

04 March 2011 - No 54

BPF Meeting 29 Jan 2011

The minutes from our last meeting are now on our website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFMin290111.pdf

AGSP Responses - Political Parties

We have now had response from the political parties on Bristol City Council to our recent letter, the letter and responses are below in the order we received them:

BPF letter: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFLetter110211.pdf

Green Party response: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/GreenResponse.pdf

Liberal Democrat response: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/LiberalDemocratResponse.pdf

Labour response: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/LabourResponse.pdf

Conservative response: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ConservativeResponse.pdf

AGSP Full Public Responses

You may remember that the full public responses to the AGSP consultation had to be removed from the Council's website 'for technical reasons'. This was because the software that was supposed to hide personal details wasn't working properly.

New software has now been used so that these responses have now been reinstated on the website. They are within Appendix G of the details for the Cabinet meeting of 16 December which can be seen via this link: <http://tinyurl.com/Cab161210> Remember many of the responses from community groups are in a separate file (which was not removed).

Stoke Park celebration event - details from Council's press release

Plans are in hand for local people to enjoy a special day out at Stoke Park - Bristol's newest park and historic estate.

With over 108 hectares of parkland on the northeastern fringe of the city, the park will be officially acquired by the city council later this spring. And to mark the occasion, a special one-day 'come, see and enjoy' park event will be held on Saturday, March 19.

Visitors on the day will be able to take part in a whole range of activities and have their say about how they would like to see Stoke Park managed and developed in the future. Given Stoke Park's location, extensive grounds, heritage, monuments and natural beauty, the council's is sure Stoke Park will be another green jewel in the city's crown.

The fun starts from 11am to 3pm, with many of the events located at Lockleaze Open Space, next to Stoke Park off Romney Avenue. Face painting, guided walks, nature trails, Cycling City roadshow, information stalls from local community groups and organisations, traditional country craft demonstrations, allotment advice, tree planting, live music and food are among the many activities on offer for the special celebration day.

In addition, there will be an exhibition focusing on Stoke Park's impressive history, including information about the renowned, eighteenth century landscaper, Thomas Wright (1711 - 1786) whose birth tercentenary is marked this year.

The stars of the day could well be a small herd of Dexter Cattle from Bury Hill Farm in Winterbourne. Their appearance underlines the city council's aim to have Dexter Cattle in Stoke Park as part of a wider council healthy and environmentally sustainable initiative to produce quality beef for local sale and consumption.

Councillor Gary Hopkins, Bristol's executive member for targeted improvements, said: "The acquisition of Stoke Park is really exciting news. It will mark a new addition to the city's park and open spaces portfolio, bringing with it a new dimension - organic beef cattle for local benefit. Not only will this provide locally produced beef, it will also offer unique opportunities for people with mental health and behavioural issues to get involved with working with farm animals as part of a rehabilitation programme.

"The 108 hectares of quality land represents a massive boost to the city's green space and is actually more than the amount of land that is earmarked for release through the council's 20-year, Parks and Green Space Strategy.

"I hope local people will come along on Saturday, March 19 and take a look at what Stoke Park offers, the opportunities it can bring and how local people can really help shape its future. The event will be a fun day for all the family and a cause for celebration."

For more information about Stoke Park and the celebration day on Saturday, March 19 visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/stokepark

Events in Parks

The BPF working group had a constructive meeting with Peter Watts of the licensing team on Monday. On behalf of the group I wrote to Peter setting out our views after the meeting, the letter can be seen here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFEventsLetter040311.pdf

The licensing team is currently under review as part of the current Council cost saving drive so there is a lot of pressure to reduce their workload which will hopefully help achieve a simplified

system for small events.

NOTE - if you are planning an event or street party for the Royal Wedding or early May it is important that you get your application in as soon as possible. Event licence and street closure applications require a minimum of 6 weeks notice.

The Event Licence application is the start of a consultation process with the Events team and SAGE (Safety Advisory Group for Events). It is better to get your application in early even if some information is missing.

A summary of the rules for event licensing and links are on our website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/index.htm#events

ASDA Field - Whitchurch

A public inquiry into the Town Green application has been in progress this week, a report from the Evening Post can be seen here: <http://tinyurl.com/66wzum2>

South Purdown

Some revised proposals for the school playing fields that are going to remove public access from part of this site have been on display, this was also reported in the Evening Post: <http://tinyurl.com/6hgway3>

Rob Acton-Campbell
BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Meeting dates: 16 April, 16 July, 15 Oct

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Knowle West Regeneration area update from the Northern Slopes Initiative:

Having been outside of the Area Green Space Plan process for the rest of Bristol, and after exhibitions on the Regeneration Framework options held in October 2010..... things have started moving again.

- 1) Knowle West Regeneration Framework - the most popular option from the consultation held in October was the Resident Planning Groups Option 2, not the Council's Options 3 ,4 or 5. The Council is currently investigating whether the Option 2 as amended is viable or not.
- 2) Kingswear/Torpoint/Marksbury Road College and Haldon Close. Within the Regeneration Area - but not part of the Regeneration options!

Council announces consultation on draft Developers Brief on Kingswear/Torpoint/Marksbury Road and Haldon Close areas:

Saturday 12 March - Marksbury Road Library between 1pm and 4pm

The last public consultation was in April 2009. NSI, Marksbury Area Community Association and Knowle West Residents Planning Group - are all asking people to go to the consultation - its about the draft Brief for Developers which sets out the boundaries (physical and in terms of design/principles) for a developer to bring forward proposals to develop/build on the sites.

We want people to tell the council whether they want "three times the numbers of homes than are there now"; "the loss of the majority of the green space around Kingswear Road and Haldon Close" - and whether "the main College building/College site should have community use". We also want to get the Residents Planning Group option 4 - which seems to have been rejected by the Council without trialling it in the public domain, back on the table.

- 3) NSI continue to ask the Council for information about how all the initiatives - Development Framework, new Supplementary Planning Guidance, BRT and the above all link together. We have also suggested a couple of ways this can be done.
- 4) In November 2010 we published an "improvement" plan for the Slopes and circulated to the Council and other parties. We are not just trying to "preserve" the Slopes, but aiming to enhance it for people and wildlife without destroying what makes them brilliant.
- 5) Finally, we would like to say thanks all those groups/individuals which have given us support - it is much appreciated.

For further information go to www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk

Town Green Applications

There have been two more stories in the Evening Post since my last update about two new Town Green Applications, links below.

Stoke Lodge <http://tinyurl.com/4mbwua7>

Grove Wood <http://tinyurl.com/4nyp8f8>

I've been asked for a list of Town Green applications, below are the others I know of:

Wellington Hill - new application <http://tinyurl.com/69eyxac>

Aston Vale Fields - recommended for approval by the inspector at the public inquiry, yet to go to the Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee.

'Asda Field' Whitchurch - inspector at first public inquiry confirmed that land had not been appropriated as public open space. Second public inquiry considering use for recreation last week - <http://tinyurl.com/66wzum2>

Cotswold Road Green - Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee on 18th October 2010 upheld the inspector's recommendation that the application be rejected because the land had been appropriated as public open space in 1984. The Committee resolved that 'Cabinet be requested to voluntarily declare the land known as Cotswold Road Green as a Town or Village Green'.

Castle Park - Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee on 3rd August 2009 upheld the inspector's recommendation that the application be rejected 'Since Castle Park had been acquired following a Compulsory Purchase Order 'for the purposes of dealing with war damage', he had concluded that in 1978, when the resolution to use the land as a park was passed, it must have been implicit in that decision that the land was being appropriated to a new statutory purpose'. The Committee resolved that the Committee requests that the Council Executive consider bringing forward proposals for Castle Park to be voluntarily made a Town Green, as per the 2006 Act, as part of any future development proposals.

Land at Ambra Vale East, Clifton Wood - Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee on 19th January 2009 resolved that the application be granted. Despite extensive searches, it had not been possible to identify the current owner of the land. There were no objections and therefore no inquiry.

South Purdown - Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee on 29th October 2007 upheld the inspector's recommendation that the application be rejected because 'the Inspector had reviewed the situation up until July 2006 and found that there had been a statutory trust for the twenty preceding years'. Access was therefore 'by right' and not 'as of right' ie there was permission to use the site.

Are there any other recent or pending ones that I have missed? If there are please let me know and I will put the full list on the website. It is interesting that in all the above that went to a public inquiry the inspector's recommendation has been upheld.

Information on Town Greens on the defra website:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/protected/commonland/tvg.htm>

Bristol Parks Website - Update from Kerry Morgan, Marketing and Communications Officer

There will soon be a new Bristol City Council web site. It is anticipated that the council's new web site will go LIVE at the end of July, however this may change given the size and scope of the project.

The council are currently working on some new quality criteria for the web site. All content will be expected to meet this criteria and it will ensure that our information and services are presented in a consistent way and is more customer centric. These criteria are being finalised at the moment.

In terms of the parks web page, we are currently reviewing the content we have on the website, whether it is still needed, and where it will fit in the new navigation scheme. The migration is starting in mid March and will need to be finished by the end of May, so there is a lot to do in terms of preparing the parks web pages.

I can now confirm that the parks home page has been updated to include the new 'i want to...' section, which you can view at www.bristol.gov.uk/parks.

To make sure you see the latest version of this web page please refresh your web browser (CTRL + F5).

A further item will be added in due course titled 'report fly tipping, graffiti, dog fouling' - this will link to an online parks reporting form which is currently being developed with the parks operations

team.

Other new web developments include:

*A new web page for trim trail exercise stations www.bristol.gov.uk/trimtrails

*A new web page for cafes in the parks www.bristol.gov.uk/parkscafes

*A new category and web page for Parks A to Z - a search function will be added at a later date (March/April 2011), so people can enter their postcode to find their nearest park
www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment-and-planning/parks-and-open-spaces/parks-a-to-z/

*Our major parks and estate web pages have been updated

www.ashtoncourtestate.com

www.bristol.gov.uk/thedowns

www.bristol.gov.uk/oldburycourtestate

www.bristol.gov.uk/blaisecastleestate - currently being updated

www.bristol.gov.uk/hengrovepark - under review

*Spotlight on section has been updated, including a link to parks spotlights only. If you would like to feature under the spotlight section please let me know.
<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/spotlight-on.en?Group=95>

*Parks home page portal promotion booking schedule introduced. The Stoke Park celebration day currently occupies the portal promotion. www.bristol.gov.uk/parks

*A new category for nature reserves has been added including a new index page
www.bristol.gov.uk/localnaturereserves

*All the local nature reserve web pages have been revised and updated

www.bristol.gov.uk/badockswood

www.bristol.gov.uk/callingtonroad

www.bristol.gov.uk/eastwoodfarm

www.bristol.gov.uk/lawrencwestonmoor

www.bristol.gov.uk/manorwoodsvalley

www.bristol.gov.uk/royatehill

www.bristol.gov.uk/stockwoodopenspace

www.bristol.gov.uk/troopershill

*The parks and open spaces events page updated www.bristol.gov.uk/parklife

*The green flag parks web page updated www.bristol.gov.uk/greenflagparks

*A new web page for the golf course at Ashton Court Estate www.ashtoncourtgolf.co.uk

*Updated tree management web pages www.bristol.gov.uk/treemanagement
www.bristol.gov.uk/treepolicies

*A new web page for Stoke Park www.bristol.gov.uk/stokepark

Stoke Park celebration event 19th March

Details at www.bristol.gov.uk/stokepark All BPF members are invited.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Meeting dates: 16 April, 16 July, 15 Oct

14 March 2011 - No 56

Good News on Events

I'm pleased to be able to report that the Safety Advisory Group for Events (SAGE) has agreed to increase the numbers limit for events covered by the Park Permit scheme.

With immediate effect the limit is increased to events with no more than 200 people expected on site at one time (up from 100). Note - the BCC website has not yet been updated to show the increase but it does apply now.

This means that the rules for events in parks now are:

Events expecting less than 50 people on site at one time do not need a permit or licence, though it might be worth telling the events team parks.events@bristol.gov.uk to check for clashes with other events.

Events expecting 50 to 200 people on site at one time (unless they have a large set up eg bouncy castle, stage etc) should apply for a Park Permit, this will cost £20 and include public liability insurance cover for events run by community groups.

Events expecting more than 200 people on site at one time need to apply for a full Site Licence.

It has also been agreed that no bond will be required for small events run by BPF member groups; no map is required for small events with minimal infrastructure and Park Permit event organisers can submit a statement describing their event to show that they have considered any possible risks, rather than a formal risk assessment.

The Park Permit / Site Licence is the process by which BCC give permission for events to be held on their land. Statutory licences for 'regulated entertainment' or alcohol sales are separate.

There are links to the relevant pages on the BCC and more information at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#events>

Love Parks Week 2011

This year the campaign will be taking place from 23-31 July, see <http://tinyurl.com/67y9fgm>

Town Green Applications

I have updated the list from my last email see www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BristolTG.pdf

One of the BPF member groups that is making a TG application, The Friends of Elderberry Walk, are holding a meet and greet in the park on Saturday 19th March 10-00am - 11.00 to attract new members and supporters for their campaign. Elderberry Walk is situated off Charlton Road, just off the top of Knole Lane.

Section 106 developer contributions

BCC planning obligations manager Jim Cliffe is currently in the process of overhauling the monthly updated spreadsheet to take account of the monies to be devolved to Neighbourhood Partnerships on 1 April 2011 (as is being discussed at the current round of NP meetings).

From next month onwards, it will specifically identify those monies over which spend decisions are to be devolved, in order that each partnership will be able to easily identify those monies over which it has spending control.

s106 parks money will still be allocated in accordance with the agreed split [below] and the local element will still be applied to a park within 1 mile of the development that generates the s106 money.

33% devolved to NPs to spend on funding capital projects (i.e. not running costs)

33% for maintenance of green space. (NP can influence spending of this money)

13% to provide and maintain citywide sports pitches (decisions on this are not devolved to NPs)

6% to provide improvements for destination parks such as Ashton Court and Blaise Castle (decisions on this are not devolved to NPs).

15% will be applied to scheme delivery costs (not devolved to NPs)

I hope to be able to post the list on the BPF website.

Parks & Green Spaces Organisations

The National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces has produced a list of organisations with website addresses for most of them, it can be seen here:

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/Organisations.pdf

Tree Planting

This year's tree planting season is now coming to an end, TreeBristol will be planting three tulip trees at the Stoke Park Event as their last event. Details of the scheme can be seen at

www.treebristol.org.uk

If you are interested in trees then don't forget there is a Bristol Tree Forum

www.bristol.gov.uk/treeforum they are looking for volunteers as 'Tree Champions' in each NP.

Another national tree planting scheme has been launched by the Woodland Trust. Details of the Jubilee Woods Project can be seen here: <http://tinyurl.com/jw2012>

Stoke Park celebration event 19th March

Details at www.bristol.gov.uk/stokepark All BPF members are invited.

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Meeting dates: 16 April, 16 July, 15 Oct

18 March 2011 - No 57

Debate at Full Council Meeting

There will be a debate at the Full Council meeting next Tuesday (22nd March) to decide how the Council should respond to the recent petition about the disposal of green spaces.

Details about the debate can be found via www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings

There was another article about the disposals in the Evening Post on Tuesday, there is a link to the article together with most of the others that have been published over the last few months on our website P&GSS page at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/pgss.htm That page also has lots of background information and the responses we received from the four parties to our recent open letter.

The three main parties have also agreed to send representatives to discuss the issue at our next meeting on 16th April.

Given that a lot of what has been said in the press and elsewhere is not always 100% accurate I thought it would be worth recapping how we got to where we are and trying to clarify the figures.

The formal consultation on the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (P&GSS) was during the summer of 2007. The P&GSS set out standards for the minimum area of green space per person and the maximum distance that people should expect to travel for each of the four types of space - children's play, natural, informal and formal. Maps in the P&GSS showing current spaces, distances and space per person were based on 'Local Needs Areas'. Soon after the P&GSS was adopted new maps were produced showing Neighbourhood Partnership areas.

The P&GSS gives an estimated figure of £87m (at 2006 prices) being required to bring Bristol's parks and green spaces to a 'good' quality standard. This figure did not change between the consultation and the adoption of the strategy in February 2008.

The consultation document said that this would be funded over the 20 years from:

Section 106 £30m
Lottery & other grants £11m
Land disposal £36m
Core BCC budget £10m

No figure was given in the P&GSS for the percentage of money from disposal that would be reinvested in parks, but Rosalie Walker, the Labour executive member at the time, said in the BPF meeting in September 2007 that it would be at least 80%. To raise £36m from land sales with 80% being reinvested requires £43m worth of land to be sold. At the time land prices were estimated at £1m per acre and it was obvious that most of the land sold would be used for housing.

The disposal of green space by the Council was of course nothing new, at the time the Council was proposing to build on part of Castle Park and several areas in South Bristol were being sold off, for example Highridge Park and land at Huntingham Rd. Without any strategy land was being sold without any consideration as to whether it was of value as open space and the money was going into a central pot for capital projects.

It was clear that with pressure for more houses to be built this loss of land would continue, the strategy was a way of controlling it. Many people also felt that it was better to build houses within Bristol rather than on the green belt around it and therefore it was important to consider all possible land. A lot of land owned by the Council and now used as parks was bought for something else. Some for housing, some for road schemes that didn't happen, some for use as tips that have now closed and been landscaped. It was sensible to consider if any of these spaces could be used for housing.

One of the issues raised by the BPF and others during the consultation was that it was no good spending money improving parks if the new play equipment, benches, fences, paths etc weren't then maintained and replaced when they got worn out. You could spend £87m now but in 20 years time you would be back where you started. We therefore wanted a commitment both for spending on day to day maintenance to be improved and for spending on 'lifecycle maintenance'. Money for lifecycle maintenance (replacing worn out equipment) is very difficult to get from grants such as the Lottery as they only ever want to fund new projects.

This requirement for lifecycle maintenance was added into the financial model for the P&GSS when it came forward for adoption at the Cabinet meeting on 10th January 2008. Bristol Parks had estimated that once the strategy had been implemented £4.2m per year would be required for lifecycle maintenance to keep the good standard of the parks. The intention was (and still is as far as I know) to set up fund that would be used to reduce the Council's borrowing. The money saved by

BCC in finance and interest charges would be used to fund the lifecycle maintenance, it was estimated that the saving per year would be 10% of the fund. Therefore a fund of £42m was needed.

The figures for the version of the P&GSS that the Labour Cabinet intended to adopt in January 2008 were therefore aimed at raising £129m over the 20 years (£87m + £42m) made up from:

Section 106 £25m (reduced due changes in the way it is calculated)
Lottery & other grants £11m
Land disposal £83m
Core BCC budget £10m

The percentage to be reinvested from land disposals had been reduced to 50%. To raise £83m from land sales with 50% being reinvested requires £166m worth of land to be sold or 166 acres - approximately 4.5% of the total.

The P&GSS was not adopted in January 2008 due to a technicality over the maps which had not been included in the documents.

BPF representatives then had discussions with the Cabinet and Bristol Parks to review the figures and to try and reach an agreement to allow the P&GSS to be adopted in February 2008. The following changes were made:

The percentage of money to be reinvested was increased to 70%;
The estimated income from grants was increased to £21m;
£1m of the money required for lifecycle maintenance after the 20 years was to be funded from grants and core budget spending, meaning a £32m fund was required.

The final adopted strategy therefore aimed to raise £119m over the 20 years (£87m + £32m) made up from:

Section 106 £25m
Lottery & other grants £21m
Land disposal £63m
Core BCC budget £10m

To raise £63m from land sales with 70% being reinvested requires £90m worth of land to be sold or 90 acres - approximately 2.4% of the total. This final version had the support of all three main parties. The quantity standards made it clear that disposals would not come from areas of Bristol where there was less green space than the standards required (though the Labour Cabinet at that time still wanted to go against the strategy and build on Castle Park).

The disposals currently agreed by Cabinet amount to 62.7 acres (25.4 Hectares) so about 70% of the area envisaged when the strategy was adopted. As a percentage, this is 1.67% of land originally covered by the P&GSS. This figure does not include sites that were deferred or those within the area of the Knowle West Regeneration Framework.

The strategy as adopted had an important extra statement:

'It is important to emphasise that it is not the council's intention to keep selling land until the funding requirements of the strategy are achieved'

All the figures produced in 2008 were estimates so we all knew that they would change as time went on, but the figures were considered a 'best guess' at the time. It was important to those of us

involved in the discussions that if there was found to be less than 90 acres of low amenity value land or less than £1m per acre was raised then the Council wouldn't go looking for more land to sell.

So where does that leave us? Even if land values recover over the next 20 years money from land disposals is likely to be less than envisaged.

Section 106 comes from new developments, mostly housing and the figure was based on the numbers for new housing over 20 years in the Development Framework so it is unlikely to go up, especially if developers keep pleading poverty and Councillors let them off paying their contributions as has happened recently. The rules are also going to change when the new Community Infrastructure Levy comes in.

The predicted income for grants with an average of over £1m per year is probably not going to increase much.

Capital spending from the Council core budget also seems unlikely to increase, though that is in the power of Councillors to decide and in the short term there might be some money from the 'new homes bonus' - if Councillors decide to allocate it to parks. Importantly Council officers and Councillors also now know that there is not a large landbank of green space that they can sell.

No one has suggested any other funding stream that could be used.

The other unknown figure at the moment is the cost of the improvements. The £87m was an estimate to get all the parks and green spaces to a good standard based on 2006 prices, so the same calculation done now would give a higher figure. As the AGSPs are developed by Neighbourhood Partnerships over the next few months the figure will become clearer.

I think it is still important that we try and achieve a really good standard of parks and green spaces in Bristol. We have always taken the view at Troopers Hill that we should decide what we want to do and then go and find the money to do it. I hope that over the next few months park groups through the Neighbourhood Partnerships will push to put together plans to really make a difference to their green spaces. Once the plans are in place then everyone should pull together to try and find the necessary funding.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Meeting dates: 16 April, 16 July, 15 Oct

25 March 2011 - No 58

BPF meeting Sat 16th April 9.30am

The next BPF meeting will again be at Windmill Hill City Farm, please let us know if there is anything you want included in the agenda.

AGSP Debate - Full Council Meeting 22nd March

The webcast of the meeting is on the Council website via www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings There were several mentions of the Parks Forum, including a suggestion in the LibDem motion that was passed that there should be meetings for chairs of the Neighbourhood Partnerships to work with council leaders and representatives of the Parks Forum. On behalf of the BPF committee I want to make it clear that we were not party to that plan and had no prior knowledge of it.

We agreed at the last meeting to try and arrange workshop sessions with Council officers and the AWT to look at the wildlife issues on the sites proposed for disposal, these are issues that apply across several sites and the aim would I think be to agree principles that would apply to any disposal of council land. While we would be happy to meet with NP chairs or indeed anyone else and discuss the principles as to which sites should be sold, the BPF committee has never taken a view on individual sites, since we cannot know all the local issues, we have left that to our member groups.

One thing that was clear from the debate was that which ever party forms the administration after the election NPs will have an increasing say in the future of green spaces so park groups must get involved.

Alison & Hugh recently took part in discussions on the AGSP with Billy Quain on BCfm - <http://bcfm.org.uk> You can hear the interview by downloading an MP3 file from our website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BAS.mp3 Thanks to Billy Quain at BCfm for sending us the file, his programme is broadcast on Saturday mornings and unusually for radio presenters he gives his guests plenty of time to speak...

Park Groups Raising Money for Improving Parks

Several park groups have raised money from Lottery and other grants to improve their parks. As part of this process there are at least two consultations currently in progress to ensure that local people support the work proposed - something that grant bodies are increasingly insisting on.

You can see details of the consultations at:

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/brandonhill

and

www.troopers-hill.org.uk/steppingforward

There are also two events coming up to celebrate the successful completion of projects.

The first is tomorrow (Sat 26th March) 12 noon - 2pm

To launch the regenerated area of their park Montpelier Park Group are holding a community Picnic in the Park. It is a chance to bring a picnic, play some table tennis, use the barbecue, meet the neighbours and help them celebrate the new space.

On Saturday 7th May midday until 4.00pm

There will be a Woodland Activities Fun Day at Badock's Wood. There will be fun activities, including puppet shows, games, face painting, woodland crafts, walks, environmental and wildlife

information and activities. The event will be held at the Northern Gateway to Badock's Wood, off Doncaster Road, Southmead, Bristol. It's being organised by Friends of Badock's Wood with Bristol City Council as part of the Big Lottery funded improvements to the woodland's Northern Gateway.

Local MP, Charlotte Leslie, has very kindly accepted an invitation to officially declare the new Gateway "open" at around 1.00pm.

Dog Bin Bunny

If you have dog bins on your site that always seem to have ears of plastic bags sticking out of the top with the result that people think they are full when they are not, then you might be interested in a sign that seems to have been successful at Troopers Hill - see www.troopers-hill.org.uk/events/11DogbinB.jpg

There is also a discussion on www.troopers-hill.org.uk/news&views about another sign that has been seen on Summerhill Terrace that is less polite but perhaps expresses a sentiment that many of us share?

Rob Acton-Campbell

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