Litter of the Thames Meeting Minutes

## PLA Offices, Pinnacle House, 23-26 St Dunstan’s Hill, EC3R 8HN

## 13/07/2015, 1-3pm

**Present**: Tanya Ferry (PLA, chair); Emma Harrington (Thames21); Suzanne Burgoyne (Thames Water); Brian Clark (British Marine Federation); Paul Clark (Natural History Museum); Pat Fitzsimons (Thames Estuary Partnership; Gerard Morgan (Transport for London)

**In attendance**: Sue Harrington (Thames Estuary Partnership) – minutes; Mohammed Dardouk (UCL Academy)

**Apologies**: Elanor Swan (Anthesis Group); Esther Thomas (LWARB); Claire Shrewsbury (WRAP); Adam Batchelor (GLA); Emma Cunningham (MCSUK); Adrian Whyle (Plastics Europe); Dave Morritt (RHUL); Emma Barton (RYA); Deb Leach (Thames21); Sue Kinsey (MCSUK)

The minutes of the meeting of March 23, 2015 were agreed as correct, subject to the following amendments:

p3.

Royal Holloway *University of London*

Rewrite *Natural History Museum* section to as follows:

Having looked into crustacean and fish stomach contents with RHUL, the next aspect to investigate is seal stomach contents. Brian Smith is responsible for collecting cetaceans for the museum and the seal management plan is being developed in collaboration with ZSL. There is potential for ZSL and NHM to work together on this.

PC will send the article on marine litter once it is finalised [ACTION ongoing]

Delete *TF will give the group an introduction to CEFAS [ACTION]*

**Matters Arising and Actions**

**Chair’s comments**

The purpose of the meeting is for discussion and action, so a way should be found for non-active members to be reflected in the information or correspondence (maybe make notes available on line but not circulate meeting dates).

Topic based meetings might draw in dedicated interest groups – Sue Thomas will do a presentation and the London Waste board also in future meetings.

PF offered to contact potential members on a 1:1 basis. Plastics Europe have posters that could be distributed [ACTIONS PF]. A distribution plan and impact assessment are needed for these actions.

EH/DL to liaise with GLA about small corner shop usage of plastic bags [ACTION and report back]

TF reported that PLA will produce an A3 poster on ‘dos and don’ts’ regarding Litter, Alien Species and unnecessary disturbance in order to engage other river users

PF reported no response yet by Cross River Partnership will arrange a meeting [ACTION]

TEP to share emails and contact details of group members [outstanding ACTION]

TEP to put circulated information on litter on the TEP website [outstanding ACTION]. Once the Thames Litter Forum URL is obtained this should be linked to the TEP web page

TF reported that the production of a logo and strap line for the group was ongoing [outstanding ACTION]

PF reported that links to the TEP Fisheries Action Group for the Evidence Group were delayed

BC to gauge interest from the Passenger Boatowners Association in monitoring the river under Thames Watch [outstanding ACTION]

EH to circulate the Thames21 Big Count leaflets [outstanding ACTION]

**AGENDA**

**National Evidence Group update**

EH – the group met in June and the partners are discussing a Horizon 2020 bid to focus on the Thames and sources of litter that reach the sea. An Intereg 2c bid with European partners would seek to upgrade litter traps. Recycled litter could be made into solids. PLA and Thames21, with TTT, will have a joint litter campaign launch during Totally Thames, date tbc. MEC, a marketing company based in Thames-side containers will have pictograms depicting the ‘Health of the River’. Thames21 have forthcoming foreshore litter events at Greenwich and Strand-on-the-Green. TF reported that 98% of driftwood waste is recycled and none goes to landfill. There had been 3 incidents reported of vessels impacting with driftwood.

PC (or colleague) agreed to contribute to a TEP annual forum workshop on litter [ACTION]

**Marine Litter Network**

PF reported on the recent AGM and projects that could be brought to the Thames Estuary:

* Sewage Related Debris – an education project – suitable for the Thames Learning Group [TEP ACTION]
* Cafe Accreditation Scheme – TF agreed to raise this with the Paper Cup people [ACTION] and send info to GM to liaise with pier cafe proprietors [ACTION]. PLA and GLA could advise on this via new cafe requests

Other issues

Unflushables – positive messages need constant reiteration though notices, especially amusing ones

Plastics based garments – when washed do fibres from recycled materials then enter the water systems? Retailers such as H&M might be interested in supporting campaigns.

Other opportunities listed may be of interest to forum members and could be developed as required.

**Sector updates**

**Academic sector**

Health of the Thames – PC commented that this is misunderstood as there have been improvements in some areas and deterioration in others eg plastics.

NHM update - PC commented on recent and in prep. research papers - trace metals in barnacles; plastics in flounders. PC to circulate all existing research papers to group –[ACTION]

PLA working with British Geological Society, as part of a trial method to evaluate the amount ofplastics in sediments taken for dredge sampling. As it is new science under development any report will not be due for another 18 months.

**Industry sector**

GM reported that fresh water dispensers had been installed recently at Tower and Westminster piers, for pier users to refill for free their own bottles or new @ £3 each. Over 10k half litre dispensed to date, but very few bottles bought. There are plans for further dispensers at Embankment and possibly at Greenwich. No concerns have been voiced so far by the commercial pier users.

The potential for waste to be thrown into the river during major events (New Year’s Eve, Marathon, Totally Thames) needs to be developed as an opportunity to raise awareness and reduce the risk.

SB to investigate whether Thames Tideway Tunnel have any litter activities or campaigns [ACTION]

**Events**

BC suggested a Plastic Beer Mug recycling campaign at big public events

Totally Thames – all forum members should encourage the recycling message during their events. The forum logo should be ready for use during September events

Selfridges Project Ocean Plastics Debate – PF will invite all forum members to this event on single use plastic bottles – TfL can be suggested for the panel [ACTION]

**Any other business**

PF – the House of Commons report has recommendations, the framework of which could be transferred to the Litter Forum eg evidence, costs etc

TF – the Port Health Authority may attend if there is an agenda item of specific interest. GM noted the overlap in potential interests.

**Date of Next Quarterly Meeting**

Early October – active members will be canvassed via a Doodle Poll

**ACTIONS**

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| **Task** | **Forum member** |
|  |  |
| Obtain posters from Plastics Europe and circulate | Pat Fitzsimons |
| Liaise with GLA about small corner shop usage of plastic bags | Emma Harrington/Deb Leach |
| Meet with Cross River Partnership | Pat Fitzsimons |
| Share full contact details of forum members | TEP |
| Update TEP website with Litter Forum information | TEP |
| Production of logo | Tanya Ferry/PLA |
| Gauge interest from PBA for Thames Watch monitoring | Brian Clark |
| Circulate Big Count leaflets | Emma Harrington |
| Present to TEP Annual Forum on litter | Paul Clark/NHM |
| Raise this with the Paper Cup people and send info to GM to liaise with pier cafe proprietors | Tanya Ferry, Gerard Morgan |
| PLA and GLA could advise on this via new cafe requests | Tanya Ferry, Adam Batchelor |
| PC to circulate all existing research papers to group | Paul Clark |
| Present ‘Sewage Related Debris’ to Thames Learning Group | Pat Fitzsimons |
| Raise Cafe Accreditation scheme with contacts | Tanya Ferry; Gerard Morgan |
| Report back on Thames Tideway Tunnels litter campaign | Suzanne Burgoyne |
| Send invites to Selfridges Project Ocean Plastics Debate | Pat Fitzsimons |