

2 September 2010 No 28

Wild City Project

The post of Wild City Project Officer is now advertised on the Council website see <http://tinyurl.com/343ho3x>

Area Green Space Plans

There will be several questions about the AGSPs at the full Council Meeting on Tues 7th September the questions can be seen on the BCC website via <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings>

Neighbourhood Partnerships – Influencing Grounds Maintenance

Also at <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings> you can see the agenda for the September round of Neighbourhood Partnership meetings. The agendas for all 14 partnerships will include an report this time on Grounds Maintenance. As with all such items the reports to each NP are very similar with the details changed so even if the details for your meeting aren't on the web you can get a good idea of what is coming from looking at other areas, Lockleaze is the first.

The report recommends the NPs to 'set up an environmental subgroup who will take the lead on influencing street cleansing, recycling bring banks, parks and grounds maintenance and Clean and Green projects in the partnership area.'

The report also lists local park groups and states that 'The Parks Service is keen for the Neighbourhood Partnerships to work alongside these groups and volunteers, to influence the work that is undertaken. It is also hoped that the Neighbourhood Partnership will be able to help influence work that is carried out in areas where there is not an active local group'.

It is presumably up to each NP to decide how the subgroup is formed but it will obviously be a good idea if park groups get involved in their local NP subgroup and make sure they are part of any decisions that impact on their parks.

The Bench

The latest edition of the 'The Bench' can be seen at:

http://www.green-space.org.uk/TheBench_57.html

The Bench is a monthly newsletter produced by GreenSpace with news relating to parks and green spaces throughout the country.

Simplifying Events Licensing

You may have seen some recent publicity that the Government is going to simplify the process for licensing street parties and fêtes. Like me you might have thought that this would help us with simplifying the process for holding small community events in parks. Unfortunately if you look at the details at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/streetpartyguide> then you will see that although it starts off well with:

'Street parties and fêtes are a traditional part of community life; they are a simple way for us to get to know our neighbours and meet members of our community. We want to make it easier for you to hold these sorts of local events, without having to plough through mountains of forms and red tape.'

The detail makes it unlikely to apply to any events in parks by saying that it only applies to events that are 'For residents/neighbours only' and publicised only to residents. In fact, despite the reference to fêtes, it does seem to be aimed entirely at street parties.

Their 'simple form' is also no less complicated than the one that Peter Watts has produced for the 'Park Permit' scheme for events with less than 100 people expected (though the Government one does have some pretty graphics, which means it takes longer to download and doesn't display properly on my computer!).

The guidance also refers to the fact that you will need insurance for public events and suggests that you might also need this for street parties. It quotes a starting price of £50 for this insurance which highlights how good the £20 deal we have is.

Events in Parks this Autumn

While talking of events there are two series of events in Parks that have been at least partly funded by BCC coming up.

The first is the 'Playful Picnics' that I have mentioned before organised by Gynormous Rawkus.

These events are intended for all the community to come together, get creative and share a picnic in their local parks. All the events will take place from 12-3pm

The remaining events are:

Urban Park Easton bike decorating and cycle maintenance - 18th September
Troopers Hill St George Kite making and flying - 3rd October
St George Park fun with willow - 7th November

There is also the chance to see Solar Powered outdoor cinema:

Thurs 9 Sept, 8pm St George Park

Fri 10 Sept, 8pm St Andrews Park

Fri 17 Sept, 8pm Urban Park, Barton Hill

Sat 18 Sept, 8pm Victoria Park

More details and alternative indoor venues in the case of bad weather can be seen at:

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/SolarCinema.pdf

There is also a series of riverside walks that you might be interested in organised by South Glos Wildways Project. These are throughout September on weekdays, details are at

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/SGwalks.pdf

Pub of the Week

It can't be all that often that Local Nature Reserves and park groups get mentioned in a pub review, but both Troopers Hill LNR and Eastwood Farm LNR were mentioned in yesterday's Evening Post Review of Beeses. This is because it is Beeses Beer & Cider Festival this weekend and this year they have again promised to donate half of the proceeds from ticket sales to the two groups.

Tickets for Saturday have already sold out but tickets for Sunday are only £4 which includes your first pint. Details at www.beeses.co.uk/beerfest.php

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

BPF Meetings:

Saturday 9 October - venue to be confirmed

7 September 2010 – No 29

A message from Richard Fletcher

Dear Parks Forum Member

I am writing to ensure that you are aware of the Area Green Space Plan consultation process that is currently in progress up to 29th October. Area Green Space Plans set out a range of ideas about how our green spaces can be improved, where facilities and different types of space might be provided and in some cases where green space might no longer be needed.

These are important documents for anyone that has an interest in parks, uses one or would like to but don't currently. They are certainly important documents for people that are committed enough to their park that they have become a member of a park group or similar.

We are very keen that every member of all the groups that belong to the Bristol Parks Forum respond to the consultation and I would like to offer help in any way possible to make that happen. We have obviously triggered a great deal of interest in the potential open space disposals set out in Area Green Space Plans and I can assure you that is welcome. However, I am as keen to ensure that park group members respond to the investment ideas we have set out - the majority of which have been put forward by members of your community. Not giving us some feedback on these might make it more difficult to take some good suggestions forward from here.

If you think we can help send out letters, leaflets etc to your membership list to encourage them to respond then please do get in touch with me - 0117 922 3896. If you have that all in hand then please do send this reminder message on.

You can see the plans at www.bristol.gov.uk/agsp and there are also copies at all libraries. You can respond online or by completing a questionnaire that can be downloaded from the website or which I can send you by post. You can also simply email a comment to park.strategy@bristol.gov.uk .

If you wish for someone to come to a meeting of your group to discuss your park then let us know. We can't always make evening meetings as we are getting a lot of requests for this - but we absolutely want you to ask if that's what you want.

Many thanks and best wishes

Richard Fletcher
Area Green Space Plan Project Manager
Neighbourhoods
Colston 33
Colston Ave
Bristol, BS1 4UA
Tel: 0117 922 3896
Fax: 0117 353 2269

BPF Statement to Full Council

Hugh bravely volunteered to 'enter the lion's den' as he put it and presented our statement to the Full Council this evening. The statement is at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/FullCouncil070910.pdf

Bats

Some groups will have received an email recently from Dan Merrett following on from my mention of his project in April. In case you haven't seen it I've reproduced it here, there are free packs available and an offer to lead bat walks.

The Bat Conservation Trust (a national wildlife charity) has received funding from Active Bristol to launch a Bristol Green City Bats scheme in the city this year. Our key aims with the scheme are to work with community groups to

- * find out more about bats using Bristol's green spaces
- * help communities get more enjoyment from, and get more active in, their local green spaces
- * provide advice on managing greenspaces in a bat friendly manner

We have produced a free Bat Pack for community groups that are linked to the city's green spaces that includes information on Bristol's bats, bat detectors and surveys, parks and bats, organising and leading bat walks and more. Because of the funding we are also able to provide free training this

year for people from these community groups, and to run batty events in the city this summer/autumn. We have so far already worked with Walking for Health walk leaders in the city giving free training to 35 volunteer walk leaders on How to Lead a Bat Walk, led a bat walk for local deaf people in north Bristol and purchased 4 bat detectors for free loan to groups in the city involved with the scheme.

We are now writing to Bristol Parks Forum groups across the city inviting them to join in and register as a bat-friendly Bristol Green City Bats group. The level of involvement is entirely up to the group - it can be as little as just registering and receiving the free pack, or if the local community is interested we can plan to run a bat walk or other batty event, training, or loan bat detectors to the group to find out more about their local bats or run their own walks. The work is fully funded thanks to Active Bristol and the Heritage Lottery Fund and will be at no cost to the group.

The scheme is part of the Bat Conservation Trusts Count Bat project and has been trialled successfully in London where over 40 groups have so far signed up since its inception last summer. You can find more information on the scheme at http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/green_city_bats.html There is also a link from this page to register your group as a Bristol Green City Bats group. Alternatively you can contact me directly at this email address to register your interest.

I hope that through this funding the Green City Bats Project will allow us to build an active bat-friendly network across the city benefiting the community groups, local people and our local bats. If you have any queries then feel free to contact me or you can register directly by following the 'register your group' link found on the aforementioned Green City Bats webpage.

Thank you for your interest and I hope to hear from you

Regards

Dan

Dan Merrett, Count Bat Project Co-ordinator

Direct tel.: 07761 942393

Main switchboard & bat helpline: 0845 1300 228

Email: dmerrett@bats.org.uk

Trees

A reminder about the Bristol Tree Forum, details can be found at www.bristol.gov.uk/treeforum The website has the minutes of all the past meetings and also includes lots of the reports that have been discussed. Hugh is the Chair and I'm sure he would be pleased if more people got involved. The next meeting is Monday 27th September 2010 at the Council House, 6 - 9 pm

If you move up a level on the website from the Tree Forum page you get the the 'Tree Management' page. There is lots more information there, including a 'Tree Planting Survey across Bristol' which shows where new trees could be planted and has some 'now' and 'in the future' photos of possible planting sites in each Neighbourhood Partnership area. You can get the report directly at

<http://tinyurl.com/35hta86>

Rob Acton-Campbell
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www.bristolparksforum.org.uk
Next BPF Meeting:
Saturday 9 October - venue to be confirmed.

18 September 2010 – No 30

Ashton Vale Fields Town Green Application

You may have noticed some coverage of this in the local media!

The full report from the inspector can be downloaded in six parts from the BCC website via <http://tinyurl.com/TGreport> The first part is the introduction and description of the site, parts 2 to 4 are mostly reports of witness statements, while parts 5 & 6 set out the law on Town Greens and then the conclusion. These sections in particular will make worthwhile reading for anyone considering a Town Green application for other spaces.

The report now has to go to the Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee who will make the final decision. You may remember that when the Castle Park application was considered by that committee that many of the members wanted to go against the recommendation but were strongly advised not to by the Council's legal department.

There is a new website describing the wildlife at Ashton Vale at www.ashtonvalewildlife.com

Area Green Space Plan Consultation

Gary Hopkins has asked us to let all park groups know that if they have any concerns about the AGSP proposals for their parks then he is willing to meet them and discuss the issues. You can email Gary at gary.hopkins@bristol.gov.uk

Site Allocations, Development Management Policies

These policies were mentioned at our last meeting and the proposals can be seen at www.bristol.gov.uk/siteallocations

Alison's quick summary is:

"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 BDF are organising some workshops to discuss these, email bdf@bristol.gov.uk if you want to take part. The BPF committee would also like to hear from anyone with any strong views on any particular policy that we can take to those workshops. We will also try to put together a BPF response if there are issues that several groups want to raise.

Health & Safety Training

The toolkit that groups have to follow to carry out work in parks & green spaces while being covered by Bristol City Council insurance can now be found on the web at www.bristol.gov.uk/parksafety You still need to undergo training before you can use it.

The website also includes Word versions of the three most used forms so that they can be completed electronically.

Parks Projects

Tracey has sent us a list of current projects in each NP area, including those funded with S106 money. The list also shows the Project Manager responsible. The list is the state of play in July, I hope to send you more updates in the future. Note that the list for St George is not complete, Also John Williams has taken over as APM for the East area so his projects need to be reallocated.

The list can be seen at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/projects.pdf

Redirectors

Redirectors are shortcuts used to get to individual pages on the Council website, they are very useful but it is difficult to know when they exist since they are not shown anywhere. Kerry Morgan, who is the new marketing and communications officer for parks, estates and sports and health development, has sent me a list of those that lead to pages in the Parks section of the website; here they are:

www.bristol.gov.uk/parks
www.bristol.gov.uk/parksevents
www.bristol.gov.uk/parkstrategy
www.bristol.gov.uk/parklife
www.bristol.gov.uk/ashtoncourtestate
www.bristol.gov.uk/ashtoncourtmanion
www.bristol.gov.uk/cityspaces
www.bristol.gov.uk/allotments
www.bristol.gov.uk/agsp
www.bristol.gov.uk/groundsmaintenance
www.bristol.gov.uk/greenfun
www.bristol.gov.uk/greenflagparks
www.bristol.gov.uk/playpathfinder
www.bristol.gov.uk/tennisintheparks
www.bristol.gov.uk/treebristol
www.bristol.gov.uk/treeforum
www.bristol.gov.uk/healthwalks
www.bristol.gov.uk/wildlife
www.bristol.gov.uk/ashtoncourtestate
www.bristol.gov.uk/blaisecastleestate
www.bristol.gov.uk/parksafety
www.bristol.gov.uk/victoriapark

Barbecue Autumn?

The issue of barbecues was considered by the Downs Committee at their last meeting on 6 Sept, they decided to put off any decision pending a city wide policy being put in place. The Downs Rangers report to the meeting included a report on what happens in other cities; it can be seen here: <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/emails/BBQResearch.pdf>

BPF Meetings

The minutes of the last meeting have now been sent to the BPF committee for proof reading and should be out soon, sorry for the delay. We are currently finalising the agenda for the 9 October meeting and will soon fix a venue. Don't forget that the next meeting is also the BPF AGM so if anyone would like to volunteer or nominate anyone to be on the committee please let us know. Fraser and Hugh both have to stand down having been in post for three years.

Rob Acton-Campbell
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www.bristolparksforum.org.uk
Next BPF Meeting:
Saturday 9 October - venue to be confirmed.

BPF Meeting & AGM 9th October 9.30am Netham Pavilion

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.

If you are on Bristol Parks' distribution list you should have received the Agenda in your inbox this morning, together with the minutes from the last meeting. There are links within the minutes to various appendices.

Both documents are now also on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/#meetings

The venue for the meeting is again Netham Pavilion, Avonvale Road, Redfield, Bristol BS5 9RN.

We realise that the acoustics at Netham are not ideal but it does have the advantage that it is a building managed by Bristol Parks and therefore there is no charge to Parks for its use. It also gives you a chance to visit what is now a Green Flag winning park. On the theme of saving money (and to reduce food waste) the BPF committee have also decided not to have a buffet lunch, but there will be coffee / tea and biscuits.

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