



Bristol Parks Forum

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2012 at Windmill Hill City Farm

Attendees

AA - Alan Aburrow - Friends of Badock's Woods, **AB** - Alison Bromilow - RCAS, **AC** - Andre Coutanche - Malago Valley Conservation Group, **AD** - Alison Devonshire - Friends of Elderberry, **AStansbie** - Angela Stansbie - Friends of Brandon Hill, **AS** - Angela Stuckley - Callington Road Nature Reserve, **BF** - Bob Franks - Northern Slopes Initiative, **CH** - Cheryl Hawkins - Friends of Stoke Lodge, **CN** - Catherine Newman - Admin Officer (BCC), **CS** - Clive Stevens - Bishopston, Cotham and Redland NP, **CW** - Chris Williams - SMAG, **DH** - Derek Hawkins - Friends of Stoke Lodge, **DJ** - Denise James - Area Environment Officer (BCC), **DMartyn** - David Martyn - Kings Weston Action Group, **DM** - Dave Mayer - Save Stoke Lodge Parkland, **DP** - Diana Porter - Bedminster Down and Upland Society, **DS** - Denis Stuckley - Callington Road Nature Reserve, **GB** - Gill Brown - Civic Society, **GD** - George Denford - Withywood Park Group, **GH** - Cllr Gary Hopkins - Friends of Redcatch Park, **GT** - Gordon Tucker - Civic Society, **HH** - Hugh Holden - Civic Society, **HW** - Heather Williams - Friends of Hartcliffe Millennium Green, **JCliffe** - Jim Cliffe - Planning Obligations Project Manager (BCC) **JC** - Jane Cunningham - Walking for Health, **JM** - John Mayne - Friends of St Andrews Park, **JT** - Julian Thomas - Friends of Eastwood Farm, **LA** - Lesley Alexander - Activate Fishponds, **LG** - Lois Goddard - Redland Green Community Group, **MB** - Mary Bannerman - Castle Park User Group, **MC** - Marie Jo Coutanche - Malago Valley Conservation Group, **MP** - Matt Postles - Bristol Natural History Consortium, **MS** - Mary Skyes - MVCG, **MW** - Monica Whyte - Bristol in Bloom, **NC** - Nancy Carlton - Kingfisher Group (chair), **PC** - Pete Clark - Assistant Parks Operations Manager (BCC), **PH** - Pat Harrison - Friends of Elderberry, **PJ** - Pam Jones - Service Manager - Environment & Leisure (BCC), **RAC** - Rob Acton-Campbell - Friends of Troopers Hill, **RB** - Roland Bruce - Mina Road Park Group, **RS** - Richard Stransom - Parks Operations Manager (BCC), **SAC** - Susan Acton-Campbell - Friends of Troopers Hill, **SE** - Steve England - Stoke Park, **SPerry** - Steve Perry - Friends of St Andrews Park, **ST** - Sam Thomson - Friends of Horfield Common, **VS** - Viv Showering - Friends of Redcatch Park, **WP** - Wendy Pollard - Avon Gardens Trust

Apologies

BB - Ben Barker - Greater Bedminster Community Partnership, **FB** - Fraser Bridgeford - Castle Park / Friends of Brandon Hill, **ES** - Eileen Stonebridge - Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve, **JC** - Jo Corke - Friends of St Andrews Park, **JP** - John Purkiss - Friends of Avon New Cut, **MM** - Mike Meecham - Friends of Hebron Burial Ground, **PA** - Pauline Allen - Friends of Brandon Hill, **RF** - Richard Fletcher - AGSP Manager (BCC)

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>NC introduced the BPF Committee Members.</p>	
2. 2.1	<p><u>Guest Speaker - Cllr Guy Poultney, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods</u></p> <p><u>Introduction to the department</u></p> <p>Cllr GP's remit within Neighbourhoods includes - Neighbourhood Partnerships, Community cohesion and equalities, pest control and fisheries.</p>	
2.2	<p><u>Are NP's Working?</u></p> <p>Cllr GP acknowledged that some NP's are working more effectively than others for different reasons.</p> <p>The main areas of concern across the city are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict between some Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Committees • Capacity to deliver the priorities of the 14 different NP's • Lack of representation at NP's from all interested parties 	
2.3	<p><u>Any plans to review NPs?</u></p> <p>Cllr GP advised that NP's are constantly under review.</p> <p>Issues that are currently being reviewed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Neighbourhood Committees and Neighbourhood Partnerships work together • How NP's work together i.e. on decisions that affect more than one NP area • How all user groups/ interested parties can feed into NP Forums 	
2.4	<p><u>Future budget pressures</u></p> <p>Cllr GP acknowledged that there are budget pressures. The new ways of working team are looking at efficiencies to ensure that frontline services are protected.</p>	
2.5	<p><u>Update on process for decisions by NPs on P&GSS disposals</u></p> <p>Cabinet will devolve decisions regarding disposals to Neighbourhood Committee in January.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Committees will be asked to make decisions in the meetings held in March.</p>	
2.6 2.6.1	<p><u>Questions and Answers</u></p> <p><i>Why has the deadline for P&GSS disposals been put back until March?</i></p>	

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	Cllr GP explained that the 2 month delay allows time for the committees and wards to make decisions.	
2.6.2	<p><i>Can s106 be transferred across NP's boundaries i.e. If a development is on the border of 2 NP's?</i></p> <p>Cllr GP agreed to get clarification following the meeting.</p> <p>It was also agreed that a separate meeting would be arranged to discuss s106 funding for the Bear Pit.</p>	Cllr GP
2.6.3	<p><i>Will the income from disposals go into a central pot or be devolved to NP's? There is a concern that some NP's won't receive any funding for development.</i></p> <p>Cllr GP agreed that a funds will need to allocated fairly between NP's and the central pot. How this is formulated will need to be decided by Cabinet.</p>	
2.6.4	<p><i>Concerns were raised that designated Wildlife sites are on the list for disposals.</i></p> <p>Cllr GP advised park groups to raise these issues with their local Councillors.</p>	
2.6.5	<p><i>Concerns were raised that some sites are being disposed of through the Site Allocation Process not the AGSP.</i></p> <p>Cllr GP and GH clarified that the Site Allocation Process states planning legalities and identifies the purpose of the land i.e. residential/ commercial. The AGSP identifies sites that are surplus to requirements that could lead to disposal.</p> <p><i>It was noted by the BPF that consulting on both at the same time has led to confusion and that in 2008 it was requested that these were carried out separately.</i></p>	
2.6.6	<p><i>Are decisions relating to Destination Parks made by the local NP's?</i></p> <p>Cllr GP explained that whilst there are city wide strategies in place, local residents will still be able to influence decisions through their local NP.</p>	
2.6.7	<p><i>Are there any plans to introduce a more democratic approach to electing NP members?</i></p> <p>Cllr GP explained that members are only able to influence decisions, it is the ward Councillors that make financial decisions.</p> <p><i>It was noted that the process for electing members differs across NP's which seems to be determining the effectiveness of the NP.</i></p>	
2.6.8	<p><i>How can Park groups obtain central funding?</i></p> <p>Cllr GP suggested that groups contact their local AEO or NHS Health Worker.</p>	

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<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p>	<p><u>Bristol Parks Operations</u></p> <p><u>Is the new structure working?</u></p> <p>It's early days but PJ feels that the new structure is working well. The Area Environment Officers (AEO) have started to build relationships with park users and have started to identify the issues that need working on.</p> <p>It was noted that in general, enquiries relating to maintenance should be directed to Miles Harris (South and Central) or Jerry Cole (North and East) (previously known as CPO's) and strategic enquiries should be directed to the AEO's.</p> <p>PJ explained that AEO's can help with a wide range of enquiries, including complex issues that involve liaising with a number of Officers. However, park users are still able to contact other Parks Officers if they wish to do so.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that the AEO's are having difficulty in engaging with other departments. PJ explained that the departments within Environment and Leisure are working closely together and hopes that this structure will influence other services.</p>	
<p>3.2</p>	<p><u>Have we seen an end to Parks Reorganisation?</u></p> <p>PJ confirmed that there aren't any plans to review the structure in the near future. However, minor changes may be made when the structure is formalised and the AEO's are formally appointed - this should take place within the next couple of weeks. Until this time, PJ can't confirm that the AEO's will remain covering their current areas.</p>	
<p>3.3</p>	<p><u>Update on P&GSS finances</u></p> <p>Cllr GH stated that there will be a strategic decision making process in place to ensure that funding is allocated fairly and not solely dependant on the land disposals in an area.</p>	
<p>3.4</p>	<p><u>Bristol Parks Budget</u></p> <p>Cllr GH said that cabinet would be asked to approve £3.5m additional capital for parks at the next cabinet meeting on 26th January. This will fund strategic, city wide investments.</p>	
<p>3.5</p>	<p><u>Measuring performance, comparison between in-house team and contractors, methods used, results</u></p> <p>Management are looking at ways to measure whether the contract specification is being met and if this in turn meets park user's needs.</p>	
<p>3.6</p>	<p><u>'Fix it' team - availability, programme of work</u></p> <p>This wasn't discussed in detail but PJ confirmed that the Fix-it team is working well and effectively managing a large workload.</p> <p>PJ welcomed feedback/ comments from the park groups.</p>	

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3.7	<p><u>Update on Cafes</u></p> <p>PJ advised that a decision has been made to manage the 2 kiosks and 4 cafes in-house. This will hopefully offer an opportunity to engage and work with young people.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 - Briefing from Jim Cliffe, S106/CIL officer</u></p> <p>Overview:</p> <p>Central Government has decided to replace S106 with CIL to mitigate the impact of growth following development.</p> <p>CIL will be charged per square metre of a new building.</p> <p>It is predicted that eventually £4m will be secured through CIL.</p> <p>CIL will fund public sector infrastructure but won't be ringfenced to a particular area. However, a percentage will be devolved back into NP effected by the development. This percentage will depend on the local population and how this is spent will be decided by the NP.</p> <p>Councillors will decide on how the majority of CIL is spent, depending on strategic priorities.</p> <p>The portion of strategic funding allocated to Parks has not yet been decided.</p> <p>S106 funding will still be obtained to support site specific mitigation measures including trees.</p> <p>CIL will be paid on commencement of a development or if over £35k in instalments over 18 months.</p> <p>Any developments that are agreed prior to the adoption of CIL will remain subject to S106.</p>	
5. 5.1	<p><u>Green Spaces and Development</u></p> <p><u>Timeline for site allocations</u></p> <p>AB confirmed that the next round of consultations for site allocations will take place on 23rd March.</p> <p>The consultation for Central Area Action plan is due to start on the 24th February.</p>	
5.2	<p><u>Update on Knowle West</u></p> <p>The regeneration programme will be dependant on whether town and village green status is granted to Filwood Park.</p> <p>If granted, £4m will have to be paid back to developers which will affect regeneration plans.</p>	
5.3	<p><u>BCC Town Greens Consultation and Updates</u></p> <p>Filwood Park - the inspectors report has advised against Town</p>	

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	<p>Green status, an appeal may follow this decision.</p> <p>Grove Wood - the inspectors report is due on Monday.</p> <p>Ashton Vale - the inspector reported in favour of town green status. The PROWG committee decided to declare only half of site as a town green. This decision is now going to Judicial review.</p>	
5.4	<p><u>Events Update</u></p> <p>It has been agreed that the £30 fee for small events will be waived for events organised by park groups that are supported by Parks.</p> <p>The forum thanked RAC for his work with the events team that has led to this decision.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Bristol in Bloom / It's Your Neighbourhood</u></p>	
6.1	<p>DJ and MW gave a presentation on how park groups can help improve local green spaces as part of Bristol In Bloom - It's your Neighbourhood initiative.</p>	
6.2	<p><u>City wide litter picking day</u></p> <p>DS will be organising a city wide litter picking day. Park groups that are interested in participating should contact RAC.</p>	
7.	<p><u>AOB</u></p>	
7.1	<p><u>Stoke Park</u></p> <p>SE advised the forum that Stoke Park is now in the ownership of Bristol City Council.</p>	
7.2	<p><u>Castle Park</u></p> <p>It was requested that Castle Park is considered as a designated city centre park rather than a local park.</p> <p>GH undertook to ensure this happened and agreed the NP funding route was not suitable for a Park of city-wide importance.</p> <p>MB advised that the AEO is currently working to refurbish the benches and notice boards and arranging tree works.</p> <p>It was requested that this work is covered when the current AEO goes on long-term leave.</p>	
7.3	<p><u>Maintenance costs for new infrastructure</u></p> <p>At a previous meeting it was noted that commuted sums need to be obtained to fund the ongoing maintenance of new facilities. PC will confirm details at the next meeting.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u> -Saturday 21st April 2012</p> <p>Venue - TBC</p>	