

NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday January 30th 7.15 – 9pm
Summerhill Methodist Church



Attendees: Mali, Margaret, Elaine, Rob, Rod, Adam, Susan, Richard, Fabian, Laura

1. Approve October Minutes

The December minutes were approved.

2. Projects

a. Progress on Access to Nature (Paths)

Susan and Rob have met with the contractors who will be undertaking the path works in Troopers Hill field. Everything is on track for work to be completed by the end of March. Once complete, there will be an access path that surrounds the entire field.

Rod raised concerns about the works causing an impact to the star gazing event in the second half of February. For the event to run, the Bristol astronomical society will require access to Troopers Hill leaving cars on Troopers Hill Field track. Rob believes the order of works will be conducted in the least disruptive way, and there should at all times be a mud free route across the field.

Rod will inform the Bristol Astronomical Society (BAS) of the works and Susan will provide updates on the progress and any issues with access.

Signs have been placed around the field detailing the work, and Susan has posted details on Facebook and Twitter.

b. Wild play, Natural Learners, The Hive and Future Work

Mali has submitted the application to the John James foundation for funds to support Wild Play and Natural Learners for the next 3 years. The ambition is for this project to be bigger, run for longer to have a greater impact. Mali will find out in February if the application has been successful.

Susan and Margaret are visiting The Hive project on Tuesday and will be discussing how this project can be continued with Troopers Hill since funding is difficult to secure. An idea is whether volunteers can receive training so they could run hive projects independently.

Susan has learnt an organization who help adults with learning difficulties have taken three allotment plots at The Farm allotments. There could be an opportunity to work together. Susan and Rob are investigating.

c. Protecting Nature (update on expenditure and celebration event)

Almost 90% of the Protecting Nature funding has been spent on the project. Susan explained that she will not be asking the Lottery funders for the remaining 10% and will talk to them about how we repay any left-over money. Of the 90%, there is around £600 left which could be spent on work party equipment.

The event on Saturday January 25th to celebrate the completion of the project was well attended and enjoyed. The project started in 2017 when Susan first applied for the money. Susan has put a lot of time and effort into the project and the group thanked her.

Rob has added Information, photos and videos from the event to the website:

<http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/events/20Celebration.htm>

Richard raise a discussion a topic about the paths by the Greendown entrance to Troopers Hill being very boggy and muddy. Richard wondered if the contractors who will be working in Troopers Hill field could use their machinery to place gravel on the paths. The group had some discussion on the topic, and it was noted that access to that area is difficult, an ecologist may need to be consulted, and gravel may not be the best solution. The group agreed the paths in this area could be improved. Susan will talk to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to see if some of the remaining £600 could be used for this purpose.

3. Conservation work on Troopers Hill

a. Bristol Parks winter works and meadow cut by Greendown

Rob explained that Bristol Parks have been doing an excellent job of the winter works and they aim to be complete before the bird nesting season starts.

b. Do we need to fund raise to cover future conservation work and events?

Rob explained it would be desirable for the same Bristol Parks team to return next year and cut back the same areas of gorse. After the gorse was cut, it was encouraging to see regrowth of new plants. The idea is not to remove the gorse but to keep it balanced and in proportion.

Rob thinks it would cost less than £1000 to recut, however funding will be a challenge. An option could be to use money held in the Friends of Troopers Hill account.

c. Volunteer conservation work parties and other works

Rob reported the following for each of the past work parties:

- Saturday 7th December – Works to clear saplings along the path between lower and upper chimneys.
- Saturday 4th January – A great turnout, most people seen in a long time. Work completed in Sally's Glade.

- Thursday 19th December – Park Works tended to trees and cages. Neil and Fran did a litter pick.
- Thursday 16th January – Work complete in Sally's Glade by Park Works. The 25-year celebration flag was erected.

d. Next work parties before the next meeting

Saturdays – 1st February, 7th March

Thursdays – 19th February, 19th March

4. Troopers Hill Field

a. The Slide – An opportunity for public art and a new slide?

Susan has done research with some local people as to whether they would like a replacement slide in Troopers Hill field to replace the slide that was removed last year. Of the people spoken to, people have said they miss the slide and do think a replacement is a good idea.

A replacement slide is expected to cost around £10,000 (£5,000 for the slide itself, and a further £5,000 for the safety surface on which the slide would be placed.

An idea previously discussed was whether a slide could be included in a public arts project where funding could be sought to place a piece of public art in situ of the old slide. It is estimated the cost of an arts project to be £30,000. Susan has spoken to Bristol City Council about funding options for public art projects and unfortunately, there is no council funding for such project. Bristol City Council recommend creating a briefing doc and sending to an arts council.

Rob has a contacted (Tessa) who manages art projects and has worked with the National Trust and other others in the past. Tessa recommends sourcing ideas for the project from local school children and finding a local artist who can create the artwork from a winning idea/concept.

Discussion was had by the group about whether the slide and arts projects should be managed as one, or separate. It was agreed that the focus should be on the replacement slide, and if this is achieved through an arts project, then we must ensure a new slide is part of the project.

Discussion was had by the group about how a project could be funded. Fabian made suggestions of finding local commercial sponsors or making a request for a CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding for the slide. Rob asked Fabian if a CIL request would have a higher chance of being granted if Friends of Troopers Hill could raise part of the funds. Fabian agreed to inquire about this.

Susan asked the group whether they think an online fund raiser would be a good idea for raising the funds for a new slide. The group has some discussion on this, and all agreed it could work. Discuss was had about the communication needing to be very clear so that people donating are

aware that a replacement slide will not be located in the same place as the old slide, and if the funding target is not met, how the raised money would be spent.

Susan is going to consider the funding ideas and options.

b. Brownies – Wildflower planting on Troopers Hill Field

This event will be taking place on a Tuesday in March between 17:45 and 19:00. Freya and Susan have asked if any Friends of Troopers Hill volunteers can help.

c. Soil and water testing by University of Bristol students

The university students have completed their visit of Troopers Hill Field and undertaken tests on the surface water. It is thought that the water could be from an old main pipe that fed the allotments. The students are giving a presentation on the results in February which Susan is attending.

5. Troopers Hill Young Rangers (Future Proof Parks) – Progress on Arts Trail

Preparation for this event is going well. 25 posters have been printed and will be displayed around the St George area. The judging panel is being agreed and hopes to include some of the Young Rangers, a professional artist and Fabian. The Young Rangers are working on a scoring card for the judges and a press release for the event.

Susan is trying to find out more information about the fire on Troopers Hill in 1995. If a precise date can be found, Margaret has offered to help with micro-fiche research. Rod suggested contacting the fire brigade who may have records which Susan will do.

6. Events

Rob has produced a new event leaflet which was shown to the group. The new leaflets will be use at St Aidan's Community Fair on March 14th. The 25th anniversary flag logo has been used on the leaflet.

Past Events

a. Celebration Event (Saturday 25/1/2019)

Discussed in section 2c.

Future Events

b. 25th Anniversary

Susan showed the group an old interpretation board that was once displayed on Troopers Hill.

Fabian suggested that a poet laureate could write a poem for the event. Susan will investigate.

c. Saturday 14th March – St Aidan's Community Fair 11am-2pm

Adam, Bill, Freya and Margaret will be volunteering for this event while Rob and Susan are away.

d. Saturday 18th April – Planetarium

The planetarium event will take place at Summerhill Methodist Church on Saturday 18th April.

The group had a lot of discussion about the suggested donation amount for attending the event. It was agreed that £5 per person was too much, and that it would be more appropriate to ask £5 for a family which could consist of 1 adult and up to 3 children.

The main concern is to cover the hire charge for the hall which the group are confident will be achievable.

7. Networking

a. Talks by Rob

Rob is doing a history talk on the third Wednesday of February at 7.30pm. Details available on the website.

b. Website

Susan asked that people review the arts page and feedback.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held from 7.15pm-9pm on Thursday 2nd April in the back room of Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Rd, BS5 8LB.