



Present: Susan (Chair), Jude (Treas) Kit (Memb Sec), Rob (WPO), Bryan (Cttee), Jules (BCC), Fabian (Cllr), Steve, David, Roy, Helen (minutes)

Apologies: Dave (BCC) Gary (BCC) Margaret, Maureen

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without amendments. Susan mentioned that she had clarified a point with Gary about line marking on the Field football pitch.

Issues and thank yous for our Community Parks Officer, Area Parks Manager, Park Keeper and Landscape team

- completion of the YANSEC project (planting at Greendown)

Everything was now in place except the whips for the blackthorn hedge. Friends had been impressed with the construction of the planting structure. Jules described the planting scheme which included heather, alfalfa, rest harrow and Jacob's ladder. It was hoped to supplement the logs with ivy. Planting below the retaining logs had been avoided because of the tendency of drivers exiting Greendown to reverse vehicles over this area. Julian offered access to a potential further supply of daffodil bulbs for the Field.

- continued excellent maintenance on the Hill

The meeting thanked BCC for recent achievements.

The top step in the row adjacent to the bottom stack had been repaired. Wooden railings had been removed at the highways works.

Only half a bag of debris had been picked up on the previous Sunday (6th November), poor weather was thought to have accounted for the small amount of litter.

- litter bin

Susan reported that the Allotments association had expressed concern that the new bin had been installed where it might assist unauthorised access to the allotments. Gary had said he would monitor the situation and the bin could be moved if necessary.

- the mine shaft

The area of subsidence had been capped. Susan read a letter from the Coal Authority to the effect that did not agree it had a remedial obligation, the trial excavation had been unrelated to an existing mine shaft. Jules proposed that the fence could be removed.

- falling soil on Troopers Hill Road

Susan outlined the history of the problem. Five lorry loads of soil had been removed. It was not proposed to replace the fence. The road had been widened by two to three feet. Rob had requested a white boundary line to mark the width of the road and indicate the extent of subsequent soil descent and bramble growth. Residents were concerned about the appearance of the bank, many had been reassured that vegetation would regrow next spring; the roots remaining in the bank would bind the soil. The practicalities of building a retaining wall were discussed and it was recognised that the extent, cost, and drainage considerations were prohibitive. Kit expressed concerns that if the frost broke up the bank it might eventually give access for motorcycles, but Jules assured the meeting that a thick growth of bramble would provide a barrier to the rest of the Hill. FOTH had covered the cost of some of the tree works from Neighbourhood Partnership Grant but the funding had

not been exhausted. The Arboricultural Officer had suggested planting additional whips, paid for from the remaining grant money. The timing of planting whips was debated and it might be better to leave it as late as possible.

Response to Proposals for Burbush Close Open Space, part of Stockwood Open Space LNR, in the Area Green Space Plan

Susan had written to the Parks Strategy Team drawing attention to the policy question in relation to protecting LNR buffer zones. She had asked for further information about the justification for the sale of Burbush Close Open Space. If it became necessary, FOTH would be minded to seek SSSI status for Troopers Hill LNR, in light of the greater planning protection available.

Work parties

- completed since the last meeting

Saturday, 2nd October & Saturday, 6th November – volunteers had removed bramble from amongst broom and heather in the vicinity of ‘Sally’s Glade’.. Rob commented that numbers of volunteers had decreased slightly from the previous year, and were considerably down on the year before that.

-Next work parties before the next meeting

Saturday, 4th December further work in Sally’s Glade

Saturday, 8th January - Prune the hedge at Greendown. Kit volunteered to lead the Work Party (in principle). Jules requested a light prune on the fence side of the hedge. Bags would be needed for cuttings.

Events

- Since our last meeting

On Friday 1st October, Susan and Rob gave a talk and slide show to pupils of Summerhill school. On the Wednesday of the following week, (6th October), Jules and Susan had taken schoolchildren to visit the hill. Jules and Susan described some of the highlights of the occasions.

Sunday 10th October - Family Fun Dog Show. The person who had offered to organise and publicise the show had withdrawn close to the date of the event. Kit was thanked with a Well Done for all his hard work in making the necessary arrangements. Attendance had been lower than last year, possibly because there had been less publicity. Discussions recognised the potential for publicising the event at other dog shows in the area and acknowledged the primarily local focus. A lost dog had turned up during the show, and the dog warden was able to return it to its owner. In response to a request, a temporary dog waste bin would be located near the show ring next year. Additional thanks were given to Jude and Bryan who had assisted in various capacities.

Thursday 4th November - Walking for Health. Susan had guided 8 people on a circular walk (in the rain) starting and finishing at the Co-op, the walkers had expressed a request for another walk in the spring. Jules drew the meeting’s attention to further walks run by Brislington Twalkers.

Saturday 6th November - Kite Flying. A company called Gynormous Rawkus had held a kite-making and flying event which had been publicised as widely as possible. The event had been postponed from October, having been rained off. It was reported that the children who attended had enjoyed the event.

Sunday 7th November - Fungi Foray

The event had been highly successful and well attended. 30 species of fungi had been found. Justin Smith proposed to record the findings in a survey document for publication on the Troopers Hill web site.

- Next events

- 2011 Events - planning meeting 11th November 7pm at Kit & Helen's house, it was likely that the programme would be similar to 2010. The Avon Valley walk would have to be occur later in the year because of the availability of Beeses' ferry. Rob suggested June. Steve suggested summer evening event/s (twilight walk). Suggestions for choral entertainment were put forward.

-The AGM would be held on Sunday 5th December at 3pm, to include a slide and video show.

- Venue for next year's meetings. The pros and cons of the venue were discussed. The former venue was recognised to be cosier. The current venue is slightly cheaper, closer and easier for everyone and has dedicated parking space. It was decided to continue holding meetings at Summerhill Methodist Church.

Action: Susan to re-negotiate the room bookings and consider possible dates

Funding

- Rob reported progress on application for the "Stepping Forward" grant from Community Spaces (a lottery funded source). He had obtained a list of works from the Council to restore (but not improve on the original) paths in the interest of making routes slightly more accessible, plus some waymarking in the woodland (see also the minutes of 28th September <http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/minutes/Min280910.pdf>) and a land drain in Troopers Hill Field to address the problem of lying water on the Field near the slide. He had applied for £32,320 at the beginning of October, and expected to hear within the next few weeks whether the application had achieved Stage One. If not, other funding sources would be explored to achieve the works.

- Bristol City Community Festival and Event Fund. Susan explained that in order to obtain the remainder of the grant she would need to compile a report on events and submit receipts [since done].

Networking

Consultation on the Area Green Space Plan and Site Allocations consultation ended on 29 October and the decision on land disposals would be referred to Cabinet in December. The investment proposals would then be referred to Neighbourhood Partnerships for comment early in 2011.

- Rob had become Champion of the St George Neighbourhood Partnership environment group, which would consider and influence decisions in relation to grounds/parks maintenance (Clean & Green). There was potential funding available, for instance, for planting and hanging baskets etc. Neighbourhood Partnerships would also be expected to have an input into decisions on the allocation of s106 money. Fabian mentioned current publicity about the council having to make those funds available to the community. Contact details had been published were on the FOTH web site.

- St George Community Fair Saturday, 26th March, 2011 hosted by St Aidan's Church in aid of South West Children's Hospice. Kit reported on last year's experience and expressed reservations. Fabian and Jules supported the idea of hosting a stall, and it was acknowledged as a good opportunity for raising awareness of the FOTH events leaflet. It was agreed that FOTH attendance at the Fair should take precedence over a Local History event at Barton Hill.

There followed a discussion about the feasibility and economics of preparing a joint community 'events' publicity leaflet to be distributed with the local free 'Observer' paper, possibly to be financed by the St George Neighbourhood Partnership. Kit outlined the

existing publicity arrangements, and it was agreed that BBC Radio Bristol was currently the best and most helpful medium for FOTH publicity.

Newsletter

Kit said that the next issue would be published in December, after the AGM.