

# Notes of a meeting of the Bristol Parks Forum

## Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 9.30am on Zoom



### 1. Welcome & Introduction – Len Wyatt, Chair BPF

Len welcomed those present, and thanked them for attending. He explained that it was a special meeting in that it was about listening and hopefully learning from a selection of the Parks Forum member groups.

Len thanked all those involved in making the meeting happen from providing advice to sorting out the tech to actually speaking.

Len asked if those attending were happy for the meeting to be recorded, solely for assisting with the production of minutes. After discussion about whether the recording could also be used to share with those not present, the decision was to not do that but only keep it for reference purposes for the minutes.

However, the minutes would not include full notes of the presentations nor the questions and answers. Contact details of the groups presenting would be sent out with the minutes that further questions could be asked or experiences shared.

### 2. Report from the Parks Forum Committee – Len & committee members

Len reported that the Parks Forum Committee had met once to organise this meeting. It had been decided not to hold a formal meeting as we usually do, in part as it was thought the new Council Policy Committee involved would need time to settle in and be able to bring forward changes; and also because we felt that some of our most successful meetings have been about group's individual stories.

Len reported that he had attended the National Federation of Parks Forum meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. 10 Forums had attended the meeting and the subject was biodiversity. There were three main areas of discussion – how to practically improve biodiversity in parks; how to fund it; and the role of planning including Biodiversity Net Gain.

Len had also recently met online with people from Bath parks groups, who are considering setting up a Forum for their groups.

Bristol Parks Forum has handed over the money we were holding for Parkwork, to Parkwork so that it can be used to benefit parks and green spaces.

#### Progress on priorities from March meeting.

This Forum's Local Plan submission had included the proposal for a large multifunctional green park in St Phillips. The Local Plan Examination in Public is scheduled for September and Len is busy preparing evidence and a statement to take to the examination. He had also attended a Bristol Civic Society meeting and discussed with them the practicalities of delivering a new park in St Phillips. They are discussing the issue further.

### Big conversation – funding the future

Following this idea of a Big Conversation being raised during the Council's budget consultation last year, it had not been progressed.

Len explained that we do not know how the new Council and relevant Policy Committees will treat funding issues but we hope to find out before the next Budget round in the Autumn/Winter. We are talking to the Royal Society Arts etc about what they want to do next after their meeting last September which has been previously reported on to the Forum..

The Committee is also considering whether there are opportunities for groups in a local area working to achieve the same things in different locations, to bid for funding together rather than separately. That work continues and we hope to come back with ideas on this at the Bristol Parks Forum AGM in October.

### Strengthening relationships

Nic Ferris from BCC was looking at the results of their recent survey of Bristol's Parks Groups leaders and members and it is expected that the results will contribute to our own understanding. It is hoped that the information will be collated and a proposal to be put to the Bristol Parks Forum meeting in October.

### Reviewing links with the City Council and Your Park

This work has not started yet.

### Standing Groups to help the Forum respond to queries and consultations.

It is suggested that the Forum could have Standing Groups on the following topics: Finance, Maintenance, Planning, and Climate and Ecological Emergencies.

The Committee will be coming to the Forum ahead of the October Forum meeting with a framework of how a group could work. Then at that meeting asking for volunteers to help with each Group.

### Updating terms of reference and purpose of Forum

Reviewing the ToR and purpose of the Forum will be started once the Local Plan examination has taken place.

Len was due to visit Castle Park in the near future to learn about the issues there and how that might inform our evidence to the Examination.

### **3. Group presentations:**

The following people gave talks about their park and the work of their Friends group. Please contact them direct about any follow up on the issues or points they raised:

Sarah, Friends of Eastville Park

Website: [www.eastvillepark.org.uk](http://www.eastvillepark.org.uk)

Email: [Friendsofeastvillepark@gmail.com](mailto:Friendsofeastvillepark@gmail.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/eastvillepark/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/eastvillepark/)

Christine, Victoria Park Action Group

Email: [christinehiggott@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:christinehiggott@tiscali.co.uk)

Website: [www.vpag.org.uk](http://www.vpag.org.uk)

Social media: [www.facebook.com/VictoriaParkBristol](http://www.facebook.com/VictoriaParkBristol)

[www.instagram.com/victoriaparkactiongroup/](http://www.instagram.com/victoriaparkactiongroup/)

Chris, Friends of Greville Smyth

Website: <https://friendsofgrevillesmyth.wordpress.com/>

Email: frogs.bristol@gmail.com

Luke, Friends of

- Withywood Park
- Willmott Park & Space Makers
- Hartcliffe Valley Walk

Email: communitylukeall41@gmail.com

During the Break two polls were undertaken – these are the questions.

Poll 1 - How would you describe the purpose of your group?

- A) to raise funds for projects in your park
- B) to run small volunteer projects like clean ups
- C) to enhance natural spaces and biodiversity
- D) to produce food
- D) to be a voice with the council for your community needs
- E) All of the above
- F) something else

Poll 2 – How many other parks or green space groups do you regularly communicate with (eg: talk to, receive newsletters, view Facebook/Instagram/X accounts).

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#### **4 Arrangements for the next meeting Bristol Parks Forum Meeting**

**The next Bristol Parks Forum meeting will be held on Saturday 19th October at 09.30 at Eastville Park. It will be a face-to-face meeting.**

The meeting will be returning to a formal agenda

The October meeting will also be our Annual General Meeting.

All formal positions are up for election so nominations will be sought for the Officers – Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer; and we are looking for members for the Committee.

Derek is standing down as Treasurer so we need to find a replacement for nomination in October.

The process will be the same as last year with information sent out in advance on how it will run; plus of course we will be looking to start up “standing groups”.

Everyone present and reading these notes are asked to please consider whether they would be prepared to stand for any of the positions or join the Committee – or a standing groups – or one of the more specialist roles we have. We can tailor what we need to what people can do.

The more people we have involved, the better for the Forum and our ability to represent the Forum members.

Meeting closed at 11.00 a.m.