

04 July 2010 No 20

BPF Meeting 17th July 9.30am to 4pm

We will again be using Netham Pavilion (see <http://tinyurl.com/yzedtm6>) for this meeting. The address is Avonvale Road, Redfield, Bristol BS5 9RN - lunch will be provided.

The main subject of discussion will be the Area Green Space Plans but the agenda will include other items. It is planned as and all day conference to give time to discuss the AGSPs in detail.

The final agenda for this meeting will be issued after a BPF committee meeting on 12th July.

Area Green Space Plan / Site Allocations Consultation

The list of drop in sessions is shown at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/siteallocations> Some extra sessions are being added to the original list; there is now one on 22 July at Begbrook Primary School for the Greater Fishponds area. The website will be updated if more are added. There will also be meetings organised by some Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Additionally the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network is organising workshop type sessions with local planning groups in the areas with most proposed changes. The BPF have been involved in discussions about these and they will also cover AGSP issues, park groups will be welcome to join them. I will send out details when I have them.

Stoke Park Walk

Many thanks to Steve England for a really interesting walk around Stoke Park on Thursday. Steve is really enthusiastic about the site and has built up a huge knowledge of its history, ecology and wildlife. It was good also to see Cellan Michael along who is Estates Manager for Bristol Parks and who is obviously keen to start managing the park once the purchase by Bristol City Council goes through.

Discovering Places Mini BioBlitz, Brandon Hill, 24th July 2010

The Mini BioBlitz is a 3 hour wildlife survey of Brandon Hill running from 12-3pm on Saturday 24th July. You are invited to come and join in and see what different species you can find in the park. Scientists and naturalists from across the region will be on hand to help you identify what you find, tell you more about the region's species, and give you 'top tips' for enjoying wildlife in Bristol.

This event is free, for more information email Charlotte@bnhc.org.uk or visit www.bioblitzuk.org.uk

The Colliter's Brook Trek Sunday July 25th 2010 10am to lunchtime

More details of this walk can be found at:

<http://www.southbristolriverscapes.org.uk/docs/resources/mti3njyxmzqwmq.pdf>

Unfortunately the South Bristol Riverscapes Project has now come to an end, but the website lives on and the plan is that it will continue to be updated by local groups. A slide show of a previous walk along Colliters Brook can be seen at <http://vimeo.com/12335754>

Bristol Central Area Action Plan

Details of the Bristol Central Area Action Plan can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/23jedur> it is being prepared as part of the Bristol Development Framework. This is another area (along with Knowle West) that is greyed out in the Site Allocations document however it is included within the AGSPs for Cabot, Clifton & Clifton East and Ashley, Easton & Lawrence Hill.

There is a consultation event on Thursday 15 July 12 noon to 5.30pm email bdf@bristol.gov.uk for more details.

Barbecue Summer?

Do you have problems with barbecues being used in your park and leaving burnt patches on the grass or worse? Does your park disappear in a haze of smoke on a sunny afternoon? Have you found any way of dealing with it? Do you feel it is a minor problem and something that has to be tolerated if we want to encourage people to use parks?

We would like to get the views of as many groups as possible to gauge whether this is something the BPF should try to get action on across the City. Please let me know your thoughts.

Green Spaces Press Coverage

There seem to have been quite a few green space stories in the Evening Post this week. There were three stories about objections to proposals in the AGSP consultation to sell green space:

Stockwood <http://tinyurl.com/3374wte>

Fishponds <http://tinyurl.com/37jlbfg>

Lodge Hill <http://tinyurl.com/37k7gcr>

There were also stories about two green spaces that have had public access for many years. For different reasons neither are covered by the AGSPs.

At Easter Gardens the land owner tried to fence part of the site and the Council stopped him:

<http://tinyurl.com/2uaqnv2>

While at Stoke Lodge the land owner apparently thinks it is a good idea to spend £1m fencing the site; the land owner is the Council: <http://tinyurl.com/3yresh2>

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Saturday 9 October - venue to be confirmed

09 July No 21

Area Green Space Plan / Site Allocations Consultation

As I mentioned last time, the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network is organising workshop type sessions with local planning groups in the areas with most proposed changes. The BPF have been involved in discussions about these and they will also cover AGSP issues, park groups will be welcome to join them. The workshops will cover nine areas: Avonmouth; Bedminster; Brislington; Fishponds, Hartcliffe, Henbury, Hengrove, Lockleaze, Southmead. There is a briefing notes about the sessions here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ExtraCI.pdf The sessions will be chaired by BNPN or BPF committee members with officers from planning and hopefully parks P&GSS team attending at least one session in each area.

If you or your group would like to be involved please let us know. Local planning groups will also be contacting park groups in their area to ask if they want to get involved. The first session in Fishponds will be on Monday (12th July).

There are drop-in sessions in Clifton and Lockleaze this week and two have already been held (Knowle and Stockwood). We would be interested to hear feedback from anyone who attended any of these sessions on how they thought they were run and how good the attendance was. The list of drop in sessions is shown at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/siteallocations>

Apparently the consultation on the Knowle Development Framework has been put back to September so the hole in the coverage of both the AGSP and the Site Allocations will remain until then.

Stoke Lodge

There is more information on the proposed fencing of the public open space at Stoke Lodge in a note from the Friends of Stoke Lodge here:

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFletter7-10.pdf>

The internal Cabinet Report that is referred to in the note can be seen here:

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/StokeLodgeCabinetReport16Apr2010.pdf>

Easter Garden

There is more about the attempted fencing of part of Easter Garden on the BBC website here:

<http://tinyurl.com/32vyb93>

Barbecue Summer?

Thanks for the feedback so far. There seems to be a mix of views, even within individual groups. Some people are in favour of a city wide ban, however, others have said they would not support a ban and like the park being used. I'll put together the responses I have (with names removed) before our meeting so if you have views one way or the other please let me know in the next week.

Events

Unfortunately Jenny Crook who we were talking to about improving the system for community events has now left the Council to move to a job in London. Introduction of the new application form has apparently been blocked by the 'equalities team'.

However, even though it is not mentioned on the BCC website the scheme that Jenny arranged for community events to be covered by the Council's insurance for the fee of £20 is in place so please state that you wish to use this cover if you are applying to hold a small community event.

I am hoping to attend a meeting between Tracey and Peter Watts of the events team soon to discuss how things can be moved forward.

Wild City

St Werburghs City Farm has been successful in securing money from Natural England's Access to Nature scheme (details at www.naturalengland.org.uk) for their 'Wild about St Werburghs' project, see <http://tinyurl.com/3787org>.

This is the same scheme as Bristol Parks applied to for the Wild City project to cover Local Nature Reserves and fund a replacement for Sally Oldfield as Local Nature Reserves Officer. Richard Ennion tells me that they expect to hear the outcome of this application within the next two weeks.

Bristol Parks Organisation

Tracey has sent us a useful briefing note on the organisation of the Environment & Leisure which is what she looks after and a part of which is Bristol Parks. You can see the guide here:

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/E&LGuide.pdf> It includes names and contact details for APMs and managers above them.

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BPF Meetings:
Saturday 17 July Netham Park
Saturday 9 October - venue to be confirmed

13 July 2010 No 22

BPF Meeting 17th July from 9.30am

The meeting is at Netham Pavilion (see <http://tinyurl.com/yzedtm6>).
The address is Avonvale Road, Redfield, Bristol BS5 9RN - lunch will be provided.
The agenda is as below, though timings as ever may vary and the room is booked to 4pm if you have a lot of questions!

- 09:30 - 09:35 Introduction and welcome - Fraser Bridgeford
- 09:35 - 09:45 Parks Organisation Structure - Tracey Morgan
- 09:45 - 09:50 Appointment of Project Officers - Tracey Morgan
- 09:50 - 10:00 Section 106 update - Tracey Morgan
- 10:00 - 10:05 Stoke Park - Tracey Morgan
- 10:05 - 10:10 Grove Woods Local Nature Reserve - Tracey Morgan
- 10:10 - 10:20 Stoke Lodge and use of school open spaces - Cheryl Hawkins
- 10:20 - 10:30 Events. Barbecues. - Rob Acton-Campbell
- 10:30 - 10:45 Community consultation process - David Farnsworth
- 10:45 - 11:15 Site Allocations - Sarah O'Driscoll's Team
- 11:15 - 11:25 Break - Tea / Coffee
- 11:25 - 12:15 Area Green Space Plans Presentation - Richard Fletcher
- 12:15 - 12:30 Area Green Space Plans Political Perspective - Gary Hopkins
- 12:30 - 13:00 Lunch (provided)
- 13:00 - 14:30 Area Green Space Plans Q&A and Discussion - Richard Fletcher / All

Each of the groups from the different neighbourhood partnerships to be able to look at the plans for their areas. People will have time over lunch to talk through what they've heard already and we may start the Q&A earlier and folks can discuss while eating etc.
Catherine will be sending out the official agenda tomorrow to groups on her list.

As a trial we will also have some sticky labels available to use as badges so that we all know who

everybody is.

Parks Forum Directory

Copies of the printed version will be available at the meeting, the pdf version should be on our website from next week.

Although it is too late for groups to be added to the printed version I can add groups to the online version on our website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/directory.htm

To be added to the list groups need to complete our membership form which is also on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/index.htm#membership

Groups like the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network are now using our list of member groups to help establish who should be consulted on various issues, so if you know of a group that is not listed then please encourage them to complete a form.

Barbecue Summer?

The responses I have received can be seen at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/emails/BBQSummer.pdf>

There are obviously strong views on each side, but the majority seem to be against a ban.

A letter appeared recently in a Leeds newspaper about a ban being enforced there, it seems to be in response to the Friends Group being called the "anti-fun brigade". You can see the letter here: <http://tinyurl.com/3xyfszr>

There was a suggestion at our committee meeting last night that the BPF & Parks should produce a poster that could be put up in parks where there is a lot of barbecues asking for them to be used considerately and giving brief guidance, such as do not place directly on the grass. Our ex CPM John Threadgold suggested some time ago that people could be asked to drink two cans of their beer first and use the empties to support the barbecue.

We'll have a brief discussion on this at the meeting.

Stoke Lodge

Following my mention of this in my last email (briefing note here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFletter7-10.pdf), it was pointed out that plans for the site can be seen on the web. The Council have obviously employed some architects to draw up their proposals to spend £1.6m on providing fenced playing fields. The architects have then put the plans on their website as an example of the work they do. They can be seen here: <http://biddulpharchitects.co.uk/Documents/Stoke%20Lodge.pdf>

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20 July 2010 No 23

BPF Meeting 17th July

Here are some brief notes on what was discussed yesterday, Catherine will send the official minutes in due course.

Area Green Space Plan / Site Allocations Consultation

This was the main part of the meeting.

Several points were clarified and we learnt a bit more about the process that will take place after the consultation closes in October. David Farnsworth of the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network started things off talking about the additional consultation sessions that are being run.

Publicity: Susan showed an example of a poster that she has produced on behalf of the St George NP to promote the process in our area. Several people asked for electronic copies; it can be downloaded from the links below as a Word document to edit or as pdf. We have replaced the words 'ST GEORGE'S GREEN SPACES' with the names of particular spaces when we have put them up near parks. Also below is the link to the official BCC poster, but that needs a lot of green ink!

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AGSPPoster.pdf>

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AGSPPoster.doc>

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AGSPPosterBCC.pdf>

Land swaps: there was discussion about the spaces in Ashley, Easton & Lawrence Hill which have been defined as Low Value but are not listed for disposal in Section 4 of the AGSP because the area is below the quantity standard. Rich Fletcher clarified that an equivalent nearby site would need to be made available as replacement green open space before these sites could be sold.

Low Value Land: Rich pointed out that sites listed for disposal are 'low value' not 'no value'. He offered to send copies of the assessments for individual spaces to any groups that would like to see a copy.

What happens next: The plan seems to be that Cabinet will decide at its meeting on 25 November which of the 62 sites listed for disposal in the AGSP will remain on the disposal list. There was a comment that this seemed to be a bit quick given the consultation closing date of 29 October and the BPF Committee will be writing to Gary Hopkins about this.

On Site Allocations it was pointed out that as well as the Site Allocations there are the Designation maps and a document with Development principles. Note the maps on the website are much more

detailed than those published in the documents and you can zoom in to a very high level of detail. They also now display reference numbers and information for each designated area to make it easier to respond if you think the boundaries or the designation is wrong.

One thing we didn't discuss is how the BPF as a whole should respond to the consultation. I think you would agree that we shouldn't respond on individual sites (that should be left to individual groups), but perhaps we should respond on the Green Infrastructure policies which apply City Wide. The next BPF meeting is 9th October so we could agree a response then but it would need a draft to be put together first, if anyone thinks this is a good idea and is willing to help agree a draft then please let me know.

Several other issues were squeezed into the first part of the meeting.

Walking for Health

Jane Cunningham gave a brief introduction on this. There is information on their website at <http://tinyurl.com/walk4health> a video here: <http://tinyurl.com/w4h-video> and the latest newsletter here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/WfHBJuly2010.pdf

Walking for health are aiming to increase their coverage of Bristol and are always looking for new walk leaders. There is more information on their website or email nicola.ferris@bristol.gov.uk

Parks Organisation

Tracey Morgan showed us the current structure chart and this led to a discussion about how Parks are working with groups in different areas. I will include more on this and the other subjects covered by Tracey in future updates.

Stoke Lodge

There was support for the Friends of Stoke Lodge in their efforts to keep open access and prevent the education department from fencing the site. It was agreed that BPF would write to Cabinet on this issue.

Events

As I mentioned on Saturday I met Tracey and Peter Watts of the events team on Monday. This was a very positive meeting. Jenny Crook has left the Council and Peter has now taken on her role. Peter is keen to continue the work that Jenny was doing with us and has agreed to hold another of our workshop sessions with the group that volunteered last October. Peter has also said that he hopes to come to the next BPF meeting on 9th October.

The revised form we developed with Jenny is still intended to be used once the equalities team are happy with it. Peter is also aiming towards a simplified permit system for small events. The £20

licence and insurance fee is available. As I suggested on Saturday it has been agreed that events with bouncy castles can be covered if the supplier of the castle has their own insurance. The dividing line for the size of event is not firmly fixed. If you are organising an event then contact Peter via 0117 922 3538 or email: parks.events@bristol.gov.uk and he will advise you whether it will be covered and / or whether you can make any changes to your plans to ensure that it is covered.

Peter and the team are also aware that more information is needed on the website and elsewhere so that people are informed upfront of the procedures and charges for events.

The other thing that became clear is that an application for an event will not be accepted or rejected based on what you put on the application form. The form is the starting point for a consultation with Parks and the Safety Advisory Group for Events (SAGE) which includes the emergency services. If something about your plans is causing concern then Peter will get back to you to discuss how it can be resolved. It is SAGE that set the rules on the size of events that need to be licensed, so I have asked Peter to find out if they would be willing to also come along to our next meeting.

Peter has sent me a list of open space events that either have been licence or where licences have been applied for which can be seen here: <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/EventsJuly10.pdf>

There will also be more event training days during the winter. People at the meeting who had attended the one in May said how good they were. I will send out details when I have them.

BPF AGM 9 October 2010

At the end of the meeting Hugh pointed out that he and Fraser will be standing down at the AGM since they will have served the maximum three years allowed under our Terms of Reference; see <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ToROct08.pdf>

Fraser has said that he is willing to move to Vice if we elect him, but Hugh has already been Chair so we need volunteers / nominees for a new BPF chair before the next meeting.

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28 July 2010 No 24

Good News 'The Magnificent Seven'

I was in St Pauls Park at lunchtime today to celebrate Bristol's Green Flag Awards. Following judging in early June, the winners were announced today. Netham Park won a Flag for the first time this year, bringing the total for Bristol to a 'Magnificent Seven'. Troopers Hill first won a Green Flag in 2007 along with the Downs. Blaise Castle Estate and Queen Square were added in 2008 and then St Pauls Park and Ashton Court Estate won for the first time in 2009. All of these sites have

retained the flag for 2010/11. Bristol City Council also applied for a Green Flag for Mancroft Park but were not successful there, though they intend to apply again next year and will consider other fresh applications.

More on the Council website at <http://tinyurl.com/BristolGF> or the Troopers Hill website at www.troopers-hill.org.uk/gf.htm

Media Coverage

This morning's BBC Radio Bristol Breakfast Show was something of a parks special, you can listen again via iPlayer via www.bbc.co.uk/bristol. There was lots of coverage of the Green Flag Award, with live interviews from Netham (at approx 2hr 26min into the programme) and a plug for Troopers Hill (2hr 53min). There was also almost 15min of discussion about Stoke Lodge (1hr 36min). Then from South Glos there was coverage of the dispute at Filton about Elm Park (2hr 6min).

The Green Flag Awards also get on the BBC website at <http://tinyurl.com/2v3zexe>

Sadly the Evening Post (perhaps continuing this weeks anti-council stance?) relegated the Green Flags to page 8 (<http://tinyurl.com/2vrht44>) with a non story about the Downs making the headlines. Elm Park was also featured (<http://tinyurl.com/35dbu9b>).

BPF Emails

Following our meeting on 17th July the BPF Committee have sent three statements by email in the last week or so, they are also on our website.

The first was in respect of Ashton Vale, see www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AshtonVale200710.pdf

Next was Stoke Lodge www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/StokeLodgeBPFletter25July2010.pdf

Lastly was an email to Gary Hopkins restating our support for the AGSP process but asking that the decision on land disposals be delayed from 25 November to ensure that all responses to the consultation received prior to the closing date of 29 October can be considered properly. See www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AGSP270710.pdf

Knowle West

Concillors and officers have also received a letter this week from the Northern Slopes Initiative about how all the different consultations in their area interrelate to each other in in terms of information / consultation deadlines etc

Knowle West remains as a grey hole in both the AGSP and the Site Allocations maps and it seems that the consultations on the Knowle West Regeneration Framework and the Kingswear / Torpoint /

Marksbury Road and Novers Masterplan will not now start until September. This of course also impacts on the surrounding areas since they will not have a full picture of their potential access to green space until these proposals are published.

More information and links are on the 'news, blog & events' section of the NSI website at www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk

Parks Structure

The structure chart that Tracey showed us at our meeting is now on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ParksOpsStructure.pdf This shows the structure for Parks Operations. You can see how it fits into the overall structure for Tracey's department by looking at the guide that I've mentioned before at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/E&LGuide.pdf

Health and Safety Training

A Health and Safety training course for volunteers and community groups is being held on 12th August, 9.00-13.00 at the Netham.

This training will allow you to lead groups carrying out work in your park (or any Bristol park for that matter) while being covered by Bristol City Council's insurance. It will also cover you for leading guided walks. The process is relatively easy once you have been trained with very straightforward paperwork.

There are a few spaces available on this course so if you or a member of your group is interested in attending, please email catherine.newman@bristol.gov.uk asap.

Barbecue Summer?

Friends of Brandon Hill are considering putting up signs asking people to 'respect the wildlife here and refrain from lighting fires or barbecues'. The wildlife includes 272 species found in 3hrs during the recent BioBlitz see www.bnhc.org.uk/home/bioblitz/bristolbioblitz.html It has also been pointed out that the signs advertising the fact that barbecues are not allowed on the Downs say just below 'Offenders may be prosecuted', 'You may enjoy barbecues in many Bristol parks' which you may agree is not a helpful message given that the problems they are trying to avoid on the Downs are then moved elsewhere.

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