

4 September 08

Several bits a pieces that I hope you will be interested in...

Volunteer for Council Scrutiny Committee

At the last BPF meeting there was a call for volunteers for BPF representation on the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission. Fraser has volunteered to represent the Parks Forum and to work with the committee. Attached below are a list of the current committee members, a timetable of meetings and a link to more details about the scrutiny process itself.

If you or any one in your group would like to be part of the scrutiny process and act as deputy when Fraser is not available please let him know.

Quality of Life Scrutiny committee members

Charles Nicholas BOLTON, Role: Member, Party: Green

Noreen Patricia DANIELS, Role: Member, Party: Labour

Richard Stephen EDDY - Leader of Conservative Group, Role: Vice-Chair, Party: Conservative

Neil Robert HARRISON, Role: Member, Party: Lib Dem

Christopher David JACKSON, Role: Member, Party: Labour

Susan Rosemary O'DONNELL, Role: Chair, Party: Lib Dem

Michael Henry POPHAM, Role: Member, Party: Lib Dem

Colin John SMITH, Role: Member, Party: Labour

Quality of Life Scrutiny timetable 2008

1 Jan 2008 18:00

25 Feb 2008 14:00

17 Mar 2008 18:00

09 Jun 2008 14:00

14 Jul 2008 14:00

08 Sep 2008 14:00

20 Oct 2008 14:00

01 Dec 2008 14:00

You can find out more about Scrutiny here: <http://tinyurl.com/6a75jf>

BPF Terms of Reference

As I mentioned at the last meeting these need updating. Fraser, Hugh and I have put together some proposed revisions which are now available here:

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

The current Terms of Reference are here: <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ToR.pdf>

Please do read them and let us know what you think. We would like to get the changes agreed at the next meeting so that we can implement the agreement made in April to elect a larger committee to assist Fraser and Hugh. In respect of the maximum length of time that the Chair and Vice-Chair can remain in post you should know that I suggested 4 years but Fraser and Hugh thought 3 was long enough.

Friends of Brandon Hill

A message from Cllr Mark Wright & Cllr Alex Woodman Lib Dem Councillors for Cabot:

Thank you to everyone who has replied to me regarding dates and other info to do with setting up a "friends and users" group for Brandon Hill.

I can inform you that the inaugural meeting will be at 7pm on Thursday 11th September in a room in the Council House on College Green. The room number will be displayed on the video screen inside the foyer.

We have sent out 250 letters containing these details to the houses on the roads adjacent to Brandon Hill, and you should all have had yours by now too. If you know of people who would be interested but who haven't received either an email or letter, do please pass on the details to them.

Park Group Websites

Friends of Horfield Common now have a website and I have added it to the list at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/parks.htm> If your group has a website or if you know of any others that should be added to the list please let me know.

The Voscur

There are a few names you will recognise on the nominations for 'The Voscur' which can be seen here: <http://www.voscur.org/voscurNominations> If your group is not a member of Voscur then do think about joining, they have lots of useful information and contacts.

Monitoring the Natural Environment

The Opal project want to engage people in monitoring the natural environment and there is an offer to provide packs to the general public/ groups/ schools. The current project is on earthworms and soil. More details are at www.opalexplorenature.org Kathy Derrek of Living Rivers is hoping to arrange some sessions in Bristol so if your group would be interested in getting involved please email kathy.derrick@bristol.gov.uk

Parks Service Restructuring

Don't forget there is Special meeting of the BPF on Saturday 13th September 10-00 a.m until 12-00 midday at the Southville Centre to discuss this. Please contact helen.rossington@bristol.gov.uk or ring 0117 922 3719 if you wish to attend.

I will send out the link to the website with the details of the restructuring when it goes live, which should be 9th Sept.

Rob
BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Next BPF meeting Saturday 11th October - 9-30am to 12-30pm at Windmill Hill City Farm.

6 September 08

The mention of the Quality of Life Scrutiny Committee in my last email brought this response from Ben Barker:

"As well as joining the scrutiny commission, the Parks Forum could also ask to give evidence to it. This has the advantage, among other things, that you only have to attend one meeting!

If we were to go before the commission to say which THREE things need to be done so that green spaces can make an even greater contribution to Quality of Life in Bristol, what would they be?

Here's one from me: A dedicated and appropriately trained 'park keeper' for every green space in Bristol, as soon as possible.

What are your suggestions?"

Hugh responded with his suggestion:

"A commitment to increase the tree canopy area by 10% as fast as possible , to mitigate the effects of climate change ,and a matching undertaking to provide increased funding to enable existing mature /overmature trees to be maintained while the new plantings are growing ?"

If you would like to add your own suggestion I have started a thread on the Friends of Troopers Hill on-line forum which can be found here: www.friends-forum.org.uk so please post your views.

Some events you might be interested in..

Sneed Park Nature Reserve 20th September 2008

Open Day with exhibition in Stoke Bishop Village Hall.

A display to celebrate the Reserve and the on-going work with the Heritage Lottery Fund grant. This is an example of a large project being run by a Parks Group, an issue that will be discussed again at the next BPF meeting.

Guided walks around the Reserve will be at 12 noon, 2pm and 3pm starting from the village hall or 15 minutes later start from the Reserve entrance.

Official opening 11.30 by local Member of Parliament, Stephen Williams.

Doors open 10.30 to 4 pm.

Stoke Bishop village hall is on the 40 bus route.

Friends of Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve now have a web site www.spnaturereserve.com

Wild Waters 4th - 19th October 2008

The Avon Biodiversity Partnership is co-ordinating this celebration of our waterways and estuary. Check out the fantastic events being organised at www.wildwaters.org.uk

Beeses Beer Festival 12th to 14th September

I wouldn't normally use these emails to advertise this sort of event, but Beeses have kindly said they will donate half of the money from ticket sales to Friends of Troopers Hill and Friends of Eastwood Farm so I hope you will forgive me. Beeses is next to Eastwood Farm so it is a good chance to visit the reserve if you haven't been there before. Details at www.beeses.co.uk

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9 September 08

Parks Service Restructuring

The Bristol Parks website is now live (with a shorter link than that which was included in the last minutes) it can be found at:

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/parksreview>

There is not much info there yet but more will be added over the next couple of days. I have also added this link to the BPF website.

Don't forget there is Special meeting of the BPF on Saturday 13th September 10-00 a.m until 12-00 midday at the Southville Centre to discuss this. Please contact helen.rossington@bristol.gov.uk or ring 0117 922 3719 if you wish to attend.

You will also be able to respond via the BCC website.

There is also a chance to discuss the proposals on-line at the Friends of Troopers Hill Forum at www.friends-forum.org.uk

While writing I thought you might be interested in the following which Hugh was told about through the GreenSpace Community Network:

Inspiring Study Visits to Community Green Spaces

Would you like to know more about how best to revitalise your local community space? CABE Space, in partnership with the Glass-House Community Led Design, are organising three visits to community spaces around England that have been designed through a Community led process and featured in the CABE Space publication It's our space.

These visits are aimed at community groups who are already improving a public space in their neighbourhood and would like to learn first hand from groups who have been through the process. The local community group and professionals will be on hand to tell their stories and answer your questions about how to negotiate the design process and get the best results.

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. All visits will be free to community groups and include:

- Site visit
- Structured discussions in a local community venue
- Free lunch provided
- Some travel bursaries available on application

Saturday 4th October 2008 - St Neot Doorstep Green, near Liskeard, Cornwall

Saturday 11th October 2008 - Albion Community Garden, Salford

Saturday 18th October 2008 - Edward Square, Islington, London

Places for these visits will go quickly - for further information and to download an application form please visit www.theglasshouse.org.uk

Alternatively, please email info@theglasshouse.org.uk and enter 'Study Visits' in the subject bar or contact Cherece or Will at the Glass-House on 020 7940 4583.

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11 September 08

The Parks Restructuring website at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/parksreview> is being updated as I write; the new structure chart should be on there by the time you read this.

Cycle Path at the Chocolate Factory at Greenbank

You may have seen articles about this in the Evening Post - there are links on our website if you haven't. This raises some issues with regard to the sale of park land and the P&GSS. We are arranging a meeting with Bristol Parks to discuss these and will report back at the next BPF meeting on 11th October.

Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network

The NPN is running a short seminar on the morning of 20th September to discuss how the new city development strategy will affect your area and why it is important for each neighbourhood to draw up its own local plan.

'NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANS'

10.00am to 12.30pm Saturday 20th September 2008 at The Withywood Centre, Queens Road, Withywood, BS13 8QA

At the moment the focus of town planning in the city is at two extremes of scale. On the one hand there is the city-wide Core Strategy with its very broad-brush policies for housing, employment and

transport and on the other hand there is the detailed site by site control of development through individual pre-application discussion and planning applications.

Town planning at the scale of the neighbourhood is in danger of being neglected and yet it is this level of town planning that can have the most impact on the quality of our day to day lives at home, work, school or leisure. At the moment, subject to Government final decision, the South West Regional Plan and the city's own Core Strategy Plan requires the neighbourhoods of Bristol to accommodate the building of an additional 36,500 houses over the next 18 years, including well over 10,000 new homes in south Bristol, as well as new employment sites and transport links.

This will have a major impact on most neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods groups and the wider communities need to take the initiative to create their own ideas for planning their areas and be able to set their own agenda for both public and private developments.

This first seminar is an introduction to this important subject. Through presentation and open discussion the seminar will cover:

- Why neighbourhood area plans are important
- What issues and subjects they can cover and
- How some neighbourhoods in Bristol have already developed their own neighbourhood area plans.

A second seminar at a later date will use real case examples to show how neighbourhood planning groups can create their own neighbourhood plan for their area in a way that will have greatest influence on the Local Planning Authority's planning decisions.

Please email Alison Bromilow at alison@rcas.org.uk to say that you or your members would like to attend or if you would like further information, and forward this email to anyone you think may be interested.

Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network is a support network of voluntary neighbourhood groups across Bristol who promote public involvement in the planning system.

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Special meeting of the BPF on Saturday 13th September 10-00 a.m until 12-00 midday at the Southville Centre to discuss the restructuring. Please contact helen.rossington@bristol.gov.uk or ring 0117 922 3719 if you wish to attend.

30 September 08

Parks Service Restructuring Update

As you know from my previous emails, a special meeting of the BPF was held on 13th Sept to discuss the review. A record of the questions raised and the answers received can be found here: <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFQs.pdf>

Following the meeting BPF has raised concerns with Bristol Parks about the way in which the existing Community Parks Manager role is being split. Hugh has produced a note on the subject which has the support of the other members of the BPF who were present:

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

The consultation period officially runs until the 3rd October, but Bristol Parks have agreed that they will accept comments until 13th October so that the BPF can again discuss the issue at our meeting on 11th and submit our views. If you are unable to attend the meeting but would like your views to be noted please email us info@bristolparksforum.org.uk

Land Sales and the P&GSS

Several issues have been raised about the sales of parks land that seem to have been agreed after the P&GSS was adopted, including the the Chocolate Factory Site and land at Filwood Park. Fraser, Alison and I are meeting with Bristol Parks to discuss this and other issues around the P&GSS next week so we shall report back at the meeting on the 11th.

Bristol Biodiversity Action Plan Launch

The Bristol Biodiversity Action Plan will be launched on 12th November (11.30am - 1.30pm) and invitations are available for 3 people from Parks Groups to attend. If you would like to attend, or would like more information, please email helen.hall@bristol.gov.uk Helen will select 3 people on a first come first served basis.

Trees in Parks and Streets

Hugh is still acting as the BPF rep at the Bristol Street Tree Forum and the minutes are being published on the BCC website at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Parks-and-open-spaces/bristol-street-tree-forum.en>

One of the issues raised has been the potential felling of Ash trees at Redland Green - a report into the trees is included on the BCC website. The alternative view is given in this letter from Chris Baines: <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ashtrees.pdf> which Chris has given us permission to post on our website.

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