



NOTE OF MEETING Tuesday 25 May 2010  
Summerhill Methodist Church

Present:

Susan (Chair) Gary (Community Parks Officer) Dave (Area Head Gardener East Bristol)  
Jules (Park Keeper) Fabian (Cllr) Jude (Treas) Bryan (Cttee) Kit (Memb Sec) Margaret,  
Gill, Maureen

Apologies:

Rob (WPO) Val

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendment.

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

- During February and March the remaining elements (planting at Greendown) of the YANSEC project to improve the fencing and entrance arrangements from Troopers Hill Road, had not been completed. A YANSEC representative had inspected the work and provided a cheque on the understanding that the planting would be completed shortly.

Action: Susan to pursue with Jamie

#### - continued excellent maintenance on the Hill

Susan described the Hill as looking like a Nature Reserve, neither too like a park nor overgrown. Gary reported that a conservation officer would walk round the hill with them in the near future as part of the Green Flag judging. It would be interesting to receive comments from Helen Hall who was instrumental in the original designation as LNR. Kit added that the Bristol Parks team were doing such a good job that there was less and less work for the Friends.

Gill asked if the severe winter weather had damaged the Hill. Dave advised that some less hardy shrubs had died off that would not normally die, but pests were fewer and blossom was particularly profuse this year. The hardy stock, mainly native species, would have benefited from the cold weather, though everything was developing later than usual. Susan mentioned the relative absence of dog mess lately, and Gill suggested it could be explained by the presence of more people on the Hill and the Field.

#### -Soil falling from Troopers Hill on to Troopers Hill Rd

A licence had been obtained for work in the autumn to allow the excess soil to fall so it can be cleared from the road. The soil would be recycled. Temporary traffic lights would be needed for traffic control

- There had been reports of a series of minor fires, including damage to a bin, but no major fires had occurred. Jules observed that evidence of fire lighting appeared near every bench. Maureen remembered the frequent incidence of much greater fires in previous times. The question of designating an area for a fire pit, perhaps in the gully, was discussed, but it was decided that fire lighting anywhere should not be encouraged, and a dedicated area would not deter fire lighting elsewhere. There was also concern about the practical difficulties of clearing up the remains of fire-based picnics.

Susan mentioned a report that a resident on Summerhill Road had had their fence removed and burned on the Hill, reported it to the police and obtained an appropriate response.

- estimate for tarmac at entrance to Troopers Hill Field from Summerhill Terrace

It was observed that laying chippings had proved unsatisfactory in the past. Jules mentioned some of the practicalities associated with treating a small area while not addressing the impact of footfalls leading immediately off the treated area. It was suggested that a stabilising mesh be laid which would firm the walking surface while allowing grass to grow through it.

Action: Susan to talk to Jamie about grass mats

- celebration trees in Troopers Hill Field

Susan reported that the tree officer had chosen hornbeam trees to provide shade at the play area and anyone wishing to contribute towards them was invited to do so. To her knowledge, at least two people would be interested in memorial trees.

Action: Susan to provide Gillian with a plan

- The Green Flag judging had been arranged for 3 June, the judges would be coming over from Netham. Kit and Susan would accompany them on their inspection.

Action: Susan to liaise with Jamie about arrangements for meeting etc

### **Mine Shaft**

Subsidence on the hill had been fenced, it is believed to be a shaft to a mine /coalmine under the hill. British Coal mining Archives had reported on it. Offers had been received to explore the void if it became possible to abseil into it. Gary was in the process of obtaining quotes from mining specialists for perhaps bore testing of the soil to establish more information on the position. Jules had obtained a spare clamp in case of future dismantling of the Heras fence.

### **Proposed Expenditure**

- New Litter Bin (£500)

Dog walkers had commented they would find an additional litter bin near to the entrance between the Field and the Hill very useful. Some had offered contributions to funding a bin. Friends were content to fund an additional litter bin. Bryan suggested it might be green but it was explained that the standard model was black, which tended to blend in better with the background. Experience from elsewhere suggested that being litter and dog bin free tended to reduce the volume of litter.

Economic concerns had caused Bristol City council to consider discontinuing collection of mixed dog waste and other litter. The proposed position of the litter bin, close to the entrance from Troopers Hill Field to Troopers Hill, will be close to a dog bin, which should help with keeping the two types of waste separate and keep additional work for Jules or his colleagues to a minimum. The position was approved and members agreed to any funding for the bin above the contributions made by dog walkers could be made from FOTH funds.

### **Work parties**

- completed since the last meeting

Saturday 6th March

Clearing bramble from amongst the broom in the steep slopes near the gorse at the top of the steps from entrance E.

Saturday 3rd April

Clearing bramble from the area of broom by the steps leading up from the lower chimney. The work was completed before the rain began again.

Saturday 1st May

Clearing bramble and saplings from 'Sally's glade'.

- Next work parties

Saturday, 5th June - Julian suggested that FOTH form an organised party to cut holm oak seedlings.

Saturday, 3rd July – addressing saplings and bracken.

**Events**

- Since our last meeting

Saturday 20th March – St Aidan's Community Fair: Kit and Margaret had attended, at a stall next to Fabian and Laura. The FOTH display had attracted a fair bit of interest and they had enrolled a few new members. FOTH donated £30 to St Aidan's collection. In the networking context, Kit had learned that the curate at St Aidan's is on the board of Governors for Air Balloon School.

Friday 2nd April - Good Friday service on Troopers Hill. Because of poor weather the service took place in church and the outdoor procession etc were cancelled.

Sunday 25th April – Avon Valley Walk

Rob had led a very well-attended event, the walkers had visited the bath house at Strawberry Lane, and a history group had joined for part of the way along Brislington Brook. FOTH had received £45 in donations, and the Folly Fellowship had given £30 for being shown round the bath house on the previous day.

- Next events

12th/13th June – Festival of Nature

Bristol Parks Forum will have a stand at the Festival of Nature, FOTH will be helping them run the table on Sunday afternoon. Friends were invited to attend. Kit mentioned the Dragon Boat racing all day on 13 June as well.

Saturday 19th June – Music on the Hill

Volunteers would be needed from 4.30: music to start at 6 pm, interval at 6.45. FOTH would provide a found child officer. There would be a sale of cold drinks and a collection taken during the interval. Susan confirmed that the licence fee included an element for the insurance premium.

Action: Susan to double check with Peter Watts that no council representative was required to attend.

**Networking**

- Consultation on the Area Green Space Plan and Site Allocations

Council officers were intending to talk to Bristol residents about site allocations. It had been suggested that they might wish to hold a consultation alongside a FOTH event, perhaps on the Saturday of the Balloon Fiesta.

- Bristol Parks Forum

Rob and Susan had continued to attend regularly. Jamie and Gary were now working out of the Netham park premises.

- St George Neighbourhood Partnership

Students from UWE had collected residents' thoughts and aspirations for St George, as a contribution to updating the Bristol Plan (used by Planning Officers) in the Bristol Development Framework. The resulting public meeting had taken place at the Methodist Church in the previous week. Fabian mentioned that the funding allocated to the Partnerships might be vulnerable to cuts, as a result of which Partnerships may have to reconsider their agenda. Susan distributed copies of the Neighbourhood Partnership Times.

**Newsletter**

Friends thanked Kit for the excellent Spring newsletter. Jules offered to resume his regular contributions. Kit reminded members that ideas and articles are always welcome,