

**Note of Meeting**  
**Thursday, 3 March, 2011 7.15pm**  
**Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Rd**

Present:

Susan (Chair), Norman (Treas), Kit (Memb Sec), Rob (WPO/Cttee), Bryan (Cttee), Clare (Cttee), Jude (Cttee), Margaret (Cttee), Paula (Wild City) Jules (CPO), Fabian (Cllr) Elaine, Keith, Roy, Helen (minutes)

Apologies

Alex (Cllr) Pete

The minutes of the 13 January 2011 meeting were approved without amendment

**Meeting Management**

Chair explained that FOTH meetings were intended to be open to everyone without having to give advance notice of interests. Fabian suggested a way of managing the time in order to curtail unexpectedly lengthy business. Bryan emphasised the need for remaining inclusive and letting people have their say. It was agreed that important discussions could sometimes be permitted to take precedence over less vital agenda items, which could be held over until for the next meeting. Jules mentioned the risks associated with Friends' etc groups being approached for responses to consultation exercises, in order to fulfil the requirements of community involvement.

**Wild City**

Paula introduced the Wild City project and explained the funding mechanism (a grant from the Big Lottery fund distributed via Natural England and administered by Bristol Council). She circulated a map of Bristol showing the Wild City designated sites, outlined the aims of the 3-year project and described the differences between the project sites (focus of the project) and network sites (legacy from Nature in the City and Wild Spaces projects). Green Corridors had also been identified for linking communities with the sites. She confirmed that none of the sites would be adversely affected by the Area Green Space Plan.

Paula described how the work would be shared on a geographical and time basis between herself and her workshare partner, Helen Adshead. She undertook to provide advice and ad-hoc support to the network sites, including Troopers Hill. The meeting noted the time constraints on Paula's availability, approximately 2 days per year for Troopers Hill. She announced the forthcoming Conham and Eastwood Farm River Festival to be held jointly jointly with South Gloucestershire Council over two weeks in July, to include

Morning of 17 July, wildlife walk and Brunch

Wild River Encounter Days

Schools River Song celebration

Thursday 21 July, a Wild Night Out

Friday 22 July, Purple Prowl at Troopers Hill

Sunday 24 July, Family River Discovery Day at Eastwood Farm

Wednesday 27 July, Tales from the Riverbank (for younger children)

Thursday 28 July, evening Wildlife walk.

The group discussed prospective arrangements for general publicity, in addition to targeting specific groups, with concern about managing access if the events should prove widely popular.

## **Issues and thank yous for our Community Park Keeper, Community Parks Officer, Area Parks Manager, and Landscape team**

Susan commented on the continued excellent maintenance on the Hill

Jules reported that the area above the lower Stack (affected by fire in July 2010) had received remedial attention and had started to green up. The access to the DOE path had been widened and there were plans to clear the undergrowth under the apple tree. Jules described his rotational approach to bramble control and confirmed he was content to use his judgement in the extent of cutting it back.

The ground by the memorial bench at the top of Greendown steps had been planted with daffodils and crocuses which had come into bloom. As the plants would not naturally occur on the nature reserve, it was proposed that most of them (except those closest to the bench) should be re-planted in a more appropriate place.

Some FOTH members drew attention to muddy conditions near the kissing gate at the Greendown entrance.

The Bristol Council Tree Officer had arranged for about 80 whips (various native species) to be planted on the bank of Troopers Hill Road from which soil was removed last year.

### **Work parties**

- completed since the last meeting

Saturday 5th February: the ground had been slippery after wet weather, so the party removed some bramble from among grass adjacent to the allotments at the top of the hill.

- Next work parties before the next meeting

Saturday 5th March – to tackle bramble and bracken in heather and broom at the top of the steps at entrance E

Saturday 2nd April and Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May - details to be arranged

### **Events**

Tree Bristol had carried out tree and daffodil planting in Troopers Hill Field. Chair thanked everyone who had helped including a class each from three schools who had impressed with their work rate and digging abilities, they managed to dig holes big enough for the tree roots.

Saturday 26th March - St Aidan's Community Fair. Volunteers were requested to maintain a presence at the stalls. The Fair would provide an opportunity to publicise proposals for future works on Troopers Hill. Short walks to the Hill would be offered during the Fair's opening hours.

Action Susan to produce a map suitable for indicating the route to the Hill from the Church Hall.

Saturday 9th April - Dawn Chorus Walk with Ed Drewitt

Bookings had already been received and places were expected to fill quickly.

Friday 22nd April - Good Friday Service Volunteers were needed to encourage visitors to the Hill to fill in survey forms.

Wednesday 11th May and Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> May St George Strollers Walks (see below)

Sunday 22nd May - Avon Valley Walk, to which Paula and Helen were invited

### **Walking for Health update**

Clare reported that the grant application had been successful. She distributed copies of the publicity posters for the launch walks. 1<sup>st</sup> St George Park/Avonview cemetery on 11 May 2<sup>nd</sup> Wesley Memorial Church and Magpie Bottom 23 May. The aim would be eventually to offer fortnightly walks throughout the year. It was proposed that the Wild City

project could offer support. Jules offered to assist with walks in the nature reserves where he worked.

### **Funding**

Over £30k had been applied for a “Stepping Forward” Grant to improve existing paths and steps, deal with muddy entrances on Field, drainage, and waymark paths through the woods. Susan demonstrated the display board depicting the problems and proposed solutions. She circulated draft questionnaires and invited comments. FOTH members offered suggestions for improvements. The survey would remain open until 8 May. Thanks were expressed to Bristol Council for providing the Freepost address. It was decided that the forms would need envelopes. Bryan said he might be able to provide them.

It was explained that, since the concert, dog show and family fun picnic were repeated events they would not qualify for an Awards for All grant. However it might be possible to obtain £8k of grant funding for items to include re-printing of leaflets, map, interpretation boards and triple clip frame signs.

Susan described the current applications to the Bristol City Community Festival and Event Fund for an amount to cover the Family Fun event rained off last year.

### **Newsletter**

Kit said that the next issue would be delivered in March.

### **Next meeting**

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July, 7.15pm, Summerhill Methodist Church