

03 October 2012 - No 107

In this update: BPF Meeting 13 October - Mayoral Elections - Neighbourhood Planning - Jan Walters - Town Green Applications - Health & Safety Training

BPF Meeting 13 October

The agenda for our next meeting is now on the website at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFAgenda131012.pdf>

NOTE - this meeting is at:
St Werburghs Centre, Horley Road, St Werburghs BS2 9TJ

NOT our usual venue. Directions, including bus details are at www.stwerburghs.org.uk/contactus.php

This meeting is also the BPF AGM, please let us know if you are interested in joining the BPF committee.

If you have any questions on the subjects to be discussed which Parks might need to research before the meeting then please email them to me and I will pass them on. The same applies if you have a question or issue you would like to raise but are unable to get to the meeting.

One of the issues is Green Flags, Richard Stransom is preparing some information on this which will be available in advance at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#meetings

Sue Lutkenhouse, Environment & Leisure Projects Manager, has prepared an update on the Capital investment plans following the £3.5m agreed by Cabinet. The report and the provisional programme can be seen via the links below:

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/UpdateCapitalInvestment031012.pdf>
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ProgrammeCapitalInvestment031012.pdf

Hard copies will be available at the meeting.

Mayoral Elections

Most of the leading contenders have now replied to our questions - see <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#mayor>

Neighbourhood Planning

If you are interested in getting involved in producing a Neighbourhood Plan and forming a Neighbourhood Planning Forum for your area, then the Council has set some dates by which it would like applications. More information is at www.bristol.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

Jan Walters

You may know that Jan Walters left her job as Nature Conservation Officer in mid September. Jan asked me to pass on her 'heartfelt thanks to all the groups involved in the Parks Forum for all their enthusiasm for making Bristol an even better place for wildlife over the years. '

Russell Horsey also left the Natural Environment team that week.

Town Green Applications

There was a meeting of the Public Rights of Way and Green Committee on 17th September, papers for the meeting, including the latest on current applications can be seen via <http://tinyurl.com/8cc4nzo>

Current applications now include the northern part of the Ashton Vale, where it states 'Balance of land to be referred to inspector Crail for a public inquiry. Pre-inquiry process to start in October 2012'.

The minutes are not yet on the website, but I understand that all the recommendations in the reports on the various sites were accepted.

Health & Safety Training

If you or any one in your group is interested in having Health & Safety training so that you can run your own task days in your park while being covered by Bristol City Council insurance please let me know. If there is sufficient demand we will ask Bristol Parks to organise more sessions.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Next meeting date: Sat 13th October

2013 meetings: Sat 19 January - Sat 13 April - Sat 29 June - Sat 12 October

(all 9.30 to 12.30, venues tbc)

10 October 2012 - No 108

In this update: BPF Meeting 13 October - Mayoral Elections - Northern Slopes, Wildfest - NSI, Knowle West update - Brislington Brook Events - Report on Neighbourhood Partnerships - Stoke Park

BPF Meeting 13 October

A reminder that the agenda and papers for our meeting in St Werburghs on Saturday are on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#meetings

This now includes the minor changes to the BPF Terms of Reference that we will be asking the meeting to agree.

Mayoral Elections

All the leading candidates have now replied to our questions, they can be seen at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#mayor> and hard copies will be available at the meeting.

Northern Slopes, Wildfest

NSI with Bristol CC Wild City project, Positive Futures and others - are holding a community wildlife event.

Next Saturday between 2pm and 6pm - on our Glyn Vale site, off Kenmare Road.

All are welcome.

There's a lot of hands on stuff, for all ages - including survival skills, photography, bird and bat box making, live music from African to rap, cooking, graffiti.... And the Lord Mayors coming too.

To find out more check out
www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk/WILDFEST

or "like us" on
<https://www.facebook.com/events/423405467720726/>

Bristol City Council Parks/Wild City, Positive Futures and Groundwork are the main sponsors and organisers – along with ourselves.

Hoping that the weather will be good!

A 'Post' report on the event can be seen here: <http://tinyurl.com/99nq2gw>

NSI, Knowle West update

Knowle West Regeneration Framework and Kingswear/Torpoint etc Development.

Kingswear/Torpoint

The Council has announced that the ex-Marksbury Road site will be treated separately, from the rest of the development area - including the green spaces.

It seems that the intention is to have a primary school open in Sept 2014, possibly with a health centre, employment opportunities and houses - including some self build.

But the rest of the site (Haldon Close, Kingswear Road and Torpoint Roads and the surrounding

green spaces) – the partners are still discussing how best to take this part forward. Their intention remains the same including the loss of what we call the critical green space uphill of Kingswear Road.

Knowle West Regeneration Plan

To back up this last point - Cabinet on Thursday 4th October (even with the strength of local opinion, the points we raised about the value of the uphill area; and the risk of a precedent being set for parts of the Slopes to the west owned by housing developers) confirmed this within the Framework Spatial Plan and Investment Principles. To be fair to the Council some green space is being kept and a corridor made wider in one location - but even after this our concerns remain.

Concerns about the need for an appropriate green space corridor around the western and southern edge of the area, did not result in a change to the Plan either.

The Site Allocations process is the next important point for us, unless of course the Council bring in a planning application before then.

The Council also announced that all receipts from council land would be reinvested in the regeneration area. What this means for green spaces - isn't clear yet.

One park group asked me what it feels like to be in this position - well, after 4 years of this - and with more years to come - not surprisingly it's a right mixture of feelings. But one thing I do know we are still going.

PS: the Cabinet also covered BRT routes and Capital investment in green spaces.

For further info - https://www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2012/ua/agenda/1004_1800_ua000.html

www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk"

Brislington Brook Events

Night-Time Creatures - Thurs 11th Oct 6pm-9pm

Ever wondered what happens in the woods after dark?! Come and join us for a NIGHT-TIME CREATURES walk and STORIES in Nightingale Valley. Suitable for children and people with an active inner-child! There will be hot chocolate and stories around the fire at the end of the night! Meet at the top of St Anne's Terrace at 6pm.

More info at <http://discoverbrislingtonbrook.wordpress.com/>

or <http://www.facebook.com/events/290510414388057/>

Forage & Feast - Thurs 25th Oct

A very exciting event organised in partnership with the Oxfam GROW campaign. Curious as to what you can eat that grows locally? Come and

meet an expert forager for a wild food walk, and bring food to share for an Autumnal feast! Explore interesting ideas about food sustainability locally and globally and meet local growing projects. Please email to book a place.

Other events for the diary

Sat 10th Nov 10am-12:30pm- "Practical Woodland Conservation Workshop"

Mon 26th Nov 7-8:30pm - "Owl Prowl" with Wild Owl, meet at bottom of Hill Lawn

Fri 14 Dec 11am - 12pm, "Christmas Walk & Get together" with "Walking for Health", 12-1pm Festive Feast! Meet at St. Annes Church and bring food to share for a festive feast!

Sat 16th Feb 10am-1pm, St Anne's Woods community clear-up

Discover Brislington Brook <http://discoverbrislingtonbrook.wordpress.com/>

Report on Neighbourhood Partnerships

You may remember that Voscur organised a working group on Neighbourhood Partnerships. The groups report can now be seen on the Voscur website at www.voscur.org/news/NPreportcompleted

Stoke Park

Steve England seems to be in The Post more often than the Mayoral candidates at the moment, he still has a regular column on Mondays and there have been several other articles and letters. He is also running a great range of events at Stoke Park. A recent article is here: <http://tinyurl.com/8tdsnpn> but they do not all appear on the website. The best way to keep up with what is happening is at www.facebook.com/groups/stokeparkestate

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Next meeting date: Sat 13th October

2013 meetings: Sat 19 January - Sat 13 April - Sat 29 June - Sat 12 October

(all 9.30 to 12.30, venues tbc)

20 October 2012 - No 109

In this update: BPF Meeting 13 October - Threat to Ash Trees - BPF AGM - AEO Update - Monitoring Your Park - Health & Safety Training - The Conservation Volunteers - Town & Village Greens - Troopers Hill Stepping Forward

BPF Meeting 13 October

Catherine will be sending out the Minutes from the meeting in due course, in the meantime I have updated the links at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#meetings

Some of the important information from the meeting is also highlighted below.

Threat to Ash Trees

Hugh would not forgive me if I did not mention this first.

Ash trees make up about a third of our native trees in the U.K ; they are under serious threat from a fungus *Chalara fraxinea* which has already caused grave damage in Europe (Denmark has lost 90% of it's Ash in 7 years) and which has been brought here on trees from nurseries there.

There are links to the current consultation and other information about *Chalara fraxinea* at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#trees The Forestry Commission website includes a link to a guide to the symptoms.

BPF AGM

Nancy and Fraser were re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair of the BPF at the meeting. We also now have an enlarged committee with Mark from SMAG, Derek from Friends of Stoke Lodge and Lesley & Maggie from Friends of St George Park joining us. The revised BPF Terms of Reference that were agreed at the meeting are now on the website.

AEO Update

There have been three new Area Environment Officers appointed over the last few weeks, so the team is now at full strength. Names and contact details are on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#net

Monitoring Your Park

As discussed at the meeting Bristol Parks have been talking to the BPF committee about how park groups can be involved in monitoring the state of Bristol's parks. The idea is that the information collected will be used in assessing the performance of the contractors and the in-house teams alongside Bristol Parks own monitoring systems.

Since the meeting I have been talking to Richard Stransom about how we can best organise park group's input. It will probably involve completing and submitting a simple spreadsheet each month along with photos of any particular problems, or particularly good examples of maintenance.

I will give more details in future updates.

Health & Safety Training

Friends of Brandon Hill have some volunteers who would like to do this training, so Catherine is going to organise some more sessions. If your group would like to get some members trained so that you can run your own work parties or task days while being covered by BCC insurance please email Catherine at catherine.newman@bristol.gov.uk

The Conservation Volunteers

If you would like to contact Claire, who spoke at the meeting about the work that TCV (formerly BTCV) have done in the area, her email address is c.dinsdale@tcv.org.uk

Town & Village Greens

You may have seen that following the consultation this time last year the Government is planning changes to the Town & Village Green laws. The draft Bill can be seen here:
<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/growthandinfrastructure.html>

The main points are that it prevents applications where planning permission has already been applied for or where the land has been designated for development in a local plan. It seems that at the moment it is not intended to apply the new rules retrospectively. However, even if that changes it does not seem that this would impact on any of the current TVG applications in Bristol.

Troopers Hill Stepping Forward

Our Lottery funded project on Troopers Hill is now nearly complete and there is a celebration event today (Sat). Yesterday pupils from a local school set up some 'dream catchers' in the woods for the event. There are photos on www.facebook.com/TroopersHill and more details of the event and the project at www.troopers-hill.org.uk/steppingforward

We have also produced a timeline of all that has happened to get to this stage, you can see it at www.troopers-hill.org.uk/steppingforward/SFtimeline.pdf - but please don't let it put you off trying to organise a similar project!

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

2013 meetings: Sat 19 January - Sat 13 April - Sat 29 June - Sat 12 October

(all 9.30 to 12.30, venues tbc)

31 October 2012 - No 110

In this update: BPF Meeting Minutes - Mayoral Election 15th November - Threat to Ash Trees - Green Flag Award News Release - £100 million Lottery Boost for Parks - Events of Interest

BPF Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting are now on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#meetings

If you are on Bristol Parks' mailing list you will also have received them by email from Catherine Newman. As Parks admin officer, Catherine has been working with the BPF for a long time now and has attended all our meetings over the last couple of years to take the minutes. However, Catherine is now leaving Parks and moving on to 'new challenges' with Children and Young People's Services. I'm sure you will join with all of us on the BPF committee in wishing Catherine all the best for the future.

One of the tasks that Catherine has been doing for us is to organise the Health and Safety training. Richard Fletcher or a member of his team will now be responsible for arranging this. It is hoped to run another course sometime during November/ December depending on the availability of the trainer from TCV. If you are interested in attending this course please email Richard, or let me know and I will pass your detail on.

Mayoral Election 15th November

There are various links to information about the elections at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#mayor

Threat to Ash Trees

When Hugh first mentioned *Chalara fraxinea* I had never heard of it, but as you may have seen it has had a lot of publicity over the last week or so. The good news is that the Government has introduced the ban on imports that the Tree Forum and others were calling for. The bad news is that it has been found in trees in East Anglia and the BBC reported that 100,000 trees have been destroyed as a result.

I have added links to some of the news stories at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#trees Importantly there is also a link to the Forestry Commission guide to the symptoms. If you are concerned about any trees please check the symptoms against the photos on the guide and if you are in any doubt report it. Contact details are on www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara or for trees in Bristol parks (or streets) email bristolparks@bristol.gov.uk or speak to your AEO.

Green Flag Award News Release

Keep Britain Tidy and partners to run Green Flag Award scheme until 2017

Environmental charities celebrate after winning licence from government

A new UK-wide partnership led by Keep Britain Tidy has been awarded the licence to run the Green Flag Award scheme for the next five years.

The Wigan-based charity will manage the overall scheme under licence from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), with the aim of increasing the number of well-managed parks and other green spaces throughout the UK and licensing the scheme for use internationally.

Keep Britain Tidy will continue to manage day-to-day operations in England, with delivery in the other nations being overseen by its sister charities Keep Wales Tidy, Tidy Northern Ireland and Keep Scotland Beautiful.

In addition, the development and growth of the scheme will be supported by a number of other key partners including GreenSpace, supporting training and international expansion, the National Housing Federation who will support the expansion of the Award into the affordable housing sector and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens who will lead on delivery of the Green Flag Community Award.

The Green Flag Award was established in 1996 to recognise and reward the best parks and green spaces. Keep Britain Tidy took over the running of the scheme in 2009 and in the past four years the number of parks and green spaces that have reached the Green Flag standard has almost doubled to 1,424 in 2012.

The partnership understands that quality green space is important to health and wellbeing and believes that everyone should be able to access quality green space close to their home. The Green Flag Award scheme drives up standards, and is underpinned by the sterling work of more than 800 volunteer judges - all of whom are green-space professionals.

Keep Britain Tidy Chief Executive Phil Barton said: "On behalf of the partners involved I'd like to say how thrilled we are to have won the licence to run the Green Flag Awards for the next five years.

'We know how important this scheme is to the army of professional men and women who manage our green spaces across the country. We also understand that, in these difficult financial times, these professionals are facing significant challenges.

'It is only by working together that we can maintain the high standards set by the Green Flag Award and it is against this backdrop that we are delighted to be working with key partners who will help strengthen the scheme. Through this partnership, we will continue to spread best practice and raise the standard of our parks and green spaces.

The new partnership believes the Green Flag Award is a model of how, by sharing good practice and celebrating and rewarding quality, we can raise the standards of public space in the UK, providing a range of benefits for local communities.'

Throughout November, the new partnership will be contacting applicants, judges and key supporting organisations with further details of the new arrangements and information about the 2013 application round.

For more information visit: <http://greenflag.keepbritaintidy.org>

£100 million Lottery Boost for Parks

On 25 Oct, at a national event about the future of the UK's public parks facing increased challenges and threats, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and BIG Lottery Fund (BIG) announced they will invest £100million for public parks over the next three years.

This vital funding marks a renewed commitment to parks by HLF and BIG, who since 1996 have jointly invested over £640million and transformed over 700 historic public spaces.

The new-look Parks for People programme aims to get local people more involved in the management of their parks and, for the first time, will provide funding to conserve historic cemeteries and offer help and advice about long term park maintenance.

Full press release: <http://tinyurl.com/HLFp4pRelease>

Programme details and application guidance: <http://tinyurl.com/HLFp4p>

Events of Interest

The Friends of St Andrews park are holding their 3rd Autumn Ceilidh on Friday 9th November between 7:30 and 11pm at St Bart's Church Hall, at the junction of Sommerville and Maurice Roads. Tickets £7 adults and £5 for under 19s. More details at <http://bit.ly/XEJmDW>

Steve England continues to run many events at Stoke Park - www.facebook.com/groups/stokeparkestate

There are a few spaces left on the Fungi Foray at Troopers Hill on Sunday - <http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/events.htm#041112>. There is also a foray at Eastwood Farm on Sunday 18th Nov - www.eastwoodfarm.org.uk

Discover Brislington Brook - Rowan is organising lots of events in Nightingale Valley and St Annes's Woods, see <http://discoverbrislingtonbrook.wordpress.com/diary>

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

2013 meetings: Sat 19 January - Sat 13 April - Sat 29 June - Sat 12 October
(all 9.30 to 12.30, venues tbc)