

# YORK ENVIRONMENT FORUM

## MINUTES OF MEETING ON 9th.Nov.2011

### Present:

Philip Crowe	York Tomorrow
Isobel Waddington	Murton PC
Dot Lawton	Heslington PC
Chris.Chambers	Strensall PC
Cllr. Andy d'Agorne	CYC Green Group
Cllr. Paul Healey	CYC Cons.Group
Cllr. Ian Cuthbertson	CYC Lib.Dem. Group
Anna Bialkowska	Friends of St.Nicholas Fields
Maurice Vassie	Just York
Sara Robin	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
John Cossham	York in Transition/York Rotters
Alastair Cooper	York Quakers(Friargate)
Phil Bixby	Constructive Individuals
Guy Woolley	CPRE
Barry Otley	Wheatlands Community Woodland/ FWAG
Richard Twigg	CTC
Matt Barker	City Car Club
Mike Slater	CYC (part)
Prof Alan Simpson	

**Chair:** Kate Lock                      York Rotters/Planet Southbank/Friends of Rowntree Pk.

Prior to the start of the meeting Kate Lock resigned as Chair, in accordance with protocol. She was duly re-elected to serve for a further twelve months. Members thanked her for her hard work in taking the Forum into sometimes new territory, and looked forward to supporting her in her mission to expand its activities, and to establish a more visible public profile.

### **1        WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mick Phythian, Richard Lane, Chantal Purchase, Carole Green, Cllr.Merrett. The Chair welcomed Matt Barker and Prof.Alan Simpson.

### **2        MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

agreed

### **3        MATTERS ARISING**

item 6- Core strategy - KL had made personal comments, not on behalf of the EF.

item 7- National Planning Policy Framework- PC had finalised the response and submitted it on behalf of the EF. SR confirmed that the Wildlife Trusts had submitted their comments on a national basis.

#### **4 CITY CAR CLUB - Matt Baker**

**MB** gave an overview of the programme. Since the purchase of "Whizzgo" in 2006 the Club was operating in 15 towns with some 577 low emission vehicles. There could be charging problems with electric vehicles, and the technology was not widespread. Each vehicle is equivalent to 25 cars taken off the roads. There were only 9 vehicles in York, a very low take-up compared to Leeds for example. Greater take-up required an attitude change in the public, and greater commitment from the local authority to provide destination/pick-up bays.

Comments were:- that owning cars was no longer an aspiration, particularly among younger people, and this should be capitalised on to widen the scope of the programme. S106 agreements should be part of major residential planning consents, requiring the inclusion of car-club membership as a condition.

KL thanked **MB** for his interesting insights into the problems associated with the roll-out of a valuable alternative to mass car ownership, and which was of particular relevance to York, with its acute traffic congestion problems.

#### **5 "TREMENDOUS" UPDATE- Philip Crowe/ Barry Otley**

The identifying of sites, recording donations and noting the number of trees planted continues, albeit slowly. It was hoped to promote **Tremendous** monthly via the CYC Press Office. It now had a "Facebook" presence, with details also at [www.york.gov.uk/Environment and Planning/Parks and Open Spaces](http://www.york.gov.uk/Environment%20and%20Planning/Parks%20and%20Open%20Spaces). Rufforth PC had identified major opportunity areas. The details of who might be involved in funding bids were still under discussion.

Comments were:- that there were dangers in planting trees too close to cycle paths. Sustrans might be a possible source of funding. The programme should be promoted on social networking sites. Offsetting of carbon emissions should be emphasised.

#### **6 FUTURE FOR YORK- Prof. Alan Simpson**

**AS** described the importance of street trees and the attendant community "leaf picking parties" which were a striking cultural aspect of US urban and suburban life. The very low tree cover in York was a public health threat if nothing else. The EF needed to establish a greater power base if it were to influence events, and to issue a "strategic mission statement" supporting the concept of the "city beautiful". An undue concentration on economic growth was not in the city's best long term interests, when it was the environment which was the setting for the life of the city and gave it its unique quality.

Comments were:- that there should be a greater consideration for wildlife, and ecological issues as a whole, rather than a concentration on tree cover. Hedgerows were very important. There could be insurance issues if trees were planted too close to buildings. There should be a massive schools planting initiative, so that children could "own" their share of the programme. Planning obligations needed rigorous enforcement. S106 agreements were being successfully implemented in Strensall. Biodiversity did not feature highly in CYC policy. Any messages for the general public should be easily understood and jargon-free.

#### **7 JUST YORK- Maurice Vassie**

**MV** stressed that York should recognise that western contributions to adverse climate change phenomena had an effect on "third world" territories, and every effort should be made to make the public aware of this as part of its global responsibilities. Solar power

generation in sunny areas using western technology could mean that energy exports to heavily populated and/or technologically advanced countries could financially benefit the exporters, with a consequent raising of living standards. Naming and shaming poorly performing companies should be the order of the day.

## **8 "WITHOUT WALLS" UPDATE- Mike Slater**

**MS** reported on the WoW meeting on 8th.Nov. The proposed restructuring of the Board was still in discussion , three Boards now being proposed, featuring growth as the main objective. It was not clear how environmental sustainability was to be incorporated, and how much emphasis was to be given to it. The meeting was chaired by the Leader of the Council.

Comments were:- was there still a need for the Board, as the Council aims were already set out in the LDF, and was it appropriate that it should be chaired by a political figure?

## **9 CLIMATE WEEK - Kate Lock**

This item was deferred.

## **10 SUBGROUP REPORTS**

**climate change sub-group:** none

**transport sub-group:** none

**natural environment and resources sub-group:** none

**built and historic environment sub-group:** none

**sustainable communities act:** none

### **NEXT MEETING**

Date	<b>Mon.Dec.12th. 2011 4.00 - 6.00pm.</b>
Venue	Guildhall
Agenda	TBC