

National Brownfield Forum

Meeting Notes

23rd November 2021, 11.00am – 3.00pm Teleconference



Final

Present:

Paul Nathanail (*Chair*)
Nicola Harries (*Secretariat*)
Graeme Duggan

Joe Dale

Richard Boyle
Trystan James
Angela Haslam
Simon Cole
Ian Evans
Seamus Lefroy Brooks
Tim Elliott
David Rudland
Stella Keenan

Jane Thrasher
Alex Lee

Max Tolley
Steve Edgar

Jenny Lightfoot
Joanne Kwan

GHD
CL:AIRE
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)
Homes England (HE)
Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
Environment Agency (EA)
Society of Brownfield Risk Assessment (SoBRA)
Specialist in Land Condition (SiLC)
Chair of NQMS Steering Group
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Environmental Protection UK (EPUK)
Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Pollution Advisory Group (YALPAG)
Environmental Industries Commission (EIC)
Association of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Specialists (AGS)
Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)
The Society of Remediation Practitioners (REMSOC)
Geological Society
CIRIA

Apologies:

Rachel Boulderstone
Edward Lewis

Andrew Williams & Joanne Smith
Emma Tattersdill
Rebekah Norbury

Frank Evans

Lucy Thomas
Caroline Thornton
Rachael Davies

Hallan Sambrook
Darren Beriro

DEFRA
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
Welsh Government (WG)
UK Environmental Law Association (UKELA)
National Contaminated Land Officers Group (NCLOG)
Soil and Groundwater Technology Association (SAGTA)
Home Builders Federation (HBF)
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Flintshire Council & Welsh Contaminated Land Working Group
Staffordshire Contaminated Land Officer Group
British Geological Survey (BGS)

Corresponding Members:

Eddie Tuttle & David Philp
Euan Hall

Chartered Institute of Building
Land Trust

Agenda

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Introductions of represented organisations
3. Review of previous minutes & actions
4. Update from Government Departments, Environment Agencies and Homes England
5. Standards Update
6. Sub Group – National Quality Mark Scheme Update
7. Roundtable Update from Industry Groups and Local Authority Fora
8. Chair & Deputy Chair Position
9. AOB
 - COP 26
 - Environment Act
10. Date and location of next meeting

Meeting Notes

1) Welcome & Apologies

Paul Nathanail (PN) welcomed everyone and apologies were given. Having come to the end of his two year term, he confirmed that this was his last meeting as chair of the National Brownfield Forum (NBF).

2) Introductions of represented organisations

Introductions were performed.

3) Review of Previous Minutes & Outstanding Actions

PN guided people through the previous minutes and it was agreed that they were a true record of the meeting. No outstanding actions were carried forward.

4) Update from Government Departments, Environment Agencies and Homes England

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

Trystan James (TJ) provided an update on behalf of Natural Resources Wales (NRW). He confirmed NRW is working on the following:

Coal Tip Safety Collaborative Working Protocol

- Following the Tylorstown slip last year, Coal tip safety continues to be a high profile issue in Wales. Recent re-classification has seen an increase in the number of tips categorised as high risk ([Number of 'higher risk' coal tips in Wales rises to 327 - BBC News](#))
- A working protocol has been developed between Local authorities, Welsh Government, NRW and The Coal Authority. All parties are working collaboratively on this.
- The aim of the protocol is to aid an effective and efficient process to enable “urgent” works to be undertaken in a timely pace whilst respecting existing legislative requirements.

State of Groundwater Report

NRW is looking at producing a report to sit alongside the '[State of Contaminated Land in Wales](#)' (SoCL) report produced in 2016 (Joint project with EA producing a similar report for England). Unlike the SoCL report there is no requirement in legislation to produce this and therefore the format and requirements for this 'State of Groundwater in Wales Report' is a little less defined but some of the outcomes NRW would like to achieve include:

- Conduct a thorough review of groundwater data (quantity / levels and quality), where and how these data are collected, stored, and used.
- Identify data gaps or needs, and what can we do to resolve these.
- Review and document the current use of Wales' groundwater.
- Identify stress points where groundwater is insufficient to support human consumption, rivers, lakes, wetlands, or to prevent seawater intrusion.
- Identify areas of either point-source or dispersed contamination, including from emerging chemicals.
- Review and predict future groundwater-related issues that are likely to become important over the next generation.

Guidance updates

NRW continue to work with Environment Agency on guidance updates such as the 'Land Contamination- Environmental Permitting Requirements' guidance for .GOV.UK. NRW is currently reviewing the latest draft of this and will look to collaborate further on this and other guidance where opportunities arise.

Welsh Government – Planning and Environment

Welsh Government representatives confirmed that there was no update to provide the NBF at this meeting.

Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC)

Joe Dale (JD) was welcomed and introduced himself as the Brownfield Planning Policy Lead within DLUHC. He provided an update on behalf of DLUHC and confirmed the following:

- The new Secretary of State has shown his commitment to the use of brownfield sites/previously developed land in the strategic review.
- DLUHC has acknowledged that brownfield land has many different uses, but is also looking at innovative ways to better encourage the use of brownfield land for development.
- The department is keen to unlock land and push forward with development but listening to different stakeholders that work in the broader brownfield sector and not just developers.
- DLUHC will respond to the White Paper consultation in due course. The Government is keen to work with the sector to understand particular issues that need to be addressed to enable brownfield development, so that they can make the most effective changes to help the brownfield sector.
- JD would like to hear from industry about what bottle necks are currently in place that DLUHC can look to address.
- JD explained that once the strategic review has been carried out then DLUHC will review in due course, any tightening up of language that may be required to be made in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- JD confirmed that DLUHC would like to understand what potential incentives could be made to make brownfield land more attractive for re-development.

Environment Agency (EA)

Angela Haslam (AH) provided an update on behalf of the EA. She confirmed that the EA and NRW are working on joint guidance which covers the Environmental Permitting Regulations aspects of land contamination which includes information on the most common types of remediation techniques. In addition, the EA is continuing to work on updating the H5 site condition report/baseline reporting guidance and preparing it in the same format as LCRM for GOV.UK. It is hoped that this will be jointly published with NRW at the end of the financial year.

The EA is also continuing the ongoing PFAS risk screening project, phases 1 and 2 are complete. As reported previously Phase 3 will further refine the internal EA GIS model and include case studies and a regional study as well as engagement with key external stakeholders such as MOD and the Fire Service. Additional groundwater monitoring will also be undertaken as well as landfill leachate monitoring at a number of historic landfill sites (this work could not be completed in Phase 2 due to COVID restrictions).

We have recently let a contract to Cambridge Environmental Assessments Limited to collate human and mammalian toxicological data on 16 PFAS that are included in routine monitoring (mainly water). The review is intended to extend our understanding of the hazards posed by PFAS beyond the four included in the EFSA opinion in 2020 and allow us to consider the implications for public health from the outcome of monitoring programmes in water, biosolids and land (if data becomes available). The project will identify the key evidence gaps and explore approaches for predicting effects using chemical and structural markers (both general methods used by toxicologists and frameworks developed specifically for PFAS). The work is being undertaken in consultation with UKHSA and will inform future wider research priorities.

AH highlighted that Defra is consulting on amendments to the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations. The consultation closes on 22 December 2021.

[Consultation on Amendments to the Environmental Permitting \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2016 as applied to Groundwater Activities and related Surface Water Discharge Activities - Defra - Citizen Space](#)

AH was asked if Waste Management 3 (WM3) guidance is being updated and whether industry could have input to this? AH confirmed she would make enquiries with waste regulation colleagues.

Post Meeting Note

WM3 was last updated in October 2021.

[Waste classification technical guidance WM3.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Unfortunately no update was provided by DAERA and NIEA.

Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Graeme Duggan (GD) provided an update on behalf of DEFRA. He confirmed Defra is currently developing working on the Soil Health Action Plan for England. This will bring together many different strands of work, strongly focusing on appropriate land management practices that improve soil health. In addition, DEFRA recently advertised an open tender for updating the Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction sites. This has yet to be awarded so no more details are currently available.

It was acknowledged that the Soil Health Action Plan is ambitious, so how can NBF members get involved? GD explained that Defra is hoping to consult on the framework of the plan in Spring

2022. NBF members welcomed the opportunity of getting involved. GD also explained that the interest in soil (urban and agricultural) at a department level has grown, reflected in recent parliament debates, particularly the passage of the Environment Act.

DEFRA thanked members of the Forum for their comments on Part 2A Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance and listening to feedback from EA and Local Authorities (LA) on how it has been implemented.

Homes England (HE)

Richard Boyle (RB) provided an update on behalf of HE. He confirmed that further information on all the initiatives that are summarised below can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-england>. RB provided a selection of recent activities.

Housing Growth Partnership to provide additional £300 million to UK housebuilders

In September, the Housing Growth Partnership II ('HGP') established by Lloyds Banking Group and Homes England has announced a new £300 million commitment to SME and regional housebuilders in the UK.

The partnership aims to bridge the homebuilder funding gap, allowing housebuilders to build more homes across the UK and grow their businesses.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/housing-growth-partnership-to-provide-additional-300-million-to-uk-housebuilders>

Octopus Real Estate and Homes England launch £175m Greener Homes Alliance

In October, Octopus Real Estate, part of Octopus Group and a leading United Kingdom specialist real estate lender and investor, has partnered with Homes England, to create the 'Greener Homes Alliance'.

The new Alliance will commit £175 million, providing both loan finance and expert support to SME housebuilders, enabling them to build more high quality, energy efficient homes throughout England.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/octopus-real-estate-and-homes-england-launch-175m-greener-homes-alliance>

£624 million of loan funding to support thousands of new homes and improve vital infrastructure

At the Spending Review, loan funding of at least £624 million will be available for house builders, including SMEs, to improve the vital infrastructure needed to kick-start new housing projects, with a particular focus on transforming unsightly and derelict brownfield sites.

The funding is part of the £2.2 billion loan financing made available at Spending Review 2020 to support infrastructure and drive housing supply.

Loans will be administered by Homes England through the Home Building Fund - an existing housing supply programme that makes loan finance available to developers. The Spending Review also announced a further £1.8 billion to regenerate brownfield land and deliver transport links and community facilities.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/624-million-of-loan-funding-to-support-thousands-of-new-homes-and-improve-vital-infrastructure>

First Homes England site gains Build with Nature Accreditation

In September, Lea Castle Village becomes first Homes England site to gain Build with Nature accreditation.

Building with Nature (BwN) is a voluntary scheme that sets out standards for high quality green infrastructure at each stage of the development process, from planning and design to long-term management and maintenance. The BwN standards enable nature friendly features to be

integrated throughout a development and cover areas including biodiversity, water management and green infrastructure.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/lea-castle-village-becomes-first-homes-england-site-to-gain-build-with-nature-accreditation>

Homes England Releases Access Agreement for the Delivery Partner Dynamic Purchasing System

Homes England has launched its new Delivery Partner Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), marking a significant shift in the way the agency procures housebuilders, as well as increasing flexibility and accessibility. As it is open to all of the public sector, various information is available to assist other government departments has been published.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-to-use-the-delivery-partner-dynamic-purchasing-system-to-procure-housebuilders> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-agreement-for-the-delivery-partner-dynamic-purchasing-system>

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) & Scottish Government (SG)

Unfortunately Caroline Thornton (CT) was unable to attend the meeting in person and no update has been provided for SEPA and SG.

5) Standards

Nicola Harries (NH) shared the update that Mike Smith kindly provided outlining the new standards that are in preparation or out for consultation. Sincere thanks were given to Mike Smith for collating and sharing this information. Full details are provided here:

<https://www.claire.co.uk/land-forum-2021?download=853:nbf-standards-november-2021>

PN reminded NBF members that British Standards Institution is always looking for volunteers to sit on relevant committees (such as EH4 Soil Quality) and review panels. He suggested that it was a very good activity for individuals for professional development and to understand and learn how standards are developed.

6) National Quality Mark Scheme for Management of Land Contamination (NQMS) Sub Group

Seamus Lefroy-Brooks (SLB) provided an update on the NQMS steering group meeting. He confirmed that the steering group met in November 2021 and there was reported 127 SQPs and 173 declarations purchased. He confirmed that the auditing documentation has been signed off and is now in progress. The number of declarations purchased is good to see in a steepening trajectory and the graph is visible on the NQMS website. SLB confirmed that it has been reported that people are more aware of contracts including the requirement of NQMS SQP to sign off reports involving land contamination management including international contracts. It was also reported that some SQP are including an NQMS declaration on all reports regardless whether the client has specifically requested it.

7) Roundtable Update from Industry Groups and Local Authority Fora

CL:AIRE

Nicola Harries provided the update on behalf of CL:AIRE and confirmed the following:

CL:AIRE has a new training centre that will be opening in the New Year in Reading.

DoW CoP

As part of CL:AIRE's digital infrastructure development, the DoW CoP Declaration Portal was launched on 1 October 2021. The feedback from Qualified Persons (QP) has been very positive and has included the following new features: ability to save a Declaration in progress; ability to

see the Declaration status after submission; and ability to see previously submitted Declarations from the User Dashboard.

The current stage of auditing for 2021 is ongoing and a full report will be circulated in the new year. In terms of Whistle-blower Projects, 7 projects have been reported (4 from the Environment Agency) and 2 projects have resulted in disciplinary action. Of these, one project team and QP received a warning letter and the QP subsequently resigned. The other resulted in QP suspension and re-training (including re-sitting the online assessment) before being reinstated.

Landfill Remediation

In September, CL:AIRE met with DEFRA's soils and waste team and the Environment Agency's land contamination and waste team to try and move forward the issue of landfill remediation. It was acknowledged that it is a very complex and challenging area. The Environment Agency is currently preparing internal guidance. DEFRA acknowledged that this is a multi-departmental issue and an update meeting was scheduled for mid-November but unfortunately has had to be cancelled.

Gas Protection Verification Accreditation Scheme (GPVS)

The GPVS has 9 Specialists in GPV (SGPV) and 8 Technicians in GPV (TGPV). 3 further SGPV applications are currently progressing and 1 TGPV. Declarations are now being purchased and included in reports submitted to local authorities.

A number of GPVS events have taken place across local authority fora. GPVS is now signposted on the LCRM website for competency and an article for RICS has just been published. New technical guidance is also signposting to the GPVS.

CL:AIRE is looking to run its gas protection verification training course again in 2022 in Preston.

National Quality Mark Scheme (NQMS)

There are now 124 Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs) on the NQMS register and 173 declarations have been purchased. The graph of declarations v SQPs is now updated after each NQMS Steering Group meeting.

Sustainable Remediation

SuRF-UK published the updated Sustainable Management Practices document, Excel spreadsheet and posters in September to bring it up to date with the latest Environment Agency land contamination risk management guidance.

[Sustainable Management Practices \(claire.co.uk\)](https://www.claire.co.uk)

SuRF International continues to have its regular calls and supported SustRem 2021 in November, and will be supporting the next SustRem 2022 in USA and SustRem 2023 in Australia/New Zealand.

Category 4 Screening Level Project

A further C4SL report has been sent to the steering group for its review and sign off. Three further reports are very close to completion before being sent to the steering group.

Monitored Natural Attenuation (MNA) Guidance

The MNA Guidance has been reviewed by the CL:AIRE TRG and the authors are now working through their comments.

Good Practice for Risk Assessment for Coal Mine Gas Emissions

CL:AIRE published this guidance document in October, and it has been extremely well received. It has already been downloaded >1000 times. Training to support this publication is being arranged for early 2022.

<https://www.claire.co.uk/component/phocadownload/category/22-important-industry-documents?download=835:good-practice-for-risk-assessment-for-coal-mine-gas-emissions>

Concawe Project

CL:AIRE and r3 environmental technology have been awarded a research project with Concawe looking for European case studies on sustainable remediation technologies on sites relevant to Concawe's interests. These will be written as 10 CL:AIRE bulletins.

PFAS

CL:AIRE is currently developing a series of bulletins on PFAS to complement its initial PFAS introductory bulletin "Managing Risks and Liabilities with PFASs" published in 2019 which has been downloaded >12,000 times.

<https://www.claire.co.uk/component/phocadownload/category/17-technical-bulletins?download=668:tb-19-managing-risks-and-liabilities-associated-with-per-and-polyfluoroalkyl-substances-pfass-2019>

YALPAG

Stella Keenan provided an update on behalf of YALPAG and confirmed the following:

- YALPAG's Land Technical Group meet twice a year - the last meeting was held on 13 October 2021.
- YALPAG guidance documents on planning, verification requirements for cover systems and verification requirements for gas protection systems are continuing to be reviewed and updated as and when necessary. The Verification Requirements for Cover Systems ([Version 4.1](#)) was issued in June 2021. The Verification Requirements for Gas Protection Systems guidance is currently in the process of being updated. It is anticipated that the planning guidance will be updated in 2022.
- The training sub-group continues to meet and is looking at options around arranging webinar training

AGS Contaminated Land Working Group

Alex Lee provided an update on behalf of AGS. He confirmed the following:

- Last meeting was held on 5th October 2021.
- An article from SiLC on climate change and land condition has been published in the October / November issue of the AGS Magazine (<https://www.ags.org.uk/magazine/ags-magazine-october-november-2021/>).
- Darren Beriro from BGS provided a presentation on the 'Brownfield Ground Risk Calculator and Groundscreen'.

The main topics / projects the Working Group are currently working on:

- An article to highlight the AGS Guidance on Waste Classification for Soils is being drafted.
- An article on the CL:AIRE mine gas risk paper will be drafted once the paper has been published.
- An article on the SiLC Affiliate Scheme and video is being drafted.
- AGS will be looking at produce an article about the methodology related to the asbestos item which SoBRA have been working on, when it is ready.
- A mind map is being developed on early careers professionals.
- A Client's Guide to Desk Studies and Reference List is currently being reviewed.
- Client Guide to Geoenvironmental Reports is being worked on.
- AGS are feeding into the work of HSG248.
- AGS Data Management Working Group (DMWG) is reviewing ERES codes.
- AGS is looking at webinar topics which could potentially be held in April 2022.
- AGS are looking to feed into a potential Task and Finish group to review and rewrite the current Aggregate Quality Protocol.
- A sustainability sub-group has been set up by AGS.

RTPI

Max Tolley (MT) attended the meeting on behalf of RTPI and wanted to draw attention to a recent publication that will be of interest:

- [The Climate Crisis: A guide for local authorities on planning for climate change](#) The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) jointly launched vital new guidance on how the planning system can help communities face the climate crisis.

BGS

Darren Beriro wished to bring to the Forum's attention the following information on behalf of BGS, although unfortunately he was not able to attend in person.

BGS have been working on incorporating climate change projections into a number of our digital ground hazard products – some of these are live and others in development. In each case these products provide valuable sources of geological insight on a range of issues affecting all sites, including brownfields. Our update for this meeting includes an open offer to get in touch with questions, suggestions and feedback as appropriate (see below).

- Products already released:
 - **GeoClimate** which considers potential shrink swell under UKCP18 scenarios, considering two 11-year windows centred on 2030 (11 year window 2025 to 2035) and on 2070 (11 year window 2065 to 2075)
- Products due to be released soon:
 - **GeoCoast** which contains an inundation component for GB considering sea level rise based on UKCP18 predictions
- In development (all beta - no release dates yet):
 - **GeoScour-Climate**: integration of UKCP18 parameters with the standard GeoScour to enable assessment of potential scour process change
 - **Ground Stability-Climate**: considering potential impact of changing ground conditions interrelated with climate conditions to assess change on future ground stability

The last 2 products are very much in the experiment stage and we're currently exploring user needs. We've a questionnaire that we're keen for people to fill in on climate related products here: <https://lnkd.in/dqNb6A7m>

BGS has also put together the following videos:

GeoCoast: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/british-geological-survey_coastal-resilience-is-a-key-issue-for-our-activity-6863533302062563328-9KNg
 BGS Climate: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/british-geological-survey_our-climate-is-changing-and-if-we-are-to-activity-6863550803072847872-fBdz

And a link to a post on GeoScour-Climate here:

<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/news/climate-and-geology-considering-future-potential-for-river-scour/>

EIC

Jane Thrasher provided an update on behalf of EIC. She shared the following with the NBF members.

Contaminated Land Group

Ongoing activities / key priorities:

- The group recently published its report 'Brownfield First: Supporting Levelling Up' as part of its ongoing campaign to increase the use of brownfield land (<http://eic-uk.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/EIC-Report-Brownfield-first-Supporting-levelling-up-FINAL.pdf>).
- Members are engaging with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and HM Treasury (HMT) on recommendations made in the report.

Laboratory Group

Ongoing activities / key priorities:

- The Group continues to explore issues of PFAS which are a large, complex, and ever-expanding group of manufactured chemicals that are widely used to make various types of everyday products.
- Members will welcome a speaker from the Environment Agency at their forthcoming meeting to discuss PFAS.

Natural Capital

Ongoing activities / key priorities:

- The Group has been engaging with the development of the Nature Handbook for Business, drawing on best practice from industry.
- Work is ongoing with regards to influencing implementation of the Environment Act 2021, particularly with regards to nature targets. The group will be working with DEFRA on these targets ahead of the Government consultation due in 2022.

Smart Cities

Ongoing activities / key priorities:

- The group has been running a series of webinars, including 'A Tale of Two Cities' in May 2021, focusing on issues such as active travel.
- The group will soon publish its report into smart procurement, highlighting the importance of establishing a model based on collaboration, procuring for outcomes, smart data, and apportioning risk to encourage innovation in order to develop new approaches to procuring smart and green technology.

SiLC

Ian Evans provided the following update on behalf of SiLC.

- There are currently 194 SiLCs and 124 SQPs
- We have six people currently going through the SiLC Exam Round 2 2021 (B)
- From a recent letter to SiLC we understand the EA is producing additional internal guidance on the development of historic landfills to support consistency across their regions. We also understand they are in discussion with Defra and CL:AIRE to develop options for improved guidance/options for historic landfill redevelopment.

SoBRA

Simon Cole provided the following update on behalf of SoBRA.

Conferences:

The Winter conference has been organised and is being held on the 8th December 2021 at the RSC library in Burlington House. It will be a hybrid event with the conference streamed live to people who are attending on-line. We hope this hybrid style will maximise the accessibility of the event to our members – particularly those who don't live near London. As with all our winter conferences to date, this is being jointly held with the Toxicology Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry. Programme details are on our website.

Sub-Groups:

The active sub-groups are and include the newly active early careers and controlled water & climate change sub-groups:

NAPL

Asbestos

Vapour Intrusion

Ground Gases

Early Careers

Controlled Waters & Climate change

Of note, the Controlled Waters and Climate Change sub-group is collaborating with CIRIA and is presenting at CIRIA's online conference in November. It also presented at SCLF's annual conference in September. A presentation on the asbestos sub-group's work is being given at the IES Land Condition Symposium in November.

New sub-groups still in the process of being formed:

CSM & sampling

Publications:

No further publications since the last NBF update. The asbestos sub-group is aiming to release its asbestos in soil human health risk assessment (AiSHHRA) toolbox in December. Publications from other sub-groups are scheduled for 2022.

Accreditation Scheme:

The second accreditation window for 2021 opened and closed in August and of the nine applicants, 7 were awarded registered status and none accredited status.

Other activities/events:

The early careers sub-group organised a series of free webinars via zoom that were open to members and non-members. The 2021 schedule for these was:

- Human Health – Simon Firth 1st July
- Controlled Waters - Alex Lee 5th August
- Ground Gas – Steve Wilson 2nd September
- Vapours – John Andrews 7th October
- Asbestos – Simon Cole – date and time 28th October
- NAPL – David Holmes 4th November
- Accreditation – Chris Taylor 2nd December

The webinars each ran for an hour, including a Q&A session, and were all being hosted jointly through Ground & Water Limited. All webinars were being recorded and are free to access for both members and non-members from the website (<https://sobra.org.uk/resources/early-careers-webinars/>).

Geological Society

Jenny Lightfoot presented the following update on behalf of the Geological Society Contaminated Land Group.

Over the last 6 months the Geological Society Contaminated Land Group has particularly focused on pre and early stage career development. We have:

- developed materials for the Geological Society website aimed at informing and attracting the future generation of contaminated land specialists;
- provided contaminated land advice at Geological Society careers days;
- run early career networking events;
- offered support such as mentoring for regulators in Local Authorities in preparation of their chartership applications;
- promoted the benefits of chartership through a recent webinar; and
- collaborated with Institution of Environmental Sciences in delivering an early careers-focussed workshop on big data.

We are planning to convene several face-to-face events in 2022, specifically a meeting contributing to the Geological Society Year of Sustainability and, in collaboration with the Hydrogeological Group, a contamination-focussed session at the Hydrogeology of Sandstones conference.

RemSoc

Steve Edgar presented the following update on behalf of RemSoc.

RemSoc hosted a face to face conference which was well received which involved workshop style exercises that will lead to working groups publishing practitioners guides. The workshops were on: Betterment and State of the Art Materials tracking and verification of soil movement to support the DoWCoP.

In addition, RemSoc has an active Early Careers Practitioner group where the members are feeding in what training they would like to receive.

RemSoc is working in partnership with CL:AIRE to update their Options Appraisal and Remediation Technology Suite of elearning training courses.

CIRIA

Joanne Kwan provided an update on behalf of CIRIA. She confirmed the following:

- CIRIA contaminated land conference 24 November 2021
https://www.ciria.org/CIRIA/Navigation/Events/Event_Display.aspx?EventKey=E21306
- Sustainable soil management report to be published in early 2022
- The site guide for ground gases was published in August and there will be a launch webinar on 20 January 2022
- New projects started
 - Soil Community of Practice which will produce a series of web pages to encourage sharing of good practice. The first stakeholder meeting will take place on 7 Dec 2021
 - A good practice for risk assessment and management of PFAS in soil and control water
 - Demonstrating good practice on the use of geophysics in site investigation

EPUK

David Rudland provided an update on the activities of EPUK. He confirmed that EPUK held its annual conference on 18 November 2021 with major speakers on various current environmental issues and of course the newly enacted Environment Act 2021.

EPUK's land quality committee last met on 7th October. The publication *Essential Environment* is a comprehensive guide to all EU and UK environmental legislation. It has been produced annually for decades, initially by EPUK and latterly by Environmental Technology Publications (ETP) (part of International Labmate). ETP is handing *Essential Environment* back to EPUK with effect from 1st January 2022 and EPUK is hoping to obtain external funding to allow it to continue offering this member benefit. Fortunately EPUK has two new Trustees with specific marketing/business skills from their previous jobs who will be approaching possible sponsors including NBF's members about supporting this unique and long respected publication.

Meanwhile EPUK regularly updates its online guides to key environmental issues. It will shortly be revising its EPUK Guidance: Air Quality & Climate Change, 2013 edition, in view of the new Act.

The Land Quality Committee (LQC) has discussed and is concerned with the issue of coastal erosion of historic landfills and the current exchange of views on the use of the CL:AIRE DoWCoP and Waste Recovery Plans in relation to possible reuse of materials from such landfills. EPUK is watching closely the quite complex issues raised by SiLC, the possible change of definition by EA and DEFRA and the possible new guidance on the matter where historic landfills are deemed outside the scope of the DoWCoP. EPUK hopes that any issue of guidance will be interactive and recognise the real difficulties faced by the brownfield industry in the interim.

RICS

Tim Elliott (TE) provided an update on behalf of RICS. TE shared the following information that he felt would be of interest to the NBF members.

- Carbon in Construction:

The Professional Statement is the latest formal Standard / Guidance publication on Carbon for the built environment and is available here:

[whole-life-carbon-assessment-for-the--built-environment-november-2017.pdf \(rics.org\)](#)

RICS also has this initiative:

[RICS Building Carbon Database](#)

Also relevant and very topical is that RICS has just launched ICMS(International Construction Measurement Standards) which can be downloaded here:

[ICMS: International Construction Measurement Standards \(rics.org\)](#)

- The Building Journal Gas Protection Verification Accreditation Scheme article:

[Scheme aims to ensure quality gas protection \(rics.org\)](#)

- Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Information paper for consumers:

The link to the information is available here:

[RICS Find a Surveyor - RICS Consumer Guide: Compulsory Purchase \(ricsfirms.com\)](#)

National Contaminated Land Officers Group

Rebekah Norbury was unable to attend the NBF meeting but sent an update of activities on behalf of NCLOG.

Over the past few months, the NCLOG Committee has been meeting to discuss various outcomes of our AGM earlier in the year and is seeking to get updated views from the membership on aspects they would like NCLOG to get involved in. The last survey we did was at the Group's inception in 2019, some time has passed and the membership has increased since then. NCLOG hopes to issue this survey to members in the next few weeks, to provide the Committee with information/aims for the coming year.

A Part 2A survey to Local Authorities was issued in the late summer from DEFRA and the EA, members of the NCLOG Committee met with their representatives to discuss this survey. NCLOG also sent written feedback to DEFRA and the EA on how we feel the Part 2A regime is currently working and what improvements could be made for it to work more effectively.

UKELA

Emma Tattersdill was unable to attend the NBF, but sent the following update on behalf of UKELA.

On Thursday 18th November 2021, UKELA announced the appointment of Rt Hon Lord Justice Lindblom as its new President. With news of the appointment, UKELA thanked former President Lord Carnwath for his active support over the past 15 years. UKELA is indebted to him for his long service and wish him well.

Working Party activity has largely been guided by the main environmental law-related events of the autumn: COP26, enactment of the Environment Act 2021 and the legal formation (on Wednesday 17th November 2021) of the Office of Environmental Protection (OEP).

These events have prompted some excellent publications such as the COP26 Sectoral Notes, many of which have been prepared by the Working Parties including those on:

- Water industry regulation (Water WP)
- Nature conservation (Nature Conservation WP)
- Land use planning (Planning & sustainable development WP)

UKELA members also have access to a series of podcasts from COP26, via UKELA's website.

The Governance and Devolution Group met on 14 October 2021 and is scheduled to meet again mid-January 2021. The Group has been actively working with the OEP in organising a series of

meetings with specialist UKELA members focussing on key areas of the OEP including its strategy, enforcement policy and its environmental monitoring and reporting function.

The Environmental Assessment WP is continuing its watching brief on possible EIA reforms. (There continues to be a planned 2 year reform timetable although no public consultation had been set).

A new Student Working Party is up and running with four co-convenors developing its work plan for the coming year. Early work of the WP was to research and report on Climate Emergency Declarations for Scotland and Northern Ireland which then fed into the Environmental Law Foundation National Report: [Local Urgency on the Climate Emergency?](#)

Finally, consultation responses since the last meeting include:

- The Government's Strategic Priorities for Ofwat (led by the Water WP);
- BEIS: *reforming the framework for better regulation* (led by GDG); and
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies consultation paper (by the Nature Conservation WP);

8) Chair and Deputy Chair

Nominations for Chair and Deputy Chair had been made ahead of the meeting. Alex Lee was nominated as chair and Darren Beriro was nominated as deputy chair. Paul Nathanail will serve for a further year as outgoing chair to provide continuity of the role of chair. PN congratulated both and wished them well.

9) AoB

- COP 26

PN wanted to highlight COP26 and the number of promises and commitments made by world leaders. It was seen as a huge opportunity for change, and the way the brownfield/development/construction industry do things. A number of key government and global policy documents such as the DLUHC Planning White Paper which will have a greater emphasis on using previously developed land and IPPC 6th Assessment report published in August 2021 are going to change our approach which will impact our business. This will all influence and shape the future of the NBF.

- Environment Act 2021

PN highlighted the recently published Environment Bill has now passed royal assent and is the Environment Act. It is not yet clear what this will mean for the redevelopment sector but it does have far reaching implications for enhancing biodiversity.

10) Date and location of next meeting

NH confirmed that the 2022 meetings will be as follows: 15 March 2022, 23 June 2022 and 24 November 2022. The locations are yet to be decided or will remain virtually.