

Arboricultural Liaison Group (ALG)
Minutes of the meeting held on
Wednesday 2nd July
at 10.30am

(ICF c/o Lockhart Garratt Offices, Corby)

Present: Nick Eden (AA), Graham Garratt (ICF), Steve Hewitt (City & Guilds NPTC), Frances Hirst (HSE), Nigel Smith (ISA), Mike Volp (NATO).

Distribution List: Pauline Buchanan Black (PB), Chris Cooper-Abbs (CC), Nick Eden (NE), Graham Garratt (GG), Caroline Harrison (CH), Steve Hewitt (SH), Frances Hirst (FH), Jane Karthaus (JK), Nigel Smith (NS), Mike Volp (MV), Marlijn Wijkhuizen (MW).

Chair: Graham Garratt

Minutes: Bryan Clary (Lockhart Garratt Ltd)

ITEM

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from CC, CH and MW.

2. Minutes of previous meeting held on the 10th January 2008.

Minutes were accepted as a true and fair account.

3. Matters arising from minutes of meeting held on 10th January 2008.

'Choosing your Arborist leaflet' - Due to be launched by the AA within the next couple of months once TrustMark scheme for arboricultural contractors is up and running.

4. ALG relationship with the Tree Council

Discussion of Tree Council's current position within the ALG. It was acknowledged that the Tree Council had fulfilled its original proposal but that in practice it had become evident that the group needed a higher level of administrative support than the Tree Council was able to give. It was raised that the position of being a member of the ALG without the secretariat role should be offered to Tree Council.

Additionally, the secretarial role was discussed and clarified. It was agreed that the chair would:

- Be appointed on a rotational basis
- Agree and circulate the agenda ahead of the meeting.
- Host the meeting, provide refreshments and lunch.
- Provide administrative support to the meeting.
- Prepare and issue draft minutes.

- Agree and circulate minutes and a summary of minutes for wider distribution by the members.

Minutes would be circulated electronically. It was also raised that some members may not have the resources to be able to chair the meetings and this should be kept under review. New membership of the ALG would be by agreement of existing members although organizations etc. could be invited to attend individual meetings.

Action:

GG to confirm with the Tree Council that it indeed did what it originally agreed to and that it is welcome to attend ALG meetings with no secretarial ties.

5. Tree risk management (to include Forestry Commission initiative and draft BS 8516)

Discussion led by NE on the timing of the draft BS 8516 and the work of the National Tree Safety Group. NE asked the ALG to join a statement to ask the BSI to postpone the new British Standard until the National Tree Safety Group has issued its findings. Some ALG members agreed with this move; however others felt that they could not comment on the issue.

Action:

NE to circulate draft letter to ALG members (including those not in attendance) to produce a statement that would be sent to the BSI.

6. AFAG Leaflets

FH updated group on the current AFAG revisions that would be released in the following 3-4 months. These included AFAG 401 *Tree climbing operations* and AFAG 804 *Electricity at work: forestry and arboriculture*. AFAG 404 *Electrical utility arboriculture* may be withdrawn.

Additionally, NE reported the AA has been updating its MEWP guidance (which has been for consultation) and is due out in printed form for the AA conference.

7. R-TWO (Register of Tree Work Operatives)

NE summarised the R-TWO concept, it is intended to recognise the progress individuals make beyond the NPTC assessment criteria. R-TWO has been split up into separate meetings for arboriculture and forestry. At the Arboricultural meeting last week it was decided (by vote) to move forward with the programme. The forestry meeting has yet to take place. FH pointed out the HSE will have to conduct a business impact assessment and that R-TWO is moving further forward but its future still has to be decided.

8. Revision of CS Qualifications

SH reported that the CS revised structure is to provide clarity between training and assessment, additionally to incorporate National Occupational Standards (NOS), which will set the industry standard that the qualification should follow. In addition to the needs of NOS there is also the consultation from the AFAG Training Certificate Group (R-TWO) which NPTC needs to consider. Finally after NPTC has developed a revised CS qualification it will be passed to Lantra Awards to produce the training. Current NOS will run to 2009, the new NOS will be ready around April-May 2009 for introduction in September 2009. SH is planning for the revised CS qualification to be available from September 2009.

9. Review of the National Occupational Standards

Overview given by SH indicates that NOS is being reviewed by Lantra Sector Skills Council and should be ready after consultation in May 2009. This would include levels 2-3 and maybe level 4. CS NOS units (level 2) should be ready by Christmas 2008.

According to FH, Paul Hanson (previously appointed by the ALG) has attended meetings and can provide information for consultation. NE expressed his concern that NOS is being revised without input from the arboriculture industry and offered to place NOS draft on AA website for consultation.

Additionally, SH reported working on a European initiative to standardise qualifications so that there is understanding in European worker competencies when they are working in the UK (or UK workers abroad). Information on the standards and competencies from the 16 member states represented are to be analysed. The aim is to produce a standard not a qualification.

Action:

NE is prepared to post NOS drafts on AA website (although responses would be automatically forwarded to the appropriate organisation).

10. NSG update

MV had no news to report. NE commented that maybe once the National Tree Safety Group had finished its current work its focus could turn to look at a national arboricultural strategy (not unlike forestry).

11. Industry events

MV – Gave out leaflet on NATO meeting/workshops.

NE – Referred group to AA website for events including AA Conference 14-17th Sept and the APF 18-20th Sept. Essential Arb is being relaunched by the Forestry Journal hence anything relevant to Arb can be advertised if 1.Date, 2. Organisation, 3. Course and 4. Approximate location are provided. Information to be sent to simon@trees.org.uk by 5th August to be included in September's issue.

NS – ISA Climbing competitions at Myerscough College, 4-6th July and Newport 30-31st August.

SH – Launch of National Highways Section Scheme 18 on the 3rd September. (Consequences include that BALI cards are necessary to show that individuals are qualified).

GVG – ICF Study Tour 15-17th October. Looking at trees in the National Forest.

12. Industry update

- Chartered Arboriculturist has been confirmed.
- Lockhart Garratt has agreed to sponsor the best student award for MSc in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry at Myerscough College.

13. Any other business

No additional comments.

14. Date of next meeting & chair

NE to chair next meeting on the 8th January 2009.

Provisional date of following meeting was set as 1st July 2009 with NS as chair.