

## Troopers Hill – The Future

September's St George & Redfield Voice shared the news that local people had given the go-ahead for the Friends of Troopers Hill's "Ways to Nature" project. The Friends then put together their preliminary application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The good news is that we can, with more work, go forward to the next stage of the application process. The bad news is that the Heritage Lottery Fund does not consider the proposals for path improvements and a new path to be good value for money.

What this means is that we look for another funder for the path work and have already identified at least one possible source. However that is a lower priority than completing our Heritage Lottery Fund application which will now focus on protecting Troopers Hill for the future. As in the original application we want to replace the rotting wooden fencing on the boundary of Troopers Hill Rd. This is the only barrier to motorbikes accessing the site and destroying valuable habitats. Now, without the cost of paths, we can also look at other ways to protect Troopers Hill using Heritage Lottery funding.

Those of you who have visited the Hill over many years or who look at our monitoring reports and photographs dating back to 1994, will have seen the spiny, yellow-flowered gorse has spread from a small group to large thickets. While these provide good shelter for birds this spread of gorse is destroying important areas of grass and heathland. It is also a high fire risk in dry periods. Volunteers, and offenders carrying out community service under the Community Payback scheme, have done much work cutting back these areas; unfortunately this work has not kept pace with the gorse. We are now asking for advice on the best way to control the gorse. When we have an agreed method and costs we will take our funding application to the next stage.



What we do as volunteers is in addition to the regular maintenance carried out by Bristol City Council. There is a consultation out now on how to save nearly £3 million annually on parks maintenance. This contains some good ideas but it is very important that you have your say. You can pick up a copy of the Parks and Green Spaces consultation at your local library or visit [www.bristol.gov.uk/parksconsultation](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/parksconsultation)

As our Chair, Susan Acton-Campbell, said in her statement to Full Council on 14<sup>th</sup> November “If Bristol City Council do not carry out the core maintenance tasks, from grass-cutting to dog bin emptying, there will be no point in volunteers giving the valuable, added support they donate today”.

**Join the Friends at one of their conservation work parties on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday or 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month, starting promptly at 10am and finishing at noon. The volunteers meet by the red slide on Troopers Hill Field. You are also invited to the Friends of Troopers Hill Annual General Meeting, 7.15pm – 9pm on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December at Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Rd.**

[www.troopers-hill.org.uk](http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk)



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