

NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday December 2nd 7.15 – 9pm

Online Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Rod, Adam, Freya, Rob, Margaret, Susan, Elaine, Rosie, Dominic, Laura, Fabian, Mali

Apologies: Emma, Fran & Neil, Richard

1. Approve October Minutes

The October minutes were approved.

2. Projects

a. Troopers Hill Red slide

All works to install the slide is now complete.

A celebration event was held to complete the project and installation of the plaque. Jo Webster Greene did the unveiling. Local MP Kerry McCarthy attended and shared a tweet the next day. There was a good community feel and many people dropped by throughout the day.

Marvin Rees has been complementary on Twitter about the activities of Friends of Troopers Hill for their work.

Susan thanked everyone who helped tie the 50 pictures around the play area plus putting up and taking down the gazebo and displays and giving out chalk to children and chatting to people.

b. Path to Troopers Hill Chimney

There are delays to the works to improve the path as the contractors (ETM) are unable to get 'buff' coloured tarmac until after Christmas. The old bench has been removed and a new concrete base laid. The new bench will be installed before Christmas and will be temporarily removed while path works are carried out.

c. New Fundraiser

Fundraising is taking place to raise £2,000 for Green Mantle to undertake additional winter works. The additional works could include taking out large areas of scrub, removing gorse that was tackled in previous years and an area of buddleia.

So far £200 has been raised. Susan has advertised the slide painting for sale in the news updates to put towards this.

3. Conservation work on Troopers Hill

a. Nature Conservation Work Parties

The advance booking system continues to work very well and on average we are running 2 work parties a month.

Since the last meeting, 5 work parties have taken place – the 14th and 23rd of October, the 13th and 20th of November, and today 2nd of December.

Last week, 6 people from the Defra Bristol office came for a work party. They worked very hard. Some were local and might attend again in the future.

b. Photo monitoring

Rupert has taken the photos and is writing the report which should be complete in the new year. The report will show if anything changed in the last 5 years and if there is anything that needs any particular focus or attention.

c. Winter works

Rob has walked around the hill with Teija and Chris from Parks to identify works needed and how this can be split between the Parks team, contractors and volunteers.

4. History Research

Continuing the research on Elizabeth Emra, Susan and Rob went to the records office in Taunton to look at book written by her sister Martha.

The website has been updated with information about John Emra and his family. It includes illustrations of the first St George church and a picture of the second St George church.

Some drawings of Elizabeth's sisters have been found but not a picture of Elizabeth herself which is odd as she was married to artist, Marcus Holmes.

5. Events

a. Celebration of Troopers Hill Red Slide

Covered in 2a.

b. Moth Night

Organised by a lecturer from Bristol university, the Moth night went very well and

good reports received from people who attended saying they were very impressed with how the event was run and were inspired.

2 moth experts attended. The moth traps were positioned well and were easy to see for everyone including Lizzie from her wheelchair.

We would welcome more events from this organiser. It is difficult for the organiser to give long advance notice of events as his source of grant funding operates in a very restricted time scale.

c. Feedback on meetings

At the last meeting, Susan asked if we should continue to use Zoom for meetings or go back to in-person meetings. To gather broader opinion, Susan sent a questionnaire to our mailing list.

Of 199 people emailed, 28 responded:

- 17 people said it would make no difference.
- 4 people would rather in- person.
- 7 people would rather keep with Zoom.

The group agreed that we will continue to use Zoom for on-going meetings.

d. Planning events and meetings for 2022

Dawn Chorus - Ed Drewitt has been booked to lead a Dawn Chorus in March.

Lichen walk - Susan has emailed the person who runs this.

Bugs and Beasties – Susan written to Rupert to ask he if can assist at Bugs and Beasties event on the balloon weekend.

Geology walks – Susan is looking for contacts.

Stargazing – Susan has written to Fiona at the Bristol Astronomical Society.

Rob shared an idea of doing an event like that of the Red Slide celebration – where a gazebo was put up where people could drop by and learn more about the hill and works being done. Rob suggested we could do this once a quarter and will look at some dates. This would allow people who are unable to use Zoom to discuss issues with members of FoTH.

6. Networking

a. RHS South West in bloom

Rob shared at the last meeting that we had been awarded the top level in the “it’s your neighborhood” category of 5 “outstanding”.

Susan met with Steve from the RHS to get a formal handover of the certificate and a photo. He gave very supportive feedback which Rob has put onto the website.

We will find out next year how we did in 'Pride in parks'.

b. Talks

Rob did a talk to the Saltford and Keynsham history group who made a £50 donation.

Next year, a talk is planned for the Bristol Industrial Archeological Society and the Malago History Society.

7. St George Strollers

Susan shared updates on the St George Park Stroll. These walks events aimed at people wishing to improve fitness, or recovering from injuries and are suitable for people in wheelchairs. Starting in January, they will be run once a month and will consist of a 30-minute walk from the Beehive centre around St George Park. They are hoping to get more than 20 people attending each walk. 3 walk leaders and 3 back markers are happy to help.

Someone asked Susan if GPs could add this to their social prescribing list. Susan will share with her contacts but make clear it's a trial.

8. AGM

a. Any proposed changes to the constitution

No need to change anything.

b. Accounts for the year

The majority of just over £2,000 expenditure over the past year has been on nature conservation. We are holding monies to pay for the new bench on Troopers Hill.

Funds budgeted for contingency for the Red Slide were not needed and will be spent on children's activities.

c. Elections

Everyone was happy for Susan, Margaret, and Adam to continue their roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

Rob, Rod, Freya, Mali and Richard will continue as committee members.

d. Budget for 2022

We have enough money to do what we want to do next year and should have some money left over at the end. Once figures are finalised, they will be shared on email.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held from 7.15pm-9pm on Thursday 10th March 2022.