



**UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man
Stakeholder Partnership Group meeting
Wednesday 25th January 2023, 2pm to 4pm**

Minutes of a meeting of the UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man Stakeholder Partnership Group (UBIOM SPG) held on Wednesday 25th January 2023, at 14:00 in the King Orry Room, Government Offices, Douglas

Present:

Alfred Cannan MHK	Chief Minister – Chair	AC
Hon Clare Barber MHK	Minister for Environment, Food and Agriculture	CB
Dr Richard Selman	Head of Ecosystem Policy, DEFA	RS
Dr Ken Milne	Director of Environment, DEFA	KM
Miss Jo Overty	Biosphere Project Officer, DEFA	JO
Miss Breeshey Kermodé	Biosphere Project Assistant, DEFA (minutes)	BK
Mr Bill Dale BEM	Beach Buddies Founder	BD
Miss Jade Foster	Engagement Manager, Climate Change Transformation Team	JF
Dr Breesha Maddrell	Director, Culture Vannin	BM
Mrs Ieda Yell	Non-executive Director, Institute of Directors Isle of Man	IY
Mr Paul Fletcher	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	PF
Mr Hayden Armour	Marketing Executive, Isle of Man Food and Drink	HA
Ms Fenella Logan	Isle of Man Municipal Association	FL
Dr David Beard	Manx Fish Producers’ Organisation	DB
Miss Jo Callister	Advisory Teacher for Manx Curriculum & Climate Change, DESC	JC
Mr Ean Parsons	President, Manx National Farmers’ Union	CK
Mrs Sarah Comish	General Secretary, Manx National Farmers’ Union	SC
Mr Steve Blackford	Head of Properties Management, Manx National Heritage	SB
Mr Leigh Morris	CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust	LM
Mrs Muriel Garland	Chair, The Green Centre	MG
Ms Gail Corrin	Higher Education Manager, University College Isle of Man	GC
Ms Yvette Hollows	Business Development Executive, Visit Isle of Man	YH
Miss Georgia Untisz	Youth Representative	GU
Miss Ciara Sowerby	Youth Representative	CS

Apologies

Visit Isle of Man

Item		Action
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1/23/1	Chief Minister’s welcome and opening remarks	
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	<p>AC welcomed the meeting participants and thanked everyone for giving up their time. He welcomed potential new faces in the room and suggested round-the-table introductions, after which he read his opening remarks, which were kept to a minimum due to a busy agenda. AC made a particular point of welcoming the new youth representatives, who he was pleased to see in the room.</p>		
1/23/2	<p>Apologies Recorded above.</p>		
1/23/3	<p>Conflicts of interest with items on the agenda None recorded.</p>		
1/23/4	<p>Minutes of meeting in July 2022 for approval Minutes approved and signed off.</p>		
1/23/5	<p>Rolling action point list CM read through rolling action point list. This is available as a full document on request.</p>		
1/23/6	<p>Progress report – paper and verbal update by Jo Overty, UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man JO reported on the activities, projects and initiatives being run by the UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man team. Full paper for the meeting available again on request.</p>		
1/23/7	<p>Review of SPG participation – paper and discussion led by Jo Overty There was some discussion around the attendance of, and stakeholders’ make-up. AC asked how an organisation can become a stakeholder and if there are terms of reference regarding the stakeholder group. JO indicated that the current terms of reference state they remain unless they choose to leave or if the group chooses to remove them. There was discussion around whether it might be useful to get in touch with organisations that have not attended a meeting of late or sent apologies to see if they still wish to be a part of the steering group. LM added that governance had been discussed in the Technical Sub Group meetings and GC confirmed this is a big theme of that group’s work. Full paper for the meeting available again on request.</p> <p>ACTION: Defer item to July SPG to consider Technical Sub Group’s proposal and make a decision then.</p>	UBIOM TSG	
1/23/8	<p>Delivering more with existing resources – verbal discussion led by Jo Overty There was a broad discussion around the issue of resource and how much work there is to deliver as a small team of two and the unrealistic expectation regarding what is achievable. AC said in an ideal world the Biosphere team could do with three more members of staff but this isn’t feasible in the current economic climate. LM</p>		

	<p>said it has previously been discussed that part of being in the Biosphere partner scheme is supporting and promoting the accolade and wider work of the team.</p> <p>JF said that Climate Change and Biosphere are aligned in many respects and we can do more to work together towards the same goals, adding she is happy to work around public awareness and engagement and would like to know more around certain subjects.</p> <p>JO said that she had wondered if there could be another group, formed of volunteers from the stakeholder partnership group, who are not a part of the technical subgroup, who could look at ways to further help to support the Biosphere team and spread the wider message and delivery of work.</p> <p>JF said she would be happy to be part of such a group.</p> <p>BM also stated her willingness to help where possible.</p> <p>JC added that she would also be interested in helping out.</p> <p>Full paper for the meeting available again on request.</p> <p>ACTION: to form a volunteer subgroup and meet to form a work plan.</p>	<p>UBIOM SPG</p>
<p>1/23/9</p>	<p>Technical Sub Group (TSG) – verbal update by Gail Corrin</p> <p>GC said the TSG had hoped to complete first stage of consultation by now but hadn't and explained the reasonable delay. There is a plethora of paperwork to go through. GC touched on the last meeting's update and the areas discussed in performance areas. The group plans a three-phase consultation and met with colleagues Ed Forrest (Galloway and South Ayrshire Biosphere) and Andy Rowland (Dyfi Biosphere), who explained how they had dealt with their recent periodic reviews.</p> <p>The TSG came away from that meeting with thoughts that the IOM is doing very well (though this is not comparable).</p> <p>GC said there is a strong case for the Biosphere strategy to be aligned and embedded in Isle of Man Government policy and GC mentioned the last meeting's commitments from Government through CB.</p> <p>The governance and membership is also a real topic of discussion and the group are on track for next steps but wanted to revise their progress with the Biosphere officers. GC continued that the public consultation in May will be around the broader understanding of Biosphere and further specific areas. LM reiterated that it should be advocated as something at a higher level than a small team in DEFA and the Biosphere community culture should be embedded across the Island. AC asked if the report will highlight the outcomes for confirmation of moving things forward GC and LM confirmed that there will be an Item for the July agenda.</p> <p>ACTION: TSG to continue its work and report on progress at the July meeting.</p>	<p>UBIOM TSG</p>
<p>1/23/10</p>	<p>Establishment of a Nature Recovery Network – paper and discussion led by Dr Richard Selman</p> <p>RS updated the group on the progress of the Nature Recovery Network. He stated that the web form is being built now and there should be something available for testing by the end of the month. It was hoped for an April launch.</p>	

<p>1/23/11</p>	<p>AC asked if a demonstration was possible. RS said it was not yet ready for showing and they know what the web form looks like, they just haven't seen the final picture. There is a full paper available on request.</p> <p>Youth involvement – introduction to and by new SPG members Ciara Sowerby and Georgia Untisz</p> <p>AC welcomed the youth representatives and said it was great to see them and he hoped their skills and insights would prove beneficial to UBIOM. GU noted that her initial discussions at UCM indicated that the majority of students didn't know what Biosphere was and it highlighted the need to educate. She believed the use of and engagement on Biosphere social media channels could be better. She added that those she spoke to that knew about Biosphere felt they were too busy to be involved in any way due to added pressures in life. GU continued that a recent student survey showed that most students fly as it's cheaper and quicker than sailing and she suggested subsidising lower cost fares for ferries for a certain age group to further encourage the return of students to the Island. JF noted a new air travel calculator.</p> <p>GU's other idea was to encourage more walking by young people. A tracking app was mentioned as she said parents would feel safer knowing where their children were, and it could encourage walking to school. Another bit of feedback was regarding the state of pavements and lighting that may discourage people from being active.</p> <p>GU added a last thought on sustainable menstrual products and said she didn't think Government was doing enough in this area. BK said she would chat to GU as she is working on something in this area in her own time. CS said she has European and global connections and is looking internationally for ideas. She further mentioned social media engagement and said she thinks UBIOM could do more in that area in terms of engaging people.</p> <p>AC thanked the students for their input and added that UBIOM should send a note to Treasury around the youth comments to pass on to the Steam Packet.</p>	
<p>1/23/12</p>	<p>ACTION: send a note to Treasury regarding the suggestion of subsidised fees for students on sailings.</p> <p>Suggestion for exhibition to mark 10 years as Biosphere – verbal discussion led by Jo Overty</p> <p>There was a broad discussion around the paper and AC asked how long this will likely run for.</p> <p>LM asked if it could be virtual, so Biospheres around the world could contribute.</p> <p>MG asked if the Government conference would be an annual event and if this could be the exhibition space, but it was decided the time of year wouldn't work and the conference is only two days.</p> <p>SB said that Manx National Heritage's curator could help to develop with UBIOM stakeholders' help, to support the process rather than run it and suggested speaking with the museum about options for this.</p>	<p>UBIOM</p>

	<p>JO stated that the proposal originally came from Manx National Heritage as a stakeholder and it would be good to have something for people to physically visit.</p> <p>IY said she liked the idea of one big gathering to celebrate the Biosphere, which could be something hybrid rather than an exhibition.</p> <p>AC suggested a rolling exhibition that could be held over a period and moved round the Island.</p> <p>BM stated the museum is always a great choice and is accessible and free. JO advised that hiring venues could be very expensive.</p> <p>BM suggested that perhaps other stakeholders could hold their own events outside of the main exhibition and we can have a celebration of 10 years. JO added that she proposes to ask all the schools, as Biosphere partners, to contribute in their own way and said there needs to be a commitment in this meeting due to how far ahead MNH spaces book up.</p> <p>The technical subgroup can feed in on the least engaged areas to target. CB suggested a subgroup be formed to examine options and report back. PF said he was happy to be part of the sub group. JC added that the Isle of Man Arts Council would be a key partner and, as it wasn't in attendance, it should be contacted. FL also volunteered to be part of the subgroup. Full paper for the meeting available again on request.</p> <p>ACTION: JO to speak with PF, FL and IOMAC to affirm the plan for a subgroup.</p>	<p>JO/UBIOM</p>
<p>1/23/13</p>	<p>Isle of Man involvement with Island Innovation and its ambassador scheme – paper and discussion led by Muriel Garland, The Green Centre</p> <p>MG advised that the Island Innovation web-based global programme was seeking ambassadors and suggested UBIOM be represented. It was noted the deadline to sign up was a week away.</p> <p>JO noted that unlike previous more open-ended schemes, the 2023 ambassador scheme had a fixed programme, with commitments to campaigning on issues, and it would not be appropriate for a Government officer to attend. LM had been an Island Innovation ambassador, had attended two meetings and was supportive of the network.</p> <p>It was agreed that this was a matter for individual consideration, not as a Biosphere IoM representative and that SPG would keep a watching brief. A request to the meeting for anyone to apply to be an Island Innovation ambassador did not yield a volunteer but it was agreed to keep a watching brief on the web platform and opportunities. Full paper for the meeting available again on request.</p>	
<p>1/23/14</p>	<p>Cultural mapping project – verbal update by Breeshey Kermodé, UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man Project Assistant</p> <p>BK read her verbal update regarding the proposed Cultural project in collaboration with Culture Vannin regarding Manx place names. There is a full update available on request. There was a short discussion around the project but the group supported the initiative and there will be an update at the July 2023 meeting.</p>	
<p>1/23/1</p>	<p>Standing item: Research – verbal updates</p>	

LM said he was delighted to have the Calf of Man tender again and Manx Wildlife Trust has received funding from Curragh's Wildlife Park. It has also received funding from KPMG for the Manx Seagrass Group. There is a small shark-tagging programme underway and they are catching tope. The Trust commissioned a wallaby survey over two nights in January and has an accurate count of the Curragh population. LM stated this was done with no agenda but simply to obtain the data that is not currently available.

GC said that the annual Research Festival held at UCM is growing. All presentations are audio recorded and on the UCM website. This year's event is on 13th October and call outs will be in March. Sustainability placements are due to start in May with Biosphere partners signing up to indicate their interest. There are already eight companies signed up. UCM has a full sustainability strategy now. Dr Christa McCartney has a paper published regarding Biosphere advocacy and business in the Isle of Man and she is happy to have this paper shared.

RS said a consultant has been looking at rare mosses, such as lead moss, and the results have been published.

BM reminded the group that the Culture Vannin board gives out grants for Manx studies and research around the Biosphere.

1/23/16

Other updates – round the table

SC said there was a talk on emissions in the agricultural sector and the Manx NFU is happy to share the link if the group is interested. The land and environment chair Chris Kneale is doing work on carbon sequestration and there is a need to engage with the Government climate change team on this topic. The union complimented Net Zero Isle of Man on its changed messaging regarding meat consumption. In regard to the Countryside Code project: there is signage to go round the countryside, glens, farms etc. to help public understanding on the Manx countryside code in a friendly way, working with Blue Badge guides to spread further agricultural knowledge.

DB updated the group on sustainability in the fishing industry. The king scallop long term management plan was introduced in 2022 and resulted in the reduction of the number of vessels that can fish in Manx waters, so the carbon footprint has reduced. Fishing trips have reduced and catch rates are up so there is less damage happening to the seabed. This management plan has benefitted the Manx economy massively as now 70% of king scallops are caught, landed and processed on the Island.

PF said that the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group had re-established the Chough Awards through engagement with partners Manx Wildlife Trust and MNFU. The awards support wildlife initiatives in agricultural practice. His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor attended the event which was held at and sponsored by Jackson's. Biosphere and biodiversity officers from DEFA also attended.

The group are also in the process of contacting John Benemann who is involved in research and development regarding harvesting methane gas as a means for renewable energy to see if there is any potential for Manx farming in that area.

IY said that PlasticBusters and Institute of Directors (IoD) litter picking networking event was happening again this month after a successful pilot event last year. In the second half of the year there will be a visit to Zurich by the group to see the renewable energy plans that are in place. There are many upcoming talks on net zero and further plans in this area within the IoD as this is an area it feels is important to its members.

RS explained that a motion in Tynwald had acknowledged the biodiversity crisis and there will be a CBD conference. The Blue Carbon Project now has an agreed two-year time frame to deliver the project.

CB said a debate in Tynwald in December 2022 brought up biodiversity and Biosphere at the same time but it was thought important to amend the motion so as not to mix up or amalgamate the two. Biosphere and its role in the Island and how we can best benefit from this will be brought to Tynwald as a separate motion.

BM stated that the Conrhenny Biosphere shelter was in production with a view to being completed by spring. There has been an international explosion of interest in Manx Gaelic and BM listed a number of articles that have been published worldwide in recent months, including a New York Times article, which she would be happy to circulate if requested. Belfast radio is coming to speak with Culture Vannin in June about Manx language developments and other aspects of Manx culture. All of this reinforces that we are an outward looking and proud nation.

YH stated that Visit Isle of Man had launched a new campaign for tourism around visiting the Biosphere, working with Biosphere partners on how it can be packaged and promoted. She stated she would be happy to share any information requested with the group and much of this work will be found on Visit Isle of Man's website.

HA spoke about the ongoing Food and Drink Team's work streams which are aligned to Biosphere, including the Food & Drink Festival plans. HA plans to meet with food producers to encourage the use of the Biosphere logo more on their products, as most food and drink producers are Biosphere partners and producers who use it say that it adds value to their product. He also said he was going to try to engage Food and Drink partners with the Biosphere Bee Community Picnic initiative.

JF said the Climate Change Transformation Team was trying to amplify youth engagement with net zero, working with the charity Junior Achievement in primary schools. An Active Travel walk and cycle week in March would be promoted through its channels.

The team is also recruiting a climate change transport partner and hopes to collate information on decarbonisation in public transport.

<p>1/23/17</p>	<p>Following up on a public insights study from 2021, the team is looking to do a survey on how perceptions may have changed since the initial survey.</p> <p>Date of next meeting The date of the next UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man Stakeholder Partnership Group Meeting will be 10th July 2023, 11am to 1pm, in the King Orry Room, Government Offices, Bucks Road, Douglas.</p> <p>Note: minutes will appear on www.biosphere.im once agreed.</p> <p>Approval: Hon Clare Barber MHK, Minister for Environment Food and Agriculture and Vice Chair of UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man.</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p>Date: 10th July 2023.</p>	
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