

# THE DOWNS COMMITTEE

Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

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	<b>Date</b>	Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2020

## **The Lord Mayor and 6 City Councillors**

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Councillor Jos Clark  
Councillor Kye Dudd                      Councillor Peter Abraham  
Councillor Donald                      Councillor Barry Clark  
Alexander  
Councillor Christopher                  Councillor Paula O'Rourke  
Davies

## **The Master and 6 Merchant Venturers**

Ross Ancell (Vice-Chair)                  Jonathon Baker  
Gillian Camm                                  Simon Cooper  
Mary Prior    Peter Rilett  
Tim Ross

Dear Member,

Downs Committee Supplementary Dispatch – 2pm on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2019 in  
Committee Room 1P09, City Hall, College Green, Bristol

Please find attached Agenda Items 7 and 8 for the above meeting which were marked "To Follow" on the original agenda sheet, together with an additional Agenda Item 9a which was received after the agenda dispatch and has been added to the agenda with the agreement of the Lord Mayor and Master.

Yours Sincerely,

*JL*

Jeremy Livitt

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# Agenda Item 7

## **Matters Arising From the Events and Finance Sub-Group - Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

Below is a precis of matters that were discussed at the Events and Finance Sub-Group. Please note that confidential items discussed within this group cannot be published. For Events, Maintenance and Finance updates please see the respective Agenda Items in the agenda pack.

**Sub-Group Members In Attendance:** Ross Ancell (Chair), Councillor Peter Abraham, Councillor Don Alexander, Councillor Paula O'Rourke, Jonathon Baker, Peter Rilett and Tim Ross

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Barry Clark

## **Matters Arising From Minutes – 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Planning Inspectorate – It was noted that the application had been refused by the Planning Inspector and that the Inspector had commented that further information was required. A decision as to whether or not to submit a fresh application would be considered at the scheduled Downs Committee meeting on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

### **Finance Update**

The Sub-Group noted the update report. It was noted that further discussions were required between the finance team, parks officers and appropriate Sub-Group members to provide further detail on some of the entries.

### **Events Update Report**

Ladyboys – This event would be held on Castle Park this year as the organisers were unwilling to pay the requested increased fee

Funderworld – Terms for the offer of an increased fee were agreed for the next three years

Foodies – It was noted that this was a very family-friendly event providing free tickets for children under 12 and discounts for nearby residents. They were a commercial organisation which operated in several cities throughout the UK. The Sub-Group agreed a revised increased offer to make to the organisers for this year's event and for officers to return to the next Sub-Group meeting if this was refused. The Sub-Group also requested that a balanced festival reducing the number of takeaway stands should be requested.

Student Union Welcome – A revised offer to be made to the University.

Downs Festival – Subject to the organisers obtaining a possible headliner at this event, further discussions would be taking place and an offer would be made

March for Men – This organisation was raising money for Prostate Cancer. The Sub-Group was minded to refuse this application and would require an increased offer

NHS Anniversary Event - The Sub-Group was minded to refuse this application and would require an increased offer

Race for Life – A discounted price to be offered subject to monitoring of car parking compliance and a possible increase to full price if these are not properly controlled at the 2020 event

Pride – Terms for the offer of an increased fee were agreed for the next three years

Phase Worldwide Charity – This event was not approved for a date in November 2020

**Any Other Business**

Costs of Cleaning Toilets on the Downs – an increase in the wages for the cleaners was agreed

## **Summary of the Minutes of the Movement and Place Sub-Group – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

### In Attendance:

Councillors - Paula O'Rourke (Chair for the Meeting), Don Alexander and Peter Abraham

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Merchant Venturers – Tim Ross and Jonathon Baker

Officers: Steven Riley, Mark Sperduty, Richard Goldthorpe, Ben Skuse

Also Attending: Mandy Leivers – Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Trust

Apologies: Councillor Barry Clark and Gillian Camm

### **Cycling Provision Alongside the A4018**

The Sub-Group noted the background to this item and previous discussion. It was noted that the Special Committee would also be considering this report at its meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

Steven Riley made the following points:

- His previous report now included an addendum setting out the background including a request at the last Downs Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 for officers to consider the possibility of providing two paths to provide separate routes for pedestrians and cyclists. It was noted that this was the preferred position of the Bristol Cycling Campaign similar to the new provision under preparation for the northern end of the A4018
- The bullet points in the addendum report outlined a possible solution subject to enforcement of signage. However, he noted this was a more significant piece of engineering than the originally envisaged plan of two shared-use paths
- The Bristol Cycling Campaign supported the creation of a two-way footpath on the Downs but the issue of resources needed to be resolved. The proposal would involve
- A high quality cycle lane would assist in ensuring cyclists used this path
- Designers could be requested to design and cost a high quality cycle route which would be ready to use subject to sufficient funding being provided

Mark Sperduty indicated that a footpath should be at least two metres, preferably three metres, in width and that there should be a minimum specified distance of at least 100 millimetres between the paths.

Ben Skuse drew the Sub-Group's attention to the fact that the land near the Durdham Park bus stop was very muddy due to recent heavy rainfall. The issue of

flooding and their impact on events held near that area (particularly access to parking) would also need to be taken account of in any proposals.

Members of the Sub-Group made the following points:

- If white bicycle signs were painted along the existing shared-use pavement this would help assist in ensuring cyclists used it prior to a new segregated route being constructed
- There needed to be an improvement of cycle provision for the roads into Bristol as a result of the large development in Filton
- If the revised proposal were adopted, the Downs Committee would be required to yield an appropriate portion of land for a pedestrian path
- Since existing Downs byelaws precluded cycling, this issue would need to be addressed
- It was important to define what would be allowed on any pedestrian route ie mothers with prams, children on tricycles

The Sub-Group agreed that it was receptive to the provision of a tarmac route for bicycles and the provision of an additional route for pedestrians (including provision for junior mobility vehicles such as prams) as well as appropriately designed signage. It was agreed that the issues raised during the discussion should be referred for consideration to the Special Downs Committee meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020. **Action: Jeremy Livitt**

### **Leisure Loop Update**

The Sub-Group noted that there would be a presentation on this issue at the Special Downs Committee meeting from Vicky Cracknell (Cycle Sunday) at their meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

The Sub-Group expressed their thanks to Vicky Cracknell for the work that she had carried out in developing the alternative approach outlined in her report to be submitted to the Special Downs Committee and which merited further consideration.

Richard Goldthorpe confirmed that he would also be making a presentation to this meeting on the wider Downs Place and Movement Framework to update those who had not been on the Downs Committee when it has originally been considered. He explained that he would be providing examples of paths at Harrogate and Richmond and outlining details of discussions that had taken place concerning recreation trails for Downs users.

The Sub-Group requested that the Special Committee should agree on a process for developing these proposals and on the creation of a further timeline for future action.

**Action: Jeremy Livitt to refer for consideration to the Special Downs Committee meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**

**Any Other Business**

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AGD Project – Councillor Don Alexander advised that as the representative of the Downs Committee on the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project, any views should be passed through to him.

Sneyd Park Residents Association – This body had indicated that they wished to interact more with the Downs Committee. Jonathon Baker indicated that they would be encouraged to do so.

Parking Restrictions on the Downs – There was discussion concerning this issue.

**Action: Mark Sperduty to contact the Lord Mayor and Master concerning this issue**

Enforcement of Byelaws – A number of Sub-Group members expressed support for greater enforcement of byelaws on the Downs. It was requested that this issue should be discussed at a future meeting of the Downs Committee. It was noted that this may be easier once the budget became in surplus. **Action: Jeremy Livitt to pass on this request to the Lord Mayor and Master**

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## SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PLAN AND INCENTIVES

The Zoo continues to support sustainable travel measures for staff and visitors.

### PHYSICAL MEASURES

- Covered parking for visitor cycles in North Car Park
- Secure covered cycle parking for staff
- Changing, shower and locker facilities for staff
- Electric vehicle charging in North & West car parks
- Bicycle maintenance sessions for staff

The real time bus information screens in the gift shop have suffered several technical difficulties due to software issues at the provider end. This has resulted in a change of software which is not supported on the current screens, however plans are in place to replace the hardware in 2020.

### INCENTIVES FOR VISITORS

The Bristol Zoo Gardens travel discount has been confirmed by Good Journey as one of the most generous in the country, not just in the local area.

- 33% discount on entry with proof of cycling, bus, train, coach, tourist bus or Park & Ride
- Online advanced ticket purchasers can claim their discount on arrival for a partial refund
- 'Members cycling stamp card' providing £5 off annual membership renewal in return for traveling by bike 5 times to the Zoo
- Discounts promoted via social media and member newsletters
- Route 8 buses promote the discount on vinyl décor inside the bus

### STAFF INCENTIVES & MEASURES

- Support for cycle purchase, including electric bikes via interest free loan
- First Bus commuter scheme for reduced monthly and season tickets via the app
- Interest free loan for annual bus and train season tickets
- Guaranteed ride home for staff travelling by bike, public transport or car share in case of emergency
- Car park pass eligibility revised on a needs basis, in addition to seasonal restrictions
- Transport updates via email and internal newsletter, including extraordinary travel arrangements for local events
- Green Team with representation from all departments to discuss and promote sustainable initiatives including travel

### THE FUTURE

The Zoo's ability to influence public and staff travel choices is outweighed by the perception of the reliability, affordability and convenience of public transport. As local public transport infrastructure improves we would hope to see more visitors using sustainable transport modes, however if uptake of the admissions discount increases significantly it will need to be reviewed to ensure it remains affordable and appropriate.

## TRAVEL SURVEYS

Travel Surveys have been conducted in most of the last 10 years and allows the Zoo to look at patterns of travel since 2010. Surveys are carried out in the peak season, July-August, often in the School Holidays.

## VISITORS

Trends from 2010-2018 show that around 75% of our visitors travel over 10 miles to visit in peak season. This restricts opportunities for using public transport, with around 80% of visitors (excluding school parties) coming by car. However, car occupancy is consistently high, an average of 3.5 guests per car, meaning that the vehicles are being used sustainably in terms of behaviour.

We continue to offer a sustainable travel incentive of 33% discount on entry, and the uptake of this increased again in 2019 after a drop in 2018. This may be due to perceived issues of bus reliability during city centre works in 2018.

This is shown below as % of paid entry:

	June	July	August
2016	1.5%	1.5%	1.9%
2017	3.7%	3.0%	6.1%
2018	2.4%	2.2%	3.2%
2019	2.5%	3.0%	5.4%

*Percentage of visitors who travelled by alternative transport other than the car*

Key reasons given by visitors during surveys for non-car travel being impractical were:

- Visiting with children, especially young children, and the equipment needed
- Visitors with mobility or other access issues
- More than one bus/train required to complete the journey
- Expense of public transport.

The Long Ashton Park & Ride service continues to serve the Zoo but is not well situated for visitors from outside the city, nor locals other than those arriving along the A370. Additional Park & Ride locations for the city in the future may be more suitable for motorway users.

## STAFF

We continue to participate annually in Travel to Work Survey to understand staff travel needs, with 2<sup>nd</sup> highest % participation of any organisation in 2019.

Staff car use increased slightly from 2018 with walking, cycling and train use reducing, however by comparing our staff cohorts across the two periods we can see this is primarily due to staff turnover rather than changes to individual staff behaviour. We also used the additional questions to ask our staff about availability of suitable public transport, and whether their commute was combined with other activities.

- 56% of respondents stated that there was either no public transport option or it would require an impossibly early start to use.
- 18% of respondents stated public transport was not reliable enough to guarantee arrival time
- 52% of staff combine their commute with school drop of/collection or other activities which necessitate car use

## STEWARDSHIP OF THE LAND

An independent ecological survey is undertaken annually to provide information around the condition and any variances in the species of flora present. The parking area is compared to an adjacent control area identified in 2005 as being sufficiently similar.

The findings of the December 2019 survey are similar to those of previous surveys, as follows:

- The composition of the vegetation in both areas has been broadly stable since 2006.
- The car parking area, when compared to the control area, has a slightly higher diversity both of plants of unimproved grassland and plants indicative of disturbance.
- There is no evidence of any ongoing decline in the diversity of plants of unimproved grassland in the car parking area.
- There is no evidence of any ongoing increase in the diversity of plants indicative of disturbed conditions in the car parking area.
- There are signs of disturbance in the control area due to use of vehicles (not linked to Zoo use).

There is no evidence of any decline in the nature conservation value of the car parking area since 2006. Changes in the diversity and frequency of desirable species (limestone indicators) and of undesirable species (those associated with disturbed conditions) have been noted from one year to the next without any clear trend, or any ongoing divergence from the sward in the control area, being apparent. The overall diversity of plants indicative of unimproved grassland increased between 2010 and 2015, providing some evidence of an increase in the nature conservation value of the area, which may be due to improvements in the management of car parking. The number of these species recorded has since been stable.

Through close contact with the Downs Rangers, we carry out maintenance work and general management of the land, to an agreed protocol, using agreed seed mixes and to an agreed method. In recent years the parking area has been reduced and amended as shown to allow the upper bank to the South East to return to uncut meadow. Where anyone has queried the use and condition of the land, Zoo staff have offered to meet on site and openly discuss this.

## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

In order to reduce congestion on busy days both our North and West Car Parks open at the start of days when required. Ladies Mile opens once we approach capacity on the two main car parks, which continues to reduce congestion significantly on Clifton Down at the peak arrival time of 10:00-11:30am. Our traffic management signage continues to operate effectively and provides clear instruction and information to visitors on arrival.

This summer we also undertook arrival and departure surveys in our car parks on several days throughout the summer season, which showed a substantial changeover in early afternoon with a second busy period in our main car parks. However sufficient morning guests have departed that this does not impact on Ladies Mile or cause significant congestion when compared to the morning peak.