

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*  
Department of Biology

**BIOLOGY OUTREACH COMMITTEE: 26 Feb 2009**

**Present:** John Pillmoor (Chair and Strategy Board Link)  
 Caroline Calvert (CNAP)  
 Adrian Harrison (Departmental Outreach Organiser)  
 Thorunn Helgason (Academic Representative)  
 Jasper Green (Postgraduate Representative)  
 Ottoline Leyser (Research Committee and Academic staff representative)  
 Chikako Barlow (Secretary)

**Apologies for absence:**

Richard Swinnerton (Undergraduate Representative)  
 Chris Kelly (Technical Representative)

		<b>Action</b>
09/1	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting (18/12/ 2008)</b>  These were accepted as a true record and will now be posted on the web	<b>CB</b>
09/2	<b>Matters Arising</b>  <b>a) 08/29c: Database of activities</b> Updating to create a summary suitable for the web is ongoing.  <b>b) 08/37: UCAS applications and outreach</b> ABH confirmed that SITS does contain information of outreach contact and he will look for a way to obtain this in due course.	<b>ABH</b>
09/3	<b>Previous Events Update</b>  A wide range of activities had been undertaken with the following particularly noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Set Chong gave a talk at Queen Margaret School, Escrick on 6 Feb about insulin</li> <li>– Gifted Talented children – microscopy based event for 8 year olds – went very well</li> </ul>	
09/4	<b>Events Log</b>  There are still problems with summarising the data from the forms provided as part of last year's census and transferring this to the main log due to missing data and duplication. This will be progressed when time allows. New forms are being added to the log as they are received.	<b>ABH/CB</b>

09/5	<p><b>Next Major Events</b></p> <p><b>Routine Events:</b></p> <p>A large number of events are planned over the coming months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Science Week: 9-11 March – Discover and Explore the Sun</li> <li>– CK and ABH have designed a new activity looking at the efficiency of photosynthesis. Phil Ineson was involved in this as well.</li> <li>– Discovery day: 12-14 March. HMOL's group is attending</li> <li>– Matlock school 18 March – CSI York activity for GCSE level students</li> <li>– Green Apples 26 March – Sarah West (SEIY) coordinating</li> <li>– Bioinformatics workshop for the National Science Learning Centre, 26-27 March – JG is providing this workshop. He is OK for resources but the Committee offered funding for printing handouts etc, if required</li> <li>– Thirsk School 31 March – Gareth Evans, Dawn Coverly and ABH</li> <li>– Science trail: 2 April, DNA fingerprinting (CK + ABH), Locust Jumping (Chris Elliott) and Earthworms (Sara West).</li> <li>– Central Admissions event "Find your way", 22-23 April</li> <li>– Evolution Day, National Science Learning Centre: 14 May – Phil Ineson speaking</li> <li>– Excellence Hub event: 18 June – activity TBC</li> <li>– Matlock School Six formers: 3 July – activity TBC</li> <li>– Elizabethan School: 10 July –CSI York</li> <li>– Selby High school: 15, 16 July – activity TBC</li> <li>– Great Yorkshire Show – HMOL's group will be attending</li> </ul> <p>Visit from Tadcaster School, to be confirmed for June/July</p> <p>An RSC grant is being applied for by TH for St Allred's School (Tang Hall) for years 5-6, if successful will be in June/July</p> <p><b>Darwin Events:</b></p> <p>ABH noted that we have offered the Atrium for the BBSRC Darwin road show. However, it is likely that they are looking for a more public location. We have suggested the Designer Outlet. Once dates are confirmed, we should consider whether we can do anything linked to their road show.</p> <p>This prompted discussion as to whether we should put together a specific Darwin package that could be offered widely to Schools and other interested groups, possibly to coincide with the anniversary of the publication of the Origin of Species in the Autumn. We could also consider running displays for the University Open Day. Anything developed could then become part of our normal offering. It was noted that AHF has a talk prepared that he gave to the Unitarian Church. JG stated the he the bioinformatics workshop prepared for the NSLC is based on evolutionary trees. HMOL's computer plant</p>	ABH/ALL
------	---	---------

	<p>game could also be suitable for inclusion. Requesting a loan of some Darwin artefacts from the National Science Museum could also be considered as a centre piece.</p> <p>TH agreed to convene a small working group to develop the ideas further.</p>	<b>TH</b>
09/6	<p><b>Excellence Hubs</b></p> <p>Continues to work well.</p>	
09/7	<p><b>Science and Society</b></p> <p>Met to discuss the Science Trail. As this group is now only specifically concerned with the organisation of the Science Trail, it was agreed to remove this as a standing agenda item.</p>	
09/8	<p><b>Budget</b></p> <p>ABH reported a net spend from the running budget of only £205 to date due to the receipt of significant sums. We have a commitment to the printing of Biology Matters and to the consumables for the forthcoming visits. However, it was felt that a budget of £2k could be made available to support the Darwin project.</p>	
09/9	<p><b>BBSRC Excellence with Impact</b></p> <p><b>a) TEBIS kit users</b></p> <p>Approximately 17 schools were contacted regarding ideas for additional equipment but with only four responses to date. They supported the idea of further kits and mentioned autoclaves and ovens as key problems for them at the moment. Questions of insurance and mechanisms of delivery were also raised.</p> <p>Following discussion it was agreed to develop a microbial loan kit and a list of equipment will be constructed for use with one of the existing microbial practicals. It was suggested that possible funding could be requested from the SGM.</p> <p>ABH felt that we probably need to do more to publicise the kits. JG suggested that we should consider offering the kits along with a PhD student.</p> <p><b>b) Mechanism for difficult to approach groups</b></p> <p>Options to link to the “Science – so what” campaign, life long learning, and displays at the Designer Centre were considered. CM will try to develop further ideas with Nicola Smith.</p>	<p><b>ABH</b></p> <p><b>CMC</b></p>

	<p><b>c) Capturing outreach by undergraduates</b></p> <p>After discussing with Julie Lord, JBP proposed that details about outreach and the outreach form are included in the Student Bulletin and displayed on the student's notice board (especially in the beginning of the year). Copies of the form should also be made available in the Undergraduate Office.</p> <p>There was also felt to be an opportunity to increase outreach engagement as well as providing training in the public communication of science as part of the Term 5 Scientific Skills – for example in a similar fashion to the Bioenterprise option. Such an option would probably be of particular interest for those considering PGCE. HMOL would be interested in running this option, subject to suitable adjustment in teaching load. ABH is the SATS organiser and will consider this for next year.</p>	<p><b>CB/JBP</b></p> <p><b>ABH</b></p>
09/10	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>a) Gilchrist bid for spectrophotometer</b></p> <p>ABH and TH have made a bid for £3,000 to purchase another spectrophotometer to provide extra capacity for visiting schools</p> <p><b>b) York taster day</b></p> <p>Sue Bougourd (Admission) is keen to develop Taster Days as part of the University Open Day. Current thoughts are for some lectures in the morning and practicals in the afternoon. At present it does not look to be feasible to offer this for the July open day. Once developed, it was felt that the format could also be offered to our key feeder schools and also extended to Leeds, Sheffield and Bradford to try to develop applications from these areas. Consideration could also be given to mature students and York College.</p> <p><b>c) Central links with Schools and Colleges</b></p> <p>The Admission Office is developing a more proactive policy with the key feeder schools and we will be working with them.</p> <p>JG suggested that it might be a good idea if Undergraduate students visit to their secondary schools to give more information and advertise University. This was felt to be an interesting idea and the Committee could offer travel expenses. ABH will consider how to develop this.</p> <p>In this context, the Women in Science project was noted</p>	<p><b>ABH</b></p> <p><b>ABH</b></p>

	<p>which will be sending material to all UK schools. It was agreed to explore whether we could include some of our material (e.g. Biology Matters and general recruitment information) in the mail shot and ABH will discuss with Nick Miller.</p> <p>d) <b>CSL</b></p> <p>HMOL noted that CSL is now merging with other Defra units to form the Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera). As part of this, they are likely to be much more outward facing and open to being involved in outreach activities and student placements.</p>	<b>ABH</b>
09/11	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>To be arranged for mid-Summer term</p>	<b>CB</b>