

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FRIENDS' of TROOPERS' HILL, 27/4/04

Present: Sally Oldfield, Virginia Spalding, Norman Spalding, Liz Read, Carole Edwards, Rob Acton- Campbell, Val Harris, David Gladden, Susan Acton-Campbell (Chair)

Matters Arising: the previous minutes were consulted and as all actions had been completed as minuted, they were then agreed as written.

Work Party Feedback and Plans: Rob gave a report on the Spring Clean. The next work party (1/5) will focus on the removal of bramble in Sally's glade and the restaking of the steps on the west side of the site. Rob showed a poster for this event to some amusement.

David apologised for his continued absence on working parties and mentioned his Saturday problem. There followed some discussion of the workability of Sunday working parties and the possibility of using weekday evenings during the summer. No clear consensus emerged.

Sally said that BTCV had phoned with an offer of 20 volunteers who could be employed however we directed. The meeting felt it was a good idea in principle but there were problems with the likely cost. Action: Sally to investigate cost and report back.

Rob said he now had gate keys. Loppers, gloves and at least one bow saw were needed for the next work party – Sally agreed to procure these.

FOTH Action Plan: Rob handed out copies of the revised Plan to Susan and Sally and summary sheets to everyone else (the Plan is now 43 pages long!) There followed some discussion about the implications for the Malvern Road Open Space. There has been no reply from the Play Area official about the state of the swings.

Action: All committee members to scan the summary schedule and let Rob know of any concerns or additions by 7/5.

Some thought to be given to a launch for the Action Plan at the end of May (see later discussion minuted under AOB p.3)

Troopers' Hill issues for Gary: none apart from the signing of his birthday card!

First Aid: Susan asked for names for the proposed course. After some reluctance by all those present Virginia and Norman bravely volunteered (Liz will do it as well but only if she has to)

Action: Susan to ask Saturday volunteers to see if there are any others who might want a place. Rob will mention it at the next St. George Partnership he attends to see if there any takers from outside the group to make up the necessary numbers

Contact with Other Groups: Susan and Rob will attend the next Meeting of the St. George Partnership Group. One of the purposes of this meeting is to set up an audit of local groups with the aim of producing a directory allowing action to be taken in due course to plug any apparent gaps.

Liz spoke about racial attacks at the Sikh Temple. Action: Susan volunteered to write to register group's strong protest at this turn of events.

Susan spoke of the next Parks Forum meeting (19/6) the focus of which will be *Maintenance* and asked for volunteers to attend the meeting. Andy was suggested as a likely candidate *in absentia*. Action: Susan to ask Andy.

The Avon Trail Walk, which Rob is leading, is booked for Sunday 6/6 2pm start. The walk is free but places need to be booked via the Avon Trail at www.riveravontrail.org.uk. It will take in Conham Vale/Dundridge Park and Troopers Hill. Alternatively, E mail Rob for the phone number of the group.

Sally spoke of contact she had had with Caroline Hollies of Walking To Health at Lawrence Hill. She felt there were some opportunities for cross-fertilisation here.

Fundraising: Susan reported that we are under a news embargo about our application until Thursday 20th May. We hope to announce some good news after that date. Sally pointed out that the our group's aims were outside the issuing body's "target focus" and only 1 in 10 of these kinds of bids was successful. Susan was congratulated by the group for the self-evident excellence of the bid.

Nothing had yet been heard of the B&Q bid.

Coffee at all FOTH meetings (including committee meetings) will now cost 50p a go! Any profits to be recycled through petty cash.

Rob and Susan said they were using a lot of paper, print cartridges and laminate pouches and requested funding from the group. Everyone quickly agreed.

History Project: A discussion was conducted about what the grant secured by Sally might be spent on. The video was discussed (Kit has filmed the Good Friday Service with this in mind).

Action: Carole was asked to investigate the idea of the plaque.

Susan asked David about the tree slice idea and discussed her thoughts about using some of the slag stone on the Hill as a basis for some artistic work to depict the Hill's history. Sally passed around a number of illustrations of other media forms used by different local groups when funding similar projects. There was a wide ranging discussion but the general feeling was that some work in stone might not only be more vandal proof but also might better reflect the nature of the work done by past generations on the Hill.

Sally suggested using the money to commission an artist with a brief to produce something original. David said that it would be better if we knew roughly what we wanted before we got to that stage as in his experience artists were lacking organisational skills. Sally said that a Landscape Architect from BCC could be invited to the next meeting of the History group to give an input. Action: Sally to organise visit by Landscape Architect to next sub group meeting. Action: Susan to organise next sub-group meeting.

Good Friday Service: Val talked about the service saying that David Brain had spoken very well on our behalf and in a fitting manner. Information sheets were handed out. Action: Susan to write to David to express FoTH's thanks.

Bird Talk and Walk: 31 people had attended the Dawn Chorus Walk despite the early start and 20 had come to the Talk so the event had passed off successfully. Amongst the other birds heard had been wrens, woodpeckers and blue tits.

Future Events: Sally spoke about Wild Week (12/6 – 20/6) when there would be events organised on local nature reserves. Also she mentioned National Local Nature Reserve Week (14/7 – 25/7) which may involve a mini-conference at Willsbridge Mill.

She asked for ideas from the group for Wild Week on Troopers Hill. A brain storm of ideas followed including: a Dog Show, a Picnic, an Invertebrates Walk (either moths at night; although this would have to be very late given the time of year) or butterflies during the day. Either of the latter ideas could be led by Ray Barnet. The suggestion with the most support was the Picnic (although this could be combined with the Butterfly Walk). The best possible date was either 12 or 13 of June.

Action: Sally to investigate ideas and likely cost and to gauge whether or not we need an earlier committee meeting to facilitate the organisation.

FOTH website: nothing had been done since the last meeting.

Date and venue of the next meetings: 26/5 at St Aidans, 7pm (Carole and Val sent their apologies) and 6/7 possibly at the Sikh Temple

Action: Susan to investigate the possibility of using the Sikh Temple for occasional meetings.

AOB: Sally suggested planning the launch of the Action Plan and announcing the funding to coincide with Wild Week in early June. Everyone thought this was an excellent idea. Action: Sally to investigate how this can be done.

Carole reported on the Brass Smelting Talk she had attended and said that Joan Day might be persuaded to provide a lecture of about 1.25 hours about industrial activity on

the Hill. There was general approval. The cost was likely to be about £30 and it should be sometime in August.

Action: Carole to organise and report back.

Sally reported on the badger problem on Troopers Hill Road – soil on the road etc. After listening to Sally's description of the possible actions for reducing this problem the meeting felt that minimum disturbance was the right option.

Sally also said that she had been in contact with a student called Alex from Bath who was carrying out a butterfly survey during the summer on the Hill. Sally would like volunteers to do the walk on preplanned days when Alex is on holiday.

Action: Sally to tell Alex about the work party on Saturday 1/5

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.30 pm . Apologies to Mervyn Bishop of East Bristol Allotment Association for the overrun.