



Note of Meeting 1 September 2011
Methodist Church, Summerhill Road

Present

Susan (Chair) Norman (Treas) Rob (Work Parties) Kit (Memb Sec) Jude, (Cttee)
Bryan (Cttee) Clare (Cttee) Margaret (Cttee) Denise James (Bristol City Council
Neighbourhood Engagement Team) Jackie, Gwen, Russ, Keith, Val, Helen
(minutes)

The minutes of the July FOTH meeting were approved without amendment.

Items for the attention of Community Park Keeper, Area Parks Manager and Grounds Maintenance team

Susan complimented the team on the continued excellent maintenance on the Hill, including litter including prompt clearing up after a burnt-out fire in the gully. It was agreed that there would be no objection to Jules bringing his vehicle into the gully for clearing up major debris.

It was noted that litter tends to build up over bank holiday weekend. Rob had removed a wheelie bin (had the house number on it) and suggested that reporting stolen and burned bins to the police should be encouraged so that incidents of this type were added to the log. It was agreed that the next work party should include a litter pick.

The meeting discussed possible methods of discouraging visitors from using disposable barbecues, which damage the grass. Introducing a bye-law would be costly and difficult to enforce. The existing signs already mention barbecues and it was felt that temporary reminder notices could be put up at relevant events. The one used in Queen's Square was circulated as an example and it was agreed that a more graphic version would be preferable.

It was recognized that dog walkers pick up litter, including tins, and Friends expressed their appreciation. Denise offered to provide a poster and cards to give dog owners thanking them for clearing up after their pets. The design and display of posters was discussed. Kit asked Denise to provide some for the dog show, and the meeting discussed the role of dog wardens.

Parks re-organisation

Denise introduced her Neighbourhood Engagement role of supporting community groups with events and fund raising, and providing a link with the Parks team. She mentioned the availability and cost of a two-person SITA crew to help remove waste after a large work party, and remarked on the improvements to appearance of Troopers Hill since the formation of the Friends' group. She confirmed she would be willing to sign off risk assessments in batches.

RHS "It's Your Neighbourhood" judging

The judging had taken place in a somewhat rushed manner because of the size of the area and the short time available for the visit. The scoring was due later in the month. Friends felt that FOTH activities did not fit strictly with the 'gardening' aspects of the competition. There was debate over whether half of Hanham roundabout is situated in Bristol.

Work parties

- completed since the last meeting

The Saturday 6th August party had concentrated on Sally's Glade. It was anticipated that the next work party would continue with that work plus a litter pick.

Area Green Space Plan

Rob gave an update on recent progress, including the implications for St George, Troopers Hill and the Field.

St George Strollers Walking for Health update

Clare observed that the group was developing successfully. The excursion to Wick Local Nature Reserve had attracted 29 people. Walk leaders' expertise was improving and the production of a finalised programme was expected soon. Kit was producing a replacement leaflet and posters. A meeting set for 2 November would bring together walkers and others involved in the programme to gather feedback and ideas for developing the programme. Clare described some of the issues associated with participant bringing dogs on the walks.

Events

- Since our last meeting

Sunday 17th July. The Tai Chi on the Hill had been rained off from the outset.

Friday 22nd July - Purple Prowl – Rupert Higgins had given a fascinating talk but the event had been interrupted by heavy rain.

17th-28th July – FOTH had been able to provide a presence at most of the Wild River Festival events, based round Beeses at Eastwood Farm.

Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th August - The plans for the Forest school on those dates had been cancelled but it was hoped that perhaps 8 places could be provided at a similar event during the October half term. Confirmation was awaited from Paula Spiers.

Saturday 13th August. The Family fun Picnic with Storytelling and Juggling had eventually attracted a reasonable crowd, the craft tent had been busy and 27 people had listened to the story. Later in the evening some balloon flights had approached close to the Hill.

- Before and shortly after our next meeting (10th November)

Friday 2nd September - Troopers Twilight Tour - over 20 people had booked for 7.00

- Sunday 9th October - Family Fun Dog Show would need a party of volunteers. Home made cakes welcome for refreshments.

- Sunday 30th October - Fungi Foray 10.30am.

- Forest school Half term (see above)

The date of the 2012 Events Planning Meeting was set for Thursday 3rd November, 7pm at 3 Corkers Hill for exchange of planning ideas.

Funding

Rob summarized progress so far on stages in application for the 'Stepping Forward' grant, stage 2 of which would need to be completed by the end of September. Bristol City Council had received tenders for the work, one valued at just over £25,000, one at £17,000 and the two lowest around £11,500. The designer had commented that economics had driven down the prices. He detailed the improvements to steps (re-grading) but no hand rails were proposed on the Hill itself. Plans and costings were available for inspection.

The successful tender was below budget, so it would be possible to include other work. It was proposed that BCTV could be engaged to refurbish the DOE path. In addition, Denise outlined the advantages of Community Payback. She offered to provide some prices for weekend work sessions to be included in the bid.

A new interpretation board could be located at the entrance to the Field from Summerhill Terrace. Jude and Bryan offered to be responsible for laminating posters and changing the displays on the new notice board. In addition, it was proposed to fund a small sign giving mobility access details on the railings at the Malvern Road entrance to the Field.

Rob confirmed that the cost of providing a path around the Field would exceed the available grant allocation.

It was also proposed that a celebration event in October 2012 could include a dog-friendly event, wild life walk, story telling, and as many organized walk groups as possible. Other uses could include a prize, newsletter and replacement gazebos.

Community Festival and Events Fund. Susan reported on the use of the funding to pay for the activities at the Family Fun picnic (see above).

Beeses Quiz: Participants in the quiz were thanked for their donation of £13 cash prizes to FOTH. It was anticipated that some of the ticket proceeds from Beeses Beer Festival would be available to offset the costs of the dog show.

Networking

Jackie gave an update on progress with FOTH's presence on Facebook. One of the proposed pages had been deleted. To date, 36 people had joined the remaining page. She had provided Kit with an article for inclusion in the next newsletter article. There was a discussion over the User name TroopersHill for linking and displaying purposes.

Newsletter

The meeting discussed ideas, including Rowan Matthiessen's prospective contribution as Project Co-ordinator for Brislington Brook. The next edition would be timed for the middle to end of September to publicise the dog show. It was apparent that few people had listened to the audio version, which would be discontinued.

Date of next meeting: 10 November 2011 7.15pm