

**Environment Working Group**

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2014**

**Present:** David Mayer, Susan Mayer, Hilary Long, Eileen Stonebridge, Alan Preece, Sheila Preece, Gill Brown, Alan Aburrow, Val Bishop, Stephanie French Eileen Poad, Gary Brentnall, Andrew McGrath

**Apologies:** Clare Campion-Smith, Glenise Morgan, Sue Boyd

**Notes from previous meeting.**

**Gas installation on Stoke Lodge.** Stephanie has been trying to progress this long-running issue. John Goulandris has written to the BCC Chief officer. It is now being treated as a formal complaint. The essential problem appears to be that Planning Enforcement have not properly enforced the planning conditions on this site and have let Wales and West Gas get away with minimal work.

**Canford Park tennis court lights.** Hilary presented an explanation document regarding the planning process for this project. There is concern that the consultation and timing hasn't been what it should be. There have been 3 residents' meetings so far. The application was originally going to go to the South East Planning Committee for decision. This has now been changed. There were apparently many letters of support for the lighting from tennis supporters around the city. The planning decision will now be made in July. The funding, which was apparently time limited, is still available for this project.

There is concern that this project will end the free access to the courts and make it more elitist. Other issues needing to be addressed include the local need and desire for these lights; concern about the lights changing the nature of the park, particularly after dark; it becoming a citywide amenity light pollution and whether it compromises the park's green Flag status. Hilary urged people to check the website and submit concerns and opinions - <http://planningonline.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=MYBDM7DNK8000>

**Canford Park Gateway.** Nigel Sands has now gone but left some plans for this project. There is approximately £31,500 remaining in this fund

for this project. It appears that no one on the Parks Project Board had been aware of this project. It will be raised as a potential project now. A designer should be appointed. The money needs to be spent/committed by end of March 2015. **Action:** Gary to report back on Project Board's deliberations.

**Parks updates.** A new BCC Parks Team structure is emerging. This will be disseminated when it's complete.

Old Quarry Park work is progressing. The chicane needs to be done next. Work is progressing with the developers on the corner of the site. Tree money has been spent in the park. All agreed that it looks great, with more work yet to be done.

Canford Park toilets. Project was recently scoped. Work should begin soon. The tarmac needs to be coordinated with the work on the tennis court lights, in order to prevent new work having to be dug up.

**Update:** Work on the toilets is due to begin by the middle of June. The work has been commissioned.

The dam at Old Sneed Park is still leaking and will be examined by a local engineer. He will report back with his suggestions

### **Possible funded projects.**

**Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve.** 3 quotes provided. Went with ??? check with Gary

**Combe Dingle Sports.** Quote of £4,550.00 (+ VAT) for new artificial cricket pitch on Stoke Lodge. The meeting **agreed in principle** to the project but wants 3 quotes (as per standard practice) and will need to await the final decision on the TVG application. There needs to be a discussion on possible match-funding as well, as it is unclear if the work proposed will be done in-house.

**Combe Dingle (Stoke Lodge) Sports pitch upgrade.** The group isn't against this project **in principle**, but has concerns. Due to the topography of the ground and the fact that there are many important TPO trees on the site, there needs to be an environmental impact assessment performed. Possible an archaeological survey as well. Any assessment would need to include drainage.

**Trees from £2,306.80 S106 monies from Stoke Hill development.**

This money could provide either 7 or 14 trees for the area, depending on if a discount can be gained from BCC. They could possibly replace trees on paths and roads going through Stoke Bishop. Meeting **agreed** to Stephanie exploring this and coming back with options. Stephanie was thanked for her fantastic work on looking after the NP's trees.

**Community Payback.** A discuss on what Well Being funded Community Payback projects have been undertaken was resolved. Stephanie to send a monitoring report to Andrew. **Update:** Report received.

**Stoke Lodge.** A new email group is being launched so that everyone knows the same thing at the same time. Car park work due to start next week. There will be clearing of the back car park. The back car park will be accessible whilst the front car park work is being done.

Following the February Stoke Bishop Forum, Cotham School was invited to meet Friends of Stoke Lodge to discuss the school's concern about dogs running on to sports pitches whilst pupils are playing. Cotham School declined such a meeting. It was also stated at the Stoke Bishop forum (April) that an attempt by the local PCSO to meet the school to discuss the same issue was also rejected. **Update on playground development:** Edited extract from recent 'Save Stoke Lodge Parkland' e-newsletter (reproduced with permission of the group) – 'Confirmation has been received that the proposed date for the Newhaven Appeal is scheduled for November 2014. I'm not sure how long the Judges will take to issue their findings but I expect it to be December or January; and then the Inspector will take a Month or so to decide if it is relevant, to Stoke Lodge TVG.

Progress with regard to the Play Facilities continues but has been slow due to the [concerns] of a small group of objectors...

The most recent delays have included concerns over the following:-

1. The work in the Front Car park would reduce car parking numbers – This has been disproved
2. The work in the Front Car Park would be unreasonably disruptive to the Adult Learners – This has been disproved. (it should be

noted that the Adult Learners do not represent the Adult Learning Centre)

3. Badgers in the Rear Car Park would be disturbed – disproved.  
There is no active badger set
4. Nesting birds in the Front Hedge would be disturbed – disproved.  
There are no nesting birds here

The latest delay relates to concerns that the Tree Preservation Order, number TPO 1192, which was intended to protect 4 Large Specimen Trees as listed in the TPO, should be read as being extended to include all the shrubbery, brambles and self-seeded saplings within the area defined by the 4 original Large Specimen Trees. If successful this would have had the effect of having to reroute the Pathway.

The Council, having taken advice on this matter, has decided that to prevent any future problems, it should seek planning permission to remove the shrubbery, brambles and self-seeded saplings where the pathway passes through the fence between the Car Park and the Playing Fields.

In the meantime, the rest of the project will continue and should be completed in time for the School Holidays - subject to obtaining the relevant permissions to complete the pathway as originally designed and agreed'.

### **Any Other Business.**

Alan showed pictures of discarded dog poo bags in a lane off Eastfield. All agreed it was fairly disgusting. Alan stated his intention of submitting an application to the Well Being fund for a dog bin in this lane. **Update:** application submitted to Well Being Panel. It is recommending to the NP that this project be funded.

Gerry Arnold has submitted his resignation to the Environment Working Group. The Group wished to have its good wishes and gratitude to Gerry recorded.

Andrew informed the meeting that the recent car sales problem in Hazlewood Gardens has now been resolved. This is a good example of BCC officers working across departments and teams to resolve a complex issue.

## **Tree Report to Neighbourhood Partnership NP3 June 2014**

1. There is an amount of £2306 available to spend on trees within one mile of 3 Stoke Hill. This is s106 money charged as a result of development in the garden which led to loss of trees. I am in talks with TreeBristol to spend this money on replacing some of Stoke Bishop's and immediate surroundings' "lost" trees. We should be able to achieve 7 trees (BCC subsidy now lost).

This subject has been raised twice with the Stoke Bishop Forum and several folk have come forward with ideas for sites for replacement street trees. We now have a list of 9 tree sites and these sites are being assessed by TreeBristol. Eventually the sites for the possible replacement trees will be chosen and I shall return to the NP with a request for approval of the scheme and release of the funds. The aim is to create maximum impact with this small number of trees, so the chosen tree sites are those which are closest to the greatest volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. I hope to present the list of sites later this year.
2. I am keeping a close eye on the development in Trymwood Parade which led to the loss of a TPO'd Willow Tree. When all the work is over there is a requirement to plant 8 replacement trees (Planning No. 13/03149) and these trees are to be protected and maintained. I'll need to rely upon the local residents to report concerns either to me or to the Council directly but I'll also check myself.
3. Wessex Water has put in an application to use a large piece of Trymside land as a temporary construction depot for their various sewerage upgrade works in the area. Two years ago a large number of new trees was planted in Trymside when it was realised that quite a number of trees there could soon be lost. The existing horse chestnuts, when in full leaf, have quite a magnificent spread and I am concerned that the fencing, and the lorries entering and exiting the site, will cause some damage/loss to trees. The gaps

between the trees on the perimeter are not that large. A Senior BCC Tree Officer has evidently reported that the situation can be managed but I ask that local residents keep a close eye on the situation and report to me or directly to BCC if they spot activity that could cause loss or damage. (Folk can check on that site at the same time as they report on Trymwood Parade!)

4. Those of you with a long memory may recall the installation of the Gas Cabin/Kiosk in the Stoke Lodge Parkland corner (near the end of Ebenezer Lane) (09/01627). This replaced a too small gas valve on the roundabout verge at the top of Druid Hill. The kiosk was supposed to be screened by shrubs/trees from all four sides by Wales and West Utilities and at their expense. The NP3 Environment Group has since battled successfully to get it screened from two sides (east and west) (13/04420) and are pursuing the lack of screening of the west and north sides through the use of an official complaint lodged with Nicola Yates and passed to the Planning Enforcement Team (again). It is currently not clear if the fault is with the Utility Company for not doing what they were told or with BCC for not being explicit with their requirements. There has been some progress but not in the right direction. There is now an existing complaint and a further complaint that the existing complaint had not been responded to. Hopefully one day you may even see the outcome, rather than see the ugly green cabin.
5. You may recall our upset about the planting of replacement trees by the University of Bristol in Woodland Road, Redland, for trees lost with the development of Hiatt Baker Hall. We won a long and bitter battle with the support of the NP, the Tree Forum and the Stoke Bishop Forum. You approved the new plans for all the replacement trees to be planted in the Stoke Bishop area. This is now “official” and you may care to look at Planning Application No 14/0462/COND.  
However things have moved on. The University has twice suggested to the Tree Forum that it should not have to comply with the Bristol Tree Replacement Standards. This could mean that were there to be further development on the Stoke Bishop Campus

(should one say “when there is further development”?), then any planting/green landscaping in mitigation would not take place in or even near the Stoke Bishop Campus but could be permitted on any land owned by the University within or without the City. The Stoke Bishop Residents’ Planning Group discussed this at some length and wrote to Zoe Wilcox to seek reassurance that such a blanket exemption is unlikely to be agreed, and to ask for a meeting to discuss this. We have been told that no approach has been made, but no offer of a meeting was forthcoming either. Apparently the University holds regular meetings with the BCC Planning Department and one is/was due this month. We shall follow it up.

6. Consent for the demolition of the Texaco Garage in Henleaze and for it to become a larger Waitrose car park has now been given. During the whole process we went from no trees in the new bit of car park to three trees in the car park – so I think that is a success although it is clear that not everyone shares that opinion. Some Silver Birch trees in the rear car park will be lost. I know that some residents of Downs Park East are not happy about that. I see on Google Earth that most of the affected houses have lawn etc. at the ends of their gardens. Maybe they could all get together with the Forest of Avon Trust and plant a combined back garden orchard along the boundary with the car park, with help and subsidised trees from the Trust?
7. Henleaze tree folk, led by Clare Champion Smith, are re-grouping after losing their “special” tree money in the budget cuts, and we plan to hold a meeting with BCC Tree Officer(s) to thrash out a new strategy – identifying big problem streets and any funding streams and try to match the two.

Stephanie French  
HSBWOT NP Tree Champion