

**Note of Meeting Tuesday, 19th August, 2008
7.15pm Wesley Memorial Church, Bryants Hill**



Present:

Susan (Chair) Rob (Work Parties) Jude (Treas) Gavin (BCC Assistant Community Parks Manager) Julie (HEART) Cllr Fabian Breckels, Margaret, Helen (minutes).

Apologies:

Sally and Claire (BCC) Kit (Memb Sec), Maureen, Anne, Laura, Gill.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. It was reported that Maureen had investigated the Sealed Knot suggestion (see minutes of July meeting) <http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/minutes/min100708.pdf> and found that it would be too expensive for FOTH to host. Those wishing to applaud the recent Trooping the Hill event had posted appreciative comments on the internet Forum. Other actions would be addressed in the forthcoming agenda.

Dog Show - Sunday 12 October

Rob and Susan clarified the access arrangements to Troopers Hill Field. Vehicular access would be restricted to setting down and picking up equipment etc, there would only be very limited parking space available for the organisers. It was agreed that the absence of on site parking should be given prominence in any publicity.

FOTH and HEART between them could probably make available sufficient marking equipment to delineate a ring for the various classes (see poster for details) and a separate smaller area for a fun scurry. Jude has asked a contact in the Guide Dogs for the Blind to have a stall and hoped that someone from the Keynsham branch would come along.

In response to a query from Fabian about refreshments, Chair confirmed that FOTH would put up a gazebo with FOTH information display, offering soft drinks/teas for sale depending on the weather. RSPCA would be offering to microchip pets @ £10. PDSA would have a stall and so would HEART. A Bristol City Council dog warden would attend. FOTH would provide (human) toilet facilities.

Rob had drafted a questionnaire and attitude survey to gather views on dogs and dog mess on Troopers Hill/Field. It was suggested, to prevent any misunderstanding, that the text include clarification that there would not be a campaign to ban dogs on the LNR.

Julie expressed the intention to start promptly at 14.00 irrespective of attendance. It was agreed that class start times should not appear on the poster. Julie proposed putting the veterans' class straight after the puppy class.

Arrangements were in hand for providing drinking water for the dogs. Lucas Vets in Longwell Green were providing rosettes and would participate in the judging. FOTH agreed to approve expenditure of £20 for prizes (dog treats). The Council insurance would cover the event. Grouping and organisation of classes would be announced over the Public Address system. The order of events would appear on laminated sheets at the corners of the ring, by the tents as well and HEART would provide a table.

It was agreed that registration of competitors would be unnecessary, as the details would not be needed for insurance purposes. Reminders about behaviour would be included in the commentary. Competitors' public liability is normally covered in their house insurance. HEART agreed to provide a disclaimer, to be shown on the 'sandwich board' of dog owners' information normally displayed at FOTH events.

It was agreed that the contingency plan in case of parking congestion would require an identified FOTH member to be vigilant on the day in the event that traffic management became an issue.

Actions: Gavin to enquire whether guard irons would be acceptable in insurance terms for marking out a show ring and let FOTH know. [Done] and to invite someone from BCC to collaborate with Kit on the risk assessment. Kit to advise local police of event in advance. To arrange site visit with Julie and Gavin to plan the layout [Done]. Julie to provide a form of words for the disclaimer. Chair to e-mail a list of contacts to Gavin copy to Claire and Julie. FOTH helpers to attend from 12.30 onwards to prepare the area and set up gazebo etc.

Green Flag Award

Chair displayed the certificate that accompanied the Green Flag. She described her visit to Liverpool to collect the award, including the presentation and surrounding events. Hundreds of Green Flags had been awarded and some useful networking resulted. The display of the 2008 Green Flag on Troopers Hill had been changed by removing the top horizontal bar to allow the flag to fly conventionally when there is sufficient wind. Comments were made before and during the meeting that this has improved the appearance of the flag.

Any issues and thank yous on Troopers Hill to be passed to Community Parks Manager (CPM)

Chair reported good and prompt responses from the CPM recently.

Thanks to Julian for prompt action to introduce temporary Red and white barrier at Greendown where the gate had broken. Rob was to attend progress meetings with BCC representatives for scheduling the replacement fence and gate and other winter works.

Claire has organized a replacement gatepost at entrance E (second lowest on Troopers Hill Road)

An arborist would be inspecting the overhanging trees on Troopers Hill Rd with a view to remedial action.

Tree works on Troopers Hill Field – Rob explained that certain trees needed to be cut down because they have partially died off and are beginning to rot. The Council has been asked what trees will be used as replacements.

Work parties

Since the last meeting, the 5 July work party had taken ivy off rock faces and cleared bramble and saplings. The evening work party on Thursday 17 July had been well attended, participants had pruned the hedge along Green Down and removed some saplings from grassland.

The Saturday 2 August work party had taken down the Green Flag and replaced it with the current one, fixed the suspending rod so the flag flew conventionally, and carried out sapling cutting in the Gully. The contractor's hay cut had also taken place on the same day.

Next work parties would be Thursday 21 August at 7 pm and Saturday 6 September at 10 am, works to be arranged, depending on the weather.

Recent Events

The Bugs and Beasties event of Saturday 9 August had been cancelled because of a poor weather forecast. The money and effort that had been expended on supplies and the craft evening would not be wasted and could be used for a similar event in 2009.

Tai Chi sessions on Sunday 20 July and Sunday 10 August had been very successful, attracting bookings of 24 and 30 people respectively (though because of the weather 15 attended the latter). Susan reported she had found a possible venue for an evening class and had informed The School of Bristol Tai Chi

Next Events

Avon Valley Walk Sunday 5 October – Rob would lead the walk starting at starting at Conham valley car park and following the same route as last year, see <http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/minutes/Min220807.pdf> (August 2007)

Susan was pursuing arrangements for Somerfield to provide facilities at half-way. Beeses had agreed to provide the ferry.

Owl Prowl – Thursday 16 October 7pm – a Nature in the City event to be held on Troopers Hill. Action: Interested participants to contact Sally Oldfield (both events)

Planning for next year's events

It was proposed to fix a date at the next FOTH meeting for a gathering in November for event planning.

Networking

St George Neighbourhood Partnership Chair reported that the recent public meeting had been well attended. The meeting had voted on the most important local priorities in four categories. They had been identified as dog fouling, traffic calming, police responsiveness, and youth activities provision. Individuals had been assigned actions to take forward and report back to the Partnership. It had been proposed that the facilities at Brunel city academy at Speedwell could perhaps be opened up to the wider community at some later date.

Condolences were expressed after the unexpected death of Cllr John Deasy (St George West)

Parks Forum

The Forum had been principally concerned with the Area Green Spaces plan. The dates had been identified for a consultation exercise. There had been a discussion about bus routes and plans for rapid transport in Bristol. The Parks organisational and contractual arrangements were discussed.

Eastwood Farm Summer Fair was planned for 31 August 2008 to include Crafts, bug hunting and pond dipping. Any Friends willing to help out from 12.00 onwards were requested to let Rob know. [Note - event was subsequently cancelled because of poor weather].

Newsletter

It was suggested that a future newsletter might show contain the dog wardens' contact number to be used for confidential reporting of a "hot-spot" area.