



NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday, 13th January, 2011 7.15pm

Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Rd

Present: Susan (Chair) Rob (Work Party Organiser) Kit (Memb Sec) Bryan (Committee), Jude (Committee), Clare (Walking for Health), Dave (Bristol City Council) Jules (Bristol City Council) Steve, Roy, Sue, Vera, Eddie, Helen (minutes)

Apologies: Norman, Margaret, Fabian (Cllr), Alex (Cllr)

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

The meeting took a moment to reflect on the recent death of a FOTH member, Gill Dyte, whose funeral would be at Westerleigh on the following day.

Chair proposed a vote of thanks to Jude (as outgoing Treasurer) for her valued service to the group.

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

The meeting noted the continued excellent maintenance on the Hill. The good work done recently, including cutting vegetation back from paths, was recognised, although slippery conditions had prevented progress from being as rapid as it might otherwise have been.

The fence around the mine shaft had been removed, not without significant difficulty partly because of the secure fixing and partly because of the weather. Jules reported that the fence at the front of the bank on Troopers Hill Road would be removed. Susan confirmed that the Neighbourhood Partnership approved of the proposal to use residual funding to plant whips on the bare banks. Meanwhile, the slopes had stood up well to the severe weather, much of the tree and undergrowth root systems had remained in place when the aerial parts had been removed, giving stability to the soil.

Jules offered to obtain more whips to replace those that had been pulled up at the Greendown entrance. The offer was gratefully accepted.

Tree Bristol and tree planting in Troopers Hill Field

Susan demonstrated a poster giving the time and place of the tree planting event (10.00 on 20 January at Troopers Hill Field). The tree planting plans were explained and copies of the plans were circulated. Copies of the last FOTH newsletter and a copy of the enlarged plan that had been provided to the care home were also circulated. The spacing of the trees had been agreed with Bristol Council Trees officer and changed from the original proposal following comments from FOTH. The Tree Officer had advised that it was too soon to plant daffodil bulbs at the bases of the trees. The ash trees were expected to reach a height of 15m and the crowns would be raised so as not to impede the view. The funding mechanism for Tree Bristol was explained.

The meeting debated matters arising from the limited consultation by Bristol Council about the tree planting. In this context it was noted that the notice board at the Field

was not situated at the most popular entrance point. There was discussion about whether there were already enough trees on the Field. It was felt that too many trees might provide shelter after nightfall for unwelcome behaviour. The prospect of vandalism to the trees was considered. The amount of potential shade provided by the trees was discussed. The problem of dog mess was emphasised, and the meeting agreed that dog owners should be more responsible. It was remarked that the location of the picnic area was not ideal with respect to dog behaviour.

Work parties

- completed since the last meeting

On Saturday, 4th December participants cleared bramble and saplings from Sally's Glade, activity was curtailed because of inclement weather.

On Saturday, 8th January, volunteers pruned the hedge along the Greendown border of the nature reserve that had been planted in 2006.

- Next work parties

It was expected that the work party on Saturday 5th February would address bramble probably in Sally's Glade or adjacent to the lower chimney steps (to be confirmed)>

Events

The Annual General Meeting on Sunday 5th December 2010 had not attracted a large attendance. A full committee was elected including two new Committee members and a new Treasurer.

Forthcoming events had been arranged at a planning meeting on 11th November 2010. Susan confirmed that the Gasworks Singers would perform at Music on the Hill in June. The date of the dog show had been fixed but it was unlikely that the Council's dog warden would be able to attend.

A Family Fun picnic, juggler and story-telling would be held in August, there would also be various Walks and talks, Avon Valley walk, Fungi Foray, and Dawn Chorus events.

Funding

- progress on application for grant for the "Stepping Forward" grant

Rob explained that the prospects of obtaining the grant were relatively good, The application had passed the first phase of the process and phase 2 was under way. He circulated a plan of the proposed works. The plans included providing an area of mesh with hardcore underneath to improve drainage, to reinforce the grass and reduce the problem of mud at the Summerhill entrance, the milestone path entrance to the Field and the end of the track at the entrance to Troopers Hill from Troopers Hill Field. The meeting speculated about the origin of the boggy area near the slide. Grant funding would also improve the steps on the Hill with rebuilding at a different rake at specific points. The meeting resolved to abandon the grant attempt if the conditions included providing handrails on the steps.

It was pointed out that the proposed dropped kerb at the Greendown entrance would be hindered by parked cars unless double yellow lines were introduced. Jules clarified the guidance for parking vehicles near corners and junctions.

- Walking for Health grant application

Clare explained briefly the aim of establishing a walking for health group in St George, the FOTH committee had decided to sponsor an application for the grant

funding. The application was put in to Active Bristol at the beginning of December, and had secured the services of the Walking for Health officer. Some discussion occurred around the value of walking for health. Clare explained the funding mechanism and outlined the kinds of people who typically joined walking for health groups. The funding would pay for e.g. rooms, refreshments, taster walks, volunteer bus fares etc. It was emphasised that the funding came from the lottery and not from the Council.

Action: Clare to report back via the Troopers Hill internet discussion forum and to disseminate information about walks happening around St George.

- Possible Awards for All grant application

Susan described a proposed grant application to Awards for All for triple clip frame signs at the entrances to Greendown and by the lower chimney. Also to have the leaflets re-printed, the map re-drawn, the interpretation board replaced and a new interpretation board designed for the lower chimney. Comments were made about the need for information to be posted at the Summerhill Terrace entrance so an additional triple clip frame sign will be applied for.

Susan confirmed that funding was in place for all the events for 2011.

Newsletter

Kit said that the next issue would probably be available in March.