

1 October 2010 – No 31

South West Friends of Parks Conference - Saturday 23 October 2010

This free one day conference, organised by GreenSpace SW, will be held in the Park Conference Centre at Exeter City Football Club. It will comprise a series of presentations and workshops aimed at demonstrating good practice and sharing learning in the community management of open spaces.

GreenSpace SW are keen that Bristol Park Groups should be represented at this conference, if you are interested in going then please email us and we will get in touch to discuss travel arrangements etc.

The conference is aimed at:

- New volunteer groups seeking to learn more and hear about good practice.
- Community groups with experience of successfully managing green spaces.
- Employees from the public/charitable sector, who have supported or will be supporting community groups in the management of open spaces.

Refreshments and a buffet lunch will be provided. Places are limited, so if you are interested in attending, please e-mail Roger Gates on rgates@green-space.org.uk

The DRAFT programme is as follows:

Morning presentations

Making the most of community involvement
Fraser Bridgeford, Bristol Parks Forum

Community groups and volunteers play an invaluable role in the management of our green spaces. Fraser Bridgeford explains the origins of the Bristol Parks Forum and how it actively supports Bristol City Council, focusing on their work to influence decision-makers, improve the profile of the city's parks, and protect investment, revenue and resources.

What support is available for community groups in developing public spaces?
Nicola Mathers, CABI Space

Help and assistance for community groups involved in the management of open spaces is essential if projects are to be successful. Nicola Mathers will outline some of the support mechanisms that are available to volunteer groups who are involved in the planning, design and ongoing management of public spaces.

Improving the sustainability of your project
Lynn Gibbons, Sustainability South West

It is vital that community projects are developed sustainably if they are to be truly successful. Lynn Gibbons will provide an overview of some of the initiatives available to community group which can ensure decision making is based on proven sustainability criteria and thus contribute towards making the South West a more sustainable region.

The benefits of Green Infrastructure to communities
Roger Gates, GreenSpace South West

Green Infrastructure (GI) is the natural environment network that lies within and links our cities, towns and villages. This presentation will introduce the concept of GI and explore some of the social and environmental benefits that can be realised by community groups, volunteers and visitors to green spaces.

Afternoon Workshops

How community groups can play a greater role in the management of green spaces?
Nicola Mathers, Adviser, CABE Space

The enthusiasm, commitment and local knowledge within a community are invaluable qualities when it comes to establishing volunteer groups to successfully manage open spaces. However, community groups can encounter many unfamiliar processes and practices that can appear overly bureaucratic when wanting to improve a public space. Nicola Mathers will outline some of the options available to groups to enable them to become more empowered, by looking at case studies and providing an overview of free guides and resources available to community groups.

Toolkits for sustainable community management of open spaces
Lynn Gibbons, Project Manager, Sustainability South West

Every individual, group or organisation can take steps to be more sustainable. However it can be challenging to know where to start in terms of assessing your project and then deciding on the best course of action to reduce your carbon footprint. Lynn Gibbons will demonstrate the new SustNav sustainability toolkit and other initiatives which will provide a simple sustainability assessment of your project or proposed scheme. It will enable you to start thinking about integrating sustainability measures into your project.

We are also aiming to hold some other workshops specifically looking at:

- 1) Fundraising; and
- 2) Help for community groups when starting up.

Once any additions/amendments to the programme are confirmed, the final programme will be announced.

Events, Park Permits

After the last workshop session with the Events team I mentioned that a new Parks Permit scheme was to be introduced to make it easier to license small events. Unfortunately the Safety Advisory Group for Events have insisted that this should only apply to events with less than 100 people expected and not specifically aimed at children. They also say that the event shouldn't be advertised to the general public.

The application form for these Permits is now on the website, though it is not easy to find. Despite the fact that these are Park Permits they are on the Leisure & Arts section of the website rather than the Parks website as you might expect.

The best place to start is www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/leisure-and-culture/events You can then see links to 'Parks Permits' and to the 'Event Site License Application Toolkit'. If you follow the link to 'Event Site Licensing' you will also see details of monthly Briefing Sessions that have been set up for events organisers. If you are planning events for next year these would be well

worth attending, unfortunately they are all day time sessions so no good for those of us who work.

Ashton Vale Town Green Application

In amongst all the publicity about the Town Green application and the petitions set up in support of the stadium, you might not be aware that there is also a petition in support of the Town Green designation. It can be seen at

http://epetitions.bristol.gov.uk/epetition_core/community/petition/1206

South Bristol Riverscapes Project

You may know that this very successful lottery funded project on rivers in South Bristol finished recently. One of its legacies is the website www.southbristolriverscapes.org.uk A link to a final report on the project has recently been added to the site.

The website has been set up so that the various groups that were involved can add information so the website will continue even though the project has ended. There is also a possibility that the website could be expanded to include river groups throughout Bristol, if your group would be interested then please let me know.

Stoke Park

There will be a Stoke Park steering group meeting on the 11th October at the Cameron Centre Lockleaze, off of Gainsborough Square, from 7pm till-9pm. Steve England has asked me to pass on an invitation for anyone who is interested to go along and get involved in the management of this wonderful parkland.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

The next meeting of the Bristol Parks Forum will be on Saturday 9th October 9.30am at the Netham Pavilion, Avonvale Road, Redfield, BS5 9RN This will also be our 2010 AGM.

4 October 2010 – No 32

Area Green Space Plan Consultation

A reminder that there are two 'city wide' drop-in sessions this week, they are at Brunel House, St Georges Road, Bristol BS1 5UY on Wed 6th and Thur 7th October midday till 8pm.

This might also be a good time to summarise some of the information about the AGSP and Site Allocations consultations.

Area Green Space Plans, Ideas and Options

www.bristol.gov.uk/agsp

Responses can be via the online surveys, printed forms (available as pdf) or by email to Park.Strategy@bristol.gov.uk

Alison's 'Easy Guide' www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AGSPeasyGuide.pdf

The criteria on which the recreational value of sites is assessed are set out in Appendix 5 of the P&GSS. It can be seen at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/PGSSApp5.pdf If you wish to object to a space being assessed as low value then the best way is to say why the site is not low value against these criteria. The final decisions on disposals will be made by Cabinet probably in December.

A map showing the 2008 quantity of space per person from the CD version of the P&GSS is here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/Citywide_Quantity.pdf There should not be any disposals in areas with less public green space than the Bristol standard of 18m²/person. Some spaces in Ashley, Easton and Lawrence have been assessed as low value but the AGSP says they will not be sold off unless a development can provide an alternative space.

A letter from Richard Fletcher can be seen here:

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/AGSP_RF_Sept2010.pdf This sets out the importance of both park groups and their members responding on the investment proposals as well as the disposals. This is your chance to have a say on the future of your park for the next 20 years so you should make the most of it.

Site Allocations, www.bristol.gov.uk/siteallocations

On the Site Allocations webpage the best way to see the sites is to use the online maps. You can double click on the maps to zoom in to a very detailed level. You can then click on the sites shown orange to get details about the proposals. Some of these sites are green spaces not covered by the AGSP.

Site Allocations, Development Management Policies, also at www.bristol.gov.uk/siteallocations

Alison's quick summary:

"These are the bit of policy that the 'development management' officers - [previously called 'development control' officers] use to decide whether to approve or refuse planning applications. So it is important that they are written so that rogue developers and lawyers can't wriggle out of them and that they cover all the things that are important to us."

The policies that are of interest from a parks & green spaces point of view are:

Green Infrastructure Provision Draft Policy DM6

Development Involving Existing Green Infrastructure Draft Policy DM7

Kingsweston and Avonmouth Urban Edge Draft Policy DM8

Development Involving Biological and Geological Conservation Sites Draft Policy DM9

Development of Private Gardens Draft Policy DM10

Development Adjacent to Waterways Draft Policy DM11

Transport Schemes Draft Policy DM13

Greenways Draft Policy DM14

Heritage Assets Draft Policy DM20

Pollution Control, Air and Water Quality Draft Policy DM22

The BPF committee are aiming to put together a BPF response on these policies. We are also awaiting information on the workshops that the BDF are supposed to be organising. We will talk more about this on Saturday.

Rob Acton-Campbell

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www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

The next meeting of the Bristol Parks Forum will be on Saturday 9th October 9.30am at the Netham Pavilion, Avonvale Road, Redfield, BS5 9RN This will also be our 2010 AGM.

Agenda: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFAgend091010.pdf

10 October 2010 No 33

BPF Meeting 9 Oct 2010

The minutes of yesterday's meeting will be sent out by Catherine in due course. There were some interesting discussions on Neighbourhood Partnerships, Parks Organisation and of course Area Green Space Plans.

Hugh was elected as Chair of BPF, he can only serve for one year having been chair for two years previously. Fraser is now Vice Chair and Mary from Castle Park Users Group has joined myself, Alison, Roland and Nancy as the other committee members.

One of the first jobs for the new committee is to agree meeting dates for 2011, I will let you know once we have fixed them. We also aim to have two committee meetings between each of the main meetings.

Knowle West Regeneration Framework

Consultation on the proposals for Knowle West starts officially on 13 October and will be on the web at www.bristol.gov.uk/kwrf

These proposals fill the hole in the Area Green Space Space Plan for that area and so this will be the first chance for people living there and in the surrounding areas to see how the green space standards will be met in their area. The consultation is currently planned to run for only two weeks. At the request of the Northern Slopes Initiative at the meeting the BPF will be asking for this to be extended by at least two weeks.

An additional drop in session to look at the AGSP proposals for the whole of Filwood, Knowle and Windmill Hill will be held on Monday 18 Oct at The Park Local Opportunity Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol BS4 1DQ The session will run from midday to 8pm. So this will be a chance to see how the Regeneration Framework proposals fit with the AGSP.

Unfortunately there is still a hole in the plans for this area because the consultation will apparently still not cover the proposals for the Kindswear & Torpoint development. You can find out more at <http://www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk>

Parks Reorganisation

At the meeting Tracey Morgan shared the outline of the new structure which will go to consultation with staff over the next month. Tracey had also had discussions with the BPF committee about this. We think the new proposals are promising and we are pleased the Tracey is listening to what we and her staff are saying.

Information about the current structure can be seen at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#contacts This also now includes structure charts for English Landscapes and Quadron that I received last week.

South West Friends of Parks & Green Spaces conference

The programme for this conference on Saturday 23rd October has now been confirmed and details have been loaded on to the 'News' page on the GSSW website at:

<http://www.green-space.org.uk/southwest/events/friendsconference.php>

If you are interested in attending or require further information, please email info@bristolparksforum.org.uk so that we can arrange to share transport. Fraser is the first speaker.

Clifton Camp conservation project

This proposed work on the Downs might be of interest.

Students from Ashton Park School will carry out a geo-survey of part of the Iron Age camp that surrounds the Clifton Observatory, from 9.30am, Monday 11 October.

The buried archaeology of Clifton Camp has not been surveyed in modern times - or with sophisticated equipment. The lucky students will be hands-on with archaeologist Tony Roberts to use the machinery, upload data onto an on-site computer and get some instant results. Tony, of Archeoscan, will be on hand to interpret the data.

The geo-survey launches a week of guided walks and an exhibition (18-23 Oct) to show the public what Bristol City Council will be doing to conserve the Scheduled Ancient Monument for future generations of people and wildlife.

The week of events, activities and exhibits will demonstrate how the council is starting work this winter to gradually remove selected vegetation through careful phasing of scrub clearance over the next five to ten years. The council is obliged to manage and maintain this important Iron Age site and is carrying out the work in partnership with English Heritage and wildlife consultants.

You can visit the on-site display showing the planned work at these times:

10am to 3pm, Monday to Friday, October 18 - 22

10am to 12noon Saturday, October 23

Free, specially arranged guided walks are also arranged. There are a maximum of 15 places on each walk so booking is essential: vicki.abel@bristol.gov.uk or call 0117 922 3719.

Archaeology Walks with Bristol City Council archaeologists Bob Jones and Peter Insole:

Monday, October 18 from 2pm to 3.30pm

Wednesday, October 20 from 10.30am to 12noon

Friday, October 22 from 2pm to 3.30pm

Wildlife Walks to learn about the wild animals and plants at Clifton Camp and how the works will benefit the local ecology, with Rupert Higgins, Consultant Ecologist:

Tuesday, October 19 from 10.30am to 11.30am

Thursday, October 21 from 10.30am to 11.30am

Ruth Coleman and Peter Milner (specialists in heritage interpretation) will be available at the following times to discuss the proposals:

Thursday, October 21 from 10am to 1pm
Friday, October 22 from 10am to 1pm
Saturday, October 23 from 10am to 12noon

'Silver gilt should make us all blooming proud'

Finally, some good news about parks from last week was reported in the Evening Post here:
<http://tinyurl.com/2fm2z4z> A later report also had a photo of Tracey and other members of the team with the award but that doesn't seem to be on the website.

Rob Acton-Campbell
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www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

16 October 2010 No 34

AGSP Consultation, Closing Date 29 October

Less than two weeks left on the consultation!

The last drop in session is in Knowle West on Monday (18 Oct) at The Park Local Opportunity Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol BS4 1DQ The session will run from midday to 8pm. The options for development in Knowle West are now on the Council's website at www.bristol.gov.uk/kwrf These cover the area that is greyed out in the AGSP. Displays at the drop in session will show how the options fit with the AGSP process.

You may have seen that the Evening Post has been running a series of articles about the AGSP consultation. Tuesday's included an article resulting from an interview with Hugh. I have put links to these and a selection of earlier stories on the P&GSS page of our website at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/pgss.htm>

AGSP report on disposals to Cabinet and Scrutiny

Parks officers are drawing up a report to scrutiny commission and cabinet to guide their decision on disposal of low amenity value green space. All responses will be attached to the report so that councillors can see the original documents. The report will highlight particular issues on the following criteria:

- a.. volume of response about a particular park [eg petitions etc]
- b.. any particular response/issue that appeared a large number of times
- c.. any response that gave rise to a change of assessment about whether a site was low amenity value.

Scrutiny Commission meets on 6th December and cabinet on 12th December. The report can be changed to reflect scrutiny commission responses before the document is finalised for cabinet consideration.

If a group is has canvassed local community opinion before submitting a response for their park, it would be a good idea to tell the Parks Officers how they have done this, so that the officers can be aware of the strength of support for the response. A Community Involvement Statement would be the best way of doing this - setting out the methods the group has used eg mail drops/ email circulars / meetings and the number of people who responded and whose point of view has been used to guide the group response.

South West Friends of Parks & Green Spaces Conference

A reminder that anyone interested in attending this conference in Exeter on Saturday 23rd October should email info@bristolparksforum.org.uk so that we can co-ordinate transport. The programme is at : <http://www.green-space.org.uk/southwest/events/friendsconference.php>

Parks Reorganisation

As mentioned at the meeting Tracey has invited us to a workshop session so that we can work through how the proposed organisation will work in terms of the way park groups and the public will interact with Parks. If you are interested please email info@bristolparksforum.org.uk and we will try and arrange a date to suit those who want to take part.

Effects of Angling on Wildlife

Friends of St George Park have produced a document showing the terrible effects of angling on birds in St George Park. You can see the document here:
<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/Angling.pdf> (it is 10MB so may take time to download).
Banning angling is one of the options in the AGSP for St George Park and looking at the photos you can see why it is getting a lot of support.

Barbecues

Brandon Hill has had a particular problem with barbecues this year, perhaps caused by the enforcement of the ban on barbecues on the Downs. I understand that Parks have now agreed to put signs up saying 'No Fires, No BBQs, No Naked Flames'. The design of the sign can be seen here:
<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/NoBBQ.jpg>

If you think similar signs would be appropriate for your park or green space then you should discuss it with your CPO.

BPF Meeting Dates for 2011

The planned dates for the Bristol Parks Forum meetings for next year are:

Sat 29 Jan
Sat 16 April
Sat 16 July
Sat 15 Oct

All meetings will be 9.30am to 12.30pm, venues to be arranged.

Rob Acton-Campbell
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25 October 2010 No 35

AGSP Consultation, Closing Date Friday 29 October

Less than one week left on the consultation!

If you haven't done so already, please remind all members of your group and anyone else you know that the closing date for both the Area Green Space Plan and Site Allocations consultations is 5pm on Friday. The message is that this is your chance to have your say both on disposals and investment ideas for your Parks so make the most of it.

The Evening Post has continued its series of articles about the AGSP consultation. Saturday's was a Q&A session with Gary Hopkins. Perhaps the most important phrase in Gary Hopkins replies is "We will guarantee that every park not sold off will be protected for the next 20 years".

Links are on the P&GSS page of our website at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/pgss.htm>

Knowle West Consultation Extended to 12 November.

Paul Owens has emailed to say 'Further to representation made at the Bristol Parks Forum meeting, and representations made at the Filwood/Knowle/Windmill Hill Neighbourhood Partnership meeting on 12th October, the current phase of the Knowle West Regeneration Plan consultation is being extended by two weeks, and will now end on 12th November 2010'.

The request for an extension was also supported by the Avon Wildlife Trust who are concerned about the possible impact on the Sites of Nature Conservation Interest in the area.

The options for development in Knowle West are on the Council's website at www.bristol.gov.uk/kwrf

Note the proposed development at Kingswear Road & Torpoint is not included in this consultation,

so we still don't have a full picture of all the impacts on green space in Knowle West. Yet another separate consultation is planned for that area!

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

2011 meeting dates: 29 Jan, 16 April, 16 July, 15 Oct