

# THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

## Department of Biology

### OUTREACH COMMITTEE: 13 June 2008

**Present:** John Pillmoor (Chair and Strategy Board Link)  
Caroline Calvert (CNAP)  
Jasper Green (Postgraduate Representative)  
Adrian Harrison (Departmental Outreach Organiser)  
Thorunn Helgason (Academic Representative)  
Ottoline Leyser (Research Committee + Academic Staff Representative)  
Nicola Charlton (Technical Representative)  
Richard Swinnerton (Undergraduate representative)  
Chikako Barlow (Secretary)

**Apologies:** None

#### Action

#### 08/14 Welcome to new members of the Committee

New members, Richard Swinnerton (Undergraduate representative) and Chikako Barlow (Secretary) were welcomed by the Chair who also noted his thanks to Baur Aituov as the previous Undergraduate representative)

#### 08/15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2008 were approved and will be posted on the web. **CB**

#### 08/16 Matters arising from the minutes

- a) **08/02a: Work placement requests:** HMOL reported that the central system for fifth formers is through Edexcel rather than SetPoint and could be worth following up as they do all the arrangements. ABH agreed to look into this. NC reported that there was not enough going on out of the University term time to accept school children on placement in the Teaching labs. However, students could be considered at selected times in term time. **ABH**  
**NC**
- b) **08/02d: Outreach funding in the Research Bulletin:** HMOL will check with Jane McCarthy that outreach funding opportunities are being included in the Research Bulletin. **HMOL**
- c) **08/02e: Teaching staff inputs:** NC reported that teaching had put in 476 hours (nearly 13 person-weeks) on outreach activities in the previous year. The majority of this was the NAGTY summer school, excluding this the input was 128 hours. JBP felt this was really helpful information to have and asked NC to keep recording the inputs. **NC**
- d) **08/05: York Council contact:** ABH reported that there was a central outreach contact at York Council but that he had been asked to liaise with them through the University Schools Liaison.
- e) **08/9: Biology Matters:** JBP reported that Buzz Palmer now had to give

up his editorial role to concentrate on finishing his PhD. The next edition is partly completed but it needs another editor. The group felt that it would be a great shame if the newsletter was not continued and JBP will approach Hilary Jones to ask whether she could seek volunteers from the PhD/Posdoc community.

**JBP**

## **08/17 Previous events update**

A large number of events had been successfully held and will be recorded in the log in due course. The following were noted in particular:

- ABH reported that he had reluctantly agreed to hold a Saturday morning workshop for ISSP (Independent and State School Partnership). However, he has declined to hold further sessions at the weekend despite pressure from the organiser
- Discover and Explore had been held in the Department this time in collaboration with Chemistry and York College. The event went really well, helped by being located here
- The workshop for technicians and teachers for the Society of General Microbiology was very successful and has led to further enquiries from the teachers regarding visits for their pupils

## **08/18 Events log**

JBP noted that only 6 events had been recorded for 2008 so far. The next routine call is due and it was suggested that this should be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July (before School Summer Holiday and also after graduation ceremony). Re-emphasising the teaching points for academics, green card points for PhDs, and cv fodder for post docs would be important. JG noted that he felt that PhDs may not be aware that they should be sending in their details and a separate email should be considered for this group to encourage them.

**JBP/CB**

## **08/19 Next major events**

ABH predicted a busy July with many school visits planned. He also reported that the available slots in teaching for the next academic year had been defined in consultation with NC so that we can respond more quickly to enquiries.

JG updated the group on his ideas for a phylogeny day for teachers. Although the NSLC had felt the idea was attractive, they advised that funding would need to be in place to enable teachers to attend by paying for cover and travel allowances. Unfortunately the proposal does not fit with the funding they currently have available. The proposed funding from the Outreach Committee clearly would not cover this level of costs. CC suggested approaching Amanda Selvaratnam to see if there could be CPD money available. She also suggested linking to an event such as the ASE conference. JG had been thinking of 20-30 people but the group suggested that smaller numbers might be better to target initially to keep the costs down.

**JG**

## **08/20 Database of available activities**

ABH and Chris Kelly have started to pull together the available activities into one database in order to make it easily searchable. Key information will include a

description of the activity, suitable target audience, time required, staff and equipment requirements, etc. It was suggested that they contact Ian Jennings to see whether any help could be provided in setting up a robust database. At the moment this is only envisaged for internal use but it may be possible to put it on Website in the future.

**ABH**

**08/21 Excellence Hubs**

We have already provided input to a number of events organised through the Excellence Hubs, all held during normal working days. There will be a further meeting in July which will hopefully define the future direction.

**08/22 Science and Society**

Nothing is happening at a moment. The Committee felt that it was a shame that this group appeared to be in limbo, particularly in the context of the Science Trail being cancelled last time due to problems with finding a suitable date

**08/23 Budget**

ABH spoke to Enclosure 1 which outlined the budget status for the four Outreach accounts. As noted previously, the £1,000 earmarked for the development of JG's phylogeny day will not be required before the financial year end. It was also agreed that it looked to be unlikely that Biology Matters will require any printing costs. The currently available spend on the current account is therefore £1,793 and it was agreed that this should be used to purchase additional equipment for the Tebis kits.

**NC**

NC outlined a wish list for future equipment purchases and this is attached as appendix 1 for reference.

**08/24 Publicity for the new academic year**

Outreach activities are introduced to new undergraduates by ABH during one of his early lectures. It might be worth including RS in this to raise his profile as Undergraduate Representative.

**ABH**

ABH also introduces outreach to new PhD students and is currently discussing with Hilary Jones the best way to achieve this. Once defined, it might be worth including JG in the process to raise his profile as Postgraduate Representative.

JG suggested that it would be a good idea for PhD students to organise a "PhD showcase" display as he felt that the displays organised as part of the BA Festival of Science had been very successful. It was suggested that this could be part of Science Week. This is normally held in April but with a December deadline for proposals. However it was felt that Atrium would be the most appropriate place for the display and Science Week is generally held in the City, last year in the Railway Museum. There is also a theme, although this is very general.

**JG**

ABH suggested it would be a good idea to consider including the PhD showcase in the pre-application visit day that is planned for September. It was felt that this was probably too short notice for the coming September but should definitely be

**ABH/  
JG**

considered for future years. He also felt it would be good to publicise outreach as part of the regular UCAS admission days.

**08/25 Any other business**

NC reported that there had continued to be strong demand from schools for the loan of the TEBIS kits. Pleasingly there had been very few problems with damage or missing items from the kits.

**08/26 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held in mid-Autumn term and a date will be sought at the beginning of the new academic year.

**CB**

## Appendix 1

### Outreach Equipment – Future Purchase Wish List

All prices are exclusive of VAT and other discounts that may be available.

2 x Mini-Sub Cell GT Systems: includes tank, casting trays, combs Biorad 170-4486		£610
Powerpac Basic for above	Biorad 164-5050	£393
4 x UV transparent trays (to allow extra gels to be poured without the need for a tank)	Biorad 170-4435	£204
2 x Gel caster units (to allow gels to be cast without the tank)	Biorad 170-4422	£178
4 x 8 well combs	Biorad 170-4462	£144
4 x 15 well combs	Biorad 170-4464	£144
2 x P20 pipettes	Biorad 166-0506	£260
2 x P200 pipettes	Gilson	£294
Biochrom spec (to loan and use for water analysis sessions)	SLS	~£2k
Microscope (Adrian)		~£600-1k

TOTAL w/o VAT = £3227

TOTAL with VAT = £3791.73