

4 September 09

Minutes of July BPF Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting are now on the website via the following link:

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFMinutes250709.pdf>

Other meeting related documents:

Appendix 1 - Community events in parks:

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/250709Appendix1.pdf>

Appendix 2 – Support to be provided by Community Development Officer to BPF

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/250709Appendix2.pdf>

BPF Statement on the Planning Application for a Football Stadium and housing at Ashton Vale

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

New Woodland and Wildlife Officer (WWO)

You will see from the minutes that Justin Smith has been appointed as Woodland and Wildlife Officer and starts on the 7th September, this appointment was actually confirmed shortly after the meeting. The purpose of this role is to be responsible for developing and overseeing the delivery of the Woodland and Wildlife Team's work programme.

Justin led various fungi forays and other events that were organised by Sally Oldfield as part of the Nature in the City Project. I think we should consider his appointment as very good news.

Area Green Space Plans BPF Conference 16 Jan 2010

As discussed at our meeting the public consultation on the Area Green Space Plans will start in January. The 'stakeholder' sessions should now be more or less complete. There has been some coverage of the meetings in Shirehampton and concerns over possible loss of green spaces; the latest being here: <http://tinyurl.com/lnlkoe>

The AGSPs will be the main subject at the BPF conference to be held on Saturday 16 January 2010. The venue for this has now been fixed; it will be at the Vassall Centre, Fishponds BS16 2QQ. The timings have yet to be confirmed, but as with previous conferences this will be an all day event and lunch will be included.

Rob Acton-Campbell
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Consultation

The BPF committee had a meeting with Peter Wilkinson on Thursday to discuss some concerns that had been raised about the consultation process for both the AGSPs and Pathfinder Play projects. We emphasised that it was important that groups were given plenty of notice of meetings and that there should be feedback including explaining why comments or ideas were not taken forward if it was decided that they were not feasible.

The Pathfinder project is being run on very tight time scales set by the Government body who provided the funding. While this is not ideal, we did all agree that having the funding and over 30 new play areas was better than not having them even if some things could have been done better with more time.

On the AGSPs, the stakeholder sessions are mostly now complete. We asked Peter to send us details of sessions that the team believed to be outstanding which I will pass on. There will then be an opportunity for any group who thinks that they have not had sufficient opportunity to have their say to contact Richard Fletcher and ask for further meetings. We also agreed that we would have some input into how the public consultation will be run next year.

The other issue raised at the meeting was the letting of the Central area grounds maintenance contract. This has now gone out to tender but there will be an opportunity for groups to comment on the specifications for their individual parks before the new contractor starts in February. If you wish to take part in this process please contact Catherine Newman at Bristol Parks.

Knowle West Development Framework

There will be an exhibition about the plans for Knowle West at Filwood Broadway on Saturday 19th September. This area includes several green spaces, including the Northern Slopes proposed Local Nature Reserve. It is vital that protection of green spaces is kept high on the agenda in this process.

More details are at www.bristol.gov.uk/kwrf

BPF Committee

The October meeting of the BPF will also be the AGM, so please consider whether you would like to join the BPF committee. We would particularly like to have someone on the committee from South Bristol to help ensure that the BPF is kept aware of the many developments in South Bristol and to represent the BPF at the various meetings.

If you would like to know more about what might be involved then please contact us.

Get Well Soon Jules

Friends of Troopers Hill were shocked to hear that our 'Parkie' Julian had suffered a heart attack last week. Thanks to the new heart unit at the BRI he now has a pacemaker fitted and is making a good recovery at home. We hope to see Jules back on the hill before long.

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Wild City

Some good news.

You will be pleased to know that there is now some positive news about the Access to Nature bid which aims to fund two posts to replace Sally Oldfield's role as Local Nature Reserves Officer.

Following on from 'Wildspace!' and 'Nature in the City' we now have 'Wild City'.

Bristol Parks have appointed two consultants to move this application forward and build on the work that Helen Hall and Richard Ennion have been doing - they are Richard Aston & Chris Giles. Richard and Chris previously worked on the successful bid for South Glos which was apparently very well received by Natural England.

Bristol Parks' successful stage 1 application that Sally put together before she left focussed on 14 sites - the network of either existing or potential LNRs.

In discussions with Natural England it has been recommended that Parks reduce the number of sites that the new Wild City Project would be actively involved in, so that the focus would be on new sites and where there is particular potential to engage the target groups (target groups are under-represented groups and include BME, the elderly, people with disabilities, people recovering from mental health problems).

What they have decided, in discussion with Natural England, is that the following seven sites would be those where the project would focus its efforts working with communities, residents and hard to reach groups:

Lamplighter's Marsh

The New Cut

Northern Slopes

Hengrove Park Mounds

Callington Road

Eastwood Farm LNR

Stoke Park

In addition they proposing that Wild City provide support on a 'lighter touch' basis to groups at the remaining seven sites. This lighter touch is yet to be defined and is something that Chris and Richard will be working on. However it is hoped that it will mean that the project can act as a catalyst for activity on these sites and to promote and encourage the LNR network, although it won't

be able to work on them in the same in-depth way for the 7 target sites.

Lawrence Weston Moor LNR
Narrowways Millennium Green
Manor Woods Valley LNR
Stockwood Open Space LNR
Troopers Hill LNR
Royate Hill LNR
Badock's Wood LNR

If all goes well the application will be submitted in sufficient time for the project to start before next summer. There have been very few events on the LNRs this year and it is a pity that some of the momentum from Sally's project has been lost but at least things are now moving in the right direction. In the long term of course it would be far better if this sort of work could be funded directly by BCC to avoid this cycle of repeated applications for funding (and the need to keep thinking up new names for projects!).

Details of some of the events that were held as part of the Nature in the City Project can be seen here: www.troopers-hill.org.uk/natureinthecity/natnews.htm

Malago Trek Sunday 20th September 10am

Details of the Malago Trek can be seen here <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/malago09.pdf>

This is organised by the South Bristol Riverscapes Project. This project is funded by the Heritage Lottery to improve the rivers in the area and will run until 2010...

Full Council Meeting 15 September

There were some questions raised at yesterday's meeting about the P&GSS and green spaces in Stockwood and Shirehampton.

There was also a resolution passed related to the delayed RSS and setting out the Council's objection to the building of houses on Green Belt land. There is a webcast of the meeting on the BCC website and the minutes will appear here: <http://tinyurl.com/kltusn> 'within 5 working days'.

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BDF Meeting Wed 23 September www.bristol.gov.uk/bdf

There is another 'Community Involvement Event' for the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy on Wednesday at 5.30pm. This may be the last event before the Core Strategy is published. The main discussion points will be housing targets and 'Green Infrastructure'. The housing discussion will be on the numbers that should be included in the BDF given that the RSS has been delayed.

On Green Infrastructure the discussion paper for the meeting asks whether the following 'broad principle' is a 'sound approach':

"The more significant the role of the green infrastructure asset, the greater the presumption will be in favour of its protection."

There is still time to book your place at this session, please email bdf@bristol.gov.uk or contact Dave Carter on 0117 9036725 by 12 noon on Tuesday 22nd September.

A reminder...

Community Networking Fair Saturday 26 September 2009

Bristol Civic Society has organised a networking fair for all Neighbourhood Planning Network and other community groups to meet each other and exchange information on issues that affect a number of them. All park groups are invited. The fair is intended to get local groups working together on issues, such as the Ashton Gate stadium, the south Bristol Tesco, the Regional Spatial Strategy housing development proposals, or the Bus Rapid Transit, that affect many parts of Bristol. Many groups working together as a united front are far more effective than are individuals tackling the issues piecemeal.

Date: Saturday, 26 September 2009

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Place: The main hall, Southville Centre, Beaufey Road, Southville, Bristol BS3 1QG

Schedule: Alison Bromilow, Administrator for the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network, and Alan Morris, Chair of the Bristol Civic Society, will make opening remarks at 10:00 a.m.

A more detailed timetable will be available nearer the date.

Description: Tables will be set up in the hall for local groups to display information about their organisations and the work they do. Groups are welcome to bring as little or as much as they like (leaflets, posters, display boards, etc.) though the centre imposes an additional charge if electricity is required. Lunch will not be provided, but the centre has a café on site, just outside the main hall.

Purpose: The networking fair will be a chance for members of local organisations to meet and mingle with other community-based groups in an informal, social atmosphere.

For further details please contact Janine Derry janine.derry@googlemail.com 0117 907 8798

Parks Coverage in the Evening Post

There were a couple of articles about Bristol's parks this week. Some good news from South Street Park in Bedminster <http://tinyurl.com/leb476> and a double page spread about the Northern Slopes <http://tinyurl.com/mm9bxf>

There was also an article about residents wanting trees cut down because they blocked their views (see <http://tinyurl.com/lva6wr>). This was about Crews Hole Woodland and followed an earlier article on a similar theme at Stockwood. Crews Hole Woodland is also called Troopers Hill Woods so I was particularly interested in this one. It is an issue that Friends of Troopers Hill have discussed several times in the past.

There were in fact some trees cut down last month in Crews Hole Woodland but this was at the bottom of the hill. They were cut by a developer who claimed to own the land. The land is shown on the P&GSS maps as Parks' land and BCC are currently trying to confirm the land ownership before taking action.

The issue of when it is acceptable to fell trees has also been raised on the Downs where Parks are intending to have a public Consultation on a weekend at the end of October on removing the trees from Clifton camp, around the Observatory. I hope there will be time to discuss this at the BPF meeting in October.

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