

<i>Reference</i>	NAP12/JUL/23
<i>Date</i>	12 July 2023



ROYAL TOWN PLANNING INSTITUTE

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT NETWORK**  
 NAPE Management Committee Minutes

**12 July 2023, 10:00-12:00**

*Held online on Microsoft Teams and in person at:*

*41 Botolph Lane*

*London*

*EC3R 8DL*

1. Welcome, Introductions  
 OS, IV, CM, CA, CB, DR, RM, MP, DS all present in person, KB joined on Teams
  
2. Network Update from Network Manager
  - MP reported that the network has 1,013 active members down from 1,065 last meeting (March 2023), coinciding with annual cancellations of inactive accounts and clearing previously cancelled accounts from the CRM
  - LinkedIn group has 210 members up from 200 (March 2023)
  - OS said it would be helpful to understand how many members of NAPE are enforcement officers and how many are chartered
  
3. Minutes from the last meeting 06/03/2023 and matters arising
  - a) Promoting the network
    - Shadowing an Enforcement Officer
    - OS recounted that Sue Bridge shadowed the enforcement team at Buckinghamshire Council on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May and published a blog
      - Design toolkit
    - MP shared that the toolkit is ready to progress once the senior case study is received from CM
  - b) APC Training for Enforcement officers
    - Neil Pearce provided an update via Teams on the February APC webinar for enforcement officers, which was attended by 76 people and could be held periodically
    - NP said the RTPI is reviewing the APC process to understand barriers to chartership for enforcement officers but changes to guidance will not be enacted until 2025
    - NP said the Membership Assessment Advisory panel will draft an advice note to help enforcement officers understand how to meet the requirements of the APC process, which will also be used to help assessors understand enforcement officers' work
    - NP asked MP to send out a regular bulletin or include a section in the NAPE bulletin about the benefits of chartership and advice and resources for enforcement officers
    - OS said promoting the APC route for enforcement officers should go hand-in-hand with promoting NAPE and RTPI membership

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- KB raised the possibility of having a distinct enforcement route for chartership

### **Actions**

*MP to provide questions for the senior case study to CM and move forward on the design toolkit with Comms*

*MP to discuss section in NAPE bulletin or separate bulletin about routes to chartership for enforcement officers with Neil Pearce*

4. Biodiversity Net Gain – Rebecca Moberly (PAS) and Amy Croombs (Natural England)
  - RM and AC discussed the current lack of guidance for enforcement of BNG, explained that guidance would be published this autumn, and solicited feedback from MC on the key challenges to monitoring and enforcing BNG
  - **Headlines from MC discussion:**
  - The current monitoring, compliance, and enforcement system is ineffective in implementing BNG, especially on-site. Local authorities have varying approaches to enforcement and face resource and capacity challenges. Enforcement is not directly funded, and planning teams prioritize applications over enforcement.
  - Monitoring fees can be obtained through S106, but there is no funding for monitoring or enforcing conditions. S106 is rarely enforced, and action often relies on legal measures or media pressure. Not all enforcement officers handle S106, and specialised expertise is needed, such as biodiversity officers and ecologists.
  - The lack of practical information and resources makes preparing for BNG difficult. MC members have expressed frustration over the lack of guidance and implications for monitoring and enforcement. Conservation covenants, seen as a promising option, are not yet available.
  - MC members were unaware of government funding for local authorities to prepare for BNG. Practical information focused on enforcement, including training, guidance, and information, is needed.
  - The current system needs adaptation for BNG implementation. Proactive monitoring and compliance are required, along with fitting BNG within CIL parameters to enable funded monitoring. Consequences for non-compliance need improvement beyond ineffective breach of condition notices. Addressing developer bankruptcies and lack of redress for LPAs is crucial.
  - Public communication is necessary to emphasise the importance of BNG to both the public and developers. Lack of understanding can lead to actions that harm biodiversity, such as encroaching on designated habitat corridors.

### **Actions**

*MP to liaise with RM and AC on communicating MC concerns to DLUHC and Defra*

5. NAPE Conference
  - DP joined to discuss potential dates and venues for the NAPE Conference

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- DP advised that MC should start considering a theme, speakers, and sponsors
- OS suggested approaching No 5 to sponsor and DP said she would approach them
- c) Dates
  - MC agreed on a date just after Easter, most likely the week of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, Tuesday through Thursday
- d) Location
  - MC expressed a strong preference for the conference to be held in London
  - DP said holding the conference in London would be expensive and that it would need to be held outside central London and tickets would need to be £80-£100
  - CM suggested a council hall be used to bring down costs; IV suggested Ealing town hall and MP suggested Walthamstow and Barnet town halls

**Actions**

*DP to approach No 5 to sponsor*

*MP to liaise with DP and MC on potential venues*

*MC to consider theme and speakers*

6. Renters Reform Bill

- IV noted that the removal of Section 21 notices under the bill creates a problem for enforcement because there will be no provision for compliance with an enforcement notice that requires residential uses of a property to cease
- IV noted that this is likely an oversight and asked for the RTPI to raise the issue with government

**Actions**

*MP to ask JC to discuss the issue with civil servants*

7. IHBC representative for NAPE Management Committee meetings

- IV said IHBC would like input into NAPE meetings to create better connection between enforcement and heritage and Peter Wood has been suggested as a representative to attend MC meetings

**Actions**

*MP to obtain contact details for Peter Wood and liaise with him about his scope of involvement with NAPE*

8. Enforcement Handbook Update

- MP provided an update that the Enforcement Handbook Update has been on hold pending publication of the LURB
- OS advised that she has been informed that changes to enforcement are likely to remain the same and that work on the Update should be commenced prior to publication

**Actions**

*MP to confirm enforcement changes with civil servants and arrange contract for Enforcement Handbook Update*

9. Networks Review

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- DS provided an update on the Networks Review, setting out the scope, aims, and timeline of the project
- OS emphasised the need for NAPE to deliver more value for members and provides opportunities for regional discussion and conferences
- CM said NAPE should be better connected to other networks, especially the Young Planners' Network and conference
- DR, IV, and OS emphasised that regional forums for NAPE members to discuss enforcement matters would be useful, and that this would likely require anonymity and moderation
- CB noted that RTPI fees are increasing but membership does not include training or events; several MC members said it is hard to encourage enforcement officers to join the RTPI when paying for membership doesn't include any free relevant training
- KB suggested that RTPI volunteers should get discounted membership
- DS confirmed that value and credibility of membership, and convincing local authorities to pay fees, was a serious consideration across the organisation

### **Actions**

*MP to draft list of actions to promote the network and the value of membership prior to completion of the Networks Review*

*DS to incorporate feedback into scoping of the Networks Review*

*MC members to send other membership feedback to [policy@rtpi.org.uk](mailto:policy@rtpi.org.uk)*

#### 10. Ask Month Queries

- MC discussed Ask Month, concluding that it is reactive, difficult to manage across annual leave, and prevents members from forming relationships with their specific regional representatives
- MC raised the idea of a central NAPE advice mailbox that all MC members have access to, or using the existing NAPE email address for queries which MP would forward to respective regional representatives

### **Actions**

*MP to replace Ask Month in NAPE bulletin with contact information for regional representatives*

#### 11. Any other business

- OS raised the idea of NAPE providing a guide to drafting local Enforcement Plans

### **Actions**

*MP to arrange next meeting*