

# THE DOWNS COMMITTEE

Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

Reply to Norman Cornthwaite

To : Members of the  
Downs Committee

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Date Friday, 31 March 2017

## The Lord Mayor and 6 City Councillors

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Councillor Jeff Lovell  
Peter Abraham Donald Alexander  
Nicola Beech Clare Campion-Smith  
Barry Clark Martin Fodor

## The Master and 6 Merchant Venturers

C McAlpine J Baker  
A Brown F Greenacre  
C Griffiths J McArthur  
T Ross

Dear Member,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Downs Committee** to be held at **2.00 pm on Monday, 10th April, 2017 at City Hall.**

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf and the supporting documents are attached.

Yours sincerely,

*Norman Cornthwaite*

Norman Cornthwaite.

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### Shana Johnson

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## **Agenda**

**1. Apologies and introductions**

**2. Minutes of last meeting (Pages 4 - 7)**

To agree that the Minutes as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

**3. Declarations of interest**

**4. Public Forum**

**5. Downs Events and Management Report (Pages 8 - 18)**

To note and agree the recommendations contained within the report.

**6. Finance Report**

To follow

**7. Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG) Report (Pages 19 - 21)**

To note.

**8. Any Other Business**

**9. Next Meeting**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 at 11.00 am and will be held at Merchants Hall.

Norman Cornthwaite, Democratic Services Officer  
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Phone: 0117 92 22390

# THE DOWNS COMMITTEE

Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

**Downs Committee Meeting**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 at 2.00 pm**  
**City Hall**

**Present:**

BCC -

Lord Mayor Councillor Jeff Lovell (Chair)

Councillor Peter Abraham

Councillor Donald Alexander

Councillor Nicola Beech

Councillor Barry Clark

Merchant Venturers -

Cullum McAlpine – Master

Jonathon Baker

Anthony Brown

Francis Greenacre

Charles Griffiths

James McArthur

Tim Ross

Also in attendance -

Gemma Dando – Neighbourhoods

Sarah Tyler – Parks

Melissa Inman- Events

Victoria Holden – Site Permissions

Ben Skuse – Downs Maintenance

Beck Belfin – Parks Development

Norman Cornthwaite – Democratic Services

Mandy Leivers – Avon Gorge and Downs Biodiversity Education Officer

Robert Westlake – Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG)

Bryan Carroll – Bristol Zoo

Tom Hedges – Bristol Zoo

**14. Apologies**

There were none.

#### **15. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

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

#### **16. Declarations of Interest**

None were received.

#### **17. Public Forum**

The following Statements were received and noted:

1. Richard Bland – Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Programme
2. M R Andrews – Music Event
3. Michael Andrews – Music Event
4. Kean Seager – Music Event
5. Carol Coles – Music Event
6. Vince and Mary Watts – Music Event
7. Nik Beatty – Music Event
8. Stephanie French – Music Event
9. Steve Small – Music Event
10. Chris Lewis – Music Event
11. Pat Arnold – Music Event
12. 12. Ken Edwards – Music Event
13. David Redgewell – Public Transport
14. Allan Moore – Music Event

A copy of the Statements is contained in the Minute Book.

#### **18. Finance Report**

Gemma Dando introduced the report and summarised it for everyone. She confirmed that there are examples of self-financing parks and other open spaces. A lot of work was required on the project and consultation would take place on the proposals that emerge. Concerns were expressed about the lack of information in the report and timescales involved in formulating proposals for savings. It was noted that the Council would set its Budget in February and that the Medium Term Financial Plan would be agreed in June. It was noted that the Downs is a City Wide resource and that that any proposals concerning its finances should be consulted upon City Wide. It was agreed that the word “status” should be removed from the third recommendation in the report as this may cause confusion – the status of the Downs is set by the 1861 Act.

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

- (2) that an additional finance meeting to discuss the contents of this report be arranged; and**
- (3) that a report on the Downs Committee be presented to the next meeting in April including a suggestion of an operating framework and potential reduction in meetings.**

#### **19. Downs Management and Events Report**

Victoria Holden, Melissa Inman and Sarah Tyler introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

It was noted that revised Fees and Charges have been agreed with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. When setting Fees and Charges for any events there is a need to be mindful of what the market will bear. The Events Team is well aware of the Downs Committee's wish to maximise income from all events especially one as large as the Music Event applied for by Team Love.

It was noted that the Sea Walls is the best location for the Music Event as the drainage is good and there is less disruption to residents.

Although concerns were raised about noise levels at the Music Event that took place in September 2016, it was noted that the permitted level of 70 db's had not been exceeded during the Event. It was suggested that the possibility of reducing the noise level to 65db's be explored with Team Love and this was agreed.

Councillor Abraham raised a number of concerns about the Events Sub Group's recommendation to approve the application - including the applicant being in attendance at the Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016, noise levels, the location of the Event, the image it projects of the Downs and the disruption caused before and after the Event - and felt that the Committee should reject the application. It was noted however that although Councillor Abraham had attended the Meeting of the Events Sub Group on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016, he had not made these concerns known at the Meeting.

It was noted that the number of letters of support for last year's event from local residents exceeded the number of letters of protest from local residents about the event.

The Committee, whilst noting the concerns of the residents, accepted the recommendation of the Events Sub Group. The Committee was satisfied that the Sea Walls is the most appropriate location for the Event, that the prescribed noise levels were not exceeded at last year's event (but was happy to explore the possibility of the level being reduced to 65 db's), noted that acoustic adjustments would be made to benefit the residents of Seawalls Road and that there was a lot of support for the event. The Committee also noted that any permission it gives for the event is subject to the applicants obtaining a Licence from the Licensing Authority.

**Resolved – (1) Event (see 3c): that permission to be given for the 2017 Team Love proposed music concert at The Downs Sea Walls location subject to a site fee and date being agreed - as recommended by the Events Sub Group (Appendix A), and the possibility of reducing the noise level to 65dbs being explored with Team Love; (Councillor Abraham voted against this resolution);**

and

**(2) Management Plan (see 4d): that the plan be circulated to the management plan sub group for comment before being sent to full Downs Committee in April for approval to then go to public consultation.**

**20. Bristol Zoo Gardens – Use of Land Off Ladies Mile**

Bryan Carroll and Tom Hedges introduced this report and summarised it for everyone.

It was noted that the extension of parking on the Downs from 4 to 5 hours brought it in line with RPZ around the Zoo.

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

**21. Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Annual Report 2016**

Becky Belfin introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

Mandy Leivers summarised the main achievements of the Education Programme.

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

**22. Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG)**

Robert Westlake introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

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

**23. Next Meeting**

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 2.00 pm in City Hall.

Meeting ended at 4.30 pm.

(Chair)

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL**

**DOWNS COMMITTEE**

**10<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Report of:** Service Director, Neighbourhoods and Service Director,  
Culture

**Title:** Downs Management and Events report

**Ward:** N/A

**Officers Presenting Report:** Melissa Inman, Arts and Events Manager  
Sarah Tyler, Operations Co-ordinator  
North Parks

**Contact Telephone Number:** 0117 9037141

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve that an events sub group meeting is held to agree the tender or extension for a Circus on the Downs for future years as the current contract ends at the end of 2017.

**Summary:** This report brings together information about the council's management of the Downs.

**1. Policy**

Not applicable

**2. Consultation**

**a) Internal**

John Williams, Area Manager North.  
Becky Belfin, Parks Development Officer  
Sarah Tyler, Operations Coordinator North  
Gemma Dando, Service Manager  
Melissa Inman, Arts and Events Manager  
Victoria Holden, Site Permissions Officer

**3. Context**

**3a) Concessions:**

Awaiting outcome of street trading application for Parrys Lane. If this is approved a tender specification will be put together for Downs Committee approval before the tender is advertised.

**3b) Filming and Events**

<b>BFO</b>		<b>Income 2016/2017</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Description / Episode</b>	<b>BFO Filming Commission</b>	<b>Downs</b>
25/04/2016	Good Spaces	Velo Vixen	46.25	46.25
05/05/2016	Radical Films	Find Your Film	0.00	0.00
09/05/2016	Michon Ltd	BT TSO 2020 strategy film	87.50	87.50
09/06/2016	ITV	Go For It	40.00	40.00
20/6/2016	Channel 5 Productions	Britain's Greatest Bridges	30.00	30.00
21/06/2016	NHK Cosmomeia Europe Ltd	Mitsunari Iwago & the cat around the world	40.00	40.00
11/07/2016	Crazy Head	Unit Parking Parrys Lane	262.50	262.50
26/07/2016	Plimsoll Productions	Puppy Love	40.00	40.00
18/08/2016	Guangdong Radio & TV station	Guangzhou TV Album	0.00	0.00
19/08/2016	BBC	Urban Foxes	40.00	40.00
13/09/2016	Huxley Studios Ltd	OVO Energy Tour of Britain	250.00	250.00
15/09/2016	BBC	Countryfile	40.00	40.00
16/09/2016	Keo Films	Life at the Edge	40.00	40.00
16/09/2016	FFP New Media	Pilcher Project: From Another Planet	92.50	92.50
22/09/2016	Twenty Twenty	The Coir	40.00	40.00
05/10/2016	University of the West of England	UWE Wildlife Masters Practice	0.00	0.00
20/10/2016	Electric Ray Ltd	Dancing for the Weekend	50.00	50.00
01/11/2016	Icon Films	River Monsters	40.00	40.00
11/11/2016	Fremantle Media	Take Me Out 9	40.00	40.00
26/11/2016	University of Bristol	Studiospace's Studioshorts: Fraystone Manor	0.00	0.00
05/01/2017	Bigtalk Bliss	Bliss	92.50	92.50
23/01/2017	Bristol Student's Union	Varsity Series 2017 Trailer	0.00	0.00
09/02/2017	Thirdberg	Aptamil	92.50	92.50
02/03/2017	Wordley Productions	Screwfix Commercial	92.50	92.50
17/03/2017		Ill Behaviour	30.00	30.00
<b>Totals</b>			1486.25	1486.25

*\*There is currently no future filming activity proposed to take place on the Downs*

**Events that have taken place since the last meeting under delegated powers:**

*Funderworld operated from 27<sup>th</sup> March to 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017. Their show dates will be from the 6<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>rd</sup> April, which will be during the Easter Holidays.*

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Site Fee</b>	<b>85% site fee income, to the Downs Committee</b>	<b>15% site fee, income to BCC</b>
Funderworld	April	£29,000	£24,650.00	£4,350.00

**Confirmed future events**

1. *The Foodies Festival* are returning to the Downs in May. They will be onsite from 9<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup> May with the event being live on the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May/ times to be added. They will be located in the showground/by the water tower.
2. Music Concert by Team Love will be returning to the Downs this year 'Subject to license'. The event will be onsite from 27<sup>th</sup> August to 5<sup>th</sup> September. Event day will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> September.
3. Moscow State Circus will be returning to the Downs this year. This will be their final year on their tender. They will be onsite from 30<sup>th</sup> September to 16<sup>th</sup> October with their event days being the 4<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October.

<b>EVENT</b>	<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Site Fee</b>	<b>85% site fee income, to the Downs Committee</b>	<b>15% site fee, income to BCC</b>
Foodies Festival	May	£10,575	£8,988.75	£1,586.25
Music Concert Team Love	September	£49,350	£41,947.50	£7,402.50
Moscow State Circus	October	£32,000	£27,200	£4,800
<b>Total:</b>		<b>£91,925</b>	<b>£78,136.25</b>	<b>£13,788.75</b>

**\*\*These fees are based on the new fees and charges structure**

**Recommendation:** Approve that an events sub group meeting is held to agree the tender or extension for a Circus on the Downs for future years as the current contract ends at the end of 2017.

## Proposed future events

Bristol city Council has received a number of applications to hold small-medium scale on the Downs in 2017, these include:

- Rainbow Run would like to return to the Downs. Onsite on the 17<sup>th</sup> June. This is a returning 5k fun run with coloured powder.
- Bristol Race for Life – to be onsite 30<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July. The event will be taking place on the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> July. This will be either a 5k, 10k or a 5k muddy obstacle course.
- Open Air Cinema – the organisers have requested to hold the event from 30<sup>th</sup> August to 2<sup>nd</sup> September. The organisers would like to be located by the water tower. Dates are being reviewed as this is the same weekend as the music concert.
- Student Union Welcome Fair would like to return to the Downs again this year and operate onsite from the 16<sup>th</sup> September to 26<sup>th</sup> September. The event day will be the 22<sup>nd</sup> September.
- She Runs the Night is an evening female only 5k or 10k run. The organisers would like to come to the Downs on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

***Fees and charges will be based on Bristol city Council's Fees and charges 17/18 - all fees yet to be agreed with event organisers.***

EVENT	MONTH	Site Fee	85% site fee income, to the Downs Committee	15% site fee, income to BCC
Rainbow Run	June	£4,500 (TBC)	£3,825 (TBC)	£675 (TBC)
Bristol Race for Life	July	£6,525 (TBC)	£5,546.25 (TBC)	£978.75 (TBC)
Open Air Cinema	August-Sept	£7,200 (TBC)	£6,120 (TBC)	£1,080 (TBC)
Student Union Welcome Fair	September	£11,250 (TBC)	£9,562.50 (TBC)	£1,687.50 (TBC)
She Runs the Night	October	£700 (TBC)	£595 (TBC)	£105 (TBC)
<b>Total:</b>		<b>£30,175(TBC)</b>	<b>£25,649 (TBC)</b>	<b>£4,526 (TBC)</b>

## Update on the Downs for a Music Concert in 2017

Team Love have distributed resident letters and held a residents meeting on the 28th February at St Marys (Notes Circulated with the report). Team Love have submitted their premises license application to hold a concert on the 2nd of September 2017 and have also written a further letter to residents

confirming that they have made a premises application.

The organisers have moved the main stage Eastwards and away from the local properties as much as they are able to do. The distance moved away from the position of the stage last year is at least 75m with the aim to severely lessen the impact of the sound from the back of the stage for local residents. The location of wild grass and flower meadows prevents the main stage/event from going any further East.

The following volume limits have been applied for - With 65db off site from 1300 to 1630hrs, 68db from 1630 to 1930hrs and 70db from 1930 to 2300hrs.

The licensing hearing date for Team Loves Premises Licence for The Downs Music concert will likely be 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

Team Love need to announce their line-up of acts by the end of April – 'subject to licence' will be clearly stated on all marketing and promotional material. Team Love have been liaising with residents regularly and has made concessions to them and Gerry Bird from Sneyd Park Residents Association which have been appreciated by local residents.

## **Financial**

### **3c) Revenue**

Events site fee income to the Downs Committee for 16/17: £99,110

Filming income to date to the Downs Committee for 16/17: £1486.25

## **Downs Management update**

### **3d) Access:**

To confirm the Bridge Trust compound is now on the Downs whilst they paint the suspension bridge, as agreed at the November committee meeting.

- The compound will be onsite for a maximum of 6 months, they plan to be less time if possible but works are weather dependant, any additional time will be charged. (started 13<sup>th</sup> March).

### **3e) Movement and Place Framework subgroup**

A sub group was not able to take place in February as planned and is currently on hold due to the present budgetary situation as any further development requires Downs Committee to consider how they will procure, project manage and fund the approaches set out in the Downs Place and Movement Framework.

Movement and Place sub group members are: Lord Mayor, Councillor Peter Abraham, Councillor Martin Fodor, Anthony Brown, Francis Greenacre, Tim Ross, Richard Ennion, Richard Goldthorpe, Sarah Tyler, Mark Sperduty, Ed Plowden, Oliver Coltman, Mandy Leivers, Becky Belfin.

#### **4. Landscape:**

**4a) Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project education programme;** Mandy Leivers will provide a separate report.

#### **4b) Tree safety works**

The tree officer continues inspections for dead or high risk trees and tree removals follow as required.

#### **4c) Management and Resources: Downs Team Report**

Daily duties continue on an ongoing basis; litter collection, football pitch provision and goat monitoring. The teams work transitions back to Summer work from now on, with grass cutting and litter removal taking up the majority of the time from now until the Autumn.

Works completed since the last report are:

- Scrub management; this represents the end of our 2<sup>nd</sup> Winter working to the plan. To date removing 46 compartments (large and small) of scrub as listed. Work comprises a combination of chain sawing, hedge cutting, ride on mowing, chipping and stump grinding. Although the plan identifies areas across the Downs, we have focused our efforts on the zoo banks area and the meadow behind and the area of main meadow adjacent to Circular Road. The reasoning for this is to facilitate a wider area of hay cut in these areas thus maintaining the area of meadows rather than the gradual loss that we were experiencing due to encroachment. The scrub management works will continue in future years across all parts of the Downs.
- A 2<sup>nd</sup> view point through the Woodland adjacent to the Promenade has been cut through. Trees and understory have been removed and it is now possible to admire the view of the gorge and across the channel to the Welsh Hills (on a clear day!). This is a small glimpse of the views that may have been admired all along the cliff tops of the Gorge back in time when the top of the gorge was still open and free of woodland and scrub.
- As in most years, this period, January to March, has been our wettest time for ground conditions. A significant amount of time has been spent chaining, spiking and applying sand to the Football Pitches to keep them playable.
- 1 new memorial bench has been installed.
- The hedges along the Observatory and across Birdwatchers have been cut.
- The Downs Supervisor supported the Educational officer in running another successful “Meet the Avon Gorge Goat keeper” event earlier this month.
- Scrub clearance on Bridge Valley Road took place with the road closures in place on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan, Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb and 12<sup>th</sup> Feb.

#### **4d) Management Plan**

The first initial draft has been produced, this is to be circulated to the sub group and a sub group meeting is to be arranged in April.

Management plan sub group members are: Councillor Fodor, Councillor Alexander, Anthony Brown, Francis Greenacre, Mandy Leivers, Becky Belfin, Ben Skuse and Sarah Tyler.

#### **4e) Health and Safety:**

- Parsons Brinkerhoff have carried out their annual inspection of rock faces at Bridge Valley Road, the Zig Zag Footpath and the Downs Playground.
- Contractors are aiming to replace the Black Rock Quarry Catch fence end of March with works anticipated to be complete by 14<sup>th</sup> April.

### **5. Public Sector Equality Duties**

5a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
  - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
  - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
  - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
  - tackle prejudice; and
  - promote understanding.

### **6. Legal and Resource Implications**

The Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861 provides that the Downs should remain as a place for the resort and recreation of the citizens of

Bristol, and that a committee should be appointed to manage them. The recommendations of this report are within the powers conferred by this statute.

## **Financial**

### **(a) Revenue (b) Capital**

Financial advice provided Finance Section Business Partner.  
Council budget update will be provided as a separate paper.

### **7. Land**

The land is under the control of the Downs Committee.

### **8. Personnel**

Not applicable

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

Background Papers: None

Notes taken from the meeting between organisers of the proposed Downs Music Concert in September 2017 and local residents at St Mary's Church on 28th Feb 2017.

Notes taken by Kate Marshall of Team Love.

Tom Paine (TP) from Team Love opened the meeting with a recap on last year's event and an explanation of the timeline of how the application would proceed for the proposed event for 2017. He explained that there was an agreement in principal from the Downs Committee for the event to take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2017 along the same size, style and structure as the 2016 event.

It was explained to all that the next stage of the application process was for a Premises Licence Application to be submitted by the organisers. As soon as this is submitted TP stated that all who attended the meeting and had given emails would be notified and sent copies of both the application and site plan. Residents were informed that from the day after submission there would be a period of 28 days whereby residents and responsible authorities could make representations against the grant of the licence. Reasonably assuming that there would be representations against the application, a licensing hearing would likely be called mid to late April and a decision on the award of the licence would be made then.

TP led the discussion on to resident's experiences of last year's event. It was agreed that the plans in place for resident parking, resident only access, security, waste management and public routes to and from the site worked well and caused a minimum of disruption to local residents. The main concerns, as all present were aware, stemmed from the noise caused from the event on the day, and the build and break of the event site.

\*Steel-shield and track-way – Exploring ways to go up quicker due to noise of the machines / delivery trucks and looking untidy mid build - TP is speaking to the contractors to ensure enough staff and correct machinery to install the fencing.

\* Plant on site too noisy - TP assured they are looking into plant with white noise alarms across site rather than 'beeping' tone and to explore use of extra 'banks men' working with site machines.

\*Bone yard location - TP plans to move this away from all the residential area to minimize disruption due to heavy usage through the build and break

\*Residents raised the issue of build and break security working overnight not to have their car doors/windows open playing music at all different times of the evening - TP will be addressing this with the security company and making sure this is in the brief for all overnight teams in position

\*Residents raised concerns of security and other crew sleeping over - TP confirmed this will be outlined in everyone's contract of employment that there will be no overnight sleeping on the Downs in Cars / tent and live in vehicles

\*Main Stage position was a major concern for some residents. Main concern was disruption from bass / low-end frequencies collecting directly behind the main stage. TP explained that repositioning of the main stage was being explored to help prevent this and moving the stage further away from the residents of Seawalls Road. Other measures to reduce disruption include reducing the amount of monitors on stage, heavy draping on stage and configuring sub-bass in a specific formation to stop the energy moving backwards from the stage.

\* Residents raised concerns that the letter drops to invite people to the meeting was not thorough or efficient enough -

- Recommended to be addressed personally to each person
- Email on the letter in a different colour making it hard for a lot of people to read and understand it reflecting on the lack of response and low attendees to the meeting
- No number on the letter making anyone who doesn't email unable to feedback
- Need to be fully aware of the actions to be able to complain

\* Sound Levels on the day of the event.

TP explained that the same levels as were granted in 2016 would be applied for with the 2017 event. 70db for the headline acts, with 68 and 65db for the earlier acts.

Residents expressed strong disappointment with this decision stating that they considered 70DB too loud and also above the recommended venue limit of 65DB.

TP discussed this with residents and explained the organiser's reasons for wanting this limit. He undertook to continue working with the council to see if a 65DB at external residential properties could be achieved, whilst still maintaining an essential level of sound on the site, through moving the main stage position. Residents also explained it was the lower frequency of sound that caused the main disruption and TP promised to examine if these levels could be reduced.

\* Parking stopped on Circular Road by council officials week before the show - TP explained that this was considered essential to ensure deliveries could be made to site.

\* Mobile signal dropped in the area Sat from 5pm raising concern if residents /friends and family needed to call for any matter – TP would look into working with local mobile companies to see if a booster mast or similar could be installed for the event.

\* Blackboy Hill – some local residents concerned that this area was very busy from after 3pm needed some system and order in place. TP explained that last year the heavy rain seemed to

keep people in this area for longer than anticipated. Organisers would speak with Police to see what their opinion was and if extra arrangements should be made

\* Drugs taking and selling – Residents wanted to have a clear understanding of the policy in which we work towards and the police role on the site. One resident reported an incident of a under-18yr old being offered drugs of an unknown description. TP remarked that unfortunately this incident hadn't been reported to organisers or police on the day of the event so had no information on it from the day. TP explained that the event had around 200 SIA security working on the day, and that bag searches were mandatory to enter site – whilst Police weren't working within the site on the day, there was a Police Command stationed inside the Event Control on the site and Police would be welcome to attend any incident within the site should the Commander deem necessary. TP would talk to police to seek opinion on extra 'plain-clothed' security working across the site on the day.

\* First Bus - No4 was stopped without any notification at all on bus stops or anything. TP did explain this was something out of our control and we have clearly stated this cannot happen this year at all and there is no need to divert this bus.

\* Resident parking - worked well everyone is happy please can we keep Holly Bush Lane in the scheme and also stay mindful of anyone wanting to go to the Bee Festival.

Gerry Bird from SP-RA was last to speak in the meeting, putting across his member's concerns over the event. Spoke positively of the event organisers work and responsibility with last year's event, but that concerns were still held over the location and suitability of the site for an event of this kind – and that other sites should be considered.



## Report to the Downs Committee April 10th 2017

This report is to update Committee members on the most recent and planned activities of the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge.

### **Statement:**

FOD+AG acknowledge Bristol City Council's policy for Parks and Open Spaces becoming cost neutral by and recognise that the Downs may better placed to generate income than many other public open spaces.

FOD+AG may be able to contribute to additional income generation through grant applications, {eg Lottery funding} which could be made in association with other groups concerned with public open spaces in Bristol.

FOD+AG are willing to be involved with the private sector in securing appropriate sponsorship arrangements.

### **Current Activities:**

FOD+AG members continue with numerous activities across the Downs.

Throughout the winter members have been busy carrying out:

- Monthly deep litter clearance operations {20 members}
- Weekend goat monitoring {six hours}
- Refurbishing dead hedges, {41 hours}
- Maintenance to the Victorian steps, {20 hours}
- Last month FOD+AG members gathered to plant three Tulip trees near Claypit Road. They replaced three Chestnut trees that had died and were purchased by FOD+AG as part of the ongoing tree replacement programme.

FOD+AG committee member Richard Bland will again be leading numerous walks around the Downs this spring and throughout the rest of the year.

Richards's insight into the flora and fauna of the Downs ensures a large and faithful following.

The FOD+AG website continues to be regularly refreshed and provides a forum for citizens and visitors to the Downs to comment on a wide range of Downs related issues.

Members may recall that at the January meeting FOD+AG reported that an application for a grant from the Neighbourhood Partnership had been frozen. This was funding required to complete the Haven restoration project and was to supply and install an information panel. I am pleased to report that the funding for the project has now been secured with a generous donation from The Redland and Cotham Amenity Society and from FOD+AG's own resources.

In February FOD+AG hosted an evening to discuss the management of scrub on the Downs. Forty members attended and we are grateful to FOD+AG committee member Martin Collins and the Downs supervisor Ben Skuse for leading the discussion.

Our members and the Education Officer Mandy Leivers met in February to agree a programme of activities and guided walks for 2017. The working group meets regularly and is known as "Your Downs" and aspires to attract diverse groups who would not normally come to the Downs. 'Your Downs' reaches out to all sections of the community across the City and gives them the opportunity to enjoy the splendour that is the Downs and Avon Gorge.

At the end of January FODAG members attended the Mayors cabinet meeting to present statements in support of the Education Officers position and to absorb the scale of the proposed cuts to services including the Parks budget.

Our members also attend the quarterly Parks Forum meetings. This group is made up of Friends Groups citywide and is an opportunity to share ideas and discuss common problems.

FOD+AG supports the Parks Forum view that a cost neutral Parks Department by 2020 is not achievable and are greatly concerned that the larger parks and estates including the Downs could be seen as cash cows expected to support smaller parks and open spaces who are without the capacity for income generation.

FOD+AG have grave concerns that the only criteria that the City Council will use; is to how much income the Downs generate with little regard for its iconic status.

It is a long held view of FOD+AG that until there is a commitment to complete financial transparency it will not be possible for the Downs Committee to plan effectively for the future governance of the Downs.

