

Attendees: Susan, Rob, Margaret, Rod, Elaine, Fran, Neil and Rosie  
Apologies: Cllr Fabian Breckels

1. **Approval of Minutes from December AGM**

These were approved.

2. **Confirmation of Signatories on Bank Account**

Margaret recently had a telephone conversation with Santander, in which it was explained that we need to submit contact details for all committee members not just the signatories. Rob, Richard and Rod have now completed the required form.

During the phone conversation Margaret was also informed that there are at present 7 signatories for our account. As well as the three correct signatories (Rosie, Margaret and Susan) there are: N. \_\_\_\_\_, H. \_\_\_\_\_, S.S.V \_\_\_\_\_ (presumably Val \_\_\_\_\_) and S. \_\_\_\_\_ (duplicate for Susan).

Margaret was informed that a form needs to be completed to remove these extra signatories, and the action to remove the signatories needs to be documented at a committee meeting, with the Minutes then signed by two committee members.

This meeting therefore confirms that the current membership of the Committee is:

Susan \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair) - Signatory

Rosie \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary) - Signatory

Margaret \_\_\_\_\_ (Treasurer) - Signatory

Rob \_\_\_\_\_, Richard \_\_\_\_\_, Rod \_\_\_\_\_

The following signatories need to be removed: N \_\_\_\_\_, H \_\_\_\_\_. S.S.V \_\_\_\_\_, S \_\_\_\_\_ (only the duplicate entry).

Susan \_\_\_\_\_ is the correct signatory. *[Full names redacted for website]*

**Action: Margaret to complete the form and send it off with signed Minutes and covering letter.**

3. **Projects**

- Memorial Trees

The two families interested in having memorial trees planted on Troopers Hill Field have been given details of how to pay Bristol City Council to do so. A member of one family has mentioned that the Council paperwork referred to planting planned for next winter rather than this one.

**Action: Susan will follow this up with Bristol CC**

- Memorial Bench

The bench has been paid for but it has been too wet to install the concrete base. It is in hand.

4. **Communications**

- Paper Newsletter

Susan reported that she is still waiting to speak to the editor, Ruth, who is recovering from medical treatment but she wondered if there was any need for a paper newsletter in the coming months. The star gazing and Planetarium events had already been promoted very successfully and there was not much else in the coming months to advertise. Rob wondered

if that would be too long a gap without some sort of promotion/presence. Discussion followed and it was decided to wait until Susan had discussed this with Ruth.

**Action: Susan.**

Elaine offered to take spare copies of the last newsletter out with her when she was litter picking on the Hill because she was often asked about FoTH by members of the public. It was agreed that this was an excellent idea. Susan would take copies of the last issue to Elaine's home and thanked her very much.

## 5. **Nature Conservation Work on Troopers Hill**

### - Work Parties

Rob reported that there had been two in December, 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, and two in January, 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. One day had been very windy but all had been successful and included dealing with a branch that had fallen across a path in Sally's Glade. As usual, photos were on the website.

### - Progress on Winter Works

"Before and after" pictures were shown of the work which had been done by Parks, mainly by the bottom square chimney and around the humps above the gully. The work had started much earlier than last year and the progress had been amazing. A diagram was shown on what had been completed and what was still to do. The two main remaining jobs were (1) trees/saplings to be removed up the path from the chimney at the bottom of Troopers Hill Road and (2) to cut some low hanging branches from the hawthorn tree up the steps from Greendown, although this was waiting to be agreed by the Tree Officer. Rod asked if we thanked the Parks team and Susan replied that we never stopped thanking them!

### - New Work Party Leader trained

Jill had now been trained as a work party leader and would be gaining experience with other leaders in the forthcoming work parties. She could only cover weekends and may bring another person with her as a supervising adult for her daughter. Susan would be contacting all leaders soon to check their availability for April, May and June.

### - Completing work funded by donations and the BCC Climate and Ecological Emergency Community grant

Green Mantle had started a week later than scheduled due to sickness. They removed a lot of mature gorse, some saplings and scrub. This is being loaded into a skip that will be removed on Friday. Their work complemented very successfully that done by Parks which meant better value for money from the grant.

**Action: Susan will write a report to the funders by 12 February.**

The one negative aspect was an incident late afternoon on the Tuesday when a motor bike and two E bikes managed to get onto the Hill shortly after Green Mantle staff had left for the day. A member of the public who lives nearby alerted Green Mantle who informed Susan and Rob. The bikes had left by 5.20pm. Susan contacted the police and 2 PCOs visited earlier today.

## 6. **Maintenance**

### - Signs at the square chimney and Greendown entrances

The Fix It team at Bristol CC had replaced the plywood backing on both information boards which now looked so much better and are now stable on their bases. Pictures were shown.

## 7. **Events**

### - Star Gazing

It had been agreed that this would take place one night between 13 and 15 February, depending on weather conditions. Rod said that it was still too soon to try to forecast the weather, but it would be a very favourable time with a crescent moon and Jupiter and its moons also visible. The number of telescopes would be higher on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Over 80 people had expressed an interest and up to the first 20 of those to book would get a place. Susan had requested volunteers to help on the evening and one had replied as a positive. Fran, Neil and Rosie all offered to accompany attendees, carry kit etc and were rewarded with confirmed places on the evening.

Susan reminded people of the beginners' courses being offered by the Bristol Astronomical Society (with Bath and Cardiff) starting on 13 February. The cost of membership covering 6 lessons was exceptionally good value and they would be recorded on Zoom. Details are on the Bristol Astronomical Society website and Facebook page.

### - Planetarium shows Saturday 17 February from 3pm

The show for ages 5-7 was full, ages 8-14 was full bar one extra place but the one for 14 years+ had many places left. Susan had reserved 4 places on that show for volunteers who could act as helpers on the day, between 2.30 and 6.30pm. She would be asking for volunteers. Margaret offered to be there.

### - Geology Walk

This event would be arranged for after summer but details would not be finalised until the course leader at University of Bristol returned from her holiday.

## 8. **Bristol City Council**

### - Response to Parks and Green Spaces Strategy Consultation

Rob confirmed that our response had been sent to BCC. Overall, the proposed strategy had been positive and reflected the views and aims of FoTH but the outcome depended on finance and budgetary restraints. The final version would go to the Cabinet meeting in March.

### - Response to the Local Plan Consultation

Susan had included the points made by Adam and Rosie at the last meeting and had returned our response. Hopefully it was a matter of "rubber stamping".

### - Change to Committee System and May elections

Rob reminded people that there was a local election in May. The St George Troopers Hill councillor, Fabian Breckels, was re-standing but the three other local St George councillors were standing down so we would have at least three new local councillors; some of the candidates may attend the next work party.

Bristol was changing from Mayor and Cabinet to a Committee led Council. Parks department came under the Communities and Public Health Committee. The 'proper' meetings would start in September after the initial change over period.

### - East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme consultation

This would be the last consultation with a closing date of 20 February.

## 9. **Update on St George Strollers**

The St George Strollers, founded and supported by Friends of Troopers Hill, are part of the Ramblers Wellbeing Walks Bristol scheme. This provides amongst other things, public

liability insurance for the walks, training for walk leaders, policies and publicity via their national website. Susan reported that the St George Strollers provided and led 2 types of walks – a three mile in various locations, twice a month, and a 30 minute ramble around St George Park once a month. Both were popular and received positive feedback. There had been a decrease in the number of walk leaders, but two new ones were currently being trained. At the moment, financially they seemed pretty viable, but it might be that £1 donations were introduced next year. Expenses were about £300 pa.

#### 10. **Networking**

- Soil and Water Sampling Project with University of Bristol students

This had taken place. They had been very careful and had left no trace of the work. Results would be known later this month.

- Visit in May from Summerhill Infant School

This was going ahead and Willy would be helping with it.

- RHS It's Your Neighbourhood award

This takes place in July and this year Rob and Susan would be away. Was anyone else prepared to meet and show RHS representatives around the Hill, explain what we do and answer their questions? After some discussion it was agreed that it would be better not to enter this year as people felt they did not have the knowledge or experience, especially if we wanted to continue the run of "outstanding" awards! The 2023 Pride in Parks award would be received next month. Susan said it is a pity it is not called 2023/2024 Pride in Parks award, as it seems out of date when it is awarded the following year.

- Your Park volunteer event

This is being held on Saturday morning (3<sup>rd</sup>). Elaine had been nominated but had not realised the date of the event. The event had sold out so Margaret gave her ticket to Elaine so that she could join Susan and Rob in attending.

- Bristol University – Masters students from Biological Sciences

Ed Drewitt had been in touch with Rob and Susan because some of his students were working on a system of QR codes being able to produce video and audio information on and in green spaces. This had some practical issues, such as affixing them to appropriate places on the Hill, and depended on funding.

- Qi gong on the Hill

We had been contacted by someone who asked if he could offer these classes on the Hill. Susan had pointed him to Bristol CC to obtain permission. He would try to attend our next meeting.

- Bristol Parks Project – Boys in Bristol.

Rob showed photos from this website of Troopers Hill (and other green spaces) taken by the Boys in Bristol. They were lovely shots. There is a link from our website to this one.

#### 11. **Meeting closed at 8.55pm.**

Next meeting to be held on 21 March 7.15pm - in person Wesley Memorial Church Hall

Wesley Memorial Church Hall is behind the church if you head towards the right of the building. It is in Bryants Hill about 60 metres past the Kingsway junction on the right. It was built with Troopers Hill stone!