

NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday, March 10th 7.15 – 9 pm

Online Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Rod, Adam, Rob, Margaret, Fabian, Susan, Elaine, Rosie

1. Approve December Minutes

The December minutes were approved, and Susan made one amendment from Rod.

2. Projects

a. Path to Troopers Hill chimney from Troopers Hill Field

Bristol City Council is expecting to complete the work in mid-March. ETM are no longer completing the work, and a new contractor has been appointed.

b. Conservation work fundraiser

A donation of £30 last week has increased the total amount to £195.

c. Public art

Rob has started a conversation with artists from 'Bricks' in St Anne's House about public art and how we might approach it.

The group has been having conversation for some time about the idea of installing a piece of public art at the entrance to Troopers Hill from Troopers Hill field.

Funding would be required and one option for this could be the Arts council.

Rob is talking to Bricks about public consultation.

3. Nature Conservation work on Troopers Hill

a. Nature conservation work parties

We have been continuing our schedule of two works parties a month. We have also had three corporate events, and the last few weeks have been busy.

Students spent the day clearing bramble from the slopes above the nursery on 11th Feb. A group from St James Place Wealth Management had a session in Sally's Glade on 4th Feb. On Feb 24th, a group from BT spent the day on the top side of Sally's Glade, clearing bramble and broom.

With the work parties and work completed by the council, we are staying on top of

the areas we wanted to clear during the winter.

b. Photo monitoring

The photo monitoring which we undertake every 5 years has been completed for 2021. The latest report has been added to the website.

The photos showed that the Golden Rod had spread, which we were already aware of. Golden Rod is becoming rarer in Britain, and Troopers Hill is a good area for it.

c. Winter works

Susan shared that she is very pleased with the work completed by the Parks team over the winter.

Susan met with Teija, Parks Operational Co-ordinator, Central & East and the Parks operations manager, in November to talk through the conservation management plan and identify the areas that would need work over the winter.

Over the winter, one person raised a concern about the work impacting on habitats for kestrels, which was addressed. Overall, lots of people saying thank you to volunteers at work parties.

4. History Research

Rob did a history talk for the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society (BIAS) on Zoom on 10th Feb.

Friends of Troopers Hill was featured on the front page of the BIAS magazine, asking if people could share old photos. Some people responded, and new photos were added to the website from the 1960s and 1977.

Rob has shared information and drawings about the Emra family with Bridging Histories.

Tyler, one of our work party volunteers, put in contact with his grandfather who donated a wonderful 1960's photo of the area and a brochure and consultation slip about the plans for building in Crews Hole in the 1980s.

5. Events

a. Drop in gazebo Sunday 27th February

The first session was held and aimed at people who don't come to our meetings or work parties but still have thoughts they would like to share and questions.

Margaret and some volunteers helped put up the Gazebo. Whilst it was cold and windy, some good conversations were had with people walking by.

One person donated £30. A suggestion was made about getting some ‘chin-up’ exercise bars. Another lady asked about play equipment for taller children.

b. Star gazing

120 people have expressed interest in the dates agreed for the event with the Bristol Astronomical Society.

Rod explained that the weather had been poor for the first tranche of dates. Last Sunday had potential however was decided to postpone, which was a good decision as half of the evening would have been spent waiting for the skies to clear.

The next tranche of potential dates is the 26th, 27th, and 28th of March.

c. Dawn Chorus Sunday 13th March – fully booked

The event this Sunday is fully booked and will be starting at 5.30 am.

One person is on the waitlist, and Susan will send a reminder before the event. It is normal for some people to not show up on the day, so Susan allows for some overbooking.

Susan will ask Ed to share a list of species that are identified during the event.

d. History Walk – 22nd May

As part of Bristol Walk Fest, a walk will be taking place on the Troopers Hill side of the river, starting at Troopers Hill, going through the woods, through Conham and up over Dundridge.

e. Drop in gazebo – 29th May

Another Gazebo event will be taking place on 29th May.

6. Networking

a. RHS South West in Bloom - IYN and Pride in Parks

We will find out later this month about our submission for a Pride in Parks award. Rob and Susan will be attending a ceremony in Beer where the awards are presented.

We needed to decide if we will enter these awards again this year. Susan explained that it’s a good way to get feedback about our work. It provides us with materials

which help in conversations with Bristol City Council and grant providers. All agreed we should enter again.

b. Talks

As well as his talk on Zoom to BIAS (Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society) Rob gave a talk to the Malago History Society which had initially been booked for 2020. A small group attended in person; a few people knew the Hill, and a donation was given.

c. Liveable Neighbourhoods (includes Fabian point)

Rob reminded the group that the Livable Neighbourhoods consultation phase for areas around Troopers Hill closes this week.

Fabian explained that constituents have been in contact with him as Ward Councillor, raising concerns about a narrow path on Crews Hole Road that is dangerous to walk.

Fabian asked if Friends of Troopers Hill would be happy for CIL allocated in 2019 for improving the rough, informal parking area opposite Woodwise Academy to be merged with funding to improve the road where it is narrow.

Rob explained that an alternate proposal had been shared with Bristol Parks last year, which is expected to cost less than the £60K funding, so there will be money left over. The aim of the project was to tidy up the area which should reduce fly-tipping.

Rob will share all the details with Fabian to understand and follow up.

d. Summerhill Methodist Church

It is confirmed that the church will be requesting the Methodist organisation for permission to close in July, which means we will no longer have a site that can be used for shelter and provide toilets for 'all day' work parties.

7. St George Strollers

In January, a 30-minute walk from the Beehive centre around St George Park started. There were nine people on the first two walks. It has been a different mix on each walk since.

There are 14 volunteers as walk leaders. Some are getting older, and some have family responsibilities meaning they are not as available as they would like. The group are looking to recruit more walk leaders for either 30- or 90-minute sessions, and Susan asked if we could spread the word.

8. AOB

Susan continues to get requests from students about undertaking studies on the hill. A study was completed last year to see if increased trampling during lockdown is impacting plants.

She was recently contacted by a UWE student wanting to do a harvest mouse survey on the hill. Susan thinks it's unlikely there are any there and has given them advice on permission they need to do the study.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held from 7.15 - 9 pm on Thursday 26th May 2022 on Zoom.