



## **Friends of Troopers Hill Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2007, 7.15pm to 9.00pm  
The Parlour, Wesley Memorial Church, Bryants Hill**

Attending: Susan (Chair) Rob (WPO) Val (Treasurer) Sally (BCC) John (BCC), Pete (Police Beat Manager) Richard (Community Support Officer) John, Liz, Pauline, Gill, Maureen, Phyll & Vernon, Ann, Jude, Roy, L., G. & A Hill, K Thorne, Helen (minutes).

Apologies

Kit (Memb Sec) Fabian (Cllr) Liz & Alan.

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting and made the necessary introductions.

### **Review of the Year**

Rob presented a slide show reporting on FOTH's activities during 2007

The presentation included a picture quiz, and a review of the year's works and monthly work parties in photographs. The total volunteer hours for the year had been 1182.

In relation to the award of a Green Flag in 2007, Rob thanked everyone at Bristol Parks and Bristol Contract Services, with special mention for the lizard which appeared on the judging day. He outlined the process, criteria and marking system and listed the benefits including a higher profile for the site, more investment of money, time and effort by the Council, better management and improved response to problems. The actual improvements achieved were highlighted with particular reference to the presence of Julian Thomas for two days a week. He gave a brief explanation of the management plan and how it divided the territory into eleven compartments bounded by path lines each with its individual requirements. The current works were aimed at protecting heathland and grassland with ancillary objectives such as restoring path erosion. The planning application, by Bristol Parks, for a flagpole at Green Down was under consideration.

Bristol Parks were beginning another Green Flag application in January 2008 as it is a cyclical process.

Rob summarized the judges' comments from the feedback report. Troopers Hill LNR was regarded as worth a local directional sign but maybe not a brown tourist information sign, and there was discussion around the best location for signage, with reference to capacity for parking visitors' cars.

The comments made by the judges were linked to FOTH's plans for next year (see below and the 2008 events leaflet).

Contact with Bristol Parks – Sally confirmed that the Nature in the City project would be funded until August 2008. The Council's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy was being developed. FOTH had the benefit of contact with an extensive team of officers, the principal contacts were named and thanked.

Comment was also made about the following 2007 events  
Friday morning walks (Through the Seasons) led by Rob  
Tony Titchen tree gazing

Good Friday  
Music on the hill – cancelled because of poor weather.  
Bugs and Beasties  
Bat evening  
Avon Valley Walk  
Discovery Day  
Fungi Foray  
Kite Flying day

The meeting was given a resume of how FOTH's Big Lottery Grant had been spent, with special mention of the three new leaflets published – one of the group's main aims since its inception – and the BRERC training sessions on recognition of wild plants, amphibians, reptiles, birds and invertebrates.

The Awards for All Grant would be partly spent on the first "Trouping the Hill" Ceremony on 28 June 2008 and designs to improve the entrances.  
The proposals generated some debate about the relative merits of wood vs metal estate fencing resulting in a consensus tending towards metal.

It was reported that newsletters had been distributed to a current membership of 163 people, all of whom had been in touch with FOTH since February 2007. The group's web site had received contributions from far-flung correspondents around the world.

### **Photo Competition**

A display of the Photo Competition entries was followed by announcement of the winners: Under 12, Harry (7); 12 – 16, Amy: Adult (Commended) Erik (from Sweden); Graham (aka Crimescene), Liz R; and Bernard (Arts at St Aidan's).  
Adult (Winner) was Mike.

### **Financial and Constitutional Issues**

There was a presentation and explanation of the year's accounts  
A change in the constitution was required to make explicit reference to the disposal of assets upon closure of the group. It was agreed, in the event, that FOTH's assets including cash, should be donated to groups in the Bristol area having similar aims. Decisions on the actual distribution of the assets would be for the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary at the time of winding up.

Val tendered her resignation as Treasurer. The meeting expressed many thanks for the work she had done in discharging her responsibilities over four years. Jude had kindly indicated her willingness to become the new Treasurer at some time in January. Liz & Alan had resigned as Committee members but were not replaced. The following officers were elected: Susan (Chair), Helen (Secretary), Jude (Treasurer), Kit and Rob (committee members).

### **Events for 2008**

The Events Leaflet was circulated and discussion ensued.  
FOTH's plans for 2008 included a dog show in October, and the Council proposed a dog mess awareness morning earlier in the year, to engage dog owners in good clear-up practices. The meeting commented on the existing habits of dog owners and litter in general, and it was recognized that dog owners are themselves taking exercise, pick up litter and are good sources of information on the Hill. Susan pointed out that dog walkers are on Troopers Hill and Field at 7am and earlier. For the dog message awareness morning to be successful it could be useful to early.

The dog show is being funded by a donation from Beeses from ticket sales to their 2007 Beer Festival. Beeses were again thanked for their support. It was agreed that the events leaflet and publicity for events would show Beeses as a sponsor.

Future work parties would include Sunday afternoons in February and April, and some evening work parties as well as the regular monthly Saturday mornings.

There was some discussion of the problems surrounding booking numbers for guided walks. When they are too well attended not everyone has the same opportunity to hear the speaker. It was recognized that this depends a great deal upon the competence of the person leading the walk.

Other events would include a Dawn Chorus Walk at Eastwood Farm in April and Tai Chi classes, which (it was hoped) would be grant funded from the Primary Care Trust. (For further information see the Events Leaflet)

By special request Rob agreed to contact the owners of the "Bath House" off Strawberry Lane to seek their agreement for a visit by a small group of FOTH members, perhaps during April. He reported that English Heritage had visited the building and were considering a recommendation to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport either to upgrade the listing to a Grade II\* or include the garden in the entire listed site.

Date of next Work Party – 12 January 2008

Date of next Meeting - 23 January 2008.