

Minutes of Friends of Troopers Hill Annual General Meeting 2024  
Thursday 12 December 2024 7.15pm at Wesley Memorial Church Hall

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

1. **Approval of Minutes from November meeting**

These were approved

2. **Nature Conservation Work on Troopers Hill**

- Nature Conservation Work Parties

There had been one that morning with Bristol CC Communities Team – 6 of them. Last Saturday's had been cancelled due to Storm Darragh, one on 30 November at Sally's Glade which needed finishing, one on 13 November at the gully in preparation for the Geology walk and one on 9 November. Rob had worked out that the total volunteer hours in 2024, with one work party to come, was 662 compared to 707 hours in 2023. It was noted that the 2023 amount also included 6 walks which this year had not taken place. There had also been an increase in volunteer attendances in 2024 to 243 which was very positive. Neil felt that safety glasses were needed, not as mandatory kit but which could be offered to the volunteers with gloves etc. Susan agreed to check out what was available at Screwfix and Toolstation. **Action Susan**

- Plan for 2025

Susan reported that we would continue to follow the Management Plan plus anything new observed. She will prepare a summary of tasks for work parties and share them with work party leaders who will let each other know how far they have progressed on each task. She tabled photos of the work that would be covered by the next few work parties. Tasks 2 (close to Sally's Glade) and 4 (below the bench), areas where Bristol Parks had worked or would be working, needed finishing. The area of Himalayan Balsam would be checked in May.

- Winter Works

The Council had been very good and had finished their list bar the gully. She had passed on praise and thanks.

- Contracted work for Himalayan Balsam

Parks had finished in that area. Greenmantle had been organised to clear the area along the path parallel to Troopers Hill Road up to the old oak tree. This would open up that whole area/slope. £2000 of the total cost of £3400 would be provided by the Friends and £1400 by the Council. All agreed.

- The meadow cut had been done.

3. Troopers Hill Field

- New Memorial Trees

There were to be two new trees - one had a sponsor the other was to come. The response to Bristol City Council's consultation had been positive except one question about positioning of the orchard.

- Orchard

There was a possibility of a mixed orchard being planted but no details were yet available

- East Bristol Intermediate Care Centre

Rob reported that this site was up for sale and would be for housing, possibly supported housing. A Planning Application had yet to be made so it was a long way off yet. A Biodiversity Net Gain exercise would be mandatory. It might be a positive development as

the entrance would have to be improved. Rob had contacted St George Councillors and suggested a café and therefore toilets!

#### 4. Maintenance

- Play area

This had been reported at the last meeting with an added post meeting update.

- Fly Tipping

This continued to be a big problem. The Council had had the money for a new lay-by for 5 years but was now £8500 short so had re-tendered. The Landscape department had contacted the East Bristol Liveable Area (EBLA) team to see if they had some funds in their budget. No one knew how long this process might take. A concerned member of the public had raised this issue at a recent full Council meeting, called to discuss the EBLA petition, and Rob had raised it at a recent meeting.

- Hole near red bench

Susan explained the recent situation where some dog walkers had reported a quite deep hole which had filled with water and dead grass and begun to smell very bad. Susan had raked out the grass and reported the hole to the Council. They had now filled it in.

#### 5. Events

- Report on the Geology walk 17 November

Everyone thought that this had been very successful. It had been hands-on with maps, inclinometers and lenses which had made it very interesting.

- Star Gazing March 2025

Dependent on the weather

- Mosses and liverworts

To be organised when Nick finishes his Masters degree

- Birdsong walk 8am Saturday 15 March

Ed Drewitt has been in touch to offer this walk which was not at dawn!

- History Walk 10.30am Sunday 18 May

Rob will lead this

- Drop in Gazebo Saturday 31 May 2.30 to 5pm

Margaret, Willy, Fran and Neil volunteered to help at this.

- Bugs and Beasties and solar observations Saturday 9 August

Rupert had confirmed this date

- Walks to get to know the neighbourhood

Sam from the new bike shop on Church Road and the St George Active Travel Group, a group who tried to encourage walking and cycling, had been in contact with Susan to see if a joint project was possible. They have now applied for funding. Susan will work with the St George Strollers to offer two, new, local each repeated once over two weekends. These walks will be aimed at local people showing them easy access routes to resources across St George. Any funds would be held by the St George Community Association.

#### 6. Networking

- Donations of Crews Hole, St George and Speedwell books

25 had been sold. They were not being sold after 18<sup>th</sup> December but will be offered again in the New Year if any copies are left.

- Hillfields Community Garden

Susan had been contacted by their outreach worker as they were considering setting up a walking group. Susan was in the process of contacting former group/walk leaders who may be interested in helping. It would be positive for networking. The Hillfields Community Garden had been set up as a charity

- Meadow Vale Community Centre  
Every two weeks they hold a community café from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Susan described where it was off Whiteway Road. She would be leading a walk for the St George Strollers on 27 January timed for the cafe. A question had been raised on whether we need to obtain ICE (In Case of Emergency) numbers of the people on the walks. Would it contravene GDPR rules? Susan had asked the Strollers to have this number written down on their person so that it was not shared and no permission was needed.
- Festive Fayre St George Community Association  
Susan and Rob had set up a table and had sold some of the books

## 7. AGM

- Any proposed changes to the Constitution  
Susan tabled copies. No changes were proposed.
- Accounts for the Year  
These were tabled along with the 2025 budget. £950.07 was in the general fund and £3212.29 in the conservation fund, £2000 of which will be spent on work by Greenmantle as discussed before. Susan gave an explanation of the BCC Countryside Stewardship operation and funding. Rob pointed out that the meeting room hire total covered a 2-year period, 2024 and 2025. The money under Children's Activities was the surplus from the Red Slide appeal and some would be spent on the Bugs and Beasties event next year. Willy knew a person who may be able to assist with children's entertainment at that event who he would contact. **Action Willy**  
Susan proposed the accounts and Neil seconded them. They were unanimously agreed. A vote of thanks and a round of applause for Margaret as the Treasurer.
- Elections  
The committee could have a maximum number of 9. Currently it comprised Susan, Rob, Margaret, Rosie and Rod. Richard had decided to step down so there were 4 spaces if the existing committee members were voted in again. Willy had put himself forward but he explained that it came with a proviso as he worked on Thursday evenings until 8pm so that there was an outside chance that he could be late to some of the meetings. No one thought that this would be a problem. Committee members may receive a few emails through the year if urgent issues arose between the meetings but this was not a frequent occurrence. Fran and Jill had also offered themselves for election. Susan read out Jill's resume in her absence. Rob proposed all applications and Margaret seconded them. All were unanimously welcomed. They would need to provide signatures for the bank. This meant that there was one space left on the committee.  
Those newly appointed to the committee were  
William  
Fran  
Jill  
  
Existing members continuing in their roles are:  
Susan, Chair  
Margaret, Treasurer  
Rosie, Secretary  
Rod  
Rob
- Budget 2025  
This was covered under Accounts and in previous items.

It was noted that one of the big banks, Lloyds, had started charging for bank accounts. This might spread to other banks so should be monitored.

- There will be the Bristol Community Festival next year from 26 March to 5 April.  
It was agreed we did not have the resource to put on event during that period.  
Susan asked if anyone knew of any grant sources as she was trying to find funding for the winter nature conservation projects from 2025 onwards.

8. **Meeting closed at 8.55pm.**

- Next meeting to be held on 6 March 2025 at Wesley Memorial Church Hall