



Bristol Parks Forum

representing resident led parks groups and city wide organisations
involved in protecting and improving Bristol's green spaces

BPF

Present:

Fraser Bridgeford Castle Park

Hugh Holden Mina Rd Park

Roland Bruce Mina Rd Park

Angela James MVCG

Vassili Papastavrou Bristol Street Trees

Clive Stevens RCAS

Marie Jo Coutanche MVCG

Andre Coutanche MVCG

Janet Carr Hyde Gores Marshalls

Mil Lusk Buried treasure

Julia Tutton Northern Slopes

George Denford Withywood Park Group

Maggie Hughes Kingfisher Gp/Save the Malago

Christopher Baggot St John's
Community Assoc

Ben Barker Greater Bedminster CP

Mike Primarolo GBCP, WHCF FCFCG

Lesley Alexander Activate Fishponds

Nancy Carlton Kingfisher Gp/ Save the Malago

Sue Flint Friends of S Purdown

Sheila Stevens Bristol in Bloom

Note Laurie Bingle also present on 19th April 2008

Ann Bingle Avon Gardens Trust

Laurie Bingle Avon Gardens Trust

Dave Williams WW2H/ Snuff Mills Action Gp

Alison Bromilow RCAS

Mary Bannerman Quaker Burial Gdn/Castle Pk

Lois Goddard Redland Green Community Gp

Alan Jones FLAG

Becky Johnson Grounds4change

Tim Hughes St George Park

John Purkiss Frogs & Franc

Eileen Stonebridge F of Old Sneed Park NR

Dennis Stuckey Callington Rd NR

Angela Stuckey Callington NR

Rob Acton-Campbell Frnds of Eastwood Farm

Susan Acton-Campbell Fo Troopers Hill

Diana Porter Fo Badocks Wood

Alan Aburrow Fo Badocks Wood

Gordon Tucker Bristol Civic Society

Richard Fletcher BCC Parks

Peter Wilkinson BCC Parks

| 1 | Area Green Space Plans (AGSP) Richard Fletcher | ACTION |
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| | <p>RF reported that the first AGSP had started in Brislington. Lessons learnt would mean that the process would be tweaked for later AGSP. The first meeting identified themes and issues; aspects of the spatial character of the existing space were identified to be preserved or changed. AGSP to identify type of existing green space and aim to provide types in accordance with PGSS.</p> <p>The first AGSP officer would be in post by the end August and 2 more officers are being sought. Officers would visit all parks before AGSP meetings.</p> | |

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| <p>It was noted that Callington Road reps were missed from invitation list to first meeting. They would be involved in future meetings.</p> <p>JCH pointed out there was a problem that the AGSP process was slowing down start of new group's project. RF acknowledged that this was possible, as each AGSP would be done in turn and it was important that no project was carried out that later was identified in the AGSP as redundant; however he was aware of time pressures especially for expenditure of Section 106 money which is time limited. PW pointed out there would be many new play areas across the city – it was important they were in the right places. NC asked whether Area Green Space Plans will take precedence (in terms of identifying the need for a green space) over other competing needs e.g. land required to deliver Rapid Transit Systems. Not necessarily – other competing needs may inform AGSPs rather than be 'governed' by them – Rapid Transit will come out of Bristol Development Framework and will have to be fed into the AGSP programme.</p> <p>Brislington and Knowle consultation will not be rushed despite taking longer than programmed. The AGSP will inform the Bristol Devt Framework so the programme end date is governed by that.</p> <p>A CD of information about the PGSS and AGSP is given to groups as part of the AGSP consultation process and information is available on the council website under "Parks and Green Spaces Strategy > next steps" and on BPF website.</p> | <p>RF</p> |
| <p>Parks Procurement Review and Parks internal review Peter Wilkinson</p> | |
| <p>The Grounds Maintenance and Parks and Green Space strategies were adopted in February 2008. From 1 April 2009 Bristol Contract Services will be integrated into and managed by Parks Service. Ashton Court, the Downs and the North and East Area Contracts will come in house. It is hoped that this will provide efficiencies and improve response. The South area contract will be re-let to outside contractors in Jan 2009. This area is not being brought in-house because there is not yet capacity in the organisational structure in the parks service to manage the whole city. If there is a decision in the future to bring the South area in house this can be done in a stepped and managed way. A dedicated woodland and wildlife team is being created under the parks review to ensure better quality.</p> <p>Some management issues to do with taking over the schools contract and Blaise nursery business still remain to be decided; a training programme for new recruits is important – and will start in Spring 2009. There is potential to build up the school grounds service for wildlife and education purposes for the new South contract.</p> <p>PW said there was the intention to involve stakeholders in South Bristol in the letting of the contract but it was noted that there were time pressures. A number of grounds maintenance contractors were being evaluated and a shortlist would be identified. The closing date for tenders is 15 September. A member of the BPF could join the Panel and help to evaluate them and sit in on interviews, to be held on or around 8-10 October. If the contract tenders come in over expectations the Cabinet would have to reconsider. A shadow bid from the in-house team would be used to check the rates. This could still be considered if outside contractors bids are too high.</p> <p>There is still a debate about the weighting of price and quality i.e. 60/40 or 70/30</p> <p>Contract will probably specify at least 16 grass cuts per year and a set</p> | |

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| <p>frequency in the fast growing period. This should be improvement over present contract. Contract would run for 5 years with an option to extend. The role of park keepers was being redrafted, would include sports attendant duties and monitoring of toilets etc - though toilets would also have a separate contract. Graffiti and Fly tipping would be dealt with by a central team. Team leaders for contractor would relate to Neighbourhood Partnership areas.</p> <p>The Community Parks Manager role would possibly need to be different for the in-house and outside contract areas. This would be picked up in next BPF meeting.</p> <p>Q. How will work improve if it is the same workforce? A. Training will be needed and a recognition that staff have been deskilled and demotivated by constant change of contractor. Q. Have workforce been involved in contract development process? A. Yes BCS staff have – not possible with Continental Landscapes’ staff. Parks have had a session involving CL and BCS and will talk with Trade Unions.</p> | <p>FB/RF</p> |
| <p>Community Action Toolkit Richard Fletcher</p> | |
| <p>RF asked for feedback if BPF thought something was missing. Next BPF meeting would have workshop on this. There are a number of documents included including how to set up a practical activity, how to be a chairperson etc all available on the BPF website. www.bristolparksforum.org.uk</p> <p>Q. Why don't CPMs go to group meetings? A. There are too many groups for this to be a commitment but CPMs will try to attend meetings when invited. Q. How is response to report of damage/vandalism prioritised? A. By Health and Safety priority</p> | <p>ALL</p> |
| <p>Save Malago Valley Nancy Carlton/ Colin Knight BCC Head of Transport Operations</p> | |
| <p>NC described the path of the Malago Greenway pedestrian and cycle route from Dundry to the City Centre. One of the short-listed proposals in the West of England partnership Joint Transport Plan shows this route as a possible rapid transit bus route. This would be in direct conflict with policies of improving walking and cycling and of cohesive communities.</p> <p>CK explained that the consultant’s report followed the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS), and the views expressed in that report have not been formally adopted by BCC. . There is a need under the regional Spatial Strategy to provide 100,000 new dwellings and there is therefore pressure on Bristol to provide a better public transport system. There is money for a better Greater Bristol bus network and the number of showcase bus routes is being increased. Studies are being carried out to look at the re-allocation of road space and work is being done with interest groups including local businesses to balance the needs of all sections of the community. No-one in council or West of England has yet taken a decision on the location of the 4 Rapid Transit corridors identified in GBSTS. The SW route from Long Ashton to the city centre are corridors to be consulted on in September / October. The NW route from Emerson’s Green is currently shelved. The type of rapid transit vehicle is also not decided on and a report on the available technologies is still under way. Although Showcase represents a major step forward, a service that is largely segregated from other traffic is essential if people are to be persuaded to use public transport instead of cars. There are still lots of options to discuss.</p> | |

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| <p>Q. At what point can we engage to have influence on route chosen. A Consultation timetable will be early 2009. A West of England Joint Committee for transport is being established. The process for obtaining DfT funding requires 3 separate submissions, each incorporating either formal or informal consultation with the public and stakeholders. Probable earliest date of construction is 2012.</p> <p>Q. Why can't we use exiting rail system? A. This is a possibility especially with the introduction of tram trains that can use both special track and existing rail network. BCC still support rail network e.g Severn Beach line. But there are issues with charges for new station construction e.g. for Park and Ride at Shirehampton. Q. How can fares be made more affordable? A. Transport Act does now allow Local Authority to set fares. BCC already spends £3 million on supporting public services at night and weekends. Q. Number of proposed buses along route will spoil enjoyment of Greenspace. Won't bus pollute air along greenways? A. The type of R.T. technology not yet decided but will not be the present bus system. There is a review of technology in September. Reduction of air pollution will be a major consideration in proposed public transport strategy. Bristol has worse congestion than comparable cities. Getting people out of cars and onto public transport will be a major factor in achieving better air quality throughout Bristol.</p> <p>CK . Whatever Bristol does it cannot impact on the routes for cycling and walking – Bristol status as Cycle city is important. The corridors will have a number of route options investigated and a strong and robust business case for each route has to be made. Stops will have to be located where there is a demand for travel, may mean that route along greenway is not best solution. Will all have to be evaluated and presented to Department of Transport. Q. How can Bristol get an integrated transport Authority? A. Would require change in legislation and the partnering authorities to be on board. This would need political support.</p> <p>Hugh H asked for a vote on statement "Bristol Parks Forum opposes the Malago Route" majority for motion, 1 against.</p> <p>Q. Will transport requirements override Area Green Space Plans? A. May do though AGSP will be a material consideration. Fraser B summed up, thanking Colin K for coming to the meeting, and noted that this was a political decision making process that we would have to influence.</p> | |
| <p>Charter Mark Peter Wilkinson</p> | |
| <p>Charter Mark is given for Organisational Excellence; Green Flag is Park specific. Charter Mk has 60 criteria, assessor talks to staff and Forum members. Tests are against National Standards. RF had contacted groups that had extensive experience with working with Parks. Charter Mk result was that there was partial compliance, Bristol Parks are given 6 months to remedy. One of feedback points was that Parks was not working effectively in its relationships with parks groups and with tree enquiries. BPF would like to be better involved with the Charter Mark process over the 6 month compliance period. Q. Was Charter Mark application premature? A. Assessment will inform parks review process. S A-C noted that Sally Oldfield's role in communications was pivotal, could the L.N.R. post be conserved and make permanent? Inter-departmental communication not good. Parks only heard about Bristol and Bath railway track proposal through the press. BB noted that Parks communications with community</p> | |

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| | was good compared to other departments. | |
| | Community Parks Group Protocol PW, RF | |
| | PW explained that the need for the protocol came out of a large project from a group and that it does not cover small projects such as installing an interpretative sign or a bench. RF reported that the protocol that had been presented at the last Forum meeting had been updated and the volunteer BPF members were going to meet Sue Lukenhouse to look at it. Will bring it to next Forum meeting. PW reported that Parks was trying to recruit more people for Sue L. Team including landscape architects. | |
| | PGSS life cycle maintenance funding RF | |
| | RF reported that Richard Mond, head of Parks, Estates and Sports had responded to the suggestion that money from land disposals should be put into an independently managed fund. He had pointed out that a separate cabinet decision would be needed to change the present arrangement. The present system promises a good rate of return that may not be possible under a trust and there will be costs involved in managing the trust. The process will be transparent and BPF can lobby if there is a danger that money may be used wrongly. MP suggested researching Quartet fund for performance comparison. Money will then be protected in case of political change. BPF agreed to ask RM to look at a mechanism to protect funds and generate a good rate of interest. If he could find one that was comparable to the present financial arrangement BPF could then decide whether to ask cabinet to make the decision to change. | |
| | AOB | |
| | Dave W reported the setting up of a new group called the Snuff Mills Action group. There had been 3 meetings so far and the group had carried out work days and site audits with Caroline Hollies the community parks manager. | |
| | Q. If Richard Fletcher moved job to work on Area Gree Space plans would he be replaced. A. There is a freeze on council posts at present so PW would have to make a case for his replacement. BPF would support replacement. | |
| | Neighbourhood Partnerships are being set up across Bristol and have funding of £5,000 per ward which Parks Groups could apply for. Key people to contact will be ward councillors. | |
| | Dave Jones asked whether Parks could find out who owns land at Briarway. | PW |
| | Terms of reference of Bristol Parks Forum needed updating. This would be a topic for future BPF meeting. R A-C asked that everyone looked at the TOR and came with comments for the next meeting. | ALL |
| | Q. Who sends out information to BPF groups? A. R A-C sends out emails and keeps BPF website updated. RF sends out emails and surface mail for BCC. | |
| | Next meeting agenda additional items: Parks events and Insurance Toolkit feedback Interesting group projects. | |

Post-meeting note:

"A new organisational structure for Bristol Parks to deliver the Grounds Maintenance function across the city is being put forward under the Parks Review. This is going out to consultation on 9 September 2008, and you will be able to find out more details via the Parks website at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Parks-and-open-spaces/review-of-bristol-parks-and-bristol-contract-services-grounds-maintenance-teams.en> at this time. There will be a Parks Review specific email address that can be used to communicate any feedback.

Comments are welcomed, and there will be a session focussing on the Parks Review with the Parks Forum at the **Southville Centre on Saturday 13th September, 10-00 a.m until 12-00 midday.**

Please can you contact helen.rossington@bristol.gov.uk or ring 0117 922 3719 if you wish to attend this session."

**Date of next Forum meeting – Saturday 11th October
9-30am to 12-30pm at Windmill Hill City Farm**

**If you have any agenda items you want included please contact Catherine Newman
on 0117 922 3719 or Catherine.newman@bristol.gov.uk**