

05 January 2014 - No 141

Happy New Year!

Park Groups - even if you don't have time to read the rest of this update, please read the section below on the Green Capital Partnership, there is a deadline of 9th January on the action we would like you to take.

In this update: Budget Consultation - Green Capital Partnership Please Pledge & Vote - Tree Forum - More New Websites - Town Green Update

Budget Consultation

The response to the budget consultation put together by the BPF Committee and submitted before last week's closing date can be seen on our website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/bpf-response-to-budget-consultation/

Green Capital Partnership Please Pledge & Vote

You may remember that during our meeting on 5th October (when we spoke to the Mayor) we had a presentation from Alex Minshull about the Green Capital Partnership and that he urged the Parks Forum and park groups to sign the Green Capital Pledge 'to help make Bristol a low carbon city with a high quality of life'. www.bristolgreencapital.org/contact/pledge/

At our meeting the following week there were concerns raised about whether the BPF should sign the pledge without the implications being properly considered. We also noted that the forms organisations are asked to use to show they are complying with the pledge are aimed at businesses and are of very little relevance to community groups with no employees.

Since those meetings Nancy has been along to some of the Green Capital Partnership meetings. The partnership is currently being re-organised to set up sub-groups to focus on particular sectors, these groups will then feed into a steering group that will create the partnership's strategy and work with the company that is being set up to run Bristol Green Capital 2015.

Having considered the issues, the BPF committee agreed that it is important that the BPF and Park Groups have a say in the plans for 2015 and that to do this we need to be part of the partnership. Being members may also help us access funds to benefit green spaces in 2015. Given the current re-organisation it is clearly also to our benefit to join now and have a say in how the partnership is set up.

Signing the pledge is the way that organisations become members of the Green Capital Partnership and the Bristol Parks Forum has therefore signed the pledge and is now a member of the Partnership. You can see the full list of members on their website at www.bristolgreencapital.org/about/pledgers/

The BPF committee would also like as many Park Groups as possible to sign the pledge to become members of the Green Capital Partnership to further increase our influence.

The partnership is now holding elections for Chair and Vice Chair and Fraser has agreed to stand

for Vice Chair on behalf of the BPF. The elections will be by a secret ballot of member organisations (ie those that have signed the pledge) and will take place from the 10th - 16th January via email. If your group is able to sign the pledge before noon on 9th January (Thursday) then you will get a vote in that ballot.

Bristol Tree Forum

Dear Friend of Bristol's Trees - Just to let you know there is a TreeForum meeting on 13th Jan (6.05pm until 8pm, City Hall) where we will be looking at the tree program for primary schools, the implications of the 30% budget cuts, deciding on our committee and electing the Chair and Vice Chair(s). If you wish to stand for either role please email richard.ennion@bristol.gov.uk by 9am on 13th Jan.

If you wish to make a public forum statement please email me a paragraph by midday on the 10th. We will allow 5 mins of discussion on any/each topic (max 6).

All the best – Clive Stevens (Chair, Bristol TreeForum).

PS – new (draft) tree forum website on www.euronova.co.uk/BristolTreeForum.htm - from where you can download the agenda for the meeting.

More New Websites

Two park groups concerned with Bristol's fantastic estates have launched new websites for the New Year.

King Weston Action Group's site is at www.kwag.org.uk

While Stoke Park Action Group are at www.stokeparkactiongroup.org.uk

The SPAG site includes a link to a newsletter with a listing of events for the next three months.

Both sites are well worth exploring to find out more about these wonderful areas.

Town Green Update

The Mayor has said on Twitter that BCC are going to withdraw their objection to Wellington Hill Playing Field becoming a Town Green. This should lead to it being designated later this year.

Rob Acton-Campbell

www.twitter.com/RobCrewsHole

Bristol Parks Forum

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

2014 meeting dates: Sat 8th March - Sat 12th April - Sat 28th June - Sat 11 Oct

Health & Safety Training for Park Groups

A reminder about the opportunity for Health & Safety training that I mentioned in the last update before Christmas. This training is free to park groups and allows you to carry out works in Bristol's parks & green spaces using hand tools while being covered by BCC insurance.

Only those who will lead the sessions need to be trained, but it is useful to have more than one person from your group trained to cover illness etc. You will be trained to use various hand tools safely, how to carry out risk assessments and how to use the Health & Safety pack and associated forms that can be seen here www.bristol.gov.uk/parksafety

Please note - the training is valid for three years and then needs to be renewed. If members of your group have done the training before, please check that it is up to date - it surprised me to find that mine expires in February this year.

The training is being organised by Emma Bird on behalf of Richard Fletcher.

The following dates have been booked:

- Friday 24th January
- Thursday 30th January
- Friday 31st January

Please let Emma know who from your group would like to attend and on which dates.

Each session holds 10 people and will run from 10am until 3pm. Sessions will be held at the Create Centre but will only go ahead if enough bookings are received.

Emma can be contacted at emma.bird@bristol.gov.uk or phone: 0117 922 3231

Emma works the following hours:

Monday - Wednesday: 8:00am until 2:00pm

Thursday: 8:30am until 12:45pm

If you have members who want to do the training but are only able to do it at weekends then please let Emma have their names, it is hoped to organise some Saturday sessions if there is enough demand.

Rob

Rob Acton-Campbell

www.twitter.com/RobCrewsHole

Bristol Parks Forum

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

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In this update: Budget - Next BPF Meeting - Bristol Walking Festival - GoodGym Bristol - Green spaces deliver lasting mental health benefits - Hugh's email

Budget

George Ferguson's revised budget proposals were published this morning at www.bristol.gov.uk/budget

The cuts to Park maintenance and tree planting remain unchanged but the Mayor is also suggesting 'creating a £500k revenue fund for parks and play'. We have not yet seen any details of where this will be spent.

Cuts that are withdrawn include the supervision of Hengrove play area and the proposed closure of public toilets.

The majority of the cuts (£49m) come from 'Increasing business efficiency through the council's Change Programme'. These will have an impact on Bristol Parks' structure regardless of whether the other cuts go through.

The budget will now be discussed at tomorrow's Cabinet meeting and then at the Full Council meeting on 18th February.

Next BPF Meeting

A reminder that there is no BPF meeting this month, the next meeting will be Sat 8th March by which time the implications of the budget cuts will be clear.

Bristol Walking Festival

Dear BPF members,

I am getting in contact as the coordinator of the Bristol Walking Festival to see if any of your members would be interested in being involved to encourage people into Bristol's parks and open spaces.

The event is running 26th April – 26th May 2014 and we are programming a series of walks and events over the month. The event ran for 8 days in 2012 with over 500 people taking part, extending the festival to a month gives us more opportunity to have more exciting walks taking place, and we're keen to get people out in their local areas to discover what's on their doorstep.

The dates may also tie in with events your members are already planning which could be included in the programme.

I have attached an invite letter which details more about the festival - see www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/InviteBWF2014.pdf

The walks and events proposal forms are on the website at www.bristolwalkingfestival.co.uk.

Do let me know if you'd like any further detail, the deadline for proposals is 3rd February.

Best wishes

Esther Mars
Festival & Events Officer
esther.mars@bristol.gov.uk
Please note I work part-time, usually Monday-Wednesday.

GoodGym Bristol

This group have worked at Brandon Hill and Troopers Hill in the past...

Dear All,

Happy New Year from GoodGym Bristol.

This January marks the first anniversary of GoodGym Bristol, we have been organising group runs to community projects all over Bristol for 1 year now. We are now looking forward to another exciting year of activity across Bristol.

This year we will continue to hold the increasingly popular group runs on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings, as well as starting a new project to support isolated older people.

For those that we haven't worked with yet, we organise group runs to community projects where we engage in some intense physical activity and then run back again. We typically bring between 5 and 15 motivated and fit volunteers who want to take part in a short burst (30 to 45 mins) of volunteering.

We are looking to get as many dates in the diary as early as possible this year. We are looking for community projects, buildings, gardens or activities that have a task that needs doing and would like some volunteers to come and help. The volunteers are supervised by our run leaders, so all we need is access to the site, clear instructions and any tools or special equipment needed. We are always open to new tasks, but the kind of thing we have done in the past include gardening tasks such as weeding, moving soil and planting bulbs or trees, intensive litter picking, delivering flyers, painting community centres, deep cleaning public spaces, moving heavy boxes and bricks, and clearing rooms.

We are particularly looking for tasks that can be done on dark Wednesday evenings. We bring headtorches and are happy to work in semi-dark conditions.

If you have a task for us please get in contact as soon as possible so that we can book you into a slot. If you would like to find out more please contact me on Bristol@goodgym.org or 07857 425667.

Many thanks,

Chris Bennett
GoodGym Bristol Coordinator.
@GoodGymBristol
<https://www.facebook.com/goodgym>
goodgym.org

Green spaces deliver lasting mental health benefits

The University of Exeter has added to the increasing number of studies that show the health benefits of green space. Details of the report are here:

www.exeter.ac.uk/news/featurednews/title_349054_en.html

There was also a report on the BBC website here:

www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-25682368

Hugh's Email

If you have ever been in email contact with Hugh you will have received an email from him this morning saying he has been robbed in Cyprus. You may not be surprised to learn that this is not true and he is in fact still in Bristol but his email account has been hacked. He will be setting up a new email account. This is at least the third person I know who has been hacked in this way.

Rob Acton-Campbell
www.twitter.com/RobCrewsHole
Bristol Parks Forum
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk
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In this update: Health & Safety Training - Town Greens - Downs Committee - Green Capital Partnership - Narrowways - Marked Routes - St George Park Kiosk

Health & Safety Training

Last I heard there are still places available for the training sessions next week on Thursday 30th & Friday 31st January at the Create Centre.

The training is being organised by Emma Bird on behalf of Richard Fletcher. Please let Emma know who from your group would like to attend and on which dates.

Each session holds 10 people and will run from 10am until 3pm.

Remember the training covers you under Bristol City Council insurance for leading walks in parks as well as tasks using non-power tools.

Emma can be contacted at emma.bird@bristol.gov.uk or phone: 0117 922 3231

Emma works the following hours:

Monday - Wednesday: 8:00am until 2:00pm

Thursday: 8:30am until 12:45pm

Town Greens

The next meeting of the Council's Public Rights of Way & Greens Committee is on Monday (27th Jan) there is an update on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/three-new-town-greens

Downs Committee

Also on Monday is the next meeting of the Downs Committee. It is worth checking the papers for their meetings because they often discuss issues that are likely to have an impact on other green spaces in the city. On Monday they are discussing amongst other things whether to make the trial barbecue area a permanent feature.

The papers for the meeting can be seen at:

www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2014/wa/agenda/0127_1600_wa017.html

Green Capital Partnership

The number of votes for Chair and Vice Chair of the Partnership are as follows:

Chair:

Alastair Sawday: 21

Guy Poultney: 28

Philippa Bayley and Liz Zeidler: 36

Vice Chair:

Open Votes: 1

David Owen: 5

Fraser Bridgeford: 19

David Hunter: 28

Nina Skubala: 30

Below is a message from the new joint chairs which is aimed as much at groups who might consider joining the partnership as it is at existing members.

Dear Green Capital supporters,

Philippa, Liz and Nina are delighted to be the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Bristol Green Capital Partnership. This is just the beginning of showing that fresh ideas and collaborative working are welcome in the Partnership.

We are at this exciting point in Bristol's green journey because of the hard work of all of the Partnership's members. We would like to extend our thanks to all of the people who have brought us to this point, and look forward to their continued involvement in a new, revitalised Partnership. We particularly would like to thank Martin Bigg as the Outgoing Chair and the members of the Steering Group for their work over the past year.

Bristol needs to become "A low carbon city with a high quality of life for all". Our vision of success for 2015 is that everyone can make a meaningful contribution to transforming the city. The Partnership's role is to hold that audacious vision – touching everything from the city's green spaces to renewable energy generation - and help make the vision a reality through ambitious yet achievable steps.

The Green Capital Partnership is open to everyone, and diverse contributions are needed to make sure Bristol looks radically different after the award than it does now. We want to harness all of the energy that is apparent across the city, and channel it towards the 2020 vision that won us the award, using 2014 and 2015 as our springboard.

Only by working together will we make the Partnership, inclusive, collaborative and effective. In the next six weeks we aim to have agreed a new organisational structure – with action groups working on different priority areas of change in the 'greening' of our city. The crucial upcoming meeting on the 27th January (2-5 pm at @Bristol) will be the first opportunity to put this into action, as we gather to set the compass for the year ahead. We will be setting up a range of key action groups to drive the change across the city. Everyone is invited to come to the event and add their energy and insights.

We look forward to getting your input to support the partnership being the dynamic, inspiring and achieving organisation we all want to see.

There are three ways you can help right now:

- Register for the meeting [<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bristol-green-capital-partnership-meeting-27th-january-2014-tickets-9766920121>] on 27 January (2-5 at @Bristol) to help set up the action groups that will be the engines of the Partnership's activity.

- Forward this email to colleagues and friends to find out more by signing up to the mailing list on the Green Capital website www.bristolgreencapital.org scroll down to 'stay up to date' on right hand side].

- Get you organisation to join the partnership by signing up to the Green Capital Partnership Pledge www.bristolgreencapital.org/contact/pledge

Liz and Philippa have chosen to share the role of Chair, and the role will be clearly divided between them without creating additional work for others. Liz will lead on the engagement of the wider Partnership, whereas Philippa will represent the Partnership on the European Green Capital 2015 Company Board. Both will chair meetings of the Partnership Board and the Quarterly Partnership meetings. Both will be open to questions and concerns from all Partnership members. We look forward to hearing from you!

Contact details

Philippa – philippa.bayley@bristol.ac.uk

Liz - liz@happycity.org.uk

Nina - nina.skubala@businesswest.co.uk

Narrowways

The website for this wonderful site in St Werburghs has recently been updated, you can find it at www.narrowways.wordpress.com and listed in the panel on the right-hand side of the Parks Forum website.

If you want to find out more about the Narrowways Millennium Green Trust and what they have been up to then why not go along to their AGM on Feb 17th at the Wild Goose Space at 19:30

Marked Routes

Ashton Court Estate now has a 3 mile marked route which starts and finishes by the gate next to the mansion house.

This route is a 3-2-1 Run England project which aims to provide a range of marked out routes across the country that anyone can use – be it for running, jogging or walking.

For more information go to: www.runengland.org/321

Several other other parks in Bristol, such at St George Park also have shorter measured routes marked out, see www.bristol.gov.uk/page/measured-routes-parks for details.

St George Park Kiosk

Bristol Parks have decided to close the kiosk in St George Park at put its operation out to tender, see www.stgeorgenp.org.uk/st-george-park-kiosk

We have been assured by Pam Jones that this only applies to the St George kiosk and not the other kiosks directly operated by BCC.

Rob Acton-Campbell

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