

NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday Oct 7th 7.15 – 9pm

Online Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Rod, Adam, Susan, Margaret, Rob, Freya, Elaine

Apologies: Fabian, Rosie, Mali

1. Approve June Minutes

The June minutes were approved.

2. Projects

a. Troopers Hill Red Slide

Installation of the slide has been completed and Susan is really pleased with the work. Follow up work on the surfacing and landscaping was needed as it was not to the level required by the council. The new surface is less prone to weeds coming through it than the surfacing used in the original play area.

Susan kept in close contact with the parks team through-out to get the works completed before the wet weather.

The group all thanked Susan for the time and effort she has put into making the project happen and getting it completed.

b. Path to Troopers Hill chimney from Troopers Hill Field

The council have said path improvement works will be undertaken between Troopers Hill Field and the bench as you walk towards the chimney. Unfortunately, there is not enough money available for the works to go all the way to the chimney.

A local family has been in touch to sponsor a bench following a family bereavement. The bench along the path needs replacing. When path improvement works are undertaken, the bench will be replaced with the new one sponsored by the family.

Susan has added a note to the bench to let people know it will be getting replaced.

c. New Fundraiser

The last 3 years of extra winter works have been funded from National Lottery grant money. There is no more money available this year and therefore Susan would like to launch a fund raiser to raise £2,000 so winter works can continue.

The group discussed a few ideas, using the red slide event to raise funds and

donations for corporate work parties.

d. Highlighting the entrance to Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve

A year ago, the group had some discussions about creating something to highlight the entrance to Troopers Hill from Troopers Hill field. It was thought that Troopers Hill could easily be missed by people in the field and not know what is beyond.

Susan showed some examples she had seen last year in a London deer park.

Susan is going to start asking local people if they think this is a good idea, if they are interested in a project, what they might like, or might not like to have.

3. Nature Conservation work on Troopers Hill

a. Nature conservation work parties

Two work parties were completed in July, one in August and another in September. A lot has been done and there is still a lot more that can be done over the winter. Rob and Susan will review with Bristol Parks to see what volunteers can do through work parties, what the council should do and whether we can get any money for Green Mantle to do any works.

The next work parties will be on Thursday 14th October led by Neil and Saturday October 23rd led by Adam.

b. Thoughts about the Greendown Oak

The group had some discussion about the large oak that collapsed at the Greendown entrance which is now completely covered in bramble.

The stump is not in the best of condition for regenerating and children are no longer playing on it. Leaving the bramble and letting it overgrow can provide shelter for birds and protect new shoots if they do grow.

The consensus was to leave it, see if it regenerates and see what happens.

c. Photo monitoring

Rob met with Rupert and his wife from Wessex Ecological consultancy who are currently undertaking surveys of all sites of nature conservation interest.

Rupert will have completed the photo monitoring and Rob expects the report to be produced and shared in the autumn/winter when he is less busy.

4. History Research

Rob has been researching Martha Emra and the Emra family. Martha wrote a book about life in the Emra family which is based in St George. Her father was the vicar of St George church in 1809. The Emra family were very religious and had relations with slave owners in St Kitts.

Susan and Rob are going to the records office in Taunton which has Martha's book along with some extra pictures.

Rob added a page to the website with more information about the family.

5. Events

a. Celebration for Troopers Hill Slide

Susan is arranging a low-key celebration event for the completion of the Red Slide on Sunday October 24th. There will be a Gazebo which will display information about the project and its fundraising. Artworks from the art competition will be arranged around the play area.

The event will start at 11 and will be attended by Jo Webster Greene who was the biggest donor.

Susan will create posters, post on next door and inform people who donated.

b. Moth Night

This weekend, a moth related event is being run by Bristol University about the lives of moths.

c. Planning events and meetings for 2022

Stargazing on the hill has been cancelled for the last 2 years, once because of bad weather and the second time because of the pandemic. Rod asked if we are interested in a star gazing event being run this winter (Feb / March) by the Bristol Astronomical Society on Troopers Hill.

The group agreed we would like to do this. Susan said she would need to check with the council about signing off the event and Rod will enquire with the Astronomical Society.

The Methodist church is open again where Troopers Hill meetings were previously held before the pandemic. Some discussion was had about whether we should continue running meetings in person, move back to the church or have some form of

rotation between the two. The group agreed the meetings on zoom are working very well but it was highlighted that could make it more difficult for other members of the public to join.

Susan will consider and may do a vote with members to get a broader view.

Some discussion was had about events next year that included walking for health, dawn chorus, fungi walk, Avon walk, bugs and beasties. It's now possible to run events again. It was discussed if a 2022 planning meeting was needed. The group didn't feel that it was. Susan will follow up and start making plans with emails.

d. Prepare for AGM

Susan will contact each of the committee members to see if they are happy continuing as committee members and check the meetings are the right frequency.

6. Networking

a. RHS South West in Bloom - IYN and Pride in Parks

Rob thanked Margaret who met with him and the RHS chair when they visited to assess the hill for South West in Bloom.

Pride in parks will be in March next year.

7. St George Strollers

The Initial walks have gone very well and there is now a continuing programme of 2 walks a month.

The ramblers are rebranding walking for health to wellbeing walks. All walk leaders have to do a 90-minute transition training session.

Walkers are pleased to be able to go walking again and it's helping a lot of people – especially ones who have been social isolated.

8. AOB

The RHS "it's your neighbourhood" results have been released on online and Troopers Hill have been awarded level 5 outstanding. We will get a certificate in due course.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be the AGM held from 7.15pm-9pm on Thursday 2nd December 2021.