

## Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

**Minutes of the Downs Committee  
held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at 4.00 pm  
at Brunel House**

**Present:**

City Councillors

P The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor  
Councillor Alastair Watson (Chair)

P Councillor Peter Abraham  
P Councillor Martin Fodor  
P Councillor Glenise Morgan  
A Councillor Mahmudur Khan  
A Councillor Bill Payne  
P Colin Smith

Merchant Venturers

P Chris Curling (Master)

A Anthony Brown  
P Andrew Densham  
P Francis Greenacre  
P Dayrell McArthur  
P Tim Ross  
P Sir James Tidmarsh

**Also in attendance:**

Andrew Gordon - Estates Management  
John Williams – Parks and Caretaking  
Ben Skuse – Downs Maintenance Supervisor  
Peter Watts - Events Team  
Richard Ennion – Environmental Improvement  
Manager  
Becky Belfin – Nature Conservation Officer

Aldo Rinaldi – Senior Public Art Officer  
Mandy Leivers - Avon Gorge and Downs Biodiversity  
Education Officer  
Lucy Badrocke - Arnolfini  
Norman Cornthwaite - Democratic Services

**16. Apologies for Absence and Introductions** (Agenda Item No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Khan and Payne, and Anthony Brown.

**17. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2014** (Agenda Item No. 2)

**Resolved - that the Minutes be agreed as a correct record of the Meeting and signed by the Chair.**

**18. Public Forum** (Agenda Item No. 3)

Nothing was received.

**19. Downs Management Report** (Agenda Item No. 4)

Andrew Gordon introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

The issue of whether there should be one or two BBQ locations was debated. The majority view was that two locations should be chosen.

The issue of whether or not Sustrans should be invited to develop a Cycling Strategy was debated. It was noted that Sustrans are a cycling pressure group. It was considered that any strategy should not just be for cycling but should be a transport strategy which takes account of all the users of the Downs and balances all of their interests. It was also considered that the strategy should be developed in house.

The issues of allowing a concession unit to be located at Sea Walls, the infrastructure cost, income that could be generated and the potential visual impact were debated. It was agreed that detailed plans and an artist's impression be considered before a decision is made.

**Resolved – (1) that the report be noted;**

**(2) that the proposed alternative locations of the Downs BBQ area, translocation of stone slabs from existing BBQ area and installation of picnic benches be agreed, that plans be drawn up and a report brought back to the next Meeting of the Committee;**

**(3) that the City Design Group be approached to develop a transport strategy for the Downs which takes account of all the users of the Downs and balances all of their interests, the work to be carried out within 3 months with a progress report to the next Meeting of the Downs Committee and in the meantime a Meeting of the Traffic Sub Group to be arranged;**

**(4) that the situation concerning Westbury Road be noted, however the view of the Committee is that the Downs Committee should not be required to pay for the scheme as Westbury Road is not part of the Downs**

**(5) that a Sub Group be established to develop new high quality interpretation material (Councillor Glenise Morgan, Francis Greenacre and Mandy Leivers agreed to sit on the Sub Group); and**

**(6) that detailed plans and an artist's impression be considered before a decision is made as to whether or not to provide the infrastructure and allow a concession unit to be located at Sea Walls.**

**20. Delegated and Upcoming Events Proposed on The Downs**  
(Agenda Item No. 5)

Peter Watts introduced the report and summarised it for everyone. It was noted that discussions on site fees are on going.

**Resolved – (1) that the events and filming activity that has taken place on The Downs under delegated powers be noted; and**

**(2) that the proposed future events to take place on The Downs between Committee meetings be noted.**

**21. Summer time Public Art Commission: Bristol Downs** (Agenda Item No. 6)

Aldo Rinaldi introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

Lucy Badrocke provided details of the project.

Aldo Rinaldi confirmed that the project will not be adjacent to the BBQ areas.

Becky Belfin confirmed that re-instatement would be carried out.

**Resolved – (1) that the installation of a temporary public artwork on The Downs by local artist Richard Long, commissioned by Bristol City Council & Arnolfini as part of a 2 year public art programme (the first work approved by the Downs Committee was realised in Summer 2014) be approved; and**

**(2) that a location for the artwork to be installed in 2015 to enable Bristol City Council and Arnolfini to gain the approval of the installation by BCC planning in time for the summer and to coincide with the artists exhibition at Arnolfini's: Richard Long: TIME AND SPACE (31 July – 15 November 2015) be agreed.**

**22. Tree Avenues on the Downs: management and replacement tree planting** (Agenda Item No. 7)

Richard Ennion introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

**Resolved – (1) Management strategy for tree avenues replant trees when they are removed (with catch up planting to allow for historic losses);**

**replant trees at a spacing within rows equivalent to the modal spacing (or most frequent distance between trees);**

**(2) Species choice for avenue planting**

**Beech to be replaced with beech (*Fagus sylvatica*);**

**Lime to be replaced with small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*);**

**Holm oak (at the water tower) to be replaced with holm oak (*Quercus ilex*);**

**Horse chestnut (where inter-planted with lime) to be replaced with small leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*);**

**Horse chestnut (where dominant species in an avenue) to be replaced with three new species of tree: tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Hungarian oak (*Quercus frainetto*) and Indian horse chestnut (*Aesculus indica*) each to be planted in single species avenues, and**

**Mixed species avenues should not be established or perpetuated, in that these are visually less harmonious: replacement planting in mixed avenues should be the most common tree within a row (excepting species change as above).**

**(3) that further reports be received when necessary; and**

**(4) that respondents be thanked.**

**23. Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Annual Review 2014 and the Report of the Activities of the Avon Gorge and Downs Seasonal Education Officer (Agenda Item No. 8)**

Becky Belfin introduced the Wildlife Report and summarised it for everyone.

Mandy Leivers introduced the Education Report and summarised it for everyone.

**Resolved – that the reports be noted.**

**24. Finance Report (Agenda Item No. 9)**

Andrew Gordon introduced the report and summarised it for everyone. He highlighted that reserves are being reduced meaning that more income has to be generated.

Concerns were expressed about the Downs Committee having to spend money on things it has no control over.

**Resolved – (1) that the financial revenue pressures caused by a reductions in concession income compared to budget are noted; and**

**(2) that the on-going financial pressures on reserves and the number of items to be charged against reserves that materially reduce the resources available to the Committee for the future are noted. The Committee will need to consider how it will secure income to fund future projects.**

(The Meeting ended at 6.05 pm.)

Lord Mayor