage consultants. Trying to make as few green space green projects achieve as many aims as possible.

Manchester cost restraints and complaints made regarding the 'untidy' aspects of wildflowers and green roofs. Vision not necessarily reality. Green roofs not managed very well previously and roof on cycle shelter hard to maintain therefore green roofs have been given a 'bad rep'.

Kingston had grass mowing complaints so sign posting exercise undertaken, narrow strips of mowing and rotation to show management was taking place.

Swansea have space issue with campus redevelopment so now very difficult to get green roof space.

Any spare roof space tends to be allocated for PV or rented out for phone masts.

One green roof and a couple of green walls at Derby.

Some PVs work well with green roofs as the roofs can help cool the PV

Green roofs tend to be the last thing people think of and weight loading can be an issue especially for retrofits. Reinforcing doubles the cost.

Warwick's new sports hub may have a mix of green roof and PV.

Leicester's living wall is the largest outside London and doing well. They have a couple of green roofs which are more ad hoc than strategically placed. The Centre for Medicine has 1 sedum roof and 2 brown roofs which hopefully can be used for seed propagation with the Botanic Gardens as part of rare seed research.

Student's Union redevelopment will include an indoor living wall.

Very urban sites where outside space is limited, bringing in a green wall would still benefit wellbeing.

Leeds have a few green roofs in various states.



Indoor planting predominately still pot plants.

Research on green walls and pollutant trapping. Lots of ideas but challenge is how to implement them.

Multistorey car parks – living walls?

Manchester 12month maintenance contract then grounds staff will take on the maintenance role. Training and regarding of roles with support from SMT.

Unofficial Biodiversity champions – create a post marrying academic and consultancy.

Leeds have an academic champion for BAP.

Intensive time requirements.

Warwick's new Sustainability Champion will have biodiversity and ecology in the role.

Tying in research side of things, campus as a living lab, student projects on Estates, staff members influence the types of projects students tend to want to do – global ecology not local.

### **Future Collaboration for Research**

Leeds test bed for iTrees and the financial value of trees, use it as a tool for making decisions regarding the campus.

Carbon value of trees.

Kingston capitalising trees but finance department rejected it.

Manchester launched Tree Trail, an interactive web based app to encourage staff, students and local community to discover more about trees near them. Trees have been cut down for the master plan so this is opportunity to educate the decision makers re replanting and value of trees.

Rotary Club aim to plant a tree for each member.

Historically York St John have not had any academics with a landscape management / ecology background to develop BAP. Experience of ecology consultants so far are they are more involved in the planning requirements/BREEAM.

BAP written as part of MSc module project in Field Ecology. Local ecologists with local knowledge is important so if you do get consultants in, a local one with knowledge of the wider landscape is important.

### **Biodiversity Monitoring**

Techniques and processes

Student projects

Volunteering monitoring with students, staff and local community

Southampton and St Andrews hold Bioblitz in June

RSPB Bird Survey

Swansea – students from different departments involved e.g. Creative Writing

Consultants used for more detailed survey techniques.

Difficulty moving the grounds team away from 100% peat based compost

Tie it into grounds maintenance contract or compost onsite.

### **Invasive Species**

Himalayan Balsam – river on the York St John boundary constantly reintroducing it to the site



Kingston have lots and cross groups working together and organising large scale practical events. Document on working near invasive species.

**Group moving forward:**

Informal option preferred and continue sharing best practice with face to face meetings / site visit every 1 – 2 years. Virtual meetings quarterly with themed topics and presentations internal and external speakers e.g. Defra, Urban Buzz, landscape professionals. Record presentations to then share with grounds and landscape team. Informal site visits can be arranged regionally if demand. Focus on certain species – pollinators, hedgehogs, birds. Employee swaps at similar Universities for fresh perspectives. Continue using Biodiversity Jiscmail as a discussion forum and knowledge exchange.

**Next meeting:**

Virtual, end of January – date tbc  
Ideas for topics and presentations welcome

**Links:**

University of Leeds Biodiversity Standard - <http://sustainability.leeds.ac.uk/policy-documents/>

Valuing Urban Trees in the Tawe Catchment -

[https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FR\\_Doick\\_Tawe\\_iTree\\_Full\\_Report\\_2015\\_low\\_res\\_for\\_web.pdf/\\$FILE/FR\\_Doick\\_Tawe\\_iTree\\_Full\\_Report\\_2015\\_low\\_res\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FR_Doick_Tawe_iTree_Full_Report_2015_low_res_for_web.pdf/$FILE/FR_Doick_Tawe_iTree_Full_Report_2015_low_res_for_web.pdf)

University of Manchester Tree Trail - [www.uom.treetrail.co.uk](http://www.uom.treetrail.co.uk)

Invasive Species – <http://www.nonnativesspecies.org/home/index.cfm>

London Environment Strategy Draft for Public Consultation – August 2017 -

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/8314\\_gla\\_les\\_online\\_single\\_page.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/8314_gla_les_online_single_page.pdf)

The University Mammal Challenge (UMAC) - <http://www.mammal.org.uk/umac/>

Environmental Dates Calendar - [http://www.eauc.org.uk/environmental\\_dates\\_calendar](http://www.eauc.org.uk/environmental_dates_calendar)

