



Bristol Parks Forum

representing resident led
park groups and citywide organisations
involved in protecting and improving
Bristol's green spaces

Statement on Constitution and Governance

Bristol Parks Forum (BPF) intend to use Bristol's European Green Capital Year as a catalyst to develop the Park Forum's role, activities and impact in the city; to move it forward as a dynamic, volunteer-led and managed organisation and make it a more active champion for the network of volunteer-led organisations functioning as custodians for Bristol's green spaces in every area of the city.

To support the achievement of this aim, BPF is applying for a number of Green Capital Strategic Grants from Bristol 2015, and additional external funding to enable us to make considerable progress towards this in Bristol's Green Capital Year.

BPF was established in 2003 as an umbrella organisation for community park groups and organisations in the city with an interest in their local parks and green spaces. It was initiated by Bristol Parks (part of Bristol City Council) and the forum is still supported by Bristol City Council but is now run independently and is currently the only 'community voice' that is dedicated to all of Bristol's green spaces. BPF was included in the bid for Bristol's Green Capital award as an example of the way in which Bristol is leading Europe in terms of engagement with citizens across the city.

To date, BPF has focused on encouraging our member groups to apply for funds to benefit their individual spaces, and therefore we have not managed our own funding nor formally delivered any city-wide projects, although we have facilitated large numbers of these, and have considerable experience of working collaboratively with our members who are volunteer-led and run groups working in all 14 Neighbourhood Partnership areas of the city.

Motivated by Bristol's achievement of the European Green Capital award, and in response to a review of our work to date, BPF now plans to strategically develop our work as a fully independent body so that we are able to initiate, develop and deliver city wide initiatives, and more effectively lead and co-ordinate work across the city which supports volunteers to achieve more effective outcomes which benefit and deliver improved outcomes for our green spaces and wildlife.

To this end at our AGM on 11th October 2014 we updated our terms of reference to allow us to have our own bank account, and agreed to establish rigorous financial procedures which will allow BPF to raise and manage our own funds. This bank account is being set up and will be in place by the end of November 2014.

We are now in the process of putting in place the necessary financial and other procedures and policies to enable the Parks Forum to manage all funding independently.

The Parks Forum committee members are all volunteers and we come from a range of backgrounds in our professional lives. Individually and collectively, we have considerable experience of managing grants for our own park groups (including for example grants awarded through Bristol City Council's Neighbourhood Partnerships and grants awarded by charitable trusts and foundation). Individual volunteers have extensive experience of managing large grants and of working in partnership with external organisations to deliver outcomes. Additionally individual members of the BPF committee have considerable experience of establishing, and developing organisational structures (including financial, policy and legal requirements) which we will draw on to ensure that these are in place, effective and robust.

For any funding secured through applications to the Green Capital Strategic (and other) funding stream, we will have sufficiently robust financial policies and procedures in place for the grant money to be properly managed and accounted for, and will be happy to share these with you prior to any funding being awarded.

As a volunteer-led and managed group, BPF do not intend to employ anyone directly; we will work with partners such as BNHC to employ people on our behalf where required and have agreement for this from decision-makers in partner organisations to do this for any projects which require this as part of our programme of work in support of Bristol's European Green Capital Year 2015.

Environmental management and sustainability plan

As an organisation based in Bristol and with the care of Bristol's green spaces as its central aim, Bristol Parks Forum fully supports the Bristol 2015 Sustainability Principles.

Our meetings are held at Windmill Hill City Farm - a central location which enables sustainable travel by our members, supports a local environmental charity (which aligns fully with our, and Bristol 2015's ethos) and enables easy access for members from all areas of Bristol.

Bristol Parks Forum projects (in 2015 and beyond) will follow the Bristol 2015 Sustainability Principles, and BPF will seek to actively promote these through our membership.

BPF will encourage all of our individual member groups to adopt these principles, and will require any member groups participating in projects or activities funded through BPF (including through Green Capital grant funding) to sign up to, and follow these.

Bristol Parks Forum Committee
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