

Meeting about Malvern Road Open Space 28th July 2005

Invitations to attend this meeting were sent to all 17 people who had ticked the box saying that they would be willing to organise events. Posters were also put on Malvern Rd Open Space shortly before the meeting to invite those interested in organising the next steps. 6 acceptances were received and 6 apologies.

On the night the meeting was attended by:

Sally Oldfield, Bristol Parks Local Nature Reserves Officer who had kindly agreed to facilitate the meeting

Susan Acton-Campbell, Chair of Friends of Troopers Hill

Rob Acton-Campbell, Works Party Organiser for Friends of Troopers Hill

Kit Elliott, Membership Secretary for Friends of Troopers Hill

Liz Read

Mr and Mrs Hepburn

Gillian Dyte

Maureen Melksham

The meeting starting with an introduction from everyone and their reasons for coming to the meeting.

Susan Acton-Campbell then explained Friends of Troopers Hill's involvement. It had become clear that although Malvern Rd Open Space is not part of Troopers Hill Nature Reserve, many people regarded the two areas as one. As a result Friends of Troopers Hill had included a task in their 5 year management plan to carry out a consultation to identify what, if anything, people wanted in Malvern Rd Open Space. This was done by distributing a questionnaire to 1,700 homes and an encouraging 170 replies were received.

Susan gave a summary of the content of the 170 replies.

Hayley Hepburn asked why only the 17 people had been invited and not the 70 who said they would willing to attend a meeting. Susan's answer was:

A meeting of 70 people is not very manageable and would probably have covered much of the same ground as the questionnaire and not moved us further forward. By inviting people who had said they would be happy to organise events we were choosing people who we hoped would be interested in taking up actions that would later result in a meeting for the 70 and as many more people who were interesting to discuss more concrete proposals.

Sally Oldfield and Susan then described the support that can be offered by Bristol Council and Friends of Troopers Hill to people who wished to take forward the work started by the questionnaire. Friends of Troopers Hill would be happy to offer their experience of applying for funds and as they are an established group with a constitution and bank account, could offer that "umbrella" to a group of people looking to raise funds for projects on Malvern Rd Open Space. They can also offer access to tools, work party organisation experience and the contacts they have built up during their existence as a group. Friends of Troopers Hill are not willing to lead any

activities on Malvern Rd Open Space themselves as they are already fully committed on Troopers Hill but would like to offer support to other people who take on that leadership role. Bristol City Council can also offer advice and contacts.

The meeting then moved on, with Sally facilitating, to a SWOT analysis. This is a technique to identify Malvern Rd Open Space's current Strengths, Weakness and then move on to identifying the Opportunities to improve it and the Threats to improving it. Attached are the lists that came under those headings. There was some discussions to explain the items on the list as they were but at this stage there was no debate as to whether items should be on the list or not. Everyone with a suggestion had that suggestion included on the list.

Then it was agreed that it was best to concentrate on a single opportunity and identify the tasks necessary to achieve that. Once that had been achieved then some or all of the opportunities could be tackled. The single opportunity was to get new play equipment and move the site of the play equipment. The task list to achieve that is also attached.

The task list was reviewed and it was clear that the starting point before any further steps could be taken would be a meeting with Bristol Council Play Officer John Knowlson. It was agreed that Sally Oldfield would contact John to find out when he would be available during August to meet on Malvern Rd Open Space to answer our initial questions. Sally Oldfield will also contact Richard Fletcher, Community Development Officer, to come along to the same meeting.

What was clear in our meeting is that while those of us who attended are willing to help there are no people able, currently, to take leading, organising roles. An action picked up by all the attendees was to talk to friends and relations who they feel would be good potential candidates for these roles.

The meeting concluded at 9.15pm.

Strengths

Play area (running about etc)
Big open area
Safe space
Meeting space
Flat
Nice grass
Potential
Village green
Well used
Nice path
Good for sports
Nothing much there – can use imagination
Good access
Near to lots of houses
Lots of blackberries
Wildlife edge
Good way to get to other places
Cluster of shady trees

Weaknesses

Dog mess
No swings / play equipment
Vandalism
No view
Too many nettles
Path unreliable for wheelchairs / buggies
Nowhere to sit down
Nothing to stop motorbikes
State of fence between allotments and Malvern Rd Open Space
Not enough people go there – makes me nervous it's so empty
Out of control dogs
What is it? (soil composition etc, foundations)

Opportunities

Dog loo area close to gates (or not)
Meadow area – soft landing for children falling out of trees
Path for wheelchairs and buggies going the whole way round in wet weather
Move play area closer to houses (Summerhill Terrace)
Get new stuff (play equipment)
Teen shelter (not near play area)
Lighting – coming on with movement focussed on play area
Multi-purpose pitch
Seating (view / play area / rest)
Picnic areas
Glades to create view
Design competition

Green spaces strategy
Big Lottery Fund /funding
Council support
Support from questionnaire respondents / larger community
Litter bins

Threats

Vandals
Inconsiderate dog owners
Money (lack of)
Development
Lack of people to organise
Indifference/ lack of support
Grumblers / opposition
Lack of consensus
Lack of maintenance

Tasks

Land survey
Money
How much? Play officer
Find out strategy – Play officer
Speak to play officer
Speak to other park groups
What do we want? – Play officer
Planning issues? – Play officer
Where do we want it? – Play officer
What obligations are the council under to replace/provide equipment ? Play officer
Look at other play areas
Which are the most successful play areas? Play officer
Design (fence/ seats / equipment / shade/ location) – Play officer
Get more people involved (after Play officer)