



Note of Meeting Wednesday, 28 May 2008

Present: Susan (Chair), Rob (WPO), Jude (Treasurer), Kit (Memb Sec), Julian (BCC), Val, Roy, Gillian, Helen (minutes).
Apologies: John T, Sally, Fabian, Pauline, Anne, John O , Maureen, Phyll & Vernon.

The previous minutes were approved. Chair has attempted to contact P Crawford and had no reply. Kit was seeking to obtain a colour printer for the news letter. Susan had written to the Housing Association and had received an explanation that repairs were in hand for the steps between Fir Tree Lane and Troopers Hill Road. Pegs had been put in the ground and it was speculated that part of the bank might be removed.

Funding - Update on Greendown Entrance

Rob was due to meet John T, Fiona (architect) and Julian on the following Friday to discuss progress. Fiona had to produce detailed drawings. Kit asked about planning permission, Rob confirmed that it would not be needed. It was hoped that the work would be done this summer. Rob demonstrated examples of the new signs for the Greendown entrance and the lower chimney entrance.

Green Flag

Kit requested improvements to the arm suspending the flag as it looks untidy. Julian suggested the flag could be hung portrait style to fit the arm.

Action: Rob to ask John T to consider an alteration.

Planning permission for the flag had been granted on 20 May 2008.

The 2008 judging had taken place on 27 May 2008 (the day before the meeting), Rob reported that one of the judges had been the same as last year and the other was new. They had been particularly pleased and impressed with Julian's bridge especially because it had not been painted. The verdict was expected in July. Julian had spent most of the previous week working on Troopers Hill in preparation for the judging. Anne Webb had telephoned Friends to say how good the Hill looked.

The meeting discussed the provision of more dual purpose bins, preferably near the entrance from Summerhill Terrace and the next entrance down from Greendown, where it could be made inconspicuous.

Troopers Hill Field

Gill had remarked that there was little available shade on the Field in sunny weather. The options for introducing shade trees, possibly alongside the red benches, were discussed. It was mentioned that newly planted trees would

be vulnerable to vandalism. Metre-high whips were known to establish more quickly and successfully than mature standards. The practicalities of mowing around and between the trees required careful consideration, along with the value of the Field as an uninterrupted flat green open space. It was agreed that there could be scope for a small group of trees in between the benches.
Action: Kit to canvass views via a future article in a newsletter.

In relation to the future provision of play equipment, Rob confirmed that the Local Area Plan to be formulated next year would include discussion of the distribution of play facilities.

Feedback on items for John T's attention were as follows

No date had yet been provided for action to address the overhanging trees on Troopers Hill Road.

The felled timber had been removed from the gully.

It was proposed (possibly at a future work party) that a channel could be cut to divert water which at present during heavy rain would flow down the steps above the nursery in the direction of the lower stack.

Julian reported he had cut back blackthorn to free the path between Lamb Hill and Malvern Road following a collapse after a recent rain storm.

Friends expressed particular thanks to Julian for removing considerable volumes of rubbish from behind the nursery.

Work parties completed since the last meeting included

Sunday 20th April 2pm – at which the final Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme participants had completed clearing and widening an existing path and adding steps to the steeper section of the path. This path connects Troopers Hill field to the foot of the steps leading from Sally's glade to Lamb Hill.. Chair had presented certificates to both participants (Chris and Drew). The question of signage for the path was discussed.

The work party had also cut saplings and bramble unsuitable for strimming.
Saturday 3rd May 10am – litter pick, cutting bramble from amongst broom in the vicinity of Sally's Glade

Tuesday 20th May 7pm – cleared saplings from the gully,

- Next work parties: Saturday 7th June 10am (to cut bracken)

Wednesday 25th June 7pm (to clear dead/dying broom)

Saturday 5th July 10am (clear ivy from rock face etc)

It was suggested that the bramble above the gully might be addressed by bending back into the mass of bramble rather than cutting off the runners. Rob said he would reconsider the viability of future evening work parties given the low numbers of participants lately.

Recent Events

Through the Seasons Walk on 25 April had been led by Rob, and had been attended by a teacher from Air Balloon Infants School and a schools activities co-ordinator. It was proposed to invite teachers onto Troopers Hill to evaluate the facilities for learning opportunities using the local nature reserve and woodland.

Forthcoming Events

Festival of Nature 7 & 8 June – Rob and Susan would be present on the Parks Forum stand for two hours late on the Saturday afternoon, and possibly also the last shift and packup on the Sunday. Kit also volunteered his presence.

Tai Chi 8 and 29 June, 10 am on Troopers Hill Field, to be preceded by a short walk and talk on the Hill. Friends would set up a display table and give out leaflets.

Trooping the Hill and Concert 28 June – there would be meetings with the Scouts to carry out preparatory work on the next three Wednesdays. The concert would require volunteer helpers to put up gazebos and tables, sell drinks etc.

Action: Chair - arrange to borrowing chairs for the band members

Newsletter

The Green Flag judges had expressed appreciation for the most recent newsletter. The next edition would be published in time for distribution before Trooping the Hill and the concert. Kit encouraged Friends to submit contributions for the summer edition.

Networking

Chair had attended the recent St George Neighbourhood Partnership meeting.

Badock's Wood Nature Reserve celebration had been deferred because of police activity in the vicinity. The rescheduled event had been a success. Rob and Susan were circulating an edition of the Avon Gardens Trust booklet containing 3 interesting articles by Susan. Rob would be leading a guided walk for the Trust on 31 May 2008.

-