

ADVISORY GROUP OF THE BELTANE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT NETWORK

17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2013, SEMINAR ROOM, 7 BRISTO SQUARE, EDINBURGH

PRESENT

Dr Sarah Anderson (invited) (SA)	Beltane Network
Dr Iona Beange (invited) (IB) *	Heriot-Watt University
Prof Mary Bownes ( <b>convenor</b> ) (MB)	University of Edinburgh
Prof Sarah Cunningham-Burley (SCB)	University of Edinburgh
Prof Isobel Davidson (ID)	Queen Margaret University
Sophie Dow (SD)	Mindroom
Prof Bob Fisher (BF)	University of Edinburgh
Donald Jarvie (DJ)	Scotland's Futures Forum
Prof Charlie Jeffery (CJ)	University of Edinburgh
Louisa Lawes (invited) (LL)	University of Edinburgh
Prof Lesley McAra (LM)	University of Edinburgh
Dr Heather Rea (HJR)	Beltane Network
* Representing Prof Alan Miller (Heriot-Watt University)	

APOLOGIES

Dr Gráinne Barkess	Edinburgh Napier University
Prof Alan Miller	Heriot-Watt University
Prof Stuart Monro	Our Dynamic Earth
Dr Jon Turner	University of Edinburgh
Joanne Ward	Scottish Government

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (**MB**)

Attendees were welcomed to the final Advisory Group meeting of 2013.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (**MB**)

All of those present approved the minutes from the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013. Most action had been completed, including the revision of Beltane's approach to Fellowship themes (HJR), and inviting Beltane to the College of Science and Engineering ('CSE') Research Committee (BF). Attendees were asked to send their updates by email following the present meeting, but to supply updates in advance of the meeting thereafter. These updates will be published on the Beltane website.

If Beltane's attendance at the CSE Research Committee proves successful, other Colleges may invite Beltane to their equivalent meetings in future. LM invited Beltane to attend one of the School of Law's committee meetings.

**Action:** Supply electronic updates following the 17<sup>th</sup> December meeting (**all**)

**Action:** Invite Beltane to a School of Law committee meeting (**LM**)

## BELTANE UPDATE (HJR)

HJR provided a Prezi update for the period August-December 2013. The full presentation can be viewed online at [http://prezi.com/fmsmyoom3vds/?utm\\_campaign=share&utm\\_medium=copy](http://prezi.com/fmsmyoom3vds/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy). Key points were:

- The next Beltane Annual Gathering will take place in May 2014 and will be on the topic of ‘participatory engagement’.
- Beltane’s Edinburgh Fringe programme will run again in 2014, with steps taken to address issues from 2013.
- Eight new Beltane Fellows have been appointed, including three professors and one Leverhulme Early Career Fellow. Fellows will be announced once their agreements have been signed. The new Fellows are:
  - Dr Jean Carletta (Informatics, University of Edinburgh)
  - Dr Joel Chaney (School of the Built Environment, Heriot-Watt University)
  - Dr Jackie Gulland (Social Policy, University of Edinburgh)
  - Prof Stephen Lawrie (Psychiatry, University of Edinburgh)
  - Dr Nancy Lombard (School for Business and Society, Glasgow Caledonian University)
  - Dr Felicity Mehendale (Child Life and Health, University of Edinburgh/NHS Lothian)
  - Dr Eugénia Rodrigues (Science, Technology and Innovation Studies, University of Edinburgh)
  - Prof Graham Turner (School of Management and Languages, Heriot-Watt University)
- The next Beltane Parliament dinner will take place in May 2014. Prior to this, Beltane Parliament Fellow Dr Jen Ross may run an event on MOOCs at the Parliament.

There was discussion about whether increased university engagement in Edinburgh’s arts festivals indicates public engagement culture change – the group felt it did. The University of Edinburgh’s Festivals Strategy Group was highlighted as good practice that could be adopted by Beltane partners.

There was concern that some researchers do not feel confident engaging with external audiences about the Scottish Independence Referendum. The Advisory Group felt that academics should be encouraged to engage, but to make sure that their platforms do not favour one party over the other. The Advisory Group offered to provide development opportunities for researchers who wish to engage about contentious topics.

**Action:** Set up a Beltane Breakfast/Twilight on the topic of sharing contentious research **(SA)**

## ROUNDTABLE UPDATES (MB)

### MB:

- The University of Edinburgh has launched a new festivals web-presence, <http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/events/festivals>.
- In 2013, the University of Edinburgh had simultaneous real and virtual graduation ceremonies for the first time.

### SCB:

- The University of Edinburgh’s College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine did several things to mark the Medical Research Council’s centenary, including an event at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh.

- The Farr Institute Electronic Health Informatics Centres flagged as having strong public engagement and education strands. The Administrative Data Research Centre will be physically based at the University of Edinburgh.

**LM:**

- The School of Law at the University of Edinburgh is expanding its pro-bono services to include a small claims clinic, mediation services and a child contact service. Rebecca Mackenzie, who leads the pro-bono programme, recently won a University of Edinburgh Principal's Medal.
- A lot of participatory methods work is being done by the School of Law's criminologists, e.g. work with the Grassmarket Community Project.

**LL:**

- Beltane has influenced the form of the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice offered by the Institute for Academic Development ('IAD') at the University of Edinburgh.
- Beltane is having an impact on the IAD's approach to evaluation and is encouraging IAD colleagues to develop novel academic development opportunities.

**SD:**

- The Mindroom Direct Help and Support Service is inundated – 227 active cases are being handled by just two people. The organisation is about to get funding for a third person. The big vision is to reform the whole system; a proposal for philanthropic funding to support this is under consideration.
- SD is working with Prof Peter Kind and Dr Sally Till (University of Edinburgh) to do a large exhibition in St Andrew's Square, Edinburgh in June 2014. The exhibition will feature fifty-six neuroscience images.
- SD's family survived a very serious fire at their home after being saved by their daughter, Annie. A heroism award is now being set up in Annie's name, with a starting fund of £20,000. The award will recognise the ability young people have. Initially, the award will be open to young people with additional support needs in Scotland up to the age of twenty-five, then will open up to rest of UK. The award will be a significant cash prize.

**DJ:**

- Beltane Fellow Dr Jen Ross is currently working at Scotland's Futures Forum on MOOCs.
- DJ is involved with a project to create a single campus for Shetland's secondary, further and higher education institutions; the project involves distance learning. DJ would welcome advice on distance learning in schools, in particular.
- DJ doing some work on wellbeing with the Scottish Government's Performance Framework.
- Scotland's Futures Forum is working with the Scottish Universities Insight Institute. Anyone interested in getting involved should contact DJ or Prof Burkhard Schafer at the University of Edinburgh.
- DJ working with Dave Gorman (Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, University of Edinburgh) on social finance.

**ID:**

- Queen Margaret University has developed academies to engage with secondary schools to let their students know how to apply to the University.

**CJ:**

- Questioned whether the University of Edinburgh should spend more on blogging platforms. Suggested a cost-benefit analysis was required.
- Noted that the Economic and Social Research Council's new Impact Accelerator accounts exclude public engagement.

**IB:**

- Heriot-Watt University's Principal's Public Engagement Prize will next be awarded in summer 2014.
- In November 2013, Heriot-Watt hosted a well-attended Beltane Breakfast on the subject of blogging.
- Heriot-Watt Engage is busy flagging up existing public engagement opportunities.
- Heriot-Watt's food and drink researchers are working with the Midlothian Science Festival and others; Scottish Government funding has been awarded for this work.

**BF:**

- Research in a Nutshell videos featuring University of Edinburgh researchers have been viewed 150,000 times, with over 70% of traffic coming from outside Scotland. There are now about 460 videos.
- The SCI-FUN public engagement group is still active.
- HJR attended the CSE Research Committee, and will shortly attend the CSE Training Committee.
- Considering adopting Cambridge University's system for internal web seminars.

## BELTANE MAGAZINE (HJR)

The Beltane team will be preparing the latest Beltane magazine-style review in the first half of 2014. The magazine will support the case for continued funding for Beltane beyond July 2015. The Advisory Group was asked what would make the magazine useful for them.

The previous Beltane magazine may be viewed at <http://www.beltanetwork.org/news-blogs-reports/beltane-reports/discover-beltane-2012/>. The Advisory Group felt the new magazine should be similar, but improvements for 2014 could be:

- A dedicated statistics section.
- Images of people, rather than abstract graphics, on the outer cover.
- A separate, shorter publication for those needing a quick introduction to Beltane.
- A leaflet advising researchers about how to get involved.
- Less dense text.
- Information about funding for public engagement.
- Interviews from people involved with Beltane.

## NEXT MEETINGS (HJR)

The 2014 meetings of the Beltane Advisory Group will take place in May and October 2014.

**Action:** Circulate 2014 Advisory Group dates (HJR)

*Prepared by: Dr Sarah Anderson, Project Officer Beltane Public Engagement Network, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014*