

# Agenda Item No.6



Thursday, 17 June 2010  
reply to  
Jack Penrose Chairman FOD+AG  
42 Lower Redland Road  
Redland  
BRISTOL BS6 6ST

Tel 0117 9732700

Samantha Mahoney/Ruth Kenrick  
Clerks to the Downs Committee  
Room 220  
The Council House  
College Green  
Bristol BS1 5TR

**Dear Samantha Mahoney/Ruth Kenrick**

**To the Chairman and Members of the Downs Committee  
Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG)**

FOD+AG has been established since February 2008 when, in response to a Bristol City Council initiative, a meeting of interested parties took place at Engineers House.

The purpose of the attached document is twofold: to present an interim report on Zoo Parking as promised in our support for planning approval and to update members of the Downs Committee on the work of FOD+AG and outline our plans for the future.

Yours sincerely

On behalf of the FOD+AG Committee

## 1. ZOO PARKING

Prior to the Downs Committee giving their support to the application for the Zoo to use a defined area of the Downs for temporary parking, FOD+AG produced a statement supporting the application. This was after lengthy discussions within FOD+AG spearheaded by their visual environment team. The aim was to provide a reasoned, objective comment based on evidence and taking into account the views of other users of the Downs. Two conditions were attached to the support statement.

- i) the permission would be for a rolling permission over a five-year period. This would give the Zoo authorities the opportunity to plan ahead while under the watchful eye of FOD+AG and other organisations. FOD+AG would have more time to ascertain the true situation, free of those issues not relevant to the question of parking.
- ii) FOD+AG would set up a team to monitor the temporary use and make available their findings.

FOD+AG are now in the position to make an interim report and enclose a copy for your information. (*also see appendix 1.*)

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Context

FOD+AGs position on vehicles using the Downs

- Parking

In the medium and long term FOD+AGs supports all efforts to remove non-user parking on the Downs and Avon Gorge

- Through traffic

In the medium and long term FOD+AG supports all efforts to reduce through traffic movements.

- FOD+AG recognises that that while general vehicular use is unlikely to reduce in the short term, the above aims should be established from the outset.

### 1.0 Overall FOD+AG policy

- To reduce through vehicular traffic
- To reduce non Downs and Avon Gorge user associated parking
- To reduce the dependency on this particular area of the Downs for temporary parking
- To encourage the development of a more comprehensive, economic and effective public transport provision
- To encourage imaginative ticketing systems which relate access to the Zoo with actual entry

## **2.0 Parking area – summary of initial conclusions**

- Overall the area and access points are reasonably well managed
- The access from Ladies Mile requires attention with consideration given to changing the actual access point on a more frequent basis
- The parking area is well managed and suffers little or no damage
- The link path from the parking area to the traffic lights and on to the Zoo is used by many of the other Downs users. At present the surface, width and gradient are below the standard required by a range of users, including children in prams and wheel chair users.

## 2. FOD+AG: the first two years

FOD+AG is now established as a group with over 100 paid up members aiming to represent users of the Downs whose activities are compatible with the natural environment and with those of other accepted users.

FOD+AG is a think tank which aims to influence through reasoned, objective debate and presentation.

### 2.1 Achievements

- Formal written comments on Downs and Avon Gorge Management Plans and on the Avon Gorge Wildlife Project plans.
- Commenting on the negative impact on the Downs which would result from RPZs.
- Establishing policies on the standard of public transport provision and the use of vehicles by non Downs users
- Educational events and practical activities, some in conjunction with BCC officers and representatives of other organisations
- Twice yearly illustrated newsletter.

### 2.2 On-going Activities

- Visual monitoring of the ever changing natural and human scene
- Monitoring of bird populations, reported to Bristol environmental records centre, and of plant species, reported to the Woodland Trust Phenology website.
- Monitoring of vegetation of the proposed Goat Enclosure.
- Butterfly Transects
- Comment on plans for the Clifton Camp ramparts
- Meeting with the Green Flag Judges
- Working with BCC officers and other groups / individuals.
- Programme of educational talks
- Deep litter clearance

### 2.3 Ideas for the future

- Programme of events to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1861 Downs Act ( *Enclosed Appendix 2* )
- Much needed pedestrian/cyclist bridge over Bridge Valley Road, associated with Gorge Edge Walk
- Re-establishment of classic 19c Gorge views, now obscured.
- Providing detailed comment on the Downs Conservation Area when it comes up for review

### **3.0 THE WAY FORWARD**

There is an increasing acceptance that such a body as FOD+AG is needed, but different interpretations of its potential function will exist:

- A think tank – influencing producing ideas, monitoring. Doing what single issue groups cannot do.
- A charitable trust, seeking to raise funds for improvements and organising events/actions under a BCC umbrella for the Downs and Avon Gorge.

# APPENDIX 1 - FODAG ZOO ON-DOWNS PARKING SURVEY

## Summary Report

### INTRODUCTION

Prior to the Downs Committee giving their support to the application for the Zoo to use a defined area of the Downs for temporary parking, FOD+AG produced a statement supporting the application. This was after lengthy discussions within FOD+AG spearheaded by their visual environment team. The aim was to provide a reasoned, objective comment taking into account the views of other users of the Downs. Two conditions were attached to the support statement.

- the permission would be for a rolling permission over a five year period. This would give the Zoo authorities the opportunity to plan ahead while under the watchful eye of FOD+AG and other organisations. More time would be available to ascertain the true situation, free of those issues not relevant to the question of parking.
- FOD+AG has set up a team to monitor the use and make available their findings.
- FOD+AG are now in the position to make an interim report and enclose a copy for your information.

### SURVEY OBJECTIVES

For a period of time, that encloses the probable licence activation dates, record the daily status of the surface of the survey points identified below, and record any litter or damage.

The report for the Easter Holiday period is summarized below. Copies of the Easter and Whitsun reports are attached.



#### Recording Schedule:

##### Full Schedule

- Frequency: 4/5 days each week. Mixture of weekdays and weekends.
- Dates: 28 March to 18 April; 23 May to 12 June; 18 July to 4 September

##### Routine Monitoring

- Frequency: 2 days each week. Mixture of weekdays and weekends.
- Dates: Dates outside Full Schedule periods

### INITIAL SURVEY – 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY

Sample survey of the Zoo on-Downs parking area completed. This found that:

- The entrance was seriously damaged.
- The parking area was in good shape.
- The footpath to the Zoo is spreading and the surface is very rough.

**Note:** Whilst conducting the initial survey it was noted that a young mother had great difficulty getting her child's buggy up the slope over the rocks and steps. The path to the Zoo needs to be reworked to meet acceptable park standards.

## EASTER SCHOOL HOLIDAY REPORT

The survey points shown above were visited each day from 29th March to 18th April.

- The Zoo used the parking area on 14 days from 5th to 18th April.
- Entrance: Additional entry point introduced and use alternated. Wear was reasonable.
- Parking area: No significant damage observed and minimal litter seen.
- Footpath to Zoo: No change. It remains a rough and rocky road for mums with prams.
- The Zoo parking attendants litter-picked the area first thing each day.

### Footpath to/from Zoo

- The path to the Zoo is very rough and needs to be reworked to park standards.
- The Zoo path is regularly used by members of the general public.
- Which organisation would be liable if the young mother mentioned above fell and she or her child was hurt?

**WAY AHEAD:** Full schedule monitoring will be carried out during the school summer holidays leading to a final FODAG report in September

# APPENDIX 1A - FODAG ZOO ON-DOWNS PARKING SURVEY

## Easter School Holiday Report

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The FODAG survey will, though the 2010 summer period, monitor the status and usage of the On-Downs Parking area as licensed by the BCC to Bristol Zoo.

#### Survey Objectives

- For a period of time, that encloses the probable licence activation dates, record the daily status of the surface of:
  - Vehicle entrance off Ladies Mile.
  - Parking area.
  - Footpath to / from the Zoo.
  - Record any other damage in area.
  - Record any litter in area
- Record number and types of vehicles in parking area
- Create a simple cumulative report.

#### On-Downs Parking Licence:

- BCC licence provides Zoo with 60 days on-Downs parking:
- Zoo will, on a daily basis, select the individual days on which licence is activated

#### Parking Survey Monitoring Plan

18<sup>th</sup> February: Plan prepared and distributed for comment.

#### Four survey points identified

- E: Vehicle Entrance
- P: Parking area
- FP1 Footpath 1
- FP2 Footpath 2





## Planned recording schedule

### Full Schedule

- Frequency: 4/5 days each week. Mixture of weekdays and weekends.
- Dates: 28 March to 8 May; 23 May to 12 June; 18 July to 4 September

### Routine Monitoring

- Frequency: 2 days each week. Mixture of weekdays and weekends.
- Dates: Dates outside Full Schedule periods

## 2 CURRENT MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENT

Input from conversation between Robin Haward and Robert Westlake the Downs Ranger.  
Maintenance of the on-Downs parking area, including entrance and path to the Zoo:

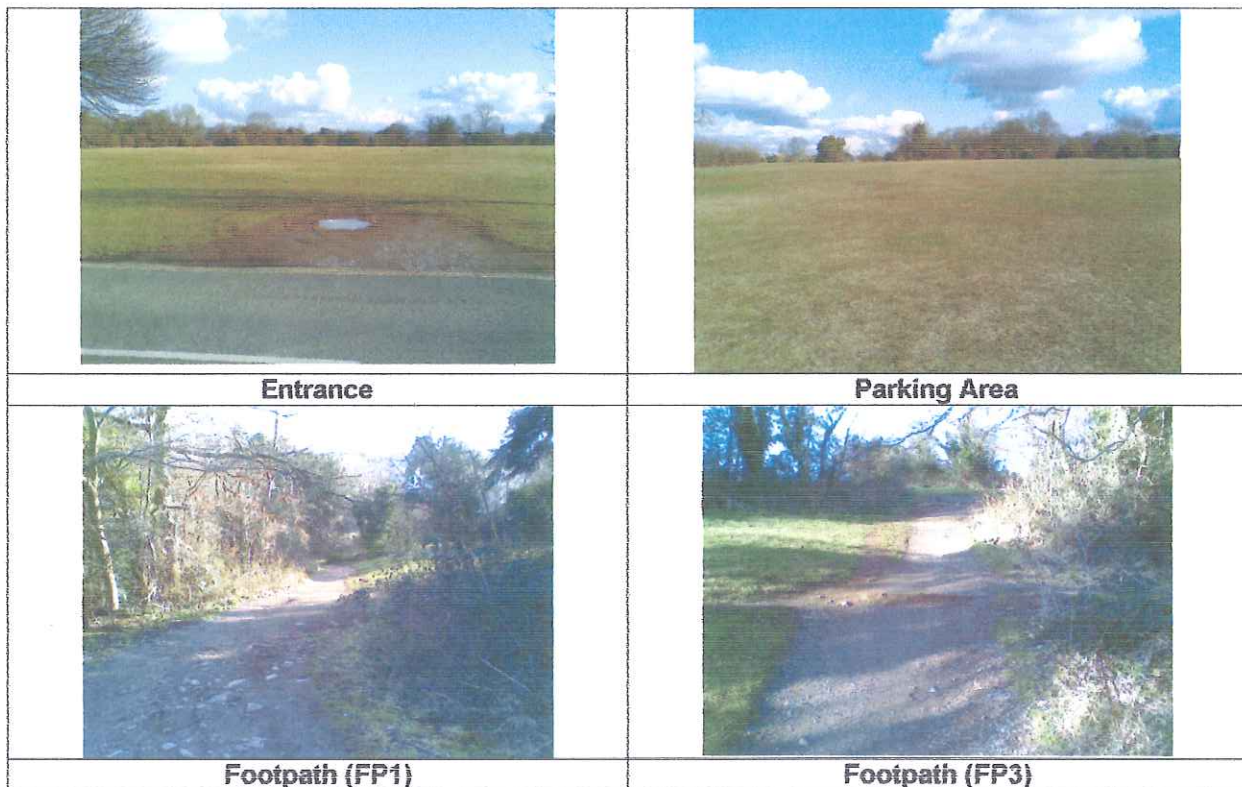
- The Downs Ranger (DR) decides what maintenance work is required. The scope-of-work is then agreed with the Zoo which then pays the bill.
- The DR wants the Zoo to vary the entrance point to minimize damage.
- If the path requires major work then this could go out to contract. However, understandably, the DR would prefer this work to be done by his team.

## 3 INITIAL SURVEYS

**Saturday 20th February**

Sample survey of the Zoo on-Downs parking area completed. This found that:

- The entrance was seriously damaged.
- The parking area is in good shape.
- The footpath to the Zoo is spreading and the surface degrading.



**Note:** Whilst conducting the initial survey it was noted that a young mother had great difficulty getting her child's buggy up the slope over the rocks and steps. The path to the Zoo needs to be reworked to meet acceptable park standards. Other paths on the Downs are correctly laid with tarmac.

#### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March

It was noted that the top half of the path had been treated with a top-coat of stone chippings.

#### Wednesday 10th March

Noted that top-coat of chippings on path is spreading. This is probably not a long-term solution.

### 4 INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

We believe that the Zoo has not used the parking area since August 2009 and it appears that no maintenance has been carried out in that time frame.

#### Footpath to/from Zoo

Reference the Note above:

- As stated above the path down to and from the Zoo is very rough and uneven. It needs to be reworked to meet acceptable park standards, ideally with tarmac surface. This is not a minor task.
- The Zoo path is regularly used by members of the general public outside the days when Zoo on-Downs parking is not in use.
- Which organisation would be liable if the young mother mentioned above fell and she or her child was hurt?

### 5 EASTER 2010 SCHOOL HOLIDAY SURVEY REPORT



#### Background Material

The survey points shown above were visited each day from 29th March to 18th April. The daily reports are given at paragraph 6.

#### Input from Zoo Parking Attendants

From discussion with the Zoo parking attendants:

- The Easter and Whitsun holidays are the most productive periods for the Zoo.
- An area between the entrance areas is slightly boggy and not used for parking.
- The numbers of cars using the parking area is significantly down on last year.
- When the site is to be used, a litter-pick is carried out each morning,

## SUMMARY

- The Zoo used the parking area on 14 days from 5th to 18th April.
- Entrance: Additional entry point introduced and use alternated. Wear was reasonable.
- Parking area: No significant damage reported: Minimal litter seen and this was cleared on a daily basis.
- Footpath to Zoo: No change. It remains a rough and rocky road for mums with prams.

## CONCLUSION

- The Zoo parking attendants managed the parking risk effectively.
- No damage was observed.
- Generally litter was minimal - probably less than the rest of the Downs.

## WAY AHEAD

- In school term, carry out intermittent site reviews.
- Whitsun holiday repeat daily surveys.

## 6 EASTER SCHOOL HOLIDAY DAILY REPORT

**NOTE: PHOTO REFERENCE FORMAT MONTH / DATE / LOCATION / PICTURE NUMBER.**

DATE	LOCATION	WRITTEN REPORT COVERING: STATUS; DAMAGE; & LITTER	PHOTO REFERENCE
29 MARCH	E	ENTRANCE DAMAGE UNREPAIRED.	3-28-E-1 & 2
	P	GOOD CONDITION, NO DAMAGE OR LITTER.	3-28-P 1
	FP1	PATH IS SPREADING, PART STONE CHIPPINGS COVER.	3-28-FP1 1;2
	FP2	STEPS ENCOURAGE PATH WIDENING,	3-28-FP2 2
30 MARCH	ALL SITES	HEAVY RAIN BUT NO CHANGE TO 29 MARCH REPORT.	NO PHOTOS
31 MARCH	ALL SITES	NO CHANGE TO 29 MARCH REPORT.	NO PHOTOS
2 <sup>ND</sup> APRIL	ALL SITES	NO CHANGE TO 29 MARCH REPORT.	NO PHOTOS
3 <sup>RD</sup> APRIL	E	<b>PARKING GUIDES (CONES AND ROPES) IN PLACE.</b> NO VEHICLES IN PARKING AREA. <b>NEW ENTRY POINT SELECTED.</b>	4-03-E-1 & 2
4 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	ALL SITES	AS FOR 3 <sup>RD</sup> APRIL	√
5 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	E	ENTRANCE SURFACE SHOWING INCREASED WEAR.	4-05-E-1
	P	ESTIMATE <b>300 VEHICLES ON SITE AT 4 P.M.</b> LITTLE LITTER, NO DAMAGE.	4-05-P-1; 2 ; 3
	FP1	BUSY WITH MANY FAMILIES NEGOTIATING PUSHCHAIRS UP THE STONY PATH. <b>59 DAYS LEFT</b>	4-05-FP-1
6 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE <b>150+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 3.30 P.M.</b> LITTLE LITTER NO DAMAGE. <b>58 DAYS LEFT</b>	4-05-P-1; 2 ; 3
	P	ESTIMATE <b>100+ VEHICLES ON SITE</b> AT 4 P.M. VEHICLE SPACING SUGGESTED 200+ VEHICLES EARLIER IN AFTERNOON. LITTLE LITTER NO DAMAGE. <b>57 DAYS LEFT</b>	
8 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	E	NEW ENTRANCE POINT	4-01-P-1

DATE	LOCATION	WRITTEN REPORT COVERING: STATUS; DAMAGE; & LITTER	PHOTO REFERENCE
	P	ESTIMATE 150+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 4 P.M. NO LITTER, NO DAMAGE. <u>56 DAYS LEFT</u>	
9 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	E	NEW ENTRANCE POINT	NO PHOTOS
	P	ESTIMATE 150+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 4 P.M. SOME LITTER. <u>55 DAYS LEFT</u>	
10 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 250+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 2 P.M. NO LITTER. <u>54 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
11 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 150+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 2 P.M. <u>53 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
12 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 150+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 3 P.M. <u>52 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
13 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 120+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 3 P.M. MINIMAL LITTER. <u>51 DAYS LEFT</u>	4-13-P-1
14 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 200+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 2 P.M. CHATTED WITH ZOO PARKING ATTENDANT STATED THAT WHITSUN AND EASTER ARE THE MOST PRODUCTIVE TIMES FOR THE ZOO. HE SAID THEY DO A LITTER PICK FIRST THING IN THE MORNING. <u>50 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
15 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 120+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 3 P.M. MINIMAL LITTER. <u>49 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
16 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 220+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 2 P.M. NO LITTER. <u>48 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
17 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 90+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT MIDDAY NO LITTER. <u>47 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS
18 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL	P	ESTIMATE 30+ VEHICLES ON SITE AT 2 P.M. NO LITTER. ABOUT 20 VEHICLES PARKED IN ROWS AS IS NORMAL, THE REST ARRANGED IN A MORE CASUAL MANNER. <u>46 DAYS LEFT</u>	NO PHOTOS

# APPENDIX 1B - FODAG ZOO ON-DOWNS PARKING SURVEY

## Whitsun School Holiday Report

NOTE: PHOTO REFERENCE FORMAT MONTH / DATE / LOCATION / PICTURE NUMBER.

Date	Location	Report covering: Status; Damage; & Litter	Photo reference
29 <sup>th</sup> May	P	Parking area marked-off but not in use.	No Photos
		Heavy rain.	
30 <sup>th</sup> May	P	Estimate 300+ vehicles on site at 2 p.m.	No Photos
		<b>44 days left</b>	
31 <sup>st</sup> May	P	Estimate 500+ vehicles on-site at 3 p.m. Little litter, no damage.	No Photos
		<b>43 days left</b>	
1 <sup>st</sup> June	P	Not used due to wet and cold weather.	
2 <sup>nd</sup> June	P	Estimate 250+ vehicles on site at 2 p.m.	No Photos
		<b>42 days left</b>	
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	P	Estimate 150+ vehicles on-site at 11.30 a.m.	No Photos
		<b>41 days left</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup> June	P	Estimate 150+ vehicles on-site at 2 p.m. Photos taken later at 5 p.m. to record the complete lack of rubbish in area.	06-04-P1 & 2
		<b>40 days left</b>	
5 <sup>th</sup> June	P	Estimate 120+ vehicles on-site at 2 p.m.	No Photos
		<b>39 days left</b>	
6 <sup>th</sup> June	P	Only 2 vehicles on-site – assume the Zoo did not activate the parking licence today	No Photos
7 <sup>th</sup> June		Whitsun Summary Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7<sup>th</sup> June Zoo parking material removed.</li> <li>• Parking area used on 6 days during holiday.</li> <li>• Entrance: 2 entry points used. Wear appears reasonable.</li> <li>• Parking area: Some wear but no significant damage observed and litter was minimal.</li> <li>• Footpath to Zoo: It remains a rough and rocky road for mums with prams.</li> </ul>	06-07E1; 06-07-P1; 06-07-P2; 06-07-FP1; 06-07-FP2.

## *Appendix 2*

### FRIENDS OF THE DOWNS AND AVON GORGE - CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE DOWNS ACT. Revision one May 2010

FODAG submits all of the following ideas, with suggestions as to which individuals / organisations might take them forward. Eight have been prioritised and are marked



Some ideas are longer term; others could take place in a focus month / weekend. The ideas have been generated by a FODAG meeting with additional in-put from Richard Bland and Mandy Leivers. This document has been finalised by Martin Collins and Robin Haward for FODAG. It is felt to be vital that there should be one named co-ordinator perhaps from the Downs Committee or from BCC

1. Oral History project - memories of Downs events e.g. American servicemen, flower show, sheep grazing etc.  
*City Museum*
- ❖ 2. Photography of the Downs competition.  
*Photographic Clubs. FODAG*
3. Display of old photos of the Downs, old postcards.  
*Library service*
4. Audio Trail using mobile phones, featuring History and Natural History  
*BCFM or BBC RADIO BRISTOL*
5. History Trail using information boards  
*City Archaeologist*
- ❖ 6. Drawing the Downs: schools art display involving both state and private schools, perhaps laminated and displayed on Sea Walls railings? Writing the Downs: schools festival of Poetry written about the Downs.  
*Bristol CYPS*
- ❖ 7. Open-air concerts (marquee?) folk, jazz, classical  
*BCC*
- ❖ 8. Commission Andy Sheppard to write a Downs Suite.  
*The Downs Committee*
9. A steam rally, using Ladies Mile  
*Local Steam Engine Group*
10. Celebration pony club event.  
*Local Pony Club*

11. A Race down and up the four paths from the surface of the Downs to the Portway (closed) involving 2,400 feet of vertical movement and 2 km of horizontal.

*Sports clubs from Bristol University and University of the West of England.*

- ❖ 12. Celebration 5 a side football competition for primary age children (mixed). *Current organisers of children's football on the Downs.*

*BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL*

13. Celebration cycle ride, circular route with roads closed in 1861 costume

*FODAG*

14. Celebration skateboard event in 1861 costume using Ladies Mile.

*BCC*

- ❖ 15. Celebration mass run in 1861 costume

*FODAG & UP AND RUNNING (RICK WALLIS)*

16. Special display: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT - how it would have been on the Downs in 1861

*Mandy Leivers, Avon Gorge and Downs Biodiversity Education Officer*

- 17A Open Air Theatre: Notable Downs Events

*A.C.H.Smith with Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.*

- ❖ 17B Speakers' corner on a Sunday p.m issues in 1861.

*BRISTOL OLD VIC THEATRE SCHOOL*

A second corner would feature current issues.

*FODAG and DOWNS COMMITTEE*

18. Display of sheepdog working with sheep.

*FODAG*

19. Mass guided walk for families/schools

*Richard Bland and Mandy Leivers*

20. The Downs 2061 - mixed media presentation

*Bristol University Earth Sciences department.*

- ❖ 21. FOR THE FUTURE - plant 150 trees of 50 different species.

*DOWNS COMMITTEE WITH THE DOWNS*

*RANGER.....LOTTERY FUNDING.*

FOR THE FUTURE - permanent public art installation

*RWA / BOWER ASHTON.....LOTTERY FUNDING -BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL*

FOR THE FUTURE: Build a commemorative cliff edge walk.

*DOWNS COMMITTEE, AVON GORGE AND DOWNS WILDLIFE PROJECT, BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL - LOTTERY FUNDING.*

- ❖ THIS SIGN IN THE TEXT ABOVE SUGGESTS PRIORITY.  
PRIME MOVERS IN EACH CASE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED.



## **INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS**

City Museum

1.,

FOD+AG involvement

2., 13., 15., 17b.,18.,

Photographic Clubs

2.,

Library Service

3.,

BCFM

4.,

Bristol Local Radio

4

City Archaeologist

5.,

Bristol CYPS

6.,

Bristol City Council

7., 12., 14., 21.,

Downs Committee

8., 17., 21.,

Local Steam Engine Group

9.,

Local Pony Club

10.,

University Sports Clubs

11.,

Up and Running

15.,

Mandy Lievers

16., 19.,

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School

17a., 17b.,

Richard Bland

19.,

Bristol University

20.,

RWA / Bower Ashton

21.,

Lottery Application ( Bristol City Council )

21 For the Future