

**Stoke Bishop, W-on-T & Henleaze
NP3 Environment Working Group
at Coombe Dingle Sports Centre
Thursday 29th October 2015
Draft Notes**

Those Present:

Sheila Preece, Alan Preece, Janet Brinnand, Mildred Miller, Hilary Long, Robert Murphy, Gill Brown, Janet Brewer (WPCA), Peter Rowbottom, Val Bishop, Eileen Poad, Stephanie French, Susan Mayer, Gary Brentnall (BCC), Alan Aburrow, David Mayer.

Apologies from:

Cllr Glenise Morgan, Helen Furber, Sue Boyd, Graham Donald, and Andy McGrath.

Meeting Chaired by David Mayer –

1. Minutes and Matters arising:

1.1 Stoke Lodge Gas Cabin

Stephanie asked about the long-term welfare of the newly planted (shrubs) screening that surrounds the Gas Installation on Stoke Lodge; the Gas Company has no obligation to maintain the plants and whilst over wintering may not be a problem, watering in the spring/summer months will be vital for their survival.

David and the Group congratulated Stephanie with the success of her campaign to have the 'gas cabin' screened;

Gary said he would look into the matter of watering via BCC

1.2 Devonshire Road

Stephanie pointed out that since Highways were refusing to undertake this investigation the funding for this project is at risk and may have to be returned to Green Capital (Not BCC). This is despite the fact that this project was intended not only to establish the practicality of installing tree pits in Devonshire Road but was a pilot that could be used across the whole City and furthermore this project did not involve planting any trees if tree pit installation unsuccessful. It was investigative.

See also paragraph 3 below.

1.3 Canford Park Fireworks

Robert Murphy expressed dismay at the lack of response he has had to a letter sent to BCC in July, concerning last year's event.

David responded by saying that SAGE (Committee made up of Police, Fire Service and BCC) have held an emergency meeting and have agreed to allow this year's event to go ahead under revised conditions that will also allow for up to 14,000 spectators. Robert interjected that despite its restricted size and close proximity to residential property, this was more than Ashton Gate and other venues and asked for clarification.

Hilary said that the spectator numbers quoted were too high for a small (formal) park with limited access points.

David asked that the statement quoted in Notes from the previous meeting, referring to this event that included the wording "*successfully refuted*" should be changed to "*refuted*" since the matter is still not resolved.

1.4 Tree Projects and Funding

Stephanie confirmed that £10,000 funding will cover all scaffolding and all artwork on the tree and will take Andy O'Neill twenty days (chain saw use restricted to approximately four hours per day). Work to commence mid January to late February 2016 at the discretion of Andy O'Neil.

1.5 Green Capital Neighbourhood Arts Project

Mildred asked if individual 'birds' would be given to their contributors/makers when the display on the Downs was dismantled.

Gary concurred but said that if the makers wanted the mounting stick also there would be a small fee.

1.6 Community Payback

Stephanie advised that the wording in the previous Notes under this heading was wrong. "*Wall of Stoke Lodge from Druids Lane to Ebenezer Lane*" should read as "*The Pathway adjacent to Stoke Lodge from Ebenezer Lane to Druid Hill*".

1.7 One off Issues

Actions to clear drain complete.

1.8 Vandalism in Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve (OSPNR)

Vandalism problem within the reserve appears to have been a one off, and a recent request for a multi use-bin to replace the original has been withdrawn following talks with nature reserve members.

Janet announced that the silt removal from the Lake by BCC had been a great success and thanked everyone involved.

However, silt will be an on-going problem for the lake as much of it comes from rainwater run-off from the highways via the drains and it is suspected that it also includes domestic wastewater from older properties;

David asked Janet to provide any photos that could be used for NP promotion. **Action:** Janet Brinnard

1.9 Phoenix Lane Weeds

Eileen confirmed that the work had been undertaken but was still incomplete in certain areas. Gary agreed to investigate. **Action:** Gary

1.10 Ebenezer Lane

Sheila submitted a Statement setting out concerns that strimming in Ebenezer lane is being undertaken by BCC too often and too vigorously, destroying many wild flower species and varieties and impacting on wildlife by destruction of natural habitat. Additionally the cut waste is not being removed.

She gave a heartfelt plea for better management of the teams undertaking strimming in this "Ancient Lane" in this as on previous occasions, most notably this summer, primroses were hacked off at ground level along with other wild flowers, whilst brambles and other rubbish (stones) left strewn across the borders creating an inhospitable, unsightly mess. Fifteen species of plant noted in the lane area are under threat.

Sheila asked for letter from E/Group be sent to Mary Knight. A vote was taken and it was agreed unanimously that Sheila would prepare a new Statement and that the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Partnership would forward it to BCC. **Action:** Sheila and David

1.11 Japanese Knotweed

Japanese Knotweed in the South West corner of Stoke Lodge has spread to other gardens fronting Shirehampton Road - Gary has recently undertaken this issue and will advise the committee on his progress.

Gary also suggested the Knotweed 'debris' might be allowed to rot in the Car Park before incineration on site.

Sheila suggested that some of the more vigorous re-growth this year was due to poor coverage of chemical spraying where whole areas were missed or under-treated.

Susan also pointed out that the Kitchen Garden is the actual source so there is little point spraying here (long-term) unless the Kitchen Garden is included in the programme.

Gary concluded that the treatment was beginning to impact on re-growth but requires up to four years of regular treatments to eradicate. **Action:** Gary

1.12 Weed Killing

Following discussion about the use of weed killers, Alan said that there is no strong evidence that the use of Glyphosate causes cancer; however, Janet interjected that some members of SPNR committee strongly disagree with his assertion, and this was also the view of Sheila.

1.13 Parks Maintenance

Gary said that following on from the BCC briefing, Canford Park will not be included in the scheme to leave some grassed areas in City Parks uncut/natural.

1.14 New Waste Contract

Gary informed the Group that Tracey Morgan would be the new CEO of 'Bristol Waste' which has taken on the role of waste management with the City.

Pam Jones will now be Head of 'in-house' waste, Di Robinson Heading Parks and Neighbourhood Works, with Gemma Dando as Manager on a temporary basis

1.15 NP Priorities Leaflets

David confirmed that the request for £400.00 to include the NP Priorities leaflet in the BS9 magazine had been approved by the Committee at the last Partnership Meeting.

2. Funding requests for New and Replacement Trees

Alan and Stephanie presented a proposed, one page, funding request form for new and replacement trees. Alan explained that the generic Well Being fund application form is too complicated, bureaucratic and difficult and as a consequence is putting applicants off, and, additionally, this form could be submitted to the Environment wg to apply for funds from a range of devolved funds to be decided at the discretion of the Env wg.

Hilary asked if anyone had consulted the residents in the application to ascertain whether they actually want replacement trees. Alan stressed that the example tabled was a worked example and not an actual application at this time.

Alan Aburrow advised that tree replacement was always a 'bottom-up' exercise. Janet asked if we should add a note to ask where consultation took place.

Sheila asked what would be the outcome if applicants preferred to go via Well Being and the extensive forms.

Following a long discussion on the simplified application form as a route to get funding for new trees, a vote was taken and it was **approved unanimously** in principle subject to further consultation on the final wording.

3. Devonshire Road

Stephanie discussed the "Environmental Access Statement" including the need to provide increased access requirements for new installations and hence the decision not to reintroduce trees in roads such as this.

Should BCC be challenged by the Group, regarding access for Buggy's/ Disability Scooters on pavements and is this change of attitude focussed on new trees only or all existing 'obstacles' including lamppost etc?

Stephanie did confirm that a consultation/survey had been conducted within Devonshire Road to establish if the alternative proposal from Highways to install tree pits and trees in the roadway had been put to the residents.

The consultation document was delivered to 86 houses, 37 houses responded, 21 voted no and 16 voted yes, so this option cannot be pursued.

Gary said he has spoken to Gemma Dando and she had suggested that the way forward may be to continue with the stump removal and tree pit investigation, this would lead to two possible outcomes; a) the investigation shows that a tree can be installed in accordance with the new standards, or b) if not the pavement can be made good.

There was general disquiet about the valuable time lost on this project so far, however, a Group vote agreed to press BCC for the project to continue.

Gary cited St Albans Road as an example of replanting of Street Trees in BS9.

4. Notice Board for Roman Ruins

Alan Preece explained the historical importance of the Roman Ruins on the Portway and presented an example of suggested wording for a replacement information board received from Bristol Museums Galleries and Archives.

Alan asked if General Funding could be used to acquire an information board within the site on Roman Way. Gary advised a budget of £1,500.00 would be appropriate; Group Vote agreed to request Gary to action. **Action:** Gary to obtain quote

5. Community Payback

Gary and Alan Preece have produced a short documentary film on Japanese Knotweed.

It was reported that whilst investigating the Knotweed infestation in the South West corner of the field a local resident challenged the Officers during filming, only to discover their property was affected.

Hilary asked for a warning notice to be created and displayed on local notice boards, to assist BS9 households in accurately identifying Japanese Knotweed. David asked Alan to produce an A5 leaflet for inclusion in the BS9 magazine showing how to identify Knotweed, the legal implications and the help available from BCC.

Stoke Lodge car park - furniture/rubbish dumped in area believed to be from the Adult learning Centre - Stephanie to pass photographic evidence to the Adult Learning Centre management. **Action:** Stephanie

Eileen asked Gary if the Payback team could be used to tidy the Phoenix Hedge area following issues with poor maintenance.

Gary advised that the payback schedule is fully booked for some weeks due to shortage of conscripts.

6. New one off issues

6.1 Stoke Lane Notice Board

Gary agreed to investigate possible intervention by BCC Officers to compel the 'registered supplier' to put right the numerous faults that have caused the frame to collapse and is no longer fit for purpose. **Action:** Gary

6.2 Stoke Lane Community Garden

BCC issued a Statement relating to parking adjacent to the Stoke Lane Community Garden which will be read out at the next WoT Open Forum

7. AOB

7.1 UoB trees

Stephanie referred to the e-mail from UoB requesting proposed "sites for one off trees in new pits" and asked for any suggestions to be sent to her.

7.2 Cycling in Parks

Hilary referred to an article in the Observer stating that BBQs and cycling were being banned in all Bristol Parks. She asked if this was true. David asked if Hilary could forward the article to Gary so that he could respond. **Action:** Gary

8. Date of next meeting

Thursday 14th January at 2.00pm

Venue to be confirmed

**Tree Report to Stoke Bishop, Westbury on Trym and Henleaze
Neighbourhood Partnership
December 7th 2015**

Henleaze

Devonshire Road: This project is currently on hold while it is under investigation and consideration at senior level in BCC following Highways' refusal to continue with the scheme, as it would not comply with the requirements of the Environmental Access Standards September 2011.

Councillors Campion Smith, Morgan and Gollop all "on the case".

Residents of Devonshire Road rejected an alternative scheme of putting trees in the street (thereby sacrificing parking places).

There is no alternative Green Capital Project "on the shelf" although we have now been told by Alison Comely that we do not have to spend the money by the end of the year.

To ask NP:

- a) Has anyone any other Green Capital Scheme ready to go for about £4200 if this one fails?
- b) What is the mechanism within the NP for agreeing to transfer to a new project should the need arise?

Congratulations to residents of Henleaze Avenue for clubbing together and purchasing a new tree replacement for their one tree stump to complete their street scene. They managed this despite the vicissitudes of the TreeBristol sponsorship website to which they were constantly, and incorrectly, referred, and which managed to "crash" at the very moment they pressed the link button, and it stayed crashed for about a week. This has highlighted various glitches in the "Just press a button and buy a Street Tree" set up, and BCC is working on it.

Westbury on Trym

Development of Verge opposite No 29 Canford Lane: This Planning Application has gone to Appeal as it was not determined by BCC in a timely fashion.

I have commented to the Inspector upon the "tree" aspects of the application.

a) The development would lead to the loss of further trees in Canford Lane. They do have a TPO and there is no doubt that they are a visual amenity in the village.

b) The suggestion by the applicant/developer that BCC cares but little for the trees it owns between the proposed development site and the traffic lights with Falcondale Road is untrue. The Tree Officer has visited the site several times and work to improve the trees and secure their future has been carried out, and more is to be done.

c) The suggestion by the applicant that in mitigation replacement trees could be planted in the pavement fronting the development is ridiculous. There is not sufficient space. Trees planted in the street (an alternative suggestion) would cause loss of parking spaces and obstruct traffic.

Stoke Lane: For a short spell Stoke Lane was stump free. Then a tree had to be felled. I said at the Stoke Bishop forum in November that I would get that tree replaced before I died. I have since found someone to sponsor its replacement! Make of that what you will.

Stoke Bishop

We are due two trees in Stoke Bishop.

One is a replacement for the s106 Oak Tree near the roundabout Druid Hill/Parrys Lane/Shirehampton Road. The new tree there, planted only last March, died after but a few weeks in the ground. Lack of watering is suspected.

The other is the s106 tree on Stoke Lodge Parkland which the NP wanted in order to replace the Ash Tree which died due to disease but which coincidentally grew where the gate for the new playground was going to be placed. This tree was on the list for last season, but time ran out. I shall make sure that these two trees are not forgotten.

Trymside

I am not Mystic Meg but I did predict that Wessex Water would not leave their temporary builders' yard when they were supposed to, and I knew they would not restore it either.

So no surprises when they failed to leave by the end of May and did not make any effort to restore the site once they had gone, leaving the area fenced off and weeds the size of triffids (showing my age). After complaints to Planning Enforcement from me, and, it turns out, from our companions over the Trym in Sea Mills, they did remove the fencing and then mowed the weeds. The area remains in an unsatisfactory condition, with rubble and weed roots but no grass.

We have been told that it will be re-seeded in the Spring. This was a pleasant meadow area and one season's use of it by residents has been lost. We'll make sure that another season is not lost, so before Spring we'll

be on the case. Someone leaked to me the e mail address of the manager at Wessex Water who is responsible for the restorative work.

The Cedar of Lebanon on Stoke Lodge Parkland

Put Thursday 5th November 2015 in your diaries - it was the date when our iconic Cedar was dismantled. People gathered around with tears in their eyes and watched in the pouring rain for most of the day to say good bye. The tree surgeons were a great gang of men and it became an almost social occasion. The sculptor arrived and stayed for about an hour, or even more. BCC Tree Officer Phil Burton came to watch for a short while. People walking around the area stopped to make enquiries of us, and we received a lot of support for the carving project. We have been sent a photo of it in the 1950s from one passer-by who snapped it when he first moved to Stoke Bishop.

The scaffolding will be done very early in the New Year and the sculptor will start almost immediately afterwards. It will take a month to complete. We have the scaffolding quote and we are within budget.

I am in touch with the Arts and Forestry teacher at Cedar Park School, and we hope to involve the children with art work and visits.

The sculptor will make further visits between now and January - in fact I saw him there last week taking a further look at it on his own now that the remaining trunk and limbs can be seen "standing clear".

We shall be moving some of the large limbs to underneath some of the other trees to protect them from folk who just cannot resist driving onto and parking on the grass and under the trees when there are two car parks and a very wide road available.

Other limbs will be stacked nearby, ready to be used when all complete for informal seating, habitat, or carving elsewhere in NP3 or Bristol.

I must express my thanks to Phil Burton the Tree Officer and to Gary Brentnall NP3 Environmental Officer for their continued support, assistance and co-operation with this project.

Significant tree loss about to happen

Four Horse Chestnuts on Church Road Sneyd Park will be felled soon. They are diseased. The Tree Officer suggests that this is a spot for five Black Pines. Anyone got £1475?

General comments applicable to all of NP area

Alan Aburrow (Traffic and Transport) and I are hoping to set up a one stop shop for Street Tree Replacement applications. The system at the moment is very complicated (in spite of my leaflet explaining all) largely because the Well Being Form is cumbersome and unwieldy and largely not applicable to Street Tree replacement funding applications.

We hope to bring all applications for such funding to the Environment Group via a simple one page form. The Group can then decide which source of funding would be most suitable for the project - CIL devolved funds or Well Being/Community Grant money, or, in particular circumstances, some s106 money (depending upon the conditions set for such monies).

If the project has a future we shall then point the applicant to the best source of funding and assist with completion of the Well Being Fund form if required. That is a form for all of Bristol and sadly would still have to be used.

TreeBristol is changing the way they deal with applications for replacement Street Trees and Park Trees. They hope to use the Environment Groups of each NP, anticipating that such groups will produce a "wish list" each year suggesting sites which can then be surveyed and approved by them. I am not at all sure at this stage how that will fit in with residents in streets suddenly being moved to request new trees and being prepared to run the replacement project to achieve that. It is all in the development phase, but I really do not want to exclude residents from ownership of their project, and nor do I want to find myself running every single project either! (she says selfishly).

TreeBristol tends to refer residents to its Tree Sponsorship page when they phone up or e mail asking about replacing their felled Street Trees. The trouble is that this has a link to the Tree Sponsorship layer of BCC's Pinpoint mapping (son of KnowYourPlace) and this just is not kept up to date with the currently available tree stumps. So folk are disillusioned when they cannot find tree stumps in their street available to sponsor. There then follows a spat between the residents and BCC Trees. The Tree Officers know this and are trying to do something about it; they just lack the resources to do the updating as each new old/poorly tree is felled, and anyway the stump mapping is years out of date to start with. One just has to be persistent and keep saying "No, not that site! I want to get these trees in my road replaced....."

Meanwhile our "How to Replace a Street Tree leaflet" remains available. I have it ready to e mail to anyone who asks. Andy McGrath has it too, so if you are asked by a resident what to do about such an idea then e mail me or Andy and we shall send a leaflet out to said resident.

Notices suggesting that the way to replace Street Trees is to get involved in the One Tree Per Child project are still being put on trees about to be felled. This is a nonsense and the Tree Officers know that. The Tree Forum has been trying to put a stop to it and has designed a much more

suitable notice referring people to their NPs, but it has not got approved yet. Something to do with a faulty QR code I have been told.

Stephanie French
NP3 Tree Champion