

NOTE OF MEETING

**Tuesday 7 November 2006 7.15pm
Wesley Memorial Church, Bryants Hill**



Present:

Susan (Chair,) Caroline Hollies (BCC), John Threadgold (BCC), Pete Crawford (Police), Michelle Heal and Ian(Wooforz), Rob, Val, Anne, Roy, Vernon, Phyll, Norman, Ben, Jenny, Carole, Roger, Kit, Helen.

Apologies: Sally, Richard and Helen

Outstanding actions from the previous minutes

Any outstanding actions to be addressed during the meeting. The previous minutes were approved.

Big Lottery Fund Grant

Rob reported the success of his grant bid in connection with the BBC Breathing Places initiative. The award is worth £9984, to be spent by October 2007. It includes provision for:

- Training sessions on flora and fauna identification and similar topics
- Surveys of invertebrates, badgers, bird nesting, etc
- Encouraging greater involvement by individuals, tools for work parties etc
- Equipment for events such as collection of bugs and beasts by children
- Exhibition room hire, materials, gazebos, display boards
- Leaflets, maps, and other publicity and educational material.

He proposed a meeting to consider design of the leaflets (one each for wildlife, history and geology) to take place in early December, with a view to briefing the designer (Claire) by the end of the year. Thanks to Rob for making the application and to Val for acting quickly to meet the financial reference requirements.

Wooforz

Chair introduced Michelle and Ian from Wooforz, attending at the invitation from Caroline. Michelle gave a short presentation on the identity and aims of Wooforz. She explained the partnership in place with Ashton Court over the last three years and proposed a similar arrangement that could be beneficial for Troopers Hill. After a short discussion the meeting welcomed Wooforz approach.

Action: Wooforz to produce a draft leaflet for FoTH and Bristol Parks' consideration.

Welcome to new Community Parks Manager

The meeting welcomed John Threadgold, Parks Manager for Bristol East, taking over from Caroline.

Issues for Bristol Parks

- **Wheelchair access path** Rob outlined the history and concerns with the state of the path. There followed a discussion of the suitability of alternative surfacing treatments during which it was recognised that the solution must be affordable, available and repairable. An example of a suitable surface was viewable at Callington Road Nature Reserve. Timing of the path completion would depend on the weather.
Action: Rob to clear proposals with YANSEC.
- **Graffiti on the chimney:** the use of a pressure washer had disturbed some pointing. Washing graffiti was preferable to wire-brushing as the latter removes the surface of the stones and is incompatible with preservation of a listed monument. Bristol Parks are reviewing the options for graffiti removal.
- **Condition of the lower "stack"** John reported that quotes had been requested, the condition of the pointing was not too bad except at the top and that remedial work might require a road closure.
- **Hay cut /herb cut near Greendown:** The area of the Hill that received a hay cut had been smaller than previously. Roy suggested this had been because of practical problems experienced by the contractors this year.

Action: John agreed to consult with Sally on the areas for hay/herb cuts as more detailed study could be needed.

- **Edge trimming on Troopers Hill Road:** Action: John to seek quotes.
- **Japanese Knotweed:** John reported that the weed had been assessed and sprayed, would be sprayed three times next year and the difference would be visible.
- **Gate altered by contractors:** the alteration had been sanctioned by the Council but the consequence of facilitating motorbike access had not been foreseen. The contractors would be asked to replace the missing part but not in this financial year.
- **Milestone path:** Action: John to visit although unlikely to be funding available for remedial work in this financial year.
- **Motorcycle access** Pete reported he had recently issued a fine to a motorcyclist. John outlined current initiatives to discourage the use of motor vehicles, including photographing and fining the offenders.
- **Invoices** had all now been processed and paid off.
- **Replacing benches:** Rob described the proposed metal and wood-top design. Work would be contingent on the completion of the wheelchair path. It was thought that the approach to YANSEC for grant stood a good chance of success.
- **Allotment Fence:** Action: John to verify with the Allotment management when painting is planned. (After the meeting it was confirmed that the work order had been placed).
- **New benches on Troopers Hill Field** Feedback indicated they were very much appreciated.
- **Gate post of lowest Troopers Hill Road entrance:** Rob reported that it had been delivered, and suggested delaying its use to use the gate, currently in storage, to replace the Greendown gate which needs more urgent attention. It was agreed that the replacement of the lowest entrance gate and post could await completion of the work on the “stack” but not must not be left indefinitely.
- **Entrances from Troopers Hill Road – appearance.** John suggested they could be enhanced along similar lines to the entrances to Wedmore Vale, to raise awareness of the character of the Hill. Action: Friends to consider design and appearance of the entrances.
- **Troopers Hill Road – Traffic:** Chair circulated a copy of her recent message to the local Councillor. The meeting discussed general and specific concerns relating to the impact of growing traffic and other developments including the proposed showcase bus route, and their efforts to engage Council interest in the problems over the years. John explained that a risk assessment was probably unaffordable from the Parks budget.
- **Agreement between FOTH and Bristol Parks:** Rob confirmed that the agreement was being discussed and outlined the terms of the concordat as it affected both parties.
- **Communication:** John asked Friends and others to use the following means to ensure that Parks responded to general reports of problems: telephone 0117 922 3719 e-mail bristolparks@bristol-city.gov.uk
Otherwise communication should be channelled through the Chair.
Action : Rob to provide John with a map of the LNR incorporating the informal names that FoTH use to identify certain areas.

Green Flag Award dates

Caroline said that Troopers Hill application for Green Flag designation was going ahead.(for parks and green spaces that demonstrate appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for many sectors of the community). The site would be judged against eight criteria:

- A Welcoming Place
- Clean & Well Maintained
- Conservation & Heritage
- Marketing
- Healthy, Safe & Secure
- Sustainability
- Community Involvement
- Management.

Award winners are entitled to fly a green flag and use the logo for the year. (Ffi see www.greenflagaward.org.uk) Achievement of the award would be good publicity for the Hill, and LNRs in Bristol. The submission date would be mid-January 2007 and a “mock judging” would occur on the morning of 10 November. Friends were invited to attend. Rob circulated a selection of photographs from which the meeting chose three to exemplify “the spirit of the place” in support of the application.

Action: Parks to involve FOTH in any alterations necessary to the management plan.

Feedback on recent events

The meeting expressed thanks to Kit, Roger & Carole and their friends for organising, controlling safety, and demonstrating kites at the recent **kite-flying event**, which had successfully made the most of what wind there had been on the day.

Health and Safety Training from Bristol Parks had resulted in a total of six Friends becoming “competent persons” to lead work parties. FOTH are now fully compliant with Health & Safety requirements, which involves completion of certain forms to authorise work parties. It was mentioned that electronic handling of these saved time and postage.

Event Planning

An events planning meeting was fixed for 15 November at 3 Corker’s Hill.

The Annual General Meeting would be on 13 December at Wesley Memorial Church: the proceedings to include a round-up of the year’s events and viewing the Royate Hill LNR video. The meeting was encouraged to form teams to enter the Quiz night on 15 February at Beeses. Jen and Roger each volunteered to lead a team.

Sally had proposed a children’s event recreating scenes from the industrial past.

Rob proposed extra winter work parties to make the most of opportunities for cutting bramble outside the bird-nesting season, and has since circulated possible dates.

Next Newsletter

Chair mentioned the recent passing of Gordon Elliott, a longstanding supporter of FOTH activities; his widow had requested this be mentioned in the Newsletter. Action: Kit to arrange, also commission other articles.

Green Spaces Strategy St Mary le Port

For reasons of time, adjourned to a future meeting.

Consultation

The meeting briefly discussed the scope and mechanics of responding to planning consultations. The options appeared to be i) full involvement of all members ; ii) seek views from members who attend meetings; iii) “committee” to decide on response. Action: Chair to include in AGM agenda.

Date of Next Meeting (AGM) 13 December 2006.