

06 September 2011 - No 77

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National Conference for Park Groups - 17 September, Birmingham

It is after the cut off date for this conference, but I received an email this morning saying that the last few spaces are still available available so book now! They need to know final numbers by mid next week for the catering.

The programme and the application form are on the web at:

www.green-space.org.uk/community/nfpgs/conference.php

There are subsidies available to cover travel costs.

Cross Party Working Group

These meetings are still ongoing but have not yet reached the stage where they are able to issue an interim statement as they had hoped to do for today's Full Council meeting.

Avon Wildlife Trust have been invited to one of their sessions to talk about SNCIs and Wildlife Network Sites.

National Planning Policy

This issue is getting as much spotlight as the selling off of the forests. It made 6pm news last night and am sure that it will continue to be in the news...

The draft National Planning Policy Framework from the Department for Communities and Local Government:

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/draftframework

Defra consultation on Town Greens:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2011/07/25/town-village-greens/>

On Town Greens we are particularly concerned about the possible 'character test' which will restrict designation to very few sites.

Whatever happens it is clear that the Government wants more housing to be built. 16% of the government land that it plans to release for house building is in fact Local Authority Land.

All this makes the P&GSS and Area Green Space Plans all the more important. As the Government is looking for spaces for homes BCC need to be able to tell them that all publicly accessible green space has been assessed and that most needs to be kept.

Good practice and guidance from the Government

The Dept of Community and Local Government has started producing documents as part of the 'Big Society' to tell people how to do what park groups have been doing for years, they seem to think it is a new idea...

The website is at www.communities.gov.uk/communities/publications/guidance/

You might find some of the guides useful including a document that sets out the potential funding available to community and voluntary organisations for community green space initiatives and a 'how to' guide aimed at helping community groups conserve or create community orchards.

There is also 'Get the green space you want: How the Government can help' which is very short and perhaps not surprisingly does not mention Town Greens. It also puts the Government's slant on the proposed planning framework.

Neighbourhood Partnerships

Are you involved in your NP? Does it have an Environment Sub-Group? Does it take notice of what Park Groups say? Is it making progress with a the Investment Plan for your AGSP?

We would like some feedback so that we can raise any issues with the appropriate officers and Cabinet members.

Castle Park

We agreed at the last BPF meeting that we would hold a separate meeting if new proposals were published for Castle Park. The BPF committee have been keeping in touch with Tracey Morgan over this and as yet there are no proposals and no decisions have been made. I will let you know of any developments.

Stoke Park

As mentioned at our last meeting the process of BCC acquiring Stoke Park has been delayed. The consortium do not want to hand over the finances and land until January 2012. This has led to concerns from Steve England and others about the fact that the Park is effectively now in limbo with no one taking responsibility for its management.

Bristol Parks have agreed that John Williams - Estates manager will take the lead for dealing with issues that arise that require immediate response. BCC will also have conversations with the Consortium to agree a process whereby they can deal with some of the issues on their behalf, e.g issues of ASB.

GreenSpace Newsletter - The Bench

Edition 69 is here: <http://tinyurl.com/GSbench69>

Events

A couple of things that have been brought to by attention:

Kingsdown Conservation Group have organised a talk to be given by the University's Estates Manager about Repton and Royal Fort it is on Thurs 22nd September at 7pm.

Details are here: www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ReptonTalk.pdf

The Kings Weston Action Group would like to cordially invite you and your friends to an exhibition of the history of the Kings Weston Estate. The exhibition will run on the 10th and 11th September and be held in the Echo pavilion in the Park. Full details on the flyer here:

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/KWAGexhib.pdf

This is part of doors open day www.bristoldoorsopenday.org/

A reminder also about Beeses Beer Festival which donates part of the proceeds to Friends of Troopers Hill and Friends of Eastwood Farm. It is on Fri 9th and Sat 10th Sept, details at www.beeses.co.uk Tickets are £7 Fri, £10 Sat or £15 for both days and get you your first pint free.

Bristol Ferry Boat Company are once again providing transport from the City Centre on Sat 10th September 2011. Leaving from Welsh Back in the afternoon for a beautiful trip along the river and returning later in the evening. Prices are single: £20/£17 conc or return £25/£20 conc. This includes the admission ticket and the free pint of beer. They can also provide just ferry tickets for anybody who has there festival ticket already. The best way to book a ferry trip is to call 0117 927 3416.

Rob Acton-Campbell

BPF

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

Next BPF meeting date: Sat 15 October (AGM)

NFPGS World Parks Day conference - 17 September, Birmingham

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In this update:

BPF Meeting 15th October - Free 'Inspirational Spaces' Study Tour, Bristol - Health & Safety Training - New BCC Website, Missing Parks - Update from BCC Events Team - Brislington Brook Project

BPF Meeting 15th October

The agenda for our next meeting (which is also our AGM) is now on the website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFAgenda151011.pdf

At our committee meeting earlier in the week we also fixed the dates for next year's meetings, they will be: Sat 14th Jan, Sat 21st April, Sat 14th July, Sat 13th October.

Free 'Inspirational Spaces' Study Tour, Bristol

Organised by the Glass-House, this tour includes an eclectic mix of community open space initiatives and will take in a local nature Reserve, public parks, open spaces within a housing estate, an urban farm and some examples of streetscape improvements using public art. Some of these sites demonstrate true grass roots projects, entirely initiated and executed by local people whereas others show what can be achieved through excellent and equal partnership with the local council.

The Glass-House are a national charity that gives both communities and regeneration professionals the skills and confidence to lead and contribute to design and neighbourhood planning that involves and benefits local people.

You can find out more and book a space on the tour at www.theglasshouse.org.uk/trainingandevents/study-tours-spaces-tour

Health & Safety Training

BTCV Avon will be running Health and Safety training courses for volunteers and community groups on 12th November, 10th December & 14th January. Time and venues are to be confirmed, but they are likely to take place in the morning at the Create Centre.

The training covers health and safety procedures that volunteers and community groups need to follow when carrying out practical activities on land owned by Bristol City Council.

If you or a member of your group is interested in attending, please email catherine.newman@bristol.gov.uk and let her know your preferred date.

New BCC Website, Missing Parks

Further to my update No 76 at the end of August where I listed those parks who's pages have disappeared from the Council website, I am told that Parks are reviewing which parks should have webpages. Apparently the pages that were removed were those that were least often looked at, this was part of a policy to remove little used pages when the new site was launched.

Update from BCC Events Team

As we have now seen the final bank holiday of the summer season for many of you it will trigger the start of your plans for 2012. For those that are still planning events in 2011 NOW is the time to submit your applications.

As I am sure you are all aware significant changes have been made to the staffing and structure of Arts, Festivals and Events. As a team we have physically moved from our old location at Colston 33 and are now based within the Council House. For your records our new address is:

G27 – Site Licencing
Council House
Bristol
BS1 5TR

Staffing Changes:

We have seen a review of staffing which has lead to a 50% reduction in staff for the Arts Festivals and Events Team. Rajdeep Kaur who worked so brilliantly throughout the summer has now moved on to continue her graduate training within a new team and will be sorely missed. The service continues but its more important than ever to ensure you submit full and complete paperwork within our 6 week deadline. Some phone lines and email accounts have been discontinued (mostly those that were monitored by an admin team) so please contact the officers directly in the future.

Finance Changes:

I would also like to ask those organisers that are accustomed to paying by cheque to refrain from doing this in the future. We have reviewed our finance processes and find the processing of cheques to be an overly drawn out system. In the future all events will receive an invoice after the event has taken place, this allows us to better track payments and avoids duplicate invoices being raised due to lost cheques. In light of this we are also asking smaller scale events to avoid sending us 'Bond' cheques. If we need to seek additional payments to meet damages we will do this via our usual invoicing system. Hopefully everyone will find this a far more streamlined system.

I would like to reassure everyone that as a smaller leaner team we are more determined than ever to support and enable events across the many

parks and open spaces that we control. There will be an increased emphasis on yourselves as organisers to ensure your paperwork is up to scratch first time – no missing staffing details, site maps or insurance docs please as the service will struggle to hand hold you all every step of the way.....you know who you are!

For those that are keen to have their 2012 events locked into our diary, I must respectfully ask that you bear with us. Until we have had final confirmation from LOCOG who are organising Olympic related events as to their plans for Bristol, I am not in a position to finalise bookings. I m hoping this will be achieved in mid – late September.

Schedule of Fee's 2012:

Im pleased to state that agreement regarding the fee schedule for 2012 has been reached. Im due to publish the new fees later this month. The really good news is that all charges relating to Community and Charitable organisations have been frozen for this year. This is to help support essential community events during this prolonged economic downturn and I am sure the news is welcomed by everyone associated with smaller park events.

New Look Website:

After a period of testing and migration the new look website and events pages are now 'live'. Hopefully you will find the new style easier to navigate. If however you notice any broken links or incorrect numbers please let me know so I may inform our web team to make the changes.

I would like to thank you all for the events you have facilitated in 2011 and look forward to working with you on future events in 2012 and onwards. I myself will be taking a well earned two week holiday between the 29th Sept and the 16th October. Please be aware that during this time the service will be open Monday and Tuesday only. If you have any concerns regarding an event please make a note to contact me this month or later in October.

Happy Event Planning!

Peter Watts
Festival and Events Officer (Licencing)
Email: p.watts@bristol.gov.uk

Brislington Brook Project

The new Brislington Brook Project got coverage on both BBC Radio Bristol and the BBC website on Thursday. You can find out more on the project's blog at <http://discoverbrislingtonbrook.wordpress.com/>

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