

# National Brownfield Forum

## Meeting Notes

25 March 2026, 11.00am – 3.00pm Teleconference



### FINAL

#### Present:

Liz Hart (Chair)	Chair
Steve Edgar	Deputy Chair & RemSoc
Nicola Harries (Secretariat)	CL:AIRE
Calum Irvine	Defra
Caroline Thornton	Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)
Matt Llewellyn & Trystan James	Natural Resources Wales (NRW)
Angela Haslam	Environment Agency (EA)
Mark Williams	Homes England (HE)
John Henderson	Interim Environmental Protection Assessor Wales (IEPAW)
Leigh Sharpe	Mining Remediation Authority (MRA)
Elaine White	Institution of Environmental Science (IES)
Matthew Byerly	Environmental Standards Scotland
Stella Keenan	Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Pollution Advisory Group (YALPAG)
Ruth Easterbrook	Geological Society
Tim Elliott	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Geraint Williams	Association of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Specialists (AGS)
Tom Henman	Specialist in Land Condition (SiLC)
Kate Baker	Society of Brownfield Risk Assessment (SoBRA)
Jane Thrasher	Environmental Industries Commission (EIC)
Ken Scally	Environmental Industries Association (EIA)
Rebekah Norbury	National Contaminated Land Officers Group (NCLOG)
Robert Tyler	West & East London Land Contamination Officers' Group (WELLCOG)

#### Apologies:

Madeleine Berg	Scottish Government
Emily Jones & Matthew Spencer	Ministry of Housing and Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)
Rachel Boulderstone	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
Emma Tattersdill	UK Environmental Law Association (UKELA)
Darren Beriro	Outgoing chair
Joanna Wragg	British Geological Survey (BGS)
David Stewart	Scottish Land Commission (SLC)
Edward Lewis	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
Darren Watson	Office of Environmental Protection (OEP)
Joanne Kwan	CIRIA
David Jacob	National House Building Council (NHBC)
David Crook	Local Government Association (LGA)
Rhodri Williams	Home Builders Federation
Bill Crooks	British Soil Science Society (BSSS)

## Agenda

1. Administrative:
  - Welcome and Apologies
  - Introductions of newly represented organisations
  - Actions from last meeting
  - National Brownfield Forum profile
  - Membership
2. General Knowledge Share
  - Government and Regulatory Update
  - Opportunity for clarification on the industry and local authority fora updates as received in advance
  - Hot or emerging topics open session
  - Brownfield in media
  - NQMS Update
  - Standards
3. Chair's Plans for 2026 – 2028
  - Questions and Answers
4. AOB
  - Use of AI in report preparation
5. Date of next meeting

## Meeting Notes

### 1. **Administrative**

#### a) Welcome & Apologies

Liz Hart (LH) welcomed everyone to the National Brownfield Forum (NBF) and apologies were given. This was her first meeting as chair and thanked Darren Beriro for his skilful chairing over the last two years.

#### b) Introductions of newly represented organisations

No new attendees were present. BSSS were due to attend their first meeting but unfortunately their representative was not available to attend.

#### c) Actions from previous meetings

NH reviewed all actions. LH confirmed that she has written to “The House Magazine” introducing the NBF and offering to write an article about the NBF and some of its work. LH will follow up with a short article.

**ACTION: LH to follow up with “The House Magazine” and write a short article about the NBF.**

#### d) National Brownfield Forum profile

LH summarised all the activities where the NBF had been profiled. She confirmed that a meeting was hosted with NBF members and MHCLG to discuss the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation. The meeting was welcomed by all, however it was noted that the way government departments are set up their work is siloed so they have limited knowledge outside of their portfolio areas. This is difficult because brownfield development covers many different areas of policy.

It was also noted at the meeting that the NPPF had very poor referencing to soil and soil as a resource. MHCLG representatives did not seem aware that soil was an issue or how the narrative around soil as a valuable resource needed raising. LH summarised key government initiatives across the last 18 months highlighting the importance of soil for their information. LH confirmed she did not list all industry groups work as there are too many but focused on government publications. In

addition to referencing soil, MHCLG were encouraged to link to Land Contamination Risk Management (LCRM) and to improve the definition around competence.

**ACTION: NH to share LH summary letter to NBF members.**

Notes of the meeting were shared with all NBF members and LH hoped that everyone responded to the NPPF consultation.

LH confirmed that she had also been contacted by Julian Ingram of the Geoscience Operational Team to discuss the challenges around risk assessment relating to permits. He wishes to discuss with a small group of NBF members about common stumbling blocks and to listen to common frustrations. The small working group will set out clear terms of reference and a time frame to look at the risk assessment aspects and how to improve the understanding of what is needed. Julian Ingram will set out the terms of the subgroup with LH and then ask for expressions of interest. LH keen for those from a risk assessment background to particularly participate.

e) Membership

LH confirmed that she felt that the current NBF membership is broad enough and indicated that unless any NBF members were aware of other groups that should be invited, there was not a need to continue to expand the group at this time and the Agenda item would be moved to the end of the meeting for a while.

LH confirmed that Natural England, who were identified at the last meeting, are interested to attend they are just discussing internally who is the most appropriate person.

**ACTION:LH/NH to invite Natural England.**

## 2. General Knowledge Share

a) Government, Regulatory and Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) Update

LH introduced the different government and regulatory groups represented and welcomed them to provide an update.

### **Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)**

Unfortunately nobody from MHCLG was available to attend the meeting but confirmed that they are currently reviewing the responses to the recent NPPF consultation. LH confirmed that MHCLG has agreed to meet her and NH so they can brief them following the NBF meeting.

### **Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)**

Defra soils and contaminated land team sent their apologies and sent the following written update. Graeme Duggan has now moved roles and Amy Rolf has recently taken his role and will be attending subsequent meetings.

Defra confirmed that the Land Remediation Pathfinder Scheme (LRPS) grant scheme previously announced at the Autumn Statement 2025 will be proceeding.

LRPS is aimed at local, combined and Mayoral authorities (and their development corporations) in England, to specifically cover the landfill tax element of any contaminated land remediation project where the landfill tax is the most significant factor making the remediation project unviable. Defra hopes to provide funding for a number of pilot sites covering a variety of contexts, for example a large industrial, a coastal landfill, and urban sites, with awards based on a defined set of criteria.

Funding will be available over a four-year period from April 2027 to March 2031. The first application window is expected to open in October 2026, and Defra expects to share requests for initial expressions of interest imminently.

Alongside LRPS, Defra anticipate being able to offer support to help authorities in their LRPS bids and also strengthen longer-term capacity to deliver their land contamination responsibilities. If parties are interested in exploring LRPS grant scheme opportunities and plans for the associated additional support, please keep an eye on Find a Grant or reach out to your area contact in the Environment Agency.

Calum Irvine (CI) provided an update on behalf of planning, infrastructure and permitting team where his particular interest is environmental permitting. He confirmed that he continues to work on streamlining the way exemptions are needed in environmental permitting. This will help so instead of having to wait for government to lay legislation to change things, it will allow regulators to do it, so the Environment Agency will be able to update exemptions more efficiently. This was consulted on which has now closed and Defra has published its response confirming that they are pressing ahead. Once the new system is in place, the Environment Agency will be able to make some targeted exemptions in specific areas that would help support construction This will include such as site drainage, site investigation works, dewatering operations, storage of inert waste materials, installation of temporary flood water barriers and ground works within flood plains. Some of these things are covered by regulatory positions statements but it is hoped that if the process is easier to register exemptions it will provide reassurance to operators and investors.

The timeframe cannot be confirmed, however this is all aimed to help the government's growth agenda. CI also confirmed that they are hoping to focus specifically on permitting and brownfields, and when appropriate will look to engage with the NBF members.

CI confirmed that he will be drawing on the published work of the NBF task and finish group that identified permitting issues. NBF members welcomed this and offered additional more detailed examples if this could be helpful.

### **Scottish Government (SG) and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)**

Caroline Thorton (CT) provided an update on behalf of SG and SEPA.

#### **Scottish Government**

- Contaminated Land Advisory Group – (CLAG) last met in December 2025. The group discussed and approved release of a document developed by a CLAG-commissioned working group: Good practice guidance for land contamination cross-service working. This working document, drafted by a working group including local authority contaminated land officers, planners and building standards verifiers, sets out a non-prescriptive, 'good practice' model to help the various local authority departments dealing with land contamination as part of the Planning and Building Standards processes work together as effectively as possible. It is broadly based on the principles set out in [CO2 mine gas - site investigation and risk assessment: best practice - gov.scot](#), but adapted and expanded to be relevant to broader land contamination issues. The document is not yet publicly available but has been distributed to LA colleagues in Scotland and we can provide a copy on request.
- State of Contaminated Land Report: We (SEPA & SG) are hoping to progress with producing a state of contaminated land survey and report in the 2026/27 financial year. We will be working closely with Scottish contaminated land officers to develop the survey to ensure it's feasible and reflects the wider impact of Part 2 A and the wider work of regulators.
- SG officials across different policy areas were involved in finalising Scottish relevant aspects of the recently published UKgov [PFAS plan](#). A number of actions (3.13-3.17) are relevant to contaminated land, and 3.14 is a specific action for Scottish and Welsh devolved nations to consider whether and how the principles of EA's risk prioritisation tool can be applied in Scotland and Wales. SG officials intend to discuss this and the wider PFAS theme at the next CLAG meeting.
- Soil health: Phase 2 of the ClimateXChange soils route map is nearing completion, with publication expected later in the spring. The Phase 1 report (published March 2025) is available here: [Securing soils in a changing climate: A soil route map for Scotland](#)
- In March 2026, an updated version of the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey interactive map was published with data from the 2024 survey. The map gives viewers the

ability to zoom into a site on the map to learn more about it, for example, the previous use, development potential, when it was last in use, the main owner, and get a satellite image to visualise the site. The overall aim of the map is to help increase the amount of vacant and derelict land that is re-developed and re-used, whilst reducing the overall amount of vacant and derelict land in Scotland. [Explore the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey](#)

**ACTION:CT agreed to provide a link to the CLAG “Good practice guidance for land contamination cross-service working” document.**

## **SEPA**

### **State of Contaminated Land Report Scotland**

SEPA & SG have had approval from Scottish ministers to progress the next ‘State of Contaminated Land’ survey and report in the 2026/27 financial year. We’ll be working closely with local authority contaminated land officers to develop the survey and final report, and in the first instance we’re interested to understand what CLOs would wish to get out of the report. To this end we intend to run a workshop event in May. Invites for this have been circulated to local authorities this week.

### **Soil reuse workshop and CL:AIRE soil passport scheme**

At the end of last month SEPA attended a Soil Reuse in Scotland discussion group hosted by West Dunbartonshire Council. The purpose was to gather together the interested parties in SEPA, the local authorities and the Scottish Government to share how things are working (particularly in relation to development and the remediation of land contamination where soils are frequently exported or imported on site). The workshop provided a forum to discuss the challenges and future approaches. We heard from CL:AIRE representatives on the soils passport scheme developed for use in E&W. SEPA had representatives from contaminated land and waste policy in attendance. It was a really productive discussion and SEPA waste colleagues are considering how a Scottish soil passport scheme could support the requirements of EASR (Environmental Authorisations Scotland Regulations).

## **Environment Agency**

Angela Haslam (AH) provided an update on behalf of the Environment Agency (EA). AH confirmed the following:

**State of Contaminated Land-** survey/questionnaire has now closed and the Environment Agency is now using the information to start to compile the next state of contaminated land report which they are looking to publish in Summer 2026. AH confirmed that they had a great response in excess of 90%.

**H5 site condition report guidance**– external consultation has been completed, again a great response from industry and the changes are currently being made. Again they are hoping the guidance will be published in Summer 2026.

**DoE Site profiles project Phase 2**– Thank you to funding for the project from the AGS Innovation/development fund, as well as collaborative funding for NRW, 15 profiles are currently being worked on and planning to be pushed at the end of the March 2026. Further to additional funding, it is hoped that more profiles will be updated.

### **Post Meeting Note**

These have now been published and are available at <https://claire.co.uk/doe>

**SR2008 No 27: standard rules mobile plant** - for treatment of soils and contaminated material, substances or products, is being updated to include discharge of treated groundwater back to ground (groundwater activity). External consultation is planned later in the year.

**Voluntary remediation advice service** – with our publishing teams.

### **Land contamination PFAS projects – 25/26**

- **Permeable Reactive Barrier/Soil Stabilisation for soil and groundwater** – The work has now been completed by CL:AIRE who was working with Arcadis. AH will be sharing the

outputs with her colleagues, with the hope that the guidance documents will be published in the Summer 2026.

- **Background PFAS in Soils project**- next phase of work is being worked on by BGS.
- **PFAS site profiles** -these have now been prepared as PFAS Site Profile Bulletins by CL:AIRE and are currently awaiting final signoff ready for publication.
- **DQRA for PFAS** – this project is completing, so the final outputs will need to be reviewed internally prior to publication.
- **PFAS Lines of Evidence** – this project has now been completed by Geosyntec and publishable outputs by CL:AIRE. Geosyntec has provided two internal workshops to Environment Agency staff to explain the methodology and approach.

### **New projects 2026/2027**

Subject to funding being secured, AH hopes to work with CL:AIRE to update the existing remediation technology elearning suite as it is now 15 years old, and potentially adding some new modules such as NSZD.

### **Natural Resources Wales (NRW) & Welsh Government**

Matthew Llewellyn (ML) provided an update on behalf of NRW.

- NRW are looking at implications and action required in response to the recently published DEFRA PFAS action plan. Broad range of actions which extend across various remits/departments within NRW but currently looking at specific actions and where we might need to adopt a similar approach (to what's being done across the UK)
- Changes at the Welsh Land contamination Working Group with the chair Rachel Davies standing down. When a new chair is in place ML will pass on details.

### **Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)**

No updates were provided by DAERA or NI EA.

### **Office of Environmental Protection (OEP)**

Darren Watson (DW) provided an update on OEP's work.

OEP published its annual [England Environmental Improvement Plan progress report](#) in January which was also laid in Parliament and published on the website. OEP have maintained its position that all soils should be sustainably managed, rather than the current approach for agricultural soils, though it commended progress here. OEP have also highlighted the need to ensure sewage sludge and excavated soils are sustainably managed and have included a case study presenting work undertaken by BGS, Jacobs and the EA who have developed a tool examining the natural capital benefits of brownfield remediation. Here OEP point towards the significant benefits of this being further developed and deployed from local to national scales in benefit of a range of EIP targets and commitments.

OEP have started work on its first progress assessment of the Environmental Improvement Plan in Northern Ireland, to be published in July and laid in the Assembly.

OEP are also to soon publish a report examining the risks, blockers and opportunities to implementation of the waste hierarchy and (via its consultants Eunomia) have received excellent engagement from industry and regulators. It will use this report to inform its next England EIP progress report. OEP is also finalising a report looking at POPs waste, including risks and opportunities in the regulatory framework and examining incinerator capacity as part of the assessment of Governments target to substantially increase the amount of POPs being destroyed or irreversibly transformed by 2030.

## **Environmental Standards Scotland**

Matthew Byerly (MB) provided an update on behalf of Environmental Standards Scotland (ESS). He confirmed that ESS continues its investigation case on whether local authorities in Scotland are carrying out their Part 2A duties to inspect land from time to time.

## **Interim Environmental Protection Assessor for Wales (IEPAW)**

John Henderson (JH) provided an update on behalf of IEPAW. He confirmed that IEPAW is continuing to carry out its investigation into contaminated land.

## **Homes England (HE)**

Mark Williams (MW) confirmed that HE has entered into its 10<sup>th</sup> strategic place partnership with East Midlands Combined Authority. The intention is to work collaboratively and promote regeneration and housing in the combined authority area. Also in December, HE published its investment roadmap that sets out its new investment strategy and introduces the new National Housing Delivery Fund (NHDF) and National Housing Bank. Both these will be officially launched on 1 April 2026 and details will be made available on the HE website. The NHDF brings together various previous funding packages that HE provided into a single, more flexible fund with the aim of making it easier to support house builders and developers.

## **Local Government Association (LGA)**

David Crook (DC) shared that the final round of Brownfield Land Relief Fund (BLRF) (2.4) closed earlier this month. It has been able to support 39 projects to deliver land for over 1600 homes through just over £20 million grant. A similar fund which will be part of the National Housing Delivery Fund (NHDF) will launch in the early summer, retaining the key features of BLRF but with some new innovations to help support the delivery of 1.5 million homes this parliament.

## **Mine Remediation Authority (MRA)**

Leigh Sharpe (LS) provided an update on behalf of the MRA. He confirmed that the permitting team have issued a survey for those that carry out drilling. They are keen to learn from people's experiences.

MRA is still awaiting to hear with regards to if their role will change as a statutory consultee for planning. Also LS wanted to make NBF aware of a Special Publication from the Geological Society to update some of the practices outlined in the CIRIA C578D mining guide. The Special Publication will be looking to bring case studies together to reinforce the understanding of mining activities. LS believes that the guide will not be free of charge but will check.

b) Industry and Local Authority Fora updates (written updates; in alphabetical order)

## **Association of Geotechnical & Geoenvironmental Specialists AGS)**

### Recent successes of the Working Group

- Virtual meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026 with 32 members in attendance.
- Rachel Hill (RSK) presented on the DoWCoP.
- Articles published on [BS 10175](#), [Ground Gas Monitoring and the AGS Format](#) and [6PPD-q](#)
- Steve Forster (Remedia Group) attended the meeting to discuss a proposal for practical industry guidance on investigating land contaminated by asbestos.
- Chris Dainton (Peak Environmental) attended the meeting to discuss a modified version of CLEA.
- Julian Lovell (Equipe) attended the meeting to discuss the AGS Ground Investigation Steering Group and CLC Super Sectors Groups – Competence initiative.

### The main topics / projects the Working Group are currently working on:

- The CLWG received updates from the NHBC, EA, SiLC (Roger Clark has stepped down from CLWG, future SiLC updates will be provided by Tim Hull), SoBRA, NBF, DEFRA, OEP, CL:AIRE and GeoSoc Contaminated Land Group.
- Update from the Steering Group on the former Department of Environment Industry Profiles.

- Standards update provided, including current progress with BS 10175, BS 8576, BS 10177 and revision of EN 12457 series.
- Continued involvement in C4SL Phase 2 project.
- Collaborating with Labs Group on agreeing PFAS CAS numbers.
- A mind map of standards relating to site investigation is being finalised – 2 mind maps for health and safety have been sent to the AGS Safety WG for review.
- Article to be published on PFAS, microplastics and pesticides are being drafted.
- A future article on AI is being considered.
- Continued collaboration with GAOF, IStructE, BDA, FPS, BDA and others.
- The Data Management Working Group has released AGS 4.2 and progress is being made in the longer term for the release of AGS 5.0 (including co-opting relevant industry stakeholders).
- The Safety Working Group have had publications approved for Personal Protection Equipment, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Off Road Driving and Overwater Working.

#### Future conferences

- AGS are hosting their Annual Conference on 19 March in One George Street, London. The theme of the conference is Challenges in Geosciences. The programme will include challenges of unforeseen ground conditions and contractual risk, consider the practicalities of BRE 365 soakaway testing and managing risks from pressurised gases during drilling. Sustainability remains a major focus of this event, and we will discuss how carbon calculators are shaping geoscience decision-making. The theme of the panel discussion is the future of geoscience and how we inspire, support and retain early career professionals, which is critical to succession planning and the long-term health of our industry. Later sessions will tackle evolving approaches to CDM, advances in laboratory testing, the role of instrumentation and monitoring in delivering safer and more efficient projects.
- AGS's AGM is taking place on 21 May (Teams)
- Contaminated Land Conference taking place on 15th October 2026 in Birmingham – initial planning started.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **CIRIA**

- CIRIA held launch event for its new climate change report C824, Good Practice Guide for Managing Climate Change and Extreme Weather in Land Development: Effective Management of Geo-based Risks on 18 March where over 200 people attended. It is available to order this:
- <https://www.ciria.org/ItemDetail?iProductCode=C824&Category=BOOK&WebsiteKey=3f18c87a-d62b-4eca-8ef4-9b09309c1c91>
- CIRIA virtual PFAS conference 2026 will now be on 16 July and here is the link [https://www.ciria.org/CIRIA/Navigation/Events/Event\\_Display.aspx?EventKey=E26106](https://www.ciria.org/CIRIA/Navigation/Events/Event_Display.aspx?EventKey=E26106)
- CIRIA is still looking for case studies and people to support :
  - good practice on developing 'challenging sites projects
  - the microplastics for construction projects
  - Implementation guide for odour management
  - PFAS Client's guide
- CIRIA's Soil Community of Practice next project steering group meeting will take place on 24 April. There are quite a lot of 'new things' on CIRIA soil web site [www.ciria.org/SOILCOP/](http://www.ciria.org/SOILCOP/) including an update from EA, list of soil definitions, a summary of the Round Table meeting in January, etc.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **CL:AIRE**

### **Projects Update**

#### Aggregates from Inert Wastes Quality Protocol

The Environment Agency, Network Rail, UROC and CL:AIRE are continuing to collaborate on this project.

#### Asbestos in Air Monitoring on Brownfield Sites Guidance

CL:AIRE has recently started working on an industry guide on asbestos in air monitoring with the support of Steve Forster Remediation Group, Simon Cole Stantec and Sebastian Lawniczak SOCOTEC. The scope of this Technical Guidance Note (TGN) aims at closing the gap of understanding and practice in respect of airborne asbestos fibre monitoring outdoors, before and during brownfield development, and monitoring inside buildings during and after asbestos removal works. The TGN will seek to build upon technical guidance published by HSE in HSG248: the Analysts' Guide (second edition, July 2021), the guidance published by IAQM on Good Practice on Air Quality Monitoring for Brownfield Projects and Monitoring in the Vicinity of Demolition and Construction Sites and the SoBRA Asbestos in Soil Human Health Risk Assessment Toolbox.

#### Category 4 Screening Levels Project (C4SL)

The project team is working hard to get the next C4SL reports reviewed and published. The steering group is currently reviewing trimethylbenzene and MTBE. After their review the reports will go to the CL:AIRE TRG for review.

#### DoW CoP

##### *New version update*

Now named the Soil Passport Scheme Code of Practice, CL:AIRE is continuing to work closely with the Environment Agency.

DoW CoP International: CL:AIRE continues to promote the use of DoWCoP principles outside of England and Wales and working with partners to use DoWCoP International.

#### Gas Protection Verification Accreditation Scheme (GPVS)

Following the Autumn 2025 application window, four TGPVs and 2 SGPVs were awarded. The Spring 2026 window closed at the end of February with 7 applications received. These are being reviewed with interviews in April and May 2026. Auditing of declarations for 2025 will start shortly.

#### Good Practice Guidance for Independent Verification of Structural Waterproofing and Gas Protection

CL:AIRE is currently working on the development of a joint industry guide with Property Care Association (PCA) on verification of waterproofing installation. As there is often a cross over with gas protection verification and this work, it seemed appropriate to work with the PCA on this.

#### Industry Profiles (Phase 2)

This project, funded via the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and AGS is updating 15 of the 47 DoE industry profiles which CL:AIRE will host on its website. There has been an industry consultation for each profile followed by a TRG confirmatory review. The project will end in March/April.

#### National Brownfield Forum

CL:AIRE continues to provide the secretariat role and web hosting for the National Brownfield Forum.

#### National Quality Mark Scheme

CL:AIRE has continued to provide administrative and secretariat support for the National Quality Mark Scheme (NQMS). The NQMS website has recently been updated. The Suitably Qualified Person (SQP) register has been updated to reflect the SQPs that have renewed their membership to SiLC and the SQP badges have all been created and sent to SiLC for distribution.

#### PFAS Lines of Evidence Approach Project

CL:AIRE has been working with the Environment Agency on this three-month project which ended in December. CL:AIRE will publish several fact sheets and some training slides once signed off and approved for release.

#### PFAS Site Profiles Project

CL:AIRE has been working with the Environment Agency on this three month project to publish a series of 13 PFAS site profiles. CL:AIRE will publish these once signed off and approved for release.

### PRB and Soil Stabilisation Guidance for PFAS

This six-month project funded by the Environment Agency ends in March. CL:AIRE has worked with Arcadis as a subcontractor and has involved industry and regulator consultation and an extensive literature review. The public output will be two guidance bulletins which CL:AIRE will publish once signed off and approved for release.

### SoBRA

CL:AIRE has started working with SoBRA to provide the secretariat of their accreditation scheme.

### Sustainable Management Practices Project

CL:AIRE is working on a second phase of the SMP project. It is quantifying the sustainability benefits across two hypothetical sites: a fuel depot and a mobility hub. The final report is being prepared and a CL:AIRE bulletin will be published to summarise the report.

### Sustainable Remediation

The SuRF-UK framework document published at the end of October 2025 has been well received globally. [updated framework document](#)

The last International Sustainable Remediation Alliance (ISRA) meeting was held in November 2025. SuRF Italy has now been resurrected and a SuRF representing Germany, Austria and Switzerland (GACH) has formed.

### Training and events

The following training courses are currently being run in 2026. All courses are also now available to be delivered **in house**.

- Definition of Waste Code of Practice (DoW CoP) – classroom
- Non-Licensed Work including NNLW - for Land Professionals – classroom
- Asbestos in Soil and Construction & Demolition Materials CAR-SOIL™ – classroom
- Introduction to Controlled Waters Detailed Quantitative Risk Assessment – classroom
- Introduction to Human Health Quantitative Risk Assessment – classroom
- Practical Aspects of Ground Gas, Vapour and Water Monitoring & Sampling – classroom
- Ground Gas Risk Assessment - More Than Calculating a GSV – classroom
- Statistics for Land Contamination – classroom
- Groundwater Monitoring & Sampling – classroom
- Principles and Practice of Sustainable Remediation – classroom
- Developing Advanced Conceptual Models for Contaminated Sites – classroom
- Managing Contaminated Sites using MNA & NSZD – classroom
- Good Practice for Risk Assessment for Coal Mine Gas Emissions – virtual
- Soil and Groundwater Risk Assessment – eLearning
- Sustainable Remediation – eLearning
- Introduction to Brownfield Site Investigation – eLearning
- Asbestos Awareness for Land Professionals – Full & Refresher – eLearning
- Piling in land affected by contamination – virtual **NEW 2026**
- DoWCoP Awareness – classroom **NEW 2026**
- Verification of Gas Protection Systems – virtual **NEW 2026**

Further information on all courses will be available: [CL:AIRE Training](#)

CL:AIRE members' events for 2026 include:

Networking events: 19 March 2026 – Bristol, 4 June 2026 – London and 15 October – Leeds.

Principal Members dinner – 25 June 2026, London

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Environmental Industries Association (EIA)**

EIA is currently working on a collective Policy Manifesto across all its working groups to identify policy and regulatory positions or interventions where it will assist the sector to grow and thrive. EIA has continued to build links across Government from Ministers to senior civil servants. EIA has continued to grow significantly over the last quarter and the breadth and depth of subjects is deepening. Our first AGM will be occurring on 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

### Remediation of Land and Groundwater Working Group

This group has continued to engage with Government namely DEFRA, Environment Agency and Treasury. Treasury officials shared findings of land remediation tax relief consultation, noting no immediate policy changes despite consultation. Members highlighted issues with contaminant definitions, derelict land criteria, back-loaded tax incentives, and misalignment with planning policy. The Environment Agency provided updates on waste crime, permitting delays, and forthcoming changes to deposit-for-recovery and DoWCoP. The group also prepared sector positions on the National Planning Policy Framework, brownfield-first policy, PFAS, and waste reform, while advancing work on the EIA manifesto and leadership nominations.

### Environmental Analysis and Testing Working Group

Members continue to focus on PFAS regulation, analytical challenges, and the need for clearer guidance from the Environment Agency. Members discussed ultra-low PFAS thresholds, laboratory difficulties achieving required detection limits, and concerns over scientific reports being mistaken for regulatory standards. UKAS outlined improvements to accreditation, consistency, and customer service. Technical assessor shortages, uncertainty reporting, and the need for better communication tools were highlighted. Actions included inviting EA report PFAS authors and further discussions with UKAS on refining extension-to-scope and portal processes.

### Air Quality Working Group

EIA have been in discussions focused on improving UK air pollution communication and advocating adoption of WHO/EU standards. Members criticised the current DACI for masking hotspots and failing to drive behaviour change. The group supported shifting language from “air quality” to “air pollution” and emphasised personalised, health-focused messaging. Policy priorities included revising the AQI, mandatory monitoring, integration with NHS digital systems, and stronger parliamentary engagement. Leadership transitions, upcoming consultations, and plans for an All-Party Parliamentary Group were also covered.

### Sustainable Buildings Working Group

This group has been reviewing the delivery and changes to Energy Performance Certificates for private and commercial sector, and have had multiple meetings with MHCLG on the delivery of NPPF. The group has also been discussing Black Mould in social, private housing.

### Water Resources Working Group

This group is current looking at the Water White Paper, and in dialogue with DEFRA’s Bill Team. DEFRA representatives attending our next meeting to walk Members through the new draft legislation which will see the biggest reforms to the water sector in over a decade. EIA is also in discussions with Thames Water in the development of a 150 billion litre reservoir in Oxfordshire.

### Environmental Noise Working Group

This group has been in dialogue with Transport Scotland regarding Environmental Noise levels in Transport.

### Climate Change Working Group

This Group has recently met with the Shadow Energy and Net Zero Secretary Claire Coutinho MP to discuss Members concerns over policy changes to tear up Climate Change Act. Discussions are ongoing and proposals from EIA Members on a 3<sup>rd</sup> way are being tabled with a view to have a further meeting later in the year.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Environmental Industries Commission (EIC)**

### January 2026

- ACE/EIC submitted [a response](#) to the government's consultation on reforming the statutory consultees system. ACE/EIC supported the proposals to remove certain bodies from mandatory consultation but urged the government to ensure their expertise and advice isn't overlooked.
  - ACE/EIC also highlighted a number of actions for government to take to further support Natural England and the Environment Agency in their roles as statutory consultees.
  - ACE/EIC opposed the proposed changes that would remove the Mining Remediation Authority's involvement in the verification and discharge of conditions.

- ACE/EIC also submitted [a response](#) to the Environment Agency's consultation on Proposals for Updated Guidance on environmental permitting: H5 site condition report.

#### February 2026

- On 11 February 2026, the EIC Contaminated Land Group met to discuss inconsistencies between local planning authorities on contaminated land-related issues. The invited speakers were Phil Mason from Salford City Council, and a committee member on NCLOG, and Robert Tyler from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. EIC members also took the opportunity to discuss the PFAS Plan and a new EA Chief Scientist's report on Developing thresholds for managing PFAS in the water environment.

#### March 2026

- ACE/EIC submitted [a response](#) to the government's consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework.
  - In their response, ACE/EIC express the view that only allowing non-contaminated soils to be reused on site is an overly rigid requirement that does not reflect established industry practice.
  - They also welcomed the introduction of a new glossary definition of “contamination” into the draft NPPF.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES)**

Recent activities for the Land Condition Community include:

- The next [Land Condition Symposium](#) took place on the 5th March, 2026 in Leeds. The agenda included updates from the Environment Agency and OEP, analysis in the PFAS Plan and a crossover session on water-land topics.
- The Land Condition Community held an online event bringing together IES Communities on the topic of [what makes good environmental reporting](#). This included a presentation by both the Chair of the Land Condition Community and a member of NCLOG.
- NCLOG and the LCC held a webinar on the RBKC Lead Modelling tool.
- The LCC are currently preparing a response to DAERA's consultation on the Northern Ireland Resources and Waste Management Strategy.
- The IES published it's [horizon scanning briefing](#) on land and nature policy
- The latest IES journal, [Fields of Change](#), is focused on agriculture.
- Both the LCC and NCLOG took part in an event for [National Careers Week](#) as part of an IES series highlighting careers in the environmental sciences.
- The LCC Steering Group met in February and confirmed their workplan for the year.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **National Contaminated Land Officers Group (NCLOG)**

There haven't been many events hosted by NCLOG since the last NBF meeting, but it has been busy. A working group of officers from NCLOG and members of the IES's Land Condition Community joined together to discuss the recent National Planning Policy Framework consultation, and responses were issued from both groups. NCLOG's response is available on our website [here](#). NCLOG co-hosted an event on lead in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on the 12<sup>th</sup> March which was well attended by both the public and private sector.

NCLOG are planning a further event on lead, to be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> March. This will be more wide-ranging and there will be a variety of talks, including from the UKHSA on lead and its health impacts, in particular in children. Other talks will include dealing with lead under Part 2A, risk assessment of lead and other case studies.

The AGM will be in June, with the usual mix of AGM activities and presentations. Members should keep their eye out for further information on this.

Finally, NCLOG is supporting the UK Brownfield Regeneration Summit in Manchester on the 18<sup>th</sup> June. Members who attended the summit last year enjoyed this and found it informative, so it is anticipated the same again in June.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **National House Building Council (NHBC)**

NHBC held its annual Geo-Environmental webinar on the 4 February 2026 on 'Assessing and Managing your Ground Gas Risk' with 570 people in attendance. The recording of the event, broken down into each speaker is now available on NHBC's YouTube Channel, which can be found here - [NHBC UK - YouTube](#).

Also on the YouTube Channel you can find a recording of last year's very popular 'Cover Systems' series of presentations as well as many other useful resources from NHBC.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Specialist in Land Condition (SiLC)**

The Chair of the SiLC Professional and Technical Panel (PTP) is Louise Beale and Lucy Bethell is Deputy Chair. Lucy Bethell will take on the Chair role in March 2026 and Carrie Rose will take on the Deputy Chair role. Tom Henman took over Chair of the SiLC Board in January 2026 and Louise Beale is now its Deputy Chair. The PTP includes organisational and technical representatives from the constituent professional bodies and AGS, as well as a small number of co-opted members. Freddie Kennedy has been appointed as the Newly Qualified SiLC representative.

The SiLC PTP met (virtually) on 2nd December 2025 and 10th March 2026. There are currently 204 SiLCs and 161 SQPs with an application round (8 candidates) currently underway. Five SiLCs have not renewed their membership for 2026 due to change in industry or retirement. An Introduction meeting was held on 29th January 2026 with 6 prospective applicants.

Other current areas of SiLC activity include:

A **webinar** titled Excavated materials – reuse, recycle, recover, dispose or extract? was chaired by Lucy Bethell on 28th January 2026. 110 people attended the webinar over 77% of whom had more than 15 years industry experience. SiLC received positive feedback and requests for more on this topic in the future confirming it is still a key topic of interest for people in the industry.

The review of the SiLC **application and assessment process** is ongoing.

SiLC submitted a response to the government consultation on **Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system in March**.

**NQMS steering group** meeting attended by Carrie Rose in March.

SiLC continues to run the following **subgroups**:

- Climate Change & Sustainability
- Soils and Material Reuse

Preparations are underway for the **SiLC 2026 Annual Forum** on 26th March. So far 150 people have registered to attend many of which are from local authorities. This year's event is centred around the themes of air, land and water. We have a range of speakers from consultant, contractor, academic, laboratory and regulator backgrounds.

- Emma Evans will talk about her experience on a project where high-quality work completed by competent teams enabled regeneration of a site with complex land and air quality issues.
- Professor Claire Holman will explain why the new IAQM Guidance was needed to promote good practice for monitoring and managing air quality during the remediation of post-industrial brownfield sites, particularly former gasworks sites.
- Paul Nathanail will host a discussion with remediation contractors Neil Hopkins and Joe Jackson on the things that delight them and the things that fill them with dread that we should avoid.
- Paul will also talk through regulatory lessons learnt on a recent case which centred on whether smoke could be a substance under Part 2A.
- Marie Armstrong and George Hannon of Element (laboratory) will talk about differences in PFAS sampling of emissions and ambient air and EA prescribed laboratory testing methods.
- David Carr will host a panel discussion with Local Authority representatives from across the UK considering the value of multiple disciplines working together.

- Helen McMillan will discuss the 2026 update of SOBRA's controlled waters and climate change guidance.
- Judith Nathanail's will look to the future by presenting open-source tools and datasets she uses when investigating groundwater pollution focusing on PFAS.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Society of Brownfield Risk Assessment (SoBRA)**

### Conferences/Events

The RSC Toxicology Group / SoBRA joint Winter Conference (and SoBRA AGM) was held on 10 December 2025 at Burlington House, London, and online. A total of ~173 attendees.

The 2026 Summer Workshop will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> July hosted by WSP at their offices in Birmingham. This year's event will be an interactive Early Careers Workshop to support the development of CSMs and scoping of site investigations.

### Sub-groups

The active sub-groups are:

- NAPL
- Ground Gases (with a radon working group)
- Early Careers
- Vapours

The Controlled Waters and Climate Change sub-group has recently completed its last action and is now dormant.

A request for expressions of interest for a new Bioaccessibility sub-group have been sent to members. Closing date was 19<sup>th</sup> March and the selection of members will be decided imminently.

### Publications

- Guidance on Assessing Risk to Controlled Waters from UK Land Contamination Under Conditions of Future Climate Change - Version 2.0, February 2026.
- NAPL Document 6 - Advice Towards Understanding the Potential for LNAPL Transmissivity and Residual Saturation, February 2026.
- NAPL Document 7 - Choosing an Appropriate Sustainable Remediation Approach, February 2026.

Details of all recent publications are available at [SoBRA Reports](#).

### Accreditation scheme

The first 2026 window was open during February. Seven applications have been received and are currently being evaluated.

SoBRA has 633 current members. 114 are accredited, of which 49 are ASoBRA for one or more disciplines.

Next accreditation window will be open in August 2026.

### Other activities/events

The early careers sub-group are organising another series of freely available webinars for 2026. To date:

- Understanding Your Data: Applying Statistical Good Practice in Contaminated Land Assessment: 24<sup>th</sup> March

Further webinars, to be confirmed, will be provided in 2026. Access to and details of all the previous webinar recordings can be found here <https://sobra.org.uk/resources/early-careers-webinars/>

SoBRA has recently awarded two Research Grant Bursaries:

- Advancing PFAS transport modelling for groundwater contamination risk assessment – Cranfield University and Geosyntec Inc.
- Early stage NSZD: Evaluation of microbial community response and NAPL degradation and change - Anthera Remediation Technologies (ART), Geosyntec, Soilfix and Socotec

\*\*\*\*\*

## **United Kingdom Environmental Law Association (UKELA)**

### Forthcoming events

#### **The work of the Office for Environmental Protection** – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Join UKELA West Midlands as they host a session on the work of the Office for Environmental Protection. Find out about the OEP's projects on environmental inspections and protected wildlife sites (Birmingham / in-person). Timings: 4pm to 6pm

#### **The Land Use Framework: Food, Nature and the Countryside** – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Join UKELA South West for a lunchtime webinar on The Land Use Framework: Food, Nature and the Countryside. This is the second session in UKELA South West's "Balancing the Landscape: Countryside Sessions" series (online). Timings: 12.30pm to 1:00pm.

#### **Statutory nuisance update seminar** – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Join the Noise and Nuisance group for a webinar providing an update on statutory nuisance (online). Timings: 5pm to 6pm

#### **UKELA Annual Conference 2026** – 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Join us at this year's Annual Conference: 16-17 June (online); 18 June NextGen evening and 19-20 June (in person/hybrid at Warwick University)

For more details and to book, please see UKELA's website.

### Recent consultation responses

Recent consultation responses which may be of interest (copies of which can be found on UKELA's website) are as follows:

- Response to the consultation on UK Emissions Trading Scheme: Scope Expansion - Emissions from International Maritime Voyages
- Response to the Riaghaltas na h-Alba | Scottish Government consultation on Scotland's Draft Agglomerations Noise Action Plan (Draft NAP)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **West and East London Land Contamination Officer's Group (WELLCOG)**

WELLCOG held a meeting on 22 January 2026 and the following was presented:

- Russ Thomas (WSP) presented on gas works
- Representative of Havering provide update on landfill determination under Part 2A
- Highlighted Brownfield Land Release Fund 2 and Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund grants
- WELLCOG non-statutory State of Contaminated Land survey has a response rate of 70% - to close soon
- RBKC KC4L's and KC3L's and Lead (Pb) model to be released soon – CL:AIRE have agreed to host on the CL:AIRE WALL

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Pollution Advisory Group (YALPAG)**

YALPAG's Land Technical Group meet twice a year with the last meeting being held on 11 March 2026. The YALPAG guidance documents continue to be reviewed and updated as and when necessary. The Verification Requirements for Cover Systems (Version 4.1) was issued in June 2021 and is due for review. The Planning guidance was reviewed, updated and issued in July 2023 and it is now anticipated that work will start on updating this document perhaps next year. The Verification Requirements for Gas Protection Systems guidance is currently in the process of being reviewed and updated.

c. Hot or emerging topics & Brownfields in the Media

Air & Dust

LH confirmed that there has been a number of newspaper articles around dust (particularly around particulate matter). It was noted that local residents are becoming a lot more aware and knowledgeable on the issue, particularly as a result of fires on historic landfills. This is becoming a key issue and something that the brownfield industry may not have been addressing adequately up until now. LH acknowledged that CL:AIRE is currently preparing guidance on the aspect of monitoring asbestos in air.

It was acknowledged that the issue of dust is problematic from a local government perspective. It should be addressed under a construction management plan, but should also be addressed under remediation strategy. However different local authority personnel will look at each element. This is rather like waste management, different parts of local government are involved in different elements and this isn't always joined up.

Lead

Robert Tyler (RT) believe that the issue of lead is gaining momentum with respect to lead poisoning. The UKHSA is now carrying out blood lead monitoring surveys in Leeds and this over the next few years this may be extended more nationally.

Expanded polystyrene

RT explained that he is becoming more aware of developers using polystyrene above basements in gardens often with insufficient soil cover. Could there be an issue of flammable insulation materials if there are changes made to the gardens. At present building control do not feel it is something that they can get involved in because it is a future issue rather than a current issue.

Risk Assessment

Kate Baker (KB) flagged an issue about suitability of risk assessments and ensuring that as risk assessors consultants need to be very specific about which exposure pathways they have considered as typically it would be relating to soil and groundwater only. This is as a result of cases in the press recently that have highlighted communities have been exposed from airborne contaminants and foams, or from waste processing materials being moved or general occupational exposure. It is very important to be clear of the consultants role within the development of a brownfield site and the cross over of disciplines.

Part 2A related

Corby remediation solution possibly leaking? Contaminated waste from the buried "containment cell" of a former steelworks could be leaking from the ground, according to details from a meeting between a parish council and the Environment Agency.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c80j87e79l8o>

According to a council report, "the site is located within 250m of a historic landfill site, and in the vicinity of an unknown location for buried cattle which raised concerns regarding contamination with anthrax".

[Fears deadly disease could be unearthed by construction of new homes - Yahoo News UK](#)

The proposed measures in Zane's Law include requiring councils to keep fuller public registers of contaminated sites.

It would ensure all potentially contaminated land is identified, made public, regularly inspected and properly cleaned up, where required.

[North Northamptonshire Council urged to back contaminated land law - BBC News](#)

A council has promised to undertake extra air quality tests at a building site after residents raised concerns about asbestos dust found in their homes.

[Building site in Cleckheaton to be tested after asbestos fears - BBC News](#)

In Our Blood: The Forever Chemicals Scandal broadcast on ITV1 and ITVX at 10.15pm on Sunday 22 March

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/mar/20/bentham-north-yorkshire-pfas-toxic-forever-chemicals-blood>

Inside Science about Affinity Water catchment studies  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgqg5lpqpy3o>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct8ty3>

TOXIC Radio 4 series “Materials scientist Mark Miodownik explores the far-reaching and unsettling world of PFAS - so-called ‘forever chemicals’.”

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/series/m002rdnp>

d. National Quality Mark Scheme for Management of Land Contamination (NQMS) Sub Group

LH provided an update on the NQMS. She confirmed that the NQMS website has been updated, and there is a new LINKED IN page. From this page, summaries of the NQMS meetings will be linked to so everyone is encouraged to promote and link to the LINKED IN page. In addition LH confirmed that the terms of reference have all been finalised. A stakeholder mapping exercise has been started to identify key groups that need to be more aware of the NQMS to start to encourage the use, such as developers and insurers. The NQMS steering group want to improve their marketing so are going to write to NBF members for their financial support to be able to pay for the services of marketing professionals. LH asked all NBF members to share with the groups they represent.

**ACTION: LH/NH to send the NQMS letter to all NBF members for their onward circulation.**

LH reminded the NBF that the NQMS is an NBF initiative so it is incumbent on the NBF to help promote and use the scheme. In addition a letter has been drafted that will be issued to all Suitable Qualified People (SQPs) that the declaration fee is going to increase to £150 + VAT. The declaration fee has not been increased since launch in 2017 and the fee is not currently covering costs.

e. Standards

Nicola Harries (NH) shared the update that Mike Smith kindly provided outlining the new standards that are in preparation or out for consultation. Sincere thanks were given to Mike Smith for collating and sharing this information. Full details are available to [download here](#).

It was acknowledged that the British Standards cost a lot of money and are prohibitive for public sector organisations (particularly contaminated land officers) and SMEs to purchase as there are many that need to be accessed. This is considered a problem when it is expected that the standards are to be followed.

NH was asked to follow up with Mike Smith to ascertain if there are options available for public sector and SMEs to access standards for low cost or free of charge as it was felt unreasonable for them to be struggling to access what is considered industry standards.

**ACTION: NH to ask Mike Smith if there are options for public sector and SMEs to access the British Standards.**

### 3. Chair’s Plans for 2026 – 2028

LH prepared a short presentation on her potential thoughts for activities for 2026-2028 and beyond. It described where the NBF started, the work that has been carried out over the last six years and the calls for action from the recently published policy interaction report. Four main calls to action were noted, LH summarised her thoughts on each considering the general direction that the NBF could now take.

Slides: [What Next](#)

LH asked the NBF members to consider what they feel the priorities are. LH & NH will create a poll which will be circulated to members. Each NBF member to vote, whether they are public or private sector.

**ACTION: NH/LH to prepare a poll for NBF members to vote on the priorities for action going forward.**

**ACTION: ALL NBF members to circulate the poll and vote on its priorities.**

Following the poll, the NBF terms of reference will then be updated to reflect any potential changes.

Discussion

It was acknowledged that the NBF has been very successful in the knowledge share aspects but it was felt had been less successful in the policy development aspects. It is hoped that the public sector NBF members will reach out earlier to the NBF members to ask for their thoughts and input. There appears to be some indications that this is happening with the regulators but less so with government departments that still appear to develop policies in isolation. It is felt the difficulty engaging with government departments is often due to regular change in personnel and that staff tend to have quite narrow portfolio areas, whereas brownfield is very cross sectorial as demonstrated by the NBF policy interaction report. The NBF needs to raise its profile with parliamentarians as well as government department, then they will automatically be invited to provide evidence to select committees.

Can the NBF horizon scan on upcoming issues that will affect brownfield development? The aspiration is for the government departments to use the NBF as the first point of contact, the go to group for brownfield.

It was also acknowledged the importance of a skilled workforce and the value of competency across the brownfield sector as there are many different disciplines. This was highlighted back in 2007 in the English Partnerships report titled: Brownfield Guide. It is important for the NBF members to promote good practice and make use of all the established accreditation schemes that are in place.

Could the NBF update the National Brownfield Skills Framework, linking to existing accreditation schemes that NBF members manage? Groups that have accreditation schemes (NQMS, RemSoc, SoBRA) know what “good” looks like, so it is important to map this out and link all the schemes together for the brownfield industry to work towards; supporting and encouraging other groups to map their own skills against the framework.

It was also suggested that the SNIFFER Risk Communication Guidance is badly in need of being updated. In light of land contamination now regularly in the press, could the NBF members work together to update this guidance?

**4. AOB**

NBF members requested whether there was a way the minutes could be summarised down and that each organisations update could provide a top themes that people need to be aware of. It was acknowledged that all the information is valuable but as there are more members joining the NBF, the notes are getting long and there is a risk of missing key information, therefore a top summary would be advantageous.

LH & NH will look at developing a template for members to complete.

**ACTION: NH/LH to look at preparing a template for NBF members to complete.**

It was also suggested if the NBF could summarise key industry publications (to prevent duplication being created) under key brownfield headings. It was acknowledged that CL:AIRE has the Water and Land Library and whether this could be expanded to ensure that all guidance and standards are listed and linked under the main brownfield headings. Resource would need to be provided to ensure that it remains up to date but then would assist all in industry to keep abreast of all guidance. It was suggested that the NBF policy interaction document would be a good resource to list all the key areas

that the NBF members work in as the group has already carried out a detailed mapping exercise. It was acknowledged that the list wasn't exhaustive but was a good start.

#### Use of AI in report preparation

It was flagged at the last NQMS meeting that local authorities are starting to see AI generated reports to support planning applications which is a concern. The report was returned because the author could not demonstrate competency, however this may not have been picked up if the local authority didn't have a competent individual employed in the local authority reviewing the report. The land contamination planning portal guidance is going to add a statement about the importance of reports being prepared by competent individuals and to not rely on AI. It was agreed that it is something that the industry will need to be cognisant of and perhaps put additional checks in place. It was noted that the NQMS declarations all have individual declaration numbers that can be checked back to the SQP that prepared them.

#### **5. Date of Next Meetings**

The next meeting is 8 July 2026.

The meeting was closed.