

NOTE OF MEETING

Thursday, 27th April 2023, 7.15 – 9 pm

St Aidan's Church Hall

Attendees: Adam, Rob, Susan, Margaret, Elaine, Rod, Fabian

1. Approve February Minutes

The minutes are approved.

2. Projects

a. Memorial Bench

A family at Christmas asked Susan if they could sponsor a new memorial bench. The memorial bench beside the chimney needs replacement and Susan has arranged with the family of the original bench for the new family to take over and sponsor the replacement. A new dedication plate will be placed on the bench which is due to be delivered between July and August to the Bristol Parks team who will install.

b. Accessibility Guide to Troopers Hill

An initiative by "Your Park" has invited Troopers Hill to produce an accessibility guide for placement on their website. Their aim is to produce guides for as many parks as possible following a standard format that contains information such as how to get to parks, what to expect, where nearest toilets are etc.

Rob has produced the guide and shared it for review with the group. There was some conversation, ideas and feedback in the meeting which Rob will include in the guide. The conversation also raised some considerations around how we might want to improve access to the site in the future.

3. Communications

a. Paper Newsletters

The new paper newsletters have been delivered by hand to over 100 people who had previously subscribed to the mailing list and were liked by many who visited the drop in Gazebo.

The group feel they are useful for people at public events and have agreed to trial producing them quarterly if Ruth agrees who produces the newsletter. Fabian suggested some newsletters could be distributed to local shops, cafes and the library.

4. Nature Conservation work on Troopers Hill

a. Nature conservation work parties

A lot of work has taken place in Sally's Glade and the Gulley which is usual for the springtime. Numbers of people volunteering has been good on Saturdays. Two work parties have been held rebuilding steps in the woodland. One work party was rained off.

Jo from Park Work is unable to continue leading Thursday work parties. Instead, some Tuesday sessions will be arranged for tasks where specific tools are needed.

Susan and Rob are meeting Becky Belfin, the conservation officer for Parks to talk about winter works, Street Goat and general conservation.

b. Street Goat

Talks have been held with Street Goat about how cuttings from work parties could be used to feed the goats. A location for a concealed entrance to the allotments where the goats live has been identified. Reps from Bristol East Allotment association are concerned that installing a gate in a new entrance could lead to theft and are not in support.

An alternative solution has been considered whereby a pen could be setup in the ditch by the allotment fencing where the goats could graze in an area on the hill. A similar setup is in place at Golden Valley nature reserve that uses electric and dual fencing.

Susan and Rob are continuing talks with Street Goat and Becky Belfin to determine what could be possible.

5. Maintenance

a. Painting furniture

No volunteers have expressed interest in helping with painting benches and other on-site furniture. Susan is going to make a start herself and complete a risk assessment.

b. Crews Hole Road "Layby" and access issues

Work to redevelop the layby on Crews Hole Road to introduce parallel parking and stop fly tipping has been delayed. CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) money was allocated in 2019 and work scheduled in for Colas.

Rob made a recommendation for metal fencing to be used as part of the redevelopment work which would last longer, and match fencing used elsewhere around the hill. Unfortunately, there is not enough money to use metal fencing and

instead, wooden fencing will be used.

6. Issues on troopers Hill – Electric Motor bikes

Electric motor bikes have been spotted on the hill using the contractor's entrance by Green Down for access. It is illegal for electric bikes without pedals to be ridden on the hill. Susan has let the council and police know it's happened. If it happens more frequently, we may need to consider addressing the gap in the fence on Greendown.

Susan shared advice on what to-do if other people witness the same. If they are worried about safety, they should call 999. Otherwise, inform Bristol City Council or report to the police by 101.

7. Events

Past

a. Bird Walk – 12th February

After interest and success of the first Bird Walk, Duncan kindly agreed to lead another. Duncan continues to carry out his own surveys and record them on eBird. A Pied Fly Catcher was seen which has not been recorded on the hill before. He was also able to confirm the Dartford Warbler is no longer at the hill.

b. Looking at Lichen – Sunday 19th Match 10:30am

Very well received and people really enjoyed the event. The local Lichen Society is coming back in August to do a survey.

c. Star Gazing – March

Unfortunately, the event could not take place because of rain and cloudy skies. On the last date, the weather did clear up by 9pm which was too late for the event.

d. Drop in Gazebo – Sunday 2nd April

A small number of people stopped and had good conversation with volunteers in the Gazebo. The Livable neighborhood team also had a gazebo next to ours. Children enjoyed the free chalk for drawing on the paths.

Future

e. Troopers Hill History Walk – Sunday 7th May

Part of the Bristol walking festival. 21 bookings have been placed so far. The route will be similar to last time.

8. Networking

a. Pride in Parks

Troopers Hill has been awarded the top 5-star award for 2022. Steve Clampin, Parks Operations Co-ordinator came and presented the award at one of the work parties.

The group discussed whether we should make a submission for the next “It’s your neighbourhood” awards and Pride in Parks. The application fee for Pride in Parks is £20 – it was agreed we should.

9. Fundraising

a. The slide painting

The painting of the old red slide on Troopers Hill field is now on display at Parkside Picture Framers on Church Road. Within days of going on display, someone enquired about purchasing the painting. If the sale goes through, the money will go towards conservation work.

b. Donations at events

A total of £40 was donated at the bird walk. Someone also has given through the GoFundMe page. At events, people are less often carrying cash but happy to donate online.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be from 7.15-9 pm on Thursday, 29th June.

Following Meetings

Thursday, 5th October 2023 – Online Zoom Meeting