



# Bristol Parks Forum

## Notes of the Meeting of the Bristol Parks Forum held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 at the Greenway Centre, Southmead

A list of attendees was taken and is held by the Forum Committee.

### **1 Welcomes and Introductions:**

Len Wyatt, Chair of the BPF welcomed everyone.

Len introduced:

- Parks Forum Committee members present and explained that Committee member Mark Maggs had stepped down from the Committee and was thanked for his contribution this far. Len reminded the meeting that we welcome more volunteers to join the Committee.
- Bristol City Council Officers: Richard Fletcher, Parks Services Manager

It was noted that Cllr Ellie King was on her way and would be joining the meeting soon.

Apologies had been received from Jon James, Head of Service for the Natural and Marine Environment, Bristol City Council and Charlee Bennett, CEO, Your Park Bristol and Bath.

Apologies had also been received from a number of other group representatives.

Len reminded the Forum that it is dependent on donations to support these meetings, for example to pay for room hire. A suggested annual donation per group of £10 would be welcomed if your group could spare it. This can be paid to the Forum in cash or by bank transfer / standing order etc.

Frances from Friends of Badock's Wood gave a 5-minute talk about Badock's Wood and members were invited to join her for a walk in the wood, adjacent to the Greenway Centre, after the meeting ended.

### **2 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Minutes were accepted with two amendments from Peter from Manor Woods Valley Group. His surname is Loy-Hancocks (the s is missing in the minutes) and he is a dog lover not a dog owner as stated in the minutes.

### **Matters arising from March and October Meetings:**

All the actions and links from the previous two meetings had been circulated to Forum members in BPF Updates.

### **3 From the Committee**

Len reported that the Committee had met twice since the last full Forum meeting in March. He suggested that any questions on these topics could be put to the Committee members during the break.

Topics covered included discussion on aspects of our admin work – including answering emails, reviewing how to make our face-to-face meetings better, how we are doing generally, plus progress on the topics at today's meeting.

Representatives have attended Bristol Green Partnership Green Mingles on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month in the evening. This is a general networking event held at Bristol Beacon.

We re-advertised unsuccessfully for help with the Secretary role. Thanks to those who sent the advert around their groups. The Committee decided to cover the Secretary role between ourselves until the AGM in October.

Our encouragement of additional representation from the South Bristol area, did not result in an additional Committee member. A number of people did consider the option. Thank you for doing that. Please consider joining the Committee when we get to the AGM in October.

In addition, some of the Committee met with Cllr Nicola Beech on 26<sup>th</sup> June to talk about the Local Plan and this is covered later in the meeting.

### **4 The Big Conversation: Rob Acton-Campbell**

Rob explained that the concept of a Big Conversation around Parks had come out of discussions around the budget. When the budget had been published for consultation, it was suggested that income from Parks was supposed to cover the cost of managing and maintaining Parks. The Forum argued against that, which led to the budget line being reinstated but without an amount to take into account inflation.

Rob had then met with Jon James, Head of Service for the Natural and Marine Environment, BCC, and the idea of a Big Conversation process was raised and that would get written into the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and also form part of the ongoing discussions around how the Parks are funded. It is really necessary to have that conversation about why parks are important and in what ways; the value of parks to the council in saving money from other services and ways in which incorporating some of these monies saved can happen. Rob mentioned that Ted is also organising an event in September (with his RSA hat on) that can feed into this.

Ted explained that the Park group he represents is Owen Square Park in Easton, a pocket park. He also convenes a local group of the Royal Society for the encouragement of arts, manufactures and commerce (RSA) which is not about arts as we think of it. The local group convenes periodic meetings about issues that are needing to be discussed. Ted cited historically the Society had got women out of gutting fish, and able to work in offices. The group are looking at how we deal with development, difficulties of local council budgets,

how can we in Bristol try and do something substantial in the face of declining central funding etc. The meeting is looking at how we can take more strategic approach to parks and green spaces. The meeting will be on Sept 19<sup>th</sup> and he will publicise it through the Parks Forum.

## **5 From the City Council – Strategies and other initiatives, finance and funding**

### **Richard Fletcher, Parks Department, Bristol City Council**

Richard Fletcher is Park Services Manager responsible for operations, assets in parks and trees and woodland service and children's play and has a lot of help from others.

At moment they are working on writing the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (PGSS), the Allotments and Food Growing Strategy, and the Tree Strategy. There are two tree strategies: a One City Tree Strategy and a Council Tree Strategy and both are being worked on at the same time.

There is also a Strategy for Managing for Nature –which has come out of Bristol City Council declaring an Ecological Emergency and having an Ecological Action Plan target of managing 30% of council land for nature.

### **Parks and Green Spaces Strategy**

Richard Fletcher reported that the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (PGSS) final draft would be out on 14<sup>th</sup> August for consultation. He said that there should be enough time within the consultation period that it will not be entirely in school holidays. Richard said that they hope people will be able to respond. He explained that there is always an issue of open questions, which make it hard to manage the different comments so there will also be closed questions. The consultation was being designed at the moment.

There is a land use function map as part of the consultation. The Council are trying to produce an interactive map where you can see how the Council is trying to find opportunities to double the tree canopy, providing more allotments (7-8k people on waiting list) as well as more land for recreation and for nature. On the map at this stage will be the officer's analysis of where they see there might be opportunities, which will then allow respondents agree or have other spaces to suggest.

Richard said there were lots of ongoing conversations about how the Council is going to do that and how do we consult, who to consult and in what way e.g. some people will want paper copies.

Richard read out the headlines from each of the sections.

The PGSS does still accept a lot of the previous strategy in 2008 around land use and protects green spaces. For the last strategy, a lot of work went on in terms of costing models but Richard is not sure that they will do that this time. He explained it was a lot of work and was not particularly useful for the last strategy.

## **Tree Strategy**

Tree Strategy sits under the West of England (WoE) Tree Strategy, and will cover tree management, tree planting, and the amount of tree canopy across the city. Bristol has 795 ha of canopy, which Richard said is a lot.

It had been thought that the existing tree canopy was 12% of the area of the city, but they now think it is nearer 17%. However, the doubling figure in the One City Plan is based on going from 12% to 24% which is more realistic, but still massively challenging, as the One City Plan is looking at covering trees on non-Council owned land as well.

## **Managing for nature**

Managing for nature – e.g. implementing management regimes that focuses on nature management. Some sites already have these regimes or plans but many do not. Parks strategy will repeat the aspirations of the One City Plan and set out how we will get there. The Council is working separately on a delivery plan, so that won't be in the strategy. E.g. grass cutting regimes for sites. Decisions will be needed on how to deliver that.

Len noted that a lot of hard work is being done by Parks Department and also the Cabinet members to try and get this right.

Sarah – Eastville Park - asked how the tree cover strategy will fit in with climate resilience plan. She said that Bristol is expected to be hot like Barcelona in future and there needs to be green cover for shade.

Richard said that they are looking at areas of greater urban heat stress and also looking at planting trees that are more resilient to heat stress.

Peter, Manor Woods Valley Group asked if they could assure us that the mapping exercise will tie in with West of England Combined Authority (WECA) Nature Recovery Plan.

Richard said yes, Managing for Nature is looking at the Bristol area and this will sit within the WECA plan and is a key part of what Parks are doing. Becky Belfin, Nature Conservation Officer, is working on this. She was seconded out for a year to look at this work and looking at areas of low distinctiveness and prioritising them.

Lois, Redland Green is concerned to know how children are being educated about the important of trees for climate and other reasons. It is very sad to see trees being planted and then being damaged and killed. Richard advised that the Tree Bristol team regularly works with schools. He explained that children do get taught this in schools but in addition there is always attrition when new trees are planted and they build in 3- year plan for new trees and factor in a rate of loss

Kate Bradbury – Oldbury Court/Vassals Park asked about heritage conversation for their park. Richard said that will not be part of Parks strategy. There is a conservation heritage plan for Oldbury Court as it is a registered heritage park and garden; and it guides the Council in how to best implement change so that heritage is protected. Kate would like to start a conversation about how that plan will be delivered.

Alie – St George Park asked about asset management plans. She noted that the Friends of St George’s Park does not have a biodiversity management plan and would like to know how they can get involved. She also queried why there is not a strategy to foster seedlings that grow from trees already there. Also, the Trees for Bristol mapping shows non-native trees for new planting because non-native trees have been there before, yet native seedlings are being cut down. She noted that seedlings that have come from trees within the park are more likely to survive in the future than a nursery tree imported in.

Richard thought that Richard Ennion could probably answer this better. Planting our own stock is hard and we would struggle to do it for the same price. As part of the One City Plan the Council needs to bring in the power of the citizen individuals (eg: how they can bring on trees and plant them in their garden or in their area in public spaces).

He also said that they have new conservation staff capacity and are starting with SNCI plans.

Susan Acton-Campbell - Troopers Hill queried the lack of a cost model.

Richard explained that the cost model in the last strategy adopted a city wide standard for good. The model tried to cost if we operated them all for positive benefits, what would that mean. Money would come from S106 monies - now CIL, selling land and other sources. Previously you could predict funding but since the new formula for CIL it has been hard to work out. They are not selling off land and approach to quality is more subjective in any individual park and not just objective and finding ways and means is more difficult. It is not thought that cost modelling would help.

Alison Bromilow, Redland and Cotham Amenity Society and others, flagged up that on Bristol Pinpoint map the mapping of the grounds maintenance is very out of date and therefore makes it very difficult to know what management is planned to take place. The subsequent experience of having wild flowers cut down is very dispiriting.

Richard explained that they have a starting point map which goes through consultation, looks at practicalities of delivering it and then publish it. The process they are implementing now will enable an operator to use a tablet to see mapping information and when we make changes, we can put these on this. They have undertaken a pilot in the South of the city and it went well but probably won’t roll it out until after the Strategy is adopted.

Rob, Committee member, asked if the space versus distance from homes standards are going to be the same as in the last strategy.

Richard said that there is a need to look at the typology of parks and green spaces previously used, and questions asked about how useful it has been. It had been useful for informing where to invest in children’s play, and understanding where there is a lack of green space. But there is a need to review it anyway as is out of date.

Rob asked if there was a move to add Natural England’s amount (area) of green space compared to distance from homes criteria. Richard replied that there are a lot of green spaces in Bristol, but it is a difficult criteria to apply.

Nikki – Sea Mills – we are always told it is the management of the arisings that affects the grass management. We understand Geneco can manage this cheaper than the current contractor. Also, can you confirm that we can get the mowing regime we need; and when that will be?

Richard explained that after the Strategy is sorted, they will be looking at mowing on a site by site basis using GPS. The aim is to have fully digital system rolled out by next summer. In terms of grass cutting the only collection regime the Council has is a hay cut which is baled and taken away. One of the management regimes that the Council wants to implement is cut and collect and that is a big challenge, not least because it is potentially an activity on an industrial scale.

Nikki commented that the Friends of Sea Mills Meadows could cut and collect; and Geneco will remove it from £200; whilst council quote for baling and removing is £2k

Frances, Badock's Wood, queried why there was still no Ash Die Back Strategy for Bristol and her group is very concerned about the dead, mature ash in Badock's Wood.

Richard said that will not be a separate Ash Die Back Strategy. The Council is taking a risk assessment approach and monolithing (reducing the size) or removing trees as necessary. Have already spent £70k. There is a whole team of inspectors, but they are concentrating on ash to try to work out if what risk category the trees fall into. First audit was about a third of all ashes are a risk, next year it increased by 5%. South of the river ash die back seems to be worse than in the rest of the city. They are doing 3 weeks concentrated inspections and if they find ash die back will deal with these.

#### Future Parks

Richard Fletcher explained that the Expressions of Interest from community groups were mostly still live projects e.g. volunteer activity in Blaise and Dame Emily, with the exception of Chaplin Park, Easton where the original applicant had apparently moved away from the area and they do not have an alternative contact. Ted suggested Future Parks contacts the Eastside Community Trust as they are the locality body for that area.

#### **Action: City Council to contact Eastside Community Trust**

Len asked about the budget situation – has anything changed?

Richard referenced the Council and Your Parks involvement in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) - see also Your Park below.

The Council still have £1.5m budget pressure and plan is to meet that without affecting the frontline experience. They are considering whether they are charging the right rates to other Depts and vice versa. Looking at whether Parks can increase cultural / events offer? £55K saving needs to be implemented on allotments. He said there are lots of work streams he might talk about with the Forum members on another date.

With regard to Parks' Capital programme there are 63 live or pending projects in Bristol's Green Spaces valued at £7.2m. Most have been agreed at Council meetings and another £2m will come from strategic CIL monies. £0.5m per year over 4 years on top of the £7.2 m which means that 2 extra staff can be employed.

An attendee asked whether there had been any more progress on charging business for using parks for their businesses.

Richard responded that they had been considering proposing implementing small fees for commercial businesses but that would not be for community related activities. This has not been implemented and Parks are still looking at it.

Alie, St Georges Park – would you do consultation with parks about that before implementing that?

Richard confirmed that Parks Department does intend to talk to Friends groups if there are going to be changes.

Clr King explained that she tends to talk more with Jon James (Head of Service). She said that there are a lot of pros and cons – e.g. liability issues. Also, there is the argument about whether anyone should be running a business free in public spaces. If fees did come in it would be very scaled and depend on types of business. She explained that when they looked into the complexity of it, it turned out to be a very small add on to costs; and would not be a giant hike that would impact greatly on a business. Bigger operations like the balloon operation which has quite a large impact is a different issue, compared to Micro businesses. Parks Services do need to know the risks related to activities going on in the Parks.

Ted, Committee – I think we owe a debt of gratitude to people working on this as there are so many pressures on operational work and to do this forward thinking is very hard. I am interested in how sports and play facilities are going to be supported. With the population of Bristol likely to increase by 25-33%, will put huge pressure on open spaces. Will this future pressure be within Strategy, or is it only looking at present estate?

Richard said that Bristol is going to grow in some areas and not necessarily going to be where there is existing open space and also whether some developments might introduce recreational space that is not already there. Not easy to respond to but the plan is that the strategy and local plan will flag it. Parks would be looking for new development at scale or changes to public realm.

Ted – in past have recognised that also need to recognise revenue implications. Bristol Civic Society are talking about how Castle Park might be funded on an ongoing basis from new developments – ongoing levies from new properties. He thought that in future there may need to be something like that.

Len explained that with regard to the Parks Strategy the Forum Committee was considering organising one Face to Face meeting and one Zoom at start of consultation period. Face to Face most likely to be at the Greenway Centre on a Saturday morning. It would be helpful if

groups in addition to considering their own situations, could look at the wider picture as well.

He flagged up that the Committee will need help with drafting response to the Parks Strategy Consultation and volunteers would be welcomed.

## **6 Planning – Local Plan**

### **Len Wyatt**

Len had prepared a few slides about the Local Plan. See

<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/LocalPlan-010723Mtg.pdf>

He stated that an update to the city's Local Plan is desperately overdue. The current Local Plan is being developed by a cross party group of local councillors. Covid had stopped the development of the Local Plan, but now the next stage of the Local Plan will be the formal consultation so whatever people submit in writing will go to the Planning Inspectorate.

Len talked about what it sets out for Parks and Green Spaces and Allotments; and how food growing projects will be treated – see presentation.

Len advised members to be sure to look at how they think planning changes in their area may affect their park, eg. is there a major housing development planned near your park which might put more pressure of numbers of users, perhaps.

The Forum is now looking to push for increased protection and to say there should be NO loss of parks and green spaces due to development; and highlight the need for new parks and other green spaces in addition to enhancements of existing parks.

The issue of being offered “public realm” is that this can mean anything from hard surfaces to a few planters.

Development built since 2014 often has green space within it, which has lost its designation so we have suggested that spaces in them are designated open spaces to avoid further developments on them.

The Parks Forum Committee has been trying to keep on top of planning consultations / developments but there are a large number and this is really hard to do this Parks Forum Committee really needs more help. But in particular looking at Central Bristol and applications which have implications for parks and green spaces generally.

Len reported that Rob and himself, had met with Cllr Beech on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June for an informal conversation about our concerns, and suggested solutions.

See presentation again re potentially 1000s of new residents in Central Bristol. We estimate 2,300 homes going in around Broadmead. St Philips 2500-7000 homes potentially, be going in – but it's not just one person per home. This is in part driven by a move from providing offices and retail, to homes.



It is not sufficient to rely on existing parks, however improved – e.g. Castle Park – see Len’s presentation for more see maps

The Committee has been talking to the Council and others about a linear park from St James Barton to Castle Park.

St Philips is the next area that will be developed it is the only area left that there are not proposals already in place. There will be a need for a new large park in that area. What should the Forum do?

Lois, Redland Green asked whether there was any chance for a green corridor linking to Arno’s Vale Cemetery.

Rob explained that the Cemetery is outside the development area.

Len in the presentation outlined some suggestions, including a linear park along the Cut (at the moment this seemed unlikely); or on land owned by public bodies (eg: the Council and Emergency Services).

Peter, Manor Woods Valley Group pointed out that when people look at the Local Plan, they invariably look at their own area. If you are happy with the proposals, they should put in a response that says they are happy with how it is. It is important for groups to show positive support in case there are developers making counter comments, which will not be known about.

Susan, Troopers Hill put forward an idea for a linear park along the Feeder, closing Feeder Road and having a park along the feeder canal, but she thought maybe that was a bit revolutionary?

Ted commented that around the city there is less capacity in Parks and Green Spaces and more development going on that at any time since 1980 – less civil society, no neighbourhood groups, etc and existing groups are struggling. However, what happens now will make a huge difference to how people will live for the next 40 – 50 years

Sarah, Eastville Park – not all of the development area is in the Clean Air Zone but what should be being considered is car free living as all development sites are within walking distance of the city centre.

## **7 Break for networking and refreshments**

## **8 Strengthening relationships**

### **Ted and Sarah, Parks Forum Committee**

Sarah explained that she and Ted had been undertaking a piece of work about how we can strengthen relations between ourselves as parks groups and with external bodies.

Sarah explained that last meeting people filled in forms and presented a slide with a Venn diagram of the results – see [PowerPoint Presentation \(bristolparksforum.org.uk\)](http://bristolparksforum.org.uk)

They had identified that there is a lot of need for information and wanting to talk about how we can we do the things and what everyone can do to achieve these things.

There is strength in the network of the Forum, sharing experience, making best practice guides, and, for example, Sarah had had queries about how they (Friends of Eastville Park) were able to get their play area.

How do we work with our local parks officers? This is about not just the parks groups but the public also writing in and having one point of contact is helpful and accessing advice e.g. on H&S from e.g. Park Works / Ella Hogg etc

Ted explained that the meeting would split up into smaller groups and spend 10 minutes thinking about the most effective relationships that we have or we need and what resources, what kind of stakeholders you have for your park.

Ted explained that as part of this work we are encouraging Forum members to visit each other's parks and open spaces. He said he has visited 3 so far as part of the Forum programme, Eastwood Farm, Manor Woods Valley, Northern Slopes and found that each one was amazing and thanks to them all. He has learnt a lot about nature reserves and biodiversity, e.g. how you can have an impact on a rough wild area and turn it into a valuable wild area. It would be good for more people who support play, sport and family uses of parks to be involved as so far we have tended to focus on the nature value. Ted knows from his area that the pocket park is valuable to people living in Houses in Multiple Occupation, and how those spaces are valuable for these users.

Sarah outlined the work of the Friends of Eastville Park as a best practice case study.

She explained that she became involved 6 years ago after sitting in Eastville Park with a tiny baby and 2-year-old. Where were the toilets, where could she have a warm space and a hot drink? She went home and thought someone should do something about this and a voice in her head said, "Yes, you should do something about this". So, she got involved in the Friends group. At that time the group was becoming despondent as they had failed to get toilet provisions etc so she helped and the group went to the people in the park and surveyed them for evidence of what they want and need.

Eastville Park also, in the recent past, had a couple of festivals which they got money donated to the Friends group from. Whilst it was not enough to pay for play equipment it was used as match funding. Having received £9k from the festivals, that helped them get match funding of over 100K and then they fundraised and raised a further 30K.

She explained that the Friends collaborate with other groups – e.g. the bowls club who were older people and needed help with their space and Friends of Eastville Park were able to work with them to make the space more usable for the wider community.

She said that she realised their experiences were not all relevant to everyone but she is happy to talk to anyone about how we do this and what we can do to help.

Ted asked that if members have ideas or things they want to share do get in touch.

Alie queried whether there is a contact list and Len explained that the membership of the Forum is on the website along with information provided by each group.

Ted asked groups to also tell him and Sarah (via the [info@bristolparksforum.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolparksforum.org.uk) email address) and their contact with their local sports groups / locality groups etc.

Sarah also explained that there are ways and means of getting volunteers but it is useful to have details including an idea of the time involved so they know what is expected of them.

Russ, Friends of Castle Park asked what mechanism they used to collect funds without event organisers paying all the funds to the City Council.

Sarah explained that when Festivals are held in Bristol's Parks – some money goes to BCC but they can also gather donations for local groups / charities and her group was able to access that money by contacting the Festival organisers. However, the Festivals using Eastville Park have now ended.

Lois – Redland Green said that they collect people's emails and email them directly every time they need to contact people and they also have a Facebook page. She said it was a good way to communicate.

Sarah agreed and recommended that groups be vocal about what they are doing.

Len said that often the most powerful tool that we can use are stories and introduced Geoff from Easter Garden, Clifton.

#### Geoff – Easter Garden Case Study

Geoff described how in the mid-1990s Easter Garden was just a pile of rubble from a couple of demolished properties behind the Kings Arms near the Port of Call pub. It was a cut through, through waste land connecting two streets – Wesley Place and High Street. In that era anyone who spotted unused land could build a wall and wait 8 years and claim it as theirs. Local people didn't want it built on and wanted to keep it as a garden. A developer built a breeze block wall and fences which local people demolished. The garden was bulldozed when it was partly put together. Geoff explained that it was quite a struggle but eventually in 1997, at Easter weekend, the garden was opened and that is how it got its name. Local people came together, constructed the garden and formed Friends of Easter Garden and a Management Committee. It is a small garden that is only steps and garden either side.

Jackie also from Easter Garden commented that during the Covid pandemic lockdown lots of people had used it and this had led to the Friends of Easter Garden receiving lots of donations.

## 9 Your Park – update on activities

Rob Acton-Campbell

Rob outlined what Your Park is about and reported that it is now employing 11 staff. Rob gave a presentation about the work of Your Park – see [BBPF Project Updates \(bristolparksforum.org.uk\)](https://bristolparksforum.org.uk)

Your Park have put together strategy for the way forward and the whole thing is about Community health & wellbeing being transformed through the creation of Inclusive & Welcoming Neighbourhood Park Networks Prioritising the highest 10% areas of health deprivation & green space deprivation.

More people in parks and makes more people feel safe and is good for their well-being. Initially when Your Park was set up it was thought of as a charity that was about improving parks but it really is about helping improve people's well-being through parks.

Wild and Well Project in South Bristol is about bringing people together, what is happening in terms of social prescribing, etc.

The Roots to Wellbeing initiative is being expanded with funding from the Lottery following a pilot project.

UKSPF (see above) is the shared prosperity fund re levelling up. Your Park has secured another £180k funding in partnership with BCC and WECA and 2 new posts are being recruited to work in south Bristol.

Access to Parks looked at barriers to visiting parks – e.g. no toilets. People do want to visit parks but find they cannot get there or in because of other barriers and that includes not knowing what is in the park when they get there.

Rob has developed an accessibility guide for Troopers Hill with Maddie from Your Park and it is clear that it has to be honest about what happens when you arrive at the site. Go to Your Park website <https://yourpark.org.uk/news/opening-access-with-information> where there are links to the project and Maddie will send you the template and work with you to produce it.

The project can help inform conversations with the Council and to help access CIL money for improving access to parks.

Lois – Redland Green asked whether the Park Hive app was still live. It was noted that it is and that it had been produced by Sam Thomson, but is not being updated.

**Action: Frances to talk to Sam about what the situation is with Park Hive and the data / photos etc.**

## 10 AOB/Other information

a) The Downs.

Rob explained that the Downs Committee was different from how other parks were managed. The Downs Act set up the system and it is different because of the joint ownerships with the Merchant Venturers and BCC. One of the things they have now set up is a Downs Advisory Panel with specialists and volunteers led by the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge, which is not replacing Downs Committee nor replacing the Friends. If you have any issues / concerns regarding the Downs you can contact the Downs Advisory Panel by email [Downspanel@gmail.com](mailto:Downspanel@gmail.com)

b) Christine, Victoria Park Action Group

Christine advised the meeting of several meetings they might be interested in.

6<sup>th</sup> July In the Southville Centre will be a meeting regarding the implications for green spaces of development in that area (eg: Bedminster Green), run by the Greater Bedminster group.  
12<sup>th</sup> July – ACTA Community theatre are running an event about increasing the interaction and collaboration between communities

She also reported that at the same time as the Forum meeting there was been meeting this morning about a new all abilities play space in Victoria Park near Bedminster Railway Station.

She also raised the issue of toilets in parks. There is a toilet in Victoria Park but one has been in a state of disrepair for 30 years and they are always told that when buildings are being developed there will be toilets. When we have events, this becomes more about costs as they need to hire portaloos.

Bedminster Green, Whitehouse Street and Mead Street – all have development proposals for blocks of flats which is likely to increase the usage of Victoria Park

c) **Visiting other Parks Groups**

Len reminded parks groups to invite other parks groups to visit them in July and September. Let the Parks Forum know and dates and places will be put in the Updates.

## 11. Next meetings

The Parks and Green Spaces Strategy was due out for consultation in mid-August so the Forum Committee was planning to run two meetings to discuss the Strategy. One would be Face to face on a Saturday morning at the Greenway Centre and one on Zoom. It was anticipated that these would be held in early September and Forum members would be advised of the date. *[Note at the time of writing the minutes the consultation may slip and not start until September so the Forum dates to discuss the Strategy have not yet been set.]*

## Forum Meetings

The Forum meets 3 times a year.

The next main meeting is on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October at the Nissen Hut in Eastville Park, hosted by the Friends of Eastville Park. It will be the AGM and there will be an opportunity for people to join the Committee; and vote on officers and approve Committee members.

By October the Local Plan consultation should have begun and this may be a main topic for the Forum meeting.

The following meeting will be in South Bristol in March 2024 at a date to be agreed. If anyone knows of a suitable, affordable, venue for holding a Parks Forum meeting on a Saturday morning please get in touch.