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The Friends of Troopers Hill

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Spring 2011

Area Green Space Plans

You will remember that last year there was a consultation on the Area Green Space Plans, which are part of the Council's Parks & Green Spaces Strategy (P&GSS). There were two parts to the plans, the bit that got all the press coverage was the proposal to sell off less than 3% of Bristol's publicly accessible green space over the next 20 years and to invest 70% of the proceeds in improvements to the other spaces. This idea came about both because of the poor state of Bristol's parks after 20 years of under investment and because of the need to find space in Bristol for more houses, which will reduce the need to build on Green Belt land around the City. The political arguments about the sell off are still going on.

The other part of the plan (which is more important for Troopers Hill) is to decide where money from Section 106 contributions (money from developers), government or Lottery grants and from any land sales will be spent and what it will be spent on. For example, should the priority be to add more play equipment in St George Park or in Troopers Hill Field or somewhere else? The Council has decided that Neighbourhood Partnerships should decide on spending priorities in their areas based on the results of the consultation and the views of local people. In St George, the Neighbourhood Partnership Environment sub-group will be taking the lead on this and will be make a recommendation to the full Partnership, probably at the meeting in September. As 'champion' of the sub-group I'll keep you up to date with what is happening via our forum at www.troopers-hill.org.uk/news&views

You can find out more about the P&GSS on the Bristol Parks Forum website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/pgss.htm and the Area Green Space Plan ideas and options can still be downloaded from - www.bristol.gov.uk/agsp

Rob Acton-Campbell



The sun is shining as your editor sits at his keyboard "penning" his thoughts. It is wonderful to see sunshine after what seems to have been a long, cold, grey winter. The very early snow seems to have confused our feathered friends who, to my mind, started singing very early this year. Nest building is well under way and

the Magpies are busy ripping twigs off our Silver Birch for their nests.

As Spring sets in properly, some of you may have noticed that new whips have been planted in the Bank on Troopers Hill Road where a large amount of soil debris was removed earlier in the year. These should soon take root and will help restore the green to a (currently) rather bare looking patch. Also the bottom entrance by the lower chimney has now had newer fencing put in place, which we think looks much better.

The St George Community Fair will be taking place on Saturday March 26th from 11am until 2pm. It is being held at [St Aidan with St George Church and Hall](#), on Firtree Lane, just off Nag's Head Hill. Friends will be there to tell people about the [Stepping Forward Grant](#) application and the work that is proposed. As part of the grant application we have organised a consultation exercise to find out what people think. We really need to hear from you and at the Fair you can pick up a simple survey questionnaire to fill in. You can also complete the survey online, if you prefer at <http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/steppingforward/>.

There will be another chance to find out about the proposals on Friday 22nd April at the annual Good Friday Service on the Hill. Friends will be hoping for better weather than last year, when the service had to be moved indoors, and will be there as usual to support the proceedings.

Book now for your place on our Dawn Chorus Walk. Ever popular, the walk will start at 6.30am on Saturday 9th April and be led by Ed Drewitt.

Our long-time supporters [Beeses Bar and Tea Gardens](#) are re-opening for business on Good Friday (April 22nd). Good news for our Avon Valley Walk!

Start planning your picnic now. Saturday June 25th will see this year's "Music on the Hill" concert. This year we will be serenaded by the terrific [Gasworks Singers](#). For those of you who haven't come across them before, they are a spin off from the Gasworks Choir and provide an exciting and interesting variety of vocal entertainment. Fingers crossed for the weather then! More details next issue.

Improving access on Troopers Hill

Great news - in principle, Friends of Troopers can have over £32,000 of Big Lottery money to improve existing paths and steps on the Hill. Making Troopers Hill easier to reach, by reducing the mud on Troopers Hill Field, and providing some information about the woodland paths may also be possible.



Steps are currently rather a challenge

However, before being given the money we *have* to prove that local people want the work done. *You* can prove your support, or show that you do not want the work to happen, by looking at the proposals and completing the questionnaire on www.troopers-hill.org.uk/steppingforward. You can also come to one of our consultation events where proposals will be on display for your comment and input. Paper questionnaires started going through the letterboxes of houses in the streets surrounding Troopers Hill during the weekend of 12th/13th March.

If there is no proof of support, **no money** will be given for the work.

The proposal will be on display for your input on:

**Tuesday 22nd
March 7pm-** *At the St George Neighbourhood Partnership Forum, Air Balloon Primary School*

**Saturday 26th
March, 11am-** *At the Community Fair, St Aidans Church, Fir Tree Lane*

**Saturday 2nd
April, 2pm -
5pm** *A drop in session for you to give your opinions at the Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Rd, St George, Bristol, BS5 8LB (next to the Air Balloon pub)*

**Friday, 22nd
April, 11am-
1pm** *In our gazebo, during and after the Good Friday service by the chimney at the top of Troopers Hill*

If you would like a questionnaire or want more information, please email Sus on friends@troopers-hill.org.uk or contact her on 0117 947 5037.

Thank you to [Modelmania](#), our local St George model shop, for supplying envelopes for the questionnaires. Also to Bristol City Council for supplying a FREEPOST address and Community Spaces for the printing costs. Particular thanks to all the volunteers who have folded, stuck labels and delivered questionnaires.

COME WALKING with ST GEORGE STROLLERS!!

There have been big developments in setting up the St George Walking for Health group: Late January we heard that our bid for funding had been successful. Early March Susan and Clare attended a Walk Leader Training day at the Create centre and came away with glossy certificates. On March 26th from 11-2 we will have a display at St George Community Fair at St Aidan's Church. We will be putting on walks at 12 and 2 which will be either FoTH or WfH led. Each walk will have a short and a slightly longer option.

St George Strollers launch walks will be on Wednesday May 11th. Starting from St George Labour Club at 10 am (and ending back there for refreshments), we will walk around St George Park, with an extra walk in Avonview Cemetery. Monday May 23rd we will start at Wesley Memorial Church at 10 am and explore Magpie Bottom, before returning for refreshments. Both walks are free and open to everyone.

Please do come and enjoy walking with us to get the group off to a fantastic start!

Any queries ring Clare on 0117 941 4514 or Nic (WfHBristol) on 0117 352 1283

Obituary

Friends were very sad to hear of the death of our very good friend, Gillian Dyte on January 1st, at the age of 71.

Gillian was an enthusiastic and active member of Friends of Troopers Hill until recent ill health limited her mobility. She was usually to be found sitting at the back of our meetings, from where she could heckle the committee members (to keep us in line) and offer informative local anecdotes. She personally contributed to the costs of clearing a sight-line from one of the benches on Troopers Hill Field and proved most effective at fund raising when sat just inside the entrance to the Hill at our events where she could collar everybody arriving and "persuade" them that they really ought to buy a raffle ticket.

She will be very much missed and our condolences go to her extended family who also live close by and help us out at events.

'Know Your Place'

A wealth of maps charting historic Bristol are now available to explore on-line following the launch of a new website by Bristol City Council on 16th March.

The site will provide access to many of the old maps held at Bristol Record Office and the information in the Historic Environment Record (HER) which is the primary source for all information relating to the city's history and archaeology. This will not only contribute to the HER but will also, through the HER, directly inform planning policy decisions; help to map heritage assets across the city and generally assist with the management of Bristol's historic environment

The new resource, which has been developed in partnership with local groups and funding from English Heritage, will enable users to explore the city and their neighbourhoods as well as add images and information of their own.

The website will include Tithe Maps, which date to the mid-nineteenth century, as well as early Ordnance Survey maps. These maps are linked to modern charts and other historic information including some images from the Braikenridge

Collection of early nineteenth century illustrations held at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

Councillor Anthony Negus, Cabinet Member for Strategic Housing and Regeneration, said: "We hope that the Know Your Place website will become an essential tool to help individuals, communities, developers, design professionals and students to develop a deeper understanding of our city and how it has evolved over the centuries. A key aspect will be the ability of community groups to contribute to this living on line resource as it develops. We are very grateful for the considerable interest and input from community groups across the city which has enabled this project to go ahead.

"**Know Your Place** is part of a wider initiative by the City Design team to promote good urban design throughout the city, not just in conservation areas.

"**Bristol** has a rich and diverse environment and its historic buildings, parks and open spaces, topography and harbour combine to create a distinctive city. These aspects are highly valued by our communities and make our city a place where people want to visit, work, learn and invest in."

bristol Garden Life show

A NEW event to be held in Bristol will give gardening fans in the city the chance to indulge their passion.

The **Bristol Garden Life Show** will give visitors the opportunity to view gardens, talk to experts and buy plants and shrubs.

This is the first year the **Evening Post** is organising the event, which could become an annual fixture on gardening fans' calendars.

The three-day extravaganza will take place from **April 15 to 17** and will include everything for outdoor life, from conservatories and wood burners to picnic items and sculptures.



Did you know?

EVENING POST
this is bristol.co.uk



Broadmead
the galleries bristol

When & Where

Fri 15 April - Sun 17 April 2011
10am - 5pm

Cabot Circus | The Mall Bristol | Broadmead

At the **heart** of all things **local**

www.troopers-hill.org.uk

Friends of Troopers Hill

Dates for your Diary

Saturday March 26th: **St George Community Fair.** 11am-2pm, St Aidan with St George Church and Hall, Fir Tree Lane off Nags Head Hill.

Saturday April 2nd: **Work Party.** 10 am—midday. Meet at Troopers Hill Road and Greendown. *Start the year by helping us look after Troopers Hill. Gentle exercise and a bit of a laugh over some coffee.*

Saturday April 2nd: **Stepping Forward Consultation Drop in session.** 2-5pm, Summerhill Methodist Church. *Come along and find out what the grant is for and let us know what you think.*

Sunday April 3rd: **Guided Walk.** 3pm, Malvern Road entrance to Troopers Hill Field. An opportunity to see exactly what could be affected by the Stepping Forward Grant

Saturday April 9th: **Dawn Chorus Walk.** 6.30-8.00am. *Led by Ed Drewitt, advance booking for this event is essential.*

Friday April 22nd: **Good Friday Service on the Hill.** *Procession starts 11.30am from Summerhill Methodist Church.*

Saturday May 7th: **Work Party.** *As April 2nd.*

Wednesday May 11th: **Walking for Health Walk.** 10am. Meet outside St. George Labour Club, Beaconsfield Rd. *No booking necessary, just turn up.*

Thursday 12th May: **Meeting.** 7.15pm, Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Road. *Come along and share your views on our Local Nature Reserve.*

Sunday May 22nd: **Avon Valley Walk.** 10am-4pm. *A guided walk through local green spaces with the opportunity for lunch at Beeses Riverside Bar & Tea Gardens or bring a picnic. Advance booking essential*

Monday May 23rd: **Walking for Health Walk.** 10am. Meet outside Wesley Memorial Church, Bryant's Hill. *No booking necessary, just turn up.*

Saturday June 4th: **Work Party.** *As April 2nd.*

Saturday June 25th: **Music on the Hill.** From 6pm. *This year the live music is provided by the wonderful Gas Works Singers. Bring a picnic and enjoy the views over Bristol whilst being serenaded. Please remember, **NO BBQs**, they damage the rare grasses which are one of Troopers Hill's precious assets.*

ABC of Troopers Hill

H is for Heather. Heather is a woody-stemmed evergreen plant of acid heathland. Two types of heather grow on Trooper's Hill: [Ling](#) (Calluna) and [Bell heather](#) (Erica). The deep purple flowers colour the south-facing slopes of the nature reserve in late summer. The plants provide an important food source for invertebrates including spiders, beetles, flies, bugs and, most importantly, the caterpillars of moths including the strangely-named [Small Elephant Hawk Moth](#). The tops and flowers of heather plants give an orange/yellow dye. Its medical uses include the control of urinary infections. Friends of Troopers Hill encourage heather to grow by controlling the scrub, brambles, and saplings that would eventually overshadow or out-compete the heather.

Bryn Friallen

Jules's Diary

Hello Troopers!

Hmmm. It's been a strange end of winter, start of year it seems. Where's the snow? (He asks hypocritically.) The team is plodding on with bramble bashing and pushing back the boundaries a little, very ably assisted by Friends Work Parties (ta!)

Bit quiet on the flora and fauna front, it being winter, but we seem to have gained a few squirrels, or they've fewer trees to hide in. At least on the Hill, several have sprouted up around the Field, which gives it a sense of place and will, in time, cast

some nice shade. And while they may not put in much of an appearance this spring, the daffydown dillies planted by very enthusiastic youngsters along the bank should host up nicely in future. Good to see the local schools using the Hill as an outdoor resource. Several young people running, and tumbling, up and down the slopes a day or so ago, (do they count as fauna?) all clutching clipboards and scribbling notes. And more visits planned I hear.

On a personal note it's now a whole year since I returned from my interesting hiatus and the Hill has done its part in restoring my fitness levels, such as they are.

So... Another spring is heralded by the sight of an occasional humblebee and flutterby and cheerfully noisy birdsong... 'Things' are starting to 'move', as they say.

Cheers, Jules



Contacts

For the latest news and updates, phone our
Information line: 0753 161 5983

If you'd like to talk to us, please contact:
Susan Acton-Campbell (Chair), Tel. **0117 947 5037**
You can also write to us at:

3, Corkers Hill, St. George, Bristol, BS5 8DT
Email:

friends@troopers-hill.org.uk

Or go to the online forum at:

<http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/news&views>

To book a place on an event,
Phone Judith: 0117 955 9819 Or email:
events2011@troopers-hill.org.uk

Walking for Health (St George Strollers)
Contact: Claire Willott
0117 941 4514

To report incidents on Troopers Hill, phone Bristol Parks:
0117 922 3719

Report criminal activity to the police on 999
or

Police local beat manager, Pete Crawford, can be contacted on
07919 628 304