



**Note of Annual General Meeting Wednesday 7 December 2005
7.15pm Wesley Memorial Church, Bryants Hill**

Present:

Susan Acton-Campbell (Chair)	Richard
Rob Acton-Campbell (Work Party Org)	Sally Oldfield (BCC)
Jon Bown (Bristol City Council)	Anne P
Gillian	Liz Read
Kit Elliott (Membership)	Judith
Helen Gillard	Alan Watt
Caroline Hollies (BCC)	Liz Watt
Val Harris (Treasurer)	Anne W
Roy	
Phyll	
Vernon	

Apologies: Carole, Maureen

Introduction

The Chair started with a general greeting and introductions that included a welcome to Caroline Hollies, the Parks Officer recently appointed in place of Gary Ratcliffe.

There followed a presentation in words, pictures and film of FOTH's activities month by month during 2005. Certain issues emerged for general discussion, as follows.

Timing of Work Parties

Consideration was given to alternatives to Saturday mornings, including alternating Saturdays and Sundays, evenings (summer only given the daylight constraints) and mid-week daytime work parties. It was established that a work party requires the presence of a person trained in Health and Safety but not necessarily a trained First Aider.

Action: To include a question on work party timing in the volunteering survey to appear in the newsletter in due course.

Grayling Butterfly

Sally outlined the reasoning behind the recent decision not to sponsor an attempt to re-introduce the grayling butterfly to the LNR. There was speculation on the reasons why none have been seen in recent years and recognition that there is currently insufficient information on its disappearance.

Thanks to all at Bristol Parks

The improvement in maintenance of paths and clearing litter was noticeable, a direct result of effective contract management.

Visit to the Bath House at Strawberry Hill

Following the video, it was mentioned that the building was built after 1740, possibly for the purpose of total immersion baptism. The origin of the black slag blocks was thought to be local.

Malvern Road Open Space (to be known henceforth as Troopers Hill Field)

Chair described the recent survey and subsequent meetings aimed at discovering residents' preferences for the future of Troopers Hill Field. The exercise began promisingly with a good response but in the event, no potential leadership emerged for working with the Council on ideas for the possible retention, re-design or re-location of the play area. The Council was developing a play area strategy for Bristol and it was considered beyond FOTH's remit to request that the existing equipment be removed in the absence of evidence to support the conclusion that a play area was not required at all.

There was support for the eventual removal of the gate between the Field and the LNR, though it was considered prudent to leave it in place at least until next summer. While on the subject of gates, it was observed that the ground at the kissing gates was muddy and could benefit from more chippings.

The proposal to cut down a few carefully selected trees to restore some of the previously visible view of Bristol received a general welcome. It would cost around £400 and the felled trees would be left in situ for ecological benefit.

Debate arose on whether FOTH should become more involved in managing the woodland between the Field and Crew's Hole, (not being within the Local Nature Reserve but nevertheless of nature conservation interest). It was accepted that the proposal was desirable but probably not achievable within current resources.

History

Historic pictures of the area were displayed and discussed. The condition and future of the former Lamb Inn was mentioned.

Action: Phyll to contact the records office at South Gloucestershire Council for further information.

SWEET application update

News on the revised grant application was expected in the next few days.

Hedge at Green Down boundary

Rob announced that following general approval from the Green Down residents, FOTH would be planting a boundary hedge in late January/early February which would eventually take the place of the deteriorating fence. The native species whips would be provided by the Council and the hedge would be maintained at a suitable height.

Benches

Suggestions were put forward for suitable locations for two new benches including one in memory of Virginia Spalding (FOTH's late membership secretary).

Website

The new appearance of the website was demonstrated and attention drawn to a new feature, the Friends' discussion forum.

Wildlife Officer

Members were reminded that funding from Sally's post would cease during 2006 and their support was sought for seeking resources to extend her appointment. The meeting expressed gratitude to Sally for her superb work in connection with FOTH.

Other

Other subjects for discussion included progress on risk assessment of the lower chimney, the changing prevalence of bats and the possibility of providing bat boxes in Crews Hole woodland, a forthcoming event at Badock's Wood in May, and the possibility that Trooper's Hill might be suitable for designation as a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site.

Funding

The meeting scrutinised the accounts produced by Val and the group's asset list. Susan announced that FOTH and Folly Farm would share in the proceeds of Somerfield's "casual dress" charity day in June 2006, and that FOTH might look forward to a donation of around £350.

Constitution and Committee Members

The proposal for the new constitution was agreed. The Chair and Treasurer were re-elected. Liz Read was elected Secretary. Rob, Kit, Helen, Alan and Liz Watt were elected to the Committee.

Thanks were expressed to the outgoing Secretary, David Gladden, in his absence and Carole Edwards, Research Co-ordinator.

Dates of Next Meetings

The next meeting would focus planning for future events and would be held at 19.15 on 12 January 2006 at Rob and Susan's house. The next FOTH general meeting would take place at 19.15 on 19 January 2006 at the Wesley Memorial Church. The next work party would be held on the morning of 7 January 2006, and hedge planting parties on 21 January at 10.00 and 14.00. A birdbox making event would take place on the Hill on the afternoon of 18 February and a Brass Band concert had been arranged for 1 July 2006.