



**Note of FOTH meeting Thursday 19 January 2006
7.15pm Wesley Memorial Church, Bryants Hill**

Present:

Susan Acton-Campbell (Chair), Rob Acton-Campbell, Gillian, Helen, Caroline, Claire, Val, Roy, Liz R, Liz and Alan, Pauline, Joy

Apologies: Sally, Richard, Kit

Approve previous minutes and Outstanding Actions from Previous minutes (AGM and October)

The previous minutes were approved. Most of the actions had been completed or would be discussed in the current agenda, except for:

Bristol in Bloom: John Bown had suggested FOTH might participate. Although this had been an action for Sally, Caroline kindly explained that Bristol in Bloom was led by a committee including Council and other representatives. The entries were normally restricted to a certain area and the judging each year followed a set route that currently did not include the locality of Troopers Hill. It was possible that the route might be varied in subsequent years. Sally forwarded the information that our management plan has been submitted with a general portfolio of information.

Action: Chair to discuss with Sally – this has been done since the meeting and some photos have been forwarded.

Green Flag Award: It had been suggested that Troopers Hill might apply for the Green Flag designation (for parks and green spaces that demonstrate appropriate levels of provision of recreational facilities for many sectors of the community). On examination of the criteria it was found that the area was too large for one classification and the requirements for the kind of facilities to be offered were not appropriate for another classification. It was agreed that no application be made but it might be worth pursuing in future years.

Issues for Caroline

Caroline approved FOTH's proposals to plant a hedge alongside Greendown to supplement and eventually replace the existing fence, including an alteration involving the removal of a small part of the fence.

The lower chimney (at the corner of Troopers Hill/ Crews Hole roads) had been risk assessed and the evaluation would be passed to Caroline. It had been observed that there was loose stonework at the top of the chimney. The pointing and equipment had been costed and quoted for.

Action: Caroline to enter the project for prioritisation within the budgeting process

Selection of trees for removal to create sight lines over Bristol from Troopers Hill and Field : Chair proposed a meeting on Saturday 4 February following the work party to identify which trees to take down. It was noted that not many trees would need to be removed and the shrubby undergrowth would benefit from some management to improve views.

Action: FOTH members to consider adding undergrowth control to management plan/future work parties

Dog Wardens: Caroline reported that the dog warden visits Troopers Hill, however there are too few wardens for more frequent visits and it is perhaps not surprising that their visits are not observed. One of the dog waste bins to be moved in the next financial year.

Action: Caroline to consider supply of posters.

More woodchip was needed at the Summerhill terrace entrance to Troopers Hill Field. A puddle had developed at the Malvern Road entrance which could benefit from an application of hardcore.

Action: Caroline to arrange delivery of materials with contractors, Gill to inspect the conditions and report back – Gill has reported back and woodchip has been placed at the Summerhill Terrace entrance – thanks, Gill and Bristol Parks.

The gate between Troopers Hill and the Field had been chained open for some months. It was reported that it was less muddy to walk through the main gate opening than through the side gate. One or two instances had been observed of motorcycles being lifted over the gate at Malvern Road to gain access to the Field and the Hill. It was still intended to remove the gate between the Field and the Hill at a later date provided the incidence of motorcycle access remained infrequent.

Feedback and plans for work parties

Rob reported that January work party had attracted 13 people, including four new volunteers. They had cleared a significant area of bramble from amongst some broom. He circulated copies of photographs (also on the web site). Thanks were expressed to Kit for supplying coffee. Hedge planting at Green Down was planned for Saturday/Sunday 21-22 January. The 4 February work party would aim to clear more bramble from broom in advance of the bird nesting season and the task for March would be removing bramble from amongst an area of heather.

YANSEC application update

The Yanley & North Somerset Environmental Company (a non-profit making organisation whose motto and aim is 'benefiting the environment') receives contributions from Landfill Tax and landfill operators to finance projects which improve the environment. It has taken up FOTH's grant application to SWEET and indicated that subject to formalities, a grant of £2910 will be made available for three benches and a wheelchair access path to the top chimney on Troopers Hill (to be made during the next financial year). Bristol Parks was identifying 10% match funding. The part of the grant application relating to leaflets, events, publicity and consultation was not funded as there were other competing bids to consider. A discussion followed about locations for the benches and the appropriate surface for the path. It was suggested that potential funding for an additional bench might usefully sit alongside the budget for restoring the view from Troopers Hill Field. The meeting thanked Rob and Sally for progressing the YANSEC application which had entailed collating a great deal of supporting paperwork.

Action: Caroline to consult the council's officer for disability access regarding a robust and otherwise suitable path surface material.

Events for 2006

The Chair circulated the list of proposed events for the forthcoming year. It was agreed that preparation (cutting out masks etc) for the bird box event would take place at Kit & Helen's house on the evening of Tuesday 14 February. The event itself would be held in the Allotments pavilion if the weather was bad, otherwise in the open air.

Action: anyone wanting to build a bird box to sign up with Rob

The possibility of a dog show was discussed. The meeting was advised that the Dogs Trust (formerly the Canine Defence League) might be able to advise on or even

organise such a show, if a venue was offered. Caroline confirmed that the Paws in the Park programme of shows had ceased.

Action: Chair to contact the Dogs Trust

A joint event was planned for September involving the FOTH/Eastwood Farm LNR groups, taking the form of a tour of each LNR linked by a ferry crossing and a visit to Beese's tea rooms.

The quiz date was confirmed as 5 September.

Pauline invited FOTH to occupy a table at the forthcoming Barton Hill Local History exhibition on 25 March at Bethesda chapel hall between 10.00 and 16.00

Action: Chair to consider the invitation including whether FOTH can maintain a presence, and respond.

Action: Rob to produce events leaflet for distribution with next newsletter.

Money

Val supplied a balance statement on which the Chair gave a commentary.

An anonymous donor had generously contributed £200 to FOTH and required only to be informed what the money had been used for.

Liz R's employers had donated £100 to FOTH. After discussion it was agreed that the contribution would be used to pay for a meeting room since the funding from Bristol Council was expected to cease at the end of the current financial year. It was agreed that given the availability of funds, FOTH meetings would continue to be held at the current venue.

Action: Chair to clarify whether the funding will indeed cease and, if appropriate, book the Wesley Memorial Hall for the year's meetings.

Other funding opportunities

Rob reported no reply from his recent approach to Total Butler. Alan's employers had indicated they would support a sustainable project. It was suggested that the sightlines project could be so described. The meeting considered whether it would be worthwhile approaching other employers and local businesses for sponsorship.

A FOTH member had proposed to sponsor a newsletter as a means of publicising his business. It was agreed that the newsletter would be a suitable vehicle for such sponsorship.

Action: Chair to agree terms with the sponsor.

The proceeds from the sale of books at the Book Barn had been disappointing (99p so far) but £44 had been raised by eBay sales and more than £10 has been raised from direct sales to FOTH members. Joy and Pauline suggested that a book dealer in Staple Hill might be interested in buying books from FOTH.

Action: Val and Liz R to check the book dealer – Liz has done so since our meeting – the shop is Harlequin Books at Staple Hill – he is not buying any books at the moment.

Agreed that if we did not find another profitable outlet for books that we no longer ask for them and ask Kit to include an item in the newsletter saying that we are ending the appeal for books.

Next Newsletter

Sponsorship – see above

Questionnaire to identify barriers to volunteering, include a question about times of work parties.

To be accompanied by Events leaflet (see above)

Include an item reminding visitors needing a gate key (obtainable from John Bown) for wheelchair access to contact Rob & Susan in the first instance.

Action: Kit to note

Dates/Venues for future meetings

Next meeting 28 February 2006. Dates of future meetings to be included in leaflet.

Other Business

The Chair played a recording of a touching message of thanks, support and appreciation from a Riversway resident. The message prompted discussion of a possible visit by FOTH giving a talk and exhibition at the home and the potential for occasionally bringing residents to Troopers Hill.

Action: Liz W to enquire as to suitable arrangements for a FOTH visit.