

3 March 2009

New Executive Member for Parks

The new Liberal Democrat administration at the Council has now announced the new Cabinet. Cllr Gary Hopkins will be responsible for Parks & Green Spaces amongst other things. Details of the new cabinet can be found here: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/redirect?oid=PressRelease-id-29676117>

Stoke Park

Following last week's changes at the Council, Thursday's Cabinet meeting which was to have considered the acquisition of Stoke Park was cancelled. A copy of the report to that meeting and the BPF statement are on our website. We will resubmit the statement when the issue is brought to the new Cabinet.

BDF Core Strategy Preferred Options Review

The Bristol Development Framework team have produced a 'Core Strategy Preferred Options Review Paper' and are asking for comments. This document suggests how Bristol could meet the increased housing requirements imposed by the Government in their review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).

The suggested solutions are:

4,500 new homes derived from more efficient use of urban land

500 additional homes located within an expanded City Centre

1,000 -1,700 additional homes on some land currently retained for industrial and warehousing uses

Up to 1,500 additional homes located on the south east edge of the city

Another two options appear to have been rejected at this stage, they were: 'Additional use of urban open land' and 'Redevelop St. Philip's Marsh for mixed uses including new homes'. 'Urban Open Land' seems to mean Parks, so the rejection of that option appears to be good news. A further increase in the population of the City Centre would also seem to strengthen the argument for keeping the existing City Centre green spaces, since there is already less space than required by the P&GSS standards.

Consultation on the Preferred Options Review Paper runs for eight weeks from 27th February 2009 to 24th April 2009; it is important that Park Groups make their views known.

The document and the response form can be found here: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/redirect/?oid=Article-id-29679031>

The latest BDF Community Involvement Event is on Thursday where this will be discussed along with transport issues. I will pass on any issues that come out of that meeting.

Ashton Park

The large development of Green Space land to the south-west of the City is of course still part of the RSS proposals and there will be a demonstration against this on Sat 7th March 1.30pm outside the Architecture Centre, next to the Youth Hostel and Pero's bridge on Bristol's Harbourside . The Architecture Centre is hosting an exhibition about the 'Ashton Park' details of which can be seen on the developer's website at www.ashton-park.co.uk. Most (but not all) of this development is outside the City boundary but it is adjacent to the proposed football stadium and its associated housing etc. at Ashton Vale. (see www.ashtonvaleheritage.co.uk).

Play Area Consultations

The Pathfinder team are starting the process of consultation on the second phase of Pathfinder sites, more details on the Government funded Pathfinder Project can be found here:

www.bristol.gov.uk/playpathfinder A list of the current consultations can be found here:
<http://tinyurl.com/c2q7g3>

Events Run by Park Groups

I have put many of the comments we received about Park Groups and Events together here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/EventsResponses.pdf I am hoping to meet with the Parks Events Officer to discuss this later in the month, possibly on a Friday. If you have a particular interest in this issue and would like to join in on this meeting then please let me know and I will contact you with more details.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

BPF Meeting Dates: 16th May, 25th July, 31st October

18 March 2009

Chocolate Factory Consultation

The results of this consultation are now on the BCC website at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristolrailwaypathpublicconsultation> You will see that overwhelmingly the majority view was against the sale / lease of the land.

The website says 'This report has been submitted to our Property Services Team, who are pulling together a report on whether the council should sell/lease the land - this will be submitted to the Strategic Director for resources'. BPF are seeking clarification on this since our understanding was that a decision as to whether to dispose of the land would be made by the P&GSS Board.

BDF Call for Sites Schedule

The BDF website now has maps and a schedule showing the sites that were submitted through the 'Call for Sites' process earlier this year. It can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/5p2chx>

"Garden Licence"

A case has been brought to our attention where a resident has recently been granted a licence to use part of a park as an extension to his garden. We are seeking further details and we hope that this is a one off situation. Please contact us if you know of any other examples. If you suspect that anyone is using Council owned land unofficially you should contact your CPM and make sure that they are aware of the situation.

Grove Wood

The Agent for the landowner has posted a statement on the Forum on the Friends of Troopers Hill website at www.friends-forum.org.uk It seems he doesn't support the Town Green application and doesn't think the BPF should either.

Streetmap Green Layer

The following is taken from the latest Bristol Living Rivers e-bulletin produced by Kathy Derrick. Email Kathy at kathy.derrick@bristol.gov.uk if you would like to join her mailing list and keep up to date with 'rivery' news in Bristol.

Bristol's new interactive online map www.bristolstreets.co.uk now has an "Environment" section with two new layers - GreenCity and Quiet places.

The GreenCity layer shows what's happening in your city to make Bristol a greener and more pleasant place to live. We recognise that reason Bristol has gained its green reputation because of the individuals that live here, the people that work here and those of you who give up hours of your time voluntarily to run projects and community groups that make our city greener. This is an opportunity for you to let others know what you are doing by putting a marker on the map. There is a category on 'water' so you can mark those watery things you are doing and there are lots of other categories as well. You can also,

Find out what is happening in your neighbourhood
Search for individuals, community groups, organisations and businesses that are making your city greener.
Search for markers that fit into the specific green categories i.e.
Energy, food, water.
Feel part of a green community across the city.

Inspire you to do more to make Bristol Greener in the future.

Green Flag Awards

As I hope you are aware Bristol currently has four Green Flag Award winning sites at Troopers Hill LNR; the Downs; Blaise Castle Estate and Queen Square. In addition Ashton Court and St Paul's Park are being entered this year. Sites are judged in May / June and the results are known in July. For some years the scheme has been run for the Government by the Civic Trust, from this year there has been a change and it will now be run by a consortium of GreenSpace, BTCV and Keep Britain Tidy. Details are at <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/>

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

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19 March 2009

Parks Restructuring

Below is the text of an email I received this morning from Peter Wilkinson giving an update on the appointments as part of the restructuring which I thought I should pass on straight away. The new structure is due to come into effect next month. Many of the names are probably familiar to you as existing CPMs (Caroline Hollies, Chris Hammond, Julian Cox, Gary Brentnall, Paul Manton). Cellan Michael is currently Ashton Court Estate Manager, while Pete Clarke and Robert Westlake are currently managers in the Grounds Maintenance team of Bristol Contract Services which is being integrated into Parks.

Hello Rob,

I have been avoiding giving you the job info until we had completed the picture, but as we are almost there here is how it looks for the key operations posts:-

Parks Operations Manager:

Robert Thurston (new face, moving from Mendip)

Area Park Managers:

South - Pete Clark

Central - Caroline Hollies (on maternity from next week, so interim cover is being finalised this week)

North - Chris Hammond

East - Jamie Roberts (new face, moving from Balfour Beatty @ Hinkley Point - glowing references....(my favourite gag at the moment)

CPOs:

South - Julian Cox

East - Gary Brentnall

Other two areas - vacancies to be advertised.

Quality Monitoring Coordinator:

Paul Manton

(Paul will have the team of six QM Officers and Play Inspectors reporting to him)

Parks Estates Manager:

Cellan Michael.

Downs Ranger:

Robert Westlake.

There are of course other posts being filled/been filled but this is a good start.

Chocolate Factory

Bristol City Council has issued a press release about the consultation which can be seen here: <http://tinyurl.com/cophdv> It contains a joint statement from Cllrs Gary Hopkins and Jon Rogers which says:

"The new administration at Bristol City Council is committed to openness and transparency and we are happy to publish the findings of the consultation. However, we have serious concerns about the way the council has reached this position and we await full answers to questions we have raised on behalf of all parties with an interest in the issue.

"Meanwhile the Planning Committee has yet to make a final decision on the development, and neither of us wish to make any comment that is seen to influence that decision. We anticipate making a further joint statement on the overall position, after the planning committee have reached their decision. The committee next sits on April 1."

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

BPF Meeting Dates: 16th May, 25th July, 31st October

26 March 2009

Stoke Park

The acquisition of Stoke Park will now be considered at the Cabinet Meeting on 2 April. The statement that we submitted for planned meeting in February will now be submitted to that meeting, you can see it at

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

Events

If you are on Bristol Parks' mailing list you will have received an email from David White david.white@bristol.gov.uk asking for news stories and details of events for inclusion in Park Life. Without Sally Oldfield's Nature in the City events there is likely to be less events to list this year.

I am meeting with Bristol Parks to discuss events licensing on Fri 3 April and I am still hopeful that we will be able to agree that Park Groups won't have to pay the licensing fee. Unfortunately you will need to decide whether to submit events for Park Life before this decision is made.

In the meantime there are some events happening on Bristol's parks & green spaces that Park Life will be too late to publicise.

First there is a fun day based around Colliter's Brook this Sunday (29 March) between 1.30pm-4.30pm at Ashton Vale Club for Young People, Silbury Road, Bristol, BS3 2QE, with the aim to raise awareness of the area and encourage the community to come out into the fresh air.

There will be a walk, depending on weather, up to Hanging Hill wood waterfall and a picture trail as well as bird box making. A number of wildlife organisations will be attending, including Avon Bat Group and Hawk and Owl Trust. Contact Ashton Vale Heritage Group www.ashtonvaleheritage.co.uk for more information.

At Troopers Hill there is the annual Good Friday Service and then an Avon Valley Walk on Sunday 19 April more details at www.troopers-hill.org.uk

If you have any events or news that you would like to pass on to other groups then please let me know.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

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